

Opinion

BRICS
and Iran's
multilateralism policy

Hossein Amir-Abdollahian

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Cape Town in South Africa was hosting the foreign ministers of the BRICS and "Friends of BRICS" on 2 June 2023. My delegation and I also attended this meeting upon the invitation of my dear colleague Dr. Pandor, the honorable Foreign Minister of South Africa. I availed myself of this opportunity and delivered a statement on the ideas and initiatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran to enhance and contribute to the programs and objectives of the BRICS. Moreover, I conferred with my counterparts from the BRICS member countries and discussed a variety of important regional and international issues of mutual interest and significance.

The five BRICS nations own in excess of one fifth of the world's gross domestic product, 40 percent of its population (three billion) and 30 percent of its territory. Having played an important role in global developments during the past 15 years of its establishment, the BRICS has been successful in stabilizing itself as an outstanding coalition of emerging economies and pioneer countries from the South, contributing to global economy and finance. The recent approaches by the BRICS countries towards some prevailing world trends, in particular measures taken to confront the hegemony of the US dollar and oppose unilateralism in global economy and trade have been welcomed and appreciated by many other countries that are now seeking to join the five-nation group.

The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, within the framework of its balanced foreign policy doctrine, has devoted scrupulous attention to promoting economic diplomacy. In fact, President Raisi has highlighted the significance of multilateralism as one of the pivotal tools at the service of economic diplomacy. Iran's active presence in and contribution to regional economic organizations are the outcome of our recognition of multilateralism. Soon our permanent membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization will be concluded and this is another important achievement of the multilateralism policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization's role and status in global and regional developments will be indubitably enhanced with the full membership of Iran, and our country will profit more from the advantages and benefits of multilateralism.

Also, membership in BRICS could constitute another solid step by the Islamic Republic of Iran to advance and consolidate multilateralism. Last June, I sent a letter to my counterparts in the five member countries of BRICS and expressed our readiness to join the group and contribute to its goals and objectives given the mutual benefits we can jointly obtain. ► Page 2

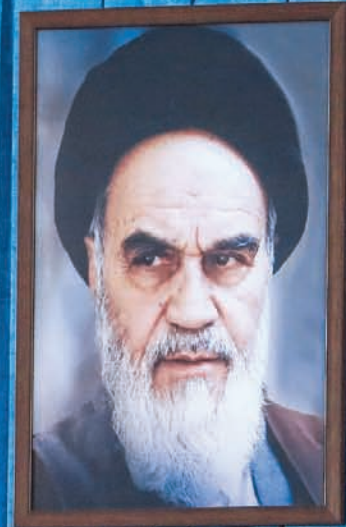
Kiani takes
gold at 2023
World Taekwondo
Championships

TEHRAN – Nahid Kiani of Iran won a gold medal in the -53kg weight class of the 2023 World Taekwondo Championships on Sunday.

It was Kiani's first ever gold medal in the world championships.

Kiani first defeated In Su-wan from South Korea 15-14 in Round of 32.

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On the 34th anniversary of the demise
of Imam KhomeiniImam Khomeini
Brought
About Great
Transformation

"In order to deal with enemies, the Iranian nation must be equipped with the same soft skills that the magnanimous Imam possessed. They need to have faith and hope."

The Leader said the difference between the current front formation and the one in the past is that the Iranian nation has become stronger now, while the enemy has become weaker.

By Faramarz Kuhpayeh

TEHRAN – Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, has reflected on the achievements of Imam Khomeini, saying that the late Leader brought about great transformation on national, Islamic, and global levels.

Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks during a speech he delivered on the occasion of the 34th anniversary of Imam Khomeini's demise.

During the event, the Leader described the venerable Imam Khomeini as the flagbearer of divine missions in an age of armed ignorance in recent centuries.

"Not only is Imam Khomeini the outstanding figure of our time, he is also one of the outstanding figures of Iran's history that no person or movement will be able to erase from historical memories, nor will they be able to distort him in an effective and long-lasting manner," he said, according to khamenei.ir.

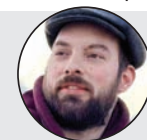


Ayatollah Khamenei referred to the incredible dimensions of Imam Khomeini's

character in religious sciences, faith and piety, strength of character, power and

Belgian researcher: Imam Khomeini presented Islamic thought as modern alternative to Western liberalism

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Bresht Yunkerz
A Belgium researcher

will, rising for the cause of God and revolutionary politics and creating transformation in the human system.

"The collection of these dimensions are not seen in any of the leaders in Iranian history. For this reason, our unique Imam will always be alive and will introduce his luminous face to everyone with a resonating voice," he added.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution clarified the unprecedented transformations that Imam Khomeini brought about in Iran, the Islamic nation and the world.

"This Revolution shattered a political structure consisting of a monarchy and replaced it with a democracy. This Revolution removed a puppet system of governance that bowed to world powers replacing it with an independent system that relied on national dignity. This system of governance removed an anti-Islamic government from the picture, and it established and built an Islamic government in its place," explained Ayatollah Khamenei. ► Page 3

Tehran reopens embassy in Riyadh today

TEHRAN – Iran will officially reopen its embassy in Riyadh on Tuesday, the Foreign Ministry announced on Monday.

Iran will also open its Consulate and Permanent Representative Office in OIC in Jeddah on Wednesday. Iran's new ambassador to Saudi Arabia is Mohammad Reza Enayati, who was the director of the Persian Gulf department at the Foreign Ministry.

Enayati was a participant in the dialogue between Iran and Saudi Arabia hosted by China in March. Since the sides agreed to reestablish ties on March 10, the foreign ministers of the two countries have met twice: one in Beijing on April 6 and another in Cape Town on June 2.

Azeri citizens should be got scared of Israel,
not Iran: Foreign Ministry

TEHRAN – Iran has reacted to the travel warning issued by the Azerbaijani foreign ministry regarding travel to Iran, saying that the Azerbaijani government should get its citizen scared of Israel, not Iran.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani said on Twitter that Azerbaijan's travel warning was similar to the policy adopted by the Israeli president during his recent visit to Baku.

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan has warned against the travel of its citizens to Iran! This is the same policy that the president of the fake, child-killing and occupying Zionist regime took during his recent trip to Baku," Kanaani said. ► Page 3



Iran FM meets counterparts in South Africa

CAPE TOWN, South Africa – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian concluded a visit to South Africa where he met with a number of foreign counterparts, whose countries are either member to BRICS or are called Friends of BRICS. ► Page 3

Iran, S. Arabia, other regional states to form naval coalition in northern Indian Ocean

TEHRAN – Iran's Navy commander has announced that a naval coalition will be formed in the northern Indian Ocean with the involvement of Iran, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Iraq, Pakistan and India, Tasnim reported on Saturday.

"Today regional countries have reached the conclusion that if there is going to be security in the region, definitely it can be done through convergence and cooperation with each other," Shahram Irani said in a televised interview.

"In line with this purpose new coalitions are being formed in the region and beyond," the admiral added.

He also pointed to annual military drills between Iran, Russia and China, saying, "In addition to the three-sided coalition according to which we hold annual drills with Russia and China..., regional coalitions are also being formed."

The admiral added, "We will soon see that our region will be free of any illegal force and the people of the region will dominate the security of their region by using their own soldiers."

On which countries are willing to join the regional coalition along with Iran, the admiral said Iran has already conducted joint maritime maneuvers with Oman and recently Saudi Arabia is seeking to join.

The UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Iraq, Pakistan and India are also among these group of countries, he pointed out.

The Navy chief went on to say that almost all countries of the northern Indian Ocean have reached the conclusion that they should coalesce Iran and "jointly" establish security in a "collective way".

'Defense Ministry able to supply border guards with all needed equipment'

TEHRAN – Defense Minister Mohammad Reza Ashtiani has said that Iran's military forces are armed with the newest weapons to confront border threats, Fars reported on Sunday.

"Our armed forces are equipped with the latest and most advanced equipment to counter armed forces," Ashtiani said when asked about border incidents and equipping border guards with modern weapons.

On May 27, one Iranian border guard and one Taliban fighter were killed after shooting broke out near a border post between Iran and Afghanistan.

Several people were also injured in the incident. Iranian military officials said the border clash was triggered by the Taliban forces.

In an indirect reference to political and military instability in Afghanistan, Defense Minister Ashtiani said Iran has long borders with neighbors and certain of them "may not have

Iran, S. Arabia, UAE, Oman to form joint naval force under China support: website

Also, a Qatari news website reported on Friday that Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Oman are to form a joint naval force under China's support in line with increasing maritime security in the Persian Gulf.

Al-Jadid said China had already begun mediating negotiations among Tehran, Riyadh, and Abu Dhabi aimed at reinforcing navigation's safety in the strategic body of water.

Back in March, China successfully helped broker a deal between Tehran and Riyadh according to which Iran and Saudi Arabia agreed to reestablish diplomatic ties after seven years of estrangement.

According to analysts, the consent of the Persian Gulf states to Beijing's mediation in such sensitive matters shows China's growing influence in the region as opposed to Washington's declining influence.

Iran has long been saying that only regional countries can guarantee the security of the Persian Gulf.

Meanwhile, the UAE has announced quitting a U.S.-led naval force.

Last week, the website of the Emirati foreign ministry said Abu Dhabi had withdrawn from the Joint Maritime Forces that operate in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf.

The ministry said the Emirates had decided to ditch the naval coalition following an extensive evaluation of its security needs.

Analysts say Abu Dhabi has made the decision in line with its ambition to diversify its security relationships.

the necessary stability and would not be able to confront elements which are active in their countries," however, the Iranian troops are "powerfully protecting the borders and the Ministry of Defense is able to produce any equipment" that armed forces may need to confront those who disrupt border security.

Following the incident, a number of senior Iranian military officials, including Army Ground Force Commander Brigadier General Kioumars Heydari, visited the region.

Heydari said wherever respective countries honor international regulations in joint border and honor good neighborliness it will see reciprocal measures by the Iranian side otherwise it "will see another behavior".

He added, "Common borders with Afghanistan are fully under the control of the army ground forces and along with us are border guards, and there is full security at the border."

Judiciary releases two Iranian-Austrian prisoners and one Danish

TEHRAN – The Iranian Judiciary on Friday released two Iranian-Austrian nationals and one Danish prisoner.

Iran's human rights chief Kazem Qaribabadi confirmed their release on Friday evening.

Austria and Denmark had earlier in the day confirmed the release of prisoners and thanked Oman and Belgium for their help in getting them released.

Qaribabadi said Massoud Mossaheb and Kamran Ghaderi- the two Iranian-Austrian citizens – had each been sentenced to 10 years in prison on espionage charges.

The Iranian Judiciary said Mossaheb, who acted as the secretary general of the Iran-Austria friendship society, was in contact with foreign spy services of Germany and Israel.

Mossaheb was giving information about Iran's military, nuclear, nano and health activities to foreigners and was sentenced to 10 years in jail in 2020, the Judiciary stated. It added Ghaderi had also been sentenced for 10 years.

Reportedly, Ghaderi had been spying for the United States who was arrested in 2016.

Austrian Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg said on Friday that he was "very relieved" that Ghaderi and Mossaheb were being brought home after years of "arduous" deten-

tion in Iran, Al Jazeera reported.

Denmark's Foreign Minister, Lars Løkke Rasmussen, said he was "happy and relieved that a Danish citizen is on his way home to his family in Denmark after imprisonment in Iran".

