

TEHRAN TIMES

8 Pages | Price 100,000 Rials | 1.00 EURO | 4.00 AED | 45th year | No. 14567 | Saturday | August 19, 2023 | Mordad 28, 1402 | Safar 2, 1445

Ayatollah Khamenei says IRGC do things that many great armies can't

IRGC World's Biggest Anti-Terror Force

Page 2



Opinion



Why is the world's largest terrorist organization angry at the IRGC?



By Dr. Mohammad Reza Hasani Ahanagar
President of Imam Hossein University

©leader.ir

TEHRAN — Changing the meaning of key phrases is one of the most important characteristics of imperialist powers, from freedom and democracy to human rights and terrorism. America has a detailed and heavy record in this regard. The US has followed this strategy more hurriedly since World War II and greatly intensified it after the September 11 attacks.

One of the most tangible actions of Washington in this regard was declaring the IRGC as a terrorist organization. In April 2019, the Trump administration declared the Guards as a terrorist organization. Of course, labeling the Guards by the US government is not strange. According to America, anyone who stands up against their sinister plans and resists them is a terrorist, from the Guards in Iran to Palestinian resistance groups who fight for survival in an unequal battle with the Israeli army.

The IRGC was formed after the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979. It was established as various security and deadly threats were largely looming against the nascent revolution. ▶ Page 2

70 years after the Ajax operation: How much does U.S. really care about democracy?

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN — The U.S. likes to present itself as a defender of democracy, freedom, and human rights. Washington's proclamations have been so persistent and widespread that it has managed to engrave the altruistic image it desires in the minds of millions of people around the world.

The official website of the U.S. Department of State says: "Promoting freedom and democracy and protecting human rights around the world are central to U.S. foreign policy". But the country has proved to be hypocritical in its actions enough times that many have in the meanwhile, started to

Mosaddegh was overthrown during a coup on August 19, 1953 through an operation dubbed Ajax by Americans and Boot by the British.

question the truthfulness of American slogans.

The very first antithesis to Washington's claims of being a supporter of democracy dates back to 1953 when the U.S. planned and executed a coup to topple Mohammad Mosaddegh, the democratically elected Prime Minister of Iran.

Mosaddegh had entered a fray with the British government over the possession of Iran's oil. The British established a large oil

company in 1909 to exploit the resources of the oil field they had discovered in southern Iran. When the Iranian Prime Minister moved to nationalize the oil, he was met with firm resistance from the UK which was so steel-willed in its illegal acts that it imposed an international boycott on the Iranian oil and tried to saddle the country with crippling financial sanctions. It is important to note that by the time Mosaddegh had made the decision, more than 80 percent of Europe's oil was getting pro-

duced from Iran's stolen resources. That's also when the editors of the New York Times had started to compare Mosaddegh to Stalin and Hitler.

When the U.S. realized Iran could start selling oil to the Soviet Union due to pressure from the UK, it colluded with the British to get rid of Mosaddegh's government. Washington hired two of the biggest gangsters in Tehran to mobilize violent and deadly protests against the Iranian Prime Minister. It then bribed military men, officials, and some clergy to help strengthen the Shah's regime to topple Mosaddegh. ▶ Page 3

Putin, Raisi discuss cooperation on regional and international affairs

TEHRAN — President Vladimir Putin of Russia and President Ebrahim Raisi of Iran have discussed cooperation on regional and international affairs in a phone call, the Kremlin press service said in a statement on Thursday.

"The parties discussed issues related to cooperation on international and regional affairs, particularly taking into account Iran's full membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and its interest in joining the BRICS group," the statement said, TASS reported.

Putin and Raisi also reaffirmed their determination to continue boosting ties in the fields of trade, energy, transport and environment protection.

In addition, both parties "expressed satisfaction with the current high level of Russian-Iranian relations," the press service said.

Iran starts producing the most modern, accurate satellite

TEHRAN- The head of the Iranian Space Organization (ISA) announced on Thursday the launch of the production process of "Pars-3", Iran's "state-of-the-art and accurate" satellite.

"Previously, we had given some promises about the production of remote sensing satellites with high accuracy," Hassan Salarieh said.

"Today, I proudly announce that the ISA has taken a very important step in the area of designing and producing indigenous remote sensing satellites with very good accuracy," Salarieh explained.

He mentioned "Pars-2" and "Pars-3" as examples of satellites whose manufacturing has officially started.

Salarieh recognized Pars-2 and Pars-3 as satellites with imaging accuracies of four and two meters, respectively.

Iran is one of the top 10 nations in the world for satellite manufacture and launch capabilities.

In 2009, Iran launched its first satellite named Omid (Hope). And in 2011, Rasad (Observation) was placed into orbit.

Navid (Good News), Iran's third home-grown satellite, was successfully launched in 2012.

Iran declared the successful launch of its first military satellite in April 2020. It also launched a second military satellite into orbit in March 2022.

Iran also put Khayyam, a high-resolution imaging satellite, into orbit in August of last year. Using a Soyuz 2.1 B rocket, the satellite was launched into orbit from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan, which is run by Moscow.

Op-ed Unraveling the Niger dilemma: Decoding the erosion of France's influence in West Africa

By Hana Saada

The intricate tapestry of historical and cultural connections between France and Africa is in the midst of a seismic recalibration. France's once unassailable stature as a colonial force on the continent is confronting an array of fresh and formidable trials, most notably underscored by the recent unfolding of events in Niger subsequent to the ousting of President Mohamed Bazoum on the 26th of July. The reverberations of potential military interference, emanating from both global and regional actors, have laid bare a transformative terrain where France's firm grasp over its erstwhile colonies seems to be slipping through its fingers. ▶ Page 5



Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian (L) and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman meet in Jeddah on Friday, August 18, 2023.

Iran FM, Saudi crown prince hold frank, fruitful talks

TEHRAN- Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian held frank and fruitful talks in Jeddah on Friday.

Amir Abdollahian said in a post on X that he spoke with the Saudi crown prince for 90 minutes.

Since the two nations' relations were repaired after years of estrangement, the highest-level negotiations took place behind closed doors. ▶ Page 2

World Photography Day: 10 iconic photos that captured the essence of modern Iran

By Samaneh Aboutalebi

TEHRAN — On August 19, World Photography Day is being celebrated around the globe, commemorating the contribution of the medium to art, communication, and culture.

Photography has been a medium of expression for decades, creating powerful images that have helped shape our understanding of history and the world around us. This special day highlights the role that photographers play in our society, capturing the beauty of our world and changing perceptions through their powerful images. ▶ Page 8

TEHRAN PAPERS

Iran-US agreement non-related to other cases

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

Shargh wrote in a commentary: The Financial Times newspaper, repeating the claim of Ukraine and its Western allies regarding Iran's military support to Russia, wrote that the United States is urging Iran to stop selling drones and the material to make drones in Russia in order to de-escalate tensions. The U.S. reportedly made the request during indirect talks with Iran that has led to the imminent exchange of at least 5 prisoners and the release of \$6 billion of Iran's blocked assets. The report was published as the U.S. has been trying to de-escalate tensions and return to talks with Iran in order to restore the JCPOA agreement. Iran has said numerous times that it had never sold drones to Russia to be used in the Ukraine war and believes its military interactions with Russia are within the framework of Tehran-Moscow defense relations. Even though some analysts believe the recent agreement between Iran and the U.S. can prepare the ground for a potential revival of the JCPOA, Washington itself has called the two matters unrelated. It believes the recent agreement regarding the exchange of Iranian and American prisoners and the release of Iranian assets in several countries is an independent issue unrelated to other cases.

Sobh-e-No: Hypocrisy of the British embassy

In a note, Sobh-e-No discussed the response of the British ambassador to the terrorist incident in Shiraz. The paper said: The American regime, together with its subordinate countries, including the UK, designed the "Bee's hive" plot to counter the depth of Islamic influence in the region and beyond. After the terrorist incident in Shiraz by ISIS, the British ambassador decided to refrain from calling the attack a terrorist and violent act against people. Had the same thing happened in a church in London, British officials including the British ambassador to Tehran would have called it a terrorist act. Western double standards and the West's baseless claims of support for human rights which causes discrimination among people of different races and religions, will only result in an increase in terrorism and deepen injustice in the world. On the other hand, the British ambassador's malice and his interference in Iran's internal affairs are visible in his tweet. He has used ambiguous words in his tweet just like the anti-Iranian opposition. It is clear how-

Why is the world's largest terrorist organization angry at the IRGC?

From page 1 ▶ Threats consisted of various attempts such as coups to creating insecurity in various corners of the country. However, the IRGC countered them, including the armed groups and separatists.

The IRGC was engaged in countering these threats when suddenly Saddam Hussein invaded the Islamic Republic of Iran. The two superpowers of the time, America and the former Soviet Union, were supporters of Saddam in the imposed war on Iran.

The eight-year war against Iran in the 1980s seasoned the IRGC. In the final year of the war, the US directly intervened and there were numerous clashes between American forces and the Revolutionary Guards in the Persian Gulf. Despite the details of these conflicts, they had an important and strategic result: the IRGC have no fear of the US military.

After the end of Saddam's invasion in which he and his supporters suffered defeats to achieve their goals, the battle for the IRGC did not come to an end. The IRGC entered various fields, from ensuring the security of the country in various fields to helping develop the country, involving in scientific fields and countering imposed sanctions, and serving the people in various fields such as natural disasters, fighting epidemics, poverty alleviation, etc.

Of course, the IRGC sphere of activity was not limited to Iran's geography. The IRGC rightly understood that the main goal of the US and its ally, the Israeli regime, is to wreak havoc on the supporters of the Islamic Republic, and if these plans are not confronted at their source, their destructive effects will spread to the extent that confronting them in later stages will be much harder and more expensive.

Ayatollah Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution, called the IRGC the largest anti-terrorism organization in the world in a meeting with the elite force commanders on Thursday. The two victories and successes in the IRGC's brilliant record are more

ever that when the UK hosts several media outlets which are opposed to Iran, it also has to keep its policies and remarks in line with anti-Iran rhetoric and mimic the words of those outlets.

Iran: Death chain in Ashraf 3

In an analysis, the Iran newspaper discussed the continuation of suspicious deaths of high-ranking members of MKO and the density of their organizational situation. It wrote: Another death of a high-ranking member of the MKO. A member, named Munir Dej, has been declared dead, confirming suspicions that a serial and systematic killing spree is taking place. Several other high-ranking members of the MKO have died in recent weeks. It seems that a possible prosecution of the key members in both Albania and Iran has caused panic among MKO members and made several of them want to leave. The group itself has declared that Munir Dej took her own life but many believe that is a made-up story to cover her murder. It seems that the unpleasant situation that the MKO is facing overseas might urge more members to leave the terror organization and hence the heads of the entity will continue to take more lives in order to cleanse the system from elements it considers problematic and undesirable.

Ham Mihan: October is a flashpoint

In a commentary, Ham Mihan wrote: Some analysts believe that the recent negotiations between Iran and the United States can form the basis for greater negotiations and a more serious agreement, an agreement whose content is not the revival of JCPOA but the next U.S. plans to control Iran in exchange for reducing some sanctions. Even if the U.S. can follow the negotiations for a few months, October 2023, when UN limitations on Iran's ballistic missiles expire, is a flashpoint, and the only option Western leaders see to avoid its expiration is a snapback. However, this option might force Iran to quit the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), a potential dilemma for the United States and Israel that would risk escalating tensions across the region. Now, Iran, America and the larger international community have to make a serious decision and take a step towards some kind of agreement or at least to prevent further tension.

prominent than others; first, confronting terrorist America and second, defeating ISIS.

Over the past two decades, the Americans had formulated many plans for West Asia. One of the most famous of these schemes was the "Greater Middle East". Invading Afghanistan and Iraq and occupying these two countries under the pretext of fighting terrorism were part of this plot. They spent about seven trillion dollars to implement their plan, and hundreds of thousands of innocent citizens in various countries in the region became victims of this devilish plan. Condoleezza Rice, the then-US Secretary of State, shamelessly called Israel's massacre of Lebanese citizens in the 2006 invasion "the birth pangs of the New Middle East".

