Straight Truth

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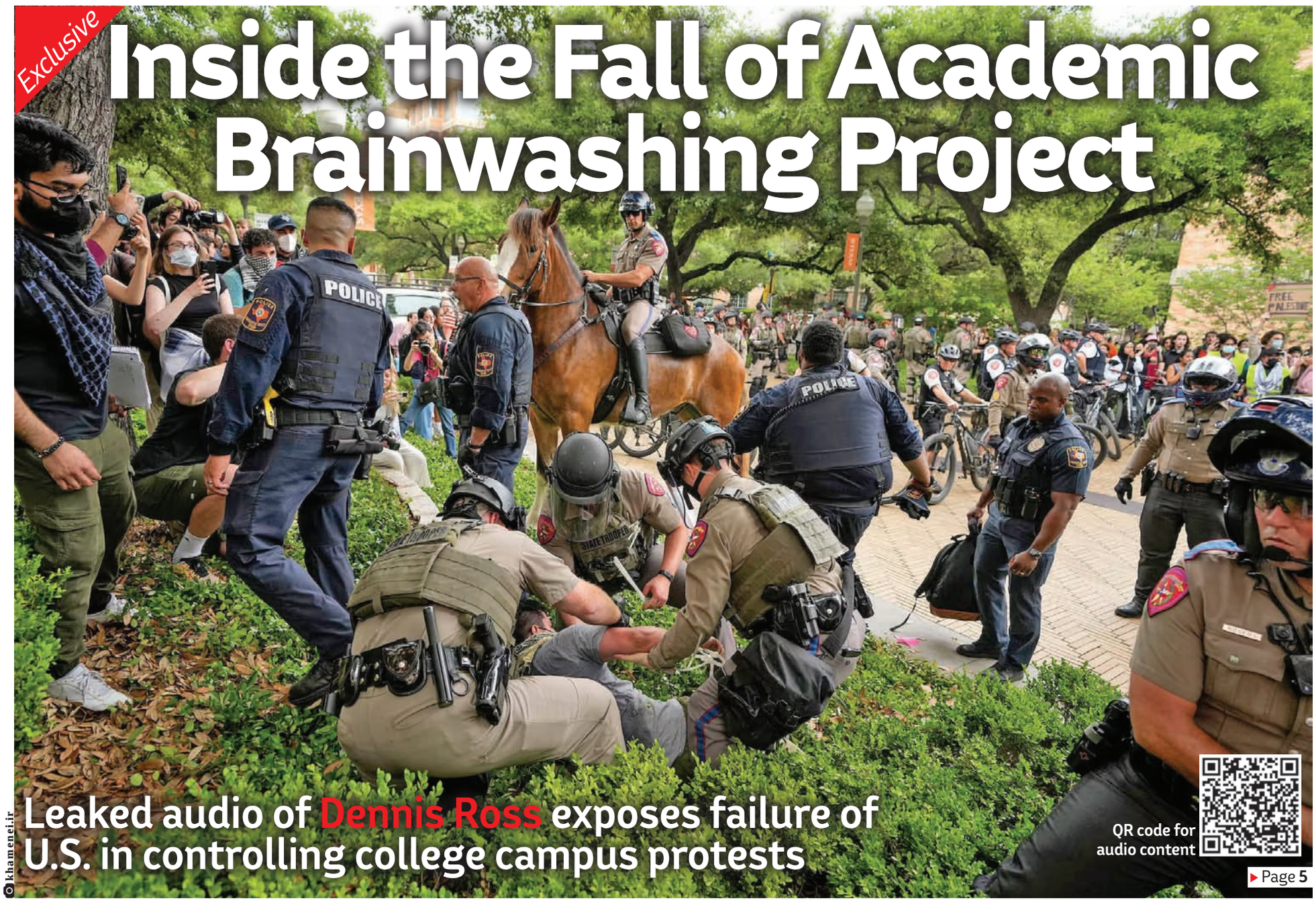
Exclusive

Inside the Fall of Academic Brainwashing Project



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Leaked audio of Dennis Ross exposes failure of U.S. in controlling college campus protests

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Texas state troopers arrest a man at a pro-Palestinian protest at the University of Texas, during the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian resistance group Hamas, in Austin, Texas, April 24.

Students renew pro-Palestine protest at Paris university

Students in Paris inspired by Gaza solidarity encampments at campuses in the United States blocked access to a campus building at a prestigious French university Friday, prompting administrators to move all classes online.

The pro-Palestinian protest at the Paris Institute of Political Studies, known as Sciences Po, came after police broke up a separate demonstration at the university's amphitheater outside one of its Paris campuses, AP reported.

On Friday, scores of protesters occupied a central campus building and dozens of others blocked its entrance with trash cans, wooden platforms and a bicycle. Protesters gathered at the building's windows chanted slogans and hung placards reading "We are all Palestinians," in defiance of administrators who students say called the police on their peers two days earlier.

On Wednesday evening, more than 100 pro-Palestinian protesters occupied the amphitheater outside one of the university's Paris campuses. Most agreed to leave after discussions with management but a small group of students remained. They were removed by police later that night, according to French media reports.

Iran calls on U.S. to cease supporting Israel as U.S. universities uprising grow

TEHRAN- Hossein Amir Abdollahian, the Foreign Minister of Iran, has denounced the current suppression of pro-Palestinian demonstrations in American universities and called on Washington to immediately halt its backing of Israel.

In a post on X on Thursday, Amir Abdollahian noted that "the suppression and harsh treatment by the American police and security forces of professors and students protesting the genocide and war crimes of the Israeli regime in various universities has deeply worried and abhorred the public opinion of the world."

"This repression is in line with the continuation of Washington's full-fledged support for the Israeli regime and clearly shows the double standard and contradictory behavior of the American government towards freedom of expression," he added.

Abdollahian spoke of "the genocide of tens of thousands of Palestinian women and children, especially after the discovery of mass graves of the sick and injured and medical staff in the vicinity of Nasser Hospital in the Gaza Strip." ▸ Page 2

Evidence of torture at Gaza mass graves

By Wesam Bahrani

Palestinian authorities say mass graves found in Gaza show that the victims of Israeli military raids at hospitals had been tortured to death. The United Nations has demanded an independent probe.

Civil defense workers have uncovered hundreds of bodies that they say were tortured and murdered by Israeli occupation forces during the regime's military assaults on hospitals in Gaza, some of which were under siege for weeks.

Palestinian authorities say the victims, including women, children, patients and hospital staff, had their hands tied and stripped of their clothes with visible signs of torture.

Among the hospitals under the spotlight are the Nasser Medical Complex in the southern-central city of Khan Younis, where the number of bodies exhumed so far has reached nearly 400 and al-Shifa Hospital in northern Gaza where reports suggest hundreds of bodies have also been recovered.

The Israeli army ended its occupation of Khan Younis on April 7, after four months of military operations in the region that included troops, backed by tanks laying siege to Nasser Hospital. ▸ Page 5

Iran: response to Israel prevented escalation of conflicts

TEHRAN – The Iranian defense minister affirmed the Islamic Republic's measured response to the Zionist regime's aggression, characterizing it as a strategic deterrentce against further escalation.

Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani made the remarks in the 21st meeting of the Council of Defense Ministers of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) on Friday.

During the meeting, which was held in Astana, the capital city of Kazakhstan, Ashtiani highlighted recent security challenges within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, citing unfortunate terrorist incidents in Iran, Russia, and Pakistan that resulted in casualties among innocent civilians.

Extending condolences to the victims' families, he condemned these events as egregious violations of human rights.

Moreover, Ashtiani addressed the ongoing atrocities in Palestine, where the Zionist regime has inflicted widespread destruction, including targeting women, children, rescuers, and journalists, and demolishing critical infrastructure and hospitals.

He strongly condemned the state terrorism perpetrated by the Zionist regime and its supporters, reiterating Iran's unwavering support for the Palestinian people's legitimate right to self-defense. ▸ Page 3

Iran, Sri Lanka ink 5 cooperation documents

TEHRAN – Senior officials of Iran and Sri Lanka have signed five cooperation documents in the various fields in the presence of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and his Sri Lankan counterpart Ranil Wickremesinghe.

President Raisi arrived in Sri Lanka on Wednesday on the second leg of his regional tour, which took him to Pakistan earlier, IRNA reported.

In continuation of the visit by President Raisi and the high-ranking political and economic delegation accompanying him to Sri Lanka, five cooperation documents were signed between the two countries in the fields of culture, cinema, tourism, and science and technology.

Earlier on Wednesday, President Raisi said the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to assist Sri Lanka on the path of progress.

Raisi made the remarks at the inauguration ceremony of the Uma Oya Multipurpose Project, one of the largest irrigation projects in Sri Lanka, on Wednesday.

"What is more important than the inauguration of the project is the realization of the concerted efforts of the two countries that are seeking to enhance the well-being of their nations further," he said. ▸ Page 4

Symphony honoring Iranian martyrs to premier globally, celebrating legacy of sacrifice

TEHRAN- A symphony dedicated to honoring the bravery and sacrifices of Iranian martyrs is set to make its international debut, announced the composer of the piece.

In an interview with the Tehran Times, acclaimed Iranian musician Amir-Hossein Samiei shared that "Epic Scene" will be presented to the audience in an international format.

This remarkable composition, led by Samiei and performed by the prominent vocalist Mohammad Motamedi along with various other celebrated artists, was initially brought to life in March. The stirring performance took place at the prestigious Vahdat and Milad Tower venues in Tehran, under the baton of conductor Hossein Sharifi. ▸ Page 8

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Iran to expand ties with African nations: President

TEHRAN – The Iranian President has articulated the shared commitment of Iran and African nations to strengthen their ties, emphasizing the potential for a complementary economy.

Ebrahim Raisi made the remarks in the 2nd Iran & Africa International Economic Conference, convened at Tehran's International Conference Center on Friday.

Raisi hailed the gathering as a symbol of the mutual determination of African nations and Iran to expand economic cooperation, with representatives from 30 African countries in attendance. ▸ Page 3

From trade to tradition: a journey through iconic bazaars

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN – For tourists, Iranian bazaars offer a window into local culture, providing opportunities to witness authentic social interactions and procure unique Iranian souvenirs.

They offer a mixture of colors, sounds, and aromas that enrich the travel experience. It's safe to say that no visit to Iran would be complete without exploring at least a few of its iconic bazaars.

Bazaars have long been integral to the fabric of Iranian cities, often situated near prominent places of worship.

While primarily centers of trade, they transcend their commercial function to become vibrant social institutions, and people from all walks of life converge. ▸ Page 6

TEHRAN PAPERS

Next time, will Iran fire 3,000 missiles and drones at Israel, or 30,000?!

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

In a note, Kayhan reacted to the claim of an Israeli analyst and wrote: According to a Zionist analyst, Iran's unprecedented attack on Israel was even more severe than Russia's attack on Ukraine, but we do not know whether next time Iran will fire three thousand missiles and drones or more.

Upon Iran's attack on Israel on April 13, the relations between the two sides entered a new phase and chapter. Such attacks are not acceptable and tolerable for Arab countries.

Despite all their differences with Israel over the Gaza issue, the cooperation of Arab countries, especially Jordan, was very important to deal with the recent attack because Iran challenged the stability of the entire region and all countries in the region. The fearfulness and projection of the Zionist analyst is while he was excited during the terrorist act of the Zionist regime in Damascus.

He said that the most important point in the attack was that the highest official of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps was killed in a sensitive country like Syria. This attack showed more than anything that Israel's intelligence about the location of the attack and the people present there was accurate.

Many believe that if Israel had been in conflict with Iran earlier, Iran would not have supported the October 7 attack. However, this scenario failed either.

Iran: Deterrence is not a tool but a goal

In an analysis, the Iran newspaper pointed out the role of deterrence in the True Promise operation. It wrote: This operation was an obvious military operation that not only provided the basis to prevent the spread of tension by the Zionists in the region but for a few nights, it led to the creation of an unofficial ceasefire in the Gaza war.

It also broke the myth of the invincibility of the Zionist regime in the public opinion of the Arab world.

This action moved the situation in the West Asia region towards the establishment of peace and ensured the general satisfaction of the political units along with the public opinion.

The "armed peace" that Tehran formulated and designed in its defense doctrine has turned the turbulent region of West Asia into a place for achieving peace and security more than ever before.

