

Security chief blames US for Israeli terror acts on Iran's nuclear sites

TEHRAN - Ali Shamkhani, the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), said on Friday that the United States is to blame for all of Israel's terrorist attacks on Iranian nuclear facilities and nuclear scientists.

The comments by Shamkhani came after U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said Washington allows Israel freedom of action against Iran's nuclear program.

"Jake Sullivan has said that if #Iran tries to produce nukes, US will recognize Israel's freedom of action to counter. This admission means that US has been and will be responsible for all terrorist acts of Zionists against Iran's facilities and people, accepting its consequences," Shamkhani tweeted.

In a speech at the Washington Institute think tank on Thursday, Sullivan said, "As President [Joe] Biden has repeatedly reaffirmed, he will take the actions necessary..., including by recognizing Israel's freedom of action" against Iran's nuclear activities.

Tehran has consistently asserted that the Islamic Republic has no intention to produce nuclear weapons and that its nuclear program is just intended for peaceful purposes. ► Page 2

Iran Navy destroyers equipped with new missile

TEHRAN - The Iranian navy destroyers have been armed with cruise missiles called "Abu Mahdi", Commander of Iran's Army Navy Force Rear Admiral Shahram Irani announced on Saturday.

The missiles are named after Abu Mahdi al-Mohandis, a senior commander with Iraq's Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), who was assassinated together with General Qassem Soleimani in 2020.

Abu Mahdi cruise missile is one of Iran's Aerospace Industries products with a range of over one thousand kilometers which can destroy any target, according to Iran's official news agency IRNA. Rapid reaction, management of target selection, and evading the enemy's defenses are among the characteristics of the Abu Mahdi cruise missile.

The addition comes after the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force (IRIAF) announced that it was planning to display new achievements in the coming days.

The new capabilities will be in the field of both manned and unmanned aircraft, according to the IRIAF's Commander Brigadier General Hamid Vahedi.

"The air force is growing (in power) and as I have stated before we must never stop for a moment because if we do, we will fall behind," Vahedi said in an interview with Mehr News agency.

The IRIAF is slated to take delivery of the first batch of the state-of-the-art Sukhoi Su-35 heavy air superiority fighter jets in the coming weeks, according to IRNA.

Iran's technical, engineering services export to Iraq significantly rises

TEHRAN - Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian said that the export of technical and engineering services to Iraq has experienced significant growth in recent years, IRNA reported.

Speaking to the press after a meeting with Iraqi Minister of Electricity Ziad Ali Fazel in Baghdad on Friday, Mehrabian said: "There have been significant exchanges in exporting technical and engineering services in the field of electricity industry between the two countries."

Mehrabian stated that capable Iranian companies have built power plants in Iraq, saying: "In addition to exchanging experience regarding the maintenance and repair of power plants, network development, etc., good negotiations have also been held in other fields."

"There are common issues between the two countries of Iran and Iraq regarding water and electricity industries and the two sides have many exchanges in this field," the minister added.

Mehrabian further mentioned the long history of electricity exchanges between the two neighbors and said: "Today, the capacities of electricity exchange between the two countries have increased." ► Page 4



Absurd Theatre

The very expensive coronation of Charles III was held with the opposition shouting "Not My King"

By Sadra Torabi

TEHRAN - On Saturday, the 74-year-old man was anointed and crowned. Charles III, the longest-serving monarch-in-waiting in British history, finally ascended to the throne after the death of his mother, Queen Elizabeth II.

The crown was placed on Charles III's head by Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who is considered the religious leader of the Church of England. He placed the "Crown of St. Edward" on the king's head, which is one of Britain's royal crowns.

This is the only time that Charles III will wear this crown during his lifetime. The crown



Members of the anti-monarchist group Republic stage a protest close to Westminster Abbey in central London, on May 6, 2023.

was made in 1661 for the coronation of Charles II. So far, six British kings have worn this crown. Meghan, Harry's wife, did not attend the coronation ceremony. In his recently published

memoir, Prince Harry revealed the disagreements he has with some members of the royal family, including his brother William.

The Coronation of King Charles III: all the latest details

Sparkling with nearly 3,000 stones, including 2,868 diamonds, 273 pearls, 17 sapphires, 11 emeralds, and five rubies, the piece weighs in at a hefty 2.3lbs (1.06kg). Some jewellery experts have estimated it to be worth between £3 billion and £5 billion, with the 317-carat Cullinan II (the diamond at the centre of the piece) alone being estimated at £400 million. ► Page 5

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Tehran Papers

In the following column, we take a look at some important contents and views in Yesterday's Iranian newspapers.

The need to end strategic patience towards Baku

In a commentary, Vatan-e-Emrooz discussed the ways to make sanctions less effective. It wrote: If the Islamic Republic of Iran becomes part of the East-West and North-South corridors, ► Page 2

Ringleader of terrorist group in Iran executed

TEHRAN- The architect of a deadly terrorist attack in southwest Iran in 2018 was executed on Saturday.

The death sentence was carried out against Habib Farajollah Chaab, also known as Habib Asyud, the ringleader of the so-called Harkat al-Nazal terrorist and separatist group, according to the Mizan news agency.

The death penalty against him was confirmed by the Supreme Court on March 12 on charges of corruption on earth through establishing, managing, and leading a militant group called "Harkat al-Nazal". The group orchestrated and carried out numerous terrorist operations in the oil rich province of Khuzestan.

Last year, he pled guilty and admitted to masterminding the 2018 massacre as well as several other terrorist crimes against the Iranian people.

Chaab acknowledged receiving Swedish citizenship and government support and said to have received a gadget that would notify Swedish security personnel to his whereabouts anytime he was in danger.

Chaab acknowledged receiving Swedish citizenship and government support

Iranian Artists Forum shows "Reflections of Spain"

TEHRAN - An exhibition of paintings by Iranian artists entitled "Reflections of Spain" ("Reflejos de España") is currently underway at the Iranian Artists Forum (IAF) in Tehran.

The exhibit opened on Thursday during a special ceremony attended by IAF director Mohammad-Mehdi Asgarpur, Spanish Ambassador Angel Losada Fernandez and a number of foreign diplomats and Iranian artists.

Hamid Pazuki is the curator of the exhibition, which is displaying works by 18 artists representing their ideas about Spain.

Among the artists are Ehsan Azari, Razieh Iranpur, Parisima Bahrami, Vahid Beikverdi, Mahnaz Hassanpur, Nushin Khodadadi, Kasra Sharifi-Monfared, Golbarg Shabani and Yasna Askari.

The exhibition, which will run until May 15, also showcases works by Mehdi Alainejad, Shirin Ghaffari, Farzad Qazi-Zahedi, Maral Qandili, Mahziar Kabiri, Bahareh Mollapur, Alireza Nekui, Niusha Niujpur and Payam Yasini.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, IAF director Asgarpur expressed his thanks to Losada Fernandez for his contributions to the event.

"Opening a window to a dialogue among civilizations in the language of art is perhaps the best and sole way to keep the peace in the world," Asgarpur noted. ► Page 8



On the last day of national health week, a video mapping was carried out on the iconic Azadi Tower in Tehran on Friday, May 5. With the slogan "Health for All" the event was held to honor healthcare workers.

TEHRAN PAPERS

The need to end strategic patience towards Baku

In the following column, we take a look at some important contents and views in the yesterday's Iranian newspapers.

From page 1 ► the effects of sanctions on the country will be lessened in medium term and introduction of sanctions will be practically impossible in the long term as Iran plays an important role in regional and Asian economies. In view of this fact, it is necessary to pay special attention to increase the speed of Iran's junction to these corridors in the current year.

Certainly, the policy of strategic patience towards Baku has not achieved significant results so far. In fact, the continuation of such a policy will not work and the Islamic Republic of Iran needs to use many other available tools and options.

Sobh-e-No: Victory prayer in the Umayyad mosque

In its editorial, Sobh-e-No addressed Raisi's visit to Syria. It said: A decade ago, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who was planning visit to Damascus after an overthrow of Bashar al-Assad, sarcastically said: "After praying at Saladin Ayubi's grave, we will go to the big yard of the Umayyad Mosque to pray there!" Now, after 12 years of war in Syria and despite the regional and international enemies against the Assad government, it was Iran that celebrated its victory in Shamat instead, and the president of our country prayed in the Umayyad Mosque.

The Syrian people, along with their supportive resistance front, these days are seeing the result of their years of resistance, and they are reminding their enemies with strength that they will never give up their values ??and will stand against any oppression, aggression and imposition of policies.

Ham Mihan: Hidden deterrence

In an analysis, Ham Mihan addressed the situation of the nuclear case. It wrote: It seems that a direct dialogue between Iran and Washington is unlikely considering the events of the last one year, as some politicians in the government of Raisi believe that there is no need to talk with America. They argue Iran can solve its problems by getting closer to Russia and China. In terms of geopolitical changes, the rising influence of

China and Russia will present suitable economic and security alternatives, which will directly favor Tehran. Apparently, the Raisi government is no longer interested in having Western companies as its main business partners and it is counting on an economic future dependent on China and a security future dependent on Russia.

Although reformists did not agree with abandoning the nuclear program, they believed that reviving the JCPOA would bring more benefits to Iran. Now, with the isolation of this political faction, a group has taken power that is not at all afraid of being isolated by the West. Rather, with keeping this situation they favor an Iran which is on the verge of nuclear break-out and they are not willing to give up the capabilities they have acquired. Some of them also believe that this situation gives a kind of hidden deterrence to Iran, which is considered a very valuable defense tool against foreign threats.

Kayhan: It seems that some are upset about humiliation of America!

Kayhan dedicated its editorial to the president's visit to Syria and said: The recent visit of the Iranian president to Syria, in addition to America and Israel, also had a special message for the Western-leaning groups inside Iran. Just a few years ago, in the midst of the war between Qassem Soleimani's soldiers and the ISIS terrorists, the radical reformist figures pretending as expert said: "Syria also wants the JCPOA"! This spectrum claimed that through negotiations with America, the desired result in the region can be achieved with much lower costs!

America wanted to overthrow the ruling Syrian political system, but Syria persisted and Washington's attempts ended in failure. In fact, a global project against the region and Islamic countries failed. On the contrary, Syria's power and credibility was significantly improved through an alliance with the resistance and the Islamic Republic. America knows that this issue can be generalized, and for this reason, it is deeply upset about increase and extension of this process to other countries in the region.

Iran FM expresses concern over 'worrying' situation in Sudan

TEHRAN- Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Iran's Foreign Minister, has voiced alarm over the "worrying" situation in Sudan caused by international intervention.

In a post on his Twitter account on Friday, Amir Abdollahian said that "Sudan situation is so worrying. If proper measures are not taken, Sudan territorial integrity is jeopardized with ramifications for the region."

He expressed sadness over international meddling and provocation in Sudan, urging local discussion and understanding to settle the dispute.

The senior Iranian diplomat tweeted that "domestic dialog and understanding seem to be the most viable option to end crisis."

The de facto leader of Sudan, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, who is in charge of the regular army, and his deputy-turned-rival Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, who heads the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) engaged in deadly fighting starting on April 15.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has estimated that so far over 551 people have



been killed and 4,926 injured; however, it has been indicated that the actual death toll is likely far higher owing to the difficulty in reaching medical facilities.