The IRGC was a force that defeated this complicated and big plan of the US and Israel in the region. Here we must remember General Soleimani, the commander of the Quds Force, a man who with his exemplary sharpness and courage even aroused the envy of US army commanders, and according to their confessions, he drew up the New Middle East. America, seeing its plans have failed, ultimately martyred this great man in a cowardly and terrorist way.

Being unable to overcome the IRGC on the battlefield and to compensate for its defeats, the US has used its large propaganda machine to tarnish the image of the IRGC and introduce it as a tension-creating and anti-security force in the region and the world. Calling the IRGC terrorist by the world's biggest terrorist is evidence of the IRGC's correct path and the pride of this revolutionary, popular, and borderless organization. What has made America more angry and confused than ever before is the spread of the IRGC model in West Asia and even beyond.

Ayatollah Khamenei says IRGC do things that many great armies can't

IRGC is the world's biggest Anti-terror force

TEHRAN - Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said on Thursday that the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) is the "biggest force" against terrorism in the world.

"Today, the IRGC is the largest anti-terrorist organization in the world," Ayatollah Khamenei told a group of the IRGC commanders.

The Leader described the IRGC as a well-armed, independent and effective military "that can do things that many great armies in the world can't accomplish."

The IRGC emerged as the most capable force against Daesh, the deadliest barbaric terrorist group in history.

Ayatollah Khamenei said the enemies have no avenue to damage the reputation of the IRGC other than through "false news, rumors and all kinds of tricks and ploys".

Following is the text of the Leader's speech posted on the khamenei.ir:

Imam Khamenei, in a meeting with the Supreme Assembly of Commanders and Officials of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) on August 17, described the creation, growth, crisis-breaking quality, and performance of the IRGC as unique and a source of pride in terms of military, civilian, services and construction, emphasizing that a key plot of the enemy is to distort the image of IRGC's image.

He pointed to the enemy's policy of creating crisis, undermining the country's security, and disrupting people's lives, but hastened to add that the enemy's defeat and the nation's victory will be "definite" through efforts to bring about national unity, encouraging people's participation, helping people, especially the lower classes, round-the-clock and Jihadi works by authorities, and continuing movement, hope and enthusiasm toward realization of the goals of the Islamic Revolution.

Imam Khamenei said "forgetting the facts and truths of the Revolution by the Iranian nation" is one of the goals of the world's Satans.

He called the formation of a group with the characteristics of the IRGC as a unique incident in the great revolutions of history.

"There are flaws and weaknesses in all human groups, but in the history of the country, there has never been a military group with such spiritual, political, moral, and human uprightness," he maintained.

The Leader also described the growth of the IRGC as unique.

He pointed to the organizational expansion of the military force shortly after its formation, saying, "About two years after its formation, the IRGC, with the support and cooperation of the Army, in several major operations,

Iran FM, Saudi crown prince hold frank, fruitful talks

From page 1 ▶ Iran's top diplomat stressed that the conversations were "explicit, frank, fruitful, and productive based on neighborhood policy."

The minister noted that both parties emphasized the need to improve enduring ties in all areas.

"We have consensus on security and development for all in the region," Amir Abdollahian wrote.

He reaffirmed Iran's intention to strengthen ties with the nations in the region, especially Saudi Arabia, during the meeting.

"Iran and Saudi Arabia can bring about further growth and prosperity to the region by improving comprehensive cooperation, including in the political, economic, commercial, transit, scientific and technological, and cultural fields," the top Iranian diplomat remarked.

Riyadh and Tehran have a "historic responsibility" in light of recent events throughout the world, he said.

Amir Abdollahian emphasized the need to foster development-oriented connections as the "path to success" in the region while highlighting Iran's accomplishments and capabilities.

According to the minister, Iran and Saudi Arabia are major players in the region and the Muslim world. The Iranian foreign minister also called Palestine and al-Quds the most pressing concerns of



including Fath ol-Mobin and Liberation of Khorramshahr, played a decisive role and managed to show the enormous power of the Revolution's defense power to the enemy."

During the same meeting, Imam Khamenei explained the answer to this important question: "What feature does the Islamic Revolution have that causes some to become hostile towards it, necessitating the need to guard the Revolution before them?"

He described the "political establishment of Islam" in Iran as a clear answer to this question.

"Standing up to oppression and helping the oppressed is a key and sensitizing feature of political Islam. This makes a regime like the Zionist regime, which is based on occupation, oppression, coercion and torture, to be stubborn and hostile toward a system such as that of the Islamic Republic," he added, while describing the features of political Islam.

The Islamic system's opposition to Arrogant Powers' encroaching on the interests and resources of nations was another feature that the Leader of the Islamic Revolution considered to be the cause of the colonialists' conflict with the Islamic system. "In contrast to the colonial approach, the Quran has instructed us to treat other nations in a just manner. This even includes nations whose beliefs and behaviors are different to us," he stated.

Imam Khamenei outlined that the wealth accumulation and development of countries such as England and France over the centuries has been due to their occupation, colonization and exploitation of other countries.

"You find some political analysts asking, 'What has the Islamic Republic done that has allowed a certain country to oppose it?' The answer to this question is clear. The evil colonialist system with all its history can obviously not be good with the Islamic system."

The Leader also pointed out a command in the Quran that instructs people to have faith in the dignity of all human beings regardless of their color, race, or the region they come from. "According to the logic of the Quran, a black person is no different from any

the Muslim world, and the Israeli regime a menace to all nations.

Also, both President Ebrahim Raisi and Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei also received greetings from the Saudi crown prince and the Saudi King.

Bin Salman stated that Iran and Saudi Arabia have a "strategic" connection. Once more he extended the Saudi Arabian offer to the Iranian president to visit Saudi Arabia.

Saudi FM expects 'new chapter' in Riyadh-Tehran ties

Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan said on Thursday that his country expects a new chapter will be opened in relations between the Saudi Kingdom and Iran.

"We expect that a new chapter will be opened in relations between the two countries based on brotherhood, mutual respect, and common interests," Faisal bin Farhan said in a joint press conference with his Iranian counterpart Amir Abdollahian in Riyadh.

Amir Abdollahian visited Saudi Arabia ahead of President Raisi's trip to the Saudi Kingdom.

Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz has officially invited President Raisi to pay a visit to the kingdom. The invitation followed after Iran and Saudi Arabia signed an agreement on March 10 in Chi-

documents of the US spy nest in Iran also revealed that these incidents took place within the framework of the same Western strategy which was based on creating one crisis after another in Iran," he added.

Imam Khamenei outlined that these crises were overcome by the IRGC and it was this organization that had come to the rescue of the people in the affected provinces. "The enemies tried to undermine and paralyze the Revolution by creating continuous crises. They then plotted to put an end to the Revolution with a measure similar to the coup that took place on August 19, [1953]. However, the IRGC thwarted it. This is the reason why the enemies have so much hatred and animosity towards the IRGC."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution described the IRGC's performance during the Sacred Defense as a very important and brilliant chapter of its existence. "The ever-increasing growth in the IRGC's capabilities is another dimension of its performance, which has created security and deterrence for Iran," he added.

The Leader attributed the reduction and non-repetition of the phrase "military options are on the table" to the IRGC's deterrence power and capabilities. "Everyone knows that this phrase has become trivial, meaningless and worthless," he said.

He described the IRGC's performance in construction and infrastructural matters as honorable, brilliant and in unparalleled dimensions. "The Revolutionary Guards have served the people with all their might through public services, overcoming privations, during natural disasters and incidents such as the coronavirus pandemic."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution described the enemy's main goal of creating crises in Iran to undermine the country's security. "If there is no security, there will be no economy, employment, or infrastructural activities. Factories cannot be set up, and there will be no science, universities or research centers. Therefore, their main goal is to disrupt the country's security and to disrupt people's lives."

He considered the CIA, Mossad, and British MI6 spy agencies to be the main perpetrators behind the design and creation of the crises.

"Of course, they also use internal and external agents and Western-oriented and indifferent elements, but the main perpetrators are the spy services."

At the beginning of this meeting, the Commander of the IRGC, Major General Hossein Salami explained the capabilities and performances of the IRGC in the fields of military, security, intelligence, science, economy, construction, health, services, propagation and the creation of hope.

na to resume diplomatic ties after seven years of frosty ties.

Faisal bin Farhan said, "We hope that Ayatollah Raisi will visit Saudi Arabia soon. King Salman has written an official letter in this regard."

The chief diplomat also said the kingdom is "determined to develop ties" with Iran and thanked the Islamic Republic for backing the Riyadh Expo 2030. The senior diplomat also said his talks with Amir Abdollahian focused on bilateral ties in different areas including security in the region.

"The talks were successful," the Saudi foreign minister said.

He also said the ambassadors from the two countries will soon start their diplomatic missions in Riyadh and Tehran and this is in line with the new relationship between the two sides.

The Iranian foreign minister made a two-day visit to Saudi Arabia on Thursday to facilitate and speed up the implementation of agreements inked between countries.

It was the first visit by an Iranian foreign minister to Saudi Arabia since 2015.

Amir Abdollahian is accompanied by Alireza Enayati, Iran's new ambassador to Saudi Arabia. Enayati is going to start his diplomatic mission in the country after the visit by Amir Abdollahian.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

70 years after the Ajax operation: How much does U.S. really care about democracy?

From Page 1 ▶ Mosaddegh was overthrown during a coup on August 19, 1953 through an operation dubbed Ajax by Americans and Boot by the British. He was jailed and then put under house arrest shortly after.

The U.S. admitted CIA's undeniable role in the 28 Mordad coup d'état in 2013 by releasing documents that said the coup had been carried out "as an act of U.S. foreign policy, conceived and approved at the highest levels of government".

What happened in Iran was Washington's first intervention in the internal affairs of other countries since the Second World War. Some reports suggest that the U.S. has helped orchestrate at least 50 other coups in different countries ever since.

How else does the U.S. help defend human rights?

Some other ways the U.S. likes to support democracy include color revolutions, sanctions, and propaganda. But its favorite of them all has got to be direct military action. The U.S. has caused some of the most devastating tragedies to unfold in the modern world.

Iraq

Washington, by claiming that the Iraqi government possesses weapons of mass destruction, launched a full-scale war against Iraq in March 2003. It bombed all the main infrastructures of



the country and wreaked havoc across the entire nation. It was of course revealed that there were no weapons of mass destruction to begin with. But the U.S. claimed it wanted to protect Iraqi people from their government before proceeding to kill an estimated number of two million people during its full decade-long occupation of the country. Washington's occupation still somehow lives on as Iraq's own officials have been sidestepped by the U.S. numerous times.

Afghanistan

To counter the Soviet Union's influence in Afghanistan, Washington helped empower a group of militants known as the Mujahedeen. Afghan Mujahedeen formed the Taliban which was later accused of helping a group of Saudi Arabian terrorists orchestrate the 9/11 attacks. The

U.S. invaded Afghanistan in 2001 to topple the Taliban only to give them back the country's reign 20 years later. At least 70,000 Afghan civilians were killed as a direct result of war while thousands of others died due to famine and insufficient health services. Afghanistan grapples with insecurity and various shortages to this day all because the U.S. decided to "save" people from terrorism.

Libya

The Obama administration essentially wracked Libya for the generations to come. The 2011 military intervention by NATO, which happened after a civil war instigated by the West, took place because the U.S. decided to "enforce a no-fly zone and protect civilians in Libya" as quoted by Hilary Clinton, the then Secretary of State. The intervention, which

has been called "Obama's biggest mistake", undermined the rules and security in Libya. Different parts of the country are now being controlled by different groups and people are stuck in an unending cycle of poverty and insecurity many of them see no way out of.

Syria

During the 12 years of fighting in Syria which persists in some areas to this day, half a million people died, millions got displaced, and cities got reduced to rubble across the Arab nation. The U.S.-instigated civil war in Syria and its subsequent bombing of the country helped create the most notorious terror group in history, Daesh. The U.S. once again proved its supportive relationship with terrorists when it assassinated Iran's anti-terror icon, General Qassem Soleimani, in 2020. As the IRGC Quds Force chief, he spearheaded Iran's fight against Daesh terrorists.

