

New Face of National Security

By Mehran Shamsuddin

TEHRAN – After ten years, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Ali Shamkhani was replaced with Ali Akbar Ahmadian, a veteran Islamic Revolution Guards Corps commander who is set to transform the security body.

Rumors surrounding Shamkhani's departure first came to the surface in January, when one of his close associates was put to death over espionage for the MI6. Nevertheless, Shamkhani remained in his post and continued to make the headlines by orchestrating a thaw in Iran-Saudi relations. Over the course of his tenure as a top security official, Shamkhani coordinated a lot of national security decisions ranging from nuclear talks to internal developments.

He is now being replaced with a hard-nosed IRGC general whose career within the IRGC is distinguished by strategizing and strategic planning. Ali Akbar Ahmadian is a quiet, cagey and taciturn general whose actions speak louder than words.

A dentist-turned-general, Ahmadian served in various positions in the IRGC and rose through the ranks to become the mastermind of many IRGC initiatives and policies. His entire career in the IRGC is characterized by leadership and strategic planning.



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Ahmadian, a taciturn general, steps into limelight

TEHRAN – Ali Akbar Ahmadian, an IRGC commander, was appointed on Monday by the Iranian president as the new secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council.

"While appreciating the 10-year efforts of Admiral Ali Shamkhani as the Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Ayatollah Dr Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi appointed Dr Ali Akbar Ahmadian to this position," the official website of the Iranian presidency said in a statement.

Ahmadian studied strategic management at the National Defense University.

Raisi appoints Ali Akbar Ahmadian as the new secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council

► Page 3

Shamkhani steps down with a swansong poem

TEHRAN – Ali Shamkhani, the former secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, announced on Sunday that he was leaving his top job after ten years.

Writing on Twitter, Shamkhani cited a poem from Iranian poet Mohtasham Kashani to the effect that he quit after the emergence of insinuations urging him to resign.

Nour News, a news outlet linked to the Council, confirmed Shamkhani's resignation. It said the poem meant that Shamkhani would definitely leave.

Shamkhani has held the position since September 2013.

UK crackdown on monarchy dissent under fire

By Ali Karbalaee

TEHRAN – Anti-monarchy groups see membership rise after "alarming" police arrest of protesters at coronation of King Charles.

Condemnation is mounting in the aftermath of the harsh police crackdown on those protesting against the coronation in London on May 6.

Controversy was already brewing before

the event, when the office of the archbishop of Canterbury called on all British citizens to pledge allegiance to the king. That sparked a backlash with anti-monarchy activists branding it an "offensive and tone-deaf gesture that holds the people in contempt".

The criticism forced the archbishop of Canterbury to tone down the move to an "invitation" to pay homage, but polls show that that didn't go down well with the public either. ► Page 5

Iran-China 4-month trade exceeds \$5b

TEHRAN – The value of trade between Iran and China reached \$5.23 billion in the first four months of 2023, according to the data released by China's customs administration.

Based on the released data, the four-month trade between the two countries increased by four percent as the figure was \$5.02 billion in the first four months of 2022, IRIB reported.

As reported, Iran's exports to China in the

mentioned four months faced a 39 percent decrease compared to the same period last year and reached \$1.52 billion. In the same period last year, China imported \$2.49 billion of goods from Iran.

During this period, China's exports to Iran, however, increased by 46 percent and reached \$3.71 billion. China exported \$2.53 billion worth of commodities to Iran during January -April last year. ► Page 4

Op-ed **Hezbollah's maneuver: Resistance's heroes ready to cross into occupied Galilee**

By Sondoos Alasaad

BEIRUT – 23 years since Lebanon's emerged victorious over the usurper occupation entity, the resistance increases in brilliance, strength, and influence, while the brutal temporary enemy descends, weakens, and erodes.

On this glorious occasion, Hezbollah has organized a symbolic military maneuver in which it displays a small part of its military capabilities and its full and serious readiness for any imminent confrontation with the occupiers. ► Page 5



© IRNA / Marziyeh Soleimani

Sokkan win Iran's women dragon boat league

TEHRAN – Sokkan team claimed the title of the Iran's women's dragon boat on Monday.

Sokkan came first with 40 points, followed by Mash'al Darya (22) and Setaregan-e Ahmadi (18).

The competition was held in Tehran's Azadi Lake.

A dragon boat is a human-powered watercraft originating from the Pearl River Delta region of China's southern Guangdong Province.

The sport of dragon boat racing has its roots in an ancient folk ritual of contending villagers, which dates back 2000 years throughout southern China, and even further to the original games of Olympia in ancient Greece.

Repeat of another futile move by EU bloc

TEHRAN – Following the Friday execution of three men found guilty of murdering security forces in Isfahan during riots last year, the EU foreign ministers increased their list of sanctions against Tehran on Monday, designating 5 individuals and 2 firms as targets.

Brussels has sanctioned Iranian persons and organizations for alleged suppression of the protesters eight times since October.

Sanctions include an asset freeze and a travel ban to the EU.

All parties on the blacklist are alleged to have worked along with Iranian police "responsible for the suppression of protests" in the country last year, including Dr. Seyyed Mohammad Amin Aghamiri, secretary of Iran's Supreme Council of Cyberspace (SCC). ► Page 2

From Inside **T**

- Iran summons Swiss ambassador over phony flag image **P2**
- Two separate committees studying 2022 unrest: minister **P3**
- Tehran to host Intl. stone expo next week **P4**
- Cultural diversity, religions coexistence hallmarks of Iran, deputy minister says **P6**
- Iran aims to promote health diplomacy at WHA **P7**
- Film chronicles Islamic saint Hazrat Masumeh's visit to Iran **P8**

Tehran Papers **T**

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

The new plan of diplomacy

Etemad analyzed the Leader's statements in the meeting with Iranian diplomats and wrote: The plan that the Leader has set out for foreign policy, with the new definition that has been proposed ► Page 2

Amir Abdollahian phones Venezuelan, Danish counterparts

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian held talks with his Venezuelan and Danish counterparts in two separate phone calls late on Sunday.

Amir Abdollahian and Venezuelan Foreign Minister Yvan Gil Pinto exchanged views on issues of mutual interests and discussed ways to promote bilateral trade and economic ties.

The two chief diplomats expressed optimism that concerted efforts would lead to significant increase in ties.

Iran and Venezuela inked a 20-year collaboration deal to improve bilateral relations in spite of criticism from the U.S. and Western powers during Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro's official visit to Tehran in June 2022.

Cooperation in the areas of research, technology, agriculture, oil and gas, petrochemicals, tourism, and culture are all included in the partnership agreement.

In the call between Amir Abdollahian and Danish Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen, the sides reviewed the current status of bilateral relations as well as future prospects.

The Iranian foreign minister stressed the need for addressing current issues and strengthening bilateral ties while praising the historical ties between the two nations as a valuable asset.

TEHRAN PAPERS

The new plan of diplomacy

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

Etemad analyzed the Leader's statements in the meeting with Iranian diplomats and wrote: The plan that the Leader has set out for foreign policy, with the new definition that has been proposed regarding heroic flexibility, has opened the hands of our country's foreign team to have foreign interaction to a large extent provided that the principles desired by the Leader are taken into consideration. In dealing with the enemy, we should not be naive and hopeful for their smile. Also, diplomacy with power should be operational and Iran should not bow its head in front of others. Any strategy that has the concept of surrender should be abandoned. It is necessary for foreign policy officials to present the Leader foreign policy strategies in the form of a charter. Such a charter that should be given to ambassadors, diplomats and analysts.

Shargh: Iran-Russia military co-op can affect Middle East

In a note, Shargh discussed the relations between Tehran and Moscow in the military field and said: Military cooperation between Iran and Russia in the long term can cause an imbalance in the Middle East. Due to foreign demands to purchase Iranian arms, Iran will be able to greatly develop its technological capabilities in military industry to the extent as even in reverse engineering Iran's military products are more advanced in comparison to the western ones.

Already in 2018, several highly advanced weapons developed by Iran had been seen in Israeli airspace. Also, Iranian-backed forces in Syria and Yemen have benefited for a long time from the Iranian version of the American BGM-71 TOW anti-tank missile. Iran's military forces with more advanced weapons will have a significant impact on regional influence, proxy forces, and as a result on the unofficial war between Iran and Israel.

Kayhan: Criticism of new bill on hijab

In its editorial written by its chief editor Hossein Shariatmadari, Kayhan criticized the new bill on hijab. He said: "In this bill, the punishments provided for taking off the hijab in the current laws of the country have been reduced and turned into fines. Although the fines provided in the bill is very small and insignificant, even if it is a large amount, it is still ineffective and is not deterrent! Why?! Apparently, the venerable drafters of this bill do not know that

the enemy uses the violation of hijab as an effective lever to deal with public chastity, undermine the family foundation, and ultimately deal with the core of the system and the Islamic identity of the people of this region. In other words, women's violation of hijab and men's hideous clothes are part of a hybrid war, and obviously the enemy has no doubt about paying for it, even on a large scale. Several hired common female workers who had been arrested for not observing hijab have confessed that they were paid three dollars for every one hour of being on the street, and one of them declared her monthly income of 50 million toman. Now calculate how much the main agents receive?! If the honorable drafters of the bill think that they can prevent the violation of hijab with a fine, we can dare say that they don't know anything about the enemy's tricks!

Ham Mihan: Foreign policy with economic attachment

Ham Mihan has interviewed two experts about the Leader's recent statements regarding foreign policy. One of them says: "An important point that was in the Leader's statements but was not noticed by the media outlet is the benefit of having a foreign policy for the country. It is development or economy-oriented foreign policy. This has been one of the biggest weaknesses of our foreign policy in these four decades. That means, from now on we have to prepare a cost and benefit balance sheet for every plan and action which we want to do in foreign policy. In other words, our policies must have an economic agenda."

The second expert also said: "The flexibility I told you is related to the negotiation table; you give 2 to 3 or 3 to 5 points and get points. But when you say that any kind of agreement is better than no agreement, that is the diplomacy of begging. This statement means that I have accepted that I am done, as exemplified by the surrender of the Japanese emperor after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Therefore, any kind of agreement with the invading army is enough to survive. When you negotiate to survive, it means begging diplomacy, but because you don't want to spoil yourself among the people and the public opinion, you try to agree with the other side. In this situation you will see the JCPOA that is full of hidden privileges which you gave to the other side."

Iran police vow vengeance for killing of border guards



TEHRAN- The deputy police commander of Iran on Monday expressed the force's will to exact revenge for the deaths of border guards in a terrorist incident in Pakistan's southeast Sistan-Baluchestan Province.

Brigadier General Qasem Rezaei made the comments two days after five border guards lost their lives in battles with armed terrorists and anti-Islamic

Revolution forces in Saravan County.

Rezaei gave a speech at the memorial service for the border guards in Zahedan, the provincial capital of Sistan-Baluchestan, in which he forewarned those who have been duped into joining the enemies that they "will definitely get a decisive and firm response wherever it is necessary."

He said, "Police forces are more resolute today, and you will hear reports of the retaliation in the near future."

The deputy police commander further stressed that such instances will not sever ties between Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, since the three countries have long-standing ties.

He stated, "Pakistan has sent a message, indicating it would deal firmly with the terrorist attack's perpetrators and that it is the last message."

