

## Report Palestinian resistance: New response is coming

By Ali Karbalaee

TEHRAN- A senior official with the Palestinian resistance warns Israel: "Our battle is ongoing, and new strikes against the Israeli enemy are on their way."

The remarks come as Israel continues its deadly aggression across the besieged Gaza Strip, also referred to as the world's largest open-air prison, where more than two million Palestinians are blockaded in a tiny coastal sliver.

Speaking to media close to the Palestinian Resistance, an unnamed Islamic Jihad commander said, "Netanyahu fears the collapse of his government if he declares commitment to the demands of the resistance."

He pointed out that "Egypt's ceasefire efforts are continuing, and they are appreciated, and we are dealing with them positively."

The Palestinian Islamic Jihad Organization has vowed it will not submit to any temporary ceasefire agreement with Israel until its terms are met.

Likewise, the official pointed out that "the enemy exaggerates its talk about calm after the cowardly crimes it commits with the aim of misleading public opinion." ► Page 5

## Iran, Saudi FM's discuss recent developments in bilateral ties

TEHRAN- The top diplomats of Saudi Arabia and Iran underlined their commitment to mending ties, facilitating mutual collaboration, and reopening their diplomatic missions.

Hossein Amir Abdollahian of Iran and Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia spoke by phone on Friday night regarding the implementation of the deal that the two nations made in Beijing in March to reestablish diplomatic ties and reopen embassies.

"The Islamic Republic is getting ready to formally reopen its embassy and consulates in Saudi Arabia," Amir Abdollahian said.

He said the discussions between top Saudi and Iranian officials will show how determined both nations are to work together and develop close ties.

Amir Abdollahian asserted that Iran has completed the required preparations for the formal reopening of its embassy and consulate in Saudi Arabia, citing Tehran's decision to appoint a new ambassador and send technical teams to the country to facilitate the restoration of diplomatic missions.

He said that the discussions and reciprocal trips between Saudi and Iranian officials demonstrate the two nations' commitment to reestablishing cooperation and constructive relations.

The Saudi foreign minister, for his part, reiterated that Riyadh sees bright prospects for relations with Tehran and will make every effort to deepen those relationships. ► Page 2

# Steadfast Support

IRGC Quds Force promises to support resistance until fall of Israel



IRNA, Mohsen Bakshandeh

## Leader's commendation for memoirs of Fatemiyoun founder's widow published

TEHRAN- According to the commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps' (IRGC) Quds Force, Iran would continue to unflinchingly assist the Palestinian resistance up until the complete overthrow of the apartheid Tel Aviv regime.

Brigadier General Esmail Qaani made the statements on Saturday during a ceremony commemorating his deceased comrades in Iran's northern holy city of Mashhad.

He declared that Iran will continue to extend all possible verbal and practical assistance to the young Palestinian resistance forces and their "strong heroic front."

The IRGC commander declared that such assistance and con-



certed attempts would continue until the Israeli regime is completely overthrown.

Young Palestinian militants have occasionally conducted more than 30 retaliatory opera-

tions against the Israeli regime in the occupied West Bank in a single day, according to Qaani, who added that this is the result of the resistance front and the mobilization of Muslims throughout the world.

He also said that the resistance front has expanded into a broad axis that connects many sources and locations of resistance across the world.

"This front has drawn together altruist, educated and erudite people who share many points in common," he said. "The main commonality among them is their longing to defend Islam, the honor of Muslims. They defend themselves and others collectively." ► Page 2

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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 failure of Iranophobia project again

In a note, Hamshahri wrote: The election of Iran's ambassador in Geneva as the head of the social assembly of the Human Rights ► Page 2

## Iran security forces apprehend Daesh member in Sistan and Baluchestan

TEHRAN- Iranian security forces have detained a member of the Takfiri Daesh terrorist groups in the country's southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchestan.

Tasnim cited Doostali Jalilian, the provincial police chief, as stating on Saturday that the forces detained a Daesh member who was discreetly residing in a village in Zabol County after "technical and intelligence measures."

"After the close monitoring of the person's actions, his hideout was finally identified and the Daesh member was arrested in a synergic and coordinated operation by the police and Intelligence Department," Jalilian stressed.

The investigation revealed that the person, who is a citizen of one of the neighboring countries, was actively supporting the Takfiri terror group in the region with a "purposeful plan."

Before they could cause unrest in the region earlier this year, Iranian security forces destroyed two Daesh-affiliated squads in the southeastern province. ► Page 2

**Daesh member was arrested in a synergic and coordinated operation**

### Interview

**Esmaili optimistic about Iran women ice hockey's future**



By Farrokh Hesabi

TEHRAN - Fatemeh Esmaili, top scorer of the 2023 IIHF Ice Hockey Women's Asia and Oceania Championship, said that lack of experience was the main reason for Iran's defeat in the final against Thailand.

Team Melli finished runners-up, losing to defending champions Thailand 3-1 in the last match of the tournament.

Key to Thailand's win in the final game was holding tournament scoring leader, Fatemeh Esmaili, in check. ► Page 3



Iran's Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ehsan Khandouzi (L) and Saudi Arabia's Finance Minister Mohammed Al-Jadaan meet in Jeddah on Saturday, May 13, 2023.

## Iran, Saudi Arabia explore ways to boost economic co-op

TEHRAN- During a meeting between Iran's Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ehsan Khandouzi and Saudi Arabia's Finance Minister Mohammed Al-Jadaan, the two sides discussed the ways to expand economic cooperation and remove the barriers in the way of trade between the two countries.

In the meeting, which was held on the sidelines of the annual meeting of board of executive directors of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) in Jeddah on Saturday, the Saudi Arabian minister expressed satisfaction with the re-establishment of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia and said: "We hope that quick steps will be taken in relations with Iran." ► Page 4

## Budget to support patients with rare diseases rises by 40%

TEHRAN - The budget allocated to support patients with rare diseases has increased by 40 percent.

A sum of 50 trillion rials (about \$100 million) was allocated in the past Iranian calendar year that ended on March 20, IRNA reported, adding that the figure rose to 70 trillion rials this year.

According to the statistics published in 2019, the number of rare diseases identified in Iran has reached 332 types of diseases, and about 4,750 people are covered by the Rare Diseases Foundation of Iran.

Out of a thousand population, 2 people get a rare disease, while the prevalence can be curbed by changing people's culture, screening, identifying, preventing births, and raising awareness. ► Page 7



## TEHRAN PAPERS

## The failure of Iranophobia project again

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

In a note, Hamshahri wrote: The election of Iran's ambassador in Geneva as the head of the social assembly of the Human Rights Council was one of the most important events of recent days, which had wide reflections in the political and media outlet circles of the world, and it is another failure for America and some Western human rights claimants in line with the furtherance "Iranophobia" project.

According to the declaration of the head of the United Nations Human Rights Council, Ali Bahraini, the ambassador and permanent representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran in international organizations in Geneva, assumed the position of presidency of the 19th session of the Social Assembly of the Human Rights Council in 2023; the news that disappointed the enemies and opposing currents, and frustrated the anti-Iranian plans of recent months. Anti-revolutionary currents, the United States and some European governments have spent continuous efforts in recent months to promote a new phase of the "Iranophobia" project. The aim of this project was increasing pressures on Iran by abusing international mechanisms and reversing Iran's internal developments, especially in the fall of 1401. But the news of Iran's presidency of the Social Assembly of the Human Rights Council was a heavy defeat for them in this direction; an event that was accompanied by widespread criticism by anti-revolutionary currents, America and some European governments.

#### Iran: Washington's empty hand in the new Middle East order

In a commentary, the Iran newspaper addressed the White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan's trip to the region and said: The resistance of the Islamic Republic was beyond what American politicians expected. Iran, especially in the 13th government, showed that it was able to control the crisis, the most important symbol of which was to find the initiative for non-oil exchanges and to open the economic markets of large Asian countries. While it was thought that our country would expe-

rience a difficult period in the economic field due to the large volume of sanctions. Not only this prediction did not prove, but on the other hand, Iran's strength of resistance in defending the country and preventing war showed itself during this period, and this national authority was able to be a suitable tool for the country's diplomacy. Therefore, following the failure of America's Middle East strategy, the Islamic Republic of Iran is now in the right place. As, the agreement with Saudi Arabia, the beginning of the dialogue between Tehran and Cairo to normalize the relationship, the return of Syria to the Arab world with the invitation card of King Salman of Saudi Arabia to Bashar Assad to participate in the meeting of the member states of the Arab League, in addition the wide welcome of the Arab countries to increase the level of relations diplomacy with Tehran has reached to the point where the Arab capitals protect the Islamic Republic's positions regarding the inter-regional cooperation plan.

#### Sobh-e-No: The world trip of the Navy and 360 degree security

In its editorial, Sobh-e-No wrote: The Commander of the Army Navy declared the first seafaring mission of the Army Navy around the Earth. The duration of this voyage has been 213 days and this flotilla is now in the Aden Gulf and is returning to the country. The 86th Naval Fleet started its mission in Mehr 1401(October2022) and berthed in Rio de Janeiro port in Brazil for the first time in Esfsnd1401 (March 2023). This flotilla holds the record for the longest voyage in the history of Iran and has been on a sea mission for more than eight months.

This show of authority, which has been formed without major alliances with powerful maritime countries, and Iran has been alone and self-reliance in distant seas, it protects not only the interests of the country, but also other vessels that are in danger of being threatened. So far, it has been successful to escort more than 41 Iranian ships and 28 foreign ships in Bab al-Mandab region.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))

## Iran to get first shipment of SU-35 warplanes next week

TEHRAN- Iran will receive the first shipment of Russian SU-35 warplanes within the next week, according to a report on Friday.

Facing severe Western sanctions, Tehran and Moscow have started to strengthen their relationship.

In recent months, Iran and Russia have inked significant agreements to expand their economic, commercial, energy, and military ties.

It was first reported by Iran's Persian-language media, which did not go into detail about the shipment.

The SU-35 is a fourth-generation fighter aircraft primarily built for air superiority missions.

There have been media reports in recent months alleging that Iran has received SU-35 aircraft from Russia.

In March, Iran's permanent delegation to the United Nations acknowledged that the government had sealed a contract to acquire the plane.

According to Iranian media sources at the time, 24 units of the fighter jets will be delivered to Iran.

Speaking with Tasnim in March, Shahrar Heidari, a member of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, underlined that Iran has ordered Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jets from Russia, and they will arrive in the country in early 1402.

The lawmaker pointed out that Iran has ad-



ditionally ordered from Russia a number of other pieces of military hardware, including air defense systems, missile systems, and helicopters, the majority of which will be delivered soon.

