

# Leader Set the Record Straight on Ukraine War

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Opinion 

## Must learn to counter Jiu-Jitsu

By Mohammad Sarfi  
Editor-in-chief

TEHRAN- Jiu-Jitsu is a Japanese martial art with a history dating back to at least five centuries. This interesting and creative method of combat is used when facing an armored opponent, where a direct attack not only yields no results but also causes harm to oneself. Jiu-Jitsu teaches you how to use your opponent's strength against themselves.

Due to its effectiveness and strategic approach, this martial art has also entered the world of politics. For example, Gene Sharp, the theoretical father of soft coups or so-called non-violent movements, has a section in his guidelines called "Political Jiu-Jitsu."

The leader of the Islamic Revolution mentioned the "hybrid warfare" that the enemy is waging against the Islamic Republic in his annual speech in Mashhad and referred to some of its dimensions. "They tempt people, and they distort the truth." ▶ Page 2

Op-ed 

## Dangerous times amid serious glimmers of real and huge, positive changes...

By Martin Love

It's difficult to be even a partially intelligent and informed citizen in the U.S. A kind of despair takes hold of one's psyche amid the blizzard of bad news around the Biden, Neocon Administration. The country is deeply awash in incoherent, idiotic moves by the Democrats and some Republicans in Congress, and in blatant corruption so deep one wonders if the country can long survive as a reasonable, going venture. (Almost the same thing can be said about its chief and only "ally" in West Asia — Netanyahu's Israel — but that's another story and in either case, at least 70 percent of the world's population is about ready to say "good riddance" to both countries if ever it occurs.) ▶ Page 5

## Iran crowned AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup champions

TEHRAN - Iran defeated Japan 6-0 in the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup Thailand 2023 final.

The win at the Jomtien Beach Arena saw Iran draw level with Japan on three titles each, with both teams now casting their eyes on preparing for the FIFA Beach Soccer World UAE 2023 in November.

Ali Mirshekari (two goals), Movahed Mohammadjpour, Moslem Mesigar, Mohammadali Mokhtari and Kosuke Matsuda (own goal) scored for Iran.

Oman defeated the UAE 4-2 to win the bronze medal.

Team Melli defeated Malaysia 14-5, Uzbekistan 11-2, the UAE 7-2 and Bahrain 10-0 and Oman 6-3 on their way to the final.

Mesigar was selected the Most Valuable Player of the 2023 AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup.



**Protests continue in Israel over paused judicial reform**

Thousands of Israelis protested in Tel Aviv on Saturday for a 13th straight week against a controversial judicial overhaul now frozen by the government while talks are held with party representatives.

Carrying Israeli flags, people marched through the center of Israel's commercial hub, chanting

"democracy" and carrying placards condemning the hard-right government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Smaller rallies were taking place in other cities.

Demonstrations erupted in January after the coalition announced its reform package, which the

government says is necessary to rebalance powers between lawmakers and the judiciary.

The proposed reforms would curtail the authority of the Supreme Court and give politicians greater powers over the selection of judges, which opponents say could imperil Israeli democracy.

## Over 1,700 idle production units revived in a year

TEHRAN- As announced by the head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO), 1,714 idle production units were revived in the country during the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

Referring to the Leader's emphasis on knowledge-based employment last year, Ali Rasoulzadeh said: "We have formulated a coherent operational

package to support knowledge-based companies and considered incentives and advantages for giving land to such companies."

He added: "Last year, we gave land to more than a hundred knowledge-based companies, and we managed to meet 107 out of 378 technological needs of these companies, which were previously

met from abroad, inside the country."

Pointing out that a good relationship has been established between knowledge-based companies and large enterprises, the deputy industry, mining and trade minister announced that 120 companies were added to the list of knowledge-based companies last year. ▶ Page 4

## More than 1,400 science journals being published in Iran

TEHRAN - According to the latest statistics of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, 1,452 science journals are being published in the country.

Out of all the mentioned journals, 289 are indexed in the Scopus database and 67 journals are indexed in the Web of Science database, IRNA reported.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, has said that the West exerted pressures on Iran in order to isolate it but their efforts in this regard backfired.

He described making progress under economic siege and the most severe pressures possible as indicative of the Iranian nation's bright performance.

"The U.S. said the economic pressures they've put on Iran are unprecedented in history. Despite all their lies, they were true to this," the Leader added. ▶ Page 7



**30th Intl. Holy Quran Exhibition opens in Tehran**

TEHRAN - The 30th edition of the International Holy Quran Exhibition opened at Tehran's Imam Khomeini Mosalla on Saturday.

President Ebrahim Raisi, Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaili, and a group of religious figures attended the opening ceremony.

Artworks and handicrafts representing Quran verses and teachings are on view at the showcase, which will run until April 18. The exhibition is organized every year during the month of Ramadan.

## Sizdeh Be-dar: Iranians flock to parks in celebration of nature day

TEHRAN- On Sunday, Iranians enjoyed fresh air as they took to local parks, lush gardens, or green countryside to celebrate a national holiday known as Nature Day.

Families played ball games, barbecued and relaxed during the day, called Sizdeh Be-dar, a public picnic day in early April.

The day marks the end of the Iranian New

Year holidays and falls on the thirteenth day of Noruz.

They say the philosophy behind the festival is to avoid the bad luck associated with the number 13 in some cultures by not staying indoors on this day.

The official Noruz holidays fall four days after New Year's Eve, but schools and many shops remain closed until the day after Sizdah Be-dar,

which usually falls on April 1 or 2.

'Sizdeh' or 'Sizdeh' means thirteen, and 'Be-dar' means to get rid of, bearing the meaning of 'getting rid of thirteen.'

On the 13th day of Farvardin, which falls on April 2 in normal years and April 1 in leap years, everyone traditionally tries to spend and enjoy this day in the best possible way. ▶ Page 6

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## Two IRGC members martyred in Syria

TEHRAN - The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) announced Sunday that a second IRGC officer who had sustained injuries during Israel's Friday attack against Syria has got martyred.

Israel carried out an attack on Syria in the early hours of Friday morning. Earlier, Iran had said that an IRGC officer named Milad Heidari was killed in the attack. The second officer, Meghdad Mahaghani, was severely injured in the attack and was pronounced dead on Sunday.

"Undoubtedly, the crimes of the fake and criminal Zionist regime will not go unanswered and it will pay the price," the IRGC said in a statement on Sunday.

The statement also said that the two officers will be accorded official funerals this week and will eventually be laid to rest on Wednesday.

Iran has condemned the Israeli strike against Syria. Spokesman for the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Nasser Kanaani strongly condemned the attacks by the aggressor Zionist regime that targeted some sites in Damascus and its suburbs on Thursday morning and early Friday, the Iranian foreign ministry said in a statement. ▶ Page 3

## ICJ rules US violated intl. law by freezing Iran's assets

TEHRAN - Judges at The Hague-based International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled on Thursday that the United States had violated international law by allowing American courts to confiscate nearly two billion dollars of Iranian assets owned by individuals and companies.

The ICJ ordered Washington to pay compensation, announcing its amount will be determined later.

Washington's freezing of funds belonging to several Iranian individuals and companies, including \$1.75 billion from the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), was "manifestly unreasonable," the ICJ stated.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry issued a statement saying the verdict demonstrates the legitimacy of Iran's positions and the illegal behavior by the U.S.

"As per this important ruling, the court rightfully dismissed the unsubstantiated defenses of the United States and" ▶ Page 2

## Iran hands Azerbaijan a note of protest over media actions

TEHRAN - The Iranian embassy in Baku has handed the Azerbaijani foreign ministry a note of strong protest over "insulting media actions" by the Azerbaijani media.

According to the Iranian foreign ministry, the note came after Azerbaijani media undertook actions that are impolite and insulting.

In its note, the Iranian embassy demanded a halt to "this trend" and warned about the negative and damaging consequences of "this media immorality".

The note came amid renewed diplomatic tensions between Iran and Azerbaijan over the latter's military frictions with Armenia and its opening of an embassy in Israel. ▶ Page 3



## Iran hopes strategic pact with Russia to be finalized ‘in a month’

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian on Wednesday (March 29) expressed hope that the long-term strategic cooperation agreement between Tehran and Moscow will be finalized in “less than a month.”

“Reviews on the long-term strategic cooperation agreement between the two countries have been finalized in Russia. Iran has also examined it. I hope that in less than a month, the final revision of the agreement will be carried out by Iran’s Foreign Ministry,” Amir Abdollahian said in a joint press conference in Moscow with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov, Press TV reported.

In his visit to Moscow which began on Tuesday night, Amir Abdollahian was accompanied by a high-level economic and political team.

Tehran and Moscow signed a 10-year cooperation deal in 2001 that was lengthened to 20 years through two five-year extensions.

Now, the two capitals are seeking to ink a document on bilateral strategic cooperation, which may determine the future of their relationship for the next 20 years.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the Iranian chief diplomat insisted that Tehran-Moscow ties are advancing on the right track, hoping that bilateral cooperation on regional and international organizations will go on efficiently.

Later on Wednesday, in a post on his Twitter account, Iran’s top diplomat described his meeting with Lavrov as “important and productive.”

Lavrov says there is no alternative to JCPOA

Lavrov also told reporters that relations between Iran and Russia in different areas, including commerce, investment, economy and implementation of key projects, are advancing well.

There has been a steady growth in bilateral ties within the framework of the joint economic commission, he said, highlighting



close cooperation in international and regional affairs.

Lavrov also expressed hope that disputes between Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan will be resolved soon.

The Russia’s chief diplomat also urged the United States to lift sanctions on Iran and return to the 2015 nuclear deal.

There is no alternative to the nuclear agreement, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Lavrov insisted.

“We talked about the situation around the JCPOA on the Iranian nuclear program. We have a common understanding that there is no alternative to this international agreement, which was written down in the unanimously adopted UN Security Council Resolution 2231,” Lavrov stressed, Press TV reported.

Washington needs to lift anti-Iran sanctions, he said, noting that the world awaits Washington’s return to its obligations under the nuclear deal.

On Tuesday, the Iranian foreign minister warned the United States and three European parties to the deal – Germany, France and Britain – that the window of opportunity to revive the agreement will not remain open forever.

