

Report
BRICS on standby for new world order

By Ali Karbalaee

TEHRAN - The new emerging global markets are to kick off their annual summit, and many countries are keen to join.

The BRICS includes Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. It will hold its first ministerial meeting on Friday and Saturday in preparation for heads of state summit in August. This year's gathering will be held in Cape Town, South Africa.

Around 20 non-BRICS foreign ministers will be in attendance at the end of the week, with many countries actively expressing an interest in becoming members.

During last year's BRICS summit in China, a strong message was delivered of putting development on top of everything else on the international agenda. As Chinese President Xi Jinping pointed out at the UN General Assembly, the goal of the initiative is that no country or individual should be left behind in pursuing development.

As the rotating chair switches to South Africa, among the themes of this year's summit is "multilateralism" in promoting international development. ▶ Page 5

Military chief says world order shifting against interests of Iran's foes

TEHRAN - The Iranian Armed Forces chief reiterated on Monday that the world order is changing and that various developments are occurring in West Asia that will weaken the opponents of the Islamic Revolution.

Talking in an annual gathering of Iranian diplomats, Major General Mohammad Bagheri said Iran must properly plan and prepare for changes in the world system.

General Bagheri added that Iran's armed forces, in view of regional strategies and policies, are prepared to defend the country with all their might against any threats.

He also described the current Iranian administration's policy to forge relations with regional and neighboring countries as correct.

The top military official went on to say that the foreign policy apparatus plays a vital role in introducing and sharing defense and military capabilities with friendly nations in an efficient way.

"Introducing and sharing Iran's defense and military capabilities can develop the country's defense relations and strengthen deterrence," he added.

Iran's armed forces, he continued, are fully prepared to expand their level of cooperation with other countries in a number of ways, including export of defense and military equipment as well as sharing military expertise in areas of training and exercises.

Two Steps to Settle Setbacks

IAEA, Iran resolve two outstanding issues pertaining to uranium particles ▶ Page 2



File photo

Iran's 2-month non-oil trade stands at nearly \$15.5b

TEHRAN - Iran's non-oil trade stood at 25.732 million tons worth \$15.454 billion during the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-May 21), the spokesman of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Mohammad Rezvani-Far put the country's 2-month non-oil export at 21 million tons worth \$7.513 billion, and that of import at

4.732 million tons valued at \$7.941 billion.

He said that the export rose 12.6 percent in weight, but dropped 13.7 percent in value, and import fell 8.7 percent in weight and 4.7 percent in value in the first two months of this year, as compared to the same period of time in the previous year.

He named China, Iraq, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and India as the top

five export destinations of Iranian non-oil goods in the mentioned two months, and China, the UAE, Turkey, Germany, and Russia as the top five sources of import.

As previously announced by the spokesman of Trade Development Committee of the Iranian House of Industry, Mining, and Trade, the value of Iran's non-oil export rose 10 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20). ▶ Page 4

U.S., South Korea in talks to release frozen Iranian assets: report

TEHRAN - officials from the United States and South Korea are holding talks over unfreezing Iranian funds held in South Korean banks, according to a South Korean daily.

The talks are focused on releasing the \$7 billion Iranian funds that have long been blocked in South Korean banks due to U.S. sanctions on Iran. The funds are oil revenues dating back to the period prior to the re-imposition of U.S. sanctions on Iran in May 2018.

Citing diplomatic and government sources, The Korea Economic Daily said, "Korean and U.S. government officials are involved in working-level discussions under Washington's leadership to unfreeze the Iranian funds."

The newspaper said the funds, if released, would only be used for public and humanitarian purposes such as UN dues and COVID-19 vaccines.

"If all goes to plan, we expect our strained relationship with Iran to improve significantly," said a Seoul government official.

If talks turn out to be successful, the frozen money will be allowed to be transferred to Iranian bank branches in neighboring Middle Eastern countries, not directly to Iran, to monitor the flow and use of the funds, sources said. ▶ Page 3

Iran maintains neighborly approach, seeks stronger regional ties: FM

TEHRAN - The Raisi administration is actively pursuing its policy of good neighborliness and strives to strengthen connections with the countries in the region, according to Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian.

In a post on his Twitter account on Tuesday, he said, "The neighborhood policy of the 13th administration is being carried out seriously based on the wise guidelines of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei and the promotion and strengthening of relations with the neighboring and regional countries."

He stated that Sultan Haitham bin Tariq of Oman's recent trip to Tehran was a crucial, significant milestone in the two nations' continuing strategic collaboration.

The Omani Sultan began his two-day visit to Tehran on Sunday at the request of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, leading a high-ranking political and business group.

During his visit to Tehran, the Sultan of Oman held talks with Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Khamenei as well. ▶ Page 2

Op-ed
Jakarta, a friend who rowing between two rocks

By Mohammad Hossein Nemat

TEHRAN - Last week, Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, traveled to Indonesia on his eleventh international trip.

It was expected that his visit to the country to take place sooner due to Iran's neighborhood policy and regionalism.

Considering the countries that the president has visited so far (Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Russia, Qatar, Oman, Uzbekistan, the United States, Kazakhstan, and China), the neighboring countries are a priority in Iran's foreign policy. Nevertheless, Raisi's visit to Indonesia is still important.

Although relations between Iran and Indonesia have been mostly friendly since the 1950s, political and economic ties between the two countries have also undergone fluctuations. This is while the effectiveness of economic and political investments with each foreign partner depends on the stability and sustainability of relationships. ▶ Page 2

Tehran Papers

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

Sultan of Oman's trip and sending a positive signal to Tehran

Hamshahri devoted its editorial to the Sultan of Oman's visit and said: "During his visit to Tehran, the Sultan of Oman carried two messages from the United States and three European countries, England, ▶ Page 2

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30 peacekeepers injured in clashes in northern Kosovo

Clashes with Serb protesters in Kosovo left at least 30 peacekeepers injured as tensions flare in the Balkan nation.

At least 30 peacekeepers of the NATO-led mission in Kosovo were injured on Monday in clashes with Serb protesters who demanded the removal of recently-elected ethnic Albanian mayors.

The Kosovo Force (KFOR) said it had faced "unprovoked attacks" while countering a hostile crowd after demonstrators clashed with police and tried to force their way into a government building in the northern town of Zvecan.

Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic said 52 Serbs were also hurt, three seriously, while one was "wounded with two gunshots by [ethnic] Albanian special forces". ▶ Page 5



IRNA / Akbar Tavakoli

Iran, Turkmenistan sign 5 cooperation documents

TEHRAN - Iran and Turkmenistan signed five cooperation documents late on Tuesday.

The documents include cooperation in areas of electricity transfer, comprehensive cooperation in areas of diplomacy and customs, and higher education.

The agreements were signed at the presence of President Ebrahim Raisi of Iran and Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow, the chairman of the People's Council of Turkmenistan.

Berdimuhamedow arrived in the Iranian capital on Tuesday for a meeting with Iranian officials, including President Raisi. ▶ Page 3

TEHRAN PAPERS

Sultan of Oman's trip and sending a positive signal to Tehran

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

Hamshahri devoted its editorial to the Sultan of Oman's visit and said: "During his visit to Tehran, the Sultan of Oman carried two messages from the United States and three European countries, England, France and Germany, and these two messages can definitely help break the deadlock in the Vienna negotiations." Since the United States and three European countries have well understood that the use of pressure and sanctions cannot force Iran to surrender in the face of greed by the United States and Europe, they are trying to send positive signals to Tehran. The Europeans hold the view that returning all parties to the negotiating table and reaching a new agreement can end the West's concerns about Iran's nuclear activities and pave the way for more interaction between the Islamic Republic and European countries. To express their goodwill, the European countries released, a day before the visit of the King of Oman, the Iranian diplomat Mr. Asadollah Asadi, who was imprisoned in Belgium for 5 years on fake charges. In such a process, it seems that both the United States and the 3 European countries - England, France and Germany - are trying to return to the negotiating table in Vienna because the options of sanctions and threats against Iran have lost their effect.

Ham Mihan: Disconnection with Egypt is meaningless

In an analysis, Ham Mihan discussed Tehran's green light for renewing relations with Cairo. It wrote: Every decision should be corrected in the new time and place and not allow the relations between the two countries make worse than now. If it happens, people will be pessimistic of authorities. Whatever had happened is finished. Severance of ties with an important country like Egypt for 44 years is meaningless. The interesting thing is that there has not been much change in regional issues that makes the new relations more justifiable compared to the past. In other words, such a change should have taken place long ago.

Donya-e-Eqtasad: De-dollarization in favor of Iran's trading partners

In a note, Donya-e-Eqtasad wrote: For a country like the Islamic Republic of Iran, due to the

policies of the United States and its long sanctions against Iran's economy, de-dollarization of foreign trade is necessary. But it should be noted that the continuation and strengthening of this policy necessitate strengthening the value of the national currency. Economic instability and continued weakness of the national currency will make people and economic actors to rely on international currencies to protect the value of their assets. De-dollarization without a plan to control volatility and economic instability may lead people to turn to other stable currencies that are linked to the dollar because of the existing limitations to obtain and to hold the dollar. For example, the dirham of the UEA and the euro (the world's second most valuable currency) when America intends to tighten limitations on Iran, will put indirect pressure through these currencies. Therefore, trade in national currency entails controlling inflation and stabilizing the value of the national currency, otherwise an intermediary currency will be needed for trade settlement with countries, and it will actually benefit Iran's trading partners.

Sobh-e-No: "Zero tension" policy in West Asia

Steps such as improving relations with Iran, which go against the wishes of the U.S. and the Zionist regime, are easily being taken today by the regional countries, Sobh-e-No wrote. Of course, the paper said, Tehran and Cairo have already agreed on important regional issues, and this alignment of positions makes the way for normalization of relations smoother; just as Egypt neither supported the enemies of the Assad government in the Syrian war nor took side in the Yemen war.

Now, according to the "zero tension" policy, disputes among the countries of the region are coming to an end. This policy will reduce tension and strengthen stability in the region by establishing good relations with all parties and untangling tight knots in relations between countries. With such a policy, the only main loser is the Zionist regime and the main winners are the Muslim nations of the region that can speed up the path of development and establish regional security and stability without the interference of foreigners, and prevent the formation of devastating wars imposed by the West in their geography.

Iran decries European Parliament over hosting MKO ringleader

TEHRAN - The European Parliament has received vitriol by the Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson for harboring the leader of the terrorist Mujahedin-e Khalq Organization (MKO), also called Mujahadin-e Khalq (MEK).

"Despite EP human rights slogans, it's regrettable some of its members turn blind eye to dark record of those who killed over 17,000 Iranian kids, women, men statesmen & MPs, hosting ringleader of terror outfit MEK," Nasser Kanaani said on his Twitter account on Tuesday.

The Iranian official questioned, "What does Human Rights have to do with supporting terrorists?"

Maryam Rajavi, the leader of the cultish MKO terrorist group, attended a conference in the European Parliament on May 24 called "Perspective of Change and European Union Policy."

