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# Hybrid Message from Bu Musa

Page 3

- *Qadir cruise missile system and Fatah 360 ballistic missile equipped with artificial intelligence were unveiled and added to the IRGC Navy for the first time.*
- *The vessels of the Hojaji Special Unit were equipped with missiles with a range of 600 km for the first time.*

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## Nasrallah: U.S. fake promises

**By Ali Karbalaei**

TEHRAN - The Secretary-General of Lebanon's Hezbollah, Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah, has strongly condemned the United States as the root cause of regional instability.

In a speech on Thursday marking the passing of the prominent Lebanese scholar Sheikh Afif al-Nabelsi, the Hezbollah chief said, "The biggest problem in this region is the scandalous and abusive U.S. interference in every aspect."

Nasrallah added, "In exchange for the blatant U.S. interference in absolutely everything, we are facing a culture and policy based on submission to America's will, which only breaks its promises".

He went to say, "Today marks the second anniversary of the American promise (to help Lebanon's energy shortage), and so far, electricity has not reached Lebanon because of the U.S. ban on imports of Egyptian gas and Jordanian electricity." Page 5

## IRGC smashes terror team in Sistan-Baluchestan

TEHRAN- A group of terrorists have been apprehended by the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Ground Force in the southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan, not far from the Pakistani border.

According to a statement issued by the Force's Quds Base on Thursday, the team was affiliated with a foreign-sponsored terrorist group and was apprehended following detailed intelligence and operational procedures.

The team was disbanded before engaging in "destructive and terrorist acts" in southeast Iran.

The operation also resulted in the confiscation of six assault rifles, some of which had telescopic sight mounted on, and a large cache of ammunition.

Last month, the IRGC Ground Force busted a group of terrorists in the region. The operation, which also involved the seizure of ammunition, weapons, and explosives, culminated in the deaths of two terrorists and the arrest of a third.

Pakistan has a border with Sistan-Baluchestan. Several terrorist attacks on civilians and security forces have occurred in the province in recent years.

Iran's security forces have consistently secured the country's borders and repulsed practically all terrorist attacks by foreign-backed anti-revolutionary elements across the country.

Back in July, a member of the so-called Jaish ul-Adl terrorist group, who was provoking violent riots and other acts of violence in Sistan-Baluchestan province last September, was detained by the intelligence units of the IRGC. Page 2

Op-ed

## Jeddah summit: U.S. effort for a dignified end to Ukraine war?

**By Abdul Rahim Ansari**

On July 27th, Jake Sullivan, the national security advisor to President Joe Biden, visited Saudi Arabia for talks with Saudi officials. Although some Western media outlets interpreted the negotiations as an attempt to foster a relationship between Israel and Saudi Arabia, the evidence suggests that the trip's primary purpose was to arrange an upcoming meeting to resolve the Ukraine-Russia war. The meeting is scheduled for August 5th and 6th in Jeddah, with senior officials from 30 countries expected to attend.

The US appears content with the war's conclusion in Ukraine. However, they are cautious about how the outcome is perceived globally, as they do not want the West to be viewed as the defeated party. The U.S. is taking indirect measures and offering minor concessions to Russia to achieve Page 3

## "Majority of Israelis fear civil war"

Former prime minister Ehud Olmert says "we are going into a civil war now" and a former Mossad chief has expressed his concerns for "Israel's immediate security".

**By Ali Salehi**

TEHRAN - A new survey reflects the fragility of Israeli settlers with 58 percent in fear of an actual civil war erupting in the occupied Palestinian territories.

The poll published by the regime's newspaper Maariv highlights the chaos and division in the Israeli settler community over the judicial reforms by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's cabinet.

Over the past eight months, huge protests across the occupied Palestinian territories have been buoyed up by support from military reservists.

More than 10,000 different armed units such as pilots, who play a crucial part of the regime's operational capabilities, have said that they will stop reporting for duty if the cabinet went ahead with a Knesset vote on the first major element of the legislation last week.

Some reports indicate that this number has risen significantly, since Netanyahu's cabinet passed the bill.

In a public statement after the vote last week in favor of the bill, the Israeli military admitted that "if reservists do not show up for reserve duty in the long term, there will be damage to the military's readiness".

The head of the Israeli Air Force, Tomer Bar, has been quoted as saying that his forces needed to remain "vigilant and prepared".

It comes as former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert warned "we are going into a civil war now".

Speaking to Britain's Channel 4, Olmert said, "This a very crucial moment, like we have never witnessed in the whole history of the [occupied Palestinian territories]. This is the first time that the government of the [occupied Palestinian territories] declared war on the [Israeli people]. Page 5

## Iran Greco-Roman team win U17 Worlds

TEHRAN –Iran Greco-Roman team managed to defend their team title at the U17 World Wrestling Championships on Wednesday. Iran claimed one gold, one silver and two bronzes in the competition held in Istanbul, Turkey.

Payam Ahmadi at 49kg won a gold medal while Ahmadreza Mohammadian at 71kg seized a silver. Alireza Amiri at 45kg and Amirhossein Abdevali at 110kg also won two bronze medals.

"I have dreamed it like thousand times," Mohammadian said. "I am feeling great and I hope kids out there in Greece start training more to become like me or better."

Iran claimed the title with 113 points, with Azerbaijan finishing a close second with 108 points. Georgia secured the third spot with 96 points, India came in fourth with 88 points, and Armenia claimed the fifth position with 77 points.

## *Iran, Pakistan ink 5-year strategic trade co-op document*

TEHRAN- Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian and his Pakistani counterpart Bilawal Bhutto Zardari inked a five-year strategic plan document for trade cooperation between the two neighboring countries from 2023 to 2028.

The two diplomats held a meeting in Islamabad on Thursday, exchanging views on a range of issues, including bilateral relations, IRIB reported.

Amir Abdollahian and Bilawal discussed the latest bilateral political, Page 4

## *Tehran, Baghdad join hands to combat sand and dust storms*

TEHRAN – Iran and Iraq signed an agreement to implement joint pilot plans to deal with sand and dust storms in four provinces of Iraq and two provinces of Iran.

On his trip to Baghdad, Ali-Mohammad Tahmasbi, the secretary of the national policymaking headquarters for dealing with sand and dust storms, met with Mithaq Abdul-Hussein Obaid, the technical undersecretary of Iraq's Ministry of Agriculture, agreed on jointly implementing the plans in the four Iraqi provinces of Dhi Qar, Al-Muthanna, Wasit, and Maysan, as well as the two Iranian provinces of Ilam and Khuzestan within the next two months. Page 7

## Raisi administration defeated project of isolating Iran: MP

TEHRAN – Iranian lawmaker Mahmoud Abbaszadeh Meshkini has said that the West lait out a project to isolate Iran but the Ebrahim Raisi administration overcame the project by boosting Iran's foreign relations.

Commenting on the Raisi administration's economic diplomacy, Meshkini said, "Foreign diplomacy has a general meaning and includes governmental, parliamentary and party diplomacy, the success of which is very effective in solving domestic and foreign problems."

During the last two years, the Raisi administration has carried out valuable activities in relation to Asian, African and Latin American countries, according to the lawmaker.

He added, "The technical knowledge of Iranian experts in the oil, industrial and production sectors of the country in various fields of agriculture, industry and defense is among the valuable capacities that were exported to other countries during the activity of this government and added to the weight of the country's political and economic diplomacy."

Underlining that the government has taken important and fundamental steps in developing relations with other countries, the lawmaker said, "The government took over the executive work of the country for the past two years when Iran's relations with some countries, especially its neighbors and countries in the region such as Saudi Arabia, Yemen, the Republic of Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan, were disturbed."

He continued, "Since the beginning of the government, improving relations with the countries of the region and 'looking to the East' have been on the agenda, and many issues that were left over from the past have been resolved."

The actions of the government in foreign policy led to the failure of the project of isolating the Islamic Republic and the reconciliation of the countries of the region with the Zionist regime of Israel, Meshkini noted.

He stated, "The officials of the 11th and 12th administrations believed that the solution to the country's problems was to build relations with America, and this mentality and approach was based in most ministries, including oil, industry and mining, and other government institutions, which hurt the country."

Meshkini said, "The 13th administration, however, increased the relationship with the countries that were hurt by America, so that despite the propaganda of the United States and the Zionist regime to isolate Iran, most of the countries in the region and even Latin America put political and economic activities with the Islamic Republic on their agenda."

He pointed out that Iran's membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization will bring about a big change in the political and economic atmosphere of the country and the world, and will destroy all the plans of the West against Iran.

He added, "By strengthening international diplomacy, Iran was able to use the capacity of its neighbors and countries in the region in the best way and improve its relations with some Arab countries in the Persian Gulf and the northern neighbors of the Caspian Sea."

Also, Meshkini considered the presence of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Latin America and Africa as a political achievement in addition to the economic achievement.

"Our presence in the backyard of America has a clear message of increasing Iran's power against the West; Until today, Iran is active in Venezuela in exporting science and building an oil refinery," he said in remarks to Iran's state news agency IRNA.

He concluded, "Although the diplomacy of the 13th government is reasonable, it also has some shortcomings that by learning from them, it can go further with a proper planning to become the origin of important developments in this field."

In the latest move to boost relations with neighboring countries, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian paid a visit to Pakistan, where he met with the leaders of the country.

## Iran calls for Palestinian unity amid violence in Lebanon camp

TEHRAN- Iran on Thursday urged the Palestinians to band together in the face of the Israeli enemy after disturbances in a refugee camp in Lebanon resulted in deaths and pitted different Palestinian factions against one another.

At least 12 people have died and several more have been injured in days of clashes in the Palestinian Ain al-Hilweh camp in southern Lebanon.

Nasser Kanaani, the spokesperson for Iran's Foreign Ministry, has insisted on the need to fully stop combat in the heavily populated refugee camp, saying that all parties must abide by a ceasefire.

"Palestine needs unity and cohesion within the ranks of the Palestinians more than ever," the spokesman added.

"It is necessary that the Palestinian groups, currents, and nation remain vigilant and use their power and resources to fight against the occupying Zionist enemy, which is the source of all the problems for the Palestinian people, along with instability and chaos in the region," Kanaani underlined.

In addition, Kanaani urged the Palestinians to create the conditions necessary for a total renunciation of Israeli occupation, resettlement of all refugees in their original lands, and establish an independent, unified Palestinian state with al-Quds as its capital.

More than 63,000 people, most of them Palestinians, live in Ain al-Hilweh in the Lebanese coastal city of Sidon.

Over 2,000 people have reportedly been forced to evacuate since the start of the battles in the camp, which featured heavy weaponry, according to the UN organization for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA.

In June, the Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman also voiced skepticism on the likelihood that the United States and Europe will request a UN truth-finding committee to investigate the crimes committed by the Israeli government in Jenin.

"12 martyrs, 140 injured, complete destruction of water and electricity networks, complete demolition of 300 buildings, damage to approximately 500 houses, destruction of streets and shops, and more, are the result of the Zionist army's insane aggression against the refugee camp in Jenin," Kanaani tweeted.

He questioned the goal of the U.S. and Europe requesting a truth-finding committee from the Human Rights Council in response to Israel's savage assault on Jenin and its refugee camp, stating, "Never!"

Israel resorted to airstrikes, ground operations, and drone attacks on innocent civilians in Jenin that forced hundreds of families to abandon their homes.

A group of United Nations experts, cited by the official Palestinian Wafa news agency, described Israel's campaign in Jenin as potentially constituting a "war crime."

They denounced Israeli operations in the West Bank that resulted in the deaths and displacement of Palestinians, as well as the damage of houses and infrastructure.

The experts were concerned about the relocation of around 4,000 Palestinians as well as the collective punishment inflicted on the people.

Historically, the United States, the principal ally of Israel, has protected the regime from responsibility by using its veto power to kill anti-Israel resolutions at the UN.

The experts agreed that in order for the current bloodshed to halt, Israel's unlawful occupation must end, since it is fundamentally awry.