Speaking in an interview with Al Jazeera news network on Monday, he said Iranian lawmakers seek to approve a plan which sets limitations to the negotiations to revive the agreement.

## Must learn to counter Jiu-Jitsu

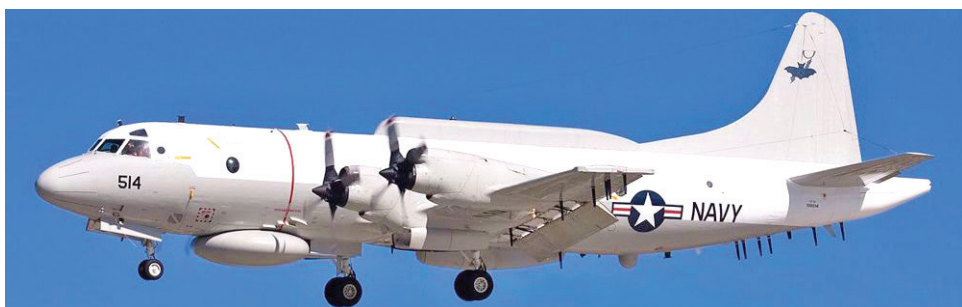
from page 1 ► Their goal is to weaken the determination of the nation. They want to get rid of people’s hopes. Their goal is to extinguish the flames of hope in the hearts of our youth. They want to create despair in the youth. Despair means reaching a dead end. When a young person loses hope to make progress, when they lose hope in the future, they feel as though they have reached a dead end. You cannot expect a person who feels deadlocked to work properly. They want to spread discord. They want to create bipolarity in the country. They want to take the real software of the country’s national power from the hands of the nation and make it ineffective. This software consists of people’s faith, people’s religious values, people’s national values, people’s beliefs. When they do these things, they seek to create instability and insecurity in the country or, if they can, even (launch) a civil war. However, they have and they always will hit a brick wall! ”

The enemies of Iran use various techniques and tactics in their hybrid warfare, but it seems that Jiu-Jitsu has a special role among

these techniques. The enemy has properly realized that military confrontation with Iran is not possible because it is costly and does not yield the desired results. Therefore, the best way is to use the strengths of the system against itself. This is where attacking values and beliefs comes into play. Values and beliefs that are at the center of Iranian society’s strengths are attacked in various ways to be introduced as problems and obstacles. Realities are reversed, and heralds of truth face character assassination. The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution is at the top of this assassination list.

Fighting in such a field is not easy and does not only require courage and sacrifice. Above all, one must be intelligent. The enemy tries to confuse you in a way that makes you angry, have minimal control over your movements, and even harm yourself. Keeping calm, having an accurate assessment of the scene, making decisive and timely decisions and actions are key to victory in this war.

## Iranian Navy warns U.S. reconnaissance aircraft



TEHRAN – The Iranian naval forces have detected a reconnaissance aircraft operated by the U.S. Navy over the Sea of Oman, forcing it to avoid the Iranian airspace after issuing a warning, the Navy said on Sunday afternoon.

The Navy’s public relations department said that an EP-3E airplane of the U.S. Navy

was about to intrude into Iran’s airspace over the Sea of Oman.

The vigilant naval forces gave the plane a warning and blocked its unauthorized entry into the Iranian airspace, the Navy added.

The aircraft heeded the warning, stayed away from the Iranian aerial border and returned to international routes.

# ICJ rules US violated intl. law by freezing Iran’s assets

*Foreign Ministry says ICJ rightfully dismissed the U.S. unsubstantiated defenses and recognized Iran as the rightful party*

from page 1 ► recognized Iran as the rightful party by emphasizing the former’s violation of its commitments. The U.S. obligation to compensate for the losses will be the most cogent reason for the legitimacy of the request of the Islamic Republic of Iran,” the ministry said in the statement, according to Press TV.

It added the Islamic Republic “considers it as one of its inherent duties to press for the rights of the Iranian nation, and will utilize all diplomatic, legal and judicial means and channels to demand the rights of the honorable Iranian people and the national interests of Iranians.”

The case before the ICJ was initially brought by Tehran against Washington in 2016 for breaching a 1955 friendship treaty, signed before the 1979 Islamic Revolution, by allowing American courts to freeze the assets of Iranian companies.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 2016 that about \$2 billion in frozen Iranian assets must be turned over to families of Americans killed in the 1983 bombing of a U.S. Marine Corps barracks in Beirut and other attacks blamed on Iran. Tehran has long rejected allegations of involvement in the 1983 Beirut bombing.

The U.S. formally withdrew from the 1955 treaty in 2018 after Iran filed two claims based on the accord.

U.S. representatives are set to respond at the ICJ on Wednesday. Washington had previously un-



successfully sought to have the lawsuit thrown out.

**“Based on the ICJ ruling the U.S. must compensate the losses it has inflicted on Iran during two years.”**

The ICJ is the United Nations’ top court dealing with disputes between countries. Although the ICJ’s rulings are binding, it has no power to enforce them.

**U.S. should pay Iranian dues**

An international law expert

says the vote by the ICJ clearly proves that the United States pay dues to Iran.

“The issuance of this vote is obligatory for the U.S. and (it) must compensate our damages and this is a victory for the Islamic Republic of Iran,” Ahmad Momenirad told IRNA in an interview published on Sunday.

**“Blow to the U.S. credibility”**

Nozar Shafiei, a senior international relations expert says the vote by the International Court of Justice is not only a victory for the Ebrahim Raisi administration but for the legal team, Iranian people,

and world public opinion.

Talking to IRNA, Shafiei says the vote also dealt a “blow to the U.S. credibility”.

?He also said the U.S. has little appetite to resolve issues “professionally and legally”.

The U.S. suffers from the illusion that its leadership in the world is based on justice, Shafiei remarked.

Tavakol Habibzadeh, the chief of the presidential center for international law, also said based on the ICJ ruling the U.S. must compensate the losses it has inflicted on Iran during two years.

## Iran insists it principally views political solution as remedy to Yemen crisis

TEHRAN – In view of Tehran’s “strategic principled policies” there is a “political solution” to the Yemen crisis, Iran’s Foreign Ministry said on Thursday.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said Iran insists on a full lifting of blockade on Yemen, inclusive cease-fire, respect to Yemen’s sovereignty and

territorial integrity, and political dialogue with the involvement of all Yemeni groups.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran, based on its principled policy, never sees war as a solution to problems and regional crises and always insists on resolution of problems based on dialogue,” Kanaani said, Iran’s offi-

cial news agency IRNA reported.

He added Iran will use all its energy to press on a just peace based on “the realities of Yemen and establishment of peace, stability and security” in the country and “we hope to see return of stability, security and reinforcement of calm in this great Islamic country.”

## Tehran calls Oman an honest friend and neighbor



**UAE foreign minister invites Amir Abdollahian to visit Abu Dhabi**

Also, in a telephone call with Amir Abdollahian days earlier, UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed said the new movement in relations between Tehran and Riyadh will have “positive” effects on the region.

Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed also invited Amir Abdollahian to visit the United Arab Emirates and congratulated the Iranians on the New Year (Norouz) and the holy month of Ramadan.

The UAE chief diplomat also expressed hope that the ties between Damascus and Abu Dhabi would increase to a favorable level in line with the interests of Muslim countries and help increase stability and security in the region.

For his part, Foreign Minister Amir Abdollahian said “fortunately” the relations between Iran and the UAE are “on the increase at political, economic, trade sectors”.

Amir Abdollahian also the “constructive” dialogue between Iranian and UAE security and economic officials will pave the ground for promoting relations more than ever.

He also announced that Tehran is ready to host joint session between Iranian and UAE businesspersons.

The top Iranian diplomat also expressed joy over the trend of increasing ties between the UAE and Syria.

and extended an invitation by Raisi to him to visit Iran.

The invitation was welcomed by the Algerian side.

The Algerian foreign minister also expressed the deep greeting of his country’s senior officials to top Iranian officials and insisted that Algeria is ready to develop ties with Iran.

Ahmed Ataf was appointed as new foreign minister around mid-March to replace veteran diplomat Ramtane Lamamra.

Ataf has previously served as foreign minister.

According to a former minister, the change will not affect Algeria’s non-aligned diplomatic line, Middle East Online reported.

**Libyan FM invited to visit Iran**

In a separate phone call with Libyan Foreign Minister Najla Mangoush last week, Amir Abdollahian also invited her to visit Iran.

The invitation was welcomed by the Libyan female foreign minister, the Iranian Foreign

Ministry reported.

The Iranian and Libyan foreign ministers also exchanged views about regional and international issues.

The two top diplomats also held talks over reopening the embassies and exchanging ambassadors.

**Malaysia predicts Iran-Saudi rapprochement will reinforce peace in West Asia**

Last week, Malaysian Foreign Minister Zambry Abdul Kadir praised a deal between Iran and Saudi Arabia to restore diplomatic ties, saying it will help promote peace and stability in West Asia.

In a telephone conversation with the Iranian foreign minister, Abdul Kadir also called Iran an important trade partner of Malaysia and expressed hope that relations between the two countries would expand further.

The Iranian and Malaysian foreign ministers also reviewed developments in Afghanistan and Ukraine.



# Leader set the record straight on Ukraine war

By Faramarz Kuhpayeh

TEHRAN – In his latest speech, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, made it clear that Iran is not a party to the war in Ukraine, rejecting all the Western propaganda in that regard.

Ayatollah Khamenei delivered a speech at holy shrine of Imam Reza (pbuh) on the occasion of the beginning of the Iranian New Year 1402 (March 21, 2023). In the speech, he addressed a variety of issues mostly related to Iran's domestic affairs.

He hailed the progress Iran made in various fields despite U.S. sanctions. "The Iranian nation made progress under these conditions. It advanced in science, it advanced in technology and reached the top ranks of the world in some scientific fields. Some places it is among the top 5 countries, in other areas it is among the top ten countries, and some other places it is among the top 3 countries — out of 200 countries! This is how our scientific and technological advancements are — in nanotechnology, in biotechnology, in different areas," the Leader said, according to Khamenei.ir.