There are numerous other instances of how the U.S. has acted in complete opposition to its mottoes of democracy, freedom and human rights. When the country cannot exploit the United Nations and other international organizations that it largely controls, it very simply resorts to coups and military actions without caring a dime about democracy. It is important to note that people in most countries allied to the U.S. in West Asia, namely Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE, and Bahrain, have

Army monitoring stealth U.S. fighter jets: general

TEHRAN – A senior Iranian Army general has said that the Iranian air defense forces have monitored U.S. F-35 fighter jets over the Persian Gulf.

Brigadier General Reza Khajeh, the deputy commander of operations of the Iranian Army Air Defense Force commented on the arrival of the U.S. stealth fighter jets to the Persian Gulf, saying, "In recent days, several of these planes were flying over the Persian Gulf and were fully monitored by our radars from the moment they took off."

He added, "All radars located in the south of the country were monitoring these planes momentarily."

General Khajeh also said that all flights taking place in the region have been monitored by the Army's air defense forces, according to Fars News.

He continued, "All flights by the powers beyond the region in the Persian Gulf, the Strait of Hormuz and the Sea of Oman are definitely monitored and checked by our radars, especially the radars located in the southern edge of the country, and they are warned if necessary."

"There has been no flight that was reported by our eavesdropping systems but not detected by our radars," the senior Iranian general.

The remarks come after the U.S. announced a new deployment of forces to the Persian Gulf. In late July, the U.S. Central Command said in a statement that



a squadron of U.S. Air Force F-35 Lightning IIs has arrived in the Persian Gulf.

"While deployed in support of Air Forces Central missions, the 421st Expeditionary Fighter Squadron from Hill AFB, Utah will help defend interests, promote regional security and safeguard freedom of navigation in the region. In coordination with our regional allies, partners and the U.S. Navy, the F-35's will partner with A-10 and F-16s already in theater helping monitor the Strait of Hormuz," the statement said. "The F-35's increased capacity and capability will allow the U.S. to fly in contested airspace across the theater if required."

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.

Iranian intelligence arrests key member in connection to Daesh attack

TEHRAN – In a statement, Iran's intelligence ministry said on Friday that a key element responsible for the logistic support of a Takfiri terrorist who carried out an attack in the southern Iranian city of Shiraz on Sunday, has been arrested.

The terrorist act which has left two people dead was the second of its kind, with the Shah Cheragh holy shrine coming under attack for the first time in October. The first incident brought about the death of 15 civilians.

The statement says the detained terrorist was directly connected to Daesh. Iran's intelligence ministry

has not revealed the detainee's nationality but explained that Daesh had to draft foreigners to organize attacks in Iran after failing to create domestic terror groups.

"Takfiri terrorists made numerous attempts to carry out terrorist operations in holy sites and other public places where religious processions take place prior to last year's attack, but to no avail. This caused Takfiris to change their strategy and send non-Iranian terrorists. Therefore as for last year's attacks, all the members involved were foreign nationals who had entered the country just a few days before

the operation," declared the statement.

Iranian intelligence has also asserted that at least 196 members of Daesh have been arrested or killed between the first and second attack. The detained individuals are all non-Iranians from the Republic of Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan.

Intelligence forces linked the second attack on Shah Cheagh to Daesh's vow to take revenge after Iran executed two terrorists responsible for the first attack.

The statement also gives more details about the terrorist who

carried out the recent terror act. The unnamed man is a citizen of Tajikistan who joined Daesh through online channels on telegram. He traveled through Tajikistan, Turkey and Pakistan to reach the province of Badakhshan in Afghanistan where he received training. He entered Iran through its eastern borders.

The statement also notes that the timing of both last year's and this year's attacks are to be taken into account. "Last year, it took place at the same time as the enemy-backed riots in autumn, and this year, just before the anniversary of those events."

celebrities, if they take action against the Chastity and Hijab Law, they will be dealt with," he said.

"In sum, the Chastity and Hijab bill says that we all must respect each other's social rights," the lawmaker said.

He added, "The emphasis in the Chastity and Hijab bill is to deal decisively with those who deliberately and with the cooperation of hostile countries take organized actions to promote unveiling and bad hijab in the society."

The Iranian parliament has recently been reviewing the bill which aims to put an end to the trend of unveiling.

Enemy seeks to polarize society on hijab: MP

TEHRAN – Iranian lawmaker Ali Nikzad has said that the enemy has targeted the hijab as an important social factor to create societal polarizations that aim to break unity.

In remarks to Mehr News, Nikzad said that no country accepts that their security whether military or cultural be endangered.

"We all should note that the issue of hijab as an important religious and cultural factor has been targeted by the enemy, which also seeks to create unity-breaking polarizations in society using this factor," he said, adding that the enemy will fail to achieve this goal.

Nikzad also touched on a hijab bill being

discussed in the parliament. Based on a decision by the Supreme National Security Council, he said, the government or the Judiciary should present the bill on chastity and hijab to the parliament.

He continued, "Therefore, the parliament did not formulate a plan for chastity and hijab. After the Judiciary compiled the Chastity and Hijab bill and presented it to the parliament through the government, it was referred to the judicial and cultural commissions of the parliament for review."

"In the Chastity and Hijab bill, it is stated that people who have social influence or are

SPORTS

Iran make history at 2023 FIBA Women's Asia Cup Division B

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Jordan a 72-54 in Bangkok, Thailand on Friday to secure the first ticket to the 2023 FIBA Women's Asia Cup Division B final.

The victory sealed Iran a trip to the Final, inching them closer to a FIBA Women's Asia Cup Division A debut.

Iran were winless in 2021, their first appearance in the Women's Asia Cup since 1974, which makes this inspiring run to the Final all the more impressive.

In a physical game between both squads, Iran were able to maintain the form that got the team to the Semi-Finals which meant playing hard-nosed defense and distributing offense among the entire team, fiba. basketball reported.

Even though Jordan's Aisha Sheppard ended up with 24 points, it took her 18 attempts and had to earn most of her points from the free throw line.

Iran's leading scorer was Faezeh Shahriari, who knocked down 5 three-pointers to end up with 22 points. She has been one of Iran's top scorers in the competition, though her improvement is something that must be noted as the 28-year-old scored only 17 points through the entire competition in 2021.

Iran will play the winners of Thailand and Indonesia in the final on Saturday.

Iran, Angola friendly confirmed

TEHRAN – Mehdi Mohammad Nabi, Vice President of Iran Football Federation, confirmed that Iran will host Angola in a friendly match in Tehran.

The match will be held at the Azadi Stadium on Sept. 12.

Iran played Angola in Group D of the 2006 FIFA World Cup, where the two teams shared the spoil in a 1-1 draw.

Amir Ghalenoei's team will play Bulgaria at the Hristo Botev Stadium in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, slated for Sept. 7 as part of preparation for the 2023 AFC Asian Cup.

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

Esteghlal earn hard-fought victory over Malavan: PGPL

TEHRAN – Esteghlal football team earned a late 1-0 win over Malavan on Thursday in the 2023/24 Iran's Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL) Matchweek 2.

Malavan player Mehran Ahmadi missed a penalty in the seventh minute.

Mohammadhossein Moradmand scored the hosts' goal with a header in the 80th minute.

Sepahan, Esteghlal and Persepolis sit top of the table with six points out of two matches.

It was Malavan's second loss in the new season.

Iran U20 freestyle team crowned world champions

TEHRAN – Iran freestyle team claimed the title in the 2023 U20 World Wrestling Championships for the third time in a row.

The Iranian freestylers won four gold medals, two silvers and one bronze in the competition held in Amman, Jordan.

Reza Shakeri won Iran's first gold medal after defeating Jesse Mendez from the U.S. 5-2 in the final bout of 65kg.

Abolfazl Babaloo overcame Ivan Prymache of Ukraine 5-0 in the final match of the 97kg.

Mohammadmobin Azimi beat Kazakhstan's Rizabek Aitmukhan 5-4 in the 92kg final bout.

Amirreza Masoumi won Iran's fourth gold by defeating Said Akhmatov from Russia 11-0 in the final bout of 125kg.

Ali Rezaei of Iran lost to Meyer Shapiro from the U.S. 11-6 in the final bout of 70kg and his countryman Hossein Mohammad Aghaei was defeated against American wrestler Mitchell Mesenbrink 15-5 in the 74kg final.

Ali Mahmoud Khorramdel also won a bronze medal in 61kg.

Iran won the team title with 165 points, followed by the U.S. and India with 152 and 102 points, respectively.

Iranian shooters win two medals at 2023 ISSF World Championship

TEHRAN – Iranian shooters claimed a silver and a bronze medal at the 2023 ISSF World Championships underway in Baku, Azerbaijan.

In the 10m Air Rifle Mixed Team, Chinese pair of Huang Yuting and Sheng Lihao, with an aggregate score of 632.7, topped the qualification followed by Iran's Shermineh Chehel Amirani and Amirmohammad Nekounam (632.5).

China went on to win gold defeating Iran 16-2, while France won the bronze medal.

The Iranian women (Golnoush Sebgatollahi, Hanieh Rostamian, Mina Ghorbani) had won a bronze medal on Thursday in the 10m Air Pistol Team.

The competition has brought 1,200 shooters around the world in Baku from Aug. 14 to Sept. 1.

Iran basketball to participate at Peak Tournament in China

TEHRAN – Iran's national basketball team will leave Tehran on Thursday to participate at the Peak Tournament in China.

Team Melli have recently participated in the Tbilisi International Cup, where it finished in third place.

Hakan Demir's side also lost to Russia twice in Prem in early August.

Iran take part in the warm-up matches as part of the preparation for the 2023 FIBA World Cup and 2022 Asian Games.

Iran volleyball defeat Japan in friendly match

TEHRAN – Iran volleyball team defeated Japan 3-1 (23-25, 27-25, 25-21, 25-21) in a friendly match on Thursday.

Iran had defeated Pakistan 3-1 and Qatar 3-1 in two warm-up matches on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Behrouz Ataei's side, who prepares for the 2023 Asian Volleyball Championship, are drawn in Pool A along with Iraq and Hong Kong.

Iran will play Hong Kong and Iraq on August 20 and 21, respectively.

The Championship will take place in Urmia, Iran, from August 19 to 26.

Iranian power plants ready for sustained electricity supply: official



TEHRAN – The deputy head of Iran's Thermal Power Plants Holding Company (TPPH) has said that the country's power plants are 98 percent ready for a sustained supply of electricity for the rest of the summer season, IRIB reported.

According to Hamid Baderestani, now that two-thirds of the summer peak consumption period is passed, the TPPH expects no serious issues in supplying electricity for the rest of the season.

"This year, 670 repair operations were carried out in large power plants, and by increasing the capacity of power plants, we were able to increase the capacity of our power plants by more than 700 megawatts," he said.

Electricity consumption in Iran has been surging as the temperature across the country hit new records high this summer.

Earlier this month, Iranian Energy Ministry's Spokesman for Electricity Industry Mostafa Rajabi Mashhadi said that electricity consumption since the beginning of the current summer season (June 22) increased by 6.5 percent compared to the previous year's same period.

Stating that the electricity industry is passing the hottest days of the year and consumption demand is high, Rajabi Mashhadi said: "The

electricity demand is predicted to reach 72,500 megawatts, which is a very high figure."

He called on all subscribers to manage their consumption in order to pass through the peak summer demand period without any outages.

Back in July, Rajabi Mashhadi predicted peak electricity consumption in Iran to surpass 72,500 megawatts (MW) in the summer due to the increasing temperature across the country.

The official also announced the launch of the Energy Ministry's new program based on which all subscribers whose consumption is less than the figure for their previous year's same period will be rewarded with discounts on their electricity bills.

Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian said earlier that the electricity consumption in the country broke the last year's record by more than 3,000 MW this year.

"The amount of electricity consumption has been 6,000 megawatts more than the same period last year and 3,000 megawatts more than last year's record," the minister said.

Mehrabian said the consumption is expected to increase even further as the temperature is foreseen to go higher.

