



Strong as 'Pohon Kayu Ulin'

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi (L) and his Indonesian counterpart Joko Widodo plant saplings at the Merdeka Palace as a sign of peace and friendship between Tehran and Jakarta on May 23, 2023.

Raisi says Iran and Indonesia agreed to trade in local currencies to defuse dollar dominance.

Iran and Indonesia inked 11 documents and agreements to strengthen cooperation in numerous fields.

Widodo expresses hope for more cooperation in science and technology sphere between both countries.

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By Ehsan Tehrani

TEHRAN- Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, who is on a two-day official visit to Jakarta, planted a sapling with his Indonesian counterpart Joko Widodo on Tuesday as a sign of peace and friendship between Tehran and Jakarta after receiving a 21-gun salute.

Discovered in 1993 in Indonesia, Pohon Kayu Ulin is regarded as one of the largest plants in the country. It is canopy tree species with erect or spreading branches and extremely durable and decay-resistant wood. There are reports that estimate the tree can live 1,000 years and its diameter can reach to 2.5 meters.

Raisi arrived in Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, at the head of a high-ranking politico-economic delegation. The goal of the visit is to improve Iran's ties with Asian nations in both political and commercial spheres.

He was warmly and officially welcomed by President Widodo shortly after his arrival.



Raisi held talks with a group of Indonesian people at the Jakarta Islamic Center on Tuesday evening.

Following the event, top officials from the two nations had consultations at the Merdeka Palace.

Preferential trade agreements (PTA) and other significant documents for

cooperation in several industries were signed by the two parties.

Raisi's state visit to Jakarta represents a watershed moment in bilateral ties, ushering in a new chapter in the two nations' relationship.

In the midst of heightened global geopolitical tensions, Tehran and Jakarta both strive to improve their political and economic relationship.

Raisi's visit to Indonesia, which has a Muslim majority, is anticipated to strengthen bilateral ties as Tehran looks for alternatives to the U.S.-led dominance of the world affairs and foster further cooperation after the two countries wrapped up talks on the Indonesia-Iran Preferential Trade Agreement this month.

Iran prioritizes strengthening ties with powerful Muslim, neighboring states

In a joint press conference, Raisi reaffirmed Iran's foreign policy of strengthening ties with powerful Muslim and neighboring states, saying, "The expansion of ties with Indonesia, as one of the most important and influential countries in Asia and the world, and a member of important regional and international organizations, is very important for Iran."

Report



Joint operation by AP and U.S. Air Force:

Mere charade for the policy of making military threats look credible

By Soheila Zarfam

TEHRAN – With Iran steadily moving to shore up its nuclear capabilities, the U.S. has resorted to charades and hackneyed tactics to intimidate Iran. But its effort will come to naught.

Earlier this month, the U.S. Air Force posted a rare photo of a widely known bomb that has been long rumored to be built exclusively to destroy Iran's underground nuclear facilities. The photo the GBU-57 bomb that is also known as the Massive Ordnance Penetrator.

The bomb has been associated with Iran right from the start. It was developed in the 2000s as the U.S. highlighted concerns over Iran's nuclear program. Yet it has never been used against Iran or even displayed to the public in detail.

The photo was then deleted hours after publication. ► Page 3

Report



What is the West's new project for Yemen?

By Ali Karbalaei

TEHRAN – Yemeni officials warn of new U.S. and Israeli project to partition their country.

The Western war against Yemen has shifted towards what can be described as a new project of dividing up the Arab country after the Sana'a government forces defeated enemies.

The head of the Sana'a government, Abdul Aziz bin Habtoor, has warned that the West and "Israel" are pushing for a project to divide Yemen.

Other senior officials have echoed those remarks.

Saudi Arabia is seeking measures to bring peace to its own conflict with Yemen, having perhaps realized that the U.S. failed to offer it protection for eight years as Washington had falsely promised to do so for decades.

Now that fighting between Yemeni forces and Saudi Arabia has eased, prospects for peace between the two sides are growing, especially following the restoration of diplomatic ties between Riyadh and Tehran and rapprochement between the Saudi Kingdom and Syria). ► Page 5

Tehran Papers



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

Ahmadian is absolutely a soldier of the Leader

Ham Mihan devoted its headline to the appointment of Ali Akbar Ahmadian as the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council and conducted several interviews in this regard. ► Page 2

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Qalibaf reelected Parliament speaker

TEHRAN – Iranian lawmakers held a vote on Tuesday morning to elect the speaker of the Parliament and his aides. The majority of lawmakers decided to retain Qalibaf in his position.

During an open session of the parliament, the legislators voted to choose members of the parliament's presiding board, Tasnim reported.

Qalibaf remained in the post by garnering the most votes, beating Elyas Naderan and Fereydoon Abbasi. Qalibaf won 210 votes.

Abdolreza Mesri and Mojtaba Zolnouri, were also elected as the first and second vice speakers respectively. Mesri won 158 votes and Zolnouri 152.

The Iranian Parliament currently has 290 representatives, changed from the previous 272 seats since the February 18, 2000 election. The last parliamentary polls were held in February 2019.

The lawmakers take the seats for a four-year term.

Qalibaf is pushing for an overhaul of the governance system. He has broached the idea of ► Page 3



Funeral held for fallen troops in Mashad

TEHRAN – A funeral service was held for three of the Iranian troops who fell victim to a terrorist attack on the border with Pakistan earlier this week.

The funeral, held Tuesday morning, was attended by the people of Mashhad and civilian and military officials.

The coffins of the victims were all draped with the Iranian flag and carried by fellow soldiers.

TEHRAN PAPERS

Ahmadian is absolutely a soldier of the Leader

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

Ham Mihan devoted its headline to the appointment of Ali Akbar Ahmadian as the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council and conducted several interviews in this regard. Mohammad Kosari, a member of the parliament, said: "Given his spirit in the imposed war, and academic knowledge that we know from General Ahmadian, we will see good results in the future, and this spirit will cause reforms in the Supreme National Security Council. This development should definitely be accompanied and coordinated with the head of the government. With the spirit that we know from General Ahmadian, there will definitely be reforms in the Supreme National Security Council."

Shamkhani's role in the agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia has now increased concerns that his change may create new limitations on Iran's relations with other countries.

Kosari emphasized: "These issues are the macro-policies of the system, and the secretary and head of the Supreme National Security Council implement them." On General Ahmadian's political tendencies, Kosari said: "He is completely a soldier of the jurisprudent."

Sharh: Resignation of Shamkhani and power struggle

In an interview with Sadatian, a member of the Parliament's National Security Committee, Sharh discussed Shamkhani's resignation from the Supreme National Security Council. He said: "Most of the attacks on Shamkhani from the Jebhe-ye Paydari (Front of Stability of the Islamic Revolution) were not related to the issue of his family and mostly revolved around his performance in the face of protests, meetings with reformists and something like this. So here, the "power struggle after unifying the executive power" causes such changes and reforms. However, some radical groups in the new era are trying to take over all levels and dimensions of power, from economic to political, diplomatic and security, especially since Shamkhani tried to resolve the regional relations in recent months in such a way that the foundations of the JCPOA revival are preserved. Although these actions are not done without the permission of the authorities, the Front of Stability did not welcome them, because they felt that some decision on the region and the JCPOA are being taken without their involvement. Even though in the issue of the revival of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia and other issues related to regional foreign policy and the JCPOA, almost the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and (deputy foreign minister) Ali Bagheri Kani were kept in dark in the past months, and Shamkhani's performance became more prominent.

Etemad: Diplomats should be researchers, not reporters

In a note, Etemad discussed the recent statements of the Leader among the group of diplomats

‘Berlin complains about human rights while it partook in Saddam crimes’

TEHRAN- Iran has condemned German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock for commenting on human rights in the Islamic Republic, recalling Berlin's role in the crimes committed by ex-Iraqi tyrant Saddam Hussein's army during the war against Iran in the 1980s.

The comments were made in a tweet by Nasser Kanaani of the Iranian Foreign Ministry on Tuesday, one day after Baerbock declared that the European Union "won't accept" alleged Iranian human rights violations.

He pointed out, "It is very unlikely that the German foreign minister is not aware of the Iranian people's mentality towards chemical gases and substances and their connection with the German government."

"How does she give herself the right to talk about the human rights of the Iranian people as her country is responsible for equipping the Saddam regime with chemical weapons as well as killing and poisoning thousands of Iranian citizens!" he added.

Additionally, he shared images of the damage caused by Iraq's chemical attack on the Iranian city of Sardasht on June 28, 1987.

Thousands more were exposed to chemical agents, and the attack claimed the lives of over 100 individuals.

Many of the crime's survivors are still dealing with the long-term respiratory and even psychological ramifications of breathing mustard gas after more than three decades.

Iran slams silence of those claiming to defend

and said: The Leader's emphasis on identifying hidden layers in regional and global decisions and actions shows that he has a serious demand from diplomats that instead of being a reporter and act like them, be a researcher and convey the contents correctly to the center (capital) with correct understanding. Avoiding superficiality is one of the essentials of working as a diplomat. Some diplomats regularly write superficial reports and their reports to Tehran lack details and accurate understanding of the issue. Giving reports is desirable, but the content must be understood and this is more important.

Hamshahri: Criticism of the hijab bill

In its opinion piece, Hamshahri addressed the new hijab and chastity bill and criticized it. It wrote: In the text that is published on cyberspace as the new chastity and hijab bill that the government, the judicial system and the parliament have not yet published its official text, the laws and the regulations have undergone vast and alarming changes. If it is true, it will be an awful impact to the high dignity of the judicial system. The pillar of these changes is that the judicial authority of the country has totally decriminalized the violation of Islamic hijab until before it leads to complete removal of the hijab and made it a legal matter and prevents police from taking preventative actions against the criminals – even if they are completely without the hijab or are half naked, unless they are completely naked!