The MKO, which is classified as a terrorist group by the majority of countries in the world, escaped Iran in 1986 and went to Iraq, where former Iraqi despot Saddam Hussein provided them with a camp.

During Iraq's imposed war on Iran (1980-88), they fought on Saddam's side. They also participated in the deadly persecution of Shia Muslims in southern Iraq in 1991, as well as the slaughter of Iraqi Kurds in the north.

Following the triumph of the Islamic revolution in 1979, the notorious group was also responsible for the deaths of hundreds of Iranian citizens and government officials.

The MKO has committed various acts of terrorism against in Iran, killing about 17,000 Iranians, many of whom civilians. It carried out different heinous acts, including planting bombs in public areas and making targeted assassinations.



Last December, Iran's Foreign Ministry harshly criticized the United States for endorsing the chief of the MKO.

Kanaani tweeted, "The American regime's alliance with the terrorists and killers of more than 17,000 Iranian citizens became just clearer."

"The recent move of some politically-bankrupt American figures to try to 'whitewash terrorism' and reprehensibly sanctify the terrorist MKO ringleader and criminal mercenary of former Iraqi dictator Saddam, have further shown the bogus image of American human rights," he added.

The MKO has been removed from the list of terrorist organizations in Western nations, including the U.S.

Kanaani further said that "the American regime's reliance on bankrupts and criminals to impose greater pressure on the Iranian government and people bespeaks its empty-handedness."

The Foreign Ministry official said, "However, this does not lessen the fact that the US is legally liable for its violation of the rights of the Iranian people and its backing for a known terrorist group."

Two Steps to Settle Setbacks

IAEA, Iran resolve two outstanding issues pertaining to uranium particles

TEHRAN - According to a source, Iran and the UN nuclear agency have settled their disputes over one of the three places where the IAEA suspected the presence of undeclared nuclear material and the finding of uranium enriched to 83.7 percent at Iran's Fordow, Tasnim reported.

The source said that the technical conversations between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency resulted in the reduction of the number of unresolved cases to only two.

Based on the source, the IAEA's request for an explanation on what it alleges to be undeclared traces of uranium at one of the three sites has been resolved.

The informed source said that the alleged Abadeh (Marivan) issue had been settled and that the IAEA had based its allegations that Iran had been enriching uranium at four secret facilities on erroneous and unreliable evidence.

The source added that another disagreement with Iran over the UN nuclear agency's discovery of uranium that had been enriched to an 83.7 percent level during an inspection of the Fordow nuclear site has been settled as a result of Iran's technical explanations.

The source also said that about one-third of the IAEA cameras have already been installed and are operating in offline mode without transmitting data, and that Iran has consented to the installation of a number of cameras at the Isfahan nuclear facility.

Grossi message to Amir Abdollahian

Prior to the meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors, which will be held in Vienna next week, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian and Iran's envoy to Vienna, Mohsen Naziri Asl, held a meeting to discuss and review the latest developments of interactions with the IAEA as well as the prospect of cooperation.

Naziri Asal also presented the message of Rafael Grossi, the IAEA director general to Amir Abdollahian surrounding the agency's readiness to continue cooperation and contact the high-ranking Iranian authorities.

Amir Abdollahian welcomed the



cooperation between the agency and Iran, which led to the resolution of some remaining issues, and emphasized the need for constructive interaction between the IAEA and Tehran with the aim of promoting cooperation.

He also mentioned the importance of interaction at high levels with the IAEA officials and welcomed the director general's proposal for contact at appropriate levels.

Grossi visited Tehran back in March which at the end of his tour, Iran and the UN body issued a joint statement in which they committed to working more closely together to iron out any unresolved issues with the Safeguards Agreement.

The two sides concurred, according to the statement, that bilateral interactions will be conducted in a spirit of cooperation, in full compliance with the IAEA's competencies and Iran's rights and duties under the comprehensive Safeguards Agreement.

"Regarding the outstanding safeguards issues related to the three locations, Iran expressed its readiness to continue its cooperation and provide further information and access to address the outstanding safeguards issues," the statement highlighted.

The following is the text of the joint statement by the two sides posted on the IRNA website:

IAEA Director General Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi visited the Islamic Republic of Iran on 3 and 4 March 2023. In the context of his visit, he met President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, H. E. Mr. Ebrahim Raisi, as well as with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, H. E. Mr. Hossein Amir Abdollahian,

Iran maintains neighborly approach, seeks stronger regional ties: FM

From page 1 ► The top Iranian and Omani delegations also had political and economic conversations.

Ayatollah Khamenei praised the Raisi administration's approach to enhancing relations with regional countries during his meeting with the Omani Sultan.

He added that deeper bilateral cooperation will be advantageous for both Tehran and Muscat.

"Increasing Iran-Oman cooperation is significant because the two countries share the very important Strait of Hormuz waterway,"

Jakarta, a friend who rowing between two rocks

From page 1 ► The peak of relations between the two countries was during the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Iran, who seriously pursued "look to the East" approach to counter the Westerners for their strong opposition to Iran's nuclear activities. In this regard, Iran sought to enhance its position among Middle Eastern energy suppliers to Southeast Asian countries. In addition to energy exports, Iran also significantly increased its non-oil trade with countries in the region.

While Iran's non-oil exports to Indonesia had not exceeded \$90 million in 2005, with the upward trend in bilateral relations, this figure reached over \$6 billion in 2010. A similar pattern is observed in imports from Indonesia. These exchanges have also had an impact on the political relations between the two countries.

Indonesia's former president, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, described Iran's nuclear program as peaceful and declared the Security Council resolutions against Iran as illegal in a press confer-

the Leader stressed.

Four agreements were signed on Sunday by Iranian and Omani authorities to advance collaboration in free zones, energy, and economy.

"Iran policy is to collaborate with all countries"

In a meeting attended by members of the Iranian Parliament National Security and Foreign Policy Committee as well as heads of parliamentary friendship groups and Iran's representatives in other countries on Monday, Amir Abdollahian said that the Raisi administration upholds the principle of a balanced foreign pol-

ity in order to work with all nations.

Indonesia. Within the framework of preferential trade agreements several other agreements - including eradication of illegal drug trafficking and its precursors, science and technology and innovation, guaranteeing halal products, energy development, regulation of pharmaceuticals, biological and traditional medicines, cosmetics and processed food products - were also concluded.

visit of Raisi to Indonesia and the conclusion of new agreements in various economic, political and cultural fields, it seems that a new chapter in the relations between the two countries has begun. In this trip, agreements were inked in the field of health and healthcare, including the unveiling of surgical robots and equipping twelve important hospitals in Indonesia with Iranian medical equipment, all of which have been developed through innovation and knowledge-based work. Rachmat Gobel, Deputy Coordinator of Industrial and Development Affairs of the Indonesian House of Representatives, said: "Iran has strengths in healthcare technology and medicine, etc." He also said: "Iran's nanotechnology research is one of the most recognized studies in the world. This technology is the future that Indonesia must master."

Furthermore, after 17 years of negotiations, the two countries signed a preferential trade agreement to become the second country after the UAE to reach such an agreement with

and the Vice-President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and President of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), H. E. Mr. Mohammad Eslami.

These high-level meetings addressed the importance of taking steps in order to facilitate enhanced cooperation, to expedite as appropriate the resolution of outstanding safeguards issues.

Both sides recognize that such positive engagements can pave the way for wider agreements among state parties.

The AEOI and the IAEA agreed on the following:

* Interactions between the IAEA and Iran will be carried out in a spirit of collaboration, and in full conformity with the competences of the IAEA and the rights and obligations of the Islamic Republic of Iran, based on the comprehensive safeguards agreement.

* Regarding the outstanding safeguards issues related to the three locations, Iran expressed its readiness to continue its cooperation and provide further information and access to address the outstanding safeguards issues.

* Iran, on a voluntary basis will allow the IAEA to implement further appropriate verification and monitoring activities. Modalities will be agreed between the two sides in the course of a technical meeting which will take place soon in Tehran.

In a sign that the West is willing to intensify its propaganda campaign against Iran, Bloomberg claimed in February that the UN nuclear watchdog's inspectors had found uranium enriched to purity just short of weapons-grade levels.

According to Bloomberg, inspectors from the IAEA found uranium materials in Iran that are enriched up to 84%.

"Inspectors need to determine whether Iran intentionally produced the material, or whether the concentration was an unintended accumulation within the network of pipes connecting the hundreds of fast-spinning centrifuges used to separate the isotopes," Bloomberg said.

Iran has unequivocally denied the report that it had enriched uranium to levels higher than 60 percent purity, asserting that the nation's nuclear facilities have never breached the level.

Bloomberg claimed "the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is seeking to understand how Iran acquired uranium enriched to 84% purity."

It was also purportedly said that highly enriched uranium particles had been discovered by IAEA inspectors "inside the network of pipelines linking centrifuges used to segregate uranium isotopes."

At the time, Behrouz Kamalvandi, spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), said Bloomberg's report was an attempt to falsify the facts.

Russia's permanent representative to international organizations in Vienna Mikhail Ulyanov said in March that some members of the IAEA leak sensitive information to complicate the talks surrounding the Iran nuclear issue.

"Some #IAEA member states always leak sensitive information. This isn't the fault of the Agency's Secretariat. With a great degree of probability, we can identify those member states who leak confidential information in order to complicate discussions in the IAEA Board of Governors," Mikhail Ulyanov said.

In another tweet, he said, "The removal of cameras from the Iranian nuclear installations was a pretty significant result of #E3 and #US-sponsored resolution of the #IAEA Board of Governors on #Iran. The neutralization of this strategic irresponsible mistake is not an easy task."

The top diplomat also noted that Raisi's administration follows a strategy of global cooperation while prioritizing its neighboring states.

He applauded the Foreign Ministry and Parliament for working together on diplomatic matters, stating that Iran will undoubtedly benefit from this collaboration.

Amir Abdollahian also discussed the Iranian Foreign Ministry's economic diplomacy, stating that it had increased economic collaboration with other nations.

Although the current trade volume between the two countries is not significant - it stood at \$257.2 million in 2022 - the \$20 billion outlook announced by the Iranian presidency coupled with the quality of the agreements reached indicate a new understanding between the two countries of the new developments in the international system.

Indonesia, with the slogan of "free and active" in its foreign policy, seeks to present an active and impartial diplomacy. It is a policy that the country followed during the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran to activate transit route connecting Oman to Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan: diplomat

TEHRAN – A senior Iranian diplomat has said that Iran discussed with Oman the activation of a transit route connecting Oman to a number of Central Asian countries.

The official, Alireza Enayati, who is the head of the Persian Gulf Bureau at the Iranian Foreign Ministry, spoke about that the trade corridor as part of explaining the achievements of the Sultan of Oman's two-day trip to Tehran.

"Relations between Iran and Oman have accelerated compared to the past after Dr. Raisi's visit to the Sultanate of Oman last year and the signing of several cooperation documents. Based on this, the parties developed and deepened their cooperation at different levels," Enayati said in remarks to IRNA.