'Using private sector capacities in stock market a main approach of SEO'

TEHRAN – Head of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) Majid Eshqi said on Thursday that using the capacities of the country's private sector in the stock market has been one of the main strategies of the organization over the past year, IRNA reported.

"One of the main approaches of the Securities and Exchange Organization during the past year has been to use the power of the private sector, because government entities and public sector do not have the necessary characteristics for economic prosperity, so we must increase the share of the private sector in the capital market," Eshqi said in a conference in Khorasan Razavi Province.

Large industries have their own problems and fluctuations, but small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can compensate for these fluctuations, the official said, adding that the main part of the world economy is moving towards small and medium-sized companies because

value, employment, and innovation lie in such companies.

The SEO head further noted that the stock market should mainly focus on investment and financing, saying: "We need to direct the liquidity flow towards production."

Emphasizing the importance role of the seventh National Development Plan (2022-2026) in securing the future of the capital market, Eshqi stated: "One of the major indicators of investment is predictability, so more action should be taken in the seventh development plan to make the economy more predictable."

He pointed to the holding of investment and financing conferences in provinces as a starting point for a new movement towards promoting investment and said: "Economic enterprises do not have enough familiarity with the capital market and such conferences are bridges that provide the necessary platform in this regard."

Loading, unloading of goods rises 11% at Bushehr port in 4 months on year

TEHRAN – Loading and unloading of commodities at Bushehr port in the southwest of Iran rose 11 percent during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22), as compared to the same period in the previous year, a provincial official announced.

Mohammad Shakibi, the director-general of Bushehr province's Ports and Maritime Department, said that 21.812 million tons of goods were loaded and unloaded at the port during the four-month period.

Loading and unloading of non-oil goods rose 19 percent to 3.789 million tons, and that of the oil products increased by 9.5 percent to over 18 million tons in the first four months of the present year, the official announced.

As previously reported by the country's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO), loading and unloading of goods in the ports of Iran increased by seven percent in the first four months of the present Iranian calendar year, as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

As the PMO reported, 73,026,069 tons of commodities were loaded and unloaded in the

ports during the four-month period.

Of the mentioned figure, 48,993,458 tons were related to loading, and 24,032,661 tons were related to unloading.

The loading of goods in the mentioned period also increased by nine percent as compared to the figure for the previous year's same four months.

During the said period, loading and unloading operations in the container sector reached 871,132 TEUs, which was three percent more than the 849,527 TEUs in the first four months of the past year.

While Iran is combating the U.S. unilateral sanctions on its economy, the country's ports as the major gates of exports and imports play a significant role in this battle. This role makes all-out support to ports and more development of them serious and vital.

Such necessity has led the government to define projects for more development of the ports and also take some measures to encourage investment making in ports, in addition to facilitating the loading and unloading of goods, especially basic commodities, there.

Iran exports non-oil goods worth \$1.788b to UAE in 4 months

TEHRAN- Iran exported non-oil commodities valued at \$1.788 billion to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22), the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

As reported, the UAE was the fourth top export destination of Iranian non-oil goods in the mentioned four-month period.

The IRICA also announced that exporting non-oil goods worth \$5.818 billion to Iran, the UAE was Iran's first source of import in the first four months of this year.

Iran and the United Arab Emirates have agreed to sign new memorandums of understanding (MOUs) on the avoidance of double taxation and facilitation of mutual investment.

The decision was made during a meeting between Iranian Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Ehsan Khandouzi and UAE Minister of State for Financial Affairs Mohamed bin Hadi Al Hussaini on the sidelines of the annual meeting of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Board of Executive Directors in Jeddah in mid-May.

During the meeting, the officials emphasized increasing cooperation in the fields of trade and foreign investment; in this regard, it was decided that appropriate measures should be implemented soon in order to sign agreements on facilitating foreign investment and avoidance of double taxation between the countries.

Pointing to the positive impact of the resumption of relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Saudi Arabia in the region, Al-Husseini said that the volume of trade between the two countries has increased about 40 times.

"This volume of trade in various fields indicates a natural and positive growth of relations and interactions between Iran and the UAE, and the role of the governments of the two sides is to encourage trade and facilitate it through agreements to avoid double taxation, and it is necessary to revise the existing agreements between the two countries," he said.

Khandouzi for his part referred



to the previous unfinished negotiations related to the drafting of a foreign investment agreement between the two sides, saying: "The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to cooperate in joint profitable projects, as well as cooperation for investing in other countries."

At the end of this meeting, Khandouzi invited his Emirati counterpart to travel to Tehran as soon as possible.

And on May 9, the head of the Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of the United Arab Emirates said his country is seeking to become Iran's top trading partner in the region.

Abdullah Mohamed Al Mazrouei, who visited Iran at the head of a business delegation, made the remarks in a meeting with Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Gholam-Hossein Shafeie in Tehran.

During the meeting, the two sides exchanged views on the common fields of cooperation, economic relations, and how to expand commercial relations between the private sectors of Iran and the UAE.

Stating that the UAE is one of the most important neighboring countries of Iran with a deep historical relationship, Shafeie said: "The UAE is Iran's second trading partner in the world after China, and the volume of our annual exchanges has reached

about 24 billion dollars. Despite all the restrictions of the past and the heavy shadow of political issues on economic relations, the UAE has always maintained its good position in relation to Iran and the mentioned issues have not been able to have a deep impact on our business relations."

Back in early January, the director-general of Bushehr Province's Ports and Maritime Department announced that Iran has launched a direct container shipping line from the country's southwestern Bushehr Port to the United Arab Emirates' Port of Jebel Ali.

According to Mohammad Shakibi-Nasab, launching the mentioned shipping line is going to boost the economic exchanges between the two countries.

He further noted that with the new line going operational the cost of transporting export cargoes has also been reduced for the two sides' traders.

At the same time, the head of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) met with the UAE's ambassador to Tehran, during which the two sides stressed the acceleration of mutual port, maritime, and transit cooperation.

In the meeting, UAE Ambassador Saif Mohamed Obaid Jasem Al Zaabi underlined the capacities of UAE companies for port and maritime investment in neighboring countries, especially

Iran, and announced a field visit by his country's experts to Iranian ports in the near future.

The Arab official also referred to the very good transportation and transit infrastructure in his country and welcomed Iran's approach to developing transit cooperation with CIS countries.

Al Zaabi emphasized the need for the expansion of economic relations between Tehran and Abu Dhabi, expressing the trust and interest of the UAE government in developing port and maritime cooperation with Iran.

PMO Head Ali-Akbar Safaei for his part stressed the strategy of the Iranian government to develop economic cooperation and good relations with neighboring countries, saying that the development of maritime relations between Iran and the United Arab Emirates is very important for the Islamic Republic.

Stating that Iran is ready for the development of maritime, transit, and port relations with Abu Dhabi, Safaei emphasized: "Transit and port connections between Tehran and Abu Dhabi with Central Asian countries and other nations can be formed quickly and prosper very fast."

The official also welcomed any investment by UAE port and maritime companies in Iran's southern ports, especially Shahid Rajaei Port and Chabahar Port.

Average daily gasoline consumption rises 13%

TEHRAN – Average daily gasoline consumption in Iran has reached about 120 million liters in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21) which is 13 percent more than the figure for the previous year, according to the head of the National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC).

"Despite the 13 percent increase in gasoline consumption this year, there is no problem with the supply and distribution of gasoline in the country," Jalil Salari said on Thursday during a visit to NIORDC's Dispatching Center along with Oil Minister Javad Oji and First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber.

According to Salari, NIORDC's gasoline

distribution has increased by 17 million liters in the current year.

Speaking to the press on the sidelines of the visit, Oji also said that there are currently 4,400 active gas stations across the country.

"This year, we have had a nearly seven percent increase in traffic compared to last year, and the average daily gasoline consumption has been 17-20 million liters more than the same period last year," Oji said.

The minister noted that despite the increase in consumption there is no concern about fuel supply.

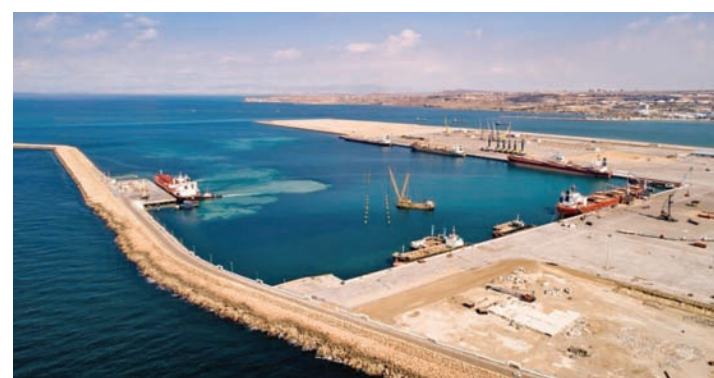
Gasoline storage in the country has been 150 million liters more than the last year's same

period, he said.

Touching upon the condition of fuel supply to the country's power plants, the official said for the first time in the country, five billion liters of liquid fuel have been stored in power plants, adding that this storage includes three billion liters of diesel and two billion liters of fuel oil.

Stating that the storage of fuel in the country is favorable and the export of diesel has started since last month, the oil minister noted that the construction of the Pars pipeline (Mehran-Fasa-Shiraz pipeline) has been approved by the Supreme Economic Council and its construction will begin soon.

'Developing Makran Coast Line requires \$9b of investment'



TEHRAN – Secretary of Makran Coast Development Council has said developing the cost line requires three years of work and nine billion dollars of investment, Fars News Agency reported.

Speaking to Fars, Hossein Dehghan said developing the mentioned cost line came under the spotlight nearly

15 years ago when stressed by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

"Over the past 15 years, important measures have been taken in this regard, however, it has not been enough," Dehghan noted.

According to the official, distance from the center and lack of infrastructure have been the two main obstacles in the way of attracting investment in the mentioned region.

Makran is a historical region in Iran that runs from mountains west of Jask all the way to parts of Pakistan's Baluchistan province in the southwest along the Sea of Oman.

Iran has recently constructed significant nautical and commercial infrastructure in a number of Makran districts, particularly at Chabahar port, which serves as a vital trade route between the Indian Ocean and landlocked nations in Central Asia.

Earlier in June, the head of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) announced a plan for attracting

over \$390 million of domestic investment in the Makran Coast.

Ali-Akbar Safaei said that so far, the private sector has invested more than \$215 million in the mentioned region and the country's small ports.

He also noted that good measures have been taken in the foreign investment sector, which will hopefully bear results soon.

Back in November 2022, President Ebrahim Raisi called for a quick development of the south and southeastern shores of Iran, namely the Makran coastline.

Raisi stated that plans for the development of the Makran coasts by the government and the private sector might assist the comparatively underdeveloped region.

Unraveling the Niger dilemma: Decoding the erosion of France's influence in West Africa

Historical ties and contemporary shifts shed light on France's diminishing influence in the region

From page 1 ▶ As the chapters of history and power dynamics realign, a new narrative is being written—one that demands an astute understanding of the evolving dynamics at play in this complex intercontinental relationship.

The Great Game revisited: France's declining influence

In the annals of history, the term "Great Game" carries with it the echoes of a bygone era of geopolitical rivalry and intrigue. Originating during the nineteenth century, this term encapsulates the intense strategic contest between the British and Russian empires for supremacy in the expansive and enigmatic terrain of Central Asia. This engrossing saga of power plays and maneuvers extended its gripping narrative to encompass regions such as Afghanistan, India, and the southern reaches of Russia. Both empires, fueled by their ambitions, engaged in a complex dance of espionage, skillful diplomacy, and discreet military engagements, all in an effort to expand their respective spheres of influence without plunging into the abyss of full-scale conflict.

In a parallel historical context, one can discern a reminiscent pattern in France's endeavors within West Africa over the course of the last century and a half. Analogous to the "Great Game," France's historical engagement in this region has been marked by its aspirations to establish and maintain control and influence. However, recent times have witnessed a notable weakening of France's once-firm grip on the region. The ascent of jihadi terrorist groups, adept at exploiting the vacuum of authority, coupled with a surge in military coups harboring anti-French sentiments, has eroded France's historical dominance in the region's power dynamics.