Tens of thousands of refugees have fled over Sudan's borders as a result of the violence, which also poses a threat to a volatile region of Africa between the Sahel and the Red Sea.

The UNHCR has urged states to be sympathetic to fleeing populations and estimates that 860,000 people have left Sudan.

Resistance front stronger, more unified than ever: Foreign Ministry

TEHRAN- The Axis of Resistance is now more unified and powerful than it has ever been, according to Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani, who also lauded the close ties between resistance groups in the West Asia region.

In a message posted on his Twitter account on Friday, Kanaani stated that "the Islamic Republic of Iran has always firmly supported Palestine as the most strategic issue of the Muslim world."

"Iran has prevented the world's arrogant powers from sidelining the Palestinian issue from international priorities," he noted.

The spokesman asserted that although the Palestinians are still oppressed, they are strong and capable of self-defense.

On the second day of his visit to Damascus on Thursday, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi met separately with the heads and commanders of the Palestinian resistance groups as well as Palestinian academics.

Raisi described Palestine and attempts to liberate al-Quds as the main concerns of the Muslim world and asserted that resistance has proven to be the sole means of confronting Israel and advancing the objectives of the Muslim world.

Ringleader of terrorist group in Iran executed

Habib Farajollah Chaab was the mastermind of terrorist attack in Ahwaz in 2018 that left 25 dead and 270 others injured

From page 1 ► The defendant was questioned by Judge Iman Afshari about whether he acknowledges that he is a Swedish national and receives help from the government and intelligence agencies of that country which he answered that the Swedish government supports him and that he is a resident and national of Sweden.

"They gave me a device so I could press its button when I felt danger, and it would alert the Swedish government security agents, and they would rescue me wherever I was," he confessed.

During the session, the prosecutor's representative Amin Vaziri said that Sweden had become a refuge for terrorist organizations including PJAK, the Nadhal Movement, and the MKO.

"Chaab is a Swedish citizen and has been receiving support from the Swedish government while he has had a red warning and has been under prosecution of international organizations," he added.

The prosecutor's representative mentioned that Chaab was detained in Poland in 2019 after traveling there to attend a conference



of terrorist organizations, but the Swedish government intervened and the U.S. administration started lobbying to have him returned to Sweden on a special flight so that he could mastermind terrorist activities there.

During his prosecution, Chaab also said Saudi Arabia spent €30 million for the establishment of Iran International, a London-based anti-Iran TV channel, which raised controversy on the day of the Ahwaz attack by allowing a spokesman of the Al-Ahwa-ziya terrorist group to go live on

air to defend the bloodshed.

Last year, Kazem Gharibabadi, Secretary of Iran's High Council for Human Rights, said that Sweden was the terrorist group's primary stronghold, with its ringleader located there and the Swedish secret service providing him and his companions with considerable assistance.

"Even when Habib Asyud was arrested at request of the Iran Interpol in one of the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf region, the Swedes intervened immediately

Security chief blames US for Israeli terror acts on Iran's nuclear sites

From page 1 ► Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution, has even issued a fatwa (religious decree) saying that nuclear weapons research, acquisition, and use are all prohibited by Islamic law.

Up to seven Iranian nuclear experts have been assassinated by the Israeli regime, including Dr. Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, who was the victim of a planned assassination in 2020.

Iran's nuclear facilities have also been re-

peatedly the target of terrorist attacks by the Israeli regime.

Israel is the sole owner of nuclear weapons, including hundreds of atomic bombs in West Asia.

The Tel Aviv regime has, however, consistently avoided all forms of responsibility to international bodies, most notably the United Nations, owing to the blind support of its main supporter, the United States.



Tehran-Riyadh détente throws cold water on the Abraham Accords: analysis

TEHRAN - In a commentary on May 2, the Strait Times said the China-brokered deal between Iran and Saudi Arabia "throws cold water on the Abraham Accords."

In its analysis the Strait Times also said, "At a time when the United States seeks to portray China's rise as a threat to the global order, Beijing found a way to demonstrate its stabilizing capacity and its knack for peacemaking."

Part of the article headlined "Lessons from China's role in Middle East diplomacy" reads as follows:

The Saudi-Iranian normalization deal brokered by China has sent shockwaves throughout the region. Regional actors had not expected China to suddenly desire a political role in the Persian Gulf. Others were skeptical of Beijing's diplomatic capacity and skills. Few, however, were as surprised as foreign policy hands in Washington - even though it is the United States' actions and missteps that inadvertently created both the opportunity for Beijing to mediate and the environment that compelled regional actors to sue for peace.

Despite skepticism in the West of the depth and durability of the normalization deal, Tehran and Riyadh appear to have moved at an impressive pace to implement the agreement signed in Beijing earlier in March. On April 12, only a month after the signing of the deal, the Iranian embassy in Saudi Arabia reopened its gates for the first time in seven years as an Iranian delegation arrived to inspect the premises. Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler, Crown Prince Mohamed Bin Salman, has invited Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi to visit Riyadh. It would be the first visit of an Iranian President to Saudi in 24 years. Raisi has reportedly accepted.

Moreover, fruits of the normalization are starting to emerge throughout the region, again, faster than many expected. (The only regional state explicitly opposed to the agreement is Israel.) The war in Yemen is now on the verge of a per-

manent truce with the Saudis and Houthis engaged in intense peace talks. A major prisoner exchange has already taken place with roughly 900 prisoners released. Talks are underway to release up to 15,000 prisoners. Fabrizio Carboni, the Red Cross' regional director, said the release "gives a sense of momentum" for efforts to end the war.

This does not necessarily mean that the Yemeni conflict will be fully resolved, as the Yemenis must still come to an agreement amongst themselves on a political solution. But Saudi Arabia's exit from the war and the lifting of the blockade are critical steps towards an intra-Yemeni political dialogue.

Washington's irritation

Commentators in Washington have sought to downplay China's role and the importance of the agreement by either shifting credit to Oman and Iraq - two countries that played an important role in laying the groundwork for the agreement - or by asserting that resolving the Saudi-Iranian dispute was a low hanging diplomatic fruit.

Neither criticisms are fully valid. Though Iraq and Oman both played important roles in setting the stage for the normalization, Beijing's role was instrumental in bringing the deal across the finishing line. By acting as the guarantor of the deal, China helped overcome Tehran and Riyadh's mutual mistrust. Neither of them can afford tensions with Beijing, which gave both of them confidence that the other party would abide by the agreement.

Still, Washington's annoyance is understandable. At a time when the United States seeks to portray China's rise as a threat to the Global Order, Beijing found a way to demonstrate its stabilizing capacity and its knack for peacemaking. Moreover, the agreement frustrates the Biden administration's Middle East policies in two important ways.

First, it throws cold water on the Abraham Accords - the decoupling of Israeli-Arab normalization agree-

ments from progress on resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Expanding the Accords has been the Biden administration's top priority - far exceeding the desire to revive the Iran nuclear deal, for instance. Much of the Biden administration's embarrassing deference to the Saudi Crown Prince has been rooted in the hope Riyadh would join the Accords under Biden's watch. Instead, MBS normalized relations with Iran.

Saudi Arabia may still normalize relations with Israel down the road, but there will be no major Middle Eastern powers opening embassies in Israel any time soon.

The only regional state explicitly opposed to the agreement is Israel.

Secondly, as Biden has failed to revive the JCPOA, the United States' de facto Plan B is an intensification of Donald Trump's "maximum pressure" strategy - a policy that the Biden team itself has deemed unworkable. Intensifying Iran's economic and political isolation will be much harder if Iran is improving relations with key neighbors such as Saudi Arabia.

Yet, America's own policies have inadvertently helped bring out the breakthrough between Iran and Saudi Arabia. On the immediate level, the timing of the normalization between the two Persian Gulf powers reflects their mutual realization that continued hostility served neither side.

But at a structural level, the realization that though the United States might not be leaving the region militarily, it no longer has the will to fight in or for the region, has spurred a flurry of intra-regional diplomacy - from Turkish-Egyptian talks to the burying of the hatchet between Riyadh, Abu Dhabi, and Doha, to Saudi-Iranian talks.

and returned him to Sweden on a private flight. Sweden has also been home to members of the terrorist Mujahedin Khalq Organization (MKO)," Gharibabadi added.

"Why does Sweden claim to be an advocate of human rights, fight against terrorism and a world of peace, security and stability, while it is hosting terrorist groups?" he questioned.

The terrorist supported by Sweden was apprehended in November 2020 as a result of "specialized and joint measures" carried out by Iranian security forces.

The terrorist group Harkat al-Nazal has been waging an armed battle with the Iranian government in an effort to sever the southwestern province of Khuzestan, which is home to the nation's Arab majority, from the rest of Iran.

It claimed responsibility for an attack on a military parade in Ahwaz, the provincial capital of Khuzestan, in September 2018, which killed 25 people, including members of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) and civilian spectators, and injured over 270 others.

Security chief blames US for Israeli terror acts on Iran's nuclear sites



Once US partners realized that they no longer could hide behind American military power, diplomacy with their regional foes became vastly more attractive. But as long as the US's military presence tilted the balance of power in their direction, sustaining the conflicts and avoiding diplomacy was the optimal policy.

Intended or not, America's military domination has served as an obstacle to regional conflict resolution.

As Annelle Sheline, an expert on religious and political authority in the Middle East and North Africa, pointed out shortly after the normalization deal was announced: MBS has only seven years left to realize his Vision 2030. For that, he needs to extract Saudi Arabia from its many conflicts. He could go with the American option of continuing to buy American weaponry while hoping that Iran would be deterred by the fear that America might still come to Riyadh's defenses. Or he could go with the Chinese option of attaining deeper security by suing for real peace with Iran. He chose the latter.

The Middle East will indeed enter a new era if this becomes the new normal: A China that offers more reliable security through peace than America can offer through deterrence.

At a minimum, Washington must by now recognize that more and more countries are welcoming a transition toward a multipolar world where China is a major stakeholder. Seeking to reverse this geopolitical trend will only further weaken America and destabilize the world. America's best option is to adjust to this reality and explore ways to collaborate with China in order to create a more stable planet where our focus increasingly can shift from inter-state conflicts to shared challenges such as Climate Chaos. In that process, the Saudi-Iranian normalization can be turned into a stepping stone toward multilateral stabilizing efforts from Afghanistan to even the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Speakers of Iran, Uzbekistan parliaments hold meeting in Tehran

TEHRAN – Uzbek Parliament Speaker Nurdinjon Ismoilov arrived in Tehran late on Friday and met Saturday with his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf.

Ismoilov is visiting Iran at the invitation of Qalibaf. He arrived in Iran at the head of Uzbek parliamentary delegation.

Qalibaf and Ismoilov held a joint press conference after their meeting. Speaking at the presser, Qalibaf said improving relations with Iran's neighbors is a priority of Iran's foreign policy.

At the beginning of the presser, Qalibaf welcomed his Uzbek counterpart. "We are very happy that today we are hosting the Speaker of the Parliament of Uzbekistan and that he has made his trip to Iran. According to the policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which has prioritized the development of relations with neighboring countries and the region, especially Islamic countries, the development of relations with Uzbekistan is one of our priorities," he said.

He added, "One of the important axes of our interactions in the development of relations with Uzbekistan is the political, economic and cultural spheres, and as our dear nation knows, the friendly and brotherly country of Uzbekistan ranks first among Central Asian countries in terms of population."

