

Leader in meeting with a group of Iranian officials and ambassadors of Islamic countries:

Israel Regime Has Lost Its Deterrence Power



Ayatollah Khamenei leads huge Eid al-Fitr Prayer

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Opinion

A strategy for victory

By Mohammad Sarfi
Editor-in-chief

An Iranian proverb states: "The well must have its own water." This means that if something does not have the capability, positive change cannot be imposed on it by external factors. Ayatollah Khamenei's emphasis on the strategy of the Islamic world regarding the Palestine issue also highlights this issue. In his Saturday speech, he emphasized that this strategy should help resistance fighters inside Palestine. This means that the main and fundamental struggle against the Israeli regime is carried out by the resistance forces inside the occupied territories, and others play a complementary role in this regard.

Since the formation of the fake Israeli regime in the mid-twentieth century, Arab countries have made two major mistakes in dealing ► Page 2

Modern irrigation program seriously followed up

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- The establishment of modern irrigation systems is one of the comprehensive plans in the field of the agricultural economy which has been the focus of Iranian officials for about three decades to deal with the excessive consumption of water in the agriculture sector of the country.

The implementation of smart irrigation policies in the agriculture sector is a national plan in response to the situation of successive droughts in Iran, which was planned and slowly implemented in the country over the past three decades.

Based on the standards of the Ministry of Agriculture, the implementation of modern

irrigation systems projects has caused a reduction in water consumption by 30 to 80 percent, so the ministry is seriously following up the implementation of these projects throughout the country.

According to the project manager of the Agriculture Ministry's smart irrigation systems development program, ► Page 4

Op-ed

Persecution of Bahrain's Shiites persists during Ramadan

By Sondoss Al Asaad

Another spree of arbitrary arrests has been reported across Bahrain, with nearly a dozen people incarcerated in what is being labeled as the ongoing repression against Shiite religious practices. ► Page 5

Op-ed

The U.S. is on a suicide mission...

By Martin Love

The U.S. may be self-destructing in front of the world. This may be a good thing and no one will be blamed for it except Joe Biden and the Presidents and administrations that came before him after Ronald Reagan, each with their own miserable moves and policies after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991.

In 1992 American political theorist Francis Fukuyama published a book in which he argued that humanity had arrived at ► Page 2

Raisi orders the continuation of pardons offered by Leader

TEHRAN – Iranian President Ayatollah Ebrahim Raisi has ordered relevant Iranian ministries to continue following up on the pardons granted by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei.

Ayatollah Raisi, in a notification, informed the Ministries of Interior, Science, Guidance, and Foreign Affairs of the conditions for the continuation of the Supreme Leader's favour in suspending, commuting, and pardoning the crimes of those who had administrative and disciplinary crimes in the past year, according to a statement by the official website of the Iranian presidency. ► Page 3

Report

Republican lawmakers warn of "proxy" war with Russia

By Ali Karbalaee

TEHRAN- A number of Republican lawmakers, including three senators, on Thursday expressed grave concern about a U.S. "proxy" war with Russia.

"A proxy war with Russia in Ukraine is not in the strategic interest of the United States and risks an escalation that could spiral out of control" they warned in a letter to President Joe Biden. ► Page 5

Persepolis edge Esteghlal in 100th Tehran derby

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team edged past Esteghlal 1-0 in Iran Professional League (IPL) Matchday 27 here at the Azadi Stadium.

Two teams showed a lackluster performance in front of about 40,000 spectators in the first half.

Persepolis became more attacking after the halftime and Isa Alekasir, who came off the bench after the break, scored the winner in the 50th minute.

Esteghlal put their archrivals under pressure to level the score but were denied by a solid defensive display by Persepolis. ► Page 3



Leader offers condolences over passing of 'revolutionary' poet

TEHRAN - Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, has offered his condolences over the passing of poet Abbas Baratipour.

In a short message on Sunday, the Leader praised the late poet as one of the protagonists in composing "ritual and revolutionary" poems.

Precious Bustan manuscripts on display at Golestan Palace

TEHRAN – A selection of rare manuscripts of the Persian poet Sadi's masterpiece Bustan (The Orchard) has been put on display in an exhibition at the Golestan Palace in Tehran, the director of the palace has said.

The exhibition displays five exquisite manuscripts, one of which is a 16th-century manuscript written by Mir Ali Soltani, and features five miniatures, Afarin Emami explained on Sunday.

There are also 14 calligraphic paintings of Sadi's poems on display in this exhibition, she added.

The exhibit will be running until April 29, she noted.

Abu-Muhammad Muslih al-Din bin Abdallah Shirazi, known by his pen name Sadi, was one of the major Persian poets of the medieval period. Sadi is known as a mystic and metaphysician in the history of Persian literature. He is recognized for the quality of his writings and the depth of his social and moral thoughts. The ancient scholar has gained worldwide fame, not only in Persian-speaking countries but in Western societies, with

his poems being quoted in a multitude of sources.

Sadi's best-known masterpieces are Bustan (The Orchard) completed in 1257 and Gulistan (The Flower Garden) in 1258. Bustan, his best-known work, was completed in 1257. It includes 4,000 verses in 183 stories about the virtues such as justice, kindness, love, modesty, liberality, generosity, satisfaction, and happiness, and the ecstatic practices of dervishes addressing all people to have a better and happier life. ► Page 6

Armenian PM congratulates Iranian Leader and president on Eid al-Fitr



TEHRAN – Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has sent separate messages to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Ebrahim Raisi congratulating them on Eid al-Fitr and called for deepening ties between Yerevan and Tehran, ISNA reported.

"I sincerely congratulate the arrival of Eid al-Fitr that symbolizes self-purification and end of fasting to you and the friendly people of the Islamic Republic of Iran," Pashinyan stated.

Elsewhere in his message, the prime minister said "the government of the Republic of Armenia and the nation of Armenia highly value" the centuries-old "warm relationship between Armenia and Iran".

Pashinyan went on to say that the manifestations

of these centuries-old interactions are clearly evident in "effective dialogue between Christianity and Islam and this will open new horizons in favor of our nations and regional stability in the near future."

In his message to the Iranian president, Prime Minister Pashinyan also said, "I sincerely congratulate the auspicious Eid al-Fitr."

He also wished the "neighboring and friendly nation of Iran" would benefit from the blessings of this holy month.

The Armenian prime minister also said there exist all the prerequisites to strengthen bilateral ties and "I sincerely hope that through the political and durable partnership we will witness expansion of cooperation" between Armenia and Iran.

The U.S. is on a suicide mission...

From page 1 ► "the end of history"! That the fall of the Soviet Union had resulted in the end-point of the evolution of ideologies and that "Western liberal democracy" had become the final valid form of human government. This bold, even stupid, assertion could not have been more incorrect. There exist a thousand reasons why he was insanely wrong but the major reason why Fukuyama's assertion was wrong was that ever since he wrote such the United States and its Western allies seized upon it not with any humility or care or consideration that humanity's ideologies and cultures have always been variegated and suited to various diverse populations and cultures.

That, plus other truths such as the one that ever since the early 1990s the U.S. has been sliding far away from supporting both real liberalism and "democracy" whether at home or even overseas. The U.S. has long been solely about bullying hegemony.

Regime change actions by the U.S. have nothing to do with liberalism or democracy, but have everything to do with installing governments in foreign countries that do the bidding of Washington. Ukraine currently is the most striking and dangerous example of this. In Pakistan for example the U.S. fomented the marginalization of former popular leader Imran Khan because he refused to support U.S. policies around Ukraine. There are myriad other examples of this kind of action, some successful and some that have utterly failed like, for examples, in Venezuela or Syria and even now in Russia via the proxy war on Russia in Ukraine.

And underneath that slide away from true liberalism and honest democracy has been such off the charts hubris and triumphalism in Washington that real democracy barely exists any longer in the U.S. and what's left is not "liberal" but a kind of radical totalitarianism. Retired Princeton University professor and political theorist Sheldon Wolin identified this when he called it not classic but "inverted totalitarianism" wherein corporations and elitist minions have corrupted true democracy by commodifying and exploiting every natural resource and every living being. This has led the U.S. in the direction of social collapse as citizens are manipulated to give up what liberties they had and their real, actual participation in government ... even though most Americans are still often not even aware of what has been lost. The propaganda in the U.S. mainstream media has been absolutely intense and few Americans have time, if they have any time but to try to survive, to read beyond the mainstream, misdirecting

headlines. It has also led the world to begin to reject soundly U.S. economic and military power such as it has existed and expanded since the end of World War 2. The Turkish Interior minister said it succinctly this week: "The world hates the U.S." Or is learning to.

The dire illness and ignorance of U.S. leaders leading to eventual self-destruction was well revealed this past week by General Mark Milley, the head of the "Joint Chiefs of Staff" of the U.S. military, when he opined that the U.S. military budget must be doubled if the outcome of the proxy war on Russia through Ukraine calls in to question the "rules-based world order" which itself is a risible joke and in fact has resulted in widespread "disorder". The "defense" budget in the U.S. is already nearly a trillion fiat dollars, larger than what the next nine or 10 countries combined spend on defending themselves. This alone is crippling the U.S. and leading towards total bankruptcy and social dismay and disintegration. If ever a U.S. President was correct in warning against the growth of the "Military Industrial Complex" or MIC in the U.S. it was Dwight Eisenhower in 1960 in his farewell address when he left the White House. And recall the MIC has not literally won any serious war since 1945!

The sole, now formal candidate for the Presidency in 2024 who is telling at least some truths that offend the establishment and may raise a spark of hope for the salvation of the U.S., however difficult this will be to achieve, is Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the nephew of JFK who was assassinated and who also lost his father to assassination (both murders with alleged CIA assistance) long ago just before and during the ill-fated debacle of the Vietnam War.

Kennedy announced his candidacy very recently in Boston and the mainstream U.S. media has already announced no likelihood for his success. (And this is because presidential elections are rigged and the primary media is hand in glove with the elitists and other powers that be in the U.S.) Among many other issues, Kennedy has come out against the dominance of the MIC with regards to U.S. policy and warmongering. Kennedy intends to run for the Presidency in 2024 as a Democrat, but he also has called for support from Republicans and the disaffected mass of independent voters who don't affiliate or identify with either of the two dominating political parties.

In any case, history has suggested this: desperate, failing empires such as the U.S. has become in the past decades have a habit of demonstrating suicidal tendencies.

Iran advises U.S. to let 'positive' course in the region proceed calmly

Foreign Ministry says Iran's military program is solely "defensive and deterrent"

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Nasser Kanaani on Sunday responded to the U.S. secretary of state's remarks regarding Iran's military program, saying such statement are in line with the "Iranophobia" project and fomenting "discord" among regional countries.

In a tweet on Thursday, Antony Blinken had said that Washington is firmly committed to disrupting Iran's military procurement activities.

"We are firmly committed to disrupting Iran's military procurement activities," Blinken wrote.

Kanaani said the "provocative remarks of the U.S. secretary of state about Iran's military program are merely aimed at finding markets for American weapons through fomenting the failed project of Iranophobia and fomenting discord among regional countries."

Contrary to Blinken's "indiscreet" remarks, Kanaani said, the Islamic Republic has always been insisting on "dialogue" and "regional cooperation" with neighbors to meet



the "security and interests of the countries in the region" without the intervention of foreigners.

