



Reports suggest Egypt may scrap Camp David Accords over Rafah invasion

Netanyahu Butchering in Rafah to Survive

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Israeli soldiers clean the barrel of a mobile artillery unit, near the Israel-Gaza border, Apr. 30, 2024.

Contracts worth over \$1.1b signed on last day of Iran Oil Show

TEHRAN - Some 15 contracts worth \$1.1 billion were signed on the last day of the Iran Oil Show 2024, Shana reported.

The 28th edition of the Iran International Oil, Gas, Refining, and Petrochemical Exhibition - also known as the Iran Oil Show - came to an end on Saturday.

On the last day of the event, some \$1.1 billion worth of contracts were signed by the Oil Ministry, the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), and the Scientific, Technological, and Knowledge-based Department of the Presidential Office with domestic companies.

The contracts included 11 first production contracts worth \$580 million and four other contracts for indigenizing oil industry equipment valued at over \$520 million.

The signing ceremony of the mentioned deals was attended by Rouhollah Dehghani, the vice president for science, technology, and knowledge-based economy, Oil Minister Javad Oji, and NIOC Head Mohsen Khojasteh-Mehr. Page 4

Global endorsement of Palestine quest to join UN shows Israel complete isolation: Iran

TEHRAN- Iran has applauded the world community for supporting Palestine's application to join the UN, saying that this shows how isolated the Israeli regime has become during its fabricated history.

The remark was made by Nasser Kanaani in a post on X on Saturday, one day after the UN General Assembly unanimously approved a resolution calling on the Security Council to reevaluate Palestine's application to join the UN as a full member.

Kanaani also noted that "the Zionist regime is living in a situation in which it is more isolated than ever throughout its fake history. The American authorities have been left alone in blindly supporting it even among their own people."

"The decisive vote of the international community in support of Palestine's full membership in the United Nations clearly shows the isolation of the Zionist regime and the U.S. in the international community," he added.

Kanaani continued, stating that "an international consensus has been formed more than ever before in support of the oppressed Palestinian people" in response to U.S. officials' overt and covert backing for Israeli atrocities in the Gaza Strip.

He said, "The international community has spoken out against the Israeli regime's genocide, forced relocation, occupation, and child killing." Page 2

Operation True Promise will facilitate Palestinian victory in Gaza: official

TEHRAN - Iran's attack against Israeli positions in the occupied territories was an unprecedented operation in kind which will help Palestinians in their fight against the regime in the besieged Gaza Strip, said the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces for Logistics on Sunday.

"The capabilities and experiences we gained during the Sacred Defense era established the basis of the attack we carried out against Israel.

God willing this will encourage and help Palestinians in their fight against the regime," Major General Mostafa Izadi stated while talking to reporters on the sidelines of a ceremony in Tehran.

The military official added that Iran, as a powerful country, decides when and how it should respond to enemy threats with the help and guidance of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

On April 14, Iran launched a large-scale drone and missile attack against military positions in the occupied territories after Israel struck the Iranian embassy in Damascus earlier in the month.

Congressional threats against ICC are horrible

By Matin Jamshidi

TEHRAN - House Republicans are preparing legislation to sanction International Criminal Court officials as a "precaution" against potential arrest warrants against Israeli officials for the war in the Gaza Strip, according to Axios.

The ICC in The Hague is a permanent global court that has the power to prosecute individuals and leaders for genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

Israeli leaders are begging allies to put pressure on the ICC to avoid issuing an arrest. In a televised news conference on May 1, Benjamin Netanyahu, the criminal-in-chief, outrageously asked "leaders of the (so-called) free world" to use "all the means in their disposal" to halt any ICC actions.

Israel is accused of committing numerous instances of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide in Gaza.

Pro-Israel members of Congress in both parties have warned repeatedly that the ICC risks consequences from the U.S. if it moves forward with the warrants. Page 5

Anthropologist tells Tehran Times:

'Israel is a European settler colony'



By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN - A group of demonstrators supporting the Palestinian cause set up tents on Columbia University's Manhattan campus on April 17 with the singular aim of urging the institution to cut financial ties with Israel.

Fast forward nearly a month, and hundreds of Columbia students have been forcefully arrested following the intervention of riot police by the administration, leading to dozens being either suspended or expelled.

While the unfolding events at the university have been distressing and acrimonious for the involved students, their actions sparked a ripple effect that spread to numerous other universities across the U.S., as well as several institutions in Europe, Asia, and Australia.

Partha Chatterjee, a political theorist, political anthropologist, and historian, served as Professor Emeritus of Anthropology and Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies at Columbia University for many years before retiring three years ago. We reached out to him for insights into the situation at Columbia and other American universities. Page 5

Mashhad to host 5th Global Congress of Imam Reza (AS)

TEHRAN-The 5th Global Congress of Imam Reza (AS) will be held from May 15 to 16 in Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi Province.

Speaking at the press conference for the congress, held in Malek National Museum and Library in Tehran last week, the congress secretary Hojatoleslam Saeid Reza Ameli pointed to the 40-year-long history of the congress, and said: "The first round of the event was held in 1983, and four rounds were organized up to 1993, with very high standard and well-known scholars in attendance. The Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei was also one of the speakers of these events, whose speeches were reflected in the book '250-year-old Human'".

The congress secretary further talked about initiative taken Page 8



History of Palestine narrated in Munir Shafiq's book of memories

By Mohamadreza Seyedagha

TEHRAN-In a ceremony at the venue of Iran Cultural and Press Institute in Tehran on Sunday, the Persian translation of the book "Journey Through the Embers" written by the Palestinian author and thinker Munir Shafiq was unveiled in the presence of the author and several prominent domestic and foreign personalities.

Translated by the Iranian politician Hossein Jaber Ansari, the book Page 8

Cyrus the Great's tomb to undergo restoration

TEHRAN - The majestic tomb of Cyrus the Great, the founder of the Achaemenid Persian Empire (c. 550 -330 BC) in southern Iran, will undergo restoration in the near future.

"Cleaning and preliminary studies to strengthen and restore the exterior walls of Cyrus the Great's Tomb is nearing completion, with a restoration phase set to commence within the next two weeks," the director of the Pasargadae World Heritage site announced on Saturday.

Mohammad Nasiri-Haqiqat highlighted the environmental and biological factors contributing to the deterioration of the exterior walls of the majestic tomb, referring to the impact of the environment on the massive stone monument.

"Factors such as climatic conditions, the activity of lichens and plants, material loss, weather conditions including frost, moisture, and rainfall, Page 6

TEHRAN PAPERS

The obstacles between
Tehran and IAEA

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

In an analysis, Etemad discussed the recent visit of Rafael Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency to Iran and the relations between Tehran and the Agency and said: Fears and hopes have increased for a better understanding between Iran and the IAEA regarding the nuclear program. Both sides are hopeful but they have reacted cautiously to the process of progress in achieving this understanding. Grossi has suggested to the Iranian authorities to focus on very tangible and practical measures that can be implemented in order to speed up cooperation. The conditions of the region and the war in Ukraine and Gaza have caused the negotiations on Iran's nuclear program and reaching a new agreement to face failure so far. A group of observers say that the failure of nuclear negotiations in recent years is mainly due to Iran's mistrust of the West's intentions and the lack of constructive guarantees from the American government. Also, the support of the United States to the Israeli regime has made Iran more suspicious of its intentions. According to Grossi, Iran and the UN nuclear observer continue to negotiate to end the deadlock on many issues between them, and they should "soon" agree on some measures.

Shargh: Taliban pressure on Iran with water lever

In a note, Shargh discussed the dam constructions in Afghanistan and the Taliban's pressure on Iran with the "water" lever and quoted Abolfazl Zohrevand, the former ambassador of Iran to Afghanistan, as saying: The Taliban is a geopolitical tool of the West and their goal is not to establish stability, security, and positive change.

The continuation of Afghanistan's dam construction on the shared rivers between the two countries and its impact on Iran has been predictable. Now the Taliban is cooperating against Iran with the United States. Their idea is that Iran is vulnerable in terms of water and they intend to use water as a lever of pressure against Iran in disrupting the geopolitical capacity of the region and moving people in the eastern borders of Iran. It means they use both the terrorism component and the water component against Iran. Therefore, Iran's diplomacy should be active in response to these actions of Afghanistan because they seek to develop a terrorist movement against Iran, China, Russia, and the entire region.

Iran conveys condolences to Afghanistan flood victims



TEHRAN - Iran has extended its heartfelt condolences to Afghanistan following the devastating flash floods that have swept through the country's northern areas.

In a statement issued by Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani, Iran expressed profound sadness over the natural disaster, which has claimed the lives of at least 300 Afghans and displaced thousands more in recent days.

Iran's Special Envoy for Afghanistan also announced that Iran is prepared to send relief forces, medical teams, and essential aid supplies requested by Afghan authorities.

Hassan Kazemi Qomi shared on his personal social media account: "The recent floods in northern Afghanistan, which resulted in the loss of many lives, have deeply saddened me. While expressing solidarity with the Afghan people, Iran stands ready to send relief forces, medical teams, and necessary aid supplies, which are sincere gifts from the Iranian people to the people of Afghanistan. These will be delivered through organizations like the Red Crescent and the Imam Khomeini Relief Committee to the affected regions as swiftly as possible."

Kayhan: JCPOA was a tool to weaken Iran

In an article, Kayhan dealt with the JCPOA and the recent statements of John Kerry, the Secretary of State of the Obama administration, and wrote: According to JCPOA supporters, the JCPOA could represent how Iran without sanctions can be different economically, socially and dynamically, even in terms of national security. Economic ties and presence in the global economy create security. They claim that sanctions make the society of Iran disappointed and the economic inactive. But in his recent statements, John Kerry called Trump's decision to unilaterally withdraw from the JCPOA a disastrous move and said that this action has reduced the security of Americans. "When Trump rejected the demands of our closest allies and withdrew the United States from the JCPOA, he created a more dangerous region, empowered Iran, and isolated the United States instead of isolating Tehran," he said. The meaning of this statement is that the JCPOA aimed to make Iran weaker and America stronger, and the global consensus against Iran has always intended to constantly put pressure on Iran by threatening sanctions and demanding new blackmail.

Iran: Possible agreement between Iran and the Agency before the meeting of the Board of Governors

In a commentary, the Iran newspaper pointed out the issue of a possible agreement between Iran and the IAEA and wrote: Iran and the IAEA are trying to conclude their consultations to draft the continuation of interactions based on the March joint statement before presenting the periodical report of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency to the Board of Governors. For this reason, it is possible that even in the coming days, Tehran will witness the presence of some officials of the International Atomic Energy Agency for further consultation regarding this draft. According to this draft, the activities and cooperation between Iran and the Agency will be followed in three sectors from now on. The first part is the past cases that were closed in the JCPOA document in the form of the PMD file (probable military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program). The second part is related to the existing conditions, in which the necessary countermeasures will be taken within the framework of safeguards and NPT, and the third part is related to the director general of the Agency, who should be effective as a facilitator and corrector to remove obstacles and solve problems which are mainly political.