The historical experience of the compromising relations of the countries of the region with Israel shows that any path other than raising the cost of war measures by the Zionist regime will lead to an increase in tension by this regime and ultimately the spread of war in the region.

Hamshahri: The biased and anti-Iranian resolution of the European Parliament

Hamshahri wrote about the biased and anti-Iranian resolution of the European Parliament: The European Parliament on Thursday, in a resolution without considering Iran's legitimate and legal right to respond to the Zionist regime, condemned Iran's recent missile and drone operations to the occupied territories and demanded more sanctions against Iran.

This is because according to the United Nations Charter, international conventions, especially the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the Zionist regime's attack on the Iranian embassy is condemned, and Iran could respond legally and according to Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

The representatives of the European Parliament highlighted the alleged destabilizing role of Iran in the Middle East by ignoring more than 7 months of crimes and killings of the oppressed people of Gaza and the West Bank by the Zionist regime, and this regime's attack on the neighboring countries.

This resolution of the European Parliament was issued while no attention was paid to the destructive and destabilizing role of the Israeli regime and its supporters in the region.

Etemad: Biden's failed game with Iran's nuclear issue

Rafael Grossi, the director of the International Atomic Energy Agency, claims that Iran is a few weeks away from having enough enriched uranium to make a nuclear weapon. Since Biden took office, the White House's game with Iran's nuclear issue has turned into his general policy against Tehran. Consecutive deadlocks arose in the revival of the JCPOA, with the United States unilaterally withdrawing from it. Now the Biden government has been confused along with other regional and global crises.

Therefore, with accusations at times, he is trying to make it appear that Tehran has made the situation more complicated in the nuclear field. On the other hand, Tel Aviv may be considering taking action against Iran's nuclear targets and sites by bringing the United States into a confrontation with Iran. Both of these situations can change Iran's nuclear doctrine.

But it seems that Tehran has no intention of doing such a thing and as the official authorities have declared many times, Iran's nuclear program is peaceful, and in the current situation, the resistance forces in the region, which are Iran's allies, are enough to restrain Israel.

Tehran urges BRICS to assist in putting an end to Israeli misdeeds

TEHRAN- Iran has appealed to the BRICS group of developing nations to assist in ending Israeli atrocities against the Palestinian people right away.

Ali Bagheri Kani, the deputy foreign minister of Iran, made the call in Moscow on Thursday as special representatives of the BRIC countries and his counterparts convened to deliberate on the most recent events in the region of West Asia and North Africa.

"The manner and quality of role-playing of individual countries and international organizations in relation to the Israeli regime's crisis mongering and the position they adopt in this regard is effective and will be recorded in history," he said.

Bagheri went on to add that "therefore, the members of the BRICS organization should show their political and practical will to completely stop attacks on people and civilian infrastructure in the Gaza Strip."

Bagheri Kani urged the BRICS countries to assist in the immediate delivery of humanitarian relief, particularly food, medication, and medical supplies to the Gaza Strip, as

well as the full evacuation of the occupying forces and the rehabilitation of the besieged area.

"At the moment, our focus should be on achieving a complete and permanent halt to the attacks of the Zionist regime in order to reduce the humanitarian disaster in the Gaza Strip, expand the sending of international humanitarian aid to Gaza, and provide firm support to the activities of humanitarian organizations, especially UNRWA," he averred.

"Only taking a position and making a statement is not enough, and effective and decisive operational measures must be put on the agenda for the Zionist regime to comply with the wishes of the international community."

Several major donors to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) have announced financial restrictions in response to allegations made by Israel—without proof—that UNRWA members took part in the operation against the occupying regime on October 7.

The senior Iranian envoy expressed gratitude to South Africa for bringing Israel before the International Court of Justice for the Gaza Strip slaughter.

He also pleaded with the BRICS nations to fully back the prosecution and offer the required legal remedies to address the offenses.

"The experience of the past 200 days of crime and aggression by the Zionist regime has shown that the Palestinian nation cannot be destroyed and the people of Gaza have proven that it is the Palestinian child who wins against the Israeli bomb," he stressed.

Bagheri Kani stated that the "key to establishing stability and peace in the region from Lebanon to Iraq and the Red Sea is to stop the crimes of the Zionist regime against the defenseless and homeless people of Gaza."

Speaking briefly about the West's effort to use the right to justifiable defense as pretexts for Israel's crimes against humanity, he said that "this justification of the supporters of the Zionist regime is completely invalid from a legal and international point of view."

Bagheri Kani also mentioned the Israeli strike on the Iranian consulate in Damascus, as well as targeting a number of military brass and employees there.

He also mentioned that "after the unprecedented and illegal crime, the Islamic Republic of Iran reserved the right of legitimate defense and the occupying regime received the response to its crime in Damascus in the occupied Palestinian territories."

Diplomat calls on UNSC to take action against Israeli belligerent acts in Gaza Strip

TEHRAN- The permanent representative of Iran to the UN has criticized the actions of Israel that are destabilizing the region, and has urged the UN Security Council to hold the Israeli regime responsible for the crimes it has committed in Gaza and other places.

Amir Saeid Iravani addressed a UN Security Council meeting in New York on Thursday, saying, "Israel's ongoing destabilized and irresponsible actions and atrocities against the nations in the region are a real threat to regional and international peace and security."

Excerpts from Iravani's statement at the UN Security Council are as follows:

We thank the Secretary-General and take note of his remarks.

We also thank those members of the Council who condemned the Israeli armed attacks against our diplomatic premises in Syria and acknowledged Iran's inherent right to respond to such horrific attacks.

As we informed in our letter last night, in response to the Israeli regime's recurring military aggressions, particularly its armed attacks on 1st April 2024 against Iranian diplomatic premises, in defiance of Article 2 (4) of the Charter of the United Nations, the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran carried out a series of military strikes on Israeli military objectives with dozens of missiles and drones.

Iran's operation was entirely in the exercise of Iran's inherent right to self-defense as outlined in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations and recognized by international law.

This concluded action was necessary and proportionate. It was precise and only targeted military objectives, and carried out carefully to minimize the potential for escalation and prevent civilian harm.

Regrettably, in this Chamber, certain members of the Council, including the US, the UK, and France have chosen once again to turn a blind eye to reality and overlook the root causes contributing to the current situation.

In hypocritical behavior, these three countries falsely blamed and accused Iran without considering their own failures to uphold their international commitments to peace and security in the region.

Following the Israeli regime's cowardly terrorist and armed attack against our diplomatic premises in Damascus the Syrian Arab Republic, on the first of April, we notified the UN Security Council and Secretary-General of such international wrongful acts as well as of Iran's inherent right under international law to respond to such terrorist armed attacks (A/78/838-S/2024/281).

Russia proposed a press statement to denounce this atrocious act, which was backed by China, Algeria, and many members, but was blocked by the US, UK, and France. Faced with such circumstances, the Islamic Republic of Iran had no choice but to exercise its inherent right to self-defense under international law.

The root causes of the current situation are clear to all. From the start of the Israeli war against Palestinian people in Gaza, more than 34 thousand civilians, two-thirds of them children and women have been killed.

All civilian infrastructures have been targeted and destroyed by Israel; even humanitarian workers have not been immune from the military attacks of this rough regime.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has warned time and again about the repercussions of malicious activities of the regime on regional and international peace and security. Iran has exercised maximum restraint. Now, it is time for the occupying regime to bear full responsibility for its consequences. This regime cannot evade accountability.

Israel's ongoing destabilized and irresponsible actions and atrocities against the nations in the region are a real threat to regional and international peace and security.

It is time for the Security Council to shoulder its responsibility and address the real threat to international peace and security. The Security Council must promptly fulfill its duty under Chapter 7 of the Charter in response to Israel's reckless defiance.

It must take urgent and punitive measures to compel this regime to stop its genocide and massacre against the people of Gaza and uphold its obligations especially fully implement the UNSC resolutions and legally binding orders of the International Court of Justice.

As a responsible Member of the United Nations, the Islamic Republic of Iran is committed to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, reaffirms once more its commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates its consistent position that it does not seek escalation or war in the region.

Iran has no intention of engaging in conflict with the US in the region. We demonstrated our commitment to peace by exercising our restraint about involving the US Army in intercepting Iranian drones and missiles bound for military targets in the occupied Palestinian territories. This underscores our dedication to de-escalating tensions and avoiding the expansion of conflict.

However, if the US initiates military operations against Iran, its citizens, or its security and interests, Iran will use its inherent right to respond proportionately.

Iran calls on U.S. to cease supporting Israel as U.S. universities uprising grow

From page 1 ▸ "One cannot hide the outpouring of distaste that the world feels for the Israeli regime and those who support it," he declared.

The top Iranian diplomat pointed out, "The White House must immediately stop supporting the Israeli regime's war crimes, and be held accountable."

As anti-Israel protests spread across college campuses, police have detained hundreds of demonstrators in several U.S. locales.

Approximately 108 people were arrested at Boston's Emerson College during the most recent operation. Ninety-three individuals at the University of Southern California (USC) in Los Angeles were previously placed under arrest for trespassing.

Conflicts between police and protestors also occurred at Austin's University of Texas. There were also 34 arrests there, according to the authorities.

An increasing number of students are attempting to establish camps or walk out of classes at U.S. universities in protest of Israel's military war in Gaza.

Since Israel began the war on October 7, the United States has given it the utmost military and intelligence backing. In addition, Washington has rejected multiple resolutions from the UN Security Council that demanded an end to the ruthless military assault that has murdered over 34,100 Palestinians, the most of them women and children.

American students have been demonstrating fervently against Washington's overt backing for the slaughter and their colleges' links to the Israeli regime.

President Joe Biden, like many other Congress members and pro-Israel bigots, has accused the students protesting Israel's crimes of anti-Semitism.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Navy chief signals Iran's intent for permanent South Pole presence

TEHRAN - Rear Admiral Shahram Irani, the Commander of the Iranian Army Navy, has unveiled the government's strategy to establish a "permanent presence" for the Iranian Navy in the South Pole."We stand ready to facilitate the country's intellectuals and scientific institutions in their endeavors in the South Pole," reiterated the commander.

Highlighting the remarkable advancements of Iran's armed forces, Admiral Irani underscored, "In the 45 years since the Islamic Revolution, Iran has faced multifaceted sanctions and hostile conspiracies.""However, leveraging our greatest assets, our talented populace and youthful vigor, the revolution has propelled Iran to a prominent global standing," added the admiral, emphasizing Iran's regional and international stature.

Admiral Irani outlined that the primary objective behind setting up a base at the South Pole is to conduct scientific research, with Iran's scientific community and intellectuals slated to spearhead these efforts.Furthermore, the admiral pointed out that in other nations with bases in the South Pole, military presence primarily serves a supportive role.

In conclusion, Admiral Irani reiterated Iran's unwavering commitment, stating, "We are fully prepared to assist the country's intellectuals and scientific institutions in establishing a presence in the South Pole. To this end, the government is making preparations for a permanent foothold."

Iran to expand ties with African nations: President

From Page 1 ▶ He stressed the importance of acquainting both parties with their shared capacities, particularly Iran's advancements in emerging technologies despite facing threats and sanctions.

Raisi underlined Iran's intention to engage with Africa on the basis of mutual interest, contrasting it with the exploitative approach of many Western countries.

He highlighted Africa's potential in various fields, including emerging technologies, and called for the development of cooperation roadmaps with defined timelines.

Additionally, Raisi emphasized the need to address obstacles, such as fund transfer issues, to facilitate the expansion of ties between Iran and African nations. He underscored that combining the capacities of Iran and Africa could lead to the creation of a complementary economy.

Elsewhere in his remarks, he touched on the inauguration of Uma Oya Multipurpose project

in Sri Lanka in his recent regional tour, noting that technical and engineering services in Iran are satisfactory thanks to the Islamic Revolution's achievements.

The conference, attended by senior officials, including economy ministers, is scheduled to conclude its activities on Monday.

Zimbabwe, Iran seek to extend economic capacities

In the backdrop of the second Iran-Africa International Conference, Constantino Chiwenga, the Vice President of Zimbabwe, convened with Iran's president.

Raisi delineated Iran's strategic approach towards Africa, accentuating shared interests. He underscored the robust ties between Iran and Zimbabwe, underscoring the commitment of senior officials from both nations to expand collaboration.