He did not name the person, saying the former prisoner's identity was "a personal matter" and he couldn't go into details".

Løkke Rasmussen thanked Belgium and said Oman "played an important role".

Schallenberg thanked the foreign ministers of Belgium and Oman for providing "valuable support" without elaborating on what form it took.

An Oman Royal Air Force Gulfstream IV, which had been on the ground in Tehran for several days, took off shortly before the announcement, Al Jazeera reported.

After a stop in Oman and medical tests, the three were flown to Belgium's military airport in Melsbroek, Prime Minister Alexander De Croo said.

Oman has good relations with both Iran and Western countries and has acted before as a mediator. The releases come after Omani Sultan Haitham bin Tariq visited Iran on his first trip there since becoming the Arab nation's ruler in 2020.

Iran insists it is ready to train Taliban border guards

TEHRAN – The deputy police chief has insisted on Iran's previous proposal that the Islamic Republic is ready to "train" Taliban border guards to observe protocols in order to prevent border clashes, Mehr reported on Saturday.

The proposal by Brigadier General Qassem Rezaei came after a border clash between Iranian and Taliban forces on May 27 led to the killing of an Iranian border guard and an Afghan one.

General Rezaei said even the Taliban are unhappy with the incident that happened in the border region and are seeking to prevent such incidents.

"Like us, they are seeking to establish security in borders, and want exchange of travelers and trade exchanges but what happens" is due to



the performance of a certain forces of Taliban who are deployed in the border regions, he noted.

On the other hand, he said, Iranian forces are facing drug traffickers who shoot on the other side of the

border.

"However," he added, "it is necessary that the Taliban border guards have a 'uniform' and observe international rules."

The general suggested, "We have

even announced that we are ready to train them to observe border protocols in border points and overpopulated regions."

But, the police official said, the Taliban have not shown willingness in this regard.

He suggested that border guards from the two sides should hold meetings with each other and even stage simultaneous and joint patrols in common borders.

Rezaei added, "In the border with Pakistan we have good relationship with their Army and border guards but in the common border with Afghanistan we are facing problems.

Yet the top police official said border areas in eastern Iran are calm and there are no problems and trade exchanges are being done normally.

BRICS and Iran's multilateralism policy

From page 1 ► The membership of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which enjoys abundant potentialities and capacities such as bountiful sources of energy, unique connectivity, skillful human resources and hi-tec knowledge-based enterprises, would undeniably bring remarkable added value to BRICS. Iran's costly but precious experience in withstanding unbridled unilateralism is an exceptional asset for BRICS. Reciprocally, membership in BRICS can provide greater capacities and open new avenues for Iran's multilateral economic diplomacy.

The number of the countries interested in joining BRICS, some of whom were present in the Cape Town meeting, is well suggestive of the increasing significance and relevance of the objectives and goals pursued by the BRICS. As I highlighted in my statement to the Friends of BRICS, an extended BRICS, can present to the world an effective pattern and competent model of collective and inclu-

sive governance, new South-South cooperation and coalition of emerging economies—patterns and models which will definitely play a role in correcting the present global systems.

At the present time, membership in BRICS is on the agenda of member countries such as India, South Africa, Brazil, Russia and China. Moreover, our partners in BRICS are devising the criteria for membership of other countries (I emphasized in meetings with my counterparts from the BRICS member countries that the Islamic Republic of Iran is logically one of the main candidates for membership in BRICS and it will fulfill any criteria for membership set by the group).

In my statement and consultations in Cape Town to reiterate our intention and support our determination to join the BRICS, I underscored that the Islamic Republic of Iran will not merely wait for official membership in BRICS but will consider avenues of partnership with this im-

portant bloc of the South.

Our political relations with each of the five BRICS nations are at the best level, and our mutual economic ties and bilateral trade are on the rise. We, in the Islamic Republic of Iran, are seeking to provide a conducive environment and fresh space for additional multilateral cooperation. Soon, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran will host a meeting of the BRICS member countries in Tehran to discuss further avenues of expanding relations. For this purpose, I will use future opportunities on various occasions such as my meetings with counterparts from the BRICS member countries to exchange views and consultations.

Our agenda for the realization of a dynamic diplomacy in Iran is to secure the interests of the Iranian nation: "We will be present wherever there is an interest for the noble nation of Iran".

With best wishes and glad tidings.

Belgian researcher: Imam Khomeini presented Islamic thought as modern alternative to Western liberalism

By Somayah Ebrahim Khalili

TEHRAN – Bresht Yunkerz, a Belgian researcher and an interpreter for RT and Press Tv, says Imam Khomeini's philosophy of "neither East nor West, but the Islamic Republic" made him one of the pioneers of the multipolar world order.

Yunkerz says Imam Khomeini's record in establishing the Islamic Republic "goes beyond the borders of the Iranian nation."

In an interview with the Tehran Times on the 34th anniversary of Imam Khomeini's demise, the Belgian scholar says, "It seems likely that Imam Khomeini would play a leading role in ensuring Iran's place as a geopolitical pole in its own right, firmly defending its place in the world, and more importantly its Islamic identity."

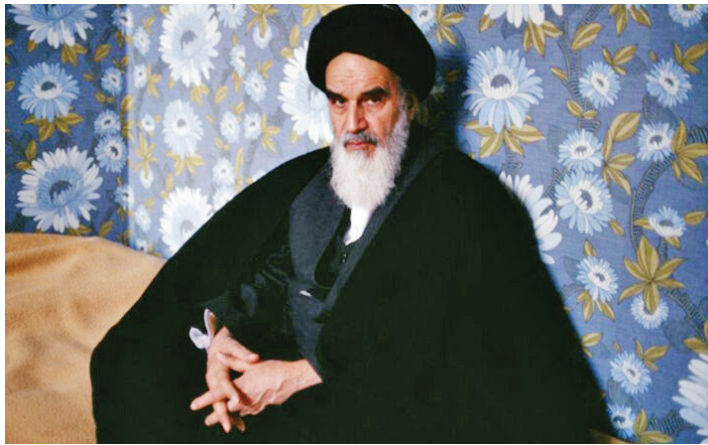
Here is the full text of the interview:

1- How do you evaluate the impact of Imam Khomeini's movement on the great revolutions in the world? Is Imam Khomeini's philosophy still effective in fighting colonialism?

A: Imam Khomeini's legacy on international politics and the revolutionary movement worldwide, lies first and foremost in the fact that he has proven once and for all that a modern alternative to Western liberalism can be found within Islam.

Finding inspiration directly within the revelations of our religion, the Imam challenged the largest imperialist superpower in the world, and won. He inspired a nation to find courage and fight on even in its darkest days, even when Saddam Hussein's armies rampaged through Iran and US-sponsored terrorism killed countless of innocents, to fight back and sacrifice for justice.

Prior to Imam Khomeini, to many it seemed infeasible, even impossible, that Islam or any other religion for that matter, could be an inspiration for a revolutionary movement in the contemporary era, let alone the basis for a modern and developed society. While Islamic philosophers and writers such as Jalal al-e Ahmad and Ali Shariati argued for exactly this sort of political



approach, it was Imam Khomeini who perfected it and put it into practice.

2- In your opinion, if Imam Khomeini was alive today, what would have been his biggest concern in regard to global developments?

A: As Imam Khomeini used to express his geopolitical philosophy with the terms "neither East nor West, but the Islamic Republic", he can be seen as one of the earliest proponents of what is nowadays known as the multipolar world order.

As the rise of Iran as a regional power is joined by the rise of China and the resurgence of Russia on the world scale, and as alternative power blocs are being formed that challenge Western hegemony in the shape of BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the Belt and Road Initiative, we are seeing the arrival of a world system that is no longer dominated by a power cabal in Washington or London.

It seems likely that Imam Khomeini would play a leading role in ensuring Iran's place as a geopolitical pole in its own right, firmly defending its place in the world, and more importantly its Islamic identity.

3- Mikhail Gorbachev, leader of the former Soviet Union, believed that Imam Khomeini's movement was able to leave a great impact on the world. To what extent do you agree with this statement?

A: While Mikhail Gorbachev as a politician and statesman brought

utter ruin to his country, resulting in the collapse of the Soviet Union, years of economic and social degradation and the geopolitical victory of the US-dominated unipolar world order, his assessment of Imam Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution in this regard was absolutely correct.

Iran has come a long way even more forward since this statement by Gorbachev was made. While in the past, the West's attempt to isolate Iran were at least somewhat successful, the rise of the Axis of Resistance and the close relations between Tehran and friendly states such as Russia and China have fully broken the stranglehold of the West. Iran has now fully taken its place as a regional powerhouse.

4- What is your opinion of Imam Khomeini's statement that Western countries are not trustworthy and should not be considered friends?

A: The so-called "nuclear deal" of the JCPOA and the quasi-immediate US withdrawal from it, prove how right the Imam was in making this assessment. The Western powers, the United States in particular, speak with a forked tongue when it calls for peace, coexistence and negotiations. At the end of the day, what the West wants, is for the world to live only according to the rules that have been set out by the West itself. No other alternative viewpoints are permissible in the unipolar liberal-capitalist mindset.

We have seen time and again how countries who either collaborate with the West, such as Iraq under Saddam

Hussein, or even merely try to find common ground and peaceful coexistence with the West, such as Libya did, always end up paying a price in blood when they inadvertently let their guard down.

Sure, the West as a geopolitical pole can and must be approached with a bona fide diplomatic attitude, just like every other legitimate country and political bloc on the world must be. But this does not mean trusting them outright. Opening one's country to the value systems of the West, to the NGOs pushing this agenda, or to any form of economic, social or military domination by the West, is a sure path to ruin.

5- In your opinion, can Imam Khomeini be considered a global leader for popular revolutions?

A: Most definitely. The legacy of Imam Khomeini is an inspiration for the Axis of Resistance, crucial for the Islamic Resistance in countries such as Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen and even as far as Nigeria.

However, the Islamic Revolution has also inspired countries, movements and political leaders across the globe, many of whom are not even Muslim themselves. From the Bolivarian revolutionaries in Venezuela, to the resurgent Russian anti-imperialists. Russian political philosopher Aleksandr Dugin also openly draws inspiration from Iran, and has repeatedly praised the Islamic Republic for its consistent ideological alternative to Western unipolarity.

6- What is the greatest achievement of Imam Khomeini's movement for the free people of the world?

A: The obvious answer is the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, a contemporary and developed democratic republic that is based entirely within the fold of the Islamic religion. But the achievement itself goes beyond the borders of the Iranian nation, as it has united countless millions of people across the Islamic world and the Global South in general to find inspiration and solace in their fundamental religious values, and to stand up proudly against imperialism, hegemony and domination.

Imam Khomeini brought about great transformation: Leader

From Page 1 ► In this regard, the Leader added that Imam Khomeini equipped a nation that had its eyes fixed on the hands of foreigners with the power of “We can,” which is something that will overcome all current and future problems.

In describing the dimensions of the transformation that Imam Khomeini brought about at the level of the Islamic nation, the Leader pointed to the creation of the Islamic Awakening, the dynamism and relative readiness of the Islamic nation and the transformation of the Palestinian issue into the first issue of the Islamic world.

“The Imam breathed life into the depressed body of the Palestinian nation,” he added.

Ayatollah Khamenei underlined that the removal of passivity in the face of materialism and drawing the attention of nations to spirituality was the main line of Imam Khomeini’s transformation on a global level.