Tactical Air Base (TAB) 8 of the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force (IRIAF), located in the city of Isfahan in central Iran, is expected to house some of the combat aircraft.

The Sukhoi Su-35 fighter jet "combines the qualities of a modern fighter (super-maneuverability, superior active and passive acquisition aids, high supersonic speed and long range, capability of managing battle group actions, etc.) and a good tactical airplane (wide range of weapons that can be carried, modern multi-channel electronic warfare system, reduced radar signature, and high combat survivability)," according to Russia's United Aircraft Corporation (UAC).

## Iran security forces apprehend Daesh member in Sistan and Baluchestan

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#### Anti-revolution media element detained

An individual connected to anti-revolutionary media has been detained by Iranian intelligence officials in Golestan Province, in northern Iran.

The individual was detained, according to the Iranian Intelligence Ministry, for his part in instigating racial and religious unrest in eastern Golestan Province.

Earlier, security forces in Galikesh had detained a member of the terrorist media outlet "Iran International."

The element was in charge of collecting, producing, and disseminating false information from Golestan Province and works closely with "Iran International."

In order to cause turmoil on social media, he had also participated in the most recent riots.

# Steadfast Support

## IRGC Quds Force promises to support resistance until fall of Israel

From page 1 ► Brigadier General Qaani described the mass mobilization of Muslim resistance troops as a goal instructed by the late Islamic Republic's founder, Imam Khomeini, and realized by Islamic Revolution Leader Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei.

The chief commander of the IRGC Quds Force further emphasized that whenever the Zionist regime perpetrates a crime in the occupied territories, resistance fighters in Lebanon, Yemen, or other places on the planet quickly express their support for Palestinians.

Iran has consistently stressed that resistance is the only means



of liberating Palestine from Israel's decades-long oppression and has spared no effort in assisting resistance groups.

Regional resistance groups, for

their part, have praised Iran for its consistent support.

Last month, a top official from Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement stated that Tehran has

always been at the forefront of resistance, despite paying the price.

Ayatollah Khamenei exhorted the Muslim world in April to grab the enormous opportunity presented by the acceleration of the Zionist regime's downfall, which began a few years ago.

The Leader underscored that the usurping Zionist regime is gradually losing power and that Palestine has always been a top priority issue for the Islamic world.

"This decline, which started a few years ago, has now accelerated, and the Islamic world must seize this wonderful opportunity," he remarked.

## Leader's commendation for memoirs of Fatemioun founder's widow published

TEHRAN – Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei's note of commendation for the memoirs of Ommolbanin Hosseini, widow of the founder of Fatemioun Brigade Alireza Tavassoli, has been published.

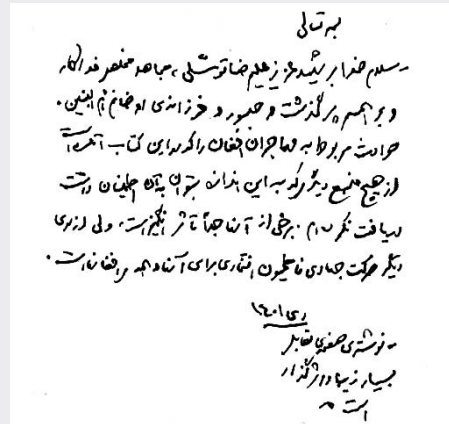
The note was unveiled on Friday in Mashhad during a special ceremony attended by a number of Fatemioun, an Afghan brigade that fought against the ISIS terrorists, and IRGC Quds Force chief Brigadier General Esmail Qaani.

"May God bless the dear martyr, Alireza Tavassoli, the devoted mujahed, and his self-sacrificing, patient and wise wife, Mrs. Ommolbanin," Ayatollah Khamenei wrote in the commendation for the memoirs "Khatun and Qumandan", which was published by Setareha in 2020.

Maryam Orbanzadeh wrote the book based on her extensive interviews with Ommolbanin Hosseini.

The Leader said that the events that happened to the Afghan immigrants have been recounted in a perfect way.

"Some of them are really sad, but on the other



hand, Fatemioun's jihadi action is an honor for them and all Afghans," he added.

Tavassoli, who was referred to by his comrades in Syria as "Abu Hamed", founded the Fatemioun Brigade in Iran on May 12, 2013.

He was also the commander of the group until he was martyred in action fighting against Jabhat al-Nusra in Daraa, Syria, on February 28, 2015.

## Iran, Saudi FMs discuss recent developments in bilateral ties

From page 1 ► "We have taken good steps in the past two months, and our adherence to the signed agreements shows our steely determination," he noted.

He cited the positive developments of the previous two months and the two nations' dedication to the rapprochement deal as evidence of their real intention to improve relations.

Bin Farhan also expressed hope that by appointing ambassadors in Riyadh and Tehran, they would be able to enhance bilateral collaboration.

Iran and Saudi Arabia reached an agreement on March 10 to reestablish diplomatic ties and reopen embassies and missions within two months after their seven-year closure, following several days of intense discussions held in China.

The two regional powerhouses have underscored the need to respect one another's national sovereignty and to abstain from meddling in one another's internal affairs.

#### Iran FM condemns Israel "brutal aggression"

Separate phone conversations about the current state of affairs in the Gaza Strip under Israeli attacks were established by Amir Abdollahian with the heads of the Palestinian resistance groups.

## IRGC vessels now equipped with new long-range cruise missile: top commander

TEHRAN- The commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy has said that the force has equipped two different types of its warships with a brand-new cruise missile with a 2,000-kilometer range.

Speaking with Tasnim on Saturday, Rear Admiral Ali Reza Tangsiri said that the domestic cruise missile "Qadr-474" can reach targets within a range of 2,000 kilometers.

He mentioned that the Mahdavi and Soleimani-class ships are outfitted with the new long-range cruise missile.

Based on his marks, the sophisticated Soleimani warship, named after Lt. General Qassem Soleimani, has been furnished with missiles with ranges of 200, 300, 750, and 2,000 kilometers.

He also stated that the IRGC Navy will use a new coast-to-sea cruise missile named after Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis.

"The Abu Mahdi missile and two other cruise missiles with 750-km and 2,000-km ranges are smart, can be guided and go after a new target before explosion, and can be launched even from regions deep in the land and behind the mountains to hit naval targets," he remarked.

The commander said that four Soleimani-class ships will be unveiled by the IRGC Navy during the current Iranian year, which ends on March 20, 2024.

He mentioned that the vessels are named after martyrs Sayyad Shirazi, Hassan Baqeri, Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, and Rais-Ali Delvari.

Tangsiri went on to add, "The new military catamarans can travel at a speed of 45 knots and are furnished with 300-km and 750-km missiles."

#### "IRGC Navy fully prepared, has grip on Persian Gulf"

The commander of the IRGC Navy also said that his troops are at their



maximum level of readiness at the moment and completely control the air, surface, and subsurface areas of the Persian Gulf.

Tangsiri told reporters in the southern Iranian port city of Bushehr on Friday that the IRGC Navy is constantly monitoring the enemy's vessel movements in the Persian Gulf.

He continued by saying that the Persian Gulf's critical waterway is completely secure.

He stressed that Iran domestically designs and produces sophisticated military equipment, noting, "The Navy and Ground Forces of the IRGC and



ing more realistic in its approach to Iran in a phone call with Catherine Colonna, his French counterpart, on Friday.

He also emphasized Tehran and Paris long-standing cultural and historical ties.

The French foreign minister, for her part, praised her recent positive meetings with Amir Abdollahian in Beijing.

Expressing satisfaction with Iran's attention to France's policy of strategic independence, Colonna described constructive dialogue as the best solution to the issues.

Additionally, she noted that France welcomes the continuation of constructive and profound talks with Iran.

She went on to explain that France is deeply concerned about the events in Gaza and that it is working to ease tensions and put an end to hostilities there.



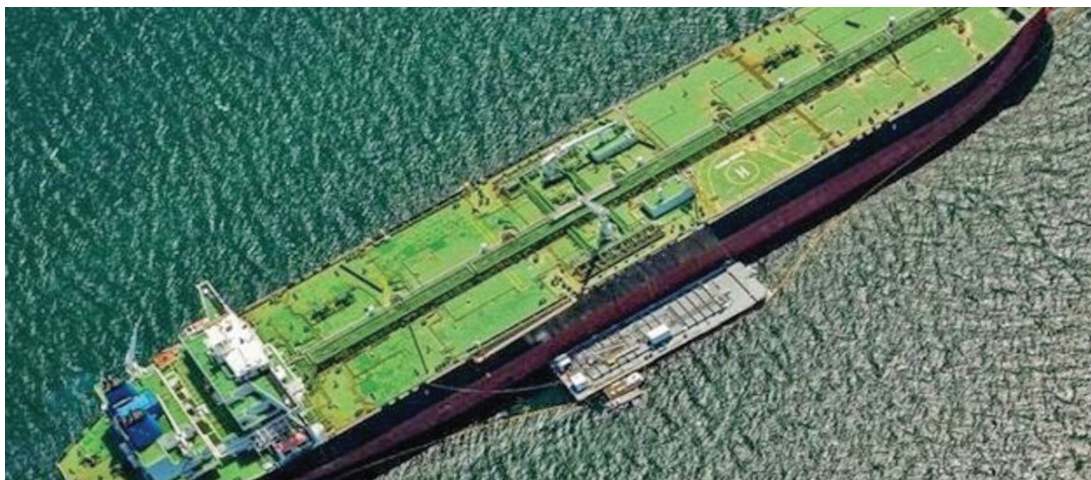
# Iran recaptures oil tanker in joint operation by IRGC Navy, Intelligence Ministry

TEHRAN- An Iranian oil ship that was illegally stolen by a foreign firm five years ago has been retaken by the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy and Iran's Intelligence Ministry in a joint operation.

The 10,000-ton oil tanker Purity has returned to Iranian territorial waters as a result of a court order and a joint operation by the IRGC Navy and Intelligence Ministry, according to Mojtaba Qahremani, head of the justice department in Iran's southern province of Hormozgan, Tasnim reported on Friday.

"The seized 10,000-ton oil tanker Purity had been illegally leased to a foreigner by falsifying documents since 2018 and its Iranian owners were deprived of the benefits of the oil tanker," Qahremani added.

The head of the Hormozgan Province Justice Department also said that it was recognized during investigations by security groups that the



foreign corporation employed the vessel for fuel trafficking.

Qahremani went on to highlight, "Following a judicial order and close cooperation between the IRGC Navy and Intelligence Ministry, the oil tanker was finally identified and confiscated in the Persian Gulf waters earlier this month."

The ship was said to have docked in Iran's Assaluyeh Port on the Persian Gulf's westernmost coast to have its fuel consignments unloaded.

