RANTI

Report

Europe protests on the rise as Ukraine war drags on

By Ali Karbalaei

TEHRAN - People take to the streets in Spain and Italy as protests show no sign of abating in Western Europe.

Western Europe is seeing a sharp rise in protests and strikes as workers complain that the cost of living is strongly outweighing their income. The energy crisis that resulted from the Ukraine war is to the blame.

In Italy people have marched through the streets of the capital Rome to demand better working conditions as well as an increase of 300 euros in their monthly salary. They are also demanding the government raise the minimum wage to ten euros per hour.

Footage shows people marching with flags, banners, and signs that read "Work to live, not live to work".

The protesters have blamed the government's policies towards the Ukraine war, calling for a peaceful solution to the crisis. The conflict erupted in February last year after Russia, citing the U.S.-led NATO ▶ Page 5

Tehran refutes Zelensky's claims, call them 'worthless'

TEHRAN - The spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry on Saturday denounced the "groundless and worthless" accusations made by the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky against Tehran, calling them a political ploy meant to deflect public opinion.

Nasser Kanaani argued such a political show with unsubstantiated charges is use-

In a televised speech on Wednesday, Zelensky accused Iran of giving Russia drones for the conflict in Ukraine.

Zelensky also urged Iran to avoid siding with the "evil" Russian government and participating in their "terror" campaign.

Kanaani said that Tehran has consistently stated its opposition to the conflict in Ukraine and its continuance as well as its sympathy for the suffering and plight of the Ukrainian people.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran stresses the need for a political solution to end the war in Ukraine in the shortest time possible and is prepared to contribute to such a solution," the spokesman stressed.

Kanaani went on to add, "The repetition of the Ukrainian president's bogus claims against the Islamic Republic of Iran is to the accompaniment of the propaganda and media warfare that the anti-Iran axis has waged against the Iranian government and nation, and takes place with the purpose of attracting more arms and financial supports from the Western countries." ▶ Page 2

Spirit of Alliance

In meeting with OPEC secretary general, Raisi calls for members unity



Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi (R) and OPEC Secretary General Haitham Al Ghais (L) meet in Tehran on Saturday, May 27, 2023.

New offshore, onshore hydrocarbon exploration operations underway: NIOC

TEHRAN - The managing director of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) has said vast exploration operations are underway on 140,000 square kilometers of offshore and onshore hydrocarbon reserves to discover new deposits, Shana reported.

"Domestic firms, including the National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC), NIOC's Exploration Department, and the Oil Industry Research Institute of Iran, have joined hands to discover new oil and gas deposits across the country," Mohsen Khojasteh-Mehr told reporters on Friday.

Khojasteh-Mehr made the remarks in his speech during a ceremony to commemorate the 115th anniversary of Iran's first oil exploration in Masjed Soleyman, southwestern province of Khuzestan.

NIOC has a 100-year vision for exploration, he said, underlining, "We are determined to carry out maximum exploration operations in order to discover and maintain the country's reserves."

Early studies have been highly promising, indicating that there are still a large number of untapped resources in the country, especially in the oil-rich Khuzestan Province, he added. ▶ Page 4

Dune diving and star gazing: reveling in the enigmatic beauty of Iranian deserts

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN - From hiking through colossal dunes of polychromatic sand to gazing at the stars on a flawlessly clear night, a desert vacation may be a unique life experience.

Many people may imagine it as a vast cultures. When it comes to arts, the golden

The Iranian deserts are among the most mesmerizing destinations for nature lovers. From the salty, white dunes of Dasht-e Kavir in central Iran to the vast Lut Desert in

orite fields, and rocky terrain offer an epic

hue of a desert may be a photographer's par- journey of breathtaking beauty and wilderness across those vast harsh deserts. However, that utter silence is shattered by motorists driving a variety of 4WD cars.

> In addition, they offer some of the most breathtaking sunsets and sunrises in the world. The wide, open landscapes and clear skies make for an unforgettable experience, whether you're watching the horizon change from the top of a sand dune or within the walls of a historic oasis. ▶ Page 6

the southeast, these barren landscapes may emptiness, but as you delve into these outamaze any adventurer. of-this-world destinations, you'll discover a great jumble of sandstone pinnacles, tabular Absolute silence, huge dunes, shifting mountains, unique wildlife and even ancient sands, salt flats, wind-carved Kaluts, mete-

Iran beach soccer into ANOC World **Games 2023**

TEHRAN - Iran defeated Japan 4-3 Friday night and sealed qualification for the 2023 World Beach Games.

Moslem Mesigar were on target two times and Mohammad Moradi and Mohammadali Mokhtari scored a goal each for Team Melli.

Takuya Akaguma scored twice and Takaaki Oba netted one goal for Japan.

The Iranians were overjoyed after the game, as after demonstrating unity and togetherness throughout the match, they reaped the rewards by defeating a strong Japanese side.

Iran will face the UAE in the final match on Saturday.

The 2023 World Beach Games, officially known as the 2023 ANOC World Beach Games and colloquially as Bali 2023, will be held in Bali, Indonesia from Aug. 5 to 12.



Heads of Iran's diplomatic representative offices meet

The meeting of the heads of the diplomatic representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran abroad under the title of "The Emerging World Order: The Role-Playing of the Islamic Republic of Iran" was held on Saturday, May 27, 2023, in the presence of Javad Oji, Minister of Oil, and Hossein Dehghan, Advisor to the Commander-in-Chief of Defense Industries, in the main building of the Foreign Ministry.

Clashes erupt at Iran-Afghanistan border, one Iranian martyred

TEHRAN - On Saturday, the Iranian border police and Taliban troops engaged in an exchange of fire in a border region in Iran's east.

An Iranian border guard lost his life and two others were injured, police said in an official statement.

As a result, Abrisham Bridge (Silk Bridge), the busiest border between Iran and Afghanistan, has been closed.

According to reports, the border clashes took place in the Makaki region near the Kang districts in Afghanistan's Nimruz province.

The region lies near Zabol in Iran's southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan.

The cause of the clash is still unknown.

A senior Iranian police officer put the blame on the Taliban forces for the incident.

Qassem Rezaei said Taliban forces started shooting at the Sasoli police station about 10 o'clock on Saturday morning in violation of conventions

He added, "They were faced with fierce reaction by (Iranian) border guards."

Rezaei said Afghan troops used different kinds of weapons. ▶ Page 2

Long-term voyages show Iran's naval might: Navy chief

TEHRAN- Rear Admiral Shahram Irani has asserted that Iran's Navy developed its might through completing lengthy voyages.

On Friday, Rear Admiral Irani stated that the Navy now plays a different function than it did in the past and would play a significant part in the global arena.

Iran's 86th flotilla, which had started its ocean-going mission in September 2022, reached home in the current month.

The Navy chief said despite the enemy's menacing trinity of threat, conspiracy, and sanctions, the Iranians did not retreat.

The adversary should be aware that Iranians would not accept isolation and are impossible to sanction, he remarked, adding Iran's Navy will be present wherever it deems necessary.

The flotilla successfully completed its historic circumnavigation of the world for the first time in the country's history. It returned to the southern port of Bandar Abbas on May 20. It was welcomed by Iran's military and civilian officials. ▶ Page 2

Tehran Papers

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

The return of the West to the Sultan channel

The Farhikhtegan newspaper commented on the West's policy towards Iran through Oman's mediation. Referring to the West's failure in overthrowing the Islamic Republic of Iran, ▶ Page 2

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-TEHRAN PAPERS-

The return of the West to the Sultan channel

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

on the West's policy towards Iran through Oman's mediation. Referring to the West's failure in overthrowing the Islamic Republic of Iran, the newspaper reported that the West has returned to Oman for mediation. The unexpected release of an Iranian citizen and his exchange with a Belgian prisoner in Iran had many similarities to exchanges during the signing of the JCPOA. The fact that this happened through Oman's mediation, which has a long history of mediating between Iran and Western countries, is another reason for the high similarity of this exchange with other cases. Considering that the Sultan of Oman is also visiting Iran, it is not unlikely that the reason for all these events is a possible and hidden progress in Iran's negotiations with the West. If this hypothesis is true, there is no reason for the Western party to retreat from its hostile policy towards Iran. Although Western countries have repeatedly announced that the JCPOA became irrelevant after the U.S. quit it, all evidence suggests that different events will happen compared to what the Western countries were seeking.

Etamad: We ourselves gave cement!

Etamad pointed to the issue of Iran's water rights from the Helmand River and stated: "The Taliban, who have their own place even in the government of Ashraf Ghani, had a full understanding of international law, foreign relations, and diplomatic language, and emphasized adherence and good relations between the two countries. Unfortunately, our seemingly soft policies have led us astray and we have become trapped in the throat of Helmand. Because of Iran's negligence towards the construction process of the Kamal Khan dam, to the extent that even the overflow of the dam was diverted through canals to arid lands in Afghanistan. We must admit that we are currently facing a severe water shortage and thirst in Sistan-Baluchestan these days, as during the construction of the Kamal Khan and Kajaki dams during Ashraf Ghani's government, all the materials, including cement, were provided from Sistan-Baluchestan. Therefore, at that time, instead of easily providing the materials, we should have prevented any deviation in dam construction and make the

The Farhikhtegan newspaper commented country to comply with international envin the West's policy towards Iran through ronmental laws and conventions."

Javan: Temptations of the last year of par-

Javan addressed the issue of the last year of the parliament and stated: "Despite the fact that significant actions have been taken in the eleventh parliament, there are still major tasks that need to be completed before the end of its term. It is natural that some of these actions, if completed, will endanger the interests of a spectrum of power and wealth owners, and we should not expect these powerful individuals to easily give up. They may even try to influence public opinion through media and advertising tools regarding these decisions, and this is where the greatest struggle of parliamentarians begins. Perhaps they should resist the temptations of the "last year" and make the right decisions. In this case, whether they will remain in Baharestan or serve in another position, they have succeeded in this great struggle."

Sobh-e No: Asadollahi freedom may herald Europe's return to realism

Sobh-e No analyzed Asadollahi's freedom and wrote: Oman has always played an intermediary role in Iran's relations with some countries in recent years. Mediation on issues between Iran and the United States, including the exchange of prisoners to hosting three rounds of talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia last year, which ultimately led to an agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia to resume diplomatic relations, has been an example of these efforts. After the Tehran-Riyadh agreement, now the media report on Muscat's efforts to increase Iran-Egypt relations. In this regard, diplomatic sources on June 2, told that Al-Arabi Al-Jadeed newspaper that Haitham bin Tariq, the Sultan of Oman, had discussed with the President of Egypt about Tehran-Cairo relations in his recent visit to Cairo. The published news also suggests that the Sultan of Oman is scheduled to travel to Iran on Sunday. We have to wait for the political and diplomatic results of the Sultan of Oman's official's trip to Iran.

The behavior of Europeans in releasing Iranian diplomats was exactly opposite to their positions in the second half of last year, which was unrealistic and emotional. Some signs, such as Asadollahi's release, should be seen within the framework of the failure of the European "overthrow project" and their realism.

U.S. 'terribly wrong' to be in Persian Gulf, IRGC Navy chief tells U.S.

TEHRAN- The U.S. military's presence in the Persian Gulf on the pretext of safeguarding the important maritime region has been bluntly rejected by the chief of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy.

Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri said the U.S. and other countries do not need to be present in the strategically important waterway since only Iran and other regional nations will be able to maintain the security of the Persian Gulf.

