

## Ruhollah Khomeini: Imam of transformation

By Zahra Pakravan

TEHRAN – Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, as the founder of the Islamic Revolution and innovator of a school of thought, has crossed geographical boundaries and become an important discourse in the world.

June 4 coincides with the 34th anniversary of the demise of Ayatollah Khomeini [known as Imam Khomeini in Iran]. He is known to many global figures and enjoys different characteristics that differentiate him from other world leaders. His difference from the others can be seen in the interpretation of his stances and views in the speeches of the world's great figures.

Imam Khomeini's school of thought has become an important discourse. The revolution founded by him has not been limited to Iran and its effects can be seen in the region and other parts of the world.

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## U.S. Decline Prompts Allies' Departure

*On why UAE withdrew from U.S.-led maritime coalition* ► Page 3



**Leader calls Iran, Turkmenistan 'relatives' who share huge cultural affinities** ► Page 2

## Iran, Saudi Arabia to strengthen economic, commercial ties: FM

TEHRAN – The Iranian foreign minister says the reconciliation between Iran and Saudi Arabia is more than just “a tactical agreement,” and both nations have decided to advance their economic and commercial ties.

Hossein Amir Abdollahian made the comments in an interview with the French newspaper Le Figaro published on Monday.

Iran and Saudi Arabia signed an agreement on March 10 to reestablish diplomatic ties. The agreement was brokered by China.

Amir Abdollahian said that Tehran held security talks in Baghdad and Oman for several months because “relations with our neighbors are a priority in the foreign policy of the current Iranian government.”

The foreign minister went on to say that finally during the visit of the Chinese president to Saudi Arabia, a strong idea was put on the table. ► Page 2

## Israel regional activities not hidden from Iran 'keen eyes': Tehran

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani has seemingly reacted to the Israeli president's visit to the Republic of Azerbaijan, saying Israeli activities in the region are not hidden from Iran.

“None of the regional movements of the Zionist regime remain hidden from the keen eyes of the Islamic Republic of Iran,” Kanaani said on Twitter. “The cobweb is

not reliable and the struggle to expand the regional presence will not help to repair the shaky internal foundation of the fake regime.”

He added, “The Zionist regime is hated by the nations of the world and will have no future.”

Kanaani also attached a Quran Surah that says, “They will not fight against you in a

body save in fortified towns or from behind walls; their fighting between them is severe, you may think them as one body, and their hearts are disunited; that is because they are a people who have no sense.”

Kanaani did not mention Azerbaijan by name but his tweet highly correlates with the visit Israeli President Isaac Herzog is paying to the neighboring Republic of Azerbaijan. ► Page 3

## U.S. nuclear test for “climate change”

By Ali Karbalaee

TEHRAN – The United States is using nuclear weapons grade material for a “climate change” experiment. Enough said.

It's quite a bizarre way to go about experimenting with weapons grade nuclear material and its effects on climate change. Surely, there are other methods to lower pollution on the planet.

The project may have gone under the

radar with the exception of some criticism, mainly by former U.S. State Department officials that made its way to Reuters. But it opens the floodgates in this article.

It is very typical for the U.S. to be experimenting with uranium at 93% purity level for “climate” purposes (if that's indeed the stated goal), while at the same time maintaining harsh sanctions on Iran by scare-mongering the world and the IAEA about Iran's civilian nuclear program.

Tehran has a peaceful nuclear program as evidenced by more than a dozen IAEA reports presented by its inspectors on the ground at Iranian facilities. IAEA inspectors have been able to make surprise inspections.

The UN nuclear agency reports are backed by none other than the U.S. intelligence community, which testified before Congress that Iran's nuclear program is of a peaceful nature. ► Page 5



Abbas Ali-Abadi, managing director of Mapna, introduces one of the products of his company to Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow, chairman of People's Council of Turkmenistan, on Wednesday.

## Chairman of People's Council of Turkmenistan visits Mapna group

TEHRAN – Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow, the chairman of the People's Council of Turkmenistan, visited Mapna group, which is involved in thermal and renewable power plants, oil and gas, railway, and other industrial projects, in Tehran on Wednesday.

During the visit, Abbas Ali-Abadi, the managing director of Mapna, referred to this group's capacities in implementing large-scale projects, and informed about Mapna's readiness to share its technical and engineering experiences with Turkmenistan.

Op-ed

## Iranian women combatants opened new chapter in history in Sacred Defense

By Sara Atta

TEHRAN – Endurance and companionship demonstrated by Iranian women during the Iran-Iraq war is unprecedented in the world's history.

The contemporary history of Iran has witnessed the comprehensive and active presence of Iranian women in various defense, martial, political and social scenes; Women who are willing to give up their emotions for their ideals and beliefs. ► Page 7

Opinion



## Iran, Turkmenistan to expand trade, energy ties

By Ebrahim Fallahi

TEHRAN – During the visit of a senior Turkmen politico-economic delegation to Tehran, senior officials from the two countries met to explore avenues of mutual cooperation in a variety of areas. ► Page 4

Tehran Papers



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

## Iranian honor

The Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly emphasized that it does not provide military assistance to any side in the war in Ukraine, does not consider the war as a solution, and supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries, including Ukraine, Sobh-e-No wrote in its editorial. ► Page 2

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## TEHRAN PAPERS

## Iranian honor

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

The Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly emphasized that it does not provide military assistance to any side in the war in Ukraine, does not consider the war as a solution, and supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries, including Ukraine, Sobh-e-No wrote in its editorial.

But it is enough to refer to injustice against Iran that during the eight years of the Sacred Defense in the 1980s, Europe and America gave Saddam all kinds of chemical and genocidal weapons, from missiles to fighter planes. However, Iran must answer to drones whose use is not only for war and sold to Russia before the Ukraine war, and Iran must be sentenced instead of another country. The propaganda, political and media noise of the West is so loud that these actions have their effect even on sports as the Ukrainian athlete refuses to shake hands with the Iranian powerlifter. But the honorable Iranian athlete with a heroic spirit tries twice to shake hands with the Ukrainian. But some Western countries, which have developed step by step through murder, bloodshed, war and sale of weapons have never responded to the crisis-stricken areas of West Asia. They have amassed fortunes through trade of death (selling weapons).

#### Javan: Signs of agreement

In a commentary Javan wrote: The Sultan of Oman's two-day visit to Tehran, which Oman's foreign minister described as "historic", has put Iran and the West on the verge of an agreement on the nuclear issue. Signs of such a vision are evident from Tehran to Washington and from there to Vienna and Tel Aviv. Israeli officials, who have a unique interest in monitoring the U.S. foreign policy movements, have said they are worried about an interim nuclear agreement between the U.S. and Iran in the "coming days and weeks". In Washington, discussions about exchange of prisoners between Tehran and Washington have been raised again, and in Vienna there are news about reduction of differences between Iran and the IAEA over the disputed issues, and finally, as always in Tehran, economic experts evaluate reduction in value of foreign currency as an intelligence reaction of market to the foreign policy developments. Sultan Haitham bin Tarik al-Said ended his two-day trip and left Tehran without talking about the nuclear tension between Iran and the West. He did not talk about the nuclear issue. That this challenge was not on the table during his visit to Tehran strengthened the view that the Omani mediator did not want to make public the most important agenda of his trip to Tehran.

#### Etemad: Foreign policy must be pragmatic

In order to evaluate success in pragmatic foreign policy, the list of wishes and ideals are not decisive, but objective and measurable indicators and the degree of realization of the goals and the

degree of profitability are the focus of evaluation, Etemad said in an analysis.

Etemad wrote: According to what was said, the country's foreign policy in the international environment should have two essential features in the global hierarchical system:

- 1- Producing power, increasing influence and all-round capability
- 2- Making profit

Foreign policy should carry out the process of "producing power, increasing influence and all-round capability" and "making profit" in the following three areas: security, development, and values. In practical foreign policy, the quality and speed of promoting values ??in the international environment is also done with attention, and simultaneously with increasing power and influence in the two fields of security and development. The important point is that the concept of "power", "security" and "deterrence" in the current phase of international relations is gradual and increasing, and the sources of power in the world are abundant. On the other hand, "power" exclusively means increasing the presence of countries to influence the dominant trends in the international environment and international developments in the objective fields of geopolitical competition. "Benefit" is also objective and fluid, and finally, for overall evaluation, the result of benefits to create security, development and values is taken into consideration.

#### Shargh: "Less for less" with an interim agreement

An important point that can be the subject of a serious discussion is release of a series of news that confirm an "interim step-by-step agreement" as a "de facto" (between Iran and the U.S.), Shargh said in a commentary.

This means that Tehran and Washington have made changes in many fields in order to prevent an increase in tensions in line with the step-by-step policy. Iran is moving in the direction of more interaction with the IAEA in the field of nuclear activities and Safeguards disputes with the body on the eve of the quarterly meeting of the Board of Governors.

At the same time Iran decided to release some dual-nationals with France. Also, it is freeing French-Irish, Belgian citizens and there is the possibility of an agreement on exchange of Iranian-American dual nationals. Simultaneously, by making a significant change in its regional foreign policy, Iran is warming up to Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Bahrain, etc. On the other hand, in the run-up to the U.S. presidential campaigns, the Biden government is trying to carry out an interim less-for-less agreement by controlling relation with Tehran in the rational manner, and for some decisions made by Tehran, give an encouraging response, such as releasing Iran's blocked funds.

## Iranian-built Simorgh aircraft conducts test flight



TEHRAN- The Iranian defense minister has said a transit aircraft built locally has successfully completed a flight test.

Brigadier General Mohammadreza Ashtiani made the announcement on Tuesday while speaking to a group of Defense Ministry officials that included Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Bagheri at an airbase in the central city of Isfahan.

He stated that the "Simorgh" aircraft is a redesigned and evolved version of planes of its generation, and that it is well adapted to the demands of Iran's civil and military institutions.

Iran's defense minister also noted that specialists from the Ministry of Defense and knowledge-based firms in the country designed and built the aircraft to adapt to the country's weather conditions in compliance with international norms.

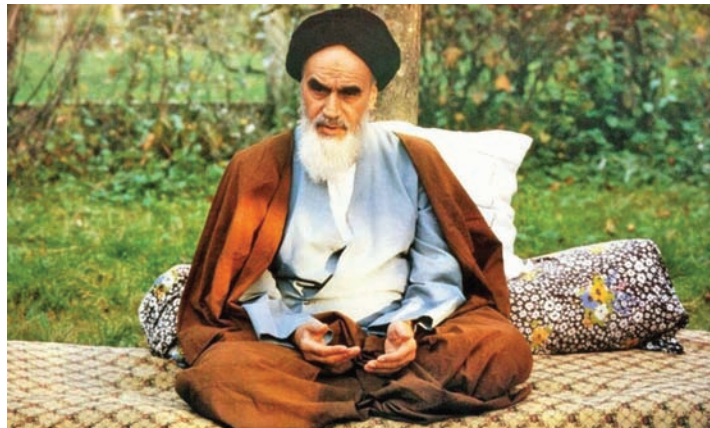
He went into detail about the features of Simorgh aircraft, including its lightness, high carriage capacity, proper radius of flight operations, compatibility with the climatic conditions of the country, ability to land and take off in short runways, as well as agility and speed in providing emergency services, including as air ambulance.

# Ruhollah Khomeini: Imam of transformation

From page 1 ► The contemporary history of Iran has seen various political figures and currents that each of them has somehow claimed the approach of transformation and reform in the Iranian society. However, among these political figures, the victory of the Islamic Revolution Iran was achieved under the leadership of Imam Khomeini, and his transformational approach played a major role in this issue.