# Amir Abdollahian suggests ways to spice up cooperation with Pakistan

### *Iran and Pakistan exchange views on border security, prisoner exchange and trade ties*

TEHRAN- In conformity with international law, the Iranian foreign minister proposed a variety of ideas to improve economic and commercial relations with Pakistan.

For a three-day official visit, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian landed in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, on Wednesday evening.

Amir Abdollahian arrived in Karachi on Friday to meet with local officials and businesses, as well as Iranians residing there, and also to participate in Friday prayers.

During an official visit on Thursday night, Amir Abdollahian met with Shehbaz Sharif, the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

He also provided the Pakistani premier with information on the discussions between delegates from the two states on political, economic, trade, security, and border issues during the gathering, which was also attended by the foreign minister of Pakistan.

Pointing to the agreements about banking activities, barter system and gas transfer pipelines, Amir Abdollahian reaffirmed Iran's determination to carry out the bilateral deals with Pakistan.

Prime Minister Sharif, for his part, praised the Iranian delegation's "timely" visit to Pakistan.

Additionally, he extended an invitation to the President of Iran, Ebrahim Raisi, to visit Pakistan in the hopes that he would be the first head of state to do so following the circumstances surrounding the elections in Pakistan.

The most recent events in Afghanistan were one of several regional and global topics that the two officials discussed.

During his official visit to Pakistan, Ami Abdollahian also met separately with Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, Speaker of the National Assembly of Pakistan, and Sadiq Sanjrani, Chairman of the Senate of Pakistan.

**Pakistan army chief says decided to cooperate with Iran in fight against terrorism**

*FM Abdollahian shakes hand with Pakistan's PM Shehbaz Sharif*

During a meeting with Amir Abdollahian on Thursday night in Islamabad, General Asim Munir, Pakistan's chief of army staff, reaffirmed his nation's commitment to working with Iran to combat terrorism.

The top Pakistani general stated that his country is totally serious about working with the amiable country, the Islamic Republic of Iran, in the battle against terrorism.

According to the general, Pakistan is firm in its fight against terrorism and regards Iran's security as being equal to its own.

He also praised the outcomes of his trip to Tehran in July and his meetings with important figures, such as President Raisi and Iranian Armed Forces Chief of Staff Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri.

Amir Abdollahian, for his part, cited the agreements he had made with high-ranking Pakistani authorities regarding security and border matters.

He stated that cooperation by the Pakistani Army for the bilateral security agreements will hasten their implementation.

The agreements on border and security matters reached during General Munir's recent visit to Tehran marked a new phase in bilateral cooperation, the Iranian foreign minister said.

The most recent events in Afghanistan were among the many regional and global issues that the two officials also addressed.

The Iranian and Pakistani foreign ministers signed a five-year strategic plan for commercial cooperation in Islamabad on Thursday.

Amir Abdollahian also exchanged views with his Pakistani counterpart Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on a range of issues, including border security and exchange of prisoners.

Amir Abdollahian emphasized that the agreements reached between the two neighboring countries to strengthen border security will provide a suitable ground for developing relations.

He further noted that the meeting is aimed at facilitating the implementation of 190 documents already signed between Iran and Pakistan and reaching a sustainable and long-term cooperation deal, Press TV reported.

Bhutto Zardari also called for formation of a strategic committee to follow up on agreements to expand cooperation, including those in the defense and commercial areas.

He also welcomed the opening of border markets and hailed the trip by Amir Abdollahian as "very beneficial."

**Iran urges Pakistan to complete its part of gas pipeline project**

According to mymotherlode.com, Iran's foreign minister also on Thursday urged Pakistan to complete its part of a much-delayed gas pipeline between the two countries, a multi-billion project that has been on hold since 2014.

"We do believe that the completion of the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline is definitely going to serve the national interests of our two countries," Amir Abdollahian told a joint press conference with Foreign Minister Bhutto Zardari.

The project, launched in 2013, required Pakistan to finish the construction of the pipeline on its territory by the end of 2014. Iran says it has already invested $2 billion on the pipeline project on its side of the border.

Elsewhere in his remarks at the press conference, Iran's chief diplomat called for halting weapons supplies to Ukraine by the West.

"We have said this and we believe war is not the way, it is not the solution," he said. "We believe that it is a source of great concern that the United States and some Western countries keep arming Ukraine."

Pakistan has also called for resolving the Ukraine issue through dialogue.

## IRGC smashes terror team in Sistan-Baluchestan

From page 1 ▸ 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, along with other terrorists, to Jaish ul-Adl's primary training camp.

## Japan to host Iran foreign minister: TBS

TEHRAN – Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian will visit Japan on Sunday and meet his Japanese counterpart and Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, broadcaster TBS reported on Friday.

Reportedly, Japan will tell Iran to stop weapon supplies to Russia during Abdollahian's Tokyo visit, TBS said, citing multiple unnamed government officials.

Iran has dismissed claims that it is supplying weapons to Russia which started a war on Ukraine in February 2022. Iran said it had sold a limited number of drones (UAVs) to Russia before the start of the war.

On the contrary, Iran has been making repeated calls for a dialogue between Russia and Ukraine to settle the dispute. In a joint press conference with his Pakistani counterpart Bhutto Zardari in Islamabad on Thursday, Amir Abdollahian renewed Iran's request for dialogue and warned that delivery of arms to Ukraine by the West is prolonging the war.

## Iran self-contained in meeting own defensive needs: IRGC deputy chief

TEHRAN- The deputy commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said on Thursday that Iran is innovative and capable of meeting its own defense needs.

Rear Admiral Ali Fadavi told Tasnim that the delivery of the "Abu Mahdi" missile to the IRGC Navy is an illustration of self-sufficiency.

Abu Mahdi is the first long-range cruise missile that can target enemy warships, he said.

In a ceremony last month, the Abu Mahdi cruise missiles were delivered to the naval units of the Army and the IRGC.

With a range of over 1,000 kilometers, the homegrown naval cruise missile has expanded Iran's naval defense coverage zone by several times and allow the Navy units to broaden their operational range.

The Abu Mahdi missile stands out for its pinpoint accuracy, devastating force, ability to avoid marine terrain, and ability to penetrate an opponent's air defense systems.

Known as the first long-range naval cruise missile whose trajectory definition and command-and-control systems have been equipped with artificial intelligence, the missile can streak at low altitudes for radar-evading maneuvers and alter its course and height in midair.

The massive warhead on the Abu Mahdi missile can destroy different vessels, frigates, and destroyers by striking the target from multiple angles.

The new missile, which is equipped with a strong integrated navigation system and a potent motor, can be launched from any point deep within Iranian territory to strike mobile naval targets.

The missile's seeker features both active and passive radar homing systems, increasing its ability to engage targets with electronic warfare, boosting stealth, and transforming the missile into a specter that falls on targets undetected.

The Abu Mahdi launch system is capable of preparing and launching many missiles quickly, on a variety of trajectories, and from a variety of fixed and mobile launchers.

# Hybrid message from Bu Musa

By Faramarz Kuhpayeh

TEHRAN – Iran has staged massive military exercises on a number of strategic islands in the Persian Gulf amid renewed American efforts to reinforce their military presence in the region.

On Wednesday, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy announced the start of drills with a different purpose: Defending the three islands of Bu Musa, the Greater Tunb, and the Lesser Tunb, which are claimed by the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The war games also included the lesser-known island of Naze'at. The drills were meant to "display the IRGC Navy's might as well as combat and defense preparedness in protecting the Persian Gulf security and the Iranian islands", the IRGC said, according to Tasnim.

Various types of weapons and equipment were employed in the drills, with troops training for rapid deployment from the southern port city of Bandar Abbas to the islands.

Various units of the IRGC Navy, including the combat, naval, missile, drone, rapid reaction, electronic warfare and airborne units, backed by the IRGC Aerospace Force, exercised a range of military tactics in the war game.

The IRGC has deployed the 'Fath' and 'Qadir' missile systems on the Iranian islands, including Abu Musa.

An IRGC Navy commander said the vessels of 'Hojaji Special Unit' have been, for the first time, furnished with missiles with a range of 600 kilometers to ensure the security of Abu Musa and the other Iranian islands.

The IRGC Navy has also employed missile-launching speedboats that reach a velocity of 90 knots, unmanned aerial vehicles, artificial intelligence-powered remotely operated naval vessels, amphibious aircraft, and precision-strike naval ballistic missiles in the exercise.

The drills come amid a set of developments that have warranted an Iranian response. First, the UAE has increased its diplomatic efforts in relation to the three Iranian islands. In less than a year, it pushed for controversial statements involving Russia and China, the two strategic partners of Iran. Using the cover of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council, the UAE has worked to elicit statements signed by Beijing and Moscow that call into question Iran's territorial integrity.

Iran has responded harshly to those statements, summoning the envoys of China and Russia.

While Iran diplomatically made it clear that its sovereignty over the three islands is inviolable, the drills severed as a military complement to the diplomatic efforts in this regard. Therefore, the message of the drills is clear: Iran is ready and determined to protect its territorial integrity no matter what outsiders do. In a sense, Iran conveyed the message that its sovereignty is not subject to diplomatic considerations.

But the Persian Gulf drills also had another important context, which is the deployment of additional American troops and military equipment to the Persian Gulf.

Over the last few weeks, the U.S. has made many announcements regarding troop deployments. And the U.S. put that in the context of countering Iran's alleged threats.

In a July 20 statement, the Pentagon said, "The Secretary of Defense has ordered the deployment of a portion of the BATAAN Amphibious Readiness Group/Marine Expeditionary Unit (ARG/MEU) comprised of the USS Bataan, USS Carter Hall, and its associated personnel and equipment into the USCENTCOM area of responsibility (AOR), in addition to the recently approved forces comprising F-35s, F-16s, and a guided missile destroyer, the USS Thomas Hudner (DDG-116)."

Most recently, the U.S. said it was considering putting armed personnel on commercial ships traveling through the Strait of Hormuz. This new action was also put in the context of countering Iran seizing ships traveling through the Strait of Hormuz.

With the U.S. saber-rattling taking a new turn, the IRGC appeared to have recognized the need to flex its military muscles in the Persian Gulf in a move to showcase Iran's readiness to respond to any aggression.

# Iran ambassador presents credentials to Kuwait FM

TEHRAN – Iran's new ambassador to Kuwait, Mohammad Totonchi, has presented a copy of his credentials to Kuwait's top diplomat.

Totonchi has become Iran's ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary amid strained relations between Iran and Kuwait over a shared gas field in the Persian Gulf.

Totonchi presented his credentials to Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Salem Abdullah al-Jaber al-Sabah on Thursday.

In the meeting, the Kuwaiti foreign minister congratulated Mohammad Totonchi on his new position as the new ambassador of Iran in Kuwait and expressed hope that his term of office will witness the strengthening and deepening of friendly relations between the two countries.

He also emphasized the development of political and economic cooperation between Kuwait and Iran and called for the strengthening of bilateral relations.

Al-Sabah conveyed the greetings of the Kuwaiti leadership to the Iranian one. "In Kuwait, we seek two goals: one is to strengthen relations with friendly countries and the second is to stabilize the security and stability of the region," he said, according to Tasnim.

The newly-appointed Iranian ambassador pointed to the friendly and long-standing relations between the two friendly and brotherly nations of Iran and Kuwait and stressed the maximum effort during his tenure in Kuwait to promote bilateral relations in all fields.

Pointing to the importance of the necessity of continuing the political consultations of the high officials of the two countries, the parties also reviewed the latest state of bilateral cooperation, especially the solution of providing facilities and visas to Iranian and Kuwaiti nationals.

Totonchi also presented an invitation from Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian to his Kuwaiti counterpart to visit Iran.

Totonchi arrived in Kuwait in late July after holding a meeting with President Ebrahim Raisi together with other ambassadors. He also met with Amir Abdollahian before heading to Kuwait.

Iran and Kuwait have been locked in a dispute over the shared Arash gas field in the Persian Gulf. Kuwait and Saudi Arabia have said that has no share in this field while Iran continues to insist that has a share in the field.