"You are terribly wrong to be here in our region," Tangsiri said during an official event in the city of Dezful in the southwestern province of Khuzestan.

He declared, "If we yield to the enemy, it will unquestionably rule us, and we have no alternative but to stand and resist, which is the road to our country's success."

Tangsiri also praised the city for its outstanding resistance during the Iraqi invasion of the country in the 1980s.

Based on the remarks of Tangsiri, who referred to Dezful as a representation of resiliency and invincibility, "during the eight years of the Sacred Defense, we demonstrated to the world that we did not and would not submit to duress."

Iran refers to resistance against the invading Saddam Army as Sacred Defense.

Tangsiri also emphasized the function of the national media in stymieing propaganda from

"We resolutely secure the Persian Gulf, and the media must participate in this security and



reflect the capabilities of the IRGC Navy and the Army so that the world understands that the security of the Persian Gulf does not need foreigners," Tangsiri remarked.

He went on to add, "We stand firmly against the enemy and will defend the honor and dignity of the Iranian nation."

The Persian Gulf — which spans some 251,000 square kilometers — is bounded by the Arvand River in the north, which forms the frontier between Iran and Iraq, and the Strait of Hormuz in the south, which links the Persian Gulf to the Sea of Oman and the Indian Ocean.

The inland sea is an international trade route linking regional countries to open seas.

Iran has made it plain that it views U.S. military ships loitering in the Persian Gulf waters as a danger to its national security as well as a cause of unrest and instability in the region.

The Islamic Republic has frequently pledged to respond forcefully to any hostile action taken by Washington that jeopardizes the safety of the crucial waterway.

Clashes erupt at Iran-Afghanistan border, one Iranian martyred

From page 1 >

Iran, Afghanistan review ties and water rights

Also, in a meeting with Taliban Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi on Saturday, Iran's Special Representative for Afghanistan Hassan Kazemi Qomi addressed the Islamic Republic's water rights from the Helmand River as well as ties between Iran and Afghanistan.

After the meeting, senior Taliban diplomat Hafiz Zia Ahmad tweeted that the Special Representative of Iran's President for Afghanistan had met and spoken with the foreign minister of the Taliban government

According to Zia, Kazemi Qomi submitted a report and spoke on behalf of Iran during a conference on Afghanistan in Doha.

For his part, Muttaqi praised Iran's participation in the Doha meeting about the issues that arose regarding the Afghan prisoners.

He also urged the use of communication and understanding to resolve problems and challenges between the two countries.

Iran has been complaining that the Taliban refuses to release Iran's share of water from the Helmand River.

Last week, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi warned the Taliban over violating Iran's water rights, urging them to respect the relevant treaty regulating the use of shared waters.

Raisi said, "I want to tell the rulers of Afghanistan not to consider my words as normal, but to take them very seriously; I warn the officials and rulers of Afghanistan to give the rights of the people and the region of Sistan and Baluch-

istan immediately."

Referring to some published claims that the dam built on Helmand does not have much water or that part of it is sediments, he stated, "Our experts should be given permission to investigate this issue as soon as possible, if our experts confirm this, very well, there is no problem; we have no dispute about the lack of water, but if there is water, this right should be given to the people of Sistan and Baluchistan and we will not allow the rights of the people to be lost in any way."

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian said on Thursday that Iran will not recognize the Taliban, insisting on an inclusive government in Afghanistan.

"We will not recognize the current rulers of Afghanistan and insist on the need to establish an

inclusive government in Afghanistan," Amir Abdollahian told.

He added, "The Taliban is part of the reality of Afghanistan but not all of Afghanistan."

"Afghanistan is an important issue for us. We are unpleased that an inclusive government has not been formed in Afghanistan and we have announced this to the current rulers of Afghanistan," the foreign minister explained.

The foreign minister went on to say that Iran has long borders with Afghanistan and "there is no option other than interaction between the two countries."

Based on the 1973 treaty Iran should annually receive 820 million cubic meters of water from the Helmand River.

Afghanistan has redirected the course of the river and built dams

on its path. The move has caused the Hamoun wetland in the border province of Sistan-Baluchestan province to dry up. The lives of a large percentage of the people in the neighborhood is dependent on the river. It is a source of drinking water and irrigation. The livelihood of fishermen is also dependent on

Since coming to power in summer of 2022, the Taliban has promised to honor Iran's water rights from the Helmand River. However, until this date it has refused to do so.

The Helmand River is the longest watercourse in Afghanistan. It originates from the Hindu Kush Mountains, west of Kabul, and flows in an arc southwest until it empties out into the Hamoun wetland in Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan

Long-term voyages show Iran's naval might: Navy chief

From page 1 ➤ The flotilla, comprised of a domestically-manufactured Dena destroyer and Makran forward base ship, set sail from Iran's southern port of Bandar Abbas on September 20, 2022. It anchored at Oman's Salalah harbor on the 236th day of its journey.

The flotilla broke the record for the distance an Iranian flotilla has sailed in international waters.

It sailed across the Indian, Pacific, and Atlantic oceans without needing assistance from the land for the first time in Iran's naval history.

The flotilla traveled 63,000 kilometers and four times crossed the

equator.

The flotilla's "360 degrees" mission included the deployment of Iranian vessels to the Antarctic as one of its key objectives.

Iranian parliamentarians praised the 86th naval fleet, saying the Navy is a source of national pride.

The Navy brought great honor to the nation both during the 8-year imposed war against the country and for years afterwards, 220 lawmakers said in a statement on Tuesday.

"The Navy is a source of pride for the honorable nation of Iran," they



added.

The parliamentarians pointed out that Iranian naval troops have demonstrated via their tremendous effort that they fully compre-

hend the directives of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, who underlined, "Don't be satisfied with the status quo and move forward."

Tehran refutes Zelensky's claims, call them 'worthless'

From page **1** The spokesman said that political accusations and machinations against Iran would not alter the facts of the conflict in Ukraine and that Iran is ready to move on with constructive negotiations with Ukraine.

"The fact that the Ukrainian side dodges the

expert negotiations with the Iranian side in order to discuss the claims reveals that they [Ukraine's claims] are groundless and that there are specific political objectives and motives behind such accusations against the Islamic Republic of Iran," Kanaani concluded.

Tehran has repeatedly and vehemently denied Western allegations that it provided weapons and drones to Russia for use against Ukraine, asserting that Tehran and Moscow have long-standing defense cooperation and that Tehran seeks a peaceful resolution to the conflict through negotiations and diplomacy.

Iranian missiles deliberately limited to 2,000 km: deputy defense minister

TEHRAN- Iran's deputy defense minister has said that despite the country's capacity to increase the range of its missiles, the Leader has ordered that it should be limited to 2,000 kilometers.

In a televised interview on Friday night, Deputy Defense Minister Brigadier General Mahdi Farahi stated that Iran has the technological capability to boost the range of its missiles to over 2.000 kilometers.

"The Defense Ministry obeys the country's major policies and orders of Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, which is why it has limited the range of missiles to 2,000 kilometers although it is able to manufacture missiles with longer ranges," the Defense Ministry official stated.

The general went on to say that that the precision-guided Kheibar

(Khoramshahr 4) missile, which was unveiled on Thursday, can hit targets with a margin of error of minus 30 meters at a distance of 2,000 kilometers.

Based on the remarks of the deputy minister, the new missile could be ready for launch in less than 15 minutes and could store its liquid fuel for three years.

He added that there is a 12-minute delay between the missile launch and the attack.

Iran's ballistic missile capabilities underwent a considerable improvement with the Kheibar launch, showing the nation's dedication to bolstering its defense and deterrence capability.

Officials in Iran have always maintained that their nation's military might is only for self-defense.

The Iranian Defense Ministry unveiled the 2000-km precision guided Kheibar missile on Thursday morning.

The projectile, powered by liquid fuel, is able to carry a 1,500 kg warhead

The missile was unveiled on the 41st anniversary of the liberation of Khorramshahr.

It has an extended range, advanced guidance and control system.

Such projectiles, classified among the Khorramshahr missiles, have an impressive strategic and tactical capabilities. They are known for their unique guidance and control system during the mid-flight phase.

Upon entry into the atmosphere the missile deactivates its guidance system, providing it with a complete immunity against electronic warfare

Due to its advanced control system, Kheibar's warhead does not require the typical thin-wing arrangement, which in turn allows the missile to pack up a heavier explosive load, according to Press TV.

The high speed at which the warhead makes impact with the designated target prevents enemy air defense systems from detecting, tracking, and taking action to shoot down the missile.

Moreover, its powerful engine enables the missile to reach speeds of 16 Mach outside the atmosphere and 8 Mach within the atmosphere.

Defense Minister Mohammad Reza Ashtiani said the missile sends the message that "we are fully committed to defending our country and the achievements of the Islamic Revolution"

Iranian parliamentary team visits location of deadly border attack

TEHRAN - A parliamentary delegation from the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee paid a visit to the location of the deadly armed attack that took place earlier this month on the border with Pakistan.

Shahriar Heidari, a member of the Committee, led the delegation. The visit took place on Thursday.

Last week, five Iranian border guards were killed during an attack by gunmen in the border region of Mak Soukhteh in Sistan-Baluchistan province. Two of the victims are officers and the remaining three are conscripts.

The troops serving in the border regiment of Saravan clashed with a group of gunmen who were trying to cross the border near the Mazesar border post, the Iranian police said, adding that the terrorists fled the scene after sustaining heavy losses, according to Tasnim.

The attack took place in Saravan County which is only 40 kilometers away from the border with Pakistan. Earlier, the deputy commander of the Iranian police and the commander of the Iranian border guards traveled to the location of the clash.

Heidari said the Iranian troops resisted from their location at the border post's turret for an hour. "Five people of the border guards were stationed in the turret that was

talks on border issues with Iran.

border security.

TEHRAN - Iraqi National Security Advisor Qassem

Al-Araji arrived in Sulaymaniyah on orders from

Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammad Sudani to review

measures related to the implementation of the

security agreement between Iran and Iraq regarding

"Under the direction of the Commander-in-Chief

of the Armed Forces, the National Security Advisor

went to Sulaymaniyah Governorate at the head of

a security delegation to discuss the procedures of

the security agreement between Iraq and Iran," the

The visit comes after Iran issued a warning to

A senior commander of the Islamic Revolution

Guards Corps (IRGC) has said Irag has made a

commitment to disarm and drive out anti-Iranian

militants operating in the semi-autonomous

the Iraqi government to implement the security

agreement signed between Tehran and Baghdad

office of Al-Araji said in a statement.

regarding border security.

Kurdistan region.

Al-Araji arrived in Iraqi Kurdistan on Saturday for



special attention to equipping the country's

border guards, and I expect my colleagues

in the parliament to soon put the plan to

strengthen the border guards on the agenda

so that the border guards of the Islamic

Republic of Iran can be strengthened in

Heidari said, "In the course of the

clash, with the planning of the border

guard commander and the border

regiment and readiness, the turrets

around the border guard helped as

soon as possible. The border guards

targeted the enemy's location in

different places, some of the bad guys

He also called on Pakistan to ensure

border security. "The expectation

of the Islamic Republic of Iran from

were injured in this conflict."

terms of quality and quantity."

destroyed by the group for about an hour. The terrorists first asked the Iranian border guards to surrender, but the brave border guards of our country preferred martyrdom to surrender. And this shows the sacrifice, interest and courage of the border guards towards the soil of the country," he said, according to the parliamentary news agency ICANA.

He also said that the assailants were backed by foreign powers. "Based on the geographical conditions of this region, it is quite clear that the foreign services on the other side of the border had a close relationship with the terrorist group and definitely helped them in providing equipment," he added.