Republicanism and Islamism in the idea of Imam Khomeini as the two main pillars of the Islamic Republic establishment, played an essential role in transforming the foundations and administrative system of the country.

In this regard, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in one of his speeches on the occasion of the demise anniversary of Imam Khomeini on Jun 3, 2020 said, "By nature, Imam was a person who advocated and who brought about transformation. As for bringing about transformation, his role was not confined to being a mere teacher and instructor, rather he played the role of a commander active on the field and leading in the true sense of the word. He brought about the greatest trans-



formations in his era which covered numerous areas and fields."

Transformation in the concept of political Islam is the first component that we should pay attention to in the transformational view of Imam Khomeini.

With the spread of Imam Khomeini's viewpoints on the concept of Islam in the world, we witnessed that the regional countries started to rise against oppression, tyranny and colonialism.

Republicanism or the maximum participation of the people in decision-making through ballot boxes is the second pillar of the transformation in Imam Khomeini's point of view.

## Leader calls Iran, Turkmenistan 'relatives' who share huge cultural affinities

### Ayatollah Khamenei receives chairman of People's Council of Turkmenistan

TEHRAN- Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, has described Iran and Turkmenistan as "relatives" with a number of common cultural roots.

The Leader made the remarks during a meeting with Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, chairman of the People's Council of the National Assembly on Wednesday in Tehran.

The Leader stressed that the cultural affinities between the two countries are crucial for advancing cooperation in a variety of fields, particularly in those of energy, gas, water and road transportation.

"These cultural fields should not be underestimated," Ayatollah Khamenei said.

The Leader was referring to the

fact that hundreds of well-known scientists and individuals reside along the border between the At-rak and Jayhoun rivers in the two nations, as well as the fact that the tomb of the renowned Turkmen poet Makhtumaghi Faraghi is located in Iran.

The Leader praised Berdimuhamedov, who was Turkmenistan's president 2007–2022, for his special attention to cultural and religious issues, as well as his efforts to expand cultural centers and mosques.

Ayatollah Khamenei added, "In the field of commercial issues, there is more potential to expand cooperation, particularly in the road sector and areas related to water, electricity, and gas."

## Unilateralism on losing streak: Raisi



TEHRAN- President Ebrahim Raisi of Iran has said that unilateralism is declining on the world scene and that regional nations and institutions are increasingly taking the lead in establishing international equations and future developments.

Raisi made the statements during a meeting with Kairat Sarybay, the visiting secretary general of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) on Tuesday.

Since its inception in 1992 by Kazakhstan, CICA has served as an intergovernmental forum aiming to improve collaboration in promoting peace, security, and stability in Asia.

CICA has 28 members, including Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, PRC, Turkey, Egypt, Palestine, India, Qatar, Iraq, Republic of Korea, Iran, Russia, United Arab Emirates.

Raisi judged the course of international developments is headed towards multilateralism, noting, "With the underway decline of unilateralism in the world, it is rather the countries of the region and regional organizations that determine the future of both the region and the world."

The Iranian president stated that CICA had numerous and diverse capabilities that could be utilized to improve cooperation among its members.

He also emphasized the importance of long-term dialogue among the body's member states.

Raisi believed that the member nations' contri-

From page 1 ► The outcome was Chinese mediation, he said, which allowed Tehran and Riyadh to take the crucial move.

"We do not consider this rapprochement a tactical agreement," he added.

Iran and Saudi Arabia decided to reestablish diplomatic ties and reopen embassies on March 10 following several days of rigorous discussions held in China, seven years after their relations were cut.

Following the agreement's signing, Tehran and Riyadh issued a joint statement emphasizing the need to respect one another's national sovereignty and refrain from meddling in one another's internal affairs.

They agreed to put into effect a security cooperation agreement made in April 2001, as well as another agreement inked in May 1998 to increase economic, commercial, investment, technological, scientific, cultural, sports, and youth af-



fairs collaboration.

In other parts of his interview, Amir Abdollahian mentioned that the Saudi government has prioritized investment in Iran.

"I talked about economic issues during my recent meeting with my

Revolution, we saw an increase in Islamic movements in the region.

Imam Khomeini's strategy in forming Islamic government brought valuable and rich experiences to Islamic movements.

The Islamic Revolution in Iran was the first successful and victorious experience of its kind, which was able to realize the goals and ideals of Islamic uprisings in Iran for the first time.

"This was how he began his movement which resulted in bringing about a transformation at national level. He transformed the Iranian nation, in the true sense of the word, whether during the time of revolutionary activities or after the victory of the Revolution," Ayatollah Khamenei said on Jun 3, 2020.

Many believe that the Imam's viewpoints, which made his political movement effective, united all Muslims in their cultural and political struggles against the East and the West.

"So, Imam was the Imam of transformation... We should learn a lesson from Imam. Every living and dynamic society needs transformation. Today, we need transformation in different areas," Ayatollah Khamenei said at the same date.

The Leader underscored that "more cooperation between Iran and Turkmenistan will be the basis for improving the status of the two countries in the changing world."

Expansion of relations will be in the interest of the two countries, the Leader remarked, expressing optimism about the future of relations.

Berdimuhamedov, for his part, said that he was pleased with the meeting. "I have always used your Excellency's views and recommendations during my trips to Iran over the past years and during my presidency, and on the basis of those recommendations, important work has been done," noted Berdimuhamedov.

Given his other visits during his stay in Tehran, Berdimuhamedov

continued, "In these negotiations, good agreements were reached to expand cooperation, especially the use of Iranian specialists and experts in road construction, water, electricity, and gas fields."

Leading a high-ranking delegation of political and economic figures, Berdimuhamedov arrived in Tehran on Tuesday to hold talks with top Iranian officials.

Several cooperation documents were signed during his visit to Iran by officials from both nations.

Additionally, President Raisi, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, the Parliamentary speaker, and Ayatollah Sadeqh Amoli Larijani, the head of the Expediency Council, were all met by Berdimuhamedov.

the heads of state of the member states to create a fund intended to support the body's members and improve contact among them.

He also expressed appreciation for Iran's assistance in these areas.

### "Membership of Zionist regime in CICA unwelcome"

At a meeting with Sarybay Tuesday, Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian highlighted the unwelcome membership and unconstructive role of the Zionist regime in CICA.

He praised Kazakhstan for its proactive actions while holding the body's rotating leadership.

The senior diplomat noted that Iran continues to support potential efforts that assist to shake up the CICA position and efficiency.

"The significance of the transition era in the regional and international political arena should be taken into account in setting out the upcoming work schedule of the Conference," he underscored.

Sarybay, for his part, congratulated Iran for its active engagement and constructive collaboration in promoting CICA's goals.

In the meanwhile, he went into further detail during his conversation with Amir Abdollahian about the bloc's existing and forthcoming activities.

CICA is a multi-national forum dedicated to promoting peace, security, and stability in Asia.

## Iran, Saudi Arabia to strengthen economic, commercial ties: FM

Saudi counterpart," the top diplomat said, adding, "We both agreed to develop our economic and commercial relations in the months and years to come."

He continued by saying that the Saudi government now prioritizes the completion of economic initiatives.

Nearly a month after agreeing to resume diplomatic relations, Iran and Saudi Arabia planned to establish a joint chamber of commerce in April to foster bilateral trade.



# U.S decline prompts allies’ departure

*On why UAE withdrew from U.S.-led maritime coalition*

By Faramarz Kuhpayeh

TEHRAN – In the latest blow to the U.S. hegemony in the West Asia region, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) announced its withdrawal from a U.S.-led maritime coalition, further giving credence to perceptions of U.S. decline.

In a statement on Wednesday, the UAE foreign ministry said, “As a result of our ongoing evaluation of effective security cooperation with all partners, two months ago, the UAE withdrew its participation in the Combined Maritime Forces.”

The statement added that the UAE remains committed to responsibly ensuring the safety of navigation in its seas, in accordance with international law.

The statement comes amid press reports of tensions between the U.S. and the UAE over Emirati complaint about lack of action on the part of the U.S.

The Western press reported that the U.S. was unhappy over how the U.S. dealt with Iranian seizure of oil tankers in the Persian Gulf. The UAE rejected these reports, saying, “The UAE has rejected the mischaracterization, in recent press reports, of US-UAE conversations regarding maritime security.”

Aside from the credibility of the UAE-US differences, Abu Dhabi’s withdrawal from the U.S.-



led Combined Maritime Forces is another indication of U.S. traditional partners in the region moving away from Washington out of growing perceptions of the global decrease in U.S. might.

When juxtaposed with positions by other allies of the U.S., the Emirati move sends an unequivocal signal about the depth of the dent in the American credibility in the West Asia region.

Saudi Arabia, a historical ally of America, has preceded the UAE in parting ways with the U.S. In March, it signed a landmark deal with Iran that was brokered by China, the global competitor for the U.S. Since then, the Saudis have been working with the Iranians to fully resume diplomatic relations.

And the UAE itself seems to be following suit. Of course, the U.S. has never fully severed relations

with Iran. But it downgraded them in solidarity with Saudi Arabia. And when Riyadh moved to snuggle up to Iran, the Emiratis decided to upgrade ties with Iran.

A senior Emirati official has recently underlined the United Arab Emirates’ determination to strengthen relations with Iran.

Khalifa Shaheen Al Marar, who is a Minister of State of the United Arab Emirates, made the remarks during a meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian in Tehran on Tuesday.

The UAE’s minister emphasized Abu Dhabi’s determination to boost relations with the Islamic Republic, the Iranian foreign ministry said in a statement.

In a sense, the Emiratis, like their Saudi peers, have ceased to believe that America can be relied upon.

Interestingly, even the Israelis appears to be coming to terms with the dwindling U.S. influence. When the U.S. proposed to Israelis that they conduct joint military planning on Iran, the Israeli received the American proposal cautiously. They may have well stopped short of rejecting it out of compliments.

All in all, the U.S. decline reached a point where even its longtime allies are exasperated by its inability to take the initiative.

## UAE determined to boost relations with Iran: minister



TEHRAN – A senior Emirati official has underlined the United Arab Emirates’ determination to strengthen relations with Iran.

Khalifa Shaheen Al Marar, who is a Minister of State of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), made the remarks during a meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian on Tuesday.

The UAE’s minister emphasized Abu Dhabi’s determination to boost relations with the Islamic Republic, the Iranian foreign ministry

said in a statement.

“In a meeting on Tuesday with Khalifa Shaheen Al Marar, Minister of State of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs Hossein Amir Abdollahian highlighted the 13th administration’s policy of developing ties with neighbors,” the statement said.

It added, “He described the UAE as a reliable trade partner, and said ties between the two countries will be enhanced both at the level of governments and private sectors.”

The statement further said, “Amir Abdollahian said the expansion of bilateral ties will be in the interests of the two countries and the broader region.”

The meeting comes after a phone conversation between the foreign ministers of Iran and the UAE in April. In that conversation, Amir Abdollahian described the existing relations as forward-moving and said, “Active meetings and consultations are

going on between the officials of the two countries.”

“There are no limits to the all-out expansion of relations,” the top Iranian diplomat said, according to a statement by the Iranian foreign ministry at the time.

The two sides stressed the importance of broadening cooperation, including in the private sector.

UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, for his part, highlighted the common interests of the two countries in the development of mutual relations in various fields, laying emphasis on various opportunities for joint cooperation.

Regarding the new conditions in the region, he said that in recent weeks, the region is witnessing the strengthening of cooperation, including good relations between Tehran and Riyadh and the new conditions in Syria.