He added, "For example, in the field of health, Iran has had more achievements than many of the world's most developed countries. This proved to be true during the coronavirus pandemic. [We have succeeded] in the nuclear sciences, in aerospace, and in defense. They are all talking about and acknowledging our progress in the field of defense. In order to bring up an excuse to use against Iran, they admit that Iran has progressed in the field of defense and weapons. We have had many achievements in the field of biotechnology. The world praised



us. The world's scientists praised our scientists, they praised our young scientists."

In addition to domestic issues, the Leader touched on some important external affairs, including the war in Ukraine, which has been a pillar of Western propaganda against Iran. Over the last year, the West launched a concerted effort to portray Iran as being involved in the Ukraine war by claiming that Tehran supplied Russia with drones for use in Ukraine, a claim that has been rejected by Iranian officials many times.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution once again reiterated Iran's position on the war in Ukraine, saying that the West's allegations regarding Iran's presence in the war is false.

Ayatollah Khamenei said Iran has no presence in the Ukraine war. "I firmly announce that the Iranian nation is strong, the Iranian nation is advancing, the Iranian nation can

solve its own problems, it can cause transformation, and that the Iranian nation supports the Resistance. I openly announce our support for the Resistance, and I strongly deny our presence in the war in Ukraine. They falsely claimed that Iran is involved in the Ukraine war. Such a thing is not true — we are not involved at all," he said.

The Leader further said that the U.S. is to blame for the outbreak of the Ukraine war, which stemmed from U.S. effort to expand NATO to the East. "In fact, the United States started this war in Ukraine in order to expand NATO toward the East, the US prepared the war. And now, it is the US that is making the most profit from the Ukraine war! While the poor people of Ukraine are facing hardships, the American arms industry is making profits. That is why they won't let the war end. America is standing in the way of what is needed to end the war and it won't allow

it to happen and they are not pleased if the war in Ukraine ends," Ayatollah Khamenei said.

Observers believe that that the West's allegations against Iran regarding Ukraine could be part of the hybrid warfare that Iranian officials say the West waged against Tehran since Sept. 2022. Many elements have been used in this war. The Iranian Interior Minister has recently revealed one such element. "Over the last few years, the issue of hijab has been one of the axes of the enemy's cognitive war against the oppressed and powerful Iranian nation, and failed pots such as White Wednesdays, Girls of Enghelab Street, no mandatory hijab, sneaky freedoms, etc., have never affected the Iranian women and girls' determination in uplifting their spiritual personality and preserving the identity of Muslim women," the ministry said in a statement.

## Two IRGC members martyred in Syria

From Page 1 ► "Unfortunately and surprisingly, the international community did not show the expected and deterrent reaction to the aggressive and continuous military attacks of the Zionist regime on Syria, including those targeting civilian airports and even residential areas of this country, and this has encouraged the regime to continue violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of an independent member state of the United Nations and repeating crimes against the country's citizens and soldiers," he said.

He said the Iranian diplomatic apparatus con-



sidered such acts of aggression as a clear and continuous violation of international laws and regulations, as well as measures meant to di-

vert attention from the internal crises and deep divisions in this regime, and from its dissatisfaction with Syria's internal strength and the recent openings in Syria's foreign relations.

Kanaani renewed the call for the responsible international institutions, headed by the United Nations Security Council, to immediately fulfil their legal and recognized responsibility in taking action against the aggressor and preventing the continuation of the Zionist regime's aggression and repeated and gross violations of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a member state of the United Nations.

## Iran, Saudi FM's agree to meet in coming days

TEHRAN – The foreign ministers of Iranian and Saudi Arabia spoke over the phone on Sunday and agreed to hold a meeting in the coming days.

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian expressed satisfaction with the positive developments in Tehran-Riyadh relations and reiterated Iran's readiness to boost Iran's neighborhood policy.

In this call, the two top diplomats reviewed the latest developments related to an earlier agreement to hold a joint ministerial meeting.

The two sides also agreed to hold the meeting in the coming days, according to the Iranian foreign ministry.

Earlier, Amir Abdollahian had said that he was hashing out the details of arrangements for the joint meeting with his Saudi coun-

terpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan.

Speaking to reporters on Saturday, Amir Abdollahian said arrangements are being made about the time and venue of the meeting with his Saudi counterpart.

He was responding to a question on the time and location of a planned meeting with his Saudi counterpart.

"We are scheduled to have a (telephone) conversation with the Saudi counterpart within the next 48 hours and finalize (the time and place of meeting)," the Iranian foreign minister replied, according to Tasnim.

Last week, the Iranian and Saudi foreign ministers agreed in telephone call to meet in the fasting month of Ramadan in line with an agreement to resume ties between Tehran and Riyadh.

Iran and Saudi Arabia have agreed to reestablish diplomatic ties after China brokered an agreement between the two countries in March. The agreement to restore ties was declared on March 10 after five days of intensive talks in Beijing.

The Saudi Press Agency (SPA) announced on March 27 that bin Farhan and his Iranian counterpart agreed in the telephone conversation to meet before the end of the holy month of Ramadan to implement the historic agreement to resume diplomatic ties between Tehran and Riyadh.

Foreign Minister Amir Abdollahian also congratulated the Iranian people on the 44th anniversary of the adoption of the Islamic Republic as the country's official governing system, saying the Islamic Republic de-



rives its legitimacy from the people.

"The secret to the persistence of the Islamic Republic of Iran is the continuation of legitimacy and the strong and high vote of people for the sacred establishment," he stated.

The foreign minister also described the failure of the hostile policies against the Islamic Republic during the past 44 years as a result of the people's trust in the system and their heartfelt support for the country.

gime as an implicit approval of the anti-Iran orientation of their cooperation, demanding an explanation from the Azeri authorities in this regard.

Emphasizing the unbreakable historical and religious bonds between the people of Iran and Azerbaijan, he added that the Islamic Republic has always tried to thwart the attempts of ill-wishers to divide the two neighboring countries, and that the government of Azerbaijan is also expected to avoid the trap that the enemies of relations between the two countries have set.

It is obvious that Iran cannot remain indifferent to the conspiracy that the Zionist regime advances against the Islamic Republic from the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the spokesman stated.

### Iranians win three medals at 2022 World Taekwondo Grand Slam

TEHRAN – Three Iranian athletes claimed medals at the Wuxi 2022 World Taekwondo Grand Slam Champions Series on Sunday.

Iran's Arian Salimi won a gold by beating Emre Kutalmis Atesli of Turkey in the men's +80kg.

Salimi began the match very strongly recording a 12-1 victory in the opening round. In the second round Atesli was able to land more points and a late head kick brought the score within 2 but it was not enough and Salimi won 12-10 to take the gold. Sanghyun Kang from Korea beat China's Zhaoxiang Song 2:0 to win bronze.

The men's -68kg was a very close and tightly fought match. The first round set the tone as Daniel Bozorgi of Iran claimed victory with just a few seconds remaining to win 5-3. There was little to choose between the fighters in the second round but this time it was Ulugbek Rashitov of Uzbekistan who edged it winning the round 7-6. In the final round it looked like Bozorgi would take the gold as he was 5-1 up with 10 seconds to go but a dramatic final flurry saw Rashitov win the round 6-6 win by final score.

Reza Kalhor got Iran another medal as he beat Jaegwon Kang of Korea in the bronze medal match.

### Iran fail to reach 2023 FIBA 3x3 Asia Cup semis

TEHRAN – Iran lost to New Zealand 20-18 at the 2023 FIBA 3x3 Asia Cup quarterfinals on Sunday.

Team Melli beat Brunei 21-7 in their opening match and then emerged victorious over Malaysia 21-19 and Hong Kong 21-5 in the qualifying round.

Iran also defeated Philippines 11-4 and Qatar 21-19 in Group D.

New Zealand will meet Mongolia in the semifinals while Australia meet China in the round.

The competition started in Singapore on March 29 and will finish on April 2.

A total of 12 teams, divided into four groups, compete in the main draw of each men's and women's competition at the FIBA 3x3 Asia Cup 2023.

### Sepahan edge struggling Sanat Naft: IPL

TEHRAN – Sepahan football team edged past struggling Sanat Naft 1-0 in Iran Professional League (IPL) Matchday 24 on Friday.

Farshad Ahmadzadeh scored the winning goal in the 40th minute in Isfahan's Naghsh-e Jahan Stadium.

In Tehran's Azadi Stadium, Esteghlal defeated Zob Ahan 2-0 to remain in the second place.

Mehdi Ghaedi scored the first goal in the 20th minute and Kevin Yamga made the scoreboard 2-0 from the penalty spot in the 63rd minute.

In Rafsanjan, Persepolis defeated 10-man Mes, courtesy of Giorgi Gvelesiani's goal from the penalty spot in the 30th minute. Mes Rafsanjan defender Ramtin Soleymanzadeh was sent off in the 25th minute.

Gol Gohar also beat Nassaji 2-1 in Ghaemshahr. Sepahan lead the table with 52 points, followed by Esteghlal (49) and Persepolis (48).

### Iran runners-up at 2023 Asian Water Polo Championship

TEHRAN – Iran lost to China 11-8 in the final match of the 2023 Asian Water Polo Championship on Monday.

Earlier in the day, Kazakhstan defeated Thailand 18-7 to win the bronze medal.

Team Melli secured a berth at the 2023 FINA Men's Water Polo World Cup.

The 2023 Asian Water Polo Championship was held from March 22 to 27 in Singapore.

### Iran handed tough group at Asian Women's U20 2024 qualifying round

TEHRAN – Iran are drawn in Group A of the second qualifying round draw for the Asian Women's U20 2024.

Accordingly, the Iranian women's U20 were drawn in Group A along with Australia, Lebanon and Vietnam.

Group B consists of China women's U20, Nepal, Myanmar and Chinese Taipei.

The teams will play in a round-robin mode. The top two teams in each group will win the right to participate in the 2024 Asian Finals along with 4 special teams: Korea, Korea, Japan and hosts Uzbekistan.

The second qualifying round of the 2024 Asian Women's U20 Championship is scheduled to be held from June 3 to 11.