Syria's Mekdad seeks more cooperation between Iran, Arab states

TEHRAN- Syrian Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad has said that Damascus seeks to boost ties between Iran and Arab states.

Speaking with Russia's RT Arabic television news network in Damascus on Sunday, the top Syrian diplomat hailed the détente between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Regarding ties with Turkey, he highlighted that "Damascus would not normalize relations with Turkey, which occupies swathes of land in Syria."

He noted that President Bashar al-Assad is reluctant to hold talks with his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan until Turkey totally withdraws its armed forces from Syria's northern region.

Assad said in March that a meeting with Erdo-

gan wouldn't be worthwhile until Turkey's "illegal occupation" is over.

"This is linked to arriving at a stage where Turkey would clearly be ready and without any ambiguity to exit completely from Syrian territory and end its support of terrorism and restore the situation that prevailed before the start of the war on Syria," Assad said.

Mekdad also said the region's ill-wishers include the U.S., the Zionist regime, and their allies, adding that Damascus wants better connections between Arab countries and Tehran.

The foreign minister also stated that Syria supports Russia's special military operations in Ukraine and that the Russian army is on a winning streak.

Repeat of another futile move by EU bloc

EU expands sanctions on Iran over alleged human rights violations

From page 1 ▶ "We will approve a new package of sanctions against Iran for human rights abuses," the EU's top diplomat Josep Borrell told reporters in Brussels as he arrived at the meeting of foreign ministers.

On Friday morning the Iranian judiciary hanged three individuals who had been found guilty of participating in a terrorist act that led to the death of three security personnel in the central city of Isfahan last year.

Majid Kazemi, Saleh Mirhashemi, and Saeed Yaghoubi were executed in the city of Isfahan, according to the Mizan news agency, which is connected to the judiciary.

They were found guilty of "mo-harebeh" (war against God) for killing three security guards — Ismail Cheraghi, Mohsen Hamidi, and Mohammad Karimi — on November 16, 2022.

With previous coordination among themselves, the attackers opened fire with the intention of murdering bystanders and police forces.

Several citizens and security personnel were hurt in the terrorist attack.

After the shooting the culprits were arrested and the indictment was issued, Mizan reported.

Court hearings on the charges of six of the defendants in the case were held in Isfahan, the news agency added.

Based on the judgments issued by three of the defendants in the case, they were accused of using handgun on public roads, forming and managing a criminal group in a bid to disrupt national security as well as membership and cooperation with the terrorist MKO outfit.



According to the evidence and records in the case, as well as the defendants' clear declarations, the gunshots carried out by these three persons resulted in the martyrdom of

three security officers in Isfahan.

The other defendants in the case received jail sentences as well, and one of them was cleared of all accusations.

Tehran slams Israeli ultra-right minister's desecration of Al-Aqsa Mosque



TEHRAN- Iran's Foreign Ministry on Monday denounced the radical Israeli minister's vandalism of the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound and urged other nations to retaliate for the provocative act.

On Sunday, Israel's far-right security minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, who was escorted by occupation troops, stormed al-Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third-holiest site, in al-Quds' Old City.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said, "Such audacious and provocative moves are another aspect of the widespread and continuous crimes of the apartheid Zionist regime against the Palestinian nation, as well as the religious and Islamic sanctities of this land."

The Muslim world and the international community must respond to them in a way that is effective, quick, and deterrent, he continued.

Kanaani stated unequivocally that Holy al-Quds is and will be Palestine's united and permanent capital, and that the Israeli regime's repeated attacks on this city and its Islamic sanctuaries would not affect its reality or historical status quo.

During his entry into the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound, Ben-Gvir proclaimed that the Israeli regime is "in charge here," setting up a storm of criticism.

According to Israeli media, the minister's visit was not planned with the Jordanian Waqf, the organization in charge of maintaining the location.

The event, held on "Jerusalem (Al-Quds) Day", which marks the 1967 capture and annex-

ation of East Jerusalem al-Quds - a move considered illegal under international law - has led to violence in recent years, as far-right Israelis shout provocative slogans and insults, as well as physically attack Palestinians and even journalists, Al Jazeera reported.

Speaking on behalf of the Palestinian president, spokesman Nabil Abu Rudeineh said, "Ben-Gvir's incursion at an early hour, like thieves, into the al-Aqsa Mosque courtyards will not change the reality and will not impose Israeli sovereignty over it."

Ben Gvir's provocative visit to the site of the al-Aqsa Mosque in January sparked intense condemnations from the Arab world.

Under a status quo agreement struck more than a century ago, only Muslims are permitted to pray in the al-Aqsa Mosque compound. Non-Muslim guests are allowed only at certain hours and in specific areas.

"Attack on border guards intended to disrupt security between Iran, Pakistan"

In another statement on Sunday, Kanaani vehemently denounced the "brutal terrorist attack" that left five Iranian border guards martyred in the southeast Saravan region on Saturday night.

The fatal terrorist assault at a station close to Pakistan was decried by Kanaani as an intentional attack on the security and interests of the two countries.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the outlawed and terrorist groups' resort to such cowardly terrorist action following the presence of a high-ranking Pakistani delegation, led by Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic Pakistan Shehbaz Sharif, in a ceremony on the inauguration of projects of the joint border market and transfer of electricity, (that was also) attended by our country's president [Ebrahim Raisi] at the Pishin border, was a targeted measure against the security and interests of the two countries with the purpose of preventing the common border from being the border of friendship and cooperation and the economic border for the people of the two

Raisi insists on strengthening ties with Muslim, neighboring nations

TEHRAN- President Ebrahim Raisi has said that his administration is taking more proactive steps to enhance relations with Muslim nations and neighbors.

Speaking during a cabinet meeting on Sunday, Raisi said Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution, stressed the importance of Iran's international ties in his recent remarks.

"Although relations with the target countries have expanded significantly in less than two years, they can still improve beyond the current level given the existing capacities," the president noted.

Speaking with a group of Foreign Ministry officials and ambassadors to other countries in Tehran on Saturday, Ayatollah Khamenei warned of adversaries' efforts to sour ties between Iran and its neighbors.

Based on the remarks made by



Ayatollah Khamenei, Iran has broad boundaries with its neighbors and the government's strategy for successful communication with the neighboring countries is of utmost importance.

In other parts of his speech, President Raisi praised the Iranian Navy's 86th flotilla of warships for completing its task after traveling across the globe in an "honorable and proud" manner.

The president pointed out that the mission depicted "the strength and power of the Navy and the Armed Forces of Iran," which, he said, "deserves appreciation."

Iran summons Swiss ambassador over phony flag image

TEHRAN- The Iranian Foreign Ministry on Sunday summoned Switzerland's ambassador to Tehran in protest to the Swiss embassy's decision to publish a picture of a fictitious Iranian flag while replicating a tweet by Switzerland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs condemning the execution of three persons involved in the killings of three security personnel in Isfahan in November 2022.

Following Switzerland's "interfering stances" on Iran's internal affairs and the Swiss embassy's "unconventional and unprofessional" action to post an image of the fictitious flag on its Twitter account, the Iranian Foreign Ministry summoned Switzerland's ambassador Nadine Olivier Lozano.

Iran's complaint and displeasure were conveyed to the Swiss envoy, who was also reminded that such an "unconventional measure" is



incompatible with the cordial relations between Tehran and Bern and has to be corrected.

The ambassador promised to inform Switzerland of Iran's objection.

The execution of the three persons in Iran was denounced in the embassy tweet in Farsi. The original tweet on the Swiss ministry was in English with a different image.

The image that was sent along with the embassy tweet depicts a crowd of protestors in which a person flying an Iranian flag dating to the pre-Islamic Revolution era.

From Page 1 ▶ The heady days of his youth coincided with the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s, which left a formative impact on his career as a navy admiral. During the war, he participated in many operations, including at sea. In some cases, he personally played a role in some maritime retaliatory operations, an experience that he would use to develop strategies for "reciprocal operations" in the IRGC Navy.

After the war, he was appointed as the deputy commander of the IRGC Navy. In this position, he "theorized" the maritime experience of the war in countering the aggressions of the U.S. In a sense, he is seen as the main architect of the IRGC Navy.

Also, he is one of the masterminds who developed the asymmetric warfare doctrine, which he put into practice when he later became the chief commander of the IRGC Navy.

In addition, Ahmadian reshuffled the IRGC during this later tenure as the chief of the force's joint staff. In this position, he put the IRGC's house in order administratively, something that earned him the approbation of Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution. Five years later, the entire IRGC entered a new administrative stage under the supervision of Ahmadian.

At the same time, Ahmadian was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's Imam Hossein University, which played a great role in providing the force with the qualified cadets.

The new security chief has obtained a PhD degree in strategic management from the National Defense University. In September last year, Ayatollah Khamenei appointed him as a member



Leader names Ahmadian as his representative in SNSC, Shamkhani political advisor

TEHRAN - In a decree on Monday, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, appointed Ali Akbar Ahmadian, an IRGC commander, as his representative in Supreme National Security Council.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei noted that "based Article 176 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I appoint you as my representative in the Supreme National Security Council."

Additionally, the Leader appointed Admiral Ali Shamkhani as a member of the Expediency Council and his political advisor.

Earlier on Monday, Ahmadian was appointed by President Raisi as the new secretary of the SNSC.

"While appreciating the 10-year efforts of Admiral Ali Shamkhani as the Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Ayatollah Dr Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi appointed Dr Ali Akbar Ahmadian to this position," the official website of the Iranian presidency said in a statement.

of the Expediency Council.

Ahmadian is taking up the reins of Iran's national security at a time when the country is navigating through sensitive issues at home and abroad. These issues range from

Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, and Saudi Arabia to the now defunct 2015 Iran deal, which is formally called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Shamkhani handled some of these issues. He played a key role in paving

the way for Tehran and Riyadh to sign a Chinese-brokered deal in Beijing on March 10. The deal restored the Iran-Saudi diplomatic relations after seven years.

Shamkhani has held the position since September 2013. Since then, he has been overseeing major cases ranging from the nuclear talks to regional negotiations with Iran's Arab neighbors.

In his recent weeks at the SNSC, Shamkhani highlighted the shift in the world order from unipolarity to multipolarity.

"We are now at a critically historical juncture, and a change in the world order is accordingly of paramount importance. The new world order and mechanisms to approach it would prompt us to review our macro policies," he underlined.

The comments were delivered by Shamkhani in Tehran at the "New World Order Geometry" conference's closing ceremony, which was held earlier this month.

He stated that the opportunities and challenges of the new world order rely on how nations behave and prepare for such changes.

Shamkhani also remarked that the new world order may either present big and bright chances or pose threats and dangers.

"We must prepare ourselves and increase our resilience for global transformations," he noted.

Shamkhani also emphasized the need of preparing for the conditions brought about by the new world order and the changes that follow, adding that being prepared for such developments will allow one to make the most of the new world order.



Ahmadian, a taciturn general, steps into limelight

From Page 1 ▶ He also served as the head of the strategic center of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) for 16 years.

Last year, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, appointed Ahmadian as a member of the Expediency Council.

Ahmadian also served as the commander of the IRGC's Imam Hossein University. Like Shamkhani, Ahmadian has the experience of commanding the IRGC Navy.

He was among those who played a key role in the idea of creating a new naval force and "reciprocal naval operations."

After the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s, Ahmadian served as the deputy commander of the IRGC Navy. He devoted himself to theorizing the great naval experiences of the Sacred Defense, especially against the

American aggressions.