The speaker of the parliament noted, "We have good and favorable opportunities in the development of economic, transportation and transit relations with Uzbekistan, especially in the use of the important north-south corridor and the east-west corridor, the development of transit relations can play a role."

Qalibaf stated, "Last year, we had an official visit to Tashkent, the president of our country also visited this country, and the recent visit of the speaker of the parliament of Uz-



bekistan is in response to the visit of the parliamentary delegation of our country to Tashkent last year."

He pointed out, "In the development of relations with Uzbekistan, our priority is especially in the economic sector, transportation, tourism, communication and the passage of trucks in transit axes. However, we are looking for cultural exchanges and development of relations in this field."

Qalibaf said he had a long meeting with Ismoilov which last an hour and a half. He said they discussed important issues in this meeting, including the situation in Afghanistan. "We are also trying to play a constructive role by developing cooperation and bringing together our points of view in the formation of a national government in Afghanistan for their people and with the presence of different ethnic groups," he added, according to Mehr News.

He noted, "Definitely, these visits will help to expand the development of economic, political and cultural relations between the two countries."

Qalibaf said, "The second important factor in the development of the relations between the parliaments of the two countries is that it is necessary to approve the contracts and

agreements between Tehran and Tashkent more quickly in the parliaments of the two countries."

He said, "It is also necessary to have regional cooperation between Iran and Uzbekistan in regional, Asian, Islamic and international meetings. And with the convergence of views, positions and points of view between the two countries, this will be realized and will always pave the way for regional and international development and will lead to the cohesion and progress and development of our countries."

Ismoilov meets President Raisi

The Uzbek official met with President Ebrahim Raisi. In this meeting, Raisi underlined the need for the implementation of agreement between the two countries.

"18 cooperation agreements and memoranda of understanding have been signed between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Uzbekistan, and the acceleration of their implementation will greatly increase the level of relations," he said, according to the official website of the Iranian presidency.

He further added, "The exchange of experiences between the parliaments of Iran and Uzbekistan will be an effective and positive step towards development of relations be-

tween the two countries."

President Raisi described the civilizational and cultural common grounds between Iran and Uzbekistan as a suitable ground for promoting economic cooperation and stated, "The growth of political and economic relations between Iran and Uzbekistan in the past year has made the situation different compared to the past, but the existing capacities require more efforts for the promotion of relations."

The Chairman of the Legislative Chamber of Uzbekistan, for his part, praised the foreign policy of Ayatollah Raisi in prioritizing the development of relations with neighbors and said, "In Uzbekistan, in line with this principled policy, during the amendment of the Constitution, the development of relations with neighbors in given priority."

Stating that the parliaments of the two countries should play an effective role in the development of the cooperation between the governments, the Chairman of the Legislative Chamber of Uzbekistan stated, "I assure that the Parliament of Uzbekistan will use all its facilities and capacities in order to implement the agreements between the two countries."

Iran to continue to support Syria: Raisi

TEHRAN – Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi has said that Iran supported Syria in the past and will continue to do so in the future.

Iran is determined to support the Syrian people and the resistance axis, Raisi said in an interview with the official Syrian SANA news agency.

President Raisi pointed out that the Americans occupied some areas in Syria to loot its resources in an attempt to achieve their goals that they failed to achieve through terrorism, but the resistance of the Syrian people will defeat their plots, and victory will be Syria's ally in the end.

Raisi stressed that the solution to the concerns of Syria's neighboring countries is the return of all Syrian lands to the sovereignty of the state, stressing that there should be no Turkish forces on any part of the Syrian territory.

The Iranian president pointed out that Syria is at the forefront of the countries of resistance and it stood clearly and strongly against Zionist greed, ambitions and aggressions, and assumed a prominent stance in this alliance, cooperating with everyone who stands against the Zionist entity.

Raisi affirmed that Syria stands against the forces of global evil in order to achieve justice and peace. "We are in Iran and under the leadership of Imam Khamenei insists on standing



by the Syrian people and constantly supporting the axis of resistance," he added.

Raisi noted, "We witnessed in Iran threats and sanctions, but that didn't weak our strength and not succeed to weaken us, this is not only from our point of view; rather it is the point of view of White House which announced that this policy has failed in Iran, and we transferred these threats and sanctions to a chance for us."

He that Syria has resisted the war and sedition launched by the US and Israel during the past 12 years, and today the conditions become different in the sense that a lot of countries which have been imposing restrictions on the country changed their stances, which means

that the Resistance has won.

On the Iranian-Saudi relations, Raisi said that the two countries are large and the return of relations between them will change balances in the region and regulate them, and the Islamic peoples in the region go towards supporting the resistance and justice.

As for Syria-Turkey relations, Raisi said that his country has affirmed that all Syrian territory should return to the Syrian State; and the Syrian government has to establish its control on all the lands, after that, security would return to the border region.

"There should not be any presence of Turkish troops in any Syrian territory," President Raisi added, according to SANA.

talks, with Turkey indicating earlier that Ankara would be "pleased if Iran is involved in this process."

In late April, Iranian Defense Minister Mohammad Reza Ashtiyani arrived in the Russian capital to take part in a joint meeting with counterparts from Russia, Turkey, and Syria.

Iran's official news agency IRNA said the meeting was aimed at normalizing relations between Turkey and Syria.

Negotiations to normalize relations between Damascus and Ankara first started on December 28, 2022 with the presence of the defense ministers of Russia,

Syria and Turkey in Moscow. In this meeting, the parties agreed on the formation of a tripartite joint commission.

Following these negotiations, it was decided that these meetings would be held at the level of foreign ministers, and direct negotiations between Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Bashar Assad, the presidents of Turkey and Syria, would also be on the agenda, Al Alam reported.

A four-way meeting of the Deputy Foreign Ministers of Syria, Russia, Iran and Turkey regarding the developments in Syria was held in Moscow in early April.

Iran into IIHF Ice Hockey Women's Asia final

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Singapore 3-0 on Saturday and advanced to the final match of the 2023 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's Asia and Oceania Championship.

Team Melli had previously defeated India 17-1, Kuwait 20-0, Kyrgyzstan 26-0 and the UAE 14-0 in their previous matches.

Earlier in the day, Thailand defeated India 13-0 to book their place in the final.

Iran will play Thailand on Sunday in the final match, while India face Singapore in the bronze medal match.

The event started on April 30 in Bangkok, Thailand and will finish on May 7.

Persepolis earn hard-fought win over Paykan: IPL

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team returned top of Iran Professional League (IPL) table with a 1-0 win over Paykan here on Saturday.

The Reds were awarded a penalty in the 80th minute after their Brazilian forward Leandro Pereira was brought down in the area and Mehdi Torabi converted his penalty.

In Ghaemshahr, Nassaji were held to a 1-1 draw by Havadar and Aluminum beat Gol Gohar 1-0 in their away match in Sirjan.

Persepolis returned to top with 60 points, one point ahead of Sepahan.

Esteghlal remained third with 56 points.

Mes Kerman coach Hosseinkhani steps down

TEHRAN – Farzad Hosseinkhani stepped down from coaching Mes Kerman football team.

Mes Kerman is on the verge of being relegated from Iran Professional League (IPL).

The team lost to Tractor 3-1 in Kerman on Friday and Hosseinkhani announced his resignation shortly after the match.

With two weeks remaining, Mes Kerman sits 14th in the IPL 16-team.

Urawa Red crowned champions of 2022 ACL

TEHRAN – J-League side Urawa Reds claimed their third Asian Champions League football title Saturday with a 2-1 aggregate win over Saudi Arabia's Al Hilal in the long-delayed final of the tournament.

An own goal from Al Hilal winger Andre Carrillo proved the difference in the second leg of the final at a windy Saitama Stadium near Tokyo following a 1-1 draw in last Saturday's opening leg in Riyadh.

The victory means Urawa added the 2022 title to their successes in 2007 and 2017.

"The team played very well here, much better than in the first leg in Riyadh," said Al Hilal coach Ramon Diaz, who also coached the club when the two teams met in the 2017 final. "They tried to create many chances, but unfortunately we couldn't translate any of them into goals."

Iran victorious over New Zealand at 2023 Water Polo World Cup Division 2

TEHRAN – Iran defeated New Zealand 17-14 in the Men's Preliminary Round - Group A of the 2023 Men's Water Polo World Cup, Division 2 on Friday.

Team Melli had earlier lost to Romania 15-4 in Group B.

Iran will meet Kazakhstan on Saturday.

Group A consists of China, Germany, Malta and South Africa.

The tournament is being held in Berlin, Germany from May 5 to 7.

15 weightlifters to represent Iran at 2023 Asian Championships

TEHRAN – Iran will send 10 male and five female weightlifters to the 2023 Asian Weightlifting Championships.

The Asian Weightlifting Championships will be held in Jinju, Republic of Korea from May 5 to 13.

The continental championship will be the second qualifying event for the Paris Olympic Games after the World Weightlifting Championships 2022.

Men's Squad:

Hossein Soltani (81kg), Kianoush Rostami and Mostafa Javadi (89kg), Ayoub Mousavi (96kg), Sohrab Moradi and Reza Dehdar (102kg), Mehdi Karami and Amir Azizi (109kg) and Ayat Sharifi and Alireza Yousefi (+109kg) will represent Iran in the competition.

Women's Squad:

Reyhaneh Karimi (59kg), Fatemeh Keshavarz (64kg), Elham Hosseini and Parisa Nourali (81kg), Zeynab Sheikh Hassan Arbab (87kg)

Iran not to compete at 2023 Asian Women's Handball

By Farrokh Hesabi

TEHRAN – Iran women's youth handball team will not take part in the 10th edition of the 2023 Asian Women's Youth Handball Championship in India, announced by the Iranian Handball Federation.

Ten teams, including defending champions South Korea and hosts India, will participate in the competition, which will double up as an automatic qualifier for the World Youth Women's Handball Championship, scheduled to be staged in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden from November 30 to December 17, 2023.

The draw for the 10th Asian Women's Youth (U18) Handball Championship was held on May 2, 2023 at the Asian Handball Federation Headquarters, South Surrah, Kuwait.

Based on the draw, Group A comprises Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Rep. of Korea, China, and Nepal. In Group B, India, Japan, Chinese Taipei, Bangladesh, and Hong Kong will compete.

The Iranian girls made history by winning a gold medal in the 2022 Asian Women's Youth Handball Championship.

However, the country's handball federation decided not to send the team to India.

"We are looking to send the high-quality teams in different women's handball competitions," said a source close to the handball federation to the Tehran Times.

"It was decided by the federation to send the youth team, instead of the junior team, to the Asian Championship. It was because of the loaded schedule of the federation in terms of international competitions, and also it was because of the financial limitations of the handball federation," he added.

"The current women's youth team are mainly composed of the players who won the 2022 Asian Women's Youth Handball Championship and participated in the 2022 Women's Youth World Handball Championship in Georgia.

"Based on that, the board of directors of the handball federation decided to send this experienced team, now as the youth team, to the Asian competitions, instead of the current women's junior team.

"Theyouth team are currently in the preparation camp in the Handball Federation Hall. With various training camps, the Iran women's junior team will definitely have a powerful presence in Asia next year," the source added.