### Farhad Majidi extends deal with Ittihad Kalba

TEHRAN – Farhad Majidi extended his deal with Emirati top-flight club Ittihad Kalba.

The ex-Esteghlal coach was named as the Emirati football club head coach in June 2022.

The 47-year-old coach has penned a one-year contract with Ittihad Kalba.

Ittihad Kalba were established in 1972 when two clubs (Al Shabab) and (Al Rooba) merged with (Al Riyadiya) to create Al Ittihad Kalba.

Under leadership of Majidi, Kalba sit eighth in 2022-23 UAE Pro League.

### Esteghlal GM Fathollahzadeh resigns

TEHRAN – Ali Fathollahzadeh, the general manager of Esteghlal, announced his resignation on Saturday.

After the Iranian club were reportedly expelled from the 2023 AFC Champions League, Fathollahzadeh stepped down from his post.

Esteghlal are the most decorated Iranian team in the tournament and were crowned champions of Asia in 1970 and 1991.

The team were reportedly expelled from this year's Asian tournament after having their licenses withdrawn by the Asian Football Confederation.

### Iran Volleyball learn fate at FISU Games

TEHRAN – Iran volleyball team discovered their fate at the Chengdu 2021 FISU World University Games.

Iran are drawn along with Australia, Czech Republic, India and Argentina in Pool B.

Portugal, South Korea, Hong Kong and Poland are in Pool A.

Pool C includes Japan, Azerbaijan Republic, Ukraine, Mexico and China.

Germany, Italy, Chinese Taipei and Brazil are in Pool D.

The World University Games were scheduled to be held in Chengdu, China, in summer 2021, but have been postponed three times due to the COVID-19 pandemic and will now be held in 2023.

Headquartered in Switzerland, FISU is the International University Sports Federation responsible for the organization and governance of worldwide sports competitions for student-athletes between the ages of 17 and 25.



## Iran, largest producer of garden products in region

TEHRAN- Iran is the largest producer of garden products in the region, according to the chairman of Iran Fruit Union.

Referring to the necessity of adopting a policy to increase exports, Reza Nourani said: "Given the country's high capacities, we are the first in the region in the production of agricultural and horticultural products".

Mentioning the country's high potential in the production of agricultural products, he stated: "Iran is a country suffering from water scarcity, and we have gone through several consecutive years of drought, however, we have the first place in the production of agricultural products in the region."

Currently, orchards are the most important center of production of agricultural products for export in Iran, and agriculture is the most central sector in the country's agricultural export.

Therefore, the implementation of the orchard reform plan of the Agriculture Ministry, which is effective in the quality of production and the increase of gardeners' income, plays a noticeable part in the export of garden products.

In this due, the development of horticulture, improvement of gardens, development of dense cultivation to increase yield per unit area, use of modern irrigation systems, use of canopy to reduce risks in the horticulture sector, and increase the quality of produced products are among the most important programs in progress in the field of horticulture in the country.

The Ministry of Agriculture has also conducted negotiations with companies that manufacture tools, equipment, and tractors for the development of mechanization in the field of horticulture in order to improve the mechanization factor in this field.

According to Mohammad-Mehdi Boroumandi, the deputy agriculture minister for horticulture affairs, Iran has a special position in the field of horticulture.



The official says that all researchers believe that the advantage of Iran's agriculture sector is horticulture because it creates more employment and brings a good foreign currency income.

He has mentioned the renovation of gardens as one of the important programs of the ministry and said: "The capacity of agricultural production in the country is more than this and should be increased."

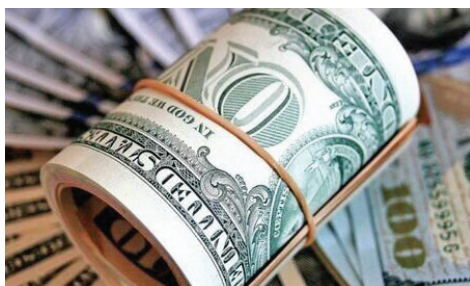
Referring to the important role of farmers and gardeners in maintaining food security, he pointed out that apart from four tropical fruits including bananas, coconuts, mangoes, and pineapples, the country is completely self-sufficient in providing other agricultural products.

Underlining that Iran has achieved good success in the field of food security, Boroumandi pointed out that the Ministry of Agriculture, as the ministry of food security, despite the climatic problems and all the economic constraints, has managed to earn good foreign currency in addition to meeting the domestic needs and food security of the country.

Back in January, the official said the Agriculture Ministry is trying to manage production by identifying new export target markets.

"Production, which is more than consumption, can be included in the country's trade basket. In this regard, the Ministry of Agriculture is trying to experience an increase in production per surface unit by implementing regular programs", he added.

## Foreign debt falls 25%



TEHRAN – Iran's foreign debt stood at about \$6.5 billion at the end of the tenth month of the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (January 20), down 25.15 percent from \$9.067 billion at the end of the year 1400 (March 20, 2022), Fars news agency reported.

From the total foreign debt, \$4.7 billion was long-term debt while \$1.8 billion was short-term debt.

External debt is the portion of a country's debt that is borrowed from foreign lenders

including commercial banks, governments, or international financial institutions. These loans, including interest, must usually be paid in the currency in which the loan was made.

Foreign debt as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the ratio between the debt a country owes to non-resident creditors and its nominal GDP.

The ratio of Iran's foreign debt to GDP is very insignificant and considering this figure, Iran is among the countries with the lowest amount of foreign debt in the world due to the U.S. sanctions and their consequent financial restrictions.

Having external debts is an important economic indicator globally, but it is not currently important for Iran since the country has almost no foreign debts.

Iran's external debt has been falling in recent years following a downward trend.

## Capital market plays significant role in realizing motto of year

TEHRAN- Capital market plays an important role in materializing the slogan of the current Iranian calendar year 1402 (began on March 21), which is "Inflation Control, Production Growth", Alireza Nassepour, the deputy head of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) for supervising the financial institutions, stated.

Two weeks ago, the head of SEO explained the priorities and key plans of the SEO in 1402.

In a message on the occasion of the New Year, Majid Eshqi wrote:

Securities and Exchange Organization has always tried to lay the ground for the continuation of sustainable growth and increase the efficiency of the capital market by carrying out structural reforms, and in this regard, key programs are prioritized:

Indirect investment development: In the past year, a good amount of diversity was created in indirect investment instruments,

especially investment funds, and we continue to focus on deepening these new and efficient instruments and promoting them for the investors.

Creating a platform for transparent and diverse financing: By defining technical and legal infrastructures to facilitate micro and macro financing by the private and non-governmental sector, a new chapter of financing projects and businesses was established, and the government was able to implement its plan to transfer the shares of companies along with the transfer of operational management without harming the capital market. The initial offering of shares of businesses based on new technologies was also a big step towards the financing of knowledge-based companies, which will be followed seriously in the current year in a higher volume and of course according to the market capacities.

# Over 1,700 idle production units revived in a year

From page 1 ► "We agreed with the Technology Department of the Ministry of Science to establish knowledge-based parks in industrial estates so that companies can take advantage of these parks", he added.

Referring to this year's slogan, which is "Inflation Control, Production Growth", Rasoulia said: "We must control inflation and increase production because these two have serious effects on each other."

He called providing industrial infrastructure and supporting small industries as requirements for production growth and said: "Supporting small industries and providing their financial resources and involving the private sector are our goals."

Stating that handing over affairs to the private sector is one of the policies of the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade, the official emphasized: "It is easier to revive the stagnant units than to provide financial support to the units, and therefore we are trying to connect the driving companies to the stagnant units."

The ISIPO head further announced the preparation of investment packages for the participation of the private



sector and said: "We are creating workshops for small enterprises and are identifying enterprises with competitive products."

According to Rasoulia, the approach of reviving the idle units is very important since the country has been dealing with the most severe international sanctions for many years; and while it relies more than ever on domestic production.

Of course, what is seen as the

result of the efforts of the ISIPO, as one of the main organizations in charge of boosting the country's production, planning and diligent follow-up to revive the stagnant production units, fortunately the work in this due is on the right track, the official has stated, highlighting that revival of each stagnant production and industrial unit leads to job creation and return to work of 18 people on average.

He stressed that reviving idle production units is the main approach that the government is currently following in the industry sector.

The government is seriously pursuing its programs to resolve production units' problems in collaboration with the private sector; Very good planning has been done in this regard, Rasoulia said.

## Iran's monthly oil production rises 20,000 bpd: IEA

TEHRAN- Iran's oil production increased by 20,000 barrels per day (bpd) in February from January, the International Energy Agency (IEA) announced in its latest monthly report.

According to the IEA's released data, Iran produced 2.65 million barrels per day (mbpd) of oil in February, while the figure was 2.63 mbpd in January.

Two weeks ago, Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji said that a new record high will be reached in the country's oil export in the current Iranian calendar year 1402 (began on March 21).

The country's oil export in 1401 was 83 million barrels more than that of 1400, and 190 million barrels more than the export in



1399, the minister announced.

Underlining that now oil export has reached the highest figure in the last two years, the official said, "Considering that the Oil Ministry is one of the main providers of the country's foreign currency; in the 13th government, despite the tightening of cruel sanctions, fortunately, thanks to the grace of God and the efforts of

our colleagues in the country's oil and gas industries, there are good records in the field of exporting crude oil, gas condensate, and petroleum and petrochemical products."

Despite the negative impacts of the U.S. sanctions, Iran has been ramping up its oil production and exports over the past few months.

Back in February, Oji had said that the country's income from the sales of oil, natural gas, gas condensate, and petroleum products in the first 10 months of the past Iranian year (March 21, 2022-January 20, 2023) increased by 40 percent compared to the same period in the previous year.

Addressing an open session of the parliament on February 1,

the minister said that 70 million barrels of gas condensate were exported in the mentioned time span.

In his remarks in November 2022, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi highlighted the failure of the enemy's policy of maximum pressure, saying the country's oil export has reached the pre-sanction levels.

Back in January, the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) in a report put Iran's average oil production in 2022 at 2.54 million bpd, 140,000 bpd more than the previous year.

Iran's oil production in 2021 was about 2.4 million bpd.