Late in October, forces from the IRGC's first naval zone captured a foreign tanker ship carrying 11 million gallons of illegal fuel in the Persian Gulf.

The Islamic Republic has said unequivocally that the Persian Gulf would never be a safe haven for smugglers.

As a result, several assaults on Iranian and international tankers have also been hindered by the IRGC's Navy over the last years.

## Life goes on without JCPOA: MP

TEHRAN – An Iranian lawmaker has said that Iran has learned how to live without the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The lawmaker, Morteza Mahmoudvand, who is a member of the Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, made the remarks on the occasion of the anniversary of the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA.

"The main problem of the West with Iran is the development of knowledge, independence and elimination of dependence," he said in remarks to ICANA. "According to nuclear specialists, today we have reached a stage where we have the entire cycle of nuclear knowledge in the country, and this issue has angered the Arrogance."

He added, "If we depended on Westerners and asked them for help in the matter of ad-



vanced sciences such as the use of nuclear knowledge capacities, there would not have been pressure or sanctions to this extent. But when we chose the path of independence, we saw terror, sanctions and bad faith."

Referring to the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA, Mahmoudvand said, "Based on various reports, according to the agreement and inter-

national standards, the Islamic Republic of Iran carried out the necessary cooperation and accepted various restrictions. But these restrictions did not stop our scientists from producing science, so America unilaterally withdrew from the agreement so that the economy and knowledge in our country would not develop at the same time."

He concluded, "We have learned to live without the JCPOA and Westerners should know that the opportunities to return are not permanent and if they do not use the agreement window, we will teach them a great lesson with the advancement of peaceful nuclear knowledge and standing."

The U.S. withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018 and reimposed sweeping economic sanctions against Iran.

## Iran friendship group formed in Brazil parliament



TEHRAN – The Iran-Brazil Friendship Group was formed in the new Brazilian parliament with the membership of leading and well-known representatives from important Brazilian parties, ISNA reported.

The formation of the new parliamentary group comes after Brazil's general elections last year and the beginning of the new term of the House of Representatives. The parliamentary friendship group of the two countries was activated with a new combination of representatives. And its board of directors is comprised of diverse political tendencies and from different regions of the country.

The new group also held an opening meeting with the presence of Iranian Ambassador to Brazil Hossein Qaribi, who thanked the president and previous members of the group for their actions and pointed out the importance and position of the parliaments of the two countries in the relations, especially in the last three years.

He expressed hope that in the 120th anniversary of relations, the parliaments of Brazil and Iran and the friendship groups of the two sides can help to improve relations more than ever.

The Iran-Brazil friendship group is headed by Joaquim Passarinho.

Highlighting the common interests and friendship of the two nations, Passarinho emphasized the readiness of the group and the parliament to help further expand and

deepen relations.

The relations between Iran and Brazil have always been friendly and Iran has the highest volume of trade with Brazil in the Americas.

When the capital of Brazil was moved from Rio de Janeiro to Brasilia, Iran was the first country to move its embassy to the new capital in 1960.

Brazilian Ambassador to Iran Laudemar Gonsalves de Aguiar Neto said earlier this year that Tehran and Brasilia need to enhance their bilateral trade relations, IRIB reported.

The ambassador addressed reporters on the second day of his trip to Abadan, Khuzestan Province, in southwestern Iran where he said that the Brazilian government is seeking to increase the level of trade with Iran.

Referring to the economic plans for bolstering mutual economic ties, Aguiar said that business people of the two countries would communicate with each other in accordance with an economic schedule.

Holding the Brazilian trade desk in the Abadan Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture is one of the missions of the Iran-Brazil Joint Chamber of Commerce and certainly will yield positive results, he noted.

"It has been decided that a memorandum of understanding will be prepared by the officials of Abadan city and we are also interested in cooperating with them in the fields that the Iranian side expects," the diplomat said.

## U.S. sanctions violate human rights: minister



TEHRAN – Iranian Justice Minister Amin Hossein Rahimi has described U.S. sanctions as an example of violation of human rights.

Rahimi has underscored that the unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States on Iran and other countries are an example of a violation of human rights because they impede procuring medicines for patients, according to IRNA.

He made the remarks during a visit to Russia to take part in the 11th St. Petersburg International Legal Forum.

Rahimi pointed out that the independent and free states should, in solidarity, file their lawsuit in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and other international entities against the countries that impose such sanctions.

Speaking about the rule of law at the forum, the Iranian minister explained his proposal for the formation of a club consisting of those countries that have been sanctioned, while he addressed the justice ministers participating in the forum in St. Petersburg.

The proposed club would be formed in the framework of legal and judicial cooperation between governments, which are victims of unilateral sanctions, and the "sanctioned club" would be established under the auspices of the ministries of justice of the member states.

The U.S. has imposed sweeping

sanctions against Iran since 2018 when former U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally pulled out of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

In late March, judges at the Hague-based International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled that the United States had violated international law by allowing American courts to confiscate nearly two billion dollars of Iranian assets owned by individuals and companies.

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

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

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

"As per this important ruling, the court rightfully dismissed the unsubstantiated defenses of the United States and recognized Iran as the rightful party by emphasizing the former's violation of its commitments. The U.S. obligation to compensate for the losses will be the most cogent reason for the legitimacy of the request of the Islamic Republic of Iran," the ministry said in the statement, according to Press TV.

## Esmaeili optimistic about Iran women ice hockey's future

From Page 1 ► "The tournament had a great level, and the games were difficult," said Esmaeili in his exclusive interview with Tehran Times.

"This was our first appearance at this level of international competition. But we did a great job and surprised all our opponents during the tournament," she added.

Esmaeili led all players of the 2023 IIHF WAOC with a whopping 17 goals and 26 points in just five games. However, she was held pointless in the game for gold against the hosts.

"Thailand had more experience than our team. They had the hosting advantage over us and the atmosphere of the stadium was completely in their favor. We were really shocked at the beginning of the final match because we had never played in such an atmosphere in an international tournament.

"I'm sure that with the valuable experience we gained in the 2023 IIHF WAOC we will be a better team next year and in the future editions we can achieve the gold medal. I'm sure about that because I believe in the team's potential and the ability of the players," Esmaeili stated.

All in all, our performance was impressive and important, but the tournament was, in the bigger picture, indicative of an ever-growing development of the Iran women's game and the evident sense that this growth is only just beginning, iihf.com reported.

## Rostamian takes silver at 2023 ISSF World Cup

TEHRAN – Iran's Hanieh Rostamian won a silver medal at the 2023 International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup on Saturday.

The Iranian shooter finished in second place in women's 25m pistol event with a score of 33 points.

Gold medal went to Chinese shooter Sixuan Feng with 38 points and Germany's Doreen Vennekamp claimed the bronze, scoring 30 points.

Sajad Poorhosseini had previously claimed a gold in the men's 10m Air Pistol.

The 2023 ISSF World Cup started in Baku, Azerbaijan on May 8 and will conclude on May 15.

## Iran expected to dominate Group C: AFC

TEHRAN – Iran, three-time champions and semi-finalists in 2019, will be expected to dominate Group C of the 2023 AFC Asian Cup.

Iran have been drawn in Group along with the UAE, Hong Kong and Palestine.

According to the-afc.com, Team Melli will be expected to dominate Group C, with the UAE – whose campaign ended at the last four stage on home soil four years ago – expected to seal the second automatic slot in the Round of 16.

Hong Kong and Palestine, however, will be fired up for the challenge of taking on two of the continent's biggest teams.

## Alireza Yousefi Sets IWF Junior Record

TEHRAN – Iran's Alireza Yousefi set a new record in the final day of the 2023 Asian Weightlifting Championships on Saturday.

The superheavyweight won the silver in clean and jerk of the Asian championships with 246kg and bettered his personal record by seven kilograms.

Yousefi finished in fifth place in the category with a total of 436kg.

In the +109kg weight class, Bahrain's Gor Minasyan won the gold medal with 464kg and silver and bronze medals went to Uzbekistan's Rustam Djangabae (437kg) and Akbar Djuraev (437kg), respectively.

## Esteghlal defender Cheshmi undergoes surgery

TEHRAN – Esteghlal football team defender Rouzbeh Cheshmi underwent a hand surgery on Saturday.

Cheshmi underwent surgery at a hospital in Tehran to repair a torn ligament in his hand.

He had suffered injury in the match against Sanat Naft last week. Cheshmi will be eligible soon, the Iranian club announced.

## Hajsafi pens two-year extension with AEK

TEHRAN – Iran international midfielder Ehsan Hajsafi has put pen to paper on a new two-year deal at AEK Athens.

The Team Melli skipper, who has previously played at Greek teams Panionios and Olympiacos, joined AEK from Sepahan in 2021 and shone in the top-flight Greek Super League side.

The 33-year-old winger has also reportedly been linked with Iranian football clubs Esteghlal and Persepolis. Milad Mohammadi is another Iranian player of AEK Athens.

## Naft Masjed Soleyman relegated from IPL

TEHRAN – Naft Masjed Soleyman football team were relegated from Iran Professional League (IPL) on Friday.

The team were held to a goalless draw by Aluminum in Arak and their relegation was confirmed.

Sanat Naft and Mes Kerman are battling it out to stay in the division.

Furthermore, Persepolis and Sepahan are favorites to win the 2022-23 IPL title.

Shams Azar have previously won promotion to IPL.

## Shahdab to start 2023 Asian Club Volleyball C'ship on Sunday

TEHRAN – Shahdab Yazd of Iran will start the 2023 Asian Men's Club Volleyball Championship with a match against Iraqi side South Gas on Sunday.

Shahdab will also meet Afghanistan's Kam Air and Taiwanese Taichung Bank in Group B in the following days. Pool A consists of Bahrain, South Korea, Australia, and Indonesian teams.

Japan, Thailand, Mongolia, and Yemen are in Group C and Kazakhstan, Qatar, Hong Kong, and Kuwait teams are drawn in Pool D.

The 23rd Asian Men's Club Volleyball Championship will be hosted by Bahrain from May 24 to 31, and Shahdab Yazd team will represent Iran in this competition.

The tournament will be held in Manama, Bahrain from May 14 to 21. The champions will advance to the 2023 FIVB Volleyball Men's Club World Championship.

## Iran crowned champions of 2023 Asian Weightlifting

TEHRAN – Iran's weightlifting team won the title of the 2023 Asian Weightlifting Championships held in South Korea.

The Asian Weightlifting Championship ended on Saturday with the superheavyweight category competition in Jinju.

At the end of this competition, in the team ranking, Iran's national team won the championship with 635 points, Uzbekistan stood in second place with 631 points and China took third place.