“That outstanding character revived spirituality in the world. The intensive attack of the political and media centers of world rulers on spiritual issues and their vulgar efforts to promote materialism is a reaction against



this development,” he said.

Ayatollah Khamenei explained that pieces of paper and audio tapes were the only tools used by Imam to convey his messages and words to the people. He underlined that “faith” and “hope” were the two important factors that enabled Imam Khomeini to carry out his miraculous activities.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution considered having faith in God while continuing the way of Imam, while fighting the enemies of God as equivalent to having faith and trust in God’s promises.

“The Lord has promised that whoever aids Him, will receive His help. He has promised to defend the believers and make them steadfast and strong in the steps they take,” he said.

Ayatollah Khamenei outlined the distance between the Islam that Imam Khomeini believed in and the Islam of capitalism and the eclectic Islam of uninformed intellectuals.

“Imam believed in the Islam of the Book and the Sunnah along with sound jurisprudential reasoning and proper comprehension. He strongly

rejected the views of uninformed, so-called intellectuals,” he added.

The Leader also spoke about another aspect of Imam Khomeini’s faith, which was his “faith in the people.”

“With a deep understanding of the divine verses, the Imam had deep trust and faith in the motives and actions of the people, including their votes.”

In exemplifying the depth of Imam Khomeini’s basic line of thought on the Republic, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution stated, “The expression ‘Republic’ in the name of the government, i.e., the Islamic Republic, is a result of the Imam’s trust and belief in the people.”

Ayatollah Khamenei clarified that “hope” was the second soft factor during several decades of Imam Khomeini’s transformative activities.

“Hope, was a permanent element and the driving force of Imam Khomeini’s movement, in such a way that he spoke of rising for the cause of God in the 40s, he practically entered the uprising field in the 60s and in the 80s, he refused to turn a hair amid the terrible military-security and political storms.”

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

SPORTS

Manicone introduced as Iran football team assistant

TEHRAN – Italian coach Antonio Manicone was introduced as Iran national football team assistant coach on Monday.

The 56-year-old coach will start his job from the 2023 CAFA Nations Cup, scheduled for June 10 to 20.

Team Melli are in Group A along with Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan.

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

Manicone, who has played in Italian teams Inter, Palermo, Genoa and Perugia, started his coaching career in Inter in 2004 and has also worked as assistant in Lazio, Switzerland national football team and Bordeaux.

Iran will participate in the 2023 CAFA Nations Cup as part of preparation for the 2023 AFC Asian Cup.

2023 VNL: Iran to lock horns with Japan in opening match

TEHRAN – Japan will lock horns with continental rival Iran in front of the home fans in the 2023 Volleyball Nations League (VNL) opener.

The match will be held in Nagoya in the competition’s Week 1.

Team Melli will also play Poland (Thursday), China (Saturday) and Slovenia (Sunday), respectively.

Currently at number 10 on the FIVB Men’s Volleyball World Ranking, Iran will look to improve further on the seventh place it finished in the VNL 2022 as it takes on the 2023 edition in June and July.

The Preliminary Phase campaign starts on June 6 and includes matches in Nagoya (Japan), Rotterdam (the Netherlands) and Anaheim (USA).

If Iran qualifies for the VNL Finals, it will travel to Gdansk, Poland for the event from July 19 through 23.

Kiani deserved to win gold at World Taekwondo Championships, coach says

TEHRAN – Iran’s women’s taekwondo head coach Minoo Maddah praised Nahid Kiani after she claimed a gold medal at the 2023 World Taekwondo Championships.

Kiani seized a gold in the -53kg weight class after beating China’s Zuo Ju 10-7 in the final.

It was Iran’s first ever gold medal in the world championships.

“First, I would like to congratulate everyone who support women’s sport in Iran. Kiani’s gold was Iran’s first ever gold in the world championships and it shows that how valuable it is,” Maddah said.

“We finished among five top teams in the world championships for the first time as well. Kiani had lost to Zuo Ju in Round of 16 last year but showed a great performance against the Chinese taekwondo athlete in this edition,” she added.

“Next week, we will participate in the 2023 World Taekwondo Grand Prix in Italy. I know that Kiani will have a difficult task ahead in the Grand Prix because she has not enough time to rest but it doesn’t matter,” Maddah concluded.

The 2023 World Taekwondo Championships took place in Baku, Azerbaijan from May 29 to June 4.

Taremi’s Porto claim Cup of Portugal title

TEHRAN – Porto football team defeated Braga 2-0 to win 82nd edition of Cup of Portugal.

Andre Horta and Otavio were on target for Porto in this match held at the Centro Desportivo Nacional do Jamor.

Porto has won the cup three out of the last four seasons, with Braga winning the other time in 2021.

Iranian international forward Mehdi Taremi played a key role in winning the Portuguese Cup.

A year ago, Taremi scored twice in the 3-1 triumph over Tondela.

Jahanbakhsh to remain at Feyenoord

TEHRAN – Iran international winger Alireza Jahanbakhsh will be playing in Feyenoord next season.

He had already told De Telegraaf he would not look for a transfer and his agent Amir Hashemi also sees no reason to look for a new club for his client.

Jahanbakhsh’s contract will expire next summer.

“The only competition Jahanbakhsh has never played in is the Champions League,” Hashemi said.

“His preference is to stay with Feyenoord and experience what it’s like to play at an even higher level. Alireza has a one-year contract and the club has an option for an extra season. I’ll probably talk sometime in the next few days with Feyenoord about their plans,” he added.

Iran fall short against Australia at AFC U20 Women’s Asian Cup 2024 Qualifiers

TEHRAN – Iran lost to Australia 3-0 on Monday at the AFC U20 Women’s Asian Cup Uzbekistan 2024 Qualifiers Round 2 Group A.

A win for Vietnam against Lebanon in Monday’s later match will confirm both the hosts’ and Australia’s spots in the Finals.

Kahli Johnson starred with a brace as Australia continued from where they left off in their opening match against Lebanon, the-afc.com reported.

Johnson, who scored once in the 5-0 win over Lebanon, netted twice within a minute to put Australia in a commanding position against Iran.

The first was scored in the 28th minute with Johnson remarkably finding the back of the net again seconds later. Substitute Ella O’Grady added the third in the 84th minute.

Australia will face hosts Vietnam in their final match on Wednesday while Iran will take on Lebanon.

Group B, meanwhile, kicks off on Tuesday with China PR playing Chinese Taipei in the opening match with hosts Myanmar to face Nepal in the later match.

The Round 2 Groups A and B winners and runners-up will join the three highest-seeded teams from the AFC U-19 Women’s Championship Thailand 2019 – Japan, DPR Korea and Korea Republic – as well as host nation Uzbekistan at the Finals next year.

Esteghlal’s Sa Pinto handed four-month suspension

TEHRAN – Esteghlal coach Ricardo Sa Pinto was handed a four-month suspension by the Disciplinary Committee of the Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI).

The Portuguese coach got involved in a controversial moment in the Tehran derby at the Azadi Stadium, where Esteghlal lost to Persepolis 2-1 in the final match of Iran’s Hazfi Cup on Wednesday.

The Esteghlal coach harshly criticized the referee in the final moments of the match and was shown a red card. He has also been accused of spitting at the fourth official.

Kiani takes gold at 2023 World Taekwondo C’ships

From Page 1 ► She then emerged victorious over Hungarian athlete Luca Patakfalvy 8-6.

Kiani beat Croat Nika Karabati? 19-6 in the quarterfinals and defeated Individual Neutral Athlete (AIN) Tatiana Minina 10-6 to book her place in the final.

The bronze medals were won by Egyptian Shahd El-Hosseiny and Minina.

The Iranian taekwondo practitioner defeated China’s Zuo Ju 10-7 in the final. The 2023 World Taekwondo Championships took place in Baku, Azerbaijan from May 29 to June 4.

Iran FM meets counterparts in South Africa

Abdollahian meets Saudi, UAE, Comoran, Gabonese, South African, Brazilian and Indian foreign ministers in Cape Town



From Page 1 ► In Cape Town, where the meeting was held, the Iranian foreign minister met with counterparts from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Gabon, South Africa, Brazil, India, the Comoros, and Russia, the Tehran Times correspondent from Cape Town reported.

BRICS currently includes the five economically emerging countries of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. The Friends of BRICS, such as Iran, are countries who aspire to join the economic bloc.

In his meeting with Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan, Amir Abdollahian expressed satisfaction with the good progress made in bilateral ties, saying the ambassadors of the two countries have been introduced fortunately and the stage has been set for the opening of the Embassies and Consulates of the two countries.

He thanked Saudi Arabia for making preparations and providing facilities for Iran’s Hajj pilgrims.

The top Iranian diplomat added that in the previous talks, the two sides discussed the necessity of strengthening the commercial and economic relations between the two countries, and that his Saudi counterpart’s upcoming visit to Tehran will be an opportunity for further discussions and exchange of views aimed at boosting bilateral relations in various fields.

He considered BRICS as a new opportunity for multilateral cooperation between Iran and Saudi Arabia and other member countries of the group, especially in economic and commercial fields.

For his part, the Saudi foreign minister likewise expressed satisfaction with the very good progress achieved in bilateral relations with Iran.

Azeri citizens should be got scared of Israel, not Iran: Foreign Ministry

From Page 1 ► He added, “What should scare the people of Azerbaijan is the Zionist regime, not a civilized and Islamic Iran.”

Kanaani continued, “Our policy is still to cancel visas and open our arms to our Azerbaijani brothers and sisters.”

He concluded, “Continuation of neighborhood policy is our top priority, of course, within the framework of mutual respect and respect for neighborhood customs.”

On Saturday, the foreign ministry of Azerbaijan issued a statement calling on its citizens to refrain from traveling to Iran. “Taking into account the terrorist act committed against the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the Islamic Republic



of Iran in January this year, and limited diplomatic representation in Iran, the citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan are strongly advised not to visit the Islamic Republic of Iran unless it is necessary, and those who visit are strongly advised to exercise increased caution,” the statement said. “Citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan who are currently in the Islamic Republic of Iran are required to observe safety and security rules.”

Tensions have been incrementally on the rise since January this year after a familial dispute led an Iranian citizen to attack the embassy of Azerbaijan, which called the attack an act of “terrorism” despite the fact the assailant stormed the embassy in search of his missing wife.

In late May, a visit by the Israeli president to Azerbaijan further inflamed the tensions. Kanaani said the time that Israeli activities in the region are hidden from Iran are over.

“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.

Electricity consumption exceeds 60,000 MW as temperature begins to rise

TEHRAN - Daily electricity consumption in Iran reached 60,150 megawatts (MW) on Saturday registering a 10,000 MW increase compared to the same date last year, according to the data released by Iran Grid Management Company (IGMC).

According to IGMC, the gradual increase in temperature has caused a surge in the use of air conditioning appliances, and consequently electricity consumption has also begun to increase again, IRNA reported.

Based on IGMC data, the industrial sector accounted for 5,020 MW of the total consumption on the mentioned date.

As reported, the country's electricity consumption stood at 49,946 MW on the same day last year.

In order to meet the electricity demand in the peak summer period, the Iranian Energy Ministry

has put several programs on its agenda among which increasing electricity production and managing consumption are the major ones.

The ministry is going to implement a comprehensive program during the summer, based on which low-consuming households are going to be rewarded while the subscribers whose consumption exceeds the normal level will face penalty.

Over the past decade, constant temperature rising and the significant decrease in rainfalls across Iran have put the country in a hard situation regarding electricity supply during peak consumption periods.