He said, "The volume of trade between Iran and Oman increased to 2 billion dollars last year."

In the field of transportation and shipping, we also saw progress between the two sides, the diplomat noted. "One of the important points that was and still is the focus of Raisi's trip and the Sultan of Oman's trip to Iran is the topic of transportation and transit, on which good discussions took place between



the two sides," he explained.

Enayati also pointed to the Ashgabat Agreement that is designed to turn Iran into a transit hub between many countries.

"Serious discussions have been held between Tehran and Muscat for the activation of the Ashgabat Agreement, which is a transit between Iran, Oman, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, and we hope to see the activation of this corridor in the future," he said.

"In the field of investment, free zones and energy, a discussion was held between two Iranian and Omani delegations during this trip, and the parties emphasized the development and deepening of these cooperations," Enayati stated.

Sultan Haitham bin Tarik concluded his two-day visit to Iran and left Tehran for Muscat on Monday morning after meeting Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution. In Tehran, he met

with President Raisi and First-Vice President Mohammad Mokhber.

Heading a large politico-economic delegation, Sultan Haitham arrived in Tehran on Sunday. His visit gave a new momentum to Iran-Oman relations, which have already been strong and historical.

"Although relations between Iran and Oman are in an upward trend and can be referred to as a 'successful bilateral cooperation model', it has more capacities for development," Enayati said. "In their talks, the heads of the two countries emphasized that along with political relations, economic and commercial relations should also increase."

The Leader also stressed the need for further expansion of Iran-Oman relations. "We believe that the expansion of bilateral relations in all fields is beneficial for both countries," he added, according to khamenei.ir.

The Leader also referred to the negotiations that have taken place between the Iranian and Omani sides. "The important thing is that these negotiations should be followed up seriously until tangible results are achieved, and eventually relations should be expanded," he said.

Raisi phones Erdogan to congratulate his reelection

TEHRAN – Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi spoke over the phone with his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan to congratulate him on his re-election.

Raisi expressed hope that the economic, political, security, cultural and commercial relations between the two friendly and neighboring countries will expand even more in the new era, according to a statement by the Iranian presidency.

Raisi also pointed to the effective role of regional cooperation between Iran and Turkey in stabilizing and strengthening the stability and security of the region, and called for more acceleration of regional cooperation between the two countries with the aim of securing the interests of the countries in the region.

For his part, Erdogan expressed gratitude

for Raisi's goodwill on behalf of himself and the people of his country in the telephone conversation.

"In the upcoming period, the process of expanding relations between Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran will continue with more strength and seriousness in various fields," Erdogan said.

Erdogan also announced his country's desire to continue regional cooperation, including in the framework of the four-way cooperation between Turkey, Iran, Russia and Syria.

The call came after Raisi sent a congratulatory message to Erdogan. In the message, Raisi considered the re-election of Erdogan a sign of the continued valuable trust of the Turkish people in him.

Raisi also expressed confidence that in the

coming period, the friendly relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Turkey based on strong historical, cultural, religious ties, good neighborliness, mutual respect and common interests of the two nations will further be strengthened and the close cooperation between the two countries will provide more suitable conditions for strengthening the peace and stability and development of the region.

In a tense run-off after he failed to secure more than 50 percent of votes required for an outright victory in the first round on May 14, Erdogan secured a victory on May 28.

Erdogan received 52.14 percent of votes in the second round, beating his challenger, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, who won 47.86 percent, according to the Supreme Election Council.

necessary to maintain authority, especially at a time when the West has attacked the culture and identity of Muslim countries and the region."

Referring to the abundance of energy resources in Turkmenistan and the construction of the Friendship Dam, Larijani said, "It is necessary to deepen and expand economic discussions. Two countries can overcome the challenges and raise the level of their economic relations to a much higher level than the current situation."

Berdimuhamedow also said, "Your reference to the Friendship Dam was a subtle point. The water issue is a big problem in the region and some want to violate international laws. It is necessary for us to be serious about the issue of water and prevent problems in the water field."



Turkmenistan's Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow holding talks with President Raisi

Larijani also praised the Iran-Turkmenistan relations. "We are two neighbors with a long common border and our religious, cultural, historical and other connections bind us together. During the last 50 years, we have seen the least

challenges at the borders and, God willing, by strengthening these good relations, the bond between the two countries will become stronger," he said.

He added, "Paying attention to the historical and religious culture and identity is very

U.S., South Korea in talks to release frozen Iranian assets: report

From Page 1 ▶ The Korean newspaper also pointed to media speculation over the concessions that Iran is expected to make in exchange for getting its money unfrozen. It said that media reports alleged that Iran would release U.S. prisoners and limit uranium enrichment levels to 60% in return. These speculations have so far not been confirmed by officials.

The frozen Iranian funds have been the biggest obstacle to improvement in Tehran-Seoul relations. They have also been a source of tensions between the two countries.

South Korea seems to be willing to improve its relations with Iran by releasing its funds. "Analysts said if the \$7 billion Iranian funds are released, it would significantly improve Seoul's relations with Tehran, an energy and military power in the Middle East," the Korean newspaper wrote.

"There is nothing South Korea can gain from becoming an enemy of Iran," said Sung Il-kwang, a Korea University professor. "Korea will benefit from gaining access to Iran's huge market."



Majlis okays new education minister, industry minister proposed

TEHRAN – The Iranian parliament (Majlis) held a vote of confidence session on Tuesday which resulted Reza Morad Sahraei becoming new education minister.

Sahraei is a long-time cadet of the education ministry and has worked as a teacher for some time.

He has been the acting minister of education after the

resignation of Yousef Nouri.

Also, the parliament received a letter from the government on Tuesday regarding introduction of Abbas Ali Abadi as the new minister of Industry,

Mine and Trade.

The parliament is now expected to review the profile of the proposed minister before holding a vote of confidence for Ali Abadi.

SPORTS

Sports minister Sajadi meets APC President Rashed

TEHRAN – TEHRAN – Iran's Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs Hamid Sajadi met with Asian Paralympic Committee (APC) president Majid Rashed in Tehran on Monday.

In the meeting held in the ministry's headquarters, Sajadi welcomed the Emirati officials and APC delegation.

"Mr. Rashed has development plans for Asian Para athletes and he has traveled to Iran for the second time in a year. I think interaction allows for more effective communication and collaboration between APC and Iran's NPC," Sajadi said.

The APC delegation traveled to Tehran to attend the 30th Executive Board meeting of the APC in Iran's National Paralympic Committee (NPC) headquarters.

The Blues have the deadliest attacking line, scoring 52 goals, but Persepolis have shown their defensive strength by only conceding 13 goals in 30 league games.

Mehdi Ghaedi and Mohammad Mohebi of Esteghlal, along with Mehdi Torabi, Isa Alekasir, and Soroush Rafiei of Persepolis, are players who can have a significant impact in this crucial match for both teams.

The biggest night of the season in Iranian football is also the final match of the season. The final outcome will reveal if Esteghlal will take revenge for their league defeat to Persepolis or if Persepolis will continue to break their archrivals' heart.

Kevin Yamga doubt for Tehran derby

TEHRAN – Esteghlal have been dealt a blow ahead of Wednesday's Tehran derby with winger Kevin Yamga a major fitness doubt because of a foot injury.

The French player was forced to leave the match against Persepolis in May due to the thigh muscle injury, where Esteghlal suffered a 1-0 loss in Tehran derby.

Now, Esteghlal club have announced that Yamga is not fit for the Wednesday's match.

Esteghlal will play Iran league champions Persepolis in 2022-23 Hazfi Cup's final in Tehran's Azadi Stadium.

Esteghlal defender Rouzbeh Cheshmi will also likely miss the match due to the injury.

Persepolis forward Pereira to miss Tehran derby

TEHRAN – Persepolis Brazilian forward Leandro Pereira will most likely miss Tehran derby.

Pereira has suffered a foot injury.

Iran league champions Persepolis will play Esteghlal in the 2022-23 Hazfi Cup final in Tehran's Azadi Stadium on Wednesday.

Esteghlal defender Rouzbeh Cheshmi and the team's winger Kevin Yamga will also miss the match due to an injury.

Nassaji part ways with Spanish coach Inarejos

TEHRAN – Iranian top-flight club Nassaji parted ways with Spanish coach Coach Inarejos.

The 39-year-old coach was appointed as Nassaji coach in early April.

The Ghaemshahr-based club also parted company with Malian striker Adama Niane.

Nassaji will represent Iran in the 2023-24 AFC Champions League.

Tehran derby, the story continues

TEHRAN – This Wednesday, the Azadi Stadium in Tehran will host the Iranian Hazfi Cup final between Persepolis and Esteghlal. Two teams will lock horns together twice in less than two months.

The match is one of the most important events on the Iranian football calendar.

The upcoming Tehran derby is expected to be one of the most heated and challenging matches between the capital's archrivals.

Persepolis enter the field as the champions of the Iran Professional League (IPL). Will Persepolis be able to secure the exciting treble cups of the Iranian football this season? That's the big talking point.

The Reds can add the third major trophy to their cabinet on Wednesday after having already won the IPL title. The team achieved a treble in 2019 under leadership of Branko Ivankovic.

Esteghlal, who were the undefeated champions of the previous season and came third in the 2022-23 league table, are keenly seeking to win the trophy this season.

Esteghlal's fans and their Portuguese coach, Ricardo Sa Pinto, believed that they deserved to win the IPL. They claim that referees' mistakes prevented them from winning the league and view this Hazfi Cup final as a moment to restore their pride.

The 101st Tehran derby will pit the IPL's best attacking line, Esteghlal, against the league's strongest defensive line, Persepolis.

Iran to host 2024 Men's West Asian Weightlifting C'ships

TEHRAN – The eleventh edition of the Men's West Asian Weightlifting is to be held in Iran in 2024.

President of the West Asian Weightlifting Federation Mustafa Saleh Al-Mahdi, in a letter to Iran's federation, hailed the capacity and capability of the Islamic Republic of Iran in holding the big event.

The precise date of the sporting event will be announced later.

The previous edition of the Men's West Asian Weightlifting Championship was held in Qatar in the early January 2023.

Iran's monthly non-oil export to Kazakhstan rises 67%

TEHRAN- The value of Iran's non-oil export to Kazakhstan increased by 67 percent in the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-April 20), as compared to the first month of the past year, the spokesman of Trade Development Committee of the Iranian House of Industry, Mining, and Trade has announced.

Ruhollah Latifi said that Kazakhstan imported non-oil commodities worth \$12.5 million from Iran in the first month of this year.

As previously reported, the value of Iran's export to Kazakhstan increased by 27 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

Iran exported commodities worth \$210 million to Kazakhstan, and imported goods valued at \$318 million from the country in the previous year.

The value of Iran-Kazakhstan annual trade also rose 20 percent in the past year.

During a meeting between Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Gholam-Hossein Shafeie and Kazakhstan's Deputy Minister of Trade and Integration Kairat Torebayev, in late April, the two sides discussed the ways for the expansion of trade ties between the two countries.