The two sides mutually invited one another for visits to Tehran and Abu Dhabi.

# IRAN IN FOCUS

JUNE 1, 2023

Straight Truth  
TEHRAN TIMES

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## SPORTS

### Persepolis clinch Hazfi Cup title

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team defeated Esteghlal 2-1 on Wednesday here at the Azadi Stadium to win Iran’s 2022/23 Hazfi Cup.

With more than 60,000 spectators attending the match, Persepolis were the better team in the early minutes of the match and put their archrivals under pressure.

In the 30th minute, Persepolis midfielder Mehdi Torabi smashed a right-footed finish into the goal from the edge of the box.

Esteghlal defender Amirhossein Moradmam headed home a last-gasp leveler and two teams went into the extra time.

Persepolis captain Omid Alishah, who came off the bench in the 90th minute, scored the winning goal in the 115th minute with a set-piece.

Esteghlal and Persepolis have met each other 101 times. Persepolis have won 27 matches, while Esteghlal emerged victorious 26 times and 48 matches ended in draw.

Persepolis and Esteghlal have clinched Hazfi Cup seven times each.

Persepolis, who have recently claimed the Iran league, automatically won Super Cup as league and Hazfi Cup champions.

### Esfandiar linked with Skra

TEHRAN – Iran international outside hitter Amir Hossein Esfandiar has been linked with a move to Polish volleyball team Skra Belchatow.

The 24-year-old player played for Russian club Ural Ufa last season.

Esfandiar was a member of Belgian side Greenyard Maaseik as well.

Iran volleyball captain Milad Ebadipour played for Skra Belchatow from 2017 to 2022.

### Iranian woman Esmailnejhad wins gold at Erzurum Sprint Flag Cup 2023

TEHRAN – Iranian woman athlete Hamideh Esmailnejhad claimed a gold medal at the Erzurum Sprint Flag Cup 2023.

She crossed the finish line in 11:43 seconds at Atatürk University Stadium.

Esmailnejhad also broke the 100 meters Iran’s women’s record by just 0.01.

About 80 athletes from Turkey, Denmark, Lebanon, Kyrgyzstan and Iran competed in the 8th ErzurumSprint Flag Cup on May 30 and 31.

Her national record will be registered after the approval of the doping test by the Iran’s NADO.

### Women cyclists capable of shining at high levels: Fatemeh Hadavand

TEHRAN – Iranian woman cyclist Fatemeh Hadavand believes that her hard work paid off when she won a gold medal at the Silk Way Series Astana.

Hadavand ranked first in the Keirin section of the tournament. In addition, she earned three silver medals in separate disciplines.

“The competition was of high standard,” Hadavand said in his exclusive interview with Tehran Times.

“Since constructing wooden velodrome tracks for their cyclists in 2012, Kazakhstan’s cycling has made tremendous progress,” she added.

The tournament was attended by athletes in the elite category from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Iran, the United Arab Emirates and Lithuania.

Cyclists could earn qualifying points for the World Championships and Olympics through Silk Way Series Astana competitions that were included in the International Cycling Union (UCI) calendar.

“I’m happy that I got the results I wanted. I did everything possible to get the best result and it worked out fortunately,” she added.

“I won a gold medal in the Keirin section by defeating Julia Golubkova, a title-holder opponent from the host country. Additionally, I won three silver medals, one in keirin, and two in 200m,” she added.

“We have demonstrated that Iranian female cyclists can compete and shine at the highest level. The biggest obstacles we face in Iran are the lack of a wooden velodrome track and inadequate facilities in the country,” Hadavand concluded.

### Iran volleyball roster named for 2023 VNL Week 1

TEHRAN – Iran volleyball federation announced on Wednesday the 14 players for the 2023 Volleyball Nations League (VNL) Week 1.

Iran will travel to Nagoya, Japan on Thursday to take part in the prestigious event.

Currently in number 10 of the FIVB Men’s Volleyball World Ranking, Iran will look to improve further on the seventh place they took in VNL 2022 as they take on the 2023 edition in June and July. Their Preliminary Phase campaign starts on June 6 and includes matches in Nagoya (Japan), Rotterdam (the Netherlands) and Anaheim (USA). If they qualify for the VNL Finals, they will travel to Gdansk, Poland for the event from July 19 through 23.

Later in the season, Iran will try to defend their continental title as they host the 2023 Asian Championship in Tehran from Aug. 19 through 26. They will start the tournament in a pool with Hong Kong and Iraq.

From Sept. 19 to 26 in Hangzhou, China, Iran will try to conquer their third consecutive Asian Games crown.

Finally, coach Behrouz Ataei’s squad will join the qualifying battles for tickets to Paris 2024 as they travel to South America from Sept. 30 through Oct. 8 to take on Cuba, Czech, Germany, Italy, Qatar, Ukraine and hosts Brazil for two spots at the Olympic Games next year.

Iran roster:

Mohammad Mousavi, Mehdi Jelveh, Mohammad Valizadeh, Mohammadtaher Vadi, Javad Karimi, Amin Esmailnejad, Ali Hajipour, Mohammadreza Hazratpour, Arman Salehi, Amirhossein Esfandiar, Morteza Sharifi, Pourya Hossein Khanzadeh, Shahrooz Homayounfar Manesh, Mohammadjavad Manavinejad

### Isfahan ready to host Asian Club Handball Championship

TEHRAN – Iranian city Isfahan is ready to host the 25th edition of the Asian Men’s Club League Handball Championship.

A total of 11 teams who will compete for the title this time are divided into two groups.

Foolad Mobarakeh Sepahan SC (Iran), India Club (India), Oman Club (Oman), Kazma SC (Kuwait) and Al-Rayyan Club (Qatar) are in Group A.

Group B consists of Al-Kuwait Club (Kuwait), Junior Club (P.R. China), Tashkent Club (Uzbekistan), Al-Duhail Club (Qatar), Shahid Shameli Kazeroon Club (Iran) and Al-Najma Club (Bahrain).

The 25th Asian Men’s Club League Handball Championship is scheduled to be held in Isfahan, Iran, from June 1 to 11.

The winner of the competition will qualify for the 17th IHF Men’s Super Globe, to be held from October 17 – 23, 2023, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

On Thursday, Sepahan will meet Al-Rayyan, while Shameli face Junior in their opening match.

## Iran, Iraq interior ministers discuss security issues

TEHRAN – Iraqi Interior Minister Abdul Amir al-Shammari arrived in Tehran on Wednesday for security talks with his Iranian counterpart Ahmad Vahidi.

In Tehran, they held a joint press conference after holding a meeting. “Today, I hosted my dear brother Abdul Amir al-Shammari, where various topics of interest to the two countries were discussed,” Vahidi said.

He added, “We are in the best condition of bilateral relations between Iran and Iraq. In the meeting we had, we discussed security issues of interest to both sides, terrorism issues, the fight against drugs, organized crime and arms smuggling, as well as coordination



regarding the important issue of Arba’een, which is being pursued by the Iraqi Ministry of Interior.”

Vahidi said, “The borders of the two countries must have the necessary preparation, and six border areas have been considered

for the entry and exit of pilgrims, and it was decided that the Khosravi border point would be open 24 hours a day. Because last year it was not around the clock.”

He continued, “For the ease of crossing the border, special passports will be prepared and used. Also, for the transportation and comfort of travelers inside Iraq, Iraqi friends have announced their readiness well, which we hope will be done during this year’s Arba’een ceremony.”

Al-Shammari, for his part, said, “At the generous invitation of my dear brother General Ahmad Vahidi, the Minister of Interior of the Islamic Republic of Iran, we came to Tehran at the head of a high-ranking delegation

to have a discussion and coordination regarding the common issues of the two countries, especially the Arba’een ceremony, coordination for its preparations and solving the problems of last year.”

He added, “We consulted to solve the problems of pilgrims that they faced last year.”

The Iraqi interior minister also pointed to border issues between Iran and Iraq. He said establishing control over the long, porous borders of Iran and Iraq requires closer coordination between the two sides.

“There is a need to strengthen and monitor the border between the two countries,” he said, according to Mehr News.

## Israel regional activities not hidden from Iran ‘keen eyes’: Tehran

Frome Page 1 ▶ On Tuesday, the presidents of Azerbaijan and Israel held a meeting in Baku. They “expressed satisfaction with the development of bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Israel in various fields, emphasizing that President Isaac Herzog’s visit to Azerbaijan would contribute to the expansion of relations between the two countries,” according to a statement by the Azerbaijani presidency.

The Israeli press portrayed the visit as an opportunity for shoring up Baku-Tel Aviv cooperation against Iran.

Herzog said in a joint presser with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev that they discussed the alleged threats Iran poses to regional security. “We looked at the entire global and regional security structure, which is endangered and threatened by Iran – clearly something, which we discussed in depth,” the Israeli president said.

Tensions between Iran and Azerbaijan have been on the rise in recent months, with

Baku leveling numerous accusations against Tehran. Most recently, Baku arrested a group of Azerbaijani nationals on charges of spying for Iran, something Iran strongly denied.

Kanaani reacted in mid-May to allegations by Azerbaijan that it had arrested a number of individuals with links to Iran, saying Iran didn’t have any links to them.

Kanaani said Azerbaijan’s security apparatus and prosecutor-general have been leveling “chain of accusations” against Iran.

“Unfortunately, the government of the Republic of Azerbaijan has been arresting and keeping its citizens in custody for some time on a charge and bogus allegation of links with Iranian institutions,” he said in a statement, according to Tasnim.

He said Iran did not have any official or unofficial ties to the detained persons.

“The popular relationships between the citizens of the two countries are heartfelt, emotional, historical, religious and even family-based. The



government of the Republic of Azerbaijan should not attribute such deep-rooted and historical bonds of its nationals to security issues or associate them with neighbors,” Kanaani added.

Kanaani noted that every government has the inherent right to take action against the law-breaking citizens, but made it clear that Baku’s move to arrest and imprison many citizens by making the allegation of connection with Iran is inadmissible and unacceptable.



## Over 2.3m tons of goods transited via Iran in 2 months

TEHRAN- As announced by the spokesman of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), 2,326 million tons of commodities were transited through the country during the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-May 21).

Mohammad Rezvani-Far said that the figure shows a 5.38-percent fall as compared to the first two months of the past year.

As previously announced by the Iranian deputy transport minister, 10.8 million tons of commodities were transited through the country in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

Shahriyar Afandizadeh also announced that Iran registered a new record high with the transit of 8.3 million tons of non-oil goods in 1401, adding that 2.5 million tons of oil products were also transited via the country in the previous year.

“Considering the transit of 7.5 million tons of non-oil goods in 1400, we have seen a 10.7-percent growth in the transit of this type of goods in 1401 compared to the previous year”, the official said.

“In 1401, we witnessed important developments and achievements in the strategic and operational areas of the country's transit, whose definitive effects will be seen gradually and steadily on the growth of transit from the country in 1402 and the coming years”, the deputy transport minister further highlighted.

### Iran has a special status in trade and transit relations due to its strategic location.

Afandizadeh then explained: “In line with the activation and development of the North-South International Transport Corridor, in a tripartite meeting in last September between the high-ranking officials of our country and the Russian Federation and the Republic of Azerbaijan in Baku, while aiming to achieve the transit of 15 million tons of goods through this corridor by 2030, agreements were reached in the field of strengthening the cooperation of the three countries in joint investment and financing, the completion and development of key infrastructures and their exploitation, especially the construction of the Rasht-Astara railway line, facilitating cross-border traffic of goods and increasing the quality and quantity of this traffic”, adding that the implementation of these agreements is being followed up.