He added: "It's important that transparent procedures are in place for accepting humanitarian assistance to ensure fairness. The challenging decision-making process, highlighted by the life-saving efforts during the Herat earthquake, underscores the need for coordinated and transparent approaches in crisis response."

The flash floods, triggered by heavy seasonal rains, have wreaked havoc across several provinces, including Baghlan, Takhar, Badakhshan, Ghor, and Herat.

The World Food Program has reported that over 1,000 houses have been destroyed, leaving countless families homeless and vulnerable. The toll on human life and infrastructure continues to rise as emergency responders struggle to reach remote and inaccessible areas.

More than half of the 600,000 people affected by the floods are children, Save the Children reported in a statement, adding that it is sending a "a 'clinic on wheels' with mobile health and child protection teams to support children and their families." Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid has also expressed sorrow over the catastrophic floods, acknowledging the significant loss of life and widespread devastation. The Taliban has mobilized resources to assist in rescue and relief efforts, but the scale of the disaster presents significant challenges.

The international community has rallied to support Afghanistan in its time of need, with humanitarian organizations and neighboring countries offering assistance. However, the road to recovery will be long and arduous for a nation already grappling with the aftermath of decades of conflict and instability.

Wise consciences around world have awakened to Zionist crimes: Leader advisor

TEHRAN- Ali Akbar Velayati, advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution in international affairs, has said that the international community is witnessing the crimes of the Zionist regime against the people of Gaza, and wise consciences have awakened in the fight against the cancerous tumor.

In a meeting with the Palestinian thinker and author Munir Shafiq on Sunday, he said that it must be known that the Zionist regime is doomed, and the brave Palestinian nation will be victorious.

During the meeting, they discussed regional developments and the Gaza war.

In this meeting, Velayati welcomed Munir Shafiq's efforts of over three decades in defending the rights of the oppressed people of Palestine and fighting against the Zionist regime.

The Leader's aide also congratulated the recent victories of the resistance and the people of Gaza, emphasizing that the people of Gaza and Palestine have proven to the world that victory over injustice is possible with perseverance and resistance.

He noted that "Today, the world witnessed the atrocities and injustices of the Zionist regime against the defenseless people of Gaza, and a wave of awakening in the wise consciences emerged in the fight against this cancerous tumor."

"This is evident in the gradual decline of the regime and the protests of American and European



students, as well as freedom fighters around the world, against the actions and crimes of the ruthless Zionist regime."

Velayati went on to add that the Zionist regime is doomed, and the brave Palestinian nation will be victorious.

Shafiq, expressing his pleasure at meeting with Velayati, thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for its unwavering support for the aspirations of Palestine.

The Palestinian author stated that "today, we are witnessing the formation of a new order in the world, and we must play our role more prominently in this new order. Iran will have an important role in the new order."

He continued by saying that Iran has always been at the forefront of defending Palestine, and Imam Khomeini was the first person to seriously establish the defense of Palestine and the fight against the

Zionist regime in the Islamic world. After him, Ayatollah Khamenei continued his path in supporting the aspirations of Palestine, Al-Quds, and fighting against the Zionist regime.

Shafiq also stated that "we are now entering a new phase where, on one side, the great operation of the Al-Aqsa Storm and, on the other side, the Operation True Promise have shattered the oppressive plans of the Zionist regime and its Western supporters."

"The Islamic world, with the sacrifice of the Palestinians and the support of major and influential countries in the region, under the leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the honorable measures of the Leader, has created a new balance that has defeated the dominance of the colonial powers. The final victory will undoubtedly be with the Palestinians, with the courageous and historic support of the Resistance Front," he stressed.

Shafiq also said that the world is no longer a place where America and France can rule; today, the world has changed, America has lost its power and dominance and is severely weakened.

He expressed that "such a conflict has proven that the Palestinians are strong, and the Palestinian people are ready to sacrifice everything. A strong and united front has emerged, and Iran plays a fundamental role in it."

The Iranian Army's Commander-in-Chief, Major General Abdul Rahim Mousavi, stated on Thursday that operations AL-Aqsa Storm and True Promise hastened the downfall of the Zionist entity oppressing and harming children.

General Mousavi emphasized that the two operations have expedited the demise of the Zionist entity. He expressed confidence that the world will soon be free from the negative impact of this malignant presence.

"The Leader of the Islamic Revolution said in the past that Israel will not see the next 25 years, the operations of AL-Aqsa Storm and True Promise have accelerated the process of destroying the Zionist regime, and the world will soon be saved from the harm of this cancerous tumor," he explained.

Major General Mousavi highlighted the significant impact of these operations, noting that they have reshaped global dynamics. He emphasized that the army is committed to its duties, remaining vigilant against threats and preparing for future challenges.

Global endorsement of Palestine quest to join UN shows Israel complete isolation: Iran

From page 1 ► The resolution urging the reassessment of Palestine's UN membership application was led by the United Arab Emirates (on behalf of the Arab Group), and it was approved by the UN General Assembly on Friday.

Nine nations abstained, while 143 countries voted in support of Palestine's status being upgraded at the international organization.

Additionally, the resolution recognized Palestine as being eligible to become a full member of the UN by granting it additional "rights and privileges."

The largest backer of the Israeli regime, the United States, has so far vetoed pertinent resolutions, obstructing Palestinian attempts to acquire full membership recognition.

Palestine was given the status of non-member observer state by the UN in 2012. A minimum of two-thirds of the General Assembly must then approve an application to

become a full member of the UN.

The resolution was passed at a time when worldwide calls for the recognition of the State of Palestine had become stronger due to the Israeli regime's genocide in the Gaza Strip.

In the conflict that Israel started on October 7, 2023, in response to a retaliation operation by the resistance forces in the Palestinian territory, at least 34,943 Palestinians—mostly women and children—have been killed and 78,572 wounded.

Iran's UN envoy reaffirmed Tehran's unwavering support for Palestine's full UN membership, calling it a critical first step in redressing the historical injustices suffered by the Palestinian people.

The UN General Assembly supported Palestine's application for full membership on Friday, stating that it is eligible to join, urging the UN Security Council to "reconsider the matter favorably."

After the U.S. vetoed the Palestinian request in the UN Security Council last month, the vote by the 193-member UNGA was a global survey of support for the initiative, which would essentially acknowledge Palestinian statehood.

In a statement before the UNGA, Iranian Ambassador Saeed Iravani explained why Iran believes Palestine must be a UN member state.

Iravani said, "The Islamic Republic of Iran acknowledges and supports the General Assembly's decision today. The decision represents a modest yet crucial step in fulfilling the international community's obligations toward the people of Palestine and restoring some of Palestine's inherent rights."

"Palestine has demonstrated its commitment to peace and its ability to fulfill the obligations under the UN Charter. Consequently, it deserves full membership in the United Nations."

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Negotiations, deal possible between Iran, IAEA ahead of BOG meeting

TEHRAN- Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency are working to reach an agreement on a draft before the presentation of the IAEA Director General's periodic report to the Board of Governors on June 7th of this year.

For this reason, it is possible that in the coming days, Tehran will see the presence of some officials from the IAEA for further negotiations on the mentioned draft.

Last week, Rafael Grossi, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, traveled to Tehran and Isfahan to participate in and speak at a nuclear science and technology conference in Iran, as well as to meet with some officials of the country.

During this trip and negotiations, it was agreed that the joint March agreement, which was reached during one of Grossi's trips to Iran, would be the basis for bilateral interaction and cooperation, and negotiations between the deputies of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency began to prepare the draft.

Iran and the Agency are working to conclude their negotiations on the draft before the IAEA Director General's periodic report is

presented to the Board of Governors on June 7th of this year.

According to this draft, Iran and the Agency's activities and cooperation will be followed in three areas. The first part concerns past issues that were closed in the JCPOA document in the form of the PMD (Possible Military Dimensions of Iran's Nuclear Program) file. In this part, the important issue of the two remaining sites and the final resolution of the file will be discussed.

As Eslami stated, the second part concerns current conditions, in which necessary reciprocal measures will be taken within the framework of compliance and the NPT.

And the third part concerns the person of the Director General of the Agency, who must act as a facilitator and mediator to remove obstacles and resolve issues, which are mainly political, in a constructive and successful manner within the framework of the Agency's professional responsibility.

It remains to be seen how the outcome of the negotiations between the IAEA and AEOI will be, and how constructive and successful the process of reaching the text of this draft will be, free from

political maneuvering and with good intentions, within the professional responsibility framework of the Agency.

Las week, Grossi met with Hossein Amir Abdollahian, the Foreign Minister of Iran, in Tehran.

The Iranian foreign minister emphasized that the UN nuclear watchdog must take unbiased and professional positions, urging the U.S. officials to stop inconsistent and erratic actions that could hurt Tehran-IAEA cooperation.

The timing of the IAEA chief's trip to Iran, according to Amir Abdollahian, is ideal, especially in light of the delicate and complex circumstances in the region.

The Iranian foreign minister emphasized the vital role played by the IAEA and stated that stability and security will be restored to the region thanks to Grossi's unbiased and professional views as well as Iran and the Agency's successful collaboration.

According to the Foreign Ministry's website, the top Iranian diplomat then characterized the threats made by the Zionist authorities to use nuclear bombs as an obvious danger to regional and global peace and

security.

He also underscored how crucial it is for the IAEA to react to such alarming claims made by the officials of a regime that is armed with nuclear weapons.

He continued by outlining the history of U.S. non-compliance with earlier agreements about Iran's peaceful nuclear program and asserted that cooperation between Iran and the IAEA should not be impacted by Washington's inconsistent and unstable policies and actions.

Amir Abdollahian also said that while this collaboration should continue in the correct path, both parties must believe that it leads to a breakthrough.

Grossi, for his part, praised Iran's stance of recognizing and expanding the reassuring collaboration with the IAEA and emphasized Iran's critical role in restoring peace and security to the region.

Grossi emphasized that anyone attempting to inflame conflict, tension, and confrontation in the region with any rationale or pretext will fail if Iran and the IAEA work together more closely.

General Zahedi's martyrdom brought about valuable outcomes: Leader

TEHRAN- Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei received members of the family of the martyred Major General Mohammad Reza Zahedi on Sunday.

Mehdi Fazaeli, deputy chief of the Office for the Preservation and Publication of Works of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, announced on his X account that the family of Major General Mohammad Reza Zahedi, who was martyred in the Zionist regime attack on the Iranian consulate in Syria, attended a meeting with Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

The meeting took place 40 days after the martyrdom of Major General Zahedi in Damascus, Syria.

"The martyrdom of Zahedi caused valuable and important consequences," Ayatollah Khamenei said in this meeting, according to Fazaeli.

"The martyr Zahedi was martyred at the hands of the most wretched of creation," the Leader told Zahedi's family.



Family of martyr Zahedi honored with major general rank

The family of martyr Zahedi was honored with the rank of Major General on Sunday.