Iranian Oil Minister Javad Owji said on Wednesday that Iran has let Kuwait know that it will tap into the Arash gas field even if the Arab country decides to shun cooperation.

Owji warned that Iran will not give up any of its rights when it comes to its rightfully-owned natural resources in the joint field.

# Jeddah summit: U.S. effort for a dignified end to Ukraine war?

Frome Page 1 ▸ a ceasefire in the Ukraine-Russia war. In order for the U.S.-proposed ceasefire terms to be accepted by Russia, specific actions must be taken. The White House is closely observing these actions to ensure a satisfactory outcome.

To encourage Russia to participate in negotiations, the U.S. has implemented a variety of political, psychological, and military tactics. These include the use of prohibited cluster munitions, the delivery of previously denied long-range missiles to Ukraine, and the targeting of areas deep within Russian territory. Additionally, kamikaze drones attacking Moscow have been used to persuade the Kremlin to agree to a ceasefire.

When you compare the recent movements of the U.S. in Syria with their military formation, you'll notice they're all headed in the same direction and don't seem to have any other objective than putting psychological pressure on Russia. It's evident that due to the upcoming 2024 presidential elections, the U.S. cannot engage in a direct war with Russia.

Even the F16 Fighting Falcons that the U.S. had previously announced to send to the Persian Gulf to protect ships against Iran's actions is nothing more than a lie. It probably wanted to indirectly warn the Russian side that the aircraft will be sent to support its military in Syria. But at the same time, the U.S. put its blame on the Arab states of the Persian Gulf by saying that the U.S. is still committed to ensuring security in the region. However, the Arab states have understood that the U.S. army has done nothing in the region and it is just a fake hegemon.

**What is the reason for selecting Saudi Arabia as the host?**

Saudi Arabia, being a leader among the Arab states, could earn international recognition and success by hosting such an important meeting and serving as a mediator.

In addition, this meeting will prevent China, a rival of the U.S., from playing a significant role as a global actor in an important event. It is worth noting that China achieved significant credit by mediating an agreement between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Thirdly, the U.S. is willing to appease Saudi Arabia, a significant energy supplier worldwide, which has signaled to the East after its animosity with the United States.

Another point to consider is the positive relationship between Arab states and Russia. This may decrease the likelihood of Russian opposition to decisions made during the meeting. It's worth noting that both the United States and Russia respect Saudi Arabia.

Additionally, several attendees of the meeting will likely be from non-aligned nations that didn't participate in the Western sanctions and maintain ties with Russia. If a joint statement is produced, Russia may be at odds with these countries that stood by it during the sanctions. This could pose a significant challenge to Russia.

It appears that the U.S. is trying to find a way out of the predicament it has created while still maintaining its hegemony, continuing the war in Ukraine, and the billions of dollars that the U.S. spent in Ukraine still failed to achieve the desired outcome.

The current situation does not put pressure on Russia but instead on the U.S. and its allies. Europe is experiencing significant strain and may start to distance itself from U.S. policies, as it has not been cooperative in deploying weapons to Ukraine as the White House expected; Although the United States did not suffer as much as Europe, it has so far spent more than $300 billion on an inconclusive war.

In contrast, Ukraine suffered destruction and did not join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Over 20% of its territory was occupied, and half its population was displaced. Additionally, many Ukrainian men lost their lives. Despite these challenges, Russia was able to maintain its security and economy. Furthermore, they were able to neutralize the impact of sanctions to a significant extent.

It could be argued that Western countries have suffered the most in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, and if the war persists, it's unlikely to yield favorable outcomes for the United States. So, it's reasonable for the U.S. to take a firm stance to end the conflict.

The Russians can come out on top in the upcoming Jeddah meeting if they remain alert and avoid falling for U.S. tricks, even though they also desire an end to the war. The U.S. cannot engage in direct warfare despite their assertions, and their deployment of troops to Syria is merely for show. Nonetheless, it remains uncertain whether the Russia-Ukraine conflict will come to a swift conclusion.

## SPORTS

## Iran football team to face Cabo Verde

TEHRAN – Iran national football team will play a friendly match with Cabo Verde in early September.

Team Melli will play Bulgaria at the Hristo Botev Stadium in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, slated for Sept. 7 as well.

Mehdi Taj, head of Iran's Football Federation, has confirmed that the National Team will also participate in the Jordan's four-team tournament in Amman in October as part of preparation for the 2023 AFC Asian Cup.

Three-time winners Team Melli are drawn along the UAE, Hong Kong and Palestine in Group C.

The continental showpiece, scheduled for Jan. 12 to Feb. 10, 2024 promises to be a thrilling affair with seven former winners among the 24 teams - seeded in accordance with the latest FIFA World Ranking - divided into six groups.

## Iran win 2023 Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting

TEHRAN – Iran claimed the title of the 2023 Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting.

The Iranian weightlifters claimed nine gold, 12 silver and two bronze medals.

Iran won the title with 741 points.

Uzbekistan became runners-up with 732 points and India finished in third place with 672 points.

The competition was held in Delhi, India.

## Iran B lose to Philippines in Chinese basketball tournament

TEHRAN – Iran B lost to the Philippines 76-65 at the 2023 Heyuan WUS International Basketball Tournament in Guangzhou, China on Thursday.

Iran had lost to Senegal 85-75 in its opening match on Wednesday.

Iran have sent a young team to the round-robin tournament.

Team Melli coach Mo Abedini has said the individual performances of the players in the tournament will help determine the final squad for the 2023 FIBA World Cup.

The Lebanon were supposed to participate in the tournament but withdrew from the event.

## Iran to play Chinese Taipei at 2023 William Jones Cup opener

TEHRAN – Iran will play Chinese Taipei at the 2023 William Jones Cup International Tournament opener on Saturday.

The event will take place in Taipei from Aug. 5 to 9.

Team Melli Banovan is scheduled to play South Korea on Saturday.

Iran will also face the Philippines, Chinese Taipei-A, Japan and Chinese Taipei-B in the following days.

Marking its 42nd edition, the Jones Cup is an official basketball competition recognized by the International Basketball Federation.

Taking place between August 12 and 20, the men's division features the local teams, as well as counterparts from Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, UAE, Qatar, the U.S. and Iran.

## Fasihi only Iranian athlete to compete at 2023 World Athletics

TEHRAN – Woman sprinter Farzaneh Fasihi is the only Iranian athlete to compete at the 2023 World Athletics Championships.

Iranian man sprinter Hassan Taftian failed to earn a quota to participate in the prestigious competition.

Fasihi will represent Iran in the women's 100 meters.

The 2023 World Athletics Championships are scheduled for August 19 to 27 in Budapest, capital of Hungary.

## Iraqi Mohammed joins Esteghlal

TEHRAN – Iraqi midfielder Muntadher Mohammed Jebur Naslookhi joined Iranian football club Esteghlal.

The 22-year-old Iraqi player passed his medical test in Tehran.

Mohammed started his playing career in Al-Kahrabaa in 2017 and has also played in Al-Zawraa, Al-Quwa Al-Jawiya and Al-Naft. He is a member of the Iraqi national football team as well.

## Diver Mirabian wins gold at 2023 Masters

TEHRAN – Iranian diver Ghaem Mirabian claimed a gold medal at the 2023 World Aquatics Masters Championships.

He finished first with 401.95 points in 40-44 age category of the Men Springboard 3m.

German Markus Albrecht won the silver with 284.45 and bronze medal went to Canadian Jonathan Asselin.

A total of 14 divers competed in the division.

The 2023 World Aquatics Masters Championships are being held in Kyushu, Japan from Aug. 2 to 11.

## Sardar Azmoun out for at least six weeks

TEHRAN – Bayer Leverkusen forward Sardar Azmoun is ruled out for at least six weeks after picking up a left leg injury.

The Bundesliga side have announced that Azmoun will be sidelined between six to eight weeks.

Azmoun will miss matches against RB Leipzig, Monchengladbach and Darmstadt in the 2023/24 Bundesliga season which will kick off on Aug. 18.

The Iran international forward will likely be absent for the friendly match against Bulgaria, slated for Sept. 7.

## Iran too strong for Puerto Rico at 2023 FIVB U19 Worlds

TEHRAN – Iran overpowered Puerto Rico in straight sets (25-18, 25-15, 25-12) on Thursday at the 2023 FIVB Volleyball Boys' U19 World Championship.

Abolfazl Mahdian and Matin Hosseini led Iran with 12 points each and Puerto Rico's Gabriel Colon Ortiz Yann scored eight points.

Iran will play Colombia in Pool C on Saturday.

The 2023 FIVB Volleyball Boys' U19 World Championship is being held in San Juan, Argentina from Aug. 2 to 13.

## Iran victorious against Faroe Island at IHF Youth World Championship

TEHRAN - Iran defeated Faroe Islands 29-27 at 2023 the IHF Men's Youth World Championship on Thursday.

Iran returned to the competition after 13 years, and they did it in style.

After sharing spoils with Sweden on the first day at Croatia 2023, they made a comeback and won against the Faroe Islands, marking their first-ever win over a European team.

Iran are scheduled to meet Burundi on Saturday in Group H.

## 4,000 beekeepers active in Kermanshah province

TEHRAN- As announced by a provincial official, 4,000 beekeepers are active in Kermanshah province, in the west of Iran.

Sirous Norouzi, the deputy head of the province's agriculture department for livestock production improvement, also put the number of bee colonies at over 644,000 in the province.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Iran, Syria to enhance banking, monetary ties

TEHRAN- Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Mohammadreza Farzin met with Syrian Communications and Technology Minister Iyad Mohammad al-Khatib and the country's Economy and Foreign Trade Minister Mohammad Samer al-Khalil on Wednesday to discuss ways of expanding monetary and banking ties.

Speaking at the meeting, Farzin said: "Monetary and banking cooperation between Iran and Syria is followed seriously and will increase in the short term."

Pointing to the necessity of developing banking, economic and commercial cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Syria, the CBI governor said: "Increasing monetary, banking, commercial and joint investment relations and cooperation is on the serious agenda of Tehran and Damascus."

He further referred to the development of Iran's electronic banking and monetary network and the CBI's readiness for joint cooperation in this field with Syria, stating: "One of Iran's important strategies in developing commercial cooperation with neighboring countries is replacing the dollar with national currencies in monetary and banking relations in order to increase the volume of trade transactions."

Samer al-Khalil for his part emphasized the need for increasing trade exchanges between Damascus and Tehran, saying: "Eliminating the dollar from trade relations and using national currencies in the context of monetary and banking cooperation between Syria and Iran will definitely lead to an increase in the volume of commercial exchanges between the two countries."

Stating that the process of implementing the previously reached agreements between Iran and Syria is on a very good track in various fields, he stated: "The important goal is to reach results in all matters related to economic issues between the two countries by following up on the previous agreements that are in line with the interests of the two countries."

Elsewhere in the meeting, Mohammad al-Khatib underlined Iran's progress in the field of electronic banking and called for the formation of a joint working group between the two countries in order to increase technological cooperation in the field of communication and banking.

Syrian ministers of trade and communications visited Iran along with a senior delegation with the aim of expanding relations between the two countries.

**Syria proposes establishing joint free zone with Iran in Latakia**

During the visit of the Syrian delegation to Tehran, the two sides have also discussed establishing a joint free zone in Syria.

In a meeting with Hojatollah Abdolmaleki, the secretary of Iran's Free Zones High Council, on Wednesday, Syrian economy minister proposed establishing a joint free trade zone in the country's Latakia port city.

"Certainly, one of Syria's priorities in commercial and economic cooperation with Iran is to create a joint free zone," Mohammad Samer al-Khalil said.

"Several meetings have been held to determine the best place for establishing a joint free trade zone with Iran and three areas of Latakia port, Abu Kamal and Hassia have been proposed as areas for the establishment of the joint free zone", he added.

Tehran hosted a meeting of the heads of Iran-Syria Joint Economic Committee on Monday during which the two sides discussed previously reached agreements and explored ways of accelerating their implementation.