He was one of the main architects of the new and innovative naval force of the IRGC, which was formed based on the goals of the Revolution, and was one of the first theoreticians of the idea of asymmetric defense.

Sometime later, given his valuable records, he was appointed as the commander of the IRGC's naval force by the commander-in-chief.

In this role, Ahmadian had the opportunity to bring the idea of asymmetric defense that had started in the Navy to its peak and to establish basic capacities to deal with the threats of great powers in the IRGC Navy.

Ahmadian is a strategist who rose through the ranks of the IRGC to become of the most capable commanders of this force.

Shamkhani steps down with a swansong poem

From Page 1 ▶ Since then, he has been overseeing major cases ranging from the nuclear talks to regional negotiations with Iran's Arab neighbors.

Shamkhani is a veteran military commander who served in various military positions. He served as a naval commander in the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps.

Under President Mohammad Khatami, he served as defense minister.

In the late 1980s, Shamkhani moved from the IRGC to the Army's Navy.

Shamkhani campaigned for the presidential post in 2001. There are speculations that Shamkhani may be again considering another presidential bid after leaving the SNSC.

An ethnic-Arab, Shamkhani was the only Iranian official who was awarded the Order of

King Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia. The order is a Saudi Arabian order of merit.

In January this year, Shamkhani's reputation was overshadowed by the vociferous execution of one of his close aides during his time as defense minister. The aide, Alireza Akbari, was executed for spying for the MI6. Before his arrest and subsequent execution, Akbari was living in the UK but he reportedly came to Tehran at Shamkhani's urging. Rumors had it at the time that Shamkhani was on the verge of resigning.

But he emerged victorious soon after he orchestrated the Iran-Arab thaw. Shamkhani played a key role in paving the way for Tehran and Riyadh to sign a Chinese-brokered deal in Beijing on March 10. The deal restored the Iran-Saudi diplomatic relations after seven years.



Two separate committees studying 2022 unrest: minister

TEHRAN - Iranian Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi said on Monday that two discrete committees have been formed and are currently studying the wave of unrest that gripped Iran last year.

In remarks to IRNA, Vahidi said one committee is working at the Interior Ministry and the other is at the presidential office.

Earlier this month, President Ebrahim Raisi ordered the formation of special committee to follow up on the September 2022 protests.

The order came after receiving a report from the Minister of Interior on the unrest.

Following a report by the Minister of Interior on the performance of the task force to follow up on the riots, President Raisi issued an order to form a



committee to investigate the dimensions of the incidents and riots and seek technical and expert views of the relevant institutions and authorities, the official presidential website said.

"According to the order of the President, Dr Hossein Mozafar as the head and Dr Kazem

Gharibabadi as the secretary of the human rights headquarters, Ms Sakineh Sadatpad, the person responsible for the pursuit of social rights and freedoms, Dr Zohre Elahian, the head of the human rights committee of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, and Hassan Safadoost, the

head of the Centre for Justice Lawyers Association were appointed as members of the special committee to investigate the unrest of the year 1401," the statement said.

Ayatollah Raisi has also ordered the special committee to send its reports regularly to him personally.

Vahidi said the two committees are working separately. Commenting on the results of the work of the committees, he said, "Their work must come to an end and then we announce the results of the investigations. Good actions have been taken and collections have been made."

Following the death of Mahsa Amini in September 2022, unrest erupted across Iran. Many people, including civilians and security forces, died during the unrest.

SPORTS

Greco-Roman team to compete at Kyrgyzstan's Ranking Series

TEHRAN - Iran's Greco-Roman team will participate at the "Ranking Series" in Kyrgyzstan.

The Kaba Uulu Kozhormkul & Raatbek Sanatbaev will be held in Bishkek from June 1 to 4.

Pooya Dadmarz (55kg), Mehdi Mohsennejhad (60kg), Iman Mohammadi (63kg), Danial Sohrabi (67kg), Mohammad Reza Gerarei (72kg), Mohammad Ali Gerarei (77kg), Alireza Mehmadi (82kg), Naser Alizadeh (87kg), Mehdi Bali and Mohammad Amin Saravi (97kg) and Amin Mirzadeh (130kg) will represent Iran in the competition.

The World Ranking Series are one of the most important tournaments in wrestling and is conducted under the supervision of UWW.

Fenerbahce eye Mehdi Taremi: report

TEHRAN - Turkey's giants football club Fenerbahce are interested in signing Iranian international forward Mehdi Taremi, according to Turkish media.

The 30-year-old forward, whose contract will expire in 2024, has scored 26 goals and 13 assists in 48 matches for Porto in the current season.

Taremi has scored 30 goals in 65 matches for Iran national football team.

Also, French football club PSG have reportedly showed interest in hiring the player in the summer.

Ezatolahy helps Vejle BK win NordicBet Liga Title

TEHRAN - Vejle Boldklub defeated Naestved 3-1 to win the Danish First Division title, the second division behind the Super League.ST

Miiko Albornoz opened the scoring in the 14th minute, followed by goals from teammates Saeid Ezatolahy and Arbnor Mucolli.

Frederik Christensen pulled a goal back in the 59th minute.

Vejle had confirmed promotion to the Danish Superliga earlier and has now taken the NordicBet Liga title by collecting 63 points, eight points above Hvidovre.

Moharrami scores first goal for Dinamo

TEHRAN - Iranian international right-back Sadeq Moharrami scored for Dinamo Zagreb Sunday night.

Dinamo Zagreb defeated Rijeka 2-1, courtesy of goals from Luka Ivanusec and Moharrami. Antonio Marin pulled a goal back in the injury time.

It was the first goal for Moharrami in his 218th appearance for the Croatian giant.

"I want to congratulate the players, staff and fans. It was a difficult game, but we took three points and I'm very happy," said Moharrami after the match.

Iran women volleyball to hold camp in Thailand

TEHRAN - Iran's women's volleyball team will hold a six-day training camp in Bangkok, Thailand.

Iran head coach Fatemeh Rashidi said that Team Melli will travel to Thailand on June 10 and will hold a training camp in the country as part of preparation for the 2023 Asian Challenge Cup.

"We will play three friendly matches with Thai clubs. After our six-day camp, we will fly to Indonesia to participate at Asian Challenge Cup," Rashidi said.

Iran volleyball team are drawn along with Chinese Taipei and Hong Kong in Pool B.

"We've previously played a representative

from Hong Kong in the 2023 Asian Women's Club Championship and I think we are the better team but Hong Kong are a difficult team," she added.

The Asian Challenge Cup will be held in Gresik, East Java, Indonesia from June 18 to 25.

Paykan parts ways with Temirov

TEHRAN - Paykan football club parted ways with Uzbek forward Sherzod Temirov.

The 24-year-old striker joined Paykan from Persepolis in last year's August and scored just one goal in 16 matches for the Tehran-based football team.

Temirov had also scored one goal for Persepolis in 10 matches.

Paykan have also parted company with its South Sudanese forward Tito Okello.

The team, headed by Mojtaba Hosseini, finished in 11th place in the Iran 16-team league.

Iran in Pot 2 of AFC U23 Asian Cup 2024 qualifiers

TEHRAN - Iran are placed in Pot 2 of the AFC U23 Asian Cup Qatar 2024 qualifiers round.

The qualifying journey for the competition will be revealed on Thursday, when the official draw ceremony takes place at the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) House in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

A total of 43 teams have submitted their interest to compete in the Qualifiers for the sixth edition of the tournament, which will be held from September 4 to 12 this year.

The teams will be divided into 11 groups - 10 groups will comprise four teams each, with the last group to contain three.

Each group will be played at a centralized venue in a single round-robin format, with the 11 group winners and four best second-placed teams among all groups qualifying for the AFC U23 Asian Cup Qatar 2024.

They will join Qatar, who have received automatic qualification as Host, to form the final cast of 16 at the tournament, to be played between April 15 to May 3, 2024.

The seeding for the Draw will be based on the AFC U23 Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2022 rankings.

The complete team Pot listings are as below:

Pots

Pot 1: Japan, Australia, Iraq, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates

Pot 2: Iran, Malaysia, Myanmar, Cambodia, Syria, India, Singapore

Pot 3: Kyrgyz Republic, Palestine, Yemen, Timor-Leste, Chinese Taipei, Lebanon, Laos, Bangladesh, Hong Kong, China, Maldives, Oman

Pot 4: Mongolia, Philippines, Afghanistan, Brunei Darussalam, DPR Korea, Guam, Macau, Pakistan, Qatar

Hosts Pot: Bahrain, China PR, Indonesia, Jordan, Korea Republic, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uzbekistan, Vietnam

Saudi Arabia won their maiden U23 title in June last year after defeating hosts Uzbekistan in the final of an engrossing tournament that set new records in digital engagement.

Iranian duo win accolade at 2023 Asian Club Volleyball C'ship

TEHRAN - Amir Ghafour of Shahdad Yazd and Mohammad Javad Manavinezhad of Bhayangkara were awarded for their best individual performance.

Ghafour was named the Best Opposite Spiker, while Manavinezhad was chosen as Best Outside Hitter.

Shahdad finished in fourth place while Manavinezhad helped Indonesian team Bhayangkara win the silver medal.

Suntory Sunbirds superstar Dmitriy Muserskiy was named the competition's Most Valuable Player.

The 2023 Asian Men's Club Volleyball Championship was held in Manama, Bahrain.

High production cost, lack of modern greenhouses reduce flower export



TEHRAN- The chairman of the Flower Retailers' Association of Tehran has said, "The high cost of production and the lack of modern greenhouses have led to low export of the flowers and ornamental plants, and have kept us away from the world markets".

Gholam-Hossein Soltan-Mohammadi said, "Last year, we did not have much export, in other words, in the second half of the past year, we had a little export to Iraq and now we are still sending to this country, however, the export to European countries was less than previous years."

"If our products reach the export markets,

we may be able to compensate the production costs. Otherwise, if we are going to produce only to supply the domestic market, we should definitely not boost production more than this", he added.

The head of Iran's Ornamental Plants Research Center (OPRC) has also said that no permanent production and the problem of transportation are obstacles to the growth of the country's flowers and ornamental plants export.

Hossein Bayat said the government's support for the creation of large production centers can provide the basis for the continuous export of these products.

"One of the shortcomings of export is that the production of flowers and ornamental plants does not follow a permanent trend, and for this reason, we cannot have a constant and permanent export of these products throughout the year, and due to the temporary stoppage of the production of the flowers and ornamental plants, we cannot meet the expectations of the export market", he further complained.

Tehran to host Intl. stone expo next week

TEHRAN - The 13th International Iran Stone Exhibition is scheduled to be held at Shahre-Aftab Exhibition Center near the capital Tehran during May 29-June 2, according to the head of the Iran Stone Association.

Bahram Shakouri said that 110 Iranian companies along with counterparts from six different countries namely China, Russia, India, Italy, Turkey, and Greece are going to showcase their latest products and achievements in this exhibition, IRNA reported.

According to the official, this year's



exhibition will cover three main areas including mining machinery and equipment, consumables, and mineral processing.

Low-interest facilities being paid to beekeepers

TEHRAN- The managing director of the beekeeping industry development support fund said this fund provides 170 billion rials (about \$440,760) of low-interest facilities to beekeepers with the aim of helping the country's beekeeping industry.