He continued, "The authorities should pay

attention to the security of the border and this issue is very important for Iran. The foreign ministers of Iran and Pakistan should monitor these issues and Pakistan should take measures to ensure the security of the common borders so that we do not witness the repetition of such unfortunate events."

The delegation also visited Iran-Afghanistan border.

Pakistan is that this country also pays

He called on Pakistan to ensure border security and on Afghanistan to respect Iran's water rights. "Ensuring the security of the borders and water rights of Helmand is mandatory according to international treaties."

Heidari noted, "The two countries of Iran and Pakistan have concerns about their common borders, but today only the Islamic Republic of Iran has been active and has taken measures to ensure the security of these borders."

The lawmaker said Iran is also ready to conduct operations inside Pakistan to ensure security if Islamabad is unable to do so. He said such operation can be done with Pakistan's approval.

"Pakistan must respect the right of neighbor, because the border tensions that occur under the influence of some currents and with the help of the equipment of foreign services harm the relations between Iran and Pakistan," he continued.

agreement the two neighbors signed in March.

borders with Iraqi Kurdistan.

Earlier this month, Iranian Intelligence Minister

Esmail Khatib said that Iraq's central government

has provided guarantees on the security of Iran's

Speaking at a judicial gathering in Mashhad,

Khatib said Iran has recently detained a terrorist

group that tried to cross the western borders of Iran.

"With the cooperation of the new Iraqi government

and the guarantees given, we hope to see security

on the western borders and the non-repetition

of [insecurity], and we remind and emphasize the

responsibility of the Iraqi [Kurdistan] region."

IRAN IN FOCUS

Straight Truth TEHRAN TIMES

Winning title a reward to Gorgan supporters: Yakhchali

TEHRAN - Winning the Super League is a reward to the amazing supporters of Shahrdari Gorgan, says Behnam Yakhchali, team's captain and an Iran basketball star.

On Thursday, Shahrdari Gorgan won the Iranian Basketball Super League (IBSL) title for the third

The Gorgan based team won the championship by beating Kaleh Mazandaran 81-79 in the best of three, securing a 2-0 victory. Shahrdari had defeated Kaleh 73-58 in their first match on

"Our fans were with us every step of the way during 10 months," said Yakhcahli to the Tehran

"Whether we were in Gorgan or other cities, our fans always stood by us and provided their unwavering support.

"In the past years, I played with other teams in Gorgan city and had a feel of the venue's atmosphere. However, this season, I had the privilege of playing for the city's team and felt the immense support from the people which touched my heart," Yakhchali added.

"We faced tough competition from Kaleh, a strong and youthful team, but we never surrendered and fought until the end to become champions. Despite the heavy atmosphere, we managed to win the match, luckily," referring to Kaleh, their opponents in the IBSL final match, the captain of Shahrdari Gorgan team stated said.

He explained his plans for the future when asked if he would stay with Shahrdari Gorgan.

"We're taking part in the significant Asian Clubs Championship in Dubai. I'm hopeful we will achieve an excellent result there. After the tournament, we'll figure out what to do about the contract issues," Yakhchali concluded.

Nasrin Shahi takes gold at 2023 WSPS **World Cup**

TEHRAN - Iranian para shooter Nasrin Shahi claimed a gold medal in the P2 - Women's 10m Air Pistol SH1 of the 2023 World Shooting Para Sport (WSPS) World Cup on Saturday.

She finished in the first place with 239.6 points.

French shooter Gaelle Edon came second with 237.1 points and the bronze medal went to Rubina Francis from India.

Faezeh Ahmadi from Iran also finished fourth

As many as 226 shooters from 41 nations are fighting out for the top places and quotas in Changwon, South Korea.

The competition serves as qualifiers for the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games.

Saeid Daghighi no longer Shams Azar head coach

TEHRAN - Shams Azar football club and their head coach Saeid Daghighi parted ways by mutual consent.

Shams Azar secured promotion to the 2023/24 Iran Professional League under leadership of Daghighi but he announced his resignation on his Instagram account Friday night.

Shahab Zandi, General Manager of Shams Azar. said that the club will choose the new head coach as soon as possible.

Qazvin-based Shams Azar will participate in the Iran football league for the first time ever.

Amin Hazbavi joins Al Sadd

TEHRAN - Foolad defender Amin Hazbavi joined Al Sadd of Qatar football team on a threeyear contract.

The 20-year-old player is among the Iranian rising stars. He is a member of Iran's U-23

Hazbavi had also been linked with a number of Iranian football clubs.

Sadd have also completed the Brazilian left-back signing from German club Wolfsburg. Otávio

Ebadipour linked with Russian club **Ural Ufa**

TEHRAN - Iran international outside hitter Milad Ebadipour has been linked with a move to Russian club Ural Ufa.

Ebadipour, who played in Italian club Allianz Milano last season, is going to join the Russian top-flight club.

Ebadipour had been previously linked with Fenerbahce S.K. but he seems to have changed his decision.

Amir Hossein Esfandiar, Iran national team outside hitter, was a member of the Russian team last season.

APC President: Iran plays a key role in developing **Paralympic** Movement

TEHRAN - On the first day of Asian Paralympic Committee (APC) 30th Executive Board meeting, President Majid Rashed delivers a speech in

In his opening speech to the APC Session, Rashed thanked Iran and especially Ghafoor Karegari as NPC head, for hosting and extending a warm welcome.

"Before opening the meeting, I would like to thank the Iran NPC for hosting us in Tehran. Beside the ancient history of this country, Iran also has great and hospitable people," Majid said.

"I believe that all the people, here, around the table are a united family in Asia. We should do our best to develop our Asian Paralympic Movement.

"However, our Movement faces challenges in some cases, such as the COVID-19 Pandemic or financial issues but we have solved them by positive attitudes and energy. Our athletes are the main source of this energy, which always send us positive vibes," he stated.

Asian Paralympic Committee President mentioned Iran as one of the most developed NPCs in the region which has been umbrella of many elite Para-Athletes and World Champions.

It is the APC President's second trip to the country since the 15th National Paralympic Day, which were organized successfully in October

The APC Board trip will be concluded on

Iran's fixture at Paris 2024 Volleyball qualification revealed

TEHRAN - Iran national volleyball team will play Germany in its opening match of the Olympic

Iran are drawn in Pool A along with host Brazil, Italy, Cuba, Ukraine, Germany, Czech and Qatar.

Team Melli will play Germany on September 30.

The men's qualifiers are scheduled to take place from September 30 to October 8.

Iran's Fixture:

*Iran vs Germany (September 30)

*Iran vs Ukraine (October 2)

*Iran vs Qatar (October 3)

*Iran vs Czech (October 4)

*Iran vs Italy (October 6) *Iran vs Brazil (October 7)

*Iran vs Cuba (October 8)

Taliban should not use language of threat: MP

Iraq security chief heads to Kurdistan for talks on border

issues concerning Iran

its promises, and we have given them a chance to

get rid of the terrorists. Otherwise, and if nothing

is done, the IRGC strikes would continue," Brigadier

General Mohammad Pakpour, commander of the

When asked by Tasnim if there is a limit in months

The top diplomats of Iran and Iraq held a phone

conversation on Thursday in which they underlined

the need to implement security agreements signed

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian

and his Iraqi counterpart Fuad Hussein also

addressed the latest status of relations between

Stressing the need to carry out an agreement

The two senior diplomats emphasized the

necessity for the implementation of a security

on security cooperation between Iran and Iraq,

the foreign ministers weighed plans for stronger

regional collaboration, Tasnim reported.

or days, the general responded that the Iraqi

government itself is aware of the time limit.

IRGC Ground Force, stated last week.

by both countries.

Tehran and Baghdad.

"We are waiting for the Iraqi government to keep

its use of language of threat vis-à-vis Iran and resort to diplomacy when to comes to Iran's water rights.

The lawmaker, Fada Hossein Maleki, who is a member of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said differences between Iran and Afghanistan can be solved through diplomacy.

In remarks to IRNA, Maleki said, "We expect the Taliban to pay attention to the historical relations between the two nations of Iran and Afghanistan and to know that Iran has stood by Afghanistan in all situations. They should not use inappropriate language

TEHRAN - Kamal Kharrazi, head of Iran's Strategic

Council on Foreign Relations, has left Tehran for

Doha to participate in a conference on Iranian-Arab

Kharrazi is leading a delegation of former Iranian

officials who are associated with Iran's Arab policies.

He will deliver opening remarks at the Arab-Iran

Dialogue, which is organized jointly by the SCFR and

The conference will on economic security and

The gathering comes at a time when Iran and Arab

countries are moving toward reconciliation after a

Al Jazeera Center for Studies.

decade of tensions.

solutions to crises in the region.

TEHRAN - An Iranian lawmaker to address us. Some of the videos added. has called on the Taliban to abandon published on the internet show our border guards talking to the Taliban and they [the Taliban] use threatening language, which is not correct at all and is outside of international norms."

> Maleki, also a former Iranian ambassador to Afghanistan, said Iran expects the Taliban to respect Iran's water share of Helmand River, which has been at the center of tensions between Tehran and Kabul in recent days, "The demand of Iran, our nation and government from Afghanistan is that the treaty related to Iran's share of Helmand be implemented as soon as possible. The Taliban should pay attention to the international treaty regarding Helmand's water share and good neighborliness," the lawmaker

attention to international agreements and treaties, relations will definitely be damaged."

Recently, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi warned the Taliban against disrespecting Iran's water rights.

He said, "I want to tell the rulers of Afghanistan not to consider my words as normal, but to take them very seriously; I warn the officials and rulers of Afghanistan to give the rights of the people and the region of Sistan and Baluchistan immediately."

Referring to some published claims that the dam built on Helmand does not have much water or that part

of it is sediments, he stated, "Our He continued, "If their negative experts should be given permission behavior continues and they do not pay to investigate this issue as soon as possible, if our experts confirm this, very well, there is no problem; we have no dispute about the lack of water, but if there is water, this right should be given to the people of Sistan and Baluchistan and we will not allow the rights of the

people to be lost in any way." Maleki said after Raisi's warning, the issue of Iran's water rights was put on the agenda at a higher level. "After the president's position regarding Iran's water share of Helmand, this issue was followed up at a higher level of the system and it was decided that this issue should be prioritized on Iran's foreign policy agenda," Maleki noted.

Kamal Kharrazi heads to Qatar

brokered deal that restored diplomatic relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The deal was reached on March 10 and stipulated that Tehran and Rivadh

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.



ambassadors after deciding to resume diplomatic relations. Alireza Enayati has reportedly been named as Iran's new ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

Iran and Saudi Arabia have recently named their Iranian Foreign Ministry, was involved in the Chinese-

Enayati, head of the Persian Gulf Bureau at the

MAY 28, 2023
Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

Over 8,000 ha of lands under flowers, ornamental plants cultivation in Iran

TEHRAN- As announced by the chairman of Iran's Ornamental Plants Research Center (OPRC), 8,251 hectares of land are under the cultivation of flowers and ornamental plants in the country.

Hossein Bayat said that of the mentioned area, 3,533 hectares are greenhouses, and 4,717 hectares are open spaces.

Two weeks ago, Bayat said that no permanent production and the problem of transportation are obstacles to the growth of the country's flowers and ornamental plants export.

