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The Humiliated Occupiers

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Netanyahu visits soldiers and an army dog injured during a military raid of Jenin at Haifa Rambam Medical Center on June 19, 2023. (GPO)/The Israel army has a special unit called Oketz for the use of attack dogs in its terrorist operations.

Surrounding of Zionist forces in Jenin heralds full victory for Palestinians: Leader

TEHRAN- Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Khamenei says the sense of responsibility of the young and faithful Palestinian generation and their individual and collective presence on the battlefield is a very important issue.

The Leader made the remarks during a meeting with Ismail Haniyeh, head of the political bureau of the Palestinian Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, and his accompanying delegation on June 21, 2023.

"What happened recently in Jenin and the siege of the Zionist military by the Palestinian youth are clear examples of this new scene and heralds a bright future a full victory for the Palestinians," underlined Ayatollah Khamenei, as he pointed out the progressive movement of the Palestinian issue.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution emphasized that the issue of Palestine is at the heart of the Islamic world and the Islamic nation's issues. "The amount of progress that is made on the Palestinian issue will influence the amount of progress that will be made regarding the issues of the Islamic nation," he said.

Referring to the noticeable difference in the conditions of Palestine compared to two or three years ago, Ayatollah Khamenei added, "What impeded the Palestinian cause in the not too distant past was the youth not being present on the scene, but now they have voluntarily entered the field. And more importantly, their reliance is on Islam. ▸ Page **3**

No delay in Palestinian response to Israeli terror

By Ali Karbalaei

TEHRAN- Palestinians retaliate a day after Israel's largest raid in the occupied West Bank in two decades.

• Palestinians have conducted a retaliatory operation in the Israeli settlement of Eli, leaving four settlers dead and another four injured.

• Hamas confirms that two of its members carried out the mission. The resistance says it's "a natural response" to escalating Israeli crimes.

• The retaliation comes a day after Israel used helicopters to fire on Palestinians in a large-scale raid on the Jenin refugee camp that killed six Palestinians and injured over 90 others.

• The raid also left seven Israeli troops injured, according to the Israeli military. ▸ Page 5

The occupiers resorted to air raids for the first time in decades in the West Bank to rescue their entangled forces

Settlers injured more than 34 Palestinians and set fire to more than 140 cars. 23 houses were also set ablaze

TEHRAN – With Israeli forces and settlers intensifying their campaign of terror against Palestinians in the West Bank, the situation in the Palestinian occupied territories seems to be heading toward intensified resistance.

In a new wave of terror against the Palestinian people, Israeli settlers went on the rampage and destroyed more than a dozen Palestinian village stretching from Ramallah to Nablus.

The Israeli settlers injured more than 34 Palestinians and set fire to more than 140 cars belonging to the Palestinian people. The arson included a Palestinian ambulance. 23 Palestinian houses were also set ablaze or partly destroyed by the settlers.

Palestinian fighters and the remains of an Israeli armored vehicle that exploded in Jenin

Israeli forces sat idly by during the rampage. They only started firing tear gas when the Palestinian people rose in defense of their villages.

The Israeli aggression comes on the heels of a military campaign against the Jenin camp which involved surprises for the Israeli regime. During the campaign, many Israeli military vehicles were severely damages as a result of Palestinian resistance units using explosives.

The Israeli forces were forced to use Apache helicopters and missiles to take its damaged vehicles out of Jenin, something that surprised many Israeli analysts who said that the Palestinian resistance units apparently made remarkable progress in terms of building powerful bombs. Some of the Israeli analysts even compared the bombs used in Jenin with those putatively employed in southern Lebanon. ▸ Page **3**

MKO poses constant threat to host nations: Foreign Ministry

TEHRAN- Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson has emphasized the terrorist nature of the Mujahedin-e-Khalq Organization (MKO) and its recent skirmishes with Albanian police, stating that the anti-Iran terror group would always pose a threat to the security of its host nations.

In addition, Nasser Kanaani said in a series of tweets on Wednesday that the MKO, also called MEK, had been kicked out from Iraq because many other nations had refused to recognize it owing to its terrorist nature.

As a result of pressure from its Western allies, Albania has hosted the terror group and thousands of its members for ten years.

He then expressed optimism that Albania would "make up for its mistake of hosting this terrorist cult." ▸ Page **2**

Op-ed

Receiving medals while wearing hijab makes Iranian woman 'outstanding'

By Sara Atta

TEHRAN – While many believed that women sports by wearing a hijab is a difficult and impossible task, the success of the Iranian women proved that hijab did not prevent them from shining in international competitions.

The issue of women's sports after the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979 faced many challenges. Because many believed that women sports by wearing a hijab and Islamic clothing are a difficult and somehow impossible task. But with the passage of 44 years since the victory of the Revolution, we have seen that the hijab did not prevent women from turning to sports and shining in sporting events. ▸ Page **7**

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FM renews proposal for Persian Gulf dialogue forum

TEHRAN- Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian visited Kuwait on Wednesday afternoon after concluding his trip to Oman.

Amir Abdollahian had already visited Qatar and Oman and discussed issues of mutual interest with the officials of the two countries.

During his tour to Kuwait, Iran's top diplomat held talks with a number of Kuwaiti officials including Prime Minister Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Al Sabah, and members of Iran-Kuwait friendship association.

Bilateral talks and sharing views on important regional and international issues were among the most important topics of Amir Abdollahian's talks in Kuwait. ▸ Page **2**

Commercial maritime transportation rises 20% in Q1

TEHRAN – The managing director of the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL) has said the transportation of goods by the company's fleet has increased by 20 percent in the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21) as compared to the corresponding period in the previous year.

Speaking at a ceremony on the occasion of the International Day of the Seafarer on Tuesday, Mohammadreza Modares Khiabani said it is necessary to revise the tariffs of sea transportation this year, Fars News Agency reported.

Underlining the need for the expansion of the country's commercial maritime fleet, Khiabani said: "We hope that good measures will be taken in the field of shipping logistics in order to develop the marine transport fleet this year." ▸ Page **4**

TEHRAN PAPERS

MKO will pay for their dependence and betrayal

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

In its editorial, Ham Mihan wrote: Foreigners just seek to secure their own interests and not to administer justice or free other nations. Sometimes their interests are met by supporting the opponents of a system, and sometimes they achieve their interests by supporting that system and ignoring the opponents, and this feature disrupts the validity of the positions of critical or opposition forces. The events of the past days regarding the Mojahedin Khalq Organization (MKO) and other forces opposed to the Iranian government, as well as radical critics, must have proved that these forces are not the ones who have used those countries for the benefit of their goals, but rather those countries have used these forces to achieve their goals and reach a compromise with Tehran. The independent political force always supports improvement of foreign relations and establishment of peace because it does not consider the interest of its people in tensions and has no interest in interference of foreigners in Iran's internal affairs. There should be no doubt that the dependence of political forces on external variables has no result but betrayal, betrayal of the ideals of the people, the country and even their supporters.

Shargh: Foreign minister's visit to the land of mediators

In an analysis, Shargh discussed Amir Abdollahian's trip to Oman and Qatar. It wrote: Speculations about the outcome of this regional trip by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of our country show that the continuation of indirect negotiations with the United States of America to release blocked funds and to exchange prisoners are at the top of diplomatic goals. It is possible and it is even predicted that we will see progress in this direction in the not-too-distant future. However, we have to be patient in regard to a release of Iran's blocked money in South Korea or making possible agreements in nuclear negotiations. We have seen these sudden changes many times.

Iran: Failure of the mission to topple the Islamic Republic system

In an analysis, the Iran newspaper discussed the attack by Albanian police on the headquarters of the hypocrite group (MKO) and the cancellation of the annual meeting of this terrorist group in France. It said: The important signs of the new scene indicate the failure of the sabotage mission and collapse of the Islamic Republic system. Some months ago, Europe and the United States made a mistake by shunning diplomacy with Iran. They were pleased with the movements of the anti-Iranian groups. This mistake was enough for the Islamic Republic to seek new large coalitions with a special focus on the Middle East and greater Asia, which could cause even more concern for the Western bloc. What the West did in the recent confrontation with the MKO was a sign of their understanding of the new developments, which showed that in regard to Iran they have no choice but to turn to the policy of lessening tensions and accepting the undeniable contribution of Iran to power equation in the region and the world at large.

Sobh-e-No: Iran-US negotiations on the path of understanding

Sobh-e-No devoted its editorial to the Iranian foreign minister's visit to Muscat and Doha and wrote: In their recent negotiations, Iran and the United States are finalizing negotiations on "Iran's blocked assets" in other countries in order to agree on an action plan and a timetable. Therefore, "technical negotiations" are still ongoing, and the role of Qatar and Oman is prominent in this regard because it is said that the assets are supposed to be transferred to the banks of these two countries. However, there has been no other news about the nuclear negotiations except the rumors of an interim agreement. It seems that Iran and America have reached an understanding on at least some "mutual conditions" and maybe in the new round of negotiations, we will see "understanding" instead of "agreement" because any agreement different from the 2015 agreement means the end of the JCPOA and the parties do not want this to happen. On the other hand, it is not possible to return to those conditions now. In the JCPOA, the nuclear infrastructure underwent changes. Therefore, it seems that the parties reached an understanding in an "unwritten agreement" on taking some mutual actions. It is an understanding that includes both Iran's economic benefits and removes the West's concerns about Iran's achievements in nuclear technology.

MKO poses constant threat to host nations: Foreign Ministry

From page 1 ▸ His comments were in response to protests that broke out on Tuesday when Albanian security forces raided an MKO camp because the group was carrying out "terror and cyber-attacks" against international organizations.

During the skirmishes in the Ashraf-3 camp, northwest of the capital Tirana, at least one MKO member was murdered and several more were hurt.

Kanaani added that the Albanian police visited the Ashraf-3 camp for an examination on the basis of a court verdict issued by Albania's Special Court Against Crime and Corruption on June 20.

The MKO members' "criminal and terrorist" activities in Albania were cited as the cause of the raid, he said.

Kanaani said that the relevant Albanian authorities had disclosed the capture of several electronic devices and drones that the MKO members had used to plan and coordinate their terrorist actions.

The Albanian officials were cited as saying that through its terrorist and cyber actions, the MKO violated the 2014 agreement that allowed its members to reside in Albania, he added.

Members of the MKO spent several years in Iraq, where Saddam Hussein, a former Iraqi dictator, harbored and armed them.

They supported Saddam during his war against Iran in 1980s and afterwards assisted him in putting down protests across the Arab nation.

After the terrorist group was spurned by the government of Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, Albania started harboring the group.

Since 2016, the European nation is said to have hosted some 3,000 members of the terror group.

MKO social media accounts blocked

Numerous MKO accounts on social media networks are said to have been shut after the Albanian police raid.

According to a statement from Albania's Interior Ministry, the country's police action on Tuesday was necessary since the MKO refused to abide by the 2014 agreement.

It added that the group had carried out actions that contravened the commitments it made when it "settled in Albania for humanitarian purposes alone." "Unfortunately, this group has not adhered to these commitments," the ministry said.

Albania's interior ministry and police, who published footage of their operation, disputed responsibility for one MKO terrorist's death.

During a press conference, Interior Minister Blendi Cuci told that police did all they could to avoid causing "incidents," and no MKO members were hurt by officers.

He also condemned the "intolerable" violence the MKO had committed against the police.

MKO worked with Daesh terrorists to undermine resistance

Based on some documents, the MKO terrorists were working with the opposition and Takfiri groups in Iraq and Syria to undermine the resistance front.

Such cooperation included collecting information, online spying, transferring money, and even helping to recruit and send troops for the Takfiri groups, the documents show.

From the start of the Takfiri group's rise in Iraq, the MKO terrorists met with the Daesh commanders multiple times. The Daesh leaders were persuaded during these sessions that the MKO had no interest in religious discourse and would support any organization that opposed Iran's plans and interests.

The MKO terrorists and Saddam Hussein's outlawed army commanders had a close connection throughout the Saddam rule.