"The positive developments" in the region are in line with this policy, the Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman remarked.

He added Iran's military program is solely "defensive and deterrent" and is not directed against any country that would not consider aggression against



the Islamic Republic.

Reminding Washington that its "reckless and wrong policies" over the last decades have been the source of insecurity, instability and war" in the region, the spokesman advised the U.S. to stop its "wrong, meddling and irresponsible approaches" toward the regional countries and let stability and tranquility to continue its course with the cooperation of all countries in the region.

Kanaani was referring to the opening of a new chapter in the region which started with the exchange of ambassadors between Iran and the United Arab Emirates and diplomatic efforts by Tehran and Riyadh to reopen their embassies coupled with dialogue between Saudi Arabia and Yemen to end the eight-year war and normalization of relations between Arab countries with Syria after more than a decade.

Netanyahu is angry over Iran-Saudi rapprochement

TEHRAN – The Zionist regime's prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu is upset over the resumption of ties between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

In an interview with CNBC on Wednesday, Netanyahu claimed that "those who partner with Iran partner with misery. Look at Lebanon, look at Yemen, look at Syria, look at Iraq."

Despite the fact that Israel is the chief source of conflict in the Middle East which has been lingering for more than 70 years, Netanyahu added, "95% of the problems in the Middle East emanate from Iran."

In a China-brokered deal in March, Iran and Saudi Arabia agreed to reestablish diplomatic ties between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Analysts and politicians believe the move dealt a blow to Netanyahu's plan to isolate Iran in the re-

gion and his efforts to normalize ties with Saudi Arabia.

He attempted to distance Saudi Arabia's decision as a setback to Israel's ambitions with the Kingdom in his interview with CNBC.

"I think it has probably a lot more to do with the desire to de-escalate or even eliminate the long-standing conflict in Yemen. I think that Saudi Arabia, the leadership there, has no illusions about who are their adversaries, and who are their friends."

The headline Israeli prime minister also called for greater U.S. engagement in the Middle East.

Iran, Jordan set to mend ties in latest sign of shifting Mideast sands: i24 NEWS

In a report on Friday, Israel's i24 NEWS also

said the foreign ministers of Jordan and Iran spoke on Thursday evening and agreed to meet "as soon as possible" to discuss relations between the two countries.

Such renewed contacts come as part of a bigger trend in the region, including the readmission of Syria into the Arab world and the rapprochement between Tehran and Riyadh.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry stated that "Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian affirmed during a phone conversation with his Jordanian counterpart Tehran's willingness to develop the relationship and cooperation between the two."

Jordan has not sent an ambassador to Tehran since a number of Iranian students attacked Saudi diplomatic missions in 2016.

Armenia hosts first trilateral meeting with Iranian and Indian officials

Armenia has hosted the first trilateral consultations with India and Iran, two increasingly significant partners for Yerevan as it plays the geopolitical field during a rocky patch in its relationship with Moscow, eurasianet.org reported on April 21.

The April 20 meeting involved various deputies and assistants in the foreign ministries of the three countries, and focused primarily on "economic issues and regional communication channels," according to a readout by the Armenian

foreign ministry. "The sides agreed to continue consultations in a trilateral format."

While the focus of the Yerevan meeting was trade, there was a strategic backdrop: Iran and India have been at the forefront of Armenia's search for new sources of security as Armenians feel they have been let down by their traditional security guarantor, Russia.

As Azerbaijan has sought to push its advantage following its 2020 victory over Armenia in the Second

Karabakh War, Iran has implied that it would provide a sort of security guarantee for Armenia. Iranian officials have repeatedly stated that Tehran would consider "changing borders in the Caucasus" to be a "red line" for it. This seems to be an implicit warning to Azerbaijan, that if it were to forcibly take land in southern Armenia for its mooted "Zangezur Corridor" – as Baku occasionally threatens – that Tehran would somehow intervene. Iran also set up a consulate in the southern Armenian city of Kapan last year.

India, meanwhile, has been sought as a potential arms supplier in the wake of apparent interruptions in deliveries from Armenia's traditional armorer, Russia. Reports since 2020 in the Indian press have suggested a wide variety of arms supplies from India to Armenia including artillery, drones, and missiles. None of those have been confirmed (other than an order of artillery-locating radar), though Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has coyly declined to deny the reports.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

A strategy for victory

guish, but even those who thought that they could score points against Israel through compromise and establish a country called Palestine on paper, finally came to the conclusion that this occupying regime understands nothing but force.

The emphasis of the Leader of the Revolution on the fact that the Islamic world's strategy should focus on strengthening the fighting elements inside Palestine indicates that he knows well that the Israeli regime will ultimately collapse from inside; first with the resistance and perseverance of Palestinian fighters for liberation of Jerusalem, and second with the chaotic and shaky situation inside the regime, which is facing fundamental contradictions and rifts.

Israel and its number one supporter, the United States, hoped that with the Abraham Accords, the Palestinian issue would be forgotten in the Islamic

Over 200 strategic drones delivered to Army

TEHRAN – On Thursday, the Iranian Army took delivery of more than 200 strategic drones manufactured by the Defense Ministry.

The strategic unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) were delivered to various units of the Army in several parts of the country.

The strategic drones include various models such as Ababil-4, Ababil-5, Arash, Karrar jet, Shahrivar 10th, Akhgar, switchblade drone, Homa, as well as sea-based and VTOL drones, Tasnim reported.

The new aircraft, all of which have low radar cross-sections (RCS), are designed to carry out a broad range of missions, including reconnaissance, detonation, combat, patrol operation, loitering, an-

ti-radar operation, aerial interception, and action against mobile and fixed targets.

The propulsion, navigation and control systems of the new drones have been modified and they have been equipped with air-to-air and air-to-surface missiles, smart air-based standoff bombs, and electronic warfare systems. The new features have turned the drones into stealth aircraft with long ranges that can carry out special operations.

The new drones are expected to enhance the Army's capabilities in reconnaissance and monitoring operations along the borders, and boost the combat and destruction power of the pilotless units in countering remote targets.



In July 2022, the commander of the Army Ground Force unveiled plans for the establishment of five new military units operating with unmanned aerial vehicles.

Israel regime has lost its deterrence power

By Faramarz Kuhpayeh
TEHRAN – The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, has underlined the need for helping resistance elements inside Palestine in a strategy that is aimed at precipitating decline of Israel and emancipating the Palestinians.

Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks in a meeting with a group of Iranian officials and ambassadors of Islamic countries on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr.

In the meeting, the Leader dedicated much of his speech to the issue of Palestine, saying that Israel is a state of decline and has lost its power of deterrence.

He considered the issue of Palestine as one of the most fundamental issues of the Islamic world and pointed to the gradual decline of the usurping Zionist regime. “This decline, which began a few years ago, has accelerated now and the Islamic world must take advantage of this great opportunity,” he said, according to khamenei.ir.

Ayatollah Khamenei pointed out that the issue of Palestine not only Islamic, but also a humanitarian issue. Referring to the Quds Day gatherings and marches in non-Islamic countries, he said, “Anti-Zionist gatherings in the U.S. and European countries on Quds Day is the result of the increasing revelation of the crimes of the usurping Zionists.”

He added that the presence of a number of Europeans in support of the Palestinian people is very important, especially in countries that are dependent on the Zionists.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution regarded the internal resistance of the Palestinian people and the risk-taking, sacrificing nature of its youth as the main causes of the miserable situation that exists in the Zionist regime. “Today’s situation in the occu-



Ayatollah Khamenei leads huge Eid al-Fitr Prayer

TEHRAN – The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, had led this year’s Eid al-Fitr Prayer which was attended by a huge number of people.

The Prayer was held in the Imam Khomeini Musallah in Tehran on April 22, which marked Eid al-Fitr in Iran.

The Prayer was attended by top Iranian military and civilian officials as well as ordinary Iranians. In the first sermon of the Prayer, Ayatollah Khamenei offered congratu-

pied territories proves that the more the Palestinians stand up and resist in different regions, the weaker the fake regime will become,” he emphasized.

Ayatollah Khamenei also underlined that the deterrent power of the Zionist regime is coming to an end. “Several decades ago, [David] Ben-Gurion, one of the founders of the fake regime, said ‘We will be destroyed whenever our deterrent power ends. The world is currently witnessing this reality and if nothing happens, the end of the usurping regime is close. This too is one of the blessings that has risen from

lations to the Islamic Ummah and the nation of Iran on this auspicious occasion, according to khamenei.ir.

Referring to the supplications and prayers of people especially on the nights of Qadr he said, “The lively nights that people spent awake and the cries of the youth were more outstanding than ever. Their attendance at the Quran recitation gatherings and the manner in which they helped the orphans and the needy filled this year’s Ramadan with a great amount of glory.”

the sacrifices of the devoted Palestinian youth in the West Bank and other occupied areas.”

With regards to these realities, the Leader considered helping the forces inside Palestine as an essential strategy of today’s Islamic world. “In line with their valuable efforts, the Resistance Front and all Islamic countries should focus on strengthening the fighting elements inside Palestine,” he stated.

Ayatollah Khamenei referred to belief in Islam as the main reason Palestinian groups have gained

strength and said these developments did not exist when there was no belief in and inclination toward the divine religion.

He called the enemies’ animosity toward Islam the result of understanding the power of Islam in strengthening the Palestinian nation and other nations, adding, “Of course, by the grace of God and the vigilance of Muslim nations, this strategy will lead nowhere.”

The late Imam Khomeini and the Islamic Republic were the forerunners in supporting the Palestinian cause, he said. “This movement will continue and we hope that the dear people of Iran would witness a day when Muslims of all Islamic countries pray freely in the Holy Quds.”

Ayatollah Khamenei also called on the officials of Islamic countries to use the spirituality of the holy month of Ramadan to establish unity within the Islamic nation and reduce and resolve the differences.

“If the Quranic commandment of ‘unity around the divine rope’ is followed, the Islamic world, with a population of about two billion and having the most important and sensitive geographical regions in the world, can take a step toward resolving the problems,” he said,

Iran vows to continue support for Yemen, calls on Europe to stop backing terrorists

TEHRAN – Iranian President Ayatollah Ebrahim Raisi has underlined Iran’s readiness to press ahead with supporting the Yemenis and called on Europe to stop supporting terrorists.

Ayatollah Raisi made the remarks in separate phone calls with Alexander De Croo, the Prime Minister of Belgium, and Mahdi al-Mashat, Chairman of the Supreme Political Council of Yemen.

In response to the telephone call of al-Mashat on Friday evening, Ayatollah Raisi congratulated the members of the council and the great, resilient nation of Yemen on the release of a group of Yemeni prisoners and welcomed it and considered it as the result of the resistance of the dear people of this country, according to a readout by the official website of the Iranian presidency.

Expressing his satisfaction with the results of the recent talks regarding the resolution of Yemen’s issues, President Raisi said, “We are concerned about the humanitarian situation in Yemen, but we hope that with the continuation of the political talks, we will witness the complete release of prisoners, the lifting of the siege of the people and the establishment of a permanent ceasefire in this country”.

He stated, “As in the past, the Islamic Republic of Iran supports the rights of the dear people of Yemen and the dialogue to determine the future of the people by themselves, and we hope to see more cooperation between the two countries with the establishment of peace and stability”.