Based on the data released by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Iran is the third-largest producer of honey in the world.

The chairman of the Animal Science Research Institute has said that the amount of honey production in the country should be increased by three to four kilograms per

colony.

Mokhtar Mohajer said, "According to the Seventh National Development Plan, the amount of honey production should be increased by at least three to four kilograms per colony according to the diversity of plants and the area of pastures that we have in the country".

He announced that 8,300 kilograms of royal jelly, 406 tons of pollen, 2,536 tons of beeswax, 247 tons of propolis, and 3,917 grams of bee venom are produced annually in the country.

Annual export from Golestan province increases by 26%



TEHRAN- The value of export from Golestan province, in the northeast of Iran, increased by 26 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20), as compared to the preceding year, a provincial official announced.

Darvish-Ali Hassan-Zadeh, the head of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department, said that non-oil commodities worth \$235 million were exported from the province to 33 countries in the previous 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.

from page 1 ▶ According to the data previously released by China's customs administration, the value of trade between Iran and China increased by seven percent in 2022 compared to the previous year.

Based on China's customs data, the Islamic Republic and China traded \$15.795 billion worth of commodities in 2022, \$1.035 billion more than the figure for 2021, IRNA reported.

As reported, China's exports to Iran grew by 14 percent in the period under review compared to the preceding year to reach \$9.44 billion. The Asian country exported \$8.258 billion worth of goods to Iran in 2021.

The value of Iran's non-oil exports to China, however, registered a two-percent decrease in 2022, reaching \$6.355 billion. Iran exported \$6.502 billion worth of goods to China in 2021.

Iran's share of China's total global trade last year was only 0.25 percent. China's trade with the world reached \$6.308 trillion

Iran-China 4-month trade exceeds \$5b



in 2022, of which \$3.593 trillion was the share of the country's exports and \$2.715 trillion was related to imports. China's global trade grew by 4.4 percent last year.

China is one of Iran's main trade partners that has maintained strong trade ties with the Islamic Republic despite the strict U.S. sanctions.

Iran and China officially signed the document for 25-year comprehensive cooperation in March 2021.

The document was signed between Iran's former Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

Back in December 2022, Iran and China finalized 16 memorandums of understanding (MOU) under the framework of the two countries' strategic 25-year agreement.

The MOUs were signed in an Iran-China comprehensive cooperation program summit which was held in Tehran on December 13 in the presence of Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber and China's Vice Premier Hu Chunhua.

Iran, China signed document for 25-year comprehensive cooperation in March 2021.

The summit was focused on four areas explored by four committees between the two countries with the aim of paving the way for the implementation of the 25-year agreement.

TCCIMA offers Iran-Cuba-Venezuela economic co-op model

TEHRAN - Secretary General of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA), in a meeting with Antonio Luis Carricarte Corona, president of the Chamber of Commerce of the Republic of Cuba (CC), and the country's Ambassador to Tehran Alberto Gonzalez Casals, has offered a trilateral economic cooperation model for expanding ties with Cuba and Venezuela.

As reported by the TCCIMA portal, at the meeting Bahman Eshghi referred to the economic relations formed between Iran and

Venezuela in recent years, and called for the creation of a trilateral market between Iran, Venezuela, and Cuba in order to form the foundation for the exchange and transfer of goods and financial transfers among the three sides.

Eshghi stated that the forward and continuous process of economic relations between the two countries of Iran and Cuba can be developed with the exchange of goods with third countries.



TCCIMA Secretary General Bahman Eshghi (L) meets with Cuban Chamber of Commerce President Antonio Luis Carricarte Corona (C), and Cuban Ambassador to Tehran Alberto Gonzalez Casals

Iran, Russia's Tver Region explore avenues of economic co-op

TEHRAN - In a meeting between Minister of Economic Development of Russia's Tver Region Ivan Igorevich, and Bahman Eshghi, Secretary General of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA),

the two sides emphasized the development of business relations by using production and export capacities.

Igorevich, who is also the deputy chairman of the Government of the Tver Region, visited Tehran on top of a trade delegation to

pursue the expansion of economic ties with the Islamic Republic, the TCCIMA portal reported.

During the meeting, the two sides emphasized the development of trade relations and called for efforts to open trade channels in order to use

their existing capacities for the exchange of products and services.

The Tver side reminded that the businessmen and economic operators of Iran will be able to access other Russian markets through the Tver region.

Commodities worth nearly \$791m traded at IME in a week

TEHRAN- During the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday), Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) witnessed trade 3,168,012 tons of commodities and 500 vehicles with a total trading value of nearly \$791 million, posting growths of seven percent and 26 percent in volume and value of trades compared with the week before that.

As reported by the IME's Public Relations and International Affairs Department, the exchange saw on its metals and minerals trading floor trade of 2,622,139 tons of commodities worth more than \$560 million.

On this floor the IME sold 1,277,140 tons of cement, 658,173 tons of steel, 536,000 tons of iron ore, 184,000 tons of sponge iron, 7,695 tons of aluminum, 5,050 tons of copper, 1,710 tons of zinc, 200 tons of molybdenum concentrate and 500 vehicles.

Furthermore, the IME witnessed on both domestic and export rings of its oil and petrochemical trading floor 443,453 tons of commodities valued at more than \$205 million.

Commodities traded on this floor included 118,437 tons of bitumen, 100,000 tons of vacuum bottom, 95,560 tons of polymeric products, 66,000 tons of lube cut, 42,418 tons of chemicals, 18,920 tons of sulfur, 3,057



tons of base oil, 120 tons of gas feedstocks and 100 tons of insulation.

The IME also traded within the same week 102,420 tons of commodities on its side market.

As previously reported, IME witnessed trade of 11,429,496 tons of commodities with a total trading value of more than \$2.5 billion on its physical market during the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (ended on April 20).

As reported by the IME's Public Relations and International Affairs Department, the exchange saw on its metals and minerals trading floor, trade of 9,646,113 tons of commodities valued at more than \$1.5 billion.

On this floor the IME sold 5,109,245 tons of cement, 2,398,000 tons of iron ore,

1,546,964 tons of steel, 550,600 tons of sponge iron, 88,450 tons of zinc, 28,675 tons of aluminum, 25,560 tons of copper, 600 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 500 tons of cast iron and 60 tons of precious metals concentrate.

Furthermore, the exchange saw trade of 1,661,569 tons of commodities worth more than \$872 million on both domestic and export pits of its oil and petrochemical trading floor.

Items traded on this floor included 437,457 tons of bitumen, 434,000 tons of vacuum bottom, 393,840 tons of polymeric products, 186,000 tons of lube cut, 148,735 tons of chemicals, 40,080 tons of sulfur, 15,868 tons of oil, 5,268 tons of petroleum products, 790 tons of gas feedstocks and 550 tons of insulation.

Last was the IME's side market on which the exchange traded 121,814 tons of commodities.

IME is one of the four major stock markets of Iran, the other three markets are Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market known also as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), and Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX).

TEDPIX rises 15,000 points on Monday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 15,802 points to 2.318 million on Monday.

As reported, over 15.104 billion securities worth 117.435 trillion rials (about \$279 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).

1st transaction conducted at IRENEX Green Electricity Hall

TEHRAN - The first transaction was conducted at the Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX)'s Green Electricity Hall which was officially opened on Monday in a ceremony

attended by the country's senior energy and stock market officials.

The opening ceremony of the mentioned hall was attended by Energy Minister Ali-

Akbar Mehrabian, Head of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) Majid Eshqi, and the IRENEX Managing Director Ali Naghavi, IRIB reported.

UK crackdown on monarchy dissent under fire

From page 1 ▶ In a sign of dwindling public support for the British royal family, a new poll has revealed that only one in ten people pledged allegiance to King Charles during the ceremony.

On the coronation day itself, police have been accused of a heavy-handed approach in arresting scores of peaceful protesters despite apparently holding discussions with the organizers and giving them assurances that their demonstrations can go ahead.

But many demonstrations didn't go ahead. And the police arrests began even before the coronation started on the morning of the ceremony. Among those arrested later in the day were several volunteers from a local council who work to keep vulnerable people safe on the streets.

However, those targeted by officers appear to be mostly from one of the largest and most active anti-monarchy groups in the UK called Republic. The protesters were arrested under new legislation dubbed the new Public Order Act, which offers police more powers to shut down protests and make arrests.

Coincidentally or maybe not quite so coincidentally, the new law was given final parliamentary approval just days before the coronation took place.

One of the most high-profile arrests was that of Graham Smith, the chief executive of Republic. He was released without charge (like many others) after some 16 hours in detention. He said it had been "traumatic to be arbitrarily detained" and is calling for an inquiry.

Such has been the backlash against the police measures, with the Human Rights Watch accusing the police of "incredibly alarming" tactics. Smith has been given the opportunity to speak before a Home Affairs committee which is looking into the police's handling of the protests.

Smith argued that the Met should have known Republic "never had any intention" of disrupting the coronation, as the group had been in discussion with the force about protest plans for months.

He told MPs "we told the Met [The Metropolitan Police responsible for Greater London] how many placards we would have and what they would say on them. We told them we would have megaphones and amplifiers for the purpose of making speeches to the crowds. We



told them exactly where we were going to be on the route."

Smith also says "the Met Police were very clear with us that they did not have a single concern about anything we were going to do."

The activist argued that his arrest and subsequent detention had "all the hallmarks of being premeditated" as it appeared to him that officers had turned up "with the intention" of taking him into custody for the duration of the coronation.

The bigger question is who gave police the orders to target Republic on the day of the coronation and why?

During the committee meeting, Police chiefs were asked whether officers had been under political pressure "from above" to make the arrests? They responded that there was "no pressure politically".

Shortly after news surfaced of the controversial arrests, the Metropolitan Police expressed "regret" that demonstrators from Republic were arrested.

Smith said "I had three officers at my door personally apologizing and handing the straps [for the placards] back to me. They were a chief inspector and two other officers from the Met. They seemed rather embarrassed, to be honest.

I said, 'For the record, I won't accept the apology. We have a lot of questions to answer and we will be taking action.'"

Republic later wrote in a social media post "this has been a disgraceful episode and we will be speaking to lawyers about taking legal action" while stressing that the group expects an inquiry to find out "who authorized the arrests."

The anti-monarchy movement are adamant the arrests were a premeditated attempt to "disrupt

and diminish" the republican demonstration.

Human rights groups are concerned over police statements about "low tolerance" of protests, with Amnesty International saying "merely being in possession of a megaphone or carrying placards should never be grounds for a police arrest. Peaceful protest is clearly protected under international human rights law."

Environmental group 'Just Stop Oil' said more than a dozen of their protesters had been arrested. Separately, another campaign movement, Animal Rising, said a number of their supporters were arrested "miles away from the coronation".

A spokesperson for the group warned "this is nothing short of a totalitarian crackdown on free speech and all forms of dissent.

"Just Stop Oil, Republic and Animal Rising have experienced the true character of this government's attitude towards peaceful protest. We are sleepwalking into fascism and it is every single person's responsibility to stand up and say 'No more.'"

Politicians joined the London mayor, Sadiq Khan, in seeking answers from Scotland Yard (the headquarters of the Metropolitan Police) over the detention of Republic protesters and volunteers working for a local council to keep people safe.

Police also arrested members of Westminster city council's women's safety campaign Night Stars, who hand out rape alarms to women and other items to vulnerable people in an attempt to keep them safe on the streets from rising levels of crime.