He went on to say, “One of the most important events last year was Iran's full membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). In a short period of time after the meeting of the heads of Shanghai in September 1401 in Samarkand, the first six-party meeting of the transport ministers of Iran and the countries of



Central Asia, in addition to Russia and Azerbaijan was held in Tehran in October 1401 with the goal of achieving 20-million tons of annual transit between Iran and Central Asian countries, as an area with a very high role and importance in east-west and north-south transit, especially after the recent regional and international developments, which was approved by the members.”

This year, the issue of transit and playing a role in major programs such as those related to China's Belt and Road Initiative, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), and Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) is one of the main priorities of the Transport Ministry in developing transport relations with regional and extra-regional target countries, the deputy transport minister noted.

After seven years of reduction in the transit of goods from the country, the growth path of transit resumed in the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20, 2022) and with the passage of 12.65 million tons of goods through Iran, a growth of 68 percent was achieved.

The policy of paying attention to neighbors and developing political and economic relations with neighboring countries in the current government, increasing attention to road and rail routes in the world, and the efforts and cooperation of transportation and trade-related organizations in establishing or activating corridors through the country has led to significant growth in transit of goods through Iran.

Iran is one of the countries with a special status in trade and transit relations due to its strategic location and special geography, as the country is the passage of several important international corridors.

Considering its geographical location, Iran can play a significant role in the transit of goods in the region and benefit a lot from its status in this due.

Paying attention to upstream documents, especially the country's development plans, and the government's decision to develop transit, paying special attention to infrastructure development, reducing transit time, making it cheaper to cross Iran and making more advantages over competitors, due to the short path for customers, can lead to facilitating the development of transit so that the country can reach the desired growth in this due.

## Iran's 4-month export to Turkey stands at \$820m



TEHRAN - The value of Iran's exports to neighboring Turkey stood at \$820 billion in the first four months of 2023, according to the figures recently released by the Turkish Statistical Institute.

The exports to Turkey in the mentioned four months declined 33 percent compared to the same period in 2022; Turkey had imported over \$1,231 billion worth of commodities from the Islamic Republic in the first four months of the previous year.

Based on the mentioned data, Iran's imports from the country also marked a four-percent decline to hit \$904 million during January-April in comparison with the same time span in 2022 when the figure was \$942 million.

## TEDPIX drops 17,000 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), lost 17,381 points to 2.271 million on Wednesday.

As reported, over 11,013 billion securities worth 82.33 trillion rials (about \$196 million) were traded at the TSE.

# Iran, Turkmenistan to expand trade, energy ties

From page 1 ► The Turkmen delegation, headed by Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow, the chairman of the People's Council of Turkmenistan, arrived in the Iranian capital on Tuesday.

As reported by the Iranian press, during his stay in Tehran Berdimuhamedow met and held talks with President Ebrahim Raisi, while his accompanying delegates also met with their Iranian counterparts to discuss ways of expanding ties, especially in the energy sector.

In the meeting with Berdimuhamedow, President Raisi said Iran and Turkmenistan have the potential capacity to expand cooperation in the fields of energy, transportation, transit, customs, agriculture, science and technology.

Stating that the relations between the two countries are based on deep cultural commonalities and beyond mere neighborliness, Raisi stated that the cooperation between Tehran and Ashgabat has enjoyed significant growth in the last two years, as the will of the Iranian government has been to strengthen relations with neighbors.

The two sides signed five cooperation documents late on Tuesday in the presence of President Raisi and Berdimuhamedow. The documents include cooperation in areas of electricity transfer,



customs, and higher education.

### Iran to import gas from Turkmenistan soon

After meeting with Batyr Amanov, the chairman of the Türkmengaz State Concern, Iran's Oil Minister Javad Oji said that Iran will soon sign a contract with Turkmenistan to import natural gas from the neighboring country.

Around 10 million cubic meters of natural gas per day is to be imported from Turkmenistan as per the contract, Oji told reporters on the sidelines of the meeting with Amanov on Tuesday.

The import of gas is scheduled to be started this month, the official said.

### Turkmenistan pursuing establishment of joint border markets with Iran

Meanwhile, in a meeting with

Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mehrdad Bazrpash, Head of the Transport and Communications Agency of Turkmenistan Mammethan Chakyeve said his country is seriously pursuing the establishment of markets at the border with Iran.

Expressing Turkmenistan's interest in strengthening cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran in various fields of transportation, he said: “Iran and Turkmenistan have a lot of transportation relations, and currently 400 wagons are passing through the Sarakhs border and 200 wagons are passing through the Incheh-Borun border daily.”

“It is possible to increase the capacity by three to four times the current capacity,” Chakyeve said.

Emphasizing the activation of the Ashgabat agreement, Bazrpash

for his part, announced that a comprehensive transportation document between Iran and Turkmenistan will be drafted and signed in the near future.

Bazrpash stressed the need for strengthening the relations between the two countries by pointing out that the two countries have a lot in common in transportation areas.

“Our approach in the government is to develop relations with all neighbors, including Turkmenistan,” he added.

### Iran-Turkmenistan electricity swap to increase to 1,000 MW

Also on Tuesday, Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian announced that the current 500 megawatts (MW) capacity of electricity swap between Iran and Turkmenistan will double after the inauguration of a new transmission line between the two nations.

Mehrabian made the remarks after a meeting with the Turkmen delegation.

According to the official, the two sides have agreed that the construction of a four-circuit transmission line between Merv and Sarakhs, which is 150 km long, will begin as soon as possible; The contractor for building this line is an Iranian company, and the equipment and facilities produced in Iran are used in this project.

## Annual trade with ECO members reaches \$20.5b



TEHRAN - Iran's trade with the members of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) reached \$20.5 billion in the previous Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20), the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) said.

According to Mohammad Rezvani-Far, Iran exported \$13 billion worth of commodities to the said nations last year, while the imports stood at \$7.5 billion, IRNA reported.

Referring to the trade potentials of ECO member countries in various fields, such as rail and land transport, common borders,

as well as territorial and population size, Rezvani-Far said the volume of commercial exchanges with ECO members should be more than this figure.

“IRICA is fully prepared to take the necessary measures for increasing the volume of trade and transit exchanges with ECO members in order to achieve the organization's goals set according to the ECO agreement,” he said.

The official underlined the development of transit ties with ECO members as a way of boosting trade exchanges with the mentioned countries.

“Iran has many customs agreements and memorandums with ECO member countries, and in order for these agreements to be operational in line with the provisions of the ECO agreement, it is suggested that the ECO secretariat announces the necessary measures needed to be taken with the cooperation of the members,” he noted.

Iran and ECO members traded more than 23.723 million tons of goods worth \$11.71

billion during the Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20, 2022), of which the share of exports was 18.419 million tons of goods worth \$6.890 billion and the share of imports from these countries was 5.312 million tons worth \$4.819 billion.

Petroleum products, dairy products, foodstuff, fresh and dried fruits, juices and citrus fruits, carpets, saffron, fish, caviar, ornamental aquatic products, various stones, construction equipment, clothing, industrial equipment, bags and shoes, medicine, and health supplies, as well as plastic products, were Iran's main exported items to ECO members last year, while basic goods, industrial machinery, raw materials for production, and medical supplies and medicine, were the top imported goods from ECO member states.

The Economic Cooperation Organization or ECO is an Asian political and economic intergovernmental organization that was founded in 1985 in Tehran by the leaders of Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey.

## ‘Resolving transit, monetary issues a prerequisite for boosting Iran-Uzbekistan trade’

TEHRAN - Director-General of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA)'s International Department Shahram Khasipour has said that resolving the issues related to transportation and banking transactions is the prerequisite for the expansion of trade ties between the two countries.

Khasipour made the remarks in a meeting with his Uzbek counterparts on the sidelines of the Iran-Uzbekistan Joint Economic Committee meeting in Tashkent, the ICCIMA portal reported on Tuesday.

Referring to the two countries' annual \$450 million trade, the official said: “Although the volume of trade between Iran and Uzbekistan has grown compared to last year,

considering the potential capacities of the two sides, this figure is not satisfactory.”

Emphasizing the need for joint investment between the private sectors of the two countries in the fields of textile, mining, and food industries, he added: “It is necessary for government officials to provide the necessary support to investors and economic operators.”

Last week, Iran and Uzbekistan stressed the need for expanding economic ties by signing a preferential trade agreement (PTA) and removing the obstacles in the way of trade relations.

As reported, in a meeting between the Acting Head of Iran's Trade

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

Speaking at the meeting, Barotovovich said Iran is the closest access route to the open sea for this country and demanded the removal of obstacles to the transit of goods through Iran.

He expressed hope that a roadmap for economic cooperation between the two countries with a target of one billion dollars of annual trade will be signed during the upcoming

visit of the Uzbek president to Tehran and said: “With the removal of transit obstacles, trade exchanges between Iran and Uzbekistan will reach four billion dollars.”

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

Zeyghmi for his part said Iran will take the necessary measures to remove the obstacles on the way of the transit of Uzbek goods and said: “The planning of the Iran-Uzbekistan business conference with the presence of businessmen from the two countries is underway during the visit of President Mirziyoyev to Tehran.”

## Commodities worth over \$1.4b exported from Khorasan Razavi in a year

TEHRAN- Non-oil products worth \$1,434 billion were exported from Khorasan Razavi province, in the northeast of Iran, during the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20), an official with the customs department of the province announced.

Putting the weight of exported products at 2,222 million tons, Javad Jafari said that the annual export indicates 15 percent drop in weight, while 1.1 percent growth in value.

He named saffron in packages of more than 30 grams, pistachios, steel bars, apples, and flooring as the major exported products, and Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iraq, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as the main export destinations.

The official further announced that 275,000 tons of non-oil goods worth \$644 million were imported to the province in the past year, with 11 percent and 20 percent growth in value and weight, respectively.

He named mobile phone, cotton, rice, yarn, wheat, and hot rolling machines as the main imported items, and the UAE, Tajikistan, Turkey, China, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan as the major sources of import.

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.



# U.S. nuclear test for “climate change”

From page 1 ► So those sitting on the fence don't need to ask Iran about the dimension of its nuclear program. They should refer to the U.S. intelligence.

That alone should end the discussion, even if the Prime Minister of America's top proxy Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, has been claiming that Iran is seeking a nuclear bomb since the early 1990's. At times, even resorting to holding up childish cartoons at the UN General Assembly.

Israel, of course, has its own stockpile of nuclear weapons. It is believed that it owns between 200 and 300 warheads and isn't a signatory to the NPT. But no one seems to care, even though Israel has invaded countries in West Asia, occupies other people's land, and continues to violate the sovereignty of West Asian countries with its acts of terrorism.

The U.S., needless to say, has a large stockpile of nuclear weapons. It is the only country on the planet to have used them against a civilian population in warfare, and the only country to have tested them on civilians. Ask the inhabitants of the Marshall Islands about that.

The U.S. also has 100 (one hundred, that's correct) B61 gravity bombs (tactical nuclear warheads) that it can drop from the sky. They are deployed across Europe. However, it is very furious that Russia has decided to deploy its first tactical nuclear warheads, since the end of the Soviet Union, outside its borders to neighboring Belarus.

Alexander Volfovich, state secretary of Belarus' Security Council says that the weapons were withdrawn after the 1991 Soviet collapse as the U.S. had provided security guarantees and imposed no sanctions. "Today, everything has been torn down. All the promises made are gone forever," Volfovich said, adding the



Western countries left Minsk with no choice but to allow Russian tactical nuclear weapons on its territory.

