

Leader in meeting with seminary students:

The West Is Neither Democracy Nor Liberal

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Iran president on tour of Africa to boost ties

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President Ebrahim Raisi and his Kenyan counterpart William Ruto (right) oversee the signing of agreements between the two countries in Nairobi, July 12, 2023.

Africa, a proper market for Iranian products

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi left Tehran for the African continent on Wednesday morning to visit Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

This trip is in line with the development of political and especially economic cooperation of Iran in the international arena.

Economic experts believe that the president's visit to Africa is providing the basis for increasing Iran's presence in the 60-billion-dollar economy of the African continent and will increase the level of activity of Iranian traders and businessmen in this continent.

Over the past 40 years, the Islamic Republic of Iran has never given up on its principled policy towards Africa due to political and cultural commonalities, despite the sanctions, pressure and disruptions of the West, and has always maintained itself alongside the people and countries of Africa.

As reported, during the Iranian calendar years 1384 and 1385 (March 2005-March 2007), the relations between Iran and the African continent increased in terms of trade, but since 1386, the economic relations between Iran and Africa have decreased due to the economic crisis and cruel sanctions against Iran. Page 4

Report Ukraine lashes out at NATO

By Ali Karbalaei

TEHRAN- Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has shifted from his diplomatic woo and charm campaign toward Western leaders by lashing out at NATO's inaction on Kyiv's membership.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, at the conclusion of the summit's first day, said, "we also made clear that we will issue an invitation for Ukraine to join NATO when allies agree and conditions are met."

The final summit communique said that while "Ukraine's future is in NATO", the alliance would only "extend an invitation to Ukraine" when Kyiv had completed certain "democratic and security sector reforms".

Zelensky branded the decision "absurd", saying the decision by the 31-nation alliance falls short of any clear pathway with timelines for membership that his government has been demanding.

In a social media post before arriving in Vilnius, Lithuania, Zelensky said the wording on Ukraine's membership was discussed without any Ukrainian government officials being present. This gives Kyiv little clarity on when and under what conditions accession will be granted, he added.

Earlier, Dmytro Kuleba, Ukraine's foreign secretary, had said the summit would be "the best moment to offer clarity on the invitation to Ukraine to become a member".

In the communique, NATO said it had realized the need to move faster on Ukraine but fell short of providing any timeframe for membership.

The decision to provide no clarity of a timeframe will be seen as a major setback for Ukraine.

Kyiv understood it would not become a member at the two-day summit in Vilnius, but was under the impression it would be offered with a clear timeline on when accession to the bloc will be granted.

Zelensky had in his earlier statement said Ukraine "deserves respect" and that "It seems there is no readiness neither to invite Ukraine to NATO nor to make it a member of the alliance." Page 5

US politicians react to Tehran Times scoop on Rob Malley



TEHRAN - Several American politicians have reacted to the exclusive report published by the Tehran Times regarding the suspension of U.S. envoy for Iran Rob Malley's security clearances.

Speaking to a US-based media, Senator Josh Hawley criticized the Biden administration for not providing clear information while Tehran Times has released astonishing information about the case, Mehr News reported.

Hawley expressed outrage at the administration's lack of transparency regarding Malley and his efforts to revive the 2015 nuclear accord. Referring to the article by Tehran Times, Senator Hawley criticized the government for not being forthcoming. He said that an official Iranian newspaper is publishing all this information and knowing it, yet the US government won't be honest about it. He further stated, "It's ridiculous."

"I feel like I've been lied to... They (the administration) lie to us all the time on various issues, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, China... It's a pattern in this administration," he added.

Answering a question about the article published by Tehran Times, US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said that he cannot confirm that Malley was asked to go on leave on April 21st. Page 3

Iran summons Russian envoy over Persian Gulf islands



TEHRAN - Russian Ambassador to Tehran Alexey Dedov was summoned to the Iranian foreign ministry on Wednesday over a joint Russian-Arab statement that called into question Iranian sovereignty over its islands in the Persian Gulf.

Russia and the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries issued the statement after a round of strategic dialogue in which they reiterated the UAE position on the three Iranian islands of Abu Mousa, the Greater Tunb and the Lesser Tunb, which Iran considers an unnegotiable part of its territory.

Alireza Enayati, head of the Foreign Ministry Persian Gulf Department, summoned Dedov to convey Iran's dissatisfaction with the statement.

Enayati told the Russian ambassador that the three islands belong to Iran forever and called on Russia to correct its position in this regard. The joint statement endorsed the UAE efforts to peacefully settle the issue of the islands through dialogue or international institutions. The Russian ambassador underlined Moscow's respect for Iran's territorial integrity and said he would convey the Iranian protest to his country.

Earlier, Nasser Kanaani, the spokesman for the Iranian foreign ministry, had reacted to the statement, underlining Iran's sovereignty over the islands. Page 3



New section of Khaf-Herat railway launched

TEHRAN - A new section of the Khaf-Herat railway project has been launched to link Khaf in northeastern Iran to Rozanak in Afghanistan's Herat Province, IRNA reported.

The inauguration ceremony of the strategic railway section took place in a ceremony on Tuesday afternoon with officials from both sides in attendance.

The managing director of Afghanistan Railway Organization, deputies from Afghanistan's Foreign Trade Ministry, the special representative of Iran's Ministry of Transport and Urban Development, the governor of Khorasan Razavi Province and officials. Page 4

West should be held accountable for aiding Saddam against Iran in 1980s: envoy

TEHRAN - Amir Saeed Irvani, the Permanent Representative of Iran to the UN, on Tuesday slammed several Western nations for aiding and abetting the former Iraqi tyrant Saddam Hussein in the 1980s and demanded that they take responsibility for their actions.

"Western countries, including France, the United Kingdom, and the United States, bear a responsibility for supporting and collaborating with the Saddam regime during Iraq's war against Iran," Irvani told a UN Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East with a focus on Syria.

The full text of Irvani's speech is as follows. Page 2

TEHRAN PAPERS

Land ownership is not negotiable

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

In its editorial, Siasat-e-Rooz addressed the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council meeting and said: No matter how eager the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf region show interest to improve relations with Islamic Iran, they still behave in a way that cause disruption in the process of expanding relations. They follow a dual policy. In its latest meeting, the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council once again discussed the three Iranian islands of the Lesser and Greater Tunbs, and Abu Musa, and issued a joint statement with the presence of Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov in which they sought negotiations about the Iranian islands. Now, some Arab countries in the region claim the ownership of some Iranian islands and try to legitimize their illegitimate demands by inviting the officials of some countries such as China and Russia to their meeting, but from legal and international point of view their claims are not valid. The Emirates and other members of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council should know that Iran neither jokes nor negotiates with anyone over its territory. These three islands belong to Iran forever.

Iran: Iran is not seeking to create nuclear weapons

In a commentary, IRAN discussed the recent assessment of the American National Intelligence Service and wrote: The Zionist center "Middle East Media Research Institute" claimed that the result of the data of three European intelligence services is that Iran is planning to test a nuclear bomb. Only two days after anti-Iran media organizations and European countries created an atmosphere that Iran is trying to test a nuclear bomb, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence

of the United States issued a different statement admitting that "Iran is not currently undertaking the key nuclear weapons-development activities that would be necessary to produce a testable nuclear device." However, it said Iran is engaged in "research and development activities that would bring it closer to producing the fissile material needed for completing a nuclear device following a decision to do so". This propaganda is aimed at disrupting the diplomatic process of restoring Iran's nuclear rights, which failed with the new report of the U.S. National Intelligence Office. Of course, the American intelligence community has acknowledged this important issue several times in the years since the U.S. withdrew from the JCPOA.

Iraq president says Tehran, Baghdad regularly consult on all subjects

TEHRAN- Abdul Latif Rashid, the President of Iraq, has praised strong ties with Iran, stating that the two neighbors frequently meet on all matters of shared interest.

In an exclusive interview with the Al-Alam news network, Latif Rashid said that Tehran and Baghdad have been proactive in coming to mutually beneficial accords.

"I believe our relationship with the Islamic Republic of Iran has reached a very good stage and consultations are continuous if not daily, then on a weekly basis in all sectors, trade, business, security, and even in some cases on the diplomatic level. All these issues are there," he stated.

The president of Iraq also expressed satisfaction with his April trip to Tehran, when he met with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, President Ebrahim Raisi, and other senior Iranian officials.

"The conversations were highly productive, and we decided to deepen our connections on all fronts — commercial, economic, historic, and cultural. We also talked about the issue of energy and water," he continued.

"Therefore, our ties are continuous and are very strong. This is something we do not hide, and we are proud of this partnership."

Latif Rashid said that his nation will never forget "the kindness of the Islamic Republic of Iran towards Iraq" in the face of adversity.

When Daesh launched its terror campaign in the Arab nation in 2014, Iranian military advisers raced

Javan: De-dollarization is departure from American economy

Javan commented on the countries' move to distance themselves from the U.S. dollar in global transactions. It said: The formation of international associations such as "BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization" will challenge the economic dominance of the United States over the world, which uses its dollar as a tool. The recent wave of de-dollarization launched by different countries is a direct consequence of Beijing's policies to neutralize the influence of the dollar that Washington uses as a lever in its economic war and unilateral sanctions. Beijing's diplomatic feat in reconciling Iran and Saudi Arabia has also shown the decline of America's international position. De-dollarization represents another dimension of the rapid change in global economic arrangements. Since 2000, the central banks' foreign exchange reserves in dollars have been reduced by half. Every week news are being published about reducing the use of dollar in foreign trade and paying in local currencies or currencies other than dollar. Also, Saudi Arabia plans to close the petrodollar system, a mechanism that was vital to maintain the position of the U.S. dollar as the world's top currency. The reduction of global reliance on dollar, regional peace, and emergence of rising powers in the East, especially by Iran, China, and Russia, can have significant long-term negative effects on the United States hegemony.

Resalat: New international order and entering post-America age

In an analysis of Iran's membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Resalat wrote: The role Iran is important as the world is moving towards a new international order, especially as many signs are emerging about the decline of American power. The America of Trump and Biden is much weaker than the America of Obama or Bush. Moreover, in addition to the transfer of power from the West to the East with Iran at the center, the Islamic Republic's membership in the Shanghai pact can expand its influence in West Asia. These developments, along with increasing internal problems in the U.S. and the growing problems in Europe, have accelerated the process that was predicted by great Western strategists years ago under the title of "change in the world order and the beginning of the post-American age". The Shanghai Organization, along with the BRICS group, is seeking to strengthen the poles of the new world order. Iran's membership in the Shanghai pact promotes Iran's economic and geopolitical status and strengthens the move toward changing the existing global order.



to the help of the Iraqi armed forces under the direction of legendary counterterrorism commander General Qassem Soleimani.

Three years later they assisted Iraqi troops in reversing Daesh's gains and eventually freeing their country from the barbaric terrorist organization.

In January 2020, the U.S. assassinated General Soleimani near Baghdad International Airport.

Latif Rashid emphasized that his country does not allow terrorist organizations to use Iraqi land as a base to conduct operations against any nation when asked about Iran's worries about border security in light of the presence of terrorist groups in Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan region.

He remarked that the collaboration between Iraq and Iran "continues even on the security level and we have a plan to secure all the borders not only in that region, but in all regions, and practical steps are already being taken."

The Iraqi president said that their security forces are present on both sides of the border and that Tehran and Baghdad have started putting into practice the security agreement they reached.

Iran FM warns religious hatred breeds animosity

TEHRAN- Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Iran's Foreign Minister, has emphasized the need to prevent actions of religious hatred that generate prejudice, animosity, and violence.

