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Exclusive

The Secret Talks that Doomed Malley

► Page 3

Report

China urges NATO to stop groundless provocative rhetoric

By Ali Karbalaee

TEHRAN- China has strongly denounced accusations by NATO that it poses a challenge to the interests and security of the military alliance. Beijing says the military bloc "must not seek to sow chaos here in the Asia-Pacific".

While the two-day NATO summit in Vilnius, Lithuania, was earmarked for wide ranging discussions over Ukraine, the summiters' final communique pointed a lot of fingers at China.

The NATO communique released on Tuesday mentioned China a dozen times and claimed again that China poses a "systemic challenge" to Euro-Atlantic security.

NATO also accused China of not condemning Russia for the war in Ukraine. This is while the facts on the ground show the majority of the international community have not condemned Russia for the Ukraine crisis. ► Page 5

Iran plans to barter petchem products for basic goods with Africa

TEHRAN - Iranian president Ebrahim Raisi has announced an agreement with some African countries to barter petrochemical products for basic goods, Shana reported.

Raisi, who has returned to Tehran from a three-nation Africa tour, said on Friday that facilitating the import of raw materials and implementation of extraterritorial cultivation projects were also among the objectives of his visits to the continent.

"Like Iran's relations with the Asian states and other countries of the world, our ties with Africa are important and relations with this continent, the land of opportunities, should not be ignored," he noted.

"The world is not limited to just a few Western countries, and we seek to have relations with all states in the world," said the president and reiterated, "To us, the African Continent is as important as the American and Asian continents."

During Raisi and his delegation's landmark African tour, 21 documents on cooperation in different fields were signed between Iran and the three countries of Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

The African tour was the first by an Iranian president in more than a decade aimed at diversifying relations amid U.S. sanctions.

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. ► Page 4

Leader expresses condolences to Hezbollah chief on Loss of Lebanese scholar



TEHRAN- Following the demise of Lebanese scholar Sheikh Afif Al-Nablusi, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei on Friday sent his condolences to Hezbollah Secretary General Seyed Hassan Nasrallah.

The Leader prayed to the All-Powerful God, pleading for mercy and blessings for the late scholar.

The Leader's message read as follows:

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Dear brother, Hujjat al-Islam wal-Muslimeen Mr. Seyed Hassan Nasrallah (may God preserve his honor),

Salam Alaykum and may God's mercy be upon you, ► Page 2

America's repetitive show in the Persian Gulf this time via F-16

Iran insists that presence of U.S. in the Persian Gulf waterway poses a perilous danger to the security in the region.

TEHRAN- The U.S. saber-rattling march of power in West Asia is nothing novel but has maintained a new façade by the deployment of F-16s in a bid to allegedly curtail the military hand of Iran.

A senior defense official said on Friday that the United States is boosting its deployment of fighter planes in the vital Strait of Hormuz to defend ships from Iranian alleged snatchings and that the U.S. is getting more worried about the developing relations between Iran, Russia, and Syria in West Asia, according to Associated Press.

The official told reporters at the Pentagon that this weekend, additional F-16 fighter planes will join the A-10 attack aircraft that have been patrolling the Persian Gulf region for almost a week.

The news comes as Iran and other Persian Gulf littoral nations have emphasized time and time again that the deployment of foreign forces will only increase regional instability and that the security of the region should be upheld by the littoral states.

AP purportedly said that after Iran attempted to seize two oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz last weeks, Washington is beefing up its military presence in the region.

In response to the U.S. announcement, an informed Iranian defense source denied the charges that Tehran was attempting to seize control of two ships.

In April, Iranian authorities detained two tankers in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman within a week, one for a legal complaint by a private plaintiff and the another for a marine mishap involving an Iranian fishing ship.

The U.S. Navy has frequently intercepted oil cargoes and ships under Iranian control that were headed to other nations in recent years, claiming that its restrictions against Iran's oil exports are justified.

Iran maintains that the presence of U.S. military ships in the Persian Gulf waterway poses a perilous danger to the security in the region. ► Page 2

Interview



Arab leaders know their attempt to oust Assad failed

By Sommayeh Ebrahim Khalili

TEHRAN - Khaled Manzlawi, the Assistant Secretary-General for International Political Affairs at the Arab League, just recently met with Syria's permanent representative to the Arab League at the pro-Arab headquarters in Cairo.

During the meeting, the assistant congratulated the Syrian delegate on assuming his position at the Arab League, ► Page 5



Report Lenj boats: Is UNESCO status enough to save a cultural heritage?

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN - In 2011, the traditional skills of building and sailing Iranian Lenj boats gained a place on UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

However, over the past couple of years, there have been critical voices warning about an imminent threat to that time-honored know-how, which is tied to many cultural values. ► Page 6

Iraq deploys more troops on border with Iran

TEHRAN -Iraq has moved to deploy more border guards and surveillance equipment to regions on the border with Iran.

The Iraqi Ministry of the Interior said on Friday that it will deploy part of the troops stationed in Sulaymaniyah to the border with Iran. It also announced the installation of dozens of turrets and cameras and a plan to establish border posts on the border with Iran, according to Iraqi News Agency (INA).

The head of the ministry's public relations office, Sa'ad Ma'an, said, "Under the guidance of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, and with the efforts and follow-up of the Minister of Interior, there was coordination with the Kurdistan region to dispatch the 21st Border Guard Brigade in Sulaymaniyah Governorate to the border with Iran." ► Page 3

TEHRAN PAPERS

Tel Aviv, the engine of discord in Baku-Tehran relations

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

In a note, Shargh discussed the anti-Iran approach followed jointly by Israel and Baku following the recent visit by the Israeli war minister to Baku. It wrote: While Iran's foreign policy is premised on de-escalation with the countries of the region and even the West, Baku-Tehran relations are still on the path of tension from the Azerbaijani side. In the midst of such a situation, Israel undoubtedly acts as an engine of disunion between Azerbaijan and Iran. According to experts, every time Iran and Azerbaijan are on the path of de-escalation, interaction and improvement of relations, Israel, by inventing some bogus claims and a trip by one of its officials, reinjects tension into the relations between Tehran and Baku. By strengthening political, diplomatic, military, security, defense, economic, and commercial relations, as well as intensifying cultural and media relations, Israel is trying to use Azerbaijan as a strategic leverage similar to the role of Lebanon to monitor and pressure Iran. According to experts, the weapons that Israel has sold to Baku are not for confrontation with Armenia, but the ultimate goal is to turn Azerbaijan into an arms depot for anti-Iran purposes, similar to the role and position of Lebanon in the north of the occupied territories.

Siasat-e-Rooz: Tehran-Moscow unity essential in face of NATO dangerous scenario for Caucasus

In an analysis Siasat-e-Rooz wrote: Changes in the region show the carefully planned project of NATO against the two countries of Iran and Russia, which makes the convergence of the parties in the Caucasus even more imperative. The Republic of Azerbaijan, with the behind-the-scenes support of NATO and the West, is seeking to dominate parts of Armenia's territory, which practically challenges the geopolitics of the region, and the end result would be surrounding Iran, Russia, and finally China, which would result in many negative consequences. Unfortunately, the serious problems and complications of the conflict in Ukraine have caused the Caucasus region to be neglected to some extent. With the least neglect the Caucasus will turn into a scene of conflict and competition between the U.S., Israel, Europe and their agents, which will endanger the interests of Russia and Iran. They will intensify tensions in the sensitive region of the South Caucasus and destabilize the security of the entire region. They will not limit themselves to the South Caucasus and try to find a foothold in the North Caucasus and most importantly the Caspian Sea and its surrounding countries. The Caspian Sea belongs only to the littoral countries and no one must be allowed to find a foothold in this very important sea.

IRGC intelligence unit provides details about riot mastermind in southeastern Iran

TEHRAN- A member of the so-called Jaish ul-Adl terrorist group, who was provoking violent riots and other acts of violence in Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan province last September, has been detained by the intelligence units of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps.

On Thursday night, the IRGC's Salman Base released a statement in which it asserted that terrorists, separatists, rogue elements, and agents of foreign intelligence agencies were responsible for disrupting regional unity and security by inciting crowds during the unrest in the provincial capital of Zahedan.

The regional IRGC intelligence units kept a close eye on the situation, identifying key leaders and instigators of the protests.

Among them was Ali Narouei, also known as Salahuddin, who was recognized and closely followed.

The troops were able to hack into his phone and discover close connection with anti-Iran terrorist groups. During the September riots in Zahedan, Salahuddin maintained contact with a high-profile member of the Jaish ul-Adl terrorist group called Qader, according to the statement.

Qader directed him to deliver guns and live ammunition to rioters and provocateurs via social media channels.

Salahuddin then departed southern Iran and found sanctuary in Dalbandin, Pakistan's southwestern region of Balochistan, in a hideaway maintained by a Jaish ul-Adl terrorist named Taher Shiranzaei.

Salahuddin was eventually transferred,

Vatan-e-Emrooz: Italian reception of terrorism

In a note, Vatan-e-Emrooz addressed Italy's invitation to Maryam Rajavi, the leader of the terrorist MKO group, and said: Supporting and hosting the Iranian opposition and cooperating with the Hypocrites (MKO) has been the anti-Iran policy of Western countries in the last few years. Months have passed since the end of last year's riots, and the main supporters of the current chaos and terror in Iran, including the United States and France, have stopped supporting the opposition groups, at least for now, due to the failure of Iran's sabotage project, but it seems that Italy is still doubtful that the sabotage project has failed several times. Italy is at the beginning of the path of supporting and interacting with the Hypocrites that neither America nor European countries will accept the risk of supporting them. Basically, the actions of the Italian parliament regarding open interference in Iran's internal affairs in the world of diplomacy and foreign policy are interpreted as open hostility and direct action against the national security of a country. So Italy must accept the possible consequences of its reckless behavior.

Iran: The West's attempt to maintain power by distorting the news

The Iran newspaper analyzed the Western media campaign against President Ebrahim Raisi's tour of three African states of Kenya, Uganda and Zimbabwe. In an opinion piece, it wrote: Limiting and depriving the country of the opportunity to diversify its relations in addition to reducing its political and economic maneuvers is desirable for America and Europe. Raisi's trip to Africa caused the Westerners to play down the importance of the visit through propaganda and media warfare in order to keep Africa exclusively for themselves. Analysis of the content of Persian-language media affiliated with the West in the week leading to the president's trip to Africa shows that their focus was on presenting the relationship between Iran and Africa as a "cost for Iran and a profit for Africa". From the beginning of his presidency, Raisi has been seeking to diversify import of basic goods; for this purpose, joint plans have been launched with different countries and this strategy was followed during the Africa trip. In contrast to this strategy, these media outlets resorted to distortion of the visit with the purpose of creating an Afrophobia and repulsion among the Iranian society and present a false narrative in order to make the country's foreign relations hostage to the will of a few bullying countries.

along with other terrorists, to Jaish ul-Adl's primary training camp.

During his stay, he went through a six-day training program that taught him how to employ mechanical, electromagnetic, and remotely controlled explosives, as well as advanced ways of targeted assassination.