Following its inception, a number of former Baath Party members joined the Daesh terrorist group, laying the foundation for future contact and collaboration between Daesh and the MKO.

Documents showed that the MKO terrorists also provided substantial intelligence on the resistance front to the Israeli officials and the U.S. forces in Iraq.

Iran, Russia, and Turkey reaffirm support for Syrian sovereignty

TEHRAN – In a statement issued on Wednesday, Iran, Russia, and Turkey insisted on Syrian sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity.

The statement followed after deputy foreign ministers from Iran, Russia and Turkey and Syria met in Astana, Kazakhstan, to reconcile Damascus and Ankara and discuss ways to return the situation tor normality in Syria.

The meeting of the senior diplomats took place within the framework of the Astana Format.

During the conflict in Syria, which began in 2011, Iran and Russia sided with the central government but Turkey supported the militants opposed to the government.

In their joint statement, the three countries, which are considered as guarantors of the Astana format, also reaffirmed their commitment to advance viable and lasting Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political process in line with the UN Security Council Resolution 2254.

Following is the full text of the statement:

1. Examined the latest international and regional developments and emphasized the leading role of the Astana Process in promoting the lasting settlement of the Syrian crisis;

2. Reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic as well as to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and highlighted that these principles should be universally respected and complied with;

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

UCMs impeding fight on terror, Iranian diplomat says

TEHRAN- The ambassador of Iran to the UN has stated that the use of unilateral coercive measures (UCMs) prevents nations from working together to combat terrorism.

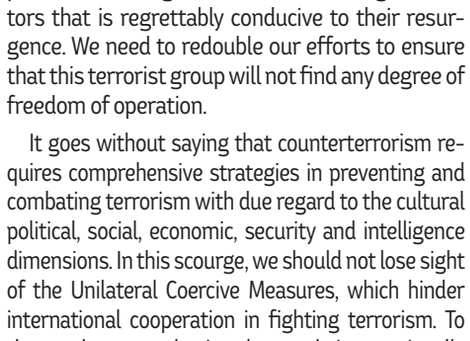
Speaking at a UN counter-terrorism conference in New York, Saeed Iravani emphasized the need for comprehensive counterterrorism strategies that take into account the cultural, political, social, economic, security, and intelligence dimensions.

What follows is the text of his speech:

Twenty years before the 9/11 attacks, we faced widespread terrorism and heinous terrorist acts by the MKO terrorist group that claimed the lives of more than seventeen thousands of innocent people including women and children in the Islamic Republic of Iran. As we are approaching 28 of June, I would like to recall that around twenty years ago on this day, this terrorist group assassinated the Iranian Head of Judiciary together with dozens of high-rank officials including parliamentarians and quite two months after that they assassinated the then-president and the prime minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The scale and scope of the harm that MKO inflicted upon people is immeasurable and, yet, certain countries in the West chose not only to ignore that threat but also to harbor them.

In our view, in the assessment of the terrorism landscape and trends, we should take into account how double standards are conducive to terrorism and how that would create a higher risk of terrorism resurgence. Along the same lines, we reaffirm that a true fight against terrorism also requires efforts that are free of politicization, double standards, discrimination and selectivity.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has manifested its genuine determination and strong commitment to fighting terrorism including through assisting States affected by terrorism in combating and diminishing terrorist groups in the region, in particular DAESH which committed unspeakable terrorist acts. General Qassem Soleimani played a critical role in fighting and eliminating such terrorist group who would have otherwise expanded their scope and scale of terrorism beyond the region. He was at the forefront of the fight against terrorism yet was martyred in a terrorist attack in the Baghdad airport while he was on an official mission in Iraq.



DAESH has been defeated and has lost its territorial dominance, nevertheless, the threat of its resurgence persists. The recruitment of mercenaries by DAESH together with certain conditions such as the situation in Afghanistan and unlawful presence of foreign forces remain among the factors that is regrettably conducive to their resurgence. We need to redouble our efforts to ensure that this terrorist group will not find any degree of freedom of operation.

It goes without saying that counterterrorism requires comprehensive strategies in preventing and combating terrorism with due regard to the cultural political, social, economic, security and intelligence dimensions. In this scourge, we should not lose sight of the Unilateral Coercive Measures, which hinder international cooperation in fighting terrorism. To that end, we emphasize that such internationally wrongful acts which are tantamount to "economic terrorism" must be terminated.

FM renews proposal for Persian Gulf dialogue forum

From page 1 ▸ In his talks with the Kuwaiti prime minister, Amir Abdollahian called ties between Iran and Kuwait "historical".

Pointing to the sitting Iranian government's foreign policy priority in developing ties with neighbors, he said, "We will seriously try to realize this goal because we believe that our neighbors, especially Persian Gulf neighbors, have great potential and affinities for cooperation."

He also said in addition to cooperation in the areas of transportation, economy and commerce, political and security consultations is "absolutely necessary".

Amir Abdollahian added, "We have proposed the formation of a regional forum for dialogue and cooperation between northern and southern countries of the Persian Gulf and if it is established, it can greatly reinforce integration between the countries."

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman, Nasser Kanaani, said on Wednesday that the reason for the foreign minister's trip to Qatar, Oman and Kuwait is to pursue the implementation of cooperation documents with these countries.

Iran and Oman highlight the need to establish long-term peace in Yemen

Before his arrival to Kuwait, Amir Abdollahian held talks with top Omani officials.

Amir Abdollahian and his Omani counterpart Sayyid Badr Albusaidi discussed a wide range of topics, including the implementation of the agreements signed during the Sultan of Oman's recent visit to Tehran as well as the promotion of cooperation between the two nations in the banking, communication, and technology sectors, as well as the consular, judicial, and customs affairs.

Additionally, the Iranian foreign minister spoke with Sultan bin Mohammed al Numani, the royal office minister of Oman. The two ministers talked about the current events in the region, notably in Yemen.

Both of them highlighted the necessity of teamwork to alleviate Yemeni people's suffering and support political processes, stability, and long-term peace.

Ansarullah lauds Iran's efforts to end Yemen's suffering

Mohammed Abdul-Salam, head of Yemen's national negotiating delegation, also met with Amir Abdollahian at the Iranian embassy in Muscat on Tuesday.

Abdul-Salam appreciated Iran's sincere support for Yemen and its efforts to put an end to the suffering of the Yemeni nation in the face of the Saudi-led war, Press TV reported.

The high-ranking Ansarullah official also briefed the Iranian foreign minister on the unfolding developments in his country, negotiations with the Saudi government, cooperation with the United Nations, and the ongoing humanitarian crisis there.

For his part, Amir Abdollahian praised the great Yemeni nation for their steadfastness and resilience, voicing Tehran's support for any measure that would put an end to Yemen's eight-year conflict.

Amir Abdollahian, who started a tour of neighboring Arab states on Tuesday morning, first visited Doha, Qatar. He held talks with his Qatari counterpart Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, who is also Qatar's prime minister.

Tehran able to thwart sanctions, will never tie growth to talks: Raisi

TEHRAN- President Ebrahim Raisi has stated that his government has never linked Iran's development to the ongoing negotiations for abolishing sanctions imposed on Tehran by the United States.

The comments were made by Ebrahim Raisi during a televised interview on Tuesday night to honor the second anniversary of his election as the president of the country. It was the ninth live interview by Raisi since taking office in August 2021.

He maintained that it is "crucial for us to fortify the nation to a point of power" that would make it resistant to sanctions.

"What is more important is for us to enhance the country to such level of strength that would render it immune to sanctions," the president added.

The negotiations have been intended to revive the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), an agreement reached between Iran, the U.S., China, Russia, the European troika, the and larger EU in 2015. The agreement gave the Islamic Republic some reprieve from some sanctions, and in return, Iran promised to put limits on part of its nuclear activity.

However, the U.S. withdrew from the agreement in 2018 under the administration of former President Donald Trump, reinstating all the sanctions that it had waived and added new ones.

Washington's unwillingness to provide assurances that it wouldn't pull out of the pact again has caused the negotiations to stagnate.

"Balanced and consistent"

Raisi later addressed the topic of Iran's foreign policy during his presidency.

He insisted that the Islamic Republic shouldn't restrict its international connections to a particular number of nations to the exclusion of others, saying that Iran has been pursuing "balanced and consistent" relations with the whole globe throughout his tenure.

The Iranian president said that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which is likely to welcome the Islamic Republic as a full member in the coming months, granted Iran's request for membership in the transcontinental alliance due to the similar foreign policy stance.

"We will cooperate with whatever country that could pursue having relations with us that are based on mutual respect. And if there are some exceptional countries such as the United States that seek adversary towards us, we will resort to resistance against them."

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Surrounding of Zionist forces in Jenin heralds full victory for Palestinians: Leader

Frome Page 1 ▶ Ayatollah Khamenei also re-emphasized the issue of "unity" and harmony among the Resistance groups. "In the recent battle in Gaza, we saw that the enemy's attempt was to create discord and division among the Resistance groups. They wanted to induce this kind of atmosphere, but, by God's grace, their efforts were to no avail. Therefore, we need to focus more on the issue of unity and harmony and we need to continue this correct path with power."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution regarded Gaza as the center of Resistance, adding that the point that will bring the enemy to its knees is the West Bank, where good progress has been made so far.

While hailing the efforts of young Palestinians, Ayatollah Khamenei added, "Who would have thought that one day the Palestinian youth in Jenin would tighten the noose around the Zionist forces so much that they would be forced to use fighter jets to escape from the siege of the young fighters? But this happened a few days ago in Jenin."

The Leader considered the international atmosphere to be in the interest of the Palestinian people

despite all the existing pressures from some governments.

"On Quds Day this year, in addition to Islamic countries, marches and demonstrations were held even in European countries, where the European people expressed their opposition to the Zionist regime. This is a very important issue and it should be amplified."

Ayatollah Khamenei also considered it a religious duty for all Muslims to take action and make an effort to liberate Palestine. In this regard, he stated, "For all Muslims, it is compulsory to become involved in efforts aimed at liberating Palestine. This is a religious duty."

During the meeting, Haniyeh expressed his gratitude toward the Islamic Republic for its ongoing support of the Palestinian issue. He also presented a report on the latest developments in the occupied territories, especially the West Bank.

"Gaza is the heart of the Resistance, but today the main and decisive battle is taking place in the West Bank. The Zionist enemy is making some dangerous decisions, but because of the upper hand that our young fighters have in the West Bank, the Zionist regime has no other choice but to choose between bad and worse options," he said.

Ismail Haniyeh described the Palestinian youth's embracing of struggle and jihad and the formation of voluntary armed resistance units in the West Bank as the most important development that has taken place in occupied Palestine. "The current circumstances and the progress made by the Resistance Front are unprecedented in the history of the occupation of Palestine," he added.

While addressing the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Haniyeh added, "We emphasize in your presence that the Resistance groups will not retreat from the Palestinian territory and that the approach of struggle and jihad will continue until Quds is liberated. By the grace of God and with the help of the young, faithful Palestinian generation, Al-Aqsa Mosque will be freed from the clutches of the occupiers in the not-too-distant future and we, together with you, will all pray there."

The Humiliated Occupiers

Israel humiliated by Jenin fighters' steely determination

Frome Page 1 ▶ Israeli media said what happened in Jenin was exceptional in terms of the gravity of the situation as Israel resorted to air raids for the first time in decades in the West Bank to rescue its entangled forces.

Israel's continued aggression against Jenin elicited strong reactions even from countries that have recognized Israel or are reportedly in the process of normalizing relations with Tel Aviv.

The Persian Gulf Cooperation Council condemned Israel's aggression against Jenin while Saudi Arabia said Israel is conducting "dangerous violations" in the camp.

Facing Israeli aggression, the Palestinians of the West Bank are increasing moving toward proactive resistance.