Martyr Mohammad Reza Zahedi, a distinguished commander of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), and a prominent figure in the IRGC leadership during the Iran-Iraq War in the late 1980s, received this posthumous recognition.

Brigadier General Mohammad

Reza Zahedi and his deputy, Mohammad Hadi Haji Rahimi, were killed in the Israeli attack on the Consular Section of the Iranian Embassy in Damascus on April 1.

In a statement, the IRGC's Public Relations Directorate-General strongly condemned the attack that, it said, had also resulted in the martyrdom of five officers accompanying the commanders.

The statement identified the officers in question as Hossein Amanollahi, Seyyed

Mehdi Jalalati, Mohsen Sedaqat, Ali Aqababayi, and Ali Salehi Rouzbahani.

The attack, it pointed out, had come "on the back of the wolfish Zionist regime's irreparable defeats in the face of the Palestinian resistance and the steadfastness of the people of Gaza, as well as [its] ignominy in the face of the steely resolve of the fighters of the regional resistance front."

Syria's official news agency, SANA, said the strikes were carried out by "the Israeli enemy" and targeted the Mezzeh neighborhood in Damascus.

Born in 1960, Zahedi joined the IRGC in 1980 and was a commander of the elite force during the Iraqi-imposed war in the 1980s.

He was the commander of the IRGC Air Force from 2005 to 2006. Later he served as the IRGC Ground Force Commander from 2006 to 2008.

Zahedi served as a commander of the IRGC Quds Force from 2008 to 2016.

Iran, Russia enhance information security cooperation



TEHRAN- Iranian parliamentarians have revised a cooperation bill between Iran and Russia in the realm of information security.

The decision came during a public session on Sunday, when the members of the Parliament scrutinized the report presented by the National Security Council detailing the collaboration between the Islamic Republic and Russia in this crucial domain.

To ensure thorough examination and legal compliance, representatives opted to seek the opinion of the Constitutional Council

regarding the proposed amendments, ultimately giving their assent to the bill.

Crucially, the amended bill now mandates adherence to the fundamental principles outlined in Articles 77, 125, and 139 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran throughout the implementation of this legislation.

Earlier on April 25, Iran and Russia signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to develop bilateral relations in the security sector.

Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) Ali Akbar Ahmadian and his Russian counterpart, Nikolai Patrushev, put their signatures on the document, during a meeting on the sidelines of the 12th International Meeting of High Representatives for Security Issues in St. Petersburg.

Under the MoU, Tehran and Moscow will work towards boosting their cooperation in various strategic areas.

Iran and Russia, as two close and strategic allies, have over the past years deepened their ties in different fields, including security and defense, despite being under heavy Western sanctions.

The 12th International Meeting of High Representatives for Security Issues was held in St. Petersburg on April 23-25, with the participation of delegates from 106 countries.

In a video address to the event, Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed his country's readiness to forge close cooperation with all interested partners in ensuring global and regional security.

Undoubtedly, international terrorism remains one of the gravest threats of the 21st century, he said, warning that radical groups and intelligence agencies of certain countries perpetrate terrorist attacks in a bid to destabilize sovereign states and fuel interethnic and interreligious discord.

Shiraz to host new nuclear reactor, announces AEOI chief

TEHRAN- The chief of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) has revealed plans for the construction of a nuclear reactor in Shiraz, emphasizing its pivotal role in advancing nuclear science and fostering research and educational endeavors.

Mohammad Eslami underscored the joint efforts aimed at bolstering nuclear sciences and techniques within

the region, highlighting Shiraz as a strategic locale for realizing this vision.

Eslami's declaration followed the recent inaugural International Conference on Nuclear Sciences and Techniques held in Isfahan, marking a milestone with participation from 22 nations.

Reflecting on the event's success, Eslami lauded the caliber

of presentations delivered by approximately 100 foreign and domestic speakers.

He affirmed the conference's pivotal role in shaping the discourse surrounding nuclear science and technology, positioning it as an independent platform free from an arrogant system.

The inaugural International

Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology (ICNST) convened in Isfahan under the auspices of key figures including Mohammad Eslami, the President's deputy, and the head of AEOI.

Notable figures such as Prof. J. Karimi Sabet, leading the Nuclear Society of Iran, also lent their expertise to the conference alongside esteemed foreign guests.

Senior commander warns of enemy plot in cultural sphere

TEHRAN- A high-ranking commander within the Iranian Army has raised concerns over an orchestrated scheme by adversaries in the arena of soft warfare.

Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, serving as the deputy chief of the Iranian Army for coordination, highlighted the imperative of instilling Iranian-Islamic values and cultural norms among Iranian households.

Admiral Sayyari underscored the necessity of promoting the Iranian-Islamic way of life, particularly among the youth, as a defense against external influences.

He emphasized the pivotal role of culture and positive educational approaches in shaping the correct lifestyle, advocating for comprehensive programs tailored to families

and children aimed at fostering meaningful connections to Iranian and Islamic cultural heritage.

On May 10, the admiral underscored the importance of directing the new generation's attention toward content creation in the domain of Sacred Defense.

During his visit to the 35th Tehran International Book Fair (TIBF), Rear Admiral Sayyari emphasized the need to impart values to the youth through diverse means.

Admiral Sayyari stressed the significance of ensuring that the current generation comprehends the journey towards Iran's stability and authority.

Reflecting on the bravery and sacrifices

made by Iranian youth during the Sacred Defense era, he pointed to the loss of 2,500 martyrs who laid down their lives to defend the nation.

The Sacred Defense refers to the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s.

Addressing attendees at the book fair, Sayyari posed a critical question: Are today's youth cognizant of the challenges faced by the Islamic Republic, including threats to its sovereignty and national security aimed at undermining its revolutionary values?

In conclusion, the admiral emphasized the necessity of implementing forward-looking strategies to engage more young people in content production related to the Sacred Defense.

China's new envoy to Tehran officially starts mission

TEHRAN - China's newly-appointed ambassador to Iran, Cong Peiwu, has officially started his diplomatic mission in Tehran.

He arrived in the Iranian capital on Friday to take over the role from his predecessor, Chang Hua, who had served a five-year term in the Chinese embassy in Tehran.

Prior to his assignment in Iran, Cong Peiwu was China's ambassador to Canada and also held a position at the Department of North American and

Oceanic Affairs of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The transfer of Chang Hua to Saudi Arabia is part of a routine diplomatic reshuffle within China's foreign service.

Cong Peiwu's new role as ambassador to Iran comes at a time when both countries are seeking to strengthen their bilateral ties and cooperation on various fronts.

China holds the position of being Iran's primary

trading ally. Both nations face varying degrees of unlawful sanctions imposed by the United States.

In recent times, the two countries' relationship has grown stronger, notably following the reimposition of sanctions on Iran's economy by the U.S. in 2018, subsequent to its unilateral withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear agreement.

In March 2021, the two countries entered into a significant 25-year partnership deal, aiming to bolster their enduring economic and political bond.

Azmoun, Jahanbakhsh's future remain uncertain

TEHRAN - Iranian football prominent stars Sardar Azmoun and Alireza Jahanbakhsh are facing uncertain futures at their respective European clubs. As the season comes to a close, the players find themselves at a crossroads, with their next moves shrouded in doubt.

Jahanbakhsh, at the age of 30, is poised to leave his current club Feyenoord, but his future destination remains unclear. His time at Feyenoord has been largely underwhelming, and the Dutch club announced his departure at the end of the season before the campaign had even concluded. Unlike Taremi, Jahanbakhsh is yet to determine where he'll be playing next season. The Iranian national team captain has expressed his desire to play in Bundesliga, indicating his intention to remain in Europe's top footballing tier.

Azmoun, the 29-year-old striker, finds himself in a similar predicament. His future is uncertain as to whether he'll remain at his current club Roma, rejoin his former team Bayer Leverkusen (who still own his rights), or seek a new team. Azmoun's time at Roma has been on loan, and despite manager Daniele De Rossi's admiration for the player, the hefty price tag associated with a permanent deal could deter Roma from keeping him. Meanwhile, Leverkusen also shows little interest in bringing Azmoun back.

Azmoun has made 27 appearances for Roma in all competitions, scoring three goals. However, he has struggled to find regular playing time due to the presence of Romelu Lukaku and Paulo Dybala in Roma's attack.

Despite the question marks surrounding their club futures, both Azmoun and Jahanbakhsh are adamant about continuing their European journeys. Their ambitions remain firmly set on gracing the biggest stage - Europe's top five leagues. While they acknowledge the interest from Iranian powerhouses, the prestige and competitive fire of European football hold far greater appeal for them.

The upcoming summer transfer window will be a crucial period for these two Iranian players, as they navigate their career paths and strive to continue their journeys at the highest level of club football.

Mirzajanzpour joins Indonesian team Pertamina

TEHRAN - Former Iranian national team player Mojtaba Mirzajanzpour joined Jakarta Pertamina Pertamina volleyball team.

Mirzajanzpour has expressed his satisfaction about new challenge, aiming to elevate his team to pinnacle of Indonesian volleyball.

The outside hitter joined Pertamina from Iranian volleyball team Foolad Sirjan.

The 33-year-old player competed at the 2014 World Championship and Rio 2016 Summer Olympics.

Jakarta Pertamina Pertamina are an Indonesian professional volleyball team. The team were founded in 2012.

Saeid Mehri wins Cypriot First Division with APOEL Nicosia

TEHRAN - APOEL managed a 1-1 draw in the championship final against AEK Larnaca and won its 29th title in its history.

APOEL and AEK Larnaca were tied in the title derby of the last game of the Cypriot league, and the home side won the cup with a draw.

As it happened, the two teams remained at 1-1 in the GSP Stadium and it was Sa Pinto's side that celebrated their 29th championship in its history and the first after five years.

APOEL led by former Esteghlal coach Ricardo Sa Pinto.

Former Esteghlal midfielder Saeid Mehri also was a member of the Cypriot team.

PGPL: Persepolis beat Havadar to move top

TEHRAN - Persepolis football team provisionally climbed to the top of the Iran's Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL) after beating Havadar 2-0 on Saturday.

In the match held in Tehran's Pas Stadium behind closed doors, Issa Alekasir made a brace, scoring goal in each half of the match.

Persepolis moved top with 59 points, while Esteghlal are second with 57 points and one game in hands.

The Blues are scheduled to host Foolad on Monday in Tehran's Azadi Stadium.

Elsewhere, Tractor defeated Gol Gohar 2-0 in Tabriz, Mes and Sepahan shared the spoils in a 1-1 draw in Rafsanjan, Shams Azar edged past Malavan 1-0 in Qazvin and Aluminum were held to a 1-1 draw by struggling Sanat Naft in Arak.

On Monday, relegation-threatened teams Esteghlal Khuzestan and Nassaji will meet together in Ahvaz, Zob Ahan will host Paykan in Isfahan and Esteghlal will play Foolad.

Persepolis eye Tractor star Ricardo Alves: report

TEHRAN - Persepolis football team have reportedly set their sight on signing Tractor Portuguese midfielder Ricardo Alves.