In this phone call, al-Mashat also conveyed the greetings of the members of the Political Council of Yemen to the Supreme Leader of the Revolution, expressed his appreciation for the support of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the people of Yemen and expressed hope that in the shadow of the empathy of the Islamic world, God will bring the best to the Islamic Ummah.

Mahdi al-Mashat also congratulated the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on its successes in various fields in the last year and a half, and called for the continuation of the active role of the Islamic Republic in solving the Yemen issue.

Europe should halt support for terrorists

Ayatollah Raisi also spoke by phone with the Belgian prime minister. In this call, the latest status of judicial interactions and cooperation between the two countries and ways to speed up the implementation of relevant agreements were discussed.

Referring to the 130-year historical relations between the two countries, the President emphasized on the development of interactions between the two countries and cooperation in various fields of science and technology, industry and agriculture.

Ayatollah Raisi also called for European countries to stop supporting and sheltering terrorist and separatist groups in these countries.

In this telephone conversation, Alexander De Croo, while expressing his satisfaction with the understandings reached between the two countries in the field of mutual cooperation, emphasized on the development and strengthening of the relations between the two countries in various fields.

President Raisi also spoke by phone with the emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad al-Sudani on the occasion of Eid al-Fitr.

Raisi congratulated the nation and government of Qatar on Eid al-Fitr, stressing expanding and strengthening relations with neighbors a foreign policy priority of the Islamic Republic of Iran and stated that regional developments are possible in the shadow of dialogues, interactions and cooperation between the countries of the region.

Referring to the recent crimes committed by the Zionist Regime in Al-Aqsa Mosque and against the defenseless fasting Palestinian people, the President stressed the need for unity and coordination of Islamic countries in preventing the actions of this regime and supporting the oppressed Palestinian people.

In this telephone conversation, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani while congratulating the government and people of Iran on Eid al-Fitr and the beginning of Shawwal month, pointed out the strong relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, emphasizing on the readiness of his country to develop relations with Iran in all areas.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

remains committed to providing the IRGC with its state-of-the-art products, equipment and various advanced technologies.”

The statement also praised progress made by the IRGC. “Today, the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps is at the height of its growth and is not only progressing in its missions and tasks, but is also the driving force in the country. And this is due to the sublime and Islamic culture, jihad, martyrdom and responsibility in the IRGC.”

institutions, including the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Science, the Ministry of Guidance, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Defense ministry equipping IRGC with newest weapons

TEHRAN – The Iranian ministry of defense has announced that it is committed to providing the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) with the newest weapons that it produces.

The Ministry put out a statement on Saturday on the occasion of the anniversary of the establishment of the IRGC.

Offering congratulations on the occasion, the statement said, “The ministry of defense



Raisi orders the continuation of pardons offered by Leader

From Page 1 ▶ After examining the various aspects of this issue and obtaining the opinions of various institutions in several meetings, the par-

don criteria were formulated and approved by the Supreme National Security Council, and finally on Thursday, the President sent them to the relevant

Persepolis edge Esteghlal in 100th Tehran derby

From Page 1 ▶ Persepolis moved top of the table with 57 points, two points above Esteghlal. Sepahan sit third with 55 points and one game in hands.

Esteghlal and Persepolis have played each other 100 times. Both teams have won 26 matches each and 48 matches ended in draw.

The two teams have a long-standing history of intense competition that stretches back to the first derby match in 1968.

Tractor also defeated Paykan 1-0 in Tabriz.

On Monday, Sepahan will host Malavan in Isfahan, Aluminum play Zob Ahan in Arak, Mes Rafsanjan meet Mes Kerman in Rafsanjan and Foolad host relegation-threatened Naft Masjed Soleyman in Ahvaz.

Shams Azar claim title of Azadegan League

TEHRAN – Shams Azar football team claimed the title of the 2022/23 Azadegan League title.

The Qazvin based football side defeated Chadormalu 3-1 in an away game and promoted to Iran Professional League (IPL) with four matches to spare.

Esteghlal Khuzestan are also on the verge of winning promotion to IPL.

Khalij Fars have been relegated to the League 2.

The Azadegan League, also known as League 1, is the second highest division of professional football in Iran.

It was the top-level football league in Iran from its foundation in 1991 until 2001, when the Persian Gulf Pro League was established.

Taremi scores as Porto beat Pacos de Ferreira

TEHRAN – Porto football team defeated Pacos de Ferreira 2-0 on Saturday in the Primeira Liga.

Mehdi Taremi opened the scoring for the visiting team from the spot in the 66th minute and Tony Martinz made it 2-0 in the 83rd minute.

Porto are second with 70 points in the table.

Benfica lead the table with 71 points and one game in hand.

O’Sullivan rockets past Hossein Vafaei at Crucible

TEHRAN - Ronnie O’Sullivan defeated Hossein Vafaei 13-2 in their second-round match at the world championship and advanced to the next stage with a session to spare.

The seven-time world champion had defeated the Iranian snooker player 6-2 in their first encounter. It is the seventh time O’Sullivan has won a match at the Crucible with a session to spare, so Vafaei is not the only one at the party.

And it was positive to see the match end with an embrace between the two, to put the bad blood behind them.

Iranian strongman Khalil Oghab dies at 98

TEHRAN – Iranian strongman Khalil Tariqat Peyma, known as Khalil Oghab, died at the age of 98 Thursday night.

Oghab was famous for bending heavy metal beams, scrolling, support feats and getting ran over by cars. In his best performing days in Iran, he was able to attract a crowd of as much as 50,000 people in a single event in the 1960s.

He emigrated to Ireland in 1971 at the invitation of the Faust Circus.

The Iranian strongman then went to England’s Jerry Cattle Circus. He was able to carry 450kg in teeth and achieved the Guinness World Records.

The Pahlevan also lifted 1408kg elephant twice a night with his feet at the age of 50.

After long journey of about 20 years, Khalil Oghab settled down in Italy where he founded a circus called “Iran and Italy”. He has performed athletic performances in more than 37 countries.

Oghab came back to Iran in 1991 after being invited by the Iranian government, along with sixty performers working for him in a circus.

He was to laid to rest on Sunday.

Gorgan get near West Asia Final with romp of Zob Ahan

TEHRAN - Discipline proved to be the difference as Gorgan refused to be on the short end of a Zob Ahan comeback, 91-72, to put one foot into the WASL-West Asia League Final, Thursday night at the Azadi Basketball Hall in Tehran.

The reigning Iranian Super League champions saw their 23-point lead become just five, 70-65, with 7:57 left to play, but quickly responded as Perry Petty and Mohammad Jamshidi powered a 10-0 run to put the game away for good.

Gorgan’s strong finish also preserved their impressive second-quarter showing that put them ahead the rest of the night, where they outscored their foes 30-8, with Petty and Behnam Yakchali accounting for over half of it by combining for 16 points.

They now lead the best-of-3 series, and could finish off their Iranian counterparts in Game 2 next Thursday in the same battleground,

Yakhchali top-scored for Gorgan with 25 points on a 9-of-13 clip from the floor, alongside 5 rebounds, an assist, and a pair of steals on the way to earning STEPAHEAD Player of the Game honors.

Petty produced 21 points, 9 rebounds, 4 assists, and 2 steals. Jamshidi had 16 points while Sajjad Pazrofteh added 13 as four of the five starters finished in double figures, fiba.com reported.

“That’s the game. Sometimes you’re up, sometimes you’re down. We didn’t have enough concentration on defense and that made us go down [during the fourth quarter] mentally. But I’m happy that we have a great team -- even the bench players came and controlled the game, and we came back to a good position and controlled the game until the end,” Mehram Hatami, head coach of Gorgan said.

Marouf one step closer to joining Shahdab Yazd

TEHRAN - Former Iran setter Saeid Marouf has moved one step closer to join Shahdab Yazd volleyball club.

The 37-year-old player, who currently plays at Fenerbahçe Istanbul, will join the Iranian club to help it at the 2023 Asian Men’s Club Volleyball Championship. Shahdab are in Group B along with teams from Iraq, Chinese Taipei, and Afghanistan.

The Iranian club will meet the Iraqi side on May 14 and face Afghanistan and Chinese Taipei in the following days.

The competition will be held in Bahrain from May 14 to 21.

Amin Esmaeilnezhad linked with European clubs

TEHRAN – Iran international opposite spiker Amin Esmaeilnezhad has been linked with move to the European clubs.

The Pas Gorgan star has received offers from Poland’s SuperLiga, Italy’s SuperLega and Russia’s Super League teams.

Esmaeilnezhad will represent Iran in the 2023 Volleyball Nations League, which will start in June.

The iconic player will have a better chance to opt his new team after the prestigious competition.

Over 15,000 tons of chicken meat produced in Kohgiluyeh Boyer-Ahmad in a year



TEHRAN- As announced by a provincial official, 15,514 tons of chicken meat was produced in Kohgiluyeh Boyer-Ahmad province during the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

Reza Behnam-Pour, the deputy director of livestock production improvement of the province's Agriculture Department, said that this amount of white meat was produced in 123 active poultry farms in the province.

He said that last year, active production units bred 7,484,690 chickens.

There are 140 chicken production units in different regions of the province, 88 percent of which are active, the official announced, adding that 17 poultry units are inactive due

to various reasons, including lack of liquidity and indebtedness to banks, which can be revived if these problems are removed.

Last week, an adviser to the Poultry Farmers Union announced that the problem of supplying food to poultry farmers was recently solved.

Mohammad-Ali Kamali said that part of the increase in the price of chicken meat is due to high prices and part is related to the production costs.

Previously, the producers and breeders of the poultry industry had problems in supplying food, because soybean meal was scarce in the last month of the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20) due to the problems of the traders, and now this problem has been solved.

Last year, with the implementation of the subsidy popularization plan, chicken farmers used their previous equipment and facilities for a while, but due to the imbalance between the supply and demand of chicken meat, the price of this product was lower than the approved price in the market, he further stated.

Iran, Russia sign transit co-op MOU

TEHRAN- Iran and Russia signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on transit cooperation.

The MOU on tripartite cooperation between the Iran Transportation Development Fund, the International Coordinating Council on Trans-Eurasian Transportation (CCTT), and the Economic Development Center of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was signed in Moscow.

This memorandum of understanding was inked in the presence of Iran's Ambassador in Russia Kazem Jalali, Russian Deputy Transport Minister Dmitry Zverev, Head of Iran Transport Development Fund Davoud Danesh-Jafari, Director-General of the Business Center for Economic Development Center of the CIS (BC CIS) Vadim Ganin, and Secretary-General of International Coordination Council on Trans-Eurasian Transportation (CCTT) Gennady Bessonov.

Based on this MOU, the signatory parties cooperate with each other to increase trade, transit and storage of goods along international corridors, especially the North-South corridor.

The signatories of this memorandum also emphasized the exchange of information, carrying out joint projects, and exchange of specialized delegations to achieve these goals.

Earlier this month, during a meeting between Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mehرداد Bazrpash and a visiting Russian delegation headed by Igor Yevgenyevich Levitin, a senior aide to the president of the Russian Federation, the two sides emphasized the necessity to boost the transit of commodities through the Caspian Sea.

During the meeting, held at the place of the Iranian Transport and Urban Development

Ministry in Tehran on Sunday evening, the two countries emphasized the development of cooperation in the air, sea, rail, and road sectors and "multimodal transportation".