Iran's Power Generation, Distribution, and Transmission Company (known as Tavanir) has repeatedly announced that the company is implementing a variety of programs for managing the situation and preventing blackouts in the country.

Iran-UAE Joint Chamber to hold general assembly in late-June

TEHRAN - The annual general assembly of the Iran-UAE Joint Chamber of Commerce will be held on Monday, June 29 at the place of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA).

As reported by the ICCIMA portal, presenting a report on the performance of the board of directors

in the previous Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20), presenting the annual financial reports, reviewing and approving the annual budget, and determining the annual membership fees for the members, as well as electing the main and alternate auditors, are among the subjects on the assembly's agenda.

OPEC+ wraps up meeting deciding on 40.46 mb/d of output in 2024

TEHRAN - OPEC+, which groups the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and allies led by Russia, has decided to adjust the level of overall crude oil production to 40.46 million barrels per day (mb/d) in 2024.

The group which pumps around 40 percent of the world's crude oil, gathered on Sunday for their 35th meeting to decide on new steps for an output-limiting deal as the global market faces flagging oil prices and a looming supply glut.

Based on the final agreement reached in the 35th meeting, Saudi Arabia has decided to make deep production cuts in July. The kingdom's Energy Minister Prince Abdulaziz said the cut of one mb/d by Riyadh could be extended beyond July if needed.

At the end of the meeting, the parties also decided to:

1 - Reaffirm the Framework of the Declaration of Cooperation (DOC), signed on 10 December 2016 and further endorsed in subsequent meetings; as well as the Charter of Cooperation, signed on 2 July 2019.

2 - Reaffirm and extend the mandate of the Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee (JMMC) and its membership, to closely review global oil market conditions, oil production levels, and the level

of conformity with the DOC and this Statement, assisted by the Joint Technical Committee (JTC) and the OPEC Secretariat. The JMMC is to be held every two months.

3 - Hold the OPEC and Non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting (ONOMM) every six months in accordance with the ordinary OPEC scheduled conference.

4 - Grant the JMMC the authority to hold additional meetings, or to request an OPEC and Non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting at any time to address market developments, whenever deemed necessary.

5 - Reaffirm that the DOC conformity is to be monitored considering crude oil production, based on the information from secondary sources, and according to the methodology applied for OPEC Member Countries.

6 - Reiterate the critical importance of adhering to full conformity, and subscribe to the concept of compensation by those countries who produce above the required production level as per the attached table, in addition to their already decided production levels.

7 - Hold the 36th OPEC and Non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting on Sunday 26 November 2023, in Vienna.

Iran-Turkmenistan business forum slated for mid-June

TEHRAN - Mashhad Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, in northeastern Iran, is going to host an Iran-Turkmenistan business forum on June 17, the portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) announced.

As reported, the event has been organized by the

Iran-Turkmenistan Joint Chamber of Commerce, with the aim of boosting economic cooperation between the private sectors of the two countries.

This meeting is expected to be a platform for negotiations and face-to-face interactions between the economic operators of the two countries.

by the sanctions condition, the country's mining sector is moving forward noticeably, overcoming such barriers.

Among the mining sector's different products, sponge iron is an outstanding example, as the production of this item is rising more and more in the country.

Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), Iran's largest metals and mining holding, has stated that one of the most important reasons for the increase in sponge iron production in Iran is the establishment of new sponge iron plants, adding that in recent years, with its new strategy and with the participation of the private sector, the organization has been able to launch several projects to produce sponge iron.

Over 50,000 tons of sponge iron exported in a month

TEHRAN- Iran exported over 50,000 tons of sponge iron in the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-April 20).

It is while the country had exported just 1,000 tons of the product in the first month of the previous year.

Direct reduced iron (DRI), also called sponge iron, is produced from the direct reduction of iron ore (in the form of lumps, pellets, or fines) into iron by a reducing gas or elemental carbon produced from natural gas or coal. Many ores are suitable for direct reduction.

While Iran is fighting the U.S. severe sanctions on its economy, and the country's different industrial and economic sectors have been affected by the limitations and difficulties caused



Parsian, Iran's potential hub for energy-intensive industries

By Mehdi Garshasbi

PARSIAN, Hormozgan - In line with the national policy for optimal utilization of the country's resources for economic and social development, the expansion of oil and gas processing units to avoid sales in crude form, and feed energy-intensive industries has been emphasized.



Ali-Asghar Allameh, the managing director of Parsian Energy-Intensive Special Economic Zone

This emphasis is based on the fundamental role of oil and gas resources in supplying the energy needed by different production sectors to generate income for the country.

Energy-intensive industries heavily rely on energy inputs. Examples include aluminum smelting, concrete manufacturing, iron and steel-making, oil and gas, and various other mineral processing operations.

Parsian Port, located in the Parsian Energy-Intensive Special Economic Zone, southern Hormozgan province, is projected to be the main gateway for importing raw materials and exporting products related to mining and petrochemical industries.

The port will be the first and largest port in Iran that will meet the needs for loading and unloading raw materials and products for the four major energy-intensive industries, namely petrochemicals, steel, aluminum, and cement in the region.



According to the market and feasibility studies, the port will have a nominal capacity of about 40 million tons per year.

It will be comprised of 19 berths for commodities, dry bulk, bulk liquids, and container goods. Buoyancy capacity is about 6,000 containers, 70,000 tons of

commodities, and 100,000 tons of dry bulk with a maximum draft depth of 17 meters.

The first phase of the port, which includes 1,500 meters of water breaker and four berths with a capacity of loading and unloading of about 9 million tons of goods per year, has been inaugurated.

Parsian is projected to be the main gateway for importing raw materials and exporting products.

So far, site selection studies and master planning for energy-intensive industries; product market studies; primary design studies; environmental studies; reviewing and analyzing the master plan; feasibility studies for petrochemical plants and non-industrial units; and

transportation and traffic management studies have been carried out.

Also, construction of office buildings, entrance gates, and roads; infrastructure facilities and service sites; a loading terminal; power stations; green spaces; flood control structures;

surface water collection systems; and gas pressure reduction and distribution stations are on the agenda.

Regarding infrastructures, more than 58 kilometers of border fence for customs; more than 58 kilometers of main and side roads, including 20 kilometers of road to connect northern and southern sites; some 18 kilometers of power distribution lines; two water storage facilities at the northern and southern sites; a water supply network with a capacity to provide 30 liters of water per second; and green spaces around passageways have been created.

In the field of permissions, necessary approvals from the cabinet of ministers and the Majlis (parliament) have been received.

Moreover, environmental permissions have been received from the Department of environment.

The permission for allocating 20 million cubic meters of gas per day has been received from



the Oil Ministry.

The permission for importing and exporting goods has been received from the Customs Administration.

Parsian will be the first port in Iran for petrochemicals, steel, aluminum, and cement.

The Port is also authorized to fulfill currency exchange for investors and has received the permission from the Ministry of Interior for determining marine borders.

Meanwhile, plots of land have been allotted to Parsian Port by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization, known as IMIDRO.

Necessary permissions have been received from the Department of Environment for establishing a water desalination plant with a capacity of 280 liters

per second.

And finally, the Ports and Maritime Organization has issued the permission for launching and commissioning Parsian Port.

The port will be comprised of 19 berths for commodities, dry bulk, and container goods.

The most important opportunities for investment include: production of petrochemicals, production of steel parts, production of aluminum, and production of alumina.

The investment opportunity is also provided for building combined-cycle power plants, and desalination plants.

Development projects in the downstream sector include creating an industrial park

for steel, petrochemical, and aluminum industries; building water storage facilities and reservoirs; constructing rail and road terminals; establishing an industrial park for small industries; building technical service and support units; and constructing hotels and tourist accommodation complexes.

Generally speaking, the main advantages of investment in special zones are the possibility of importing goods that are exempted from customs duties; exemption of customs duties for supplying goods manufactured in the special zone to the mainland in contrast to the value-added products and the materials used by the domestic market; and the possibility of transiting and re-exporting of goods without any limitations.

Form other advantages, it can be referred to the possibility of making investment by both Iranian and foreign entities; tax exemptions; facilitated banking, monetary, and currency exchange affairs; and easy regulations for recruiting foreign nationals.

WORLD HEADLINES

New Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan assumes office



Türkiye's newly appointed Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan took charge of the ministry from his predecessor Mevlut Cavusoglu on Monday. "I will do my best for the peace, security and welfare of our state and nation," Fidan said at the handover ceremony. Fidan vowed to continue to advance the national foreign policy vision based on the sovereignty of the nation's will.

Palestinian toddler shot by Israeli troops in West Bank dies of wounds

A 3-year-old Palestinian boy who was shot by Israeli troops in the occupied West Bank last week died of his wounds, Israeli hospital officials said Monday. Mohammed al-Tamimi was shot in the head last Thursday near his village of Nebi Saleh while riding in a car with his father. He was airlifted to Israel's Sheba Hospital, which announced the boy's death. During the friends of BRICS gathering, Washington's paranoia and concern over its diminishing global influence was seen when U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin reached out to his Chinese counterpart to hold talks, which Beijing shunned. China has been subject to rising U.S. military and economic pressure with unproven accusations over trade and technology. Liu Pengyu, spokesperson at the Chinese embassy in Washington, said in a statement that communication between China and the U.S. was conducive to a greater mutual understanding. However, he pointed out "how the U.S. says it wants to speak to the Chinese side while seeking to suppress China through all possible means and continue imposing sanctions on Chinese officials, institutions and companies," the statement said. "Is there any sincerity in and significance of any communication like this?"

Saudi pledge pushes oil prices higher



Global crude oil prices have risen after Saudi officials announced plans to cut production by an extra 1 million barrels per day (bpd), starting from July. The move is expected to take the country's output to its lowest level in several years. The main benchmarks jumped more than 2% on Monday following the news. Brent crude futures were trading at \$77.89 a barrel at 9:50am London time, up 2.3%. US West Texas Intermediate futures stood at \$73.50, over 2.4% higher. On Sunday, the OPEC+ group of leading oil-producing countries opted not to make changes to previously planned production curbs for the rest of the year. Saudi Arabia's output will decline to 9 million bpd from around 10 million bpd in May, the kingdom's energy minister, Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman, said in a statement. He added that his country "will do whatever is necessary to bring stability to this market."

NATO chief urges Turkey not to veto Sweden joining alliance

NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg has urged Turkey not to veto Sweden's bid to join the military alliance, ahead of a meeting this month to try to overcome objections delaying Stockholm's membership. "Membership will make Sweden safer but also make NATO and Turkey stronger," Secretary-General Stoltenberg told journalists in Istanbul on Sunday after meeting Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his newly appointed foreign minister, Hakan Fidan, the former head of the intelligence agency. "I look forward to finalising Sweden's accession as soon as possible," Stoltenberg added. Officials from Turkey, Sweden and Finland will meet next week to attempt to resolve the issues that have delayed Sweden's NATO membership, said Stoltenberg, referring to the permanent joint mechanism set up to address Turkey's concerns about Sweden and Finland. In March, Turkey ratified Finland's bid for membership, and it became NATO's 31st member in April. All 31 member countries must ratify a candidate's accession protocol for it to join the transatlantic alliance.