Green party politician Caroline Russell, who chairs the London

assembly's police and crime committee, has described the crackdown as "really worrying."

She told the media that "It felt like, for someone who was trying to protest and trying to do it by the book, it was very difficult to understand what the rules were."

The mayor of London says "some of the arrests made by police as part of the coronation event raise questions and, while investigations are ongoing, I've sought urgent clarity from Met leaders on the action taken."

Since the coronation arrests, Republic saw its membership almost double in one week, further reflecting the anti-monarchy sentiment among the British public. The group says it has attracted a wave of new paying members.

Smith says "people understand it's quite worrying if the law allows police to arrest the most peaceful of peaceful protests. I think it has done the police an awful lot of reputational damage. A lot of the coverage of the coronation was dominated by these arrests."

The new polls showing that a tiny proportion of people had pledged allegiance to the king isn't surprising. Analysts believe it reflects the fact that there is only a small group of enthusiastic royalists left in the country and say it strongly signals that Britain is no longer a nation of monarchists.

The days of the British empire with a powerful monarchy are over as the majority of the British are now struggling to put food on the table.

Human rights activist Peter Tatchell says police were forced to "construct a watchtower in front of the demonstration so that the king would not see the protest as he passed by on the way to the palace."

WORLD HEADLINES

China summons Japanese envoy over 'anti-China' G7 summit

China's Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong has summoned the Japanese ambassador to register protests over "hype around China-related issues" at the Group of Seven (G7) summit over the weekend, the foreign ministry said in a statement.

The heads of the world's richest countries who met in the Japanese city of Hiroshima expressed serious concerns about rising tensions in the East China Sea and the South China Sea as well as voicing concerns about the human rights situations in China, including in Tibet and Xinjiang.

Sun said Japan collaborated with the other countries at the G7 summit "in activities and joint declarations ... to smear and attack China, grossly interfering in China's internal affairs, violating the basic principles of international law and the spirit of the four political documents between China and Japan", referring to the China-Japan Joint Communiqué of 1972.

A joint communiqué issued by the G7 nations on Saturday singled out China on issues ranging from Taiwan and maritime claims to economic coercion and human rights, underscoring the tensions between Beijing and the group of rich countries which includes the United States.

Armenia ready to recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as part of Azerbaijan – PM

Armenia is prepared to recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as part of neighboring Azerbaijan if the authorities in Baku guarantee the safety and rights of the local population, which predominantly consists of ethnic Armenians, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said on Monday.

Speaking at a press conference, Pashinyan noted that the territory of Azerbaijan encompasses 86,600 sq km, a figure significant because it includes the region in question. The president added, however, that "at the same time, we say that the issue of the rights and safety of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh should be discussed" in future negotiations.

"If we and Azerbaijan understand each other correctly, Armenia will recognize the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within the named limits, while Baku will recognize the territorial integrity of Armenia within the area of 29,800 sq km," he added.

The prime minister also called for international safety guarantees, expressing concern that the lack

of any mechanism could result in Azerbaijan carrying out "ethnic cleansing" in the region.

Pashinyan went on to say that Azerbaijan and Armenia are engaged in active peace talks, expressing hope that the sides will be able to quickly hash out any differences.

India hosts G20 tourism meet in Kashmir under heavy security

A Group of 20 (G20) tourism meeting is being held in Indian-administered Kashmir amid high security, with China and Pakistan condemning holding the event in the disputed region.

The Himalayan territory of Kashmir is the cause of a dispute between India and Pakistan since their independence 75 years ago. The two nuclear powers – who claim it in entirety but rule over parts of it – have fought two of their three full-scale wars over the territory.

The Indian portion of Kashmir, the country's only Muslim-majority region, has been roiled for decades by an armed rebellion seeking independence or a merger with Pakistan, with tens of thousands of civilians, soldiers and Kashmiri rebels killed in the conflict.

Police said last week that security had been beefed up "to avoid any chance of terrorist attack during the G20" meeting, the first diplomatic event in the disputed region since New Delhi revoked its limited autonomy and took direct control in 2019.

Three Palestinians martyred by Israeli forces in raid on Nablus

The Israeli army has martyred three Palestinian men during a large-scale raid on the Balata refugee camp in the city of Nablus in the northern occupied West Bank.

The Palestinian health ministry identified the three, killed on Monday morning, as Muhammad Abu Zaytoun, 32, Fathi Abu Rizk, 30, and Abdullah Abu Hamdan, 24.

At least seven other Palestinians were injured, including four with live ammunition, and dozens of others suffered tear gas inhalation, according to the ministry.

Hundreds of Palestinians turned out for the funeral procession on Monday afternoon for the three men killed.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) strongly condemned what it described as "the heinous crime" by the Israeli occupation forces in the Nablus.

Hezbollah maneuver, the resistance's heroes ready to cross into the occupied Galilee

From page 1 ▶ There are many messages that have been released by the resistance in this distinguished event (dedicated to the local and international media): Despite all reckless and hostile attempts to weaken it, it only gets brighter and stronger.

In terms of organization, the event, entitled "We Will Cross", has been highly and uniquely well-organized in terms of media and logistics.

The resistance wanted to send a message that recent rapprochements and reconciliations do not mean the end of the war with the enemy, but rather give the resistance a greater motive to remove the usurping entity after it has been able to devote its proficiencies to one front.

Three operations, all of which have been displayed by the resistance's heroes, have been "crossing" operation within a period of time that did not exceed 5 minutes: a capture operation, an operation to break into a settlement, and an operation to breach the made-up wall.

At the entrance to the military camp is a picture of the founder of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini (R), and a quote: "Israel is a cancerous gland that must be eradicated from existence." The sincere sons of Imam Khomeini are loyal to his righteous approach of confronting all sorts of vicious hegemony; thanks to him, victory has been achieved and resistance has been strengthened.

Then the media personals have been greeted by a musical band beautifully playing the melodies of the resistance, and Hezbollah's Military Ambulance Forces fully equipped to support the



After Hezbollah carried out a symbolic maneuver with live ammunition in South-Lebanon, which included a military parade and simulated attacks targeting "Israel"; Mr. Hashem Safieddine hands over the personal weapon to Hajj Imad_Mughniyeh, a gift from the martyr's family to the "Quwat al-Radwan".

resistance front.

Ideologically, the camp's name is "Baqiyat Allah Camp" (alluding to the 12th Shiite awaited Imam),

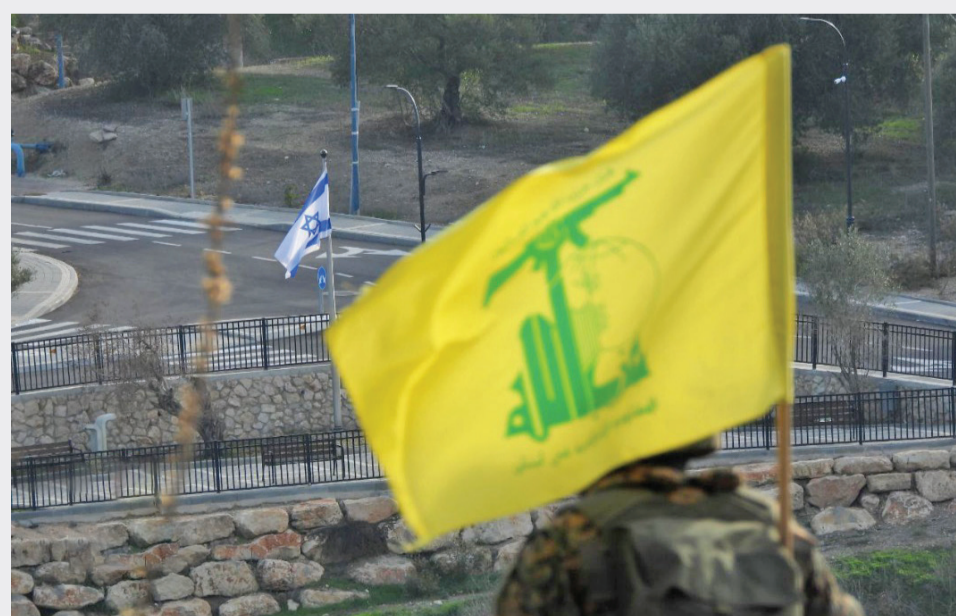
which reflects an ideological dimension that the enemy has repeatedly failed to comprehend. God's men are loyal to their faith, patient, committed, and determined. Their sacred project is linked to the promised savior, who will put an end to all forms of arrogance, oppression, and domination, and requires from them to copiously prepare for the near future, as stipulated in the Qur'anic verse, "And prepare for them whatever power and whatever garrisoned horses you can, to spread awe thereby into the hearts of the enemy of Allah." -Surah Al-Anfal – 60

From the entrance to the camp down towards the maneuver yard, military vehicles lined up have on the left with anti-tank missiles, rocket launchers of various sizes and ranges, and a huge 130-field cannon on a locally-manufactured truck.

Besides, soldiers and the "Radwan Unit", the elite force in Hezbollah, have been distributed all over the place and behind the oak trees with their distinctive equipment and uniforms.

For its part, the Hebrew media have commented on the maneuver, emphasizing the sincerity of the resistance in its readiness and determination to fight with an exceptional performance that the enemy might not expect. The comments have mainly focused on the fact that the wall built by the enemy would not protect it from the resistance; analysts have called for taking this issue very seriously.

Yesterday's event has welcomed by the majority of the media. Since 2005, followed by the July war, and then the brutal war on Syria, the resistance



stopped organizing any military shows without the resistance opening the way for Western and Arab media to cover its military activities.

From the former Zionist "Bir Kalab" military position, in which –pre 2000– the enemy and its treacherous collaborators used to aggressively bomb the villages of the south and attacked their inhabitants, the heroes of the resistance have reminded all the free people of the world that they are capable of attenuating and defeating global arrogance, and that they are fully prepared to cross into the occupied Palestinian

Galilee and blow up the artificial borders with the occupied Palestine.

Thus, the resistance is at the peak of its power, capable of attacking, surprising and deterring. The resistance is capable of curbing the enemy and protecting the land. Of course, what the resistance has revealed is a symbolic display of its capabilities, which confirm that it is capable of destroying what remains of its so-called "Iron Dome", which Hezbollah's Mujahideen call "The Cartoonish Dome."

House of tribes set to be launched in Tehran



TEHRAN – Niavaran Cultural-Historical Complex is set to launch a space dedicated to Iranian tribes and ethnic communities, Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili said on Monday.

“A house of tribes will be established in the Niavaran cultural center Ethnic House to help introduce the various Iranian ethnic groups,” Esmaeili said.

He made the remarks during his visit to a tribal exhibition organized to mark the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, saying: “That house is meant to show the cultural diversity of Iran and the unity of the plurality of its people.”

He described Iran as a rainbow of cultural diversity, saying: “Ethnic communities from Sistan-Baluchistan to the Turkmen Sahara, and from the Azarbaijan region to Khuzestan and Kurdistan, all adhere to their own rituals and traditions under one umbrella and single flag in the name of Iran.”

Moreover, the official referred to Greater Iran as a cultural land from one side to the borders of China and the Indian subcontinent to Central Asia and on the other side to the Anatolia region and the Caucasus, saying the name of Iran stands on the wise and philosophical visions of elites of this land.