In the mentioned meeting, the Iranian minister considered the development of transportation cooperation between the two countries to be beneficial for both sides and said while the maritime trade between the ports of the two countries has a very long history, the use of the capacity of the active ports of the two countries in the Caspian Sea can be considered for new cooperation.

The senior aide to the president of the Russian Federation, for his part, summarized the expert meetings and the visit of the Russian delegation to the Rasht-Astara railway route and called for the development of transportation cooperation in all areas.

It should be also mentioned that Iran and Russia reached an agreement last year for reviving the idle section of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) in Iran for expanding transit ties.

The first Russian freight train arrived at Iran's Sarakhs railway station in Khorasan-Razavi province on the border with Turkmenistan last July to officially launch the eastern section of the INSTC.

The Russian train was allowed into the Iranian border in a ceremony attended by First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber along with transport, oil, industry, and agriculture ministers as well as the vice president for science and technology.

The second Russian transit cargo for India entered Iran also from the northeastern Sarakhs border in October.

Iran and Russia are also cooperating in the maritime sector to use the Caspian Sea to shorten the transit route from Russia to India.

TEDPIX gains 145,000 points in a week

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 145,000 points (six percent growth) in the Iranian calendar week ended on Friday.

TSE is one of the four Iranian stock exchanges, and the most important one. The other three ones are Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX), and Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB).

A capital market expert stated that directing liquidity towards the capital market will be one of the best solutions to materialize this year's slogan and control liquidity and reduce inflation, and said strengthening the capital market to finance companies will greatly boost production.

The current Iranian calendar year 1402 (began on March 21) is named "Inflation



Control, Production Growth".

While emphasizing the potential of the capital market to realize this year's slogan, Mohsen Abbaslou said: "The year 1402 has been named by the Leader as the year of Inflation Control, Production Growth and without a doubt, directing liquidity towards the capital market is one of the best ways to control liquidity and reduce inflation."

Modern irrigation program seriously followed up

From page 1 ► the purpose of implementing this plan is to increase the productivity and sustainability of water and soil resources in the country to ensure the sustainable production of agricultural products.

Fariborz Abbasi, who is the head of the Agriculture Ministry's Water and Soil Department, has said that in smart agriculture human intervention in irrigation management and planning is minimized by using new technologies.

According to the official, the average annual rainfall in Iran is 250 mm and the country's total recoverable water is 112 to 113 billion cubic meters per year, but due to the decrease in rainfall in recent years, this figure has fallen to 100 billion cubic meters.

Emphasizing the approach of the country's planners in the development of modern irrigation methods in water crisis conditions, he said that in general there are about 8.5 million hectares of irrigated lands in Iran, and 30 percent of these lands have been equipped with all kinds of modern irrigation systems.

According to the project manager of the Iranian Agriculture Ministry's smart irrigation systems development program, various types of modern irrigation systems were established in 51,500 hectares of land in the country during the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20), so far, a total



of about 2.6 million hectares of Iran's irrigated agricultural lands have been equipped with modern irrigation systems.

He pointed out the advantages of implementing these systems in terms of water efficiency and said among the advantages of establishing these systems in agricultural lands is a 30-40 percent increase in water efficiency compared to traditional methods, which can also reduce the volume of irrigation water inside the farm in the same amount.

Abbasi also pointed to the increase in crop production in the lands covered by these systems and added: "Our main approach in developing modern irrigation is to establish systems with high efficiency."

"Also, in the next stage, we plan

to develop irrigation machines that have high efficiency and uniformity", the official added.

The adviser of the agriculture minister further pointed to the supply of equipment and parts for modern irrigation systems and said: "Fortunately, we are close to the border of self-sufficiency in the field of parts and equipment for modern irrigation systems, so that all the parts and equipment needed for these systems are manufactured in the country by domestic manufacturers."

"We only needed to import a few limited parts of these systems, but fortunately, based on the plans made, some of these parts were manufactured by domestic manufacturers and knowledge-based companies, who are in the process of

obtaining relevant certificates and approvals, which, if approved, the import of those parts will be finally prevented", he added.

Saying that according to the surveys conducted in the country, about 70 percent of the country's recoverable water resources are consumed in the agriculture sector, and the rest is consumed in other sectors, the official concluded that taking this issue into consideration, the vital role of developing the modern irrigation systems in reducing water consumption and increasing water efficiency, especially inside the farm, is an undeniable debate, and with the further development of these systems, it is possible to save more water inside the farms.

Iran's annual non-oil export to neighbors up 19%



TEHRAN- The value of Iran's non-oil export to its neighbors rose 19 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20), the spokesman of Trade Development Committee of the Iranian House of Industry, Mining, and Trade announced.

Ruhollah Latifi said that 75.184 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$30.537 billion were exported to the neighboring countries in the previous year.

Iraq with the purchase of non-oil goods worth \$10.238 billion (15 percent growth) and registering a historical record, Turkey with \$7.459 billion (23 percent growth), the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with \$5.767 billion (28 percent growth), Afghanistan with \$1.638 billion (11 percent drop), and Pakistan with \$1.448 billion (18 percent growth), were the first five export destinations of Iranian goods among the neighbors, the official said and added that Oman with \$1.087 billion, Russia with \$744 million, Azerbaijan with \$654 million, Armenia with \$464 million, Turkmenistan with \$460 million, Kuwait with \$198 million, Kazakhstan with \$195 million, Qatar with \$124 million, Saudi Arabia with \$14.7 million, and

Bahrain with \$10.4 million ranked next.

According to Latifi, Iran imported 21.582 million tons of non-oil products valued at \$28.305 billion from its neighbor in the past year, with a 10-percent growth in worth year on year.

The UAE with sales of \$18.395 billion (11 percent growth), Turkey with \$6.999 billion (15 percent growth), Russia with \$1.577 billion (five percent drop), Pakistan with \$842 million (170 percent growth), and Oman with \$619 million (29 percent growth) were the first five sources of goods sales to Iran among the neighbors, he said and added that Iraq with sales of \$264 million, Kazakhstan with \$125 million, Qatar with \$84 million, Azerbaijan with \$34 million, Afghanistan with \$29 million, Turkmenistan with \$28 million, Armenia with \$14 million, Kuwait with \$12.5 million, and Bahrain with \$3.5 million are in the next ranks respectively.

Latifi, who is the former spokesman of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), further stated that Iran's non-oil trade with neighboring countries accounted for 52 percent of its total non-oil trade, exports to these countries for 57.5 percent of the total non-oil exports, and imports from them for 47.5 percent of the country's total non-oil imports in 1401, which shows the increasing importance of neighbors in Iran's foreign trade and bringing foreign currency to meet the needs of the country under sanctions.

As previously announced by Latifi, the value of Iran's non-oil export rose 10 percent in the past Iranian calendar year.

Bulgaria, newest European customer of Iranian oil

TEHRAN- The European Union's statistics office Eurostat announced the import of Iranian oil by three European Union (EU) members in 2022, and introduced Bulgaria as the newest customer of Iranian oil in this union, IRNA reported on Sunday.

The information published by the Eurostat shows that the European Union imported 4,181 tons of crude oil or oil products from Iran last year.

Although the amount of EU oil imports from Iran is not a significant figure, it indicates the desire of European refineries to ignore the U.S. sanctions against Iran, and the inclusion of these figures in the official European oil import statistics shows the desire of the European authorities to distance themselves from the sanctions, or at least showing their objection to the U.S. sanctions policy against Iran.

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi has said that the oil and gas sector experienced a growth of nine percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

Oil Minister Javad Oji has recently said that a new record high will be reached in the country's oil export in the current Iranian calendar year.

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.

In his remarks in November 2022, President 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.

Republican lawmakers warn of “proxy” war with Russia

From page 1 ► The Ukraine war has well entered its second year with no end in sight as Washington brushes aside any peace initiatives by third parties, the latest by China and Brazil.

The lawmakers warned how the American aid to Ukraine threatens further escalation while lacking “much needed strategic clarity”.

The U.S. is the number one financial sponsor of the war. To date, it has contributed \$113 billion dollars, mostly in military assistance, which the lawmakers said is aimed “to prop up a foreign government that is historically mired in corruption”.

They pointed out that this comes at a time when “the American people suffer from record inflation and a crippling national debt is wildly irresponsible on its own - but to do so while our military contends with aging weapons systems and depleted stockpiles is disgraceful... Time and again, the executive branch has used debt as a tool to finance foreign wars to the detriment of the American taxpayer.”

The legislators have highlighted how the U.S. strategy towards Ukraine is pushing Washington’s “two greatest adversaries closer together”.

They wrote that in early February 2022, the presidents of China and Russia reminded the world of their “no limits” partnership in their first face-to-face meeting in two years.

On Friday, China’s Foreign Ministry said no country has the right to interfere in its relationship with Russia, as the two sides are sovereign, independent countries.

A spokesperson said, “China and Russia follow the principle of no-alliance, no-confrontation and no-targeting of any third party and are committed to developing a new type of major-country relations featuring mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation. This is entirely different from the U.S. practice of forming exclusive blocs and stoking bloc confrontation. No country has the right to interfere.”

“Both China and Russia see the U.S. as inextricably opposed to their interests and security. The depth of U.S. involvement in Ukraine only gives credence to this narrative,” the letter said.

In their address to Biden, the American lawmakers said U.S. national interests and those of the Ukrainian



people are best served by encouraging negotiations to end the conflict. “We strongly urge you (Biden) to advocate for a negotiated peace”.

Ironically, this is the same approach that the entire world has been advocating for, with the exception of the U.S.-led NATO military alliance.

Russia, in particular, has repeatedly warned that pouring weapons into Ukraine will only prolong the war and the suffering of the Ukrainian people.

“The current strategy of sanctions and drawn-out aid will only prolong the conflict, leading to escalation and more violence. Our national and economic security demand an alternative,” the lawmakers wrote.

The letter pointed out U.S. military assistance also extends to military training and intelligence support and warned of the risk of provoking a direct war with Russia.

“The extent of our aid makes it increasingly difficult to deny Russian accusations of U.S. complicity in a proxy war. Vladimir Putin’s advisors are already framing the conflict as a ‘military confrontation Russia and NATO, and above all the United States and Britain’, Russian tolerance for fighting a proxy war with NATO could run out at any point.” The lawmakers warned.

They added that Moscow’s decision to take military action in Ukraine “should be evidence enough” of its “willingness to use military force and should give us pause in continuing to push the limits at the risk of catastrophe”.

“With every new aid package and every new weapon provided to

Ukraine, the risk of direct conflict with Russia climbs,” the letter added.

“The Biden administration’s virtual ‘blank check’ funding of this conflict for ‘as long as it takes,’ without any defined objectives or accountability, distracts from our country’s most pressing challenges.”

“Unrestrained U.S. aid for Ukraine must come to an end, and we will adamantly oppose all future aid packages unless they are linked to a clear diplomatic strategy designed to bring this war to a rapid conclusion.”

They also spoke of a delusional U.S. strategy, which has made the U.S. military weaker as it will take months or, in some cases, years to manufacture a depleted weapons stockpile being shipped to Kyiv.

“Should our actions entangle us in a confrontation with Russia now or should conflict erupt in the Indo-Pacific in the coming years, we fear that our military will be woefully unprepared to meet these challenges as a direct result of what has been shipped to Ukraine,” they said.