In the meeting held at the place of ICCIMA, Shafeie emphasized the special position of Kazakhstan as a trade partner for Iran and said the presence of the two countries in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) pacts has opened new doors for the development of economic relations, and the private sectors of the two countries should take advantage of this opportunity.

Emphasizing that paying attention to rail, road and sea transportation infrastructure should be a priority of the two countries, the ICCIMA head stated: "The most important problem in the way of improving the level of trade cooperation between Iran and Kazakhstan is the issue of transportation. Solving this issue requires the will of the authorities of the two countries. The future of transit between the two countries can be bright due to Kazakhstan's connection to China and Iran's access to the open waters of Southeast Asia, provided that the infrastructure for exploiting this opportunity is available."

The Kazakh official for his part emphasized that his country is seeking to improve business relations with Iran as much as possible and said: "Iran is our main way to communicate with Turkey and West Asia. So far, we have had 20 million dollars in financial transactions, and the aim of these meetings is to increase this amount to 60 million dollars."

"Our economies have a good overlap. We are looking for further development of relations between the two countries, especially in the field of vegetables, fruits and fisheries", he added.

Back in last November, Iran and Kazakhstan inked a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the expansion of cooperation in the agriculture and trade fields as well as industries, logistics,



transportation and technology transfer in Tehran.

The MOU was signed by Javad Sadati-Nejad, the Iranian agriculture minister, and Zhumangarin Serik, the deputy prime minister and minister of trade and integration of Kazakhstan, who visited Tehran on top of a Kazakh delegation.

As reported, the effort of the two countries in order to increase the value of bilateral trade to about one billion dollars, based on the agreements of the presidents of the two countries, is considered in the MOU.

During a meeting between Kazakhstan Prime Minister Alikhan Ashanuly Smayilov and Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber on the sidelines of the Second Caspian Economic Forum in Moscow in October 2022, the Kazakh side emphasized the importance of improving the level of cooperation between Tehran and Astana in the oil swap, as well as industry, agriculture, scientific and cultural sectors.

Mokhber, for his part, said that the level of trade between Iran and Kazakhstan can quickly reach three billion dollars, considering the existing capacities of the two countries.

The Kazakh prime minister welcomed the proposal of Iran's first vice president and stated that the necessary fields and capacities of the two countries are ready to raise the level of trade exchanges between Iran and Kazakhstan and reach three billion dollars a year.

Mokhber then announced Iran's readiness to send mining companies to Kazakhstan and added: "Tehran is ready to cooperate with Astana in port, dam construction, hydropower plant construction, knowledge-based and technical and engineering services."

Also, during an Iran-Kazakhstan business forum hosted by the ICCIMA in Tehran in mid-October last year, the two sides stressed the need for removing visa issuance and transportation obstacles, to realize a \$6 billion annual trade target.

The business forum was attended by senior officials from both sides including Shafeie, Torebayev, Kazakh Ambassador to Tehran Ashkat Orazbay, and ICCIMA Deputy Head Mohammadreza Karbasi, as well as the head of Iranian chambers of commerce and businessmen from the two sides.

The members of the Iran-Kazakhstan Joint Chamber of Commerce, representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (RAI), the Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), and the Agriculture Ministry were also present at the event.

'Marine transport fleet development atop agenda of PMO's activities'



TEHRAN- The head of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) said that the development of the country's marine transportation fleet is a top agenda of this organization's activities.

Making the remarks in a live TV program on Monday night, Ali-Akbar Safaei said that Iran is a country that conducts more than 90 percent of its trade via sea, and noted: "For this reason, the

country's maritime fleet should be modernized in the north and south, especially in the north of the country, and the capacities should be also increased."

He further pointed to the strategies of the Ports and Maritime Organization in attracting domestic and foreign investment and said: "So far 110 trillion rials (about \$262 million) of private sector's investment has been attracted, and more than this amount of investment by the private sector is being made in the country's ports."

The investment of the private sector along with the investment of the Ports and Maritime Organization can create good conditions for the ports, the PMO head added.

He also said that good things have happened in the field of attracting foreign investors as well.

TEDPIX climbs 13,000 points on Tuesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 13,042 points to 2.288 million on Tuesday.

As reported, over 10.192 billion securities worth 81.048 trillion rials (about \$1.92 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).

Iran's 2-month non-oil trade stands at nearly \$15.5b

From page 1 ▶ Ruhollah Latifi said that 122.056 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$53.166 billion were exported in the previous year.

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

Latifi further announced that



37.18 million tons of non-oil commodities valued at \$59.655 billion were imported to the country during the past year, with a

10 percent drop in weight, and a 13 percent rise in worth, year on year.

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

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

CBI governor leaves Tehran for Washington to meet IMF officials

TEHRAN- Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Governor Mohammad-Reza Farzin left Tehran for Washington to meet the officials of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the CBI portal reported on Tuesday.

As reported, Mohsen Karimi, the CBI deputy governor for international affairs is accompanying Farzin on this trip.

Iran is currently a board member of the IMF.

The International Monetary Fund, in its latest regional report on "Middle East and Central Asia", said Iran's economy is expected to grow as much as two percent in 2023 despite tough sanctions imposed against the country.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is predicted to curb skyrocketing inflation and liquidity and also to boom its oil exports in the global market, Fars News Agency reported citing the

IMF report.

Reviewing 12 macroeconomic indexes of Iran in 2023, the IMF also announced that Iran's crude export will rise up by twofold in the current administration of President Ebrahim Raisi.

The IMF predicted that Iran's gross domestic product (GDP) will increase in this period while the inflation rate and liquidity growth will decline significantly.

'OPEC welcomes back Iran's full return to market when sanctions lifted'

TEHRAN- The secretary general of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) said that the OPEC family welcomes back the full return of Iran's oil production to the market, once the sanctions against its oil sector are lifted.

Haitham Al Ghais made the remarks in an interview conducted by Iranian Oil Ministry's news agency, Shana.

Answering to a question that how he assesses Iran's role and more generally OPEC's role in the market situation, and how Iran's full return to the market affect the situation, Al Ghais said:

"Iran is a founding member of OPEC and a key player in the global oil market. Iran is currently under sanctions and this is limiting its production. We know that Iran has the capacity to bring significant production volumes within a short period of time. This has been demonstrated in 2015-2016 when the sanctions were removed. I believe Iran has managed to increase its production by almost 1 mb/d of crude oil and condensate.

Indeed, we welcome the return of Iran's oil production in the future, when sanctions are lifted. We look forward to that day. The market is growing. There is increasing demand and we believe that Iran is a responsible player amongst its family members,

the countries in the OPEC group. I'm sure there will be good work together, in synchronization, to ensure that the market will remain balanced as OPEC has continued to do over the past many years."

The OPEC secretary general met Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Oil Minister Javad Oji in Tehran on Saturday (May 27).

During the meeting, President Raisi stressed the necessity of strengthening unity among the OPEC members in a bid to nullify the division created by the West.

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.

During the meeting with the Iranian president and oil minister, 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 (May 26) 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.

Export from Sistan-Baluchestan increases 14% in a year



TEHRAN- The value of non-oil export from Sistan-Baluchestan province, in the southeast of Iran, increased by 14% in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20), as compared to the preceding year, a provincial official announced.

Mehdi Shojaei, the general-director of the office of economic affairs coordination of the province's governorate, said that 4.6 million tons of products worth \$1.605 billion were exported from the province in the past year, indicating also six percent growth in terms of weight, year on year.

He named cement, clinker, coal, gas, agricultural poison, dates, tomatoes, laundry powder, plums, raisins, shrimp, fish and canned

food items as the main exported products, and Pakistan, Afghanistan, India, Iraq, Kuwait, UAE, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Indonesia, Tajikistan and Lebanon as the major export destinations.

Shojaei further announced that two million tons of non-oil goods valued at \$2.222 billion were imported to the province during the previous year, with 18 percent fall in weight, while 49 percent growth in worth, year on year.

He named wheat, rice, corn, oats, mango, banana, sesame, potato, live livestock, cloth, tea, mats, car spare parts, light and heavy car tires, cooling devices, spices, and fish as the major imported items and Russia, Pakistan, France, Germany, India, Brazil, United Arab Emirates, China, Thailand, Netherlands, Kenya and Afghanistan as the main sources of imports to the province in the past year.

As announced by the spokesman of Trade Development Committee of the Iranian House of Industry, Mining, and Trade, the value of Iran's non-oil export rose 10 percent in the past year.

Ruhollah Latifi said that 122.056 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$53.166 billion were

exported in the previous year.

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

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

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

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

BRICS on standby for new world order

From page 1 ▶ It's no surprise that the success of the BRICS mechanism has attracted many like-minded nations who are expressing a desire to join, from the UAE in Asia to Algeria in Africa and Argentina in Latin America.

Among other issues on the agenda at the BRICS summit in August is increased economic autonomy. Another is plans to decide on admitting new members and what criteria they would have to meet.

Talks on the enlargement of the bloc are mainly based on the interest of other countries over the self-made economic prosperity of its members, as other nations who seek BRICS membership are growing tired of dealing with the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank.

According to Anil Sooklal, South Africa's ambassador to BRICS, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran are in talks to join the economic bloc.

"What will be discussed is the expansion of BRICS and the modalities of how this will happen," Bloomberg has cited his as saying. "Thirteen countries have formally asked to join and another six have asked informally. We are getting applications to join every day."

Since its formation as the four-member BRIC in 2006, the bloc has only added one new member, South Africa, in 2010, which made it BRICS.

In March, South African Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor said international interest in the BRICS group was "huge." "Saudi Arabia is one," she said. "United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Algeria, and Argentina, as well as Mexico and Nigeria."

Iran is said to have already applied to join BRICS and its foreign minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has confirmed he will be participating in the Cape Town meeting at the official invitation of South Africa.

The latest submissions for membership give substance to the argument of the rapidly changing global developments following the Ukraine, Yemen and Afghanistan wars.

Among the attractive aspects of BRICS is that nations view the alliance of emerging markets as an alternative, and not necessarily a challenge, to a U.S.-led world order which is weakening, as experts point out, because of America's unilateral



foreign policy blunders.

Experts also argue that Europe lacks any sovereign world vision, as witnessed by the Ukraine war, where it has taken its marching orders from Washington and failed to bring peace to Ukraine, as European households suffer from record inflation as a direct result of the conflict on its doorstep.

The Ukraine war has had a direct impact at international scale when it comes to food and energy.

In the absence of any willpower to stamp its authority on regional affairs, let alone global affairs, Europe has, in essence, failed the international community as a reliable economic partner, forcing many to seek alternatives to the West.

Iran for instance has the second largest gas reserves in the world, something that Europe is desperately searching for, but has not approached Tehran about, because of its bizarre compliance to illegal U.S. unilateral sanctions. It now looks that the much-needed Iranian commodity will most likely be heading elsewhere.