Following his training, Salahuddin made contact with another Jaish ul-Adl terrorist member known as Zaker Sheikhzadeh, alias Mullah Omar, who was in charge of identifying senior Iranian security and intelligence officers in Sistan-Baluchestan region.

Salahuddin was subsequently assigned an assassination mission in Zahedan.

Salahuddin unlawfully entered Iran through border on April 5, intending to commit terrorist actions.

However, he was quickly recognized and detained by the IRGC's intelligence forces before he could carry out any such intentions.

After congregational prayers on September 30, 2022, terrorists carried out gun assaults on Zahedan police stations and public areas, killing 19 persons and injuring another 20.

In addition, they destroyed a bank, an emergency station, and a fire engine in the city. Security forces' prompt action stopped the culprits' attempts to start further riots.

The separatist terrorist group Jaish ul-Adl claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement.

The province of Sistan-Baluchestan, which borders Pakistan and Afghanistan, has recently seen a number of terrorist strikes that targeted both civilians and security officers.

America's repetitive show in the Persian Gulf this time via F-16

From page 1 ► Just recently the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Navy seized a foreign oil ship carrying over a million gallons of illicit fuel in the Persian Gulf.

The large haul of illicit petroleum was intercepted on June 6 at Iran's southern maritime border, the commander of the IRGC Navy's second naval zone told reporters.

The foreign vessel was getting military assistance from U.S. troops, according to General Ramezan Zirahi, but alertness, professional action, power, and precise response by the IRGC Navy aborted the Americans' unlawful and unprofessional actions in the Persian Gulf.

He said that as Iranian soldiers were inspecting the "NADA 2" oil ship, which was systematically smuggling gas oil out of Iran, American forces engaged in a number of risky and unprofessional actions to thwart the legitimate seizure of the fuel.

During the operation, the IRGC servicemen discovered that the oil tanker's captain was calling the U.S. command and control center to make plans for an escape, according to General Zirahi.

In an attempt to thwart the seizure operation, the Americans sent two A-10 combat aircraft, a P-8A reconnaissance plane, two Hawk-C helicopters, an MQ-9 unmanned aerial vehicle and patrol vessels to the area, the IRGC general explained.

Also in May, an Iranian oil ship that had been illegally stolen by a foreign firm five years ago was retaken in a joint operation by the IRGC Navy and the Intelligence Ministry.

Leader expresses condolences to Hezbollah chief on Loss of Lebanese scholar

From page 1 ► I offer my condolences on the passing of the mujahid scholar, Mr. Hujjat al-Islam wal-Muslimeen Sheikh Afif Nabulsi, to his honorable family and all the Lebanese and Palestinian mujahids. I ask God to bestow His mercy and forgiveness on him. I ask God to bestow health, success, and ever-increasing honor upon you.

May God's greetings and mercy be upon you.

Raisi, Amir Abdollahian send message of condolences

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian have also offered condolences to Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah over the demise of Al Nabulsi.

In a statement released on Friday, Raisi expressed sympathy to the family of Sheikh Al-Nabulsi.

Amir Abdollahian also sent on Friday condolences to the family of Sheikh Nabulsi, the Palestinian people, and the Hezbollah leader.

Iran criticizes Israel for using 'iron fist' to suppress protesters

TEHRAN- Unmasked Zionist tyrants have come under censure from Iran for using an "iron fist" to suppress demonstrators who wanted to oppose Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's regime.

Nasser Kanaani, the spokesperson for Iran's Foreign Ministry, said on Friday that "the occupying and criminal Zionists tried for many years to portray their fake regime as the most democratic entity in West Asia."

But the oppressive Zionist leaders are now controlling the unrest with an "iron fist," Kanaani said.

According to the Iranian spokesperson, the protest lead-

ers have warned Netanyahu that Israel is perched precariously close to a cliff.

Israel has seen thousands-strong anti-regime rallies over the past several weeks in Tel Aviv and other cities. The main issue is Netanyahu's contentious desire to restructure the judiciary.

The plan seeks to scrap a number of the Supreme Court's powers to make it incapable of overriding the decisions made by the far-right cabinet.

It also seeks to give sweeping powers to the political elite in the process of selecting judges for the court.

Netanyahu was forced to put the proposal on hold in March in order to allow for discussions on the matter.

However, seeing the negotiations as fruitless, the prime minister re-launched his campaign to push through the reform package in June, touting new moderate suggestions.

The idea for judicial reform raised concerns from President Isaac Herzog in March that it would result in "civil war."

Back in June, at a meeting with Ismail Haniyeh, head of the Hamas political bureau, the new Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), Ali Akbar Ahmadian, noted that



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

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

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

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

The Islamic Republic has said

unequivocally that the Persian Gulf would never be a safe haven for smugglers.

As a result, several assaults on Iranian and international tankers have been hindered by the IRGC Navy over the last years.

Over the last 4 decades, the U.S. has made attempts to impede Iran's diplomatic and military progress but has failed in the totality of its aims.

In line with this policy regard, the U.S. navy has conducted a myriad of plots to halt the flow of oil in the Persian Gulf by confiscating oil tankers but has blamed Iran for its actions. However, they are trapped in oblivion that Iran is voracious to encounter all kinds of threats.

In other words, Iranians never kowtow to bullying. In other words, threats have no place in the courageous hearts of Persian people.

Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri, commander of the IRGC Navy, stated in June that since Iran and its southern neighbors are working together there is no need for trans-regional forces to protect the strategic waterway of the Persian Gulf.

Admiral Tangsiri said the countries in the region own the Persian Gulf and are responsible for ensuring its security.

Iran has welcomed and will continue to welcome the strategic principle of allying and forming the community of Persian Gulf countries, he said, adding Tehran's policy has always been de-escalation and this has been demonstrated in practice.

He reaffirmed the IRGC Navy's valiant forces' successful accomplishments in their fundamental duty to stabilize the security of the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz.

The senior diplomat praised Nabulsi for giving his life to promote Muslim unity and for aiding the Lebanese and Palestinian resistance movements against the Zionist regime in his statement.

Sheikh Al-Nabulsi, a well-known scholar in Lebanon and an outspoken advocate of the Islamic Resistance movement against Israel's occupying regime, died on Friday (July 14) after years of sickness.

resistance is the best method to end the more than 75-year Zionist occupation of Palestine.

Ahmadian said that the resistance's involvement in the Saif Al Quds battle was a significant turning point that led to tactical successes for the resistance movement.

The resistance's unity and support for the Islamic Jihad movement in this war disappointed the Zionist regime, Ahmadian stated.

He noted that the Palestinian resistance, which previously engaged in combat in Gaza to protect itself, has now reached a stage of readiness as it increases its presence there.

Army chief says Iran sensitive to every square inch of its land

TEHRAN- The Armed Forces keep voraciously defending every square inch of the Iranian land, the chief commander of the Army has said.

Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi made the comments on Thursday in response to a recent joint statement by the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Russia concerning the three Iranian islands of the Greater and Lesser Tunbs and Abu Musa in the Persian Gulf.

In their statement, the GCC and Russia supported a settlement through "bilateral negotiations or the International Court of Justice."

In response to the UAE-backed statement, Mousavi stated, "We are very sensitive about every iota of our country's soil and whatever is said occasionally about the properties of the Islamic Republic."

In order to defend territorial integrity, he ordered the Army's land, air, and naval units to stay more alert and attentive.

"We will never neglect for a moment protecting the Islamic Republic's borders and interests,



from the northernmost to the southernmost spot of the sacred land of Iran and will safeguard the country's territorial integrity with full force," Mousavi said while speaking at a meeting with a number of Army commanders.

The commander continued by saying that Iran enjoys enormous dignity as a result of national strength rooted in the Armed Forces' determination and readiness to defend the in-

terests of the Islamic establishment.

Numerous historical, legal, and topographical records in Iran and elsewhere in the globe attest to the historical Iranian ownership of the three Persian Gulf islands of Abu Musa, the Greater, and the Lesser Tunbs.

But the United Arab Emirates has claimed ownership over the islands time and again.

The islands were placed under British rule in 1921, but on November 30, 1971, Iran regained control of the islands a day after British troops departed the region and two days before the UAE was set to become an official federation.

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian dismissed the joint GCC-Russia statement in a tweet on Wednesday in Persian, stating that Tehran will not compromise on its position over its territorial integrity.

"We do not pull any punches with any side over the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iran," Amir Abdollahian tweeted.

The secret talks that doomed Malley

By Sadra Torabi

TEHRAN – The U.S. envoy for Iran, Rob Malley, has been placed on unpaid leave due to his secret talks with a senior Iranian diplomat in the UN and his suspicious interactions with unofficial advisors of Iranian descent, the Tehran Times can reveal.

Over the last few days, Malley has been making global headlines due to the suspension of his security clearances. In the latest development, the Twitter account of the office of the U.S. envoy for Iran removed the profile photo of Malley, indicating that the embattled Malley has either been formally dismissed or the FBI probe into his case will take longer time than expected.

Malley has not made any official statement on his ordeal. And the Biden administration has so far refrained to explain the circumstances of his unpaid leave. Press report suggest that Malley was placed on leave earlier this year but no date has so far been announced for that. The Tehran Times has been the first to report the exact date of Malley's leave, which began on 21 April.

Citing a source familiar with the matter, the Tehran Time earlier said that on April 21, Malley was informed by the Diplomatic Security Department that he had difficulty in preserving and maintaining classified documents, and his clearance was suspended. His work-related accesses were cut off at this time. However, to prevent the matter from becoming public, some of his limited and non-critical accesses were maintained, such as his communication with the families of American prisoners in Iran.

After several weeks, Malley is sent on forced and unpaid leave, which is not exactly a dismissal. During this period, Iran and the US held confidential negotiations



in Oman, and the US sent Brett McGurk, a member of the National Security Council who is close to Jake Sullivan, to Oman.

Ironically, April marked the second anniversary of the resumption of talks over reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). During the Trump administration, which unilaterally withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018, Malley has been a staunch proponent of the tattered deal. But when he took the reins in the Biden administration, he pursued more or less the same goals of the previous administration, something that occluded progress toward reviving the JCPOA.

Following the Tehran Times' recent report on the downfall of Rob Malley, many questions and requests were directed to the Tehran Times querying about the main reason for the suspension of Malley's clearances. Although the Diplomatic Security Department of the U.S. has so far made no private or public statements in this regard, a source at the U.S. State Department told the Tehran Times that the main problem of Malley

stems from his secret talks with Iranian Ambassador to the UN Saeid Iravani and his meetings with some of Iranian-American figures in the U.S.

As reported earlier, in what amount to a negotiation tactic, Malley has been in regular contact with various circles and people to advance his policies regarding Iran. Through these contacts, Malley sought to influence the calculations of the Iranian negotiating team.

These people include Ali Vaez, Malley's former right-hand man at the Crisis Group; Vali Nasr, a professor at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies; and Trita Parsi, the current colleague of Malley's son at the Quincy Institute. They are Iranian Americans whose presence in Democrats' Iran diplomacy during the Obama and Biden administrations is quite clear. Thanks to their connection with the former Iranian negotiators, some of whom are still present in the current negotiating team; they play the role of broker and middleman between Iran and the Democratic administration of the U.S.