The senators and representatives also criticized the Biden administration’s decision to send High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) to the Ukrainian military. That decision “was seen as a serious provocation, given the enhanced capabilities these weapons afforded,” according to the lawmakers.

The letter mentions the Biden administration’s plans to ship M1 Abrams tanks to Ukraine, which require months to ship and training for Ukrainian crews, and to send ground-launched small-diameter

bombs, which would also require months to ship.

On top of the \$113 billion that Congress has authorized for Ukraine, the Biden administration is still drawing funds from the \$45 billion package approved in December. That aid is expected to be exhausted by the summer, meaning the White House will likely ask Congress to authorize more funds soon.

In February, Representative Mathew Gaetz accused the Biden White House as well as members of both parties of spending tens of billions of dollars in Ukraine to keep a war going that does not satisfy any U.S. national interest other than making U.S. weapons manufacturers happy.

“How much more for Ukraine? Is there any limit?” Gaetz asked on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. “Which billionth dollar really kicks in the door? Which redline we set will we not later cross?”

U.S. Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene recently told U.S. media that Ukraine was “not the 51st state,” and that she has to focus on fixing the problems her constituents and the American people are facing.

“We’re ignoring our own people’s problems... the United States needs to be pushing for peace in Ukraine, not funding a proxy war with Russia.”

“Politicians have given over \$100 billion of taxpayer money to Ukraine,” a spokesperson for Senator Rand Paul said. “Taxpayers deserve to have a full accounting of how their money is being used overseas, particularly before even more is asked of them and especially since priorities in our own nation are being neglected.”

The arguments against “blank checks” for Ukraine appear to be gaining popularity among regular Americans. The support for unconditional military aid has decreased notably, from 60 percent in May 2022 to 42 percent this February. The biggest drop has come from Republicans, according to a poll by The Associated Press-Norc Center for Public Affairs Research.

On Wednesday, the White House announced its 36th package of military aid for Ukraine.

The letter comes as Ukraine received U.S.-made Patriot surface-to-air guided missile systems, which will further satisfy U.S. arms manufacturers.

WORLD HEADLINES

Foreign states rush to evacuate from Sudan

The United States and the United Kingdom said their armed forces helped staff from both embassies get out of Sudan, but evacuations by some other countries faced problems on Sunday as rival military factions battled in the capital Khartoum.

The eruption of fighting eight days ago between the army and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary group has triggered a humanitarian crisis, killed 400 people and trapped many thousands of civilians in their homes.

As people attempted to flee the chaos and foreign countries tried to pull out their nationals, gunfire rang out across the capital and dark smoke hung overhead, a Reuters reporter said.

The warring sides accused each other of attacking a convoy of French nationals, both saying one French person was wounded. France’s Foreign Ministry, which had earlier said it was evacuating diplomatic staff and citizens, did not comment.

The army also accused the RSF of attacking and looting a Qatari convoy heading to Port Sudan. Doha released no immediate statement on any incident.

Egypt said a member of its mission in Sudan had been wounded by a gunshot, without giving details.

President Joe Biden said the U.S. was temporarily suspending operations at its embassy in Khartoum but remained committed to the Sudanese people, reiterating calls for a ceasefire.

“The belligerent parties must implement an immediate and unconditional ceasefire, allow unhindered humanitarian access, and respect the will of the people of Sudan,” Biden said in a statement.

Pope Francis appealed for an end to the violence during his Sunday midday prayer in Rome.

The fighting broke out in Khartoum, along with its adjoining sister cities of Omdurman and Bahri, and other parts of the country on April 15, four years after long-ruling autocrat Omar al-Bashir was toppled during a popular uprising.

The army and RSF jointly staged a coup in 2021 but fell out during negotiations over a plan to form a civilian government and integrate the RSF into the armed forces.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said the country’s armed forces has evacuated diplomatic staff and their family members.

U.S. officials said special forces using aircraft including MH-47 Chinook helicopters swept into Sudan’s battle-stricken capital on Saturday from a U.S. base in Djibouti, spending just one hour on the ground to bring out fewer than 100 people.

“We did not take any small-arms fire on the way in and were able to get in and out without issue,” said Lieutenant General Douglas Sims, the director of operations at the military’s Joint Staff.

Chris Maier, an assistant secretary of defense, said the U.S. military might use drone or satellite imagery to detect threats to Americans travelling on overland routes out of Sudan, or position naval assets at Port Sudan to aid Americans arriving there.

Tens of thousands of Israelis rally against judicial reform plan



Tens of thousands of protesters have flocked to Tel Aviv and cities across Israel to express their opposition to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s far-right government and its divisive plan to overhaul the country’s judicial system.

Crowds of Israelis held banners with the words “Crime Minister” overlaid on Netanyahu’s face in Tel Aviv at Saturday’s protest, the latest in a series of weekly actions since the start of the year.

China will never allow trampling on its sovereignty: top diplomat

China’s Foreign Minister Qin Gang on Friday said both sides of the Taiwan Strait belong to China, and Beijing would never allow anyone to trample on its sovereignty, the state-run Global Times newspaper reported.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Lanting Forum on Chinese Modernization and the World held in Shanghai, Qin said Taiwan has been an inalienable part of China’s territory since ancient times, and its return is a component of the post-war international order.

He slammed remarks accusing China of challenging the rules-based international order and changing the status quo across the Taiwan Strait as absurd.

“It is not the Chinese mainland, but the Taiwan independence separatist forces and a handful of countries attempting to disrupt international rules and unilaterally changing the status quo,” Qin said. “Those who play with fire on Taiwan will eventually get themselves burned.”

Beijing sees Taiwan as its own territory and criticizes high-level meetings between Taiwanese and foreign leaders.

China recently held military exercises around Taiwan after its president, Tsai Ing-wen, met in Los Angeles US House of Representatives Speaker Kevin McCarthy.

Israel halts urgent immigration program for nationals of Russia, Belarus

Israel canceled an emergency program offering Russian and Belarusian nationals an expedited path to Israeli citizenship, local media reported on Saturday.

The fast-tracked program for immigration to Israel, or Aliyah, will remain open to Ukrainian immigrants, the daily Haaretz said on the decision, which comes nearly 14 months since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine war in February 2022.

Haaretz reported that the number of Russian nationals seeking Israeli citizenship has spiked amid concerns of an expanded military draft, along with human rights violations.

Tel Aviv’s latest move will leave fresh arrivals seeking to make Aliyah from Russia and Belarus without legal residency status for months and limit their access to employment, housing, and health care.

Outside of exceptional humanitarian circumstances, citizens of Russia and Belarus will be unable to utilize the emergency track unless they signed up to one-stop-shop service sites seeking to make Aliyah before April 15.

Persecution of Bahrain’s Shiites persists during Ramadan

Denouncing normalization is a further reason for reprisal



From page 1 ► Islamic eulogist Abdul Amir Al-Biladi has been remanded in custody for a week “pending an investigation,” Al-Biladi, who was detained on Wednesday, reportedly drew the ire of Bahraini authorities after reciting a poem on the martyrdom of Imam Ali (AS), which touches on the popular rejection of the shameful normalization moves.

Speaking to Shiite worshippers during Friday prayers at Bahrain’s Imam Al-Sadiq Central Mosque marking International Quds Day, Bahrain’s Sheikh Ali Al-Sadadi has affirmed that Muslims will never give up their claim to “the cause of the Al Aqsa Mosque, Al Quds, and Palestine.”

The cleric has reminded that it did not matter how long the struggle for the liberation of Palestine took because it does not have a “statute of limitations” and “will not be offset by regimes that collaborate with Israel.”

Sheikh Al-Sadadi has further reiterated that Manama’s normalization with Israel “is not the will of the Bahraini people.”

Remarkably, the Palestinian keffiyeh has been a prominent feature during the Friday prayers with both worshippers and religious leaders sporting the checkered black and white scarf - an icon of Palestinian nationhood.

In parallel, large crowds fill the Bahraini towns, including Sitra, Al Musallah, Shahrakan, and Duraz, in a showcase of solidarity with Palestinians and in condemnation of the

ongoing Israeli occupation of Arab lands.

Speaking at a forum dedicated to Quds Day, Bahrain’s top religious authority, Ayatollah Sheikh Isa Qassim has stressed that the Bahraini people’s support for the Palestinian cause is not concealed; neither is the price that they are paying for that support.

“The people of Bahrain have unconditionally and constantly sacrificed for the causes of Islam and justice; they will continue to make sacrifices on this path, regardless of whom they anger or satisfy,” Ayatollah Qassim has affirmed.

In a related context of sectarian persecution, Bahrain’s SALAM for Democracy and Human Rights has called for an end to sectarian discrimination against the Shiite majority as the NGO marks exactly 12 years since Manama bulldozed roughly 38 Shiite religious sites.

While urging Manama to abide by its commitments to religious freedoms, the local rights watchdog has pointed out that at least 7 of the demolished mosques have not been rebuilt. It has also pointed out that another 7 have been reconstructed by members of local communities who are yet to be compensated by authorities.

These religious sites were razed over a two-month period at the height of anti-regime protests in 2011 including the Barbaji Historical Mosque.

Besides, Bahrain’s interior ministry reportedly confiscated loudspeakers used during religious gatherings, where they were given a choice between handing them over or facing potential criminal charges.

Another senior cleric, Sayyed Abdullah Al-Ghuraifi, has reminded the authorities that the Eid Al Fitr holiday represents a “great opportunity for the release of all the political prisoners.”

“We appreciate the release of prisoners that took place,” Sayed Al-Ghuraifi said in reference to a small group of political detainees who were paroled during the holy month of Ramadan.

The London-based Bahraini activist Sayyed Ahmed Al-Wadaei reported that Manama has released only 58 political prisoners from the Jau Prison out of a total of 558 detainees paroled under the so-called Alternative Punishment law, labeled as an “alternative oppression” by Ayatollah Qassim.

“We hope that every prisoner will return to his natural place in this country and for the fathers, mothers, wives, and children to no longer shed tears. The joys of the Eid await more releases,” Sayed Al-Ghuraifi has wished.

For her part, the UN special rapporteur on human rights defenders, Mary Lawlor, urged Manama to release Abduljalil Al-Singace “as a mercy for Ramadan.” On Twitter, Lawlor wrote “Al-Singace, a Bahraini human rights defender with disabilities, was imprisoned for his activism; he is old and infirm.”

Her colleague, the UN rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, Gerard Quinn, called on Manama to respect Al-Singace’s fundamental rights. “As a human rights defender with a disability in detention, Al-Singace faces additional risks,” Quinn warned.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

Precious Bustan manuscripts on display at Golestan Palace



From Page 1 ► A year after the completion of Bustan, Sadi composed his masterpiece Gulistan. Gulistan, comprised of 8 chapters is mainly in prose. The book widely addresses kings'morality, dervishes' behavior, benefits of contentment, silence and talking in proper time, love and youthfulness, weakness in old age and education. Sadi attempts to advise people to live freely and to improve the quality of their lives in Gulistan. It is one of the most effective books in prose in Persian literature.

Sadi's other works include Ghazals (love poems or Lyrics; sonnets), qasidas (longer mono-rhyme poems or Odes), quatrains, and short pieces in prose in both Persian and Arabic. He is known as one of the greatest ghazal-writers of Persian poetry besides Hafiz.