Alves joined the Iranian team in 2022 but has yet to win a single trophy with Tractor.

The former Portugal U20 winger has one year remaining on his current deal and Persepolis will face an uphill task to sign the player. Alves had been linked with a move to Esteghlal last year but the Blues failed to sign him. Tractor have not won Iran's Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL) so far and are unlikely to allow the player to leave in the summer transfer window.

Bonyadifar to officiate Tajikistan v Pakistan in World Cup qualifier

TEHRAN - Moud Bonyadifar has been chosen to officiate the match between Tajikistan and Pakistan in the second round of 2026 FIFA World Cup AFC qualification.

The match will be held in the Pамиr Stadium in Dushanbe on June 11.

Tajikistan sit third in Group G with five points, five points behind leaders Saudi Arabia. Pakistan sit bottom of the table without collecting a single point.

Bonyadifar will be assisted by his compatriots Saeed Qassemi and Alireza Ildorom in the match.

Iran gains two historic medals at Trampoline Asian C'ships

TEHRAN - Two Iranian trampoline athletes made history by winning colorful medals in individual competitions at the 2024 Trampoline Asian Championships held in Hong Kong.

Mam-Abdollah from Iran won the gold medal in the men's individual trampoline event with a score of 54.860 points at the 2024 Trampoline Asian Championships.

Kargar, another Iranian athlete, secured the second position with 52.690 points and received the silver medal.

The tournament took place at the Tsuen Wan Sports Centre in Hong Kong from May 11-12.

Saffron exports at over \$207m in year to March

TEHRAN - Head of the Study, Monitoring and Market Development Office of the Central Organization of Rural Cooperatives of Iran says 21 metric tons of Iranian saffron worth \$207,786,281 were directly exported to 55 countries in the Iranian calendar year ending in late March.

"Despite the growth of exports in terms of weight and the increase in the price of this product in the country and international markets, we have observed a 15.7% decrease in the value of this product," Roohollah Latifi said on Saturday.

The export of saffron with packaging of less than 30 grams experienced good growth, which accounted for 22 percent of the exported saffron in the Iranian calendar year 1402, while in 1401, this amount was about 15.5 percent, he added.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) was the top destination for Iranian saffron with the purchase of 67,120 kg of saffron, followed by China with the purchase of 49,200 kg, Spain with 43,820 kg, and Afghanistan with 21,716 kg and a growth of 198 percent, Qatar with 5,774 kg, Italy with 5,604 kg, Kuwait with 3,301 kg, Oman with 2,993 kg, Bahrain with 2,683 kg, and France with 2,433 kg, he noted.

Saffron is one of the most important export products of Iran. The country aims to increase overseas shipments of the spice by easing restrictions on exporters.

Earlier this month, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations signed a project with the Iranian Minis-

try of Agriculture aimed at warranting access to safe and authentic saffron products.

Titled "Control of Food Authenticity and Management of Food Supply Chain for Successful Achievement of SDGs," the project is in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UN-SDCF), Sustainable Development Goals, and FAO Country Programme Framework (CPF).

The initiative is part of FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) and is set to span two years, concluding in December 2025.

Under the auspices of the Deputy for Horticulture of the MAJ, the project targets the enhancement of a transparent and reliable saffron supply chain, ensuring food and nutrition security and safety for consumers. The initiative seeks to address the challenges posed by the globalization of food supply and the complexities of modern trade, particularly in the saffron industry, where Iran holds a dominant position, contributing approximately 90% of the world's production.

The project's impact will be profound, warranting consumers access to safe and authentic saffron products through the enhanced capacity for immediate response and effective enforcement mechanisms for food quality testing and traceability.

This project represents a significant step towards enhancing transparency and traceability in the saffron industry, ultimately contributing to food security and the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.

Iran's power generation capacity increases by 183MW

TEHRAN - The deputy head of Iran's Thermal Power Plants Holding Company (TPPH) for projects development said the country's nominal power generation capacity has increased by 183 megawatts (MW).

This was achieved after the 2nd gas unit of the Rashed combined cycle power plant in Torbat Heydarieh, east of Iran, was connected to the nationwide power grid and entered the electric energy production cycle with a total investment of €70 million, Mohammad Ramezani stated.

In line with developing the electricity generation in the country and responding to the electricity consumption growth in the Khorasan region, the construction operation of the Rashed Power Plant in Torbat Heydarieh, having two 183-mega-

watt gas units and one 180-megawatt steam turbine, is underway by the MAPNA Power Plants Construction & Development Company, he added.

The power plant is important for supplying safe and sustainable electricity to the nationwide power grid, optimal use of fuel, preventing the loss of the national wealth, preserving the environment, generating employment in the region, and removing the problems of the voltage drop in Khorasan region, Ramezani continued, Mehr news agency reported.

The Rashed Combined Cycle Power Plant is located 12km northeast of Torbat Heydarieh city, Khorasan Razavi province, and its second gas unit was connected to the nationwide power grid on Friday.

Iran becomes OPEC's 2nd producer of liquid fuels

TEHRAN - Overtaking Iraq, Iran has become the second producer of liquid fuels in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

The U.S. Department of Energy revealed that Iran's production of liquid fuels increased by 110,000 barrels in the first quarter of the current year (January to March).

It introduced Iran as the largest producer of these products in OPEC after Saudi Arabia.

The Energy Information Administration, affiliated with the U.S. Department of Energy, in its latest report entitled World Short-Term Energy Outlook, said Iran produced 3.230 million barrels

per day (bpd) of oil in the first quarter of 2024.

Iran's production of crude oil in this period increased by 50,000 barrels per day compared to last year's corresponding period.

The report added that Iran produced over 2.870 million barrels of oil per day in 2023 on average and it is expected that the average production of crude oil in Iran will exceed three million barrels per day in 2024.

The department has put the total production volume of Iran's liquid fuel, including crude oil and condensates, at 4.42 million barrels per day in the first quarter of 2024.

TPO issues licences for opening 9 new trade centers abroad

TEHRAN - Iran's Trade Promotion Organization has issued licences for opening nine new trade centers in various countries, the TPO portal reported.

The new trade centers will be established in Iraq's Basra and Mosul, India's Mumbai, Kazakhstan's Almaty, China's Tianjin, Vietnam's Hanoi, Thailand's Bangkok, and Oman's Muscat.

Iran has five trade centers in Iraq, five others in Russia, three ones in Syria, eight ones in Africa, and some other trade centers in Central Asia, Uzbekistan, Poland, the UAE, and other trade partners, according to a TPO report published earlier this year.

Underlining the significance of commercial attachés in trade ties between countries, the TPO report said that Iran currently has as few as 17 commercial attachés in different countries with the number expected to grow to 30.

Iran will appoint two commercial attaches ones in Brazil and Uzbekistan in the near future, and other Iranian commercial attachés also expected to start their missions in Indonesia, the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, Shanghai, Nigeria, and East Europe countries such as Poland and Serbia, the report added.

Appointing a commercial attaché to Saudi Arabia is also on the agenda of Iran's Foreign Ministry, it said.

Contracts worth over \$1.1b signed on last day of Iran Oil Show

From page 1 ▶ A 200-million-dollar contract signed between the Scientific, Technological, and Knowledge-based Department of the Presidential Office and Sepahan Oil Company was about developing knowledge-based economy in refining industries, renewable energies, and related areas.

A deal for the localization of the coiled tubing was also inked between the Manufacturing, Support, and Procurement Kala Naft Company, a subsidiary of the NIOC, and FALIZ Pajouhesh Pars company with a contract value of \$12 million.

The Manufacturing, Support, and Procurement Kala Naft Company also signed another contract with two Iranian firms of the Behesht Kavir Ariana and the Parand Forged Steel Pipe worth \$800 million on indigenization of



corrosion-resistant alloy (CRA) tubing.

Speaking at the signing ceremony Oji said: "Since the 13th administration took office 2.5 years ago, we have waited neither for foreign companies nor negotiations to provide our needs to goods but have been

looking for meeting our needs at home."

"We have opened the oil ministry doors toward domestic knowledge-based companies," he added.

Commenting on the closing day of the 4-day event, he thanked all peoples who were

involved the event, noting that the Oil Show paved the ground for state oil companies and domestic producers and manufacturers to realize each other's needs.

In addition to 1,500 Iranian firms, some 250 companies from 12 countries took part in the Iran Oil Show 2024, whose motto was "Petroleum industry, production leap, and technological optimization".?

Participants from the upstream, intermediate, and downstream sectors of the oil industry, along with associations and unions of oil industry equipment manufacturers, and first-time producers NTBFs showcased their achievements in the Iran Oil Show 2024, which is the most important Iranian event related to the oil industry.

Iran offers establishment of energy corridor from Russia to Persian Gulf

TEHRAN - Mojtaba Damirchilou, the secretary-general of the Eurasian Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has proposed the establishment of an energy corridor from Russia passing through Iran to the Persian Gulf.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 28th Iran International Oil, Gas, Refining and Petrochemical Exhibition (Iran Oil Show 2024), Damirchilou said according to the geographical location and existing infrastructure in Iran, the capacity is available to pay attention to this issue, as regional countries are also interested in cooperating with Iran in this regard.

The use of existing infrastructure and the creation of

new infrastructure to reach regional markets should be considered.

constructive cooperation has been started to this end and we have a clear vision, the official stated.

He also noted that there is cooperation between Iran and the regional countries in the field of energy export, swap, and transit.

There have been long-standing ties between Iran and the countries of the Eurasian region, as these regions have extensive connections with Iran, the official stated.

The official went on to say that Iran has energy ties with all the countries of the Eurasian region,

explaining that these countries are either oil and gas producers and exporters or energy consumers.

Iran's energy networks are connected with Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, and Armenia, Damirchilou noted, adding that effective communication between Iran and neighboring countries is underway.

"In the field of exporting petroleum products and petrochemical products, there are many capacities and a clear perspective could be imagined," he said.

As for investment and joint cooperation, such as the development of oil and gas fields, a constructive understanding has been formed between Iran

and Russia, as several contracts are being implemented, he said, noting that under the new conditions of Russia due to the oil embargoes on the country, a new field of cooperation has been formed.

In the Iran Oil Show 2024, some companies from the Eurasian states were present to get familiar with the potentials of Iran, and efforts were made to establish professional connections between the experts and representatives of Iranian and Eurasian companies, the official stated.

Inaugurated on Wednesday, Iran OilShow 2024 was open to visitors at the Tehran International Permanent Fairground until Saturday.

Iran Petchem production capacity to exceed 100m tons by Mar. 2025



TEHRAN - The head of the National Petrochemical Company (NPC) said the country's petrochemical production capacity will top 100 million tons by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2025).

Planning is underway to launch 15 small- and large-scale petrochemical projects in the country, according to which, the total number of Iran's petrochemical production units will reach about 80, Morteza Shahmirzaei noted.

With the coordination made in this regard,

the petrochemical production capacity will cross 100 million tons by the end of the current year, the NPC chief added.