But what is certain is that

Robert Malley, who has had secret access and security clearances at the highest levels of the U.S. government for years, has been in full coordination with the U.S. State Department in promoting this negotiation tactic.

Perhaps the reason why U.S. Secretary of State Tony Blinken did not meet and talk with Malley is because the U.S. top diplomat does not want the scope of this scandal to expand and tarnish his reputation.

At any rate, what is clear is that Malley's dismissal was not due to a disagreement between the Secretary of State team and the National Security Advisor team.

These two teams have worked very well together to keep this issue secret and exploit it in the recent negotiations with Iran over the last three months. In fact, Malley's extreme closeness to his unofficial advisors of Iranian origin, which was perhaps his greatest strength and the reason for his appointment to this position in the new American government, has now become his Achilles' heel and caused his downfall.

Iraq deploys more troops on border with Iran



From Page 1 ► TEHRAN -Iraq has moved to deploy more border guards and surveillance equipment to regions on the border with Iran.

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The head of the ministry's public relations office, Sa'ad Ma'an, said, "Under the guidance of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, and with the efforts and follow-up of the Minister of Interior, there was coordination with the Kurdistan region to dispatch the 21st Border Guard Brigade in Sulaymaniyah Governorate to the border with Iran."

He added that 50 concrete turrets and 40

cameras have been installed, and 47 border posts will be built on the Iraq-Iran borderline. This work is part of the border control process, and during the next week, specialized contracting companies will be invited to submit bids, and then implementation will start, he continued.

He noted, "Also, next week, the border cameras monitoring center will be opened, which will use 130 cameras, and work is continuing to add more. These cameras provide surveillance from the Sinjar district and the Iraq-Syria border, and extend along the border. A large surveillance hall will be opened, and these cameras will be used for security work."

The Iraqi cabinet of ministers decided earlier to allocate 10 billion dinars to the Ministry of Interior, to build border posts on the Iraq-Iran border within the Kurdistan region to prevent infiltration and smuggling. It also announced that it is working to complete the border posts on the Iraq-Turkey border.

Iran and Iraq signed a security agreement earlier this year that obligates Iraq to exert more control on its border with Iran and work toward disarming Iranian Kurdish separatist groups based in Iraqi Kurdistan.

The agreement was signed in March by Ali Shamkhani, the then-secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, and Iraqi National Security Advisor Qassem al-Araji.

The foreign ministers of Iran and Iraq recently met in Baku and underlined to implement the security agreement.

The security agreement between Iran and Iraq and its complete implementation were other issues that Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian raised in the meeting. The Iraqi foreign minister noted his country's seriousness about regional stability and security, according to the Iranian foreign ministry.

Recently, General Mohammad Bagheri, the chief of joint staff of Iran's armed forces, said Iraq had vowed to disarm Iranian Kurdish separatists based in Iraqi Kurdistan by September. If Iraq fails to act on its word, Bagheri warned, Iran will take action.

Iran fired missiles against the headquarters of these groups in September 2022. And Bagheri warned that this time Iran will launch a tougher operation.

Since last year, Iran and Iraq have held several rounds of security talks to disarm the Kurdish groups but Iraq has so far failed to take a concrete action in this regard.

Pakistan army chief meets Iranian military chief

He also pointed to the importance of developing military relations between the two countries and emphasized increasing educational interactions and common defense and security relations between the two countries at the regional level.

The Pakistan Army commander is also expected to meet with other officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The meeting comes after several incidents at the Pakistan-Iran border. The Iranian province of Sistan-Baluchistan, which borders Pakistan, has witnessed several cross-border attacks in recent weeks.

Also, Iran and Pakistan are

cementing their military and economic cooperation. In late June, the head of the Iranian military delegation joined the graduation ceremony and parade of the Pakistan Navy.

Rear Admiral Arya Shafqat Rudsari, the commander of the Imam Khomeini Naval University of Noshahr who headed the Iranian military delegation, attended the Pakistani Navy's graduation ceremony and parade.

Shafqat Rudsari also discussed ways to increase educational collaboration between the two nations with Rear Admiral Mohammad Khalid, commander of the Pakistan Naval Academy.



Both parties emphasized collaboration in education, student exchange, and collective effort of naval delegations during the meeting.

The commander of the Pakistan Navy Academy praised the Iranian military delegation's attendance at

the parade and graduation ceremony of navy officers.

He characterized it as evidence of the strong ties that bind the two nations together and of their shared dedication to upholding maritime security and stability.

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Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

3

SPORTS

Freestyle runners-up at U15 Asian Wrestling C'ships

TEHRAN – Iran finished in second place at the U15 Asian Wrestling Championships held in Amman, Jordan.

The Iranian wrestlers won one gold, four silver and four bronze medals and came second with 171 points.

Amir Mohammad Zarrinkam won a gold medal in the 57kg.

Amir Abbas Ramezani in 41kg, Sam Arshad in 44kg, Ariobarzan Mohammadi in 62kg and Arsham Vahabian in 68kg seized four silver medals.

Matin Khandan in 38kg, Arian Mehrzadadeh in 52kg, Ali Taherlou in 75kg and Kavian Tavahi in 85kg took four bronze medals.

India finished in first place with 173 points, while Japan came third with 145 points.

Nokhodi takes gold at 2023 Polyak Imre Memorial

TEHRAN – Mohammad Nokhodi claimed a gold medal at the 2023 Polyak Imre & Varga Janos Memorial in Budapest, Hungary on Friday.

The Iranian 79kg freestyler started the competition with a 11-0 win over Austrian Simon Marchl and then defeated American Chandler shane Marsteller 10-0 and Georgian Avtandil Kentchadze 6-2 in his way to the final.

Nokhodi beat Georgian Vladimeri Gamkrelidze 3-0 in the final bout.

The ranking points play a significant role in setting the wrestlers' seeding at major tournaments, such as the World Championships.

The World Wrestling Championships 2023, which will take place 2023 in Belgrade, Serbia from Sept. 16 to 24, will serve as a qualifying event for the Paris Olympics 2024.

Hungarian Greco-Roman wrestler Imre Polyak won medals at four consecutive Olympic Games (1952-64), making him only the second wrestler after Finland's Eino Leino to achieve the success.

Russia beat Iran's women's football team in friendly

TEHRAN – Russia women's football team defeated Iran 4-0 in a friendly match at Kazan's Central Stadium on Friday, as a crowd of 5,840 spectators cheered the teams on.

Alsu Abdullina opened the scoring for the Russian team in the 28th minute. Anna Belomytseva made it 2-0 in the 38th minute. Valeriya Bizenkova scored Russia's third goal three minutes before the halftime and Nataliya Mashina was on target in the 83rd minute.

It was the first ever meeting between the Russian and Iranian women's football teams.

They are scheduled to square off against each other again on July 18. That match will be played without spectators in Novogorsk outside Moscow.

Team Melli prepare for the Olympic Tournament Paris 2024 qualification, where the Persians are drawn along with Australia, Chinese Taipei and the Philippines in Group A.

Spanish forward Sergi Enrich linked with Esteghlal

TEHRAN – Sergi Enrich Ametler has been reportedly linked with a move to Iranian football club Esteghlal.

Enrich, 33, has most recently played for Oviedo.

He has been a member of Spain U-19 football team and has also played in La Liga sides Mallorca, Numancia and Eibar.

Esteghlal coach Javad Nekounam has played in La Liga side Osasuna in two stints.

Olad wins Iran's sixth medal at Paris 23 Worlds

TEHRAN – Mehdi Olad claimed Iran's sixth medal at the Paris 2023 Para Athletics World Championships on Saturday.

He won a silver medal at the Men's Discus Throw F11 with a throw of 43.73 meters.

Gold medal went to Brazilian thrower Alessandro da Silva with 45.30 meters.

Spaniard athlete Alvaro del Amo Cano seized the bronze with 37.60 meters.

Javelin thrower Saeid Afroozat and Shot putters Mehdi Olad and Rashid Masjedi have previously claimed three gold medals in the event.

Long jumper Amir Khosravani has won a silver and Hashemieh Motaghian claimed a bronze at the javelin throw.

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.

Behnam Yakhchali joins Gladiators Treves

TEHRAN – Iran international guard Behnam Yakhchali joined German basketball club Gladiators Treves.

Yakhchali, 28, has penned a two-year deal with second-tier Gladiators Treves.

Yakhchali has already played in German teams Rostock (ProA) and Mitteldeutsche BC (BBL).

He currently is preparing with the Iran national team for the 2023 World Cup, where they will face Brazil, Spain and Ivory Coast.

He was Iran's most important player in the World Cup qualifying with 24.3 points, 5.5 rebounds and 3 assists per game and will also captain his colors against the Philippines, Japan and Indonesia.

"Behnam is an extremely talented player with tremendous experience at both club and international levels. I've seen him many times over the past two years. He is a great addition to our team. His skills and experience will help us. We are very happy that Behnam is coming to our team," Gladiators head coach Don Beck said in an interview with the club's website.

Iran defeat Kazakhstan at U16 CAVA

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Kazakhstan in three straight sets at the Central Asian Volleyball Association (CAVA) Under-16 Volleyball Championship in Tashkent, Uzbekistan on Saturday.

Iran's under-16 boys' volleyball team played against Kazakhstan in their second match in U16 CAVA Volleyball Championship on Saturday and beat their rival 3-0 to achieve their first win in the competition.

They won in three straight sets (25-22, 25-14, 25-21) to collect three points.

Iran lost to the Pakistani team 3-2 on the first day of the event on Friday.

Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan is hosting the first U16 CAVA Volleyball Championship on July 14-20.

Immediately after this four-nation event (Iran, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan) ends on July 19, these four teams will compete at the Asian Under-16 Championship on July 20.

The continental event will also be held in Tashkent from July 22-29.

The participating teams will play single round-robin format, with top two teams advancing to the final showdown and teams finishing third and fourth places fighting it out in the third-place playoff clash for bronze medal.

'Domestic producers of red meat in need of support'



TEHRAN- The Chairman of the National Union of Light Livestock Producers stressed the need to support domestic producers of red meat.

Afshin Sadr-Dadras said that the subsidy that is allocated to support consumers for imported meat should be allocated to support domestic production.

He reiterated that the country's livestock industry needs serious support, adding that if the problem of livestock industry is not taken seriously, due to the lack of liquidity of the producers, there is a possibility of a

decrease in production in the second half of the current Iranian calendar year (September 22, 2023-March 20, 2024).

As previously reported, the production of red meat in Iran stood at 43,775 tons in the second month of the current Iranian calendar year (April 21-May 21), showing 11 percent fall compared to the same month in the past year.

Beef and veal had the lion's share in the country's red meat output during the second month with 23,281 tons, followed by lamb and mutton with 17,057 tons, goat meat with 2,592 tons, and red meat from other livestock with 845 tons.

Iran is among the leading consumers of red meat in the West Asia region with lamb being the most sought after.