Value of trade between Iran, Turkey stands at \$1.379b in Q1



TEHRAN – The value of trade between Iran and Turkey stood at \$1.379 billion during the first quarter of 2023, down 14 percent from \$1.619 billion in the first three months of 2022, according to the figures recently released by the Turkish Statistical Institute.

Based on the mentioned data, Turkey's export to Iran rose two percent to \$702 million in the three-month period of this year, from \$682 million in the same time span of the previous year.

Iran's three-month export to Turkey fell 27 percent to \$677 million from \$932 million.

Based on the data previously released by the Turkish Statistical Institute, the value of Iran's exports to neighboring Turkey increased by 19 percent to reach \$3.35 billion in 2022.

Turkey had imported over \$2.82 billion worth of commodities from the Islamic Republic in 2021.

Based on the mentioned data, Iran's imports from the country also marked an 11-percent rise to hit \$3.07 billion in the past year, in comparison with 2021, when the figure was \$2.77 billion.

According to the Turkish Statistical Institute, the trade between the two countries has registered a 15-percent rise in 2022.

The value of trade between the two neighbors reached \$6.42 billion in 2022, while the figure stood at \$5.59 billion in the preceding year.

Iran's trade balance with Turkey has been \$280 million positive in favor of Iran in the past year.

As announced by an official with Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), the value of Iran's export to Turkey increased by 23 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

Farzad Piltan, the director-general of TPO's Office of West Asian Countries, said that based on the data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), Iran exported commodities worth \$7.45 billion to its neighbor in 1401, while the

figure was \$6.079 in 1400.

Saying that Turkey was Iran's third top export destination in the past year, the official named natural gas, aluminum, urea, polyethylene, copper cathode and cathode parts, copper wires, iron and steel ingots, and polyethylene as the major products Iran exported to Turkey in the previous year.

Piltan further announced that Iran's import from Turkey also rose 15 percent to about \$6 billion in 1401, from \$5.2 billion in 1400.

Stating that Turkey was the third source of import for Iran in the previous year, the official named sunflower seed oil, road tractors, corn, bananas, generators, barley, soybeans, synthetic fibers, crude soybean oil, and solid acrylic polymers as the main items Iran imported from its neighbor in 1401.

In last July, Iran and Turkey discussed ways of expanding economic relations along with political ties at the Turkish-Iranian High-Level Cooperation Council in Tehran.

During the meeting, which was co-chaired by Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the two sides negotiated the extension of the gas export contract between the two sides for the next 25 years.

In the meeting, President Raisi noted that the Islamic Republic of Iran is determined to expand economic relations with neighboring countries.

The president also evaluated Tehran-Ankara ties as positive and progressive, saying that the two countries should pursue appropriate policies to move towards increasing their annual trade exchanges to \$30 billion.

Iran's export to Turkey up 23% in past Iranian year

On the sidelines of the mentioned meeting, Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian also held talks with Turkish Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Fatih Dönmez in which the two sides exchanged views on cooperation in energy fields.

TEDPIX gains 20,000 points on Saturday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 20,559 points to 2.535 million on Saturday.

As reported, over 26.031 billion securities worth 192.079 trillion rials (about \$457.3 million) were traded at the TSE.

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).

Commodities worth \$579m exported from Zanjan province in a year

TEHRAN- Commodities valued at \$579 million were exported from Zanjan province in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20), the head of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department announced.

Saying that six countries were added to the export destinations of the province, Majid Golshani said that currently, the main export target countries of the province are Turkey, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Pakistan, India, Azerbaijan, Oman, South Africa, Russia, and Spain.

He named zinc ingots, transformers and accessories, rebars, steel ingots, copper wire, zinc concentrate, cardboard, lead ingots, and dairy products as the main exported items.

The official further announced that commodities worth \$504 million were imported to the province in the



previous year, and named Turkey, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, Germany, Slovakia, Singapore, Italy, China, Hong Kong, and Spain as the main sources of imports.

He listed wood pulp, recycled paper and cardboard, tobacco, polyamide and plastic tape, production line machines, polyamide thread and polyester thread as the major imported items.

As announced by the spokesman of Trade Development Committee of the Iranian House of Industry, Mining, and Trade, the value of Iran's non-oil

export rose 10 percent in the past year.

Ruhollah Latifi said that 122.056 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$53.166 billion were exported in the previous year.

China with the purchase of \$14.584 billion of commodities (no change), Iraq with \$10.238 billion (15 percent growth), Turkey with \$7.459 billion (23 percent growth), the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with \$5.767 billion (28 percent growth), and India with \$2.146 billion (18 percent growth) were the first five export destinations of Iranian goods in 1401, the official stated.

Latifi further announced that 37.18 million tons of non-oil commodities valued at \$59.655 billion were imported to the country during the past year, with a 10 percent drop in weight, and a 13 percent rise in worth, year on year.

Iran, Vietnam explore ways of expanding trade ties

TEHRAN – Representatives of the private sectors of Iran and Vietnam discussed the ways of developing trade between the two sides in a meeting held at the place of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) on Saturday.

Chaired by Director-General for the Arab-African States in ICCIMA International Department Shahram Khasipour, the meeting was attended by a delegation of Vietnamese officials and businesspersons, the ICCIMA portal reported.

Speaking at the meeting, Khasipour underlined Vietnam's growing economy and said: "Vietnam's economy is growing and has experienced an eight percent growth last year, while the country's foreign exchange has also increased by 10 percent



in the mentioned year."

He further mentioned Iran's progress in the field of industry, technical and engineering services, and nanotechnology, noting that considering the existing capacities, the level of economic exchanges between the two countries can be significantly increased.

The official put the value of trade between Iran and Vietnam at around \$140 million to \$150 million, of which about \$45 million is the share of Iran's imports from Vietnam and around \$96 million is related to Iran's exports to the country.

Noting that the current level of trade does not correspond to the

available capacities, Khasipour stressed the need to increase commercial cooperation in areas like foodstuff including tropical fruits, coffee, dried fruits, etc., as well as construction materials, medicine, marine products, and the export of technical and engineering services in which Iran has ample experience.

He stated that it is possible to raise the level of exchange between the two countries up to two billion dollars and added: "In this regard, it is necessary for the governments of Iran and Vietnam to provide the necessary infrastructure, including monetary and financial mechanisms as well as establishing regular shipping lines and direct flights between the two countries."

Iran's technical, engineering services export to Iraq significantly rises

From page 1 ► Mehrabian, who is the head of the Regional Center on Urban Water Management (RCUWM), affiliated with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), arrived in Baghdad on Friday to attend the country's Third International Water Conference.

Also, in a meeting with Iraqi Minister of Water Resources Aoun Dhiab Abdullah late on Friday Mehrabian emphasized the need for the development of bilateral relations in the



Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian (L) and Iraqi Minister of Electricity Ziad Ali Fazel speak to the press in Baghdad on Friday.

water industry and noted that Iran is ready to implement joint water projects with Iraq.

He stressed that promoting the level of cooperation with neighboring countries, especially Iraq, is one of the priorities of the administration of President Ebrahim Raisi.

The relations between Iran and Iraq are presently 'amicable and friendly' but efforts should be made to improve and expand the level of the ties in the future at the highest level, Mehrabian emphasized.

Modern irrigation systems established in 2.8m ha of farmlands

TEHRAN - Iran's Deputy Agriculture Minister Safdar Niazi said 2.8 million hectares of the country's farmlands have been equipped with modern irrigation systems, Mehr News Agency reported.

According to Niazi the mentioned figure has been achieved since the beginning of the implementation of the Agriculture Ministry's modern irrigation systems development program.

Referring to the construction of irrigation and drainage sub-

networks in 1.6 million hectares of the country's farmlands, Niazi said: "So far, 33,000 kilometers of piped water transfer projects and 813,000 hectares of traditional river cover projects have been also implemented across the country."

The official noted that acceleration of the completion of semi-finished projects, the development of new technologies to improve agricultural water productivity, and strengthening the relationship with universities, research institutions, and specialized organizations are

among the most important policies and approaches of the Agriculture Ministry.

Recent droughts in Iran have raised the need to use new methods of irrigation. This issue is especially important in rural areas.

It is necessary to develop modern methods of irrigation and replace them instead of traditional irrigation by farmers due to the lack of water in most areas.

Considering the current situation when the country is facing water

challenges, the Agriculture Ministry has been implementing the development plan for new irrigation systems.

Back in May 2022, the ministry's project manager for the mentioned development plan said that the plan for developing modern irrigation systems has witnessed a significant leap in the past three years, as it is most effective in increasing the efficiency of water and soil resources and strengthening the country's food security.

A bright future ahead of stock market using modern financial instruments: MP

TEHRAN - A member of the Iranian Parliament's Planning and Budget Committee has said that a prosperous future is expected for the stock market by using modern financial instruments, IRNA reported.

Mohammadreza Mirtajedini said shareholders need to invest indirectly in the capital market using financial instruments such as investment funds before directly entering the market.

Pointing out that education is a necessity for people who want to enter the market, Mirtajedini

said: "With the help of investment funds and with a long-term view, shareholders can inject their capital into the market to bring the country's production to the required prosperity."

"In general, good measures have been taken or are being taken by the Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) to protect the shareholders and their capital, among which we can mention the implementation of the stock insurance plan," the official noted.

"By using modern financial instruments in the

capital market, we can envision a prosperous future for the market and witness the re-entry of liquidity to the stock market," he added.

The stock market transactions in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20) went through volatile days, which, according to experts, despite the value of the stock market for investment, the mistrust of shareholders and their fear of entering their capital into this market led to a decrease in liquidity and creating severe fluctuations in the stock market.

ONE STAGE TENDER RENEW INTERNATIONAL CALL

FOR

PURCHASE OF POT LINING MATERIALS

TENDER No.: J/6

DATE: 1th /MAY/2023



Iran Alumina

1.Subject.: Iran Alumina Company (IAC) intends to purchase pot lining materials for using in its Primary Aluminum Reduction Smelter Plant through one stage Tender according to following conditions as mentioned in the relevant Tender documents .:

2.: Bid Bond Guarantee: 85,259 Dollar/or 25,085,192,829 Rials

3.:Tender proposal.: Since the tendering is to be done in one stage ,thus the eligible Bidders should follow and regard the Tender instructions and present and submit all of required justified documents and the mentioned Tender envelopes in one package together.

4.:Closing Date.: The eligible Bidders should submit their Bids/proposal to the central administration office as mentioned below and also in the Tender documents before 16:00 pm ,local time , on the **day 06 th JUNE ,2023 .**

5.: Opening Date.: 13 th JUNE , 2023 on 10:00 AM.

6.: Contact information.: For more details and receiving the relevant Tender documents , the Bidders can refer to the following contact information.

Add.: Km 7 of Sankhast Road, city of Jajarm, Northern Khorasan Province, IRAN, P. O. Box:1135-94415 legal and contractual Affairs .

Tel .: 0098-58-32603067-32604231 **Fax:** 0098-58-32272487

website: www.iranalumina.ir **E-mail:** aluminumijajarm@gmail.com

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Second Announcement

Absurd Theatre

The very expensive coronation of Charles III held with the opposition shouting “Not My King”

From page 1 ▶ That said, several specialists have decided that putting a price on the crown's worth is 'nigh on impossible'. Royal expert Alastair Bruce has previously stated that the Crown Jewels collection (of which the crown is apart) was beyond monetary value.