Iran won two gold, three silver and five bronze medals in this competition. Hossein Soltani won two golds and a silver, Ayat Sharifi and Alireza Yousefi won a silver each, Mustafa Javadi and Fatemeh Keshavarz won two bronzes and Mehdi Karami won a bronze.

The Asian Weightlifting Championships was held on May 5-13 in Jinju, Republic of Korea.

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



## Over 5m tons of agricultural products produced in East Azarbaijan per year



TEHRAN- Over five million tons of agricultural products are produced in East Azarbaijan province, in the northwest of Iran, per annum, a provincial official announced.

Akbar Keramati, a deputy head of the province's agriculture department, also said that East Azarbaijan is the third hub of agricultural products in the country.

Back in late January, the chairman of Iran's Chamber of Agricultural Guilds emphasized that incentives should be considered for agricultural

production.

Pointing out that the issues should be solved at the root and the solution to market regulation is not to create obstacles, Qasem Pishavar reiterated that incentives for production should be considered.

"We should increase the guaranteed purchase price of the products that we need more and reduce their bank loans profit. Good incentives should be considered for market regulation", he added.

The chairman of the Chamber of Agricultural Guilds further stated that the government should not interfere in the agricultural sector because it is an economic sector.

Pishavar believes that the farmer's opinion has not been seen in the "cultivation model" that has been prepared and presented.

Naturally, such plans will not be implemented and the farmer will do his work based on his interests and what the market dictates, he commented.

## Annual export from Tehran province rises 19%

TEHRAN- The value of export from Tehran province increased by 19 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20), according to a provincial official.

Mahmoud Seyjani, the director-general of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department, announced that 826,000 tons of non-oil goods worth \$1.444 billion were exported from Tehran province in the previous year.

He said Tehran imported 537,000 tons of non-oil goods valued at \$11.016 billion during the past year, with a 13 percent fall in the worth of imports.

The official further stated that Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan, Germany and Afghanistan were the first five export markets of Tehran province, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), China, Turkey, Germany and Switzerland were the first five sources of imports to the province in the past year.

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.

The UAE with sales of \$18.395 billion (11 percent growth), China with \$15.744 billion (24 percent growth), Turkey with \$6.99 billion (15 percent growth), India with \$2.019 billion (80 percent growth), and Germany with \$2.019 billion (five percent growth), were the first five countries supplying goods to Iran in 1401, he stated.

The official went on to say that the country's non-oil trade reached 159.236 million tons worth \$112.821 billion in the previous year, with an 11.2 percent growth year on year.

## TEDPIX drops 63,000 points on Saturday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 63,666 points to 2.214 million on Saturday.

As reported, over 18.143 billion securities worth 117.524 trillion rials (about \$235 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).

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.

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.

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

The current Iranian calendar year 1402 (began on March 21) is named "Inflation Control, Production Growth".

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

In addition, the strengthening of the capital market will also help the financing of companies and facilitating the financing of manufacturing companies will itself lead to the prosperity of production because the capital market is the only market that will not cause inflation when liquidity enters it; while, the entrance of liquidity into the commodity, currency, car and housing markets leads to the escalation of inflation, the expert said, adding, "Of course, directing liquidity to the capital market and controlling this liquidity will depend on strengthening investors' trust in this market and stability in rules and regulations and decisions".

# Over \$831m worth of maritime, port projects underway in Iran

TEHRAN – Head of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) has said over 400 trillion rials (about \$831.3 million) of maritime and port projects are currently underway in the country, the PMO portal reported on Saturday.

According to Ali-Akbar Safaei, 180 trillion rials (about \$340 million) of such projects have also been completed and gone operational since the current government took office in August 2021.

He stated that in the international arena, with the government's policy regarding relations with the neighbors, very good links have been established with the neighboring countries in the maritime and ports sector.

"Many negotiations have been conducted with the southern and northern neighbors and it is hoped that this year we will witness a significant growth in the investment of foreign companies and government sectors in the maritime industry and the north-south transit corridor," Safaei said.

In November 2022, PMO



announced that the organization has modified its investment charter in order to facilitate foreign investment in the country's ports.

"Since economic diplomacy is a major policy of the 13th government, the charter of investment in ports has been facilitated with the aim of attracting foreign investors," IRNA quoted PMO Deputy Head Jalil Eslami as saying.

Speaking in a gathering of PMO managers with oil and petrochemical industry representatives, Eslami said: "We live in a period when ports infrastructure development is very important and over the past few decades positive efforts have been made to increase the capacity of ports in the south and north of the country."

According to the official, the capacity of the country's ports is going to be increased to 280

million tons per annum in the near future.

Later in March this year, Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mehrdad Bazrpash inaugurated 10 major maritime projects worth 42.951 trillion rials (about \$81.1 million) in southern Hormozgan Province.

The inauguration ceremony of the said projects was also attended by Safaei, Governor of Hormozgan Province Mehdi Dousti, along with some provincial officials and MPs.

The inaugurated projects include a marine reference building, a new section of the third phase of Shahid Rajaei Port's development plan, and two suction machines with a total capacity of 300 tons per hour for loading and unloading of grains at this port.

Khamir multipurpose port was another major project that was inaugurated by the minister. The port is developed with the aim of facilitating trade, enhancing the export of minerals, and boosting employment in the province.

## Iran, Saudi Arabia explore ways to boost economic co-op

From page 1 ► "In this regard, it is necessary to remove the economic and trade barriers against the two countries", he stressed.

Referring to the great opportunities for interaction and cooperation between the two countries, Al-Jadaan expressed hope that he will soon meet the Iranian finance and economic affairs minister in Riyadh.

The Iranian minister for his part welcomed the progress of economic relations between the two countries and stated that the development of relations is important not only for Iran and Saudi Arabia, but also for all countries in the region.

Stating that it is the duty of governments to facilitate economic ties, Khandouzi said these bilateral relations are very important not only from an economic point of view, but also in the political and security fields.

Explaining Iran's program in the field of economic relations with Saudi Arabia, Khandouzi said: "At the government level, Iran and Saudi Arabia have not finalized any basic agreement in the field of investment, customs and trade. In this regard, it is necessary to draw up and sign MOUs between the parties."

The Saudi Arabian side, while agreeing to cooperate in the three fields of customs, trade and investment, expressed hope that with the assistance of his country's ministries, cooperation in the mentioned fields will be followed up.

**Iran taking new measures to boost share in IsDB**

Iranian finance and economic affairs minister also met IsDB Chairman Muhammad Sulaiman Al Jasser on the sidelines of the annual meeting of the bank's board of executive directors in

Jeddah on Saturday.

During the meeting, Khandouzi said Iran, as one of the major shareholders of the Islamic Development Bank, is implementing new measures to participate in increasing the bank's capital.

In this meeting, while pointing to the milestones of joint cooperation, the parties emphasized on removing the related obstacles and problems in the path of this cooperation.

Referring to the efforts made by the Iranian government to remove existing cooperation obstacles, Khandouzi pointed out the emphasis of the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran on strengthening joint cooperation with IsDB and solving the problems and challenges in the path of these interactions.

Al Jasser for his part pointed out the challenges facing the bank during the years of the Coronavirus pandemic and requested that the Islamic Republic of Iran, like other senior shareholders of the bank, supports the increase of the bank's capital and fulfills its obligations to the bank.

**Iran, UAE to ink MOUs to avoid double taxation, facilitate joint investment**

Iran and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) agreed to sign new memorandums of understanding (MOUs) on the avoidance of double taxation and facilitation of mutual investment.

The decision was made during a meeting between Khandouzi and UAE Minister of State for Financial Affairs Mohamed bin Hadi Al Hussaini on the sidelines of the above-mentioned event in Jeddah on Friday.

During the meeting, the officials emphasized increasing cooperation in the fields of trade

and foreign investment; in this regard, it was decided that appropriate measures should be implemented soon in order to sign agreements on facilitating foreign investment and avoidance of double taxation between the countries.

Pointing to the positive impact of the resumption of relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia in the region, Al-Husseini said that the volume of trade between the two countries has increased about 40 times.

"This volume of trade in various fields indicates a natural and positive growth of relations and interactions between Iran and the UAE, and the role of the governments of the two sides is to encourage trade and facilitate it through agreements to avoid double taxation, and it is necessary to revise the existing agreements between the two countries," he said.

Khandouzi for his part referred to the previous unfinished negotiations related to the drafting of a foreign investment agreement between the two sides, saying: "The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to cooperate in joint profitable projects, as well as cooperation for investing in other countries."

At the end of this meeting, Khandouzi invited his Emirati counterpart to travel to Tehran as soon as possible.

The Islamic Development Bank is a multilateral development finance institution that is focused on Islamic finance for infrastructure development and is located in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. There are 57 shareholding member states with the largest single shareholder being Saudi Arabia.

## Iran calls for barter trade with Vietnam to boost trade



TEHRAN – Niloufar Asadi, acting head of the international affairs department of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), in a meeting with the head of the commercial office of the Vietnamese Embassy in Tehran, stressed the need for using barter trade as a way to increase trade relations between the two countries.

During the meeting which was held at the place of ICCIMA in Tehran, the two sides discussed ways to develop trade between the two

countries and remove the obstacles and problems facing it, the ICCIMA portal reported on Saturday.

Also, during a meeting at the place of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) in previous week, the representatives of the private sectors of Iran and Vietnam discussed the ways of developing trade between the two sides.

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.

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."

## Gas export deals to Iraq to be extended for 5 years: Oji

TEHRAN – Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji has announced that his ministry is going to extend two major gas export deals with neighboring Iraq for another five years, Shana reported.

Iran currently has two gas export contracts with Iraq's Baghdad and Basra power plants, the oil minister said, adding that: "Based on the agreement of both parties, these two

contracts will be extended for the next five years after going through expert procedures."

Oji made the remarks after a meeting with Iraqi Minister of Electricity Ziad Ali Fazel.



# Palestinian resistance: New response is coming

From page 1 ▶ The official reiterated that “only the resistance will determine the time for the end of this round of fighting.”

Sources have told media outlets affiliated with the Palestinian resistance that “the truce negotiations in Egypt are facing great difficulties, and there has been no real breakthrough so far.”

The sources pointed out that “the main issue is the Israeli enemy’s refusal to make a written or verbal commitment to stop the assassinations.”

The sources stated that “Islamic Jihad and the resistance factions reject any idea of ??ending the battle without obtaining this commitment.”

They also highlighted that “the chances of heading to a broad battle are much greater than the chances of calm, with a narrow window of hope remaining to observe a truce”.

On the conflicting reports about the ceasefire, a private source in the Islamic Jihad movement confirmed, “there is no truth to what is being talked about in the media about the truce.”