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

"One of the shortcomings of export is that the production of flowers and ornamental plants does



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

Commodities worth almost \$3b traded at IME in a month

TEHRAN- During the past Iranian calendar month (ended on May 21) Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) witnessed trade of 13,429,985 tons of commodities and 1,075 vehicles with a total trading value of almost \$3 billion on its physical market, registering growths of 21.7 percent in value and 17.5 percent in volume of trades compared with the month before that.

As reported by the IME's Public Relations and International Affairs Department, the exchange saw on both domestic and export pits of its oil and petrochemical trading floor, trade of 1,777,910 tons of commodities valued at nearly \$860 million.

The IME's customers purchased on this floor 509,402 tons of bitumen, 421,000 tons of vacuum bottom, 418,260 tons of polymeric products, 184,000 tons of lube cut, 179,693 tons

of chemicals, 37,840 tons of sulfur, 19,876 tons of oil, 12,098 tons of petroleum products, 1,670 tons of insulation, 1,000 tons of slop wax and 790 tons of feedstocks.

Moreover, the exchange saw trade of 11,506,598 tons of commodities and 1,075 vehicles worth more than \$2 billion on its metals and minerals trading floor.

Items traded on this floor included 6,074,215 tons of cement, 2,778,000 tons of iron ore, 1,888,779 tons of steel, 748,100 tons of sponge iron, 36,030 tons of aluminum, 32,700 tons of copper, 5,305 tons of zinc, 2,000 tons of coke, 1,020 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 300 tons of cast iron, 60 tons of precious metals concentrate and 1,075 vehicles.

43 idle production units revived in Ardebil province in a year



TEHRAN- As announced by a provincial official, 43 idle production units were revived in Ardebil province, in the northwest of Iran, during the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

Ramin Sadeqi, the head of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department, said that the mentioned units returning to the production cycle created jobs for 750 persons.

He mentioned removing production barriers, maintaining and creating new and sustainable employment as a guarantee of economic development and added that due to the government's prioritization of production boom and job creation, the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department examines the existing problems and legal obstacles, through cooperation with the executive bodies, and tries to remove them.

Sadeqi further announced that there are 1,056 production units in Ardebil province, of which 91 percent are active and nine percent are stagnant.

As announced by the head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO), 1,714 idle production units were revived in the country in the past year.

Referring to the Leader's emphasis on knowledge-based employment last year, Ali Rasoulian said: "We have formulated a coherent operational package to support knowledgebased companies and considered incentives and advantages for giving land to such companies."

He added: "Last year, we gave land to more than a hundred knowledge-based companies, and we managed to meet 107 out of 378 technological needs of these companies, which were previously met from abroad, inside the country."

Pointing out that a good relationship has been established between knowledge-based companies and large enterprises, the deputy industry, mining and trade minister announced that 120 companies were added to the list of knowledge-based companies last year.

"We agreed with the Technology Department of the Ministry of Science to establish knowledgebased parks in industrial estates so that companies can take advantage of these parks", he added.

Referring to this year's slogan, which is "Inflation Control, Production Growth", Rasoulian said: "We must control inflation and increase production because these two have serious effects on each other."

He called providing industrial infrastructure and supporting small industries as requirements for production growth and said: "Supporting small industries and providing their financial resources and involving the private sector are our goals."

Stating that handing over affairs to the private sector is one of the policies of the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade, the official emphasized: "It is easier to revive the stagnant units than to provide financial support to the units, and therefore we are trying to connect the driving companies to the stagnant units."

The ISIPO head further announced the preparation of investment packages for the participation of the private sector and said: "We are creating workshops for small enterprises and are identifying enterprises with competitive products"

TEDPIX drops 34,000 points on Saturday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 34,715 points to 2.311 million on Saturday.

As reported, over 12,139 billion securities worth 98.739 trillion rials (about \$235 million) were traded at the TSE.

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

Spirit of Alliance

In meeting with OPEC secretary-general, Raisi calls for members unity

By Mahnaz Abd

TEHRAN- Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi stressed the necessity of strengthening unity among the members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), in a bid to nullify the division created by the West.

Making the remarks during a meeting with OPEC Secretary General Haitham Al Ghais, in Tehran on Saturday, when Oil Minister Javad Oji was also present, the president said: "Some Western countries seek to create division and disagreements among OPEC member countries to secure their interests, and the OPEC members should prevent the realization of these goals by strengthening their cohesion."

He considered the constructive cooperation of the OPEC members with each other as an important factor in the success of this international organization and added: "The Islamic Republic of Iran has always had a constructive cooperation with this organization and we are determined to continue and improve the level of cooperation."

The president further mentioned supporting the rights of oil producers and preventing discrimination against them as the philosophy of forming OPEC, and expressed hope that OPEC can bring peace to the oil market in the new period of activity.

'Iran has always had effective, constructive co-op with OPEC'

During the meeting with the Iranian president and oil minister,



Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji (2nd R), and OPEC Secretary General Haitham Al Ghais (3rd L) in a meeting with Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi in Tehran on Saturday

OPEC Secretary General Haitham Al Ghais stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran, as one of the founding members of OPEC, has always had useful, effective, and constructive cooperation with this organization and its members, and reminded: "Iran, both at the ministerial level and at the technical level has always acted in the direction of strengthening the cohesion and unity of OPEC members."

He also described the situation of the oil market and said: "I hope that with the unity of OPEC members and benefiting from the constructive support and cooperation of the Islamic Republic of Iran, we will be able to bring peace to the market."

The OPEC secretary general arrived in Tehran on Friday for reviewing the oil market situation, as well as the supply and demand outlook, with

the Iranian officials, and exchange of views on the upcoming meeting of OPEC members and the ministerial meeting of the OPEC Plus (an entity consisting of the 13 OPEC members and 10 of the world's major non-OPEC oil-exporting countries).

Iran has always asked fellow OPEC members to "refrain from any unilateral measures", warning that would undermine the unity of OPEC.

The Islamic Republic has called on members not to take unilateral measures that would undermine the unity and independence of OPEC and provoke the U.S. to take action against Iran.

Reacting to Iran's approach in this regard, the former OPEC secretary general said there were no unilateral decisions in the organization.

Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo said; "Regarding the issue of Iran and the

sanctions, Iran had been faced with similar challenges in recent years and I am sure that it can overcome these issues."

"Over the 60 years since the establishment of OPEC, we have faced many challenges, but what has always helped us is the unity of member stations. If we can preserve this unity, we can overcome the problems again," the late OPEC secretary general said in an interview in Tehran on the sidelines of the Iran Oil Show

'Iran ready to help maintain global energy security away from politics'

Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji has stressed that the global energy market needs an increase in the supply of Iranian oil, saying: "As a major producer of oil and petroleum products, we are always ready to play our role in maintaining global energy security away from politics."

Speaking after an OPEC+ meeting last September, Oji noted that the role and importance of Iran's supply of energy resources, including oil, gas, and petroleum products, is of double importance in ensuring the stability and security of the world's energy.

"We have always declared that Iran is ready to contribute to the improvement of energy security in the world by avoiding the political use of energy. The global energy market needs an increase in the supply of oil and natural gas from Iran," the minister said.

New offshore, onshore hydrocarbon exploration operations underway: NIOC

From page 1 ► "The number of oil and gas wells in Iran exceeds 3,500," he noted, adding that 70 percent of NIOC's gas fields and 50 percent of the country's oilfields were discovered after the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

According to the NIOC head, the discovery

of hydrocarbon reserves has witnessed a considerable rise over the last 40 years.

Despite the negative impacts of the U.S. sanctions, Iran has been taking new measures for ramping up its oil and gas production and exports over the past few years.

In this regard, NIOC has signed numerous agreements with Iranian universities and knowledge-based companies for research in various fields of geophysics, geochemistry, unconventional hydrocarbon resources, and drilling

Tehran, Tashkent stress boosting economic ties using preferential trade

TEHRAN – Iran and Uzbekistan have stressed the need for expanding economic ties by signing a preferential trade agreement (PTA) and removing the obstacles in the way of trade relations, Fars News Agency reported.

As reported, in a meeting between the Acting Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Mehdi Zeyghami and Uzbekistan Ambassador to Tehran Abdullaev Bakhodir Barotovich, the two sides discussed various issues including the preparations for holding the two countries' joint economic committee meeting in Tashkent and the recent visit of Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev to Tehran.

Speaking at the meeting, Barotovich said Iran is the closest access route to the open sea for this country and demanded the removal



TPO Acting Head Mehdi Zeyghami (R) and Uzbekistan Ambassador to Tehran Abdullaev Bakhodir Barotovich

of obstacles to the transit of goods through Iran.

He expressed hope that a roadmap for economic cooperation between the two countries with a target of one billion dollars of annual trade will be signed during the upcoming visit of the Uzbek president to Tehran and said: "With the removal of transit

obstacles, trade exchanges between Iran and Uzbekistan will reach four billion dollars."

The ambassador also announced his country's interest in holding business conferences and special events to connect the businessmen of the two countries.

Iran & Uzbekistan are negotiating establishment of a joint free zone between the two countries.

Zeyghmi for his part said Iran will take the necessary measures to remove the obstacles on the way of the transit of Uzbek goods and said:

"The planning of the Iran-Uzbekistan business conference with the presence of businessmen from the two countries is underway during the visit of President Mirziyoyev to Tehran"

Back in late April, the secretary of Iran's Free Zones High Council negotiated with the officials of the free trade and special economic zones of Uzbekistan about the establishment of a joint free zone between the two countries, during a two-day visit to Tashkent.

As reported, Hojatollah Abdolmaleki participated in the international investment meeting of Uzbekistan, which was held in the presence of the president and other high-ranking officials of this country and heads of international and regional financial organizations and institutions

Issues of desalination contractors discussed at TCCIMA meeting

TEHRAN – In the latest meeting of the dialogue council of the government and the Tehran Province's private sector on Saturday the issues and challenges that the private sector desalination companies are currently facing were discussed.

As reported by the portal of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA), the meeting was attended by officials and representatives of the private sector and government including Mohammadreza Taheri, the deputy secretary of the Government and Private Sector Dialogue Council of Tehran Province, and Vahid Ghandchi, Secretary of the Association of Water Desalination Companies.

Speaking at the gathering, Ghandchi underlined the importance of supporting the companies active in the desalination sector, saying that currently, water desalination companies are supplying drinking water for 10 million residents along the Persian Gulf and Makran coasts and more than 90 percent of the country's water desalination contractors are members of the Association of Water Desalination Companies.

According to the official, the members of his association desalinate 650,000 cubic meters of water daily across the country, for 450,000 cubic meters of which the companies have guaranteed purchase contracts with the Energy Ministry.



About 200,000 cubic meters of the desalinated water is also supplied for industries, the official said.

Mentioning the challenges facing the companies, Ghandchi said the Energy Ministry owes desalination companies a great deal and the debts have been accumulated over time.

Tehran to host FINEX 2023 in early June

TEHRAN – The 15th International Exhibition of Financial Industries (Exchange, Bank & Insurance) – Iran FINEX 2023– is slated to be held at Tehran Permanent International Fairground from June 6 to 9, IRNA reported.

The slogan of this year's exhibition would be "Propelling financial industry, growth of production and containment of inflation".

Raising awareness about financial markets and their services, increasing financial literacy,

promotion of indirect shareholding, development and promotion of new services in insurance and financial markets, digitization of payment as well as electronic banking are among the most important goals of this exhibition.

Europe protests on the rise as Ukraine war drags on

From page 1 > military alliance's expansion on its borders, launched what it called a "special military operation".

Western sanctions on Russia's gas exports have seen a record rise in inflation across Western Europe with the sharp rise in Energy costs, spearheading the record inflation levels.