Iran: Raisi government diplomacy and trip to Jakarta

The Iran newspaper discussed President Raisi's visit to Indonesia and wrote: Raisi's visit is taking place upon the official invitation of the president of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, while almost 17 years have passed since the last official bilateral visit of the presidents of the two countries. Asian countries are one of the important areas in the foreign policy of the 13th government. What has made these countries important to the politicians is not just a focus on political aspect of such relationships, but it the use of political and diplomatic capacities in line with the country's economic goals and interests. The previous government's focus on restoring relations with the West just led to a clear reduction in the level of Iran's relations with Asian actors.

Along with the idea that Iran's foreign policy should be "offensive-defensive", it caused the country to neglect development of relations with the countries that are called "peripheral countries" in international relations. Accordingly, not only the wishes of the 11th and 12th governments were not fulfilled by focusing on the policy of developing relations with the West, rather their political relations with large and small Asian countries were limited to trips that sometimes had no achievements. They even made many previous cooperation agreements to become irrelevant.

human rights

Kanaani also paid respect to five Iranian border guards who lost their lives in a recent terrorist incident in southeast Iran and criticized those who profess to defend human rights and combat terrorism for remaining silent.

"I pay my respects to the heavenly souls of the martyrs of the homeland, the five youths, sacrificers for the security of the nation, and defenders of the borders of the motherland," Kanaani tweeted.

He went on to add, "Iran has been combatting terrorism and the smuggling of narcotics with the sacrifices of the generals and soldiers of the motherland for years."

"Why isn't there anything to hear from the claimants of human rights and the fight against terrorism, and no 'united message' from the European ambassadors in Tehran?" Kanaani deplored.

In the armed struggle that broke out in the Saravan district of the southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan on Saturday night, five border guards fatally shot and two others were injured.

The Iranian police said that the border regiment of Saravan engaged in combat with a group of gunmen who were attempting to breach the border close to the Mazar border post, adding that the terrorists abandoned the region after suffering severe casualties.

The distance between Saravan and the shared border with Pakistan is only 40 kilometers.

Strong as ‘Pohon Kayu Ulin’

Raisi makes high-profile visit to Indonesia to strengthen ties with Asia

From page 1 ► He added that Iran and Indonesia have different potential for deepening relations and expressed confidence that his visit to Jakarta will lead to positive results for relations between the two big Muslim nations regionally and globally.

Additionally, Raisi stressed that "over the past 70 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations, the two countries have always had good interactions in various political, economic, trade, regional and international fields."

He continued by saying that Tehran and Jakarta share common position on major regional and international issues, including Palestine and Afghanistan.

Raisi declared that "until al-Quds



is liberated, the two countries are committed to upholding the rights of the Palestinian people."

The president emphasized the

need to build an inclusive government in Afghanistan that works to restore the rights of the Afghan people and includes all ethnic and

religious groups.

Raisi noted that the U.S. embroilment in Afghanistan after two decades ended in total fiasco and resulted in destruction and death in the country.

The Iranian president highlighted that Iran and Indonesia are committed to fighting unilateralism in regional and international affairs.

Prior to leaving Tehran at Mehrabad Airport on Monday, Raisi said Iran and Indonesia support long-term peace and security in the region and both countries are united against unilateralism.

"Indonesia is an important country in Southeast Asia and has a significant position in regional and international developments," Raisi told reporters.

Iran, Indonesia ink 11 documents, agreements

The signing of several documents for bilateral cooperation in many industries, according to the Iranian president, reinforces both parties' commitment to advancing relations in all spheres.

In the presence of Raisi and Widodo, senior officials from Iran and Indonesia inked 11 documents and agreements to strengthen cooperation in preferential trade, cancellation of

visa, cultural exchanges, supervision over the pharmaceutical products, science and technology as well as oil and gas.

The two nations are now engaged in extensive bilateral, regional, and international negotiations to improve collaboration in a variety of areas, including politics and economy, commerce, energy, science and technology, culture, parliamentary, and security.

Iran, Indonesia agree to trade in national currencies

Iran's president announced that Iran and Indonesia agreed to trade in local currencies in a bid to counteract the dominance of the dollar.

Raisi emphasized Tehran's steadfast commitment to strengthen ties with Muslim countries and its neighbors while maintaining that onerous sanctions and pressure had failed to impede Iran's ad-

vancement.

He continued by saying that despite pressure and oppressive sanctions, Iranian youths have made significant breakthrough in science and technology as well as the development of the country's economy.

"Sanctions and threats are unable to thwart Iran," the president added.

Raisi visit to Jakarta opens new chapter in ties, FM says

TEHRAN- Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has called the planned visit to Jakarta by President Ebrahim Raisi a "turning point" in ties between the two Muslim countries, saying that it will start a new era in the relationship.

Amir Abdollahian elaborated on the significance of the Iranian president's visit to Indonesia in an op-ed that published in English-language daily The Jakarta Post on May 22.

What follows is the text of the article entitled "Strengthening Cooperation between Iran and Indonesia":

The state visit of Islamic Republic of Iran President Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi to Jakarta, in response to the invitation of President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo, marks not only a turning point in the bilateral relations between the two countries but also the commencement of a new chapter in the relations between the two great nations.

The stands of the two countries in the two regions of the Middle East and East Asia, cultural and civilizational commonalities and weighty potential for cooperation in various fields, alongside the new requirements of the international order, herald the opening of a new era of relations between the



two countries hinged on respect and mutual understanding.

The diplomatic ties between Iran and Indonesia are now entering their eighth decade, while the relations between the two great nations have deep roots in history. The people of the two countries, centuries ago, were able to establish profound bonds with each other through Islam, and Iranian and Indonesian Muslim scholars and intellectuals had beneficial interactions in past centuries.

The linguistic ties between the two countries also serve as further evidence of the historical interactions between the people of the two nations throughout Asia. A considerable number of Persian words in the Indonesian language and shared assets such as

Imam Muhammad Ghazali testify to the depth of historical connections between them and provide a basis for deepening the relations between the two nations.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, within the framework of a balanced, smart and dynamic foreign policy, attaches special prominence to the development of relations with Indonesia. Fortunately, this determination exists on both sides, and the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Indonesia are resolute to create the required infrastructure and facilities for the development of relations in various fields.

The bilateral negotiations between the two countries encompass a wide range of bilateral, regional and inter-

national topics. Iran and Indonesia seek to deepen cooperation in various areas, including political, economic, trade, energy, scientific and technological, cultural, parliamentary and security fields.

Despite the excellent relations, constructive cooperation and mutual support in international forums, it must be acknowledged the current volume of trade relations between the two countries is below expectations given the available capacities. Therefore, President Raisi and his accompanying delegation in this to Jakarta provide a valuable opportunity for the public and private sectors of both countries to become more familiar with each other's economic and commercial capacities and capabilities.

The links between Iran and Indonesia, within the framework of South-South cooperation, have a historical background and demonstrate the common approach of the two countries to create a balanced world. The two countries have common positions on regional, international and Islamic issues, and continuous negotiations between the two sides on these matters are ongoing.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Intelligence Ministry foils foreign-backed spy network

TEHRAN- A foreign espionage network that was gathering critical information from important authorities has been dissolved and its agents have been apprehended, according to Iran's Ministry of Intelligence.

In a statement released on Tuesday, the ministry declared that continuous monitoring had shown that an unidentified foreign intelligence service had been gathering data on Iranians leaving and entering the country, including those who worked in important government positions or had access to sensitive information in sensitive institutions.

In the statement, the ministry said that it had been successful in locating a network of intermediaries and executive agents who had been gathering information from a number of significant institu-



TEHRAN- On Monday, representatives from Iran and the UN virtually discussed Yemen's condition and potential solutions to the Arab

tions and agencies inside Iran.

According to the statement, the agents attempted to improperly use the databases that were accessible in Iran to extract information about travelers entering and leaving the country and then provide the information to the relevant foreign intelligence services.

It further stated that once the network's executive agents and intermediates were located within Iran, they were detained right away at the behest of the nation's legal authorities.

Turkey busts Mossad cell working against Iran

Turkish local media reported on Tuesday that a cell working with the Mossad targeting Iranian assets had been detained by intelligence officers.

Iran, UN mull ways to end Yemen crisis

nation's issues, according to the Iranian Foreign Ministry official website.

In order to solve the crisis in Yemen and achieve sustainable peace in the war-ravaged country, Ali Asghar Khaji, a senior assistant to the Iranian foreign minister for special political affairs, held consultations with Hans Grundberg, the UN Special Representative for Yemeni Affairs.

In the virtual conversation, the two sides discussed the latest developments related to Yemen and exchanged views on the process of the Sana'a negotiations as well as the available ways to solve

the Yemen crisis.

While expressing his satisfaction with the recent openings, especially the direct negotiations between Saudi Arabia and Ansarullah in Sanaa, Khaji called for removal of the existing obstacles to the transfer of humanitarian aid to the Yemeni people.

Hans Grundberg explained the measures taken by the United Nations to advance the peace talks in Yemen, and emphasized the necessity of continuing political talks with the aim of building trust and reaching an agreement between the parties.

Mere charade for the policy of making military threats look credible

From Page 1 ▶ Then the Associated Press started from where the U.S. Air Force left off. In a slanted report, the American news agency alleged that Iran is building an underground nuclear facility near the Natanz nuclear plant that is likely to be impervious to U.S. penetrator bombs such as the one discussed above.

“So the depth of the facility is a concern because it would be much harder for us. It would be much harder to destroy using conventional weapons, such as like a typical bunker buster bomb,” AP quoted a researcher who analyzed the alleged construction at Natanz as saying.