50 police officers injured in Leipzig unrest

Far-left protesters clashed with the German police in the eastern city of Leipzig over the weekend in unrest provoked by a recent court ruling that sent a woman known for anti-Nazi activism and her three accomplices to prison. The disturbances came on Wednesday after a Dresden court sentenced four left-wing militants to prison terms over acts of violence against suspected neo-Nazis. At the center of the case was a 28-year-old student identified as Lina E, the supposed ringleader, who was given five-years detention. The three others received sentences ranging from two years and five months to three years and three months. To protest the court ruling, local activists announced a march dubbed 'Day X'. Although banned by the local authorities over safety concerns, the rally still attracted hundreds of protesters, with initial estimates putting the number of participants at 1,500. The demonstrations started off peacefully but later devolved into violence, with protesters pelting law enforcement officers with stones and bottles. Leipzig police said that the clashes resulted in around 50 officers injured since Friday, adding that an unknown number of protesters were also hurt. The police also claimed to have encircled around 1,000 protesters while arresting 30 of them. In addition to this, up to 50 people were taken into custody but subsequently released by Sunday noon. The police also launched an investigation into serious breaches of the peace and attacks on police officers.

Biden will meet Xi 'at some point,' Sullivan says

White House National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said Sunday that President Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping will meet "at some point" as tensions between the two countries continue to rise. During an appearance on CNN's "Fareed Zakaria GPS," Sullivan also told Zakaria that he just met with his Chinese counterpart, the director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission Wang Yi, where both diplomats discussed "all of the strategic issues" in their ongoing relationship, adding that he hopes to see discussions between the two countries continue in the coming months.

By Ali Karbalaee

TEHRAN - The BRICS ministerial summit has wrapped up in South Africa with the bloc's expansion and an alternative global leadership high on the agenda. The two-day gathering in Cape Town was the first ever to be attended by over a dozen foreign ministers, with many other countries around the world signaling their desire to submit a bid for membership. A Friends of BRICS Foreign Ministers Meeting, which included non-members, was followed by the five major emerging economies' BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting, Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. South Africa's Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor, whose country holds the annual chairmanship, says her counterparts are working on a framework for admitting new members. She says these measures are aimed to be completed before BRICS leaders meet at a summit in Johannesburg this August. Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Ma Zhaoxu said BRICS countries should "strengthen strategic communication and coordination with other developing countries." Ma added that the world's second strongest economy "looks forward to welcoming new members into the BRICS family at an early date." Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov expressed his desire for expanding the alliance, saying "we welcome the idea of holding a separate session in the Friends of BRICS format as part of the Foreign Ministers Meeting, where we will invite our partners from like-minded countries." Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said talks had included consultations on the guiding principles, standards, criteria and procedures of what an expanded BRICS bloc would look like. Brazilian Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira added "we are working to deepen our dialogue and cooperation with African countries, which have enormous potential for trade and investments and with whom we share historical and cultural ties. The same applies to Asian and Middle Eastern (West Asian) countries." Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, Comoros, Gabon, and Kazakhstan all sent representatives to Cape Town, while Egypt, Argentina, Bangladesh, Guinea-Bissau and Indonesia participated virtually. Others have also expressed their interest in joining the bloc.

What has made BRICS attractive?

There are certain factors, as outlined by the joint BRICS statement at the end of their summit that has left a long line of countries waiting to join. U.S. dominance on the global financial affairs of other nations stretches back to the 1970s, something that has been reinforced, over the decades, by the single largest commodity in the world: energy.



The U.S. and its staunchest allies have imposed their hegemony on the global economy with unilateral measures like sanctions and other coercive measures such as petrodollars, at the expense of ordinary households around the world. This is being felt today, more than ever, in Europe as the Ukraine war rages amid unprecedented sanctions on Russian energy. BRICS has its own bank, New Development Bank, and its regular terminology of multilateralism means if energy rich countries like Iran and Saudi Arabia conduct their trade transactions in local currencies, it would change the global finance arrangements in the direction of a multi-polar one. The joint BRICS statement criticized "unilateral coercive measures", including sanctions, boycotts, embargoes and blockades, by certain countries and said that such measures were producing "negative effects" on the developing world. This is while the BRICS joint statement underscored the "importance of encouraging" the use of local currencies in trade settlements and international transactions amid the ongoing trend by many developing nations to move away from the U.S. dollar. BRICS is creating a parallel structure to U.S. system, where countries are not subject to orders from Washington. In the wake of the Ukraine war, Russia saw its foreign reserves of \$300bn dollars frozen. Those seeking to join BRICS are exploring ways where their reserve currency cannot be controlled by people sitting back in the U.S. Congress. Russia is the latest in a long list of countries who have been subject to unilateral and coercive measures by the U.S. The BRICS ministers alluded to this by recognizing the impact on the world economy from "unilateral approaches in breach of international law" and they also noted that the situation is complicated further by unilateral economic coercive measures, such as sanctions, boycotts, embargoes and blockades. The recent election results in Turkey reinforced the vision of major countries, including Islamic nations, of leading an alternative world order. It's also a real wake up call for other countries around the world

who have always relied on the U.S. and are now beginning to realize that the U.S. is more unstable than they had believed. They are now realizing that maybe they need to search for alternatives. This shift away from the U.S. is already taking place. The debate about a multi-polar world has been around for some time now, as it has become clear a unipolar U.S. world means instability across the world. In essence, BRICS has an alternative worldview that has attracted like-minded countries. For instance, a joint final statement underlined the "need for a comprehensive reform" of the UN and its organs, including its Security Council, in order to make it "more representative, effective and efficient". Critics of the UN Security Council argue it has failed in its duty of bringing global security and that while there have been discussions for many decades about reforming the council, the UN hasn't been able to do so. The fact that two BRICS members, China and Russia, are also among the five UN Security Council members who enjoy veto power. However, in the BRICS statement they both advocated reforms to the Security Council. Many moons ago, the argument of global stability and security was used against the idea of a multi polar world. Following the events of the past two decades in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Somalia, Yemen which saw an unprecedented rise in terror groups and blood baths thanks to U.S. military adventurism; and more recently Ukraine. The reality on the ground today shows this argument has become flawed. The BRICS countries and their friends, by the actions of their leaders have proven they can come to the fore as countries worthy of leading an alternative world order. This comes down mainly to BRICS and their friends (or soon to be members) maintaining their sovereignty and defiant defense of their own policies, brushing aside pressure by the declining world hegemon; the U.S. "Multilateralism and upholding international law," was a common theme at the BRICS summit. In its joint statement, BRICS added that "terrorism should not

be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group and rejected double standards in countering terrorism and extremism conducive to terrorism." BRICS has made other states sitting on the fence to realize that they can oppose the U.S. as evidenced by countries who have survived the harshest sanctions imposed against them, and to an extent flourished in this environment. Today, the BRICS summits have given a boost to the concept of multilateralism by showing how the U.S. has overplayed its hand. The seizure of Russian assets triggered alarm bells across the world, especially among countries who have heavily invested in U.S. treasury notes and believe their money is safe at the hands of lawmakers sitting in Congress back in Washington. The reality as outlined by the BRICS summit is that everyone is as equally vulnerable as Russia and others. BRICS can play an effective role in a new emerging market since it includes the second (soon to be first) largest economy in the world as a member, with very energy-rich countries potentially following suit. BRICS is not just about politics and economics, as the joint statement pointed out. It has also set out initiatives for peace in warzones like Sudan and Ukraine. During the friends of BRICS gathering, Washington's paranoia and concern over its diminishing global influence was seen when U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin reached out to his Chinese counterpart to hold talks, which Beijing shunned. China has been subject to rising U.S. military and economic pressure with unproven accusations over trade and technology. Liu Pengyu, spokesperson at the Chinese embassy in Washington, said in a statement that communication between China and the U.S. was conducive to a greater mutual understanding. However, he pointed out "how the U.S. says it wants to speak to the Chinese side while seeking to suppress China through all possible means and continue imposing sanctions on Chinese officials, institutions and companies," the statement said. "Is there any sincerity in and significance of any communication like this?"

Russia sees 'no prospects' for Ukraine grain deal renewal as deadline looms

Russia says it sees no prospects for extending the Black Sea grain export deal, which allows grain shipments from Ukrainian ports through a safe corridor in the sea. Russia's foreign ministry said on Monday that it was continuing consultations with the United Nations about the UN-backed Black Sea Grain Initiative, which is set to expire in mid-July. The ministry said that ship inspections had already resumed in Ukraine's Black Sea ports. The deal was originally brokered by Turkey and the United Nations last July to allow Ukraine to resume exports from its southern ports, which had been blockaded by Russia since the start of the war in Ukraine in February last year. The agreement last came up for renewal on May 18 and Russia agreed at that point to extend it for 60 more days, to July 17. A new round of Russia-UN talks would take place in regard to the deal in Geneva on June 9. Ukraine was one of the world's major grain exporters before the onset of Russia's military campaign in February last year. More than 30 million tons of grain and agricultural products have been exported under the initiative to date. Moscow said previously that the initiative will cease unless an agreement aimed at overcoming obstacles to its own grain and fertilizer exports is fulfilled. (Source: Press TV)

Discover Lake Chitgar, the sole man-made lake of Tehran



TEHRAN – Lake Chitgar, an artificial and recreational body of water in northwestern Tehran, is located inside the vast park of Chitgar.

Chitgar Park is a top destination for cyclists in search of nature and a place to exercise. Its beautiful design and facilities for aerobic activities make it the perfect place to spend some quality time, undoubtedly one of the best choices near Tehran.

This park, founded in 1963, is a beloved destination for those living in the capital city and visitors from the other parts of the country.

In order to reach the destination, we need to take the Tehran-Karaj highway and take the first exit that leads to the park. Our path will be illuminated by the magnificent rows of pine trees. Moreover, it can be easily reached by subway.

The green area of the park is where your picnic will begin upon your arrival. Having a mat or a tent would be ideal, but if not, you could always seek out a bench or pergola for shelter. Although Kababs can be cooked on cement grills, it's worth considering spending the day relaxing at one of the park's restaurants.

Chitgar Park's reputation as a premier destination for cycling is well-established, catering to both se-

rious enthusiasts and those seeking a leisurely ride. The mountain pathway is recommended for individuals with exceptional physical endurance.

Women can now enjoy cycling in their exclusive track while also having the chance to rent bicycles.

Explore the joy of horseback riding in Chitgar Park by visiting a horse riding club. The club has some permanent members who go there regularly.

The forest park is widely favored for its versatility as people of different preferences can indulge in various activities such as cycling, skating, horse riding, and even paintballing for those who desire it. A visit to the Woodlands with your children can offer an exciting opportunity to observe the various species of birds and animals.

Do not miss the chance to walk and enjoy the refreshing shade of trees, it's truly worth it. The region boasts a rich variety of tree species, including but not limited to Pine and Cypress. Other notable ones such as maple, oak, and locusts also thrive in the area. In the park's labyrinthine paths, we can find safety and seek refuge from the noisy bustle of cars.

The north of Chitgar is where we can find Tehran's only man-made lake that is worth a visit. Although Tehran lacks a prominent river, it is still a fascinating city to visit. Experience other exciting activities such as the freefall slide, skydiving, surfing, sky flyer, kayak riding, and the 6D cinema. Children's playground, roller coaster and the complex of sandy beaches also entertain children.

The east of this lake is now home to the incredible Bam Land shopping center, at long last. There is an abundance of coffee shops and restaurants available that offer you excellent dining options.

Qajar-era church to undergo restoration

TEHRAN –The Qajar-era (1789-1925) Saint Mary Church in the northern port city of Bandar-e Anzali, Gilan province, is planned to undergo some rehabilitation works, the provincial tourism chief has said.