As Western governments send more weapons into the warzone instead of seeking a peaceful resolution, the protesters are turning on their governments for prolonging the conflict arguing it is the average households back home that are feeling the dire financial consequences of the inflation levels.

Speaking to the AFP news agency one of the many protesters in Rome, Valerio Conti, called on the government to seek a peaceful solution to the war and an end to the arms shipments to Ukraine, saying "we believe that the warmongering policies of our government are the main cause. This is why we are in the streets: to ask that they put down their weapons, that is, that there be a peaceful solution to the conflict, and to increase wages to increase the purchasing power of wages, which have truly become unsustainable."

Others struck a similar tone, such as Giampiero Simonetto who said "while there are huge investments to sustain the war in Ukraine, on the NATO side, the territories suffer neglect due to a lack of restructuring and maintenance."

Fabiola Bravi, another protester, explained that the rising inflation which Italy is experiencing is limiting the ability of families with low wages to pay their bills, and stated that the rally was organized to express the public's dissatisfaction with their government.

"This strike above all is against the Meloni government, which is the enemy of the people and the working class." she said.

Reportedly similar demonstrations also took place in other Italian cities, which led to the disruption of local transportation as well as schools.

Bravi also says funds are ending



up in the pockets of private companies while "nothing is going to the town. There is a hungry population that is the victim of inflation that has reached 12%. The prices of basic necessities have exceeded double the usual level. The electricity and water bills are not paid because the families cannot sustain the cost of living with the low wages that we have in Italy."

There is a similar pattern emerging among protesters across Western Europe who are hitting the streets or going on strike with a common argument that amid the rising inflation, their salaries have stayed the same and are not rising in line with the inflation level.

Meanwhile in Spain, teachers and healthcare professionals joined forces in walking out of their jobs and holding two rallies in front of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education in the capital Madrid, echoing similar demands by protesters across Western Europe for better working conditions.

The demonstrators, holding flags and signs while chanting slogans such as "No we don't want to pay your debt with health and education."

Among the many signs held at the protest read "Teachers fighting we are teaching", "Health and education, no to privatization" as well as "More investment in public education".

Isabel Galvin, the spokesperson

of Confederation of Workers' Commissions, says teachers also have a fundamental demand of a 35-hour working week, which was promised by the government but has yet to be implemented.

This is in line with promises by many Western governments who cannot afford to carry them out as conflict in Ukraine is becoming more costly for the West.

The past months have witnessed waves of protests and strikes in countries across Europe, in particular the UK, which has seen a record number of public workers walking out along with protests across the country and across almost all sectors as the cost-of-living crisis bites. The strikes have also paralyzed different public sectors from hospitals to transportation.

The UK Chancellor was denounced on Friday after telling British media that he would be "comfortable" with a recession if it brings inflation down.

Asked by Sky News whether he was "comfortable with the Bank of England doing whatever it takes to bring down inflation, even if that potentially would precipitate a recession", Jeremy Hunt replied: "Yes, because in the end, inflation is a source of instability."

The Bank of England is expected to hike its interest rates to more than 5.5% making it even more difficult for households and others who have taken out loans, to repay their monthly installments to banks. This is on top of the

unprecedented rise in energy costs across the UK, in which households are paying a record amount in their monthly bills.

The remarks led to anger from opposition parties and organizations who argue the government has no policies to ease the financial hardship among families.

In France, changes to the pension system by the government, which President of Emmanuel Macron enforced by bypassing a parliamentary vote on the plan, has seen a series of angry nationwide protests and strikes against the measures.

Macron says the deeply unpopular measures are necessary to balance the pension system.

Unions say they will not end their strikes and protests until the French president repeals the law.

Critics say these are all a direct result of the Ukraine war which has economically backfired on the West with households suffering the consequences.

While there is money to send weapons to Ukraine and prolong the war, which experts believe was triggered by NATO, it is Western households that are footing the bill for the conflict.

Nowhere has this been evidenced more than the rising number of protests and strikes in countries that are directly involved in the Ukraine war.

INTERNATIONAL

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

WORLD HEADLINES -

Offering NATO to Ukraine led to war: Kissinger

Former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger has explained how his views on prospective NATO membership for Ukraine changed between 2008, when the bloc first acknowledged Kiev's "aspirations" to join, and today, after the stream of Western military aid transformed it into the "best-armed country" in the region.

"I'm in the ironical position that I was alone when I opposed membership, and I'm nearly alone when I advocate NATO membership," the veteran politician told a Wall Street Journal contributor in an interview recorded days before his 100th birthday.

"I think the offer to put Ukraine into NATO was a grave mistake and led to this war," he explained, yet claimed that the scale of the conflict, and "its nature, is a Russian peculiarity, and we were absolutely right to resist it."

But after Washington and its allies turned Ukraine into the "best-armed country in Europe," it clearly belongs to the US-led military bloc, the former official stated, reiterating his firm belief that peace in Europe cannot be achieved without Ukraine in NATO.

China declining contacts with US military: Pentagon

The Pentagon's attempts to reach out to China's military in recent months have been ignored or rebuffed, Ely Ratner, US Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs, has claimed.

Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin "believes in the importance of open lines of communication with the PRC [People's Republic of China] and we have sought to build out those open lines of communication. Unfortunately... we've had a lot of difficulty when we have proposed phone calls, meetings, dialogues," Ratner said during an event hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington on Thursday.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Mark Milley, along with the head of US Indo-Pacific Command Admiral, John Aquilino – and other uniformed and civilian officials – have asked Beijing for dialogue, but "those requests [were] rejected or not answered," he said.

"The US and Department of Defense have had an outstretched hand on this question of military to military engagement, but we have yet to have consistently willing partners," Ely Ratner explained.

Dialogue between military officials of the two countries is crucial "to prevent misperception and miscalculation and to prevent crises from spinning out of control," the official insisted.

Russia to US: No lectures on nuclear weapon deployments

Russia has dismissed criticism from US President Joe Biden over Moscow's deployment of tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus, saying Washington for decades has done the same throughout Europe.

Russia said on Thursday it was pushing ahead with the first deployment of such weapons outside its borders since the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union, and Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko said the arms were already on the move.

Biden said on Friday he had an "extremely negative" reaction to reports that Russia moved ahead with the deployment in Belarus.

"It is the sovereign right of Russia and Belarus to ensure their security by means we deem necessary amid a large-scale hybrid war unleashed by Washington against us," Russia's embassy in the United States said in a statement.

"The measures we undertake are fully consistent with our international legal obligations."

Tactical nuclear weapons are used for tactical gains on the battlefield and are usually smaller in yield than the strategic nuclear weapons designed to destroy American, European or Russian cities.

The Russian embassy called the US criticism of Moscow's deployment hypocritical, saying "before blaming others, Washington could use some introspection".

 $\hbox{``The United States has been for decades maintaining''}\\$

a large arsenal of its nuclear weapons in Europe. Together with its NATO allies it participates in nuclear sharing arrangements and trains for scenarios of nuclear weapons use against our country."

UN backs its envoy to Sudan as army seeks to expel him

United Nations chief Antonio Guterres said he was "shocked" by a letter from Sudanese army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan reportedly requesting the replacement of special envoy Volker Perthes.

Perthes and the UN mission in Sudan have been the target of several protests by thousands of military and other supporters who repeatedly accused him of "foreign intervention" and demanded his dismissal.

"[Guterres] is proud of the work done by Volker Perthes and reaffirms his full confidence in his special representative," a statement from UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said late on Friday. "The secretary-general is shocked by the letter he received from General al-Burhan."

Sources within Sudan's foreign ministry told Al Jazeera that Perthes will not be allowed back into the war-torn country.

Türkiye to hold runoff vote today to elect president

Türkiye is heading to a runoff vote today to elect the president after no candidate was able to reach the 50% threshold in the first round held on May 14.

The voting will begin at 8 a.m. local time (0500GMT) and end at 5 p.m. local time (1400GMT).

More than 60 million people are registered to vote, including 4.9 million first-time voters.

According to Türkiye's Supreme Election Council, more than 1.89 million people – 1,895,430 – already cast their votes at Türkiye's foreign missions and customs gates as of 10 a.m. local time (0700GMT) on Thursday.

Voting at diplomatic missions ended on Wednesday, while the polling will continue at customs gates until 5 p.m. local time (1400GMT) on Sunday.

In the May 14 elections, a total of 1,839,470 Turkish citizens abroad went to the polls to vote in both presidential and parliamentary elections.

Those who are unable to cast their ballots within the dedicated time in their country of residence will be able to vote at the customs gates until 5 p.m. Sunday.

80% of Chinese blame US for Ukraine conflict – study

Some 80% of the Chinese population think the US and Western countries are ultimately responsible for the conflict in Ukraine, according to a new study. Less than 10% blame Russia for starting the offensive.

Published on Wednesday by the Center for International Security and Strategy at Tsinghua University, the survey found that 80.1% of respondents blame the conflict on the "US and Western countries," while 11.7% blame Ukraine, and 8.2% hold Russia responsible.

Some 34.1% identified the "impact of the war on civilian life" as the most important issue arising from the conflict, while 20.9% named the safety of Chinese people and their economic interests in Ukraine, and 15.6% pointed to the "impact on the global energy supply."

A majority of Chinese people distrust Washington, the pollfound, with 59.1% holding a "very unfavorable" or "somewhat unfavorable" opinion of the US. Just 7.8% hold the same view of Russia, with 58.4% viewing their neighbor "somewhat," or "very" favorably.

Pink Floyd's Roger Waters says Berlin gig controversy a 'smear'

Pink Floyd's frontman Roger Waters said he opposes "fascism" in all its forms following a furore in Germany where the rockstar's donning of a Nazistyle uniform at a Berlin concert sparked a police investigation.

Berlin police said on Friday they were probing Waters after images of the Pink Floyd co-founder circulated on social media, showing him on stage last week at the Mercedes-Benz arena wearing a long, black coat with red armbands and firing an imitation World War II sub-machine gun.

Ending the Guantánamo nightmare

By Cesar Chelala

Legend has it that on April 30, 1494, Christopher Columbus arrived to the Guantanamo Bay area and spent the night there. Columbus probably didn't dream that that area was going to be a subject of acrimonious debate centuries later. And the debate has not ceased, prompting calls for closing the facility. More appropriately, it should now be returned to its original owners, the Cuban people.

Guantanamo's contentious history is what Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis found, to his chagrin, when he was questioned by Mansoor Adayfi, a former detainee at the Guantanamo prison, at the Museum of Tolerance in West Jerusalem in late April. He angrily denied Adayfi's accusation that he watched unperturbed as Adayfi was forced fed to break his hunger strike in 2006. Two other former detainees, as well as defense lawyers and officials at the base, confirmed Adayfi's claim.

Although DeSantis initially said that he advised the base authorities in favor of the force-feeding program, he later retracted his statement. That three former detainees at the facility question DeSantis behavior, is a serious accusation that should be considered in discussions about his qualifications as presidential candidate.

The Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, colloquially called GTMO by members of the U.S. military, has a complex history. It is located on 45 square miles of land and water on the shore of Guantanamo Bay, at the southeastern end of Cuba. It is the oldest U.S. naval base in the world, and has been leased since 1903 as a coaling station and naval base. Initially the lease was \$2,000 in gold per year. This was amended in 1974 to \$4,085.



After the Spanish-American war ended with the Treaty of Paris in 1898, Spain formally relinquished control of Cuba. American officials denied Cuba a seat at the Paris peace conference.