A survey has revealed that the majority of Palestinians support the armed resistance to liberate their entire land and form one state over the Palestinian Authority and its "two-state" solution. According to the results of a survey carried out by the Palestinian Policy Research and Survey Center, most of the Palestinian respondents said they believe resistance movements in the besieged Gaza Strip, such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad have outperformed the Palestinian Authority (PA) and its President Mahmoud Abbas, in thriving for a Palestinian state.

The Palestinian Policy Research and Survey Center is based in Ramallah, the occupied West Bank city that houses the headquarters of the Fatah-controlled Palestinian Authority.

The results of the survey show that 80% of Palestinians want Mahmoud Abbas to step down from presidency of the Palestinian Authority.

Against this backdrop, two young Palestinians conducted an operation against Israeli settlers in the West Bank, killing four of them. Israel killed the two assailants.

The Palestinians are moving toward resistance in the West Bank after exhausting all other peaceful options as a result of Israel's procrastination.

Some of the Palestinian leaders visited Iran in the last days, where they were encouraged to step up resistance against Israel in the West Bank as the only option to liberate Palestine.

Ali Akbar Ahmadian, The Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), told the Palestinian leaders that resistance is the best method to end the more than 75-year Zionist occupation of Palestine.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, once described Israel as a "rabid dog" due it its hutzpah and brutality. Palestinians residing in the West Bank seem to have come to the conclusion that with such a colonial creature only resistance works.

Nuclear chief denies installation of 100 cameras in Isfahan plant

TEHRAN – Mohammad Eslami, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), on Wednesday dismissed as untrue speculations that dozens of surveillance cameras have been installed at the Isfahan nuclear plant.

"Such a thing is not true, we do not have a power plant in Isfahan to have 100 cameras installed there," Eslami said in response to a question on the installation of the cameras in contravention of the Parliament's Strategic Action Law.

The nuclear chief made the remarks after a cabinet meeting.

"The Atomic Energy Organization will act based on the Strategic Action Law," he said according to IRNA.

The Strategic Action Law that was passed by the Iranian parliament in December 2020 regulates Iran's nuclear interactions with the West.

He added, "In the understandings made with the agency in March, the discussion of the continuity of knowledge with the agency, which is part of the safeguards and NPT requirements, was published in the form of a statement. Accordingly, actions are being coordinated and carried out."

Eslami noted, "Iran's actions are within the framework of safeguards, and the criteria for Iran's action in terms of quantitative and qualitative goals is the law of strategic action to lift sanctions."

Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency have reached an understanding to boost cooperation. And according to this understanding, Iran pledge to undertake a set of measures to further clear up some of the misunderstandings that have

plagued Iran-IAEA relations.

Earlier this month, Eslami said Iran had achieved 159 goals in nuclear industry in the previous Persian calendar year (ending March 20) despite U.S. sanctions and other obstacles imposed by the West.

He pointed out that young Iranian scientists made successes in a variety of sectors in the nuclear field, such as irradiation systems, microwave, radiopharmaceuticals, and plasma technology.

"Last year, we had 159 achievements. It was important for us to speed up the time needed to get results and turn an idea into a product," he said.

Eslami stressed that despite U.S. sanctions that forbade Iranian radiopharmaceutical enterprises from sending or receiving any shipments, progress had been accomplished.

He went on to highlight that the West is against uranium enrichment and fuel cycle in Iran because they are against the growth of the country's power.

"Therefore, we had to create a nuclear fuel cycle from zero to a hundred, from research to the acquisition of infrastructure. All of them have been created indigenously," Eslami explained.

Iran has been collaborating with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for a long time as a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Iran-Saudi agreement 'strategic': diplomat

TEHRAN – The Iranian Ambassador to Iraq, Mohammad Kazem Al Sadeq, has hailed the Iran-Saudi deal as "strategic," saying that the region needs stability.

The Iranian ambassador made the remarks in a meeting with his Saudi counterpart in Baghdad hosted by the Iraqi Foundation of Foreign Policies. The meeting was also attended by a number of Iraqi politicians. In the meeting, the ambassadors of Iran and Saudi Arabia emphasized the seriousness of the two countries in implementing the Tehran-Riyadh agreement and helping to reduce tension in the region, according to IRNA.

The Iranian ambassador appreciated Iraq as the main actor of the agreement between Tehran and Riyadh and emphasized that Iraq has become an important gate to bring closer the views of Iran and Arab countries.

Prior to the March 10 agreement in Beijing, Iraq hosted five rounds of talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia.He added Iran's current policy is based on cooperation with its neighbors and noted that the region needs solidarity and stability, and this is the mission of everyone, including Iran and Saudi Arabia.

The diplomat also emphasized that the region will witness more stability and peace in light of the dialogue between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

He added, "We reopened our embassy in Riyadh and Saudi Arabia will reopen its embassy in Tehran and its consulate in Mashhad."

Iraq is making a constructive effort to restore diplomatic relations between Iran and Egypt as well, the ambassador said.

Al Sadeq called the agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia a strategic agreement and not a tactical one and that all Iranian officials view this agreement as such. Elsewhere in his remarks, the ambassador emphasized that the prosperity of the region requires real adherence to the principles of good neighborliness.

Al Sadeq also said that contrary to the claims of the West, Iran is not a party to the conflict in Ukraine, and signs of a changing world can be seen, especially after the war between Russia and Ukraine.

The Iranian ambassador called the Palestinian issue a central issue and emphasized the importance of Iran and Saudi Arabia focusing on points of commonality.

He added that the agreements signed in 1998 between Riyadh and Tehran guarantee the expansion of relations between the two countries.

Al Sadeq pointed out that the agreement between Iran and Saudi Arabia will help to revise the policy of normalizing relations with the Israeli regime.

For his part, Saudi Ambassador to the Republic of Iraq Abdulaziz bin Khalid Al-Shammari said, "We are facing a golden opportunity that will not be repeated, and the region has suffered from crises, wars and attrition, and everyone is a loser from its continuation."

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

SPORTS

Esteghlal appoint Javad Nekounam as head coach

TEHRAN – Esteghlal football club appointed former Iran captain Javad Nekounam as their new head coach on Wednesday.

Nekounam started his coaching career in 2017 when he took charge of the first tier Khooneh be Khooneh.

He has also led Nassaji and Foolad.

The ex-Osasuna midfielder played for Esteghlal from 2012 to 2014 and scored eight goals in 44 matches for the Blues.

Nekounam was a member of Iran national football team from 2000 to 2015 and represented Team Melli in the 2006 and 2014 FIFA World Cups.

The 42-year-old coach replaced Portuguese trainer Ricardo Sa Pinto, who parted ways with Esteghlal at the end of the season.

Nekounam will be assisted by former Esteghlal players Mehdi Hasheminasab and Kianoush Rahmati.

Iran to discover 2024 AFC Futsal Asian Cup Qualifiers journey on Thursday

TEHRAN - The path to the 2024 AFC Futsal Asian Cup will be laid out on Thursday, when the official draw ceremony for the Qualifiers takes place at the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) House in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

A total of 31 teams will be in action from October 7 to 11, 2023 as they vie for the right to make it to the 17th edition of the tournament, with the exact dates to be finalized.

The draw will divide the teams into eight groups – seven that comprise four teams each, with the last group to contain three. Each group will be played at a centralized venue in a single round-robin format, with the eight group winners and seven best second-placed teams among all groups qualifying for the 2024 AFC Futsal Asian Cup.

These 15 teams will join the Host Member Association (MA), to be determined at a later stage and who will receive automatic qualification, to form the final cast at the tournament.

The seeding for the Draw will be based on the 2022 AFC Futsal Asian Cup Kuwait ranking; teams that did not participate will be added as the lowest-ranked teams. All matches involving the Host MA, should they later decide to participate in the Qualifiers, will be considered as friendly matches and not be taken into account when calculating the group rankings.

Pots

Pot 1: Japan, Iran, Kuwait, Vietnam

Pot 2: Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Turkmenistan, Lebanon, Korea Republic, Myanmar

Pot 3: Afghanistan, Malaysia, Australia, Palestine, Hong Kong, China, Timor-Leste, Nepal

Pot 4: Cambodia, Maldives, Brunei Darussalam, China PR, India, Macau

Hosts Pot: Bahrain, Chinese Taipei, Indonesia, Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uzbekistan

Vietnam too strong for Iran at 2023 AVC Challenge Cup

TEHRAN - Vietnam cruised into a 3-0 match (25-10, 25-9, 25-18) against Iran in the 2023 AVC Challenge Cup for Women on Wednesday.

In the match held in the Pool F match-up in East Java's Tri Dharma Petrokimia Gresik Gymnasium, Vietnam scored with 46 attacks, 7 blocks and 5 service winners.

Captain Tran Thi Thanh Thuy delivered keyed 12 points in Vietnam's sweep of Iran.

Iran tried to spark a run in the third set, but Vietnam surged forth with momentum on their side for their third consecutive win in the competition.

Vietnam will capitalize on this momentum against Chinese Taipei to dispute the top position in Pool F on Friday.

Meanwhile, Iran will look to win against Uzbekistan for a better stake at the rankings during the earlier match.

Italy down Iran at 2023 VNL

TEHRAN – Italy defeated Iran 3-0 (25-19, 25-16, 26-24) in the 2023 Volleyball Nations League (VNL) Week 2 on Wednesday.

Alessandro Michieletto scored 15 points for Italy and Iran's Morteza Sharifi earned eight points.

Iran, who had defeated Germany 3-0 in their opening match, are scheduled to play the U.S. and the Netherlands on Friday and Saturday, respectively.

The VNL Preliminary Phase will feature three weeks of competition, with each of the 16 teams playing 12 matches.

The eight best-ranked national teams in the Preliminary Phase will qualify for the Final Phase, which will be held in Gda?sk, Poland, from July 19-23 – host country Poland are already guaranteed a spot.

Albacete eye Amir Abedzadeh: report

TEHRAN - Segunda Division side Albacete has reportedly shown an interest in signing Iranian international goalkeeper Amir Abedzadeh.

Abedzadeh parted ways with SD Ponferradina in early June.

The 30-year-old goalie joined SD Ponferradina in July 2021, making him the first Iranian to play for the club.

Spanish media reports suggest that Albacete is going to hire Abedzadeh.

Albacete, which has been founded in 1940, is a team from Albacete in Castilla-La Mancha.

Iran runners-up at 2023 West Asia U23 Championship

TEHRAN – Iran finished in second place in the 2023 West Asia U23 Championship on Tuesday.

The Iranian team lost to host Iraq 5-4 in penalty shootout after the match ended in a 1-1 draw in regular and extra times.

Hossein Goudarzi scored for Iran in the 31st minute and Hussein Lawend equalized for Iraq in the 45th minute.

The 2023 WAFF U23 Championship was the fourth edition of the biennial international age-restricted football championship organized by the West Asian Football Federation (WAFF) for the men's under-23 national teams of West Asia.

Mehdi Taremi named 2023 CAFA Nations Cup MVP

EHRAN – Iran national football team forward Mehdi Taremi was named the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the 2023 CAFA Nations Cup.

Iran defeated Uzbekistan 1-0 thanks to Sardar Azmoun's second half goal in Tashkent on Tuesday.

Taremi scored six goals in the tournament and became the CAFA's top goalscorer.

He was also named the tournament's MVP.

Oman's Ibrahim Al-Mukhaini was named CAFA's best goalkeeper.

440 tons of honey expected to be harvested in Yazd province this year

TEHRAN- It is expected that this year a total of 440 tons of honey will be harvested in Yazd province, some of which will be used inside the province and a large part will be sent to other regions of the country, an official with the Agriculture Department of the province announced.

Mehdi Gheybollahi, the deputy head of the province's Agriculture Department for plant production, said that the harvesting of natural honey from 876,000 colonies in different regions of the province has started and continues for two months.

Last month, the managing director of the beekeeping industry development support fund said this fund provides 170 billion rials (about $440,760) of low-interest facilities to beekeepers with the aim of helping the country's beekeeping industry.