Speaking on Tuesday at the 53rd session of the UN Human Rights Council, he said that any delay in denouncing and stopping the blasphemous burning of the Holy Quran reveals "double standards" on the part of the international community.

The most recent burning of the Quran in Sweden, according to Amir Abdollahian, was the sixth such event across European nations in 2023.

He called it "an act that brazenly incites violence, hatred, discrimination, and hostility against Muslims."

The top Iranian diplomat continued by saying, "Burning the Quran is not only a violation of human rights, but also an infringement on the rights of more than two billion Muslims across the world. Such abhorrent actions must be



immediately condemned by all advocates of human rights."

Amir Abdollahian emphasized the necessity of locating and closing "legal loopholes" on both national and international scale in order to immediately stop the insult to the Holy Quran from happening again.

"We adamantly urge the authorities of Sweden and other European countries to take immediate and effective measures against the perpetrators of such appall-

ing acts in order to prevent their recurrence in the future," he added.

Amir Abdollahian also urged nations throughout the world to confront religious hatred crimes that promote prejudice, antagonism, and violence.

The foreign minister underscored that "any kind of hesitation or delay in denouncing or preventing such actions will only reinforce perceptions of double standards and justify the abuse of freedom of expression."

Salwan Momika, a 37-year-old Iraqi immigrant, trampled on the Quran before lighting some pages on fire in front of Stockholm's largest mosque on June 28. The disrespect to the Muslim holy book was committed with the permission and protection of Swedish police.

Muslims from all over the globe were outraged by the sacrilegious incident. It happened as Muslims were marking the Eid al-Adha feast and the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca was being concluded.

Following the event, thousands of Iraqis gathered close to the Swedish embassy in Baghdad to condemn the burning of the holy book and demand the ambassador's expulsion.

People protested the action in the streets in other Muslim nations as well.

In recent years, Sweden has routinely allowed the burning of the Quran. For example, near the Turkish embassy in Stockholm a Swedish-Danish right-wing extremist burnt a copy of the Quran in January.

IRGC chief: Military act against Iran will tantamount to 'suicide'



TEHRAN - The chief commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) has warned that any attempt to challenge Iran's defensive capability will result in nothing except a "major suicide".

Speaking at a meeting of several IRGC Ground Force commanders on Tuesday, Major General Hossein Salami said the Iranian armed forces had been successful in developing a deterrent force against the adversary.

He said Iran's defense system is the result of "hard and heavy experience" in the face of all sophisticated and non-advanced opponents in the contemporary age.

Iran has faced a variety of challenges in recent decades, the top commander remarked.

The adversary has been let down by Iran's development of an "endless power", he said, adding that Iran's deterrent capability extends beyond missiles and drones.

Salami also argued that Iran's "small enemies" are part of the bigger enemies' strategies and act as mere pawns in their hands.

He went on to say that due to Iran's intrinsic capacities the enemies employ proxies against the country, and they are fully aware that any direct conflict with the Iranian military forces will result in "major suicide" for them.

In an apparent reference to a terrorist attack against a police station in the city of Zahedan, the capital of the province of Sistan-Baluchestan, on Saturday, the major general asserted those who committed the tactical destructive move received direct instructions from the United States.

In the attack on police station in Zahedan four armed terrorists were killed. Two police officers were also martyred in the attack.

On Saturday, Sistan-Baluchestan Police Chief Doustali Jalilian stated that armed terrorists attempted to enter the central area of Zahedan Police Station Number 16 while disguised as clients.

Ahmad Vahidi, the Iranian Interior Minister, said that the nation's security and intelligence agencies will continue to hunt down terrorist groups even outside the country's borders.

West should be held accountable for aiding Saddam against Iran in 1980s: envoy

TEHRAN - Amir Saeed Iravani, the Permanent Representative of Iran to the UN, on Tuesday slammed several Western nations for aiding and abetting the former Iraqi tyrant Saddam Hussein in the 1980s and demanded that they take responsibility for their actions.

"Western countries, including France, the United Kingdom, and the United States, bear a responsibility for supporting and collaborating with the Saddam regime during Iraq's war against Iran," Iravani told a UN Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East with a focus on Syria.

The full text of Iravani's speech is as follows:

Iran once again condemns the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, and under any cir-

cumstances. The use of such lethal weapons is a flagrant violation of international law, constitutes a crime against humanity, and poses a serious threat to international peace and security.

Iran has tragically been one of the primary victims of chemical weapons. On June 28, 1987, the city of Sardasht in Iran endured a devastating chemical weapons attack, leading to the immense suffering and loss of innocent civilians, including women and children.

Western countries, including France, the United Kingdom, and the United States, bear a responsibility for supporting and collaborating with the Saddam regime during Iraq's war against Iran. Their complicity enabled the systematic use of chemical weapons against the Iranian people, an act

that should not be forgotten.

The silence or active participation of Western countries in these atrocities undermined the pursuit of justice and revealed blatant double standards. This also hindered the UN Security Council's ability to fulfill its responsibilities and hold perpetrators accountable for such heinous crimes.

The Syrian Arab Republic remains steadfast in its commitment to fulfilling its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention. In alignment with this commitment, the Syrian government has maintained a constructive and cooperative approach towards the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

The Secretariat report confirms that all 27 declared chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs)

in Syria have been successfully destroyed. To ensure transparency and accountability, Syria has been regularly submitting monthly reports on the progress of chemical weapons dismantlement.

In May and June 2023, Syria submitted its 114th and 115th monthly reports to the OPCW Director-General, providing details of the activities carried out to dismantle chemical weapons and their production facilities. Moreover, Syria has facilitated two visits by a reduced team from the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) to Damascus this year. During these visits, the Syrian National Authority extended its full cooperation by allowing access to sites, collecting samples, and conducting interviews with witnesses.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Military chief threatens new attacks on terrorists in northern Iraq

TEHRAN- Iran's top military commander on Tuesday warned the Iraqi government that if Baghdad doesn't take action against hostile armed groups in its northern territories by the deadline of September, Iran will launch new military operations against the militant separatist groups.

Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri, the Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces, lamented the failure of several neighboring governments to uphold their obligations toward border security.

"Armed secessionist groups exist in northern Iraq which cause insecurity at our borders," the senior commander stated while addressing an annual meeting of IRGC commanders in Mashhad.

In order to safeguard Iran's security, Major General Baqeri praised the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Ground Force for its "effective missile and drone attacks" against terrorist groups in the Iraqi Kurdistan region.

However, he noted that the strikes have since been halted after the Baghdad government committed to disarm those groups and put an end to their operations by the Iranian month of Shahrivar (August 23 - September 22).

The general went on to say that Iran will wait until that time and expect that the Iraqi government will keep its promises. "If the deadline passes and terrorists remain armed or carry out any operation, our operations against those groups will definitely reoccur more severely."

Leading Iranian and Iraqi officials signed a historic security pact in March with the intention of laying out a plan for guaranteeing long-term security along the shared borders.

In 2022, the IRGC conducted a number of rounds of military operations against separatist group locations in Iraq's Kurdistan region.

On September 24, the initial phase of the assaults started, after a ter-



rorist attempt to spark unrest and riots in border cities west of Iran.

Following their armed teams' incursion into Iranian border cities, the Komalah and Democrat terrorist groups with bases in Iraq were targeted by the IRGC Ground Force.

The IRGC stated that these terrorists, who are located in northern Iraq and are supported by arrogant countries, were compelled to leave the nation after suffering significant fatalities.

The IRGC emphasized that despite several warnings from Iran regarding the operations of terrorist groups in the region, officials of the Iraqi Kurdistan Region failed to heed the warnings and take the appropriate precautions to stop terrorist activities.

Additionally, it has noted that the Iranian military activities are part of measures to maintain long-lasting border security and punish violent terrorists.

Leader in meeting with seminary students: The West is neither democracy nor liberal

TEHRAN – Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution, met on Wednesday with a group of seminary students in which he outlined the broad contours of religious promulgation.

Ayatollah Khamenei emphasized the great importance of religious propagation and clarification in the present era.

He highlighted the need to know the audience, recognize the structure of the global scene, and possess a jihadi spirit in order to have an impact in disseminating and clarifying ideas, according to Khamenei.ir.

The younger generations, he said, must be the focus of creative propagation based on new methods and tools.

During the meeting, which was held on the eve of the Islamic month of Muharram, Ayatollah Khamenei stressed the importance of the long-standing tradition of propagation in the seminaries and in the lives of great scholars.

“The significance of propagation as one of the duties of the seminaries has doubled following the establishment of the Islamic Republic, because the establishment of a political establishment based on religion has increased the enmity of the arrogant powers towards Islam,” he noted.

“Propagation in the current era has developed a lot with the presence of all kinds of methods based on science and the spread of tools, including the Internet and artificial intelligence (as



a symbol of the post-Internet stage),” the Leader explained, adding that common sense says propagation must be the top priority in countering the blood-shedding swords of the enemy’s propaganda.

“Ukrainians must be killed because the interests of Western arms production companies lie in continuation of the war in Ukraine.”

He also maintained that in addition to the expansion of propagation hardware in the West, the progress in the methods of making a message

believable is one of today’s realities.

“Using various sciences, including psychology, the Westerners instill 100-percent false messages as truth in the minds of the audience,” he said.

The Leader warned, “If we are negligent and weak in propagation in the face of new developments, we will be afflicted by a cultural transformation. Like the West, we will become caught up in a step-by-step move toward the normalization of major sins, which cannot then be easily remedied.” He also said, “As Imam [Khomeini] repeatedly said, ‘If Islam is struck in Iran, the effect will remain for years.’”

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution called the front against the Islamic system, which calls itself liberal democracy, a liar. He pointed out that the front against the people of Iran is against libertarianism and freedom of thought and against any kind of democracy that is not

dependent on the arrogant.

The resistance and struggle of the Iranian nation and the Islamic system against this front is a civilizational and global struggle, he continued.

He called the situation of the homeless and poor people of Ukraine a proof of the continuation of the colonial and predatory motives of the West. “The people of Ukraine must be killed because the interests of Western arms production and sales companies lie in the continuation of the war in Ukraine,” Ayatollah Khamenei pointed out.

He also said that the vulnerability of the West today is more than ever. America, which Imam [Khomeini] honored with the title of the great Satan, is a collection of devils and evils in various fields of “politics, confrontation with nations, confrontation with the American nation itself, racism, sexual ethics, crime and cruelty.”

Iran president on tour of Africa to boost ties



TEHRAN – Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi has held several meetings in Kenya as part of his whirlwind tour of three African countries.

In Africa, Raisi seeks to strengthen cooperation, particularly in economic fields, between Iran and African countries.

The president started his tour by first visiting Kenya, where he held many high-level meetings. After Kenya, he headed to Uganda. The tour will also take Raisi to Zimbabwe.

In Nairobi, Raisi held talks with his Kenyan counterpart William Ruto. After the meeting, they held a joint presser in which they talked about relations between Tehran and Nairobi.

“Iran-Kenya relations have a long history and we believe that the cooperation between the two countries, as well as the cooperation between Iran and all the countries of the African continent, can develop day by day,” Raisi said, according to the official website of the Iranian presidency.

He described Africa as a continent of potentials and stated, “Our view in the Islamic Republic of Iran on Africa is considering

countries with talent, capacity, talented human forces, material and spiritual reserves, natural and mineral resources.”

Raisi added, “Also, we consider our friend Kenya as a country full of diverse capacities, whose exchange with the numerous capacities of Iran can help improve the level of relations between the two countries.”