Since starting its assassination campaign against Islamic Jihad leaders on Tuesday, the Israeli occupation forces have continued their military aggression against the Gaza Strip, as the regime’s warplanes and drones bomb homes and apartments in the north, center and south of the Strip, killing and wounding women and children as well as several Palestinian Islamic Jihad members and commanders.

According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, the death toll from the Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip rose to at least 33 Palestinians, including 6 children and 3 women, more than 150 have been wounded, many of them women and children.

Some of the wounded are in critical condition, including 35 children and 18 women.

Those in critical condition have been prevented by Israel from leaving the besieged Gaza Strip for urgent medical treatment not available in the blockaded territory.

Palestinian Islamic Jihad has responded by targeting, with around 1,000 missiles, the settlements around the Gaza Strip, as well as settlements deep inside the occupied Palestinian territories.

In response to the ongoing Israeli aggression, Gaza’s Joint Room, where all the resistance factions coordinate, launched their response under the name operation “Revenge of the Free.”

Missiles from Gaza have hit the



Israeli military site Nahal Oz after they passed the so-called Iron Dome.

Footage shows smoke rising from inside the occupation’s military site, located to the east of Gaza City, after the resistance struck it.

Al-Quds Brigades, the military wing of Islamic Jihad, released a statement that said “the Palestinian resistance declares its responsibility for targeting a gathering of the enemy’s vehicles and soldiers, with heavy caliber shells, as part of the ongoing operation ‘Revenge of the Free’, confirming accurate hits and casualties among the occupation forces.”

Israeli media reports have acknowledged that Israel’s Nahal Oz site has come under attack.

Israeli media also reported that sirens have once again blared in the settlements around the Gaza Strip, while confirming that rockets had been fired at Gush Dan, south of Tel Aviv, and the settlement of Beit Shemesh, in addition to a settlement near occupied al-Quds (Jerusalem).

Israeli media pundits have expressed their surprise following the firing of a precise missile at a settlement near occupied al-Quds saying it was “dramatic and unexpected”, while referring to yet another direct hit on a building in the Sderot settlement near Gaza.

Reports have also emerged that the resistance targeted a second Israeli military site, located east of the wall separating the Gaza Strip from the occupied Palestinian territories. According to reports, the military site is located east of the central governorate in the Gaza Strip.

The Islamic Jihad movement has vowed that the depth of the enemy’s occupation of Palestinian territories will be targeted with more strikes in response to Israel’s indiscriminate

attacks on women and children, and the flattening of residential homes.

Palestinian sources say, “al-Quds Brigades and the Resistance Brigades do not suffer from any shortage of ammunition, and they have the ability to continue fighting for many months.”

Lots of videos have gone viral on social media showing the Palestinian resistance firing rocket salvos towards Israeli settlements, setting off sirens, and sending settlers running to bomb shelters.

The battle has so far seen Israel trading fire only with the Islamic Jihad Resistance movement. The regime has been careful to avoid targeting any positions belonging to the Hamas organization, wary of drawing in the more powerful resistance group to the battle.

Hamas spokesman Abdel Latif Al-Qanou has said that the battle is open with the Israeli occupation while sending a message to the regime that the resistance factions are united.

He also indicated that Hamas has been offering advice to Islamic Jihad.

Al-Qanou says that the Palestinian resistance is not only unified, but the joint room manages the battle wisely.

He pointed out that the occupation is in a real crisis, its internal problems will intensify, and Israel is fully aware of the field unity of the resistance.

Al-Qanou said, “This far-right, fascist government declared war on the Palestinian people, and all arenas must engage in confronting it.”

Hamas chief Ismael Haniyah has discussed the attacks on Gaza with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Washington appears to be concerned over its staunchest ally and proxy in West Asia.

Israeli media has revealed that the United States is in talks with the

regime’s leaders about the need for a ceasefire and refraining from further escalation, for fear of the confrontation slipping into new phases.

This comes as the al-Quds Brigades, in a warning to Israel, published a video titled: “Your slingshot will not work for you.”

In the video, al-Quds Brigades presented the features of the “Buraq 85” missile, which was manufactured by its experts, and has a range of 85 kilometers.

“The crime of assassinating the leaders of the al-Quds Brigades will strike back at the enemy, terrifying and defeating its security and army.” The resistance movement warned.

Another Palestinian resistance faction, Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades, the military wing of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, has issued a statement that said “there is neither security nor safety for the occupation entity, with all its settlers and leaders,” and that “the fire of the resistance will be upon them, a calamity, a lava, and a volcano of anger,” and that “the next stage will be greater.

The statement added, “our heroic fighters continue to confront the Zionist aggression during the battle of revenge of the free within the unified response of the joint room of the resistance factions,”

The faction also announced it has begun targeting the occupation’s settlements and sites with a variety of salvos of missile and artillery fire.

While Israeli settlers enjoy the freedom of hiding in shelters, Gazan children in critical condition, as a result of Israeli bombing raids, living in the world’s largest open air prison and most densely populated region, have nowhere to hide or go for treatment.

## WORLD HEADLINES

### Türkiye to head to polls for presidential, parliamentary elections

Voting for presidential and parliamentary elections in Türkiye will begin at 8 a.m. local time (0500GMT) Sunday and last until 5 p.m. (1400GMT).

A total of 191,885 ballot boxes will be set up in 973 districts and 1,094 district election boards across the country to elect the president and members of parliament, who will serve for five years.

More than 64.1 million voters will cast votes in Türkiye and abroad. Around 4.9 million will vote for the first time in the country. The number of voters imprisoned is 53,172.

Voters will be able to cast their ballots with one of the official documents having their identity number.

It will not be mandatory to bring a sheet showing where to vote. Those who did not receive the voter information sheet will be able to learn where and in which ballot box they will vote on the website of the Supreme Election Board (YSK). If the election goes to a second round, the sheet will not be required again.

It will be forbidden to enter the voting station with video recorders or communication devices such as mobile phones or cameras. Those devices will be left at the ballot box committee and will be returned after the voting process is finished.

Voters will put two separate ballot papers for the president and deputies in the same envelope and put them in the ballot box.

### U.S. will destroy its last remaining chemical weapons by fall

The US will destroy its last remaining chemical weapons by the fall of 2023, President Joe Biden announced on Friday, ahead of next week’s international arms control conference in The Hague.

“We are on track to complete the destruction of our chemical weapons stockpile by this fall – a disarmament milestone that upholds the highest standards of transparency and public safety,” Biden said in a statement posted on the White House website.

The US will continue to work with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to “prevent the stockpiling, production, and use of chemical weapons around the world,” the statement read.

### Pakistan ex-PM Imran Khan returns home after arrest saga

Pakistan’s ex-Prime Minister Imran Khan has arrived safely back at his Lahore residence after being freed on bail following days of nationwide protests over his arrest on corruption charges.

After the court granted him bail, Khan spent hours in the courthouse in the capital, Islamabad, as he and his legal team were locked in apparent negotiations over his exit.

As he headed to his home in the eastern city of Lahore, Khan put out a video statement from his vehicle saying the Islamabad police tried to keep him in the court through different tactics, and authorities allowed him to travel only when he threatened to tell the public he was being held there against his will.

Khan was taken by dozens of paramilitary troops and arrested during a routine court appearance on Tuesday.

### Israeli air attacks intensify: Al Jazeera correspondent

Israeli attacks targeted cities across the Gaza Strip, including two neighbourhoods that were completely destroyed, Al Jazeera’s Youmna ElSayed reported.

“Israeli air strikes have intensified a lot this morning with many houses targeted,” she said from Gaza.

Rockets were also fired into Israel. “The confrontation shows no sign of any fruitful mediation towards a ceasefire and that has risen fear among civilians as we are in the fifth day of attacks from both sides.”

A Palestinian official familiar with truce talks described them as “complicated” and “tough”, but confirmed efforts were pressing ahead.

### Pakistan: More than a dozen dead in Balochistan attack

At least 13 people including soldiers have been killed in an attack on a security facility in southwestern Pakistan.

A Frontier Corps camp in the Muslim Bagh area of northern Balochistan was attacked in the early hours of Friday. The military launched an operation to rescue hostages and clear the area, the military’s media wing, Inter-Services Public Relations, said in a statement on Saturday.

In the process of the operation, “at least six soldiers and a civilian were killed”, it said. Another six people including a woman were wounded.

The dead included all six attackers who the military said were well-equipped and stormed the compound.

“The complex clearance operation involved a hostage rescue operation as well to save three families from a residential block. The terrorists had not even spared children of their horrendous approach,” the statement said.

“The security forces, in step with the nation, remain determined to thwart all attempts at sabotaging the peace, stability and progress of Balochistan,” it said.

### Two Palestinians killed in West Bank as Gaza attacked for 5th day

Israeli forces have shot dead two Palestinians and wounded three others in the occupied West Bank as air raids hit the Gaza Strip for a fifth straight day.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said the Israeli attack on Saturday occurred in the Balata refugee camp in the northern West Bank city of Nablus.

Both men – identified as Adnan Wasim Yousef Al-Araj, 19, and Saed Jihad Shaker Mashah, 32 – were killed by gunshots to the head, it said. One of the wounded was a woman in her 50s who was shot multiple times.

The Israeli army said it was a “counterterrorism” operation targeting operatives who had been planning attacks on soldiers.

“Armed gunmen fired at the forces who responded with riot dispersal means and live fire,” it said. “Two of the terrorists were targeted.”

The Fatah movement of Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas said the two men killed in the raid were members of its armed wing, the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades.

The deadly raid on Nablus is the latest in a series of incursions in the occupied West Bank since the start of the year.

## Geopolitical realities, energy make Iran-Saudi coop. worthy

By Zahra Mirzafarjouyan

TEHRAN– Calling Iran-Saudi rapprochement a game-changer, Ogutcu says, “Though scope for cooperation between two competitors is limited, new geopolitical and energy sector realities could make Iran and Saudi collaboration worthwhile.”

After about a decade-old tensions, Iran and Saudi Arabia started rapprochement negotiations in 2021 and held several rounds of negotiations in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad. Back in March this year, they clinched a détente deal after several days of intensive negotiations hosted by China. The agreement obliged the two to restore their diplomatic relations and re-open embassies within two months.

Several Iranian and Saudi officials have hailed the rapprochement as a source of benefit for not only the two countries but also the entire region.

Leading a senior economic team, Iran’s Economy Minister Ehsan Khandouzi arrived on Thursday in the Saudi city of Jeddah to attend the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group’s Annual Meetings, as the first Iranian minister to visit Saudi Arabia after the signing of the agreement.

To know more about the Saudi-Iranian rapprochement, we reached out to Mehmet Ogutcu, former Turkish diplomat and chairman of the London Energy Club.