In 1901, the U.S. government passed the Platt Amendment, part of an Army Appropriations Bill. In its section VII it read, "That to enable the United States to maintain the independence of Cuba, and to protect the people thereof, as well as for its own defense, the government of Cuba will sell or lease to the United States lands necessary for coaling or naval stations at certain specified points to be agreed upon with the President of the United States."

After the Platt Amendment was incorporated into the Cuban Constitution, Gen. Leonard Wood, named by President William McKinley to be Cuba's military governor, told President Theodore Roosevelt, "There is, of course, little or no real independence left Cuba under the Platt Amendment." During the invasion of Cuba carried out by Cuban exiles at the Bay of Pigs in April of 1961 with the support of the U.S., Washington concentrated troops and weapons in Guantanamo.

In the last two decades of the 20th century the base was also used to house Cuban and Haitian refugees fleeing their country who were intercepted on the high seas. Since Jan. 11, 2002, the base has housed the Guantanamo detention center, where some 780 Muslims, captured during the U.S. invasion to Afghanistan, have been detained and tortured. As of February 2023, 31 detainees remain imprisoned at Guantanamo Bay. These are not the conditions under which the leased was signed.

Several human rights organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch, as well as the United Nations have condemned the treatment of inmates at Guantanamo, several of whom have committed suicide rather than accept the conditions at the detention camp.

Since 1959, the Cuban Government has stated its desire to end the lease on Guantánamo, a request that the U.S. has systematically refused. The Cuban government insists that the lease conditions were imposed under duress, since the treaty was imposed on the Cuban National Assembly as a pre-condition for limited Cuban independence. Alfred-Maurice de Zayas, an American lawyer and professor of international law, notes that article 52 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties states, "A treaty is void if its conclusion has been procured by the threat or use of force in violation of principles of international law embodied in the Charter of the United Nations."

Legal and ethical arguments favor the return of Guantanamo to Cuba. The world is exhausted by infamous images of cruelty and violence. What are needed instead are examples of civility and intelligence that show the kindness of the human spirit. Returning Guantanamo to Cuba, a long-delayed measure that would bring a worldwide wave of goodwill, would be a step in the right direction.

TOURISM



Dune diving and star gazing: reveling in the enigmatic beauty of Iranian deserts



From Page 1 ► Moreover, visitors may find diverse flora and fauna that can only survive in these extreme conditions. Some of the unique species found in these deserts include hyenas, gazelles, sand cats, and desert foxes, as well as rare plants such as spiky bushes and Tamarix trees that form one of the most iconic landscapes in the heart of wilderness.

Voyagers may also discover a wealth of history and traditions preserved by local communities over the centuries. Ancient citadels, water reservoirs, and caravanserai that once served as important trade routes for traders and travelers can be found on the

margins of Iranian deserts.

One of the best ways to experience the beauty and diversity of the Iranian deserts is to join a guided tour or adventure trip. Guided tours offer a chance to see hidden corners of the desert region while learning about the traditions and cultures of the local tribes.

Many tour guides believe that Iranian deserts offer a once-in-a-lifetime adventure. The unique landscape, rich history, and fascinating cultural traditions make for an unforgettable experience that visitors will remember for years to come.

New handicraft hubs gain national status

TEHRAN - Two villages and a city have been designated as national handicraft hubs in Iran, CHTN reported on Saturday.

Kondazi and Tang-e Chogan, both in the southern province of Fars were registered as national villages of handicrafts, while Khesht, also in Fars province, was named a national city of handicrafts, the report added.

The value of Iran's handicraft exports stood at \$400 million during the first ten months of the Iranian calendar year 1401 (Mar. 21, 2022 - Jan. 20, 2023), the deputy tourism minister said in February.

Compared with the same period a year earlier, the figure represents some 30 percent growth, Jalali said.

"The Islamic Republic exported \$400 million worth of handicrafts during the first ten months of the current year, which shows a 30-percent increase year on year."

Iran exported some \$320 million worth of handicrafts during the past Iranian year (1400), the official stated.

The Islamic Republic has the most cities and towns registered with the World Crafts Council (WCC), followed by China with seven, Chile with four, and India with three desig-



Shiraz, Malayer, Zanjan, and the village of Qasemabad in January 2020, bringing the total number of craft cities and towns in Iran from 10 to 14. Shiraz has been dubbed "the world city of [various] handicrafts."

Malayer became a center for woodcarving and carved wood furniture on a global scale. The designation "world city of filigree" was given to Zanjan. The village of Qassemabad, which is renowned throughout the country for its traditional costumes, was also promoted to a major handicrafts center on an international scale.

Ceramics, porcelain, handwoven clothing, jewelry, and semi-precious stones are among Iranian handicrafts traditionally exported to Iraq, Afghanistan, Germany, the U.S., and the Persian Gulf coastal states, to name a few.

The WCC-Asia-Pacific Region designated

UNESCO sites at a glance



Kakadu National Park

Kakadu National Park is a living cultural landscape with exceptional natural and cultural values. Kakadu has been home to Aboriginal people for more than 50,000 years, and many of the park's extensive rock art sites date back thousands of years.

Kakadu's rock art provides a window into human civilization in the days before the last ice age. Detailed paintings reveal insights into hunting and gathering practices, social structure, and ritual ceremonies of Indigenous societies from the Pleistocene Epoch until the present.

The largest national park in Australia and one of the largest in the world's tropics, Ka-

kadu preserves the greatest variety of ecosystems on the Australian continent including extensive areas of savanna woodlands, open forest, floodplains, mangroves, tidal mudflats, coastal areas, and monsoon for-

The park also has a huge diversity of flora and is one of the least impacted areas of the northern part of the Australian continent. Its spectacular scenery includes landscapes of arresting beauty, with escarpments up to 330 meters high extending in a jagged and unbroken line for hundreds of kilometers.

hunting-and-gathering tradition demonstrated in the art and archaeological record is a living anthropological tradition that continues today, which is rare for hunting-and-gathering societies worldwide. Australian and global comparisons indicate that the large number and diversity of features of anthropological, art, and archaeological sites (many of which include all three site types), and the quality of preservation, are excep-

Many of the art and archaeological sites of the park are thousands of years old, showing a continuous temporal span of the hunting and gathering tradition from the Pleistocene Era until the present. While these sites exhibit great diversity, both in space and through time, the overwhelming picture is also one of continuous cultural development.

Iran's Aras Geopark gains global recognition

TEHRAN -The addition of Iran's Aras Geopark to the UNESCO Global Geoparks network has been endorsed, UNESCO's official website has announced.

UNESCO's Executive Board approved the addition of 18 geoparks from across the world including Iran's Aras Geopark to the global network on Thursday.

This brings the total number of geoparks to 195 in 48 coun-

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 Aras River forms the northern boundary of the geopark, serving as the dividing line between Iran, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. According to UNES-CO within the geopark's region, there are three designated protected areas. The area's conservation efforts are significantly

influenced by its rich wildlife variety and the existence of endangered species like the Caucasian Black Grouse, Red Deer, Armenian Ram, and Leopard.

The UNESCO Global Geopark label was created in 2015. It recognizes geological heritage of international significance. Geoparks serve local communities by combining the conservation of their significant geological heritage with public outreach and a sustainable approach to development.

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.

Alborz holds potential to become industrial tourism destination

TEHRAN -Alborz province holds considerable potential to become an industrial tourism hub of the country, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

Alborz holds immense potential for the development of industrial tourism, as it boasts over 3,500 production and industrial facilities, Shahram Ali-Mohammadi explained on

In addition to highly desirable tourist attractions in the fields of agritourism and nature tourism, Alborz could also offer industrial tourism experiences, the official added.

The presence of industrial and manufacturing towns, as well as being home to famous national brands, makes the province a favorable place for boosting industrial tourism, he noted.

The presence of diverse food-related industrial factories such as chocolate, pasta, flour, and beverage production across the province represents an excellent opportunity to organize industrial tourism tours for those keen to learn about the production process,

Industrial tourism is one of the newest additions to the large family of tourism types. It is one of the growing sub-sectors, and it attracts many companies to explore

After the industrial revolution, industries around the globe started flourishing. People got more interested in how products are made, especially in particular details such as the manufacturing process, material sourcing, and specifics regarding operational logistics. That is why many experts refer to industrial tourism as one of the oldest forms of tourism, but it is starting to become popular nowadays.



Alborz province is surrounded by Mazandaran, Tehran, Markazi, and Qazvin provinces. Its name is driven by the Alborz Mountains. A significant part of the mountains is located in the northern part of the province.

Historical resources and documents as well as archeological studies indicate that Alborz has a rich culture dating back to pre-

Iranian, Afghan handicrafts in joint exhibition

TEHRAN - An exhibition featuring selected works by Iranian and Afghan artisans is currently underway in Mashhad, the capital of Khorasan Razavi province.

Named "Sense of Neighborhood", the exhibit showcases needlework, personal ornamentations, woodwork, carved stones, and paintings, to name a few, Mehr reported.

Organized by Khorasan Razavi's tourism directorate in close collaboration with the Islamic



Needlework (Souzan-douzi in Persian) is the art of drawing images on plain fabrics by sewing delicate stitches using a needle and colorful yarns. They bracelets, necklaces, bags, and

According to the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, Iran has the most cities and towns registered with the World Crafts Council (WCC), followed by China with seven, Chile with four, and India with three designated ones.

The WCC-Asia-Pacific Region designated Shiraz, Malayer, Zanjan, and the village of Qasemabad in January 2020, bringing the total number of craft cities and Culture and Relations Organi- are mainly used to embellish towns in Iran from 10 to 14. Shization, the exhibition runs from women's clothes; however, such raz has been dubbed "the world May 24 to May 28, the report works are applied to decorate city of [various] handicrafts."

Malayer became a center for woodcarving and carved wood furniture on a global scale. The designation "world city of filigree" was given to Zanjan. The village of Qassemabad, which is renowned throughout the country for its traditional costumes, was also promoted to a major handicrafts center on an international scale.

Iraq, Afghanistan, Germany, the United States, and the coastal states of the Persian Gulf are among the countries that traditionally import ceramics, porcelain, hand-woven clothing, personal jewelry, and semi-precious

Woodturners in Malayer to exhibit skills



TEHRAN - Tens of Iranian woodturners and proficient carpenters will showcase their skills at a sales exhibit in the near fu-

The exhibit will be held in Malayer, which is a global hub for woodcarving and carvedwood furniture, from June 29 to July 7, ISNA reported.

Located in Hamedan province, Malayer is home to over 4,000 furniture workshops in which more than 8,000 wood masters and some 25,000 crafters are engaged.

Registered by the World Crafts Council -Asia-Pacific Region (WCC-APR), Malayer is top on the list for those who are interested in wooden furniture.

Artisans of the ancient city use the wood of

beech, walnut, and sycamore to make various products, such as traditional, classic, steel, and sofa furniture. Their other products are dining tables, desks, all kinds of chairs, beds, and decorative objects.

Although the arts have been practiced in Malayer for a long time, it has been around half a century since they prospered in the re-

Currently, more than 60 percent of Iran's furniture and woodcarving products are reportedly made in Malayer and shipped to various Iranian cities or exported to Central Asian countries. Persian Gulf countries. Turkey, and Iraq, among others.

Cultural heritage photo festival underway in eastern Iran

TEHRAN - South Khorasan is hosting a photo festival dedicated to the cultural heritage of the eastern province, the provincial tourism chief has said.