He stated, “Islamic Iran, with the blessing of the Islamic Revolution, the blood of the noble martyrs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and with the blessing of the guidance of the wise Leader of the Islamic Revolution, despite all the threats and sanctions of the enemy, has been able to progress in various economic, scientific and technological fields, and today it is an advanced and technological country and is ready to share its experiences with the dear people of Kenya.”

Pointing out that today the Islamic Republic of Iran has valuable experiences and achievements in the fields of petrochemicals, agriculture, fisheries, and science and technology, Raisi pointed out that the healthcare and medical equipment are other fields for cooperation.

He stated that the cooperation between Iran and Kenya will not be limited and specific only to the two countries. “Just as the Islamic Republic of Iran is a neighbor to the countries of the Persian Gulf and Central Asia and enjoys extensive cooperation, Kenya also has extensive relations with East African countries. And therefore, strengthening the relationship between the two countries will be a basis for wider regional cooperation.”

In Kenya, five cooperation documents were signed between the high-ranking officials of Iran and Kenya at the presence of the presidents of the two countries.

The cooperation documents were in the fields of veterinary medicine, communication, culture, fisheries and professional technology, which were signed by the ministries of foreign affairs, information, communication and digital economy, tourism, wildlife and heritage, mining, water economy and marine affairs and education of Kenya and the ministry of foreign affairs and cooperatives, labor and social welfare of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The president of Iran and Kenya attended the signing ceremony.

Also, a meeting of the high-ranking delegations of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Kenya was held under the chairmanship of the presidents of the two countries.

In the meeting, Raisi described the relations between the two countries as deep and historical.

Referring to the huge capacities of Iran and Kenya, he emphasized the necessity of using these capacities in line with the development of business interactions.

After concluding the visit to Kenya, President Raisi left for Uganda.

US politicians react to Tehran Times scoop on Rob Malley

From Page 1 ▶ “I will just say, as I said, I am very limited in what I can say about this matter. It’s a personnel matter. There are rules imposed on us by the Privacy Act that make it – limit what we can say. I can say that on June 29th, Rob stopped performing the duties of the special envoy for Iran. He went on leave several weeks before that, but I can’t say it with any more degree of specificity.”

He added that he cannot

confirm that not only Secretary Blinken but also Abram Paley have not met with Malley since.

Asked if he’d read the Tehran Times article and is aware of the details included in it, Miller did not specify whether it’s true or not, saying, “I did not say that. I did not say that. I was responding to the question she asked me.”

Responding to another question about whether he finds it problematic that Iranian Government media knows more

about Rob Malley’s case than they do, he stressed, “I would not agree with that characterization.”

The investigation into Malley was initially conducted by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, but State Department sources informed that the case was passed on to the FBI, which could suggest alleged criminal foul play.

The FBI’s involvement raises the stakes of the investigation into a veteran, high-profile,



and sometimes controversial diplomat, and suggests that investigators are considering something beyond the lowest-level mishandling of documents.

Iran summons Russian envoy over Persian Gulf islands

From Page 1 ▶ Rejecting the content of the joint statement, Kanaani said, “These islands belong to Iran forever and issuing such statements is in contradiction with the friendly

relations between Iran and its neighbors.”

He said, “The Islamic Republic of Iran emphasizes the continuation of the policy of good neighborliness and mutual respect,

and considers the development and stability of the region to be the collective responsibility of the countries of the region,” Kanaani added.

SPORTS

Iran rout Thailand at 2023 FIVB U21 World Championship

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Thailand 3-0 (25-11, 25-16, 25-19) in the 2023 FIVB Volleyball Men’s U21 World Championship Pool E on Wednesday.

Mobin Nasri led Iran with nine points and Thailand’s Jakkrit Thanomnoi earned 1 points.

Iran will play Bulgaria on Thursday.

Iran had previously defeated Thailand, Tunisia and Bahrain in the preliminary stage and gained a win over Poland in Pool E.

The 22nd edition of the FIVB Volleyball Men’s U21 World Championship is being held in Manama, Bahrain from July 7 to 16.

Italy are defending champions.

‘Iran to equip football stadiums with VAR soon’

TEHRAN – Iran’s Minister of Sports and Youth Affairs says that the country is seeking to install Video Assistant Referee (VAR) technology at the football stadiums soon.

Hamid Sajadi made the remarks on Sunday while paying a visit to the Azadi sports complex, adding that the VAR technology is expected to be used in the Iran Professional League (IPL) next season.

The VAR technology was used in Qatar’s World Cup, where the new technology was a system designed to provide automated offside alerts to the video match officials team.

The International Football Association Board (The IFAB) unanimously approved the use of VAR at its 132nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) that took place at FIFA’s headquarters in Zurich on March 3, 2018.

In the VAR system, a group of referees reviews the decisions of the head referee using video footage and headset communication.

According to IFAB website, the philosophy of VARs is ‘minimum interference – maximum benefit’ which aims to reduce unfairness caused by ‘clear and obvious errors’ or ‘serious missed incidents’ in relation to four incidents of goal/no goal, penalty/no penalty, direct red card (not 2nd yellow card/caution), and mistaken identity (when the referee cautions or sends off the wrong player of the offending team).

Ali Gholizadeh joins Lech Poznan

TEHRAN – Iran international winger Ali Gholizadeh officially joined Polish football club Lech Poznan on Tuesday. The 27-year-old player has joined Lech Poznan from Belgian side Charleroi.

Gholizadeh has most recently played in Turkish football club Kasimpaspa on loan.

He played 143 games for Charleroi and scored 23 goals for the team.

Gholizadeh represented Iran in the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar.

Iran to face Russia in two friendly matches

TEHRAN – Iran men’s basketball team will play two friendly matches with the Russian team in August, the Russian Basketball Federation (RBF) announced.

The warm-up matches will be played as part of the training camp for the 2022 Asian Games.

Iran, headed by Hakan Demir, will travel to Perm, Russia to play the Russian team on Aug. 7 and 9.

The International Basketball Federation (FIBA) has suspended the national teams of Russia and Belarus from participating in competitions under the auspices of the organization, as a result, the national teams could not participate in the qualifying tournaments for the World Cup.

The Russian team were not also allowed to participate in the qualifying tournament for the 2024 Olympics in Paris.

Iran’s Khosravani wins silver at Paris 23 Worlds

TEHRAN – Long jumper Amir Khosravani of Iran seized a silver medal at the Paris 23 Para Athletics World Championships on Wednesday at the Charlety Stadium.

He came second with a jump of 7.26 meters at the Men’s Long Jump T12 Final.

Uzbekistan’s Doniyor Saliev claimed the gold with 7.47 meters and Azerbaijan’s Saied Najafzadeh won the bronze with 7.11 meters.

On Tuesday, Iran’s Rashid Masjedi won a gold at the Men’s Shot Put F53 with 8.49 meters.

Over 1,300 athletes from 107 nations compete across 168 medal events. Many of them will be returning to Paris next year for the Paralympics, making it the first World Championships to be held in the Paralympic host city one year before the Games.

Iran’s flagbearers at Chengdu Universiade named

TEHRAN – Shooter Najmeh Khedmati and taekwondo athlete Mirhashem Hosseini have been named as flagbearers of Iran at the Chengdu 2021 FISU World University Games.

Female shooter Khedmati and male taekwondo athlete Hosseini will carry Iran’s flag in the event.

The 2021 FISU World University Games will be held from July 28 to August 8 in Chengdu, southwest China’s Sichuan Province.

The national teams can appoint a man and a woman as their flagbearers at the opening ceremony to send a message of gender parity.

Abderrazzak Hamdallah linked with Persepolis

TEHRAN – Moroccan forward Abderrazzak Hamdallah has been reportedly linked with a move to Persepolis football club.

The 32-year-old forward currently plays for Saudi Professional League club Al-Ittihad.

Persepolis have parted company with Issal Alekasser and are going to terminate contracts of Cheick Diabate and Leandro Marcos Peruchena Pereira.

The media reports suggest that Syrian forward Omar Al Somah has been also linked with the Iranian top-flight club.

Persepolis want to defend title in Iran league and also bring an end to AFC Champions League title drought.

Iranian defender Montazeri retires from football

TEHRAN – Former Iran national football team and Esteghlal defender Pejman Montazeri announced retirement from football.

The 40-year-old has most recently played for Qatari club Al Kharaitiyat. Montazeri will reportedly join the Qatari club coaching staff.

He started his playing career in Iran’s Foolad in 2004 and joined Esteghlal after three years.

Montazeri played seven years for the Iranian Blues and won two Iran leagues and three Hazfi cups.

He made his debut for Team Melli against Palestine, which he managed to score as Iran beat their opponent 7-0. Montazeri played full 90 minutes in all three matches for Iran in the 2014 FIFA World Cup, where the Persians failed to advance to the next stage.

Montazeri played 51 matches for Iran national football team from 2008 to 2019 and scored two goals.

Annual honey production stands at 136,000 tons

TEHRAN- Iran produced 136,000 tons of honey in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20), the head of the bee research department of Animal Science Research Institute of Iran (ASRI) has stated.

Naser Taj-Abadi said that this amount of honey production is high, while many factors affect production growth.

Taj-Abadi has said that according to the strategic document that was compiled and unveiled in the Iranian calendar year 1397 (March 2018-March 2019), honey production in the country is planned to increase by four percent each year.

It should be noted that this document has considered 15 percent growth in the production of some products of the beekeeping industry, such as royal jelly and propolis, he added.

As previously announced by the chairman of the Agriculture Committee of Iran Chamber of Cooperatives (ICC), Iran exports honey to 22 countries around the world.

Arsalan Qasemi put the country's value of honey export at \$5.6 million.

He named China, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Germany, Britain, Canada, Hong Kong, Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Iraq, and Lebanon as the most important export destinations of Iranian honey.

According to the latest census of the country's apiaries by the Agriculture Ministry, the production of honey is 136,000 tons in the country, a board member of the Iran Beekeepers Association announced.

Mohammad Fekri said that with producing 30,000 tons of honey per annum, West Azarbaijan province supplies more than 22 percent of the country's annual honey, East Azarbaijan, Fars, Ardebil and Kermanshah provinces come next, and about 43 percent of the honey is produced in other provinces.

As stated by the chairman of the Animal Science Research Institute of Iran, Iran ranks third in the world in the number of apiaries.

Mokhtar Mohajer also said that Iran's rank in honey production is changing and moving between fourth and sixth place in the world.

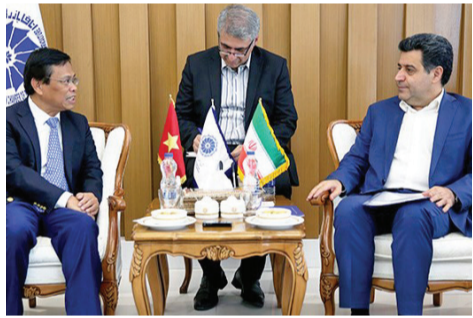
Based on the data released by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Iran is the third-largest producer of honey in the world.

The chairman of the Animal Science Research Institute has said that the amount of honey production in the country should be increased by three to four kilograms per colony.

Mohajer said, "According to the Seventh National Development Plan (2022-2026), the amount of honey production should be increased by at least three to four kilograms per colony according to the diversity of plants and the area of pastures that we have in the country".

He announced that 8,300 kilograms of royal jelly, 406 tons of pollen, 2,536 tons of beeswax, 247 tons of propolis, and 3,917 grams of bee venom are produced annually in the country.