However, the consumption per person is around a third of what is normally seen in countries like the U.S. and Australia, mainly due to the prohibition of pork in Islamic law.

The major part of Iran's red meat imports comes from countries like Brazil, where Iranian supervisors directly control culling methods to ensure they comply with religious rules.

Quarterly export from Qeshm Free Zone rises 63% yr/yr

TEHRAN- The value of export from Qeshm Free Zone in the southern Qeshm Island rose 63 percent during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, the head of the zone's Customs Department announced.

Products worth nearly \$76.9 million were exported from Qeshm Free Zone in the three-month period, Mokhtar Garshasbi stated.

The official further said that the value of imports to the zone dropped 30 percent to \$31.2 million during the first quarter of the present year.

In a recent interview conducted by the Tehran Times, Secretary of Iran's Free Zones High Council Hojatollah Abdolmaleki said the value of exports from free trade and special economic zones last year was close to \$18 billion and about a third of the country's non-oil exports value. Of this amount, the share of special economic zones was more, and the share of free trade zones was \$1.7 billion, and considering that the value of imports to the free zones was almost \$1 billion, then the trade balance of these zones was \$700 million positive, and it was the first time that this happened.

"This year we plan to have a jump in non-

oil exports from the free zones", the official noted.

Establishment of free trade zones (FTZs) in Iran dates back to Iranian calendar year 1368 (March 1989 - March 1990) following the fall in the country's oil income in the preceding year which prompted the government to promote the non-oil exports.

The first two free trade zones of Iran were established in the south of country. The first one was Kish Free Trade Zone established in 1368 on Kish Island in the Persian Gulf and the second one was Qeshm Free Trade Zone established the year after on Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz.

Some five other free trade zones have been also established in the country since then, including Chabahar in southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan Province, Arvand in southwestern Khuzestan Province, Anzali in northern Gilan Province, Aras in East-Azerbaijan Province and Maku in West-Azerbaijan Province, both in the northwest of the country.

Development of existing free trade zones and establishment of new FTZs has become one of the major economic approaches of Iranian government.

Chabahar port is a golden opportunity for India: envoy

TEHRAN - India's Ambassador to Tehran Rudra Gaurav Shresth has said Iran's southeastern Chabahar Port is a golden opportunity for India to expand its economic ties, IRNA reported.

"Chabahar's position in the expansion of trade exchanges in West Asia, Eurasia, and even Europe is unique," Shresth said on Friday during a visit to the port.

"This trip is planned with the purpose of visiting the port's infrastructure to implement our investment commitments," the ambassador told the press.

The official called on the members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to take the necessary measures for using the capacities of the Chabahar port.

"The North-South International Transport Corridor can serve as a safe and efficient route for landlocked countries in Central Asia to access the Indian Ocean, and we all must strive to realize the corridor's full potential," the official added.

During the trip to Chabahar Port, Shresth visited Shahid Beheshti and Shahid Kalantari ports, Chabahar's Marine Traffic Control Tower, Shahid Kalantari Port Passenger Terminal, as well as the basin and access channel to Shahid Beheshti and Shahid Kalantari ports.

As Iran's only oceanic port on the Gulf of Oman, Chabahar Port holds great

significance for the country both politically and economically. The country has taken serious measures for developing this port in order to improve the country's maritime trade.

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

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

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

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

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

Iran plans to barter petchem products for basic goods with Africa

From page 1 ▶ 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.

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, the value of trade between Iran and Africa rose two percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20).

He put Iran-Africa annual trade at 2.545 million tons worth \$1.278 billion.

Iran exported 2.452 million tons of products valued at \$1.183 billion to 49 African countries in the past year, showing one percent fall, and imported 92,898 tons of goods worth \$95.316 million from 23 African countries, indicating 59 percent growth, year on year, according to Latifi.

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 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.

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.

Tehran, Belgrade eye expanding trade ties



ICCIMA Head Hossein Selahvarzi (R) and Serbia's Ambassador to Tehran Dragan Todorovic

TEHRAN - In a meeting between the head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) and Serbia's ambassador to Tehran, the two sides stressed the need for expanding trade ties by promoting the exchange of trade delegations.

As reported by the ICCIMA portal, Hossein Selahvarzi and Dragan Todorovic discussed the obstacles facing the commercial cooperation of the two countries in the meeting and explored the latest information related to the economic opportunities and capacities of the two countries.

Referring to the emerging economy of Serbia, Selahvarzi said: "The ICCIMA is focusing a lot on promoting international activities, and in this regard, countries with economic advantages are given priority; therefore, with the help of the Serbian Embassy, we can take good steps to develop business relations."

He mentioned the visit of an Iranian trade delegation to Serbia in 2022, saying: "In that visit, solutions were agreed upon in the form of some payment mechanisms and now we should focus more on implementing those mechanisms."

The ICCIMA head further underlined the advantages of trade relations between Iran and Serbia and continued: "ICCIMA is ready to

exchange trade delegations with Serbia and as the first step we will get in touch with the Serbian Chamber of Commerce to make the necessary arrangements for receiving a trade delegation from Serbia."

Todorovic, for his part, congratulated Selahvarzi on his election as the new head of the ICCIMA and welcomed his proposal regarding the visit of a Serbian trade delegation to Iran, saying: "In October or November this year, the joint economic committee of Iran and Serbia will be held in Tehran, and a business delegation can also be sent to Iran at the same time as this event."

"Also, in ten days, the speaker of the Serbian Parliament is going to visit Iran, and after two weeks, our Deputy Foreign Minister will also travel to Tehran. Arrangements can also be made for the presence of business delegations during these trips," he added.

During a meeting between the private sector representatives of Iran and Serbia in Tehran in late May, the two sides discussed ways of expanding mutual economic ties.

In the meeting which was attended by acting head of the ICCIMA Department of International Affairs Niloufar Asadi and a delegation of Serbian private sector representatives, the two sides stressed the

need for promoting joint investment and production in order to increase the level of trade.

According to Asadi, establishing a barter trade mechanism between the two sides can also significantly boost economic relations between the two countries.

The officials also explored common areas for cooperation including agriculture, petrochemicals, tourism, and especially health tourism.

The head of the Serbian delegation for his part expressed his country's readiness for welcoming Iranian economic delegations in the future, saying: "In addition to cooperation between the science and technology parks of the two countries, we are looking for trade in agricultural products, especially the import of chemical fertilizers from Iran and the export of corn, soybeans, and other products."

Meanwhile, in a meeting with the former Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Alireza Peyman-Pak in Belgrade in July 2022, Serbia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Nikola Selakovic announced his country's serious determination to develop economic relations with Iran noting that the volume of trade between the two countries has the potential to increase and Serbia supports this issue.

Selakovic referred to the 80-year history of official relations between the two countries and expressed the determination of the president and the government of the Republic of Serbia to expand economic cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Underlining the good political relations between the two countries, he said that the volume of mutual trade has the potential to increase and the Serbian government is ready to take the necessary measures to realize this goal.

Peyman-Pak, for his part, referred to the capacities and capabilities of Iranian companies and explained Iran's roadmap for the development of economic cooperation with Serbia, and noted that several mechanisms have been considered to realize the increase in the volume of trade between the two countries through the private sectors.

He also emphasized the role of the chambers of commerce of Iran and Serbia in promoting trade relations between the two countries.

TEDPIX loses 500 points on Saturday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 513 points to 2.07 million on Saturday, which is the first day of Iranian calendar week.

As reported, over 13.071 billion securities worth 85.744 trillion rials (about \$175 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).

China urges NATO to stop groundless provocative rhetoric

NATO alleges Beijing challenges its "security" through "coercive policies"

From page 1 ▶ NATO does not speak on behalf of the international community, observers have pointed out, and a greater number of nations around the world have condemned NATO for the Ukraine war and its failure to bring peace to the fighting.

In fact, many countries accuse the United States and its Western allies for instigating the war. Washington has been prolonging the crisis by sending a record shipment of weapons to Kyiv to drag the conflict out for as long as possible and extend the suffering of Ukrainian civilians.

Experts believe Ukraine is being used as a proxy for the U.S. to contain Russia.

Among the latest U.S. weapons delivered to Ukrainian forces are internationally banned cluster munitions that have devastating effects on civilians, as they shower scores of smaller bomblets on the ground over a wide area; many of which remain undetonated for years.

The White House says Ukraine will use these weapons of mass destruction in its counter-offensive against Russia.

Ironically, the counter-offensive is being fought on Ukrainian territory, which means any cluster bombs fired by Ukrainian forces will fall on their own soil whilst having a serious effect on the lives and health of Ukrainian civilians for decades to come.

This was not discussed at the NATO summit, despite international condemnation over the shipment of the weapons as well as criticism from U.S. Western allies.

Among the accusations published by the summit's final communique include the "the deepening strategic partnership between China and Russia and their mutually reinforcing attempts to undercut the rules-based international order run counter to [NATO's] values and interests."

The Chinese Foreign Ministry said the Beijing-Moscow relationship is built on the basis of no-alliance, no-confrontation and no-targeting of any third party.

A spokesperson for the ministry has said that ties "rises above the model of military and political alliance in the Cold War era and provides a model for major-country relations. This is fundamentally different from the exclusive groupings and bloc confrontation practiced by some NATO countries."

The spokesperson has also urged NATO "to stop making groundless accusations and provocative rhetoric targeting China, quit the outdated Cold War mentality, and ditch the wrongdoing of seeking absolute security. We have seen what NATO has done to Europe,



and NATO must not seek to sow chaos here in the Asia-Pacific or elsewhere in the world."

The NATO communique claimed the People's Republic of China (PRC) challenged its interests, security and values with its "ambitions and coercive policies."

The China says the Beijing-Moscow relationship is built on the basis of no-alliance, no-confrontation and no-targeting of any third party.

"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 Europe has also responded by issuing a statement that said all the China-related content of the communique completely ignored the basic facts, distorted China's position and policies, and deliberately discredited China.

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

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

"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," Stoltenberg told reporters.

The Chinese mission said Beijing was unwavering in its opposition to NATO's "eastward movement into the Asia-Pacific region", while further warning that any action threatening Beijing's rights would be met with a response.

"Any act that jeopardizes China's legitimate rights and interests will be met with a resolute response," it said.

In the communique, NATO also claimed that China seeks to control key technological and industrial sectors, critical infrastructure, and strategic materials and supply chains, and that Beijing also uses its economic leverage to create strategic dependencies and enhance its influence.

China's Xinhua state news agency hit back, saying in an analysis that the wars and conflicts involving NATO states suggest the bloc is a "grave challenge" to global peace and stability.

China asks to NATO to quit the outdated Cold War mentality and ditch the wrongdoing of seeking absolute security.

"Despite all the chaos and conflict already inflicted, NATO is spreading its tentacles to the Asia-Pacific region with an express aim of containing China."

The China Media Group has also said in a report that NATO is no longer confined to its traditional domains and missions but aggressively setting sights and expanding footprints in the Asia-Pacific region to create hostile anti-

China policies to feed the appetite of the U.S. in trying to maintain America's global hegemony.