AP added, “Such underground facilities led the US to create the GBU-57 bomb, which can plow through at least 60 meters (200 feet) of earth before detonating, according to the American military. US officials reportedly have discussed using two such bombs in succession to ensure a site is destroyed. It is not clear that such a one-two punch would damage a facility as deep as the one at Natanz.”

The news agency went so far as to speculate about the resumption of sabotage against Iran. “With such



bombs potentially off the table, the US and its allies are left with fewer options to target the site. If diplomacy fails, sabotage attacks may resume,” it said.

This kind of highly charged language and reporting is hardly new. The West has long sought to browbeat Iran into relinquishing its nuclear work with such threats. But they never got their desired results.

This time the West is resorting to thinly-veiled threats at a time when the acceleration of Iran's nuclear work is a direct result of U.S. bullying. One has to remember who withdrew from the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Instead of reversing course, the West is now unabashedly using banal strategies put forth by hawks who never really wanted

diplomacy with Iran. These hawks first dissuaded the Biden administration from making up for Trump's mistake and are now pushing the Biden administration into addressing the issue of lack of fear on the part of Iran as if Tehran has ever feared Washington.

Iran has long said that it only responds to diplomacy and respect. Threats never work with Iran.

Senior Iranian diplomat appointed ambassador to Saudi Arabia: reports



TEHRAN – Iranian media reported on Tuesday that Alireza Enayati has been named as Iran's new ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

Enayati, head of the Persian Gulf Bureau at the Iranian Foreign Ministry, was involved in the Chinese-brokered deal that restored diplomatic relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The

deal was reached on March 10 and stipulated that Tehran and Riyadh reopen their embassies within a period of two months.

Enayati has also previously served as Iran's ambassador to Kuwait.

Saudi Arabia has already introduced its ambassador to Iran. Iranian media reports earlier suggested that Alireza Enayati and Nasser Kanaani, the spokesman for the Foreign Ministry, were among the top candidates for the high-profile job.

Relations between Iran and its southern Arab neighbors improved after Tehran and Riyadh signed the Chinese-brokered agreement in Beijing on March 10. The landmark deal resulted in both sides resuming diplomatic relations after seven years.

Iran has also appointed a new ambassador to Kuwait, who will arrive in the Arab country soon, Fars

News reported in mid-May.

The newly-appointed ambassador, Mohammad Totonchi, will replace the outgoing ambassador Mohammad Irani, who has been Tehran's envoy to Kuwait since September 2018.

Totonchi has previously served as the head of the Persian Gulf Bureau at the foreign ministry and Iran's chargé d'affaires in Oman.

After Iran and Saudi Arabia severed relations in January 2016 due to the attacks on the Saudi embassy and consulate general in Iran, the Kuwaiti government recalled its ambassador from Tehran in accordance with Saudi Arabia and reduced the level of its diplomatic relations with Iran.

The government of this country appointed its new ambassador in Tehran in August of last year after about six years.

Qalibaf reelected Parliament speaker

From Page 1 ▶ “new governance,” which aims to address some of the shortcomings.

Qalibaf said in mid-May that Iran needs to overhaul its governance system in accordance with a strategic declaration by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei.

Speaking at a gathering in Tehran, Qalibaf said, “Today, all thinkers and experts, world powers and all the countries of the world and national governments on the planet believe



that they are on the verge of changing the world order. We must know where we stand in this change of world order and where we should be, and without a doubt, we should be in a better

position than in the past, both in the regional and international fields.”

He added, “We must know where we are and we must know our road map and we need a transformation in our governance system in various economic, political, and defense and security fields. And we need new governance based on the second step of the Revolution.”

Qalibaf was referring to the declaration of the second step of the Revolution, which was issued by Ayatollah Khamenei.

“We must strengthen our strengths and overcome our weaknesses,” he said, according to Tasnim. “We must define common and limited priorities. We have lost so much time that we don't have time to advance this plan according to arbitrary methods. Even in the method of reaching the goals, we have to find a consensus in order to be successful in the 7th Plan,” he added, referring to the Seventh Development Plan that is expected to be tabled at the Parliament for review. The plan is a long-term program that aims to achieve development.

Iran prioritizing balanced foreign policy and economic diplomacy: Amir Abdollahian

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has underlined the priorities of the Iranian foreign policy, saying that the Raisi administration has prioritized pursuing a balanced foreign policy and shoring up economic diplomacy.

In an interview with khamenei.ir, Amir Abdollahian stressed the need to develop relations with the world. “When we say interaction, we mean interaction with all parts of the world in a balanced foreign policy, giving priority to neighbors and looking at Asia, taking into account active economic diplomacy and paying special attention to Iranians abroad,” he said.

He added, “This is a case that the Supreme Leader pointed out well; of course, the government has paid attention and emphasized the development of cooperation with its neighbors in its foreign policy. We have started a lot of work in this sector from the past and we will strengthen this approach more than in the past in the context of the reiteration of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.”

Amir Abdollahian pointed out that expanding relations with Islamic countries and other countries of the same direction has been on the agenda of foreign policy.

“Due to the special emphasis of the leaders of the Islamic Revolution on development of relations with Islamic countries, the directors of the diplomatic apparatus and our ambassadors in these countries

will seriously follow up all these guidelines and lines drawn and communicated,” he said.

The foreign minister continued, “We believe that in parallel with working with all parts of the world, we should have a priority view with Islamic countries and have the same direction.”

He noted, “The government's policy, which prioritized the development of relations with neighboring countries, continues with a greater extent. For this reason, in the foreign field, we will focus and plan more precisely to work with Islamic countries in the same direction, along with working with neighbors.”

Earlier this week, Amir Abdollahian and a number of Iranian diplomats met with Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei.

The profundity of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution's strategic perspective on the changing world order and his emphasis on effective foreign policy will serve as the ministry's guiding principles, Amir Abdollahian said.

Amir Abdollahian made the remarks on Saturday, hours after Foreign Ministry officials and Tehran's diplomats to foreign countries met with Ayatollah Khamenei.

“Today, at the start of a meeting of ambassadors and heads of political, international and consular representative offices, we visited Iran's Leader



Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei and received his deep views on foreign policy and international relations,” Amir Abdollahian wrote on his Twitter page.

He added that the Foreign Ministry will continue to adhere to Ayatollah Khamenei's “strategic views on changes in the world order and his emphasis on an effective foreign policy.”

Addressing a group of Foreign Ministry officials and ambassadors to other countries on Saturday, Ayatollah Khamenei delineated the meanings of the three keywords “honor, wisdom, and expediency” in the Iranian foreign policy.

The Leader described lack of reliance on principles in foreign policy as a violation of honor and the cause of hesitancy.

Ayatollah Khamenei described the meaning of “wisdom” as speech and behavior that is “wise, well thought-out and prudent.”

Volleyball expert hits out as Shahdab performance in Asia

TEHRAN – Mostafa Karkhaneh, director of Iran volleyball national teams, expressed disappointment in Shahdab Yazd's results in the 2023 Asian Club Volleyball Championship.

Shahdab came in fourth at the 2023 Asian Club Volleyball Championship after losing to Police of Qatar in the bronze medal match.

The team lost all three matches during the competition held in Manama, Bahrain.

Karkhaneh stated in his interview with the Tehran Times that the results were far from satisfactory.

“Shahdab were a star-studded team, and the expectations were high from them, but they failed to meet them,” said the Iranian volleyball expert.

Shahdab lost to Police of Qatar 3-1 (24-26, 25-16, 25-20, 25-19) on Sunday. The team's second loss to the Qatari side followed a previous defeat at the hands of the Japanese team Suntory Sunbirds.

“The club's management has provided the team with top-notch facilities. The team boasted six or seven of Iran and Asia's finest volleyball players, some of whom competed in the Olympics.

“Shahdab's performance did not live up to the expectations set by Iranian volleyball at national and club levels in the past 15-20 years.

“I believe that managing big stars in a team is an art for the head coaches. Shahdab failed to manage the condition in my opinion,” concluded Mostafa Karkhaneh.

Khalilzadeh, Gholizadeh miss 2023 CAFA Nations Cup

TEHRAN – Shoja Khalilzadeh and Ali Gholizadeh are not fit for the 2023 CAFA Nations Cup.

Iran national football team winger Gholizadeh has undergone surgery for a knee injury and is not ready for the competition.

Iran defender Khalilzadeh has also suffered a muscle tear in his abdomen and will be sidelined for three months.

Team Melli are drawn along with Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan in Group B of the competition.

Group B consists of Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Oman.

Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan will host the competition from June 10 to 20.

The teams drawn in group B will play their matches on June 10, 13 and 16 and Group A matches will be held on June 11, 14 and 17.

The final match and the match for the third place will be played on June 20 in Tashkent, capital of Uzbekistan.

Iran slams U.S. after three volleyball players denied visas

TEHRAN – Head of Iran volleyball federation Mohammadreza Davarzani says that they will withdraw from the 2023 Volleyball Nations League (VNL) for denying U.S. visas to three players.

The VNL Week 3 will be held in Anaheim, California from July 4 to 9 but the U.S. government has not granted visas to the three players.

Davarzani said that the country's volleyball federation plans to voice its official protest to the International Volleyball Federation (FIVB).

Amin Esmailnezhad, Arman Salehi and Esmail Mosafer are the players who have not been granted the visas.

Davarzani has sent an email to FIVB President Dr Ary S. Graça F, expressing his concern for lack of response from the American side due to visa issuance for the national volleyball team's members.

The Iranian teams and athletes have been already denied visas to enter the U.S. over the past years.

Saman Ghoddos linked with Malmo FF

TEHRAN – Iran international winger Saman Ghoddos has been linked with a move to Swedish football team Malmo FF, according to Expressen.

English Premier League side Brentford have recently announced that Ghoddos, 29, is leaving the squad as his contract expires this summer.