The negotiations between Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mehrdad Bazrpash and Syria's Economy and Foreign Trade Minister Mohammad Samer al-Khalil were mainly focused on the agreements and memorandums signed between the two countries during the visit of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi to Syria in May.

Speaking on the sidelines of the meeting, al-Khalil said the agreements reached during the visit of the Iranian President to Syria are in line with the interests of the two countries.

"[The goal of] Today's meeting is to follow up on the agreements and approvals that were made during the visit of the President of Iran to Syria on May 5," he stressed.

The Syrian minister noted that several constructive meetings have been held with Iranian officials regarding economic cooperation between the two countries and many topics have been discussed in all the potential fields of cooperation.

Bazrpahs for his part mentioned the agreements signed during President Raisi's visit to Syria, saying: "16 cooperation documents were signed between the two countries during the visit, and one of our main duties in the [two countries' Joint Economic] committee is to follow up on the implementation of these documents."

The Iranian transport minister announced the revival of the semi-closed factories of two Iranian automobile manufacturers in Syria and the establishment of a tire production complex in this country and said: "the agreements and approvals of the recent visit of President Raisi to Syria are in a very good condition and a large part of these agreements are currently being implemented."

The official also announced that the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) is going to issue a permit for an Iranian bank to start operating in Syria within few weeks.

He noted that tariffs on many commodity groups have been zeroed and the two countries businessmen can export and imports their goods without any tariffs.

# Development projects valued at $21b underway at PSEEZ

TEHRAN - The managing director of Iran's Pars Special Economic Energy Zone (PSEEZ) has said 27 development projects with a total investment of $21 billion are underway in the region, Shana reported.

Speaking in a meeting of the managers of the country's oil industry on Thursday, Sekhavat Asadi said: "Despite the sanctions, 150 billion dollars has been invested in the upstream and downstream sectors of the oil industry in the Pars Special Economic Energy Zone."

The official noted that four petro-refineries are also being constructed in the zone and after the completion of these complexes Iran will no longer need to export the gas condensate produced at the South Pars.

Underlining the fact that South Pars accounts for 48 percent of the country's petrochemical production, the official said: "With the new projects completed, the South Pars output will double."

Asadi pointed out that the feed for the petrochemical complexes in this region is supplied from the gas produced at the South Pars field, stating that the Persian Gulf Star Refinery, which supplies 40 percent of the country's gasoline, receives 100 percent of its feed from South Pars gas condensate.

He noted that exports from PSEEZ increased by 40 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20) to reach $12.3 billion.

According to the official, over 90,000 people are currently working in the PSEEZ.

Located in the port city of Assaluyeh, PSEEZ is home to several petrochemical complexes that receive gas and gas condensate feedstock from the giant South Pars gas field, which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf.

The zone is the hub of Iran's exports of major non-oil commodities including gas condensate and petrochemicals.

Earlier on Wednesday, an official with the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) said that the emission of flare gases in the refineries of the South Pars gas complex are going to decrease by 36 percent by the end of the current Iranian calendar year 1402 (late March 2024).

According to Mohammad Hosseini, flare gas emissions at the South Pars refineries decreased to three billion cubic meters in the previous Iranian year (ended on March 20) from 3.2 billion cubic meters in the year 1400.

Hosseini said the figure is expected to fall to 1.9 billion cubic meters by the end of the current year.

## Iran, Pakistan ink 5-year strategic trade co-op document

From page 1 ▶ economic and defense issues, including the development of trade ties during the meeting.

"Under the government of Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi, the volume of trade exchanges between the two countries has increased by more than 50 percent," Amir Abdollahian said in the meeting, adding that Iranian and Pakistani officials want to see further expansion of ties in the future, given existing capacities.

Bilawal, for his part, called for the formation of a strategic committee to follow up on agreements on the expansion of cooperation.

He also welcomed the opening of border markets and hailed Amir Abdollahian's trip as "very beneficial".

At the end of their meeting, the two officials signed a five-year strategic plan for Iran-Pakistan commercial cooperation.

In recent years, Tehran and Islamabad have been working towards enhancing relations in all areas including bilateral economic relations.

Back in mid-May, President Raisi and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sherif inaugurated a joint retail market at a border crossing linking the Iranian city of Pishin to the Pakistani city of Mand to further boost trade ties between the two countries.

The opening of the border market is seen as an important development that can positively affect the economic situation of residents in the border regions.

The administration of President Raisi has made ties with neighbors a top priority of its foreign policy.

Iranian officials have repeatedly reiterated that the government's foreign policy is basically built on good neighborliness. They stated that Tehran is willing to further bolster cooperation with its neighbors despite enemies' opposition.

Iran has significantly expanded relations with its neighbors in recent years, especially in trade and commerce fields.

Iran's non-oil export to Pakistan increased by 18 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), according to the spokesman of the Trade Development Committee of the Iranian House of Industry, Mining, and Trade.

Pakistan was Iran's fifth largest export market in the previous calendar year, importing non-oil products worth $1.488 billion from Iran, Ruhollah Latifi said in May.

He added that Iran imported non-oil goods worth $842 million from Pakistan last year, up 170 percent from the previous year.

Meanwhile, a conference on economic and industry opportunities between Iran and Pakistan was held in Karachi on Friday.

As reported, the conference was held with the participation of Amir Abdollahian, some officials of Karachi, some representatives from Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and some Iranian traders and businessmen.

## Tehran hosting intl. exhibition of construction industry

TEHRAN- The 23rd International Exhibition of Building and Construction Industry (Iran Confair 2023) was opened by Transport and Urban Development Minister Mehrdad Bazrpash at Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds on Thursday.

Syria's Economy and Foreign Trade Minister Mohammad Samer al-Khalil and Head of Iran Chamber of Cooperatives (ICC) Bahman Abdollahi and several MPs also attended the opening ceremony, IRNA reported.

More than 800 domestic and foreign exhibitors are participating in this four-day exhibition.

Representatives of over 60 foreign companies from countries including Sweden, the UK, Germany, Spain, China, Turkey, Poland, Russia, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are showcasing their latest achievements and products in this exhibition.

The exhibition covers a variety of areas including construction tool wares, equipment and machinery, roof and wall coverings and prefabricated parts, cooling and heating facilities, work safety equipment and supplies, bathrooms, saunas and kitchens, door and window, automatic doors, interior decoration and architecture, paint, glue and resin and insulators, building stones, sanitary faucets, industrialization and new technologies, tiles, ceramics, parquet (wall-to-wall carpet) and floor coverings, electrical and electronic equipment and supplies, and pipes and fittings.

Scientific and research centers, consultants and contractors, financial and credit institutions, publications and software firms, as well as, some state-run institutions are also partaking in the event.

Holding B2B meetings in order to develop the export of technical and engineering products and services with the presence of 220 trade delegations from 23 countries, as well as dozens of conferences, workshops and specialized meetings with the presence of university professors, experts, mass builders, consulting engineers and university students are among the programs scheduled held on the sidelines of the exhibition.

## Export from Golestan province rises 28% in 4 months on year

TEHRAN- The value of non-oil export from Golestan province, in the northeast of Iran, rose 28 percent during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, a provincial official announced.

Shahriyar Shahriyari, the director-general of the province's Customs Department, said that over 161,000 tons of non-oil goods worth $86.58 million were exported from the province in the four-month period of this year, with a 33-percent growth in weight, year on year.

He named eggs, cheese, polystyrene, iron pipes, fish food, chipboard sheets, nylon, dates, polyethylene compound and wire and cable coating as the main exported items, and Turkmenistan, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Romania, Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Russia, Armenia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey and India as the major export destinations.

The official further announced that over 25,370 tons of non-oil products valued at $56.326 million were imported to the province in the first four months of the present year, with 333 percent rise in value, and 237 percent growth in weight year on year.

He named soybean oil, sodium sulfate, diesel generator, greenhouse equipment, calcined petroleum coke, and fabric as the main imported items, and Turkey, Turkmenistan, England, India, Spain, Kazakhstan, Russia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Taiwan, Vietnam, Pakistan, Iraq, Australia, Germany, Denmark, and Italy as the major sources of import to the province in the mentioned four-month period.

As previously announced by Darvish-Ali Hassan-Zadeh, the head of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department, the value of export from Golestan province increased by 26 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20), as compared to the preceding year.

He said that non-oil commodities worth $235 million were exported from the province to 33 countries in the previous year.

# Nasrallah: U.S. fake promises

***"U.S. breaks its promises everywhere" in the region***

From page 1 ▶ From Lebanon to Syria, Nasrallah stressed that "all the suffering that Syria is suffering is due to the U.S. sanctions and the Caesar Act," stressing Washington's meddlesome policies through coercive strategies have caused great pain to the people of the region.

"Without the Caesar Act, Syria would not have required any aid from any party to overcome the aftermath of the war," Nasrallah highlighted, slamming Washington's hegemonic plots.

He also stressed that "the American occupation is preventing the Syrian government from reaching the oil and gas fields east of the Euphrates (river). This is while the U.S. is looting Syria's natural resources."

Washington promised to allow Iraq energy imports from Iran and then backtracked. "The U.S. is preventing Iraq from paying the price of gas to the Iranian government so that Iran will cut off electricity to Iraq," noting that "the reason for the American ban on (Baghdad's payment to Tehran) is aimed at Iran ending the pumping of gas to Iraq, and then they can say to the people of Iraq, look at Iran, look at what Iran is doing to you?"

In Yemen as well, the main obstacle to end the war and bring peace, according to Sayyed Nasrallah, is the U.S., which is making efforts to prolong the suffering of Yemeni people.

As for Palestine "the possibility of a two-state solution is sharply fading away," the Hezbollah chief said while also emphasizing that "whoever waits for the U.S. in politics, economics, and values, is only waiting for abnormal values."

The Hezbollah leader has called on all regional nations to stand together against the mischievous U.S. pursuit of interference in other countries' affairs to satisfy its hegemonic appetite and hold Washington accountable for its actions.

Nasrallah said the Lebanese "resistance, through its various frameworks, was a factor of surprise to the United States and Israel, and the development and achievements of the resistance has been witnessed by everybody," alluding indirectly to how the foreign occupation and interference can be kicked out through hardship and sacrifice.

Elsewhere in his remarks, he added, "If the Lebanese are pouring their anger out on a minister here or there, then they are drowning out the details, they must pour their anger out on America, which is tyrannical and preventing electricity from reaching the Lebanese nation."

Nasrallah indicated that "there are many sources that can generate money for the Lebanese treasury, but they are banned due to measures taken by the U.S. embassy" in Beirut.

It is something that has to end, he emphasized.

He explained the need to get rid of American hegemony and find a solution to the crisis in Lebanon as the U.S. "will take us to a painful and catastrophic reality because of their illegal interference in our country."

Regarding the clashes at a Palestinian refugee camp in southern Lebanon, Sayyed Nasrallah said, "There are media outlets that falsely accuse Hezbollah of being behind these events."

He called on all concerned parties to immediately halt the fighting, saying it only serves the enemies and undermines the resistance movement.

On Thursday, Save the Children said fighting in the Southern Lebanese Palestinian camp of Ain el-Hilweh has displaced 20,000 residents, including about 12,000 children.

> "Whoever waits for the U.S. in politics, economics, and values, is only waiting for abnormal values."

Since fighting broke out on Saturday between the Palestinian Fatah faction and extremist militants, at least 13 people have been killed in the camp, the majority of them militants.

A fragile ceasefire has been holding after two militants were killed late Wednesday night, security sources have been cited as saying.

Earlier this week, Seyyed Nasrallah, also called for an immediate and lasting ceasefire.

Touching on the third anniversary of the Beirut port explosion, which killed 220 people and wounded thousands of others, Sayyed Nasrallah stressed that "the ones who lost the truth of the facts behind the explosion are the same ones who were working to politicize the issue from the beginning, and some resorted to linking this tragedy to regional events."

The huge blast damaged swathes of the city. Despite the devastating impact, an investigation has brought no senior official to account.