While BRICS has its own bank (New Development Bank), it is not as large as the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund (IMF), but this could be down to just a matter of time as more countries seek to join the economic bloc.

The World Bank and the IMF were founded back in the 1940's and have failed in their declared goals of creating a more stable and prosperous global economy.

The austerity that comes with loans have brought increasingly high levels of poverty and inequality to countries who borrowed money from them. Just ask the people of Greece or Argentina. Critics accuse the U.S. of having unfair influence on the World Bank and the IMF.

On the other hand, the New Development Bank or the BRICS Bank, which was just established in 2015 and with its stated aim to "to help build a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable future for the planet" is appealing. It may sound like a good advertising slogan, but the facts on the ground show BRICS is attracting a record number of clients seeking to expand the bloc.

According to reports, BRICS is in talks with Saudi Arabia to become a member of its New Development Bank. While Saudi Arabia has yet to confirm this, such reports were unheard of just a year ago.

The idea itself makes sense as most oil purchasing clients are now based in the East and Latin America. But it will be a major setback for the United States, which will see an agonizing decline of petrodollars.

In the early 1970s, Washington and Riyadh reached an agreement that Saudi oil sales to all international clients be sold in dollars in exchange for American military protection, something that the U.S. failed to adhere to in the Saudi conflict with Yemen.

Today, Saudi Arabia is in talks

with Beijing to sell its oil to China in the Yuan and has restored diplomatic ties with Iran in another blow to the U.S. and its extremely mischievous proxy in the region Israel.

Should the Kingdom become a New Development Bank member, it would be a boost to the bank as well as for Saudi Arabia itself, as BRICS members, among other things, provide a safety net in times of difficulty.

For instance, BRICS members have not bowed to NATO pressure to join the sanctions regime against Russia.

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has argued that BRICS nations should establish their own common currency, highlighting the advantages of such a unified economic measure that would be independent of the U.S. dollar.

Under a U.S. dollar dominated world order, prosperity has been taken over by poverty while peace has been replaced by violence.

And BRICS is not all about the economy.

In April, BRICS' deputy ministers and special envoys held a meeting in Cape Town to discuss, among other issues, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as developments in the Persian Gulf states, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Western Sahara and Yemen.

Such platforms provide an opportunity to bring emerging markets together to discuss both the financial and political aspects of the world.

WORLD HEADLINES

Moscow attacked by drones: mayor



Multiple drones attacked the Russian capital on Tuesday morning, damaging several buildings, Moscow Mayor Sergey Sobyamin has said.

Sobyamin ordered the evacuation of residents from two apartment blocks that were hit, according to messages posted on Telegram.

The mayor, citing data from the city medical services, said that no residents of the buildings hit by the aircraft were seriously hurt. He added that two people requested medical assistance at the scene, but no one had to be taken to the hospital.

Moscow Region Governor Andrey Vorobyov wrote on Telegram that "several drones" were shot down by air defenses as they were flying towards the city.

Telegram channel SHOT posted an unverified video of what it said was the destruction of a drone mid-air.

Settler attacks on Palestinians in West Bank leave man in critical condition

Israeli settler attacks on Palestinians in the West Bank has left a man in critical condition and drew international condemnation, including from the US.

Settlers on Friday attacked local farmers and set cars and farms alight near the villages of Turmosayia and Al Mughayyer north of Ramallah, eyewitnesses told CNN and local journalists.

One man remains in critical condition in the hospital on Saturday, having been shot in the head, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Health. Eight others were injured.

Italian secret service agents among victims of Lake Maggiore boat accident

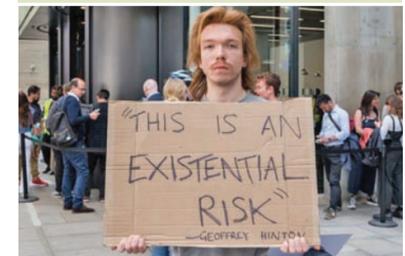
Two Italian secret service agents and a retired member of Israel's security forces were among the four victims from Sunday's fatal boat accident on Lake Maggiore, northern Italy.

The Italian victims were named as Tiziana Barnobi, 53, and Claudio Alonzi, 62, a delegate of Italy's secret service confirmed, while a spokesperson for Israel's foreign ministry identified the Israeli victim as Shimon Erez, 60.

The boat captain, whose Russian partner Anna Bozhkova, 50, also died in the incident, is under investigation for culpable manslaughter, according to the Italian prosecutor.

The 16-meter (52-foot) houseboat was carrying 24 people at over capacity when an apparent waterspout struck it, causing it to capsize on Sunday evening, CNN affiliate Sky Tg24 reported.

Artificial intelligence could lead to extinction, experts warn



Artificial intelligence could lead to the extinction of humanity, experts - including the heads of OpenAI and Google DeepMind - have warned.

Dozens have supported a statement published on the webpage of the Centre for AI Safety.

"Mitigating the risk of extinction from AI should be a global priority alongside other societal-scale risks such as pandemics and nuclear war" it reads.

But others say the fears are overblown.

Sam Altman, chief executive of ChatGPT-maker OpenAI, Demis Hassabis, chief executive of Google DeepMind and Dario Amodei of Anthropic have all supported the statement.

The Centre for AI Safety website suggests a number of possible disaster scenarios:

* AI could be weaponised - for example, drug-discovery tools could be used to build chemical weapons

* AI-generated misinformation could destabilise society and "undermine collective decision-making"

* The power of AI could become increasingly concentrated in fewer and fewer hands, enabling "regimes to enforce narrow values through pervasive surveillance and oppressive censorship"

* Enfeeblement, where humans become dependent on AI "similar to the scenario portrayed in the film Wall-E"

South Africa moves to let Putin attend summit despite arrest warrant

The South African government has said it will extend its Diplomatic Immunity and Privileges Act to all international officials who plan to attend an August summit in the country. The controversial move was clearly an attempt to pave the way for Russian President Vladimir Putin to travel to South Africa despite the International Criminal Court (ICC) issuing a warrant for his arrest in March over alleged war crimes in Ukraine.

As a signatory to the ICC, South Africa may be obliged to arrest Putin if he sets foot in the country, but its government appears to be looking for a way around that obligation.

Senior government officials tell CBS News that Putin's possible attendance at the summit of the BRICS bloc of developing nations - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - has been a topic of discussion at the "highest levels" in South Africa since the arrest warrant was issued.

Biden planning new China crackdown: media

US President Joe Biden is finalizing an executive order to restrict American investment in China's defense industry, Axios reported on Friday. The move will further ratchet up a campaign that Beijing calls "economic coercion."

The order will be released later this summer, Axios stated, citing anonymous sources. Rumors of an impending order have circulated in the US media since April, but Axios' sources said that work on the decree was slowed by Washington's efforts to convince its G7 allies to issue similar restrictions.

"Clear progress" on this issue was made at the G7 summit in Japan this month, one source said.

It is unclear how broadly the order will define China's "defense industry." China's military-industrial complex is almost entirely state-owned, and has already been sanctioned by the Biden administration. Instead, the decree will cover "the fields of semiconductors, artificial intelligence and quantum computing," Bloomberg reported last month, noting that these technologies all have military applications.

Biden has already attempted to throttle Beijing's technological progress, imposing export controls last October to block the sale to China of the hardware and software used to produce semiconductors. Furthermore, the US is currently in talks with Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan to formalize the so-called 'Chip 4 Alliance', which Beijing sees as an attempt to exclude China from semiconductor supply chains.

30 peacekeepers injured in clashes in northern Kosovo

From page 1 ▶ Hungary's defence minister said on Facebook "more than 20 Hungarian soldiers" were among the wounded, with seven in serious but stable condition.

Italy's foreign minister said three of its soldiers were seriously wounded, and the country's prime minister, Giorgia Meloni, joined NATO in calling for "all parties to take a step back to lower tensions".

Boycotted elections

Kosovo's Serbs boycotted last month's elections in northern towns, which allowed ethnic Albanians to take control of local councils despite a very low turnout of less than 3.5 percent.

Kosovar Prime Minister Albin Kurti's government officially installed the mayors last week, defying calls to ease the tensions by the European Union and the United States, which have both supported the territory's 2008 independence from Serbia.

Many Serbs are demanding the withdrawal of Kosovo police forces - whose presence in northern Kosovo has long sparked resistance - as well as the ethnic Albanian mayors they do not consider their true representatives.

NATO strongly condemned the "unprovoked" attacks against KFOR troops, adding that such actions were "totally unacceptable".

"Violence must stop immediately. We call on



all sides to refrain from actions that further inflame tensions, and to engage in dialogue," NATO said in a statement.

Bottom of Form

Kosovo police said "organised" demonstrators rallied in northern Kosovo towns, home to many ethnic Serbs who reject Kosovo's independence from Serbia.

Kosovo unilaterally declared independence

from Serbia in 2008, and Belgrade and its key allies Russia and China have refused to recognise it, effectively preventing Kosovo from having a seat at the United Nations.

Serbs in Kosovo remained largely loyal to Belgrade, especially in the north, where they make up a majority and reject every move by Pristina to consolidate its control over the region.

Iranian qanat masterpiece of creative genius, official says



TEHRAN – The Iranian qanat system stands as a masterpiece of creative genius and evidence of a creative civilization that flourished on the Iranian plateau, demonstrating their remarkable achievements, an official with the tourism ministry has said.

“The Iranian qanat is a testament to the advanced civilization of the people who inhabited the Iranian plateau,” Reza Sameh said on Sunday while visiting the Qanat of Zarch, known as the world’s longest subterranean aqueduct in central Yazd province.

Qanat of Zarch is a magnificent representation of the resourcefulness and cultural heritage of Iran and proof of its significant advancements in the area of engineering, the official added.

Reviving these qanats across the country is important to showcase the remarkable history of engineering and urban infrastructure in Iran, he noted.

The Qanat of Zarch originated from the village of Fahraj stretches some 80 km across the north-east of Yazd and runs at a depth of 30-40 m beneath the surface. It reaches Zarch, where the water is used for irrigation in the lower lands.

Based on a survey, some 37,000 out of a total of 120,000 ancient subsurface water supply systems, qanats, are still in use in Iran in arid and semi-arid regions of the country.

A selection of eleven qanats is collectively been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list under the title of Persian Qanat. Each of them epitomizes many others in terms of geographic scopes, architectural designs, and other motives. Such subterranean tunnels provide exceptional testimony to cultural traditions and civilizations in desert areas with an arid climates.

Generally, each qanat comprises an almost horizontal tunnel for collecting water from an underground water source, usually an alluvial fan, into which a mother well is sunk to the appropriate level of the aquifer.

UNESCO has it that “The qanats provide exceptional testimony to cultural traditions and civilizations in desert areas with an arid climate.”

Such constructions are still in practice, many of which were made from the 13th century onwards. Yazd is among ancient cities which have applied this concept to make urban settlements possible in central Iran.

The earliest water supply constructions in Yazd are dated to date from the Sassanid era (224 to 651 CE) while many others have been continually repaired and used over time, most surviving ab-anbars can be today traced to the late Safavid and Qajar periods.