According to the newspaper, Ghoddos has offers from Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Major League Soccer.

There are also clubs in the English second division, the Championship, who have registered their interest in the 29-year-old.

Ghoddos is particularly attractive in the Persian Gulf as he holds an Asian passport, which means he does not count as a foreign player.

In Swedish elite football, Ghoddos has represented Trelleborgs FF, Syrianska FC and Östersunds FK.

Iran runner-up at Asian Belt Wrestling Alysh

TEHRAN – Iran's women's team finished in second place in the 2023 Asian Belt Wrestling Alysh.

Host Uzbekistan won the title.

Sepideh Babaei (55kg), Omolbanin Mohseni (60kg), Roghaye Mahmoudabadi (65kg) and Reyhaneh Gilani (70kg) won four silver medals and Sahar Ghanizadeh (75kg) and Ezzat Ghorbani Sani (+75kg) won two bronze medals.

It means all six wrestlers of Iran won a medal.

The competition was held in Jizzakh, Uzbekistan.

Esteghlal Khuzestan secure promotion to Iran Professional League

TEHRAN – Esteghlal Khuzestan football team won promotion to the Iran Professional League (IPL) on Tuesday.

The Ahvaz based football club defeated Arman Gohar 4-0 and won the promotion as the second team.

Esteghlal Khuzestan had previously won the IPL title at the 2015/16 season.

Shams Azar have previously won the title of the 2022/23 Azadegan League title and advanced to IPL as the first team.

Naft Masjed Soleyman and Mes Kerman were already relegated from IPL and Shams Azar and Esteghlal Khuzestan replaced them in the top-flight league.

Azmoun wants to leave Leverkusen

TEHRAN – Iranian media reports suggest that Sardar Azmoun has set sights on leaving Leverkusen.

After just one and a half years at Bayer Leverkusen, Azmoun is reportedly heading for the exit door.

The 28-year-old striker has decided to leave the club at the end of the season.

French clubs Olympique Marseille and Olympique Lyon, as well as Turkish side Fenerbahce SK, are said to be interested in signing the Iranian international.

Azmoun has a contract with Leverkusen until 2027. He has scored five goals and provided five assists in 41 appearances for the club in all competitions.

Iran's monthly non-oil export to Pakistan up 41%



TEHRAN- The value of Iran's non-oil export to Pakistan increased by 41 percent in the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-April 20), as compared to the first month of the past year, the spokesman of Trade Development Committee of the Iranian House of Industry, Mining, and Trade announced.

Ruhollah Latifi said that importing non-oil commodities worth \$116 million, Pakistan was Iran's fourth export destination in the said month.

As previously announced by the official, the value of Iran's non-oil export to Pakistan rose 18 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

Latifi said that importing non-oil goods worth \$1.488 billion from Iran, Pakistan was the fifth top export destination of the Islamic Republic in the previous year.

Iran imported non-oil commodities valued at \$842 million from Pakistan in the past year, which was 170 percent higher than the figure of the preceding year, the official stated, adding that Pakistan was Iran's fourth top source of import in the previous year.

On April 30, Iranian Ambassador to Pakistan Mohammad-Ali Hosseini and Pakistani Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar discussed the ways for increasing trade between the two countries in a meeting in Islamabad.

Expressing their satisfaction that the trade between the two countries exceeded \$2 billion, the two sides emphasized the need to take more effective steps to strengthen economic cooperation and help expand trade relations.

During the meeting, the Pakistani minister said that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with the friendly and brotherly country of Iran.

Appreciating the efforts of the Iranian ambassador during his diplomatic mission in Pakistan in order to strengthen the brotherly relations between the two neighboring countries, Senator Ishaq Dar praised the measures taken especially in the commercial and economic fields.

Expressing their satisfaction with the value

of trade between Iran and Pakistan, which has exceeded two billion dollars, the two sides emphasized the need to identify new ways to help increase trade and develop economic cooperation.

Emphasizing the country's economic outlook, Pakistan's finance minister expressed confidence that despite economic challenges, Pakistan is on the path of progress and development.

Iranian ambassador to Pakistan for his part, appreciated the cooperation and support of the Pakistani government for the development of bilateral relations in various fields, and stated that the potential capacities of Iran and Pakistan are the main factor for the expansion of joint cooperation.

Iran and Pakistan signed an MOU in January to facilitate bilateral trade.

He added that bilateral trade between Iran and Pakistan has now reached \$2.4 billion, but it is not compatible with the good political and people relations of the two neighbors and more efforts should be made to support the business community of the two countries.

Back in January, Iran and Pakistan signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to facilitate bilateral trade between the two countries.

The MOU was signed by the former Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Alireza Peyman-Pak and Head of the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) Muhammad Zubair Motiwala.

Based on the MOU, which was signed on the sidelines of Iran's Exclusive Exhibition in Karachi, the parties pledged to exchange business information, support each other's private sectors, and provide the conditions and context for the presence of their trade delegations in the other country.

It was also agreed that both sides would take all the necessary measures to facilitate holding exhibitions in the opposite country, whenever required.

Speaking in the signing ceremony, Peyman-Pak said that signing this MOU was indicative of the two sides' determination for removing the obstacles in the way of bilateral trade and prepare the ground for the businesspersons of both sides to bolster cooperation.

ICCIMA remains head of ICC Iranian Committee

TEHRAN – Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) has been re-elected as the head of the board of directors of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Iranian Committee.

The decision was made by the members of the ICC Iran Council in a meeting at the place of the ICCIMA on Monday, the ICCIMA portal reported.

As reported, Iran Export Confederation (Mohammad Lahouti), Seyed Hosseini Salimi, Pasargad Bank (Majid Qasemi), Iran's Insurance Syndicate (Seyed Mohammad Karimi), Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (Masoud Khansari), and Parsian Bank (Kourosh Parvizian), were also elected as other main members of the ICC Iranian Committee's board of directors.

Bank loans to economic sectors up 12.7% in a month



TEHRAN- Iranian banking system has paid 1.8129 quadrillion rials (about \$3.55 billion) of facilities in the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (ended on April 20), registering

a 12.7-percent rise from the figure in the same month of the previous year.

Banks had loaned various economic sectors 1.6085 quadrillion rials (about \$3.015 billion), the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) announced.

As reported, of the total facilities, 1.614 quadrillion rials (about \$3.16 billion) equivalent to 89.1 percent, was paid to the business owners (real and legal), and 198 trillion rials (about \$388.5 million) equivalent to 10.9 percent, to the final consumers (households).

TEDPIX gains 12,000 points on Tuesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 12,292 points to 2.33 million on Tuesday.

As reported, over 15,104 billion securities worth 126.256 trillion rials (about \$300 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).

Tehran, Jakarta determined to boost bilateral trade

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- The value of trade between Iran and Indonesia reached nearly one billion dollars in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

Of the mentioned figure, \$847 million was the share of Iran's export to Indonesia, and \$119 million was the share of Indonesia's export to Iran.

Indonesia is one of the world's consumption markets, and this country's market is the main destination of many countries' export goods. Considering Indonesia's membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and low tariffs for imports to this country, Iran can also take advantage of the economic status of Indonesia and expand its trade with this country.

In recent years, Iran has started to sign preferential trade agreements (PTA) with other countries to expand its economic relations through the reduction of tariff rates. A clear example of this policy is the trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and Pakistan, based on them zero tariffs are to be applied on at least 100 items.

Iran also signed a PTA with Indonesia on Tuesday during the trip of President Ebrahim Raisi to Jakarta.

Iran, Indonesia ink 11 agreements to expand co-op in different fields

During this trip, the two sides inked 11 agreements on cooperation in different areas, including oil and gas, in the presence of the two countries' presidents.

In a joint press conference with Indonesian President Joko Widodo on Tuesday, President Raisi said



Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji (L) and Indonesian Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Arifin Tasrif ink oil and gas co-op agreement in Jakarta on Tuesday.

that Iran and Indonesia have various fields and capacities to improve the level of relations, emphasizing that the signing of numerous cooperation agreements in various fields shows the determination of the two countries to develop relations in all fields.

Referring to the goal set to increase the value of trade between the two countries to \$20 billion, the president said, "Of course, the two countries have decided to conduct their exchanges with national currencies."

Indonesian traders very eager to expand relations with Iran

Also, before his trip to Indonesia, Iranian Minister of Communications and Information Technology Issa Zarepour, who is the Iranian chairman of Iran-Indonesia Joint Economic Committee, held a meeting with some Indonesian traders and businessmen in Tehran, after which, the minister said that the Indonesian traders are very willing to expand ties with Iran.

By removing the obstacles, the

commercial exchanges between Iran and Indonesia can be multiplied quickly, the minister noted.

Zarepour also met Indonesian Trade Minister Zulkifli Hasan on Monday prior to the trip of President Raisi to Indonesia in order to finalize the documents of expanding trade between the two countries.

Iran-Indonesia trade on upward trend in past decade

The data of the last decade of Iran's trade with Indonesia show that the peak of Iran's trade relations with this country was in the Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20, 2022), which can be a turning point in history of trade between the two countries.

Iran's 10-year exports to Indonesia show that in 1400, the highest value of exports to Indonesia occurred in the last ten years, which was \$1.081 billion.

Iran's export to Indonesia in the last ten years shows an upward trend, as the exports to this country have increased from 60 million dollars in 1392 to more than one

Over 1,300 ha of lands under greenhouse cultivation in Mazandaran

TEHRAN- As announced by a provincial official, 1,314 hectares of lands in Mazandaran province, in the north of Iran, are under greenhouse cultivation.

Ehsan Abbaspour, the deputy head of the province's agriculture department for plant production improvement, also said that the area under greenhouse cultivation in the province will be expanded to 5,000 hectares by the next three years.

He said, "Five greenhouse states were built in Mazandaran, and we hope that this process will continue."