The tactical nuclear warheads, which the U.S. has deployed in Europe deliver blasts into the hundreds of kilotons. To give you an idea about the damage that they can cause, the U.S. nuclear bombs that Washington dropped on Japan and killed between 129,000 and 226,000 people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki had yields of 15 and 21 kilotons, respectively.

Many have rightly pointed out that there is no need for the Pentagon to deploy its nukes in Europe anyway, as the U.S. strategic nuclear arsenal (including long-range bombers, intercontinental ballistic missiles -ICBMs-, and submarine launched weapons) are already serving as a very sufficient deterrent against any potential adversary, including Russia.

Under international law, Tehran has the absolute right to a peaceful nuclear program and can use it for medical purposes, producing electricity, or any other civilian purposes it wishes.

If a country like Iran was experimenting bomb-grade

uranium (93% uranium purity) for six months to try to test its effect on reducing pollution, the U.S., Israel, and its Western allies would be up in arms. Washington would be calling on the UN Security Council to be holding an extraordinary session this very night and perhaps for many consecutive nights after that.

Former U.S. State Department officials and other experts are calling for the six-month U.S. nuclear experiment to be called off, saying "the damage to national security could exceed any potential benefit from this highly speculative energy technology," Reuters has reported.

The U.S. Energy Department and two other companies, including one backed by Bill Gates, are working on the project that will see more than 1,322 pounds (600 kg) of fuel containing 93% enriched uranium be tested at the Idaho National Laboratory for at least six months.

"When the U.S. preaches the nonproliferation gospel, it should practice what it preaches," Alan Kuperman, a political scientist at the University of Texas at Austin, told Science Magazine. "There was not by any means adequate public

disclosure by the department that they were planning to contradict 5 decades of U.S. nonproliferation policy."

The alleged purpose of the project is to test reactors supposedly to reduce pollution linked to climate change, but at a time that the war in Ukraine has reached a point in which Dmitry Medvedev, the former Russian President who currently serves as deputy head of the Security Council, has warned that a defeat of Russia would lead to a nuclear war does raise eyebrows about the project back in Idaho.

The nature of U.S. double standards has not been lost on the international community, which many believe to be Western heads of state. The international community comprises of thinkers, authors, political commentators, analysts, university professors and the general public who are the silent majority.

It's perhaps time to do the smart thing and what the silent majority wants. That is to call the Ukraine war off, along with the U.S. nuclear experiment for "climate change" purposes linked to "pollution" as well as a world free of nuclear weapons.

## Qatar prime minister, Taliban chief hold secret Afghan talks

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The Qatari prime minister held secret talks with the leader of the Taliban this month on resolving tension with the international community, a source briefed on the meeting said, signaling a new willingness by Afghanistan's rulers to discuss ways to end their isolation.

The May 12 meeting in the southern Afghan city of Kandahar between Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani and Haibatullah Akhonzada is the first the reclusive Taliban chief is known to have held with a foreign leader.

U.S. President Joe Biden's administration was briefed on the talks and is "coordinating on all issues discussed" by the pair, including furthering dialogue with the Taliban, said the source.

The source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said other issues Sheikh Mohammed raised with Haibatullah included the need to end a Taliban bans on girls' education and women's employment.

The meeting represents a diplomatic success for Qatar, which has criticized Taliban restrictions on women while using long-standing ties with the Islamist movement to push for deeper engagement with Kabul by the international community.

The United States has led demands for the Taliban to end the bans on girls' schooling and women working, including for UN agencies and humanitarian groups, to restore their freedom of movement and bring Afghans from outside Taliban ranks into government.

The source's comments suggested that Washington supported elevating what have been unproductive lower-level talks in the hope of a breakthrough that could end the world's only bans of their kind and ease dire humanitarian and financial crises that have left tens of millions of Afghans hungry and jobless.

The White House declined to comment on the talks. The State Department and the Qatar embassy in Washington did not respond to requests for comment.

The Taliban did not immediately respond to a

request for comment.

### Education, employment bans

The restrictions on women's schooling and work have stymied humanitarian aid and are key reasons why no country has recognized Taliban rule since they seized power in August 2021, after the Western-backed government collapsed as the last U.S.-led international troops departed following two decades of war.

The treatment by the Taliban of women and girls could amount to a crime against humanity, according to a UN report presented in March at the Human Rights Council in Geneva. The Taliban say they respect women's rights in line with their interpretation of Islamic law and Afghan customs.

Haibatullah, a hardline Islamist, has shown little willingness to compromise on his edicts.

His meeting with Sheikh Mohammed, however, suggests that he is open to exploring avenues for ending Afghanistan's isolation and boosting relief programs as the country sinks into hunger and poverty.

"It was a very positive meeting," said the source. Haibatullah was "very interested" in continuing a dialogue with the international community.

But eventual recognition by other countries of the Taliban administration, senior members of which remain under U.S. and international sanctions, is far from assured given their treatment of women and poor human rights record.

Sheikh Mohammed raised with Haibatullah the need to lift the bans on women's education and employment, including the bar on them working for UN agencies and other humanitarian groups, the source said.

The Taliban administration has been promising since January written guidelines allowing aid groups to operate with female staff.

The Taliban in March 2022 barred girls from high schools and extended the ban to universities in December.

They say they will reopen secondary schools to

girls when "conditions" have been met, including devising an Islamic syllabus.

### Addressing humanitarian crisis

Sheikh Mohammed and Haibatullah also discussed efforts to remedy Afghanistan's humanitarian crisis, the source said.

The United Nations says nearly three-quarters of Afghanistan's 40 million people need help and it has warned that funding is drying up.

Sheikh Mohammed, the source said, raised with Haibatullah the "continued efforts on the ground" by the Taliban on counterterrorism, an apparent reference to Kabul's drive to crush an Islamic State affiliate.

The main ideological foe of the Taliban is based mostly in eastern Afghanistan but has targeted minorities and embassies in Kabul.

The U.S. and its allies say the Taliban harbor members of al Qaeda and the Pakistani Taliban. The Afghan Taliban deny that.

Sheikh Mohammed, who also serves as Qatar's foreign minister, met publicly in Kandahar with Mullah Hassan Akhund, the Taliban prime minister, on the same day he met the leader. He was accompanied by Qatar's intelligence chief.

Neither side, however, revealed the talks with Haibatullah.

He almost never leaves Kandahar but has been the paramount religious, political and military leader of the Taliban since 2016, guiding the movement to victory over the Western-backed Kabul government.

Qatar allowed the militants to open a political office in Doha in 2013 and facilitated their talks with Washington that led to the 2020 deal for a withdrawal of the U.S.-led international force that they fought for 20 years.

While the tiny Persian Gulf monarchy has no formal diplomatic ties with Afghanistan, its Kabul embassy is open and represents U.S. interests there.

Qatar has long pressed the international community to agree a "roadmap" of steps for the Taliban to gain recognition, arguing that isolating Afghanistan could worsen regional security.

## WORLD HEADLINES

### North Korea says satellite launch fails, plans to try again

North Korea's attempt to put a military reconnaissance satellite in space failed Wednesday when the second stage of the rocket malfunctioned, state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said, adding that Pyongyang planned to carry out a second launch as soon as possible.

"The new satellite vehicle rocket, Chollima-1, crashed into the West Sea as it lost propulsion due to an abnormal startup of the engine on the 2nd stage after the 1st stage was separated during normal flight," KCNA said.

The report said "the reliability and stability of the new engine system" was "low" and the fuel used "unstable," leading to the mission's failure.

North Korea's National Space Development Agency said it would investigate the failure "urgently" and carry out another launch after new testing, KCNA reported.

### Mossad says ex-agent was among 4 who died when boat sank in Italy

Israel's intelligence agency said Wednesday that a retired agent was among four people killed in northern Italy when a sudden storm sank a houseboat hired for a weekend pleasure cruise on a lake.

The former agent was on the vessel with 22 other people on a lake near the town of Lisanza, according to Italian media reports. Two Italian intelligence agents and a Russian woman — part of the two-person crew — also died in the incident.

The Israeli prime minister's office issued a statement on behalf of the Mossad saying the unnamed agent's remains had been returned to Israel for burial. The Foreign Ministry had previously confirmed that a retiree from the Israeli security forces was killed but didn't provide a name or age or give details on his professional background.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said that because of the agent's work in the agency, further details could not be disclosed.

Italian police released no information on the identities or professions of the 19 survivors, but local news reports said they included other members of the Italian and Israeli intelligence services, suggesting the boat outing may have been part of a work meeting.

### Sudan army suspends participation in Jeddah ceasefire talks

Sudan's army has suspended its participation in talks over a ceasefire and humanitarian access, Sudanese diplomatic sources told Al Jazeera, raising fears of renewed fighting that has displaced hundreds of thousands of people.

The talks with the rival paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) began in the Saudi Arabian port city of Jeddah in early May and produced a declaration of commitments to protecting civilians and two short-term ceasefire deals that have been repeatedly violated.

The army and the RSF had agreed to extend a weeklong ceasefire deal by five days just before it was due to expire late on Monday.

Diplomatic sources told Al Jazeera on Wednesday that the army was suspending its participation in the talks.

A spokesman for the army, Brigadier Nabil Abdalla, also told the Associated Press news agency the decision was in response

to the RSF's alleged "repeated violations" of the humanitarian ceasefire, including their continued occupation of hospitals and other civilian infrastructure in the capital, Khartoum.

In a statement, the RSF accused the army of halting the talks in Jeddah so that it could undermine them and of violating the ceasefire by using airpower and heavy artillery to attack its positions.

### NATO to send more troops to Kosovo

NATO will deploy 700 additional troops to Kosovo, where 30 of the bloc's security personnel were wounded during clashes with local Serb protesters. Another battalion will be placed on high alert in the event of further escalation.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg announced the move in a Tuesday press briefing, saying the deployment was a response to recent "attacks" on the force, which he said were "unacceptable."

Stoltenberg urged officials in Pristina and Belgrade to take "concrete steps" to de-escalate the situation, and said the two sides should participate in an EU-brokered dialogue.

### Woman who accused Joe Biden of sexual assault asks Putin for citizenship

The woman who accused Joe Biden of sexual assault during the 2020 presidential race has appeared in Moscow and asked Vladimir Putin for Russian citizenship.

Speaking from Moscow, Tara Reade claimed that her life was in danger and that she was facing imprisonment after she was called a Russian agent following her accusations against the US president.

Sitting alongside Maria Butina, a Russian politician and former spy who was arrested and imprisoned in Washington in 2018, Ms Reade said: "I just really so appreciate Maria and everyone who's been giving me [protection] at a time when it's been very difficult to know if I'm safe or not.

"I just didn't want to walk home and walk into a cage or be killed, which is basically my two choices."

The 59-year-old said that she has "always loved Russia" and does not see "Russia as an enemy".

She said she had one "large" request and added: "I'd like to apply for citizenship in Russia, from the president of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin."

### Kremlin says would like to hear ‘some condemnation’ from West on drone attack

The Kremlin on Wednesday said that it would like to hear "some condemnation" from the West with regard to the drone attack in the Russian capital Moscow early Tuesday.

"We saw the reaction from both London and Washington. Once again we recorded for ourselves the absence of any condemnation. Of course, we would prefer to hear at least some words of condemnation. There was no condemnation," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said during a press briefing.

Though the US and UK reacted to the drone strike, they did not condemn the incident.

In response to a question on discrepancies in the number of drones during the attack in Moscow, Peskov said that the media cannot be the primary source of information and pointed to the Russian Defense Ministry as the primary source.