Adding a new layer of complexity to this unfolding narrative are the entrance and calculated moves of global powerhouses. Chief among them are Russia and, particularly, China, whose strategic designs in the region aim to carve out a foothold, extend their geopolitical sway, and harness the bounteous natural resources and markets that a penetration into West Africa can afford. As these influential actors make their presence felt, the very equilibrium of power is poised to shift, creating a fresh set of challenges to France's traditional hegemony.



Yet, amid these sweeping transformations in the Francophone expanse of West Africa, a fascinating undercurrent emerges: the emergence of anti-French and anti-Western sentiment within the populace. This sentiment has lent legitimacy to military elites that have orchestrated the overthrow of leaders with pro-French inclinations. This multifaceted backdrop sets the stage for a comprehensive inquiry into the waning influence of France. Central to this exploration is the examination of the intricate web of perceptions shared between France and Africans, a lens through which the internal dynamics of West African societies can be better understood.

The multifaceted manifestations of the French retreat

The manifestations of the French retreat from Africa are vividly apparent through a spectrum of compelling indicators that underscore the waning of French influence across the continent. Among these indicators, none are more striking than the recent conversion of Gabon and Togo, both Francophone nations with no historical British colonial ties, into members of the Anglophone Commonwealth during the Kigali summit of 2022. This seismic shift serves as a stark testament to the erosion of France's once-dominant sway. This transformation can be attributed to a confluence of factors that illuminate the changing landscape of global relations.

Foremost among these factors are the economic advantages that align with this strategic decision. The allure of enhanced trade prospects within the 54-member Commonwealth bloc is compelling, especially given that many of Africa's burgeoning economies

are English-speaking. Moreover, the move fortifies ties with the prevailing global language of business, English, amplifying the potential for economic growth. The aftermath of Brexit accentuates this pivot, as African nations seek to forge direct relationships with the United Kingdom, free from the constraints of EU trade regulations. This pivot echoes the prior inclusion of non-British colonial nations, such as Mozambique in 1995 and Rwanda in 2009, indicating a broader trend.

Beneath the surface, this shift also echoes cultural and political realignments that discernibly distance French influence from economic stagnation. The desire to sever ties with the vestiges of colonial linguistic and cultural bonds underscores the notion that such detachment may invigorate development. This sentiment is particularly pronounced in Togo, reflecting a broader sentiment across Francophone Africa that connects French influence with economic constraints, fostering a renewed desire for self-directed growth.

Strategically, the move to join the Commonwealth should not be viewed solely as a decline in France's sway; rather, it is emblematic of a broader trend toward diversified international engagement. This reframing does not necessarily undermine France's relevance, but rather signifies African nations' aspiration to broaden their global horizons, seeking multifaceted partnerships that resonate with their evolving needs.

The resurgence of political Sankarism constitutes another compelling manifestation of the French retreat. Rooted in the ideology of Thomas Sankara, the former President of Burkina Faso,

this movement champions Pan-Africanism, economic autonomy, and wealth redistribution. Sankara's legacy reverberates through contemporary Africa, inspiring activists and leaders who espouse principles of change and equity. Recent military upheavals in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger appear to be drawing on this historical legacy, evoking a spirit of transformation and justice that resonates with African populations.

Simultaneously, the increasing clout of alternate global powers further underscores France's diminishing influence. Russia's burgeoning military presence, facilitated by private military companies like the Wagner Group, offers Moscow a shadowy means to expand its reach, circumventing traditional military interventions. China's economic ascendancy is equally significant, as its investment-driven approach, devoid of political conditions, appeals to African nations seeking swift developmental progress. China's substantial infrastructure undertakings, loans, and direct investments yield tangible and immediate benefits, further enhancing its standing on the continent.

In the realm of diplomacy and soft power, significant rearrangements are palpable. Western sanctions and the Russia axis, prompted by geopolitical developments such as the Ukrainian crisis, have impelled Moscow to cultivate alliances in alternative regions, including Africa. China's diplomatic endeavors, epitomized by the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, have solidified strategic partnerships and provided African nations with a pivotal platform for engagement with Beijing.

In essence, the challenges confronting France in West Africa are intricate and multifaceted, arising from the region's internal dynamics and the shifting tides of global geopolitics. The contemporary "Great Game" unfolding across Africa is marked by a nuanced interplay of economic might, soft power, and traditional military engagements.

In the upcoming article, we will comprehensively explore African perceptions of France and dissect the intricate factors that shape the dynamics of France-West Africa relations.

Lukashenko warns against any foreign aggression

Belarusian president denounces NATO claims that Belarus could enter the Ukraine war

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko has stressed that his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin is not trying to push Belarus into joining the war in Ukraine, dismissing such allegations by the United States and its closest allies.

"To involve Belarus... what will that give? Nothing," said Lukashenko, one of Russia's many allies, whose country also borders Ukraine, Russia as well as three NATO states including Poland.

Lukashenko has also warned that Belarus would not hold back in its response in the event of any foreign aggression on the country, including the use of nuclear weapons that Moscow has stationed on Belarusian territory.

Last month, Russia deployed tactical nuclear weapons to Belarus, a move that was denounced by Ukraine's Western backers, in particular the United States. Critics, however, say the U.S. has deployed its nuclear weapons in many places beyond American borders.

"Nuclear weapons will not really be used, which we have in Belarus. Otherwise, why were they brought here? If there is no aggression against us. If there is an act of aggression against us, an attack on Belarus. We won't wait and so on. We'll use the whole arsenal of our weapons."

Outlining where the threat of an attack can arise, he said, "There can be only one threat - aggression against our country. If aggression against our country starts from Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, we will respond instantly with everything we have."

Lukashenko has warned that Minsk will resort to other weapons as well, which he did not reveal, should Ukraine attack Belarusian territory or

violates its sovereignty.

"Against Ukraine, if it commits aggression against us - not only nuclear weapons will be used. We have something besides nuclear weapons. And we will not warn you that if you cross the red lines, we will strike at the decision-making centers. This will be done without warning," Lukashenko warned.

"If you Ukrainians do not cross our border; we will never participate in this war. In this hot war. But we will always help Russia - they are our allies," he added in an interview with Diana Panchenko, a Ukrainian journalist.

Lukashenko also said he believed Moscow had already achieved its goals, in what Russia has branded a "special military operation" in Ukraine, saying that the time has come for the two sides to sit together and be ready to address all matters, including the future of Crimea and other Ukrainian territories that Moscow has claimed in eastern Ukraine where the majority of the population are ethnic Russians.

"The objectives of the SVO (special military operation in Ukraine) have now been accomplished. Ukraine will never behave so aggressively towards Russia after the end of this war as it did before the war. Ukraine will be different."

Lukashenko is of the belief that since Russia's military mission has been accomplished, Kyiv will change its policy toward Moscow.

"Its goals have already been fulfilled to date. Ukraine will never behave so aggressively towards Russia after the end of this war, as it did before the war," Lukashenko argued.

He has called for peace talks to start without



any preconditions, arguing that this is the only way to end the crisis.

"Negotiations should begin without preconditions. This is a classic of any diplomacy. I think so. We need to sit down at the negotiating table and discuss everything. And Crimea, and Kherson, Zaporizhia, Donetsk and Lugansk. Everything there needs to be discussed," he said.

But Lukashenko noted that Russia will never let go of Crimea, where the locals voted in a referendum to join the Russian Federation in 2014.

"Of course, Russia will never give Crimea back to

WORLD HEADLINES

Xi to meet African leaders during BRICS summit

Chinese President Xi Jinping will meet African heads of state on the sidelines of the BRICS summit next week "to advance China-Africa cooperation in the new era", China's ambassador to South Africa said on Friday.

The meeting will take place late on Thursday, the last day of the three-day summit, Chen Xiaodong told a briefing. The day has been set aside for events involving the more than 70 countries invited as "friends" of the BRICS bloc, consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

On Tuesday, Xi will pay a state visit to South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa in Pretoria and later travel to Johannesburg for the summit, in what will be his fifth trip to South Africa since he became president in 2013.

China's interactions with African leaders will follow last month's Russia-Africa summit in St Petersburg, where Russian President Vladimir Putin held court with the 17 African heads of state.

Chen said Xi and African leaders will draw up a blueprint for cooperation to create jobs and improve livelihoods in Africa.

"The initiatives will be in line with the needs of Africa's economic restructuring and upgrading," he said.

UN suspends services in Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon

The UN agency for Palestinian refugees says it has decided to suspend all of its services in Lebanon's largest refugee camp on Friday in protest against the presence of gunmen in its facilities.

UNRWA's decision went into effect shortly before noon Friday at the Ein el-Hilweh refugee camp near the southern port city of Sidon. Services will resume Saturday, UNRWA said.

Days of street battles took place in the camp between the Fatah group of Palestinian

President Mahmoud Abbas and two Islamic militant groups, Jund al Sham and Shabab al Muslim. The clashes broke out on July 30, after Fatah accused its rivals of shooting dead a senior Fatah military official.

The fighting killed at least 13 people, injured dozens and caused millions of dollars in damages in the camp, according to UNRWA officials.

Lebanese security forces don't operate inside the refugee camps, where security is in the hands of Palestinian factions who often compete for clout.

UNRWA said in its statement Friday that armed fighters are still present in its facilities, including schools. It added that UNRWA reiterates its call on armed actors to immediately vacate its facilities, "to ensure unimpeded delivery of much-needed assistance to refugees."

UNRWA said it "does not tolerate actions that breach the inviolability and neutrality of its installations." It added that schools are unlikely to be available for 3,200 children at the start of the new school year given repeated violations and significant damage reported.

Ein el-Hilweh is home to more than 50,000 people and is the largest of 12 Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon.

Chechen leader threatens to 'deal with' Quran-burning countries

The head of Russia's Chechen Republic Ramzan Kadyrov has blasted Muslim leaders over their failure to address numerous Quran-burning incidents in the West, vowing to do his best to "deal with" the culprits after the end of the Ukraine conflict.

In a statement on Telegram, Kadyrov said that the continued desecration of Islam's holy book in Europe poses an "unprecedented challenge" to the Muslim world, and that the stunts "predictably bring the situation to the point of no return."

"Where are the leaders of Muslim states at this time? Why are they allowing our holy scriptures to be openly violated and not taking any significant steps to protect Muslims and the Islamic religion? Do they really fear backlash and American and European sanctions more than the wrath of Allah Almighty?" he asked.

Kremlin's arguments, branding the war as a land grab attempt by Russia.

Lukashenko has also hit out at Volodymyr Zelensky, accusing the Ukrainian president of putting an end to talks between Kyiv and Minsk.

"Zelensky noticed some kind of threat to those who organized these talks. Political rivals. He forbade them to conduct this dialogue. I know that through special bodies, special services. Including the military with the Russians are conducting these negotiations in Ukraine. And the position of Russia to Ukraine, Ukraine to Russia. They have contacts. The Ukrainians have contacts with us (Belarus), they have contacts with Russia."

Belarus has long called for an end to the fighting in Ukraine and settling the crisis through peace talks, arguing the crisis has backfired on European states.

Belarus is not alone in its push to end the war. Countries in West and East Asia, Africa and Latin America have urged the warring sides to end the war. They have travelled to both countries presenting peace proposals.

The United States, which is cashing in on the suffering of the Ukrainians with lucrative arms and energy sales, stands accused of being the wedge between peace and war.

The U.S. is doing so despite a recent survey highlighting the majority of Americans are against the pumping of weapons to the warzone.

Russia says the influx of Western weapons to Ukraine is only dragging the conflict instead of ending it. Putin has said that Moscow is not opposed to peace talks.

Ukraine. I still doubt that anything can be agreed upon that here in the east."

Russian President Vladimir Putin said his country was forced to send tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine last year to protect its own security and territorial integrity against the U.S.-led NATO military alliance's expansion toward Russian borders.

Putin also said the "special military operation" was needed to protect the native Russian speakers from what he called "neo-Nazis" and ultra-nationalists that have taken the helm in Kyiv.