As stated by the deputy agriculture minister, the development of greenhouse cultivation is a major policy of the Agriculture Ministry.

In this regard, several projects have been defined and introduced to the banks, and as soon as the notification is made, the projects will receive facilities and their implementation will begin, the official added.

In recent years, the water crisis has caused serious challenges in Iran's agriculture sector.

To solve this problem,

several solutions, including the implementation of pressurized irrigation project and greenhouse cultivation, have been emphasized by experts and officials in this sector.

Iranian Agriculture Ministry's Greenhouse Development Program is one of the priority projects of this ministry which aims at increasing productivity, efficiency, and water consumption management in the agriculture sector.

The program was approved in the Iranian calendar year 1395 (ended on March 20, 2017) under the framework of the National Resilient

billion dollars in 1400. This is a sign of the potential of relations between the two countries in the economic area.

'Iran can use Indonesia as a hub for marketing its products in ASEAN countries'

Indonesian Ambassador to Tehran Ronny Prasetyo Yuliantoro has said that Iran can use Indonesia as a hub for marketing its products in the ASEAN countries.

The envoy made the remarks in an interview conducted by the Tehran Times on the sidelines of a ceremony to celebrate ASEAN Day 2022 in Tehran in last August.

"I think we [ASEAN member states and Iran] have some great potential that can be developed, for instance now with regard to the health field we can have some kind of cooperation, you know this is a time that we can increase cooperation in the health sector", he stated.

"So, this is a good time and then I believe that there is some potential that can be still developed between ASEAN countries and Iran", the ambassador reiterated.

It should be also mentioned that the membership of Iran and Indonesia in important regional and international agreements and alliances such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and the D-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation, known as Developing-8, can be a platform to increase bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

Given such capacities and platforms, Iran and Indonesia are determined to deepen cooperation in various fields, including commercial and economic areas.



Economy Plan.

The development of the country's agricultural parks and greenhouses not only is going to create new job opportunities but also increases the country's non-oil exports and helps preserve the environment and the national water and soil resources.

Export from Qom province rises 22% in a year



TEHRAN- The value of non-oil export from Qom province increased by 22 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20), as compared to the preceding year, a provincial official announced.

Akbar Ebdali, the head of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department, said that 379,70 tons of non-oil goods valued at \$347.743 million were exported from the province in the previous year, indicating also 28 percent growth in terms of weight, year on year.

He named plastic materials, mineral fuels, shoes and sandals, copper wire, iron wire, eggs, polyester fibers, chemical products, and mechanical machines as the major exported items, and Iraq, Afghanistan, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Pakistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Syria, Russia, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan as the main export destinations.

TEHRAN – The 51st Asian Clearing Union (ACU) summit, mainly focused on de-dollarization, kicked off on Tuesday at the place of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), ISNA reported.

On the first day of the two-day event, expert committees from the delegations attending the summit held meetings to discuss preliminary issues.

The summit is attended by the governors of the central banks of the ACU member countries in addition to Russia.

The Governor of the Central Bank of Russia Elvira Nabiullina arrived in Tehran on Monday night to attend the mentioned event.

In the 51st ACU summit, the members are set to discuss various issues including the amendment of the Union's statutes in order to facilitate the acceptance of new members, and determining the new currency basket of the member countries in order to settle exchanges without the need for euro or the dollar.

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.

CBI hosting 51st ACU summit

Exploring the feasibility of using digital currencies of central banks for cross-border payments and the unveiling of the interbank messaging network of the member states of the Union are also among the major topics on the summit's agendas.

Asian Clearing Union is a payment arrangement whereby the participants settle payments for intra-regional transactions among the participating central banks on a net multilateral basis.

The main objectives of the clearing

union are to facilitate payments among member countries for eligible transactions, thereby economizing on the use of foreign exchange reserves and transfer costs, as well as promoting trade and banking relations among the participating countries.

Currently, the members of ACU are the central banks of Iran, India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar.

What is the West’s new project for Yemen?

From page 1 ▶ Other regional overtures have not gone down well with the West, especially the U.S. and its strongest regional ally Israel.

The new Western project is to split the country into two. Yemen is of utmost geopolitical importance considering its geographical location on the Bab-el-Mandeb strait, literally a southern Yemeni chokehold critical to global energy security.

Bab-el-Mandeb forms a vital link in the maritime trade route between the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean via the Red Sea and the Suez Canal.

The U.S. alongside Israel don’t want the Sana’a government have anything to do with the strait.

The majority of the Yemeni people support the popular revolution of 2014, which is why Yemen stood united and steadfast against U.S. and Saudi military attacks.

The West and Israel have been supporting separatist forces in southern regions like Aden, near Bab-el-Mandeb.

At various points during the eight-year war in Yemen, Saudi-backed forces and Emirati- backed separatists fought each other during heavy street clashes in the southern Aden region.

It highlighted a split in the Saudi-led coalition, but it also signals something else.

As fighting eases down, support for these separatist forces is increasing in the new Western-Israeli project against Yemen, spearheaded by the U.S.

The other dimension of bringing insecurity to Yemen and preventing the government in Sana’a from solidifying its presence in its southern waters is the Yemeni Island of Socotra that is strategically located at the mouth of the Gulf of Aden, overlooking the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.

In the spring of 2018, the UAE deployed its military to Socotra, in what reports cited as a change from its former civilian presence on the island.

Many reports have since emerged indicating that Israel has a secret intelligence military base on the island, which is 350 kilometers south of Yemen.

This can pave the way for the West to consolidate its presence on the strategic waterway.

Experts believe the West is aware that people living under separatist forces in regions like Aden are



unhappy with the authorities ruling the southern areas and have a desire to join the popular revolution and government in Sana’a.

This would explain why the Sana’a government is warning of a Western and Israeli project to divide the south from the north.

The biggest aspect of the West’s plan in seeking to divide Yemen is that it either wants to control the Bab el-Mandeb and the Red Sea itself or have a government in Sana’a that is allied to Washington. The last thing the West wants is the Sana’a government, aligned with Iran and the Palestinians, to control the strategic waterway.

There is Western fear that Yemen might use the Bab el-Mandeb Strait against the West, but the past decades have proven that countries in West Asia have shown more respect for international law than the West has ever done in its history.

Yemen’s enemies have always tried to keep the nation very weak. It is the poorest country in West Asia, yet its steadfastness over the past decade shows the Yemeni nation and tribes are, in fact, very powerful.

The idea of splitting Yemen is not something new. Different parties have tried to execute this plan in the past.

Ansarullah, which controls Sana’a and accuses former Yemeni President Mansur Hadi of being a Western puppet, says he tried to divide the country into six regions.

During his final year in power, the former president held a meeting with Ansarullah members to discuss the proposal. The idea was strongly opposed by the movement that has fought to preserve Yemen’s territory as one country.

Yet it was one of the many disputes between Hadi and Ansarullah, whose

officials say they told the former leader that this would mean six Yemeni countries, with six budgets and six legislations. They cite the former president as saying each member of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council had allegedly proposed to financially support one of the six regions.

The revolution thwarted what Ansarullah said was a U.S. satanic plot that included separating Aden and Socotra as well. These U.S. plots go unpunished and receive little media attention.

The crimes of U.S.-made bombs landing on civilian infrastructure in Yemen over the past eight years, killing and maiming hundreds of thousands of civilians, many of them women and children, have yet to be investigated before an international tribunal.

It is the West that has been invading nations in West Asia, breaking every rule in international law and all the global rules -based order.

If there is any Western concern that Yemen might disrupt trade or something along those lines (that Western politicians like to falsely claim) in the country’s southern waters than this highlights how fragile and afraid the West has become.

The other realistic aim for dividing Yemen is to prevent the country from any prosperity because a strong, independent, and unified Yemen would be a major influential player. The West is strongly opposed to prosperous, independent and influential countries on the international stage, as this would weaken America’s global hegemony, which is already on the decline.

As U.S. global hegemony declines there are some that wish to remain proxies of Washington.

More Western interference in

Yemen goes against those advocating for West Asia without foreign interference. Many, especially Iran, have been pushing for regional countries to be in control of regional affairs in coordination with each other.

This is the only way to bring peace to the region. Any issues between regional countries can be solved over a cup of tea, without the need to bring in aggressive foreign forces who seek to destabilize the region, plunder its mass natural resources or dictate to others what policies to take.

All U.S. policies are not aimed toward the benefit and security of the region in the long run. Rather Washington seeks the benefits of the West and its proxy client Israel.

It is also a violation of international law for foreign powers to try and divide another sovereign nation for their own benefits. But countries like the United States don’t play by the rules.

Nevertheless, the ancient civilization of Yemen, with its mass historical culture and heroic tribal forces, as they have shown since the time of the prophet Mohammed (pbuh) until today, will not allow enemy hands to touch its territorial integrity or allow enemies to intimidate the nation.

Experts believe Yemenis will foil any new Western project to divide the country as it has foiled many other foreign plots over the past centuries.

As the cradle of civilization on the Arabian Peninsula, many foreign powers have tried different projects to conquer Yemen but failed miserably in the long run. History and recent events indicate the latest project of division is doomed to fail just like the others did and Yemen will retake its place once more among the ancient nations of civilization.

WORLD HEADLINES

Israel reportedly in advanced’ talks for direct flights to Hajj in S. Arabia

Israel and Saudi Arabia are engaged in ‘advanced’ US-brokered negotiations to enable direct flights to Jeddah, near Mecca, to help Israeli Muslims perform the Hajj pilgrimage as soon as next month, several Hebrew news outlets reported Sunday.

The Maariv daily first reported that a breakthrough in talks was possible on Friday. Then, on Sunday, several outlets quoted a senior Israeli official estimating that there is a 60 percent chance the move will be announced next month.