The Iranian president resident presented Iran's blueprint for bolstering trade and economic ties with African counterparts. He regarded the conference and expo participation as pivotal moments for African officials to acquaint themselves with Iran's capabilities across various sectors. Raisi reiterated Iran's eagerness to extend these capacities.

Acknowledging the longstanding and amicable relations, particularly post-Islamic Revolution, Zimbabwe's Vice President advocated for deeper interactions and economic partnerships.

Chiwenga commended the well-executed organization of the Iran-Africa International Conference, praising Iran's principled stance towards African nations. He expressed Zimbabwe's keenness to intensify cooperation with Iran.

Moreover, the Zimbabwean Vice President highlighted progress in implementing agreements forged during Raisi's earlier visit, underscoring officials' commitment to honoring these accords.

Iran: response to Israel prevented escalation of conflicts

TEHRAN – The Iranian defense minister affirmed the Islamic Republic's measured response to the Zionist regime's aggression, characterizing it as a strategic deterrentce against further escalation.

Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani made the remarks in the 21st meeting of the Council of Defense Ministers of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) on Friday. During the meeting, which was held in Astana, the capital city of Kazakhstan, Ashtiani highlighted recent security challenges within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, citing unfortunate terrorist incidents in Iran, Russia, and Pakistan that resulted in casualties among innocent civilians.

Extending condolences to the victims' families, he condemned these events as egregious violations of human rights.

Moreover, Ashtiani addressed the ongoing atrocities in Palestine, where the Zionist regime has inflicted widespread destruction, including targeting women, children, rescuers, and journalists, and demolishing critical infrastructure and hospitals. He strongly condemned the state terrorism perpetrated by the Zionist regime and its supporters, reiterating Iran's unwavering support for the Palestinian people's legitimate right to self-defense. Ashtiani criticized the recent Israeli aggression against the Iranian consulate in Syria by the Zionist regime, denouncing it as a deliberate attempt to exacerbate regional tensions and divert attention from its atrocities in Gaza, a violation of international law.

Ashtiani emphasized that Iran's response was a prudent warning to deter further escalation, affirming Iran's commitment to regional stability.

"Despite these provocations, Iran, under its legitimate right to self-defense as enshrined in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, took decisive action against the aggressor," he added.

Nevertheless, he cautioned against any audacious provocations, emphasizing that Iran stands ready to respond appropriately and remorsefully to any hostile acts.Ashtiani hailed the firm stance of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states in condemning the attack on Iranian diplomatic premises in Syria, describing their response as commendable.

Ashtiani lauded the rational and constructive positions of Russia and China, particularly their support for Iran's legitimate right to self-defense. He warned against the biased and unconditional backing received by the Zionist regime from certain Western nations, cautioning that such support could erode the credibility and efficacy of international bodies in upholding global order and security.In his analysis of the current global geopolitical landscape, Ashtiani emphasized the pressing need to grasp the realities of the evolving international order and the emergence of a new global geopolitical paradigm.

He underscored the intensifying power struggles, especially in military and security domains, the disregard for human rights, the use of double standards in addressing international issues, the exacerbation of geopolitical crises, and the escalation of economic warfare and sanctions by dominant powers as key aspects of the ongoing international transition.

Ashtiani highlighted that many of the crises and conflicts witnessed in recent decades, including those in Iraq, Afghanistan, Ukraine, and Palestine, have been fueled by hegemonic and interventionist policies pursued by Western powers and NATO.

Ashtiani emphasized the pivotal role played by the SCO in shaping this trajectory, citing its diverse and robust social, cultural, economic, military, and security capabilities, which have positioned it as a major player in international affairs and a reference point for numerous countries worldwide.

The Iranian Defense Minister stressed that terrorism has become a global fundamental issue. He stated, "Given that countering all forms of terrorism and their roots is one of the strategic objectives of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, it is expected that the organization will prioritize serious and practical measures against this phenomenon more than ever before."

Noting Iran's strategic position and geopolitical capabilities, Ashtiani mentioned that the country can effectively achieve the organization's goals, especially in military and security fields, aligning with other member countries.

He further stated, "Iran's Armed Forces are fully prepared to expand and deepen defense and military relations with SCO member countries through bilateral and multilateral cooperation, ready to share our counter-terrorism capabilities, knowledge, and experiences with other members."

The Iranian Defense Minister continued, "With joint maritime exercises between Iran and some SCO members such as Russia and China, we hope to establish the Shanghai Maritime Security Belt, transforming the Indian Ocean into an international safe passage."

He reiterated, "Iran's defensive and security doctrine advocates peace, stability, friendship, and security for neighboring countries and the world. Defense and security cooperation between Iran and the SCO can include combating terrorism, extremism, and separatism through joint exercises, educational collaborations, combating smuggling, preventing illegal migration, addressing information warfare, cybercrime, and more."

On the sidelines of the meeting, Ashtiani met with the defense ministers of China and Russia.

Dong Jun and Sergei Shoigu, representing China and Russia respectively, engaged in discussions with Ashtiani relating to various regional matters.

Interior Minister confirms Iran's readiness for second round of parliamentary elections

TEHRAN- Iranian Interior Minister Ahmad Vahidi has declared the readiness to proceed with the second phase of parliamentary elections.

Vahidi disclosed on Thursday that all necessary arrangements have been completed for the upcoming electoral process. He highlighted the extensive preparations undertaken across all 22 constituencies for the second round of the 12th parliamentary elections.

Notably, Vahidi emphasized that eight constituencies will conduct the election entirely through electronic means. The scheduled date for this phase of the parliamentary election is set for May 10.Earlier on March 1, the country held parliamentary an Assembly of Experts elections. The polls opened across Iran at 8 a.m. local time (0430) on Friday for parliamentary and Assembly of Experts elections.

More than 61 million people were eligible to vote. About 15,000 parliamentary candidates were vying for 290 seats for a four-year term.

Simultaneously, people voted for 88 members of the Assembly of Experts, a body in charge of overseeing the performance of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution. Candidates for the assembly are elected for an eight-year term.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution, cast his ballot at a polling station in Tehran in the first minutes of voting.

Ayatollah Khamenei called on the voters to turn in big numbers to please friends and disappoint enemies. "We ask the Almighty God to make today a happy day for the Iranian nation and that the results of the efforts of our dear people and those involved in the various issues of the elections may reach the desired results and benefit the Iranian nation," the Leader said after voting.

"Our dear nation should know that today the eyes of many people in the world, both individuals and politicians and those who hold prestigious national and political positions, are on Iran and you."

"They want to see what you are doing in this election and what will be the result of your election. Both our friends and people who are interested in the Iranian nation, as well as ill-wishers from all sides, observe the issues of our country and our beloved nation. Pay attention to this; make friends happy and disappoint the ill-wishers." The Leader repeated his recommendation to the voters in the previous elections to head to the polls and vote as early as possible.

"The second recommendation is to vote for as many people as you need, not fewer, in any constituency. For example, in Tehran, vote for 30 people in the Islamic Consultative Assembly and for 16 people in the Assembly of Experts of the Leadership," he added.

Later in March 5, Mohsen Eslami, the spokesperson for the election headquarters, provided details on the parliamentary and Assembly of Experts elections.

Eslami announced that as results show, 45 seats in the 290-seat parliament will be decided in the run-off elections. He said candidates who have failed to win less than 20 percent of the votes will be competing again in the spring to determine who will win the vacant seats.

According to the election law, two candidates will compete for each remaining seat.However, all 88 seats for the Assembly of Experts were filled in March 1 elections.

In terms of voter participation, 48% were women and 52% were men, with 85% using their national ID cards to vote. This year for the first time since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran allowed voters to use various identification documents to vote. Before the latest round of elections, people were only allowed to cast votes by identification booklets (Shenasnameh).

SPORTS

Iran beat Uzbekistan to advance to 2024 Futsal Asian Cup final

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Uzbekistan 6-5 in penalty shootout to book a place in the AFC Futsal Asian Cup Thailand 2024 final.

The match eneded in 3-3 after two extra times.

Team Melli will play Thailand on Sunday in the final match.

Iran have won 12 times the title.

The competition is being held in Bangkok, Thailand.

Iran defeat Tajikistan at CAFA U18 Women's Championship

TEHRAN – Iran defeated hosts Tajikistan 5-0 at the 2024 CAFA U18 Women's Championship on Friday.

Maryam Dini (two goals), Somayeh Esmaeili (two goals) and Tania Jahanshahi were on target for Iran.

The Persian girls, who had defeated Uzbekistan 4-2 and Turkmenistan 7-0, are also scheduled to play Kyrgyzstan on Sunday.

The tournament plays an important role and aims to support the general popularization of the Women's game in the region and provide platform to prepare the teams of Central Asian member associations for the Continental competition AFC U20 Women's Championship as well as showcasing their skills and talents through all CAFA media channels.

CAFA contributes their regional football development initiatives which is further supporting the vision of FIFA making the game truly global and vision of AFC to making football the number one sport in the continent.

The tournament takes place in Dushanbe, Tajikistan from April 19 to 28.

A total of five teams compete in an exciting single round-robin format.

Shardari Gorgan lose to Al Riyadi: WASL

TEHRAN - Al Riyadi of Lebanon submitted another defensive-oriented outing in shackling the erstwhile unbeaten Shahrdari Gorgan 95-60 on Thursday to move one win away from repeating as FIBA WASL-West Asia League champion.

The visiting side from Iran were averaging a potent 94.9 points per outing at the Stade Nouhad Nawfal, heading into the best-of-3 title series, but got held to easily the fewest points they mustered this season that eventually led to their first loss after winning its first eight matches.

Al Riyadi will look to close it out in Game 2 on May 1, Wednesday, at the Azadi Basketball Hall Tehran as the affair shifts to Iran.

Thon Maker has seemingly found his niche with the crew as he top-scored in the victory with 20 points on 72.7-percent field goal shooting, including a 3-of-4 clip from beyond the arc, alongside 7 rebounds and a block in a turnover-less outing for a 24 efficiency.

American point guard of Shahrdari Gorgan Will Cherry is optimistic about Match 2 against Lebanese basketball team Al Riyadi.

"Very disappointing. We knew what type of team we're going against, the defending champs; what type of atmosphere it would have been," Cherry said.

"The beauty of us we have another game. We have another game to redeem ourselves," said the 32-year-old in the postgame presser.

Iran's mixed team take silver at 2024 WSPS World Cup

TEHRAN – Iran won a silver medal at the P6 - Mixed Team 10m Air Pistol SH1 of the Changwon 2024 WSPS (World Shooting Para Sport) World Cup on Friday.

Iranian pair Mohammadreza Mirshafiei and Nasrin lost to Indian counterpart Nihal Singh and Sharma Bhakti 16-6 in the final match.

The bronze medal went to Ukraine's Oleksii Denysiuk and Iryna Liakhu, who defeated India's Sanjeev Kumar Giri and Rubina Francis 17-7.

The 2024 World Shooting Para Sport takes place in Changwon, South Korea from April 22 to May 1.

Former Iran basketball captain Kashani dies

TEHRAN – Former captain of Iran's men's basketball team Nader Kashani passed away at the age of 78.

Kashani started his playing basketball career with Pas Tehran and won four national titles with the team.

Kashani became the captain of the Iran men's national basketball team from 1961 and represented Team Melli at the 1966 Asian Games, 1970 Asian Games, 1973 ABC Championship and 1974 Asian Games.

He retired from basketball in 1977.

Kashani died on April 22 at the age of 78 years in Tehran, capital of Iran.

Tehran Times extends its deepest sympathy to Kashani's family, loved ones, and friends over his demise.

Daniele De Rossi satisfied with Azmoun's form

TEHRAN – Roma head coach Daniele De Rossi is deeply satisfied with Azmoun's work and has even asked the club to keep him beyond the expiry of his loan.

The future of Sardar Azmoun is yet to be determined.

Despite being faced with limited playing time caused by occasional injuries and Romelu Lukaku's top place in Roma's hierarchy, Azmoun has managed to draw praise from the capital club's management thanks to his dedication and work rate.

With his limited minutes, Azmoun has found a way to leave a mark on the team, providing the Giallorossi with good energy when called upon.

According to Il Messaggero, Daniele De Rossi is deeply satisfied with Azmoun's work and has even asked Roma to keep him beyond the expiry of his loan.

Azmoun is currently on loan at Roma until the end of the season from Bayer Leverkusen. Roma holds a €12 million but it could seek a discount.