## Monthly car manufacturing up 86% on year

TEHRAN- Car manufacturing in Iran rose 86 percent in the last month of the past Iranian calendar year (February 20-March 20), as compared to the same month in the preceding year.

As reported, Iranian carmakers managed to manufacture 112,891 vehicles in the mentioned month.

Car manufacturing in Iran increased by 39 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20), as the Iranian carmakers manufactured 1,347,394 vehicles in the mentioned year.

In the past year, 1,182,078 passenger cars were manufactured in the country, registering a 35-percent rise year on year.

Vans accounted for the lion's share of the production in the past year, as 125,507 vans were manufactured, with a 56-percent growth.

In the past year, 34,136 trucks were manufactured, with a 150 percent rise.

The manufacturing of buses stood at 1,391, and minibusses, and middle buses at 1,118, registering a growth of 88 percent and 11 percent, respectively.

Also, about 450,000 motorcycles were manufactured in the previous year, with a 61.2 percent rise year on year.

Meanwhile, the International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (known as OICA) ranked Iran sixth in the world in terms of car manufacturing growth in 2022.

According to the OICA data, car manufacturing in Iran increased by 19 percent in 2022, as the country manufactured 1.064 million vehicles in the mentioned year, while the figure was 894,000 in 2021.

The international organization in its annual



report released in mid-March had ranked Iran as the world's 16th largest automaker in 2022.

According to the OICA report, Iran's position among the world's top automakers has improved by three places in 2022 compared to the previous year making the country stand above industrial countries like the UK, Russia, and the Czech Republic. The Islamic Republic was ranked 19th in the OICA list of the world's top automakers in 2021.

Based on the mentioned report, Iranian automakers managed to manufacture 1,064,298 vehicles in 2022 to register a 19-percent growth compared to the previous year.

According to the OICA data, in 2022, more than 85 million cars were produced worldwide, indicating a six percent growth compared to 2021.

Also, European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA), in its annual report released in late February, ranked Iran as the world's 11th largest automaker in 2022.

According to the ACEA report, Iran's position among the world's top automakers has improved by eight places in 2022 compared to the previous year. The Islamic Republic was ranked 19th in the ACEA list of the world's top automakers in 2021.

Based on the mentioned report, Iranian automakers managed to manufacture 1,085,859 vehicles in 2022 to register a 10.8-percent growth compared to 979,969 cars in 2021.

According to the ACEA data, in 2022, more than 68 million cars were produced worldwide, indicating a 7.9 percent growth compared to 2021. About 63,200,000 cars were produced in the world in 2021.



# Dangerous times amid serious glimmers of real and huge, positive changes...

From page 1 ► Consider first the remarkable developments beyond the chaos in Washington as March ends. And this is the good news. China's leader Xi showed up in Moscow. Syria's Assad visited the UAE with his lovely wife, she apparently free of cancer, and diplomatic relations are being restored, following diplomatic restorations between Iran and Saudi Arabia and embassy openings ahead this Spring. Xi is presenting a plan to push a ceasefire at least in Ukraine and end the carnage. This has already been rejected by Washington. (And estimated 300,000 Ukrainian troops have died or been disabled. Maybe 40,000 Russian troops have been sidelined or killed in the senseless war provoked by Biden and his Neocon masters, many of whom are the very same ideologues, mostly Zionists, who played a big role in sparking the Iraq war among others 20 years ago. Ukraine, which had a population of some 39 million, has seen its population shrink to maybe 20 million as millions have become refugees in Europe.

The Arab/Persian/Muslim world may be waking up to the obvious benefits of cooperation and peace and more unity.

Representatives of 40 African countries also convened with Russian diplomats to bolster relations and Russia canceled billions in debts. Little Kenya decided to shun the dollar as a trade vehicle with China and other countries, and this is but one of other, smaller positive moves inherent in the rise of a multipolar planet which is well underway it seems. As one pundit remarked, it's possible that in the next few months more geopolitical and economic changes may occur that have not been witnessed in over 100 years.

But the fly in the ointment is the U.S. and this is becoming more recognized around the world, even perhaps in places in Europe such as France where some observers smell "revolution", and get this, there has been some chatter in Germany about a repair and reopening of the Nordstream gas pipelines, which the the Bidenists destroyed last year but won't admit to.



Biden has proved to be so ignorant that he has driven Russia and China into a firm alliance, including Iran. Recall that since the 1960s a goal of U.S. foreign policy was to align with China against Russia, or align with Russia against China depending on which country seemed like the greater threat! It's now likely that China and Russia will never be split apart again. Biden back in 1997 spoke about NATO expansion and the Russians told him they were threatened by it, and that it might force them into alliance with China. Biden (who has accomplished little in his parasitic career of any real merit while rising to the top of the Washington cesspool like a turd) at the time just literally laughed and said "Good Luck" with that. And now the U.S. also faces 16 countries that want to join the BRICS bloc, too, in defiance of the U.S. Is the world in dangerous times but in more promising times? You bet.

But even if much of the world suffers trying to create a fairer multipolarity amid U.S. threats of World War 3, the U.S. may be about to crash like never before into hostile divisions.

The Biden Democrats have be-

come so desperate that this week, wanting a felonious indictment of former President Donald Trump, they may see the former President handcuffed and booked on a risible charge of having broken some law over a \$130,000 payment to one former porn star named Stormy Daniels to shut her up during the election in 2016, she and Trump having been involved in a sexual escapade. While it's difficult to consider Trump anything but a self-serving narcissist, no President has suffered as much opprobrium as he did over the trumped up "Russiagate" scandal, which has been exposed as utterly false. One would think with all the garbage the Democrats have tried to find to indict Trump and insure he won't or can't run in the election in 2024 (if it even occurs), they'd have found something more damning than a personal out-of-pocket hush money payment to a woman of ill repute. Some pundits are claiming that IF Trump is indicted, it will virtually assure his reelection in 2024 since so many Americans remain Trump fans and are beginning to despise Biden.

The top two contenders currently for the Republican nomination are

Trump and Florida governor Ron DeSantis. Interesting it is that both men believe the proxy war on Ukraine does not serve U.S. interests. This fact alone ought to insure a Republican win in the 2024 elections over anyone the Democrats vomit up to run for office as it becomes increasingly apparent that the proxy war against Russia, and expenditures to support it of over \$110 billion so far, have utterly failed to being Russia to its knees along with the rejection of Putin within Russia.

In sum no person of any intelligence said the end of the "American Century" and its bloody empire would ever be anything but frightful and perilous for humanity. What is imperative is that average Americans wake up en masse and realize the Biden gang's sole aim has been to maintain American military and economic hegemony over much of the world for its elites, but none of this effort has benefitted nearly all Americans. At least it can be said that the Global South is rising and prospects exist with that for a better, more peaceful world whatever becomes of the U.S.

## Syrian foreign minister visits Egypt for first time in over a decade

Syria's Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad has held a meeting with his Egyptian counterpart in the capital, Cairo, to discuss strengthening of bilateral relations as well as the latest regional and international developments.

Mekdad met with Sameh Shoukry at the foreign ministry in Cairo on Saturday, in the first such visit since the Syrian conflict broke out more than a decade ago.

The Egyptian foreign ministry said in a statement that the two ministers had a closed door meeting followed by discussions between the two countries' delegations.

The ministry said discussions were focused on "supporting the Syrian people to restore (the country's) unity and sovereignty over its whole territories."

"The ministers agreed to intensify channels of communication between the two countries at different levels during the coming phase," the statement said.

Egypt also reiterated its backing for a "comprehensive political settlement to the Syrian crisis as soon as possible," it added.

The meeting comes amid efforts by certain countries to restore Syria's membership in the Arab League, more than a decade after it was suspended from the 22-member bloc.

An Egyptian security source, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Reuters that the visit will help put in place steps to return Syria to the Arab League through



Egyptian and Saudi Arabian mediation.

The Arab League suspended Syria's membership in November 2011, citing an alleged crackdown by Damascus on opposition protests. Syria has denounced the move as "illegal and a violation of the organization's charter."

Syria was one of the six founding members of the Arab League in 1945. In recent months, an increasing number of countries and political parties have called for the reversal of its suspension from the Arab League.

Back in February, Shoukry travelled to Syria, in a visit he described as "primarily humanitarian" following the devastating earthquake that hit the war-torn Arab country and neighboring Turkey.

The foreign ministry said at the time that Shoukry will visit Turkey and Syria - both hit hard by a deadly earthquake on February 6 - to "convey a message of solidarity from Egypt with the two countries."

The trip -- the first of its kind in more than a decade -- took place after Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi called his Syrian counterpart Bashar al-Assad to express his country's solidarity with Syria.

Since 2011, Syria has been gripped by foreign-backed militancy, leading to the emergence of Daesh and other terrorist groups in the Arab country.

In recent months, observers have noted, there has been a race among Arab countries to mend their ties with the Syrian government, more than ten years after the beginning of a conflict in Syria during which key Arab countries tried to oust Assad.

The new approach adopted by the UAE, which has proven to be much quicker than other Arab countries in making considerable foreign policy shifts to secure its interests, was welcomed by Assad as "realistic and correct."

Unlike other Arab governments, Cairo never fully severed ties with Damascus after the conflict, but relations were downgraded.

(Source: Press TV)

## China calls on all nuclear weapon states to effectively reduce risk of nuclear war

A Chinese envoy said on Friday that China calls on all nuclear weapon states to effectively reduce the risk of a nuclear war.

"Mutual trust and cooperation among major countries are the fundamental guarantee for maintaining global strategic stability," Geng Shuang, China's deputy permanent representative to the United Nations, told the Security Council briefing on threats to international peace and security.

Geng said that in January last year, the leaders of the five nuclear weapon states issued a joint statement emphasizing that nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, and reaffirming that none of the nuclear weapons are targeted at each other or at any other state. "Against the backdrop of the current tense relations among the nuclear weapon states, the special significance of this historic statement is all the more prominent."

"China calls on all nuclear weapon states to abide by the vision of the statement, effectively reduce the risk of a nuclear war, and avoid any armed conflict between nuclear weapons states,"

said the ambassador.