As India holds G20 meet, brutal’ Kashmir media crackdown slammed

As New Delhi holds a Group of 20 (G20) tourism meeting in Indian-administered Kashmir, a leading watchdog has condemned the crackdown on media and arrests of journalists in the region.

The New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) said press freedom remains under attack even as India tries to project normalcy in the disputed region.

“CPJ calls on the Indian government to end its brutal crackdown on the media and immediately release the four arbitrarily detained Kashmiri journalists,” the group said in a statement shared on Twitter on Monday. The journalists it wants freed are Asif Sultan, Fahad Shah, Sajad Gul and Irfan Mehraj.

Countries in West Asia face extreme heat risk, study finds

Countries across the Persian Gulf region and the wider Middle East are highly vulnerable to extreme heat borne out of climate change, with poorer populations being particularly at risk in the decades ahead, a new study has warned.

Iran will become one of SCO members in current year

BEIJING - China’s SCO National Coordinator, Zhang Haizhou, said on Monday, May 22, that more and more countries are applying to join the SCO family, the Tehran Times reporter from Beijing reports.

For example, Zhang said, “Iran will become one of the member states this year.”

Speaking to media persons from countries member to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Zhang welcomed journalists on behalf of the Department of European-Central Asian Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China.

A media team from 20 member countries has traveled to China to learn about the achievements of the organization.

Zhang explained that the goals of the SCO are as follows: firstly, to step into a new stage with unity and mutual trust; secondly, to reach a new level of security cooperation; thirdly, to enter into a new stage of opening-up; fourthly, to make achievements in cultural and people-to-people exchanges; fifthly, to confirm the trend of democracy in a multi-polar world.

The organization adheres to the principle of achieving shared growth through discussion and collaboration, strengthens cooperation with observer states and dialogue partners, builds close contact with other international and regional organizations. It holds an objective and fair standpoint on international and regional hot issues, setting a good example for new international relations based on mutual respect, justice, and win-win cooperation.

“Now, more and more countries are applying to be involved in the SCO family, among which Iran will become one of the members this year, and Belarus has started the procedure as well. All of this demonstrates that the SCO has taken root in the hearts of the people. The SCO makes greater contributions to promoting international order in the direction of more fairness and justice,” he said.

According to the SCO national coordinator,

The research, published in the Nature Sustainability journal and released on Monday, looks at how countries are exposed to ‘unprecedented heat’ that it describes as mean annual temperatures of 29 degrees Celsius (84.2 degrees Fahrenheit) or higher.

It evaluates the exposure in two scenarios by 2070, namely if global temperatures rise by 1.5C (2.7F) or by 2.7C (4.9F).

In a scenario where the global population is 9.5 billion people and global temperatures rise by 2.7C (4.9F) by that time, Qatar would have the entirety of its population exposed to extreme heat, closely followed by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain with almost their whole populations exposed, the study found.

Kuwait and Oman would have more than 80 percent of their populations exposed, followed by Saudi Arabia with more than 60 percent and Yemen with about half.

US must make security deal with Russia Hungary

An agreement between the US and Russia is the only thing that can end the conflict in Ukraine, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban stated on Monday. Orban has repeatedly accused EU leaders of serving American, rather than European, interests by continuing to bankroll Kiev.

Speaking at the Qatar Economic Forum in Doha on Tuesday, Orban reiterated his position that Ukraine cannot win on the battlefield, and that Kiev and its Western backers must pursue peace talks with Russia.

“First we should have a ceasefire,” he said. Then let’s talk about the new security architecture of the European continent.”

“The only peace agreement that could close this whole conflict is if it is between Russia and the United States,” he elaborated. What is at stake is the future security of Europe. It’s obvious that without the US there is no security architecture for Europe, and now the war can only be stopped if the Russians can make an agreement with the United States.’



supporting each other based on consensus, opposing foreign interference, and strengthening mutual trust among member states are crucial. Cooperation in all fields with all parties, implementing multilateral cooperation projects, actively participating in global governance, clearly opposing hegemony, bullying, unilateralism, and protectionism, implementing global development initiatives and global civilization initiatives, promoting international order towards more justice, expanding foreign exchanges and cooperation will be among the organization’s plans for the future.

In recent years, President Xi Jinping put forward a series of major initiatives, drawing a blueprint for the future SCO development and putting forth a way of solving the difficult problems.

On March 10, China brokered a deal between Iran and Saudi Arabia, two countries in the SCO family.

Iran is becoming a full member of the SCO and Saudi Arabia is now a dialogue partner. The process of Iran’s full membership was endorsed in the SCO meeting in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, in September 2022.

Joining the SCO was discussed during a visit by President Xi to Saudi Arabia in December 2022.

Zhang said the reconciliation deal between Iran and Saudi Arabia confirms the cooperative principle of promoting regional peace and development and is a “vivid practice of building a human community with a shared future for mankind”.

Palestine and Imam Khomeini’s global view



By Dr. Ali Komsari
Chairman of the Institute for Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini’s works

TEHRAN - Opposing the authoritarian system, defending the oppressed, and supporting Islamic movements around the world are important principles rooted in Imam Khomeini’s (RA) thoughts on global issues, particularly the Islamic world. One of the issues that can serve as an example for implementing these principles is the issue of Palestine. Imam Khomeini (RA) believed that it was necessary to focus on the issue of Palestine and place it at the center of everyone’s attention, especially Muslims, and supporting Palestinian movements against the Zionist regime to achieve victory for truth over falsehood is part of the fundamental principles of Imam Khomeini’s (RA) ideology.

The history of Palestinian struggles against occupiers dates back to the late 19th century. At a time when the indigenous people of Palestine realized that the occupiers’ goal was to establish a Zionist state on Palestinian soil, which led to the formation of the Palestinian national movement in 1919 in protest against the British government’s betrayal of the Palestinian people and the issuance of the Balfour Declaration. Since then, numerous uprisings by Palestinians against Zionist occupiers have taken place, leading to the organization of their struggles in movements such as Fatah, the Palestine Liberation Organization, or the popular and spontaneous movement of the Palestinian people, such as the Intifada, which continues to this day.

From the late 1320s (1940s), the Pahlavi regime strengthened its unofficial and secret

relations with Israel at the request of the United States. In the early years of the Shamsi 40s (1960s), Imam Khomeini (RA) listed Israel and Zionism as a serious threat to the Islamic world, peace and security in the region, and all Muslims, especially Iranians, alongside declaring support for the oppressed people of Palestine. He strongly protested against the Pahlavi regime and its Zionist and American supporters. In his jurisprudential approach, Imam Khomeini believed that if the land of Muslims falls under the rule of infidels and Islam comes under their influence, it is obligatory for all Muslims to support Islamic lands with their lives and property. Imam’s first public position on Palestine dates back to Shamsi 1341 (1962), when he announced his opposition to the Israeli government in a speech and introduced himself as a supporter of Muslim governments against Israel. From that date on, he repeatedly warned Muslim governments about the danger of the Palestine issue, calling on them to refrain from conflicts and to try to expel Israel from Palestine and defend the rights of Palestinian refugees.

During the struggles of the Palestinian people, Imam Khomeini criticized Islamic governments that instead of supporting the Palestinian people, showed indifference or even supported the criminals. He called on Muslims to support and defend Palestinian fighters by any means possible and to expel Israel through Islamic unity. After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini designated the last Friday of Ramadan as Quds Day and called for Muslim unity to support the rights of the Palestinian people.

From his perspective, Imam Khomeini believed that the issue of Quds was not just a national issue related to one country or even Muslims worldwide, but rather a reality related to monotheists of the world and believers of

the past, present, and future. He evaluated the Palestinian issue as the center of the struggle against the arrogant powers and considered Quds Day as the day of Islamic life and the day of determining the fate of oppressed nations, calling on Muslim nations to take practical and principled actions for the liberation of Quds.

Today, the self-motivated movement of the oppressed people of Palestine in the form of Intifada, in compliance with the guidance of Imam Khomeini and the announcement of unwavering support from the wise leader of the revolution for the defenseless people of Palestine, has formed a broad awakening front against the Zionist regime throughout the world, which expands every day.

The Supreme Leader of the Revolution, in his speech on Quds Day, evaluated the future of the struggles of the oppressed people of Palestine and depicted the current strategy of their victory as follows: “The downward movement and decline of the enemy Zionist regime has begun and will not stop. Two important factors determine the future: first and most importantly, the continuation of resistance in the Palestinian territories and strengthening the line of jihad and martyrdom, and second, global support from Muslim governments and nations worldwide for Palestinian fighters.”

All statesmen, intellectuals, religious scholars, parties and groups, enthusiastic youth, and other classes must find their place in this comprehensive movement and play their role. This is what nullifies the enemy’s plot.

Imam Khomeini’s firm support for the Palestinian people led them to introduce principles such as jihad, martyrdom, and sacrifice for their goal as fundamental principles of organizations such as Islamic Jihad in Palestine.

Moshir-ol-Molk Caravanserai in southwest Iran will be restored with state funds



TEHRAN – The centuries-old Moshir-ol-Molk Caravanserai, which is located in Iran's Bushehr province, will be restored with government funds.

The first phase of restoration work has commenced on Moshir al-Molk Caravanserai in Bushehr's Borazjan after years of legal impasse, CHTN reported on Tuesday.

The \$40,000 (20 billion rials) project is carried out under the supervision of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Ministry after it reached an agreement with the Endowments and Charity Affairs Organization, which possesses the land of the caravanserai.

Earlier this year, the tourism minister Ezatollah Zarghami inspected the old caravanserai in a formal visit to organize an urgent restoration to safeguard the vast monument.

Having a rectangular form, the monument has four towers and is more than twelve meters high. The towers provided safety for the people who rested inside the building. The building itself is about four thousand and two hundred square meters.