Compared with the "strategic concept" document adopted at the NATO Madrid Summit in June 2022, this current version mentioned China much more frequently and posed a preaching mentality of a morally superior nature in a condescending manner, the report added.

It also asked why NATO is pointing its fingers at China again? This is not surprising. The U.S.-led military alliance has a fundamental motivation for survival, which is the need for new adversaries.

From the several publications of NATO's strategic concept documents that have been updated after the end of the Cold War, almost every update has followed the foreign policy of the U.S., reflecting the aggressive strategic demands of Washington.

The administration of U.S. President Joe Biden, like its predecessor, has mistakenly identified China as the most consequential strategic competitor and publicly proposed an Indo-Pacific strategy with NATO participation.

Under firm U.S. command, NATO has grown to take on a hardline approach toward China with the aim of expanding its presence in the Asia-Pacific region in what experts say is the false branding of Beijing as a rival to the U.S.

Stoltenberg has stated that in the future, the military bloc should contain, in his own words, the China threat. This risky policy is now an important foundation for NATO's survival.

Under increasing pressure from Washington, NATO no longer serves European security. Rather it defends the interests of the United States. This is while the accusations levelled against China are not even shared by many of its own members.

China has never initiated a conflict, nor has it ever occupied the land of another country or waged a proxy war for that matter. Instead, for more than three decades now, Beijing has dispatched more than tens of thousands of security personnel for peace keeping missions under the United Nations leadership.

On the contrary, the U.S., under which NATO members are now taking orders from, has broken all the rules-based international orders by bypassing the UN Security Council to launch wars against sovereign states such as Vietnam, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria to name a few. This has led to the casualties of millions of civilians and displaced tens of millions of others.

The latest case in point being Ukraine.

Arab leaders know their attempt to oust Assad failed: professor



From page 1 ▶ stressing the importance of working collectively to achieve the organization's goals to enhance the process of joint Arab action.

Dan Kovalic, a professor of international human rights at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, tells the Tehran Times that the Arab League has just realized that it cannot sideline Syria.

"They know that their attempt to oust Assad has failed," the professor says.

Here is the full text of interview:

Syria one day was suspended from the Arab league and today is again welcomed by the league. How should this be interpreted?

We have a saying in the United States – if you can't beat them, join them. This saying applies well to this situation. A number of Arab League countries – most notably, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar – attempted to overthrow the Syrian government of Bashar Al-Assad with the help of the US, Israel and Turkey. Without the intervention of Russia, Iran and Hezbollah, this attempt may have succeeded, but ultimately it did not. Now that the Arab League sees that Assad's government is secure and is not going away, it has decided to invite Syria back into the fold.

Bashar Assad travels to different Arab capitals. Are Arab leaders satisfied with Assad remaining in power?

I'm not sure that the Arab leaders are "satisfied" with Assad remaining in power, but they are resigned to it. They know that their attempt to oust Assad has failed, and they recognize this. Now, they understand that they need to reunite with Syria to work together addressing issues of common concern, such as the continued oppression of the Palestinian people by Israel. I think that there is some regret among some of the Arab League countries about how much they became conduits of Western attempts to control and even destroy the Middle East. They are now waking up to the need to act in the interest of the region and not in the interest of the West which has no concern for the people of the Arab or Muslim world. In order to successfully change this shift away from the West, the Arab nations will seek closer relations with Russia, China and Iran. This represents the biggest challenge to Western hegemony in some time.

Modi and Macron commit to expand defense ties

India and France unveiled a 25-year roadmap to deepen their strategic partnership on Friday night, marking the end of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's two-day visit to Paris. In a joint statement, the two countries outlined a course for bilateral relations up to 2047, with a focus on the defense sector, aviation, technology, and energy.

Addressing a joint press conference at the Elysee Palace on Friday with President Emmanuel Macron, Modi emphasized the importance of France as a partner in the 'Make in India' and 'Self-Reliant India' initiatives and stressed that defense ties have always been the foundation of relations between the two countries.

"This is a symbol of the deep trust between the two nations... Be it submarines or Indian Naval ships, together we want to fulfill not just ours but also the requirements of other friendly

How Syria's return to the Arab body will resonate for Israel?

This normalization of relations with Syria, and with Iran as well, does not bode well for Israel. It is clear now that the countries of the Middle East are uniting against Israel and in support of the Palestinians. This, on top of the fact that the Palestinians are uniting amongst themselves, and that Israel is suffering from severe, internal political divisions, represents a perfect storm for Israel and its continued attempts to dominate the Palestinian people. This is especially the case because the Arab League will find willing support in Russia, China and Iran to challenge Israel.

How will Washington redefine its strategy against Syria after normalization?

Sadly, it does not appear that the US's strategy against Syria will change as the result of any of this. Indeed, there are reports that the US, which is still occupying one-third of Syria, is beginning to re-organize and re-arm the terrorist organizations it originally used to try to destabilize Syria. In short, the US seems to be doubling-down on its anti-Syrian strategy of the past decade. In addition, it is quite unlikely that the US will decrease its support for Israel and its occupation of Palestine and the Golan Heights. If anything, the US may even increase its support for Israel and its desire for expansion in the region. Of course, this will have a direct impact on Syria. In short, the US will not give up on its attempt to control the Middle East, and it will act aggressively to take on Russian and Chinese influence in the region and to assist Israel in maintaining control over the territory it now controls.

How will Syria's relationship with the Resistance movement look like after it comes back to the Arab League?

I believe Syria's relationship with the Resistance movement will only intensify now. It is my perception that Syria will increase its support for Palestine, Hezbollah and its resistance to the US and Israel. One form this will take is Syria's attempt to re-take the Golan Heights. I think Israel itself will become more isolated in the region and find it harder to retain its grip over Palestine and the Golan Heights. The worst fear of the US and Israel is being realized – a united Arab world assisted by Russia, China and Iran. Syria will most certainly take advantage of this shift in the balance of forces.



countries," he said.

The Indian leader on Saturday lauded a 'memorable' visit to France. "It was made even more special because I got the opportunity to take part in the Bastille Day celebrations. Seeing the Indian contingent get a pride of place in the parade was wonderful!" Modi tweeted.

Inside the Occupied Palestine: Deluded, Scared, and Confused

After an American senior official, whose name was not disclosed, warned last night about an increasing cooperation between Iran and Russia, an Israeli media called the fictional alliance an "intensification of ties" between the two countries "against America, to help Hezbollah". "The U.S. has witnessed ever increasing cooperation between Iran and Russia, even in Syria, part of which is rooted in Tehran supporting Russia in the war in Ukraine", the outlet quoted the American official. He continued to say "Russia is obliged to Iran in its efforts to push the U.S. Military forces back from the Syria which will provide better conditions to provide Hezbollah with more lethal weaponry and threatens Israel furthermore". The official who is believed to occupy a high position in the Pentagon, said, "we witness security coordination between Iran's Quds Forces and Russia in Syria, aimed at putting more pressure on the U.S. to force it out of Syrian soil". For months, the Israeli media claims, the U.S. has been warning that the Russian pilots are repeatedly and increasingly violating the safety regulations and make close contacts with the American fighter jets while armed with missiles and other weapons.



that the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) soon to create new security mechanisms to perform an operation aimed at detaining the armed groups of the north of the West Bank with an extra emphasis on Jenin. According to Al-Akhbar, this settlement is part of the agreement between the PNA and Israel based on which, some measures will be undertaken to avoid the Israeli soldiers being shot in Jenin. The main purpose of this agreement is to prevent the demolition of the PNA and avoid the further domination of HAMAS inside in different territories. This report has been published on Wednesday for the first time since 2012 after the president of PNA visited Jenin.

Ongoing Tensions on the Border

Amid the tensions on the border between Lebanon and Palestine, a group of media representative along with one of the Lebanon's

Parliament members visited the border today, faced with provocative behavior of Israeli soldiers stationed there. According to sources, Israeli army started firing tear gas at the visitors, also the official accompanying them, who were inside the territory of Lebanon. After the definitive speech delivered by Hezbollah's Secretary general Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah regarding the situation in the southern borders of Lebanon, spectators believe more tensions will occur in the disputed Lebanese areas and an escalation of situation is profoundly possible. Nasrallah, in his speech on Wednesday July 13th, clarified Hezbollah's stance regarding the territories of Lebanon occupied by Israel, saying "the territory in question will not be ignored".

Died "Suddenly"; Part 2374839!

As the chain of events leading to the "sudden death" of Israelis outside the Occupied Palestine continues, another Israeli was reported dead in Tiflis, Georgia's capital today. According to the reports, he was run over by a car and died on the scene of the accident. In most of instances like this, the Israeli officials disclose the real identity of the deceased person later on, introducing them as people with an "unordinary" status. The details of this particular incident is yet to be published.

PNA Has Picked a Side

Referring to a report published by the Lebanese newspaper, Al-Akhbar, an Israeli media claimed

Christian worshippers observe Badarak ritual in St. Thaddeus



TEHRAN – Hundreds of Christian worshippers and pilgrims have come together at St. Thaddeus, a UNESCO-designated church in northwest Iran, to observe their annual ritual of Badarak.

The three-day event commenced on Thursday in the church -- aka Qareh Klise ("the Black Church") -- one of the oldest surviving Christian monasteries in the country.

The baptism of children along with performances of traditional songs and dances are among the highlights of the pilgrimage, which is traditionally made by travelers from Iran, Armenia, Syria, Lebanon, the Netherlands, France, Austria, Germany, Canada, and some other countries.

Moreover, the religious event is of high importance for Iranian-Armenians who mostly come from the cities of Tabriz, Urmia, Tehran, Isfahan, and Qazvin, to stage the reunion in groups and families. It also provides them an opportunity to go on holiday and visit distant relatives.

Besides, participants commemorate the martyrdom of St. Thaddeus, one of the twelve disciples killed while he was preaching the Gospel. The legend says a church dedicated to him was first built in 68 CE there, where Qareh Klise is standing. Thaddeus was an

apostle of Christ, and the ceremony is rooted in the last supper with Jesus Christ on the night of his arrest and execution by the Roman soldiers.

St. Thaddeus is situated in Chaldoran county some 20 kilometers from Maku, adjacent to the borders of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey. The ancient Church shows off elaborate bas-reliefs of flowers, animals, and human figures on its façade and exterior walls. It bears verses from the Old and New Testament in Armenian calligraphy as well.

St. Thaddeus, together with St. Stepanos Monastery and the Chapel of Dzordzor, was placed on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2008 under the name "Armenian Monastic Ensembles of Iran." All three sites are located in West Azarbaijan province and are of high significance from historical and cultural perspectives.

As mentioned by the UN cultural body, the three churches collectively bear credible testimony to interchanges with the ancient regional societies, in particular the Byzantine, Orthodox, and Persian.

According to UNESCO, these churches are examples of the outstanding universal value of Armenian architectural and decorative traditions in Iran.

Archaeologists in Peru find 3,000-year-old tunnel in mountain temple complex

Peruvian archaeologists have discovered a sealed underground corridor known as "the condor's passageway", dating back to the Chavin civilization.