ICCIMA head meets Vietnamese envoy to discuss trade ties



ICCIMA Head Hossein Selahvarzi (R) and Vietnam's Ambassador to Tehran Luong Quoc Huy

TEHRAN - Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Hossein Selahvarzi met Vietnam's Ambassador to Tehran Luong Quoc Huy on Tuesday to discuss ways of expanding trade ties between the private sectors of the two countries.

The two sides discussed various subjects during the meeting including trade capacities, obstacles to bilateral cooperation, and ways to increase the level of economic exchanges between Iran and Vietnam, ICCIMA portal reported.

In this meeting, Selahvarzi emphasized the readiness of the private sectors of Iran and Vietnam for joint investments and using barter trade capacities for the development of economic cooperation.

The ICCIMA head underlined Vietnam's

significant economic growth in recent years and noted that the Iranian private sector is eager for the expansion of ties with their Vietnamese counterparts in all areas.

"We are interested in developing business relations with Vietnam, and the establishment of the Iran-Vietnam Joint Chamber of Commerce is an indication of our interest in strengthening business cooperation," Selahvarzi said.

He also called for resolving the problems regarding the issuance of business visas for Iranian traders.

The Vietnamese ambassador for his part congratulated Selahvarzi on his election as the new head of the ICCIMA and welcomed his proposals and remarks.

The official noted that Iran is economically very important for the region, Asia, and the world in general, and this issue shows the right direction of Iran's diplomacy and foreign policy.

He mentioned the upcoming visit of the speaker of the Vietnamese Parliament to Tehran, noting that a delegation comprised of 70 officials and businesspersons is going to accompany the Vietnamese Parliament speaker on his visit to Tehran.

Luong Quoc Huy further pointed out the obstacles to trade with Iran, saying: "The sanctions and limited banking and financial relations are the major obstacle in the way of trade between the two countries. Of course, in recent years, Iran's foreign policy has shown that it is taking steps in the direction of lifting sanctions."

TEDPIX loses nearly 57,000 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 56,949 points to 2.071 million on Wednesday.

As reported, over 11.313 billion securities worth 74.912 trillion rials (about \$152 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).

Earlier this month, stock market analyst Nima Mirzaei said the market will experience a calm trading period in the summer and will continue to improve by the end of the season.

"The trend of the market in the spring shows that this market was lively but had relatively volatile transactions during the mentioned time period," said.

According to the expert, there is a possibility that as the end of the summer season approaches, the number of transactions will increase and the value of transactions will reach more than \$200 million.

"The increase in the value of transactions and the consequent growth of liquidity inflow to the market will help the upward trend of the stock market index by the end of summer, and we can hope that the index will reach 2.5 million points at this time," Mirzaei said.

"We can hope that shareholders will gain reasonable returns in the short term, but this profit will more likely be earned by those shareholders who entered the market with knowledge or indirectly through investment funds," he added.

The capital market expert stated that the general trend of the stock market is positive and it seems that the market will reach relative stability in the current range.

Africa, a proper market for Iranian products



From page 1 ► Surveys show that in the past years, due to the lack of restoration of economic relations with Africa, the amount of trade with the countries of this continent has remained at the level of \$1.2 billion, but according to Mohammed-Sadeq Qanadzadeh, the director general of the Africa Department of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), facilitating the trade route with Africa is happening now and it is expected that the trade figure with this continent will reach \$10 billion in the next three years.

In fact, good steps have been taken to use Africa's capacity, and Africa can be a suitable market for Iranian goods, Qanadzadeh stated.

Last year, the official referred to the beginning of the 13th government's measures to develop relations with the African continent, and said: "Over the past [Iranian calendar] year 1400 (ended on March 20, 2022), a series of measures have been initiated, which were resulted in the visit of about 60 African trade delegations, active presence in the exhibitions of this continent, the opening of 10 trade centers, and the dispatch of three commercial attachés.

"As the result of these measures, Iran's trade with Africa experienced a 100-percent growth from \$650 million in the Iranian year 1399, and also in the first nine months of the year 1401, Iran-Africa trade was equal to the total trade of the previous year, and we also experienced a growth of about 700 percent in the export of technical and engineering services," he added.

Also as announced by Vice President of Iran and Africa Merchants Club Ruhollah Latifi,

He made the remarks at the Scientific and Economic Cooperation Meeting Between Iran and West African Countries (IRAN WAC) which was held in Tehran in mid-March.

As reported, 20 multilateral and bilateral cooperation agreements were signed between Iran and West African countries in the first day of the mentioned event, and the expansion and deepening of comprehensive economic cooperation was emphasized.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Diplomacy Mehdi Safari has said that the economies of Iran and the African continent are complementary to each other, and due to their abundant capacities, significant achievements can be achieved in this due.

He added that the current level of economic exchanges between the two sides is not acceptable

and they are seeking to enhance the level of ties ten-fold in the first step.

Addressing that meeting, President Raisi emphasized Tehran's readiness to comprehensively expand cooperation with African countries, especially countries in the west of this continent.

He also said that the current level of trade between Iran and Africa is not acceptable, and according to the capacities and efforts of the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran and West African countries, it is expected that the cooperation and economic relations between them will change even more.

As stated by the experts, in order to increase the level of trade with Africa certain infrastructure including transportation and direct shipping lines, as well as proper legal, commercial, monetary, and banking relations must be provided.

It is said that in the near future, the African continent will become a great power in the world due to having 18 percent of the world's population and increasing population growth.

Statistics show that the African continent has 30 percent of mineral reserves, 40 percent of gold and 90 percent of chromium and platinum in the world. The continent also has the largest reserves of cobalt, diamonds, platinum and uranium in the world.

Also, Africa has 65 percent of the world's arable land, 10 percent of renewable fresh water resources, and 12 percent of the world's oil reserves.

As stated by Mehrad Ebad, a member of the board of representatives of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (TCCIMA), in the last

20 years, Africa's foreign trade has grown significantly, but Iran has not yet been able to use this capacity.

According to Ebad, one of the issues that caused the African market to be neglected was the lack of proper introduction of this market to Iranian traders and businessmen.

"In order to develop trade and relations with African countries, it is suggested the activity of joint chambers of commerce to introduce target markets and existing risks will be increased; Because our exporters are not interested to go to African markets due to lack of knowledge", he commented.

He also considered the cruel sanctions as another problem of trade with Africa and said that the traders are forced to send their goods to these countries through neighboring countries such as the UAE, Oman and Turkey in order to export their goods to African countries. It will cause re-export of goods and increase costs.

Despite existence of some barriers in the way of expanding trade between Iran and Africa, the visit of the president to three African countries proves that the current government is serious about developing cooperation and communication with the African continent in order to secure the country's economic interests.

It is worth mentioning that during the visit of Raisi to Kenya, the two sides signed cooperation documents in the fields of veterinary, communications, culture, fisheries, as well as technical-vocational field in the presence of the two countries' presidents.

Iran is taking good steps to use Africa's trade capacity.

New section of Khaf-Herat railway launched

From page 1 ► from the Iranian Embassy in Afghanistan were among the attendees of the ceremony.

The inaugurated railway is part of the 222-kilometer-long Khaf-Herat railway project which started in the fiscal year of 2007-2008 to connect Iran's eastern city of Khaf to Afghanistan's western city of Ghoryan.

The Khaf-Herat railway is part of a broader 2,000-kilometer-long East-West

railroad running through China, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan and Turkey to Europe.

This railway provides the landlocked Afghanistan access to the high seas via Iranian ports in northern country.

The construction project of the railway had been stalled due to the government changes in Afghanistan, but it was completed over last year and the first Iranian cargo train arrived in Afghanistan on Tuesday.

The railway was mainly implemented by the Islamic Republic of Iran under a tripartite agreement between Iran, Afghanistan, and India, in order to use the capacities of Iran's Chabahar port for expanding trade exchanges in Afghanistan.

The project was implemented in four parts, Iran was in charge of completing three of the mentioned four parts, two of which are in the Iranian territory and the other two are on the Afghan side.

Iran ready to share expertise in petchem sector with Kenya: Raisi

TEHRAN - Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi has said the Islamic Republic is ready to share its experiences in various fields including the petrochemical industry with Kenya, Shana reported.

President Raisi, who visited Nairobi on Wednesday during a tour of Africa, said in a press conference with his Kenyan counterpart William Ruto that Iran and Kenya have great potential for cooperation in different areas,

and they are seeking to enhance the level of ties ten-fold in the first step.

Referring to Iran's experiences in various fields including petrochemical, agriculture, science, and technology, the president said the country is ready to share such experience with Kenya.

He added that the current level of economic exchanges between the two sides is not acceptable

and they are seeking to enhance the level of ties ten-fold in the first step.

Leading a delegation, Raisi arrived in Nairobi on Wednesday morning, marking the first stop on his three-nation tour of Africa, which also includes trips to Uganda and Zimbabwe.

His visit to Africa entails a series of activities, including bilateral meetings, participation in intergovernmental

committees, joint press briefings, and meetings with trade and economic officials in all three countries.

Notably, this tour marks the first visit by an Iranian president to Africa in 11 years, reflecting Iran's commitment to a balanced foreign policy that emphasizes convergence and multilateralism.

The primary objective of Raisi's visit is to enhance Iran's presence in Africa's economy.

Ukraine lashes out at NATO

President Zelensky fumes as NATO refuses to offer membership timeline

From page 1 ▶ In a statement issued after the communique, the Ukrainian President said, "Today I embarked on a trip here with faith in decisions, with faith in partners, with faith in a strong NATO. In a NATO that does not hesitate, does not waste time and does not look back at any aggressor ... And I would like this faith to become confidence."

On Sunday, before the summit, Biden said Ukraine was not ready for NATO membership and that it had to show progress on "democratization" and "a whole range of other issues".

U.S. Senator Rand Paul went a step further, branding the statement by Zelensky as "audacious", saying the Ukrainian president might need to change his complaints to avoid alienating his Western allies.

"There's an old English adage he might need to become aware of: Never look a gift horse in the mouth," Paul, a Republican from Kentucky, told Fox News. "We've given them \$100 billion, and he has the audacity to be so brazen as to tell us we'd better speed it up? I'd say that's audacious. I'd say it's brazen, and that's not very grateful for the \$100 billion that we've given him so far."

U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan also issued a thinly-veiled warning to Kyiv one day after the Ukrainian president's tirade, saying some of the charges leveled against the U.S.-led alliance were "entirely unfounded and unjustified."

Sullivan added, "I think the American people do deserve a degree of gratitude from the United States government for their willingness to step up and from the rest of the world as well."

The U.S. is by far the largest donor of military support to Ukraine, offering more than \$46 billion worth of equipment to Kyiv.

The reality is NATO's article 5 of its founding charter, that declares every member must agree "that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all". It requires member states to join in defending the country under attack.



The communique's language strongly indicates the opposition from countries like Germany and the U.S. that commitment too strong could prompt retaliation from Russia and, if Ukraine was allowed to join the alliance while the conflict is ongoing, would ultimately drag some NATO members into a war with Moscow.

"It seems there is no readiness neither to invite Ukraine to NATO nor to make it a member of the alliance," Zelensky said.

The U.S.-led military alliance kicked off its two-day summit in Vilnius on Tuesday by issuing the statement saying that Kyiv would be invited to join NATO only "when allies agree and conditions are met."

Zelensky said it was "unprecedented and absurd" for Ukraine to be denied a concrete timeline, further highlighting Kyiv's diplomatic failure at the summit.