A destination for domestic and international travelers, Golestan Palace is located in the heart

and historic core of Tehran. The palace complex is one of the oldest in the Iranian capital, originally built during the Safavid dynasty (1501–1736) in the historic walled city.

Following extensions and additions, it received its most characteristic features in the 19th century, when the palace complex was selected as the royal residence and seat of power by the Qajar ruling family (1789-1925). At present, the Golestan Palace complex consists of eight key palace structures mostly used as museums and the eponymous gardens, a green shared center of the complex, surrounded by an outer wall with gates.

As mentioned by UNESCO, the complex exemplifies the architectural and artistic achievements of the Qajar era, including the introduction of European motifs and styles into Persian art.

Eid al-Fitr holidays: Mazandaran records 1m overnight stays

TEHRAN –Travelers have made over one million overnight stays in accommodation centers of the northern Mazandaran province during the two-day Eid al-Fitr holidays, which marks the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, the provincial tourism chief has said.

A total of 222,653 people also visited tourist attractions and natural sights of the province during the mentioned time, Sadeq Barzegar explained on Monday.

This year's Ramadan began on March 23, which falls in spring in Iran, and ended on April 22. Because of the nature of the lunar calendar system, the dates of Ramadan vary each year and there is always a sort of disagreement among scholars as to when Ramadan precisely starts or comes to an end.

By tradition, the new moon crescent, which is sighted by the naked eye, marks the beginning of a new lunar month, but these days, Muslims prefer to lean towards astronomical calculations to avoid such confusion.

Sandwiched between the towering Alborz mountain range and the Caspian Sea, Mazandaran has a rich yet turbulent history. An early civilization flourished at the beginning of the first millennium BC in Mazandaran (Tabarestan).

Its insecure eastern and southeastern



borders were crossed by Mongol invaders in the 13th and 14th centuries. Cossacks attacked the region in 1668 but were repulsed. It was ceded to the Russian Empire by a treaty in 1723, but the Russians were never secure in their occupation. The area was restored to Iran under the Qajar dynasty.

The northern section of the region consists of lowland alongside the Caspian and upland along the northern slopes of the Alborz Mountains. Marshy backlands dominate the coastal plain, and extensive gravel fans fringe the mountains. The climate is permanently subtropical and humid, with very hot summers.

4,000 historical properties exist in Kordestan



TEHRAN – So far, some 4,000 cultural heritage properties have been identified across the western province of Kordestan, the provincial tourism chief said on Sunday.

Despite the lack of adequate restoration funds

last year, some of these historical monuments were restored to protect them from adverse weather conditions, Mansour Mehrzad explained.

However, more budget needs to be allocated to preserve and protect these historical properties, he noted.

Kordestan's name refers to the region's principal inhabitants. After the Turkish invasion of Iran in the 11th century CE (Seljuk period), that name was given to the region comprising the northwestern Zagros Mountains.

It was during the reign of Abbas I the Great of Iran's Safavid dynasty (1501–1736) that the Kurds rose to prominence, having been enlisted by Abbas I to help stem the attacks of the marauding Uzbeks from the east in the early 17th century.

Persepolis bears no womon carved in relief, archaeologist says

TEHRAN – Different palaces of the UNESCO-registered Persepolis have no engraved stone images and bas-relief carvings of women, an Iranian archaeologist has said.

It is not possible to find reliefs of women in the palaces of Persepolis, but they can be seen in seals, tablets, and carpets dating back to the Achaemenid Empire (c. 550–330 BC), Abolhassan Atabaki said on Sunday.

The walls and ledges of palaces of Persepolis feature motifs of servants of the royal table, which some people mistakenly believed were images of veiled women because of their attire, he explained.

Some of these figures, however, are depicted with beards and mustaches, and others without beards, and they are actually male servants that Greek historians wrote extensively about during the Achaemenid period, he added.

Although there are no reliefs of women in the palaces, tablets found at Persepolis depict women alongside men and sometimes even above them and some even held managerial positions during this time, he noted.

Persepolis, also known as Takht-e



Jamshid, whose magnificent ruins rest at the foot of Kuh-e Rahmat (Mountain of Mercy) is situated 60 kilometers northeast of the city of Shiraz in Fars province. It was the seat of the government of the Achaemenid Empire, though it was designed primarily to be a showplace and spectacular center for the receptions and festivals of the kings and their empire.

Persepolis ranks among the archaeological sites which have no equivalent, considering its unique architecture, urban planning, construction technology, and art. This 13-ha ensemble of majestic

approaches, monumental stairways, throne rooms (Apadana), reception rooms, and dependencies is classified among the world's greatest archaeological sites. The city's immense terrace was begun about 518 BC by Darius the Great, the Achaemenid Empire's king. On this terrace, successive kings erected a series of architecturally stunning palatial buildings, among them the massive Apadana palace and the Throne Hall ("Hundred-Column Hall").

According to Britannica, the stone was cut with the utmost precision into blocks of great size, which were

laid without mortar; many of them are still in place. Especially striking are the huge columns, 13 of which still stand in the audience hall of Darius I (the Great; reigned 522–486 BC), known as the Apadana, the name given to a similar hall built by Darius at Susa. There are two more columns still standing in the entrance hall of the Gate of Xerxes, and a third has been assembled there from its broken pieces.

Narratives say that Persepolis was burnt by Alexander the Great in 330 BC apparently as revenge on the Persians because it seems the Persian King Xerxes had burnt the Greek City of Athens around 150 years earlier.

The ancient region, known as Pars (Fars), or Persis, was the heart of the Achaemenid Empire founded by Cyrus the Great and had its capital in Pasargadae. Darius I the Great moved the capital to nearby Persepolis in the late 6th or early 5th century BC. Alexander the Great defeated the Achaemenian army at Arbela in 331 and burned Persepolis apparently as revenge on the Persians because it seems the Persian King Xerxes had burnt the Greek City of Athens around 150 years earlier.

Qara Tepe: an ancient cemetery shrouded in mystery

TEHRAN – Over the past couple of years, teams of cultural heritage experts headed by archaeologist Mostafa Dehpahlavan have uncovered a wealth of information about an ancient cemetery, which is situated in the Segzabad region of Qazvin province, west-central Iran.

The mystery of these tomb sites has captivated experts, begging the question: what truly lies beneath the earth at Qara Tepe? Among the most intriguing finds are the enigmatic tombs of children, each revealing a fresh set of secrets.

With the efforts of archeology researchers at the University of Tehran, 3,000-year-old skeletons of children were discovered in Qara Tepe, according to the public relations report from the prestigious university.

"This complex with an area of five square meters and a height of 120 cm, weighing about 10 tons, includes the remains of nine children, a baby and a fetus, the remains of two adult horses, two goats and a sheep," Dehpahlavan said.

Due to the lack of favorable conditions in the Qara Tepe cemetery, the discovered collection has been transferred to Segzabad municipality as a museum piece for display and preservation in compliance with conservation and restoration standards.

Dehpahlavan, who presides over the Institute of Archeology of the University of Tehran, stated that the foundation work has three parts, adding

the first part contains the burial remains of a child along with the remains of an immature goat.

Dehpahlavan said: In the eastern cemetery of Qara Tepe, important evidence of five layers of burials and graves on top of each other was obtained on a wide scale. In this cemetery, the graves do not have a specific direction. Their borders are surrounded by several clay ridges. Aborted fetuses and babies were buried in clay cooking pots. Without exception, the remains of animals such as goats, immature sheep, cows, camels, and horses were found in all the graves, which indicates that animals were buried next to the dead.

Based on criteria such as the growth of teeth and the length of long bones, the child's skeleton is estimated to be less than six years old.

In describing the second part, the archaeology said: "In this part, the burial remains of two adult horses of different breeds can be seen. First, the remains of an adult horse lying on its left side without a skull. Another smaller adult horse (probably of the Caspian breed) was buried in a huddled form on its right side. Its skull is above the surface of the body in a semi-raised form. This horse has a necklace with bronze beads and a part of the iron bridle of this horse can be seen in the mouth area."

In his explanation about the third part of this collection, Dehpahlavan stated: This part contains



human and animal remains that are in a very chaotic state. Based on the number of visible skulls, a total of eight people were buried in this section. Next to a gray clay cave, the remains of a human fetus can be seen.

In addition, an adult sheep skull can be identified next to the skulls of human fetuses. Also, a container with a vertical handle and a small jug along with a part of the body of a pot with pea color and rope decoration constitute the pottery findings of this section.

In addition, the cemetery has yielded burial ornaments such as bronze bracelets, a ring, and the remains of a necklace consisting of stone, bronze, and ivory beads along with clay dishes next to a child's skeleton that can testify to his special social status.

Safavid mosque in southwest Iran to undergo restoration

TEHRAN – A new restoration work is to commence on the ruins of the Safavid-era mosque situated in the ancient city of Belad Shapur, southwestern Iran.

Under the plan, 10 billion rials (\$20,000) will go toward restoring the mosque, which is expected to have a major impact on the development of religious tourism in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, the provincial tourism chief said on Friday.

The provincial tourism directorate seeks to restore ancient sites and monuments in Belad Shapur in a bid to promote tourism, Saeid Talebipur said.

For instance, some 35 billion rials (\$70,000) has been spent restoring a nearby ancient bazaar, which

embraces 32 shops, the official noted.

Inscribed on the National Heritage list in 1985, Belad Shapur is one of the top tourist sites in the province.

The city was built at the time of Shapur I, also known as Shapur the Great, (reigned 241 CE–272), the second king of the Sassanid Dynasty. Under his leadership, the empire stretched from Sogdiana and Iberia (Georgia) in the north to the Mazun region of Arabia in the south; in the east, it extended to the Indus River and in the west to the upper Tigris and Euphrates river valleys.

Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad is well-known for its ancient nomads and their traditions. Sightseers may



live with a nomadic or rural family for a while or enjoy an independent stay and assist them with day-to-day life. It also opens up an opportunity to feel rustic routines, agriculture, traditions, arts, and culture.

Iran is home to hundreds of shrines, imamzadehs, mausoleums, churches, and even fire temples amongst other religious destinations which are dedicated to different faiths. Among the

Gonabad to host mulberry harvest festival

TEHRAN – Gonabad in northeast Iran is getting prepared to hold an annual harvest festival dedicated to mulberry.

It is a time-honored practice that is carried out by local farmers, who carefully pick the succulent fruit from the trees with great care and attention.

Visitors may enjoy traditional music and performances, sample the delicious local cuisine, and browse through an array of fascinating crafts and souvenirs. They are invited to join harvesting, which is a great way to experience the local culture and traditions.

From jams and jellies to smoothies and desserts, the options are endless, and visitors are sure to walk away with a newfound appreciation for this delicious fruit.



Another highlight may be the chance to see the traditional silk-making process. Silk production has been a major industry in Gonabad for centuries, and visitors can watch as local artisans

work their magic, spinning silk from the cocoons of the silkworms that feed on the mulberry leaves.

Last year, sericulture and traditional production of silk for weaving gained UNESCO status jointly for Iran, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

The inscription secured approval at the 17th session of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Committee of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) held in the Moroccan capital of Rabat.

Iran has long been home to silk makers, mainly in the regions of Gilan and Khorasan. For more than three millennia, silk thread produced in Iran has been used to make clothing fabric and for weaving Persian rugs.