Iranian nomads live in Fars, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, Khuzestan, Isfahan, and some other provinces. They usually change between their winter quarters in steppes (Qishlaq or warmer areas) and summer quarters in green mountainous regions (Yeylaq or cooler countryside).

Sightseers may visit nomads at different times of the year. However, the best seasons are spring and summer. There are several nomadic tribes you can meet or stay with, each of them having its unique lifestyle, culture, customs, foods, and musical performances.

Held every year on 21 May, the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development celebrates not only the richness of the world's cultures but also the essential role of intercultural dialogue in achieving peace and sustainable development. The United Nations General Assembly first declared this World Day in 2002, following UNESCO's adoption of the 2001 Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, recognizing the need to “enhance the potential of culture as a means of achieving prosperity, sustainable development and global peaceful coexistence.”

Iran eager to boost sports tourism, deputy minister says

TEHRAN –The Iranian government plans to develop sports tourism, the deputy sports minister has said.

Considering the country's capacities in sports tourism and the importance of this branch of tourism, the development of this field is on the agenda, Seyyed Mohammad Pouladgar explained on Monday.

As a country with four seasons, Iran is well positioned to host many sports events, which can be a turning point for its development, the official added.

The gorgeous beaches of southern Iranian islands such as Kish Island can be a hub for international sports tourism, but their potential has not been fully realized, he noted.

Sports events of various kinds and sizes attract tourists as participants or spectators and destinations try to add local flavors to



them to distinguish themselves and provide authentic local experiences.

Mega sports events such as the Olympics and World Cups can be a catalyst for tourism development if successfully leveraged in terms of destination branding, infrastructure development, and other economic and social benefits.

Three Iranian cities nominated for UNESCO status



TEHRAN – Three Iranian cities have been nominated for the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities (GNLC), a tourism official says.

Hamedan, Kelardasht, and Ardakan have applied for membership in the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities, IRIB quoted Seyyed Mostafa Fatemi as saying on Sunday.

Sprawling on a high plain, Hamedan never falls short of offering cultural heritage sites to its visitors. Scenic natural landscapes, traditional restaurants, public gardens, colorful outdoor markets, and more importantly, its hospitable people make for an unexpected slice of the city. Known in classical times as Ecbatana, Hamedan was one of the ancient world's greatest cities. Pitifully little remains from antiquity, but significant parts of the city center are given over to excavations, and there's a scattering of historical curiosities.

Known for its natural beauty and scenic landscapes, Kelardasht is a popular tourist destination that attracts visitors from all over the world. The northern city is surrounded by lush green forests, snow-capped mountains, and pristine rivers, making it an ideal location for nature enthusiasts and adventure seekers. With its unique cultural heritage, ancient historical sites, and vibrant local markets, Kelardasht offers a rich and diverse travel experience that is sure to captivate and enchant all who visit.

Ardakan is a historic city located in Yazd province. With a rich cultural, architectural, and socio-economic heritage, Ardakan is considered a jewel of the Iranian desert. Its landmark structures, including grand mosques and Zoroastrian fire temples, showcase the city's unique blend of Islamic and pre-Islamic Persian traditions. In addition to its historical significance, Ardakan is also renowned for producing fine carpets, pottery, and textiles.

In 2013, the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning initiated the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities to promote social cohesion, economic development, and sustainability in urban areas.

In 2015, the network began accepting members; since then, it has evolved into a driving force for the promotion of lifelong learning as a means of achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals at the local level.

Network members benefit from the exchange of lifelong learning policies and practices, the production and sharing of knowledge on key challenges and solutions, and training initiatives.

As mentioned by the UN body, UNESCO learning cities across the globe make lifelong learning a reality. “Whether they are megacities or smaller urban areas, all of them show how learning opportunities empower citizens of all ages when suitable policies and programs are put in place.”

Currently, 292 members of the network work closely together to share best practices, policies and activities to ensure learning for young and old.

Sheikh Heydar Mausoleum: uncovering secrets of ancient cylindrical tomb tower

TEHRAN – Tombs of prominent personalities have always held a high place in Iranian history. According to archaeological evidence, burials of different types, such as the use of rock tombs and different burial methods based on the diversity of faiths, existed millennia ago.

Although in the pre-Islamic period made of brick or stone as well as rock-hewn tombs of kings and great figures were prevalent, in the Islamic period, especially from the Seljuk period, certain tower-shaped or square tombs became common.

The tomb of Sheikh Haider in Meshgin-Shahr is one of these tower tombs, the date of which differing and sometimes conflicting opinions exist. Some sources say many decorations of the tomb tower date back to the Safavid period. Others say that the building dates back to the Ilkhanid period and beyond.

The monument stands tall in the Azarbaijan region of northwestern Iran, which plays an important role in the development of tower tombs.

As mentioned by Visit Iran, Sheikh Heydar, Shiekh Jonayd's son, was one of the great mystics who showed great courage in the war with Sirvan and was killed in the same war. “His body was transferred to Meshgin Shahr by his disciples, where they constructed a mausoleum for him.”

According to the historical document, Shah Ishmael, the founder of the Safavid Empire, transferred the body of his father, Sheikh Heydar, to the family tomb in Ardabil, next to the tomb of their great ancestor,



Sheikh Safi al-Din. Therefore, this mausoleum is now only a reminder of his original burial and not his true tomb. Later, some spaces such as parking lots, a museum, a library, and other facilities for tourists were added to this place.

A destination for sightseers, researchers, and history buffs, the building is in the shape of a cylindrical brick tower and is placed in the old and central structure of Meshgin-Shahr in a green and beautiful garden. It is surrounded by some porches that possibly were once used by passengers to rest.

The tower is 18 meters in height and 10.5 meters in diameter. It has a basement and an upper circular part. The roof is dome-shaped and gabled, but the original roof was also dome-shaped and was destroyed during the war with the Russians.

Although the outside of this tower is circular, its inside has twelve sides, symbolizing the twelve Shia Imams to whom the Safavids were extremely devoted. The entrance door of the basement is on the north side of the building, and the Sheikh's tomb is at the end of it.

The building material was stone for the foundation and brick for the walls. The brick body of this tower has been decorated with beautiful blue tiles from the outside. Although these tiles did not cover the entire body and were broken in some places, they still show their beauty and splendor.

As part of its arabesque decorations, the monument bears the name of “Allah”, believed to be inspired by the dome of Allah Allah in Ardabil, or the same dome of Sheikh Safi al-Din, but the tiles of the Ardabil dome are

more readable than those of Sheikh Heydar.

Other sacred worlds, like Hoo, Mohammad (PBUH), and Ali (AS) are also seen on the tiles. The entrance door and three windows of this building, beautiful plaster muqarnas decorations. This tomb tower was nationally registered in 1932.

Some cultural heritage experts believe additions and architectural decorations related to the post-patriarchal period have been added to the tomb tower though the construction date of the building revolves around the middle of the 8th century AH.

There are many historical clues to help determine the origin of these doubts and get a clear answer to all questions.

Cultural diversity, religions coexistence hallmarks of Iran, deputy minister says

TEHRAN – Iran is a symbol of cultural diversity and peaceful coexistence of religions, the deputy tourism minister has said.

There is no doubt that Iran has been a symbol of cultural diversity, peaceful coexistence of religions, and a symbol of peace and tolerance throughout its history, Ali Darabi explained on Sunday.

Mosques, churches, and synagogues in different Iranian cities could reflect this tolerance and cultural diversity, the official added.

Diverse cultures can work together in harmony and with no discrimination or inequality under any title, he noted.

Although human societies share many cultural characteristics, they all have different degrees of inhomogeneous nature, both in the internal sphere comparison with each other, he mentioned.

This diversity and plurality must be protected and preserved in the societies, he stated.

Among Iran's cultural policies are respect for cultural diversity, equal opportunities for marginalized cultures, and support for cultures in danger



of extinction, he said.

Iran has a well-developed system of ethnic groups and regions, and these ethnic groups have unique characteristics as a result of their climate, history, beliefs, and lifestyle, he explained.

The culturally-diverse country is home to many regional people including ones with Turk and Arab elements in addition to the Kurds, Baloch, Bakhtiari, Lurs, and other smaller minorities such as Armenians, Assyrians, Jews, and others.

Language, music, indigenous cuisine, clothing, songs, anecdotes, crafts, live performances, and local rituals such as celebrations and wedding ceremonies have always spurred many to experience life among the tribes.

Over the past couple of years, tribe tourism has gained a lot of support and attention in the country by both the government and the private sectors, as well as sightseers and local communities. Each month, several tribal festivals are held across the country. Moreover, tens of collective tours bring visitors to experience life among the tribespeople.

Tribe tourism, also known as the-tourism or ethnic tourism, lays the ground for you to feel indigenous people by living with a nomad or rural family or enjoying an independent stay.

For both domestic and foreign travelers, tribal tourism is all about opening eyes to new places, traditions, cuisines, beliefs, and ways of life.

Many tourists from all over the world tend to observe the lifestyle of these hardworking people and spend a few days watching activities such as milking, yogurt making, buttering, oiling, woolen, carpeting, and much more. Many Iranian and foreign tourists are interested in sleeping in nomadic black tents.

Lorestan people's hospitality strengthens tourism, governor-general says

TEHRAN –The people of the western province of Lorestan are known for their hospitality, which contributes to the tourism economy, the governor-general has said.

With its beautiful nature and welcoming people, Lorestan is an excellent tourism destination, and it is capable of being a tourist



hub in this capacity, Farhad Ziviar said on Monday.

Using this capacity to develop the tourism industry could lead to economic prosperity and employment for the locals, he added.

Lorestan, which is a region of raw beauty, was inhabited by Iranian Indo-European peoples, including the Medes, c. 1000 BC. Cimmerians and Scythians intermittently ruled the region from

about 700 to 625 BC. The Luristan Bronzes are noted for their eclectic array of Assyrian, Babylonian, and Iranian artistic motifs.

Lorestan was incorporated into the growing Achaemenid Empire in about 540 BC and successively was part of the Seleucid, Parthian, and Sassanid dynasties.

2,500 pilgrims arrive in Mashhad on foot

TEHRAN –Some 2,500 foreign and domestic pilgrims have recently entered Mashhad on foot to celebrate the birthday of Imam Reza (AS) on Wednesday, a local official has said.

The pilgrims are from the Iraqi cities of Karbala, Samarra, and Najaf, as well as different Iranian cities, Hossein Rezaei explained on Monday.

Until Wednesday, an estimated 7,500 pilgrims who have started their foot pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS), the eighth Shia Imam, will also arrive in the city, the official added.

Mashhad, the capital of Khorasan Razavi province, is Iran's holiest and second-largest city which embraces the shrine complex of Imam Reza (AS), the eighth Shia Imam.

Before the coronavirus puts almost everything on lockdown, Mashhad played host to thousands

of travelers and pilgrims who come from various Iranian cities, neighboring countries, and even across the globe to visit the holy shrine.

Over the past couple of years, neighboring Iraq has been one of Iran's most important markets for tourism and pilgrimage. In January, the deputy tourism chief Ali-Asghar Shalabafian announced that Iran had renewed arrangements to facilitate travels for Iraqi nationals. “For Iraqi tourists visiting Iran, a new system has been implemented to ensure their safety and comfort.”

In 2021, the two neighbors agreed to abolish visa requirements for air travelers.