The colonial legacy of the monarchy's crown jewels

The royal jewels are a legacy of Britain's colonial era, and after the death of the Queen, several countries demanded the return of these looted jewels to their own country.

One of the jewels believed to be featured in the Queen's sceptre, “The Great Star of Africa,” is a 530-carat jewel that was reportedly stolen from South Africa in 1905 and estimated to be worth \$400 million. The Imperial State Crown also reportedly includes a 317-carat diamond known as “The Second Star of Africa.” Both jewels were cut from the same diamond known as “The Cullinan Diamond.”

Queen Elizabeth II owns the largest clear-cut diamond in the world known as “The Great Star of Africa” the 530 carats gem was mined in South Africa back in 1905. It was stolen from South



Africa. It has an estimated worth of \$400 million...The British claim The Great Star of Africa was given to them as a symbol of friendship and peace, yet it was during the colonialism. The British then renamed it “Thomas Cullinan.”

Indians also want their diamond back. The 105.6-carat Kohinoor diamond is currently set in a crown worn by the late mother of Queen Elizabeth, for her coronation in 1937 as queen consort. The crown was worn again during Queen Elizabeth's coronation in 1953 and

is on display at the Jewel House in the Tower of London.

Not my king

During the coronation of the King and Queen of Britain, a relatively large group of anti-monarchy protesters in London's Trafalgar Square, where the ceremony was broadcast live on large screens, cheered on the coronation.

The sound of the coronation ceremony was broadcast loudly from speakers in the square. Every time the word “king” was mentioned in the ceremony, the protesters shouted, “Not My King”.

They also protested in various parts of the ceremony by cheering on and expressing their objection.

When after the anointing of the king by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the sentence “God Save the King” was announced, the protesters yelled louder than ever before and shouted the slogan of “Not My King”.

The massive cost of King Charles' coronation

Buckingham Palace hasn't released the official price tag on Prince Charles' coronation, but according to BBC it's expected to cost between £50 to 100 £million, although they report “that figure does not originate from an official source.”

So, who's footing the bill? The BBC reports that because it's a “state event” the coronation is being paid for by the UK government as well as Buckingham Palace, via the Sovereign Grant and Privy Purse. So it's at least in part being paid for by the British taxpayers, which

apparently 52% of Londoners were not thrilled about.

The BBC spoke to one person who said “we're struggling for heating and eating and they're splashing all this money out,” while another countered with “if it brings something to our economy, let's go for it.”

Absurd theatre

A lavish and futile theater was held while people in different cities in England chanted “We Don't Want a King”. Three incompetent governments in less than a year have resigned and replaced and England has broken the record for the highest inflation rate in Western Europe. Every month teachers, doctors, and nurses in England go on strike and students and patients are left stranded. The statistics of the sixth largest economy in the world tell the story of a significant increase in emergency food distribution and intensified poverty in the country over the past year. Rent prices in London have skyrocketed, with renting a room reaching £1,000 per month; an amount higher than 50% of a citizen's income. One person from every 5 households in England had skipped meals or not eaten for a whole day in January (International Food Foundation report). Some vulnerable English women have been forced into sexual relationship due to the cost-of-living crisis (The Guardian), and 6,500 rapes have been recorded in English hospitals (Daily Mail). The price rise of some food items has been seven times faster than wage increases, and the cost crisis is getting even worse (Daily Mirror).



Coming in from the cold: Escaping isolation

By Ted Snider

Joe Biden promised, while campaigning for the presidency, to make Saudi Arabia a “pariah.” He didn't. He promised to isolate Russia. He hasn't.

The US has experienced a recent deficit in its ability to enact its promises to isolate enemies. Its confidence is proving greater than its capacity.

The US promised to sanction and isolate Iran. But Iran is entering the Shanghai Cooperation Organization as a full member, unlocking access to top-level contacts and economic cooperation with nations representing a full 43% of the world's population, including giants like China, India and Russia.

In March, with the help of China, Saudi Arabia and Iran signed “an agreement to resume diplomatic relations between them and reopen their embassies and missions within a period not exceeding two months.” One month later, they signed an agreement to reopen their embassies and consulates in each other's countries.

The first achievement opens up Eurasia to Iran; the second has the potential to reintroduce Iran to the Sunni Muslim world and the Middle East region. Though not fully insulated from US sanctions and not desirous of being cut off from the US and the West, Iran has found an escape and has been neither starved nor isolated.

In America's backyard, the same is true for Cuba and Venezuela. In the 2022 iteration of the UN General Assembly vote on the US embargo of Cuba, the world voted 185-2 against US isolation of Cuba. Mexico demanded that the world not

just vote, but act and promised “to continue demanding that the blockade against Cuba be lifted.” Other Latin American countries joined in the call. Brazil's President Lula da Silva has urged Latin American and Caribbean nations to solve the problems of Cuba – and Venezuela – and treat them with “much affection.”

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has embraced both Venezuela and Cuba, including inviting Miguel Díaz-Canel of Cuba and Nicolás Maduro of Venezuela to the most recent meeting of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. Colombia has returned its ambassador to Venezuela and signed a joint declaration with Venezuela to consolidate bilateral relations and deepen integration. Peru, Honduras and Chile have reopened communications with Venezuela, Ecuador is considering re-establishing diplomatic relations with Venezuela, and Argentina has announced that they will re-establish ties.

In November, French President Emmanuel Macron addressed Maduro as “President” and shook his hand for one-and-a-half minutes while telling him that he “would be happy if we could talk to each other for longer to engage in useful bilateral work for the region.”

And while the US continues to insist on the isolation of Syria, Syria is similarly escaping that isolation. Saudi Arabia has backed the rebels fighting the Assad government. But, with the help of Russia, Syria and Saudi Arabia have recently agreed to reopen their embassies. That could be the door to reintegrating Syria into the Arab world from which it has been isolated.

Saudi Arabia is reported to be ready to formally invite Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to this May's Arab League summit in Riyadh. The invitation, Syria's first since 2011, would “formally end Syria's regional isolation.” Syria's readmission has a good chance of passing, though perhaps not passing unanimously. On April 1, Syria's foreign minister went to Cairo for the first official visit in twelve years to begin the process of reinstating Syria in the Arab League. And on April 12, Syria's foreign minister, Faisal Mekdad, arrived in Saudi Arabia for meetings with Prince Faisal bin Farhan, the Saudi foreign minister. It is the first visit to Saudi Arabia by a Syrian foreign minister since 2011.

And the reintegration is extending past the Arab world. Again under the auspices of Russia, on April 25, the defense ministers and intelligence chiefs of Syria and Turkey, together with their counterparts from Iran and Russia met in Moscow in order to “rebuild Turkey-Syria ties.” Like Saudi Arabia, Turkey has backed the armed opposition to Assad. This is the second time the Turkish and Syrian defense ministers have met in Moscow.

In the latest progression of Syria's reintroduction to the Arab world, the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Iraq and Syria on May 1 all joined in calling for Syrian “sovereignty” over all of its territory and for “the exit of all illegal foreign forces from it.”

As in Cuba, Venezuela and Iran, the US opposes the normalizations of relations with Syria. But the US ability to isolate its enemies does not seem to be keeping pace with its desire.

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Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

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WORLD HEADLINES

Two Palestinians killed by occupation forces



Two Palestinians were killed on Saturday morning by the Israeli occupation forces during an assault on Nur Shams refugee camp in the northern West Bank city of Tulkarm, according to medical sources.

The Ministry of Health said the two were brought dead to a hospital in Tulkarm and a third was brought with injuries in the limbs and is in stable condition.

The two were identified as Samer Salah Shafiee, 22, who was shot in the neck, chest, and belly, and Hamza Jamil Kharyoush, 22, shot in the chest, belly, and left leg.

Reports from Tulkarm said a large army force raided the refugee camp and in the process shot and killed the two youths and injured the third before leaving the area.

With the latest killings, the Israeli army shot and killed 108 Palestinians in the West Bank, East Jerusalem, inside Israel, and in the Gaza Strip since the start of the year, including 20 minors and two women. Two others have died in prison, including Khader Adnan who died after going on hunger strike for 86 days.

Thousands attend funeral prayers for Shia school teachers in Pakistan

Thousands of people attended the funeral prayers of seven Shia School teachers in Pakistan on Friday.

They were assassinated by unknown gunmen in northwestern Pakistan on Thursday, drawing nationwide condemnation, officials said.

The mourners also rallied against Thursday's killings. The teachers were gunned down by unidentified assailants who stormed a school in Kurram, a district in the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

The slain teachers were members of Pakistan's minority Shiite community, which extremist Sunni militant groups frequently target. The attack happened when the teachers were supervising exams at the school, and just hours after a separate attack killed another teacher — a Sunni Muslim — from the same school.

Saudi Arabia, US call on parties to conflict in Sudan for ceasefire

The United States and Saudi Arabia welcome the preliminary talks between the parties to the conflict in Sudan, which was held on Saturday (May 6) in Saudi Jeddah, and look forward to the active participation of the parties in the negotiations to secure a ceasefire. This is according to a joint statement by the two countries released on Friday by the press service of the US State Department.

“The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States welcome the start of pre-negotiation talks between representatives of the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces in Jeddah on May 6th

2023. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States urge both parties to take into consideration the interests of the Sudanese nation and its people and actively engage in the talks towards a ceasefire and end the conflict,” the statement says.

“The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States urge continued, coordinated international support for an expanded negotiation process that should include engagement with all Sudanese parties,” according to the document.

The US and Saudi Arabia also stressed “the efforts of the countries and organizations which supported these talks,” including the United Kingdom and the UAE as well as the League of Arab States, the UN mission in Sudan and the African Union.

Arab foreign ministers to decide on Syria's return to LAS on May 7



Arab foreign ministers on May 7 will make a decision to restore Syria's full membership of the League of Arab States (LAS), a LAS spokesman announced on Saturday.

“Tomorrow, the Arab foreign ministers will decide on Syria's return to the LAS,” El Sharq TV quoted the official as saying.

An early meeting of the LAS Council at the foreign minister level is expected to be held on Sunday at the organization's headquarters in Cairo with the restoration of Syria's membership featuring prominently on the agenda.

Thousands march in Tel Aviv against judicial reforms for 18th straight week

Thousands of Israelis protested for an 18th straight week against the hard-right regime's controversial judicial reforms, despite Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu shelving the overhaul more than a month ago.

Hundreds of demonstrators gathered in the central city of Rehovot, waving Israeli flags and blocking a major road junction.

Thousands gathered in Tel Aviv's Habima Square as they prepared to march across the city to Kaplan Street waving Israeli flags and chanting anti-Netanyahu slogans.

One protester held aloft a large picture of far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir with a caption dubbing him “the minister of national failure.”

Israeli police did not immediately release any estimates for the number of demonstrators.

In a statement released earlier, protest organisers said the Netanyahu government was waiting to turn Israel into a “messianic and dangerous dictatorship”.

They underlined what they said was the economic cost of the government's refusal to ditch the reforms altogether, instead holding talks with opposition representatives hosted by President Isaac Herzog for the past month.

“As long as the deliberations in the president's house continue, no investment is entering Israel and the Israeli economy is crashing,” the organisers said.

Proponents of the judicial reforms claim they are necessary to rebalance power between the branches of government. Critics say they represent a threat to democracy.