Iran rosewater festival valuable enough to be on UNESCO list

By Tohid Mahmoudpour

TEHRAN – Rosewater festival in Iran, estimated to be the birthplace of rosewater production in the world, is a unique sociocultural event that is priceless enough to be on the list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO.

Known as Golab-Giri in Persian, the ancient ceremony is annually held in Iran to introduce the paramount role played by the rose in cuisine, cosmetics, medicine, and traditions.

The treasured festival is held every year in the spring, usually from mid-May to the end of June.

Rosewater, Golab in Persian, is traditionally produced from damask roses.

This very sweet-smelling kind of flower is locally called Gol-e Mohammadi or Gol-e Sorkh in Iranian culture.

When spring approaches in Iran, roses blossom in every corner of the country.

Reportedly, Iran is considered the leading producer of damask roses in the world, accounting for 70% of the global output.

Mohammadi roses mainly grow in the provinces of Fars, Kerman, and Isfahan, as well as some parts of West Azarbaijan province, namely Khoy, and Urmia.

But Kashan and Qamsar remain the main production center of rosewater in Iran.

A glance at the traditional distillation process

Although the ancient method of rosewater making has changed over time, it has still retained its originality.

Flower pickers start working early in the morning before sunrise and they have to finish the task before noon. Based on an old farmers’ myth, flowers picked before sunrise will spread a richer and stronger odor.

The petals are put into massive copper pots and



boiled.

Each pot is filled with 80 liters of water and around 30 kilograms of rose petals, and it is connected to metal pipes so that steam can pass through to produce the hydrosol.

The extracted water is then kept in special bottles.

The longest the distillation is, the better will be the quality of the homemade rosewater.

Local residents speculate rosewater traditionally distilled is of higher quality than rosewater manufactured in factories, probably due to the speedier harvesting and distillation processes.

Rosewater-based products

Rosewater and rose oil are thought to have therapeutic benefits. Some claim that rose oil soothes the mind and lessens anxiety, stress, and depression. The product is said to help boost the health of the skin.

A bottle of tonic liquid is found in the kitchen of every Iranian household as it plays a key role in the cuisine of the Asian country.

The zesty ingredient spices up tea, herbal drinks, and local dishes.

Rose water is also used as a fragrance in religious ceremonies around the globe. Water used to clean the Kaaba, the Qibla for Muslims located in Mecca, combines water from the Zamzam Well with rosewater as an additive.

Qom handicrafts on show at Golestan Palace

TEHRAN –A selection of handicrafts and traditional arts made by artisans from Qom province has been put on display in an exhibition at the Golestan Palace in Tehran, CHTN reported on Tuesday.

The exhibit has been designed to boost handmade product sales and offer a marketplace for craftspeople to showcase and sell their creations, the report added.

The exhibition will come to an end on Thursday.

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 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 towns in Iran from 10 to 14. Shiraz has been dubbed “the world city of [various] handicrafts.”

Ecotourism is a reliable way to reduce poverty in Iran, diplomat says

By Eshrat Mardi

YANGLING, China – Ali Nemati, Minister Counsellor of the Iranian Embassy in China said, Ecotourism is a reliable way to reduce poverty in Iran.

Speaking on the second day of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Forum on Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development in Yangling, Shaanxi province of China, Nemati described the geographical location of Iran, the weather, and the tourism potential of the country and then said: Iran, in terms of international security indicators and according to the World Travel Risk map, is as safe as countries such as Britain, Sweden, Canada, and Denmark.

“Iran has been recognized as the most affordable foreign tourist destination by Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report. Iran offers the highest gains at the lowest costs, making it an attractive option for travelers seeking unique experiences without breaking the bank,” Tehran Times reported Nemati said.

In another part of his speech, the Minister Counsellor of the Iranian Embassy to China mentioned history, culture, architecture and geographical diversity, exquisite handicrafts, nature, and biodiversity and explained the significance of ecotourism in poverty reduction. In this regard, he said: Ecotourism serves



as a platform for urban dwellers to witness the destructive effects of industrialization, raising awareness about the importance of protecting the environment. It provides an opportunity for individuals to temporarily escape pollution, stress, and daily pressures, allowing them to reconnect with nature.

Ecotourism plays a crucial role in distributing tourists during peak seasons, ensuring a more balanced flow and reducing strain on popular destinations. It fosters cultural exchange between ethnic groups, strengthening solidarity and mutual understanding among communities. It increases cultural exchange and helps to strengthen solidarity and mutual understanding, Ali Nemati added.

According to the minister counsellor, Ecotourism creates em-

ployment opportunities, increases production and income, and strengthens local identity. By promoting services and adopting an environmental approach, ecotourism enhances societal attitudes and awareness towards rural villages, improving infrastructural and architectural factors. It also addresses sociocultural issues, promoting a holistic development approach.

“To harness the potential of ecotourism we must focus on improving the attractions and service quality of rural tourism through targeted planning and training. Additionally, it is essential to empower local communities through skills training, restore historical monuments, and facilitate the flow of tourists to rural areas,” he said, adding, “To ensure the success of ecotourism initiatives, we must

also develop the necessary infrastructure, including transportation networks and accommodation facilities. Diversification of tourism products, such as ecotourism, agricultural tourism, and creative tourism, will cater to a broader range of interests and attract a diverse set of visitors.”

He went on to explain Iran’s policies for the development and promotion of ecotourism and said: We are proud to report a significant growth in ecotourism in Iran. The number of tourists visiting eco-lodges has steadily increased, and that with it has brought an increase in the number of eco-lodges, contributing to economic development and poverty reduction. Our ongoing efforts aim to further promote and expand ecotourism opportunities across the country.

Baneh rose festival hosts visitors from across Iran

TEHRAN – Domestic travelers from across Iran attend a rosewater festival underway in a massive garden located in Baneh county of Kordestan province.

The joyous celebration of roses, locally known as Golab-Giri or rosewater festival, is annually observed during May and June when rose fields bloom and produce an exquisite scent.

Covering 33,000 square meters, the garden produces around eight tons of pink roses each year, a local tourism official said on Monday.

Shoulder to shoulder with farmers, visitors pick rose petals to be distilled later in the festival to create the fragrant oil, using a network of large copper pots and pipes.

Moreover, the festival features lively bazaars where local vendors sell all kinds of rose-infused products such as perfumes, soaps, and even tea. In fact, rose water is an essential ingredient in Persian cuisine. In addition, there are various musical and cultural

events, including folk dances and traditional performances.

The concentration of flowers and herbs has a long history in Iran. Many believe that traditionally distilled rose water is of higher quality than that produced in factories, probably due to the shorter time between harvest and distillation.

Rosewater is traditionally derived from a very sweet-smelling type of flower best known in the country as Mohammadi roses. The flower harvest is almost complete in the early morning. Rumor has it that the quantity and quality of essential oil decreases due to delays in harvesting or shipping to the distillery.

80 liters of water and almost 30 kilograms of rose petals are placed in each pot, which is connected with metal pipes to allow steam to pass through, thus creating the hydrosol. Distillation waste can either be fed to animals or composted.

Locals believe that rose oil and rose water



have therapeutic effects. Some say that rose oil calms the mind and relieves depression, grief, stress, and tension. Rose water products have been reported to help improve skin health, colds and digestive issues.

A highlight of Iran’s cultural calendar, Golab-Giri is a reminder of the importance of preserving and cherishing these ancient customs and traditions that have been passed down through generations. However, it is not only a celebration of the rose harvest but also a celebration of Iranian hospitality and generosity.

Restoration work begins on Qajar-era mansion



TEHRAN – The Qajar-era (1789-1925) Samimi Mansion in the ancient city of Ramhormoz, the southwestern province of Khuzestan, has undergone some rehabilitation works, a local tourism official has said.

A budget of 8.6 billion rials

(\$17,200) has been allocated to the project, Seyyed Abbas Mousavi explained on Tuesday.

The project involves repairing damaged parts and replacing worn-out materials, the official added.

Spanning over a vast area of 16,500 square meters, the mansion’s design is heavily influenced by Western gardens, owing to the owner’s prolonged stay in Europe.

However, Persian influences have also been seamlessly incorporated

into the structure. The combination of the two styles has resulted in a stunning architectural masterpiece.

The historical structure has been inscribed on the national heritage list.

Khuzestan is home to three UNESCO World Heritage sites of Susa, Tchogha Zanbil, and Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System yet it is a region of raw beauty where its visitors could spend weeks exploring. The province is also a cradle for handicrafts and arts whose crafters inherited from their preceding generations.

Mayamey hosts poppy flower festival

TEHRAN –The 16th edition of a flower festival dedicated to the poppy plains was held in Mayamey, northcentral Iran on Monday, a local tourism official has said.

The festival was attended by local cultural officials and tourists as well as nature lovers, Seyyed Mohammad Sadeq Razavian explained on Tuesday.

Performing folk music, setting up handicrafts market, and visiting tourist attractions of the nearby villages were parts of the festival, the official added.

Moreover, an Iranian traditional wrestling competition was also held on the sidelines of

the festival, he noted.

The oldest and perhaps most beautiful evidence of flower bouquets in Iran is found in the stone carvings of the UNESCO-registered Persepolis.

Over 2500 years old, the stone carvings show Darius I (550 – 486 BC), holding the scepter of authority in one hand and a lotus flower with two buds in his right hand as a symbol of royalty.

Second Announcement

Shahrekord Cement Industries Company

Renewal of Shahrekord Cement Company’s Export Clinker Sale’s Announcement

Shahrekord Cement Industries Company (Private Joint Stock) intends to sell 300,000/ tons (in parts of 50,000 tons) of its export cement clinker in 2023. Therefore, all competent companies having the ability to purchase and export the said amount, are hereby invited to get the auction documents from the company’s address, located at No.4/6, Azadegan Lane, beside Tehran Clinic Hospital, Ghaem Magham Farahani Ave., Tehran, Postal Code: 1586735914 or through the **Company’s website as:** <http://shahrekordcement.com>

The document should be sent to the mentioned address and delivered in the sealed envelope to Mr. Mohammad Ehsan Ghafoori in managing director’s office until 03 June 2023 .

If you need more information, please contact us with Phone No. +98 21 88704400-2, Ext. 137 Fax No: +98 21 88715415

E-Mail:info@shahrekordcement.com , E-Mail:nazari@shahrekordcement.com

Shahrekord Cement Industries Company

Iran's protection for refugee children is encouraging: UNICEF

TEHRAN – Robin Nandy, the representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Iran, has said the country's comprehensive program for the protection of refugee children is encouraging.

Making investments in programs and services to better care for and support children affected by migration and asylum will reduce costs in the future, he added.

He made the remarks in a meeting with Ali Kazemi, the deputy justice minister, IRNA reported.

Emphasizing the important role of non-governmental organizations in supporting refugee and immigrant children and teenagers, Nandy expressed hope that holding educational workshops will lead to the promotion of children's rights and justice for children.