Based on the data released by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Iran is the third-largest producer of honey in the world.

Commercial maritime transportation rises 20% in Q1

from page 1 ▸ "The Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines operates from the Far East to Russia and Kazakhstan in the form of combined transportation; the route between Bandar Abbas and Chabahar Port is also operated by the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines and we hope that new records of sea freight will be broken this year as well," the official said.

1.25m National Housing Movement units under construction

TEHRAN- Transport and Urbana Development Minister Mehrdad Bazrpash announced that 1.25 million units of the National Housing Movement plan are under construction in the country.

The minister also said that 3,000 hectares of land has been allocated to this plan so far.

National Housing Movement to construct four million housing units in four years is one of the major plans of the current government in the housing sector.

According to the plan, out of these four million residential units, 3.2 million units will be constructed in cities and 800,000 units in villages, some of these units are currently being constructed after providing lands and preparing the necessary conditions.

TEDPIX climbs 6,900 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 6,940 points to 2.173 million on Wednesday.

As reported, over 6.378 billion securities worth 48.386 trillion rials (about $115.2 million) were traded at the TSE.

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

The stock market transactions in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20) went through volatile days, which, according to experts, despite the value of the stock market for investment, the mistrust of shareholders and their fear of entering their capital into this market led to a decrease in liquidity and creating severe fluctuations in the stock market.

This condition caused the government and the Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) to take effective measures to restore prosperity and investors' confidence in this market, in a way that many capital market experts believe that the outlook for investing in the stock market is positive in the current year.

Hossein Abdi, a capital market expert said that the government has a supportive approach to the capital market, and it seems to affect market transactions positively.

Analyzing the upward trend of the stock market and breaking the record of the index this year, he said the capital market started its work in the first week of this year with a very positive trend, which promises good days in the capital market for 1402.

Meanwhile, as stated by the secretary general of Iran's Securities Exchange Brokers Association (SEBA), the government and Securities and Exchange Organization worked well to make changes in the stock market during the past Iranian year.

Mohammad-Reza Dehqani Ahmad-Abad added that these measures can bring good returns in the first half of 1402, but measures must be taken to remove the concerns from the stock market in the long term.

Also, in a message on the occasion of the New Year, SEO Head Majid Eshqi mentioned the measures taken by this organization in the past year, and explained the priorities and key plans of SEO in 1402.

In his message, the official wrote:

The Securities and Exchange Organization has always tried to lay the ground for the continuation of sustainable growth and increase the efficiency of the capital market by carrying out structural reforms, and in this regard, five key programs are prioritized:

1- Indirect investment development: In the past year, a good amount of diversity was created in indirect investment instruments, especially investment funds, and we continue to focus on deepening these new and efficient instruments and promoting them for investors.

2- Creating a platform for transparent and diverse financing: By defining technical and legal infrastructures to facilitate micro and macro financing by the private and non-governmental sectors, a new chapter of financing projects and businesses was established, and the government was able to implement its plan to transfer the shares of companies along with the transfer of operational management without harming the capital market. The initial offering of shares of businesses based on new technologies was also a big step towards the financing of knowledge-based companies, which will be followed seriously in the current year in a higher volume and of course according to the market capacities.

3- Smart regulation and monitoring: The organization's new approach in smart and preventive monitoring, along with the launch of systems for speeding up the handling of complaints, promises a new move that will greatly help to reduce violations in this market by formulating the necessary regulations in the amendment of the stock market law.

4- Revision of the regulatory infrastructure: Due to the necessity of implementing professional and uncomplicated principles and rules in the direction of the sustainable development of the capital market, in addition to the measures taken in order to amend the corporate governance guidelines for publishers and the guidelines for identifying and reporting the confidential information holders in the organization, some reforms, which need the changes in the stock market law, have also been considered in cooperation with the legislator, which will definitely ensure the long-term interests of the capital market.

5- Derivative market development: Some basic measures in the field of capital market infrastructure and also in the field of designing derivative instruments with the aim of making the market two-way and providing risk management instruments for market participants were implemented in the past year, and therefore there is full readiness and determination to make these efforts come to fruition with the introduction of new derivative instruments, especially in the stock market, from the beginning of this year.

Sponge iron production rises 2.8% in 2 months on year

TEHRAN – Production of sponge iron in Iran rose 2.8 percent during the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-My 21), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) announced.

As reported, 6.723 million tons of sponge iron was produced in the two-month period of this year, while the figure was 6.537 million tons in the first two months of the previous year.

The World Steel Association (WSA), in its latest annual report, has ranked Iran second among the world's top sponge iron-producing countries in 2022.

Based on the WSA data, the Islamic Republic managed to produce 32.9 million tons of sponge iron in 2022 to stand at second place after India with 42.3 million tons of production.

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 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 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.

Meanwhile, last July, IMIDRO reported that Iran's Mines and Metals Company (MME) has established China's first gas-based sponge iron production unit using the Persian Direct Reduction (PERED) technology.

"As the world's first manufacturer of gas-based sponge iron, Iran is now transferring the technology to the world's biggest steel producer", IMIDRO announced at the time.

> WSA has ranked Iran second among the world's top sponge iron-producing countries in 2022.

The deal for the construction of the first gas-based sponge iron plant was concluded between China's CSTM Company and MME Company from Iran as the license owner of PERED technology.

With a capacity of 300,000 tons, the plant has been launched in China's Taiyuan city.

TPO hosts conference on introducing opportunities of presence in Indian market

TEHRAN – Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) hosted a conference on introducing the opportunities and capacities of presence in the Indian market on Tuesday.

The conference was attended by officials from the two sides including the ambassadors of the two countries, board members of the chambers of commerce of Iran and India, and more than 300 businessmen from both sides, the TPO portal reported.

The TPO Acting Head Mehdi Zeyghami, Iranian Ambassador to India Iraj Elahi, and India's Ambassador to Tehran Rudra Gaurav Shresth were among the speakers at the conference.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the event, Zeyghami pointed out that India is one of the main trade priorities for Iran, saying: "Considering the huge volume of India's trade with the world, Iran has a small share, which should be increased."

"Holding such conferences and workshops along with exchanging trade delegations can lead to the strengthening of business relations between the two countries and ultimately lead to the prosperity of trade," he added.

Referring to the existing obstacles in the way of trade development with India, Zeyghami said: "Strict standards and high tariffs for Iranian agricultural products have caused these products to be smuggled to neighboring countries that have zero tariffs with India and then exported to India, which has caused damage to Iranian businessmen."

Referring to TPO's plan to revive idle trade agreements with other countries, the official said: "Free trade with Eurasia and preferential trade agreement with Indonesia have been concluded, and preferential trade agreements with other countries are being pursued, and we have the same seriousness regarding our preferential trade agreement with India."

Further in the conference, Shresth referred to the history of cultural, political, and commercial relations between Iran and India and said: "We hope that holding such programs will lead to the development of commercial relations between the two countries."

Pointing to the existing obstacles in the way of the expansion of trade relations between India and Iran, he said: "Solutions have been found to overcome the obstacles, especially in financial and banking issues."

Iran-China trade exceeds $6.5 billion in H1 2023

TEHRAN – The value of Iran's economic exchanges with its leading trade partner, China, reached $6.5 billion during the first sixth months of 2023, according to the data released by China's customs administration.

Based on the mentioned data, the six-month trade between the two countries has not changed significantly in comparison to the figure for the same period in the previous year, IRNA reported.

The value of exchanges between the two countries was reported to be $6.470 billion in January-May 2022.

Latest data released by China's customs administration show Iran's exports totaled $1.9 million during the period, indicating a 68 percent year-on-year decrease.

In return, China exported $4.6 billion worth of goods to Iran, registering a 40 percent rise as compared to the previous year's same six months.

> Iran and China finalized 16 MOUs last December under framework of their strategic 25-year agreement.

Bilateral trade hit $1.27 billion in May 2023 with Iran's exports at $377 million and imports at $893 million which shows a 46 percent decrease in export and a 20 percent increase in imports compared to the corresponding period in 2022.

China is one of Iran's main trade partners that has maintained strong trade ties with the Islamic Republic despite the strict U.S. sanctions.

Iran and China officially signed a document for 25-year comprehensive cooperation in March 2021.

The document was signed between Iran's former Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

Back in December 2022, Iran and China finalized 16 memorandums of understanding (MOU) under the framework of the two countries' strategic 25-year agreement.

The MOUs were signed in an Iran-China comprehensive cooperation program summit which was held in Tehran on December 13 in the presence of Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber and China's Vice Premier Hu Chunhua.

The summit was focused on four areas explored by four committees between the two countries with the aim of paving the way for the implementation of the 25-year agreement.

Legal issues for investment in Chabahar port resolved: PMO head

TEHRAN – The managing director of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) has said the legal disputes over the country's long-term investment contract with India regarding Chabahar port have been resolved after nearly eight years and there will be no more problems for investment in this port.

Speaking in a ceremony on the occasion of the International Day of the Seafarer on Tuesday, Ali-Akbar Safaie said a delegation of Indian officials has recently visited Iran during which good negotiations have been made and positive results have been achieved, IRNA reported.

In May 2016, India, Iran, and Afghanistan signed a trilateral agreement for the strategically-located Chabahar port to give New Delhi access to Kabul and Central Asia.

Later, based on a separate deal with Iran, India agreed to install and operate modern loading and unloading equipment including mobile harbor cranes in Shahid Beheshti Port in Chabahar.

Under the framework of the mentioned agreement, the Indian side has been operating in Shahid Beheshti port in the form of a build–operate–transfer (BOT) contract; this is the first time that such a contract has been implemented in one of the country's ports with 100 percent foreign investment.

The first consignment of Indian equipment for the development of port activities at Chabahar port worth $8.5 million arrived in the southeastern port in January 2021.

As Iran's only oceanic port on the Gulf of Oman, Chabahar Port holds great significance for the country both politically and economically. The country has taken serious measures for developing this port in order to improve the country's maritime trade.

The port consists of Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti terminals, each of which has five berth facilities. The port is located in Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan Province and is about 120 kilometers southwest of Pakistan's Baluchistan Province, where the China-funded Gwadar port is situated.

No delay in Palestinian response to Israeli terror

By Ali Karbalaei

TEHRAN- Palestinians retaliate a day after Israel's largest raid in the occupied West Bank in two decades.

• Palestinians have conducted a retaliatory operation in the Israeli settlement of Eli, leaving four settlers dead and another four injured.

• Hamas confirms that two of its members carried out the mission. The resistance says it's "a natural response" to escalating Israeli crimes.

• The retaliation comes a day after Israel used helicopters to fire on Palestinians in a large-scale raid on the Jenin refugee camp that killed six Palestinians and injured over 90 others.

• The raid also left seven Israeli troops injured, according to the Israeli military.

• The Palestinian resistance says the number of Israeli military casualties is higher and includes fatalities.

• Israeli Prime Minister chairs an emergency meeting amid reports of a rift among his cabinet and security chiefs.

Two Palestinians have opened fire on Israeli settlers at a gas station on Highway 60 near the settlement of Eli, leaving four Israeli settlers dead.

Four other settlers have sustained injuries, including one left in a serious condition, and three in moderate to minor condition.

The illegal Eli settlement is located between the cities of Nablus and Ramallah in the occupied West Bank.

According to reports, the two Palestinians shot the settlement guard, then advanced to a nearby gas station and targeted two settlers, before one of them entered a restaurant at the gas station and shot a number of settlers.

The two Palestinian youths were later killed by the Israeli occupation forces. They have been identified as Muhannad Shehadeh, aged 26, and Khaled Sabah, 24, from the town of Orif on the outskirts of Nablus.

Israeli forces killed Shehadeh after an exchange of fire. Sabah was killed near Nablus following heavy air surveillance after he succeeded in withdrawing from the site of the operation.

Israel sent in a number of battalions to the West Bank, beefing up its occupation near Nablus and the scene of the operation en masse. The regime closed Highway 60 in both directions and set up military checkpoints at the entrances to Nablus.