Sightseeing tours of Shiraz organized for the elderly, physically challenged people



TEHRAN – Shiraz authorities, in close collaboration with some rehab centers, has organized some sightseeing tours of the ancient city.

Dedicated to the elderly and physically challenged people, the tours are aimed to mark Shiraz Week commemorated from May 5 to 11, CHTN reported on Saturday.

Social responsibility regarding familiarizing different groups of society with tourist destinations serves the main purpose of these tours, a local tourism official said.

“These tours will be held on occasions on the occasion of Shiraz Week.”

“Participants visit the attractions and historical and cultural monuments of Shiraz and get acquainted with the historical assets of the ancient city with the presence of tourist guides,” the official explained.

Introduced by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the creation of the international “Accessible Tourism Destination” aims to make sure that a destination can be enjoyed by any tourist including physically impaired people.

The UNWTO Recommendations on Accessible Tourism for All are meant to be used

as a general, basic mainstreaming framework for ensuring that people with disabilities have access to the physical environment, the transportation system, information, and communications channels, as well as to a wide range of public facilities and services.

As mentioned by the World Tourism Organization, accessibility for all tourism facilities, products, and services should be a central part of any responsible and sustainable tourism policy. Accessibility is not only about human rights. It is a business opportunity for destinations and companies to embrace all visitors and enhance their revenues.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), 15% of the world's population (1 billion people) lives with some form of disability.

Celebrated as the heartland of Persian culture for over 2000 years, Shiraz has become synonymous with education, nightingales, poetry, and crafts skills passed down from generation to generation. It was one of the most important cities in the medieval Islamic world and was the Iranian capital during the Zand dynasty from 1751 to 1794.

Shiraz is home to some of the country's most magnificent buildings and sights. Increasingly, it draws more and more foreign and domestic sightseers flocking to this provincial capital.

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

Kumsai ritual observed in UNESCO-designated Uramanat



TEHRAN –On Friday, the ancient ritual of Kumsai was held in the UNESCO-designated Uramanat, Kordestan province, western Iran.

A large crowd of foreign and domestic tourists interested in learning more about this traditional ritual attended the ceremony, which was held near the shrine of Pir-e Shaliar, a local tourism official has said.

As part of the ceremony, tourists were treated to an exhibition of regional handicrafts and souvenirs, daf playing, folk music performance, and a poetry reading, Mansour Mehrzad explained on Saturday.

Each year in early May, the Kumsai ceremony is held in this UNESCO-designated region uniquely and magnificently, the official added.

Kumsai in the local language is composed of the words ‘ku’ for assembly and ‘msai’ for learning, he noted.

It is narrated that as a result of the harsh nature of Uramanat and the culture of nomadism in the region, people left the village in the middle of spring every year and migrated to other parts of the region for a period of more than six months, he mentioned.

Having been away from each other for a year, they decided to organize a meeting and a ceremony before reuniting, to divide the necessary social affairs among themselves and to delegate them to qualified people, and

to prepare for the migration, he stated.

Moreover, the ceremony is also held to commemorate Pir-e Shaliar, a legendary folk figure for Iranian Kurds, who is warmly remembered for his allegedly magical healing qualities and mojo that locals believe could populate the land with livestock and crops in times of trouble, he added.

The legend says that Pir-e Shaliar magically cured ‘Shah-Bahar Khatoun’ the beloved daughter of the king of Bukhara so that he was rewarded with getting married to the girl.

Stretched on the slopes of Sarvabad county at the heart of the Zagros Mountains and shared between the provinces of Kordestan and Kermanshah in western Iran, the Uramanat cultural landscape embraces hundreds of villages, 106,000 hectares of land, and 303,000 hectares of surrounding properties.

Archaeological findings dating back about 40,000 years, caves and rock shelters, ancient paths and was along the valleys, motifs and inscriptions, cemeteries, mounds, castles, settlements, and other historical evidence attest to the continuity of life in the Uramanat region from the Paleolithic to the present time.

According to the UN body, Uramanat is an exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition of the semi-nomadic agropastoral way of life of the Hawrami people, a Kurdish tribe that has resided in the Zagros Mountains for millennia. This outstanding cultural tradition is manifested in the ancestral practices of transhumance, the mode of seasonal living in Havars, steep-slope terraced agriculture, soil and water management, traditional knowledge for planning and constructing steeply terraced villages, and rich diversity of intangible heritage, all reflecting harmonious co-existence with nature.

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TEHRAN – The 12th edition of the orange blossom festival opened on Friday in the northern city of Babol, Mazandaran province, an official with Babol Municipality has said.

Folk music performances, poetry recitations, and cooking contests will all be part of the one-week festival, Morteza Omrani said on Saturday.

Tepe Yahya: a journey through Early Bronze Age

TEHRAN – The last centuries before 3,000 BC were of immense significance in Iran and Mesopotamia as there arose distinguishing civilizations: the proto-Elamite and the Sumerian.

Various seasons of excavation at Tepe Yahya have yielded treasured relics and valuable information not only of southeastern Iran and the homogenous and distinctive culture which existed in this large area throughout the Early Bronze Age but also indicated its significant relations with Mesopotamia on the west.

Situated in the Dowlatabad region of Kerman province, Tepe Yahya, Tepe Yahya provides us with the longest prehistoric sequence of occupation in southeastern Iran.

According to Penn Museum, the cultural sequence at the site begins c. 4500 BC and continues without a major hiatus until the middle of the third millennium based on radiocarbon dates.

The outcome of excavations suggests that Tepe Yahya was almost continuously occupied from the middle of the 5th millennium to the end of the 3rd millennium BC.

The site was apparently abandoned during the 2nd millennium BC but was reoccupied from about 1000 BC to about 400 CE.

Tepe Yahya may have been a center



for the production and distribution of steatite (soapstone), a material used in making vessels, seals, and other objects.

As mentioned by Britannica, the trade in Tepe Yahya may be locally controlled at first, but it may later have come under Elamite influence.

“Design motifs on steatite bowls from Tepe Yahya parallel many

motifs found in Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley and indicate that Tepe Yahya filled an important position in the economic and cultural relations between Mesopotamia, the Iranian Plateau, and the cultures to the east.”

According to the museum's website, excavations at a number of sites throughout southern Iran,

undertaken since World War II, have appreciably increased our understanding.

Since World War II, American archaeologists have not directed their attention to the excavation of a comparable number of Early Bronze Age sites on the Iranian Plateau and northern Iran, where American interests have profitably focused on Neolithic and later first and second-millennium sites.

The important Bronze Age sites of Yarim Tepe, Yanik Tepe, Geoy Tepe, Tal-e Nokhodi, Godin Tepe, and Tureng Tepe involve problems distinctive from those of southern Iran and appear to belong to different cultural zones largely unrelated to the Early Bronze Age proto-Elamite culture of southern Iran.

Proto-Elamite (Susa III/Banesh) period, ca. 3400/3200-2800 BC was characterized by a distinctive assemblage of artifacts and an artistic style distributed from Lorestan in the west to Kerman in the east.

The establishment of a city at Anshan during the Proto-Elamite period and smaller outposts at Tepe Sialk and Tepe Yahya in the eastern highlands suggest that the foundations of the union between lowland and highland regions characteristic of later Elam were first laid in the late 4th millennium.

Archaeologists still hoping to find Laodicea Temple



TEHRAN – A team of Iranian archaeologists is still hoping to find Laodicea Temple following several failed attempts made in the city of Nahavand, west-central Iran.

“We are planning to conduct a final archaeological season in search of Laodicea Temple if the needed budget is provided,” ISNA quoted Nahavand's tourism chief as saying on Saturday.

Previous excavations uncovered capital column heads, their shafts, and bases as well as striking pieces of engraved pottery estimated to date back to the Seleucid era.

Archaeologists believe that the ancient Greek temple is buried beneath many residential units built by the locals over the years.

According to archaeologist Mohsen Khanjan, the ruined Laodicea Temple is one of the treasured sites in Nahavand and it bears relics, which date from the time of the Seleucid Empire.

In 1943, archaeologists discovered an 85x36 centimeter ancient inscription of 30 lines written in Greek calling on the people of Nahavand to obey the laws of the government. The inscription indicated the existence of the Laodicea Temple, which had been built by the Seleucid king who ruled Asia Minor, Antiochus III the Great (223-187

BC), for his wife Queen Laodicea.

Two of the inscriptions as well as four bronze statuettes unearthed at the site, are on display in the National Museum of Iran in downtown Tehran. And, column capitals and bases are currently being used as decorations in Nahavand's Hajian Bazaar and several other parts of the city.

The Seleucid Empire reigned from 312 BC to 63 BC; Seleucus I Nicator founded it following the division of the Macedonian Empire, vastly expanded by Alexander the Great. Seleucus received Babylonia (321 BC) and from there expanded his dominions to include much of Alexander's near-eastern territories. At the height of its power, the Empire included central Anatolia, Persia, the Levant, Mesopotamia, and what is now Kuwait, Afghanistan, and parts of Pakistan and Turkmenistan.

Khatun Bridge restoration among top priorities, provincial tourism chief says

TEHRAN – The restoration project of the ancient Khatun Bridge in Karaj, Alborz province, should be accelerated, the provincial tourism chief has said.

One of the top priorities of the tourism directorate of the province is to speed up the restoration process of the ancient bridge, Rahim Khaki explained on Saturday.

Restoration work on the arch bridge started in early 2021, months after it partially collapsed in

December 2020. Media reports said severe rainfall and lack of proper maintenance were key causes behind the collapse of the bridge's deck.

Earlier this year, a ministry official said a budget of \$160,000 is needed for the restoration of the monument. “The total estimated cost of restoring the arch bridge... will be about fifty billion rials (about \$160,000),” a tourism official said.

Experts believe that the bridge's foundation was constructed during



the Seljuk era (1037–1194) while its other sections were thoroughly renovated in the time of Safavids (1501–1736).

Arch bridges have been built since ancient times due to the easy

accessibility of stone masonry, which is an appropriate material for sustaining compressive forces. An arch bridge carries loads primarily by compression, which experts on the foundation of both vertical and horizontal forces. Arch foundations must therefore prevent both vertical settling and horizontal sliding. Despite the more complicated foundation design, the structure itself normally requires less material than a beam bridge of the same span.

Discover traditional carpet skills of Fars region



TEHRAN – For millennia, Persian carpets have been admired worldwide for their intricate designs, lavish colors, and peerless craftsmanship.

Tens of Iranian cities and regions enjoy a global reputation in carpet weaving. However, such remarkable skill in Fars province was inscribed on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list in 2010 under the name “Traditional

skills of carpet weaving in Fars.”

The history of carpet weaving in Fars is very long, and its exact date is not known. Historians point to the presence of carpets in Cyrus' tomb during Alexander's invasion of Iran.

The eighth-century AH was reportedly the peak of carpet weaving in the Fars region. In the ninth and tenth centuries, AH, with the presence of more Qashqai, Khamseh tribes, and other tribes in this province, carpet weaving flourished in this region. This art continued until the present and became one of the main features of this region.

Furthermore, the nomadic lifestyle has a direct impact on the use of elements of nature. People in this area created beauties and these beauties emerged in the Fars carpets gradually.

Nomadic weavers used various kinds of looms. For example, unlike many areas, the loom carpet in this area is mostly on the ground and horizontally so that it can be easily moved during migration.