Kazemi, for his part, said some 63 percent of Afghan refugees have selected Iran as their destination and the government does its best to settle the refugees with dignity.

The situation of non-Iranian children and adolescents and their families who have sought refuge in the Islamic Republic of Iran due to migration or injuries caused by unforeseen events and natural disasters or issues such as war has always been of concern to Iran, IRNA quoted Kazemi as saying.

It is expected that international organizations and other countries will also provide more assistance in this field in line with their humanitarian responsibilities and duties arising from human rights conventions, he added.

The Law on the protection of children and adolescents considers protection as the right of all people under the age of 18 who live within the borders of the Islamic Republic, Kazemi highlighted.



"According to the law, equal and non-discriminatory treatment in terms of color, race, religion, language, health, gender, ethnicity, nationality, and family status is the right of every child living in Iran.

Some 800,000 documented and 2.6 million undocumented Afghans are living in Iran.

The indisputable principle that governs all measures related to children and various legal protections have been considered for non-Iranian children and adolescents."

The Islamic Republic of Iran is currently host to one of the largest and most protracted refugee populations in the world, the majority of whom are Afghan refugees.

The country is home to over 800,000 registered refugees and some 2.6 million undocumented Afghans. Today, more than 500,000 Afghan children- including undocu-

mented Afghans and those who have newly arrived in Iran following the Taliban-takeover-are benefitting from Iran's inclusive education policies, one of the most progressive in the world.

Many of the refugees living in Iran are second and third-generation, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Iran has spent more than \$352 million in the current school year that started on September 23 on the education of Afghan students.

Over 670,000 students of Afghan nationals are studying in Iran, and the cost of educating these students is more than \$352 million, IRNA reported.

In the current school year, \$17 million of international aid and \$335.631 million dollars from internal sources have been spent on the education of Afghan nationals.

However, international organizations have paid less than 3.9 percent of the cost of education for Afghan students in Iran in the last two years.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei issued a decree in May 2015 that allows all foreign nationals, even those who have no identification and are living in Iran illegally, to attend schools in the country.

Relying on moral and Islamic principles, the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has created equal conditions in benefiting from educational opportunities for Afghan students.

In the previous school year, some 556,000 Afghan students studied in Iranian schools.

Afghan students are currently studying in 6,000 schools across Iran, of which 88 schools are being built with the participation of international organizations.

The literacy rate among refugees has increased significantly in recent decades. So that the literacy rate of Afghan immigrants in Iran is higher than the number of literate people in Afghanistan, according to a report published in June 2022 by the research center of the Iranian Parliament (Majlis).

Iran is among the 15 successful countries in attracting international university students, according to Mohammad Javad Salmanpour, the deputy head of the Organization for Student Affairs.

The education of foreign students in Iran has grown significantly compared to previous years, even last year, it has doubled, he said.

Iran has the ability and capacity to have more than 250,000 foreign students by 2026, he stated.

Ivo Freijssen, Representative for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Iran, has said Iran is an exemplary country that has acted very well in hosting refugees and has been hosting them for a long time.

Forty years have passed since Iran started hosting them [refugees]. As we have always said, Iran has had positive approaches toward refugees, we appreciate that, and we are honored to support Iran's efforts, he said in an exclusive interview with Iran Newspaper published on September 4, 2022.

Nature tourism, an opportunity to explore Lorestan's rich biodiversity



TEHRAN – The western province of Lorestan holds a 30 percent share of the country's plant and animal diversity, and nature tourism is an opportunity to introduce these capacities.

Nature tourism, also called nature-based tourism, is tourism based on the natural attractions of an area. It consists of responsible travel to experience natural areas and their landscape, flora, and fauna, protecting the environment and improving the quality of life of locals.

Lorestan is located in the heart of the Zagros mountains and plays an important role in the ecosystem of this region.

Out of the total 6 million hectares of Zagros for-

ests, 1.2 million hectares are located in Lorestan, and on the other hand, this large capacity has enriched the biodiversity in this region.

Plant species such as oak, pine, and juniper forests and animal species such as hunting birds, partridges, brown bears, leopards, mountain goats, rams and sheep, and Luristan newt are among the valuable genetic resources of the province.

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

Undoubtedly, the outlook and perspective of experts and people towards the issue of genetic and biological reserves have changed over time.

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

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

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

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

The lower the number of genetic reserves, the more difficult it will be for planning management. In such a situation, the role and importance of bio-banks and gene banks become apparent.

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

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

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

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

'Salt particles raising from Lake Urmia contained by 80%'

Salt particles raising from the catchment basin of Lake Urmia has been contained by nearly 80 percent, Farhad Sarkhosh, head of the provincial department for the Lake Urmia restoration program at West Azarbaijan has said.

In cooperation with the Forests, Range and Watershed Management Organization, some saplings and shrubs have been planted in the catchment basin of Lake Urmia to slow down the wind giving rise to salt particles since past three years, which cost 600 billion rials (nearly \$14 million), Sarkhosh said.

He went on to say that the major salt particle hotspots in the West Azarbaijan province include Jabal Kandi village in Urmia County, Saporghan, Urmia, Choopanloo and Miandoab, which are highly contained by planting vegetation, ISNA reported on Saturday.

کنترل ۸۰ درصد ریزگردهای نمکی در باچه ارومیه

مدیر دفتر استانی ستاد احیای دریاچه ارومیه در آذربایجان غربی گفت: نزدیک به ۸۰ درصد از ریزگردهای نمکی حوضه آبریز دریاچه ارومیه کنترل شده است.

فرهاد سرخوش در گفت‌وگو با خبرنگار ایسنا با اشاره به اینکه حجم آب ورودی به دریاچه ارومیه باعث مرطوب شدن نمک‌های سطح دریاچه و کنترل ریزگردهای نمکی آن می‌شود افزود: خارج از بستر دریاچه ارومیه و در حوضه آبریز با همکاری منابع طبیعی و کاشت نهال و درختچه‌ها ریزگردهای نمکی کنترل می‌شود که از سال ۹۳ تا ۹۶ در این راستا ۶۰ میلیارد تومان هزینه شده است.

وی با بیان اینکه کانون بحرانی ریزگرد در آذربایجان غربی خاطرنشان کرد: کانون بحرانی ریزگردها در استان شامل منطقه جبل کندی در ۴۵ کیلومتری ارومیه، منطقه سیورغان ارومیه، چوپان لو سلماس، و میانداوب است که با نهال کاری تا حدود زیادی از این ریزگردها مهار شده‌اند.

World MS Day: building connections to quality care

By Mehdi Garshasbi

World MS Day is officially marked on May 30. It brings the global MS community together to share stories, raise awareness, and campaign with everyone affected by multiple sclerosis (MS).

'Connections' is the theme for World MS Day 2020-2023. The MS Connections campaign is all about building community connections, self-connection, and connections to quality care.

It is an opportunity to advocate for better services, celebrate support networks, and champion self-care.

In 2009, the MS International Federation (MSIF) and its members initiated the first World MS Day.

Multiple sclerosis is one of the most common diseases of the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord). Today, 2.8 million people around the world have MS.

MS is an inflammatory demyelinating condition. It is caused by damage to myelin – a fatty material that insulates nerves.

In MS, the loss of myelin affects the way nerves conduct electrical impulses to and from the brain. Symptoms can include blurred vision, weak limbs, tingling sensations, unsteadiness, memory problems, and fatigue.

Most people with MS are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 40. MS is two to three times more common in women than in men. There is no drug that can cure MS, but treatments are available which can modify the course of the disease.

World MS Day activities take place throughout the month of May and in early June. The campaign offers flexibility for individuals and organizations to achieve a variety of goals.

Challenging social barriers and stigma that can leave people affected by MS feeling lonely and isolated; Building communities that support and nurture people affected by MS; Promoting self-care and healthy living with MS; Lobbying decision makers for better services and effective treatment for people with MS; and Connecting people affected by MS-to-MS research are the World Day objectives.

In 2005, MS was included among rare and special diseases and is supported by the Ministry of Health.

Registration and census systems have been launched to draw up general policies in the diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of patients, as well as academic MS committees, to confirm the disease and address issues.

Amir-Hesam Alirezaei, a Health Ministry official, has said some 95,000 MS patients have been so far identified in the country.

Currently, the largest number of MS patients are in the provinces of Isfahan, Fars, and Tehran, he added.

The prevalence of the disease is still 2.5 times higher in women than in men and in the age group of 20 to 45 years.

According to global statistics, the average prevalence of MS is 112 people per 100,000 people in the world. In Iran, the prevalence of MS is equal to 111 patients per 100 thousand population. So, Iran is among the countries with a high prevalence of MS.

In recent decades, the prevalence rate has increased in the country, especially in urban areas.

This issue indicates the importance of diagnosing and controlling the disease in young and middle-aged people, considering its moderate to high prevalence.

On average, about 5 thousand patients are added to the population of patients in the country every year.

"Currently, there is no problem with domestically produced Iranian drugs, and we sometimes have a shortage of imported drugs due to sanctions, which has now been eliminated," Alirezaei said.

The provision of the newest drugs used by patients (monoclonal antibodies) with high efficacy is emphasized by the Ministry of Health.

Support for patients in the form of financial packages is compiled and communicated



by obtaining opinions from scientific advisory committees.

It is aimed to reduce the financial burden of patients with the support coverage of basic insurance funds for special and rare diseases.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Grouped together, rare diseases affect 6-8 percent (or about 30 million people) out of the 508 million population of EU countries. This roughly equals the estimated prevalence of diabetes in the World Health Organization European Region, which in 2013 was 6.8 percent of 658.7 million adults in the 20 to 79-year age group.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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MAY 31, 2023

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Love children and be kind to them and keep your promises to them since they only know you as their providers.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:03 Evening: 19:35 Dawn: 3:06 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:50 (tomorrow)

Collections and study of Persian art in Germany

Part 1

Until the 19th century, Persian works of art entered collections in Germany by mere chance.

From then on, works of art from all periods of Persian history were collected systematically to acquire knowledge of the world and to educate and inspire artists and craftsmen.

Collecting, exhibiting, and studying Persian art reached an unprecedented scale in the 20th century.

Before 1867

A very limited number of Persian works of art entered the art collections of noble families as a result of marriage, war booty, or diplomatic gifts; some were acquired by diplomats and travelers who had been in Persia.

State libraries and treasuries such as those of Baden, Bavaria, Saxony, Schleswig-Holstein, and Prussia also added Persian works of art to their collections.

They seem to have consisted mainly of arms and armor, textiles, and carpets; they rarely included manuscripts.

A mission sent to the court of Shah Safi I (1629-42) returned in 1639 with gifts of textiles and carpets which entered the collections of Duke Friedrich III of Holstein-Gottorp.

In commemoration of this mission a collection of Safavid art is on exhibition in the Schleswig-Holsteinisches Landersmuseum Schloss Gottorp.

Adam Olearius (1599-1671), a member of this mission, brought with him a small collection of manuscripts which were sold in 1672 to the Grand Elector of Prussia and thus became the first collection of Persian manuscripts to enter the Royal Library in Berlin.