Speaking on the sidelines of the 28th Iran International Oil, Gas, Refining and Petrochemical Exhibition dubbed "Iran Oil Show 2024", he said that industrial and production units are prepared to materialize the objectives of the current year's motto of "Production Jump" in the petrochemical sector.

The deputy oil minister added that today, the petrochemical industry tries to invest heavily in the upstream sector to provide its feedstock sustainably.

Moving towards indigenizing the petrochemical requirements should be put on the agenda of the holdings and petrochemical complexes, Shahmirzaei emphasized.

Iran's petrochemical industry accounts for 28 percent of the region's petrochemical capacity and 2.7 percent of the world's petrochemical capacity.

The petrochemical industry plays a crucial role in Iran's non-oil economy, as petrochemical export is the second-largest source of revenue for the country after crude oil. Petrochemical exports already constitute nearly 33 percent of the country's non-oil exports.

According to Shahmirzaei, the company plans to increase its annual petrochemical production capacity to 200 million tons over the next 10 years.

In this regard, Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji said that more than 100 petrochemical projects with a total investment of about \$70 billion have been defined and will be implemented across the country.

Oji noted that the country will also be completely self-sufficient in producing the catalysts used in the petrochemical industry by the end of the current government administration's incumbency (August 2025).

Annual mineral exports hit \$13 billion

TEHRAN - The value of Iran's export of minerals in the previous Persian calendar year (ended on March 19) stood at \$13.7 billion, the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) announced.

According to IMIDRO, the value of Iran's export of minerals and mineral industries in the last year registered a nine percent increase compared to a year earlier.

The report added that \$7.3 bil-

lion worth of the mining and mineral products were imported into Iran from March 2023 to March 2024, showing a 35 percent rise compared to a year earlier, IRNA reported.

Iran is one of the top 10 mineral-rich countries in the world. Having 15,000 mining areas, Iran has the sixth largest zinc, seventh largest copper, ninth largest iron ore reserves, and fifth largest gypsum and barite reserves globally. It also has three of the world's total lead and zinc reserves and huge coal reserves.

Other mineral products such as chromate and manganese are also found in different regions of Iran.

The total proven reserves of Iran's mines are estimated at about 60 billion tons, which is expected to reach more than 100 billion tons with the implementation of the Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry's exploration programs over 500,000 square kilometers of new mineral zones.

Despite the country's huge potential in this area, due to some

issues like the lack of necessary machinery and equipment and the lack of access to financial resources and foreign investment because of the U.S. sanctions, the Iranian mining sector has been struggling to operate at its maximum capacity over the past few years.

So, the government programs for promoting this industry are mainly focused on relying on domestic sources to help the mining sector overcome its current problems and hit its ideal targets.

TEDPIX loses over 15,000 points on Sunday

TEHRAN - TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), lost 15,095 points to 2,193,188 on Sunday, which is

the second day of the Iranian calendar week.

TSE is one of the four Irani-

an stock exchanges, and the most important one. The other three ones are Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), Iran Energy

Exchange (IRENEX), and Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB).

Netanyahu butchering in Rafah to survive

Reports suggest Egypt may scrap Camp David Accords over Rafah invasion

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faces growing isolation, domestic scrutiny and an erosion of trust among Western allies as ongoing military action in the Gaza Strip shows little signs of any success.

Making matters worse for the Israeli premier, reports have surfaced indicating a high level of frustration among authorities in Egypt and suggesting that Cairo may consider scrapping the Camp David Accords over the U.S. failure to pressure the Israelis to avoid any ground offensives in Rafah.

The Israeli occupation forces (IOF) has taken control of the Gaza border crossing with Egypt in Rafah, dividing the city in half and obstructing the entry of what was already a small trickle of aid that had been entering the enclave via Rafah.

Israeli media says Egyptian officials have relayed a message to CIA director William Burns to also pressure Tel Aviv to re-engage in negotiations for a truce to end the regime's unprecedented assault on civilians.

The Camp David Accords were a series of security agreements signed in 1978 between the Israelis and the Egyptians.

The IOF has expanded operations in Rafah, which U.S. President Joe Biden had previously set as a red line. Netanyahu's cabinet has now trampled all over that line, which has, in turn, made Biden come across as being a weak leader in the eyes of the international community.

As the IOF prepares to invade



central Rafah, Palestinians have been forced to flee the southernmost city in the hundreds of thousands after being forced to flee from the north to the south seven months ago by the Israeli military.

Now Palestinians are fleeing to the north of Rafah. They cannot return to northern Gaza as the IOF is locked in fierce battles with the armed wing of Hamas in the same areas of the north including Jabalia and Zeitoun that Israeli leaders declared victory over the Palestinian resistance late last year.

After seven months of bombardment and ground operations, Tel Aviv is back to square one fighting the Palestinian resistance in the north. The same regions the Israeli military started bombing on October 7 for around 20 days before sending ground troops in.

Hebrew media has reported more casualties among Israeli troops in the south as well as the north of Gaza, where reports also suggest warplanes are carpet bombing some of the

regions.

Considering the small size of Gaza and the density of the population - housing over 2.2 million - there is no safe areas for Palestinian families to travel to in what was widely described as the world's largest open-air prison, before October 7.

Some families have moved from one area of the Strip to another at least seven times now, squatting in unsanitary makeshift tents.

Israel's degrading behavior toward Palestinian civilians has been highlighted once again.

UNRWA estimates that since last week around 300,000 people have fled Rafah, saying, "The forced and inhumane displacement of Palestinians continues. There is nowhere safe to go".

In a statement, Volker Turk, the UN high commissioner for human rights warned, "I can see no way that the latest evacuation orders, much less a full assault, in an area with an extremely dense presence of civilians, can be reconciled with the

binding requirements of international humanitarian law and with the two sets of binding provisional measures ordered by the international court of justice."

Israeli diplomats have noted that if Tel Aviv does not recognize the Hamas-led Palestinian government in Gaza and continues massacres against women and children, it could pave the way for a regional war in the Middle East.

The problem essentially lies with the Israeli occupation itself that has dug a hole in Gaza, under Netanyahu's government orders, that it cannot find a way to come out alive.

Tel Aviv also faces widening challenges from the West that include growing distrust of Netanyahu and his ministers who look like they have no strategies in Gaza except a vengeance against the entire civilian population because of the Netanyahu regime's security and intelligence failures on October 7.

As Netanyahu seeks to ensure his own survival, 600 Israeli families of captives held in Gaza have said this is political brinkmanship. Other families have said they don't want their children to fight and get killed for corrupt leadership in Tel Aviv.

Protesters have once again poured their anger on the streets with footage showing Israeli forces violently arresting the family members of captives and soldiers killed in the enclave.

Rafah, as was widely expected, has become the pressure cooker for Netanyahu, who is struggling to cling on to his rule with every passing day.

WORLD HEADLINES

UN urges ceasefire as Gaza death toll tops 35,000

The UN Secretary-General has renewed his call for "an immediate humanitarian ceasefire" in the Gaza Strip as the death toll from Israel's genocidal war on the besieged Palestinian territory surpasses 35,000.

Antonio Guterres added, "The war in Gaza is causing horrific human suffering, devastating lives, tearing families apart, and rendering huge numbers of people homeless, hungry, and traumatized."

UK rejects calls to stop arms sales to Israel

Britain has tried to justify its refusal to halt arms sales to Israel as the regime continues its brutal onslaught in Gaza.

The British foreign secretary said stopping arms sales to Israel if it launches a ground assault on Rafah in the Gaza Strip would strengthen Hamas.

David Cameron claimed that a ban on weapons supplies to the regime would also make a captive deal less likely.

Hundreds killed in Afghanistan flash floods

More than 300 people were killed in flash floods that ripped through multiple provinces in Afghanistan, the UN's World Food Programme said, as

authorities declared a state of emergency and rushed to rescue the injured.

Many people remained missing after heavy rains sent roaring rivers of water and mud crashing through villages and across agricultural land in several provinces, causing what one aid group described as a "major humanitarian emergency".

Erdogan: Hitler jealous of Netanyahu's genocidal methods

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Sunday that Adolf Hitler would be "jealous" of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for Israel's "genocidal methods" in the Gaza Strip.

"Netanyahu has reached a level that would make Hitler jealous with his genocidal methods. We are talking about Israel; which targets ambulances, hits food distribution points, and opens fire on aid convoys," he said.

UK faces legal challenge over Rwanda scheme

The UK Home Office is being threatened with legal action over concerns that children face being sent to Rwanda because officials wrongly identify them as adults, according to the Observer.

The department is being challenged over the treatment of those who say they are children but are labeled as adults by immigration officials after an initial assessment of their physical appearance and demeanor.

'Israel is a European settler colony'

Retired Columbia professor discusses anti-Israeli student protests with Tehran Times

From Page 1 ▶ The full text of the interview is as written below:

You have taught for over two decades in American universities. In your experience, does Israel have a significant influence on the teaching and research on Palestine in American universities?

From what I know of the major US universities, teaching and research on specific topics are never influenced directly by outside agencies.

They are left entirely to the academic judgment of the professor.

Broad trends of research are, of course, affected by the availability of funding in particular areas and course offerings shaped by the preferences of students.

Teaching and research on Palestine have been relatively limited in U.S. universities.

As far as I know, Columbia University has the only Centre for Palestine Studies in the entire country.

However, the history and politics of the Middle East are much studied and taught. I am not aware of any direct Israeli influence in that academic field.

But the ideological balance in the courses offered and research conducted would, I think, reflect in general the prevalent American attitude towards Israel.

What are your thoughts on the allegations that the recent pro-Palestine protests at American universities are motivated by antisemitism?

I was not present in New York during the recent events. But I have followed them closely in the media

as well as in email conversations with faculty and former students. I think the way accusations of antisemitism have been flung at the protesters is utterly absurd.

My own sense is that during the first stage of demonstrations, various abusive epithets were shouted from both sides.

As soon as some Jewish students complained of antisemitism and a lack of security, the protest organisers became extremely careful not to provide any opportunity for the charge of antisemitism to be levelled against them. Even when repeatedly provoked by pro-Israel agitators, the protesting students did not react. In the end, sections of the media and politicians began to equate antisemitism with any opposition to Israel's policies. This is a travesty.

How do you think the heavy-handed response by university administrators to protesting students will impact the academic environment in the U.S.?

I think the atmosphere in many U.S. universities will remain disturbed for some time.

The protests may die down over the summer. But what has been severely damaged is the trust between the faculty and the administration.

The authoritarian use of the armed police to break up peaceful protests and the arrest of hundreds of students has shocked the faculty. This is certain to affect the academic atmosphere and the smooth running of the university.

I fear the faculty and administration will continue to clash over a lot of issues.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Congressional threats against ICC are horrible

Moves to protect Netanyahu, criminal-in-chief, from ICC justice send shockwaves across the world

From page 1 ▶ Of course, it was predictable that the U.S., as an accomplice in Israel's war in Gaza, would react against any possible action by the ICC against Israeli leaders. Sir Geoffrey Nice KC, who led the prosecution of the former Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic for war crimes at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), has warned that the ICC could come under political pressure to reconsider its decision-making.