Ukraine and its Western allies have dismissed the

Turkish archaeologist highlights Urartian settlements in northwest Iran



TEHRAN—Dr. Erkan Konyar, professor of archeology at Istanbul University, has delivered a lecture on Urartian settlements in northwest Iran, turning the spotlight on the ancient country once centered in the mountainous region southeast of the Black Sea and southwest of the Caspian Sea.

Addressing a host of archaeologists, historians, and cultural heritage enthusiasts at the National Museum of Iran late on Tuesday, Konyar emphasized the importance of northwest Iran in the Urartu kingdom and said: To the east of the Van Lake Basin, behind the northern Zagros Mountains, lies the Urmia Lake Basin, which contains the important plains and the Lake Urmia.

In his lecture titled "The Urartian Capital Tushpa and the Urartian Settlements in Northwest Iran", Konyar discussed the capital of the Urartu, Tushpa, and its explorations, as well as its comparison with the Urartu settlements in the northwest of Iran.

Regarding the geography of Urartu, he said: Urartian geography can be divided into sections with different characters depending

on its widespread area. This situation has affected many areas, such as house type, settlement style, and lifestyle.

Within these borders, Lake Van, Lake Urmie, and Upper Basin contain important Urartian settlements. Regarding Tushpa, he said: The settlement of Tushpa, the capital of the Urartians, who established the central state structure in this geography in the 9th-7th centuries BC, plays a decisive role in understanding other Urartian settlements and architectural traditions.

"Tushpa-Van Rock, which was a pioneering model in the Urartian period, was not abandoned by the founding king Sarduri I until the collapse of the kingdom."

Moreover, the archaeologist noted that some important royal centers of Urartu, such as Qalatgah, are also found in northwest Iran, which are not yet excavated and are potentially important for the Urartu researchers.

Konyar, who has done research on the culture and kingdom of Urartu in eastern Turkey and has numerous publications on the subject, is currently analyzing Hasanlu archaeological material that is housed in the National Museum of Iran.

The archaeologist directed the Kahramanmara? Survey between 2006-2010 and the Van-Tushpa excavations, the capital of Urartu, between 2010-2019. Furthermore, he has three published books and four edited books. He has also published nearly 80 articles in various international journals.

Today, what was known as the Urartu kingdom (860 BC - 590 BC), is divided among Armenia, eastern Turkey, and northwestern Iran. Mentioned in Assyrian sources from the early 13th century BC, Urartu enjoyed considerable political power in the Middle East in the 9th and 8th centuries BC.

Kashan, Dezful named world crafts cities

TEHRAN—The World Crafts Council has recently registered Kashan and Dezful on its list of global cities of handicrafts.

The World Crafts Council has added two more Iranian cities to its coveted list of world craft cities, IRNA quoted the Iranian tourism minister as saying on Wednesday.

"Dezful was registered as the world city of Kapu-weaving (or Kapu-bafi, a kind of coiled wicker using leaflets of palm trees) and Kashan as the world city of traditional textiles by the World Crafts Council," Ezzatollah Zarghami said.

The minister underlined that "global registration of Dezful and Kashan carries not just prestige but responsibility."

"Handicrafts constitute a vital pillar of our cultural economy, and we must rectify the oversights of the past," Zarghami noted.



By the inclusion of Dezful and Kashan on the prestigious list, a total of 13 cities and three villages in Iran have been registered as "world cities" across various handicraft categories.

Based on available data, the value of Iran's handicraft exports stood at \$400 million during the first ten months of the past Iranian calen-

dar year 1401 (Mar. 21, 2022 - Jan. 20, 2023). Compared with the same period a year earlier, the figure represents some 30 percent growth, deputy tourism Maryam Jalali Dehkordi said.

Iranian handicrafts have a high capacity for export, which can be realized through the creation of spe-

cial holding companies, she said. Iran exported some \$320 million worth of handicrafts during the year 1400, the official added. Iraq, Afghanistan, Germany, the United States, and the coastal states of the Persian Gulf are among the countries that traditionally import ceramics, porcelain, hand-woven clothing, personal jewelry, and semi-precious stones from Iran.

The World Crafts Council is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that was founded in 1964 to promote fellowship, foster economic development through income-generating craft-related activities, and organize exchange programs, workshops, conferences, and exhibitions.

The UNESCO-affiliated organization has established five branches in Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America, and North America.

Iran becoming more accessible despite tension with West



TEHRAN - Despite numerous travel warnings and periodic condemnation by Western governments, Iran continues to attract adventurous international visitors, including those interested in the ancient Persian Empire, the Nikkei wrote on Thursday.

In travel blogs and on social media, foreign tourists typically praise the country's cuisine and its hospitable people, as well as praising the country's architectural landmarks and beautiful landscapes, the Tokyo-based paper said.

Nowadays, many opt to travel

to renowned destinations such as Shiraz, famous for its poetic atmosphere, and Isfahan, one of the most important architectural centers in the Islamic world.

In the post-pandemic era, however, travel trends suggest that increasing numbers of travelers are venturing to more remote areas, which remain accessible in spite of renewed warnings against travel to Iran.

According to a May 2023 report by Statista, a German data provider, 4.1 million foreign tourists visited Iran in 2022, up from 990,000 in 2021. But

Iran's Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Heritage says that 8.83 million international visitors arrived in 2019, the last full year before the pandemic, suggesting that significant further post-COVID-19 growth is likely.

Iran boasts 26 UNESCO World Heritage sites, including Persepolis which is situated near Shiraz, Naqsh-e Jahan Square in Isfahan, the Historic City of Yazd, and Golestan Palace in Tehran.

"But to explore the accessibility of more remote destinations for foreigners, I recently traveled to the Aras UNESCO Global Geopark on Iran's northwestern border -- a site that does not immediately pop up in searches for key destinations." One of the main historical attractions is the Saint Stephanos Monastery, dating to the ninth century, which serves Christians in the Iranian diocese of Atirpatakan, the oldest in the worldwide Armenian Apostolic Church.

"The faithful we serve are not immigrants or newcomers to this area but rather native residents whose

ancestors were born here and have been living on these lands for many centuries," Archbishop Krikor Chiftjian told Nikkei Asia.

For many international visitors, visiting Iran is fairly simple, despite Western discouragement. Citizens of 180 countries are eligible for 30-day visas on arrival.

It can be difficult to find a direct flight, however, especially for travelers from East Asia, Europe, and North America. Qatar Airways, Emirates, and Turkish Airways serve Iranian destinations, but flights can be expensive.

For many Westerners who judge the country based on what they have learned from their purposeful media outlets, Iran may be indelibly associated with protests and disputes with other countries.

Though, everyday life in the Islamic Republic is usually tranquil and rewarding for those who are curious enough to explore the country firsthand.

Technology reveals new picture of ancient Native American culture

Jeff Ferguson, Rob Walker and Francisco "Paco" Gomez at the University of Missouri are part of an interdisciplinary research team using drones equipped with light detection and ranging, or lidar, to study ancient Native American villages called pueblos in the Lion Mountain area of western New Mexico. The team's goal is to better understand the connection

between migration and social interaction patterns and pueblo occupations.

"Among the archaeological sites discovered in the area is a massive pueblo likely built and occupied by immigrants from the large-scale abandonment of the Four Corners region, including Mesa Verde, in the late 13th century," said Ferguson, an associate professor in the Department of Anthropology.

"Our research is focused on documenting the regional settlement pattern and understanding how the migrants coming from the north interacted with existing local populations. Using this technology, we aim to efficiently identify any sites not previously documented."

(Source: phys.org)



Expression of Interest (EOI)

The office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Iran invites interested and eligible vendors to submit Expressions of Interest (EOIs) in respect of provision of the requirements described below. The purpose of the "Request for Expression of Interest" is to identify vendors that wish to participate in a forthcoming tender process.

Type of Vendor	Type of Service required	Requested Documents
Hotel	Accommodation, catering, venue	1. Brief presentation of company including number of staff, turnover, years in business 2. Reference list demonstrating qualifications for participating in this upcoming bidding process 3. Contact information: full name and address, country, telephone number, e-mail address, website and contact person. Note: Prices are not required at this stage.
Travel Agency	Ticket, Visa, Hotel Bookings, Tour and travel arrangements	
Service Company	Maintenance and repair of building and facilities	
Transportation	Transportation/Taxi service to/from airport and other locations within/outside the city	
Radiology	Radiology/X-ray services for beneficiaries	
Laboratory	Laboratory services including Blood/Urine analysis for beneficiaries	

Please submit your documents to email address: iomtehranprocurement@iom.int mentioning the type of Vendor in Subject line no later than 16 September 2023.

IN THE NAME OF GOD
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING
INTERNATIONAL SINGLE-STAGE TENDER No: 1402/103-30/03
Renewal

Tender Holder:
 ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Tender :
 Broadcasting the TV networks of Press TV & English iFilm on IS20 satellite for 3 years in accordance with the technical specification and other terms and conditions mentioned in the tender documents.

Deadline and how to receive the tender documents:
 From Saturday 19 Aug 2023 (1402/05/28) 10:00 a.m until Monday 21 Aug 2023 (1402/05/30) by 14:00 p.m with presentation of introductory letter by company or its representative and the receipt of paying the documents fee.

Place of receiving the tender document:
 Interested participants may refer to purchasing (KALA) Dept. ,4th Floor of IRIB Administration Complex ,Hotel Esteghlal St. Vali -Assr Ave, Tehran, Iran

The fee of the tender documents and how to deposit it:
 Submission of payment receipt for the amount of 1,000,000 Rials to account 4101029171204273 with BIC No.IR 310100004101029171204273 IRAN Central Bank in the name of IRIB.

Type and amount of guarantee for participation to tender:
 The amount of deposit for participating in tender is USD 54000 fixed or its equivalent in Rials 27/000/000/000 which should be in the form of Bank Guarantee.

Time and place of delivering Bidding Envelopes:
 The sealed (A,B&C) packages/envelopes and the qualification evaluation package/envelope separately packed , should be submitted no later than 09:30 a.m. on Sunday 01 Oct 2023 (1402/07/09) at the address mentioned in 4th clause.

Time and place of opening Qualification Evaluation envelopes:
 The date of opening the Qualification Evaluation envelopes is on Sunday 01 Oct 2023 (1402/07/09) at 10:00 a.m in the office of International Purchasing Dept.

Time and place of opening Envelopes:
 The envelopes A of those eligible participants who meet the qualification criterion and approval of Technical and Commercial committee will be opened on Sunday 01 Oct 2023 (1402/07/09) at 02:00 p.m in the office of Financial Vice President .In case of complete content in the envelopes A the envelopes of B and C of eligible participants will be opened at the same time and place.
 The participant must be qualified by the competent authorities.
 Fore more information please see :
www.iriboffice.ir/tenders and <http://iets.mporg.ir/> Tel: 00982122167053

Purchasing (Kala) Dept.,IRIB

Families of quadruplets and more to receive free housing



TEHRAN- Ensiyeh Khazali, the Vice President for Women and Family Affairs, has announced that families with quadruplets and more will be provided with houses free of charge.

The national budget law for the current Iranian year (March 2023-March 2024) has stipulated the provision of housing for these families completely free of charge, she said, adding that the law is apart from the family support law, IRIB reported.

Family support law

In September 2021, a program was prepared to support families with multiple births in line with population

growth policies. This plan has been developed with the aim of developing social justice and providing social welfare for families with multiple births.

In November last year, President Ebrahim Raisi urged all responsible bodies and organizations to adopt national policies in line with the goal of population growth.

Raisi declared the "Law on Family and Youth Support" to the Judiciary for a 7-year implementation.

It was also declared to other ministries including the Health Ministry, the Interior Ministry, the Education Ministry, as well as the Vice Presi-

dency for Women and Family Affairs.

The plan stipulates health insurance for infertile couples, providing services and facilities to working women, providing health and nutrition support packages to mothers and children, educational opportunities for student mothers, providing livelihood support to families, and ongoing medical services to pregnant women.

The national budget bill for the current [Iranian calendar] calendar year, which began on March 21, has proposed 120 trillion rials (nearly \$240 million) to implement childbearing and family support plans in the country.

Also, as per the Law, children, and family allowance of all different groups of employees in the relevant institutions, the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Intelligence, the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, and also faculty members of universities and research institutions, judges, and retirees will increase by 50 to 100 percent.