In Munich, the House of Wittelsbach probably acquired Polonaise carpets and a silk tapestry rug through the marriage in 1642 of the Elector Philipp Wilhelm von der Pfalz-Neuburg with Anna Catharina Constanza, a daughter of King Sigismund III Wasa of Poland.

They are now in the Residenzmuseum, Schatzkammer der Residenz, and in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich.

Persian works of art in the Badisches Landesmuseum at Karlsruhe may have belonged to the Margrave Ludwig Wilhelm of Baden, who probably seized them in the victory over the Ottomans in 1691, and which later entered the art collection of the Baden family.

Among the booty, later known as the "Türkenbeute," were a silk carpet and Safavid textiles, which were sometimes used as envelopes for letters.

In 1817, Persian manuscripts collected by Heinrich Friedrich von Diez (1751-1817) during his term as Prussian ambassador at the Ottoman court in Istanbul entered the Royal Library in Berlin.

The collection included albums of miniatures, drawings, calligraphies, and designs that later became famous as the Diez albums.

In 1857, the collection of the Royal Library was supplemented by manuscripts acquired in Persia during the Prussian mission under Julius Freiherr von Minutoli.

Julius Heinrich Petermann (1801-71) traveled in the Near East and Persia, where he acquired Sassanid seals, Islamic manuscripts, and other objects for Berlin.

The seals (Horn and Steindorff, eds.) entered

the Oriental collections of the royal museums, and the illustrated manuscripts went to the Royal Library in 1857.

The other objects went to the Berlin Museum für Völkerkunde, founded in 1873. Other German libraries, such as the Herzogliche Bibliothek Gotha (Pertsch), and the Royal State Library in Munich also collected Persian manuscripts.

The Royal State Library in Munich acquired the library of the French Orientalist Étienne-Marc Quatremère in 1858, which included illuminated and illustrated Persian manuscripts.

From 1867 to 1918

International art exhibitions around the middle of the 19th century nourished interest in the arts and crafts of other countries.

The first exhibition (London, 1851) seems to have had little immediate effect on German collectors, but in the wake of these exhibitions museums for applied art and ethnography were founded within the German states.

Often affiliated to schools of arts and crafts, these institutions collected art from all over the world to educate and inspire art students.

Acquisition of Persian art by German museums began with the exhibitions of 1867 and 1873 in Paris and Vienna, respectively.

The Kunstgewerbemuseum was founded in Berlin in 1867. Similar museums, indeed nearly all those that today show Persian art as part of their pre-Islamic or Islamic collections, followed in Dresden (Kunstgewerbemuseum), Düsseldorf (Kunstmuseum), Frankfurt am Main (Museum für Kunsthandwerk), Hamburg (Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe), Hagen, later Essen (Folkwang-Museum), Hannover (Kestner-Museum), Cologne (Museum für Angewandte Kunst), Krefeld (Deutsches Textilmuseum), Leipzig (Städtisches Kunstgewerbemuseum), and Munich (Bayerisches Nationalmuseum).

Julius Lessing, the director of the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Berlin and the first European to publish a book on carpets, was responsible for the numerous acquisitions of Persian works of art for that museum.

After 1877, Wilhem von Bode, the curator of the Royal museums in Berlin, acquired numerous carpets for the same museum, many of which later became part of the Islamic department (Enderlein).

Bode also published the first article on a Persian carpet, which later was expanded into a book that became the standard work on carpets in Germany.

Otto von Falke, Lessing's successor, wrote a study on textiles which included Persian textiles from the Sassanid period up to the 18th century.

Friedrich Sarre (1865-1945), a leading German figure in the study of Islamic and Persian art who had already been to Turkey in 1895, began his tours of Persia in 1897.

During these years, he acquired a collection of Persian art of pre-Islamic as well as Islamic periods. Sarre was interested in all facets of Persian art, as witnessed by his publications on architecture (Sarre, 1910), rock-reliefs (Sarre and Herzfeld 1910), and drawings (Sarre and Mitwoch, 1914) to name but a few (Schmidt).

With the founding of an Islamic department in the Royal Museum in Berlin in 1904 by von Bode, Sarre gave the larger part of his collection on permanent loan to that museum.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica.
 To be continued.

World Art Museum unveils folio from rare copy of Shahnameh

TEHRAN – A detached folio from a 682-year-old copy of the Shahnameh, Ferdowsi's epic masterpiece, was unveiled at the World Art Museum in Tehran on Monday.

The manuscript was commissioned by Qavam ad-Din Hasan, a minister to the Injuid governor of Fars, Abu Is'haq, in 741 AH (1341 AD), as stated in its colophon.

On its two sides, the 30 X 37-cm folio carries the story and illustration of Nushzad and Rambarzin.

"Qavam brought together several persons to create one of the most embellished copies of the Shahnameh with 104 illustrations," said art expert Ali-Asghar Mirzaimehr.

The manuscript consisted of 325 pages written in naskh by calligrapher Hasan ibn Mohammad ibn Ali ibn Hosseini who wrote under the pseudonym "Museli".

An art dealer namely Dikran Kelekian purchased the manuscript from a dentist and exported it to Europe nearly 102 ago. To make much more money, he detached all the folios from the book, and sold each one to collectors around the world.

Mirzaimehr said that some Persian manuscript experts have noted that the illustrations in the book were drawn by a single artist,



Part of a detached folio from a 682-year-old copy of the Shahnameh commissioned by Qavam ad-Din Hasan.

but they were created by different artists in a state-run art workshop.

He also added, "Qavam ad-Din Hasan commissioned the artist to create the manuscript in 741 AH before he had been appointed as a minister by the Injuid governor. At that time he was just an intellectual who served as an official in the Injuid court."

"Before he was appointed as a minister, he had a powerful

desire to produce a copy of the Shahnameh. Consequently, we believe that he had many other achievements or created several other copies of the Shahnameh, which have since disappeared over time," the expert explained.

Detached folios from the rare manuscripts are preserved in the world's major collections, including the Harvard Art Museums and Brooklyn Museum.

Among the scholars confirming the authenticity of the folio is Shahnameh expert Amir Arghavan who attended the unveiling ceremony.

He said that many fake manuscripts of the Shahnameh have recently been produced and added, "However, our surveys verify the genuineness of the folio and we are certain that it dates back to the Injuid period."

"The Stranger" director awarded with IAA Plaque of Glory



Director Mohammad-Hossein Latifi speaks after accepting the IAA Plaque of Glory in Tehran on May 29, 2023.

TEHRAN – The Iranian Academy of Arts (IAA) paid tribute to director Mohammad-Hossein Latifi by presenting him with its IAA Plaque of Glory on Monday.

He received the plaque for his latest movie "The Stranger" about IRGC commander Mohammad Borujerdi's struggles against separatists in western Iran to maintain

Iran's territorial integrity in the region in the early 1980s.

The movie entitled "The Stranger" has been produced at the Owj Arts and Media Organization by Mohammad-Hossein Latifi, director of the acclaimed war film "The Third Day".

In addition, the academy also honored Borujerdi's daughter Somayyeh, and Nosratollah Mahmudzadeh, the author of the book "Mohammad, the Christ of Kordestan", based on which the film was produced.

"The film stirs up the strongest emotions as Mr. Latifi has reproduced the reality of these eternal scenes perfectly," IAA director Bahmand Namvar-Motlaq said.

"Watching these scenes causes one to recall the virtually forgotten memories of the war in the region," he added.

"We may approach the film from many different angles and the academy must study the different views," Namvar-Motlaq noted.

He also praised Latifi for selecting the film's title based on the method Mahmudzadeh adopted to describe Borujerdi in his book.

After accepting the plaque, Latifi said, "I feel proud when I see my work has had an impressively positive reception by viewers."

"Despite all the hardships our crew suffered during the film's production, we felt great satisfaction when Martyr Borujerdi's family was favorably impressed by the film," he added.

"The Stranger" scored a big win at the National Will Manifestation Awards by garnering five prizes.

The gala is a supplement to the Fajr Film Festival and the awards are presented by public organizations and institutes to those films that are in agreement with their goals and interests.

Oscar-nominated director Majid Majidi was the first personality honored with the first edition of the IAA Plaque of Glory in 2021.

He received the plaque for his acclaimed drama "Sun Children" about child labor.

Persian publisher offering "This House Is Mine"

TEHRAN – The major Iranian publisher Qoqnu has recently published "This House Is Mine", German writer Dörte Hansen's debut novel, in Persian.

Fatemeh Atraki is the translator of the book originally published in 2015.

All her life Vera has felt like a stranger in the old and drafty half-timbered farmhouse she arrived at as a five-year-old refugee from East Prussia in 1945, and yet she can't seem to let it go.

Sixty years later, her niece Anne suddenly shows up at her door with her small son. Anne has fled



A combination photo shows Dörte Hansen and the front cover of the Persian edition of her novel "This House Is Mine".

the trendy Hamburg, Germany neighborhood she never fit into after her relationship imploded.

Vera and Anne are strangers to each other but have much

more in common than they think. As the two strong-willed and very different women share the great old house, they find what they have never thought to

search for a family.

Told in skillfully crafted alternating points of view and a nonlinear storyline, Hansen's internationally bestselling debut novel "This House Is Mine" showcases her impressive talent for characterization and dialogue in an exceptional book that combines emotional depth and humor.

The author's sparse language and sometimes oblique references make for a deeply immersive reading experience, and the characters will resonate long after the last page has been turned.

Mario Benedetti's "Blood Pact" published in Persian

TEHRAN – "Blood Pact and Other Stories" by Uruguayan writer Mario Benedetti has been published in Persian.

Mahi is the publisher of the book translated by Leila Minai. The book was first published in 1998.

This collection includes the best of Benedetti's stories from over 40 years of publishing.

In these stories of powerful sudden impact, Benedetti plumbs with deep psychological insight both the dreams and frustrations of the middle class in a bureaucratic society, as well as the pain and disorientation of political exile.

An English translation of the collection by Darwin J. Flakoll was published by Curbstone Books.

The Handbook of Latin American Studies described the collection as "Translations of 27

stories from over 40 years of writing by one of Latin America's favorite authors whose prose creates powerful surprises and compelling humor out of the terrors lurking in 'ordinary people and things' in Montevideo. Fine editing and translating by Louise Popkin and 14 other translators, but lacking an introduction."

Benedetti was also a journalist and poet. Despite publishing more than 80 books and being published in twenty languages he was not well known in the English-speaking world. He is considered one of Latin America's most important 20th-century writers.

Benedetti was a member of the "Generation of 45", an Uruguayan intellectual and literary movement, and also wrote for the famous weekly Uruguayan newspaper Marcha from 1945 until it was forcibly closed by the military government in 1973, and was its literary



Front cover of the Persian edition of Mario Benedetti's "Blood Pact".

director from 1954.

From 1973 to 1985 he lived in exile, and returned to Uruguay in March 1983 following the restoration of democracy.