The material used in this building is mostly stones and Sarouj, a type of water-resistant mortar, which makes it stronger in comparison with other buildings of its kind. In addition to the façade of the caravanserai that is covered with stones, the outside and inside of the entrance are covered with yellow carved stones. The entrance is located on the southern side, where there are three stories. The building is two-story on its other parts, and each story has two alcoves. There are two large and small yards in this caravanserai and sixty-eight

rooms that have decreased and increased in number at different times.

Iran has nominated 56 caravansaries for a collective inscription on the UNESCO list for World Heritage, Zarghami's deputy for cultural heritage said on Saturday. "[A selection of] 56 Iranian caravanserais will be registered on the UNESCO list... and Sa'd al-Saltaneh caravansary of Qazvin shines like a jewel among them," Ali Darabi said.

For many travelers to Iran, staying in or even visiting a caravanserai can be a wide experience; they have an opportunity to feel the past, a time travel back into a forgotten age!

Caravanserai or caravansary is a compound word combining "caravan" with "sara"; the former stands for a group of travelers and the latter means the building. They often had massive portals supported by elevated load-bearing walls. Guest rooms were constructed around the courtyard and stables behind them, with doors in the corners of the yard.

Passing major roads in the country, one may see crumbling caravanserais, many of which were abandoned for ages. In the Information Age, such guest houses have largely lost their actual usage.

Staying at or even just visiting a centuries-old caravanserai can be a memorable experience for many visitors to Iran because it allows them to experience the past and travel back in time. Narratives say it is not hard to fancy the hustle and bustle of merchants bargaining on prices, recounting their arduous journeys to one another while their camels chew hay!

The earliest caravanserais in Iran were built during the Achaemenid era (550 – 330 BC). Centuries later, when Shah Abbas I assumed power from 1588 to 1629, he ordered the construction of a network of caravanserais across the country. Such roadside inns were once constructed along ancient caravan routes in the Muslim world to shelter people, their goods, and animals. The former Silk Road may be the most famous example dotted by caravanserais.

Budget allocated to complete wildlife museum in North Khorasan

TEHRAN –Needed budget has been allocated to complete a wildlife museum in North Khorasan province, northeast Iran, a local official has said.

The government has allocated a budget of 80 billion rials (\$160,000) for the completion of North Khorasan's wildlife museum, Reza Shekarian said on Tuesday.

There is a plan for the budget to be spent in phases, and currently, 12 billion rials (\$24,000) has been allocated for the first phase, the official added.

The museum's construction was halted in 2013 due to the lack of funding and has been abandoned ever since, he noted.

Iran 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 mam-



mals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and aquatic fish, about 30,000 species of invertebrates, and 8,000 species of plants have been identified in the country.

Unfortunately, over the past two decades, human activities have led to the alarming degradation of ecosystems, and the deletion of genes, species, and biological capabilities; Human threats to biodiversity have accelerated the most over the past 50 years over the entire history of human life.

Local food festival held in northeast Iran



TEHRAN –A festival dedicated to traditional and healthy food was held in Chenaran county in the northeastern province of Khorasan Razavi on Monday, a local tourism official has said.

The festival was organized to help revive forgotten food recipes as well as preserve the old cuisine traditions, Mohammad Taherian explained on Tuesday.

Performing folk music and displaying hand-made products of the locals were also parts of

the festival, the official added.

Iranian cuisine, usually dominated by fragrant herbs, varies from region to region. It principally accentuates freshness, deliciousness, and colorfulness.

Experts say that food is not merely an organic product with biochemical compositions. However, for members of each community, food is defined as a cultural element.

No Persian meal is complete without an abundance of herbs. Every table is usually set with Sabzi-Khordan, a basket of fresh herbs, radishes, and scallions, which are eaten raw and by the handful. Persian cuisine is, above all, about balance — of tastes and flavors, textures and temperatures.

Located 50 kilometers northwest of Mashhad, the provincial capital, Chenaran is a mountainous destination with rich wildlife for local holidaymakers.

Iran is hoping to gain UNESCO tag for Aras Geopark



TEHRAN –Iran is hoping to win a UNESCO tag for Aras Geopark, which has been nominated for new UNESCO Global Geoparks in March, a local official has said.

Aras Geopark, which covers an area of about 1670 square kilometers, has been put on a shortlist along with other 18 geoparks from across the world, Mohammad Farzad Mirzai explained on Tuesday.

The possible registration of Aras Geopark will make it Iran's second registered geopark after Qeshm Geopark, the official added.

Situated in East Azarbaijan province, Aras Geopark covers an area of about 1670 square kilometers, sprawling across the whole Jolfa county. The topography is generally extremely steep and forms astonishing landscapes so the highest point in the Jolfa region is the Kiyamaki mount with 3347 meters and the lowest points include the northern boundary and the Aras River valley with 720 to 390 meters.

The property has an appropriate

geo-tourism attraction, because of its mountainous landscapes, outcropping of different sedimentary and igneous rocks, diversity in tectonic structures, semi-cold and semi-arid climate, and diverse flora and fauna.

The UNESCO-designated Qeshm Geopark in the Persian Gulf embraces a wide range of ecotourism

attractions such as the Hara marine forests and about 60 villages dotted mostly across its rocky coastlines. Qeshm Island has an abundance of wildlife, including birds, reptiles, dolphins, and turtles as well.

A UNESCO definition of the global geopark is a unified area with a geological heritage of international significance.

Experts say geoparks usually promote awareness of geological hazards, including volcanoes, earthquakes, and tsunamis and many help prepare disaster mitigation strategies with local communities. Moreover, they yield records of past climate changes and are indicators of current climate changes as well.

Chehel Sotoun palace hosts Shahnameh recitation event



TEHRAN – On Monday, an event dedicated to the recitation of epic poems of Shahnameh, the masterpiece of Persian poet Ferdowsi, was held in the Safavid era (1501-1736) Kakh-e Chehel Sotoun in central Isfahan province, the provincial tourism chief has said.

Stanzas of the Shahnameh were also translated for foreign tourists during this ceremony, which was attended by several domestic and foreign visitors, Alireza Izadi explained on Tuesday.

The Shahnameh, in which the Persian national epic found its final and enduring form, was com-

pleted in 1010.

It was written for Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna. However, he didn't welcome it because of the Shia religion of Ferdowsi.

According to some historical sources on Persian literature, Ferdowsi spent 30 years writing the Shahnameh, which is comprised of nearly 60,000 verses.

Also known as "Book of Kings" in English, the Shahnameh is based mainly on the Khwatay-namak, a history of the kings of Persia in Pahlavi (Middle Persian) from mythical times down to the 7th century.

For nearly 1000 years, Shahnameh has remained one of the most popular works in the Persian-speaking world.

Chehel Sotoun, located in the central Iranian city of Isfahan, is a surviving 17th-century palace, which used to be part of the royal precinct that stretched between Naqsh-e Jahan (Imam) Sq. and

Chahar Bagh Abbasi St.

The Safavid-era palace was built as a pleasure pavilion and reception hall midst of a large park, itself an exemplar of the Persian Garden which has been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

The name of the palace, which literally means "Forty Columns", derives from the illusion that the twenty columns of the front portico are doubled by the reflecting pool to the south.

The palace is entered via an elegant terrace that connects a pattern of the Persian garden to an interior of elaborate design and splendor.

Chehel Sotoun boasts eye-catching frescos that depict multitudes of human figures, royal meetings, and battle scenes among them: the reception of an Uzbek King in 1646 and the infamous Battle of Chaldiran against the Ottoman Sultan Selim I.

Based on historical records, the building was initially constructed in the mid-17th century and rebuilt in 1706 following a raging fire.

A symphony of scents and carnival flair: former royal palace hosts Golab-Giri festival

TEHRAN – A time-honored Golab-Giri festival, dedicated to pink roses, is currently underway on the premises of Kakh-e Morvarid (Pearl Palace), which was once a Pahlavi royal residence in Karaj, the capital of Alborz province.

Visitors can experience a traditional distillation process that involves picking flower petals, collecting the fragrant oil in jars and steam rising from the giant pots, a local tourism official said on Tuesday.

Some 75 stalls have been set up on the sidelines of the event to offer rosewater products, handicrafts and souvenirs from across the country, the official said.

Moreover, participants from Ker-

manshah, Hamedan, Tabriz, Isfahan, Yazd and several other provinces showcase their ancient skills and perform traditional dances in the festival that runs through May 31.

Every year in May and June, hundreds of Golab-Giri festivals take place, where roses reign and fragrant dreams come true. For centuries, the delights of fragrant roses have taken center stage in Kashan and surrounding lands, as honored guests and locals pluck petals with gentle care and joy.

Iran has a long history of concentrating flowers and herbs. Many people think that traditionally distilled rose water is of higher quality than rose water made in factories,



likely due to the faster harvesting and distillation processes.

Traditionally, rose water is made from a flower with a very sweet scent, best known in the country as Mohammadi roses. In the early morning, the flower harvest is almost complete. Rumor has it that delays in harvesting or transporting it to the distillery are causing a drop in the quantity and quality of essen-

Samen underground city to host workshop on troglodytic architecture

TEHRAN – The national site of Samen underground city in Hamedan province is set to hold a workshop on troglodytic architecture.

Scheduled for May 24, the workshop is aimed at turning the spotlight on labyrinthine underground "cities", which were used as defensive shelters.

Those hand-carved places do not require major construction materials but require a variety of tools as an ax, hammer, chisel, and sledgehammer to shape the interior space.

Based on scientific surveys, the creation of handcrafted troglodytic architectural sites depends on several factors, including climatic and geographic conditions, defense, security, durability, and religion, which are closely related to the cultural, political, social, and economic circumstances.

This architecture can be divided into different formal types in terms of its external form, its interior, and its function (religion, tombs, dwellings, and housing).