Geng pointed out that nuclear weapons are "the sword of Damocles hanging over our heads," noting that China's position on the issue of nuclear weapons "has been clear and consistent"

"Since its first day in possession of nuclear weapons, China has firmly committed to a defensive nuclear strategy, and honored the pledge to no first use of nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstances," he said. "China has also clearly committed unconditionally not to use or threat to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states or nuclear weapon free zones."

"We call for the abolition of the nuclear sharing arrangements and advocate no deployment of nuclear weapons abroad by all nuclear weapons states and the withdrawal of nuclear weapons deployed aboard," he said.

Turning to China's position on the Ukraine issue, Geng said that this position "is also clear and consistent."

"Not long ago, China issued a position paper

on the political settlement of the Ukraine crisis, which comprehensively laid out China's propositions," he said.

"It includes aspects regarding opposing armed attacks against nuclear power plants or other peaceful nuclear facilities, emphasizing that nuclear weapons must not be used and nuclear wars must not be fought, that the threat or use of nuclear weapons should be opposed, and that nuclear proliferation must be prevented and nuclear crisis avoided," the envoy added.

Geng noted that a series of recent events have once again proved that the resumption of dialogue and negotiation and the promotion of a political settlement should happen sooner rather than later.

"All parties must stay rational and exercise restraint, avoid aggravating tensions, intensifying frictions, or fanning the flames, stop all actions that contribute to prolonging the war, and prevent the crisis from deteriorating further or even spiraling out of control," he said.

### WORLD HEADLINES

## Death toll tops 26 as tornadoes tear through US Midwest and South

At least 26 people have been killed and dozens more injured after storms and tornadoes tore through towns and cities across Southern and Midwestern parts of the United States.

Several tornadoes touched down on Friday night across at least eight states, laying waste to homes and businesses and splintering trees, as part of a sprawling storm system that brought wildfires to the southern plains states and blizzard conditions to the upper Midwest.

Tens of thousands lost power as the storms smothered a swath of the country home to some 85 million people.

## Israeli soldier kills Palestinian in West Bank as violence rises

An Israeli soldier has shot dead a Palestinian man in the occupied West Bank, hours after a policeman killed a medical student at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa compound.

The Palestinian Authority identified the man killed in the West Bank on Saturday as Mohammad Ra'ed Baradiyah, 24.

Witnesses told the Palestinian Wafa news agency that Baradiyah was shot in his car near the town of Beit Ummar and that medics were denied access to the wounded man.

"Baradiyah was left bleeding helplessly until he died of his wounds," the agency reported.

The Israeli military said Baradiyah was shot dead after he rammed his car into a group of soldiers. Israeli medics said three people were wounded, two of them seriously.

Earlier on Saturday, Israeli police said they shot dead another Palestinian man at the Chain Gate, an access point to the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in occupied East Jerusalem. Palestinian worshippers at the entrance to the site said the police shot 26-year-old Mohammad Khaled al-Osaibi at least 10 times after he tried to prevent them from harassing a woman who was on her way to the holy compound.

## Ukraine court puts Metropolitan Pavel under house arrest

A court in Ukraine's capital has sentenced a top religious leader to house arrest, according to his church, amid hearings into whether he glorified invading Russian forces and stoked religious divisions.

In a statement on Saturday, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC) said the Kyiv court also ordered Metropolitan Pavel to wear an electronic bracelet.

The Interfax Ukraine and Ukrinform news agencies said Pavel had been given 60 days of house arrest.

"I haven't done anything. I believe this is a political order," the religious leader told reporters after the ruling.

The decision came as Kyiv cracks down on the UOC on the grounds it is pro-Russian and is collaborating with Moscow, a charge the church denies. Earlier in the week, Pavel - who is the abbot of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra monastery, Ukraine's most revered Orthodox site - had cursed Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, threatening him with damnation.

## Trump surges to largest-ever lead over DeSantis

A new Yahoo News/YouGov poll - one of the first conducted after former President Donald Trump was indicted Thursday for his role in paying hush money to a porn star - shows Trump surging to his largest-ever lead over Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, his likely 2024 GOP primary challenger, as Republican voters rally around the only president in U.S. history to face criminal charges.

In the previous Yahoo News/YouGov survey, which was conducted less than two weeks ago, Trump (47%) led DeSantis (39%) by eight percentage points in a head-to-head matchup among registered voters who are Republicans or Republican-leaning independents. As recently as February, it was DeSantis who was narrowly ahead of Trump, 45% to 41%.

But the new, post-indictment poll suddenly finds Trump lapping DeSantis by 26 percentage points - 57% to 31% - in a one-on-one contest. The former president even attracts majority support (52%, up from 44% previously) when pitted against a wider, 10-candidate field of declared and potential GOP challengers, while DeSantis plummets to 21% (down from 28%).

No one else cracks double digits. By the same token, a full 54% of Republicans and Republican leaders would now prefer Trump to be the GOP's 2024 presidential nominee rather than "someone else" (33%) - up from 51% Trump, 39% someone else last time.

## Israeli police raid Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque compound

Israeli police again raided the Al-Aqsa Mosque complex in East Jerusalem early Sunday, according to witnesses.

Israeli police cut the electricity and forced Palestinians out of the Qibla Masjid who were performing prayers.

Palestinians attempted to prevent police by closing the doors to the mosque.

Israeli forces and fanatical Jewish settlers frequently carry out raids at Al-Aqsa Mosque to provoke Palestinians.

Israel occupied East Jerusalem, where al-Aqsa is located, during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. It annexed the entire city in 1980, in a move never recognized by the international community.

### Protest over right to housing in Lisbon



Demonstrators parade holding signs and a Portuguese flag during the "Casa Para Viver" (A House to Live In) protest on April 01, 2023 in Lisbon, Portugal. Demonstrations for the right to housing are held in Lisbon, Porto, Viseu, Aveiro, Coimbra and Braga to protest the increase in house prices while wages have stagnated or have decreased.



## Sizdeh Be-dar: Iranians flock to parks in celebration of nature day



From Page 1 ► As in many other cultures, the number thirteen is unlucky in the Iranian tradition. Some Iranians believe that by going outdoors, they welcome the spring and leave behind all the bad luck associated with the number thirteen.

For millennia, Iranians have interwoven the magic of nature with the aesthetic qualities of art and architecture to create a symbolic representation of paradise on Earth, a phenomenon called the Persian Garden.

A typical Persian garden combines natural and artificial elements to represent the idea of creating a paradise on Earth using artistic, philosophical, figurative, and religious ideas.

According to UNESCO, the flawless design of the Persian Garden and its capacity, to adapt to extreme climatic conditions are the outcomes of the inspired and astute integration of various fields of knowledge, i. e. engineering, architecture, botany, agriculture, and water management.

## Hormozgan province exports \$3 million of handicrafts in year

TEHRAN - Handicrafts exports from Hormozgan province reached \$3 million during the past Iranian calendar year 1401, which came to an end on March 20.

Hormozgan exported some \$3 million of handicrafts during the past Iranian calendar year, which is considered a remarkable success for artisans and craftspeople, the provincial tourism chief said on Saturday.

"We are planning to take part in various exhibitions to expand our foreign markets as Hormozgan's handicrafts are of high importance in terms of diversity," Mohammad Mohseni said.

Hormozgan is home to more than 80,000 casters, most of whom are women, the official stated.

Based on available data compiled by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, the value of Iran's handicrafts exports stood at \$400 million during the first ten months of 1401.

Compared with the same period a year earlier, the figure represents some 30 percent growth. The Islamic Republic exported some \$320 million worth of handicrafts in 1400.

Iran has the most cities and towns registered with the World Crafts Council (WCC), followed by



China with seven, Chile with four, and India with three designated ones.

Bordering the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman on the south and bounded by Bushehr and Fars provinces on the west and northwest, Kerman on the east and northeast, and Sistan-Baluchestan on the southeast, Hormozgan is widely renowned for having incredible culture and heritage, stunning sceneries, and above all its warm and hospitable people.

It embraces arrays of islands among which Kish, Hormuz, Hengam, and Qeshm are the most popular ones and top tourist destinations in the southernmost parts of the country.

## Over 1.4m visits registered for Fars tourist sites



TEHRAN - Tourist attractions across the southern Fars province attracted over 1.4 million visitors during the Iranian new year holidays (Noruz), the provincial tourism chief has said.

A total of 1,452,000 people visited historical sites and natural sights throughout the province during the mentioned period, Seyyed Moayyed Mohsen-Nejad explained on Saturday.

Of the figure 387,921 people visited Hafezieh, 276,922 toured Persepolis, 245,093 people visited Sadi mausoleum, 155,970 people visited Karim Khan Citadel, and 154,514 people toured Pasargadae, the official added.

The ancient region of Fars also spelled Pars, or Persis was the heart of the Achaemenian Empire (550-330 BC), which was founded by Cyrus the

Great and had its capital at Pasargadae. Darius I the Great moved the capital to nearby Persepolis in the late 6th or early 5th century BC.

Celebrated as the heartland of Persian culture for over 2000 years, the capital city of Shiraz has become synonymous with education, nightingales, poetry, and crafts skills passed down from generation to generation. It was one of the most important cities in the medieval Islamic world and was the Iranian capital during the Zand dynasty from 1751 to 1794. Moreover, Shiraz is home to some of the country's most magnificent buildings and sights. Increasingly, it draws more and more foreign and domestic sightseers flocking to this provincial capital.

Eram Garden, Afif-Abad Garden, Tomb of Hafez, Tomb of Sa'di, Jameh Mosque of Atigh, and Persepolis are among the historical, cultural, and ancient sites of Shiraz that are of interest to domestic and foreign tourists. The ancient city is also home to some magnificent historical gardens such as Bagh-e Narenjestan and Eram Garden, which are top tourist destinations both for domestic and international sightseers.

# Nine million travelers visit Mashhad in Noruz

TEHRAN - Over nine million travelers and pilgrims visited Mashhad, which is home to the shrine of Imam Reza (AS), during the two-week Noruz holidays, a local official has said.

Noruz holidays have brought a total of 9,228,414 pilgrims to the holy city, Hojjat Gonabadi explained on Sunday.