Taremi has already undergone medicals at Inter: report

TEHRAN – Porto and Iran striker Mehdi Taremi has already undergone medicals ahead of a free transfer to Inter Milan this summer.

Italian news outlet FCInterNews also reports that Taremi's brother was recently in Milan ahead of the striker's move.

It is not exactly a secret that Taremi will be joining Inter this summer.

The 31-year-old was already a target for the Nerazzurri since at least last summer.

Inter had balked at a high asking price from Taremi's club Porto. Therefore, It signed Marko Arnautovic from Bologna instead.

However, Inter's interest in signing Taremi never diminished.

And the Nerazzurri were very much aware of the Iranian international's contract situation.

Taremi's deal with Porto runs out at the end of June of this year.

Therefore, Taremi is available on a free transfer in just a couple of months when his contract expires.

Iran, Sri Lanka ink 5 cooperation documents

From page 1 ▶ The project manifested the solidarity between the two Asian countries, he further noted.

Raisi voiced Iran's readiness to share with Sri Lanka the knowledge of its scientists from 45 years of experience.Terming Sri Lanka as an independent country, he said the expansion of bilateral ties could bring about a bright future for both sides.The Islamic Republic, with its technical and engineering capabilities, is carrying out large electricity and water projects in over 20 countries, he noted.

The Uma Oya Multipurpose Project, implemented through the collaboration of Iranian experts, aims to alleviate water scarcity in the southeastern region of Sri Lanka by redirecting an annual average of 145 million cubic meters of excess water from the Uma Oya basin to the Kirindi Oya basin.

The project is located in southeastern Sri Lanka, 200 kilometers east of the capital Colombo, in a relatively deprived and arid region.

It includes the construction of two dams, a water transmission tunnel, and two 60-MW underground hydroelectric power plants.

Iran Air adds Boeing 737 to domestic fleet

TEHRAN - A Boeing 737 was added to the domestic fleet of the Airline of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Iran Air), spokesman Hesam Ghorbanali said Wednesday.According to the Iranian Ministry of Road and Urban Development's website, Ghorbanali said that by adding this aircraft to Iran Air's fleet, 1,200 seats will be added to the company's seat capacity, especially in domestic flights.

He further explained that the aircraft will be used for emergency domestic flights, and due to the increase in demand for air travel, especially in April and May, emergency flights will be added to flight routes such as Tehran-Mashhad, Tehran-Shiraz, and Tehran-Bandar Abbas.

Iran, Tajikistan ink MOU on road transport cooperation

TEHRAN - The deputy transport ministers of Iran and Tajikistan signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for boosting road transport cooperation, Tasnim News Agency reported.

The Iran-Tajikistan Joint Road Transport Committee held a meeting on Wednesday in Tehran and an MOU was signed between the Head of Iran Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization (RMTO) Dariush Amani and the deputy transport minister of Tajikistan for promoting road and transport ties.

During the meeting, Iran's deputy roads minister pointed to the policy taken by the administration of President Ebrahim Raisi for developing relations with its neighboring countries in the region and called this possibility not only the beginning of a new era for strengthening road transport ties but also the beginning of deepening relations in other fields.Amani also highlighted the strategic location of Iran as a bridge connecting China and Central Asia with Western Asia and Europe, the website of Iran's Ministry of Roads and Urban Development reported.The deputy transport minister of Tajikistan called the meeting an opportunity to use the available capacities to promote ties between the two nations.

Shayesta Moradzadeh emphasized the location of Tajikistan at the heart of Central Asia, as a country with hidden capacities in various fields of transportation.In the meeting, the two sides emphasized the necessity of using the capacities of international corridors such as the Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Iran (KTAI) transport corridor, the southern route of the East-West corridor, and the eastern part of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC).

The head of the Tajik delegation invited the head of Iran's Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization to take part in the international conference on "Road to Tien Shan", which will be held next month.

ICCIMA to host Iran-Cuba Business Forum on April 30

TEHRAN - Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) is going to host a joint business forum of Iran and Cuba on April 30.The forum will be held as part of a visit to Tehran by the president of the Cuba Chamber of Commerce at the head of a 13-member delegation, the ICCIMA portal reported.

It is said to be participated by the state and private sectors of the two countries and will be focused on the potential of the markets as well as the trade and investment advantages of both Iran and Cuba.The business forum will also be followed by B2B meetings of Iranian and Cuban businesspeople active in different areas, including steel, mines, pharmaceuticals, renewable energies, and electricity.

Iran imports $148m of coffee in a year: IRICA

TEHRAN - The Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced that 49,000 tons of coffee beans, valued at $148 million, were imported into the country in the previous Iranian calendar year (March 2023-March 2024), showing a 48.55 percent hike compared to a year earlier.

In this period, Iran imported coffee beans from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Vietnam, India, Indonesia and Uganda, among others, the report said.

About 95 percent of the coffee beans were imported into the country from these five countries, it added.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) exported $78 million of coffee to Iran, accounting for 52.89 percent of Iran's coffee imports share in value, IRICA added. About 82 percent of coffee was imported into the country via Shahid Rajaee Customs Office, followed by Mashhad, Bushehr, Bandar Lengeh and Tehran customs, Mehr news agency reported.

IRICA put the world's trade value of coffee in 2022 at $45.5 billion.

Iran, Pakistan private sectors call for finalizing free trade agreement

TEHRAN - The private sectors of Iran and Pakistan have stressed the need for finalizing a free trade agreement between the two neighboring countries.

Hamed Asgari, the director of international affairs of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA), and Atif Ikram Sheikh, the president of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), discussed a wide range of bilateral issues in a meeting in Pakistan.

Speaking during the meeting, the Iranian side urged the need for further joint investments by both the state and private sectors of Iran and Pakistan.

The creation of a joint free zone with the incentives and support of both governments will be an additional incentive for further cooperation, Asgari said.He also highlighted the urgency of making improvements in the transportation and customs sectors, calling for removing tariff obstacles and problems hindering the money transfer.

Asgari further underscored the significance of cutting tariffs on bilateral trade and called for a free trade agreement between the two neighbors to be finalized at the earliest.

The president of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry, for his part, said that the establishment of a joint special economic zone between Iran and Pakistan would be a positive step in the promotion of relations between the two countries.

The current level of trade between Tehran and Islamabad is far behind their potential, he said, urging the need for finalizing a free trade agreement between the two nations.

Tehran, Ashgabat to develop co-op in energy sector

TEHRAN - Iran and Turkmenistan will expand their cooperation in the fields of electricity and energy.

A high-ranking delegation from Turkmenistan has arrived in Tehran to pursue the development of cooperation in the electricity and energy industries, the director general of the foreign trade office of Iran's Power Generation and Distribution Company (TAVANIR) said.

Mehrdad Eqlimi added that an expert-level meeting was held at the venue of the company with the aim of expanding relations between the two countries in the relevant fields.

During the meeting, the two sides exchanged their views regarding the expansion of the common capacities and the process of facilitation of financing the joint venture project for the construction operation of 3rd electricity transmission line between the two states, he said.

Once the said electricity transmission line is launched, the electricity connection capacity between the two neighbors will increase threefold, Eqlimi emphasized, ISNA reported.

An expert-level meeting was also held between the two sides for developing and strengthening cooperation with the neighboring states in the field of exporting electricity equipment and technical and engineering services, he continued.

Iran exports $1.8b technical engineering services in 2 years

TEHRAN - The chairman of the Board of Directors of the Iran Water Industry Federation said the country exported $1.8 billion worth of technical and engineering services over the past two years.

Stressing the importance of exporting technical and engineering services, Reza Haj Karim said giant steps have been taken in the administration of President Ebrahim Raisi in the field as compared to the previous years.

Domestic knowledge-based companies have a high potential to export technical and engineering services and can do even better with due support from the government, he underscored, IRNA reported.

Haj Karim further noted that Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and East Asian countries are among those whose economic growth is higher than the world average so this Asian market can be a lucrative market for Iranian domestic companies.

As a leading country in the water and electricity industry, Iran stands in the first rank in the region in the export of technical and engineering services in this industry, and this shows the high technical and engineering knowledge and ability of Iranian specialists and companies.

Thanks to the efforts of the country's specialists in the years after the victory of the Islamic Revolution, Iran is now among the top five power plant turbine manufacturing countries in the world.

Foreign journalists visit Beijing's demonstration service center for persons with disabilities

By Mahnaz Abdi

BEIJING- Journalists from some Asian and Pacific countries visited Beijing Demonstration Center of Service for Persons with Disabilities (Hui Ai Building) on Wednesday (April 24).

The visit was arranged by the China International Press Communication Center (CIPCC).

During their visit, the journalists witnessed Beijing's achievements in developing programs for the disabled.

The visitors were present in the hall to receive an introduction to the center, watch a promotional video, and learn about the services provided for disabled people in Beijing.

The center features a specially designed spiral corridor called the "Hui Ai Corridor" that is accessible to both wheelchair users and visually impaired people, allowing them to easily reach the second floor. The corridor showcases various handicrafts, including oil paintings, fabric art, paper quilling, and carvings.

The journalists were amazed by the exquisite works on display and noted that it would have been hard to imagine that they were created by individuals with disabilities had they not visited this location.

The Hui Ai Corridor is just one example of the numerous accessible facilities available throughout the center, ranging from crash rails and handrails to tactile pavings and accessible navigation.

Upon seeing the refreshing products showcased in the high-tech accessibility exhibition area, such as the smart hat for visually impaired people, the virtual sign language broadcaster system, and the accessible AR glasses by LLVISION, journalists eagerly requested further details and began their interviews and shootings.

In addition to providing accessible facilities and equipment, the center also offers professional rehabilitation training and various employment skills training to help people with disabilities integrate into society.

During the rehabilitation training session, the journalists were not only introduced to programs such as independent living skills training and therapy for children with disabilities through art, but also greeted by autistic children who were attending classes. These real-life examples of helping people with disabilities live independently and reintegrate into society deeply moved the journalists.

Located in Fengtai District, the Beijing Demonstration Center of Service for Persons with Disabilities is multi-functional facility that demonstrates specialized services for disabled people, incubates and promotes projects that provide services for persons with disabilities, and offers practical training and guidance for disabled people seeking jobs.

Foreign media visit Beijing International Automotive Exhibition

By Mahnaz Abdi

BEIJING- The representatives of media from different countries paid a visit to 2024 Beijing International Automotive Exhibition on Thursday.

The International Automotive Exhibition kicked off in the Shunyi District of Beijing on Thursday (April 25), and will last until May 4.

The exhibition features 117 new cars from well-known domestic and international brands, along with 41 concept cars and 278 new energy models.

China's largest auto show opened with the biggest names showing off their latest electric vehicles (EVs), underlining how the world's largest auto market is already in an all-electric state of mind, and isn't looking back.

The show, which runs through early next month, comes as NEV sales hit a milestone in early April, accounting for over 50 percent of cars sold in China, auto association data showed.

Sales have been getting a boost from a year-long price war that has sapped profit margins, as automakers strive to keep up by announcing newer, cheaper models and promotions.

"At the Beijing auto show, there's no doubt there is no interest in gasoline vehicles anymore. Everyone is looking for the latest technologies in intelligence and electrification," William Li, founder and CEO of Chinese EV maker Nio stated.

China has one of the fastest growing EV markets in the world with an estimated 500 electric car makers having piled into the world's largest vehicle market. As the Chinese government prods home-grown brands, such as Nio, Xpeng and Li Auto, to get a larger slice of the market under the Made in China 2025 industrial master plan.

It is worth mentioning that China International Press Communication Center (CIPCC) arranged the visit to 2024 Beijing International Automotive Exhibition for the foreign journalists.

CIPCC, under the China Public Diplomacy Association (CPDA), has initiated a program to build a platform for the media from countries around the world, especially developing countries, to observe China and study development in this country.

The program aimed at media exchange was halted in 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid-19 epidemic.

In each edition of the program, journalists from all around the world gather together to get familiar with the modern China and exchange their experiences in the field of journalism.

In 2024 edition of the program, scheduled to be held from late February until late June, over 100 journalists from more than 90 countries are participating.

IOEC

Call for Tender 2st Announcement for the Purchase of Flanges (Piping Materials) for Jask Oil Terminal Project, Tender No. 955016

Iranian Offshore Engineering and Construction Company intends to **Purchase of Flanges (Piping Materials) for Jask Oil Terminal** through a public tender. Therefore, the applicants are allowed to have 10 days after the date of 1st publication of the tender notice in the newspaper to participate in this tender.