House Foreign Affairs Committee Chair Michael McCaul confirmed the legislation in the works and told Axios he and other GOP lawmakers have been in contact with ICC chief prosecutor Karim Khan.

"We want to emphasize to him that going down this road of arrest warrants is a really bad idea and it's going to blow up the relationship," McCaul said.

McCaul said the bill would be a House companion to Republican Sen. Tom Cotton's legislation, introduced last February, to sanction ICC officials involved in probes of U.S. allies, such as Israel.

Cotton, a notorious person for his naivety and hawkishness, led a dozen Senate Republicans in a letter to Karim Khan on May 6 warning that arrest warrants "will result in severe sanctions against you and your institution."

Among those signing the letter are other hawkish senators, including Ted Cruz and Marco Rubio.

Astonishingly, they claimed in the letter that "such actions are illegitimate and lack legal basis".

Like Netanyahu, House Speaker Mike Johnson is shuddering over possible arrest warrants, claiming, "It is disgraceful that the Interna-

tional Criminal Court is reportedly planning to issue baseless and illegitimate arrest warrants against Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and other senior Israeli officials."

The Biden administration also claims that the ICC does not have jurisdiction to investigate Israel. But on March 18, 2023, when the ICC issued an arrest warrant for Russian President Vladimir Putin - whose country is not also a party to the Rome Statute - President Biden said it "makes a very strong point" and that Putin "clearly committed war crimes".

Though Israel isn't a member of the ICC, the ICC has ruled that since 2015 it does in fact have jurisdiction over the occupied West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza after the Palestinians ratified the Rome Statute as the State of Palestine.

Moreover, the charges against Putin are in no way comparable to what Netanyahu has done in Gaza.

In his ruling against Putin, Prosecutor Karim Khan said children "can't be treated as spoils of war" as Russia has transferred almost 20,000 Ukrainian children to areas under its control. But Israel has far slaughtered at least 10,000 children. Add to this number those children who have been maimed for life.

Given such bitter realities, such reprehensible remarks by hawkish Congress members and warnings against the ICC and its chief are abhorrent and disgraceful.

Such shameful support for the Israeli butchers depicts a dreadful world. The threats against the ICC inherently show that these Congresspersons are racist, bigoted, heartless, and as bloodthirsty as Netanyahu and his lieutenants.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Doomed to failure

Protesters call for ceasefire in Gaza, Netanyahu's resignation as the Israeli army fails to defeat Hamas

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN- A growing number of people inside Israel are joining anti-war protests as the regime's brutal onslaught on the Gaza Strip rages on.

Thousands of people demonstrated in several cities including in Tel Aviv at the weekend calling for an end to the Gaza war.

The protesters demanded that Israel agree to a truce deal with Hamas to secure the release of captives. They also called for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's resignation and early elections.

Hundreds of demonstrators also chanted against Netanyahu outside his official residence in al-Quds (Jerusalem), accusing the premier and his cabinet of abandoning the captives.

"Alive, alive, we want them alive!" they chanted, according to Israeli media.

In Tel Aviv, police clashed with protesters and made arrests.

Such protests have become a regular occurrence in Israel over the past months.

Israel declared war on Gaza after Hamas carried out a surprise military operation in southern Israel on October 7.

More than 1,100 people were killed and nearly 250 others were taken captive in the attack. Dozens of them still remain in Gaza following a swap deal in November last year.

Despite growing pressure on Netanyahu to reach a ceasefire deal with Hamas, the Israeli army continues to carry out deadly strikes across Gaza. It is also pressing ahead with an offensive in Rafah despite warnings by UN agencies and rights organiza-

tions about the risk of a humanitarian catastrophe there.

Netanyahu has repeatedly said the Israeli war on Gaza is aimed at freeing captives and destroying Hamas. He has vowed to continue the war until "total victory" over the resistance movement.

However, Israelis say the regime's continued military operations endanger the lives of captives. They believe Netanyahu is prolonging the war to keep himself in power.

Earlier this month, several Israeli military officers told Middle East Eye that Israel has abandoned its goal of freeing the captives.

One of the officers, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the Netanyahu cabinet's aims are unclear and the objective of rescuing captives and destroying Hamas has "collapsed".

The officer said the war has become "personal" for Netanyahu.

Similar remarks have been made by Israeli opposition leaders and the families of captives.

On Saturday, opposition leader Yair Lapid pledged to work toward the fall of Netanyahu's cabinet and the return of captives.

"My job is to do everything so that at the right moment this power of yours will turn into political change," Lapid wrote on X.

Lapid's statements shed light on the growing political divisions among Israeli officials.

These rifts indicate that Israel has failed to achieve its goals on the battlefield despite slaughtering over 35,000 Palestinians in Gaza.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Restoration project worth \$1.7 million announced for Bazaar-e Vakil

TEHRAN - Fars province's tourism chief has unveiled plans for a substantial restoration project aimed at preserving the historic Bazaar-e Vakil in Shiraz.

"Bazaar-e Vakil will be restored with a budget of 100 billion tomans (some \$1.7 million).... This initiative seeks to safeguard the architectural and cultural heritage of the centuries-old bazaar," Mohammad Sabet-Eqlidi said.

Paying a visit to the bazaar on Sunday, the official highlighted the commencement of preliminary work for the ambitious restoration project.

He stressed the necessity for a meticulous plan to address the intricacies of the restoration process effectively.

The project is structured into 14 distinct phases to ensure comprehensive coverage and meticulous attention to detail, he added.

According to ISNA, the Vakil Bazaar was inscribed on Iran's National Heritage List in 1973, underscoring its significance as a cultural landmark of immense historical value.

With its atmospheric maze of meandering alleys behind the screaming street traders, Bazaar-e Vakil has always been a bustling tourist destination in downtown Shiraz.

Seray-e Moshir - a restored caravanserai, Shamshegarha Bazaar - a tribal handicraft arcade, and Seray-e Mehr Teahouse - a distinctive place to make a pause, may be the high-

lights of a stroll through the bazaar.

Today, the bazaar is home to almost 200 stores selling carpets, handicrafts, spices, antiques, leatherwork, and clothes amongst others. Its broad vaulted passageways are designed in such a way that ensures the interior remains cool in summer and warm in winter-time.

While most of its structures and market-places are associated with the 18th century onwards, the history of trade in the bazaar is rooted much deeper in time, as narratives say the market was originally established by the Buwayhids in the 11th century CE.

Some visitors refer to Iranian bazaars as "a city within another" because most of them embrace mosques, madrasas, bathhouses, guesthouses, banks, once thriving caravansaries, and residential neighborhoods.

In the Iranian culture, bazaars have been traditional public spaces in Iranian cities with great contributions to commercial activities in urban life. Meanwhile, their extended activities can be traced to social, cultural, political, and religious roles.

Shiraz is home to some of the country's most magnificent buildings and sights. Increasingly, it draws more and more foreign and domestic sightseers flocking into this provincial capital, which was the literary capital of Persia during the Zand dynasty from 1751 to 1794.

Bulgarian tourists to set foot in Tabas Geopark

TEHRAN - A group of Bulgarian tourists has scheduled to explore Tabas UNESCO Global Geopark, a captivating natural site situated in the northwest of South Khorasan province.

On Sunday, a provincial official in charge of tourism, outlined that a group comprising 16 travelers from Bulgaria is anticipated to embark their journey in South Khorasan.

Morteza Arabi added that the excursion is slated to commence on May 15.

Arabi also highlighted that this burgeoning interest in inbound tourists, particularly in the historical and natural landmarks of South Khorasan, marks a pivotal moment in the province's efforts to attract foreign visitors.

Furthermore, the official emphasized the pivotal role of bilingual and up-to-date content generation as a linchpin in the endeavor to entice inbound tourists.

Such fam tours stand prominently on the agenda of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Ministry, reflecting its commitment to fostering sustainable tourism growth and cross-cultural engagement.

Situated in South Khorasan province, the gigantic Tabas Geopark was officially registered in the listing of UNESCO Global Geoparks (UGGp) in 2022.

The geopark includes 50 geo-sites, a variety of scenic landscapes, and untouched terrains with the mysterious Kal-e Jeni (canyon of Jinn)

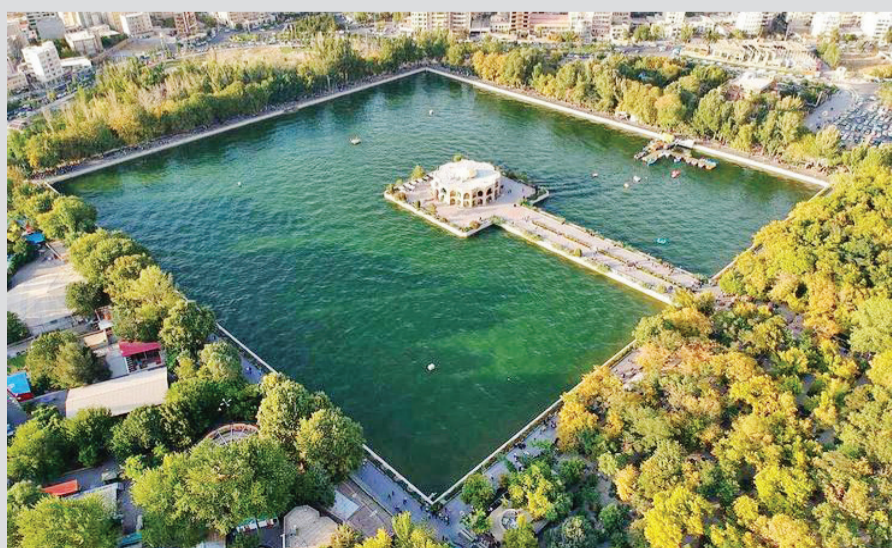
located in Azmighan village. Some say that Kal-e Jeni is still unexplored by many potential travelers and adventurers who may not even know such a wonderful attraction exists on Earth!

A UNESCO definition of the Global Geopark is a unified area with a geological heritage of international significance. Geoparks use this heritage to promote awareness of key societal issues related to our dynamic planet. Experts believe that the majority of geoparks help raise awareness of geohazards, including volcanoes, earthquakes, and tsunamis, and much help disaster mitigation strategies with local communities. UNESCO Global Geoparks have multiple aims which included the protection and conservation of its territorial geo-heritage and the culturally and environmentally sustainable development of the area.

Furthermore, a UNESCO Global Geopark is expected to foster socio-economic development that is culturally and environmentally sustainable, directly affecting the area by improving human living conditions and the rural environment. UNESCO Global Geoparks has multiple aims which included the protection and conservation of its territorial geo-heritage and the culturally and environmentally sustainable development of the area.

According to the UN cultural body, many UNESCO Global Geoparks have strong links to the arts communities, where the synergy released by bringing science and the arts together can yield surprising results.