Peskov further said that Russia's air defense system will continue to improve, as expressed by President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday.



## West Azarbaijan exports \$14.29 million of handicrafts in year



TEHRAN – Handicrafts exports from West Azarbaijan province reached \$14.29 million during the past Iranian calendar year 1401, which came to an end on March 20.

“Craftspeople of West Azarbaijan exported \$14.29 million of handicrafts in 1401,” the deputy provincial tourism chief said on Monday.

As for domestic sales, the official referred to local festivals, marketplaces, and exhibitions such as the ones organized to mark Noruz (the Iranian new year) as highlights of the sector.

## Flooring project begins at historical bazaar of Qazvin

TEHRAN – A flooring project is underway at Qeisarieh covered passage of the historical bazaar of Qazvin, a local tourism official has said.

To preserve the historical structure and to replace worn-out materials, the project is being carried out in collaboration with the shop owners, Ehsan Nurani explained on Wednesday.

Qazvin was once the capital of the mighty Persian Empire, under Safavids, from 1548 to 98. It is a major tourist destination with a wonderfully restored caravanserai-turned-arts precinct, some quirky museums, and a handful of decent eating options. For most travelers, Qazvin is also primarily the staging point for excursions to the famous Castles of the Assassins and trekking in the sensational Alamut Valley.

Also known as the castle of the Assassins, the 12th-century Alamut castle is nestled on top of a peak. It was once a shelter for the followers of Hasan-e Sabbah (1070–1124) who was a spiritual leader of an Islamic sect. In the early 1930s, British-Italian explorer and travel writer Freya Stark described her exploration of the place in her book “The Valleys of the Assassins.”

Qazvin is also home to one of the biggest roofed caravanserais in the country, Sa’d-al Saltaneh caravanserai. Dating back to the Qajar era, it’s a place for discovering tens of Højreh shops, cafes, yards, and a stunning mosque. It’s a place for visitors who want to experience the culture, cuisine, and hospitality of Iran.

Bazaars in Persian towns

Bazaar is, originally, a public market district of a Persian town. The bazaar of the ancient Islamic world was vividly described in the folktales of “The Thousand and One Nights”. Located in a distinct quarter of a town, it was bustling and noisy by day

## Excavation sheds new light on Oshnavieh’s historical sites



TEHRAN –Five teams of Iranian archaeologists have recently finished the rescue excavations on the historical sites at the basin of the Chaparabad Dam in the city of Oshnavieh, northwest Iran, a local tourism official has said.

During this season of excavation a total of 111 historical objects from the Iron Age to the Islamic era were discovered in the area, Ronak Tasa explained on Wednesday.

Earlier this month, the official announced that as a result of the water release in the dam in the near future, the historical sites and relics in the area could be completely submerged.

Archaeologists, therefore, work hard to find and save historical objects and hand them over to the

According to avaluable data, the value of Iran’s handicrafts exports stood at \$400 million during the first ten months of the year 1401, which shows some 30 percent growth compared with the same period a year earlier.

Experts say Iranian handicrafts have a high capacity for export, which can be realized through the creation of special holding companies. The Islamic Republic exported some \$320 million worth of handicrafts in the year 1400.

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

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



in contrast to the quiet residential quarters. Access was forbidden after sundown.

Distinctive architecture characterized some bazaars—such as those built at Kashan and Isfahan in Iran in the 17th century. They were usually roofed for protection against the hot desert sun, either with a single roof, with individual vaulted cupolas or domes, or with awnings.

From another point of view, bazaars are also synonyms for foods, with their unmissable colorful stalls of vegetables, herbs, and spices. Yet, most of these ingredients might be mysterious to a foreign eye. Teahouses help punctuate the walk and a traditional restaurant is a perfect place for lunch.

Browsing through a traditional bazaar may provide new experiences and fresh points of view on the ancient land. Such excursions can be made either in person or by “off-the-beaten-track” tours. Not only it’s an opportunity to discover dozens of unique local ingredients, but it’s also a chance to taste street foods and delicacies, in some traditional bakery known only by locals and shopkeepers.

People watching and even mingling with them in the bazaars is one of the best ways to take the pulse of the country. Bazaars have traditionally been major economic and social centers in any Iranian city.

museums in the area, she added.

Located in West Azarbaijan province, Oshnavieh boasts 106 sites registered on Iran’s National Cultural Heritage List. It is also home to five bas-relief carvings, originally belonging to the Kingdom of Urartu (860 BC – 590 BC), the main reason why Oshnavieh is called an archaeologist’s paradise.

However, over the past couple of years, the region has witnessed a series of unauthorized, unprecedented drillings and excavations committed by unauthorized diggers and antique dealers.

West Azarbaijan embraces a variety of lush natural sceneries, cultural heritage sites, and museums including the UNESCO sites of Takht-e Soleyman and Qareh Klise (St. Thaddeus Monastery), Teppé Hasanlu, and the ruined Bastam Citadel.

The region was home to several ancient civilizations. According to Britannica, it was conquered by Alexander the Great in the 4th century BC and was named Atropatene after one of Alexander’s generals, Atropates, who established a small kingdom there. Ultimately, the area returned to the Persian (Iranian) rule under the Sasanians in the 3rd century CE.

# The Great Wall of Gorgan: an ancient marvel of military construction

TEHRAN – Ancient great walls are among the most recognizable wonders humans constructed centuries ago.

Of course, the two most well-known are the fabled Great Wall of China and Hadrian’s Wall, both of which are located in Northern England and were constructed by the Roman Emperor Hadrian. The Berlin Wall is a more contemporary example and a reminder of the Cold War between the U.S. and the USSR, as well as the Belfast Peace Wall in Northern Ireland.

Between the Great Wall of China and Hadrian’s Wall, however, was the construction of a second, equally impressive wall in West Asia; the Great Wall of Gorgan.

The Great Wall of Gorgan, between the Caspian Sea and the Alborz Mountains, guarded the Sassanian Empire’s frontiers. It was one of the hardest buildings to take over because of the clay, fired bricks, mortar, and other sturdy building materials that went into its construction.

Although there is some dis-



agreement regarding when it was built, many sources date it to the fifth or sixth century CE.

This would imply that the Sassanian Empire was founded by the great Khosrow I, one of the greatest kings of Persia.

Even though the initial purpose of the wall’s construction is mysterious, many people think it was to defend the northern borders of the Empire against the Hephthalites, also known as the White Huns, with whom the Sassanids

had mixed relations.

Except for the Great Wall of China, it completely dwarfed all other similar structures with a length of 195 km.

To put it in perspective, Hadrian’s Wall and Antonine’s Wall don’t even come close to matching Gorgan’s Wall.

But more than just its size, this wall’s structure was remarkable, adding to its impact.

Also known as Red Wall, which in some ancient texts is referred

## Marand Jameh Mosque to turn into tourist destination

TEHRAN –The historical Jameh Mosque of Marand, which stands tall in East Azarbaijan province, northwest Iran, holds the potential to turn into a tourist destination, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

The 700-year-old Jameh Mosque of Marand has both historical and touristic significance, IRNA quoted Vahid NAvadad as saying on Wednesday.

Therefore, the religious utilization of the central part of this site will be minimized to focus on tourism and make it more visitor-friendly, the official added.

It is planned to separate the central part of the mosque from the rest of it, making it easily accessible to visitors at any time of the day without any hassle, he noted.

However, the restoration projects, which have recently been begun on the historical structure, need to come to an end, he mentioned.

## Kohgiluyeh-Boyerahmad to develop tourism infrastructure

TEHRAN – The tourism infrastructure in the southwestern Kohgiluyeh-Boyerahmad province is planned to be developed, the provincial tourism chief has said.

A budget of 700 billion rials (\$14 million) has been allocated for the tourism development of the province, Saeid Talebipour explained on

Wednesday.

The money will be spent on different tourism-related projects including the completion of Yasuj’s Archaeological Museum, the restoration of historical monuments, and setting up handicrafts markets, the official added.

The lesser-known province is home to various nomads and is a top

destination for those interested in visiting in person the nomadic life. Sightseers may live with a nomadic or rural family for a while or enjoy an independent stay and assist them with day-to-day life. It also opens up an opportunity to feel rustic routines, agriculture, traditions, arts, and culture.

## Digging deeper: A look into burial traditions in northwest Iran during Bronze Age



TEHRAN – Northwest Iran is a rich area of burial sites. For example, excavations in the Azarbaijan region have revealed a variety of similarities and differences in their placement, as well as in the structure, building materials, and funerary goods of their tombs.

The first archaeological excavations in the cultural area on the south/southwest shore of the Caspian Sea were carried out more than 100 years ago. The excavations of Jacques de Morgans in the Talesh region at the end of the 19th century revealed for the first time considerable traces from the second and first millennium BC. Although there has been no unequivocal chronological study of the archeology of this area and the current classification, chronological knowledge, such as that of the Iron Age, did not yet exist in Iranian archaeology.

According to a 2021 academic study conducted by Hossein Naseri-Someeh, Alireza Hejebri-Nobari, and Kamaledin Niknami, numerous surveys and excavations at the Iron Age cemeteries of northwest Iran have produced a large body of data, which have so far been treated at the level of

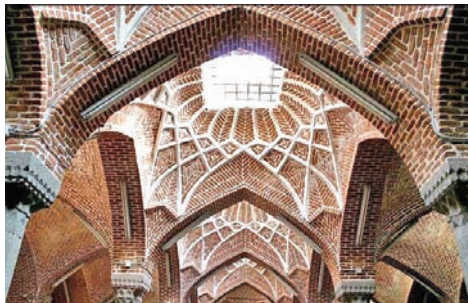
individual sites and have rarely been used in integrated, holistic research on the typology of graves structure.

In many cases, the earlier tradition of simple pit burial survived alongside the newly introduced regular structures, which fall into various groups such as rectangular, semi-rectangular, cromlech, dolmen and pitcher burials.

Cromleches mark a very distinct burial custom in north-western Iran in the 2nd and 1st millennium BC. The term is literally divided into Crom, which means ring or circle, and Lech, which means stone. In its simplest application, therefore, the term describes a stone circle surrounding a central tomb. Apart from north-western Iran, circular arrangements of stone slabs around burials are attested in several other regions, from the Altai Mountains to all of Europe, the Caucasus and eastern Turkey.

The term dolmen refers to characteristic funerary structures consisting of a series of large upright stone slabs topped with a horizontally placed capstone. Because of their structure, they are mostly above ground and visible on the surface. Numerous related burials have been found in a variety of regions, such as France, Africa and Palestine.

Dolmens of Azarbaijan are mainly scattered in the eastern and northern highlands in the Qaradagh and Sabalan regions. Examples have been reported from the cemeteries of Zard Khaneh and



conqueror, took it in 1392. Some decades later the Kara Koyunlu Turkmen made it their capital, it was when the famous Blue Mosque was built in Tabriz.

The city retained its administrative status under the Safavid dynasty until 1548 when Shah Tahmasp I relocated his capital westward to Qazvin. During the next two centuries, Tabriz changed hands several times between Persia and Ottoman Empire. During World War I, the city was temporarily occupied by Turkish and then Soviet troops.

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

Shahar-e Yeri.

The exact reasons behind this structural and formal multiplicity remain unclear. What is clear, however, is that geography played a direct role in burial practices.

The Bronze and Iron Age is one of the most significant and complicated cultural periods in Iran and Azarbaijan in particular, which can be attributed to various episodes of migration, the rise of the earliest states, the discovery of new metals and the significantly changed interactions. The respective locations are characterized primarily by grey/black ware, cast vessels, absence or lack of painted ware, extracurricular cemeteries, and the occurrence of iron artifacts.