The Chavin people, whose civilization ended more than 1,000 years ago, lived high in the Andean mountains of Peru, 3,000 meters above sea level.

They are known for having built granite and limestone temples with complex drainage systems to prevent flooding, as well as creating sculptures from carefully hammered sheets of gold.

Their metalsmiths developed an understanding of melting points, soldering and creating alloys, which was impressive for the time.

The corridor, one of dozens at the site that are linked to underground structures, is about 3,000 years old. Explorers used a camera mounted on a robot to investigate the tunnel, which is thought to be at risk of collapse.

Legend of the Lanzon

About 430km north of Lima, the Chavin de Huantar archaeological site is among the culture's most important, and thrived from about 1,500 to 550 BC.

The area, which became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1985, contains about 35 tunnels that have been discovered over decades of excavations.

The Chavin de Huantar is filled with carvings of animals thought to have religious significance, including jaguars and caymans. At the center of the complex of buildings is the Lanzon, a holy stone sculpture sited in a net-

work of tunnels, which features a carving of a hybrid human-jaguar figure.

It is thought worshippers would walk through the dark tunnels before eventually being confronted with the Lanzon and performing religious rituals.

"What we have here has been frozen in time," lead archaeologist John Rick told Reuters.

Mr Rick has been studying the area for nearly 30 years and says the world of carvings, sculptures, tunnels and roaring sounds from water flowing through specially created canals represents is an example of an early effort by authoritarian rulers to control their subjects.

"I was fascinated with the evidence we have for this idea of manipulation of people who went through ritual experiences in these structures," he told Stanford News in 2016.

The religious order in the Chavin civilization "needed to create a new world, one in which the settings, objects, actions and senses all argue for the presence of intrinsic authority", he said at the time.

A large ceramic piece weighing about 17kg, decorated with what appears to be a condor's head and wings, was found in the aisle, along with a ceramic bowl, both unearthed in May last year when the entrance was uncovered.

The condor, one of the largest birds in the world, was associated with power and prosperity in ancient Andean cultures.

Mr Rick, a Stanford University archaeologist, has said much of the temple complex is still to be excavated.

(Source: The National)

Lenj boats: Is UNESCO status enough to save a cultural heritage?

From Page 1 ▶ Moreover, there are growing concerns that this element is at risk of being removed from UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage.

Generally speaking, the UN recognition distinguishes the importance of the preservation and protection of the Lenj construction boat as the unique maritime heritage of southern Iranian coasts.

The Iranian Lenj boats are traditionally hand-built and used by the people of the north coast of the Persian Gulf for sea voyages, trade, fishing, and pearling. As mentioned by the UN cultural body, the traditional knowledge surrounding Lenj vessels includes oral literature, performing arts, and festivals, in addition to sailing and navigation techniques as well as terminology and weather forecasting associated with sailing, and the skill of boating.

The maritime knowledge used for sailing in Lenjes is traditionally passed down from father to son. Iranian navigators can locate ships based on the positions of the sun, the moon, and stars; they used special formulas to calculate latitude and longitude, as well as water depth.

As for the impending threats, several factors contribute to the potential loss of UNESCO status for that skill passed down from generation to generation.

Firstly, a rapid pace of modernization and urbanization in Iran, especially in the coastal areas, has led to a decline in the practice and spread



of traditional skills related to Lenj building and sailing.

Moreover, the younger generations are increasingly losing interest in acquiring these skills, opting for more modern forms of employment.

Secondly, as the world becomes more interconnected, traditional practices and cultural heritage are gradually being eroded when young people are exposed to a globalized culture, which causes changes in values, lifestyles and preferences.

Finally, the lack of awareness and appreciation of the cultural significance of Lenj boats may contribute to their decline. Without active

efforts to educate people about the importance of these traditional skills, there will not be enough support to sustain them. The lack of public interest may ultimately damage UNESCO's position on this intangible cultural heritage.

Amid ongoing concerns about the potential loss of UNESCO status to Iran's traditional Lenj boating and boating skills, many measures may be taken more than ever to mitigate the threats.

Educational programs, workshops, and exhibitions may be among the smart initiatives to raise awareness of traditional boating and craft

techniques. Local communities may be more encouraged to take part in festivals and cultural exchange programs aimed at reinforcing the importance of ancient maritime skills. On the other hand, government bodies, NGOs, and cultural agencies should join hands to provide further financial support for the preservation of boat-building skills.

By raising awareness, involving the community, and providing legal and financial support, steps can be taken to ensure the continued survival of the Lenj boat tradition, allowing future generations to appreciate its rich historical and cultural significance.

Repair work starts at Kazerun museum of anthropology

TEHRAN – Restoration work has commenced on the anthropology museum of Kazerun, an ancient town in southern Iran, which was once a seat of power for the mighty Sassanid Empire.

The anthropology museum features a wide range of exhibits, including traditional clothing, textiles, pottery, jewelry, and other crafts mainly from various cultures.

Moreover, the museum houses an extensive collection of tools, weapons, and other artifacts

that offer insight into the daily lives of indigenous peoples throughout history.

The Kazerun region is one of the most important areas in the field of archaeological and prehistoric studies for various geographical and historical reasons of Fars province.

To date, based on the results of studies on the remains of human habitation in this region, it can be said that the human presence in Kazerun dates back to the Neolithic period, that is, about 30,000

to 40,000 years ago.

The nearby ruins of the ancient city of Bishapur, include bas-relief depictions from the Sassanid era (ca. 224–651).

The ancient region of Fars also spelled Pars, or Persis, was the heart of the Achaemenian Empire (550–330 BC), which was founded by Cyrus the Great and had its capital at Pasargadae. Darius I the Great moved the capital to nearby Persepolis in the late 6th or early 5th century BC.

World Kebab Day: all you need to know about their rich flavors



Furthermore, Kebab Day promotes cultural diversity and encourages individuals to explore different cuisines, fostering a sense of unity through food.

Kebabs can be prepared at home for a barbecue with your family or eaten in a restaurant at any time. It is a popular dish among non-vegetarian food lovers. The tender non-vegetable parts are marinated in a variety of spices for several hours to soak up the flavors, then skewered and smoked over an open fire.

Here are some of the most renowned Kebab varieties that are cooked in Iran:

Kabab-e Koobideh: Koobideh is Iran's signature Kebab and the most famous of them all. It is made from ground lamb, beef, or chicken mixed with chopped onions.

Koobideh refers to the style that which meat was prepared, originally placed on a flat stone (precisely a black flat stone) and smashed by a wooden mallet.

Joojeh Kabab: Chicken Kebab is barbecued chicken with olive oil, tomatoes, and saffron.

This kind of kebab is easily prepared and thus among the most favorite of Iranian people.

Kabab-e Barg: Barg is, in fact, barbecued lamb, chicken, or beef kebab dish. The main ingredients of Kebab-e Barg are fillets of beef ten-

derloin, lamb shank, onions, saffron, olive oil, and mild spices.

Shishlik or Shish Kebab: Shishlik, meaning skewered meat, is originally made of lamb chops and is popular in many countries.

In Iran, it is grilled meat with bones, previously marinated in onion, olive oil, and saffron.

Kabab-e Torsh (sour): Torsh kebab (sour kebab) is a traditional kebab from Gilan province in Iran. It is made with beef -- usually sirloin or tenderloin -- marinated in a paste made of crushed walnuts, pomegranate juice or paste, chopped parsley, olive oil, and crushed garlic.

Kabab-e Soltani: The combination of two skewers of Kebab Barg and Kebab Koobideh is typically called soltani, meaning King's kebab.

Kabab-e Bakhtiari: Bakhtiari Kebab is a combination of chicken kebab and kebab served either with Persian rice or traditional bread.

Chenjeh: Chenjeh Kebab is pure meat and very similar to western steaks. However, unlike most Iranian Kebabs, onion is not used in preparation.

Chenjeh (meat chops) is usually made from sheep meat when it's still soft and fresh. It is one of the most delicious Persian kebabs that is usually served in special ceremonies and occasions, like wedding parties.

TEHRAN - Kebab Day is an exciting occasion celebrated worldwide to honor and indulge in the rich flavors and cultural heritage of the smoked dish, whose origins can be traced back to ancient times when skewered meat was cooked over open fires.

A wide variety of Kebabs have evolved over centuries, with each region adding its unique spices and cooking techniques to create an array of flavors and styles. Since they were popular in Iran, India and Turkey, kebabs have been around for a very long time in history.

Every year, World Kebab Day is celebrated on the second Friday of July to celebrate this dish. This year, the

occasion falls on July 14. A top way to celebrate World Kebab Day is to invite your loved ones over and serve them kebabs while having a conversation and skewers ready.

This year, "Celebrating Global Kebab Traditions" has been selected as the focal theme for the day aimed at highlighting the diverse and vibrant culinary traditions associated with kebabs worldwide.

Experts say the occasion honors the cultural significance of kebabs and their contribution to global cuisine. In fact, it serves as an opportunity to acknowledge the craftsmanship and culinary heritage behind them.

Heat forces Acropolis to temporarily close as some tourists experience fainting spells

Greek authorities temporarily closed the Acropolis in Athens on Friday as temperatures were expected to reach 40 degrees Celsius and some tourists experienced fainting spells.

Volunteers, doctors, and healthcare workers from the Hellenic Red Cross offered water and first aid to tourists hoping to visit the ancient monument, which

was closed from noon to 5 pm local time.

The organization reported that some of the site's visitors experienced signs of dehydration and fainting spells because of the high temperatures.

"We had many incidents today of people fainting or feeling dizzy because they didn't take very good care of themselves," Stella Katsouloupoulou, a Red

Cross volunteer, told Euronews.

"They didn't wear hats, which is very important these days. We must not go outside without a hat and of course, we need to drink lots of juices and water."

(Source: euronews)

A glimpse at wonderful wildlife refuges in north-central Semnan

TEHRAN – North-central Semnan province is home to two extraordinary arrays of wildlife and natural landscapes, from Touran to Kavir National Parks, areas with the largest population of endangered Asiatic cheetah. Here, we take a glimpse at these wild, wonderful places.

To preserve the existing biodiversity over the wide geographic expanse of Iran, four types of areas have been designated for preservation and protection, including, national parks, wildlife refuges, protected areas, and natural national monuments. In 1997, the Department of the Environment (DOE) held supervision over 7,563,983 hectares of such areas. By the year 2003, the size of the DOE-supervised areas reached 11,791,788.225 hectares.

The national park is a designated part of Iran's environment - including forests, rangelands, woodlands, prairies, water, and mountains - that is an outstanding representation of Iranian nature. As such, it is brought under protection in order to permanently preserve its natural ecology and to create a suitable environment for the flourishing of wildlife and the growth of flora under natural conditions. The national parks currently cover 1,649,771 hectares of the country's area.

Protected areas also are significantly important natural resources due to their impact on wildlife breeding, the preservation of plant life, or its natural state. The total area of regions protected is 6,600,601 hectares.

A Wildlife refuge has natural habitats and special climate qualifications, which are brought under protection in order to revive wild animals, and it stretches to 3,524,181 hectares.