Instead, Ukraine has been promised even more military aid to fight Russia on what experts believe to be on behalf of NATO

members, in particular the United States.

It adds weight to the argument by observers that Ukraine, its territory, armed forces and population are being used as a proxy for the U.S. to contain Russia militarily and economically.

Whether that has been successful is up for debate. Whilst the rest of Europe is struggling with a cost-of-living crisis as a result of the war, Russia has had seen the lowest inflation on the continent.

This is while, barring the U.S., Ukraine has the largest military arsenal of any NATO member as Western countries have seen their weapons depots depleted, having shipped most of their artillery and other arms to the Ukrainian military.

European counties are rushing to replenish their own supplies, which is not only leaving them vulnerable, but also wondering rushing to remanufacture equipment to keep up with a war that is dragging on, longer than expected and appears to show no signs of abating anytime soon.

After securing new pledges for more weapons, Zelensky toned down his language on Wednesday, saying he expects Ukraine to join NATO once the conflict ends, after alliance leaders refused to set a timeline for membership.

"I am confident that, after the war, Ukraine will be in NATO. We'll

be doing everything possible to make it happen," Zelensky said at a news conference at the NATO summit in Vilnius.

Most of the weapons that have been shipped to Ukraine are also made in the U.S., boosting lucrative profits for the country's military industrial complex.

According to the Kiel Institute for the World Economy's Ukraine Support Tracker, the second largest military donor, by contrast, is the UK, which has provided more than \$6 billion in military equipment, earning British arms manufacturers a major source of profit as well.

U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan some of the remarks by Zelensky were "entirely unfounded and unjustified."

But as the arms manufacturers in the West count their profits, there has been no serious peace initiative emerging from the West, which is prolonging the crisis in Ukraine, with both Ukrainian and Russian civilians paying the price of war.

Inside Occupied Palestine: Israel gets closer to Azerbaijan

Israeli Minister of War, Yoav Gallant, is set to visit Azerbaijani president Aliyev on Wednesday 12 July 2023 to discuss issues which are not disclosed to the media yet. Gallant will also meet Azerbaijan's Minister of Defense, the Commander of Border Security, and other officials. Some believe that the quickly scheduled trip is the result of the reports which were published two days ago, indicating the neutralization of an imminent attack to the "an embassy" in Baku by Azerbaijani security forces. Although the reports did not mention which embassy has been threatened, but unofficial sources pointed at Israeli embassy and now consider this trip as a proof.

Collapsed Economy, Abolished Security

Israeli Ex-Minister of War, Avigdor Lieberman, commented on current economic and security status of Israel on Wednesday, called for resistance against the sitting Prime Minister. "We have a huge deficit, billions of Shekels. They are directing Israel towards demolishment in security and economic level. They have turned



us into a leper in the international community. No Western high-ranking official is willing to meet Netanyahu", Lieberman said, adding that "the Minister of War should ask himself how we got to this point and how we got to the verge of a civil war in just half a year?".

Fading Interests

An American renowned analyst

told The New York Times today that the U.S. is now "reevaluating" its relationships with Israel. Thomas Freedman, a senior American commentator criticized the behaviors of Netanyahu's government and said it's expected that during the next week's meeting between Biden and Hertzog, the U.S. president would

inform the Israeli official that the interests of the two sides are now apart from each other. Freedman believes that this "reevaluation" will not affect the security/military cooperation of the parties but will reduce the support the U.S. provides for Israel within the international organizations.

Refusers

As tensions escalate and protests continue all over the Occupied Palestine as the result of the ongoing controversial judicial reforms put forth by the governing coalition, hundreds of pilots and troopers of reserve units of Israel's air force declared their "full support" from "any kind of demonstrative action" and threatened to suspend their volunteer services immediately. Some of the air force's ex-officials also expressed their support for the decision made by the reserve units. Meanwhile, most of the cities witnessed violent protests with and increased dose of harsh suppression by the Israeli police. Initial reports indicate over 120 Israeli protestors have been arrested.

10 killed in house fire in Pakistan's Punjab

At least 10 family members were killed after a fire broke out in a three-story house in Pakistan's eastern Punjab province on Wednesday, police officials said.

The fire erupted during the early hours of

Wednesday in the house in Punjab's provincial capital Lahore, trapping all the family members, police told local media.

Police said that the victims locked themselves in the back room, leaving them

with no chance to escape after the fire engulfed the whole house.

Among the killed were at least seven women and children, said the reports. An investigation was launched to determine the cause of the fire.

WORLD HEADLINES

UN Human Rights Council condemns attacks on Quran despite Western states' rejection

The UN Human Rights Council condemned recent attacks on the Quran, despite Western countries' votes against the resolution.

The draft resolution was presented by Pakistan on behalf of the 57-member Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

The resolution, which calls for condemnation of attacks targeting the Quran and described them as "acts of religious hatred," was put to vote by the 47-member council.

The resolution was adopted with 28 countries voting in favor, 12 countries voting against it, and 7 countries abstaining at the 53rd regular UN Human Rights Council session.

Countries that voted in favor of the resolution included Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Cameroon, China, Ivory Coast, Cuba, Eritrea, Gabon, Gambia, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Morocco, Pakistan, Qatar, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.

Belgium, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Romania, the UK, and the US voted against the resolution.

Also, the UK, US and some European Union member countries rejected condemning the burning of the Quran during an urgent debate Tuesday at the UN Human Rights Council over the rising number of attacks against the Muslim holy book.

N. Korea fires suspected ICBM ahead of South Korea, Japan summit

North Korea fired a suspected intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) off its east coast on Wednesday, as leaders of South Korea and Japan were set to meet on the sidelines of a NATO summit to discuss threats, including the nuclear-armed North.

The launch came after heated complaints from North Korea in recent days, accusing American spy planes of violating airspace in its economic zones, condemning a recent visit to South Korea by an American nuclear-powered cruise missile submarine, and promising to take steps in reaction.

The suspected ICBM flew for 74 minutes to an altitude of 6,000 km (3,728 miles) and range of 1,000 km, Japan's chief cabinet secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said, in what would be the longest ever flight time for a North Korean missile.

China lashes back at NATO criticism, warns it will protect its rights

Beijing lashed back at NATO's accusation that China challenges the bloc's interests and security, and opposed any attempt by the military alliance to expand its footprint into the Asia-Pacific region.

In a strongly worded communique issued midway into a two-day summit in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius on Tuesday, NATO said the People's Republic of China (PRC) challenged its interests, security and values with its "ambitions and coercive policies".

"The PRC employs a broad range of political, economic, and military tools to increase its global footprint and project power, while remaining opaque about its strategy, intentions and military build-up," NATO heads of state said in their communique.

"The PRC's malicious hybrid and cyber operations and its confrontational rhetoric and disinformation target Allies and harm Alliance security."

The Chinese mission to the European said in a statement on Tuesday the China-related content of the communique disregarded basic facts, distorted China's position and policies, and deliberately discredited China.

"We firmly oppose and reject this," it said.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters at the summit that while China was not a NATO "adversary", it was increasingly challenging the rules-based international order with its "coercive behaviour."

"China is increasingly challenging the rules-based international order, refusing to condemn Russia's war against Ukraine, threatening Taiwan, and carrying out a substantial military build-up," he said.

However, NATO made no mention of Taiwan in its communique.

Cuba calls US nuclear submarine in Guantanamo Bay 'provocative escalation'

Cuban authorities on Tuesday said the U.S. recently had a nuclear-powered submarine at its military base at Guantanamo Bay and called the action a "provocative escalation" of tensions weeks after Washington alleged that there was a Chinese spy base on the island.

"The presence of a nuclear submarine there at this moment makes it imperative to wonder what is the military reason behind this action in this peaceful region of the world," Cuba's foreign ministry said in a statement. Washington did not confirm that there was a submarine at the naval base.

The ministry did not specify whether the submarine was armed. It said it was at the base from July 5 to July 8.

The U.S. State Department declined to give information about movements of military assets. It said Cuba was looking to distract from the two-year anniversary of largest street protests seen in Cuba since Fidel Castro's 1959 revolution. On Monday, Cuba had accused the U.S. of inciting that unrest.

"Attempts by the Cuban government to distract the world from the significance of this day are transparent and risible," a State Department official said.

Sudan rejects African peace bid and 'enemy' peacekeeping force

Sudan's army-aligned foreign ministry has rejected a regional summit proposal to consider deploying peacekeeping forces to protect civilians, dashing tentative hopes it might help efforts to end the country's three-month war.

The East African regional body, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), suggested on Monday that the rival sides consider the deployment of a regional force and new peace negotiations. The mediation offer was the first in weeks after talks in Jeddah were suspended by the United States and Saudi Arabia after numerous ceasefire violations.

The army boycotted IGAD's mediation plan and accused Kenya, which spearheaded it, of providing a haven to the Rapid Support Forces (RSF), the Sudanese military's challenger.

"The disrespect of IGAD towards the opinions of its member states will cause the Sudanese government to rethink the utility of its membership in the organisation," the foreign ministry said on Tuesday.

"The Sudanese government rejects the deployment of foreign forces in Sudan and will consider them enemy forces."

The power struggle between the army and paramilitary RSF since April 15 has killed more than 1,000 civilians and displaced 2.9 million, according to the United Nations.

Over 2,500 tourism projects worth \$7.2 billion underway across Iran

TEHRAN – More than 2,500 tourism projects worth more than 3.600 trillion rials (some \$7.2 billion) are currently underway across Iran, a tourism official said on Tuesday.

At present, 2,582 tourism-related projects including hotels, apartment hotels, eco-lodges, traditional restaurants, and tourist complexes are under construction in various provinces, Ahmad Tajari said.

The developing projects are worth more than 3.600 trillion rials, the official said.

Although Iran's tourism industry faced a 45% drop in its share of the GDP in 2020, the share of this industry in the economy experienced a 40% jump in 2021.

Based on the WTTC report, the share of the

tourism industry in the total economy of the Islamic Republic in 2022 also increased by 39.2 percent and reached 4.6 percent of its total economy.

Over the past couple of years, Iran's tourism has suffered from strict sanctions imposed by the Western world. For instance, there have been limitations on financial transactions, making it more challenging for foreign tourists to access certain services. The sanctions have also resulted in restrictions on international flights and reduced connectivity.

Despite those hardships, the ancient land still welcomes many tourists from around the world who are drawn to its rich cultural and historical heritage, ancient sites, vibrant cities, and beautiful landscapes.

Bolivian ambassador tours Azadi tower



TEHRAN – Bolivian ambassador to Iran Guadalupe Perez Ramos has paid a visit to Azadi tower, widely known as the most iconic landmark of the Iranian capital.

The envoy toured various spaces of the monument, including the interior attractions and its roof, and after the visit, she held a meeting with the tower's authorities, ISNA reported on Wednesday.

She emphasized increasing cultural and artistic interactions between Bolivia and Iran during her visit to the Azadi tower.

Houshyar Parsian, who presides over the Azadi complex, said his complex is ready to host a joint cultural event and Bolivia's National Day.

During the visit, the envoy was impressed by a photo of volunteered Iranian forces being dispatched from Azadi Square during the

eight years of the Sacred Defense (1980-88 Iran-Iraq war), and said, "This photo symbolizes the resistance of the Iranian people to achieve freedom."

In addition, during this visit, the Iranian Photography Museum, the Iranology Hall, and photographs of the resilience and steadfastness of soldiers were highlighted, alongside the national symbol of the country, catching the attention of the Bolivian ambassador in Iran.