**What are the immediate impacts of the Saudi-Iran rapprochement?**

The Iranian-Saudi rapprochement, unexpectedly



brokered by China, is indeed a game-changer in the Middle East [West Asia], bringing an end to the decades-old tension and proxy wars, and opening a new chapter in trade, investment and finance between Iran, Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf economies. Whether this will be sustainable over the long run or not we have to wait and see because it is not that easy to quickly heal the old wounds and relaunch a relationship poisoned by mutual mistrust.

The Beijing agreement ushering as it does a new historic era in the Saudi-Iranian relationship will likely contribute to managing or even resolving, some of the conflicts elsewhere in the Middle East [West Asia] such as Yemen, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq. It might even pave the ground for a security and economic dialogue among the Persian Gulf states, Iran and Iraq.

Some of the smaller Arab states had previously been reticent about expanding their engagement with Tehran if Riyadh did not first mend ties, so in that sense, the deal opens the

door to wider opportunities.

**What economic gains do you foresee for Iran?**

As Iran is facing not only diplomatic pressure but also its currency and economy are under intense pressure from US sanctions, more importantly, one of Tehran’s principal motives is to step up fresh economic support from its rich Arab neighbors, led by Saudi Arabia. As a member of the Saudi-led OPEC oil cartel, Iran wants to be able to sell more of its crude but is limited by US sanctions. The deal could expand investment and trade ties with Saudi Arabia, the region’s biggest economy, and attract more FDI flows.

The Iranian minister of economic affairs and finance Ehsan Khandouzi said Tehran aims to raise annual trade with Riyadh to \$1 billion in the first step of resuming economic ties. Given that Iran and Saudi Arabia are both seriously determined to resume bilateral cooperation, the launch of the joint chamber of commerce must be on the agenda to expand trade from very low levels. Trade and investment delegations must be exchanged, and new finance possibilities must be made available to traders and investors.

At the current juncture, what Tehran needs is an investment, and the Kingdom has recognized this. Saudi Arabia’s Finance Minister Mohammed Al-Jadaan said, “There are a lot of opportunities for Saudi investments in Iran. We don’t see impediments if the terms of any agreement would be respected. When people really stick to the principles of what was agreed, I think that it could happen very quickly.” (See full text at [www.tehrantimes.com](http://www.tehrantimes.com))



## Tea festival to make debut in Tonekabon



TEHRAN –A first edition of a tea festival is planned to be held in a small village in Tonekabon county, the northern province of Mazandaran, a local tourism official has said.

The three-day festival, which will open on May 17, aims at promoting tourism and agritourism in the region, Dariush Rahim-Mashai explained on Saturday.

Vising different tea factories as well as collaborating in tea harvesting are parts of the festival programs, the official added.

Some tour guides believe an important aspect of a tea tour is the opportunity to participate in a customer experience that will help you show your support for local farmers and the community rather than just watching from the sidelines.

An essential feature of a tea tour is that you are not just an observer but a part of a traditional experience to boost support for farmers and the local community.

Where the tea is grown, an energizing sea of green on gently sloping hills where the sound of babbling streams, tweeting birds, and bustling farmers can be very alluring!

The tea culture is really strong and a sign of hospitality in the ancient land. The tea and its associated philosophy are well-soaked

into the life of Iranians from all walks of life. It also constitutes a vital sign of hospitality across the ancient land; a cup of tea is the first thing that an Iranian will offer their guests!

For almost every Iranian, an earthenware teapot with a drawing of a red rose flanked by a steaming samovar conjures up memories of childhood when mom, grandma, or dad were making a perfect shade of brown, golden tea as the sunlight coming through from the horizon. They usually poured strong thick tea for the adults and a hint of color for the kids and grandkids!

Iranians start the day with a freshly brewed cup of tea sweetened with some sugar served with their breakfast, believing its taste is in great harmony with bread and cheese. Iranians' story of drinking tea is not limited to mornings with breakfast only; they drink tea at work, after their meals at home, or at night before sleep.

The shade of color, temperature, strength, and taste of the tea is of very importance during formal gatherings and when served to specific guests. Before taking the teacups to the guests, the host traditionally checks the tone, color, and strength of the tea with a single glance behind the shining glass.

Today, agritourism is regarded as a stimulus to the imbalanced economy of agriculture sectors and the tendency for emotional and nostalgic roots of the modern world citizens due to factors such as visitor participation in farm activities, direct purchase of products, spending a night at a farm, curiosity and learning about the farm and agriculture products has been able to create a wide target population.

## Over 1m visits to Marivan recorded



TEHRAN –Over one million visits to the historical sites and natural sights of the western county of Marivan in Kordestan province were registered in a month, Marivan's governor has said.

Over one million visits to the tourist attractions of the western county were recorded from the Noruz holidays, which officially started on March 21, to the two-day Eid al-Fitr holidays, which started on April 22, IRNA quoted Esmail Ahmadi as saying on Saturday.

However, the region has the potential to host more visitors and tourists, the official added.

Marivan is considered one of the country's tourism hubs in the fields of religious, cultural, and sports tourism, he noted.

The development of infrastructure, however, should be considered in advance if

tourism is to flourish as a sustainable source of income for Marivan, he mentioned.

In 2017, Marivan won the WCC-APR status as the city of Kalash, particularly lightweight and breathable footwear.

Located in western Kordestan province, the city is nationally famous for being a living museum of footwear made of natural cotton and leather.

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

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



the South Khorasan carpets.

Hand-woven carpets from Iran are in international demand because of their filigree designs and good quality. A medallion pattern is arguably the most distinctive feature of all types of Persian rugs.

# Shahr-e Yeri, nicknamed ‘City of the Mouthless’, to open to public

TEHRAN – Shahr-e Yeri, a unique archaeological site nicknamed ‘City of the Mouthless’ in northwest Iran, will be open to the public in the near future.

Over the past couple of years, the site underwent extensive restoration work to help safeguard its Iron-Age fortress, three prehistorical temples, and tens of stones, which bear bizarre-shaped mouthless faces.

A series of custom-made roofing covers and tourism amenities have been constructed over the ancient site, which is situated near Pirazman village of Meshkin Shahr in Ardabil province.

Massive shielding structures have been installed to protect the 400-hectare archaeological site against harsh natural conditions, according to local officials.

The archaeological site was inscribed on the list of national heritage sites in 1931. It embraces an Iron-Age fortress, three prehistorical temples, and tens of stones on which bizarre-



shaped mouthless faces have been carved. In its heyday, bodies of the dead were buried with special ceremonies and rituals in compliance with religious beliefs... however, the majority of the tombs were found empty of skeletons due to illegal excavations, according to the Circle of Ancient Iranian Studies.

More than 10,000 ancient petroglyphs and rock-carved art have been discovered in and near Meshkin Shahr over the past couple

of years. Some of the objects bear depictions of human beings in archery and cavalry in rhythmic and magical themes. There are also petroglyphs depicting mountain goats, boat anchors, shooting and scenes of war, and scenes of deer hunting in individual and collective forms.

Rock arts can be seen around mountainous regions across Iran where roaming life and livestock farming are prevalent typically. The rock-carved figures of animals

and associated tools are regarded as good clues to help shed light on daily life in the distant past, though some figures might be symbolic.

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

From the Caspian in the northwest to Baluchistan in the southeast, the Iranian plateau extends for close to 2,000 km. The land encompasses the greater part of Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan west of the Indus River, containing some 3,700,000 square kilometers. Despite being called a “plateau”, it is far from flat but contains several mountain ranges, the highest peak being Damavand in the Alborz mountain range at 5610 m, and the Dasht-e Lout east of Kerman in Central Iran, falling below 300 m.

## Architectural elements of 12 Tehran churches examined



TEHRAN – A team of cultural heritage experts has examined the architectural elements of 12 historical churches scattered across Tehran province.

Supervised by the Research Institute for Cultural Heritage and Tourism, the survey is aimed at enhancing the detailed knowledge of restoring

churches constructed in the semi-arid Tehran province, Mehr reported on Saturday.

Any attempt to restore and renovate historical churches requires accurate knowledge of their original construction methods, cultural heritage expert Ahmad Mirzakouchalkhan-Khoshnevis said.

No intervention in this matter should be done with speculation, the expert said, adding “This phase of our study was aimed to introduce the details of old churches in Tehran.”

He also reminded the wide scope of Persian architecture across the country that sometimes makes it difficult even for experienced experts to choose precise technical solutions for restoration projects.

“It is necessary for researchers to fully

comprehend scientific and rational reasons for using brick and stone in the construction of historical buildings.”

The study has found unique methods of utilizing brick, stone, and special mortars in the construction of historical churches in Tehran, the expert said.

“For each church, we collected information, including the list of materials and their dimensions and their architectural details.”

To the untrained eye, Iran's earliest churches may seem modest structures to some, but they bear testimony to a vast panorama of architectural and decorative scenes associated with Armenian culture blended with other regional cultures: Byzantine, Orthodox, Assyrian, Persian, and Muslim.

## Iran tourism to reap reward if Ecbatana gains UNESCO status, governor-general says

TEHRAN – Hamedan's Governor-General has said the UNESCO designation of Ecbatana will be providing a great opportunity for Iran's tourism sector.

“The UNESCO registration of the Hegmataneh ensemble will provide an unparalleled opportunity not only for Hamedan but for the whole tourism sector of Iran,” Moslem Makhfi said on Thursday.

Known in classical times as Ecbatana, the ensemble, which partly overlaps with modern Hamedan, was once one of the world's greatest cities of ancient times.

“Now, an important assignment for [gaining] a [possible] UNESCO

registration of this historical identity of Iran is on the shoulders of Hamadan [province],” the official said.

In this regard, continuous efforts should be made to cement cultural dialogue between Hamedan and [other parts of] Iran, he added.

Hegmataneh was once the capital of Medes and later the summer residence for Achaemenid kings. The ensemble is made up of a priceless archeological site and a singular collection of historical ruins.

It embraces artifacts from six different historical eras that are still extant, including an odd collection that belonged to Iran's Christians.



It is well protected as a result of its significance to history and culture.

Ecbatana was first excavated in 1913 by the French Assyriologist Charles Fossey. In 2006, excavations in a limited area of Hegmataneh hill failed to uncover anything older than the Parthian period (247 BC). However, excavations have been limited due to the modern city

covering most of the ancient sites.

Around 1220, Hamedan was destroyed by the Mongols. In 1386, it was sacked by Timur (Tamerlane), a Turkish conqueror, and the inhabitants were massacred. In the 17th century, it was partially restored and then frequently changed hands between the Iranian dynasties and the Ottomans.