The announcement came after President Ebrahim Raisi and Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi met in Tehran, discussing various issues including visa waiver, a joint railway project, and increasing the level of trade.



Before the coronavirus pandemic, Iraqi constituted Iran's largest source of tourists. In return, hundreds of thousands of Iranian pilgrims head for the holy Iraqi cities of Najaf and Karbala each year to attend the Arbaeen pilgrimage, aka the Arbaeen trek, to mark an end to the 40-day mourning period following the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS), the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

From agreement to action: build back biodiversity

By Mehdi Garshasbi

The United Nations has proclaimed May 22 the International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB) to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues.

When first created by the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly in late 1993, 29 December (the date of entry into force of the Convention of Biological Diversity), was designated The International Day for Biological Diversity.

In December 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted 22 May as IDB, to commemorate the adoption of the text of the Convention on 22 May 1992 by the Nairobi Final Act of the Conference for the Adoption of the Agreed Text of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

This was partly done because it was difficult for many countries to plan and carry out suitable celebrations for the date of 29 December, given the number of holidays that coincide around that time of year.

To mark this incredible and historic achievement, the proposal for this year's theme is: "From Agreement to Action: Build Back Biodiversity"

This theme builds on the results of COP 15. Now that the world has the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (agreement), the focus must quickly shift to its implementation (action).

Signed by 150 government lead-



ers at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, the Convention on Biological Diversity is dedicated to promoting sustainable development.

Conceived as a practical tool for translating the principles of Agenda 21 into reality, the Convention recognizes that biological diversity is about more than plants, animals, and microorganisms and their ecosystems – it is about people and our need for food security, medicines, fresh air and water, shelter, and a clean and healthy environment in which to live.

Biodiversity in Iran

April 4 has been named the day of preserving genetic and biological resources in Iran. The occasion coincides with the establishment of the National Center for Genetic and Biological Resources in 2015.

Undoubtedly, the outlook and perspective of experts and people towards the issue of genetic and

biological reserves have changed over time.

In the meantime, society always faces the challenges of an adequate and sustainable supply of housing, food, and health, and the government must plan for meeting the requirements.

If we want all members of society to have access to these three essential needs, there must be confidence in maintaining the resources.

The current generation should be able to hand these resources to the next generation.

The issue of climate change is known as a super challenge. Climate change can overshadow the life of a plant or animal specimen, and some plants or food sources may not be available in the future due to drought, heat, or any other factor.

The lower the number of genetic reserves, the more difficult it

will be for planning management. In such a situation, the role and importance of biobanks and gene banks become apparent.

To preserve the existing biodiversity over the wide geographic expanse of Iran, four types of areas have been designated for preservation and protection, including, national parks, wildlife refuges, protected areas, and natural national monuments. In 1997, the DOE held supervision over 7,563,983 hectares of such areas.

Currently, the supervised areas reached about 18.5 million hectares, including, 30 national parks, 170 protected areas, 45 wildlife refuges, and 37 national natural monuments.

The country has a high diversity of species due to geographical conditions, climatic diversity, huge water resources of the Caspian Sea in the north and the Persian Gulf, and the Sea of Oman in the south.

According to the latest studies, about 1,300 species of vertebrates, including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and aquatic fish, about 30,000 species of invertebrates, and 8,000 species of plants have been identified in the country.

Out of 1,300 species of animals in the country, 130 of which are endangered and threatened, Hassan Akbari, deputy head of natural environment and biodiversity of the Department of Environment, said in December 2021.

IOM pledges more support for Iran



TEHRAN - Lalini Veerassamy, the Chief of Mission of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the Islamic Republic of Iran, has said the organization will make every effort to provide Iran with more support.

The services provided to immigrants in Iran are not at all comparable to other countries of the world, including Europeans, and unfortunately, these services for immigrants are ignored, she added.

"As long as I am in Iran, I will take the issue of immigrants seriously, and we understand that the Islamic Republic alone bears 90 percent of the problems of immigrants.

We will do our best to allocate more resources to Iran and provide quality services to immigrants."

"Although we have a small team in Iran, we have many capabilities to enter the field of crisis management and we want to reach a common solution on how to cooperate with the crisis management organization and exchange experiences and manage non-cash items," she

stressed.

Veerassamy went on to say that examining the situation of immigrants in Iran requires long and short-term multilateral cooperation.

Last year, 31 million people affected by natural disasters were covered by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and this support will continue, she noted.

Some 70 percent of the Organization's credits and budget are allocated to respond to crises and natural disasters, and stabilizing the conditions of the victims is another part of IOM's responsibility, she highlighted.

In addition to crisis management and helping the victims, the Organization is also active in pre-crisis prevention, she concluded.

In April, Veerassamy said the world should know the services that are offered to refugees in Iran.

"I believe that the world should know what Iran is doing for the people of Afghanistan and should know that all these services are based on humanitarian principles that the international organization encourages," she added.

"I thank you for this responsibility and the actions and services you have provided to Afghan immigrants in this country over the decades."

She made the remarks in a meeting with the Japanese Ambassador to Iran Kazutoshi Aikawa that was held in the city of Kerman in the presence of Governor General Mohammad-Mehdi Fadakar.

"We try to increase our support in this field. Of

course, the support of international organizations is needed to provide better services."

"The International Organization for Migration has a broad presence in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Turkey and we hope to provide the same services in Iran with the support of the Iranian government," she stressed.

Iran is home to over 800,000 registered refugees and some 2.6 million undocumented Afghans.

Many of the refugees living in Iran are second and third-generation, according to the UNHCR.

In October 2022, the Iranian delegation at the 73rd meeting of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner for Refugees said with the continued allocation of insufficient international aid, it is very difficult and almost impossible for the Islamic Republic to continue providing services to refugees and unauthorized foreign nationals.

Despite the cruel and unilateral sanctions imposed by the United States, Iran has so far hosted a large number of refugees beyond its fair share.

Several decades of hosting refugees as well as undocumented Afghan citizens have created huge economic and social costs for Iran.

For this long time, the Islamic Republic has pursued this mission despite numerous economic and social problems caused by regional crises as well as illegal and unfair sanctions, along with insufficient international aid and mainly using limited domestic resources.

ENGLISH IN USE

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'Water transfer from Sea of Oman entails no considerable environmental risk'

Transferring water from Sea of Oman to central drought-ridden provinces of the country, provided that the environmental requirements are met, will not pose threats to the environment, Issa Kalantari, the Department of Environment (DOE) chief has announced.

To provide the amount of water needed for the country, agriculture and industries, there is no choice but to use seawater, the incredible and abundant resources, now and in the future, Kalantari stated, IRNA reported on Monday.

He went on to say that Iran located in an arid and semi-arid area, is facing environmental problems including water shortage, sand and dust storms due to low precipitation amounts coupled with climate change.

شیرین سازی و انتقال آب دریای عمان مشکل زیست محیطی ندارد

معاون رئیس جمهوری و رئیس سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست کشور گفت: شیرین سازی و انتقال آب دریای عمان به استان های مختلف به شرط رعایت الزامات محیط زیستی مانع زیست محیطی ندارد و از نظر این سازمان بلا مانع است.

عیسی کلاتری دوشنبه شب در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایرنا در چابهار اظهار داشت: برای تامین آب کشاورزی، آشامیدنی و صنایع کشور چاره ای جز استفاده از آب دریا نداریم و باید چه اکنون و چه آینده به این منابع بیکران و بسیار فراوان رجوع کنیم.

وی افزود: ایران کشور پر آبی نیست و سالهای سال با بحران بی آبی، خشکسالی و مسائلی زیست محیطی، گرد و غبار و ریزگردها مواجه است.

Iran aims to promote health diplomacy at WHA

TEHRAN – The seventy-sixth World Health Assembly is being held in Geneva, Switzerland, on May 21–30 with Health Minister Bahram Einollahi in attendance.

The minister is scheduled to hold meetings, ink agreements, and report on the country's development in the health sector with the framework of promoting health diplomacy.

On the sidelines of the WHA, a meeting of the G5 countries (Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, plus the World Health Organization) will be held.

The theme of this year's Health Assembly is: WHO at 75: Saving lives, driving health for all.

During the seventy-sixth World Health Assembly, a series of strategic roundtables are being held. During these sessions, WHA delegates, partner agencies, representatives of civil society, and WHO experts will discuss current and future priorities for public health issues of global importance.

The health minister is scheduled to hold meetings, ink agreements, and report on the country's developments.

The World Health Assembly is the decision-making body of WHO. It is attended by delegations from all WHO Member States and focuses on a specific health agenda prepared by the Executive Board. The main functions of the World Health Assembly are to determine the policies of the Organization, appoint the Director-General, supervise financial policies, and review and approve the proposed program budget. The Health Assembly is held annually in Geneva, Switzerland.

Iran's health achievements

Ricardo León-Bórquez, the president of the World Federation of Medical Education, has praised Iran for progress in the health sector, saying that the country's achievements are amazing.

Iran has paid much attention to the importance of medical education and can be one of the key members of the World Federation of Medical Education in the accreditation process, he added.

He made the remarks in a meeting in Tehran with Health Minister Bahram Einollahi, noting that the accreditation process of medical education, which was started by WFME in Iran in 2019, has progressed very well and Iran is moving in the right direction in this field.

Previously, Einollahi said many countries in the region are asking Iran for help with issues related to health.

Emphasizing that all diseases are currently treated in the country, the minister added: "With



the help of scientists, we were able to educate efficient human resources," ISNA reported.

"With the efforts that have been made during the 44 years after the victory of the Islamic Revolution, today we have the strongest health system in the region in such a way that the health indicators in the Islamic Republic are far ahead of other countries in the region."

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

Health is one of the areas that got a good jump after the Islamic Revolution, ISNA quoted Karimi as saying.

It should be noted that in the early years of the Revolution, even for a cataract, which is a routine ophthalmic operation, the patient was sent abroad, but now patients from abroad come to Iran for the most advanced surgeries, he highlighted.

"At the beginning of the Revolution, there were just 56,000 hospital beds, but now we have 156,000 hospital beds," he noted.

Meanwhile, there were just seven thousand specialists, but now there are 70 thousand specialists and sub-specialists in the country, he added.

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

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

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.

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

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

The bill has proposed a budget of 2,730 trillion rials (about \$6.8 billion) for the Ministry of Health, IRNA reported.

The administration has also proposed 690 trillion rials (about \$1.7 billion) as subsidies to provide medicine by health industries.



Blueberry cultivation in Iran

A woman is picking ripe blueberries at a greenhouse in the northcentral Alborz province, May 22.

Growing blueberries has become recently popular in the country.



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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The elderly are the sources of mercy and divine blessing.
Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:01 Evening: 19:29 Dawn: 3:12 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:54 (tomorrow)

Iranian studies in German: Islamic period

Part 6

Political sciences and contemporary history: Since the late 1960s, political science in Germany, as well as in other Western countries, has concentrated more and more on Middle Eastern affairs, but, for a variety of reasons, Turkey and parts of the Arab world have received much more attention than Persia.

This reflects the fact that, in traditional Orientalist studies in Germany, Arabic and Turkish studies have customarily predominated over research on Persian themes.

In contrast, from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, the German critical intelligentsia, partly under the influence of the so-called New Left movement, was deeply interested in Persia, particularly in its political opposition to the Pahlavi regime.

Therefore, during this time, there was a good deal of publication concerning Persia, which sometimes took place outside the academic circles and failed to meet the standards of critical scholarship but, nevertheless, occasionally served scholarly purposes.