From page 1 ► a campaign titled “Green Iran, Strong Iran” and a national program for planting one billion saplings over the course of four years were launched.

Experts say tree planting is a climate change solution that doesn't require scientists to come up with technological solutions to draw carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. It is available now. It is the cheapest one possible and every one of us can get involved.

The national budget bill for the current Iranian calendar year (March 2023-March 2024) has allocated a special line of credit for planting trees.

These credits are used for tree planting and annual maintenance, ILNA quoted Abbas-Ali Nobakht, head of the Forests, Rangelands, and Watershed Management Organization, as saying.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has said: “If each Iranian plants three saplings, the government's goal to plant one billion saplings over the next four years will be realized.”

Over the past years, the environment has been damaged by various natural and human factors, and the main priority in planting one billion trees is to restore nature, Nobakht said.

On March 6 which marked National Tree Planting Day, Ayatollah Khamenei pointed to the importance of planting saplings in preserving the environment, emphasizing that with the help of the people, it is possible to plant one billion saplings.

Experts believe that in addition



Count on planting trees to combat drought

to planting fruit trees, trees that produce wood should be planted because the export of wood has a significant effect on the country's economy, the Leader stressed.

Last year, Ayatollah Khamenei emphasized the need to develop non-fossil sources of energy, including renewables, and expand activities to protect the environment.

The destruction of forests and the environment and vegetation is equivalent to the degradation of national interests, and the depletion of part of the forests for construction, except in emergencies, is definitely to the detriment of the nation, he explained.

Family physician program kicks off

TEHRAN – Health Minister Bahram Einollahi officially announced that the family physician program started on Friday in 57 cities across the country.

The minister pointed out that the program aims to strengthen preventive measures and protect people's health with the participation of capable groups under the supervision of the country's health and treatment network, ISNA reported.

By actively monitoring the target population, the expert teams follow up on their health regularly and try to prevent problems caused by diseases in people by informing them about their health status.

If the healthcare provider diagnoses the disease, the sick person who needs care will be referred to the family physician to be examined and treated for free as the level one service.

Also, if the patient needs specialized services, the physician will refer the person to a specialist doctor as the level two service.

At this stage, the specialist doctor gathers information related to the patient's health status and the treatment process in an electronic file.

The third level of services is related to people who need to be admitted and receive medical services in the hospital, which is done by transferring the patient's electronic file to the hospital.

The family physician program, being implemented in cities with less than 20,000 people, has envisaged building 3,900 medical centers across the country.

“We all seek to strengthen and streamline health and treatment networks to increase resilience, and the family physician program

provides an opportunity to realize the goal, IRNA quoted deputy health minister Behrouz Rahimi as saying.

The national development plan has emphasized the need for the implementation of the family physician program, and about 6 to 8 percent of the gross national product is allocated to the health sector, he added.

Family medicine is a type of medicine in which family physicians are in direct contact with families. These doctors are responsible for primary health care and are physicians who are always present.

They are usually in contact with families in case of illness or accidents.

Due to accurate knowledge of the people covered by them and familiarity with their medical history, these doctors can find out their illnesses sooner and treat them continuously in case of illness.

People who have a family doctor have a trusted and knowledgeable counselor for their medical problems.

Family physicians are also always available and present, caring for the target population.

Periodic examinations and monitoring of people's health status, easy and round-the-clock access to basic services and primary care, and preventing frequent visits to doctors are the characteristics of a family physician.

The program started in 2005, targeting almost 25 million citizens residing in rural areas.

Based on the program, a physician and a midwife offer services in rural areas, every 3,300 villagers have a physician and there is a midwife per 5,200 people in villages.

The plan helped reduce treatment costs and

the disappearance of forests around and inside cities through expanding vegetation cover.

In January, Nobakht said one of the serious tasks toward protecting the environment is to preserve the two natural assets and vital reserves, namely water and soil, and to avoid taking them for granted. In this line, authorities must pay attention to expert points of view.”

“Considering the climatic conditions of the country, low per capita green space, and the fact that Iran is among the countries with low forestation rate, we are obliged to produce and plant one billion saplings in a four-year period.”

The expansion of the country's green space and paying more attention to natural resources and the environment is not a new issue, he said, adding that the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, the President, and the Minister of Agriculture have always emphasized the need to promote the issue of tree planting and sapling planting.

In this line, mining organizations and industrial companies should be committed to participating in the sapling planting programs, he stressed.

Mostafa Jalili, an official with Natural Resources and Watershed Management Organization, has said that a budget amounting to 2.27 trillion rials (about \$4.5 million) is projected to be spent on forestation plans.

The national budget bill for the current Iranian calendar year has also allocated the budget for dealing with wind erosion as well as sand and dust storms, IRNA quoted Jalili as saying.



public spending on healthcare services, as the physician is aware of the person's health background, it prevents many unnecessary diagnostic processes, like scans.

The implementation of the family physician program in urban areas also began in June 2012 in Fars and Mazandaran provinces. Reducing out-of-pocket payments has been an important effect and benefit of the urban family physician program.

Some 800 clinics and medical university centers are providing services in provinces.

Some 12 services are provided in the villages, including doctor visits, pharmaceuticals, paraclinical, laboratories, radiology, drug supplements, management of technical programs, and construction.

Currently, more than 7,000 physicians, 5,600 midwives, and over 2,000 dentists are providing services in 4,112 rural centers.

The family physician program has positive achievements for improving the health of society, and with timely diagnosis by doctors, the staggering costs of treatment can be reduced.

All the necessary medical controls of people are done through these doctors, and if there is a need to receive higher levels of services, the necessary action will be taken to refer to a specialist doctor who is in this plan.

National plan being drafted to protect Caspian seals, sharks



TEHRAN – A national plan is being drafted and finalized for the protection of Caspian seals as well as sharks.

The program for the protection of endangered species will be carried out seriously as in previous years, Mohammad Talebi-Matin, an official with the Department of Environment, has said.

In this regard, several plans have been prepared, which are different according to regions and species, he added.

The official announced that the third annual symposium on sea turtles will be held and a national program for the protection of Caspian seals and sharks is being drafted.

In general, there are 10 species of turtles in Iran, five species of which are terrestrial turtles (non-marine turtles), and the other five species are considered sea turtles.

European pond turtle, Caspian turtle, and Euphrates softshell turtle are the three species of pond turtles; while two species of spur-thighed tortoise and Afghan tortoise are terrestrial.

The Euphrates soft-shell turtle with the scientific name of Refetus Euphrates is the only soft-shell turtle in Iran, which is critically endangered and facing extinction.

The predominant species of turtles in the

WORLD RAMSAR SITES

Guangxi Beilun Estuary National Nature Reserve

The Site is a coastal wetland with mangrove forest, intertidal mudflats and sea-grass beds located on the East Asian – Australasian Flyway.

Situated to the north of Beilun River, a transboundary river between Viet Nam and China, it represents the largest contiguous stretch of mangrove forest in coastal China.

The mangroves help resist and alleviate the impacts of hazards and protect the coast from shoreline erosion. The Site supports ten true mangrove species and five semi-mangrove species; Bruguiera gymnorhiza and Acanthus ilicifolius dominate.

The seagrass community in the peripheral areas is dominated by Zostera marina. The Site also provides habitat to 155 species of large benthic fauna, 27 fishes, 213 birds and over 1,400 species of higher plants.

Globally threatened species include the critically endangered Baer's pochard (Aythya baeri) and spoon-billed sandpiper (Eurynorhynchus pygmeus); the endangered black-faced spoonbill (Platalea minor); and the vulnerable Chinese egret (Egretta eulophotes) and fairy pitta (Pitta nympha).

The mangrove ecosystems in this Ramsar Site can resist the impingement of waves, tides and floods, also it can effectively alleviate the damage caused by typhoons, violent tides and tsunamis. Besides, it has functions in protecting coastlines and reclaiming lands from the sea.

This Ramsar site presents the largest contiguously stretched mangrove forest dominated by (Bruguiera gymnorhiza)and (Acanthus ilicifolius) in coastal China.

There are 10 true mangrove species and 5 semi- mangrove species in this Ramsar Site. It is rare that in Pearl Bay there are many mangrove plants growing on the tidal flat under average sea level, while in the periphery low tide region, there grows Zostera ma-

rina sea grass community. Also the reserve is the only site where (Heritiera littoralis) forest grows on the coastal region.

Fish farming

This Ramsar site is a significant place for the reproduction, migration, foraging, breeding and inhabiting of many marine species.

There are 27 fish species belonging to 3 orders and 19 families, including Leiognathus brevirostris, Harengula ovalis and Ctenogobius gymnauchen.

The mangrove's tidal creeks are vital places for female limulus to reproduce, while infants of limulus scatter on mangrove's tidal flats. The ancient relic species Lingula anatina can be found frequently on bare beach at the edge of mangroves.

Biological diversity

This Ramsar site is a regional hotspot of biodiversity. It holds 155 species of large zoobenthos and 213 species of birds. Also, there are more than 1400 species of higher plants along the coastal areas.

Ecological character

This Ramsar Site is located in the tropical monsoon climate region with a mean annual temperature of 22.3 and a mean annual precipitation of 2500 mm.

The coastal areas are mainly composed of sandy and humid-thermo ferralitic soils with low nutrient content. The mangrove forest represents the main vegetation type of the Site.

The mangrove species together with the inhabiting birds, planktons, zoobenthos, fishes and insects characterize the biological community of the Site.

The wetland plays a significant role in reducing the impacts of hazards and protecting the coastline from erosions. This estuarine system supports a wide variety of life forms and provide opportunities for scientific and educational studies.

Source: Ramsar.org

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

System to be set up for monitoring, forecasting agricultural drought

A system will be launched to monitor, forecast and report the agricultural lands being hit by drought, Amir Qaderi, an official with Disaster Management Organization has announced.

Over a meeting of a special working group for addressing drought and risks threatening agricultural sector, a plan for establishing a system for monitoring and forecasting agricultural drought in the country was approved and submitted to the Disaster Management Organization for review, he explained.

“Following the study of other countries’ experiences and existing global methods, the necessity of establishing a domestic system to recognize the lands prone to agricultural drought was emphasized,” he noted.

سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران ایجاد می‌شود

معاون امور بازسازی و بازتوانی سازمان مدیریت بحران کشور از ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران خبر داد.

به گزارش پایگاه اطلاع رسانی سازمان مدیریت بحران کشور، امیر قادری روز یکشنبه با اعلام این خبر گفت: طرح ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران طی جلسه‌ای با حضور مدیران و کارشناسان سازمان مدیریت بحران و وزارت جهاد کشاورزی بررسی شد.

وی ادامه داد: پس از بررسی تجارب داخلی و روش‌های موجود جهانی، ضرورت استقرار نمونه بومی پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی مورد تأکید قرار گرفت و با مشارکت مراکز پژوهشی سازمان هواشناسی کشور و پژوهشکده حفاظت خاک و آبخیزداری طرح ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران پیشنهاد شد.

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Managing Director: **Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati**
Editor-in-Chief: **Mohammad Sarfi**

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895
Email: info@tehrantimes.com
Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Whoever delights his/her parents, has delighted Allah and the one who displeases them has displeased Allah.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:03 Evening: 19:04 Dawn: 3:49 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:20 (tomorrow)

China, Iran: Influence of Eastern Iranian art

Part 4

Silver vessels had come to China through trade from the Han Era onward. Sima Qian, the great historian of the Eastern Han era, noted that the inhabitants of Dayuan turned all the Han gold and silver they could get into vessels and used them as currency by weight, a practice well-known in ancient Iranian culture.