Ramos stated: "I have visited tourist destinations in Iran, and I was amazed to see the unity of all Iranians at the Iranology Museum of Azadi tower."

At the end of this visit, it was decided that cultural and artistic programs will be held in the complex until August 6, coinciding with Bolivia's National Day.

Completed in 1971, the tower has a very distinct style that merges traditional Persian architecture with modern influences?—one can see this quite clearly by its big iwan arch that is covered with 8,000 pieces of white marble. Visitors can climb the tower using the elevator or stairs to get a nice view of the city from the top.

Azadi Square, where the tower sits, is very symbolic too: a lot of protests happened there during the 1979 Islamic Revolution, and it's still a popular site for demonstrations today.

Stone knives discovered in ancient Maya city near sacrificial altar

Archaeologists have found more than a dozen stone knives in an ancient Maya city near a sacrificial altar.

Researchers made the find in the pre-Hispanic settlement of Kuluba, in the southern Mexican state of Yucatán.

Excavations at the site uncovered 16 knives—three made from flint and 13 from obsidian—that were intended as some form of offering, researchers with the Mexican National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) told Spanish news agency EFE.

The Kuluba archaeological site contains several structures, including residences, a central plaza, and a palace measuring 20 feet tall, 180 foot long, and 49 feet wide that was in use between around 600-1050 CE, according to INAH.

The Maya civilization dominated what is now southeastern Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, and the western areas of El Salvador and Honduras for more than 3,000 years until the era of Spanish colonization.

They were notable for creating the only fully developed writing system in pre-Columbian America, their striking architecture and art, as well as their advanced calendar, mathematics, and astronomical system.

The knives that have recently been uncovered at the site were found to the southwest of Kuluba's central square.

"The importance of the offering is its ritual character," Alfredo Barrera Rubio, a researcher with INAH, told EFE. "These types of knives were used for sacrifices."

The knives were found near a stone slab that may have been used for sacrifices—both human and animal—as well as for offerings to the gods.

Analysis of the knives in question though revealed that they were never used, archaeologist Cristian Hernandez Gonzalez, who has been conducting research at the site, told EFE.

Nevertheless, the researcher highlighted the importance of the offerings, noting the significance of the materials involved.

"The offering is made up of 16 pieces: three of flint and 13 of obsidian, materials that are not available in the Yucatan peninsula, brought from faraway places, such as Guatemala and central Mexico," he said.

Last month, INAH announced that archaeologists had discovered an ancient Maya city hidden in the jungles of southern Mexico.

The site is located in the Balamku ecological reserve in the central part of Campeche state and contains several large pyramidal structures.

(Source: Newsweek)

Tehran considers waiving tourist visa requirements for 60 countries

TEHRAN – The Islamic Republic of Iran is considering a proposal for border easing based on which it may unilaterally drop visa requirements for passport holders of 60 states, the deputy tourism minister said on Wednesday.

Ali-Asghar Shalbafian said the tourism ministry's proposal to waive visa requirements with 60 countries is currently under consideration by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and relevant authorities.

Shalbafian stated that the proposal was submitted to the President's office after Ayatollah Ebrahim Raisi visited the tourism ministry.

The scheme recommends unilateral cancellation of visas with Muslim countries and neighboring states to increase international arrivals, the official said.

The Islamic Republic has recorded about 850,000 foreign tourist arrivals during the first two months of the year, which shows over 50 percent growth year on year, the tourism ministry announced earlier this month.

According to the statistics bureau of the World Tourism Organization, Iran's foreign tourist arrivals in 2022 rose 315 percent from a year earlier. Data showed around 4.1 million tourists came



to the country in 2022, while the Islamic Republic attracted 990,000 tourists in 2021.

The upsurge of foreign tourist arrivals in 2022 was three times the global average growth in this field. Nevertheless, Iran's share in attracting foreign tourists is still small, and only 0.4% of all foreign tourist trips in 2022 have been made to Iran, the report said.

Before the COVID pandemic, Iran's tourism had constantly been growing, reaching more than eight million visitors in

the Iranian calendar year 1398 (started March 21, 2019). That surge, however, helped prejudices to become thick and thin.

Iran's tourism, however, was already grappling with some challenges, on top of those Western "media propaganda" aimed at scaring potential travelers away from the Islamic Republic. Some say Iran is still somehow "unknown" for many potential travelers due to such a "media war."

Long shunned by Western travelers, the Islamic Republic

has steadily stepped-up efforts to use tourism, over the past couple of years, to help promote its international image battered by endless opposition mostly from the U.S.

The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 26 are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Museum of Paleolithic Age to open in northern Iran

TEHRAN – A new archaeological museum dedicated to the Paleolithic, also called the Old Stone Age, will be open in the northern city of Rudbar in Gilan province, which is bounded by the Caspian Sea.

The arrangement of a Paleolithic museum is almost complete in Rudbar, which is home to one of the oldest human settlements in Iran, the provincial tourism chief said on Tuesday.

The existence of various Paleolithic sites in the province is among the most important reasons for the establishment of a Paleolithic museum in Rudbar, the official said.

The lush green province, which is bounded by

the Caspian Sea, is a historically and culturally rich region that offers visitors a diverse range of experiences.

The Old Stone Age began with the first stone tools some 2.5 million years ago in Africa, and it ends with the Neolithic or 'New Stone Age', essentially at the beginnings of agriculture.

The Paleolithic is conventionally divided into Lower, Middle, Upper, and Terminal or Epi-Paleolithic periods. The Paleolithic is known almost exclusively from lithic artifacts—stone tools, classified in conventional ways into types that are diagnostic of the various periods.

According to Iranica, Iran may belong to a

second Lower Paleolithic tradition that extends across eastern Asia and is known for its choppers, chopping tools, and crude flakes.

There is virtually no information about the perishable tools and devices made of wood, fiber, or skins that may have been in use. Layers in archeological sites typically contain quantities of lithics, bones of animals that were hunted and consumed, and the ash from domestic fires.

Paleolithic sites in Iran are known primarily from caves and rock shelters in the central Zagros mountains, along with a few sites on the Caspian Sea coast and scattered sites on the desert plateau.

Tourism minister visits 11th-century Alamut fortress



TEHRAN – On Tuesday, Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Ezzatollah Zarghami paid a visit to the ancient Alamut fortress, which belonged to the Ismaili leader, Hasan ibn Sabbah, in the 11th century.

The minister closely visited the maintenance and restoration process of this treasured historical site, which is also a significant tourist destination in the Alamut region of Qazvin province.

During the visit, Zarghami walked an ascending path toward the fort, which is perched atop a steep hill, IRNA reported.

Moreover, the minister talked to several local people and was

informed about their issues, problems, and demands, the report said.

According to a local official, the Alamut region has a great capacity for sightseeing and tourism. "We believe that Alamut is the advantage of Qazvin's tourism and proper planning, and more attention to this area can lead to its growth and development at the national and provincial levels."

Alamut is famed for a well-fortified castle nested on top of a hill, once sheltering the followers of Sabbah, who was the spiritual leader of a heretical Ismaili sect, known as 'Assassins'. Narratives say Sabbah led a bizarre, much-feared mercenary organization

whose members were dispatched to murder or kidnap leading political and religious figures of the day.

Narratives say that the name Alamut, which means "eagle's nest", is associated with a regional 8th-century king who spied an eagle landing amid its rugged lofty crags and was inspired to build an impregnable fortress.

The valleys of Assassins were once the spine of Sabbah (1070-1124) and his followers as remnants of their history are everywhere, hiding in the ancient sight. In the 1930s, British-Italian explorer and travel writer Freya Stark described her exploration of the place in her book "The Valleys of the Assassins."

To reach the fortress, which is better known as Alamut castle, one should pass for nearly half along a narrow road surrounded by cherry and pomegranate orchards until a mass of gray-brown rock looms from the distance with fortifications perched atop a summit.

Assassins believed their actions would transport them to paradise. Supposedly, Sabbah cunningly cultivated such beliefs by getting his followers stoned on hashish (unknown to them) and then show-

ing them beautiful secret gardens.

The castle was captured by Mongol ruler Hulagu Khan in 1256 using diplomatic trickery, having earlier forced the surrender of the Ismailis' spiritual leader (Sabbah's successor).

Sabbah's rule from Alamut (which he renamed the City of Good Fortune) is shrouded in mystery and enigma. This is partly because most Ismaili records of the era were destroyed by the invading Mongols while the writings of their detractors survived.

For centuries, Alamut castle was almost forgotten and only returned to public consciousness with the publication of Stark's 1930s travel diary, Valleys of the Assassins. A copy of that recently reprinted volume makes a great companion for the trip.

Sandwiched between the dry and barren plain of Qazvin in the south and the densely forested slopes of the Mazandaran province in the north, Alamut, draws many travelers with particular objectives in mind: to find the past in the present, to learn about other cultures, to have a breath of fresh air, or simply to get some distance from work, to cite a few.

50% of tourists want sustainable holidays despite higher costs

Booking.com told Euronews that many people want to lower their carbon footprints when travelling, even if it means paying more.

As many as 50% of travelers say they do not mind paying more to have a more sustainable holiday, according to one of the world's largest online travel agencies.

Danielle D'Silva, the Head of Sustainability at Booking.com said on Tuesday that people are coming around to the thinking that environmentally conscious travelling is a good thing.

"We know that there are some barriers they're facing. So, while they have intent, there's also something getting in their way and that's the costs, or the perception of costs that is. Do they feel that sustainable options are too expensive and it's also the idea that there is too few options for them to choose from," she told Euronews.

"So, we have 50% of our travelers telling us that the sustainable options are too expensive. Interestingly there is also 50% of our travelers that are telling us that they're willing to pay more for a sustain-

ably certified experience or accommodation."

A Booking.com survey found that tourists want to travel in a more sustainable way. In 2023, three-quarters of respondents said they want to go on holiday with a lower carbon footprint, but they encounter obstacles in this process.

And the Destination Europe summit in the Belgian capital, where D'Silva was speaking, discussed exactly this.

(Source: w Euronews)

More than 8,000 plant species identified in Iran

TEHRAN - In terms of biological and genetic diversity, Iran is among the top twenty countries in the world, so more than 8,000 plant species and a significant number of exclusive species in Iran have placed important parts of the country in the world's biodiversity hotspots.

According to Ali Salajeheh - head of the Department of Environment - Iran is the origin of an important part of the valuable genetic reserves of the world and the primary and secondary center of diversity of countless important species, including wheat, apple, saffron, pistachio, rose, pomegranate, as well as medicinal plants.



Iran is the origin of an important part of the valuable genetic reserves of the world.

The policy of the Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization is in the exploitation of natural resources in the form of management plans. Therefore, in biological operations, the use of species that contain medicinal, aromatic, and edible products is prioritized.

Edible plants

Many plants, including Men-

tha, Rheum, Rhus, and Crocus, and a variety of shrub fruits, including Crataegus, Mespilus, and Berberis, are raw or cooked or they are used as a spice in all kinds of food. Since ancient times, these plants have been used in cooking various native and local dishes.

Medicinal Plants

In the pharmaceutical industry and traditional medicine, different parts of each plant, including roots, leaves, fruits, flowers, seeds, and plant oils are used in various forms such as poultices, infusions, syrups, and herbal extracts.

The effects of these plants can be seen in various ways, such as soothing against anti-inflammation, anti-flatulence, anti-nausea, anti-arteriosclerosis, anti-cough, anti-asthma, anti-parasitic, anti-blood pressure, blood purifier, diuretic, expectorant, laxative, and tonic.