The Law also describes the conditions for maternity leave. The duration of maternity leave was increased to 9 months with the payment of all salaries and related bonuses, and if the mother requests, up to two months of this leave can be used in the final months of pregnancy, which is 12 months for the birth of twins and multiples.

Couples who have their third child benefit from government incentives such as land, so that in cities with a population of fewer than 500,000 people and more, half of the land is allocated to the mother and another half to the father.

In cities with more than 500,000 populations, the land will be given to families with 3 or more children in new cities or nearby cities.

Over the [Iranian calendar] year 1410 (March 2021-March 2022), the elderly population will reach 13.5 million people, which is 14 percent of the country's population, and Iran will officially be an old country.

Currently, the elderly population is 9.2 million, which constitutes 7.1 percent of the country's population.

Iran, Turkmenistan highlight cooperation to mitigate SDS impacts

TEHRAN- Tehran and Ashgabat have emphasized the need to cooperate on tackling sand and dust storms (SDS) originating from the Karakum Desert in Turkmenistan.

Iraj Heshmati, the deputy head of Iran's Department of Environment, and Charygeldi Babanyazov, the Minister of Environment of Turkmenistan, held a meeting via video conferencing on Tuesday, August 15.

They discussed the impacts of climate change, particularly SDS, on the health of people, and their economic and social activities in the region, IRIB reported.

Studies show that the Karakum Desert, with an area of about 10 million hectares in Turkmenistan, is one of the sources of dust storms in the north and northeast of Iran, Heshmati pointed out.

He called for signing a memorandum of understanding to take joint measures to deal with the issue.

Babanyazov, for his part, emphasized the importance of protecting the environment and biodiversity. Referring to some of the actions taken by his country, he said: "Environmental protection is a global issue, and environmental challenges should be resolved through joint efforts of all countries."

Vegetation expansion is one of the effective ways to combat sand and dust storms and desertification as well, the Turkmen official stressed.

"Unfortunately, climate change has reduced rainfall, leading to the destruction of vegetation."

During the meeting, Heshmati invited Babanyazov to take part in the international conference on combating sand and dust storms, which is scheduled to be held in Tehran on September 9-10.

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 internal dust sources are estimated at 34.6 million hectares, generating an average amount of 4.22 million tons of dust per year, about 1.460 million hectares are dried wetlands.

In August 2022, Department of Environment Chief Ali Salajeqeh said to deal with sand and dust storms, positive measures have been taken inside the country.

To deal with sand and dust storms, positive measures have been taken inside the country.

A ten-year plan has been prepared to curb internal sources of sand and dust storms.

"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.

In July 2022, Tehran played host to a conference

of ministers and officials from 11 countries, aiming to boost cooperation for resolving extant environmental problems, especially sand and dust storms.

Environment ministers of Iraq, Armenia, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Syria, and Qatar, as well as deputy ministers of Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan along with delegations from Turkey and Uzbekistan, participated in the event which was held with the theme of "Environmental Cooperation for a Better Future."

Addressing the opening ceremony, President Ebrahim Raisi emphasized that the preservation of the environment is essential and an inevitable priority.

Letizia Rossano, the director of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (APDIM), said in June 2022 that Iran is really at the forefront of understanding the problem of sand and dust storms as well as dealing with it.

More than 80 percent of the entire populations of Turkmenistan, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and the Islamic Republic of Iran are exposed to medium and high levels of poor air quality due to sand and dust storms," she noted.

Joint project to manage SDS

In March, Salajeqeh met Turkmenistan's Foreign Minister Rasit Meredov. They decided to launch a joint project to manage and control sand and dust storms originating from the Karakum Desert in Turkmenistan, IRIB reported.

The two officials met on the sidelines of an international conference titled "Partnership for Food Security under Climate Change" which was held in collaboration with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Ashgabat on March 9-10.

Expert teams from both sides said to investigate the origin of the dust in northeast Iran that affects the two countries.

Dredging of the rivers leading to the Caspian Sea, as well as the issue of protecting border areas and implementing joint plans in the field of wildlife conservation, were other issues discussed by the two sides.

Addressing the international conference in Ashgabat, Salajeqeh called for boosting multilateral cooperation in the region to tackle environmental challenges and ensure food security.

"The impact of climate change has become so obvious and severe that we must react actively, effectively, efficiently, and quickly."

Environmental problems are not limited to the political arena, he said, adding that supporting and strengthening regional and multilateral cooperation to overcome common challenges is of vital importance.

The SDS phenomenon has been plaguing the country for several years and has caused problems in many provinces. According to experts, natural and human factors are involved in the occurrence and severity of this phenomenon which is mainly caused by excessive consumption of water and drying up reservoirs.

10 Iranian universities in Shanghai ranking 2023

TEHRAN- Ten universities from Iran are among the top 1000 universities in the world in Shanghai ranking, 2023, according to the head of the Islamic World Science Citation Center (ISC).

The University of Tehran is among the top 500 universities in the world with a rank of 401-500, the best among Iranian universities, the ISC head Ahmad Fazl-zadeh said, IRIB reported.

Tehran University of Medical Sciences (501-600), and Amirkabir University of Technology (601-700) were ranked second and third, respectively, he added.

There are 11 Islamic countries in the 2023 Shanghai World Ranking. Saudi Arabia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Turkey, Egypt, and Pakistan have the highest number of universities with 12, 10, 8, 7, and 6 universities respectively.

The 2022 edition of the ARWU put 11 universities from Iran in the top 1000 universities.

The Academic Ranking of the World Universities (ARWU), also known as the Shanghai Ranking, was first published in June 2003 by Shanghai Ranking Consultancy.

ARWU is published in two general areas, broad subject fields, and specific subjects. The ranking includes Natural Sciences, Engineering, Life Sciences, Medical Sciences, and Social Sciences.

ARWU uses six objective indicators to rank world universities, including the number of alumni and staff winning Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals, the number of highly cited researchers, the number of articles published in journals of Nature and Science, the number of articles indexed in Science Citation Index - Expanded and Social Sciences Citation Index,

and per capita performance of a university.

This year, more than 2500 institutions were scrutinized, and the best 1000 universities in the world are published.

According to the 2023 edition of ARWU, Harvard University tops the ranking list followed by Stanford and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Iranian universities gradually advance

Multiple organizations annually rank universities around the world based on different criteria.

A look at Iran's universities in these systems over the past decade shows that these universities have had an upward movement, standing above other Islamic countries, evidently.

Achieving better ranks in different ranking systems not only helps universities increase their reputation but also helps them attract better students and faculty and as a result, improve the quality of education.

Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World Rankings of Universities, The Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings, The Shanghai Ranking, and Leiden Ranking are among the most important systems publishing rankings for universities.

Each system takes into account specific metrics including scientific impact, international faculty members, elite students, number of professors and students winning Scientific awards, graduate employment, scientific inventions, and validity of the published articles in specific time intervals.

In the 2023 edition of the Times Higher Education Young University Rankings which includes 605 universities, Iran became the third more re-



resented nation with 39 institutions.

The ranking is based on 13 carefully calibrated performance indicators that measure an institution's performance across five areas: teaching, research, knowledge transfers, industrial income, and international outlook.

The latest edition of the QS World University Rankings (2024) has placed seven Iranian universities among the world's top institutes.

The ranking features 1,497 institutions worldwide based on the three indicators of Sustainability, Employment Outcomes, and International Research Network.

The Leiden ranking system published the 2023 report, according to which 46 Iranian universities were among the 1,411 top universities in the world. Among Islamic countries, Iran ranked first, followed by Turkey and Egypt with 36 and 13 universities, respectively.

In the 2023 edition of the Times Higher Education's Asian University Ranking System, 669 institutions from 31 Asian countries are included and 65 Iranian universities are among the top Asian institutions.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Iran finds herbal medicines effective in COVID-19 treatment

The Food and Drug Administration has approved four domestically produced herbal medicine effective in the treatment of COVID-19 and has issued a production license for two of them.

The first herbal medicine in this collection is an oral spray containing six herbal essential oils, and according to the results of a clinical trial presented, if used, it helps to improve the pulmonary complications of coronavirus, including shortness of breath, cough, and arterial oxygenation.

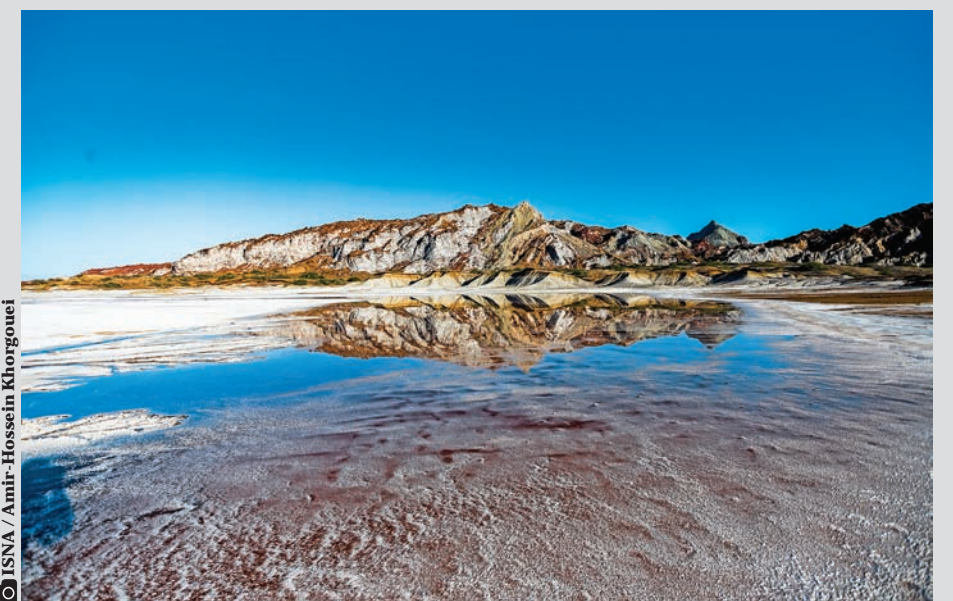
The second drug is a syrup containing the extract of two herbs, which according to the clinical trial evidence provided if used, helps to improve the symptoms of fatigue and anorexia in patients with coronavirus.

تولید دو داروی گیاهی موثر در درمان کرونا در ایران

سازمان غذا و داروی ایران چهار فرآورده طبیعی تولید داخل با اجزای گیاهی برای بهبود علائم کووید ۱۹ را تایید کرده و مجوز تولید را برای دو مورد آنها صادر کرده است.

اولین داروی گیاهی از این مجموعه یک اسپری دهانی حاوی ۶ اسانس گیاهی است و با توجه به نتایج کارآزمایی بالینی ارائه شده در صورت مصرف به بهبود عوارض ریوی کووید ۱۹ شامل تنگی نفس، سرفه و اکسیژن رسانی شریانی کمک می کند.

داروی دوم یک شربت حاوی عصاره دو گیاه است که با توجه به مدارک کارآزمایی بالینی ارائه شده، در صورت مصرف به بهبود علائم خستگی و بی اشتها در بیماران مبتلا به کووید ۱۹ کمک می کند.



Salt domes in south of Iran

The natural attractions of Hormozgan province with its unique scenery are not just limited to the sea and its beaches. Salt domes with their beautiful landscapes are one of the tourist attractions of the southern province.



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

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895
Email: info@tehrantimes.com
Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051430
Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807
Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603
Printed at: Jame Jam Bartar Borna - 44197737



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

AUGUST 19, 2023

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Mix with people properly, so that they weep for you when you die, and show you affection and fight your enemy when you are alive.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:08 Evening: 19:08 Dawn: 3:56 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:26 (tomorrow)

Iranian calligraphy (khattati, khoshnevisi)

Part 2

Straightness (sat'h) is obtained by direct movement of the pen in strokes which may be horizontal, vertical, or oblique.

Since it is most conspicuous in the elongations of certain final letters and in optional elongations, the term "straightness" most often refers to horizontal strokes and then means the same as "flatness."