Over six million overnight stays were also recorded during the period mentioned, the official added.

Back in February, Khorasan Razavi's Governor-General announced that Mashhad was expecting to host some ten million pilgrims and sightseers on the Noruz holidays.

"Based on the estimates, we are preparing to welcome about 10 million pilgrims during Noruz," Yaqubali Nazari said.

Each day, Mashhad, which is the capital of Khorasan Razavi province and Iran's holiest and second-largest city, welcomes thousands of domestic and international tourists.

The number of foreign travelers to Mashhad, one of the holiest places for Shia Muslims, jumped 311 percent



during the first half of the last Iranian year, compared to the same period a year earlier, according to the director general of Khorasan Razavi airports.

In August 2020, the spiritual tradition of pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS) was registered on the National Intangible

Cultural Heritage list by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts.

According to available data, some 37 million Iranian pilgrims and travelers visited Mashhad during the first ten months of the Iranian year 1398 (March 21, 2019- March 10, 2020). Of whom some eight million

came by road, six million by rail, 3.8 million by air, and 18 million by private cars.

During Noruz, when schools and most businesses and workplaces are closed, millions of Iranians grasp the opportunity to go from one place to another.

## Smuggled Iranian bas-relief worth £30m seized at UK airport

TEHRAN - UK authorities have seized a smuggled Iranian bas-relief carving expected to be worth £30 million.

The ancient treasure, which depicts an imposing male figure carved in the 3rd century CE, will go on show at the British Museum before going back home, the Guardian reported on Saturday.

Experts say this Sasanian rock relief is such an important sculpture that if it appeared on the art market today it could fetch more than £30m.

It was heading for the black market in Britain when it was seized at Stansted airport, the report said.

The haphazard packaging, which may have been meant to imply that it was a useless item, made Border Force officers suspicious. The over-one-meter-tall antique was hacked out of live rock or on-site carved rock.

Dr. St John Simpson, a senior curator and archaeologist in the British Museum's department of the Middle East, said: "We almost never come across a case of something being cut out of the 'living rock.' That's a level of brutality that surpasses anything.

"You've even got felt-tip marks on the back before they've used an angle grinder to slice diagonally behind it and across the top. It was then packed in an incredibly bad manner, in a small, almost unpadded crate held together with nails.

"If it had been a state-of-the-art art-handling type crate, that would have attracted a different sort of attention because it required all sorts

of paperwork." He has identified it as a unique rock relief sculpture dating to the period of the Sasanian empire, AD224-651.

"It belongs to a period when Iran was the center of a powerful empire stretching from Syria to the Caucasus and Central Asia, and with its capital at Ctesiphon, south of present-day Baghdad," he said. "The Sasanians were powerful rivals of Rome and famous today for their fine silverware and cut glass."

It is impossible to pinpoint the precise location because the bas-relief has been carved from calcareous limestone, which is found all over Iran. Only a small number —about 30, mostly from the third century— of Sasanian rock reliefs are known to exist. Nearly all of them are in the province of Fars, which is a relatively small area of Iran and is where they originally came from.

Simpson said: "We suspect it comes from somewhere in the Shiraz area. Stylistically, it is similar to one known in the region. I think it probably is part of a big sequence. There might be more bits out there.

"The lack of an inscription makes it impossible to identify the person depicted, but his dress and diademed headdress signifies him as a person of high rank. His gesture of greeting and submission, with a raised, bent forefinger, is a feature of Sasanian art when figures are in the presence of royalty, which suggests that this was part of a larger composition, with the king to the right and perhaps other figures behind."

Due to the poor packing, the relief had split in



half. Conservationists have now repaired it for the British Museum.

"It looks amazing," Simpson said. "It is stunningly attractive. The valuation could be anything, really. We're talking £20m to £30m-plus. There's never been anything like it on the market."

He said the artifact would be "incredibly valuable" on the black market.

Furthermore, the Iranian government gave the British Museum permission to display the item for three months after it was formally forfeited to the Crown before sending it to the National Museum in Tehran.

In a statement, Seyyed Mahdi Hosseini Matin, chargé d'affaires of the Islamic Republic of Iran in London, said: "We sincerely hope that further expansion of cooperation between the British Museum and the Iranian Embassy in London would continue to be effective in fighting against illicit trafficking of cultural properties and protect the cultural heritage of mankind."

The Sassanid era, which saw a general renaissance in Persian art and architecture, is of utmost significance to the history of the country.

## Six million visitors tour Iran museums during Noruz

TEHRAN - Some six million people paid visits to museums, palaces, and other heritage sites affiliated with the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts all over the country during the New Year (Noruz) holidays, which ended on April 2.

The figure shows a significant percent growth year on year, the director of museums and historical properties at the tourism ministry said on Sunday.

Museums in Fars, Isfahan, Tehran,

Khuzestan, and Kerman provinces hosted the highest numbers of visitors, Morteza Adibzadeh explained.

The museums also organized some 270 programs and festivities for the visitors during the mentioned time, he added.

The ancient country is home to one of the world's oldest continuous major civilizations, embracing settlements dating back to 4000 BC. It also hosts some of the

world's oldest cultural monuments, including bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, gardens, rich natural, rural landscapes as well as 26 UNESCO World Heritage sites.

The name of Iran, formerly known as Persia, mostly conjures up the first Persian Empire, ruled by the Achaemenids (ca. 550- 330 BC) and sites such as Pasargadae and Persepolis. However, there are tens of prehistorical sites as the Burnt City in Sistan-Baluchestan, Tepe

Sialk in Kashan, Susa and Chogha Zanbil in the Khuzestan province, and Ecbatana in Hamedan which predate the Achaemenid period.

From a wider point of view, Iranian history can be divided into Pre-Islamic and Islamic eras. The Medes unified Iran as a nation and empire in 625 BC. The Islamic conquest of Persia (633-656) that put an end to the mighty Sassanid Empire (224-651) was a turning point in the history of the nation.

## Noruz holidays draw 3,000 visitors to Quri Qaleh cave per day



TEHRAN - Some 3,000 tourists and travelers visit Quri Qaleh cave in western Kermanshah province every day during the Noruz holidays, a local tourism official has said.

Every year, many domestic and foreign tourists visit this cave and its surroundings due to its pleasant and green surroundings, Seyyed

Mohammad Amin Hosseini explained on Sunday.

Before Noruz, the tourism infrastructure of the cave and its surroundings was developed, which was well received by tourists, the official added.

Quri Qaleh or Quri Qala Cave is located in the foothills of the Shaho mountain range, 86 kilometers from the western province of Kermanshah.

The water cave, which is formed some 65 million years ago, is 12 kilometers long and 3,140 meters deep. Being explored for the first time in the 1950s, the cave is one of the longest caves in western Asia.

Where there is more humidity and waterfalls, limestone crystals and stalactites are created inside the cave.

There are some historical signs from the Sassanid era (224-651 CE) found in the cave, including silver plates, some pieces of pottery and

15 coins from the Yazdgerd III period. There are also some words in Pahlavi on plates and coins.

Archaeology excavations have revealed that the Quri Qaleh Cave was a hunting lodge during the Stone Age.

Exploring a cave may not be on the "to-do list" of travelers in Iran. However, Karaftu, Ali-Sadr and Quri Qaleh, and Katala-Khor are among the most visited caves.

Iran is geologically a part of the Alpine-Himalayan organic belt. According to the Britannica Encyclopedia, the enigmatic evidence of human presence on the Iranian plateau is as early as the Lower Paleolithic times.

The first well-documented evidence of human habitation is in deposits from several excavated cave and rock-shelter sites, located mainly in the Zagros Mountains of western Iran and dated to Middle Paleolithic or Mousterian times (c. 100,000 BC).



TEHRAN - Iran Health Insurance Organization, together with the Ministry of Health, provided important and significant services in different sectors during the past year (March 2022-March 2023).

Providing free insurance for low-income families, paying the medical expenses of infertile couples, providing services to the disabled, supporting patients with rare diseases, and providing services to foreign nationals have been done in the past year, IRNA reported.

The government has adopted policies to identify uninsured people. In this regard, the Health Insurance Organization in cooperation and interaction with the Social Security Organization was assigned to identify uninsured people, who are often from the vulnerable groups of society.

Accordingly, some 90 percent of hospitalization costs and around 70 percent of outpatient treatment costs are covered by insurance.

In this regard, by allocating 50 trillion rials (about \$100 million), 107 rare diseases are covered by the health insurance fund, and with the cooperation of universities, a lion's share of treatment costs are paid by the government.

So far, more than 31 rare and special diseases, including high blood pressure, MS, type 2 diabetes, hemodialysis, thalassemia, kidney transplant, hemophilia, diabetic retinopathy, type 1 diabetes, cystic fibrosis, and autism, have been identified in the system of the Health Insurance Organization.

Unfortunately, during the past



# Health Insurance Organization offers significant services

years, many infertile couples who wanted a child avoided pursuing their problems due to the huge and staggering costs of treatment.

This is while paying attention to this important issue can help increase the young population, which is one of the most important and influential elements in the progress and development of the country.

With the support of the organiza-

tion, infertile couples without insurance coverage, pregnant mothers, and their babies up to the age of 5 are covered by insurance.

All the indicators of health and treatment have made significant progress after the Islamic Revolution, and now Iran is one of the leading countries in this field.

Electronic health records have been set up so far for 98 percent of people

in the country. One of the key features of an EHR is that health information can be created and managed by authorized providers in a digital format capable of being shared with other providers across more than one healthcare organization.

Iran has one of the strongest health systems in the region and this opportunity should be used optimally in the field of health diplomacy, Health Minister Bahram Einollahi has said.

In June 2021, Ahmed al-Mandhari, the World Health Organization director for Eastern Mediterranean Region, said the Islamic Republic of Iran is a role model for primary health care.

For the past four decades, its PHC network has aimed to ensure that people have timely access to affordable, accessible, and acceptable essential health services, he explained.

In October 2021, World Health Organization (WHO) representative to Iran Jaffar Hussain, said that Iran's health system can be a model for other countries in the region, especially in the field of health and the use of valuable forces such as healthcare providers.