Some 64 photographers from across the country have participated in the festival, which will run until Monday, Hadi Shahverdi explained on Saturday.

The festival aims at promoting the region as a tourist destination as well as introducing its tourist attractions, historical sites, and natural sights, the official added.

Located in eastern Iran, South

Khorasan is home to many historical and natural attractions, such as Birjand Castle, Dragon Cave, Furg Citadel, and Polond

The province is also known for its famous rugs, as well as its saffron and barberry, which are produced in almost all parts of



Over 500 companies attending Iran Health expo

TEHRAN - The 24th International Exhibition of Iran Health opened at the Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds on Sunday and will run until Tuesday.

More than 500 companies, including 390 domestic companies and 110 companies from China, Russia, Turkey, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, South Korea, India, Australia, Japan, Pakistan, and Taiwan are participating in the exhibition.

The number of domestic companies in this year's exhibition has increased by 30 percent compared to the previous year, and the number of foreign companies has increased by

Meanwhile, more than 100 knowledge-based companies are present and participating in this year's medical equipment exhibition.

Companies from 13 countries are participating in the exhibition.

Artificial intelligence, modern technologies for operating rooms, human resources, marketing and sales, and medical equipment are discussed in conferences and workshops on the sidelines of the exhibition.

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.

"The increase in drug production

TEHRAN - The Imam Khomeini Relief Founda-

tion is committed to creating some 500,000 jobs

for financially-struggling families in the current

The Foundation succeeded in creating some

About 220 trillion rials (some \$440 million)

were allocated for job creation projects, which is

equivalent to 89 percent of the approved budget,

Last year, some 113,000 people received skill

training services, a 3-fold increase compared to

the preceding year, Firouzabadi said, adding that

for the first time, a special skill training program

for teenagers and students has been launched

and eight thousand people benefited from these

"Due to the fact that transportation services are

training services.

420,000 job opportunities in the past year, Morteza

Iranian calendar year that started on March 21.

Firouzabadi, an official with the Foundation, said.



A total of 227 knowledge-based

firms are supplying medical equip-

ment for health centers across the

country, according to the Vice Pres-

Iranian-made pharmaceuticals

are currently exported to Canada.

Japan, and Europe, Faramarz Ekhter-

aei, chairman of the Iranian Pharma-

ceutical Industries Syndicate said,

emphasizing that 72 percent of the

country's pharmaceutical raw mate-

Some 40 percent of the country's

total pharmaceutical exports are

biotechnology products, a mem-

ber of the board of directors of the

Association of Manufacturers and

Exporters of Medical Biotechnology

Iran's biotechnology products are

exported to European, Asian, and

Latin American countries, and Iran's

technology can compete with oth-

er countries in this field, he further

The export revenue of medicinal

plants is estimated at \$700 million,

the caretaker of the Vice Presidency

Products said.

highlighted.

rials are domestically produced.

idency for Science and Technology.

is supported by stable supply for exports, and our forecast for exports in the current year is \$200 million," IRNA quoted Heidar Mohammadi, the head of the Food and Drug Adminis-

Currently, the production of med-

Referring to the shortage of 100 drug items in the country, he said: "Currently, nearly one and a half percent of the country's pharmaceutical need is imported. Along with domestic production, it is done as soon as the domestic production meets the

According to Food and Drug Administration, some \$60 million worth of medicine was exported in the calendar year 1400 (March 2021-March 2022).

The figure was about \$180 million in the year 1397 (March 2018-March 2019). The country imports some \$1 for Science and Technology, Rouhollah Dehghani, has said.

He made the remarks at the 6th National Festival and Exhibition of Medicinal Plants, Natural Products, and Iranian Traditional Medicine which was held in Tehran from November 1 to 4, 2022

Stating that out of 2,500 medicinal plants, 1,800 of them are endemic to Iran, he emphasized that Iran with its own strong history of traditional medicine and a rich ecosystem of medicinal plants has a huge opportunity for increasing share in the national and global market.

The export revenue of medicinal plants is \$700 million. However, it should be increased considering the high potential of the country, he said.

Stating that half of the country's export revenue is related to saffron, he highlighted that this amount is not significant compared to the turnover of this industry in the world.

According to the document approved by the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution, it is predicted that there is at least \$3 billion of capacity in the country in this field, and it can reach \$15 billion by focusing on the peripheral technologies, he noted.

He went on to say that in recent years, it has shown that people's approach to complementary medicine to herbal products is increasing drastically.

In this regard, the biggest support measure for knowledge-based companies is market building, in which we can develop domestic and foreign markets, he also suggested.

Straight Truth TEHRAN TIMES

Iran calls ECO for promoting primary healthcare

TEHRAN – The Iranian deputy health minister has called member states of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) for upgrading and strengthening existing systems and restructuring processes to promote universal health coverage (PHC).

Considering that the issue of health is the most important factor of sustainable economic-social development, especially when communicable and non-communicable diseases have increased in different countries of the world as well as ECO member countries, it can be seen as a common responsibility for all countries, Mohammad-Hossein Niknam said.

He made the remarks at the 5th meeting of the Ministers of Health of the ECO member states within the framework of the 76th session of the World Health Assembly, which was held in Geneva, Switzerland, on May 21–30.

Creating a joint network in the pharmaceutical industry, vaccines, and medical equipment is essential.

In order to successfully carry out this responsibility, the continued cooperation of ECO member countries to improve the health situation in their countries and exchange experiences and lessons learned from the recent Covid-19 pandemic will create a resilient infrastructure of primary health care (PHC), he highlighted.

Considering that the joint cooperation between ECO member countries in the field of health is a main element for the growth of the national economy of the countries, creating a joint network in the pharmaceutical industry, vaccines, and medical equipment is essential, Niknam stressed.

Addressing the World Health Assembly on May 24, Health Minister Bahram Einollahi said the only way to ensure the global health goals, including "saving people and ensuring health for all," is to increase opportunities for meaningful international collaboration and partnership.

"The World Health Organization recently declared the end of Covid-19 as a global health emergency. I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation for the tireless efforts of all the dedicated health workers involved in responding to this pandemic."

He went on to say that the right to enjoy health and enjoy the highest health standards should be available to everyone without distinction of race, religion, political opinions, or economic and social

Equitable, unimpeded, and timely access to critical in public health emergencies.

Unilateral coercive measures, as acknowledged in the report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on his visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran, negatively affect the right to health of people under sanctions.



"Regional and subregional cooperation can play an important role in promoting health for all. Health-focused subregional initiatives, such as the G5 cooperation program in our region, can help improve the resilience of health systems."

The Group of Five cooperation program was designed and initiated by the Islamic Republic of Iran with the participation of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and the World Health Organization, and Tajikistan as observers. This subregional group is a unique example of South-South cooperation in the field of health, the minister stressed.

'We are happy to share our subregional joint health achievements with other regions and

The 26th G5 High-Level Experts Meeting on Health Cooperation and the 1st Healthcare Leadership and Governance Training Program was held in Tehran from May 6-10.

G5 countries (Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, plus the World Health Organization) took part in the meeting with the theme of "Joint Work for Solving Joint Health Problems."

Iran initiated the establishment of the G5 in 2005 to promote subregional cooperation in health among the countries.

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

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

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

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

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

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

tration, as saying.

icine, medical equipment, and powdered milk is supported by subsidies. So, their exports were very limited, but it is hoped that their exports will increase next year, he explained.

billion of drugs per year.

half a million jobs part of high-paying and stable jobs for job seekers, a thousand tractors were handed over to job

Relief Foundation committed to creating

"Last year, we promised to provide 40,000 solar panels for job seekers, of which 20,000 were provided. This year, we plan to provide them with another 40,000 solar panels in addition to providing the 20,000 solar panels remaining from last year."

In March, a total of 23,000 apartments were delivered to low-income families across the country.

The Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation has constructed the apartments. President Ebrahim Raisi handed over three apartments, IRNA reported.

A total of 25 trillion rials (nearly \$50 million) has been proposed to provide housing for the underprivileged in the budget bill for the current [Iranian calendar] year (started March 21).

The Foundation also plans to build 360,000 houses over the next four years.

The project will start next year and 90,000 houses will be built for the deprived annually, 60.000 of which will be built in cities and 30.000

A memorandum of understanding has been signed with the Mostazafan Foundation and Housing Foundation regarding the construction of 10,000 housing units in villages and cities with less than 25,000 populations.

Another memorandum of understanding has been inked with the Basij and Housing Foundation to build 40,000 houses.

In October 2022, Morteza Bakhtiari, head of the Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation, said more than 900,000 job opportunities were created for financially-struggling individuals during the Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021).

"During the sixth development plan, we were required to create 350,000 jobs, however, we managed to create more than 900,000 job opportunities for the target community, and a significant number of clients became self-sufficient and no longer receive support," Bakhtiari added.

From March to October 2022, more than 180,000 job opportunities have been launched and 134,000 employment plans are in the process of receiving loans, he stated.

He went on to note that 6.000 elites, 52.000 school students, and about 730,000 college students are under the support of the foundation, which can guarantee the future of the country in various fields of science and technology.

Moreover, about 50,000 cases of skill training have been provided to clients, he added.

The Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation has launched 3,285 projects to support job seekers over the first five months of the past Iranian calendar year.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

COVID-19 takes lowest toll on foreign nationals in Iran

Iran had the lowest coronavirus cases and mortality among refugees and foreign nationals compared to the population it is hosting. Mehdi Mahmoudi. Director of Citizens and Immigrants. Affairs of the Ministry of Interior has said.

Referring to the measures taken for non-Iranian citizens during the pandemic, he said that since the very beginning, when the country became infected with the disease, the community of foreign nationals in our country was no exception to this issue, and prevention programs and necessary measures have been taken for

"We identified foreign nationals in need and tried to provide them with livelihood assistance, as well as health packages and selfprotective items needed to prevent the infection," he explained.

ایران کمترین تلفات کرونا اتباع خارجی را

مهدی محمودی مدیرکل امور اتباع و مهاجرین وزارت کشور گفت در خصوص ابتلا به بیماری کرونا در بین اتباع خارجی،ایران کمترین ابتلا و کمترین تلفات را نسبت به جمعیت داشتهاست. او در گَفْتوگو با ایلنا درباره اقدامات صورت گرفته برای اتباع غیرایرانی در ایام کرونا گفت: از همان ابتدا که کشور درگیر این بیماری شد، جامعه اتباع خارجی هم در کشور ما مستثنی از این موضوع نبود و برنامههای پیشگیری و تمهیدات لازم نیز برای این گروه نیز در نظر گرفته شده است. أتباع غيرايراني كه نيازمند بودند را شناسايي كرده و تلاش كرديم از نظر معیشتی به این گروه نیز کمکهایی صورت بگیرد و همچنین بستههای بهداشتی و اقلام مورد نیاز پیشگیری از بیماری کرونا در چندین نوبت به



Spectacular dunes in central Iran

Saghand, located in the central Yazd province, is one of the spectacular deserts of Iran, full of

Known as Rig-e Zarin (the golden sand), Saghand has special flora and fauna. Turmeric and thorn bushes and animals such as foxes and rabbits are parts of this rich wildlife.

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

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895 Email: info@tehrantimes.com

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Do not waste water even if you were at a running stream.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:02 Evening: 19:33

Dawn: 3:08 (tomorrow)

Sunrise: 4:51 (tomorrow)

Iranian studies in German: Islamic period

Early products of this interest in Central Asian studies include the works of Walther Hinz (1936) and Hans Roemer (1952) insofar as their studies on Timurids are concerned, and also the works of Berthold Spuler (e.g., his monumental study on the Golden Horde and his contributions to the Cambridge History of Islam).