The technological advancements in pottery, tools, and metal objects as well as the emergence of monumental architectural plans during the late Bronze and early Iron periods are the most obvious examples of the dramatic changes in ancient societies.

Other notable adjustments to burial practices were made on the Iranian plateau and in most of Western Asia as the advent of urbanism permanently ended the long-standing custom of intramural burial and replaced it with the interment of the dead in distinct extramural cemeteries, which were typically located outside of the populated areas.

Home to many other kinds of historical tombs such as tomb towers and rack-hewn tombs, Iran is heaven for cemetery enthusiasts and grave hunters.



# Domestic production of medical equipment saves €20m annually

TEHRAN – The production of medical equipment by Iranian companies saves up to €20 million annually, a health official has said.

“Every year, 15 to 20 million euros worth of medical equipment is manufactured in the country, and we are witnessing the move towards self-sufficiency in this regard,” IRNA quoted Mehdi Mahdavian as saying.

“It is expected that in [the Iranian year] 1403 (March 2024–March 2025), we will make the country needless to import of a diverse basket of safety-based tests, especially rapid qualitative and quantitative diagnostic tests, as well as coagulation and blood bank products.”

The country is moving towards self-sufficiency in producing medical equipment.

“To this end, we signed memorandums of understanding with universities of medical sciences to maximize interaction with knowledge-based companies and conclude joint production contracts.”

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

“The increase in drug production



is supported by stable supply for exports, and our forecast for exports in the current year is \$200 million,” IRNA quoted Heidar Mohammadi, the head of the Food and Drug Administration, as saying.

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

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

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

The figure was about \$180 million in the year 1397 (March 2018–March 2019). The country imports some \$1 billion of drugs per year.

A total of 227 knowledge-based firms are supplying medical equipment for health centers across the country, according to the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology.

Iranian-made pharmaceuticals are currently exported to Canada, Japan, and Europe, Faramarz Ekhteraei, chairman of the Iranian Pharmaceutical Industries Syndicate said, emphasizing that 72 percent of the country’s pharmaceutical raw materials are domestically produced.

Some 40 percent of the country’s total pharmaceutical exports are biotechnology products, a member of the board of directors of the Association of Manufacturers and Exporters of Medical Biotechnology Products said.

Iran’s biotechnology products are exported to European, Asian, and Latin American countries, and Iran’s technology can compete with other countries in this field, he further highlighted.

The export revenue of medicinal plants is estimated at \$700 million, the caretaker of the Vice Presidency

for Science and Technology, Rouhollah Dehghani, has said.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 1000 vehicles and 300 ambulances added to Iran’s rescue fleet

TEHRAN- Adding 1000 rescue vehicles and 300 ambulances to the emergency fleet, the head of the Red Crescent Society has announced.

Speaking at a meeting with rescuers and managers in the administrative council of the city of Malayer on Wednesday, Pirhossein Koolivand complained about the mismatch between the budget of the Red Crescent Society and its essential needs, the Mehr News Agency reported.

He said that sustainable resources should

be considered to provide the necessary budget, especially in the field of rescue and relief.

For example, Koolivand said, part of the toll fees or other transportation costs such as insurance can be used to cover road emergency services in the country.

Koolivand added that the Red Crescent Society is determined to improve its logistical facilities in the current year (March 2023–March 2024) by equipping and renovating its emergency fleets.

Fortunately, 1000 new rescue vehicles and

300 new ambulances will be added to the Red Crescent’s emergency fleet this year, but this number of vehicles is not enough to meet “our needs”.

He added although the Red Crescent Society does great work in social and cultural areas in the country, people and officials know it more for its emergency services and natural disaster response.

“Currently, our logistical facilities for rescue operations on land, air, and sea do not match our needs at all.”

## Knowledge-based medical equipment factory inaugurated in Kashan

TEHRAN- By operating a knowledge-based factory, production lines for several important medical products in the field of cardiology and vascular system have been launched for the first time in the country.

The official opening ceremony of the factory and the operation of production lines for several medical products, including arterial sheet and angiography catheter production lines, was held with the presence of the head of the Imam

Executive Command Headquarters, the director-general of medical equipment and supplies at the Food and Drug Administration, the CEO of Barkat Knowledge-Based Institute, and some local managers in Amir Kabir Industrial Park in Kashan.

Aref Norouzi, head of the Imam Executive Command Headquarters, stated that a 5,500 square meter factory was opened in Kashan with an investment of 300 billion tomans which has created direct employment for 150 people.

He added that by opening this factory and launching production lines for arterial sheet and angiography catheter which is taking place for the first time in the country, about 50 to 90 percent savings have been achieved for producing various products, and products from this factory are more affordable than similar foreign ones. Norouzi said that the headquarters has supported a wide range of knowledge-based companies, including Kashan Company.

He emphasized that usually knowledge-based companies are formed by talented and enthusiastic individuals who support growth and development of their country, and supporting these companies is a long-term investment for the country. He continued by stating that most cardiovascular medical equipment is imported, but this company has invested about 300 billion tomans with 140 billion tomans from shareholders and 160 billion tomans from bank facilities to achieve its results.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

### Iran finds herbal medicines effective in COVID-19 treatment

Two herbal drugs that are effective in healing the symptoms of COVID-19 have been permitted to be produced domestically.

The Food and Drug Administration has approved four domestically produced herbal medicine effective in the treatment of COVID-19 and has issued a production license for two of them.

Kianoush Jahanpour, the spokesman for the Food and Drug Administration, told IRNA on Monday that “none of these drugs are a cure for COVID-19, but they have effects to reduce the symptoms of this disease and should be further investigated.”

The first herbal medicine in this collection is an oral spray containing six herbal essential oils, and according to the results of a clinical trial presented, if used, it helps to improve the pulmonary complications of coronavirus, including shortness of breath, cough, and arterial oxygenation, he explained.

### تولید دو داروی گیاهی موثر در درمان کرونا در ایران

سازمان غذا و دارو ی ایران چهار فرآورده طبیعی تولید داخل با اجزای گیاهی برای بهبود علایم کووید۱۹ را تایید کرده و مجوز تولید را برای دو مورد آنها صادر کرده است.

کیانوش جهانپور سخنگوی سازمان غذا و دارو روز دوشنبه در گفت وگو با ایرنا گفت: هیچکدام از این داروها داروی درمان کووید۱۹ نیستند اما اثراتی برای بهبود علایم این بیماری داشته اند و باید مراحل بررسی بیشتر را طی کنند. وی گفت: اولین داروی گیاهی از این مجموعه یک اسپری دهانی حاوی ۶ اسانس گیاهی است و با توجه به نتایج کارآزمایی بالینی ارائه شده در صورت مصرف به بهبود عوارض ربوی کووید۱۹ شامل تنگی نفس، سرفه و اکسیژن رسانی شربانی کمک می کند.

## Women from the Leader’s point of view-7

### Iranian women combatants opened new chapter in history in Sacred Defense

From page 1 ▶ During the imposed war by ex-Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein on Iran (1980–88) [known as Sacred Defense in Iran], Iranian women played a very effective role, regardless of their restrictions and physical situation.

In addition to their presence behind the scenes of the war to provide key logistical support, some other women who had learnt military training also fought on the front lines against the Ba’athists shoulder to shoulder with men.

Women who were active behind the scene of the war handed over their jewelry and precious belongings to the combatants and participated in political, social, and cultural activities.

Although women combatants were fewer in numbers in comparison to male combatants throughout the Sacred Defense era, history tells us that the presence of men on the battlefields was not the only factor that secured victory for Iran.

Some Iranian women were present in the border cities during the invasion of the Iraqi army in the early days of the war and defended the cities along with men and some of them took up their presence on the battlefield due to necessity.

In this regard, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in his message to Congress “7,000 Martyred Iranian Women” pointed to the role of women in the Sacred Defense era, saying, “Muslim Iranian women have opened a new chapter in history for women throughout the world and they proved that it is possible to be a woman, to be modest, to wear hijab, to be noble and at the same time to play a pivotal role and make great achievements.” (Mar 6, 2013)

When war began on September 22, 1980, Iraqi armed forces invaded western Iran along the countries’ joint border. Iraq’s troops captured the city of Khorramshahr but failed to take the important oil-refining centre of Abadan. By December 1980 the Iraqi offensive had bogged down about 50–75 miles (80–120 km) inside Iran after meeting unexpectedly strong Iranian resistance. In May 1982, Iranian forces recaptured Khorramshahr.

During this period, some Iranian women remained in Khorramshahr and Abadan after the Iraqi invasion and volunteered to participate in defending the cities. Driven by revolutionary zeal or by their patriotism, each acted independently and disregarded all gender lines.

Women who lived in the war zone weren’t the only women to volunteer to fight immediately following Iraq’s invasion. Those females who lived far from the calamities also devoted their time and property. Women of villages and cities such as Shalamcheh, Susangerd, Khorramshahr, and Abadan that were directly attacked found themselves with the only option to fend for themselves regardless of the prospects. For these wom-

en, not defending their towns meant bearing the consequences of remaining passive, including captivity, rape, death, or a combination thereof.

The presence of Iranian women on the battlefield and the front lines of the war included nursing and providing aid to the wounded, direct participation in war operations, and war photography and journalism.

Some 500 Iranian women reportedly fought as combatants during the war. Official figures say nearly 25,000 female doctors, nurses, and aid workers also served on the front lines.

Statistics show that 6,428 Iranian women were martyred during the imposed war that most of them were martyred in the bombings of the cities. According to the Martyr Foundation and Veterans Affairs of Iran, 500 of the martyrs were women combatants.

Shahnaz Haji Shah was 26 years old in September 1980 when she was martyred by an Iraqi mortar in Khoramshahr near the border with Iraq.

Just before she was martyred, Haji Shah saved the life of a wounded Iranian soldier. According to accounts by her relatives, she was struck in the heart by a mortar fragment as she was rushing towards a house that had been shelled to try to help anyone inside.

“The women martyrs, disabled war veterans and former prisoners of war are a manifestation of one of the highest peaks of glory for the Islamic Revolution and the Islamic Republic,” Ayatollah Khamenei said in a message delivered to officials of the National Congress in honor of 17,000 women martyrs, disabled war veterans and former prisoners of war. (March 9, 202)

The Leader also in another message released on Mar 6, 2013 discussed the outstanding role of martyred Iranian women in changing the course of history, saying, “The blood of these martyrs has made new power and attraction appear in the present era. Sooner or later, this will influence the fate and position of women throughout the world.”

Also, according to some reports, up to 170 Iranian women were prisoners of war in Iraqi custody.

Khadijeh Mirshkar was the first Iranian captive woman who returned to Iran after about 2 years of captivity in Iraq. She was arrested by Iraqi forces in Susangerd in the early days of the war. Mirshkari was seriously injured when she was captured by the Iraqis and spent difficult days in the Iraqi camps.

Although some of these captured women were eventually officially recognized as prisoners of war for the full or partial duration of their captivity, some had a less-distinct diplomatic status because the Saddam Hussein’s government concealed their identity and secretly imprisoned them in that country’s military intelligence detention centers.



### Cheerful wedding in Bakhtiari tribe

The wedding ceremony in the Bakhtiari tribe is one of the most beautiful and cheerful celebrations in Iran. The wedding ceremony usually lasts for several days.

Bakhtiari nomads also hold special rituals in wedding ceremonies.