The historical church will open its doors to the public after being fully restored, Vali Jahani explained on Monday.

Iran is home to several ancient and historical churches. Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians are the most significant religious minorities in the country, with Christians constituting the bulk.

For centuries Anzali has served as a gateway to Europe, connecting the economies of the East and West. Not surprisingly the customs authority of Anzali is at least 300 years old.

Fishing is one of the leading occupations in Anzali, which is the main producer of caviar in the country. Rice cultivation and farming are the other traditional professions of Anzali inhabitants.

Some historical attractions of the city include Pahlavi-era Mian Poshteh Palace which is now a military museum, Qajar-era (1785-1925) St. Mary Church, Anzali Clock Tower, which was originally a lighthouse, and the five-deck Mirza Kouchak Khan Cruise Ship.



Anzali Lagoon and Sorkhangol Wildlife Refuge are among the city's top natural attractions. Anzali Lagoon divides the city into two parts and is home to various indigenous and migrant birds and fish, and also draws many tourists because of its lotus flowers and water lilies. Sorkhangol Wildlife Refuge is a heaven for birdwatchers in the wintertime.

Anzali wetland, neighboring the Caspian Sea, has long been a heaven for nature lovers and birdwatchers. Covering some 20,000 hectares, the lagoon bears international importance as being a refuge for diverse wintering water and shorebirds. It is also home to all-embracing reed beds, submerged and floating vegetation. However, the wetland, like many other of its counterparts, is suffering from environmental pollution.

Bojnurd hosts national horse beauty festival



TEHRAN –The 17th edition of a national festival dedicated to the beauty of the Turkmen horse breed was held in Bojnurd, North Khorasan province on Friday, the provincial tourism chief has said.

A selection of 200 horses from across the country took part in the festival, Ali Mostofi-an explained on Sunday.

North Khorasan province is one of the most significant genetic reserves of pure Turkmen horses in the country, the official added.

The Turkmen horse is noted for endurance, bravery, smartness, and slender body. Many locals believe that breeding such horses is one of the toughest jobs in the world.

Such animals are dominantly found in the pasturelands of Turkmen Sahra, a region sandwiched between Iran and Turkmenistan.

Iran and Turkmenistan seek to put forward the Turkmen horses and their safeguarding practices as a candidate for inclusion in the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Local travel insiders believe that traveling in North Khorasan is gaining momentum by degrees, creating lucrative opportunities for the tourism industry.

According to Lonely Planet, most foreign tourists pass straight through North Khorasan in transit between Mashhad and Gorgan, but if you have time to explore, it's worth diverting south from the capital, Bojnurd, towards Esfarayen, famed for its wrestling tournaments, the remarkable citadel of Belqays and the partly preserved stepped village of Roein some 20km north.

Tourism infrastructure in historical Jundi Shapur being developed

TEHRAN –The tourism infrastructure of Jundi Shapur University, an ancient academy in the southwestern city of Dezful, is being developed, a local tourism official has said.

A budget of seven billion rials (\$14,000) has been allocated to the project, Yaghub Zalaqi explained on Monday.

The project aims at boosting tourism in the region as well as attract more travelers, the official added.

Jundi Shapur, also spelled as Gundi Shapur, was one of the world's birthplaces of knowledge and wisdom, which is a source of national pride and enthusiasm for Iranians.



The city was the intellectual center of the Sassanid Empire (224–651) and the home of the Academy of Jundi Shapur Univer-

sity, which offered education and training in medicine, philosophy, theology, and science.

Budget allocated for Hegmataneh's possible UNESCO registration

TEHRAN – In order to facilitate the possible inclusion of ancient Hegmataneh on the UNESCO World Heritage list, the municipality of Hamedan has set aside a sufficient amount of funding, the city's mayor has said.

A budget of 700 billion rials (\$1.4 million) has been allocated to ensure that ancient Hegmataneh is considered for inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage list, Seyyed Masoud Hosseini explained on Friday.

Last May, a local tourism official announced that a working group had formed to identify, investigate and solve potential problems in the path of possible registration of Hegmataneh in the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Moreover, Hamedan authorities are ready to take preliminary measures to pave the way for the global registration of Hegmataneh and prepare it to be assessed by UNESCO evaluators, he said.

Earlier this year, a traffic fellow related to a nearby steel marketplace was declared as one of the major barriers faced with the possible registration based on UNESCO criteria.

Known in classical times as Ecbatana, Hamedan was one of the ancient world's greatest cities. Pitifully little remains from antiquity, but significant parts of the city center are given over to excavations. Ecbatana was the capital of Media and subsequently

a summer residence of the Achaemenid kings who ruled Persia from 553 to 330 BC.

Ecbatana is widely believed to be once a mysterious capital of Medes. According to ancient Greek writers, the city was founded in about 678 BC by Deioces, who was the first king of the Medes.

French Assyriologist Charles Fossey (1869 – 1946) directed the first excavation in Tepe Hegmataneh for six months in 1913. Erich Friedrich Schmidt (1897 – 1964), who was a German and American-naturalized archaeologist, took some aerial photos from Hamedan between 1935 and 1937.

According to the Greek historian Xenophon of Athens (c.430-c.355), Ecbatana became the summer residence of the Achaemenid kings. Their palace is described by the Greek historian Polybius of Megalopolis. He writes that the city was richer and more beautiful than all other cities in the world; although it had no wall, the palace was built on an artificial terrace, according to Livius, a website on ancient history written and maintained since 1996 by the Dutch historian Jona Lendering.

Furthermore, an inscription unearthed in 2000 indicates that Achaemenid king Artaxerxes II Mnemon (404-358) built a terrace with columns in Ecbatana. Some twelve kilometers southwest of Hamedan is Ganjnameh, where Darius I and his son Xerxes had inscriptions cut into the rock.



Polybius, a Greek historian of the Hellenistic period noted for his work The Histories, tells that the builders used cedar and cypress wood, which was covered with silver and gold. The roof tiles, columns, and ceilings were plated with silver and gold. He adds that the palace was stripped of its precious metals in the invasion of the Macedonian king Alexander the Great and that the rest were seized during the reigns of Antigonos and Seleucus. Later, Ecbatana was one of the capitals of the Seleucid and the Parthian Empires, sometimes called Epiphaneia.

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

Persian handicrafts: Arghavan-bafi



TEHRAN – Iran boasts a vast array of plant species, contributing to the diversity of mat weaving across its regions and cities. In every area, unique weaving techniques have developed to cater to the abundance of local flora.

Torqabeh is a region located just 20 kilometers away from the city of Mashhad. Known for its abundance of Eastern red-bud trees, Arghavan in Persian, the locals have made a tradition out of weaving intricate baskets using the thin stems of these trees. These beautiful weaves are commonly referred to as Arghavan-bafi.

Each year, during either spring or autumn, the stems are carefully collected. When it comes

to cutting and gathering stems, it's crucial to handle these plants with care, as they are quite delicate. If you make a mistake when cutting a tree, it can lead to the tree drying out, which is far from desirable. To avoid any negative consequences, it is essential to exercise extreme caution and execute every cut with precision. Any slightest mistake can lead to a serious problem.

Once the stems have been collected, they are set aside in a moist environment for a sufficient amount of time to increase their flexibility for weaving. The artisans deftly interlace the plant stems to create a pattern of vertical and horizontal strands, known as the warps and wefts. The majority of these items are typically

found in round or oval shapes. To improve his grip, the weaver uses his toes to grasp the stem, and by controlling the number of rows, he customizes the size and texture of the basket.

To achieve a faded color effect, the stems are occasionally boiled in pots. The Arghavan tree is naturally dark brown in color. The local population has received the traditional knowledge of making mat weaves and Arghvan-bafi from their ancestors. They make a living out of crafting these exquisite pieces. These mat baskets are incredibly resilient and have greater longevity than other mat weaves. Prior to the widespread adoption of plastic, Arghavan-bafi containers were commonly used and are now a viable alternative to plastic baskets. You can clean them using water and regular cleaning agents. Baskets are the cornerstone of Arghavan-bafi's business and are available in a variety of types including fruit baskets, flower baskets, and rice cultivation baskets.

Handicrafts similar to Ar-

ghavan-bafi can be found in different cities and regions of Iran, where local plants' stems or branches replace Arghavan. The artistic tradition of crafting with natural materials is widespread in the country, allowing each community to create their unique variations of cultural artifacts. A traditional craft practiced in different regions of Iran is the art of weaving baskets. In various provinces, different materials are used to create these baskets, showcasing the unique cultural influences of each region.

In Mazandaran, a province in the north, the craft is called "Bambo-bafi," while in Gilan they refer to it as "Morva" or "Cham-bafi." In East Azarbaijan, the craft utilizes the Sousan tree, in Marand, wheat stems are used, and in South Khorasan, baskets resembling Arghanvan baskets are created using willow, prunus, and tamarisk stems. This traditional craft highlights the diversity and richness of Iran's cultural heritage and is a testament to the skill and creativity of Iranian artisans.

Millennia-old relics discovered in Zanjan

TEHRAN –The Iranian police have recently discovered five historical clay relics in a small village in the northwestern province of Zanjan, a senior police official in charge of protecting cultural heritage has said.

Estimated to date back to the 1st millennium BC, the relics were discovered after police had received reports from cultural heritage aficionados, Nasser Habibian explained on Monday.

Zanjan is one of the cities founded by Sas-



sanid King Ardashir I (180-242 CE). The province

makes a base for wider explorations with the architectural wonder of Soltaniyeh, the subterranean delights of the Katala-Khor caves, colorful mountains, and the UNESCO-registered Takht-e Soleiman ruins nearby.

The first well-documented evidence of human habitation on the Iranian plateau is found from deposits from several excavated cave and rock-shelter sites in the Zagros Mountains, which dates back to Middle Paleolithic or Mousterian times (c. 100,000 BC).

World Environment Day: solutions to plastic pollution

By Mehdi Garshasbi

Led by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and held annually on June 5 since 1973, World Environment Day is the largest global platform for environmental public outreach and is celebrated by millions of people across the world.

More than 400 million tons of plastic is produced every year worldwide, half of which is designed to be used only once. Of that, less than 10 percent is recycled.

An estimated 19-23 million tons end up in lakes, rivers, and seas annually. That is approximately the weight of 2,200 Eiffel Towers altogether.

Microplastics – tiny plastic particles up to 5mm in diameter – find their way into food, water, and air. It is estimated that each person on the planet consumes more than 50,000 plastic particles per year – and many more if inhalation is considered.

Discarded or burnt single-use plastic harms human health and biodiversity and pollutes every ecosystem from mountain tops to the ocean floor.

With available science and solutions to tackle the problem, governments, companies, and other stakeholders must scale up and speed up actions to solve this crisis.

This underscores the importance of this World Environment Day in mobilizing transformative action from every corner of the world.

Plastic, a danger for climate change

Plastic is predominantly produced from oil and gas, both of which are fossil fuels. The more plastic we make, the more fossil fuel is required, and the more we intensify the climate crisis.

Also, plastic products create greenhouse gas emissions across their whole lifecycle. If no action is taken, greenhouse gas emissions caused by plastic could account for 19 percent of the Paris Agreement's total allowable emissions in 2040 to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.



degrees Celsius.

According to UNEP, Some 11 million tons of plastic waste flow annually into oceans. This may triple by 2040.