Khar Turan National Park

Khar Turan National Park or Touran Wildlife Refuge, situated in the southeast of Shahrud city, stretches to 1,400,000 hectares while being the second largest reserve in the country after Naybandan Wildlife Refuge.

Defined as a protected area in 1972, the region also received the title of biosphere reserve by UNESCO and ranked the second biosphere in the world after the Serengeti ecosystem (a geographical region in Africa).

A wide range of flora and fauna, and valuable genetic resources are seen in the area, more importantly, the precious species of Asiatic cheetah inhabit the area.

National Parks, Wildlife Refuges, and Protected Areas constitute 8, 17, and 75 percent of the entire area. Ghosts have been nicknamed Iran's Africa.

Some 41 species of mammals, 167 bird species, 42 reptile species, and 2 amphibian species have been identified in Touran.

The reserve also hosts wild sheep and goats, the goitered gazelle and Indian gazelle, in addition to the largest population of Persian onager.

The most important animal species are leopard, cheetah, jebber gazelle, goitred gazelle, wild goat, Northern three-toed jerboa, hamster, gerbil, hyrna, wildcat, cape hare, marbled polecat, caracal, houbara bustard, Pleske's ground jay, heron, ferruginous duck, eagle, falcon, peregrine falcon, sand grouse, see-see partridge, different buzzards, goshawk, eagle owl, agama, monitor, Iranian spiny-tailed lizard, saw-scaled viper, and cobra.

The high biodiversity of the region has paved the way for scientific, educational, and research activities in the refuge.

Kavir National Park

Kavir National Park with an area of 4,000 square kilometers is a protected ecological zone stretched over the provinces of Semnan, Tehran, Qom, and Isfahan.

Lying on the western edge of Iran's major desert (Dasht-e Kavir), the region reveals the natural beauty of the mysterious desert and displays a great share of wildlife species. Its astonishing biological characteristic has made it known as Little Africa or Iran's Serengeti.

Kavir National Park is home to native goats (Capra aegagrus), sheep (Ovis Orientalis), striped hyenas, Indian wolves, gazelles, rare Asiatic cheetahs, and Persian leopards.

Receiving around 150 millimeters of rain a year, the region's vegetation is adapted to drought and salty soils; also plants grow leaves with thorns to retain water and combat grazing by animals.

The Kavir National Park is Iran's only region that contains no human, mineral, and grazing habitat so it is well protected from human involvement.

In fact, the park is a natural exhibition for showcasing the rare desert wildlife, including Asiatic cheetah, Persian leopard, gray wolf, striped hyena, sand cat, red fox, Rüppell's fox, chinkara, ovis, jackal, caracal, and various halophyte plants.

In total, 34 species of mammal, 155 birds, and 34 reptiles have been identified in this region.

In the past, a large population of Persian onager lived in the area, the last of which was observed in 1984, and today their generations have certainly vanished.

Black-tailed gazelle, if not extinct, is on the verge of extinction, but the population of Indian gazelle in this region is probably the largest in all of Iran.

Africa welcomes Iranian medicine, medical equipment

TEHRAN – Iranian knowledge-based companies have concluded contracts for exporting medical equipment and medicine to Africa.

Amir-Hossein Mir-Abadi, an official with the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, said the African market is an attractive opportunity for Iranian knowledge-based companies, IRNA reported.

Referring to the recent visit of President Ebrahim Raisi to Africa, Mir-Abadi said works are underway for exporting 50 types of medical equipment and 10 medicine to Africa.

He touched on the President's visit to the House of Innovation and Technology of Iran in Kenya, saying: "The capacities and capabilities of Iranian knowledge-based companies for exporting technological products were greatly appreciated."

He also pointed to the establishment of a medical and pharmaceutical equipment exhibition two weeks ago with the presence of more than 10 Iranian knowledge-based companies in Kenya.

In this exhibition, two Iranian companies succeeded in concluding contracts, he added.

Works are underway for exporting 50 types of medical equipment and 10 medicine to Africa.

The process of registering more than 50 medical devices and also two drugs for export to Kenya has been done, and the registration and process of exporting more than 10 other drugs to this country is in the implementation phase, he explained.

He listed agriculture, food, and livestock industries as among the fields that were highly regarded and needed by African countries.

"In his speech, the president of Kenya mentioned Iran's House of Innovation and Technology several times and the infrastructure created for technological cooperation between Iranian and Kenyan companies."

During his visits to Kenya and Uganda, President Raisi emphasized the need to bolster technological cooperation, Mir-Abadi stressed.

In Uganda, an exhibition for knowledge-based products was opened, and in practice, an infrastructure has been created for boosting the export of knowledge-based products and the display of Iranian capabilities, the official added.

"The products presented there were mostly in the field of the food industry, agricultural industry, medicine and medical devices, chemical products and catalysts, building materials and products related to the field of livestock and poultry, as well as medicines and herbal supplements."

Raisi left Tehran on Wednesday for Africa to visit the friendly nations of Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe to strengthen Iran's ties with Africa and to open the door for greater political and economic partnership.

Speaking at Tehran's Mehrabad Airport early on Friday upon his return from Africa, Raisi emphasized the need to strengthen connections with African countries while calling the continent the land of opportunity where its potential should not be undervalued.

In Zimbabwe, the two nations agreed to cooperate on initiatives in the fields of research, science, and technology as well as energy, agriculture, medicines, and telecommunications.

In January 2021, Iran opened its house of innovation and technology in Kenya and the first center in Africa.

The center serves as a base for the creation of innovative ideas, the commercialization of these ideas, and the export of Iranian knowledge-based products and services to the East African market.

Exporting technological products of Iranian knowledge-based companies is one of the important and key programs of the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, and in this regard over the past years, with the support of the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, the Iranian houses of innovation have been set up in several countries to develop the global market for knowledge-based products.

These centers have already been set up in countries such as Russia, Turkey, China, Syria, Kenya, Armenia, Iraq, and Uzbekistan.

By supporting innovative ideas, and holding



technological and innovative events, the centers will be a platform for the development and promotion of Iranian knowledge-based companies, startups, and creative industries.

The centers are mainly formed with the investment and support of the private sector to provide the necessary infrastructure for their exports through innovation houses.

In February, Raisi said science and technology are the cornerstones of national development.

The chain of knowledge, research, innovation, and technology ensures sustainable development in the country, he added.

"Our interaction with all nations and governments in the world should be for the transfer of knowledge and technology, and our interaction with all neighboring countries, in the region and globally, should be based on this criterion," Raisi highlighted.

The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology was formed in 2006 with the aim of creating an environment for supporting knowledge-based companies and providing the ground for the development of technological industries.

The country's progressing process of development has accelerated with the emphasis on the formation of the technology and innovation ecosystem and the approval of laws for supporting knowledge-based companies and boosting Iran-made products.

Today, we are witnessing the positive effects of adopting the approach in the economy, culture, and daily life of people.

The national budget bill for the current Iranian calendar year 1402, which started on March 21, has earmarked about 37 trillion rials (\$74 million) for science and technology.

The bill increased the budget by 35 percent compared to the previous year's budget, ISNA reported.

Improving the scientific level of society, achieving high global rankings in the number of scientific articles, references, and patenting, reducing the illiteracy rate, and increasing the number of university courses and students are only a part of the achievements after the victory of the Islamic Revolution.

According to the latest statistics, more than 8,000 knowledge-based companies are operating in the country.

Exports of medicine

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Iran ranks 11th in International Mathematical Olympiad



TEHRAN – Iranian students took six medals, ranking 11th at the 64th International Mathematical Olympiad which was held in Japan on July 2-13.

A gold medal from Ehsan Heidari, four silver medals from Sobhan Aram, Mohammad-Parsa Jafarnejadi, Arvin Taheri, and Mohammad-Ermia Qaseri, and a bronze medal from Pouria Rahmani placed the country 11th among 111 participating countries, ISNA reported.

According to the International Mathematical Olympiad rules, approximately 1/12 of the participants receive a gold medal, 2/12 receive a silver medal, and 3/12 receive a bronze medal.

Furthermore, even if they do not receive a medal,

contestants who score a perfect 7 points on at least one problem are awarded an honorable mention.

IMO is the World Championship Mathematics Competition for High School students and is held each year in a different country.

The first IMO was held in 1959 in Romania, with seven countries participating. It has gradually expanded to over 100 countries from all seven continents.

At the 63rd edition of IMO which was held in Norway, Iran grabbed three gold medals and three silver medals, ranking 8th among 104 countries.

Iranian students grabbed two gold and two sil-

ver 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 Qasemloui 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.

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\$22m earmarked for equipping technical-vocational schools

A total budget of 900 billion rials (nearly \$22 million) has been requested to develop and equip technical-vocational high schools across the country in the current Iranian calendar year (ending March 20, 2019), Mohsen Hosseini, an official with the Ministry of Education has announced.

Describing some of the programs and priorities of the technical and vocational training organization affiliated to the Ministry, Hosseini pointed to improvement of technical and vocational training plans as the Ministry's main priority.

Competency-based education and assessment is among the most important programs of the technical and vocational organization, which must be well implemented in all career and technical education high school, he added, Mehr reported on Wednesday.

تخصیص ۹۰ میلیارد تومان اعتبار برای تجهیز هنرستان های کشور

مدیرکل فنی و حرفه‌ای دفتر متوسطه وزارت آموزش و پرورش از تخصیص ۹۰ میلیارد تومان اعتبار برای تجهیز هنرستان‌های کشور در سال جاری خبر داد.

به گزارش خبرگزاری مهر، سیدمحسن حسینی مقدم در دیدار با مدیران هنرستان‌های فنی و حرفه‌ای شهر شیراز و برخی از مناطق استان فارس با تشریح برخی از برنامه‌ها و اولویت‌های وزارت آموزش و پرورش در بخش فنی و حرفه‌ای، گفت: کیفیت‌بخشی برنامه‌های دفتر فنی و حرفه‌ای اولویت اصلی آموزش و پرورش است.

حسینی مقدم اظهار کرد: آموزش و ارزشیابی مبتنی بر شایستگی از مهمترین برنامه‌هایی است که در آموزش‌های فنی و حرفه‌ای دنبال می‌شود و باید این شیوه آموزش به خوبی مراقبت شده و در همه هنرستان‌ها اجرا شود.



Managing Director: **Mohammad Mahdi Rahmati**
 Editor-in-Chief: **Mohammad Sarfi**

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895
 Email: info@tehrantimes.com
 Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
 Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051430
 Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807
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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The faithful are tied in kindness and affection together like members of a body, one's pain and hardship affect the others.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:10 Evening: 19:40 Dawn: 3:18 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:00 (tomorrow)

Sadi: works and life

Part 8

Others have defended him from the charge of practical or utilitarian ethics, pointing out similar views among European thinkers like Victor Hugo (one might also adduce Blake's line: "The truth that's told with bad intent/Beats all the lies you can invent").

The appropriateness of Sadi's counsel to the political circumstances after the Mongol invasion and his strong sympathy for the vulnerable and oppressed have also been emphasized.