The Home Front Command of the occupation army, in a statement, addressed the settlers of the Eli settlement, saying: "Do not leave your homes until you receive notification. Movement in the area is prohibited and entry into it is prohibited until further notice."

Following the retaliatory operation, Prime Minister Netanyahu convened an emergency meeting to assess the security situation. A statement issued by his office stated that he had received field reports on the details of the operation, which Israeli media described as "difficult."

Israeli minister for military affairs Yoav Gallant also announced that he had held an emergency session with the participation of the Chief of Staff of Israeli army Herzi Halevi, Shin Bet chief Ronen Bar and other senior security officials before the consultations with Netanyahu.

Israeli cabinet minister Itamar Ben Gvir, who lives on an illegal settlement himself, arrived at the site of the operation and demanded the launch of a large-scale military operation in the occupied West Bank, including assassinations from the air, and called on settlers to take up arms.

By nightfall, Palestinians in the nearby village of Huwara and a local official said Israeli settlers went on the rampage, setting fire to cars and torching fields in the area, in scenes reminiscent of the Ku Klux Klan.

Ben Gvir also said, "I call on the prime minister and Galant that the time has come to carry out a military operation in the West Bank, to return to liquidations, and to destroy buildings."

He added, "They have turned us into sitting ducks."

The Israeli Minister of Finance Bezalel Smotrich also said in a statement carried by the Hebrew Channel 7 that he believes "a major military operation is closer than ever."

He said, "The security situation is intolerable... there are several considerations that I cannot address in public, so as not to give our enemies free information about our intentions."

Smotrich added, "We cannot allow the existence of outposts that strike our soldiers and settlers. We will not allow Jenin and Nablus to turn into southern Lebanon again."

His remarks come as the international community this week, including the UN chief, the UN Middle East coordinator and the EU have all strongly condemned the expansion of illegal Israeli settlements and outposts, as well as the regime's plans to ease rules for expanding settlements.

"Threats do not frighten us"

Ismail Haniyeh, chief of the Hamas political bureau, told occupiers that "this is the first rain, and what awaits you is worse." He added, "It will be victory or martyrdom".

The Gaza-based Hamas resistance movement said the Palestinian martyrs were two of its members.

In a statement, it also warned the occupation that "this would be the beginning of a series of resistance operations," adding "our people have the right to defend themselves by all means possible."

It concluded, "The occupation must realize that its ongoing crimes against our people and sanctities ... will make this process just the beginning of a series of acts of resistance that will disturb their fragile state and turn the dreams of their soldiers and settlers into a nightmare."

Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem stressed that "this great uprising will not stop unless the goals of our people are achieved with freedom and independence."

Palestinian Islamic Jihad spokesman Tareq Selmi stressed "threats do not frighten the Palestinians" and that "the resistance is ready to face any escalation".

Palestinian resistance factions, in separate statements, roundly praised the commando operation at the Eli settlement as a "natural response" to what happened in Jenin on Monday.

Despite committing terror in Jenin on Monday, the occupation forces fell in an elaborate ambush while fleeing, during which explosive devices were planted and shots were fired, wounding seven Israeli soldiers, according to Israeli media.

The Jenin Brigade revealed, in a statement, that the occupation's admission of seven injured soldiers with some seriously wounded "is escaping from recognizing the reality of the multiple and confirmed casualties that occurred".

The Jenin Brigade confirmed its full responsibility for the "explosive device bombing of Israeli personnel carriers," which it said was locally manufactured.

The resistance group said the bombing of the APC in the Jenin camp led to its "damage, and the killing and wounding of everyone who was inside it, directly," adding that the fighters with the Jenin Brigade and the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade targeted, in a joint operation, a military "jeep" that tried to tow the damaged APC.

The resistance has also challenged the Israeli regime to reveal the true number of wounded troops and those who were killed in Jenin to its settlers.

Hamas leader Osama Hamdan says, "The enemy was surprised that the resistance had accurate information about its withdrawal plan after carrying out its operation."

Israeli media reported that Ben-Gvir was not summoned to participate in the security consultations held by the occupation cabinet on Tuesday. A reporter for Israel's Channel 12 says Ben-Gvir was severely criticized in the government.

Israeli media also reported a dispute within the security establishment and at the same political level in the regime over the expansion of military operations in the northern West Bank.

Israeli security officials are reported to have said, "There are no magic solutions."

WORLD HEADLINES

India, Türkiye's purchases of Russian S400-s are different cases, says Pentagon

India's and Türkiye's purchases of Russian S-400 missile defense are two different cases, the Pentagon said Tuesday.

In a press briefing, Deputy Pentagon Press Secretary Sabrina Singh was asked why the US took certain measures against Türkiye for getting the S-400s, while they did not for India, in a case of unequal treatment. Both countries bought the missile systems long before the start of the war in Ukraine last year, but amid longstanding strains in US ties with Russia.

"We encourage all of our partners and allies to avoid transactions with Russia. That's something that we've continued to reiterate with Turkey, with India, and with others," said Singh.

"I think there are very different and two different cases, and when it comes to India, we remain confident in their diversification of equipment and our ability to integrate with them as well," she added.

China rips Biden description of Xi as dictator as 'extremely absurd and irresponsible'

Beijing on Wednesday bashed President Biden's description of China's President Xi Jinping as a dictator during remarks to donors as "extremely absurd and irresponsible."

At a fundraising event in California on Tuesday, Biden discussed the incident earlier this year when the U.S. shot down a Chinese surveillance balloon that floated over the country, which heightened tensions between Washington and Beijing.

"The reason why Xi Jinping got very upset in terms of when I shot that balloon down with two box cars full of spy equipment is he didn't know it was there. No, I'm serious. That was the great embarrassment for dictators, when they didn't know what happened," Biden said in California.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning later said Biden's comments "go totally against facts and seriously violate diplomatic protocol, and severely infringe on China's political dignity."

"It is a blatant political provocation. China expresses strong dissatisfaction and opposition ... The U.S. remarks are extremely absurd and irresponsible," Mao added.

EU agrees on new package of sanctions against Russia over Ukraine war

European Union countries on Wednesday agreed on a new package of sanctions against Russia for its war against Ukraine.

Sweden, which currently holds the rotating EU presidency, said that the package includes measures aimed at countering sanctions circumvention and individual listings.

Details of the measures will be unveiled later this week when the sanctions are officially adopted by written procedure.

The EU had previously imposed 10 rounds of sanctions on Russia since President Vladimir Putin ordered his forces into Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022. Banks, companies and markets have been hit — even parts of the sensitive energy sector. More than 1,000 officials are subject to asset freezes and travel bans.

Much work has involved closing loopholes so that goods vital to Putin's war effort don't get through. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, the head of the EU's executive arm, said the new package will "deal a further blow to Putin's war machine with tightened export restrictions, targeting entities supporting the Kremlin."

"Our anti-circumvention tool will prevent Russia from getting its hands on sanctioned goods," she added.

Modi calls for 'one earth, one family, one future' at UN yoga event

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi led a celebration of International Yoga Day at the United Nations in New York on Wednesday and called on people "to join hands together to realize the goal of one earth, one family, one future."

The United Nations in 2014 declared June 21 the International Day of Yoga, adopting a measure proposed by Modi. "Let us use the power of yoga, not only to be healthy, happy, but also to be kind to ourselves and to each other," Modi told a gathering of yoga devotees seated on yellow mats on the north lawn of UN headquarters by New York's East River.

"Let us use the power of yoga to build bridges of friendship, a peaceful world, and a cleaner, greener and sustainable future," he said.

Modi is in the United States for talks with President Joe Biden that the White House sees as bolstering "one of the defining partnerships of our age."

They might be American, but they are not stupid!

Unjust or defeated? Which "war" Americans prefer and why this is important?

By Ehsan Etesam

TEHRAN – As we get closer to the presidential elections in the U.S., more and more speculations emerge specifically in the West about the fate of current president who keeps surprising the world in many ways.

He is old; he forgets where he has to go; he shakes hands with ghosts on stage; he asks God to save England's Queen who died on September 8, 2022; he has a thing with stairs; and the list goes on and on. But you will be surprised if you know none of these actually have an impact on the upcoming elections. In fact, the upcoming elections will start somewhere other than the United States and is going to start soon, in Ukraine!

Before the American elections in 2024, two summer military campaigns are planned in Ukraine. And before the primaries start, the current "counteroffensive" has to end. They have a lot to say.

The Biden administration has a lot to be blamed for. The recent fiasco about Hunter Biden's laptop is also added to the package now and along with disappointing results of the poles about the publicity of Biden himself, has convinced many to believe that Biden will end up in an elderlies' care center after 2024 elections.

This presumption could be true in a parallel world where the dynamics of power are exactly as being thought in law and politics schools. The truth is, at least for 2024 elections, the fate of the current president relies more on outside the American soil than inside.

Today, besides everything else, Biden captivated by the shame of the U.S. retreat from Afghanistan. There is no doubt that it was inevitable and even the decision was made before Biden took the office, but the scenes of American troopers rushing out of Afghanistan and the catastrophe they left behind, is now stuck with Biden forever. Add to this the fate of thousands of Afghans who had cooperated with the U.S.-led coalition for twenty years and were left behind to deal with forthcoming unknown future.

Then you have the southern borders of America itself, where the humanitarian challenges of immigration are still intact. The previous president of the U.S. who was a loud speaking racist in this specific regard, left a legacy behind which Biden promised to address. But even the same camps founded by Trump are still operational under the exact same circumstances or even worse.

Then it comes the biggest of all: Ukraine. Hundreds of billions of taxpayers' dollars have been spent on the party which was the losing horse from the very beginning. Ukrainian refugees have flooded the U.S. with privileges incomparable to any other. And the world is waking up to the fact that the whole conflict was planned and staged by the U.S. and the idea of keeping a safe distance with the U.S. is gaining more momentum amongst its allies every day.

Accordingly, Biden has intensely tried to create distractions. His endeavor to gain the love of different social classes, especially the liberals, is notable. He has been more liberal than any liberal. He has recognized a zillions of genders, has pushed for a ban on civilian possession of assault weapons, has paved the ground for BLM to keep going, keeps coming up with new quotes about women every now and then, has presented plans to defund the police. All the ingredients of a perfect presidential campaign are there except for one: a big triumph in a field where Biden has experienced his most significant defeats: battlefield.

To the eyes of history books of coming decades, Biden is either the President who wasted American's money to fund the losing side of the war while Americans were economically suffering dramatically, or the president who had the command in the war in which the U.S. defeated Russia. Yes, it's a big gamble. But what if it works?

There might be trends appearing within American society in strong opposition against U.S.'s unjust wars. Disclosure of some very disturbing documents about what has happened in Ukraine since 2014 up to date and the backgrounds of the current conflict has led the Americans to rethink their acknowledgments they deemed "honest" about U.S.'s warmongering in other countries like Iraq. Today it is really difficult to find an American who still believes Bush's administration and his friends were actually looking for weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Iraq. Some of his collaborators in invasion of Iraq, like Britain's then Prime Minister Tony Blaire, have even spoken out loud about how they regret deciding to form a coalition with the U.S. which claimed the lives of 1.000.000 of Iraqi civilians.

Americans know all these, but for an American mindset, an unjust war is still better than a war in which the U.S. is defeated. So, as long as the war surges on, they will advocate the defeat of Russia. And this is Biden's golden chance to win the coming election. You are going to see the commanders of Ukrainian army appearing in Biden's promotional videos during his presidential campaign. These commanders and their soldiers are the most important faces which will pop up on the screens, but what matters the most is what they are going to say. The story they will be telling. Is it the story of the U.S.'s victory in battle against Russia? Or Ukrainian commanders and soldiers will tell the story of how they were defeated despite the all-out support of the U.S. and how this is not Biden's fault?

That said, forget about all the garbage you see or hear about Biden's mental or physical health. Keep your eyes on Ukraine and do not blink! The next president of the U.S. will be elected there.