Gerhard Doerfer, a Turkologist, has contributed immensely to Iranian studies with his encyclopedic work on the Turkish and Mongolian elements in New Persian (1963-75), which is based on an extensive survey of Persian historiography of Mongol, Timurid, and early Safavid periods.

Among the works of Bert Fragner mention must be made of his research on pre-revolutionary Bukhara and

of his contribution to the study of nation-building under colonial and Soviet conditions in Transoxiana (1994). Jürgen Paul has concentrated on the Transoxanian Nagshbandi dervishes in the 15th century (1991), and has recently published an important study on the social history of Khorasan and Transoxiana in the

early-Islamic period (1996). Manfred Lorenz (then of East Germany) wrote his unpublished doctoral thesis on differences between contemporary Persian and standard Tajik in the 20th century.

In 1989, Reinhard Eisener began to analyze various aspects of nationalism in Tajikistan and published a book on the subject in 1991, and then undertook a huge research project concerning the history of the revolution" in the former emirate of Bukhara, the results of which will be published in near future.

The situation has changed profoundly since 1990: The Institute of Central Asian Studies has been created in Berlin (Humboldt-Universität); Jürgen Paul is now well established at the University of Halle; and a large number of young, promising scholars are just discovering Central Asia as a new field of

This new trend not only affects social and anthropological fieldwork, which is now very popular, but also the study of history.

Mention should be made of Florian Schwarz (Tübingen), who has done research on the 16th-century dervishes of Bukhara, and of the young, promising student, Eckart Schiewek (Bamberg), who is now working on the historiography of the Khanate of Khoqand in the 19th century.

Jurgen Paul's research on the Shaybanid tombstone inscriptions from Samarqand, which he did with the cooperation of two young Uzbek historians, Bakhtier Bobozhonov and Ashirbek Muminov, marks a milestone in the expanding Central Asian studies in Germany.

The study was published in 1997 in German, Uzbek, and Russian. Another significant step in the development of Central Asian studies in Germany is the establishment of a new series, ANOR, dealing with Central Asian subjects, founded by Ingeborg Baldauf and Jürgen Paul. It has already published a Tajik grammar for students by Lutz Rzehak.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica.

Concluded.

German cultural influence in Persia

German culture was and is very highly appreciated in Persia, but its influence on Persian culture is usually overrated.

A lasting influence was mainly exercised on Persians who either attended a German school in Persia, had other personal contacts with Germans, studied in Germany, or worked there.

Schools and universities in Persia

Shiraz, and Mashhad.

During the early phases of the introduction of modern education in Persia, French was the only European language taught at Persian schools and, in certain cases, even the language used for lessons and examination.

The Dar al-Fonun had Austrian professors, but their lectures were translated into French.

In 1907, a cultural agreement between the German Empire and Persia led to the founding of the first German school in Tehran (Madrasa-ye Almani), where students, from the very first grade, studied German for nine hours a week (Dawlatabadi, Hayat-e Yahya).

Funded by both the Persian (12,000 tomans) and German governments (3,000 tomans), the school was well-equipped with laboratories and sport facilities.

It led to the Persian high school degree, but imparted knowledge far exceeding the usual high school level, so that its exclusively Persian graduates often found employment in high Persian government positions.

Its graduates, a number of whom had continued their study in Germany, provided the technical expertise for the establishment and running of the Persian railway system.

In 1923, a German-Persian vocational school (madrasa-ye san'ati) was founded in Tehran.

It was taken over by the Persian government in 1937 and, after the Allied occupation of Persia in 1941, was banned from offering German lessons, although it continued to employ German teachers up to the

1950s. In the 1930s, more vocational schools were founded with German participation in Tabriz, Isfahan, To be continued.



The German School (Madrasa-ye Almani) in Tehran , After H. Grothe, Wanderungen in Persien, Berlin,

Iranian Artists Forum to face "The Look of Silence" for review

TEHRAN American-British filmmaker Joshua Oppenheimer's 2014 documentary "The Look of Silence" will be reviewed at the Iranian Artists Forum on Monday.

The review will be held after a screening of the film scheduled for 5 pm. Culture scholar Navid Purmohammadreza will talk on the topic "Conquerors' History, the Oppressed History"

"The Look of Silence" is about the Indonesian mass killings of 1965-66.

A middle-aged Indonesian man, whose brother was brutally murdered in the 1965 Indonesian Communist Purge, confronts the men who carried out the killings.

Out of concern for his safety, the man is not fully identified in the film and is credited only as "anonymous", as are many of the film crew's locations.

Some shots consist of the man watching (what seems to be) extra footage from The Act of Killing, which includes a video of the men who killed

He visits and interviews some of the killers and their collaborators, including his uncle, under the pretense of an eye exam.

Although none of the killers expresses any remorse, the daughter of one of them is clearly shaken when she hears, apparently for the first time, the details of the killings.

Also interspersed, there are scenes of his elderly mother and his almost deaf and blind father.

The film was screened in the



Inong in the documentary "The Look of Silence" by Joshua Oppenheimer.

official competition at the 71st Venice International Film Festival, where it won the Grand Jury Prize, the International Film Critics Award (FIPRESCI), the Italian online critic's award (Mouse d'Oro), the European Film Critics Award (FEDEORA), as well as the Human Rights Nights Award.

It was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature

at the 88th Academy Awards.

"The Look of Silence" received critical acclaim. On review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, the film holds a 96 percent approval rating, and an average rating of 8.8/10, based on 136 reviews.

The website's critical consensus states, "The Look of Silence' delivers a less shocking, yet just as terribly

compelling, companion piece to Joshua Oppenheimer's 'The Act of Killing."

On Metacritic, the film has a 92 out of 100 rating based on 29 critics, indicating "universal acclaim."

The film is a companion piece to Oppenheimer's 2012 documentary "The Act of Killing", which was reviewed at the Iranian Artists Forum last week.

Vidar brings "Terror" to Tehran theater

TEHRAN - The Vidar theater troupe is performing German lawyer and writer Ferdinand von Schirach's play "Terror" at Da Theater in Tehran.

Negar Azizi is the director of the troupe, which gave the first performance of the play last Wednesday. Rahman Afshari has translated the play and the

director renamed it "Based on Your Verdict" for its Iranian premiere. Azizi also plays a role in the drama starring

Esparukhan Moradi, Sara Sibi, Ali Sibi, Mostafa Dehgani-Ashk, Negar Jahandideh, Parham Sedigi and Ramin Dowlatabadi. In this play, Major Lars Koch, a pilot of a German Army Eurofighter, faces your verdict. A Lufthansa-

Airbus is highjacked by terrorists; Major Koch is

ordered to divert the Airbus from its course, can he

do the right thing? There are 164 people on board Flight LH 2047, Berlin to Munich. The Airbus has suddenly changed course for the Allianz-Arena where a capacity crowd of 70,000 have gathered for the Germany versus



A file photo shows members of the Vidar theater troupe during a rehearsal for "Terror".

England international.

Maior Koch must react. What are his orders? If the terrorist does not change course, can he, should he, shoot down a passenger jet? The clock ticks, Lars

In the play, the audience gives their verdict, "guilty" or "not guilty".

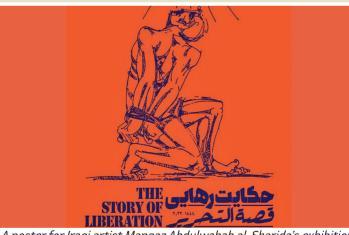
Von Schirach's debut play questions the very notion of human dignity. Can any human life be measured against others, regardless of the number? What circumstances could there ever be to avoid one catastrophe with possibly a smaller catastrophe? Who is responsible? Is it only Lars Koch alone here on

The Jury decides.

Von Schirach is also the author of the story collections "Crime" and "Guilt" and the novels "The Collini Case" and "The Girl Who Wasn't There", selling in millions in 35 different countries. He has received many literary awards, including the prestigious Kleist

Vidar performed John Willard's 1922 play "The Cat and the Canary" at the Khane-ye Honar-e Aban Theater in Tehran in August 2022. Their performance won widespread acclaim.

Art news in brief



A poster for Iraqi artist Manqaz Abdulwahab al-Sharida's exhibition at the Abolfazl Aali Gallery in Tehran.

Tehran gallery artworks by Iraqi POW showcases

TEHRAN – A collection of artworks by Iraqi soldiers who were prisoners of war in Iran for several years is on view in an exhibition at the Abolfazl Aali Gallery in Tehran

The collection includes the paintings, graphic designs and sculptures Manqaz Abdulwahab al-Sharida created while in captivity.

He was freed in 1992 under an order from the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

The Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization is the Organizer of the exhibition, entitled "The Story of Liberation".

The exhibition will run until June 7 at the gallery located on Somayyeh St. near Hafez Ave.

A calligraphy work by Gholam-Hossein Amirkhani. Calligraphers to raise funds for Khoy quake victims TEHRAN - A group of calligraphers

to raise funds for the victims of an earthquake in Khoy. Entitled "Call of the Kind People", the

will showcase their works in an

exhibition at the Art Center Gallery

exhibition will open on May 30. including Gholamcalligraphers,

Works by several celebrated

Hossein Amirkhani, Yadollah Kaboli and Ali Shirazi, have been selected to be put on view at the event.

The Iran Calligraphers Association is the organizer of the exhibit that will run until June 2 at the gallery located at 145 North Salimi St. off Andarzgu Blvd.

The earthquake with a magnitude of 5.9 struck northwest Iran near the border with Turkey in February, killing at least three people and injuring more

Thomas Mann's "Tables of the Law", "Joseph and His Brothers" come to Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN - "Tables of the Law" and "Joseph and His Brothers" by German writer Thomas Mann have been published in Persian in a single book.

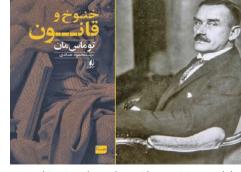
Ofoq is the publisher of the book translated by Mahmud Haddadi.

First published in 1944, "The Tables of the Law" recounts the early life of Moses, his preparations for leading his people out of Egypt, the Exodus itself and the incidents at the oasis of Kadesh, as well as the engraving of the stone tablets of the law on Mount Sinai.

In Thomas Mann's ironic and incisive style, this story, the most dramatic and significant in the Hebrew Bible, takes on a new, and at times witty, life and meaning.

He wrote himself that he wanted to bring this distant, legendary figure closer to the modern reader in an intimate, natural and convincing

Like Joseph and His Brothers, it represents



A combination photo shows Thomas Mann and the Persian edition of his stories "Tablets of the Law" and "Joseph and His Brothers".

Mann's art at its best. His tale of the ethical founding and molding of people sharply rebukes

the Nazis for their intended destruction of the moral code set down in the Ten Commandments. lending his famous irony and authorial license to this account of the shaping of the Jewish people.

In "Joseph and His Brothers", Mann regarded his monumental retelling of the biblical story of Joseph as his magnum opus.

He conceived of the four parts, The Stories of Jacob. Young Joseph, Joseph in Egypt, and Joseph the Provider, as a unified narrative, a "mythological novel" of Joseph's fall into slavery and his rise to be lord over Egypt.

Deploying lavish, persuasive detail, Mann conjures for us the world of patriarchs and pharaohs, the ancient civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Palestine, and the universal force of human love in all its beauty, desperation, absurdity and pain. The result is a brilliant amalgam of humor, emotion, psychological insight and epic grandeur.