Iran in frames



Located in the historic city of Tabriz, Elgoli Park draws in countless visitors daily. The park boasts a delightful fairground surrounding an artificial lake, with a picturesque pavilion at its heart, evoking the grandeur of a Qajar-era palace.

Cyrus the Great's tomb to undergo restoration

From Page 1 ▶ as well as cavities resulting from the activity of cyanobacteria, which promote the growth of lichens, have all led to damage on the site."

Nasiri-Haqiqat stated that specialists are currently assessing the various types of damage affecting the site.

"Maps have been prepared to determine the extent of damage and to provide solutions and required materials for each of the issues identified. A final summary will be prepared within the next two weeks to enter the implementation phase, which will involve cleaning and strengthening the site."

Proud and alone on the Morghab Plain, the Tomb of Cyrus is the first of the monuments encountered on entering the site of Pasargadae. The tomb consists of a modest rectangular burial chamber perched on six-tiered plinths. Its unique architecture is a totem of conquest, combining elements of all the major civilizations captured by Cyrus.

During the Achaemenid period, the tomb was surrounded by gardens and kept secure, but this was no deterrent to the armies of Alexander the Great who plundered the site - an act that greatly distressed the Macedonian conquerors.

In addition, Nasiri-Haqiqat noted that tasks in the initial phase will include removing dirt and vegetation from crevices, physically removing lichens, strengthening and bonding



loose stone fragments with water-based acrylic adhesives, and filling spaces prone to moisture penetration with lime-based materials.

The official said the completion of this project is estimated to take two years with an approximate budget of 100 billion rials (some \$170,000).

"The first phase will primarily focus on sensitive areas of the tomb prone to erosion and is expected to take three to four months." He also mentioned that since lime-based materials and acrylic adhesives are readily available for the initial phase, there is no need for imports....

Highlighting the history of restoration efforts on Cyrus the Great's Tomb, Nasiri-Haqiqat noted that the tomb has previously undergone four restoration projects, the first of which was executed between 1929 and 1936.

Established in the 6th century BC within the heartland of the Persians, today known as the province of Fars in southwestern Iran, Pasargadae emerged as the earliest capital of the Achaemenid Empire.

Its archaeological remnants, including palatial structures and meticulously arranged gardens, along with the mausoleum of Cyrus, exemplify the inaugural phase of Achaemenid art and architecture and serve as a remarkable testament to the Achaemenid civilization in Persia. The royal ensemble, known as the "Four Gardens," conceived in Pasargadae, laid the groundwork for subsequent Western Asian architectural and design endeavors.

Covering an expansive 160 hectares, the archaeological expanse of Pasargadae showcases some of the earliest expressions of Persian art and architecture. Within its boundaries lie notable landmarks

such as the compact limestone tomb situated on the Morgab plain, once housing the gilded sarcophagus of Cyrus the Great; Tall-e Takht, colloquially known as "Solomon's Throne," a formidable fortified platform atop a hill that later evolved into a sprawling citadel fortified with substantial mud-brick defenses; and the royal ensemble, comprising several palatial structures originally nestled within a meticulously planned garden layout known as the "Four Gardens." Pasargadae's innovative design, featuring formal divisions by waterways or pathways, laid the groundwork for the Persian Garden concept characterized by refined detailing and elegant verticality.

Pasargadae stands as an extraordinary testament to the grandeur of the Achaemenid civilization.

Spanning from the eastern Mediterranean and Egypt to the Hindus River in India, the vast Achaemenid Empire epitomized a pioneering approach to respecting the cultural diversity of its subjects. This ethos found expression in the empire's architectural endeavors, which synthesized influences from various cultures.

Pasargadae embodies the nascent phase of this architectural evolution into a distinctly Persian style, later reaching its zenith in the UNESCO-listed city of Persepolis.

Iran to launch sea services linking major islands to Dubai and Oman

TEHRAN - Iran is set to launch new marine services connecting the Islands of Kish and Qeshm to Dubai and Oman in the Persian Gulf.

"We seek to establish maritime services dedicated to tourists and recreational affairs between the islands of Kish and Qeshm and destinations in Dubai and Oman," Hojatollah Abdolmaleki, the secretary of Iran's Free Zones High Council, said on Sunday.

Abdolmaleki stated that the development of maritime tourism and passenger transportation is a priority for the High Council of Free Trade Zones.

He emphasized that the islands of Kish and Qeshm have considerable potential to establish maritime routes to countries on the southern shores of the Persian Gulf.

Abdolmaleki further underscored the need to develop domestic maritime routes. Moreover, he highlighted a growing interest from private sector investors.

Emphasizing the safe environment provided by the free trade zones to prevent capital flight, Abdolmaleki underscored the role of domestic and international tourists in the

economic development of these areas.

Tourism plays a pivotal role in the socio-economic development of both Kish Island and Qeshm Island, two prominent destinations in Iran's Persian Gulf. Known for their natural beauty, cultural heritage, and strategic locations, these islands attract visitors from both domestic and international origins, contributing significantly to the local economies and fostering cultural exchange.

Kish Island, often referred to as the "Pearl of the Persian Gulf," is renowned for its pristine beaches, vibrant coral reefs, and duty-free shopping opportunities. With a plethora of luxury resorts, water sports activities, and entertainment options, Kish Island has emerged as a premier tourist destination in the region. The island's rich history, evidenced by ancient archaeological sites such as Harireh Ancient City and the underground Kariz-e-Kish aqueduct system, adds a layer of cultural depth to its allure. Moreover, Kish Island's status as a free trade zone has attracted investors, leading to the development of world-class

infrastructure and amenities catering to the needs of tourists.

Qeshm Island, the largest island in the Persian Gulf, boasts a diverse array of natural attractions, including the mesmerizing Hara forests, unique geological formations like the Chahkooh Canyon, and pristine beaches such as Stars Valley Beach. Qeshm's designation as a UNESCO Global Geopark underscores its significance as a site of geological and ecological importance. Beyond its natural wonders, Qeshm Island is steeped in history and culture, with landmarks like the Portuguese Castle and the historic Laft Village providing glimpses into its storied past. The island's traditional handicrafts, such as Qeshm's distinctive handwoven textiles and wooden souvenirs, offer visitors the opportunity to engage with local artisans and support sustainable tourism initiatives.

Experts say that for both islands of Kish and Qeshm, the tourism industry plays a vital role in job creation, revenue generation, and infrastructure development.

Yazd to celebrate Cultural Heritage Week with diverse programs

TEHRAN - Yazd province gears up for a vibrant celebration of national Cultural Heritage Week with diverse programs, set to captivate locals and visitors alike.

"In celebration of International Museum Day and Cultural Heritage Week," a provincial official in charge of cultural heritage stated. "40 diverse programs will be held in museums and historical buildings throughout Yazd Province."

Abdulmajid Shakeri emphasized that the aim of these programs is to increase society's heritage literacy, promote public awareness and contribute to the enhancement of national identity along with social vitality.

Referring to this year's theme for International Museum Day set by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) as "Museums for Education and Research", Shakeri added that this theme underscores the pivotal role of

cultural institutions in providing a comprehensive educational experience.

"The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts has designated the theme for this week as 'Cultural Heritage, Public Participation and Social Responsibility,' allocating each day to specific activities," Shakeri further noted.

He also elaborated on some of the planned events, including activities honoring the Persian language on Ferdowsi Commemoration Day.

The official concluded by mentioning the timeline of the events, pinpointing that the diverse programs scheduled to take place from May 17 to 23, across the province.

Yazd province, located in central Iran, boasts a rich cultural heritage spanning millennia. Renowned for its ancient cit-

ies, exquisite architecture and deep-rooted traditions, the province stands as a testament to Iran's diverse cultural tapestry.

One of the province's most notable features is its historic city of Yazd, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. With its maze-like alleys, distinctive wind catchers (badgir) and adobe structures, Yazd preserves the architectural marvels of ancient Persia.

The city's Jameh Mosque, dating back over a thousand years, stands as a masterpiece of Islamic architecture, while its Zoroastrian Fire Temple serves as a testament to the region's pre-Islamic heritage.

Yazd is also celebrated for its vibrant handicrafts industry, producing intricately designed carpets, textiles, ceramics and metalwork. Traditional crafts such as silk weaving, pottery



and copper engraving continue to thrive, passed down through generations of skilled artisans.

In recent years, Yazd has emerged as a popular tourist destination, attracting visitors from around the world eager to explore its historical sites, experience its unique culture and immerse themselves in its timeless charm. With its commitment to preserving its cultural legacy and promoting sustainable tourism, Yazd province continues to enchant and inspire all who venture within its ancient boundaries.

Iran is top medical device manufacturer in West Asia: official

TEHRAN –With 50 percent of medical devices being domestically manufactured, Iran holds the first place in West Asia for producing medical equipment both in terms of quantity and diversity, a health ministry official has said.

Iranian-made medical devices worth around \$50 million are exported to 40 countries annually, IRNA quoted Ahmad Moslemi as saying on Saturday.

Over the past five years, the number of manufacturing companies has increased fivefold with some 2,000 companies operating now, he noted.

Moreover, the official said, the number of products has increased fourfold. Equipment such as implants as well as advanced medical devices are manufactured in the country as well.

In addition, the country's medical centers have been equipped with some 15,000 new hospital beds have been added to with 90 percent of the equipment produced locally, Moslemi added.

Iran Health Expo

The 25th international exhibition of medical, dental, pharmaceutical, and laboratory equipment (Iran Health Expo 2024) will be held from May 18-21 at the Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds.

Many domestic and foreign companies will take part in the exhibition, and 40 percent of attendees are



manufacturers.

Iran Health aims to develop health technologies in the country, enhance the global competitiveness of Iranian knowledge-based companies in markets, expand the exports of knowledge-based and technological firms in the health sector, and form domestic and foreign technological consortia in Iran and global markets, IRNA reported.

Sharing experiences of health technology development as well as attracting foreign investment in the field of health are among other important goals of holding this exhibition.

Iran Health aims to showcase the country's latest products and achievements in the fields of medical engineering; dental, medical, ophthalmic, and orthopedic equipment; pharmaceuticals; home care products; remote therapy; physiothera-

py; surgical and medical emergency equipment; sonography and endoscopy; medical applications; electrical equipment; beauty products; and plastic surgery.

A total of 240 foreign delegates and 55 foreign companies from 12 countries including Germany, Italy, and Switzerland, will be participating in the exhibition.

Rise in medical exports

More than 70 percent of medical equipment and 100 percent of normal hospital beds are domestically made, Abdolreza Yaqoubzadeh, the head of Iran's Union of Medical Equipment Manufacturers and Exporters, said in January.

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, IRNA quoted Yaqoubzadeh as saying.

He 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.

Iran experienced a significant rise in exports of medicine and medical equipment in the first four months of the past Iranian calendar year that ended on March 19.

"Exports of pharmaceuticals and medical equipment grew by 300 percent in the first four months of the year," IRNA quoted Heidar Mohammadi, the head of the Food and Drug Administration, as saying.