New tourist complex inaugurated in Ardabil

TEHRAN –A vast tourist complex was inaugurated in northwestern Ardabil province on Tuesday.

A budget of three trillion rials ($6 million) has been allocated to the project, the provincial tourism chief has said.

The complex has generated some 200 job opportunities for the locals, Hassan Mohammadi Adib explained on Wednesday.

The project was carried out by the private sector, the official added.

In 2019, Ardabil along with Sari, the capital of Mazandaran province, was selected as the cultural capitals of the Economic Cooperation Organization for 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Last April, the tourism authorities of the province announced that they have developed extensive plans to draw more tourists during the winter to the province and make it the winter tourism hub of the country.

Sprawling on a high, windswept plateau, Ardabil is well known for having abundant natural beauty, hospitable people, and its silk and carpet trade tradition. It is also home to the UNESCO-registered Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and the Shrine Ensemble.

The province is freezing in winter and mild in summer, attracting thousands every year. The capital city of Ardabil is usually recorded as one of the coldest cities in the country in winter.

Massive underground city in central Iran made national heritage

TEHRAN –A massive underground city located in Tafresh, central Iran, has recently been inscribed on the national heritage list, ILNA reported on Wednesday.

The hand-carved underground city is situated under the modern city of Tafresh and with an area of three hectares, it is one of the largest underground areas in Iran and even in West Asia.

Two archaeological seasons have been carried out on the underground city so far and subterranean spaces and passageways covering 400 square meters have been excavated by archaeologists and cultural heritage experts.

The underground city was accidentally discovered several years ago during a construction operation. Narratives say that it sheltered inhabitants during the Mongol invasion of Persia in the early 13th century.

The hand-carved underground city can become a top tourist destination for domestic and international tourists, but there will need to be more accommodation options, including eco-lodges, according to local authorities.

Based on the academic findings, the creation of handmade troglodytic architectural sites depends on several factors including climatic and geographical conditions, defense, security, durability, and religion, which were deeply tied with the cultural, political, social, and economic circumstances. This architecture can be classified into various formal types in terms of their external form, internal space, and function (religious, tombs, residential, and shelter).

The handmade troglodytic architecture is a distinctive kind of architecture, which does not require major construction materials and consequently very low environmental load since its creation is majorly by extraction of space rather than the addition of mass. Architecture by subtraction rather than addition provides many opportunities that call for comprehensive research and analysis.

As there is no obligatory method in making spaces rather than material cohesion, there is no priority in constructing a troglodytic structure, either from the roof or from the floor. Dealing with stone blocks, rocks, and piles of the earth requires a variety of tools as an ax, hammer, chisel, and sledgehammer to shape the interior space.

In Iran, many magnificent cases of this architecture have taken place in different regions due to its various climates. This unique architecture is at odds with the conventional settlement patterns and construction methods and is always can take advantage of the mountains and valleys on the floor or wall, which is a good way to control climate fluctuation in different regions.

Iran is a haven for ancient troglodytic architecture which is somewhat forgotten though they are filled with life and creativity. The northwest Kandovan village is one of the most famous examples of troglodytic architecture in the country; its ice-cream cone-shaped homes resemble that of Turkey's Cappadocia.

In October 2018, the country hosted the 3rd International Troglodytic Architecture Conference in which tens of experts, researchers, and academia discussed troglodyte-associated architecture, culture, and technology.

Historical mansion in Behbahan to turn into handicrafts center

TEHRAN –The Qajar-era (1789-1925) Akhavan mansion in Behbahan, southwestern Khuzestan province, is planned to be repurposed into a handicrafts center, a local tourism official has said.

The mansion has undergone some rehabilitation works and will open its doors as a handicrafts center after being fully restored, Ali Haddad explained on Wednesday.

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

Behbahan and its surrounding neighborhoods bear some archaeological sites that date from the Sassanian period (224 to 651 CE) and Elamite era (2700 – 539 BC).

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

Lying at the head of the Persian Gulf and bordering Iraq on the west, Khuzestan was settled about 6000 BC by a people with affinities to the Sumerians, who came from the Zagros Mountains region. Urban centers appeared there contemporaneously with the first cities in Mesopotamia in the 4th millennium. Khuzestan, according to Encyclopedia Britannica, came to constitute the heart of the Elamite kingdom, with Susa as its capital.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Centuries-old caravanserai in Qom undergoes restoration

TEHRAN – The Seljuk era (1037–1194) Tolab caravanserai in the central province of Qom, has undergone some rehabilitation works, the provincial tourism chief has said.

A budget of eight billion rials ($16,000) has been allocated to the project, Alireza Arjmandi explained on Wednesday.

The project involves strengthening the structure and foundation, repairing the rooftop and replacing worn-out materials, the official added.

The historical inn, which has been inscribed on the national heritage list, could become a tourist destination after being fully restored, he noted.

Seljuk, also spelled, Seljuq, was a ruling military family of the Oguz (Ghuzz) Turkic tribes that invaded southwestern Asia in the 11th century and eventually founded an empire that included Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, and most of Iran. Their advance marked the beginning of Turkish power in the Middle East.

Iran's second holiest city after Mashhad, Qom is home to the holy shrine of Hazrat-e Masumeh (SA), several major seminaries, madrasas as well as many tourist resorts both cultural and natural.

Apart from sightseers and pilgrims who visit Qom to pay homage, it is also a top destination for Shia scholars and students who come from across the world to learn Islamic studies at its madrasas and browse through eminent religious bookshops.

Qom, which its antiquity goes back to the Sassanid era (224 CE–651), has many must-see destinations such as historical mosques, mansions, and natural sceneries scattered across the city as well as towns and villages nearby.

One of the most visited natural spots of Qom is Hoz-e Soltan. It is an eye-catching salt lake in the middle of the desert. The visitors could easily walk in the shallow parts and enjoy the shapes created by the salt, however, the center of the lake could be dangerous, as it is muddy and could easily trap people.

Possible UNESCO tag for Iranian caravanserais

Iran has put forward a selection of 56 caravansaries as a candidate for a collective inclusion in UNESCO'S cultural heritage list.

Last year, the tourism ministry announced that Iran is developing a dossier for a selection of its historical caravanserais for a possible inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage list. In this regard, cultural heritage experts are assessing such monuments that are scattered across the country to make a shortlist in terms of their architecture, as well as historical and cultural values.

Caravansary (also Caravanserai or Caravansaray) is a building that served as the inn of the Orient, providing accommodation for commercial, pilgrim, postal, and especially official travelers.

According to Encyclopedia Iranica, from the number of surviving caravansaries and their sizes, it is clear that in Safavid and Qajar times there was a state architectural department that was specifically concerned with the construction of caravansaries and stations on the overland routes. Furthermore, in the cities, several caravansaries were erected as lodging houses, depots, and commercial offices in the vicinity of the bazaars.

A typical caravansary consists of a square or rectangular plan centered around a courtyard with only one entrance and arrangements for defense if necessary. Whether fortified or not, it at least provided security against beasts of prey and attacks by brigands.

The earliest caravanserais in Iran were built during the Achaemenid era (550 -330 BC). Centuries later, when Shah Abbas I assumed power from 1588 – to 1629, he ordered the construction of a network of caravanserais across the country.

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

Such roadside inns were once constructed along ancient caravan routes in the Muslim world to shelter people, their goods, and animals. The former Silk Roads may be the most famous example dotted by caravanserais.

Cozy chambers that are meticulously laid out around a vast courtyard may easily evoke spirits of the past. It's not hard to fancy the hustle and bustle of merchants bargaining on prices, recounting their arduous journeys to one another while their camels chewing hay! You can also conceive the idea of local architectural style and material in its heyday.

It is not hard to fancy the hustle and bustle of merchants bargaining on prices, recounting their arduous journeys to one another while their camels chewing hay!

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

However, a couple of years ago, the Iran tourism ministry introduced a scheme to keep them alive and profitable; tens of caravanserais are ceded to the private investors for better maintenance. Now, some are exclusively renovated and repurposed into boutique hotels and tourist lodgings.

They often had massive portals supported by elevated load-bearing walls. Guest rooms were constructed around the courtyard and stables behind them with doors in the corners of the yard.

Police arrest five illegal excavators in southwest Iran

TEHRAN –On Tuesday, Iranian police arrested five illegal excavators and antique smugglers while digging for historical objects in a historical castle in southwestern Kohgiluyeh-Boyer Ahmad province, a senior police official in charge of protecting cultural heritage has said.

The accused people were traced and finally arrested after the authorities received reports from cultural heritage aficionados about their lawbreaking, Mokhtar Torab explained on Wednesday.

Some excavation tools and equipment have been seized from the culprits who were surrendered to the judicial system for further investigation, he added.

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

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

Discover Zarbaft, Persian fabric of unparalleled beauty and richness

TEHRAN – Zarbaft, a Persian textile, is renowned for its beauty and legendary status as one of the world's most famous fabrics.

Despite its splendor, the fabric made of gold threads for the weft and silk threads for the warp is no longer in high demand, not even among billionaires.

Iranian textile industry has a rich history that can be traced back to the Parthian era when it was first introduced. The evolution of this art throughout the years is truly captivating, positioning Iran at the forefront of crafting exceptional textiles.

Although few fabrics have survived from the Achaemenid era, it is evident that the art of weaving fine

textiles was a flourishing industry. Therefore, it can be concluded that weaving, along with other forms of art, was thriving during the Achaemenid era.

Since the Parthian era, fabrics have been enriched with threads crafted from pure gold.

During the Sassanid period, the production of grand silk cloths was highly favored. This became such a lucrative industry that the economic prosperity of the country relied on its export to the Far East, specifically the Chinese Empire, and the Far West.

Under the Safavid dynasty, particularly during the reign of Shah Abbas, around eight hundred individuals were employed at the workshop owned by the royal court. The demand for luxurious fabrics was so high that the king took the decision to prohibit their domestic sale and allow only their exportation.

The sale of Zarbaft and other luxurious fabrics constituted a significant source of income for the ruling system's operating expenses.

Currently, there are only a small number of workshops in Iran that are capable of producing these exceptional fabrics.

The majority of their products are stored and neglected, with minimal demand in the market.

Renowned museums around the globe preserve magnificent fabrics of Persian origin dating back to the Achaemenid, Sassanid, and other distinguished periods.

FAO delineates activities to combat desertification, drought in Iran

TEHRAN - Yubak Dhoj G C, the representative ad interim of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to Iran, has expounded on activities to combat desertification and drought in the country.

Every year on June 17 the United Nations marks the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, working toward raising public awareness and assisting international efforts to this end.

The theme of 2023 to commemorate this day focused on women's role and right in sustainable land management. This theme strongly calls for safeguarding women's land rights to ensure a sustainable future for all.

"Desertification and drought pose immense challenges that extend across every corner of our planet, endangering the livelihoods of millions, particularly those residing in dry and semi-dry regions such as Iran," said the FAO representative in a message on this occasion.

Hereunder is the message that was read at the place of Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization by Ms. Nazi Tavakoli, the officer in charge, on behalf of the FAO representative ad interim to Iran.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, with vast arid and semi-arid areas, confronts and controls significant challenges of water scarcity, land degradation, desertification, drought, and dust storms. These environmental perils have a considerable impact on the agricultural sector.

Nazi Tavakoli, the officer in charge, reads the message of the FAO representative ad interim to Iran.

On the other hand, land degradation and dust storms not only threaten human health but also damage agricultural productivity. It is obvious that the phenomenon of dust has severe economic effects and affects various sectors including agriculture, transportation, and energy.

As a top priority for FAO, our interregional technical cooperation project, "Catalyzing Investments and Actions to Enhance Resilience Against Sand and Dust Storms in Agriculture," has conducted a thorough Sand and Dust Storms disaster risk assessment in Ahvaz.

This project has laid the foundation for the development of timely, effective, and appropriate preparedness and response measures within a comprehensive contingency plan.