And in honor of Sheikh Afif al-Nabelsi, the Hezbollah secretary-general said he was "the scholar, the jurist, the present fighter, the poet, the author, the educator, the professor in the seminary, the investigator and writer in all human sciences, and one of the great founders of this march to freedom".

"Sheikh Nabelsi was present in the establishment, activities, meetings, mobilization, education and organization of Hezbollah since the first day," of its founding, he highlighted.

He added that "Sheikh Afif's position was decisive in the July 2006 war, when his house and the compound he built in Sidon were destroyed, but only served to increase his determination and resolve," noting that his position was also clear and evident regarding the events that occurred in the region.

Nasrallah also pointed out that "Sheikh Afif was familiar with the events in Lebanon and the region, and had great knowledge of the main enemy, its ongoing project, and those behind it."

In conclusion, Nasrallah addressed Sheikh al-Nabelsi, and said, "Your brothers and sons in Hezbollah, as well as your family members, will carry your will as they carried the wills of all the martyrs, and your resistance will witness more victories."

## WORLD HEADLINES

### Denmark to tighten border controls after Quran burnings

Danish police are tightening border controls following recent burnings of the Quran that have affected the security situation, the justice ministry has said, following a similar decision by Sweden earlier in the week.

"Authorities have today concluded that it is necessary at this time to increase the focus on who is entering Denmark, in order to respond to the specific and current threats," the Danish ministry said in a statement late on Thursday.

Tighter border controls will initially be in place until August 10, it said.

Far-right activists in Denmark and Sweden have burned and damaged several copies of the Muslim holy book in recent months, inciting outrage in the Muslim world and demands that governments ban such acts.

"The burnings are deeply offensive and reckless acts committed by few individuals. These few individuals do not represent the values the Danish society is built on," Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen said in a statement last week.

### Deposed Niger leader calls for US intervention

The Washington Post on Thursday evening published an op-ed purportedly written by the ousted Nigerien president Mohamed Bazoum, in which he asks for US help to defeat the military junta that seized power last week.

"I write this as a hostage. Niger is under attack from a military junta that is trying to overthrow our democracy," Bazoum said. Last Wednesday's coup "has no justification whatsoever" and is a "cynical effort to undermine the remarkable progress Niger has made under democracy," he insisted.

"I call on the US government and the entire international community to help us restore our constitutional order. Fighting for our shared values, including democratic pluralism and respect for the rule of law, is the only way to make sustainable progress against poverty and terrorism," the ousted leader wrote.

As a key argument, Bazoum brought up that earlier this year, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called Niger "a model of resilience, a model of democracy, a model of cooperation."

Bazoum argued his government had made great progress in "economic and social governance," partnering with the Indiana National Guard to reduce terrorist threats, while USAID shifted its focus from humanitarian work to "building sustainable energy, improving agricultural productivity and educating the next generation of Nigerien leaders."

He revealed that foreign aid makes up 40% of the country's budget, but is now blocked due to sanctions by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which Bazoum endorsed.

Niger "stands as the last bastion of respect for human rights amid the authoritarian movements that have overtaken some of our neighbors," Bazoum argued, criticizing Mali and Burkina Faso for employing "criminal Russian mercenaries" such as the Wagner Group, "whose brutal terrorism has been on full display in Ukraine."

# "Majority of Israelis fear civil war"

From page 1 ▶ "The elite of the Israeli army units, including hundreds of Israeli pilots, will cease to volunteer for military service which is a major threat for the ability of the Israeli army to perform."

Olmert admitted, "This is a serious threat, which has never happened before, and we are going to civil war now." He added, "We will be accused of having an apartheid government [in the occupied Palestinian territories]".

Asked on what one former Israeli prime minister, who spent time behind bars, would tell the current prime minister, who also faces corruption charges and prison time, Olmert censured Netanyahu for putting his personal interests above Israeli settlers by making changes to the judiciary which critics say is aimed at avoiding jailing time.

"For Netanyahu, personal interests are always ahead of everything else ... and that's what brought a crisis and a breakdown between different groups in [the occupied Palestinian territories].

On Wednesday, thousands of demonstrators rallied in Tel Aviv in a sign that the protest movement has no plans to go away after Netanyahu's cabinet passed a key part of the bill over its judicial overhaul measures last week.

The demonstrations came on the backdrop of even larger ones that took place across the occupied Palestinian territories on Saturday, kicking off the 30th week of protests and seeing more than 200,000 Israeli settlers participating.

The results of the poll, which was conducted by Lazar Research, showed that only 38 percent of Israelis said they are not concerned about an actual internal war, while 4 percent said they are not sure.

According to the survey, the majority of the concerns about a possible civil war was among opposition voters, who reached 76%, compared to 55% of those who voted for the parties of the current of Netanyahu's coalition.

According to Reuters, former and ex-Mossad spies have joined the growing protest movement, with one former Mossad chief, speaking of his concerns for "Israel's immediate security".

There is also growing alarm among Israeli tech entrepreneurs and business leaders about the economic implications of the judicial overhaul being pushed by Netanyahu's hardline coalition.

A business leader, who has helped create some 120 jobs since he co-founded an automotive start-up company in 2015, has decided to boost activities abroad instead.

"We're investing more in our locations outside (the occupied Palestinian territories) and generating intellectual property outside (the occupied Palestinian territories)... and we're actively looking at opening in other locations," the business leader told the Financial Times. "We haven't done any incremental hiring in (the occupied Palestinian territories) this year, but we hired five people in Portugal," he added, noting that the decisions were "heavily influenced" by the judicial overhaul.

The company's co-founder chipped in that "the government demonstrated last week that they don't care about the wellbeing of the Israeli economy." He said, "They have a mission to grab power, and they'll sacrifice anything they need in order to do that."

Last month, a survey by a think-tank found 68 percent of start-up companies had taken legal or financial steps, like moving activities or cash outside (the occupied Palestinian territories), since the judicial battle began. According to reports, investment in the sector was 67 percent lower in the first half of the year than in the same period a year earlier.

In essence, the most efficient and educated sector of Israelis is in revolt. This is one of the most powerful sectors in any society and it is withdrawing its services from Israeli society. The bigger question is whether the fault lines of Israeli society are growing to the point where there is going to be a medium to long term fundamental weakening of Israeli society?

And thereby the colonial project to which Israel has been building for all these decades appears to be fairly plausible, in particular if the regime's closest allies that have been providing mass financial assistance, at the expense of their taxpayer's money, start to withdraw that assistance.

Rating agencies Moody's and Standard & Poor's warned last week about the economic repercussions of Netanyahu's overhaul plans.

"(The occupied Palestinian territories) until now had good institutions, an array of checks and balances, separation of power, and an efficient bureaucracy. But all that is being targeted by the government," said an economist at the Hebrew University of (occupied al-Quds) Jerusalem. "The real concern is that this will be translated into a lower economic growth rate over a very long period."

For the Palestinians, the occupation is illegitimate and despite what internal disputes may be inside the entity, no matter how large, they will suffer from Israeli atrocities and war crimes.

The Palestinians don't consider any military occupation to have any type of political legitimacy, whether they are in the opposition or if they are in control of the occupation.

Whilst Israelis fight Israelis over how to ethnically cleanse the Palestinians, what one Israeli prime minister and war criminal does is limited to what the Israelis fear on how they will be affected. Many former Israeli prime ministers and war criminals have committed heinous crimes against Palestinians for many decades.

The exception on this occasion is that Israel has one of the most far-right extremist and racist cabinets to date. What the Israelis are concerned about is that they might get a little taste of what the Palestinians have been suffering since 1948.

Activists say the only solution for the Palestinians is for all the illegal settlers to go back to where they came from.

## *Inside the Occupied Palestine*

### Burnt

• A 33-year-old Israeli army soldier named Bar Kalaf who had served the Israeli Occupation Forces army during the Operation Cast Lead (2008-2009) and Operation Mighty Cliff (2014) died as the result of the injuries he had picked, not during the invasion, but after setting himself on fire a few days ago! He was suffering from posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) which he'd developed after committing multiple crimes against the Palestinians during his presence in those operations. He committed suicide 5 days ago and died on Thursday. The Israeli media Channel 12 released an audio file after Kalaf's death, containing shocking information about what he had experienced in the army. "I was in Kafir brigade. It's a big one. A battlefield in which your body and your soul become the same. There is a unique kind of exhaustion in there which disturbs your concentration and distracts you constantly. This will push down inside depression, especially if you have no friends around you. The crisis I experienced during my presence in the army significantly affected me", Kalaf says in the audio. This has casted doubts over the mental readiness of Israeli occupation forces. But in a social perspective, what shocked the Israeli settlers was the army's refusal to accept Kalaf's status as an "injury caused by war" prior to his suicide. Kalaf's mother revealed to the media that his son was rejected the army's rehabilitation department on the ground that his disorder was not caused by war. So, he did not receive the mental care and soon after, committed suicide. "My son had lately been rejected by the rehabilitation department of the army. Though, he had", Kalaf's mother said on Thursday, asking for compensation because of army's delinquency. The next day, on Friday, she released an announcement claiming that she didn't have the money required for the funeral.

**Ukraine Increases Pressure on Israel**

• As Israel keeps ditching the constant requests of Ukraine to provide specific weaponries to be used against Russia, Ukrainian officials keep increasing the pressure on Israel to force it to comply. In the latest instance, Ukrainian embassy in Israel attacked the Israeli government, saying, "Jewish community in Odessa continues to suffer significant blows from Russian attacks. Where is the Israeli government's concern for their communities?" It is expected that Israel would soon be forced to take a more explicit position regarding the situation in Ukraine. So far, the main argument put forth by Israeli authorities to justify not supplying Ukraine with high-tech weaponries like Iron Dome air defense systems, has been the fear that Iran would somehow find access to these systems and reverse engineer them.

## Over 1.8 million travelers visit Mazandaran province

TEHRAN ––More than 1.8 million travelers visited Mazandaran province on Tuesday and Wednesday, a local official has said.

The travel flow started on Tuesday when the Iranian government declared national holidays for the two upcoming days due to a heat wave that saw temperatures touch record levels across the country.

A picture-perfect destination for nature lovers, Mazandaran registered some five million arrivals, of which 1.8 million considered as travelers made overnight stays in the northern province, ISNA reported on Thursday.

Sandwiched between the southern coast of the Caspian Sea and the Alborz mountains, Mazandaran features plains, prairies, forests, and rainforest stretching from the sandy beaches of the Caspian Sea to the rugged and snowcapped Alborz mountains.

When it comes to local cuisine, the Mazandaran region is a food lover's paradise as well. The region is well-known for its diverse cuisine made with fresh and organic ingredients. Many of its popular dishes have a flavorful mix of white rice, fish, and herbs, cooked with sour orange juice. Its distinctive dishes include: Aghuz Mossama (walnut dish), Tah Chin, Torsh Torshu, Do Pati, Espenasak, pumpkin soup, Esfenaj Marji, Kahi Anar (a dish made from pumpkins), Naz Khatun, Qaliye, Khoresht-e Alu and Aghuznun.

## Faloodeh of Yazd gains place on national heritage list

TEHRAN - Faloodeh of Yazd, a traditional Persian dessert made of lime and rose water granita with rice noodles, has been registered on Iran's national list of intangible cultural heritage.

On Tuesday, the art of Yazdi Faloodeh-making was added to Iran's List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts aimed to safeguard and raise awareness about forms of cultural heritage — often passed down from generation to generation.

Faloodeh is one of the most popular syrup-like desserts among the locals and travelers to the ancient city, which a UNESCO World Heritage since 2017. It is usually served with Persian-style milk-based ice cream that is flavored with pistachios and honey in cafes and ice cream parlors.

Also spelled Paloodeh, the dessert is quite different from Western-style ice cream, although it shares some characteristics with sorbet and is made with unusual ingredients such as vermicelli, rose water, lime juice, and syrup - cherry blossom.

Legend has it that Faloodeh was the first frozen dessert ever made — dating back to around 400 BC — and was invented largely by accident when flavored syrup was spilled on the snow and everything people realize that they can be turned into a delicious dish.