The national budget bill for the current Iranian calendar year 1402, which started on March 21, has increased the health sector's budget by 29 percent compared to the past year's budget.

The bill has proposed a budget of 2,730 trillion rials (about \$5.5 billion) for the Ministry of Health, IRNA reported.

The administration has also proposed 690 trillion rials (about \$1.4 billion) as subsidies to provide medicine by health industries.



The share of Iranian articles with international participation has had significant growth of 209 percent during an eight-year period (2013-2020), becoming the Islamic world's leading country in science diplomacy, according to the Scopus International Citation Database.

## More than 1,400 science journals being published in Iran

From page 1 ► Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks during a speech on March 21 at the holy shrine of Imam Reza on the occasion of the New Iranian year.

He named the Persian New Year the year of "Inflation Control, and Growth in Production."

The Leader highlighted the progress made in science and technology and Iran's ranking among the top countries of the world in fields such as Nano and Biotechnology, health, aerospace, nuclear, defense, infrastructure, medical centers, and oil refineries "With regard to foreign relations, the West's efforts to isolate Iran have failed," he said.

Since the administration of President Ebrahim Raisi took office in August 2021, more than 45 scientific and research journals have been indexed by Scopus, the deputy health minister

Younes Panahi has said.

The growth in Scopus-indexed publications has been unprecedented, he said, adding that before the administration took office, 135 publications had been indexed by Scopus, while the figure is currently 180.

In 2021, a number of 27,800 articles have been registered by medical science researchers of the country in the Scopus database, he added.

Over the past year, 18 articles published by Iranian researchers have been cited by Scopus International Citation Database, compared with a total of 101 during the past 40 years, the deputy science minister Peyman Salehi said in September 2022.

International citation indexes include Web of Science, Thomson Reuters Journal Citation Reports, Web of Knowledge, and Scopus.

## World Autism Awareness Day calls for 'transforming the narrative'

TEHRAN - April 2 marked World Autism Awareness Day with the theme of "Transforming the narrative: Contributions at home, at work, in the arts, and in policymaking".

It is a call to bring up awareness about autism, thus accepting and supporting autistic people in the society and workplace.

Autism is a lifelong neurological condition that manifests during early childhood, irrespective of gender, race, or socio-economic status. The term Autism Spectrum refers to a range of characteristics. Appropriate support, accommodation, and acceptance of this neurological variation allow those on the Spectrum to enjoy equal opportunity, and full and effective participation in society.

Autism is mainly characterized by its unique social interactions, non-standard ways of learning, keen

interests in specific subjects, inclination to routines, challenges in typical communications, and particular ways of processing sensory information.

In recent years, major progress has been made in increasing awareness and acceptance of autism, not least thanks to the many amazing autistic advocates who have worked tirelessly to bring the lived experience of autistic people to the wider world.

The United Nations General Assembly unanimously declared April 2 as World Autism Awareness Day to highlight the need to help improve the quality of life of those with autism so they can lead full and meaningful lives as an integral part of society.

"We want to play our role well in changing the attitude towards people with autism and in recognizing and asserting their rights as citizens of society, just like other citizens,"

Ali-Mohammad Qaderi, head of the Welfare Organization, has said.

"In this line, the Welfare Organization is providing services in the form of setting up 110 daily education and rehabilitation centers and 16 multi-disability centers and with about 1,500 specialized personnel for about 5,000 people with an autism spectrum disorder."

Moreover, four temporary residences, 399 vocational training centers, 127 production workshops, 16 job support centers, and 103 home care centers are now operating nationwide, he added.

Throughout its history, the United Nations has celebrated diversity and promoted the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities, including learning differences and developmental disabilities.

In 2008, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities entered into force, reaffirming the fundamental prin-

ciple of universal human rights for all.

Its purpose is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

It is a vital tool to foster an inclusive and caring society for all and to ensure that all children and adults with autism can lead full and meaningful lives.

The rate of autism in all regions of the world is high and the lack of understanding has a tremendous impact on individuals, their families, and communities.

The stigmatization and discrimination associated with neurological differences remain substantial obstacles to diagnosis and therapies, an issue that must be addressed by both public policymakers in developing nations, as well as donor countries.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## Afghans life in Iran provided new model of migration

The friendly coexistence of Afghans with Iranians has set a new pattern in migration, secretary of human rights headquarters in Iran has stated.

The two nations of Iran and Afghanistan share similarities in religion, culture and civilization, Ali Bagheri Kani said on Thursday during a meeting with Afghan immigrants in Tehran.

The West is using all the capacities to turn the differences between the two nations of Iran and Afghanistan into a dispute and then a conflict in order to achieve their illegitimate interests, he lamented.

"The effort of the Human Rights Headquarters is to highly protect the right of immigrants living in Iran," he highlighted.

## زندگی افغانستانی‌ها در ایران الگوی جدیدی از مهاجرت ارائه کرده است

دبیرستاد حقوق بشر جمهوری اسلامی ایران می گوید همزیستی ملاطفت‌آمیز افغانستانی‌ها با ایرانی‌ها، الگوی جدیدی را در مهاجرت ارائه کرده است.

به گزارش ایرنا ، «علی باقری‌کنی» روز پنجشنبه در دیدار با مهاجران افغانستانی در تهران اظهار داشت: اشتراکات دینی، فرهنگی و تمدنی دو ملت ایران و افغانستان بسیار به هم نزدیک است .

وی افزود: غربی‌ها از همه ظرفیت‌ها استفاده می‌کنند تا تفاوت‌های دو ملت ایران و افغانستان را به اختلاف و سپس نزاع تبدیل کنند تا به منافع نامشروع خود برسند.

او گفت: تلاش ستاد حقوق بشر آن است که کوچکترین حقی از مهاجران مقیم ایران ضایع نشود.

## The importance of earthquake insurance

By Mehdi Zare

Part 1

Many people's houses in the city of Khoy, West Azarbaijan Province, northwest Iran, and the surrounding villages were destroyed in three earthquakes on 2 October 2022 and 18 and 27 January 2023, with magnitudes of 5.6, 5.6, and 5.9 respectively.

Of course, these events caused three deaths, but a strange outcome was the number of destroyed houses, where human casualties were limited. Even the low casualties made it difficult for authorities to believe that such a number of buildings, about 2000, had been destroyed.

Such earthquakes show another type of damage in modern societies; Damage to buildings is too high and casualties are low earthquakes. The insurance might be used as a "risk transfer" solution.

Earthquakes in Iran are not fully covered by standard home or business insurance policies. Coverage for other types of damage that may result from earthquakes, such as fire damage and eruptions from burst gas and water pipes, is provided by standard home and business insurance policies.

Earthquake insurance has a deductible, generally as a percentage and not a specific amount. Premiums also vary widely based on location, insurer, and type of structure covered.

In general, older buildings cost more to insure than newer buildings. Wood frame structures usually have lower rates than brick buildings; Because better stress tolerance can be expected in these types of structures.

Areas are graded in zones 1 to 3, or 1 to 5 for earthquake probability, and this may be reflected in the insurance rates offered in those areas. The ability to quantify exposure to earthquake risk is a prerequisite for the effective financial management of earthquake risk and a tool for evaluating the costs and benefits of different risk reduction approaches and risk transfer to insurance and reinsurance capital markets.

The development of earthquake risk maps and models, including secondary loss factors, should be encouraged to improve the assessment of potential exposures.

Government investment in improving access to data on structures and soil conditions, historical events, and understanding earthquake processes can make an important contribution to improving the accuracy of maps and models and, as a result, assessing exposure to earthquake risk. Losses and damages caused by earthquakes are very damaging and damaging, especially for developing countries like Iran.

Government-sponsored insurance and reinsurance arrangements contribute to higher levels of earthquake insurance, particularly in countries facing high levels of earthquake risk.

The government should implement an integrated approach to the financial management of earthquake risk using limited public resources with a wide range of policy instruments.

A comprehensive approach to the financial management of earthquake risk requires effective coordination across government, with the aim of addressing financial vulnerabilities re-



sulting from exposure to earthquake risk.

Potential earthquake liabilities for public finances can be minimized by carefully evaluating the cost-effectiveness of different approaches to risk management, reducing the scope of public financial assistance and insurance (re) arrangements, and by maximizing the share of risk transferred to the private sector.

Ordinary homeowners' insurance does not cover damages caused by earthquakes. Many international insurance companies stopped earthquake insurance in the 1990s; Because predictions were that a major earthquake could potentially bankrupt them.

If an earthquake strikes, most homes sustain damage that does not exceed their insurance deductible, meaning that even with high insurance rates, insured homeowners will not receive money from their insurance policy to cover the damage.

In insurance, a part of the damage must be paid by the individual, that is, the insured, which is called the deductible. Some large international insurance institutions, such as "Munich Re", take the existing risk into account and participate in projects designed to strengthen buildings against earthquakes and improve people's financial security through insurance.

The costliest natural disaster of all time, the 2011 Fukushima nuclear disaster occurred in Japan following the earthquake and tsunami following the March 11, 2011 earthquake.

Losses caused by earthquakes are determined not only by earthquake parameters (large, distance, duration of movement) but also by the characteristics of damaged buildings: type of design, type of building, height, asymmetry in floor plan and height, intensification of seismic waves due to soft soils, location in the area near the fault or on the active fault.

More severe earthquakes can also cause landslides, sinkholes, and landslides, which can cause huge casualties. The most important preventive measures are related to engineering design features to protect buildings against earthquake forces.

This issue is regulated at the macro level in Iran by the Iranian Seismic Building Code (Standard No.2800) and the national building regulations. The purpose of most earthquake regulations is primarily to protect human life.

They ensure the stability and resilience of the building in order to preserve human life while accepting that some financial damage may occur.

However, the new generation of building codes, such as those used in the United States, Japan, and New Zealand, attempts to reduce property damage as well.

To be continued



## The unique ecology of Shadegan wetland

Shadegan wetland in the southwestern province of Khuzestan covers 530,000 hectares, 400,000 hectares of which have been designated as a Ramsar site, recognizing its unique ecology as well as cultural, and recreational value.

Thanks to its very rich and diverse geographical location, it attracts many tourists every year, especially during the Noruz holidays.