Fars carpets usually have a mental design and are woven in pairs or with a rug. The first carpet is called the “order” carpet, and the carpet or rug is woven with the ordered rug with the help of its design or mentally inspired by the ordered carpet design.

Traditional motifs or patterns are often woven mentally and have a geometric structure. The most important feature of this type of Fars carpet is symmetry weaving. Fars Carpets are woven symmetrically with traditional motifs from their horizontal or vertical halves.

Orange blossom festival opens in Babol

On the sidelines of the festival, several workshops are organized on orange blossom benefits and features, the official added.

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.

Some 100,000 mangrove saplings to be planted in 2 provinces

TEHRAN – The Department of Environment is planning to plant some 100,000 saplings of mangrove in the two southern provinces of Sistan-Baluchestan and Khuzestan, IRNA reported.

Mangrove forests are rich ecosystems that support the planet and humanity in unique ways by providing conditions for fish growth, storing carbon, and fighting floods. They are able to store about 6 to 8 tons of carbon per hectare of soil per year.

In January, IRIB reported that provincial authorities in participation with local communities in Bandar Lengeh port city, southern Hormozgan province, were planning to plant 50,000 mangrove saplings.

Bandar Lengeh is one of the most important aquatic habitats from a natural point of view, and in terms of tides, it has special conditions for planting mangrove seedlings.

Protecting the soil and beaches against waves and sea storms, greening the shores of the Persian Gulf, reducing seawater pollution, creating a safe place for birds and aquatic life, reducing the temperature of the coastal environment, and creating suitable spots for tourism development are among the main goals of the plan.

With more than 25 thousand hectares of mangrove forests, Hormozgan has the most natural mangrove forests among the Persian Gulf countries.

Only 55 countries in the world,



including 14 Asian countries have large areas of mangrove forests.

In terms of mangrove forests, Iran ranks 43rd in the world.

Protecting beaches from floods and tsunamis, preventing coastal erosion, supporting the nutrient cycle in water, suitable habitats for plants and animals, producing oxygen due to photosynthesis, providing resin and tannin raw materials, a food source for fish and shrimp, the use of the genes of these trees in biotechnology as genetic resources, medicinal properties, beauty, and natural landscape and tourist attraction are some of the benefits of mangrove forests.

Yet mangroves are disappearing three to five times faster than overall global forest losses, with serious ecological and socio-economic impacts. Current estimates indicate that mangrove coverage

has been divided by two in the past 40 years.

Due to the importance of these trees, in 2015, UNESCO designated July 26 as the International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem, to raise awareness of the integral role of mangrove ecosystems and to promote solutions for their conservation, sustainable management, and utility.

There are 107 species of mangroves, two of which grow in Iran, called Hara and Chandel. The forests are distributed in three provinces of Hormozgan, Sistan-Baluchestan, and Bushehr.

In 1972, mangrove-covered lands were nationally managed as protected areas. In 1976, it was accepted and registered as a biosphere reserve. In 1977, the pristine areas of mangrove forests, flower gardens, and streams in the Strait

of Khuran were registered as important wetlands of international value (Ramsar site).

The RAMSAR Convention, an international treaty, was adopted in 1971. Ramsar Wetlands are sites inscribed on the List of Wetlands of International Importance (the "Ramsar List") under the Convention on Wetlands.

Controlling coastal erosion means preventing the destruction of beaches against waves and storms, stabilizing sedimentation and preventing its movement with a special root system, and protecting coral reefs are important features of the mangrove forest in maintaining the biodiversity of the region, and the mangrove forest provides the habitat needs of aquatic animals so that many aquatic species spend their initial stages of growth and reproduction in these forests.

Some 150 species of migratory birds are wintering in the wetlands and mangrove forests of Southern Qeshm Island.

The area is a major habitat for migratory birds in the cold season and for reptiles, fish, and varieties of Arthropoda and bivalves. Green (or hooked) turtles and venomous aquatic snakes are also indigenous to the forests.

Beautiful birds such as Dalmatian pelicans, cormorants, European bee-eater, larks, and flamingos came to the Hara Biosphere Reserve and its wetlands.

Blood donation rate at 26 per 1,000 people

TEHRAN – The average blood donation rate in Iran is 26 per thousand people which places the country in a good situation among other countries.

According to the World Health Organization, the median blood donation rate in high-income countries is 31.5 donations per 1000 people. This compares with 16.4 donations per 1000 people in upper-middle-income countries, 6.6 donations per 1000 people in lower-middle-income countries, and 5.0 donations per 1000 people in low-income countries.

Of the 118.5 million blood donations collected globally, 40% of these are collected in high-income countries, home to 16% of the world's population.

In low-income countries, up to 54 % of blood transfusions are given to children under 5 years of age; whereas in high-income countries, the most frequently transfused patient group is over 60 years of age, accounting for up to 76% of all transfusions.



Of the 118.5 million blood donations collected globally, 40% of these are collected in high-income countries, home to 16% of the world's population.

Only 56 of 171 reporting countries produce plasma-derived medicinal products (PDMP) through the fractionation of plasma collected in the reporting countries. A total of 91 countries reported that all PDMPs are imported, 16 countries reported that no PDMP was used during the reporting period, and 8 countries did not respond to the question.

In the past Iranian calendar year, which ended on March 20, some 2.223 million blood donations were registered across the country, an increase of 9.3 percent compared to the year before.

North Khorasan, with an increase of 34 percent, took first place in the growth of blood donation in the country.

Ilam province, with an increase of more than 25 percent, and Lorestan, with an increase of more than 23 percent, took the second and third places in the growth of blood donation, the Blood Transfusion Organization spokesman Bashir Hajibeigi said.

By registering 369,523 donations, Tehran province has the highest amount of blood donation in the country.

Donors who successfully donate blood twice or more within 12 months are considered continuous donors.

Iran is among the countries of the Eastern Mediterranean region as a reference in the field of blood donation activities.

While blood donation in 70 countries still depends on replacement or paid donors, Iran is the first country in the region that has enjoyed voluntary blood donation by 100 percent since 2007.

Iran currently has the highest blood donation rate in the Eastern Mediterranean region, so out of 9.9 million blood donation units in this region, more than two million belongs to Iran.

Also, the index of blood donation is 25 per 1,000 populations, while in the member states of the Eastern Mediterranean region, this number is 14.9 per 1000.

There are currently 178 blood donation centers in the country, with Fars, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Tehran, and Mazandaran provinces having the largest number of blood donation centers, he stated.

World Blood Donor Day takes place on 14 June each year. The day provides an opportunity to call to action governments and health authorities to provide adequate resources to increase the collection of blood from voluntary, unpaid blood donors and to manage access to blood and the transfusion of those who require it.

DOE to hold first sports competition for rangers



TEHRAN – The first sports competition for rangers will be held by the Department of Environment in the sixth Iranian calendar month of Shahrivar (starting August 23), IRNA reported.

The contestants will participate in triathlon, darts, shooting, futsal, and 20 kilometers race walk competitions.

Thanks to their continuous presence and activities in different natural areas of mountains, plains, forests, seas, and wetlands, rangers enjoy good physical fitness, and in carrying out their missions to protect the environment, they naturally do various sports.

So, in addition to creating a competitive environment for increasing physical abilities, holding competitions can also lead to an increase in the motivation and personal growth of rangers.

If the event is held successfully, the next edition of the competitions will be held with the presence of regional countries.

In order to protect the country's environment well, the number of rangers should increase by 10 times,

Hassan Akbari, deputy head of natural environment and biodiversity of the Department of Environment, said in September 2022.

In the country, there is currently one ranger for every 30,000 to 40,000 hectares of protected areas, while usually there should be one ranger for 1,000 to 3,000 hectares, so to preserve our biological assets, we must take steps to recruit more rangers.

Over 100 species of vertebrates in the country are in danger of extinction, and about 160 species are protected.

Some species such as the Asiatic cheetah, great bustard, and fallow deer are at risk of extinction and are in a more critical situation, some species such as the Persian zebra have limited habitats, and some such as the bustards are damaged by trafficking, on the other hand, the habitats of some animals that have a large territory such as leopard are occupied, each of them faces specific problems and each of them needs its own methods, and packages for protection.

If the military, judiciary, veterinary, and people come to work, the endangered species can survive extinction, he further highlighted.

He went on to note that illegal hunting takes place in the protected areas, especially the prohibited hunting areas, to a small extent and to a significant extent in the free areas, where there are not enough forces to protect them.

We must move towards participatory conservation, livelihood change, or models in the world that provide a part of nature to the private sector for con-

servation, he suggested.

President Ebrahim Raisi has highlighted the importance of environmental protection, emphasizing that the preservation of the environment is prior to every development.

Environmental protection will lead to power, security, investment, and production growth in the country, he said.

Both people and NGOs have an effective role to play in the protection of the environment, and they should be given a chance to play their role, he added.

On November 17, 2015, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, announced the general policies on the environment, emphasizing the need for comprehensive, harmonious, and organized management of vital resources based on ecological capability and sustainability, particularly by increasing capacities and appropriate legal and structural capabilities accompanied by public participation.

The policies call for establishing a cohesive and national system on the issue of the environment.

Improving environmental conditions with the purpose of helping society enjoy a healthy environment, administering justice and observing intra-generational rights, preventing and prohibiting the circulation of all kinds of unlawful pollutants, recording crimes related to the environment, administering efficient and preventive punishment of polluters and destroyers of the environment and forcing them to compensate for their actions, were also among the policies.

ENGLISH IN USE

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‘Only 15% of Tehran’s construction, demolition waste recycled’

While some 50,000 tons of construction and demolition waste is produced in Tehran daily, only 10 to 15 percent of which are recycled and the rest is dumped or disposed, Mohammad Hossein Bazgir, head of Tehran's department of environment (DOE) has said.

Waste materials, generally termed as construction and demolition waste, are part of construction materials' packaging, containers, and spent machinery and equipment parts that are no longer usable.

"A good portion of construction wastes can still be usable with proper planning and their usage can be a solution itself to the burgeoning waste issues that the communities and the construction industry face," Bazgir said.

He further referred to a construction waste management unit opened in Abali in Damavand county last week, and stated that the unit is capable of recycling some 3,000 tons of construction waste, ISNA reported on Tuesday.

To eradicate the issue, construction waste trucks must be equipped with GPS to determine their route and not allow them to dispose the waste at any areas, he concluded.

تنها ۱۵ درصد نخاله های ساختمانی تولید شده در تهران بازیافت می شود

رییس اداره محیط زیست شهر تهران با بیان اینکه در تهران روزانه ۵۰ هزار تن نخاله ساختمانی تولید می شود، گفت: متأسفانه تنها ۱۰ تا ۱۵ درصد این زباله ها بازیافت می شود و بیش از ۸۰ درصد آن دیو می شود. محمد حسین بازگیر در گفت و گو با ایسنا، اظهار کرد: بازیافت پسماندهای ساختمانی بخشی از فرایند مدیریت پسماند است که سبب می شود این نوع زباله ها دوباره به چرخه مصرف بازگردانده و بسیاری از مشکلاتی که که مردم و صنعت ساخت و ساز با آن روبرو هستند، برطرف شود. ظرفیت این واحد بازیافت حدود ۳۰۰۰ تن است و می تواند این مقدار نخاله و آوار ساختمانی را بازیافت کند.