More than 800 marine and coastal species are affected by this pollution through ingestion, entanglement, and other dangers.

A shift to a circular economy can reduce the volume of plastics entering oceans by over 80 percent by 2040; reduce virgin plastic production by 55 percent; save governments \$70 billion by 2040; reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent; and create 700,000 additional jobs – mainly in the global south.

Plastic pollution in Iran

About 185,000 tons of plastic are produced annually in the country, which cannot be returned to nature, so we must be very active in the field of collecting plastic waste and recycling them so that it can be used in other products by turning into raw materials of industries, Mehdi Khadem-Sameni, an official with the Department of Environment, has said.

The executive regulation on reducing the consumption of plastic bags was prepared and submitted to the cabinet of ministers and was approved in October 2022 in coordination with other agencies such as the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Industry, the Ministry of Education, and the National Standards Organization, he explained.

The regulation was drafted in 10 articles, he said, adding that the Ministry of Industry is obliged to develop a five-year plan to annually produce 20 percent of the production capacity of thin plastic bags with a thickness of less than 25 microns, replacing them with biodegradable or environmentally friendly bags.

“The Ministry of Industry in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior will prepare a guideline to reduce waste production and limit the production, distribution, and consumption of plastic bags.”

Khdam-Sameni went on to say that the ban on the free distribution of plastic bags, except for fruit shops, and the ban on the distribution of thin plastic bags with a thickness of less than 25 microns is emphasized.

Bags less than 25 microns are very thin and light, and it takes between 300 and 900 years to decompose and return to nature, depending on the type of polymer and environmental conditions, he highlighted.

“International and national studies have proven the presence of microplastics in water sources. The presence of microplastics in the air, water resources and soil causes a lot of damage to aquatic animals, living organisms, and the natural environment”

“Several meetings are being held at the international level, and due to the environmental damage of plastics to the environment and human health, international commitments

have been made in the field of banning and limiting plastic production,” he went on to say.

“There are still no permissible limits for microplastic pollutants in water, soil, and air environments, as well as national or international standards, so currently it is not possible to say how much of our environmental pollution they include, but researchers believe that the concentration of these pollutants in vital sources is increasing, and in fact, the investigation and results of such researches have led to the formation of the preliminary meetings of the plastic convention.”

President Ebrahim Raisi has highlighted the importance of environmental protection, emphasizing that the preservation of the environment is prior to every development.

Environmental protection will lead to power, security, investment, and production growth in the country, he said.

Both people and NGOs have an effective role to play in the protection of the environment, and they should be given a chance to play their role, he added.

On November 17, 2015, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, announced the general policies on the environment, emphasizing the need for comprehensive, harmonious, and organized management of vital resources based on ecological capability and sustainability, particularly by increasing capacities and appropriate legal and structural capabilities accompanied by public participation.

Time is running out, and nature is in emergency mode. To keep global warming below 1.5°C this century, we must halve annual greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. Without action, exposure to air pollution beyond safe guidelines will increase by 50 percent within the decade and plastic waste flowing into aquatic ecosystems will nearly triple by 2040.

We need urgent action to address these pressing issues.

Some 360,000 liters of smuggled fuel seized in Persian Gulf

TEHRAN -The Iranian authorities seized as much as 360,000 liters of smuggled fuel in the Persian Gulf on Sunday.

Border guards in Hormozgan province, who received news about the activity of fuel smugglers, were immediately sent to the location to investigate the matter with marine patrol teams, IRNA reported.

In an operation, the border guards discovered four plastic containers with 360,000 liters of smuggled diesel fuel after a thorough inspection of the area.

The smugglers escaped from the place by vessels immediately before the border guards arrived.

The value of discovered smuggled diesel fuel was estimated at 98.6 billion rials (about \$197,000).

On May 13, Tasnim reported an Iranian oil ship

that had been illegally stolen by a foreign firm five years ago was retaken by the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy and Iran's Intelligence Ministry in a joint operation.

The 10,000-ton oil tanker Purity has returned to Iranian territorial waters as a result of a court order and a joint operation by the IRGC Navy and Intelligence Ministry, according to Mojtaba Qahremani, head of the justice department in Iran's southern province of Hormozgan.

“The seized 10,000-ton oil tanker Purity had been illegally leased to a foreigner by falsifying documents since 2018 and its Iranian owners were deprived of the benefits of the oil tanker,” Qahremani added.

The head of the Hormozgan Province Justice Department also said that it was recognized

during investigations by security groups that the foreign corporation employed the vessel for fuel trafficking.

Qahremani went on to highlight, “Following a judicial order and close cooperation between the IRGC Navy and Intelligence Ministry, the oil tanker was finally identified and confiscated in the Persian Gulf waters earlier this month.”

The ship was said to have docked in Iran's Asaluyeh Port on the Persian Gulf's westernmost coast to have its fuel consignments unloaded.

In October 2022, forces from the IRGC's first naval zone captured a foreign tanker ship carrying 11 million gallons of illegal fuel in the Persian Gulf.

The Islamic Republic has said unequivocally that the Persian Gulf would never be a safe haven for smugglers.

Women from the Leader's point of view-8

Mothers, wives patience in Sacred Defense makes everyone humble

By Sara Atta

TEHRAN – The companionship, empathy, patience and sacrifice of Iranian martyrs and war veterans' mothers and wives during the Iraqi imposed war against Iran are so great and praiseworthy that they are undoubtedly unique in the history of Iran and cannot be overlooked.

If we talk about all the issues and aspects of war and the sacrifices of warriors and soldiers during the imposed war by ex-Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein on Iran (1980–88) [known as Sacred Defense in Iran] and do not mention the important role of their mothers and wives in that period and also in the post-war era, then the history of that period is definitely not stated correctly.

It is true that war is basically considered a manly and violent activity and requires a lot of fearlessness and courage but it should be noted that mothers and wives of the combatants play the main role in creating the combating spirit.

The wives and mothers of combatants, especially the mothers of the martyrs of the Sacred Defense not only did not prevent their husbands and sons from going to front lines of the war, but they were the best supporters and trainers for them.

During the eight years of Sacred Defense, the Iranian mothers created immortal epics that history will always remember. They lost their sons in the war to preserve the ideals of the Islamic Revolution and the security and peace of the people. These mothers spent long years in great hardship after their children's martyrdom.

In addition to mothers who lost one or more of their children during the war, there were also mothers who were not even aware of their children's fate (whether alive or martyred) in war and endured this double sorrow for years.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei considers the role of martyrs' families as a key role backing martyrs in the Sacred Defense era.

“I have always said that our martyrs are on the front lines defending Islam and that their families—including fathers, mothers, wives and children—stand, immediately, behind them; this should be appreciated. The impact that martyrs exert on Islam and on Muslims is not few in number,” Ayatollah Khamenei said. (August 16, 2017)

During the war, many women accepted the responsibility or duty of staying at home and managing the family while their

husbands fought on the front lines. Wives of martyrs had difficult tasks in growing their children in the absence of their martyred husbands. They faced many difficulties in their lives.

Ayatollah Khamenei in one of his speeches on April 19, 2014 said, “We have had so many wives of martyrs and disabled war veterans, so many mothers of martyrs and so many relatives of those people who laid down their lives in the way of God. The strong willpower, firm determination and patience of these women make everyone humble. I really have a sense of humility whenever I meet with these outstanding women. I have many meetings with the mothers and wives of martyrs and disabled war veterans.”

The Sacred Defense era in Iran brought up women who nursed their veteran husbands for many years. Wives and mothers of war veterans see the hard and painful life of their loved ones every day but they, especially the wives of disabled war veterans, try to maintain their families in spite of the difficulties they are facing.

“When a self-sacrificing lady spends her entire life managing and improving the life of a disabled war veteran for the sake of God, this is not a minor achievement. It is easy to say this, but it is very difficult to do it,” the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said in the same day.

Women, especially mothers, wives, sisters and daughters of martyrs, war veterans and prisoners, played a significant role in promoting the values and culture of war days. Many women in Iran were and are the mothers of several martyrs, simultaneously the mother of a martyr and the wife of a martyr, and in some cases the daughter or sister of a martyr at the same time.

The presence of the mothers, wives, sisters and daughters of the martyrs and being pride of martyrdom of their loved ones, definitely has created a culture of sacrifice and the spirit of martyrdom among men, boys, youths and the nation.

“A mother who has offered two, three, four martyrs in the way of God and who has stood firm despite this, advises us to stand firm as well. One really feels humility in the face of such greatness. These are the realities about the women of our society which are very glorious and important realities. Well, this is thankfully the bright and shining part of the issue of women in our country.” (April 19, 2014)

ENGLISH IN USE

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20% of areas in Iran at high risk of flood

Twenty percent of areas across Iran are highly prone to flooding, Khosro Shahbazi, head of the Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization (FRWMO), has said.

“Precipitation in Iran is one-third of the world's average, as the country is located in a dry and fragile region where we experience 11 millimeters decrease in precipitation each 10 years and an increase in evaporation of more than 50 millimeters every year,” he explained, ISNA reported.

Rainfall fluctuations usually lead to flood and devastation, so a comprehensive planning for watershed management and flood control is required, he noted.

بیست درصد ایران جزو مناطق با خطر سیل خیزی بالا است

سرپرست سازمان جنگلها، مراتع و آبخیزداری می گوید ۲۰ درصد ایران جزو مناطق با خطر سیل خیزی بالا است.

به گزارش روز جمعه ایسنا، خسرو شهبازی افزود: میزان بارش در کشور ما یک سوم متوسط آن در دنیا است و از نظر جغرافیایی در منطقه ای خشک و شکننده واقع شده ایم که هر ۱۰ سال با ۱۱ میلیمتر کاهش بارش و بیش از ۵۰ میلیمتر افزایش تبخیر و تعرق مواجه هستیم که همه منجر به این شده که بارش ها در منطقه ما سیلابی و ویرانگر باشد، به همین خاطر نیازمند برنامه ریزی جامع برای مدیریت حوضه های آبخیز و کنترل سیلاب ها هستیم.



Tuyserkan boasts a pleasant climate

The protected area of Tuyserkan, measuring some 9,000 hectares in the northcentral Hamedan province, enjoys a pleasant moderate and mountainous climate.

The diversity of vegetation, being away from sources of pollution, has created suitable living conditions for wildlife.

TEHRAN TIMES



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Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051430
Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807
Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603
Printed at: Jame Jam Bartar Borna - 44197737



Tehrantimes79

No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran P.o. Box: 14155-4843 Zip Code: 1599814713

JUNE 6, 2023

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The one who gets married has completed half of his/her religion.
Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:03 Evening: 19:39 Dawn: 3:03 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:48 (tomorrow)

Image of Persia, Persian literature among French authors

Part 1

Whereas Germany could vaunt Goethe's West-östlicher Diwan and Nietzsche's Also sprach Zarathustra, and England had FitzGerald's imaginative and free translation of Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, French writers and critics had their own, manifold responses to the lure of Persia.

At first, they celebrated the ancient heroes (Cyrus, etc.); later, informed by reports of missionaries and travelers and by the Thousand and One Nights and Sadi's Golestan, they used Persia chiefly as a means of social, political, and religious self-criticism, and they were interested in Zoroastrianism as "the most ancient religion."

Later, the gradual acquaintance with other Persian poets inspired them to create new literary works.

Furthermore, ancient Persia was praised as the country of truth, justice, and purity; the Persian poets were seen by some as masters of unconventional morality, while others were fascinated by Persian mysticism.