To download the tender documents, please visit the tender's section of the IOEC 's website: WWW.IOEC.COM/EN/TENDERS, and Please do not hesitate to contact with Transaction Committee office with Mr Amir Nosratzadeh with Tel: +9821-82841533 under sign for any inquiries and more information.

Inside the fall of academic brainwashing project

Leaked audio of Dennis Ross exposes failure of U.S. in controlling college campus protests

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN – Students at US universities and colleges are continuing their campus demonstrations to vent their anger at Israel's genocidal war on Gaza as American police intensify violent crackdowns.

Such demonstrations began to spread across college campuses in the United States after New York police removed a pro-Palestinian protest encampment at Columbia University on April 18 and arrested more than 100 people.

Since then, police have made hundreds of arrests to break up peaceful protests and clear encampments.

Police brutality

On Thursday, police with shields and batons shoved into protesters at Indiana University Bloomington after students established an encampment. Police officers also tore down tents at the University of Connecticut. At Ohio State University and Emerson College in Boston, police also attacked protesters.

Police officers further clashed with students at the campus of Emory University in Atlanta. A large number of people were detained during attacks on these universities.

Demonstrators at Emory accused police officers of using pepper spray and tear gas to break up the encampment they had set up a few hours earlier.

The Atlanta Police Department acknowledged that its officers had "used chemical irritants during the incident." The Georgia State Patrol also confirmed its troopers used pepper balls for crowd control.

Separately, The New York Times has reviewed video footage that shows a trooper using a stun device on a protester who was on the ground.

Authorities in Georgia State accused the demonstrator of resisting arrest.

Students at Harvard, Georgetown, MIT and George Washington University, in the heart of the US capital city, have also pressed ahead with rallies to express solidarity with Palestinian people in Gaza.

University professors detained

In addition to perpetrating violence against university students, police have launched a clampdown on faculty members.

Police arrested Noelle McAfee, chair of Emory's philosophy department, as they tried to disperse peaceful protesters.

"It went from a peaceful protest to mayhem in the matter of a minute," McAfee said. The professor said she had frozen and been quickly detained.

Emory University economics professor Caroline Fohlin was also taken into custody.

During her interaction with police, Fohlin could be heard expressing concern about the violent arrests and use of force by police against students, according to CNN.

Demands of protesters

Demonstrators at US universities have called for an end to Israel's brutal onslaught on Gaza. They have denounced the complicity of their educational institutions in Israel's human rights abuses. The protesters have demanded that universities divest from the Israeli genocide in Gaza and stop investing large school endowments in companies involved in weapons manufacturing and other industries supporting the regime's war.

Israel currently stands accused of committing genocide in a case brought by South Africa at the International Court of Justice. Israel has turned a blind eye to an ICJ ruling which demanded in late January that the regime take all possible measures to prevent genocidal acts.

Condoning violence

The police crackdown against students and faculty members comes as some US politicians have demanded a stronger response. They have accused protesters of antisemitism.

House Speaker Mike Johnson has accused protesters of intimidating and threatening Jewish students and suggested withholding funding to universities that allow pro-Palestinian protests.

But the protesters, many of whom are Jewish, have rejected such accusations.

"When you're accusing anyone who's against genocide in Gaza of being anti-Semitic, you're losing the actual meaning of the movement against anti-Semitism," Donia, a protester at George Washington University, who chose to be identified by her first name only out of fear of reprisal, told Al Jazeera.

Donia added that pro-Israel advocates were "freaking out" and trying to repress the student movement with anti-Semitism allegations because they know it is effective.

"A lot of the future generation of politicians in this country are at these universities, and they're not buying their lies any more. That's what's really scaring them," Donia told the Qatari news network.

No to genocide

A number of US politicians, however, have different opinions including Democratic Congresswoman Ilhan Omar, who visited the pro-Palestine protest camp at New York's Columbia University on Thursday.

"Young people have always pushed our government to do better, whether it was through the civil rights movement, whether it was to end the Vietnam war."

She added, "I think they are on the right side of history in pushing our country not to stay complicit in the genocide that is taking place in Gaza."

Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, one of America's highest-profile Jewish lawmakers, also lashed out at Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu who had accused US college students of being antisemitic.

"No, Mr Netanyahu. It is not antisemitic or pro-Hamas to point out that in a little over six months your extremist government has killed 34,000 Palestinians and wounded more than 77,000 – seventy percent of whom are women and children. It is not antisemitic to point out that your bombing has completely destroyed more than 221,000 housing units in Gaza, leaving more than one million people homeless – almost half the population," Sanders said.

Opposition to Gaza war

Israel's brutal war on the Gaza Strip has also sparked street protests in the US over the past months. Protesters have called for ending Israel's onslaught and an immediate ceasefire. They have denounced Washington's unwavering military and political support for Israel.

Polls indicate that a majority of Americans disapprove of Israel's military actions in Gaza.

The shift in public opinion in the United States has raised deep concerns among American politicians pushing to design schemes to tackle growing support for Palestinians.

Bombshell revelations

Former veteran US politician Dennis Ross has played a key role in drawing up schemes in the face of growing opposition to Israel's war on Gaza and the atrocities that the regime has committed there.

After Israel declared war on Gaza on October 7, Ross has routinely visited US universities and held meetings to rally support for Israel's war machine. He has left no stone unturned to demonize Palestinian resistance groups. Besides, he has tried to wage smear campaigns against Palestinian people who are only calling for the liberation of their land from the Israeli occupation and ending the regime's war of genocide.

Nonetheless, the expansion of antiwar protests throughout US universities indicates that his plans have backfired.

According to a recording of a private meeting exclusively obtained by the Tehran Times, Ross has acknowledged a growing dissidence movement in US educational institutions.

"There is a kind of dissidence now, among a lot of the younger Jewish students and who were attracted to the progressives before October 7th, created a kind of real dissidence for them, and I've seen a kind of, there is a question in their minds now who they were previously associated with," stated Ross, who held important positions in the administrations of Jimmy Carter to Barack Obama.

He also admits that university students skip classes that he attends.

"There is also a kind of interesting opportunity because I'm being requested now to do more campuses to go to more places and with interesting enough, with more faculty inviting me to come, so there are, when we think about the tools that are available to us, let's think about that as well, how would do a different kind of outreach, the faculty does, the faculty allows you, brings you into classes, there is a lot of things you, I can go to a university wide event and kids who are in classes they won't come out there, you know they won't come to a next curricular activity," Ross, who has taught classes at Brandeis University, Georgetown University, and the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, pointed out.

In November last year, the Tehran Times also published the script of a recording it had obtained exclusively from a private meeting attended by Jonathan Greenblatt, the director of the so-called Anti-Defamation League.

In the meeting with a group of Zionist propagandists, Greenblatt raised the alarm about diminishing support for Israel among the young generation and Iran's backing for the Palestinian cause.

"We think that there is something more to this that's below the water line, it's the young generations that we need to focus our energy on, there is something happening with Iran, and how it's now their propaganda, in their language in their tactics, seem to be bleeding into the American kind of activists face, in ways that is very different than NIAC and very very problematic," Greenblatt said.

Comments made by Greenblatt and other Israeli officials against Iran are in line with the regime's blame game.

Iran has only provided spiritual support for Palestinians who have been subjected to decades of occupation and atrocious crimes by the Zionist regime.

Israel has been perpetrating heinous crimes against Palestinians since its creation in 1948. But, the genocidal campaign in Gaza has clearly exposed the regime's barbaric nature.

Evidence of torture at Gaza mass graves

UN "horrified" at discoveries

From page 1 ▶ According to ReliefWeb, a humanitarian information service provided by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Israeli tanks and snipers attacked the hospital on more than one occasion.

On February 22, the Israeli occupation forces withdrew from the hospital after raiding it for one week, only to storm the medical complex for a second time in the same month.

Last month, eyewitnesses, including doctors, spoke of being subjected to widespread abuse by Israeli troops who arrested hundreds of people at the medical complex.

Palestinian authorities have dismissed claims by Israel that locals had used hospital grounds to bury the dead (from Israeli attacks), saying the bodies identified in the mass graves by their families were alive before Israeli forces stormed the hospital and are now being discovered deep under the ground.

The Palestinian media center has accused the Israeli army of summary executions.

Stephane Dujarric, the spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General, said the organization has called for an international investigation. Asked on how that would take place considering the Israeli blockade of the enclave, Dujarric stressed that "investigators wherever they come from would need to have access to Gaza".

On Thursday, the UN deputy spokesman, Farhan Haq, hinted that the presence of UN and international bodies on the ground do not have the necessary resources to oversee a probe, stressing that "an independent, effective and transparent investigation into the deaths at Nasser and al-Shifa hospitals must be conducted".

Amnesty International has noted that "the absence of forensic experts and the decimation of Gaza's medical sector as a result of the war and Israel's cruel blockade, along with the lack of availability of the necessary resources for the identification of bodies such as DNA testing, are huge obstacles".

Earlier this week, the UN rights office said it was "horrified" at the discoveries, stating that "disturbing reports continue to emerge about mass graves in Gaza in which Palestinian victims were reportedly found stripped naked with their hands tied, prompting renewed concerns about possible war crimes".

The UN rights office also stressed the need for an investigation following the recovery of hundreds of bodies "buried deep in the ground and covered with waste" at Nasser and al-Shifa hospitals.

"Among the deceased were allegedly older people, women and wounded, while others were found tied with their hands...tied and stripped of their clothes," said Ravina Shamdasani, spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The UN body's spokesperson also expressed deep concern over Palestinian bodies buried in two graves in the courtyard of al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza City.

"There are reports that the hands of some of these bodies were also tied," Shamdasani said, adding that there could be "many more" victims.

The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor says its members on the ground in Gaza have witnessed medics exhuming hundreds of bodies at al-Shifa hospital's vicinity, many of whom were subjected to "premeditated murder as well as arbitrary and extrajudicial executions while they were detained and handcuffed".

The Palestinian Red Crescent says another mass grave in the vicinity of Kamal Adwan Hospital in northern Gaza may also contain hundreds of Palestinian civilians killed and buried by the Israeli army.

As more corpses are uncovered, a growing number of countries and international bodies have also demanded an independent and transparent investigation.

South Africa, which has led the case against genocide in Gaza at the International Court of Justice said it is "appalled by the recent grim discovery of a mass grave containing the remains of Palestinian civilians at Nasser Hospital in Gaza."

"These grim findings call for immediate and comprehensive investigations to ensure justice and accountability," the South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation added.

Amnesty International warned that "the harrowing discovery of these mass graves underscores the urgency of ensuring immediate access for human rights investigators, including forensic experts, to the occupied Gaza Strip to ensure that evidence is preserved and to carry out independent and transparent investigations with the aim of guaranteeing accountability for any violations of international law."

The discovery of mass graves at different hospitals in the north and south of the Gaza Strip strongly indicates that multiple Israeli army units are systematically involved in such horrific practices.

Macron says Europe must never be 'vassal' of US, warns 'our Europe can die'

'Our Europe today is mortal and it can die'

French President Emmanuel Macron on Thursday urged Europe to wake up to the fact that it was not sufficiently armed in the face of global threats such as Russian aggression that pose an existential challenge to the continent, France 24 reported.

In a major foreign policy speech, Macron called on Europe to adopt a "credible" defence strategy that is less dependent on the US.

Macron returned to some of the themes of a speech he gave in September 2017 months after taking office at the same location – the Sorbonne University in Paris – but in a context that seven years on has been turned upside down by Brexit, Covid-19 and Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Europe must rise to the challenges of a changed world and scale up its defence, said Macron, warning that the EU was not sufficiently armed to take on global threats such as Russia's war in Ukraine.

"Our Europe today is mortal and it can die," said Macron. "It can die and this depends only on our choices," he noted. "We need to build this strategic concept of a credible European defence for ourselves."

He described Russia's behaviour after its invasion of Ukraine as "uninhibited" and said it was no longer clear where Moscow's "limits" lie.

Macron also sounded the alarm on what he described as disrespect of global trade rules by both Russia and China, calling on the European Union to revise its trade policy. "Our Europe, today, is mortal and it can die," he said.

"It can die and this depends only on our choices," said Macron, warning that Europe was "not armed against the risks we face" in a world where the "rules of the game have changed".