Ornamental plants

There are plants that are used to decorate green spaces or as houseplants. These plants are kept for display or because of their special aroma. Sometimes, the unusual characteristics of these plants make them classified as ornamental plants. Nowadays, the cultivation of ornamental flowers and their export and import has become one of the most important incomes of countries.

Industrial plants

There are plants that are used in different industries or their modified varieties or their compounds and products are used as raw materials in different sectors of industry, cultivation, etc. Starch products, sugar products, oil products, essential oil products, colored products, and textile products are manufactured using industrial plants.

Soil stabilizing plants

These plants are usually found in steep areas or in deserts and stabilize soil and sand and play a decisive role in controlling floods and advancing deserts. Soil protection depends on the protection of vegetation and the destruction of vegetation means the destruction and loss of soil.

Low vegetation

Considering that Iran is one of the countries with low vegetation and only seven percent of its total area is covered with forests, the need to increase the country's green space is very important.

One of the very important reasons for increasing the country's vegetation is that Iran is the seventh carbon-producing country in the world and in terms of carbon absorption, Iran has a very low rank.

Due to the importance of the per capita increase in Iran's green spaces, a campaign titled "Green Iran, Strong Iran" and a national program for planting one billion saplings over the course of four years were launched.

Experts say tree planting is a climate change solution that doesn't require scientists to come up with technological solutions to draw carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere. It is available now. It is the cheapest one possible and every one of us can get involved.

The national budget bill for the current Iranian calendar year (March 2023-March 2024) has allocated a special line of credit for planting trees.

Women from the Leader's point of view-19

A revolution that paved women's way to cinema

By Sara Atta

TEHRAN - Iranian women have played an important role in gaining international recognition for Iranian art and in particular Iranian cinema.

After the victory of the Islamic Revolution of Iran and the fall of the Pahlavi regime in February 1979, not only the government system but also all the elements in the country underwent Revolution and transformation. The artistic fields were also influenced by the Revolution.

The change in the government system followed by the transformation of the management system of all institutions and organizations, as well as the change in the management method of the institutions responsible for cultural and artistic affairs, created a special opportunity for many artists who avoided attending the vulgar artistic atmosphere during the Pahlavi era, to participate in the artistic field and create valuable works.

Cinema and TV movies were among the fields that many female artists avoided because of the atmosphere that dominated the field during the Pahlavi era.

After the Revolution, there have been noticeable and fundamental changes in the attitude towards women and their presence in Iranian cinema. Such changes can be clearly found by observing the role and position of women in movies before and after the Revolution.

From the early years of film production in the country, Iranian cinema benefited from the attractiveness of female actors. The process continued until 1979.

After the Constitutional Revolution [took place between 1905 and 1911 during the Qajar dynasty], the traditional society of Iran, especially following the forced "modernist movements" of the Reza Shah Pahlavi regime [1925-1941], turned towards Western civilization. Although some changes appeared in the cultural and social structures of society, modernization was faced with the resistance of the traditional sections of society.

Cinema was only five years old when it came to the traditional society of Iran at the beginning of the 20th century. The arrival of cinema which was initiated by Mozaffar ad-Din Shah Qajar [1896-1907] was condemned as a blasphemous phenomenon during that era.

In the majority of pre-Revolution films, a woman was treated as a worthless and negligible figure and seldom reference was made to her positive and humanitarian qualities and values. In fact, in this series of films, a woman was a puppet in the hand of the filmmaker.

In this regard, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Seyyed Ali Khamenei said, "Unleashing libido and sexual desires is one of the simple and easy ways to confront the religions in different societies. The same ap-

proach was taken in Iran and they began to ban the Islamic veil (kashf-e-hijab), as well as expanding the consumption of alcohol. Another way to contain religion was by removing limits on the relations between men and women. New modern technologies like cinema, television and radio eased their way to realize their goals." (December 19, 1990)

After the Islamic Revolution, Iranian cinema was also revolutionized and the general nature of films and the role of women in the films changed in a positive manner.

Although during the eight years of Sacred Defense (Iraqi imposed war against Iran in 1980-1988), Iranian cinema was stagnant for a period of time, gradually filmmaking took pace and contrary to the pre-Revolution era educated women with different and new perspectives entered the field. During the years after Revolution, women gradually found their place and took steps to overcome their minor and marginal roles.

A look at post-Revolution cinema indicates that woman slowly moved away from the traditional mode where she was always only mother and wife and had a completely marginal role in the movies and becomes one of the main characters of the flick.

Ayatollah Khamenei in a meeting with artists and cultural officials of the country on July 13, 1994, advised the filmmakers and screenwriters to avoid imitation of Western methods in screenplays under the pretext of attracting the audience.

"Maybe thinking of attracting the audience of the opposite bloc, tempt you to imitate the work of the opposite bloc... For example, using females as the sexual factor to make the film attractive as the opposite bloc does, but this is not correct at all. I do not accept this. Not only I don't agree, but I imagine that this thought is wrong and this action is wrong."

Following the rise of the Iranian New Wave [refers to a new movement in Iranian cinema], there are now record numbers of film school graduates in Iran and each year more than 20 new directors make their debut films, many of them women.

In the last two decades, the percentage of Iranian film directors who are women has exceeded the percentage of women film directors in most Western countries.

Besides women involved in screenwriting and filmmaking, numerous award-winning Iranian actresses with unique styles and talents attract critics.

"The Revolution has paved the way for many to make progress. Unfortunately, in the past before the Revolution, the ground was not paved for many to make progress and become great and distinguished figures in different fields of writing and art. But today we can find lots of great men and women among our artists, authors, directors and poets. The Revolution has paved the way for them," the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said. (August 12, 1992)

Iranian students grab four medals at IBO 2023



TEHRAN - Iranian students grabbed two gold and two silver medals at the 34th edition of the International Biology Olympiad (IBO) held in the United Arab Emirates from July 3-11.

The IBO 2023 hosted 293 students from 76 countries.

Arman Forqani and Ali Qasemlou won the gold medals, while Kiyarash Behboudi and Aidin Naziri-Fard won the silver medals.

In the 33rd International Biology Olympiad, Iran's team was ranked first in the world by winning four gold medals.

The IBO 2022 was held in Armenia and attended by 65 countries.

Thanks to the achievement, Saman Hosseinkhani of Iran was selected as a member

of the International Biology Olympiad (IBO) Steering Committee, which represents the IBO association legally and manages its daily affairs.

Previously, Iranian students won 2 silver and 3 bronze medals in the International Physics Olympiad 2022, held online from July 11 to 14 and hosted by Switzerland, and won three gold medals and three silver medals, ranking 8th in the International Mathematical Olympiad, which was held in Oslo, Norway.

Over the past Iranian calendar year, which ended on March 20, Iranian students won seven gold medals, 11 silver medals, and nine bronze medals at dif-

ferent international Olympiads.

According to the Ministry of Education, Iranian students have won 192 gold medals, 371 silver medals, and 204 bronze medals since 2005, IRNA reported.

Recently, Iranian students grabbed two gold and two silver medals at the 54th International Chemistry Olympiad (IChO) which was held in Tianjin, China, on July 10.

Mohammad-Hossein Barekati and Ilia Kahvand won the gold medals, while Amir-Hossein Razavi and Amir-Mohammad Hosseini snatched the silver medals.

The International Chemistry Olympiad (IChO) is an annual competition for the world's most talented chemistry students at the secondary school level.

All participants are ranked based on their individual scores and no official team scores are given. Gold medals are awarded to the top 12% of students, silver medals are awarded to the next 22% of students, and bronze medals are awarded to the next 32% of students.

Attended by 83 countries, the 54th International Chemistry Olympiad was held with the slogan of 'Change, Creation, Fusion'.

The IBO 2023 hosted 293 students from 76 countries.

ENGLISH IN USE

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

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

In cooperation with the Forests, Range and Watershed Management Organization, some saplings and shrubs have been planted to slow down the wind since past three years, which cost 600 billion rials (nearly \$14 million).

The major salt particle hotspots in the province include Jabal Kandi village, Saporghhan, Urmia, Choopanloo and Miandoab.

کنترل ۸۰ درصد ریزگردهای نمکی دریاچه ارومیه

مدیر دفتر استانی ستاد احیای دریاچه ارومیه در آذربایجان غربی گفت: نزدیک به ۸۰ درصد از ریزگردهای نمکی حوضه آبریز دریاچه ارومیه کنترل شده است. فرهاد سرخوش در گفت‌وگو با خبرنگار افزود: خارج از بستر دریاچه ارومیه و در حوضه آبریز با همکاری منابع طبیعی و کاشت نهال و درختچه‌ها ریزگردهای نمکی کنترل می‌شود که از سال ۹۳ تا ۹۶ در این راستا ۶۰ میلیارد تومان هزینه شده است.

وی خاطر نشان کرد: کانون ریزگردها در استان شامل منطقه جبل کندی در ۴۵ کیلومتری ارومیه، منطقه سپورغان ارومیه، چوپان لو سلماس، و میاندوآب است که با نهال کاری تا حدود زیادی از این ریزگردها مهار شده‌اند.



Wetland hosting myriads of flamingos

Some ten thousand flamingos have migrated to one of the wetlands in the vicinity of Lake Urmia, northwest of Iran.

The water shortage crisis in other wetlands has prompted flamingos to come to the region.



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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

If the right usurped from us is given back to us we shall take it, otherwise we shall go on claiming it.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:09 Evening: 19:42 Dawn: 3:15 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:59 (tomorrow)

Sadi: works and life

Part 6

That same evening, Sadi encounters another friend in a garden, where they stay the night. Preparing to return to town the next morning, the companion begins gathering rose petals to take back as souvenirs, whereupon Sadi comments that ephemeral things make unsuitable objects of affection (a line Victor Hugo later borrowed for *Les Orientales*).

Sadi promises instead to compose a roseate book whose leaves would never fall to the tyranny of the autumn winds; that very day he completed a portion (fasl) of the book on social graces and the etiquette of conversation (dar hosn-e mo'asharat wa adab-e mohawarat).

This does not correspond precisely to any of the chapter (bab) rubrics provided in the table of contents of the *Golestan*, but if the eighth chapter (dar adab-e sohbat) is intended, this would mean that the book began as a series of maxims and admonitions rather than as a collection of anecdotes.

Sadi frequently introduces his anecdotes as things he saw or heard about during his travels, and while some of the anecdotes obviously draw upon literary tradition, relatively few have been traced to specific written sources.

The form of expression, at least, seems unique to Sadi, and the elaborate conceit of the *Golestan* as rose petals/florilegium pages gathered as souvenirs of a sojourn out of town reinforces the impression that the *Golestan*, like the *Bustan*, was offered as lessons learned in the course of the author's travels beyond Shiraz.

Much of what Sadi presents as personal experience in both these works has, however, been shown to be greatly embellished or wholly fabricated.

Sadi himself warns us that "he who has seen the world tells many lies" (chap. 1:32), but the temptation to cull biographical details has nevertheless proved irresistible. However, a more skeptical consensus about Sadi's historical reliability has been building, and it has been shown that the "Sadi" who appears as protagonist in over 40 stories in the *Golestan* should be understood primarily as a poetic persona, rather than as a chronicler of events.

Despite these inherent dangers, the *Golestan* affords some of what little we know first-hand about Sadi. The epilogue alludes to the Mongol sack of Baghdad and the toppling of the Caliphate, which occurred only months before the completion of the work in 1258.

Sadi comments about one poem in the introduction, in which a fifty-year-old persona reflects upon his life, that it mirrors his own personal situation.