It encompasses all aspects of SDS disaster risk management in agriculture, encompassing both cropland and rangeland.

The Global Environment Fund (GEF) has made significant contributions to the global endeavor to combat desertification and drought.

Their funding has supported numerous projects in Iran, yielding positive impacts on local communities.

For instance, the GEF has backed initiatives promoting sustainable land management practices, reducing water wastage, and enhancing carbon sequestration.

These endeavors have not only mitigated the impacts of droughts but have also strengthened ecosystem resilience and bolstered local economies.

One FAO exemplary project, co-financed by the Global Environment Fund (GEF), is the "Rehabilitation of Forest Landscapes and Degraded Land with Particular Attention to Saline Soils and Areas Prone to Wind Erosion Project (RFLDL)."

Its objective is to restore degraded ecosystems, mitigate land degradation, and improve local livelihoods.

This project has been implemented in the provinces of Kerman (Rigan) and South Khorasan (Sarayan), yielding valuable experiences and lessons that we hope can be applied in other regions in the future.

In conclusion, as we stride towards a more sustainable future, it is imperative that all stakeholders collaborate to address the challenges posed by desertification and drought.

A multidisciplinary approach is indispensable, one that encompasses ecological, social, and economic considerations. International organizations such as FAO, GEF, and UNCCD are committed to supporting countries like Iran in their efforts to combat desertification and drought and achieve sustainable land use.

By working together, we can safeguard our natural resources, protect our livelihoods, and secure a better future for generations to come.

World Refugee Day: Iran celebrates inclusive policies, calls for global solidarity

TEHRAN – On June 20, UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency in the Islamic Republic of Iran, marked World Refugee Day with a series of events celebrating refugees' resilience and courage and the country's commendable inclusive policies towards refugees.

The occasion served as a reminder of the need for more global burden-sharing and solidarity in addressing the challenges faced by displaced persons around the world, according to the UNHCR website.

With over 3.4 million refugees and refugee-like populations, Iran has become the second-largest refugee-hosting country globally this year.

In total, Iran hosts some 4.5 million Afghans of varying status – including resident permit holders, undocumented Afghans, and family passport holders – many of whom have been in the country for an extended period and require support to strengthen their resilience.

Iran's support for refugees is demonstrated through its inclusive policies, which encompass protection, assistance, education, and healthcare, inspiring the global community and positively impacting the lives of refugees.

Throughout Iran, a range of events were organized to commemorate this year's World Refugee Day, under the theme "Hope Away from Home."

These events emphasized the importance of solutions, inclusion, and compassion towards those forced to flee their homes due to conflict, persecution, or natural disasters.

In Kerman, Fars, and Khorasan Razavi provinces, and in Semnan refugee settlement, UNHCR, together with the Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants' Affairs (BAFIA) of Iran's Ministry of Interior, organized colorful refugee-focused events.

These events showcased the rich diversity and talent of refugee communities, featuring traditional music and theatre performances, refugee craft bazaars, and drawing competitions.

UNHCR Representative Inna Gladkova, in her Refugee Day message, paid tribute to the courage and remarkable resilience of refugees and commended Iran for its inclusive refugee policies, particularly in the sectors of education and health.

Ms. Gladkova stated, "The scale of the global refugee crisis requires greater solidarity and burden sharing. Iran's exemplary efforts cannot be sustained without continued international support."

She further called on the international community to increase their support for Iran's humanitarian efforts, recognizing that no single country can bear the responsibility of hosting refugees alone.

She emphasized that more financial support, technical assistance, and innovative partnerships are essential to ensure the protection, well-being, and successful integration of refugees worldwide.

Despite its own domestic challenges, Iran has extended support to refugee children, allowing them to access education in public schools alongside Iranian children.

Iran's healthcare system promotes refugee integration by providing them with vital healthcare services, including access to insurance, and vaccinations, enhancing refugee well-being, and benefiting public health in host communities.

On World Refugee Day, UNHCR extends gratitude to Iran for its hospitality and ongoing efforts in protecting and empowering refugees.

Iran's example showcases the transformative power of inclusive policies, enabling refugees to thrive as valued members of society.

On 14 June, UNHCR released its flagship annual report, Global Trends in Forced Displacement 2022. The report found that by the end of 2022, the number of people displaced by war, persecution, violence, and human rights abuses stood at a record 108.4 million, up 19.1 million on a year earlier, which was the biggest ever increase.

Estimates for the number of refugees from Afghanistan were sharply higher by the end of 2022 due to revised estimates of Afghans hosted in Iran, many having arrived in previous years.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, with over 3.4 million refugees and refugee-like populations became the second-largest refugee-hosting country in the world.

Of these refugees, 99 percent reside in urban areas, side-by-side with Iranian host communities. The remaining one percent live in 20 government-run refugee settlements.

Women from the Leader's point of view-13

Receiving medals while wearing hijab makes Iranian woman 'outstanding'

From page 1 ▶ Despite facing major challenges in this field, Iranian sportswomen were able to force the world federations to accept their Islamic clothing with their active presence and hard efforts.

One of the international competitions where Iranian women made significant progress was the Asian Games. In each edition of these games, the Iranian women athletes have been able to win more medals than the previous ones.

Before the Revolution, Iranian women only won 5 medals in Asian competitions, but after the Revolution, women gained more successes in sporting events despite wearing hijab.

14th Asian Games (2002, Busan)

Parvaneh Mohammad Taghipour Tehrani was the first Iranian female medalist after Islamic Revolution in 2002 Asian Games held in Busan, South Korea who won a bronze medal in Taekwondo competitions. Iranian women athletes also managed to win a silver medal in the 10-meter team shooting at the Busan Asian Games.

Referring to the successful participation of Iranian women athletes in world competitions while wearing hijabs, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in one of his speeches said, "Iranian women are among the most outstanding in athletic competitions. One is truly unable to praise them the way they deserve. Iranian women wearing hijab stand on podiums receiving medals in front of hundreds of millions of global TV viewers. This is not trivial." (July 27, 2022)

15th Asian Games (2006, Doha)

In the 2006 Asian Games held in Doha, Iran ranked 6th with 11 gold, 15 silver and 22 bronze medals.

The Iranian team consisted of Mehdi Ghaemmaghami, Elshan Moradi, Atousa Pourkashiyan [the only female athlete in the team] won the bronze medal of the competitions.

Two Iranian female athletes Mehrouz Saei and Afsaneh Sheikhi each won a bronze medal in Taekwondo competitions in the Doha games.

16th Asian Games (2010, Guangzhou)

Iranian female athletes did their best in the 2010 Asian Games held in Guangzhou, China, and won colorful medals in various disciplines.

Iranian women's kabaddi team gained the bronze medal of the 2010 edition.

Fatemeh Chalaki and Samira Malekipour each received a bronze medal in female Karate.

Iranian team managed to win a bronze medal in Women's Lightweight Rowing in this edition of the Asian Games.

Elahe Ahmadi won a silver medal in shooting competitions in Guangzhou and Iranian female athletes also gained the silver medals in the 10-meter and 50-meter team shootings in the Guangzhou edition.

Rahele Asemani and Sara Khoshjamalfekri each received a silver medal in Taekwondo competitions and Samaneh Sheshpari and Sousan Hajipour snatched the bronze medal of the competitions.

Iranian women athletes Khadijeh Azadpour and Elaheh Mansouriyan grabbed gold and bronze medals in Wushu competitions.

In a speech delivered in a meeting with the officials of the Athlete Martyrs Congress on January 11, 2016, Ayatollah Khamenei said, "Another example is that a female athlete from our country stands on the medal podium wearing a hijab. This is very important. Who can tolerate the critical and questioning looks of the materialistic world in which a woman's honor lies in appearing naked in sports competitions? Men appear covered from head to toe, but women should definitely appear naked. Part of their bodies should be naked and open to eyes. This is a wrong, deviant, devious and political measure."

17th Asian Games (2014, Incheon)

The Iranian female athletes, capably presenting with Islamic hijab, won two valuable gold medals and a total of 16 medals for the first time.

In the past rounds of Asian Games, 88 female athletes participated who were able to win 14 medals but during this edition, only 58 female athletes won 16 medals.

In females10-meter air pistol, Najmeh Khedmati won a gold medal and Narjes Emamgholi grabbed a silver medal. Iranian female team also won silver medal in 10-meter pistol section.

Leila Rajabi snatched a silver medal in weight throw competitions.

Arezou Hakimi, Sonia Gomari and Solmaz Abbasizadeh each received a bronze medal in 200-meter single kayak, single slalom, and single rowing, respectively. Also, Iranian female team rowing won the bronze medal of the competitions.

Iranian women's kabaddi team gained the silver medal of the 2014 edition.

Hamideh Abbasali grabbed a gold medal and Fatemeh Chalaki and Nasrin Doosti each received the bronze medal in female Karate.

In Taekwondo competitions, Fatemeh Rouhani and Akram Khodabandeh each gained a silver medal and Sousan Hajipour won a bronze medal.

Elaheh Mansouriyan snatched a silver medal in Wushu competitions.

18th Asian Games (2018, Jakarta-Palembang)

Iran's sports delegation was dispatched to the event with 378 athletes in 42 disciplines including 280 male and 98 female athletes.

Iran received its first gold medal in females Kabbadi.

In Taekwondo, Marjan Salahshouri and Nahid Kiani won silver and bronze medals, respectively.

Elahe Mansourian, Shahrbanoo Mansourian and Zahra Kian each gained a silver medal in Wushu competitions of 2018 edition of the Asian games in Indonesia.

Iranian female athletes Taravat Khaksar and Rozita Alipour won silver medals, Pegah Zangeneh grabbed and Hamide Abbasali grabbed bronze medals in Karate competitions.

Females heavyweight team rowing (silver), female lightweight individual rowing: Nazanin Molaei (silver), female lightweight double rowing (silver), single kayak: Hedieh Kazemi (silver), females heavyweight double rowing (bronze) were among the other medals were achieved by Iranian women athletes in Rowing, Kayaking & Canoeing competitions.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

ENGLISH IN USE

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Iran gets ready for two-week coronavirus closure

The National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control will implement a plan, according to which all occupations, except for emergency services and basic food suppliers, will be closed for two weeks in more than 100 cities in an attempt to curb the coronavirus.

Alireza Reisi, a spokesman for the Headquarters, said that "the plan will go into effect on November 21."

The plan divides cities into three levels of alert, according to which, if a city is in a state of high alert, all other occupations will be closed, except for the most essential jobs, which are related to the provision of basic necessities, security, and health.

اجرای طرح تعطیلی دو هفته ای سراسری برای مقابله با کرونا هفته آینده

ستاد ملی مقابله با کرونا در ایران طرحی را اجرا خواهد کرد که بر مبنای آن بیش از ۱۰۰ شهر از جمله تهران با وضعیت هشدار بالای کرونا به مدت دو هفته تعطیل خواهند بود.
به گزارش ایسنا، علیرضا ریسی سخنگوی ستاد ملی مقابله با کرونا گفت: این طرح از اول آذرماه آغاز می شود.
این طرح شهرها را به سه سطح هشدار تقسیم بندی می کند که بر اساس آن، اگر شهری در وضعیت سطح هشدار بالا قرار گیرد به جز مشاغل خیلی ضروری که مربوط به تهیه مایحتاج ضروری مردم، امنیت و سلامت می شوند، بقیه مشاغل همه تعطیل هستند.

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UNDP director releases rehabilitated bird

Kanni Wignaraja, UN Assistant Secretary-General and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, releases a rehabilitated bird during a visit to Salehieh wetland, northcentral Alborz province, on June 20.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Be childlike with children.
Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:06 Evening: 19:45 Dawn: 3:02 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:49 (tomorrow)

Iran's Farabi Cinema Foundation, Russian Cinematographers' Union sign MOU

TEHRAN – Iran's Farabi Cinema Foundation (FCF) and the Russian Cinematographers' Union have signed a memorandum of understanding to cooperate on joint film projects.