Silver vessels became popular early in the Tang Dynasty due, not only to the flood of imported goods, but to the growing Chinese taste for exotic luxuries that flourished with newly prosperous times.

Sogdians in great numbers, together with other peoples of Iranian heritage, settled permanently in China in the 6th and 7th centuries, bringing their treasured silver with them. Immigrant silversmiths and native Chinese artisans mutually influenced one another in their output.

Under a Tang dynasty aesthetic, however, shape and ornamentation were gradually assimilated into a newly created Chinese silverwork idiom often only vaguely reminiscent of its prototypes.

Silk brocades of Iranian and Central Asian origin became highly fashionable in China during the same era. Silk weaving was known in the oasis kingdoms of Xinjiang from the 5th century, and the brocades of Samarkand are mentioned in the Sui Annals.

Prior to 650, finely woven silk brocades with pearl roundels encircling a variety of single elements must have come to China primarily from Sassanid Persia.

A diaspora of silk weavers from Iran after 650 no doubt vastly enriched both Sogdian and Xinjiang workshops, where a variety of brocade designs continued to be made in similar style.

From the Tarim Basin to China the exotic style of silk weaving flourished. Iranian-inspired silk brocades became articles of fashionable luxury during the Tang Dynasty, and can be seen depicted here as the robe of a Buddhist deity at Dunhuang.

One luxury item from the West that China prized highly was glassware, especially bowls, cups, and flasks, beginning with imports from Roman Syria.

Since the Chinese had no knowledge of glassblowing technology, glass was considered to be some sort of natural material like jade or crystal.

The earliest Sassanid glass vessel, a hemispherical bowl with pointed bosses comes from a Western Jin tomb dated 307 CE. Later during the Northern Wei fine, faceted Sassanid glass bowls have been excavated from tombs in Jiangsu and Datong.

Although the Chinese had made small objects of molded glass, it seems probable that the technology of glassblowing was introduced to China by Bactrian artisans brought to the Northern Wei court at Datong, although the Chinese manufacture of blown glass did not begin to expand until the mid-seventh century.

Sassanid glass continued to be imported from the Sui into the early Tang eras and was considered to be of great value.

The Chinese retreat after their defeat by the Muslim Arab armies at the Talas River north of Ferghana opened the way for the Tibetans to wrest Xinjiang from the Tang Empire in 751.

Shortly afterward a court Tang favorite of Sogdian origin with the Chinese name of An Lushan fomented a rebellion that almost destroyed the dynasty.

After these setbacks China began to turn inward. The Uighur Turks who were brought in to help quell the rebellion against the Tang became protectors of ethnic Persians and Sogdians in China until 840, when their own empire was destroyed by the Kirgiz.

Difficulties ensued for all communities of alien heritage, especially during a persecution of foreign religions between 843 and 845.

Gradually, all peoples of Iranian heritage in China lost their cultural identity. Sogdian trade continued by sea on the southern routes, but by the time of the Mongol Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) it had ceased.

Nevertheless, an indelible Iranian imprint remained in Chinese art, music, and dance, primarily through the Sogdian vehicle.

The Uighur Turks adapted their initial script from Sogdian, which itself was originally derived from Syriac. The Uighurs passed on much of their alphabet to the Mongols.

The Manchu, who were founders of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), adopted a modified version of the same alphabet. In summation, it is clear that Iranian culture, particularly that of “Outer Iran,” played a significant part in the development of Chinese art and culture.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica.

Concluded.

Safavid studies in Japan

Part 1

Among Japanese scholars interested in Iran, the ratio of historians who conduct research on pre-modern Iran is relatively higher than that in Europe and North America.

This seems to be due to the fact that, while in Europe and North America researchers interested in Iran are trained either in the departments of Oriental Studies or Middle Eastern Studies, where a variety of related subjects are taught, in Japan they usually come out of the departments of Oriental History.

The unique notion of “Oriental history” (toyoshi) is closely related to the Japanese world view at the turn of the 19th-20th centuries.

Until quite recently, there have been neither special departments for Persian language and literature or Iranian philosophy, nor a department of Middle Eastern Studies in any large university in Japan. As a result, historical studies has been the only choice for a student who wanted access to Iran.

Japanese scholars began to become interested in Iran and the Middle East in the 1970s, when serious historical research began.

The growing interest in the history of a remote country like Iran, which had had no close relations with Japan, seems to reflect the stability and prosperity of Japanese society some thirty years after the end of the Second World War.

To be continued.

Abbasali Baratipur, composer of Islamic ritual poems, dies at 80

TEHRAN – Abbasali Baratipur, an Iranian poet best known for his Islamic ritual compositions and lyrics on Shia saints, died from heart failure at his home in Tehran on Friday. He was 80.

Born in Tehran, he joined the Iran Air Force in 1962. Due to his desire to learn relevant technical subjects, he was immediately sent to the United States of America to receive intensive training from the U.S. Air Force.

In 1977, he was dispatched to the U.S. to complete his training in electronics. After his return, Baratipur was commissioned to hold courses on electronics and the English language at the Iran Air Force. He continued his career in teaching until 1993 when he retired as a colonel.

His desire to learn technical subjects was matched by the parallel tendency to raise his knowledge of Persian literature.

His debut collection “Gaze in Wonderment” was published in 1990.

His collection “The Rendezvous”, which comprises poems on Imam Mahdi (AS), the twelfth Imam of the Shia, came a year later.

He also composed the three collections “Description of Patience”, “Love’s Green Sina” and “In

This file photo shows poet Abbasali Baratipur talking to Fars at his library on March 18, 2019. (Fars/Hossein Mersad)

Brotherhood with Poppies” about Iranian prisoners of war during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war.

His poems on Hazrat Abbas (AS), the brother of Imam Hussein (AS), were published in the two collections “On the Alqama Riverside” and “The Moon on the Euphrates”.

He also supported Palestinians in his collection “Olive and the Wound” published in 2002.

In his book “On Morning’s Forehead”, Baratipur focused on poems on the Ghadir event, during which the Prophet Muhammad (S) announced his cousin Ali (AS) as his successor and first Imam shortly before his death on the way back home from Hajj in 632.

He was the director of the annual meeting of the poets and literati with the Leader of the Islamic

Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, for 13 years. The meeting is organized every year on the eve of the birthday of Imam Hassan (AS) on the 14th of Ramadan.

His friendship with Ayatollah Khamenei dates back to the years between 1967 and 1970 when he was in Mashhad for a military mission.

Iranian animation “Loupetoo” premieres in Lebanon

A poster for the premiere of the Iranian animation “Loupetoo” in Lebanon.

TEHRAN – “Loupetoo”, an acclaimed animated movie produced at the Sureh

Film Organization of Iran’s Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization, premiered in Lebanese theaters on Saturday.

Directed by Abbas Askari, the animation has been dubbed in Arabic for its premiere in Arab countries, the Sureh Film Organization announced.

In “Loupetoo”, Mr. Kamali, the owner of a sanitarium, treats the patients by teaching them to make toys. The toys are creative, so they are very attractive to children. But the toy studio is shut down due to sabotage, which causes a critical mental condition in the patients. Mr. Kamali becomes disappointed and sad in his vain attempts to solve the problem, but finally, an angel of hope appears.

Sureh is screening the movie with contributions from MEEM Cultural Productions and the Al-Risalat Institute located in the Lebanese capital of Beirut.

The film is scheduled to be screened in theaters in Syria, Iraq and several other Arab countries.

“Loupetoo” has won awards at several international festivals, including the award for best animation film at the 2022 Ahmedabad International Children Film Festival in India.

Having its Iranian premiere during autumn, the film grossed over 200 billion rials (about \$400,000 based on Iran’s free-market exchange rate: \$1 = 510,000 rials).

“The Diary of a Political Idiot” comes to Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN – “The Diary of a Political Idiot: Normal Life in Belgrade” by Jasmina Tesanovic has been published in Persian.

Mahi is the publisher of the book originally published in 2000. Razieh Khoshnud is the translator of the Persian edition.

Hours after NATO started bombing Yugoslavia, Jasmina Tesanovic received an e-mail from a friend in Sweden who wanted to know how she was doing.

Jasmina didn’t have time to write back, so she sent entries from her diary. Her friend, the writer Ana Valdes, posted Jasmina’s diary entries on the website of a magazine she wrote for.

Within a week, the diaries had

Front cover of the Persian edition of Jasmina Tesanovic’s book “The Diary of a Political Idiot: Normal Life in Belgrade”.

been posted anonymously on fifty websites and sent in e-mails throughout the world. The diary of an anonymous woman from Belgrade had become everybody’s diary.

“The Diary of a Political Idiot” was first published as a book in Argentina and has since been translated into eleven languages.

At a time when “compassion fatigue” is seen as both the cause and the unavoidable consequence of current international news reporting, Jasmina Tesanovic’s wide readership is as much a testimony to the intelligence and compassion of her readers as it is to her own.

Labeled a traitor by nationalist Serbians because she opposes

the war in Kosovo, a dissident journalist chronicles the intimate details that haunt her daily life.

Amidst the bombardment, however, hope persists: neighbors braving air attacks to commune at midnight Easter service; young women performing ballet recitals despite all threats of danger; strangers gathered for safety, waiting for the next NATO bomb to strike.

The author takes us beyond the sound bites of the nightly news by offering a firsthand account of daily life in a war zone.

“The Diary of a Political Idiot” was named a PEN selection for 2000 and has been simultaneously published in 11 languages.

The Important Message of This Book Is to Use Every Moment of Life!

An interview with Fateme Vafaeizadeh

“The Father’s Hadis” is the twenty-eighth book of “The Twenty-Seventh” book series, which includes the documentary narration of the life of martyr Ali Turanlu. Martyr Turanlu was the commander of the Ansar Battalion of the 27th Mohammad Rasulullah Division, who went missing in the Khyber operation in the winter of 1983 and did not see his daughter Hadis grow up.

This book includes five main chapters titled “Chapter One: Martyrdom”, “Chapter Two: Beginning of Life”, “Chapter Three: Tehran Again”, “Chapter Four: Internal Conflicts” and “Chapter Five: War”. At the end of this book are photos of Martyr Turanlu.

What made you decide to write about Martyr Ali Turanlu?

He was one of the commanders of the Muhammad Rasulullah’s division, whose biography was supposed to be written. There were attractive features in his life, such as his personal characteristics which were orderly and disciplined, or his place

of residence where he grew up in the village, and another point is that his body returned to his homeland after 13 years. Even though his family knew that Ali was martyred; But they were still waiting. All of these stories and details about his life, made me write his book.

How long did it take to write the book and what obstacles did you face to write it?

It took about two years to write the whole book. While writing it, I already had the interviews with his family and friends, naturally due to the passage of time, there were differences in the narration of their memories, which were resolved as much as possible with supplementary interviews.

If you were to make a comparison between the books you have written about warriors, what would you point out?

There is a similarity in the books on the stories of the martyrs that I have had the honor of narrating their lives, and that these books are the lives of people with great purity.

Last but not least, what is the major message of “The Father’s Hadis” for the young generation?

To use every moment of life.