وی در پایان با تأکید بر اینکه کامیون های مخصوص حمل نخاله های ساختمانی باید ساماندهی شوند و پیمانکاران حمل نخاله ها تحت مدیریت مناسب و هوشمند قرار بگیرند، گفت: کامیون های حمل نخاله باید مجهز به GPS شوند تا مسیر تردد آن ها مشخص شود و امکان تخلیه زباله را در هر نقطه ای نداشته باشند.



Tea harvest in Lahijan

A man is harvesting tea leaves in the city of Lahijan, northern Gilan province, on Thursday.

More than 55,000 families grow tea over 28,000 hectares of farmland in the two provinces of Gilan and Mazandaran, producing some 135,000 tons of tea leaves per year.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

When a husband and wife look at each other with love, Allah looks at both of them with mercy.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:01 Evening: 19:12 Dawn: 3:36 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:10 (tomorrow)

Iranian studies in German: Pre-Islamic period

Part 6

Some knowledge could be gathered from the reports given by the travelers who visited Persia and its sites of cultural and historical interest, and even some superficial knowledge of the Avesta and of the Persepolitan inscriptions was available in Europe since the publication of Anquetil-Duperron's Avesta and Carsten Niebuhr's Reisebeschreibung.

But to disclose their secrets in a scholarly manner was only possible after a thorough knowledge of the Sanskrit language had reached Europe.

Thus from the beginning the older Iranian languages were the center of attention, and as is the case with the other branches of Oriental studies, philology was dominant; and regardless of all shifts in the main stress of teaching and research towards modern times it will remain dominant, since it is indispensable for the analysis and evaluation of the sources written in a number of older idioms.

Old Persian: Niebuhr (1733-1815), who had visited the ruins of Persepolis in March 1765, was the first to publish (1778) careful and usable copies of all eleven inscriptions that he was able to reach and to settle preliminary questions fundamental for the future decipherment of the cuneiform script.

The man who actually took the first steps in deciphering the Old Persian variant of the cuneiform script was Georg Friedrich Grotefend in 1802 (1775-1853), a Göttingen grammar-school teacher, who by his powers of reasoning was led to the nearly accurate interpretation of several signs, even though the task as a whole came to a successful end only some decades later.

Starting from the results achieved previously by Grotefend and by Rasmus Rask (who in 1826 recognized the title king of kings and the ending of the genitive plural), Christian Lassen was able to contribute several new findings (e.g., with regard to the mode of function of that writing system) by assuming that one of the longer Persepolitan inscriptions, namely DPe, lists the names of the peoples of the Achaemenid empire.

By means of the toponyms attested there, he found out that in most consonantal signs a vowel a is inherent (if it is not silent), whereas other signs occur only before the vowels i or u.

Thus it became possible to gain an insight into the phonological system and structure of the Old Persian language.

Among the pioneers in the study of the Old Persian inscriptions must be reckoned also Franz Bopp, who made some important discoveries (e.g., by finding the title king of the countries in analogy to Rask's king of kings), even though the Old Iranian languages were not of crucial importance for him.

Julius Oppert, who in 1851 identified the value of the last phonetic sign as (a), was involved also in completing the endeavors at deciphering the Old Persian cuneiform script.

The first complete collection of the texts (with German translation and glossary)

was Die persischen Keilinschriften (Leipzig, 1847) by Theodor Benfey (1809-81), who was professor of Oriental philology at the University of Göttingen from 1848 to 1881.

That collection later was superseded by Friedrich Spiegel's Die altpersischen Keilinschriften (Leipzig, 1862, 2nd ed., 1881, with text, trans., commentary, grammar, and lexicon).

Extremely commendable in its time and in part even today is the major work of Franz Heinrich Weissbach (1865-1944): his book Die Keilinschriften der Achämeniden (Leipzig, 1911,) with the text of all three of the cuneiform versions of the royal inscriptions, was the last edition of its kind and has still not been replaced at least for most of the Elamite and Babylonian versions.

Achaemenid inscriptions that have been found at various places in the 1920s and 1930s are the object of studies by Friedrich Wilhelm König (Der Burgbau zu Susa nach dem Bauberichte des Königs Dareios I., Leipzig, 1930), Wilhelm Brandenstein, Ernst Herzfeld (Altpersische Inschriften, Berlin, 1938), and Walther Hinz.

A new edition of the Old Persian text of the inscription of Darius I at Bisotun was published in 1991 by Rüdiger Schmitt in the Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum.

Avesta: The sacred book of the Zoroastrians, kept secret for a long time by the Parsi priesthood, had been made known in Europe by Anquetil-Duperron in 1771, whose work was translated into German in 1776-77 by the theologian Johann Friedrich Kleuker (1749-1827).

In the long dispute about the age and authenticity of the Avesta, which was only settled by Rasmus Rask in 1826, primarily Kleuker and the Austrian White Friar Paulinus a Sancto Bartholomaeo (Johann Philipp Vesdin, 1748-1806) were on Anquetil-Duperron's side; in his booklet on the old age and the relationship of the Avestan, Sanskrit, and German languages (1798), Paulinus for the first time not only asserted but also explained in detail the relationship of the Avestan with the Sanskrit language and supported that with the examples collected in a word-list.

Thus the Avesta became accessible only with delay after Sanskrit and its relationship to Avestan had become known.

Following these and other advances in Avestan studies, the first four chapters of the Vendidad were edited by Justus Olshausen (1800-82), who had been a pupil of Kleuker and was then professor of Oriental languages in Kiel.

The project was not continued, however, since its author then turned to other studies.

As to research on the Avestan language and vocabulary, German scholars have been among the pioneers: On the one hand Franz Bopp, in his comparative grammar of the Indo-European languages, took Avestan into account from the beginning; on the other hand Hermann Brockhaus published (Leipzig, 1850) the complete Vendidad Sade (i.e., Yasna, Visprad, and Videvdat) together with a full index and a glossary, which is actually the first Avestan dictionary.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica.

To be continued.

Iranian Artists Forum shows “Reflections of Spain”

From Page 1 ► “As an NGO, the Iranian Artists Forum has always done its best since its establishment to host unique cultural events and today, we are organizing an amazing exhibit that represents ideas of a number of Iranian artists about Spain, a beautiful and lovely country, which has some of the most perfect sunsets in the world,” he added.

In his short speech, Losada Fernandez also elaborated on his aim to organize the exhibition. He said that he would like to present his country during his diplomatic missions and he believes that art is the best medium of introduction.

He noted that organizing art events in other countries improves mutual understanding among different cultures.

Losada Fernandez said that the word “reflections” has purposely been selected for the exhibition and added that reflections help the images be better seen.

Accordingly, in collaboration with the IAF, the Embassy of Spain

Spanish Ambassador Angel Losada Fernandez and IAF director Mohammad-Mehdi Asgarpur visit the exhibition “Reflections of Spain” at the Iranian Artists Forum in Tehran on May 4, 2023. (IAF/Leila Ebrahimi)

called on a number of Iranian artists to “reflect” their perception of Spain in their paintings.

He said that when we know people's perceptions of us, we can better communicate with them.

He asked art aficionados to visit the exhibition in order to know how the Iranian artists see Spain.

Director Narges Abyar on WMAFF panel

Iranian director Narges Abyar in an undated photo.

TEHRAN – Narges Abyar, director of the acclaimed Iranian drama “When the Moon Was Full”, has joined the international jury of the 7th edition of the Women Media Arts and Film Festival (WMAFF) currently underway in Sydney, Australia.

She is also best known for directing “Track 143”, which is adapted from her novel titled

“The Third Eye” narrating the story of a woman and her son during the time of war.

Her films sensitively picture the sufferings of women and children caused by society, war, or radicalism.

The WMAFF is a new screen culture and audience development initiative by Cinewest in partnership with Sydney Olympic Park Authority.

The jury also comprises Australian actress and writer Kate Fitzpatrick and the New Zealand-born Australian-based filmmaker Margot Nash.

Three Iranian films are also competing in the festival, which will run until May 7.

“Kal Fatemeh” by Mehdi Zamanpur Kiasari, “Lady of the City” by Maryam Bahrololumi and “The Sun of that Moon” by Setareh Eskandari have been selected to be screened in different sections of the festival.

The documentary film “Kal Fatemeh” is about a woman who lives on her own farm

away from the village with her two sons. She runs a farm and rears cattle for a living, meeting many challenges. She grieves over her daughter's situation, as she has had an unhappy past.

“Lady of the City”, a drama also known as “Shahrbano”, follows Shahrbano, a woman who has been sentenced to life in prison for being a drug mule. After eleven years in jail, she is released from prison for a few days to attend her son's wedding. The temporary freedom helps her see a new aspect of her life and that of her family before returning to prison.

The story of “The Sun of that Moon” is set in the southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan, where a Baloch widow named Beeban decides to keep silent and not to speak anymore. She lives in her father-in-law's house with her son, Miran. When her childhood playmate, Hamraz, returns home, once again they begin feeling in the mood for love. But everyone tries to force her to forget all about this forbidden love.

Tehran art center to disclose “A Hidden Life”

Valerie Pachner and August Diehl act in a scene of “A Hidden Life”.

Cannes Film Festival in May 2019 and won the François Chalais Prize and the Prize of the Ecumenical Jury.

Peter DeBruege of Variety writes, “Whether or not he [Malick] is specifically referring to the present day, its demagogues, and

the way certain evangelicals have once again sold out their core values for political advantage, “A Hidden Life” feels stunningly relevant as it thrusts this problem into the light.”

Jägerstätter biographer Erna Putz was touched by the

film's spirituality after a private screening in June 2019, saying that Malick had made an “independent and universal work.”

She also considered Diehl's and Pachner's performances to be accurate to whom Franz and Franziska were (“Franz, as I know him from the letters, and Franziska, as I know from encounters”).

Rotten Tomatoes critical consensus reads, “Ambitious and visually absorbing, ‘A Hidden Life’ may prove inscrutable to non-devotees—but for viewers on Malick's wavelength, it should only further confirm his genius.”

On Metacritic, the film has a weighted average score of 78 out of 100, based on 43 critics, indicating “generally favorable reviews.”

“The Naked Sun” rises in Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN – A Persian translation of American writer Isaac Asimov's science fiction novel “The Naked Sun” has come to Iranian bookstores.

The second in his “Robot” series, the book has been published by Chatrang. Saeid Simorgh is the translator of the book.

A millennium into the future, two advancements have altered the course of human history: the colonization of the Galaxy and the creation of the positronic brain.

On the beautiful Outer World planet of Solaria, a handful of human colonists lead a hermit-like existence, their every need attended to by their faithful robot servants.

To this strange and provocative planet

comes Detective Elijah Baley, sent from the streets of New York with his positronic partner, the robot R. Daneel Olivaw, to solve an incredible murder that has rocked Solaria to its foundations.

The victim had been so reclusive that he appeared to his associates only through holographic projection. Yet someone had gotten close enough to bludgeon him to death while robots looked on.

Now Baley and Olivaw are faced with two clear impossibilities: Either the Solarian was killed by one of his robots — unthinkable under the laws of Robotics – or he was killed by the woman who loved him so much that she never came into his presence!

Front cover of the Persian edition of Isaac Asimov's novel “The Naked Sun”.