Last month, Yazd marked the sixth anniversary of its listing on the prestigious list in a ceremony attended by local officials, experts in cultural heritage, artists, travel insiders, and craftspeople.

The historical core of Yazd is full of mud houses, bazaars, public bathhouses, water cisterns, mosques, synagogues, Zoroastrian temples, and centuries-old gardens. From a divine point of view, the city enjoys the peaceful coexistence of three religions: Islam, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism.

Heritage experts believe that Yazd is a living testament to the intelligent use of the limited resources available in the desert for survival. Water is brought to the city through the ancient qanat system.

## Hungary says U.S. is taking revenge on its nationals by tightening visa-free travel rules

The Ministry of Interior of Hungary has said that the United States is "taking revenge" on Hungarians following the decision of the latter to restrict visa-free travel rules.

Through an official statement issued earlier this week, the Ministry disclosed that the U.S. had required the government of Hungary to share the personal information of Hungarian passport holders with dual citizenship that live abroad.

Moreover, through the same statement, the Ministry said that they do not plan on sharing such information and, at the same time, stressed that this is nothing but revenge on Hungarians, SchengenVisaInfo.com reports.

"The United States of America demands from Hungary the disclosure of the personal data of those 900,000 Hungarians with dual citizenship living abroad. Hungary will, however, not release such data to anyone because that would compromise the security of Hungarians living abroad," the Hungarian interior ministry's state secretary, Bence Retvari, said.

According to About Hungary, the spokesperson of the U.S. State Department, Matthew Millar, said that the decision of the U.S. to tighten the visa-free travel rules for Hungarian has nothing to do with any issue other than the country's compliance with the Visa Waiver Program.

Reacting to such a remark made by Millar, the state secretary of the Ministry of Interior of Hungary, Bence Retvari, said that his statement is false and deceptive.

On the other hand, Miller said that the U.S. raised the issue with the Hungarian government and allowed them to address the situation, but they refused to do so.

Additionally, when asked whether the U.S. has any concrete information on who are the people with questionable backgrounds entering the territory of the U.S. with a Hungarian passport, Miller said that he does not have any information on this.

"We looked at the fact that there were people who were getting passports without going through a rigorous screening that we think is necessary to gain," Miller stressed.

*(Source: schengenvisainfo.com)*

# Ancient Iranian mosque nominated for ICESCO label

TEHRAN - Iran has nominated its Tarikhaneh mosque, which dates some 900 years, for possible recognition by the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO).

Seeking to help preserve and promote distinguished cultural heritage sites, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is expected to announce the list of winners by the end of summer, IRNA reported on Thursday.

The mud-brick mosque, which is located near the modern city of Damghan in Semnan province, is expected to gain a place on the ICESCO's Islamic World Heritage List (IWHL), the report said.

Also called Tarik Khana, the place of worship is sometimes referred to as the "oldest existing" mosque in the country.

Architecturally speaking, the mud-brick mosque incorporates a simple Arab plan with Sassanian construction techniques. An arcade lines the central courtyard, a single bay deep on all but the qibla side where it increases to three bays.

The central aisle on the qibla arcade is wider and taller than the others, a form that presciently indicates the later ubiquitous monumental axis of Persian architecture. The mosque's arcades formed by fired brick arches recall Sassanian precedents.

Near the mosque, there are remains of a square minaret of uncertain date, possibly part of the original construction period, and a cylindrical minaret from the Seljuk period (1060-1307).

The ancient city of Damghan was the winter capital of the Parthian monarchs. Situated about 350 kilometers northeast of Tehran, Damghan was once a prosperous city on the Silk Road that connected China to West Asia and Europe. Narratives say that Damghan was once called the city by one hundred gates. Later, during the reign of the Sassanids, the Umayyad, Abbasid, Taherid, Samanid, Sarbedaran, and Deylamite dynasties, Damghan had a significant position for the emirs and governors.

Headquartered in Rabat, Morocco, the Islamic World Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ICESCO, formerly ISESCO) was founded by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in May 1979. It has 54 member states.

It is a specialized organization concerned with fields of education, science, culture, and communication in Islamic countries to support and strengthen relations among the member states.

## Gilan province registers 2.5 million overnight stays for two-day holiday

TEHRAN— Domestic travelers made over 2.5 million overnight stays in official accommodation centers across Gilan province during a two-day holiday declared by the Iranian government as soaring temperatures swept across the county on Wednesday and Thursday.

"Some 2.4 million travelers arrived in Mazandaran province due to a two-day holiday," the provincial tourism chief said on Friday.

2,550,000 overnight stays have been recorded during the past 48 hours at authorized accommodation centers such as hotels, traditional lodging houses, apartment hotels, and guest houses of the province, Vali Jahani said.

On Tuesday, Iran declared a two-day holiday for government and non-government workers and banks nationwide on Wednesday and Thursday as soaring temperatures sweep across the country.

The decision came after the meteorological office forecasted temperatures exceeding 40 degrees Celsius in many cities and hovering around 50 degrees Celsius in the southwest.

According to Jahani, tourist arrivals in the northern province during spring jumped 65 percent from a year earlier to around 18 million mainly due to the removal of COVID restrictions once imposed to contain the spread of the coronavirus. "Some 18 million passengers arrived in Gilan during the first three months of the [current Iranian calendar] year."

Some 22 million overnight stays have been registered in official accommodation centers of the province during the three months, the official said.

In 2019, Gilan was selected as the first province to start the country's comprehensive tourism plan, which is being developed under the auspices of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). The comprehensive plan is aimed at serving as a roadmap to guide tourists from all over the globe to achieve a sustainable and competitive tourism market.

The lush green province, which is bounded by the Caspian Sea, is a historically and culturally rich region that offers visitors a diverse range of experiences. With its mild climate, lush greenery, majestic mountains, and stunning coastline, Gilan is becoming an increasingly popular tourist destination in northern Iran.

The province is also known for its beautiful natural scenery and exotic wildlife. The stunning waterfront of the Anzali lagoon, the majestic Talesh mountains, and the verdant rice paddies are just a few of the natural wonders that attract visitors to the region.

It offers plenty of activities for tourists. Hiking and trekking in the mountains, birdwatching in the lagoons, camping near the waterfalls and rivers, and sightseeing in the beautiful natural scenery are all popular activities for visitors. Rasht, the provincial capital, has long been a weekend escape for residents of Tehran who are looking to sample the famous local cuisine and hoping for some pluvial action–it's the largest and wettest town in the northern region.

Gilan provides visitors with various accommodation options, including hotels, guesthouses, and traditional houses that have been converted into accommodations for tourists. The province is easily accessible by land, sea, and air. The Rasht international airport provides direct flights to major cities in Iran.

## Russia's Mantra Tourus to deepen ties with Iran

TEHRAN - Russia's Mantra Tourus Holding is willing to foster collaboration with Iran's tourism sector as the two counties scrap visa requirements for groups of five to 50 travelers.

On Tuesday, Mantra Tourus's board of directors visited Iran's tourism sector as well, Mehr reported.

Suggestions were made to develop theme parks in Iran in collaboration with Mantra Tourus, promote the southern regions of Iran, and enhance sports activities. Additionally, the discussion included the need to improve air travel connections between Iran and Sochi for easier accessibility.

Moreover, the high tourism service prices for Iranian travelers to Sochi were also addressed during a meeting.

On August 1, Tehran and Moscow deputy tourism minister Ali-Asghar Shalbafian to discuss ways to reinforce collaboration in several areas including accommodation, ski resorts, and theme parks.

The holding company expressed enthusiasm for tourism interactions and investment opportunities within Russia officially implemented visa-free tourist exchanges dedicated to groups of five to 50 travelers. In a similar agreement, Russia inaugurated another mutual visa-waiver program with China on the same day.

"Now, Russians will enjoy visa-free access to two of the oldest and richest civilizations on Earth —both of which also happen to be Moscow's key strategic partners," Sputnik reported on Tuesday.

Late in June, Tehran's ambassador to Moscow Kazem Jalali announced that Iran is ready to waive visa requirements reciprocally with Russia, based on an agreement the two countries previously secured for certain tourist groups. The agreement was initially signed by former Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in 2017.

As mentioned by the report, Iran and China can proudly boast their status as among the oldest continuously surviving civilizations on Earth, with all the cultural, archeological, architectural, and other splendors that come with such a status while Russia is known to be home to dozens of major lost ancient historical empires and has its own thousand-year history to speak of.

## Turkey's Antalya faces shortage of drivers amid tourism surge

The bustling tourism activity in Antalya, a popular tourist destination in southern Turkey, has led to a shortage of drivers, according to the head of the metropolitan's Transportation Planning and Rail Systems Department.

The city experienced a significant demand in the first seven months of this year by welcoming a total of 7.3 million tourists to the city via air between Jan. 1 and July 18, according to official tourism data while the officials expect this year's tourism figures to surpass the pre-pandemic data.

Other than the extended mobility, the shortage of drivers was further exacerbated as some drivers retired because of the pension reform overhaul (EYT) that went into force earlier this year.

To address the shortage and avoid disruptions in public transportation, the Antalya Metropolitan Municipality recently introduced 60 new buses into service, the Ihlas News Agency (IHA) reported on Friday.

However, this move increased the demand for drivers even more. To recruit some 150 bus drivers, the municipality placed job advertisement boards on pedestrian overpasses and advertisement boards at various locations across the city.

After receiving 600 applications in response to these announcements, 100 drivers were hired, whereas the municipality plans to employ an additional 120 drivers.

*(Source: Daily Sabah)*

# Tehran, Baghdad join hands to combat sand and dust storms

From page 1 ▸ The two sides also discussed different possible ways to deal with desertification, reduce the impacts of climate change, remove barriers to food security, and manage sand and dust storms, IRIB reported.

Tahmasbi emphasized the need to boost cooperation in this regard, announcing Iran's readiness to study cases of desertification in border areas.

Obaid, for his part, said that solving the problem of sand and dust storms in the region requires the cooperation of West Asian countries, including Iraq, Kuwait, and Iran.

On Tuesday, August 1, a delegation led by the secretary of the national policymaking headquarters for dealing with sand and dust storms started a four-day visit to Iraq to follow up on previous agreements in this regard.

The visit aimed to implement the sub-regional action plan to deal with sand and dust storms, form a regional technical working group, and carry out joint projects to curb hotspots of sand and dust storm, IRNA reported.

Tahmasbi said bilateral and multilateral memorandums of understanding have been signed with Iraq, but unfortunately have not yet been implemented.

The SDS phenomenon has been plaguing the country for several years and has caused problems in many provinces.

According to studies, eight large sand and dust storm hotspots stretching to 270 million hectares in neighboring and Persian Gulf countries are affecting Iran.

Regional maps show that Saudi Arabia produces the highest level of particulate matter, followed by Iraq, Syria, Kuwait, and the UAE, respectively.

The Department of Environment will hold five international meetings in the current Iranian calendar year that started on March 21, DOE chief Ali Salajeqeh has said.

"At least five international meetings will be held this year, one of which is the conference on combating sand and dust storms," he added, IRNA reported.

One of the approvals of the regional meeting of environment ministers, which was held in Iran last summer, was the establishment of a regional dust organization, he highlighted.

"Environmental diplomacy is the main priority for the country's political diplomacy, so holding the conference on combating sand and dust storms is important for us."

So far, 11 meetings of the national headquarters for policymaking and controlling dust storms have been held and the results of these meetings should be evaluated and made public, he stressed.

In the field of diplomacy, the Department of Environment has held meetings with neighboring countries to the extent that Egypt has also announced its readiness to attend the Tehran meeting, he highlighted.

# Iran just one MPOWER policy away from joining tobacco control leaders

TEHRAN – Iran is one of the eight countries that are soon to join the leaders in tobacco control by adopting the World Health Organization's MPOWER policy.