The MOU was inked on Tuesday in Moscow in a meeting between the foundation's director Mehdi Javadi and the union's president Nikita Mikhalkov.

"Despite all the historical affinities between Iran and Russia, it seems that there is a dearth of knowledge of each other; cinema can improve the situation," Javadi at the meeting.

"Working on joint film projects and cultural cooperation could help develop mutual understanding between the two countries," he added.

The MOU will also ease the way for organizing film weeks and festivals and conducting joint research projects.

On his part, Mikhalkov called the Oscars a race that is handled by the White House and CIA and said that Hollywood's dominance has been challenged in the world by films from Asia, Latin America and Russia.

He suggested the launching of a joint film prize by Russia, Iran, China, India and countries in Latin America and Eurasia.

Russian Cinematographers' Union director Nikita Mikhalkov (L) and FCF director Mehdi Javadi exchange documents after signing a memorandum of understanding in Moscow on June 20, 2023.

"Many filmmakers struggle worldwide to win an Oscar, but we can unite to launch an award representing our national ideology; an award, for example, worth one million dollars," he explained.

Yuri Ivanovich Kolosov, director of the International Department of the Russian Cinematographers' Union, also attended the meeting.

He said the MOU will help boost collaboration between the organizations and Iranian and Russian filmmakers.

He added that Iranian filmmakers are frequent visitors to Russian film festivals and hoped that the MOU would increase this tendency.

Launching an award similar to the Academy Awards has previously been suggested by other Russian cineastes.

Earlier in December 2022, Valery Ivanovich Tonkikh, an official of the Russian Cinematographers' Union, said that Russia was seeking to collaborate with Iran to provide an alternative to the Oscars, the U.S. film gala organized annually by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

He made the remarks during a visit to Tehran during a review program for several new Russian films organized at Iran's Farabi Cinema Foundation.

Tonkikh also announced the union's plan to launch a film society of the Caspian states and a Eurasia film academy with contributions from Iranian film organizations.

Iranian studies in France: overview

Part 3

Its library collection was enriched by acquiring the private libraries and papers of Darmesteter, Massé, and Marijan Molé (1924-63), a Polish born and highly gifted specialist of the Zoroastrian religion, Sufi orders, and classical Persian literature.

The profound influence of Massignon himself on oriental studies in general and his role in delineating a particularly Persian strain in the development of Islamic thought remains a matter of debate and controversy.

He was succeeded by Émile Benveniste, who became director of the IEI in 1962 and inaugurated the series Travaux des l'Institut des études iraniennes with his own contribution, Titres et noms propres en iranien ancien (Paris, 1966).

Following Jean de Menasce (1902-73) professor of ancient Iranian religions at the École pratique des hautes études (EPHE), the Institute was directed by Gilbert Lazard (b. 1920), a linguist, author of Grammaire du persan contemporain (Paris, 1957; tr. by S. A. Lyon as A Grammar of Contemporary Persian, Costa Mesa, Calif., 1992), and Dictionnaire persan-français, (Leiden, 1990).

His teachings and works on Persian language and literature have had a very strong influence on the whole of Persian studies in France since 1960.

His work covers many fields particularly early Persian language and literature (La langue des plus anciens monuments de la prose persane, Paris, 1963; Les premiers poètes persans, Paris, 2 vols., 1964). He has also translated several works by Sadeq Hedayat, including Haji Aqa, into French (Hadji Agha, Paris, 1996).

From 1952 to 1972 Lazard held the chair of Persian language at the École nationale des langues orientales vivantes. He was also professor at Sorbonne from 1966 and at EPHE as successor to Benveniste from 1971.

In 1972, a new journal, Studia Iranica, was founded under the editorship of Philippe Gignoux (b. 1931), professor of ancient Iranian religions at EPHE, and the famous historian Jean Aubin.

In the same year, the Institut d'études iraniennes joined the Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) to create a research group chaired by Gilbert Lazard and entitled "Langues, littérature et culture iraniennes" to which most of French scholars working on classical Persian studies were affiliated.

In literary studies, Charles-Henri de Fouchécour (b. 1925), professor at the Langues O and the Sorbonne, has studied a wide range of topics in classical literature, and has published many articles on literary subjects and individual poets including Hafez and Ferdowsi.

His comprehensive work, Moralia: les notions morales dans la littérature persane du 3e/9e au 7e/13e siècle (Paris, 1987), based on a wide ranging study of primary sources, is a pioneering and subtle analysis of the intertextual connections between literature and ethics through new perspectives and taxonomies.

Research on medieval literature has also been carried out by Claude-Claire Kappler, particularly on Hafez and Rumi, and by Marina Gaillard on popular prose literature (Le Livre de Samak-e Ayyar: structure et idéologie du roman persan médiéval, Paris, 1987).

On modern literature, Christophe Bala (b. 1949), professor at the Langues O since 1985, has written on Persian contemporary novels and short stories (Aux sources de la nouvelle persane, Paris, 1983, in collaboration with Michel Cuypers; and La genèse du roman persan moderne, Tehran, 1998).

The history of arts and sciences in the Islamic period has been studied by several scholars in France.

Yves Porter (b. 1957) has written on miniature paintings and the art of the book (Peinture et arts du livre, Paris, 1992; tr. by S. Butani as Painters, Paintings, and Books: An Essay on Indo-Persian Technical Literature, 12th-19th Centuries, New Delhi, 1994).

A historian of medieval sciences, Zhiva Vesel, has written on medieval Persian encyclopædias (Les encyclopédies persanes: essai de typologie et de classification des sciences, Paris, 1986).

The Persian historian Chahryar Adle (b. 1944) has edited and contributed to the proceedings of important seminars on art and archaeology as well as the social and cultural history of Tehran.

He has also published several articles based on his field work on archaeological sites and monuments particularly relating to the medieval Islamic period in eastern Persia.

Assadullah Souren Melikian-Chirvani, a prolific writer on fine arts and art history in general, has written several valuable studies on the interaction between art and literature (Essai sur les rapports de l'esthétique littéraire et de l'esthétique plastique dans l'Iran pré-mongol, Paris, 1970).

Another scholar with an interdisciplinary approach is Jean During (b. 1947), whose work is informed by his study of mystical and philosophical texts as well as a thorough knowledge of Persian music (with Z. Mirabdolbaghi and D. Safvat, Musique et mystique, Paris, 1989; tr. into Eng. with the collaboration of Manuchehr Anvar as The Art of Persian Music, Washington, D.C., 1991).

Historical studies of the Islamic period in Persia have never occupied a central place in French institutions, where they have always been overshadowed by the dominance of studies focused on the Arab world.

Jean Aubin (1927-98), professor at the EPHE, was the most eminent French historian writing on Persian history.

He established, with Jean Calmard (b. 1931), a separate research group joining EPHE with the CNRS called the Centre d'études islamiques et d'histoire comparée.

In his wide-ranging and yet highly detailed articles, Aubin showed his mastery in using primary sources with a flair and sensitivity unequaled in contemporary Western historical research on Persia.

Like Claude Cahen, he was a historian with a wide and rigorous training in different historical fields. Assisted by Jean Calmard, who contributed articles on nineteenth century social history and popular religious dramas (tazieh), Aubin published numerous studies in the journal Le monde iranien et l'islam (several issues from 1971 to 1994).

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica.

To be continued.

"Silence Again", "Survivor" win honorable mentions at Asolo Art Film Festival

"Silence Again by Mohammad-Kamal Alavi.

TEHRAN – Iranian shorts "Silence Again" and "Survivor" have won honorable mentions at the 40th edition of the Asolo Art Film Festival in Italy.

Directed by Mohammad-Kamal Alavi, "Silence Again" received the AAFF Special Mention in the Art Film Category.

The film is about a young woman who lives on a hill far from the city, alone and in silence. She farms and takes her produce to the city on an old motorbike. On the way back, a scarecrow catches her eye. The woman returns home but she cannot get the scarecrow out of her mind.

"Survivor" won the Mention Frontier Cinema Festival in the Art Film Category.

In this drama, director Karim Azimi portrays some immigrants waiting by the sea for them to be able to cross it. A young couple is going with the other immigrants to the light of the world, but they have problems when their baby is born.

The Asolo Art Film Festival, an event that celebrates the union between art and cinema, announced the winners on Monday.

The Asolo International Grand Prix went to the Russian director Aleksandr Sokurov.

The award is given to personalities from the artistic world who distinguish themselves for the human and universal values transmitted through their artistic language. His film "Fairytale" was screened at the closing ceremony.

In addition, the Italian actress Laura Morante was honored with the Duse Award, which is a lifetime achievement award given to an internationally renowned actress in the world of cinema and theater.

"Reka WW – Wind Oh Wind" by Egor Gavrilin won the Grand Prix of Asolo in the Video Art Category, while "Scenes, Overheard" by Parlor Collective received the Grand Prix of Asolo in the Art Film Category.

The award for best film on art in the feature film competition went to "The Artist's Daughter" by Margarita Linton and Yaniv Linton.

"Her Scents of Pu er" by Anna-Claria Ostasenko Bogdanoff from Canada won the award for best film on art in the short film competition.

Dozens of films were also awarded in the side sections of the festival, which takes place in the historical village of Asolo every year.

"The Psychology of Art" published in Persian

TEHRAN – "The Psychology of Art" by George Mather has been published in Persian by Qoqnus.

Sahand Soltandoost is the translator of the book that gives answers to technical questions such as Why do we enjoy art? What inspires us to create artistic works? How can brain science help us understand our tastes in art?

"The Psychology of Art" provides an eclectic introduction to the myriad ways in which psychology can help us understand and appreciate creative activities.

Front cover of the Persian edition of George Mather's book "The Psychology of Art".

Exploring how we perceive everything from color to motion, the book examines art-making as a form of human behavior that stretches back throughout history as a constant source of inspiration, conflict and conversation.

It also considers how factors such as fakery, reproduction technology and sexism influence our judgments about art.

By asking what psychological science has to do with artistic appreciation, "The Psychology of Art" introduces the reader to new ways of thinking about how we create and consume art.

Mather was appointed to a lectureship at Sussex in 1984, having previously held post-doctoral fellowships at the University of Reading, York University (Canada) and UCL.

He has held an academic position at the University of Sussex for most of my academic career since then (apart from a period when he was a professor at the University of Lincoln).

In 2022, he became an honorary professor of experimental psychology in the School of Psychology at Sussex.

"Life Sentence" for Persian readers

TEHRAN – "Life Sentence: Selected Poems" by Romanian writer Nina Cassian has come to Iranian bookstores.

Originally published in 1990, the collection has been translated into Persian by Sanam Vefqi-Mojarrad. Saless is the publisher of the book.

Often edged with gallows humor, the poems deal with childhood, color, censorship, freedom, greed, loneliness, love, pain and mortality.

The book was acclaimed by the author's contemporaries worldwide.

"The selected poems of Nina Cassian represent an exciting collaboration of poet-translators and the poet herself," American poet Maxine Kumin said.

"Comedy and despair come together in this lyrical text; the whole is enhanced by William Jay Smith's useful and insightful introduction," she added.

"Nina Cassian strikes me as one of the best poets alive," said American poet Howard Moss, while for Stanley Kunitz, another American poet, she "is a world-class poet, high-spirited, fierce, intelligent, uncompromising and wonderfully nervy."

Cassian had been a leading literary figure in Romania for over forty years when, during a visit to New York in 1985, her satires of the Ceausescu regime were discovered and copied into a friend's diary.

The friend was tortured to death, while Cassian's house was ransacked by the authorities and her publications were banned.

Cassian's irrepressible voice has outlasted the Romanian dictatorship. The deeply affecting, magical poems of "Life Sentence", a selection spanning forty-five years, have been translated by a number of distinguished poets, including Richard Wilbur, Carolyn Kizer, William Jay Smith and Fleur Adcock.

Front cover of the Persian edition of Nina Cassian's poem book "Life Sentence".