Macron also championed the concept of European sovereignty, calling for autonomy in defence and the economy.

"How can we build our sovereignty, our autonomy, if we don't assume the responsibility of developing our own European defence industry?" he asked.

Europe "must show that it is never a vassal of the United States and that it also knows how to talk to all the other regions of the world", he said.

He said he would ask European partners for proposals in the next months and added that Europe also needed its own capacity in cyber defence and cybersecurity.

Macron said preference should be given to European suppliers in the purchase of military equipment and backed the idea of a European loan to finance this effort.

He also called for a "revision" of EU trade policy to defend European interests, accusing both China and the US of no longer respecting the rules of global commerce.

"It cannot work if we are the only ones in the world to respect the rules of trade – as they were written up 15 years ago – if the Chinese and the Americans no longer respect them by subsidising critical sectors."

Biden gets morning briefings about reported theft of organs of corpses in Gaza: Ralf Nader

TEHRAN – Ralf Nader, the former American presidential candidate, has said President Joe Biden gets early morning briefings about the reported stealing of human organs from fresh Palestinian corpses in Gaza.

However, Nader says, Biden cows to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and sends billions of dollars of American taxpayers for his regime to massacre Palestinian civilians, Nader tweeted on Friday.

"Stage 2 of Israel's genocidal war is emerging. Mass graves are being discovered. Torture of abducted Palestinian hostages thrown in Israeli prisons and reports of selected human organ extractions from fresh Palestinian corpses in Gaza. Intelligent agencies report all this in their morning briefings to President Biden. Still he sticks to his master, Netanyahu, and makes the American taxpayer pay $14 billion more for Netanyahu's slaughter of Palestinian children, women and male civilians," Nader wrote.

Paramedics and rescue workers have raised suspicions about organ theft by the Israeli military after recovering bodies of civilians from mass graves, WAFA news agency reported.

Medics and rescuers have found at least 392 bodies in the Nasser Medical Complex in Khan Younis. About 165 of them remain unidentified after their bodies were found to have been disfigured.

Medics reported that some bodies were found with their abdomens cut and stitched in a manner that is different from the usual wound closure techniques performed in besieged Gaza, raising suspicions of organ theft,

while a mutilated body of a little girl found wearing surgical grown, suggesting she was buried while still alive.

According to the report, many bodies were found wrapped in black and blue shrouds made of plastic and nylon — used to raise the temperature — which are different from the color of shrouds used in Gaza, also suggesting that Israel wanted to speed up the decomposition and conceal the evidence.

Isfahan's craft exports double in year

TEHRAN - Isfahan's handicraft exports have experienced a more than two-fold jump, surpassing $15 million in value in the past Iranian calendar year [Mar. 2023-Mar. 2024].

A local official in charge of handicraft affairs reported that the exports during the previous year soared to $15 million from just $7 million in the year earlier.

Nourullah Abdollahi also stated that these export figures are separate from personal shipments (suitcase trade) by passengers.

"Hand-woven carpets, pottery, block print and metal products like enamel" the handicrafts deputy chief added. "Are among the handicrafts that have many buyers in foreign countries."

The upsurge in exports can be attributed to the high demand for Isfahan's traditional handicrafts, the official noted.

Abdollahi further outlined that the products from Isfahan, a city celebrated as the cradle of one-third of the world's handicrafts, have found a flourishing market in countries such as Germany, the UAE, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Pakistan, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

According to Majdodin Taj, head of Isfahan's Handicraft Union, the province is home to 100 officially recognized artisans contributing to this thriving industry.

As per records, Isfahan is responsible for safeguarding 200 of the 299 recognized

handicraft categories in Iran, out of a global total of 602.

Local specialties such as enamel, block print, Qalamzani [metal engraving], inlay work, turquoise inlaying, wood carving and pottery continue to sustain and spread Isfahan's rich cultural heritage across the globe.

This robust export activity not only preserves these ancient crafts but also significantly contributes to the local economy through international trade, as claimed by provincial officials.

Isfahan is sometimes referred to as the crown jewel of Iran's handicraft industry, where its artisans do their best to safeguard know-how passed down from generation to generation.

The city was once a crossroads of international trade and diplomacy in Iran, and now it is one of Iran's top tourist destinations for good reasons. It has long been nicknamed as Nesf-e-Jahan, which is translated into "half the world", meaning seeing it is relevant to see half the world.

Mount Fuji view to be blocked as tourists overcrowd popular photo spot

A huge barrier to block views of Mount Fuji will be installed at a popular photo spot by Japanese authorities exasperated by crowds of badly behaved foreign tourists.

Construction of the mesh net – 2.5 meters (8ft) high and the length of a cricket pitch at 20 meters – will begin as early as next week, an official from Fujikawaguchiko town said on Friday.

"It's regrettable we have to do this, because of some tourists who can't respect rules," leaving litter behind and ignoring traffic regulations, he told Agence France-Presse.

It is the latest direct action in Japan against over-tourism after residents of Kyoto's geisha district banned visitors from small private alleys this year.

Record numbers of overseas tourists are travelling to Japan, where the number of monthly visitors exceeded 3 million in March for the first time.

Mount Fuji, Japan's highest mountain, can be photographed from many spots in the resort town of Fujikawaguchiko. This viewpoint is particularly popular because the majestic – and active – volcano appears behind a Lawson convenience store, which are ubiquitous in Japan.

Due to this visual juxtaposition, "a reputation has spread on social media that this spot is very Japanese, making it a popular photo location", said the town official, who declined to be named.

The mostly non-Japanese tourists are overcrowding a stretch of pavement next to the Lawson shop, he said.

After traffic signs and repeated warnings from security guards were ignored, the town in Yamanashi region decided on the huge screen as a last resort.

The measure is also meant to protect a nearby dental clinic against tourists who sometimes park there without permission and have even been seen climbing on to the roof of the clinic to get the perfect shot, the official said.

The town wished it had not been forced to take action, the official said, adding that the current plan was for the screen to stay up until the situation improves.

(Source: The Guardian)

Iran in frames

Photo depicts ancient columns, which uphold diverse arched ceilings within a hall of the UNESCO-listed Jameh Mosque of Isfahan. This site serves as a remarkable testament to the development of mosque architecture spanning twelve centuries, originating in 841 CE.

From trade to tradition: a journey through iconic bazaars

From Page 1 ▶ With the advent of Islam, bazaars gained added significance, evolving to incorporate educational, religious, and communal facilities such as schools, Tekiehs for Islamic ceremonies, Hammams (public bathhouses), and caravanserais. These additions catered to the diverse needs of merchants, residents, and travelers, underscoring the bazaar's pivotal role in economic stability and societal cohesion.

Throughout history, bazaaris have wielded considerable political influence, their collective voice resonating in pivotal events like the Constitutional Revolution, the nationalization of Iranian oil, and the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

The country is home to thousands of bazaars, each city boasting its own unique marketplace alongside bustling daily markets. Here are glimpses of ten traditional bazaars in Iran:

Qeysarieh bazaar

When there's any talk of bazaars in Isfahan, many think of a bazaar surrounding Naqsh-e Jahan Square.

If you want to ditch the touristy souvenir shops and get better prices, taking a stroll within Isfahan's Qeysarieh bazaar is a must.

Bazaar-e Tajrish

Bazaar-e Tajrish, named after an old neighborhood, where it is located in northern Tehran, has become rather popular with tourists in the past few years.

But still, many prefer a visit to the Grand Bazaar of Tehran instead. While Tajrish is definitely not as big as the Grand Bazaar, it offers a very unique experience.

The most significant part of Tajrish bazaar is dedicated to food. And unlike most bazaars in Iran, it doesn't just offer spices and nuts but a whole variety of fresh ingredients.

The variety of fruits and vegetables here is even a surprise for the locals. From the craziest tropical fruits to specific wild herbs, you'll find it all here. It's open every day of the week but gets super crowded before Nowruz, the Persian New Year.

Carpet Bazaar of Tehran

The Grand Bazaar of Tehran has lost some of its authenticity throughout recent years and it's mostly dominated by China-made products.

> With the advent of Islam, bazaars gained added significance, evolving to incorporate educational, religious, and communal facilities.

The carpets section of the Grand Bazaar, however, is another story. There's a huge three-story section dedicated to all kinds of handwoven nomadic rugs, carpets, kilims, and pictorial rugs.

Bazaar-e Tabriz

Tabriz is the best example of Islamic bazaar in Iran. It's the biggest roofed bazaar in the world perfectly known for its Timcheh Mozafarieh where the most intricate carpets are sold. The bazaar of Tabriz is the biggest in Iran and it's recognized as a UNESCO world heritage.

You could easily spend a whole day wandering through its alleyways. It's also relatively easy to get lost in. And apart from great shopping, there are plenty of local restaurants and mosques to be found within the bazaar.

Darvazeh-Kazerun market

Darvazeh-Kazerun is rarely known to foreign tourists. It's the first market in Shiraz dedicated to fresh food and where many of the locals buy their fruits and vegetables.

There's also a beautiful but tiny mosque situated at the end of the market where you'll see many sellers heading during prayer times.

Anything from fresh veggies and fruits to nuts, tea, and bread is to be found in the bazaar. There's also an amazing fish market located right next to it.

Goldsmiths' Bazaar of Yazd

Goldsmiths' Bazaar of Yazd (locally known as Bazaar-e Zargarha) is a small section of the famous Bazaar-e Khan in the UNESCO-registered city and probably a favorite spot among local women.

In Yazd, where all types of jewelry are created into various forms and shapes using molding, metal casting, and wax removal, the art of goldsmithing and creating jewels has a long history.

Yazdi goldsmiths have long been renowned for their unique artistic talent, impeccable taste, and patience when creating jewelry.

Bazaar-e Vakil

Anything from silverware to antiques, carpets, and handicrafts can be found in Bazaar-e Vakil located in downtown Shiraz.

The bazaar is not too big and you easily visit it in a few hours without getting lost. Many travelogues have mentioned sections of the bazaar dedicated to spices and carpets.

Fish market of Bandar Abbas

If you happen to be in Bandar Abbas on your way to visit Qeshm or Hormuz islands, then a stop at the local fish market is a must.

There are all kinds of fresh fish and other sea creatures to be found here. There are also a few locals outside the bazaar who would be willing to cook the fish for you at a fair price.

Bazaar-e Rasht

Rasht is without a doubt a favorite Persian food destination in northern Iran.

It's no wonder that its bazaar is probably among the most delicious food bazaars in the country. There's everything from seafood to tea and fresh veggies but my absolute favorite part is the long array of pickles and olives.

Bazaar-e Ganj Ali Khan

Ganj Ali Khan Bazaar in Kerman is part of a great complex of the same name that includes an impressive mosque, one of the best-preserved hammams, a school, and a caravanserai.

While wandering around the bazaar keep an eye on the intricate plasterwork and watch out for creepy mannequins.

Iranian authorities seize Parthian coins from train passenger

TEHRAN - In a most recent move to safeguard ancient heritage, Iranian railway police have confiscated 73 coins dating back to the Parthian era from a passenger at Andimeshk railway station.

On Wednesday, Heshmatollah Maleki, the head of the railway police, announced that the recovery was made during a routine X-ray inspection of the passenger›s belongings, which revealed the coins expertly concealed within a bag.

Regarding the value of the coins, Maleki further explained that the cultural heritage experts in Andimeshk have verified the coins as authentic relics from the Parthian period, with an estimated worth of two billion Rials [approximately $4000].

The passenger, whose identity has not been disclosed, was detained and has been transferred to the police headquarters for legal proceedings, according to the commander.

"During the investigation, the accused offered a bribe to the officers," Maleki added. "Proposing to hand over all the seized coins in exchange for his release."

This attempt has been formally recorded in his file, the commander additionally explained.

Maleki also brought to light that further inquiries revealed the individual had a prior criminal record. "Following his confession to the crime," the commander winded up. "He was transferred to the prosecutor›s office to face charges related to the possession and attempted smuggling of historical relics."

The Parthian Empire, also known as the Arsacid Empire, was a major Iranian political and cultural power in ancient Iran. The Parthians largely adopted the art, architecture, religious beliefs, and royal insignia of their culturally heterogeneous empire, which encompassed Persian, Hellenistic, and regional cultures. At its height, the Parthian Empire stretched from the northern reaches of the Euphrates, in what is now central-eastern Turkey, to eastern Iran.