Based upon this topos of age, it has generally been inferred that Sadi was about fifty years old at the time the *Golestan* was written, thus placing his birth in the year 1209, though Abbas Eqbal argues for a later date, between 1213 and 1218.

The *Golestan* includes over forty direct quotations from the Quran and the Hadith, and Sadi tells us he was of pious and ascetic bent in childhood, performing devotions well

into the night.

Sadi shares much in common with the tradition of popular homily, but seems uninterested in the literal or legalistic exegesis of traditional *feqh*, asserting that "the purpose of the revelation of the Quran is the acquisition of a good character, not the recitation of the written characters".

His concerns revolve around pragmatic situational ethics and personal integrity rather than religious law and systematic theology, reflecting the values of the social milieu of the *khanaqah* and *rebat* more than the *madrasa*.

Sadi casts numerous dervishes (*darvish*), pious men (*parsa*, *abed*), and ascetics (*zahed*) in the role of protagonist in the *Golestan*, and one of the longest chapters is devoted to the dervishes.

Though "dervish" often designates a stock Sufi character, Sadi sometimes uses it to refer more generally to the poor or meek. The dervishes and pious men of the *Golestan* are mostly anonymous characters, with few of the heroes of the Sufi tradition being celebrated by name.

Zul-Nun Mesri appears once and Sadi does make Abd al-Qader Gilani (d. 1165) the hero of one story; he also describes the grandson of Abulfaraj ibn Jawzi (killed in 1258), who taught in the Mostanseriya madrasa and became the *mohtaseb* in Baghdad from 1235, as one of his own teachers.

In the *Bustan*, Sadi also mentions learning from the "knowledgeable Shaikh" Shehab ad-Din Omar Sohravardi (d. 1234), who had promoted a *fotowwa*-inspired order among the merchant classes on behalf of the caliph.

Sadi's connection to the Sufi tradition seems, however, to have been loose and informal. He seems unconcerned with strict adherence to all its principles, and the breaking of his vow of silence to compose the *Golestan* perhaps implies that he never completed the rites of seclusion that would constitute initiation into a Sufi order.

While Sadi often counsels tolerant and altruistic humanism in the *Golestan* (e.g., "mankind are all members of one body"), his principles sometimes derive from conventional mores, or from simple comfort and convenience, and sometimes betray the prejudices of the day against black Africans, Jews, and women, etc.

Style and Criticism

Modern observers have independently remarked upon the perceived deficiencies of organization and consistency in the *Golestan* and in another work completed within fifteen years of it, the *Masnawi* of Jalal ad-Din Rumi, both of which illustrate religious, political and socio-ethical values through entertaining and edifying tales.

Remarks have been made about the "careless" and "hasty nature of the composition" of the *Golestan*, and how it "sags a bit in the middle", or how it is "more superficial and elaborately 'devised'" than the more earnest and carefully organized *Bustan*.

Source: *Encyclopedia Iranica*
To be continued

Iranian sculptor Parviz Tanavoli's works on display in Vancouver gallery

TEHRAN –A collection of artworks by prominent Iranian sculptor Parviz Tanavoli is currently on display in an exhibition in Vancouver Art Gallery in Canada.

Entitled "Parviz Tanavoli: Poets, Locks, Cages", the exhibit is the first major Canadian exhibition of works by the Iranian-born, Vancouver-based artist.

The exhibition features a captivating collection of over 100 significant works that showcase the artist's prolific six-decade career. It encompasses an extensive range of mediums, including sculpture, painting, printmaking, and mixed-media assemblages, providing a comprehensive and awe-inspiring insight into the artist's diverse practices.

"I would have loved to be a poet, but I am a sculptor. But my sculptures are a kind of poetry," the 86-year-old sculptor said in a statement for his exhibition.

Internationally celebrated, Tanavoli has lived in Vancouver for over thirty years while also maintaining a studio in Iran.

"He is among the foremost contemporary Iranian artists. He belongs to the Saqqakhana School, which emerged in the early 1960s in Iran, and has been influenced heavily by his country's history, culture and traditions," the gallery said in a statement for the exhibition.

"Iranian cultural practices underwent a transformation in the mid-twentieth century, which divided the art community into those who embraced a national artistic identity and those who



Iranian sculptor Parviz Tanavoli in an undated photo.

were heavily influenced by Westernization," reads part of the statement.

"Artists began reconceiving folk culture, Persian traditional motifs and Islamic iconography at a time of increasing global consciousness and technological development, forging a link between heritage and progress."

Tanavoli—who has been widely recognized as the only Iranian artist to fully capture the duality and interplay of Iran's pre-Islam and Islamic cultural identities created a visual symbology through his sculptural work that would have a lasting impact on modernism in Iran.

"Parviz Tanavoli: Poets, Locks, Cages" examines the layering of both sacred and secular histories

in Tanavoli's work, an integration that is crucial to understanding the development of modern sculpture in Iran.

The exhibit will run until November 19.

Tanavoli is a founding member of the Saqqakhaneh School, the first modern art movement in Iran. His practice incorporates modernist aesthetics with traditional motifs including handicrafts and Persian literature.

Tanavoli has showcased his artworks at major art centers across the world, including the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Tate Modern in London, Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, British Museum in London, Minneapolis Institute of Art and the Venice Biennale.

Numerous museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, British Museum, Tate Modern and the Museum of Modern Art in Vienna, are displaying his work in their collections.

Tanavoli has devoted himself to serious studies of Iranian nomad carpets and rugs, which have been published in the books "Shahsavan Iranian Rugs and Textiles" and "Persian Flatweaves".

Tanavoli is also known for his expansive body of works including paintings, prints, ceramics, rugs and jewelry. In addition, the artist is a highly-regarded collector and poet.

In his book, "Mania for Collecting", published in 2021, he tells about his passion for collecting strange and rare objects.

"Heidar Babaya Salam" published in English

TEHRAN –"Heidar Babaya Salam", the most famous Azerbaijani poetry collection of Iranian poet Shahriar, has recently been published in English by Tabriz University Publications.

Iranian scholar Behruz Azabdaftari is the translator of the poetry collection.

The majority of the words and phrases employed by Shahriar in this collection revolve around rustic customs, serving as a nostalgic nod to the linguistic heritage of generations past, Azabdaftari explained on Wednesday.

They possess a captivating allure, deeply rooted in local traditions, he added.

For a translator who is not familiar with the customs of the local villagers, and therefore not familiar with the words used to describe these customs, it can be challenging to fully comprehend and appreciate the profound meaning behind Shahriar's words, he explained.

"Once I grasped the essence and comprehended the concept, I encountered no difficulty as a translator in conveying these ideas into English," he noted.

"However, I must emphasize that the same meaning and concept can be expressed in various ways in the target language and the choice of which

expression is more captivating relies upon the translator's personal taste and talent."

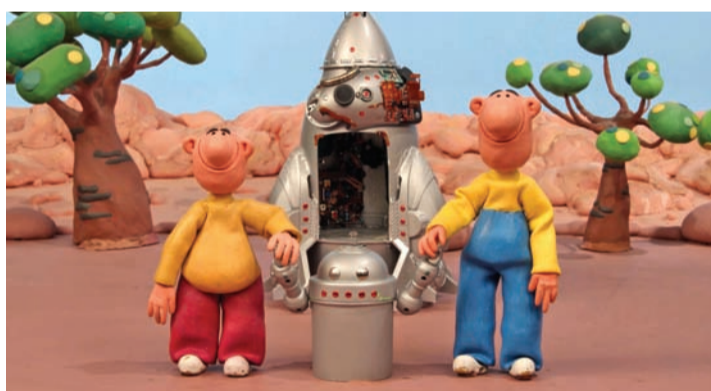
Mohammad-Hossein Behjat Tabrizi, known as Shahriar, is of the most prominent figure of contemporary Persian poetry.

He was mainly influenced by the poetry of Hafez, a Persian poet writing in the 14th century.

Shahriar, who also composed works in Azerbaijani, published his first book of poems in 1929 with prefaces by Persian literature scholars Mohammad-Taqi Bahar, Saied Nafisi and Pejman Bakhtiari.

His "Heidar Babaya Salam" highlights his birthplace, the village of Heidar Baba.

Iranian animations on screen at Italian festival



A scene from "Let's Make Peace" by Abdollah Alimorad

TEHRAN –A lineup of short animations by Iranian filmmakers is being screened in different sections

of Cartoon Club, an international festival of animated movies, comics and games, underway in the Italian

city of Ramini.

"Before Heaven" by Ahmad Heidarian, "Being Ten" by Fatemeh Jafari, "It Is A Gray, Gray World" by Seyyed Mohsen Purmohseni Shakib and "The Killing" by Mojtaba Purkhatun are on screen at the festival.

The lineup also includes "The Sprayer" by Farnush Abedi, "The Lovely Sky" by Amir Mehran, "Gun Play" by Barzan Rostami, "Soo" by Roya Salimi and "Swollen" by Zahra Khorshidi.

Also included are "Gamepad" by Azad Sadeqi, "Humeyra" by Seyyed Hossein Hashemi, "Irreversible" by Sheida Kashi and "Let's Make Peace" by Abdollah Alimorad.

"Animation is often considered a

minor child of cinema, but in reality it was born long before the invention of the Lumiere brothers," reads a part of the festival's statement.

"Its origins lie in all those ingenious techniques and technologies used by storytellers and entertainers to arouse wonder before the invention of the cinematograph: the ancient Chinese shadows and more modern instruments such as zootropes or optical theaters."

"However, the basic need that accompanies the world of animated drawing is always the same: to arouse emotions and wonder," it continues.

The festival will be running until July 16.

Iranian bookstores host "Post-Cinematic Theatre and Performance"

TEHRAN – A Persian translation of Piotr Woycicki's "Post-Cinematic Theatre and Performance" has recently appeared in Iranian bookstores.

Nimaj Publication released the Persian translation of the book by Shabnam Moutabi.

A cinema without cameras, without actors, without screen frames and without narratives almost seems like an antithetical impossibility of what is usually expected from a cinematic spectacle. The book defines an emergent field of post-cinematic theatre and performance, challenging our assumptions and expectations

about theatre and film.

Piotr Woycicki is a Lecturer in Theatre and Performance Studies at Aberystwyth University, UK. His previous publications include articles in the *Journal of Beckett Studies* and the *Journal of Performance Research*.

Anton Chekhov's "Three Sisters" on stage in Tehran

TEHRAN – "Three Sisters", a play by the Russian author and playwright Anton Chekhov, is on the stage at Tehran's Malak theater hall.

Milad Soleymanlu is the director of the play, which will be on stage until July 30.

Milad Soleymanlu, Asal Hamidian, Faran Javadi, Parisa Sanei, Mandana

Javadi, and Mojtaba Torkaman are among the cast members of the play.

"Three Sisters" is a Russian drama in four acts by Anton Chekhov who was a leading playwright of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries known for short stories. He was also a doctor, balancing his medical practice with his writing. Three Sisters, which premiered in

1901, is a play he worked on as part of a collaboration with Constantin Stanislavski and the Moscow Art Theater.

The Prozorov sisters (Olga, Masha, and Irina) yearn for the excitement of Moscow; their dreary provincial life is enlivened only by the arrival of the Imperial Army. The sisters' dreams of a new life are crushed when

their brother marries a woman they consider ill-bred and mortgages the house.

The characters of Three Sisters are outstanding examples of Chekhovian boredom, longing, and listlessness. The playwright portrays the sisters' social aspirations with sensitivity and irony, using them as emblems of Russian middle-class pretensions and despair.