In line with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), WHO introduced the MPOWER measures in 2008. MPOWER is a set of six cost-effective and high-impact measures that help countries reduce the demand for tobacco. These measures include: Monitoring tobacco use and prevention policies; Protecting people from tobacco smoke; Offering help to quit tobacco use; Warning about the dangers of tobacco; Enforcing bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship; and Raising taxes on tobacco.

The seven other countries are Ethiopia, Ireland, Jordan, Madagascar, Mexico, New Zealand, and Spain.

If fully implemented and enforced, the key WHO FCTC measures represented by MPOWER could reduce smoking prevalence in the Eastern Mediterranean Region.

A new World Health Organization report highlights that 5.6 billion people – 71% of the world's population – are now protected with at least one best practice policy to help save lives from deadly tobacco – five times more than in 2007.

> MPOWER is a set of six cost-effective and high-impact measures that help countries reduce demand for tobacco.

In the last 15 years since WHO's MPOWER tobacco control measures were introduced globally, smoking rates have fallen. Without this decline, there would be an estimated 300 million more smokers in the world today.

This WHO Report on the global tobacco epidemic is focused on protecting the public from second-hand smoke, highlighting that almost 40% of countries now have completely smoke-free indoor public places.

The report rates progress in tobacco control, showing that two more countries, Mauritius and the Netherlands, have achieved a best-practice level in all MPOWER measures, a feat that only Brazil and Türkiye had accomplished until now.

"These data show that slowly but surely, more and more people are being protected from the harms of tobacco by WHO's evidence-based best-practice policies," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General.

"I congratulate Mauritius on becoming the first country in Africa, and the Netherlands on becoming the first in the European Union to implement the full package of WHO tobacco control policies at the highest level. WHO stands ready to support all countries to follow their example and protect their people from this deadly scourge."

"With a strong political commitment, we have made great progress in tobacco control policies in Mauritius. Our country has adopted the MPOWER strategy and is moving resolutely towards a smoke-free country," stated Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, the prime minister of the Republic of Mauritius.

Maarten van Ooijen, State Secretary for Health, Welfare and Sports for the Netherlands said, "Civil society organizations, health experts and medical professionals are strong driving forces behind everything that we are achieving with regard to tobacco control in the Netherlands.

They deserve the primary credit for the praise that our country receives from the World Health Organization. Although we are making progress in reducing smoking prevalence and improving our tobacco control policy we also still have a long way to go. Together we will keep fighting for a smoke-free generation by 2040!"

Smoke-free public spaces are just one policy in the set of effective tobacco control measures, MPOWER, to help countries implement the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and curb the tobacco epidemic.

Smoke-free environments help people breathe clean air, shield the public from deadly second-hand smoke, motivate people to quit, denormalize smoking, and help prevent young people from ever starting to smoke or use e-cigarettes.

"While smoking rates have been going down,

tobacco is still the leading cause of preventable death in the world – largely due to relentless marketing campaigns by the tobacco industry," said Michael R. Bloomberg, WHO Global Ambassador for Noncommunicable Diseases and Injuries and founder of Bloomberg Philanthropies.

"As this report shows, our work is making a big difference, but much more remains to be done. By helping more countries implement smart policies, backed by public opinion and science, we'll be able to improve public health and save millions of more lives."

There is still much work to be done, 44 countries remain unprotected by any of WHO's MPOWER measures and 53 countries still do not have complete smoking bans in healthcare facilities. Meanwhile, only about half of countries have smoke-free private workplaces and restaurants.

"WHO urges all countries to put in place all of the MPOWER measures at the best-practice level to fight the tobacco epidemic, which kills 8.7 million people globally, and push back against the tobacco and nicotine industries, who lobby against these public health measures," said Dr. Ruediger Krech, WHO, Director for Health Promotion.

Around 1.3 million people die from second-hand smoke every year. All of these deaths are entirely preventable. People exposed to second-hand tobacco smoke are at risk of dying from heart disease, stroke, respiratory diseases, type 2 diabetes, and cancers.

This report demonstrates that all countries irrespective of income levels can drive down the demand for deadly tobacco, achieve major wins for public health, and save economies billions of dollars in health care and productivity costs.

Today, more than half of all countries, with nearly 40% of the world's population (2.8 billion people), have implemented at least one MPOWER measure to the highest level of achievement.

Increasing tobacco tax and prices has proven to be one of the most effective, yet least utilized tobacco control measures that countries can use to address various issues.

For example, by increasing prices, taxation protects the poor from exposure to a product that kills and causes disease. Taxation, in fact, is the most effective means to motivate current, mostly male, tobacco users to quit.

This is especially so for lower-income populations, and tobacco users in low- and middle-income countries, where 75% of smokers live. And by stopping people from smoking, tobacco taxes also reduce exposure to second-hand smoke among non-smokers, including children and women.

The tobacco epidemic is one of the biggest public health threats the world has ever faced, killing over 8 million people a year around the world. More than 7 million of those deaths are the result of direct tobacco use while around 1.3 million are the result of non-smokers being exposed to second-hand smoke.

All forms of tobacco use are harmful, and there is no safe level of exposure to tobacco. Cigarette smoking is the most common form of tobacco use worldwide. Other tobacco products include waterpipe tobacco, cigars, cigarillos, heated tobacco, roll-your-own tobacco, pipe tobacco, bidis and kreteks, and smokeless tobacco products.

Around 80% of the 1.3 billion tobacco users worldwide live in low- and middle-income countries, where the burden of tobacco-related illness and death is heaviest. Tobacco use contributes to poverty by diverting household spending from basic needs such as food and shelter to tobacco. This spending behavior is difficult to curb because tobacco is so addictive.

The economic costs of tobacco use are substantial and include significant health care costs for treating the diseases caused by tobacco use as well as the lost human capital that results from tobacco-attributable morbidity and mortality.

# Iranian traditional medicine highlights lifestyle: health official

TEHRAN – An official with the Ministry of Health has said that Iranian traditional medicine highlights the importance of lifestyle for keeping people in shape.

Experts of Iranian traditional medicine recommend that people should maintain health by adopting appropriate habits on diet, sleeping hours, mood, and other health-related issues, IRNA quoted Nafiseh Hosseini Yekta, the director of the health ministry's office for Iranian traditional medicine, as saying.

Accordingly, traditional medicine practitioners offer lifestyle consultations to individuals based on his or her special conditions, she added.

For the time being, 48 government-owned and 19 privately-owned traditional medicine centers are offering services, she noted, saying that more than 32,300 individuals referred to the centers last year (March 2022-March 2023).

More than 100 research and technology projects on the development of traditional medicine have been implemented in the country.

In this line, the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology has supported the printing and publishing of books and encyclopedias on Iranian traditional medicine, IRNA reported.

Previously, Hosseini Yekta said Iran ranks fourth worldwide in the production of science in the field of traditional medicine, and the remarkable achievement will improve in the coming years.

Over 17,000 books have so far been published about Persian traditional medicine, which has been recognized by the World Health Organization, she noted.

Iranian traditional medicine strongly focuses on prioritizing health maintenance and disease prevention over treatment.

It is one of the most ancient forms of traditional medicine. It is grounded in the concept of four senses of humor: phlegm (Balgham), blood (Dam), yellow bile (Safra'), and black bile (Sauda'). The concept of the four senses of humor is based on the teachings of Rhazes and Avicenna in an elaborate medical system.

So far, about 30,000 plant species have been identified in the world, with Iran's share of about 8,000 species which is more than the whole of species found in Europe.

The per capita consumption of medicinal plants in Iran is about one kilogram of dried plants, in other words, 83,000 tons of medicinal plants worth 1.2 trillion rials (around $4 million) are consumed in the country, while in Europe this amount is 900 grams and in the United States is 2.5 kilograms.

The 6th National Festival and Exhibition of Medicinal Plants, Natural Products, and Iranian Traditional Medicine was held in Tehran on November 1 to 4, 2022.

The event introduced technological and scientific achievements of knowledge-based and creative companies in the field of medicinal plants.

It also created a reliable bridge between people who are active in the ecosystem of medicinal plants and traditional medicine.

It hosted knowledge-based companies, investors, research and technology funds, creative and innovation houses, banks, and venture capital funds in order to provide a path for development in the country.

More than 70 creative companies and a number of innovative houses presented their capabilities and products at the festival.

From 2006 to 2021, the publication of Iranian articles in the field of traditional medicine has increased by about ten times, according to data released by the SCImago Journal of Traditional Medicines.

The number of articles published by the country has increased from 59 in 2006 to more than 500 in 2021.

By providing the structure in the Ministry of Health, and the establishment of traditional medicine colleges in 2006, the number of articles in the field of traditional medicine increased by about 10 times in 15 years.

The Islamic World Science Citation Center (ISC) put the share of Iranian articles in the field of medicinal plants and herbal medicine in the world at 5.9 percent.

## ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

### 81% of bus drivers responsible for fatal accidents in 2 months

The number of public transport fleet accidents has increased significantly over the last two months, and 81% of bus drivers were to blame for fatal road crashes, Traffic Police chief has announced.

Over 90 percent of the whole transfers across the country are done by ground transport system, while air, rail and sea transportation hold a small share, Mehr quoted Seyed Kamal Hadianfar as saying on Tuesday.

Last year, 19 million rides have been delivered transferring over 290 million passengers, mostly through the bus transportation fleet under the Municipalities supervision, he stated.

He went on to say that bus drivers spend more time driving exceeding standard hour due to low income, which increases the risk of road crashes.

### ۸۱ درصد رانندگان اتوبوس در تصادفات فوتی دو ماه گذشته مقصر بوده اند

رئیس پلیس راهور ناجا، گفت: در ۲ ماهه اخیر تعداد تصادفات ناوگان حمل مسافر افزایش قابل توجهی داشته و در تصادفات منجر به فوت و جرح ناوگان عمومی حمل مسافر، ۸۱ درصد رانندگان اتوبوس مقصر بوده اند.
سردار سیدکمال هادیانفر، افزود: بیش از ۹۰درصد از جابجایی ها در سطح کشور از طریق زمینی صورت می پذیرد و درصد کمی را حمل و نقل های هوایی ، ریلی و دریایی تشکیل می دهد. در طول سال۹۷ ، ۱۹ میلیون سفر با ۲۹۰ میلیون مسافر صورت پذیرفته است که عمده آن از طریق پایانه هایی صورت پذیرفته که مدیریت آن بر عهده شهرداری هاست.
رئیس پلیس راهور ناجا افزود: رانندگان به علت میزان درآمدشان بیش از ساعت مقرر رانندگی می کنند که ریسک تصادف را بالا می برد.

# TEHRAN TIMES

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**GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING**

*Envy is disgraceful; and fear is a sign of defect. Indigence makes an intelligent man dumb in argument, and a needy person a stranger in his hometown. Helplessness is a great calamity; fortitude is courage; abstemiousness is wealthiness, and devoutness is a chainmail which guards the body and soul against sins.*

***Imam Ali (AS)***

**Prayer Times »** Noon:12:10 Evening: 19:24 Dawn: 3:40 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:15 (tomorrow)

# Voice actor Hamid Manuchehri dies at 82

TEHRAN – Prominent Iranian voice actor Hamid Manuchehri died in a Tehran hospital on Thursday. He was 82.