The Same underground settlement dates back to the Parthian period (247 BC – 224 CE) based on archaeological evidence. The underground city

has 25 rooms carved into the rock, interconnected tunnels, and corridors. The underground complex seems to have been used first for religious purposes, then as a cemetery, and finally as an emergency shelter.

Many great examples of this architecture have been realized in different regions in Iran due to the different climate zones. This unique architecture is at odds with traditional settlement patterns and construction methods and can always take advantage of the mountains and valleys on the ground or wall, which is a good way to control climate variability in different regions.

The ancient country is a haven for cave architecture that is somewhat forgotten, although it is full of life and creativity. The village of Kandovan in the northwest is one of the most famous examples of troglodyte architecture in the country. Its ice cream cone-shaped houses resemble those of Turkiye's Cappadocia.

Hamedan, called Ecbatana in ancient times, was one of the largest cities of antiquity. Pitifully little remains of antiquity, but significant parts of the city center have been left to be excavated. Ecbata-



na was the capital of Media and later a summer residence of the Achaemenian kings who ruled Persia from 553 to 330 BC. reigned.

Hamadan has had many names: it was possibly the Bit Daiukki of the Assyrians, Hangmatana, or Agbatana, to the Medes, and Ecbatana to the Greeks. One of the Median capitals, under Cyrus II (the Great; died 529 BC) and later Achaemenian rulers, it was the site of a royal summer palace.

About 1220 Hamedan was destroyed by the Mongols. In 1386, it was sacked by Timur (Tamerlane), a Turkic conqueror, and the inhabitants were massacred. It was partly restored in the 17th century and subsequently changed hands often between Iranian ruling houses and the Ottomans.

‘Back to the Village’ program returns 6,250 families

TEHRAN – A national program called “Back to the Village” has so far caused some 6,250 rural families living in cities to come back to their place of birth.

The Barekat Charity Foundation, affiliated with Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam, launched the program in June last year.

The program aims to generate 15,000 jobs in villages, aiming to help reverse the rural-to-urban migration trend.

Some 100,000 plans have been launched in order to provide jobs for 300,000 people in remote and rural areas both directly and indirectly, said Mohammad Torkamaneh, the managing director of the Foundation.

Agritourism, religious tourism, and ecotourism can stimulate rural development.

Barekat Foundation has launched a total of 280,000 community-orient-



ed plans with a capacity to generate 840,000 direct and indirect jobs in deprived and rural areas, he added.

Representatives of the Foundation are busy identifying applicants and creating jobs for people in 13,500 villages and 1,250 cities out of 448 counties in 31 provinces of the country, he noted.

Many rural residents migrate to the cities due to unemployment and the hope of making a better future.

The Barekat Foundation has various activities, but the main activity is in the field of job creation and production.

Investment has been made in nearly 800 enterprises and production units, small and large, which has led to the creation of more than 200,000 jobs over the last 14 years.

Currently, 26 percent of the country's population lives in villages, around 39,000 villages have more than 20 households and 23,000 villages have less than 20 households.

Thus, more than 97 percent of the country's rural population lives in villages with over 20,000 households.

Many efforts have been made over the past couple of years by the government to support villagers and slow down the trend of migration from rural areas to cities.

Rural tourism, agritourism, religious tourism, and ecotourism are alternatives or complementary economic activities that could further stimulate rural development while decreasing rural community dependency on one main economic sector (agriculture, forestry, energy, or

mining).

More than 4,500 rural development plans were inaugurated last year on the occasion of Government Week (August 24-30), Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi said.

In the model of economic growth, villages are of great importance and the effort is to continuously identify and eliminate the weaknesses of the villages and strengthen them, he explained, IRIB reported.

Stating that the policy of returning to the village and reverse migration is not possible without development, he regretted that 90,000 rural settlements have been depopulated.

A total of 31 trillion rials (nearly \$62 million) for the eradication of deprivation in rural areas was approved by the Majlis (Iranian Parliament) in the budget bill for the past Iranian calendar year (March 2022-March 2023).

The comprehensive development plans aim to develop rural areas in line with cultural, economic, and social conditions, as well as housing provision for the rural residents and improving environmental services.

There are around 40,000 villages in the country with more than 20 households, for all of which comprehensive development plans have been approved every 10 years.

Tehran, Jakarta sign technological agreement

TEHRAN – Iran and Indonesia signed an agreement on Tuesday in order to expand cooperation in different fields of technology.

The agreement was inked during a visit of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi to Jakarta.

In this regard, a delegation comprising representatives of 13 companies has traveled to Indonesia to introduce the capabilities of the country in the health and medical sector.

During the three-day visit, the companies will hold meetings and will participate in specialized exhibitions.



to name a few.

Many countries seeking Iranian expertise

Health Minister Bahram Einollahi has 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.

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

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

Iran expects to increase the exports of medicine to around \$200 million in the current year that started on March 21, from some \$60 million last year.

346 companies active in nanotechnology



TEHRAN – By the end of the first Iranian calendar month Farvardin (April 20), 346 companies have been active in the field of nanotechnology in the country.

The companies produced 1,911 products and 241 pieces of equipment, supplying them to the market, IRNA reported.

According to the latest statistics, 281 Iranian companies are active in the field of manufacturing nanotechnology products and 65 companies are active in the field of manufacturing nanotechnology equipment.

On November 28, 2022, President Ebrahim Raisi declared the “National Document for the Development of Nano Science and Technology”.

The document, consisting of 7 articles, was approved by the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution on November 15.

Policy making and planning for progress in nanotechnology started in 2003 with the formation of a special headquarters for the development of nanotechnology, and accelerated with the approval of the first 10-year document for the development of nanotechnology entitled “Future Strategy Document”.

In this document, Iran was targeted to be among the top 15 nanotechnology countries in the world and aimed to generate wealth and improve people's lives. The general approach of the first

ten-year document was the training of human resources and the provision of infrastructure for the development and commercialization of technology.

In order to continue the nanotechnology progress, the upcoming national document has been compiled with new goals and approaches such as being a reference in science and technology, industrialization, maximum impact of nanotechnology in priority industrial areas, and entry of nano products into the global markets and the promotion of people's lives.

By 2033, the advancements of nanotechnology in Iran will improve the quality of life and the production of wealth. The country moves towards global authority in science and nanotechnology by producing innovative products while having a stable place in the market of other countries.

General goals are improving the scientific position and promoting the authority of the country in science and nanotechnology, promotion of innovation based on novel technologies with high economic and social impact, upgrading existing industries by nanotechnology, stable export and promotion of Iranian nano products in regional and global markets, enhancing the effectiveness of nanotechnology in improving the quality of life and social impact.

Priority industrial areas in the national document are consisting of water and environment, energy, agriculture, health, and construction

One of the industries that have experienced good growth in Iran in recent years, proving the country's scientific development, is the nanotechnology industry, a subject area that has brought Iran to the world's fourth place.

Over the Iranian calendar year 1400 (March 2021-March 2022), the total sale of Iranian nano-products has been equal to 115 trillion rials (nearly

\$230 million).

The expansion of nanotechnology export programs in recent years and the establishment of bases for exporting nanotechnology products to China, India, Indonesia, Syria, Turkey, and Iraq have

Some 42 percent of Iranian nanotechnology products are related to construction.

provided the opportunity for the entry of Iranian nanotechnology goods, equipment, and services into global markets.

Some 42 percent of the products in this field are related to construction, more than 17 percent to the field of oil, gas, and petrochemicals, 13 percent to the field of automobiles, and over 10 percent to the field of optoelectronics.

Iran's ranking in nanotechnology articles citation in 2019 has significantly improved compared to 2018, as it moved 26 levels higher, according to StatNano's statistics collected from the WoS database.

Based on a report Nanotechnology Publications report, Iran ranked 38 worldwide for the average number of times the nano-articles have been cited in the Journal Citation Reports in 2019, while in 2018, it was placed 64.

ENGLISH IN USE

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Iran pioneer in cancer innovation, research among Islamic countries

Iran has the most research and innovation in the field of cancer both in the region and among Islamic countries, deputy health minister Reza Malekzadeh has stated.

Referring to the great progress in cancer research, he said that “We have been able to play a role in this area globally.”

He added that one of the hopes for early detection of cancer is the use of urine and blood tests for people who are susceptible to cancer.

“We have conducted researches in the field of blood and urine biomarkers, which will help control cancers in the country,” he said.

ایران بیشترین نوآوری و تحقیقات سرطان را بین کشورهای اسلامی دارد

معاون تحقیقات و فناوری وزیر بهداشت، درمان و آموزش پزشکی گفت: ایران هم در منطقه و هم بین کشورهای اسلامی بیشترین میزان تحقیقات و نوآوری ها در حوزه سرطان را داشته است.

دکتر رضا ملک زاده روز شنبه در گفت و گو با خبرنگار علمی ایرنا با اشاره به اینکه ما در زمینه تحقیقات سرطان پیشرفت های خیلی خوبی داشتیم، گفت: ما در سطح جهانی هم توانستیم در این حوزه نقش آفرین باشیم.

وی افزود: یکی از امیدهای خیلی روشن برای تشخیص زودرس سرطان، استفاده از آزمایش ادرار و خون برای افرادی است که استعداد سرطان را دارند.

معاون وزیر بهداشت گفت: در ایران تحقیقات خیلی خوبی در زمینه بیومارکرهای ادراری و خونی در دست اجرا داریم و امیدواریم با این کار، امکان کنترل سرطان ها در کشور میسر شود.



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Martian Mountains, a scenic natural landscape

Martian Mountains, also called Miniature Mountains, are one of the most beautiful, staggering natural landscapes in Sistan-Baluchestan Province, southeastern Iran.

The geometric patterns of the mountains have been created by rapid soil erosion caused by heavy rain and wind.