The opposite of straightness, roundness (davr), is obtained by swinging the pen in such a way as to make a retroverted or upturned semicircle or a loop as at the top of faa, qaf, waw, etc. Both gentle and forceful movements of the pen are required, for which particular skill is needed.

Heightening (so'ud) is of two kinds: "real" (haqiqi), which means heightening final alefs, median laams, and final kafs and "unreal" (majazi) which means raising the end of the letter when the pen is making a dawr.

Lowering (nozul) is also "real" or "unreal"; "real" lowering applies to detached alef, laam, and kaf, to initial laam, kaf, and to the tail of mim, and "unreal" lowering means lowering the starts of semicircles and some elongations and the crossbars of kaf and gaf.

When "real" heightening and lowering are performed similarly shaped letters are kept parallel to each other.

The terms "blackness" and "whiteness" (sawad o bayaz) refer to the balance between the loops of letters such as jim, saad, zaad, taa, zaa, ayn, fa, qaf, and haa and the white background showing inside them.

"Release" (ersal) means letting the pen move freely in writing certain letters, for example in flattening ra, waw, and final mim, long taa and nun, and some other letters in the shekasta script.

Soltan Ali Mashhadi considered ersal to be inadmissible in the nastaliq script.

2. "Proportion" (nesba or tanasob) means that identically or similarly shaped letters, whether detached or joined, should be of the same size in all contexts. Ravandi applied the term mansob (well-proportioned) to writing which conformed to this basic principle.

3. Composition (tarkib) is the most important factor in calligraphy. It is the arrangement of letters and words (tarkib-e jozi), sentences, and lines (tarkib-e koll) to produce a beautiful layout.

This is a particularly demanding task in the case of inscriptions, where the space is limited. Adequate space must be left between the letters, words, and lines and on the page.

Written matter and background and "boldness" and "faintness" must be consistently balanced, and elongations must be used to obtain symmetry.

Words and letter combinations must be constructed and "seated" so as to fit in with whatever is adjacent. The harakat (fatha, zamma, kasra, jazm or sokun, tanwin) and other diacritical marks (tashdid, madda, hamza-ye qat, hamza-ye wasl), pointings, and ornaments must be suitably placed.

Elongations, whether elemental or optional, are of great importance for good composition and calligraphy, as they relieve monotony and impart symmetry and beauty to a piece of writing.

In the nastaliq script a full elongation should not be placed at the beginning or end of a line or hemistich, but only in the middle, though the

placing of a medium or short elongation at the beginning or end is permissible.

4. "Seating" (korsi) refers to the placement of the letters and words of a line or hemistich in relation to each other and to the "horizon" of the line, or khatt-e korsi, of which there are five: ra's al-khatt: for the top of alef, uncrossed kaf, and laam; for the top of daal, ra, saad, taa, ayn, fa, qaf, mim, waw, and haa; wasat: for the bottom of alef and laam, for baa etc., for the starts of the semicircular final flourishes of jim and ayn, and for the flattened last stroke of kaf; for the bottom of daal, ra, and final sin, saad, qaf, nun, and ya; and zayl al-khatt: for the bottom of final jim, ayn, and the like.

Some calligraphers recognize only three seat plans, middle, upper, and lower, in all the scripts, while some others recognize four. Today the khatt-e korsi is also known as the khatt-e zamina (background line) or khatt-e hamel (supporting line).

"Refinement" (safa) and "dignity" (sha'n) are the terms in use to denote the excellence of handwriting (also called rawnaq and aab) a calligrapher of talent and skill in the four basic principles can attain.

Refinement makes looking at the writing a pleasure, and dignity gives it charm and relieves it of monotony. These two qualities determine what impression (maza, asar) the writing will produce.

A calligrapher whose work has achieved them may develop a style (shiva) of his own, which may transcend principles and rules and manifests itself in artistic touches and special execution of the writing that set it apart from the work of others and can be recognized by connoisseurs.

For a clear appreciation of the differences of letter shape and size in the various script, the following points should be kept in mind:

1. The length of the alef measured in points, important because the sizes of the other letters are measured with reference to the number of points in the alef;

2. The particular shape of each letter, both when standing alone and when joined by a ligature;

3. The shape of the letter, whether consistent or erratic and whether easily legible and graceful;

4. The spaciousness or crampedness, the proportion of straight to round strokes, the openness or blotching of the so-called eyes (chashm) and loops, and the presence or absence of tufts (sarak, sorra) on letters;

5. The size of the elongations, ranging from a full elongation, which may be three times as long as an alef, to a short elongation;

6. Whether a pen is moved rapidly or slowly; and

7. The special purposes for which each script was used.

To teach calligraphy practice sketches (siah-mashq) and models for practice (sar-mashq) have been in common use. Siah-mashqs are sheets on which a calligrapher has written rows of letters and letter combinations for practice, usually in nastaliq or shekasta-nastaliq.

Besides attesting to the skill and zeal of the writer, a siah-mashq often has a pleasing appearance and sometimes displays virtuosity. For this reason practice sketches by leading masters are included in the treatises on calligraphy.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica
To be continued

World Photography Day: 10 iconic photos that captured the essence of modern Iran

From Page 1 ▶ Iranian history has been closely intertwined with photography, with the first photographic images appearing in the country in the mid-19th century.

The first daguerreotype cameras were brought into Iran by request of Mohammad Shah Qajar (r.1834-1848) from Russia and England. Russian cameras, which were a gift from the emperor, arrived first and were brought to Tehran by young Russian diplomat, Nikolay Pavlov, who had previously learned photography for this purpose.

According to the notes of Jules Richard, the first photography in Iran was carried out by mid-December 1842. Iranian Prince Malek Qassem Mirza and Frenchman Jules Richard are among the pioneers who also did photography in Iran via daguerreotype.

Apart from one photo, none of the Iranian daguerreotypes have survived, but some of them, including portraits of Mohammad Shah and Crown Prince Naser al-Din Shah, have been handed over to Kamal-al-Molk, who used them to create painted portraits.

In the early 20th century, with the arrival of modern technology and access to cameras, Iranian photographers began documenting the daily lives of their compatriots in greater detail. Photography, which was before in the serve of the kings and elites, became an essential tool for documenting glimpses of history and culture.

With the socio-political conditions of the nation, photography has played a significant role in expressing the country's social and political facets of Iranian society. Iranian photographers have captured, documented, and presented moments of hope, terror, joy, and grief through their images, conveying the history and culture of the country in a tangible and powerful way.

Today, Iranian photography has gone beyond conventional boundaries, pushing towards a more experimental and contemporary approach. With access to digital and modern technologies, Iranian photography has developed into an innovative, playful industry that blurs the lines between art and photography. From stunning wildlife and nature photography to thought-provoking photojournalism, Iranian photographers are continuously exploring new possibilities and redefining the boundaries of the medium.

Here are some historical photos that could shed light on the captivating history of the country. Even though the photographers responsible for these moments may often remain anonymous and their images

may have been captured in a casual and amateurish manner, the emotions conveyed in these photographs have surpassed the boundaries of time and profoundly touched the viewers.



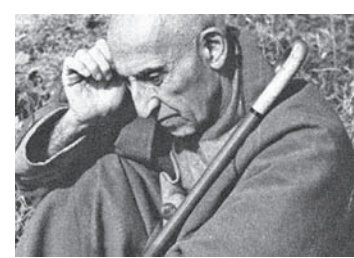
* This old and low-quality photo is the only surviving daguerreotype image in Iran depicting Malek Qassem Mirza, one of Iran's photography pioneers.



* This historic image is widely considered to be one of the very first selfie photos ever taken. It features Naser al-Din Shah (r.1848-1896) and his wives captured in a mirror of Andaruni (harem). The king had an immense love for photography and was a skilled photographer himself. During his numerous trips to Europe, he acquired the latest cameras and even appointed at least two official court photographers.



* This iconic image features the 'Big Three' - Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill - at the Tehran Conference, which took place from November 28 to December 1, 1943. The conference was held at the Soviet Union's embassy in Tehran following the Anglo-Soviet invasion of Iran. This conference marked the first of the World War II conferences held by the 'Big Three' Allied leaders - the Soviet Union, United States, and United Kingdom.



* This rare photograph captures Mohammad Mosaddegh (1882-1967), a prominent political figure in modern Iranian history, who served as Prime Minister until his overthrow in the joint U.S.-British coup known as the 28 Mordad coup on August 19, 1953. The photo was taken around 1965 in Ahmadabad, Iran.



* This photo captures the fury and passion of the Islamic Revolution of 1979, as Iranians pull down the statue of Mohammad Reza Shah. The revolution, which began in the winter of 1979, was a significant turning point in Iranian history and ultimately led to the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran.



* Imam Khomeini delivering a powerful speech at the Behesht-e Zahra cemetery in Tehran, just ten days before the triumph of the Islamic Revolution on February 1, 1979. After spending over 14 years in exile, Imam Khomeini's return to Iran marked a turning point in the country's history and paved the way for the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran.



* This iconic photo, captured by Abdol-Hossein Partovi on February 7, 1979, depicts a powerful moment in Iran's history. This is the moment when the Homafaran, officers in the Shah's Iranian Air Force, pledged their allegiance to Imam Khomeini upon his return from exile in France. In the photo, Imam

Khomeini can be seen in the distance, while the Homafaran salute him. The image was published on the front page of Kayhan daily on February 8, just before the Iranian Revolution toppled the Shah's government. To avoid detection, the photo was taken from behind, increasing its historical value as the only known image of this pivotal moment.



* This photo immortalizes the bravery and resilience of Iranian soldiers amidst the Iran-Iraq war. Celebrating the liberation of Khorramshahr on May 24, 1982, the soldiers gather in front of the symbolic and iconic Jameh Mosque - a building that partially withstood the war's destruction. In this moment, the soldiers' victorious spirits shine through as a powerful testament to their enduring commitment to their country and its people.



* The photo shows the emotional moment when Iranian prisoners of war were finally released by the regime of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein in 1990, two years after the end of the Iran-Iraq War. The release of these prisoners marked a major milestone in the enforcement of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 598, which aimed to bring an end to the brutal war imposed on Iran by Iraq.



* This powerful photograph captures the immense crowds that gathered to pay their respects during the funeral procession of top Iranian military commander Lieutenant-General Qassem Soleimani, who was martyred during a U.S. airstrike in Baghdad on January 3, 2020. As the commander of the Quds Force, Soleimani was known for his bravery, strategic genius, and unwavering commitment to the Iranian people. His death marked a significant loss for Iran.

Shahram Nazeri's album "The Lost Poet" to be released



TEHRAN - "The Lost Poet", the latest album by the celebrated Iranian vocalist Shahram Nazeri is

planned to be released in the near future.

Composed by Arashk Rafiei, the album contains poems by Mahmoud Moshref Azad Tehrani (M. Azad).

Over the past years, the music artists Nazeri and Rafiei have dedicated their talents to creating and performing magnificent musical pieces as a tribute to Nima Yushij, the revered pioneer of modern Persian poetry.

In 2015, the movie "Iran Burger", dazzled audiences with its end title song featuring the captivating voice of Nazeri and the composition by Rafiei.

This masterpiece of music was recognized and honored as the best song at the prestigious

15th edition of the Hafez Awards, Iran's premier private awards event in the film industry and TV productions, organized every year by the Persian cinematic monthly Donya-ye Tasvir (Picture World).

In addition to various joint collaborations, it is worth mentioning the song "Falling Leaves" with lyrics penned by M. Azad, dedicated to the courageous individuals impacted by the devastating earthquake in Kermanshah in 2017.

Moreover, their composition "Jan Janam" featuring heartfelt lyrics by Arashk Rafiei serves as a poignant tribute to the survivors of the tragic Ukrainian plane incident in 2019.

First 'My Child' Festival to be held in Tehran

TEHRAN - The first edition of the Iranian 'My Child' Festival will be held in late August in Tehran.

The festival is aimed at supporting

Iranian goods and helping to boost production and business, as well as promoting Iranian culture and encouraging people to use

domestically produced goods.

The festival includes booths of stationery, books, cultural goods, domestically-produced toys, and

educational products.

The festival will be held from August 22 to September 1 in Tehran's Mosalla.