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JUNE 1, 2023

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

*When Allah chooses to favor someone, He makes him the source of satisfying other people's needs.*

**Prophet Muhammad (S)**

Prayer Times » Noon:12:02    Evening: 19:35    Dawn: 3:06 (tomorrow)    Sunrise: 4:50 (tomorrow)

## Collections and study of Persian art in Germany

**Part 2**  
Philipp Walter Schulz, the first German author to write on Persian miniature painting, acquired Persian works of art and ethnography during his travels in Persia before 1900.

His collection was exhibited in Leipzig in 1900 and later on sold to museums, libraries, and private collectors.

One of the first major exhibitions of Islamic art ever to be held took place in Munich in 1910. Among the more than 3500 exhibits, numerous works of art from Persia were exhibited in Germany for the first time (Sarre and Martin).

**From 1919 to 1945**  
Due to the economic crisis in Germany during the 1920s, museums and libraries made only a limited number of acquisitions.

The Vorderasiatisches Museum in Berlin, founded in 1899, exhibited pre-Islamic art up to the Achaemenid period, and the Islamic department exhibited art from the Parthian, Sassanid, and Islamic eras.

The Museum für Vor- und Frühgeschichte in Berlin as well as museums in Hamburg, Mainz, and elsewhere collected bronzes of Luristan.

Numerous studies of Persian art appeared during those years. Herzfeld published results on Taq-e Bostan, and Sarre wrote the first complete account of art and architecture in pre-Islamic Persia.

Similar studies by other scholars (e.g., von der Osten, Brentjes) soon followed in the 1950s and 1960s. Beginning with 1915, the first general surveys on Islamic art as well as studies on single fields of Islamic art by Ernst Kühnel introduced Persian art to a wider public.

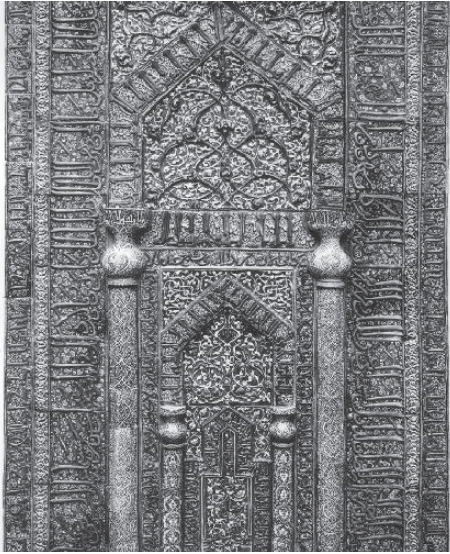
Kurt Erdmann studied Sassanid hunting plates, Persian fire-temples, and published the first book concerned solely with all facets of Sassanid art.

Sarre, Kühnel, Erdmann, and Oscar Reuther (who led the first excavation at Ctesiphon), were, among others, contributors to the Survey of Persian Art.



Bowl with lute-player and Arabic benediction in Kufic script on the edge. Silver and niello. Iran, 10th-11th century. Courtesy of Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Museum für Islamische Kunst (Inventory no. I.582, 5-77). Photograph courtesy of Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Berlin

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica. Concluded.



Glazed ceramic mehrab with arabesque reliefs and Quranic inscriptions in Kufic and naskh scripts, Kashan. Dated Safar 623 (February-March 1226) and signed by Hasan ibn Arabshah. Courtesy of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Museum für Islamische Kunst (Inventory no. I. 5366).

**From 1946 to 1996**  
During these years, museums in the western part of Germany began to expand their collections systematically or to build up new sections devoted to Persian art.

Many works, such as Luristan bronzes and Amlash pottery, Achaemenian and Sassanid glass, Islamic pottery and glass from the Nishapur region, and metalwork from eastern Persia, entered museum collections for the first time.

The Exhibition of 7000 Years of Art in Iran, which included items from various countries among them Persia and Germany, was the first of a series of exhibitions that promoted the knowledge of Persian art of all periods.

Some of the exhibitions were based on the museum collections while others were devoted to special themes such as archeological excavations (Naumann), court life (Niewöhner, 1995), animals (Das Tier ...), ceramics (Klein et al.), glass (Städtisches Museum Braunschweig), silks (Deutsches Textilmuseum), and carpets (Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe).

In the eastern part of Germany, the study of Persian miniature paintings led to an exhibition of items from museums and libraries in Berlin, Dresden, Gotha, Halle, Weimar, and Leipzig (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin).

During this period only a limited number of private collectors in Germany were particularly interested in Persian art.

Studies on single groups of objects focused on Luristan bronzes (Calmeyer), Sasanian fire-temples (Schippmann), Sassanid stucco (Kröger, 1982), Safavid carpets (Luschey-Schmeisser; Spuhler, 1968), carpets of all periods (Erdmann, 1955, 1966), a Safavid Shahnameh (Enderlein and Sundermann), textiles from the Safavid to the Qajar periods (Neumann and Murza), and a number of different Islamic themes.

Since the foundation of the Persian branch of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut in 1961, many studies of Persian art conducted by German scholars have been sponsored by this institute.

# Allegorical play “Otolsurun” satirizes arrival of first car in Iran

TEHRAN – A play currently on stage at a Tehran theater allegorically satirizes the arrival of the first automobile in Iran during the Qajar period.

Director Shahrzud Delafkar uses a cast of 25 amateur actors, who previously participated in his workshops, to stage “Otolsurun” (“Car Launch Party”) written by Baqer Soroush.

The play takes the audience to Qajar king Mozaffar ad-Din Shah's dream in the early years of the 1900s when he brought an automobile to Iran for the first time. The story features symbols from the history of the period and notes the harem's jealousy over the new phenomenon.

The decision to bring the car to the country was made at a time when conditions in the society were such that there was widespread suffering from a growing addiction problem, rampant poverty, infectious diseases and many other social and political crises.

The play satirically explores the question: what is the point of introducing the automobile to a society in which over 90 percent of the population are suffering from hunger and are illiterate, while additionally their country is being looted by the Soviet Union and Britain?

In March 2021, Delafkar used



Director Shahrzud Delafkar's troupe performs “Otolsurun” at the Nazerzadeh Kermani Hall of the Iranshahr Theater Complex in Tehran on May 23, 2023. (Tiwall/Reza Javidi)

another troupe in staging the play at Samandarian Hall in Tehran.

“In this play, we use history just as a medium, we don't intend to recount a historical story. In fact, we use the Qajar period as a form; not as a historical subject,” writer Soroush told the Persian service of Honaronline at that time.

“My writings come from my life experiences and all those things

necessary for writing,” he added.

“Otolsurun” won an honorable mention at the Fajr International Theater Festival in Tehran in 2021.

Mozaffar ad-Din Shah made three visits to Europe during his reign from 1896 until his death in 1907.

On his first trip to Europe in 1900, he went to Belgium where he became acquainted with automobiles.

Visits to car manufacturers were a major part of his travels to Europe. As a result, his visits to the car companies led him to purchase several automobiles, of which he certainly showed a preference for French cars.

In 1901 he bought a Gardner-Serpollet in Paris and he gave Léon Serpollet the Order of the Lion and the Sun for his services.

## More films from Iran line up for Shanghai festival

TEHRAN – Six other movies by Iranian directors will be screened at the 25th Shanghai International Film Festival.

“World War III”, “Leila's Brother”, “Scent of Wind” and “No Bear” have been selected to be showcased in the Viva la Festival section, which is dedicated to reviewing the latest award-winning or nominated films from the world's major film festivals.

Directed by Hooman Seyyedi, “World War III” was Iran's submission to the 2023 Oscars.

The film depicts Shakib, a hapless day laborer who finds himself cast in a film about the Nazi regime while hiding his girlfriend, a sex worker fleeing from her exploiters, on the set.

The film has been screened in numerous international events, including the 79th Venice International Film Festival, where it won the Orizzonti Award for best film and the Orizzonti Award for best actor for Tanabandeh for his portrayal of Shakib.

Another highlight of the lineup is “Scent of Wind” directed by Hadi Mohaqeq.

The film was the opening film of the 2022 Busan International Film Festival and won the Kim Jiseok Award.

The film's story is set in a distant Iranian village where a paralyzed man collects herbal medicine

in the mountains for making his living with his sick child. The electricity goes off in his house and an electrician comes to fix it. Unfortunately, the problem is bigger than what was anticipated and may take days to be resolved. When he sees the child on the sickbed, he feels committed to doing whatever he can to bring the electricity back. However, he has a tough job ahead with facing nature and some unexpected events.

It was also the winner of the Silver Balloon (Montgolfière d'Argent) award of the 2022 Festival des 3 Continents in Nantes, France.

Winner of the grand prize at the 36th Venice International Film Critics' Week, “Zalava”, Arsalan Amiri's directorial feature debut, will be screened in the Spectrum-Midnight Fantasy category.

The film presents a brilliant examination of faith, science and tradition based on stories told to him by his father.

In 1978, the inhabitants of a small village in Iran called Zalava claim there is a demon among them. Masud, a young gendarmerie sergeant who investigates this claim, encounters an exorcist attempting to rid the village of the demon. When he arrests the exorcist on charges of fraud, the villagers' fear and anger escalate. Masud and his love interest, a government doctor, soon find themselves trapped in a cursed



Akbar Zanjanpour and Shahram Golchin in “Chess of the Wind”.

house, surrounded by villagers who believe they are both possessed by the demon.

Director Mohammadreza Aslani's 1976 drama “Chess of the Wind” will be reviewed in the SIFF Classics-4K Restoration section.

In this film, the first lady of a noble house has died and now there is conflict among those remaining over the distribution of her inheritance.

The Iranian films “The Annoyed”, “1.5 Horsepower”, “Cause of Death: Unknown”, “Dolphin Boy” and “The Passion of Mahmoud” will be screened in different sections of the Shanghai festival, which will take place from June 9 to 18 in Shanghai, China.

## Alain de Botton’s “What Is Culture For?” published in Persian

TEHRAN – “What Is Culture For?”, an essay written by Alain de Botton at the School of Life, has been published in Persian.

Reza Baharam is the translator of the book originally published in 2018. The Persian edition has been published by Kargadan.

This book illustrates how to find compassion, hope and perspective in the arts.

Many people search for the meaning of life through music, film, literature and the visual arts.



Front cover of the Persian edition of Alain de Botton's book “What Is Culture For?”

But how can we synthesize the emotions we feel through art?

## “From the Land of the Moon” comes to Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN – Italian novelist Milena Agus's book “From the Land of the Moon” has recently been published in Persian by Mahi.

First published in 2006, the novel has been translated into Persian by Mehrdad Vosuqi.

A young unnamed woman reflects upon the life of her grandmother, a bewitching and eccentric figure whose abiding search for love spans much of the twentieth century.

In 1943, as American bombs fall on the city of Cagliari, the young woman's grandmother is thirty and already considered an old maid, unmarried and still living at home with her parents.

But when the bombing ceases, and despite her protests, her father forces her to marry the first man to propose, an older widower she doesn't love.

After suffering several miscarriages, she is sent for treatment at a spa on the mainland, where she falls in love with an injured Italian army veteran and nine months later gives birth to a son.

Attributing the pregnancy to her spa treatment, she returns to her husband and never reveals the affair.

Decades later, she returns to the mainland and travels to her former lover's hometown of Milan. Dressed in her finest coat and shoes, she wanders the streets in search of the elusive veteran.

Agus is from Sardinia. She is one of the leading novelists in the so-called Sardinian Literary Spring, which began in the 1980s and which includes other international names such as Michela Murgia.



Front cover of the Persian edition of Milena Agus's novel “From the Land of the Moon”.