Kish Island flourishes as tourist, investment magnets

TEHRAN - The CEO of the Kish Free Zone Organization has announced a tenfold year-on-year increase in the arrival of foreign tourists on the coral Island during the last Persian year [Mar. 2023-Mar. 2024].

Talking to ISNA, Rahim Sarhangi highlighted that Kish Island, being a pioneer of the free zone model in Iran, should serve as a prototype for the country's economic future.

"Kish Island, often referred to as the 'gem of the Persian Gulf', has seen fluctuating periods of attention and neglect over the years," Sarhangi noted. "Yet has always maintained a leading position in terms of development compared to the mainland."

The island's free zone status offers an opportunity for the economic expansion of the country, according to the official.

Kish Island is ramping up efforts to become a more attractive destination for both domestic and international travelers through a new summer campaign, as announced by Sarhangi.

This initiative, aimed at sustaining it through the end of the year, seeks to capitalize on the growing interest from foreign tourists who find the island a cost-effective destination, yielding significant revenue potential.

In light of the tenfold increase in foreign visitors, primarily from Iraq, with substantial inbound flights from Dubai, Oman, and Iraq, Sarhangi emphasized the importance of enhancing infrastructure to cater to inbound tourists.

He further explained that the measures include offering diverse culinary options, improving urban signage and simplifying financial transactions for tourists, with several banks already collaborating to facilitate these enhancements.

The campaign not only targets summer tourists but plans to extend into a comprehensive international strategy post-summer, focusing particularly on neighboring countries, according to the official.

"This aligns with Kish's broader strategy," Sarhangi further explained. "To compete more effectively in the global tourism market."

Regarding the scale of investments, the CEO outlined that Kish saw an uptick in domestic investments following successful efforts to attract local investors in the latter half of the last year.

Moreover, on the international front, Sarhangi reported significant foreign investments from Arab countries in the commercial, residential, and hotel sectors.

Sarhangi also emphasized that by participating in various international expos, the Kish Free Zone is actively pursuing further foreign investments from neighboring states, aiming to expand and diversify its economic base.

In his concluding remarks, Sarhangi declared that this strategic move to boost tourism and investment on Kish Island reflects a comprehensive plan to enhance the island's economic status and global appeal, promising a bright future for this jewel of the Persian Gulf.

Sarhangi also pinpointed that with free zones, for the most part, being managed by the private sector, the slogan of this year — "Production Leap with Public Participation" — is possible to be fully implemented in these areas.

Knowledge-based companies to attend Vietnam Medi-pharm Expo 2024

TEHRAN –Iranian knowledge-based companies will participate in the 31st Vietnam International Medical and Pharmaceutical Exhibition which is scheduled to be held in Hanoi from May 9 to 12.

The Vice Presidency for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-Based Economy will support the Iranian delegation.

The exhibition will focus on introducing the latest technologies, advancements, and outstanding achievements in the medical field.

Experts in the field of health and medicine from all over the world will attend the exhibition to advertise and introduce products; exchange experiences; seize investment and production opportunities; and explore new markets.

The exhibitors will showcase a wide range of products including pharmaceuticals, medical machinery and equipment; hospital services, medical tourism, dental, laboratory, analytical equipment, cosmetics, and beauty care equipment.

A business matching program and specialized seminars will

also be held, along with charitable and social activities such as fundraising for poor patients, a blood donation event, health screening for the elderly, advice provision, and free check-ups for visitors.

Over 60 countries import Iranian medical equipment

On January 13, the head of Iran's Union of Medical Equipment Manufacturers and Exporters said medical equipment worth around $20 million is exported to more than 60 countries annually,

More than 70 percent of medical equipment and 100 percent of normal hospital beds are domestically made, IRNA quoted Abdolreza Yaqoubzadeh as saying.

Also, over 95 percent of specific ICU and CCU beds and more than 85 percent of operating room medical equipment such as anesthesia machines and other equipment are manufactured with cutting-edge technology in the country, he added.

Yaqoubzadeh went on to say that the country's need for medical equipment production is three to four billion dollars per year, some one billion dollars of which is imported.

Exporting to neighbors

On December 30, 2023, Vice President for Science, Technology, and Knowledge-based Economy, Rouhollah Dehqani-Firouzabadi, said the country is planning to export laboratory equipment to neighboring countries.

Knowledge-based companies started to meet the country's technological needs in the past decade, he said, adding that the Vice Presidency supported the companies to manufacture laboratory equipment, Mehr News Agency reported.

Now, various pieces of laboratory equipment are manufactured at prices much lower than the same foreign products, Dehqani-Firouzabadi noted.

Foreign delegations that attend Iranian exhibitions will be familiarized with the country's capabilities, he said, adding that the export of knowledge-based products was $300 million in the year to March 2021, but increased to $600 million the year after.

The export has surged to $1.5 billion so far in the current Iranian calendar year and is forecast to hit $2 billion by the end of the year, he said.

More schools install solar power panels to go green

TEHRAN –According to an official with the Ministry of Education, seven new schools across the country have installed solar panels with the aim of using clean energy.

The schools are in the provinces of Isfahan, Qom, Golestan, East Azerbaijan, Kohgiluyeh-Boyerahmad, and South Khorasan, IRIB quoted Hamid-Reza Khanmohammadi as saying.

Nine more schools will soon be equipped with rooftop solar panels, he added.

"Installation of these panels will bring stable income for schools and reduce their expenses."

It will also increase students' awareness and help them learn about the economic benefits of using clean energy, he stressed.

The official stated that the Ministry of Education is planning to implement almost 2,500 more projects, and some 20,000 schools will soon benefit from solar energy.

Currently, 56 solar panel projects are operating in the country with 11 schools in Qom ready to install such panels with a capacity of 220 kilowatts.

The official went on to say that the Ministry of Education wants to install solar panels in all the newly built schools with the help of school-building donors.

Solar panels will prevent the emission of 560 grams of carbon dioxide per kilowatt hour, and save about 0.27 cubic meters of natural gas, and 0.22 liters of water, Khanmohammadi further noted.

Green schools to be constructed

In October 2023, Khanmohammadi said a total of 64 eco-schools would be built across the country meeting green management standards, the director of the Organization for

While calling the environment a vital issue, he stated, "Green management includes reducing energy, water, raw materials, equipment, and paper consumption, and recycling solid waste," Mehr news agency reported.

According to the sixth five-year development plan (2017-2021), it is mandatory to implement the green management program in all non-governmental public organizations and institutions, he stressed.

"Signing a memorandum of understanding with the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA) and the association of school-building benefactors of the country to establish small-scale solar power plants in schools with the investment of donors, holding training courses on waste management in schools, and organizing scientific field trips to recycling centers are among the other programs of the Organization for Development, Renovation, and Equipping Schools in line with the preservation of the environment."

First green school

In November 2022, the first school in the country with zero energy waste was inaugurated in the city of Zanjan, aiming to promote energy management in the education sector.

"In the country's first green school in Zanjan city, solar panels have been installed to generate and distribute 10 kilowatts of electricity," Hamidreza Eslami, director of the provincial Organization for Development, Renovation, and Equipping Schools, said.

"The surface water treatment and recycling system is one of the facilities used in this school, and in fact, the precipitation and rain-

fall will be collected in tanks to be recycled," he added.

Referring to the installation of a green roof garden in this school, Eslami stated that the fire alarm system, smart heating system, and ventilation devices are among the other unique features of this school.

Environmental plans

During the first round of President Ebrahim Raisi's provincial trips that ended in April, a total of 55 environmental plans worth more than 6.78 trillion rials have been approved to be implemented across the country, IRNA quoted Alireza Noormohammadi, an official with the Department of Environment, as saying.

He added that the provinces of Mazandaran, Alborz, North Khorasan, and East Azarbaijan have the highest number of approved plans respectively.

President Ebrahim Raisi has highlighted the importance of environmental protection, emphasizing that the preservation of the environment is prior to every development.

"Environmental protection will lead to power, security, investment, and production growth in the country," he said.

WHO EMRO to support cooperation between Iran, neighboring countries

TEHRAN – The World Health Organization's (WHO) director for the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) has announced WHO's support for multi-country partnerships including subregional collaboration between the Islamic Republic of Iran and neighboring countries.

"WHO would like to share the Islamic Republic of Iran's valuable experiences in primary health care, family medicine, the local production of medical supplies, health insurance, and preventive health initiatives with other countries in the Eastern Mediterranean Region and beyond," WHO website quoted Hanan Balkhi as saying.

The official made the remarks in a four-day visit to the provinces of Isfahan and Tehran, which took place from April 12 to 15, to assess the country's healthcare system's capabilities and progress.

During her first official visit, she met with officials and partners to discuss WHO's work on the ground and how to strengthen collaborations and strategic initiatives to meet health needs.

The Regional Director's visit began in the historic city of Isfahan, where she visited Isfahan University of Medical Sciences and met with Chancellor Dr Shahin Shirani, who also heads the Isfahan Academy of Medical Sciences.

She also met with faculty members of the university and other Ministry of Health and Medical Education officials.

"It's impressive to see how a quality integrated medical education has played a role in improving health services in the country, leading to higher life expectancy, lower mortality rates, and wider vaccination coverage," the WHO website quoted Balkhi as saying.

With over 800 research centers, the Islamic Republic of Iran has made great efforts to expand its research capacity.

Balkhi visited the Isfahan Cardiovascular Research Institute, one of 16 WHO collaborating centers in the country. The institute focuses on research, training, and patient rehabilitation in the area of cardiovascular diseases.

The country's investment in evidence generation is building a knowledge base for the health workforce and strengthening health system resilience.

Balkhi later met with Stefan Priesner, United Nations (UN) Resident Coordinator, along with representatives of other UN agencies.

In focus were the critical role of multisectoral collaboration in improving health, and the long-term socioeconomic benefits of preventive health measures.

They considered how to improve advocacy for the critical work that the Islamic Republic of Iran does for the people of the country – including more than 5 million refugees and migrants.

Also under discussion were areas to prioritize for collaborative work among UN agencies.

In a meeting between Balkhi and Health Minister Bahram Einollahi and his deputies, Einollahi indicated that more than 96 percent of the population have health insurance.

He also said that the country is committed to reinforcing its primary healthcare network and family health program; strengthening prevention and health promotion, and locally producing more than 92 percent of essential medicines.

To build on such remarkable achievements, Balkhi reiterated WHO's support to the Iranian health system, especially on primary health care to advance universal health coverage.

Meeting with Jamileh Alamolhoda, wife of the Iranian president, mental and psychological health were discussed as important aspects of public health alongside physical health.

WHO will continue to work with Member States for the holistic health and well-being of their people.

Moreover, Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Minister of Foreign Affairs, met with Balkhi to discuss issues related to health and diplomacy to reduce the burden of disease and create safer communities.

Among the topics discussed were the impact of sanctions on public health; cross-border transmission of infectious diseases, a challenge to which the influx of refugees has contributed; and implementation of health measures during annual mass gatherings, for which the Islamic Republic of Iran is keen to strengthen collaborations with the WHO to find and implement suitable solutions.

"In addition to our continued technical support to the country's health system, we are ready to expand collaborations for the regional priorities, which include equitable access to medical supplies, empowering the health workforce, and tackling substance use," said Balkhi.

Balkhi's visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran underscores the mutual commitment to address complex health challenges and to build bridges between countries for the well-being of populations, especially during these challenging times when the Region is facing multiple emergencies and conflicts.

Expanding co-op with WHO EMRO

In February, Einollahi announced the country's readiness to foster cooperation with the World Health Organization's Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office.

On the sidelines of the international conference on quality and safety in healthcare in Doha which was held from February 21 – 25, Einollahi held a meeting with Balkhi, the health ministry's website reported.

During the meeting, Balkhi lauded the health ministry for remarkable achievements and commendable progress.

She went on to say, "I am trying to focus on three issues in the Eastern Mediterranean region: empowering human resources in the field of health, improving self-sufficiency in the production of medicine and medical equipment, and fighting against narcotics and treating addicts."

She further noted that it's essential to hold talks with the member states to solve the problems of the Eastern Mediterranean region.

In the end, she expressed hope to travel to Iran to learn more about the implementation of the Family Physician Program in Iran.

Einollahi, for his part, referred to the country's achievements in the field of the health system, saying, "The Family Physician Program is a preventive health program that is being implemented in 195 cities of the country."