Already in 1847 we find Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his poem "Saadi," advising our poet not to heed "what the brawlers say," and urging critics not "to vex with odious subtlety/The cheerer of men's hearts."

Many have seen the Golestan as the continuation of the Maqamat tradition, though others have also linked it with the prose tradition of Sufi literature and the essays of Jahez.

Sadi adorns his prose with parallel rhymed phrasing (saj) and various types of paronomasia (jenas). While several works of rhyming prose might have provided inspiration for Sadi (e.g., the Monajat of Ansari, the Meccan suras of the Quran), the style of adorned prose (nasr-e mosajja' or masnu'), as distinct from plain prose (nasr-e morsal) on one end of the continuum and verse (nazm) on the other, was a defining characteristic of Hamidi's Persian adaptation (1156) of the Arabic Maqamat of Hariri and Hamadani.

But whereas Hamidi's rather mechanical use of saj and recherché Arabic lexemes and morphemes can result in obscure and purple passages, Sadi usually does not strain for rhymes or employ parallelism to excess; in fact, some stories do not rely upon it at all.

Very few stories in the Golestan take episodes in the Maqamat genre as explicit models, though at least one (Sadi's debate with a dervish about wealth and poverty), clearly does.

Like the Maqamat, the stories of the Golestan reflect humorously on various social classes and types, are often set in distant locales, and rely upon rhymed parallel prose interspersed with verse.

Unlike the Maqamat, the Golestan does not follow the framework of a single narrator recounting episodes about a recurring picaresque hero, and, with its generally much shorter stories, does not depend as much on characterization or plot development.

Instead, the Golestan and Bustan have been seen as the culmination of the Persian pand-nama genre, as exemplified in the Qabus-nama or Kimia-ye saadat.

In this view, Sadi replaced Ghazzali as the pre-eminent moral authority among Persian speakers by perfecting a trend in which, as with Sanai's Hadiqat al-haqiqat, the tradition of moral/wisdom literature merged with the mystical tradition.

This attention to content as the defining generic feature of the Golestan has the advantage of highlighting the unique nature of Sadi's achievement.

The Golestan combines simple and unadorned prose to create a new genre not clearly indebted to any prior form (Mahjub), and by joining the previously distinct prose and verse registers into a unified literary idiom Sadi created a "true literary form out of what had hitherto been only too often a rather shapeless mass of ill-assorted materials".

Despite this, surprisingly little has been written about the stylistics of the Golestan. Malek al-Sho'ara Bahar gives the best technical analysis of its rhetorical features. Zia Movahhed notes the minimalist plots sculpted out of language, word play, and psychological insight, and the way Sadi memorably and musically expresses mots justes, often without recourse to imagery, and concludes that the Golestan is characteristically a "poetry of ideas."

Sadi boasts in the epilogue that he did not borrow verse from other poets to adorn the Golestan, as was common epistolary practice. Despite the appearance of one line from Asadi, and a pair from the Rahat al-sodur, this claim holds true, though Sadi does apparently quote lines of his own.

The suggestion that many lines of Sadi's verse were inspired by particular Arabic examples in Motanabbi (Mahfuz) has been unanimously rejected.

Influence: Now universally regarded as the outstanding practitioner of "inimitable simplicity" (sahl-e momtane) in Persian literature, Sadi describes himself in the Golestan's preface as already celebrated far and wide for his style, claiming that copies of his compositions were considered quite valuable.

We know that Sadi's ghaazals were celebrated in distant parts during his lifetime, though evidently not before the mid-1250s, and perhaps not until after 1260.

Sadi himself had complained in 1257 (Bustan, intro.) that he was not properly appreciated in Shiraz, but with the appearance of the Bustan and Golestan that certainly changed.

Sadi was quite prescient in offering the Golestan as a model of epistolary style for the emulation of orators and secretaries (motakalleman-ra ba kar ayad wa motarasselan-ra balaghat biazayad).

Its fame spread widely and rapidly, displacing Abul-Ma'ali Nasr-Allah's Kalila wa Demnaye bahramshahi (which Awfi had encouraged secretaries to study) as the pinnacle of Persian prose style.

The Golestan was known in Anatolia within a few years of its composition, perhaps facilitated by the fact that Ghias ad-Din Kaykhosrow, the Seljuk ruler in Konya, had married the daughter of Sadi's patron, Abu Bakr ibn Sa'd.

In a letter written sometime before 1278, a certain Abu Bakr al-Motatabbeb "Sadr" in Konya quoted a qet'a from the Golestan without mentioning Sadi's name, and Aflaki in his Manaqeb al-arefin (compiled 1318-1353), also quotes without attribution an Arabic verse occurring in the preface.

The Golestan inspired numerous imitations, beginning with the Rawza-ye khold of Majd Khafi (1333) and including most notably Jami's Baharestan (1497) and Qaani's Parishan (1836), the latter published in the margins of an early Golestan lithograph (Tabriz, 1869).

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica
 To be continued

Havva intl. film festival announces winners

TEHRAN –Winners of different sections of the first edition of Iran's Havva International Film Festival were announced on Friday during a special ceremony at Tehran's Vahdat Hall.

They received their awards from Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaili and his colleagues.

In the international section of the festival, "In the Arms of the Tree" by Iranian director Babak Khajepasha was named best film.

The film is about a crisis in the relations between Kimia and Farid that disturbs the peace of their children's lives.

"Dream Team", co-directed by Philipp Abryutin and Maxim Zykov from Russia, won the special jury prize in this section.

The movie traces the journey of Stepan Vershinin, a sports commentator who endures the loss of his esteemed position in television. In his quest for a new job, he finds himself immersed in extraordinary competitions.

The best director award was given to Tamara Kotevska and Ljubomir Stefanov from Macedonia for their documentary "Honeyland".

The movie tells the story of a woman who harnesses the power of ancient beekeeping techniques to produce honey in the breathtaking mountains of North Macedonia. When the family next door makes an attempt to do the same, it creates tension because they completely ignore her wisdom and advice.

"After Class" by Charles Xiuzhi Dong from China and "Fatjona" by Steve Bache from Germany shared



A scene from "In the Arms of the Tree" by Iranian director Babak Khajepasha

the award for best short film.

"After Class" is about a mother, who defies the school registration system despite facing marginalization, determined to ensure her daughter's education,

"Fatjona" tells the story of a young woman, who embarks on a journey to search for her six-year-old daughter, deeply regretting the decision she made to give her up for adoption. Upon rediscovering the girl, she is overwhelmed by the heartbreaking reality that her own daughter fails to recognize her. In light of this profound revelation, she is compelled to make a life-altering choice.

In the national section of the festival, the best film award was given to "Yadoo" by Mehdi Jafari.

The film follows a teenage boy named Yadoo living with his

family and people under siege in the southwestern Iranian city of Abadan in the early days of the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war. The family is finally forced to migrate.

Leili Aaj's "Colonel Sorayya" brought her best director award.

Written based on a true story, the film portrays mothers longing for their children being held captive in Iraq at Camp Ashraf, the base of the MKO, which has officially been designated as a terrorist group.

The film follows Sorayya Abdollahi, an Iranian woman who travels to Iraq to meet her son at the camp. Behind the camp's fence, she finds many other mothers who have been unable to visit their children.

"Shahrbanu" by Maryam Bahrololumi received the

best screenplay award at the festival.

Written by Pejman Teimurtash, "Shahrbanu" is about a mother of three children who has been sentenced to life imprisonment for drug trafficking. She spends 11 years in prison before being released on a temporary basis to attend her son's wedding where she experiences other life and family challenges.

During its first edition, Havva International Film Festival showcased a diverse collection of nearly 80 films, presented at both national and international sections, being screened across 13 provinces throughout the country.

The main objective of the three-day event was to highlight the significance of women in society and the powerful impact that families have within the social fabric.

Croatia envoy, Iran's culture minister meet

TEHRAN – Croatian Ambassador to Tehran Drago Štambuk met Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaili, in his office in Tehran on Wednesday to discuss the expansion of cultural ties.

"Given the friendly nature of our relationship with Croatia and the strong cultural ties between our nations, we warmly embrace the opportunity for collaborative cultural and artistic endeavors between Iran and Croatia," Esmaili said.

The Iranian people hold a positive perception of Croatia, and the government along with the culture ministry are enthusiastic about fostering stronger cultural and artistic ties,



he added.

The ministry is well-prepared to enhance cultural relations and carry out various projects in this field in both countries, he noted.

For his part, Štambuk said that Croatia and Iran enjoy a remarkably strong bond on a cultural level.

"There is a prevalent belief among Croatian intellectuals that our people have deep-rooted connections to Iran," he added.

"This theory holds great significance and resonates strongly within our society," he mentioned.

Tehran cinematheque to review "Dogville"



A poster for a review session of Danish filmmaker Lars von Trier's 2003 drama "Dogville" at the Iranian Artists Forum in Tehran.

TEHRAN –The cinematheque of the Iranian Artists Forum (IAF) will review Danish filmmaker Lars von Trier's 2003 drama "Dogville" on Monday.

Iranian critic Ashkan Raad will attend the review session, which will be organized after a screening in the Nasserli Hall of the forum at 5 pm.

Starring Nicole Kidman, Lauren Bacall, Paul Bettany and James Caan, the film tells the story of a beautiful and well-dressed young woman, Grace, who arrives in the mountainous old mining town of Dogville as a fugitive late one night, following the sound of gunshots in the distance which have been heard by Tom, the self-appointed moral spokesman for the town.

Persuaded by Tom, the town agree to hide Grace, and in return she freely helps the locals. However, when the Sheriff from a neighboring town posts a Missing notice, advertising a reward for revealing her whereabouts, the townsfolk require a better deal from Grace, in

return for their silence; and when the Sheriff returns some weeks later with a Wanted poster, even though the citizens know her to be innocent of the false charges against her, the town's sense of goodness takes a sinister turn and the price of Grace's freedom becomes a workload and treatment akin to that of a slave. But Grace has a deadly secret that the townsfolk will eventually encounter.

The movie was awarded in several international film events. It received Bodil Award for Best Danish Film, European Film Award for Best Cinematographer, Robert Award for Best Screenplay, European Film Award for Best Director, and David di Donatello for Best European Film.

It also won Robert Award for Best Costume Design, Russian Guild of Film Critics Golden Aries Award for Best Foreign Actress and Best Foreign Film, Cinema Brazil Grand Prize for Best Foreign Film, Guild of German Art House Cinemas for Best Foreign Film and Sofia International Film Festival Award for Best Film.

Veteran voice actor Ali Mohammad Ashkbous passes away

TEHRAN – Iranian veteran voice actor Ali Mohammad Ashkbous passed away in Tehran on Friday at the age of 80.

Ashkbous, who was professional in the field of dubbing, passed away after a long

illness.

He began his artistic career in 1961 at the age of 18.

"Captain Tsubasa"; a Japanese soccer anime

and 'The Adventures of Hutch the Honeybee'; a Japanese animated TV series about a lonely, orphaned bee named Hutch were among the famous animation that Ashkbous lent his voice to one of the characters of the series.