Located on a high plain, Hamedan is pleasantly cool in the summer but can snow and freeze from December to March. Hamedans attractions include Ali Sadr Cave, Ganjnameh Inscriptions, Avicenna Mausoleum, Hegmataneh Hill, Alaviyan Dome, Jameh Mosque, and St. Stephanos Gregorian Church, among others.

## Discover carpets woven in South Khorasan province

TEHRAN – South Khorasan is famous for its exquisite carpets and rugs, which according to the knowledge passed down from generation to generation are woven in different villages of the eastern Iranian province.

Historically speaking, the region was a lively hub for carpet weaning during the Timurid era (1370–1507) when quite famous for its floral carpets.

The most common motifs of South Khorasan carpets are Rizeh Mahi, Paisley, Robee Sadi, Kaleh Asbi or Horse Head, Kheshti or Four Seasons, and Moharamat. In all these designs, the motif of the sun appears in different forms, a feature that we find only in

## Kordestan rich in cultural, religious, and natural attractions, official says

TEHRAN –The western province of Kordestan has great potential to become a major travel destination, the provincial tourism chief has said.

As a result of its vast natural resources, historical significance, and cultural potential, the province can develop the tourism industry, Mansour Mehrzad said on Saturday.

In addition to its cultural,



religious, and natural attractions, Kordestan is also an important hub for international tourism, he noted.

In the tourism industry, the province supports investors, provides facilities, and strengthens infrastructure to create good jobs in this field, the official added.

As the number of tourists in the province increases by 15 percent every year, it is important to strengthen the infrastructure of this sector, he mentioned.

The name Kordestan refers to the region's principal inhabitants.

After the Turkish invasion of Iran in the 11th century CE (Seljuq period), the name Kurdistan was applied to the region comprising the northwestern Zagros Mountains. It was during the reign of Abbas I the Great of Iran's Safavid dynasty (1501–1736) that the Kurds rose to prominence, having been enlisted by Abbas I to help stem the attacks of the marauding Uzbeks from the east in the early 17th century.



Tall-e Marv located near an Achaemenid Palace, and Qajar era Malek al-Tojar Mansion. Qajar-era Kazeruni Mansion, which has been inscribed on the World Heritage List, is another attraction that world travelers love to see among various ancient sites.



# WHO regional director sends message to G5 meeting in Iran

TEHRAN - Ahmed al-Mandhari, the World Health Organization director for Eastern Mediterranean Region, has sent a message to the 26th G5 High-Level Experts Meeting on Health Cooperation that was held in Tehran from May 6-10.

"I strongly believe that the Group of Five Cooperation Program will add value to the health programs and operations that countries in the region implement in order to achieve the development goals of the World Health Organization," he said.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has shown how public health crises damage not only people's lives but also their livelihoods.

Regional and sub-regional collaborations and partnerships are vital to the stability and prosperity of the region and it is only through collective action that we can increase achievements in promoting and improving people's health and well-being."

G5 countries (Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, plus the World Health Organization) took part in the meetings from May 6-10 with the theme of "Joint Work for Solving Joint Health Problems."

Addressing the opening ceremony, Health Minister Bahram Einollahi referred to the unity and cooperation of the countries in the fields of health, treatment, and medical education as a historical necessity.

Achieving, maintaining, and promoting health is never possible in a regional way and does not happen in an isolated region, but requires the cooperation of countries, especially neighboring countries, he stressed.



"To develop health in the countries of the group of five, we must look at health collectively and think about creating and promoting health in all countries.

The health sector of Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Tajikistan is tied to each other. Today, with the relations and cooperation that exist in different sectors between the countries and neighbors, a disease is capable of penetrating all countries."

"Therefore, our unity and cooperation is a historical necessity so that the health indicators in the region can be improved and brought to the ideal point," the minister reiterated.

He went on to say that conditions should be provided so that professors, students, and scientists can easily communicate with each other and travel to each other's countries without hindrance and hold joint scientific conferences.

"Many incidents have happened in the region, such as this year's huge earthquake in Turkey and last year's flood in Pakistan, which unfortunately left many damages and

deaths. These bitter incidents show the need for joint cooperation to help each other."

Health is the common link of the countries of the region and it can cause the unity and development of the cooperation of the G5 countries and also a prelude to the development of the health economy, he added.

"Iran has achieved many successes in the field of knowledge-based companies and is able to provide 99 percent of its pharmaceutical needs and 40 percent of its advanced medical equipment needs.

So, the country can provide the G5 with its experiences."

Einollahi pointed out that the group of five has an exceptional position due to being located in a strategic area, and the formation of this group can be a model for other countries.

One of the major problems of the G5 countries today is management in the field of health, which requires the creation of an up-to-date mechanism because management is the most important element in promot-

ing health in the countries of the group of five.

Iran initiated the establishment of the G5 in 2005 to promote sub-regional cooperation in health among the group of four countries - Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan - plus the World Health Organization as the fifth member of this group to provide technical support in improving this collaboration.

Several activities have already been taken under this initiative, with the Islamic Republic of Iran taking responsibility for serving as its secretariat.

The first subregional workshop for G5 countries on health system strengthening was hosted by the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination of Pakistan on November 19-20, 2013 in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Syed Jaffar Hussain, the World Health Organization Representative and Head of Mission in Iran, has appreciated the country for its efforts to enhance health security in the region.

The WHO representative also thanked Iran for holding the 26th G5 High-Level Experts Meeting on Health Cooperation and the 1st Healthcare Leadership and Governance Training Program, IRNA reported.

In June 2021, al-Mandhari said the Islamic Republic of Iran is a role model for primary health care.

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

## Budget to support patients with rare diseases rises by 40%

From page 1 ► According to WHO, rare diseases are often serious, chronic, and life-threatening. The European Union (EU) definition of a rare disease is one that affects fewer than 5 in 10,000 people. At present, more than 6000 rare diseases are known; around 80 percent of them are genetic disorders and half of them occur during childhood.

Some 70 trillion rials (about \$140 million) has been allocated to support patients with rare diseases.

Grouped together, rare diseases affect 6-8 percent (or about 30 million people) out of the 508 million population of EU countries. This roughly equals the estimated prevalence of diabetes in the World Health Organization European

Region, which in 2013 was 6.8 percent of 658.7 million adults in the 20 to 79-year age group.

Rare diseases are associated with a high psychological burden for the patient but they can also have a major impact on a patient's family. In addition to the health burden on patients, few of these diseases have effective drug treatment available.

President Ebrahim Raisi has instructed all government organizations to implement the National Document on Rare Diseases.

The National Document on Rare Diseases was approved in December 2020, with the aim of preventing the birth of infants with rare diseases and therapeutic problems.

Patients with rare diseases launched and signed a petition calling for drawing up a national document on rare diseases on the occasion of Rare Disease Day, February 28, 2019.

The main vision of this document is to prevent the birth of infants with rare diseases and to solve the medical and therapeutic problems of rare patients in the country.

There are 355 types of rare diseases in Iran. Also, according to the World Health Organization, there are nearly 8,000 types of rare diseases in the world.

A total of 107 hard-to-treat diseases are currently under health insurance coverage, Mohammad-Mehdi Nasehi, the managing director of Iran Health Insurance Organization, has said.



He made the remarks in a meeting with Ahmed al-Mandhari, the World Health Organization director for Eastern Mediterranean Region, IRNA reported.

Some 20 million people in villages across the country are covered by the Health Insurance Fund and the government pays most of the treatment costs, Nasehi added.

A total of 250 trillion rials (around \$500 million) was proposed in the budget bill for the previous Iranian calendar year that ended on March 20 to support and treat patients with hard-to-treat diseases.

Out of a thousand population, 2 people get a rare disease, while the prevalence can be curbed by changing people's culture, screening, identifying, preventing births, and raising awareness.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## Special clinic to be launched to relieve bereaved coronavirus families

A special clinic will be opened for the first time in the country to provide free psychological services to families who have lost their loved ones during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The clinic is called "Soog" (literally meaning mourn) will be inaugurated at Shahid Beheshti Educational and Medical Center in Zanjan province on Wednesday.

The outbreak of coronavirus has changed the lifestyle of many families, Ehsan Fakoor, head of the mental health department of Zanjan University of Medical Sciences said.

Sudden changes in life cause stress, while the coronavirus itself has doubled the stress due to its contagion and the number of lives it has claimed in the world to date, he regretted.

## افتتاح 'کلینیک سوگ' برای تسکین خانواده‌هایی که اعضای خود را بر اثر کرونا از دست داده‌اند

رئیس گروه بهداشت روان دانشگاه علوم پزشکی زنجان از افتتاح نخستین کلینیک سوگ در کشور برای ارائه خدمات رایگان روان‌شناختی به خانواده‌هایی که اعضای خانواده خود را به دلیل ابتلا به کرونا از دست داده‌اند خبر داد و اظهار کرد: این کلینیک ۲۳ مهرماه امسال در مرکز آموزشی درمانی شهید بهشتی زنجان کار خود را آغاز خواهد کرد. فکور با بیان اینکه شیوع ویروس کرونا باعث شده است تا سبک زندگی بسیاری از خانواده‌ها دچار تغییر شود، ادامه داد: ایجاد تغییرات ناگهانی در زندگی باعث ایجاد استرس می‌شود، این در حالی است که خود ویروس کرونا به دلیل واگیردار بودن و نیز آمار فوتی‌هایی که تا به امروز در دنیا به جا گذاشته، این استرس را دوچندان کرده است.

## Iran to mark national environment week



TEHRAN - The national environment week will be celebrated on June 6-12 under the theme of "solutions to plastic pollution", concurrent with World Environment Day.

The first day of the environment week (June 6) is named after global-regional diplomacy, climate change and water management, and implementation of dust reduction strategies.

Other days of the week have been named as follows:

June 7: Biodiversity and protection of endangered plant and animal species with the participation of local communities,

June 8: Environment, environmentalists, promoting the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom,

June 9: Environment, media, religious teachings, social responsibility,

June 10: Environment, green industry, waste, and knowledge-based sustainable development,

June 11: Environment, sea-based economy, wetlands tourism, employment, facilitating processes, and production growth,

June 12: Environment, new technologies, fertilizers, and voluntary partnerships

Strengthening knowledge and raising awareness and giving hope to the people through the national media and other mass communication media, exploiting the capacity and social influence of artists, athletes, and elites in the direction of creating a culture of environmental protection, and laying the groundwork for the maximum participation of non-governmental organizations in holding weekly programs Environment through environment houses are among the objectives of the national environment week.

Appreciating voluntary actions in the field of wildlife, collection of waste from wildlife habitats by local communities, promotion of the culture on protecting animal species, support of new environmentally friendly technologies with the approach of supporting the purchase of goods made in Iran, holding educational workshops for different classes of people and performing waste clean-up ceremonies in environmental areas at the entry points of cities in view of the beginning of summer holidays are among the approaches and implementation policies of

this year's environment week.