When Madeleine de Scudéry (1607-1701) wrote her novel Artamène ou le grand Cyrus, her source was of course Xenophon's Cyropedia, in which the founder of the Achaemenid empire is depicted as an ideal king.

Prosper Jolyot de Crébillon's (1674-1762) tragedy Xercès was based on Aeschylus' Persae. Pierre Corneille (1606-84) wrote his tragedy Rodogune (1644) about a Parthian princess and ten years later Suréna, général des Parthes, the conqueror of Crassus.

Jean Racine (1639-99) in his Mithridate carried his praise of the Persian king to the highest level of eulogy. Their examples were followed by some subsequent writers. The outcome was some thirty tragedies on Persia.

Meanwhile, even before the end of the century of Louis XIV, the quarrel of the Ancients and Moderns had begun to divide French writers: should they continue emulating the ancients as they had done since the Renaissance, or seek other sources of inspiration including biblical and oriental material?

Charles Perrault (1628-1703), who was among the Moderns, published in 1691-94 his Contes de ma mère l'Oye and in 1697 his Histoires ou Contes du temps passé, in one of which, entitled Le Maître Chat ou le Chat botté, the cat likes to call his master Marquis de Carabas.

The reputation of Shah Abbas, notably as a great builder, who had sent letters to Henry IV and Louis XIII, must have spread deep enough in France for this name to be so altered.

And he had another avatar in la fée Carabosse, a kind of female Ahriman opposed to Carabas-Ormazd, perhaps a reflex of the Iranian dualism known in France through Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride, Barnabé Brisson's (1530-91) De regio Persarum principatu (1590) and later, through Thomas Hyde's (1636-1703) Historia religionis veterum Persarum eorumque magorum (Oxford, 1700).

Persia was described in L'Estat de la Perse en 1660 by Père Raphaël du Mans (1613-96), and by Père N. Sanson, in Estat présent du royaume de Perse (1694), Jean-

Baptiste Tavernier's (1605-89) Voyages, Jean Chardin's (1643-1713) Voyage en Perse et aux Indes orientales (1711).

Sadi's Golestan was translated by André du Ruyr de Malezar as Gulistan ou l'Empire des Roses, composé par Sadi, prince des poètes turc et persan (Paris, 1634).

It inspired Jean de la Fontaine (1621-95) in the composition of his Fables, although the only oriental model he acknowledges is "le sage indien Pilpay."

This Pilpay or Bidpay (from an Old Iranian vaedyapaiti "master of knowledge") was allegedly the author of a collection of tales translated from the Sanskrit Pancatantra into Pahlavi, in turn rendered into Arabic in the 8th century by Ebn al-Moqaffa and entitled Kalila wa Demna, thence into Latin and several modern languages, including the French version by Davud ibn Sa'id Esfahani (David Sahid d'Isphan, 1612-84; Richard, 1986-87), who had stayed in Paris in the 1640s, and Gilbert Gaulmin (1585-1665, Richard, ibid), entitled Le Livre des Lumières ou la Conduite des Roys, composé par le sage Pilpay indien (1644), apparently known to la Fontaine, who, however, was also indebted to Sadi, for "The Dream of the Resident of Mogol" is taken from Golestan 2, 15 and "The Astrologer Who Fell into a Pit" is freely adapted from Golestan 4, 11.

Moreover, the source of "The Shepherd and the King" is to be found in a tale Tavernier brought back from the court of Shah Abbas.

The Thousand and One Nights was imitated by Jean-François Pétis de la Croix (1653-1713) in his Mille et un jours, and by Anne Claude Philippe, comte de Caylus (1692-1765) in his Nouveaux contes orientaux. Barthélemy d'Herbelot's (1625-95) Bibliothèque orientale had several articles on Persia.

About the year 1717 which saw the end of Louis XIV's long reign, Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de la Brède et de Montesquieu (1689-1755), probably began to write his Lettres persanes, which were published under a pseudonym in 1721 and had enormous success.

Montesquieu's purpose was not, of course, to tell us about the Persians but to criticize the French, their beliefs and way of life, and ultimately to recommend—in a young magistrate's manifesto—tolerance, liberalism, humanism.

The Persian he uses for this purpose, has left his country in order to widen his vision of things and men. The country he leaves behind is characterized by despotism, polygamy (with a rather frivolous emphasis on eunuchs), and bigotry.

He praises the sultan for not expelling the Armenians, which would have deprived the country of their valuable talents, a veiled allusion to Louis XIV's Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

The "most ancient" religion of Persia is evoked with sympathy in the story of the Gabr in love with his sister, and pacific coexistence between religions is recommended. But the Christian mission in Persia is dismissed as senseless.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica.

To be continued.

“Punch Drunk” wins best screenplay award at Cheboksary filmfest

TEHRAN – Iranian tragicomedy “Punch Drunk” has won the best screenplay award at the 16th Cheboksary International Film Festival in Russia.

Director Adel Tabrizi co-wrote the screenplay with Arsalan Amiri.

After accepting the award, Tabrizi dedicated it to Ferdows Kaviani, a veteran Iranian actor who is suffering from Parkinson's disease.

Set in Tehran in 1996, the story of the film follows Mahtab who lives along with her 10-year-old child, Erfan. She is divorced from her husband, Morteza, who is in jail. Mahtab has enrolled her child in a karate class so that he does not end up like his father as far as his character is concerned. Erfan's only interest is cinema and could not care less about sports. Hassan Khoshnud, the tough and serious karate instructor with his dictatorial methods causes Erfan to run away one day from the karate academy in the middle of exercises.

The winners of the Cheboksary festival, which is dedicated to ethnic and regional cinema, were announced last Thursday.

The Grand Prix in the feature film competition was awarded to “Everybody Hates Johan” by Norwegian director Hallvar Witzo.

The film is a comedy about Johan, a small-town loner with a flair for horses and explosives. He finds himself in constant conflict

Director and writer Adel Tabrizi (2nd L) holds the award for best screenplay at the closing ceremony of the 16th Cheboksary International Film Festival in Russia on June 1, 2023. Jury members are also seen in the photo. (CIFF)

with the community, struggling to find his place in society while coping with unrequited love for his neighbor, whom accidentally blew to bits while in his teens.

Semyon Serzin from Russia was selected as best director for his film “A Similar Man”

The best actor prize went to Paul Sverre Hagen for his role in “Everybody Hates Johan”, while Olga Lapshina and Valentina Telichkina shared the award for best actress for their roles in the Russian drama “The Garden” by

Larisa Sadilova.

The Grand Prix in the Ethnic and Regional Film Competition was given to “Knots” by Russian director Oleg Khamokov)

The film was directed based on an ancient Caucasian legend about the Adiyuh tower, which is located in Karachay-Cherkessia. According to legend, the young Adiyuh was kidnapped and locked in an impregnable tower by Prince Psabida.

“How People Live” by Russian director Pavel Skorobogatov

won the Grand Prix for best documentary film.

The film focuses on the inhabitants of the Buryat village of Moigoty, of which there are only six left, living for more than twenty years outside of civilization without light and electricity. Being forgotten by the authorities, they do not want to go anywhere, they are building a hotel in the hope that tourists will come to them, and they are waiting for electricity and other utilities to be brought to them.

Brooklyn Spectacle Theater screens Iran’s “Iro”

A scene from “Iro” by Iranian director Hadi Mohaqeq.

TEHRAN – Spectacle Theater in Brooklyn, New York, has arranged three screenings for the Iranian drama “Iro”.

“Robinson & Crusoe” returning to Tehran theater

TEHRAN – Iranian director Alireza Kushk-Jalali is restaging “Robinson & Crusoe” starting today at the Shahrzad Theater Complex in Tehran.

Written by Giacomo Ravicchio and Nino D'Introna in 1985, the story of the play is set on a roof surrounded by the ocean.

Two men meet there after a disaster; one speaks several European languages, the other some strange kind of gibberish of Oriental origin.

The ocean is the only witness to their struggles to find a common language so they can initially meet their need for survival, and later on enjoy their “bounty,” dream of their past, and decide about their future

A poster for “Robinson & Crusoe”, which will be performed at the Shahrzad Theater Complex in Tehran.

and a new life.

Saeid Borjali and Hossein Jeddi will play the two men in the performance, which will go on stage every night for a month.

The play was originally

performed and directed by Ravicchio and D'Introna and produced by the Teatro dell'Angolo of Torino in Italy.

It has been performed in 20 different countries on five continents by more than 100 theater companies.

Kushk-Jalali has previously staged “Robinson and Crusoe” several times in Tehran, Rasht, Mashhad, Ahvaz and Tabriz.

The latest time was in November and December 2018 when his troupe Ayna performed at the Shahrzad Theater Complex.

Kushk-Jalali's play “Barefoot, Naked, Heart in His Hand” has won public acclaim in its performances worldwide.

movies “Bardou” and “Immortal”.

His latest drama “Scent of Wind” was the opening film of the 2022 Busan International Film Festival, one of the most significant film festivals in Asia.

It won the Kim Jiseok Award, which is given to two established Asian filmmakers with three or more feature films.

Theaters in over sixty cities in France are currently screening the movie, Persian Film Distribution has announced.

The film was awarded the Silver Balloon (Montgolfière d'Argent) of the 2022 Festival des 3 Continents in Nantes, France.

The dark comedy on racial violence narrates the story of a Turkish Muslim migrant living in Germany who loses his family and house in a fire rooted in a racist attack.

Written in the German language in 1993, the play has previously been performed over 650 times in different countries, including Iran, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Ukraine and Russia.

Michael Morgenstern was the sole actor in the monolog, the latest performance of which was in Cologne, Germany, in 2020. Only 20 people were allowed to attend each performance based on restrictions during the Covid pandemic.

Catherine Gildiner’s “Good Morning, Monster” published in Persian

TEHRAN – “Good Morning, Monster: A Therapist Shares Five Heroic Stories of Emotional Recovery” by Catherine Gildiner has recently been published in Persian.

Adash is the publisher of the book that originally came out in 2020. A team of scholars selected by the publisher translated the book into Persian.

In this fascinating narrative, therapist Catherine Gildiner presents five of what she calls her most heroic and memorable patients.

Among them: a successful, first-generation Chinese immigrant musician suffering sexual dysfunction; a young woman whose father abandoned her at age nine with her younger siblings in an isolated cottage in the depth of winter; and a glamorous workaholic whose narcissistic, negligent mother greeted her each morning of her childhood with Good morning, Monster.

Each patient presents a mystery, one that

will only be unpacked over the years. They seek Gildiner's help to overcome an immediate challenge in their lives, but discover that the source of their suffering has been long buried.

As in such recent classics as “The Glass Castle” and “Educated”, each patient embodies self-reflection, stoicism, perseverance and forgiveness as they work unflinchingly to face the truth.

Gildiner's account of her journeys with them is moving, insightful and sometimes very funny.

“Good Morning Monster” offers an almost novelistic, behind-the-scenes look into the therapist's office, illustrating how the process can heal even the most unimaginable wounds.

Catherine is the author of the bestselling memoirs “Too Close to the Falls”, “After the Falls” and “Coming Ashore”.

She has also written a novel, “Seduction”, a thriller about Darwin and Freud. It was chosen by DER SPIEGEL as one of the ten best mysteries.

Front cover of the Persian edition of Catherine Gildiner's book “Good Morning, Monster”.

She is a unique writer in that she was a psychologist for many years and only became a writer at the age of 50, showing that anything is possible.