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Rainfall increases Lake Urmia level

Recent rainfall has increased the level of Lake Urmia to 1,271 meters, a step closer to its ecological level of 1,274 meters.

The lake is expected to reach its ecological level within 10 years by completing the restoration plans which started four years ago.

Farhad Sarkhosh, head of the Lake Urmia Restoration Program's office in West Azarbaijan province, said that the Lake's level is now 58 cm higher than it was last year.

According to the latest monitoring, the lake's water volume is estimated at more than 3.6 billion cubic meters.

He added that the lake surface area has reached 2,883 square kilometers, adding that the figure is increased by 538 square kilometers compared to the same period last year.

Although the ecological level of the lake is defined as 1,274 meters, the lake will also have favorable conditions at 1,272 meters and more than 90 percent of sand and dust storm hotspots will be eliminated.

افزایش سطح تراز دریاچه ارومیه بر اثر بارش

بارش های اخیر تراز فعلی دریاچه ارومیه را به یک‌هزار و ۲۷۱ متر و ۳۸ سانتی‌متر رسانده است که در حال رسیدن به تراز اکولوژیک یک‌هزار و ۲۷۴ متر است.

به گزارش ایرنا، فرهاد سرخوش رییس دفتر استانی ستاد احیای دریاچه ارومیه گفت سطح دریاچه ارومیه اکنون ۵۸ سانتی‌متر بیشتر از زمان مشابه سال گذشته است. طبق آخرین پایش صورت گرفته حجم آب این دریاچه بیش از سه میلیارد و ۶۷۰ میلیون مترمکعب برآورد شده‌است.

وی با بیان اینکه وسعت دریاچه ارومیه در حال حاضر به بیش از ۲ هزار و ۸۸۳ کیلومتر مربع رسیده، اضافه کرد: وسعت این دریاچه نیز نسبت به سال گذشته ۵۳۸ کیلومتر مربع افزایش دارد.

هرچند تراز یک‌هزار و ۲۷۴ متر به عنوان ارتفاع اکولوژیک دریاچه ارومیه اعلام شده ولی این دریاچه در تراز یک‌هزار و ۲۷۲ متر هم شرایط مطلوب خواهد داشت و بیش از ۹۵ درصد کانون‌های ریزگرد آن رفع خواهد شد.

IRNA / Vahid Khademi

University entrance exam held

The first round of the Iranian university entrance exam, simply known as Konkur, was held on Thursday and Friday.

Every year the participants sit for the multiple-choice exam to vie to get the best results possible as the seats at tuition-free public universities are limited.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The weakest person is he who is unable to secure a friend for himself, and weaker than him is he who loses his friend.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:02 Evening: 19:07 Dawn: 3:43 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:15 (tomorrow)

Symphony honoring Iranian martyrs to premier globally, celebrating legacy of sacrifice

Frome Page 1 ▸ Samiei expressed that due to the powerful thematic elements infused into the symphony, there are plans to distribute this impactful project internationally in audio form.

Featuring a poignant musical narrative penned by notable lyricists like Ali Mohammad Mo'adab, Mohammad Mehdi Sayyar, Reza Yazdani, and Milad Erfanpour, the symphony will be vocally rendered by a select group of talented singers including Mohammad Motamedi, Seyyed Mohsen Hosseini, Vahab Ebrahimi, and Hadi Hasan Beigi, he explained.

This project, conceived with meticulous detail, pays homage to the spirit of resilience and sacrifice showcased by Iranian warriors across different historical junctures during the Islamic Revolution of Iran, he said.

It eloquently portrays the struggles and sacrifices faced by revered martyrs throughout the nation's journey, from the genesis of revolutionary movements to the modern era, he added.

The crafted audio rendition of the symphony comprises seven eloquent movements, each dedicated to honoring specific groups of martyrs such as "Martyrs of the Sacred Defense", "Martyrs of Security and Terrorism", and "Children and Mother Martyrs," Samiei highlighted.

This extensive list underscores the comprehensive approach taken by the composers to highlight the diverse narratives within Iran's rich history of heroism and sacrifice, he concluded.

Iranian musician Amir-Hossein Samiei in an undated photo

What's in Tehran art galleries

Photo

* Photos by Maryam Zandi are on view in an exhibition at Dena Gallery.

The exhibition runs until May 10 at the gallery located at 4 Sussan Alley off Qarani St.

Painting

* Guyeh Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by a group of artists including Behdad Najafi, Behnam Bakhshi, Farnaz Ferdowsian, Zahra Azizi, Sepideh Morshedi and Zohreh Solati.

The exhibit will continue until May 2 at the gallery that can be found at No. 39, Lotfi Alley, Mashahir St., near Haft-e Tir Square.

* Tehran-based Hungarian artist Gizella Varga Sinai is showcasing her latest paintings in an exhibition at Vista Gallery.

Entitled "Hafez Divination", the exhibition will run until May 13 at the gallery located at No. 11, 12th Alley, Mir Emad St.

* A collection of paintings by Habib Alian is currently on display in an exhibit at Binesh Gallery.

Named "Green Window", the exhibition runs until May 6 at the gallery located at 22 Khakzad Alley, Vali-e Asr Ave.

* An exhibition of paintings by Elnaz Abbasi is underway at Ebteda Gallery.

Entitled "Homeland", the exhibition will run until April 3 at the gallery located at 35 Farrokhi Alley, near Vali-e Asr Square.

* An exhibition of paintings by Mina Hassani is currently underway at Sharif Gallery.

Titled "Perhaps It Was Me", the exhibit will be running until May 10 at the gallery that can be found at 11 Mahruzadeh Alley, Shariati Ave. near Quds Square.

* Hoor Gallery is currently playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Nosratollah Moslemian.

The exhibition will be running until May 17 at the gallery located at 12 Naeimi Alley, North Mirza Shirazi St., off Motahhari Ave.

* An exhibition of paintings by Akbar Rafiei is currently underway at Afrand Gallery.

The exhibition named "Deserted Quarter" will continue until May 10 at the gallery located at 48 Jalal Hosseini St., Jahan Ara St., off Jalal Ale-Ahmad Highway.

* Javid Gallery is hosting an exhibition of paintings by Maqsud Teimouri.

The exhibition runs until May 6 at the gallery that can be found at 17 Zartosht St., Vali-e Asr Ave.

Calligraphic painting

* A collection of calligraphic paintings by Soleiman Miri is on display in an exhibit at Haft Samar Gallery.

The exhibition will run until May 3 at the gallery located at No. 8, Fifth Alley, Kuh-e Nur St., Motahhari Ave.

Iran participating in Greek festival with 11 short films

TEHRAN-The 7th Photometria in Motion contest, which is underway in Epirus, Greece, has picked up eleven films from Iran in the Short Films section.

The host country has the highest number of participants in this section with 13 films and the Iranian short flicks come next in this regard.

There are also eight other works from France, Mexico, Ireland, Spain, Serbia, Ukraine, and the U.S. present in the section, ILNA reported.

The Iranian films include "Entropy" directed by Bamdad Aghajani and Arian Navabi, "We Are All Dogs" by Aminreza Alimohammadi, "The Single Horn" by Mohamad Kamal Alavi, "Najan" by Mohammad Mehdi Baqeri, "We Are Happy" by Mohamad Boorboor, "Double Bed" by Ali Khameparast Fard, "Tornado" by Meisam Gheisizadeh, "Boycott" by Amin Rafie, "The Land" by Masoud Shahri, "School Benches" by Behrouz Shamshiri, and "From the Painter's View" by Goli Zarei.

A scene from "Najan" directed by Mohammad Mehdi Baqeri

Photometria in Motion contest is part of the Photometria International Photography Festival, which has been running for 16 years. The moving image competition, Photometria in Motion, is being held for the 7th consecutive year.

Detective Maigret back to bookstores with new story

TEHRAN-The Persian translation of the detective fiction "Maigret" written by the Belgian author Georges Simenon has been released in the Iranian book market.

Abbas Agahi has translated the book from French into Persian and it has been brought out by Jahan-e Ketab Publishing House in the 'Neqab' (mask) series, which focuses on detective stories. So far, over 30 books on Maigret stories have been published in the country, Mehr reported.

In this story, Maigret has retired to the Loire Valley while his wife's nephew, Philippe, shows up. He had gotten a job in Paris as a cop, but he has become a suspect in a murder.

He claims to be innocent. Maigret goes with him back to Paris and the story proceeds from there. The readers can see the seedy underbelly of Parisian life and understand how Philippe had gotten involved. Since Maigret is retired, he cannot investigate straightforwardly. Nevertheless, he moves forward, and justice is done.

Georges Simenon (1903-1989) was most famous for his fictional detective Jules Maigret. One of the most popular authors of the 20th century, he published around 400 novels, 21 volumes of memoirs and many short stories, selling over 500 million copies.

Between 1931 and 1972, 75 novels and 28 short stories about Maigret were published. With the creation of Maigret, Simenon renewed the detective novel-genre.

The novels and stories have been translated into more than 50 languages. The Maigret stories have also received numerous film, television and radio adaptations.

The character of Maigret was influenced by Chief Inspector Marcel Guillaume (1872-1963), said to be the greatest French detective of his day, who became a long-time friend of Simenon.

Simenon's writing style was characterized by his ability to create a dark and moody atmosphere, often focusing more on the psychological aspects of the crime rather than the intricate details of the mystery itself.

His novels were known for their simple yet effective language, and his characters were often deeply flawed and complex.

In addition to his Maigret series, Simenon wrote many standalone novels that explored themes such as human nature, isolation, and the dark side of humanity. He was known for his prolific output, often writing a novel in just a few weeks.

Despite his commercial success, Simenon was also a critical favorite, with many of his works receiving high praise from literary critics.

Abbas Agahi, 83, is a prominent translator of French literature. A graduate of Paris-Sorbonne University, he has translated over 80 books, mainly works of detective fiction, which is a subgenre of crime fiction and mystery fiction in which an investigator or a detective investigates a crime, often murder.

In addition to George Simenon, the veteran translator has rendered works by several authors into Persian, including Frederic Dard, Michel Bussi, Olivier Norek, Jean-Christophe Grangé, Fred Vargas, Stanislas-Andre Steeman, Pierre Boileau and Thomas Narcejac among others.

Neqab series of Jahan-e Ketab Publishing House is a rich collection of more than 100 books in the genres of crime, thriller and mystery. Although most of the works are from French literature, there are translations from English and German literature as well.

Tehran institute hosting English, French performance of "Adventure of Asterix and Obelix in Iran"

TEHRAN-Children Mythology World Institute in Tehran is hosting the collaborative show "Adventure of Asterix and Obelix in Iran" for children performed by Laboratory of Audiences of Narenji Theater in English and French.

Written by Sajjad Aqababai, Maryam Mirzai, and Negar Asgharzadeh, and directed by Aqababai, the performance is a loose adaptation of the children book series "Elmer" written by the British author David McKee.

In the book, Elmer is an elephant with yellow, orange, red, pink, purple, blue, green, black and white squares arranged as a patchwork.

He has a cheerful and optimistic personality, and he loves practical jokes.

However, the story of this adaptation revolves around famous comic book characters Asterix and Obelix who, after finding a colorful elephant in Africa, come to Iran.

As the elephant is upset about his color, other elephants decide to turn into a new color each.

The show aims to introduce young audiences to the rich diversity of global languages and personalities. Drawing inspiration from beloved figures such as Asterix and Obelix from France, the production emphasizes peace, tolerance, and the celebration of differences.

In this collaborative show, children audience also get involved in the performance by the actors and help the characters in the story.

The cast includes Maryam Mirzai, Negin Asgharzadeh, Sajedeh Aqadadi, Atieh Saeidi, and Sharareh Noori.

"Elmer" was first published in 1968, and re-issued with re-drawn illustrations in a slightly shortened version in 1989. It was inspired by the mascot of the Bordeaux Zoo (which closed in 1974) in France.

Forty-one book titles have been created since 1989, and the series has sold more than eight million copies in 50 languages around the world.

"Asterix and Obelix" is a bande dessinée comic book series about a village of indomitable Gaulish warriors (including the titular hero Asterix and his friend Obelix) who adventure around the world and fight the odds of the Roman Republic, with the aid of a magic potion, during the era of Julius Caesar, in an ahistorical telling of the time after the Gallic Wars.

The show will go on until June 20.