The theme for World Environment Day on 5 June 2023 will focus on solutions to plastic pollution under the campaign #BeatPlasticPollution.

The world is being inundated by plastic. More than 400 million tonnes of plastic is produced every year, half of which is designed to be used only once. Of that, less than 10 percent is recycled. An estimated 19-23 million tonnes end up in lakes, rivers, and seas. Today, plastic clogs our landfills leaches into the ocean and is combusted into toxic smoke, making it one of the gravest threats to the planet.

## The theme for World Environment Day on 5 June 2023 will focus on solutions to plastic pollution.

Not only that, but what is less known is that microplastics find their way into the food we eat, the water we drink, and even the air we breathe. Many plastic products contain hazardous additives, which may pose a threat to our health.

The good news is that we have science and solutions to tackle the problem -and a lot is already happening. What is needed most now is a surge of public and political pressure to scale up and speed up actions from governments, companies, and other stakeholders to solve this crisis. This underscores the importance of this World Environment Day mobilizing action from every corner of the world.

World Environment Day 2023 will showcase how countries, businesses, and individuals are learning to use the material more sustainably, offering hope that one day, plastic pollution will be history.



## IRCS holds rescue and relief drill

The Iranian Red Crescent Society held a rescue and relief drill in Tehran on Friday to mark World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day.



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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Loving humanity is second only to having faith in Allah as one of the best deeds in Islam.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:01    Evening: 19:21    Dawn: 3:22 (tomorrow)    Sunrise: 5:00 (tomorrow)

## Iranian studies in German: Pre-Islamic period

**Part 12**

Wilhelm Eilers (1906-89) wrote also several studies on Iranian personal names (as attested in the Late Babylonian documents), but he was much more interested in the geographical toponyms of Persia and adjacent countries and published a number of important contributions to those problems.

Pre-Islamic culture and history: For the study of Iranian culture and history we have to analyze, even if we confine ourselves to the textual evidence, a great number of sources, chiefly those written in cuneiform script and Akkadian, Elamite, or Old Persian language; those in other Semitic languages (Aramaic, Hebrew); and the multitude of classical authors.

Among the literature dealing with pre-Islamic Iranian culture in a rather broad sense (including writing, languages, and literary sources as well as history and religion, geography and ethnography) are the accounts of Friedrich Spiegel (Eranische Alterthumskunde, 1871-78), Wilhelm Geiger (Ostiranische Kultur im Altertum, 1882), Ferdinand Justi (Geschichte des alten Persiens, 1879), and the same author's contribution to the Grundriss.

Since those early studies scarcely any comprehensive survey on such a variety of topics has been published.

With due care, ancient Iran was included in the writings of the universal historian Eduard Meyer (1855-1930), especially in his Geschichte des Altertums; but it has been Meyer, too, who first recognized in the names of Median chieftains mentioned in Assyrian texts the oldest datable evidence of Iranian linguistic material.

Equally wide-ranging were the interests of the Austrian historian Max Budinger (1828-1902), who wrote on the fall of the Median empire (1880) as well as on the history of Austria in the Middle Ages.

Intensive work on the history of Iran, Central Asia, and the entire Near East in pre-Islamic times has been done by Franz Altheim (1898-1976), professor of Ancient History at the Free University of Berlin after 1950, who tried to take into consideration the sources written in various Oriental languages.

His numerous writings such as Geschichte der Hunnen or Geschichte Mittelasiens im Altertum, which despite their titles are by no means systematic accounts, are both stimulating and controversial because they often mingle established facts and speculative hypotheses.

The history and civilization of Achaemenid and pre-Achaemenid Iran were the concern of Justin V. Prasek (Geschichte der Meder und Perser bis zur makedonischen Eroberung); Julius Junge; Walther Hinz (1906-92), who did much work on the source materials themselves and their historical evaluation (esp. with regard to the Persepolis tablets) and presented an overall view of Achaemenid culture and history in his Darius und die Perser; and the Swiss historian Gerold Walser (1917-), the author of Die Völkerschaften auf den Reliefs von Persepolis (Berlin, 1966) and Hellas und Iran (Darmstadt, 1984).

Parthian history has been treated by Alfred von Gutschmid (1831-87) in Geschichte Irans und seiner Nachbarländer von Alexander dem Grossen bis zum Untergang der Arsaciden (Tübingen, 1888), and the Sassanid state by Franz Altheim and Ruth Stiehl in Ein asiatischer Staat: Feudalismus unter den Sasaniden und ihren Nachbarn I (Wiesbaden, 1954).

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica.

To be continued.

# Torino National Museum of Cinema reviewing Niki Karimi films

TEHRAN – The National Museum of Cinema – Torino is reviewing films by Iranian director and actress Niki Karimi.

Her films “Final Whistle”, “Night Shift” and “Atabai” have been selected to be screened at Cinema Massimo on May 13 and 14 as part of a program entitled “Stories of Iranian Women”.

“She is one of the most famous and acclaimed actresses and directors in Iran. She has acted in more than twenty-five films with which she has won national and international awards,” the museum said in its statement for the program.

“Already an assistant to Abbas Kiarostami, she began her career as a director in 2001, directing five films, selected from the world's most prestigious festivals... We pay homage to her cinema by presenting three of her films as a director,” the organizers added.

Directed in 2011, “Final Whistle” examines the border between law and justice, and between victims and perpetrators. The main character, a documentary director, begins to take an interest in the desperate story of a girl, Malineh. The girl tried to sell a kidney to save her mother

Hadi Hejazifar and Javad Ezzati act in a scene from “Atabai” directed by Niki Karimi.

in prison, awaiting trial on a murder charge.

“Night Shift” (2015) follows Nahid who realizes after an incident that her husband, Farhad, has been acting strangely. When she is warned of the man's alleged suicidal tendencies, she becomes even more suspicious and begins to investigate her spouse and his secrets, and finds out that he no

longer is working at the company he was dependent on.

“Atabai” is the latest film that she directed in 2020. It tells the story of Kazem, a middle-aged man who lives in a small village where he comes from, near the tourist site, Lake Urmia. A respected architect, he left the University because of a past love, but when two sisters enter his life, he discovers that he can fall

in love once again.

Earlier in April, the National Museum of Cinema – Torino hosted a masterclass by two-time Oscar-winning director Asghar Farhadi.

In addition, his latest drama “A Hero” was screened at Cinema Massimo and he was awarded the Star of the Mole for his lifetime achievements.

## Iranian movies line up for Oklahoma deadCenter Oscar-qualifying festival

A scene from “The Birds Beyond the Lake” by Vahid Rad.

TEHRAN – Seven short movies by Iranian filmmakers will compete in the 23rd edition of the deadCenter Film Festival in Oklahoma City.

The Academy Award-qualifying event will take place from June 8 to 11.

“The Birds Beyond the Lake” by Vahid Rad, “English Channel” by Amin Sajjadi, “From the Painter's View” by Goli Zarei, “Liberty” by Sara Khosroabadi, “The Red Suitcase” by Sirus Neshvad, “Sampo” by Marzieh Riahi and “Thou Shalt Dance” by Abtin Yaghmaian will be screened in the different categories of the festival.

“The Birds Beyond the Lake” is about a little boy called Mahmud, who is going to be circumcised the next day, so he runs away from home.

“English Channel” tells the story of Reza and his wife who want to leave the country illegally from the English channel, but they face problems on the journey.

A co-production between Iran and Canada, “From the Painter's View” centers on Siavash, a six-year-old boy who has won a painting award,

and his parents are trying to analyze his TV interview about the painting. In the painting is a home with no walls. Everyone is trying to find a reason, but none are correct.

In “Liberty”, a woman decides to terminate her life in her own way, but something goes wrong.

In “The Red Suitcase”, a 16-year-old Iranian teenager is terrified to take her red suitcase from the carousel at the Luxembourg Airport and go through the exit doors. Her fear grows with every second in the face of what awaits her beyond the gate.

In “Sampo”, to make ends meet, a mother caters for funerals and parties, but her daughter has a different idea about her mother's job.

In the animated film “Thou Shalt Dance”, on a normal day, a normal man finds an abnormal solution for his problem.

## Christopher Hamilton’s “Middle Age” published in Persian

TEHRAN – “Middle Age: The Art of Living” by Christopher Hamilton has been published in Persian by Now.

Originally published by Routledge in 2009, the book has been translated by Meisam Mohammad-Amini.

Middle age for many marks a key period for a radical reappraisal of one's life and way of living.

The sense of time running out, both from the perspective that one's life has ground to a halt, and from the point of view of the greater closeness of death, and the sense of loneliness engendered by the compromised and wasteful nature of life, become ever clearer in mid-life, and can lead to a period of dramatic self-doubt.

In this book, the philosopher Christopher Hamilton (early 40s)

A combination photo shows Christopher Hamilton and the front cover of the Persian edition of his book “Middle Age”.

explores the moods, emotions and experiences of middle age in the contemporary world, seeking to describe and analyze that period of life philosophically.

Hamilton draws on his own personal experiences of turning

40 as well as a wide range of sources – from the philosophical writings of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Hegel and Heidegger to the literature of Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Conrad and the films of Woody Allen – to offer us a philosophy of middle age.

## Turkish envoy compares Tehran book fair to big int'l events

Tehran – Turkish ambassador to Tehran Hicabi Kirlangic has said that the Tehran International Book Fair is comparable with prominent book fairs in Frankfurt and Cairo.

Kirlangic said that the Iranian book fair is a big one, noting that he made speeches at the book fair.

Kirlangic, who has also translated the Divan of Hafez, the poems written by prominent Iranian poet Hafez Shirazi (1325-1390), also noted that the book fair was held in other places in past years, but it is now being held at Imam Khomeini Mosque, which is appreciable.

The ambassador pointed to the translation project of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkiye, noting that the international project

helps introduce Turkish authors in Iran.

The international section of the fair aims to introduce the capacities of the publishing industry of Iran, expand cultural exchanges in the international scene, and lay the groundwork for communication between local and foreign publishers.

The event will also address the problems and solutions for the development of international publishing through exchanging views among authors, translators, publishers, cultural institutions, publishing organizations, as well as literary agencies.

The 34th Tehran International Book Fair is underway in the Iranian capital from 20 to 30 May 2023. It is also being held online.

Turkish ambassador's visit to Tehran International Book Fair.

It is worth mentioning that “With Reading, We Feel Healthy” was the motto of the 33rd Tehran International Book Fair that took place at Imam Khomeini Mosalla in May 2022.