There appeared also standard manuals on the political situation in Persia, like Ulrich Gehrke and Klaus Mehnert's *Iran (1975)* and Friedrich Kochwasser's *Iran und wir (1961)*.

Intellectuals critical of the political situation in Persia were, at that time, deeply impressed by Bahman Nirumand's analysis *Iran: Modell eines Entwicklungslandes (1967)*.

In this connection, attention may also be drawn to the interesting study of the Revolution of 1978-79 by the political scientist Dawud Gholamasad.

In the former German Democratic Republic, an annotated German translation of Ayatollah Khomeini's *Welayat-e Faqih* by Ilse Itscherenska and Nader Hassan (a pseudonym) was published in 1983, and Hans-Georg Ebert, Henner Fürtig, and Hans-Georg Müller cooperated in the publication there of a basic textbook on the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Fürtig is the only one of these three scholars who still concentrates on Persian affairs. He recently published a book on the foreign policy of Persia since the death of Ayatollah Khomeini.

Worthy of mention also is Welried Buchta's recent studies on religious aspects of political ideas and strategies in the Islamic Republic.

Katajon Amirpur is just finishing an analysis of religious intellectuals (*rowshan-fekran-e dini*), dealing mainly with the philosophical and religious approaches of Abdolkarim Sorush and Mojtaba Shabestari.

Reza Hajatpour recently finished a rather philosophical study of the discourse concerning politics, democracy, and human rights among Shia olama, a specific chapter of which is devoted to Shaikh Hadi Najmabadi.

Two early publications compiled by Jan-Heeren Grevenmeyer and Kurt Greussing were, for at least a few years, the two most widely read books in Germany on the Islamic Revolution (1980, 1981).

The economist and political scientist Asghar Schirazi (Berlin) published some important analyses concerning land reform and agrarian aspects of the Islamic Republic (1987, 1988).

Once the general fascination caused by the revolution wore off, there appeared a new trend towards examination of earlier phases of 20th-century Persian history: Ralph Kauz (Bamberg) dealt with the *Hezb-e demokrat-e Iran* and its leader Ahmad Qavam (Qavam-al-Saltana; 1995); Christl Catanzaro (Munich and Bamberg) is preparing to publish a pioneering study on the early history of the University of Tehran, and Hamid Khusravi-Shahroudi (Tübingen) published in 1998 a study on the Constitutional Revolution.

Tim Epkenhans is at the present time (1999) preparing a thorough analysis of the early intellectual journal *Kava*, and Anja Pistor-Hatam (Heidelberg) is concentrating on reformist ideas of Persian subjects living in the Ottoman Empire at the end of the 19th and the early 20th century, paying particular attention to the Persian newspaper *Akhtar*, which is also the subject of another detailed study by her to be published.

Persia in the period during and immediately after World War I was seldom dealt with in the German speaking countries until recently, when Perso-German relations became the subject of a few in-depth studies.

Ahmad Mahrads' compilations of archival sources concerning Perso-German relations are to be noted in this context (1976, 1977, 1985).

Schapur Ravasani did a detailed study on the Jangali Movement in Gilan, and Werner Zürer concentrated on the Anglo-Russian rivalry in Persia following World War I.

Persia in World War I has recently become the main subject of research by the young scholar Oliver Bast (1997), who is preparing a major study on this theme.

Outside of academic structures, there are two institutions that deal more or less regularly with political affairs concerning Persia. One is the *Deutsches Orient-Institut* in Hamburg, currently run by Udo Steinbach.

Its journal regularly contains contributions on the current political situation in Persia.

The other institution is *Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik*, a public foundation now located in Ebenhausen im Isartal near Munich, to be moved to Berlin in near future.

Johannes Reissner at this institute is concerned mainly with research on political issues involving Persia and Central Asia. Other institutions of political research have reduced their activities focusing on Persia during the last twenty years.

Social sciences and anthropology: Persia is not well represented in social science studies in Germany. In contrast, Afghanistan has been a major interest for a group of social scientists during the 1970s and 1980s.

For a while, social anthropologists were influenced by leftist debates over feudalism and the "Asiatic Mode of Production" (AMP), relying strongly on Karl August Wittfogel's concept of Oriental despotism.

But, even within these debates, Persia was rarely touched upon. During the 1970s, a number of students, mainly Persian nationals, tried to contribute to this kind of discourse, and some of them were able to publish their theses, among them Susan Sarkhosh (1975), who did an analysis of the concept of AMP in Qajar society.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica.
 To be continued.

Film chronicles Islamic saint Hazrat Masumeh's visit to Iran

TEHRAN – A film featuring Hazrat Masumeh (SA), the sister of Imam Reza (AS), on her visit to Iran has recently been produced.

The feature film entitled "Okht-o-Reda" ("Reza's Sister") was made by Mojtaba Tabatabai, director of the acclaimed documentaries "Cloudy Sky" and "The Footsteps of Water".

In 815 CE, Hazrat Masumeh (SA) and a large number of her relatives embarked on a journey from Medina to meet her brother, Imam Reza (AS), in Khorasan where the eighth Imam of the Shia had resided for years by order from Abbasid caliph Mamun.

Due to his hostility toward Shias, Mamun ordered his men to stop them in Saveh, a city near Qom, home to a large population of Shias.

Mamun's soldiers killed a large number of the companions of Hazrat Masumeh (SA) in Saveh, where she was taken ill. Consequently, she decided to take refuge in Qom.

Shia Muslims in Qom gave Hazrat Masumeh (SA) and her companions a very warm welcome upon their arrival in the city. However, she was in critical condition and ultimately met her death on November 9, 816 CE, and was buried in Qom.

Earlier in the Fars region, Mamun had killed her brothers, Hazrat



A scene from "Okht-o-Reda" by Mojtaba Tabatabai.

Ahmad ibn Musa (AS) and Seyyed Alaeddin Hossein (AS).

Due to the prohibition on the depiction of Islamic saints, the story in "Okht-o-Reda" has been portrayed through the eyes of three characters, Tabatabai, who is also a co-producer of the film, told the Persian service of MNA.

One of the characters is the person who carried out Mamun's order to transfer Imam Reza (AS)

to Khorasan. Hazrat Masumeh's maid and one of her brothers are the other characters.

"We never created any distortion of the truth and avoided using our imagination in recounting the story; meanwhile, we did our best to dramatize the historical facts about this historical narrative," Tabatabai said.

Most of the scenes have been filmed at the Nurtaban Cinema Town, the

setting for several films on the history of Islam, including "Muhammad (S), the Messenger of God", director Majid Majidi's epic about the childhood of the Prophet of Islam (S).

The cast does not include any big-name stars.

Tabatabai plans to premiere "Okht-o-Reda" in Qom, the home of the shrine of Hazrat Masumeh (SA), this year on October 9 to mark the anniversary of her arrival in the city.

Iranian movies line up for Tracce Cinematografiche Film Fest



A scene from "Silence Again" by Mohammad-Kamal Alavi.

TEHRAN – Nine Iranian movies will compete in the 12th edition of the Tracce Cinematografiche Film Fest, which will take place from July 4 to 9 in Rome, Italy.

A highlight of the Iranian lineup is the award-winning short drama "Katvoman", written and directed by Hadi Shebani.

The film shows a mom and son playing dressed up as Batman and Catwoman before dad returns for dinner. Through the play, the child

discovers a difficult truth about his parents.

The film won the award for best fiction at the Festival International du Film Amateur de Kelibia – FIFAK in Tunisia and the audience award for best short fiction at the 10th Amnesty International France's Cinema for Human Rights Festival.

Among the films is also the animated drama "The Melody of Loneliness".

Directed by Samira Azimian, the movie tells the story of a Kurdish girl who has to weave carpets for her foreman in order to make a living. To endure loneliness, she creates her dreams and depicts them in the form of carpet motifs. Finally, after weaving several carpets, she faces the truth and accepts it, but weaving dreams is the only reason for her to live, though all her carpets will be given to others. The girl weaves and weaves and years go by. She, who has now reached old age, dies on the last carpet she has woven for herself, and her soul is freed from the captivity of her body.

Mohammad-Kamal Alavi's short drama "Silence Again" will also compete in the festival.

The film is about a young woman who lives on

a hill far from the city, alone and in silence. She farms and takes her produce to the city on an old motorbike. On the way back, a scarecrow catches her eye. The woman returns home but she cannot get the scarecrow out of her mind.

She gets up in the middle of the night and walks in the dark. The next morning, the scarecrow is at the woman's house. The woman is no longer alone. She changes the look of the scarecrow and gives it a feminine look. The woman's relationship with the scarecrow gradually deepens. One day, the woman returns home, and when she opens the door, the scarecrow falls on her face and injures her. The woman throws the scarecrow out of the house and sheds tears, alone and heartbroken. The next morning the farmland, roads and houses are empty and silent. In the middle of a field, a woman stands in a scarecrow shirt and hat with her arms outstretched; still and motionless, like a scarecrow.

The lineup also includes "A Butterfly Is Knocking on Windo" by Mohammad Hassani, "Daybreak" by Yaser Yari and several other films.

Judith Hermann's "Home" prepared for Persian readers

TEHRAN – The Ofoq publishing house in Tehran has released a Persian translation of German writer Judith Hermann's novel "Home".

Mahmud Hosseinizad is the translator of the book first published in 2021.

In the novel, Hermann tells of a departure and an awakening: an old world is lost and a new one arises.

The protagonist has left her former life behind, moved to the seaside, and into her own house. She writes short letters to her ex-husband, telling him how her new life is going in the north.

She cautiously makes friends, tries having an affair, and



A combination photo shows Judith Hermann and the front cover of the Persian edition of her novel "Home".

wonders whether she could make herself at home or whether she should move on.

Hermann tells of a woman who leaves many things behind, develops resilience and becomes someone else in the intense landscape of the coast.

She tells of memory. And of that moment when life divides, an old world is lost and a new one emerges.

Hermann was born in Berlin in 1970. Her debut book, "Summer House, Later" (1998), was greeted with great acclaim.

The short-story collection "Nothing but Ghosts" followed in 2003. Some of these stories were adapted for film in 2007.

"Save Me a Seat" at Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN – "Save Me a Seat", co-authored by Sarah Weeks and Gita Varadarajan, has recently been published in Persian.

Peydayesh is the publisher of the book translated by Shuka Karimi.

Originally published in 2016, the book follows Joe and Ravi who might be from very different places, but they're both stuck in the same place: SCHOOL.

Joe's lived in the same town all his life, and was doing just fine until his best friends moved away and left him on his own.

Ravi's family just moved to America from India, and he's finding it pretty hard to figure out where he fits in.

Joe and Ravi don't think they have anything in

common, but soon enough they have a common enemy, the biggest bully in their class, and a common mission: to take control of their lives over the course of a single crazy week.

Weeks has been writing children's books and songs for the past twenty years. She is a graduate of Hampshire College and NYU and recently became an adjunct faculty member in the prestigious Writing Program at the New School University, in New York City.

She was one of the authors of the 2017 Kids Reading Across Rhode Island with "Save Me a Seat".

Varadarajan was born and raised in India. She has worked with children all over the world, and now teaches second grade in Princeton, N.J. "Save Me a Seat" is her first novel.



Front cover of the Persian edition of "Save Me a Seat".