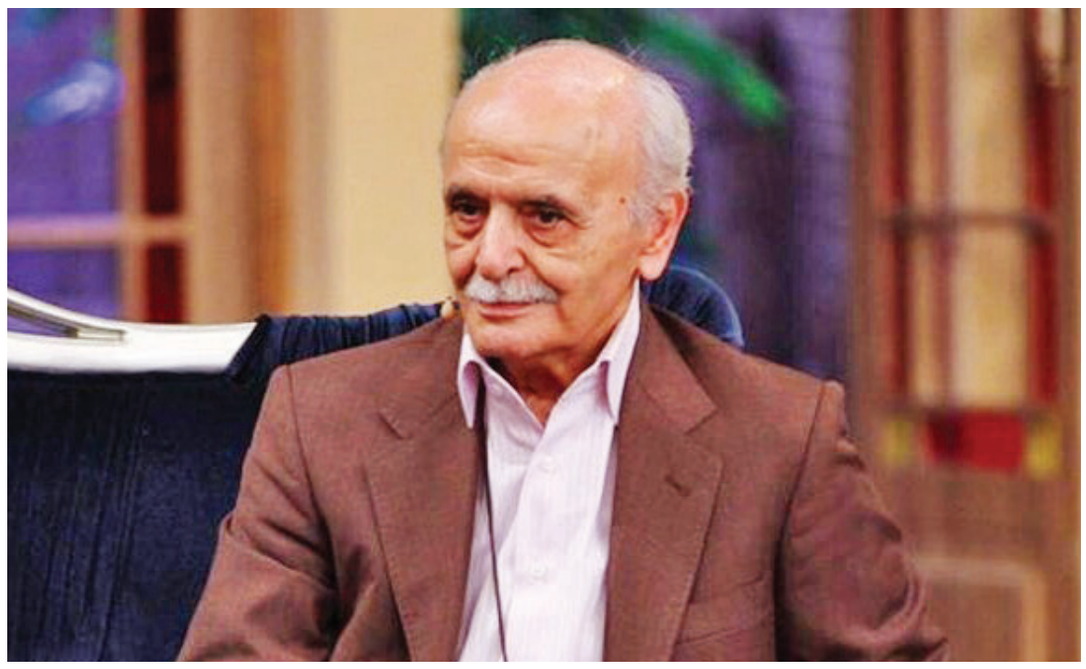
Born in 1941, the renowned narrator, voice actor, and actor, Hamid Manuchehri became familiar with radio performances at the age of 16.

Later he became acquainted with the profession of dubbing. In 1963, he joined Radio Iran, and in 1972, he took over the directorship of the children's radio program. Manuchehri directed several other programs until 1978.

In 1981, he took charge of directing "Friday Morning with Radio" on the Iranian radio and continued his work until 1986.

In addition to voice acting in films such as "Elmer Gantry" by Richard Brooks "Mutiny on the Bounty" by Lewis Milestone, "The Long Goodbye" by Robert Bernard Altman, " 12 Angry Men" by Sidney Lumet and " The World is not Enough" by Michael Apted, he has also played roles in Iranian television series such as "One of These Days," "The Story of a Life," and "The Mystery of the Shah."

He also brought life to several characters of the popular animation series including "Inspector Gadget" and "Manga Mitokomon".



*Iranian voice actor Hamid Manuchehri in an undated photo*

# Iranian bookstores host 'The Death of Meyerhold'

TEHRAN – A Persian translation of Mark Jackson's "The Death of Meyerhold" has recently appeared in Iranian bookstores.

Nimaj Publications released the Persian translation of the book by Alireza Hael-Moghaddam.

With humor, tragedy, and grotesque theatricality, "The Death of Meyerhold" is a play by Mark Jackson that depicts the contradictory life, art, and era of famed Russian theater director Vsevolod Meyerhold with humor, tragedy, and grotesque theatricality. Told through the filter of Meyerhold's life between 1898 and 1940, the play examines the death of freethinking in politically ambiguous times.

Beginning at a rehearsal for "The Seagull" at the Moscow Art Theatre in 1898, where Meyerhold finds himself at odds with his teacher and mentor, Stanislavski, the play moves on through the turmoil of 1905 to the 1917 Soviet Revolution. By the 1920s Meyerhold is a prominent and controversial figure of Russian theater and his artistic revolution has taken its stride alongside the Soviet Revolution. He falls in love with and marries the actress Zinaida Raikh, to whom he stubbornly gives the best roles over Maria Babanova, the talented young actress audiences adore. With mixed feelings, Babanova finally resolves to leave Meyerhold's theater, and what's left of Meyerhold's luck seems to go with her.

# Iran's "Coriolanus" on stage at Georgian festival

TEHRAN – An Iranian troupe led by director Mostafa Kushki is performing an adaptation of William Shakespeare's "Coriolanus" at Poti International Festival of Regional Theaters in Georgia.

The play is about the Roman general Coriolanus, who makes his name defeating an enemy army and defending Rome. The Senate nominates him as consul but he cannot win the people's vote, so he is banished from Rome and allies with his old enemy. He comes to attack Rome, his mother persuades him not to, and his new-found ally kills him for the betrayal.

Morteza Foruzanfar, Hanieh Moqadam, Sahar Mesbah, Amir Ahmadi and Mahsa Sharifi are the main members of the cast for the play.

The 9th edition of the Poti theater festival is dedicated to the plays based on the plays by William Shakespeare as the 2023 has been declared as the year of the greatest playwright.

Organized by the Cultural-Educational Foundation "Today", the festival will be running until August 8.

# What's in Tehran art galleries

**Painting**

* A collection of paintings by Najva Erfani is on view in an exhibition at Homa Gallery.

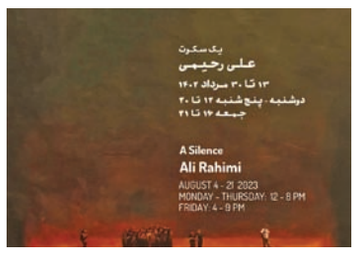
The exhibit named "Woman and A Pink Boat" will be running until August 15 at the gallery that can be found at No. 8, Fourth Alley, Sanai St., Karim Khan Ave.

* Paintings by Navid Zafaralizadeh are on display in an exhibition at Iranshahr Gallery.

Entitled "Cursed", the exhibit will be running until August 15 at the gallery, which can be found at 69 Sepand St., off Karim Khan Ave.

* Jamshid Samavatian is showcasing his latest paintings in an exhibition at Negar Gallery.

The exhibit named "Everlasting" will run until August 14 at the gallery located at 54 near Iranshahr St., Karim Khan Blvd.




* A collection of paintings by Ali Rahimi is on view in an exhibition at 0 Gallery.

The exhibit named "A Silence" will be running until August 21 at the gallery, which can be found at 8 Shahin St., Sanai St.

* Kiana Khazchin is showcasing her latest paintings in an exhibition at Bostan Gallery.

The exhibit named "Forget Me Not" will run until August 15 at No. 71, 22th Alley, Larestan St. off Motahhari Ave.

* Hoom Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Ahura Khalaj.

The exhibit will run until August 12 at No. 2, 4th Alley off Qaem Maqam St.

* Paintings by Ali Sharifi are currently on view in an exhibition at Jaleh Gallery.

Entitled "Maniac", the exhibition runs until August 11 at the gallery located at No. 3, Noshahr Alley, Iranshahr St., Karim Khan Ave.

* Negah Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by a group of artists including Farah Abolqasem, Mostafa Dashti, Nikzad Nojumi, Mina Naderi and Ahmad Morshedlu.

Entitled "Antifragile Human", the exhibit runs until August 23 at the gallery that can be found at 64 Ghaffari St., Jam St., Motahhari Ave.

* An exhibition of paintings by Parisima Bahrami is currently underway at Sharif Gallery.

Entitled "Manipulated Reality", the exhibit will be running until August 18 at the gallery that can be found at 11 Mahruzadeh Alley, Shariati Ave. near Quds Square.

* Paintings by Hassan Mehrabani are currently on view in an exhibition at Vaali Gallery.

The exhibit named "The Endless Emphasis" will continue until August 23 at the gallery located at 72 Khoddami St., Vanak Sq.

# Abulqasem Ferdowsi: Life

Part 9

Nezami Aruzi visited the tomb in 1118, and in 1482 Dawlatshah Samarqandi reported: "At the present time his noble tomb is well known, and pilgrims visit it to seek boons."

Despite repeated destruction of Tus by Turks, Mongols, Uzbeks, and Timur, Ferdowsi's tomb remained a venerated site.

In about 1592, Qazi Nurollah Shushtari wrote: "His tomb is nowadays well-marked and celebrated and people from all realms, particularly the Imami Shias, make pilgrimage to it.

The present writer also has had the honor and blessing of visiting it (be sharaf-e ziarat-e u mosharraf wa faez shodeh)."

In 1822, a small "dome ornamented with lacquered tiles" was still standing, but even this was gone by 1883. In that year Abdolwahhab Khan Asaf ad-Dawla Shirazi, governor of Khorasan, discovered the tomb and began to erect a brick structure over it but was unable to complete the project.

The rise of nationalism in Persia early this century motivated scholars and dignitaries to urge the government to build a suitable mausoleum for the poet who had done so much to preserve Iranian identity and history.

Mohammad-Taqi Bahar wrote several articles on the necessity of the project and urged Reza Khan (later Reza Shah) to prove his asserted nationalism by building a mausoleum. "Otherwise," he wrote, "we, the people of Khorasan, will do it ourselves".

At the initiative of Arbab Kaykhosrow Shahrokh, the nationalist representative of the Zoroastrians in the Majles, the newly established Anjoman-e asar-e melli put out a leaflet inviting the public to participate through financial contributions or a lottery in the construction of an appropriate mausoleum for Ferdowsi, "who has no superior among great Iranians" and who "constitutes a pillar of Iranian nationalism."

Shahrokh was commissioned to visit Tus and locate the site of Ferdowsi's tomb. He succeeded in finding the tomb by consulting literary sources, investigating the ruins of Tus, and interviewing elderly locals who still remembered Asaf ad-Dawla's structure.

Construction of the tomb started in 1928, under the supervision of Shahrokh, and was finished in 1934, in time for Ferdowsi's millenary celebration.

Karim Taherzadeh Behzad provided an architectural plan, evidently following suggestions by the court minister Abdolhossein Teimurtash (Teimurtash forced his views on the Anjoman). But this proved impractical, and work consequently proceeded according to a plan and gypsum miniature model submitted by André Goddard.

The pyramid roof envisioned in this design cracked and collapsed soon after construction and was replaced by a stepped-pyramidal roof planned by Behzad.

The tomb was situated in a garden of fruit trees measuring 25,248 m² (endowed by its owner, Naeb al-Tawliya Qaem-maqami, and later enlarged to some 30,000 m²).

The structure was erected by Hossein Hajjar-bashi Zanjani and Hossein Aqa Lorzadeh, and the masonry came from the Khallaj marble quarry near Mashhad.

The appearance of the monument was reminiscent of buildings at Persepolis and the tomb of Cyrus the Great at Pasargadae. It consisted of three parts:

(1) An innermost section centered around a two-stepped marble platform on which lies the cenotaph, a marble slab (150 x 100 cm) some 50 cm high.

(2) A square (16 x 16 m) chamber built of dressed marble and ornamented on the interior with faience work. Four tall columns with double-headed bull capitals rise on the corners of the chamber supporting the highly ornamented stepped-cornice.

Each wall is further decorated with a pair of similar but shorter engaged columns which are joined by stepped-lintels to form pseudo-doorways.

The Persepolis traits are further indicated by the image of a winged man (which in Achaemenid art represented the Royal Fortune but which is popularly known as the Foruhar symbol) carved on the upper part of the south wall of the chamber.

The cornice supports an entablature that is turned inward to form a square base for a wall 100 cm high, which itself tapers inwards to create a smaller square on which rests the uppermost wall, again 100 cm high, carrying the roof.

Eight columns surrounding the aforementioned innermost-platform rise half way up to carry a roof and form two upper and lower corridors within the chamber.

(3) An outer stepped-platform of dressed marble, on which stands the chamber.

Many inscriptions (engraved by Hasan Zarrinkhat) and sculpted scenes (carved by Shaban Purjafari) adorn the monuments. Most texts are verses from the Shahnameh and carved on walls.

The epitaph inscribed on the tomb-stone may be rendered in English as follows: "In the name of the Lord of life and wisdom [this is a distich which opens the Shahnameh. This auspicious site is the resting place of the most eminent of Persian poets and the composer of the Iranian national saga, Hakim Abulqasem Ferdowsi of Tus, whose words are the resurrector of the country of Iran and whose grave is eternally revered by the people of this land. Date of birth 323; date of death 411; date of construction of the mausoleum 1353."

*Source: Encyclopedia Iranica*

*To be continued*