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

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

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

Rotavirus, pneumococcal vaccinations cover more provinces

TEHRAN – The national vaccination program against rotavirus and pneumococcal started on Sunday in seven more provinces of the country.

The seven provinces are Khorasan Razavi, South Khorasan, North Khorasan, Sistan-Baluchestan, Hormozgan, Bushehr, Khuzestan, and Ilam, IRNA quoted deputy health minister Hassan Farshidi as saying.

Rotavirus is the most common cause of diarrhea in infants, under the age of one, and their hospitalization, the official noted.

Annual rotavirus vaccination prevents the hospitalization of over 50,000 individuals. It will also prevent some 1,200 deaths caused by severe cases of diarrhea.

High-risk regions

On April 13, Pedram Pak-Aein, an official with the health ministry said, "The vaccination program against pneumococcal and rotavirus will focus on tropical and southern regions of the country."

"The immunization initiative will begin in the coming weeks in provinces that are most vulnerable to these diseases," IRNA quoted Pak-Aein as saying.

Rotavirus vaccination program will target tropical, southern, and southeastern provinces, while pneumococcal vaccination will be extended to southern provinces as well, he added.

The nationwide implementation of the vaccination program will commence as soon as needed pneumococcal and rotavirus vaccines are provided, Pak-Aein further noted.

The vaccination program to combat pneumococcal and rotavirus kicked off in February after being missed from the immunization schedule for a decade.

The program was officially launched in the city of Bandar Khamir, southern Hormozgan province, IRNA reported.

On February 19, Pak-Aein said, "The vaccination program to combat pneumococcal has been added to the country's immunization program."

It will be implemented in several phases, with the priority given to underdeveloped areas, he added.

Some 3.5 million doses of pneumococcal vaccine have been imported. In the first phase, the vaccines will be distributed in deprived areas of the southern provinces of the country, the official explained.

Pak-Aein went on to say that vaccination against rotavirus, started on February 20, aims to prevent the hospitalization of 10,000 children per year.

Knowledge-based companies and domestic manufacturers will soon produce both pneumococcal and rotavirus vaccines and present them to the market within the next few months, he added.

Vaccination against rotavirus, pneumococcal

The national vaccination plan aiming to combat rotavirus and pneumococcal, which most notably cause diarrhea and pneumonia respectively, was said to be added to the country's immunization

program on January 21.

Rotavirus can cause severe watery diarrhea, vomiting, fever, and abdominal pain. Children who get rotavirus disease can become dehydrated and may need to be hospitalized.

Babies can get three doses of vaccine at the 2nd, 4th, and 6th months of life. The vaccine is administered by putting drops in the child's mouth, IRNA quoted Mohsen Zahraei, the head of the preventable diseases department of the Ministry of Health, as saying.

The pneumococcal vaccine helps protect against some types of bacterial infections that can cause serious illnesses like meningitis (an infection in the brain and spinal cord) sepsis (a life-threatening reaction to an infection) pneumonia (an infection in the lungs).

Zahraei further noted that pneumococcal vaccine can be injected when babies are 2, 4, and 12 months old.

"We hope to be able to develop these two vaccines soon. Once the vaccines pass the quality control trials, and obtain the Food and Drug Organization approval, we will be able to use the domestic products in the national vaccination program," Zahraei said.

"Since the development of a vaccine is a complex process and takes a lot of time, the vaccines are imported now.

Annual vaccination worldwide prevents the death of two and a half million children, which shows the very high effectiveness of vaccines," he added.

Iran, Russia hold joint course on sustainable development

TEHRAN –Iran and Russia have held a joint international course titled 'Entrepreneurship and Future Skills' aimed at fostering sustainable development and commercialization of ideas.

The three-month course was held at Amir Kabir University of Technology in Tehran, IRNA reported.

It was organized by the Russian Academy of Foreign Trade and the Management faculty of Amir Kabir University of Technology.

Expanding international cooperation is one of the most important strategies of the management faculty of Amir Kabir University of Technology.

The objective of the course was to encourage teamwork to learn and generate ideas in business and sustainable development. Therefore, the course was designed based on learning and enhancing international interaction and participation via online collaboration between professors and students of the two countries.

A total of 30 Iranian and 30 Russian students took part in the course which was conducted with the cooperation of professors from both nations.

Completing a preliminary course, students in Iranian and Russian teams chose topics related to the challenges of sustainable development as well as the macro issues of their respective countries.

The students analyzed the topics and then conducted a comparative analysis of the situation in the two countries.

The course helped student groups develop entrepreneurial business ideas in line with sustainable development goals.

Tehran, Moscow to set up joint innovation center

Iran and Russia will soon establish a joint innovation center, the deputy science minister said on March 3.

"Launching the joint innovation center is at the final stages and will be inaugurated soon," Hassan Zamanian said in a meeting in Tehran with his Russian counterpart Konstantin Mogilensky.

"We also proposed setting up a center at the Russian ministry of science to deal with problems faced by Iranian medical students in Russia," he added, noting that the proposal was welcomed by the Russian side, IRNA reported.

Mogilensky, for his part, referred to the high capacity of Iranian universities in the field of research and technology, and said, "The areas of cooperation will be determined in the joint committee to be signed later by the high officials of the two countries' ministries of science."

He went on to say that Iranian and Russian universities have already signed dozens of memorandums of understanding.

Persian and Russian languages are already taught in universities reciprocally. The expansion of these trainings can further strengthen the relations between Russia and Iran.

Geographical proximity and Western countries' sanctions on the two countries are the reasons for the two countries' alliance in recent years, Mogilensky added.

He further noted the scientific and academic cooperation between the two countries has a long history that needs to be promoted.

After the meeting, the Russian delegation vis-



ited Sharif University of Technology.

Planning to recognize higher education degrees

Iran and Russia are about to reach an agreement on mutually recognizing higher education degrees, Hadi Goudarzi, the counselor of the Iranian Embassy in the Russian Federation, said in January.

Once the agreement is finalized, the governments of the two countries are expected to sign a document, TASS reported.

The document will cover the recognition of bachelor's, master's, postgraduate and doctoral diplomas.

"More than 90 percent of the agreement is ready, I think it will be signed at the level of the governments of Iran and Russia in the near future," TASS quoted Goudarzi as saying.

Moreover, Iran has just joined BRICS – comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa – starting academic and scientific cooperation with Russia within the BRICS framework.

"I think there will be a lot of meetings between us during this year where new treaties on scientific and practical cooperation within the BRICS framework can be proposed," Goudarzi added.

Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Ethiopia became full members of BRICS as of January 1.

Iranian, Russian universities to boost ties

On the sidelines of the 15th Congress of the Eurasian University Association which was held in March 2023 in Moscow, officials from the University of Gilan and the University of Lomonov held a meeting to enhance cooperation.

They discussed the improvement of inter-university cooperation, cultural and scientific exchange, and digitalization. The event was organized by Lomonosov Moscow State University.

In this meeting, the vice president of Moscow State University announced the university's readiness to implement the provisions of the memorandum of understanding between the two universities.

The proposal of conducting joint research, sending professors and doctoral students in the form of study opportunities, and holding joint academic courses were among the most important agreements between the two institutions.

In August 2022, Mohammad Javad Salmanpour, the deputy head of the Organization for Student Affairs, and Dmitry Kalinichenko, head of the Russian Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States Affairs, Compatriots Living Abroad, and the International Humanitarian Cooperation, met in Tehran.

During the meeting, Kalinichenko noted that there were 300 Iranian students with scholarships in Russia and that the number could increase in the future.

ENGLISH IN USE

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Clinic to relieve bereaved coronavirus families

A special clinic will be opened for the first time in the country to provide free psychological services to families who have lost their loved ones during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The clinic is called "Soog" (literally meaning mourn) will be inaugurated at Shahid Beheshti Educational and Medical Center in Zanjan province on Wednesday.

The outbreak of coronavirus has changed the lifestyle of many families, Ehsan Fakoor, head of the mental health department of Zanjan University of Medical Sciences said.

Sudden changes in life cause stress, while the coronavirus itself has doubled the stress due to its contagion and the number of lives it has claimed in the world to date, he regretted.

'کلینیک سوگ' برای خانواده‌هایی که اعضای خود را بر اثر کرونا از دست داده‌اند

رئیس گروه بهداشت روان دانشگاه علوم پزشکی زنجان از افتتاح نخستین کلینیک سوگ در کشور برای ارائه خدمات رایگان روان‌شناختی به خانواده‌هایی که اعضای خانواده خود را به دلیل ابتلا به کرونا از دست داده‌اند خبر داد و اظهار کرد: این کلینیک ۲۳ مهرماه امسال در مرکز آموزشی درمانی شهید بهشتی زنجان کار خود را آغاز خواهد کرد.

فکور با بیان اینکه شیوع ویروس کرونا باعث شده است تا سبک زندگی بسیاری از خانواده‌ها دچار تغییر شود، ادامه داد: ایجاد تغییرات ناگهانی در زندگی باعث ایجاد استرس می‌شود، این در حالی است که خود ویروس کرونا به دلیل واگیردار بودن و نیز آمار فوتی‌هایی که تا به امروز در دنیا به جا گذاشته، این استرس را دوچندان کرده است.



Iran's sky hosting migratory birds

Iran hosts more than five percent of the world's migratory birds in 450 sites in winter. Each year the World Migratory Bird Day is celebrated on May 11 to raise awareness about the importance of migratory birds and the need to protect them.



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MAY 13, 2024

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Be childlike with children.
Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:07 Evening: 19:21 Dawn: 3:22 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:00 (tomorrow)

Mashhad to host 5th Global Congress of Imam Reza (AS)



From Page 1 > by the custodian of Imam Reza Holy Shrine in 2022 to resume the congress after a 30-year hiatus as a flag bearer and identity of the shrine.

"Fortunately, some 50 preliminary sessions have been held in the past year and a half - 17 sessions abroad and 33 ones inside the country," he added.

About 30 countries have participated in the meetings outside Iran, including Latin American and European countries, Pakistan, Iraq, and Turkey, with prominent Shia scholars and Iranologists in attendance.

The 5th and 6th rounds of the congress, which is scheduled to be held every two years, are titled "The Civilizational Thought of Imam Reza (AS)".

"We have done our best to look at global challenges. The topic of the congress is, therefore, 'Justice for Everyone, Injustice for No One' as justice and discrimination are the most fundamental issues of the today's world," Ameli noted.

Further in his talks, Ameli referred to the sagacious letters written by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution to the youth in Europe and North America in 2014, saying: "The Leader's main point in the two letters was raising awareness. And while so many were doubtful about the impact of the letters, today we witness that awareness".

Elsewhere in the meeting, the secretary of the international section of the congress Zohreh Nosrat Kharazmi said that so far, some 200 articles have been submitted to the secretariat. "In the international section, we have tried to start Imam Reza's discourse in dialogue," she stated.

Gathering focal thoughts around the oneness-based and justice-based thought of Imam Reza (AS) to plant divine truth instead of evil dominance is among the main agendas of the congress.

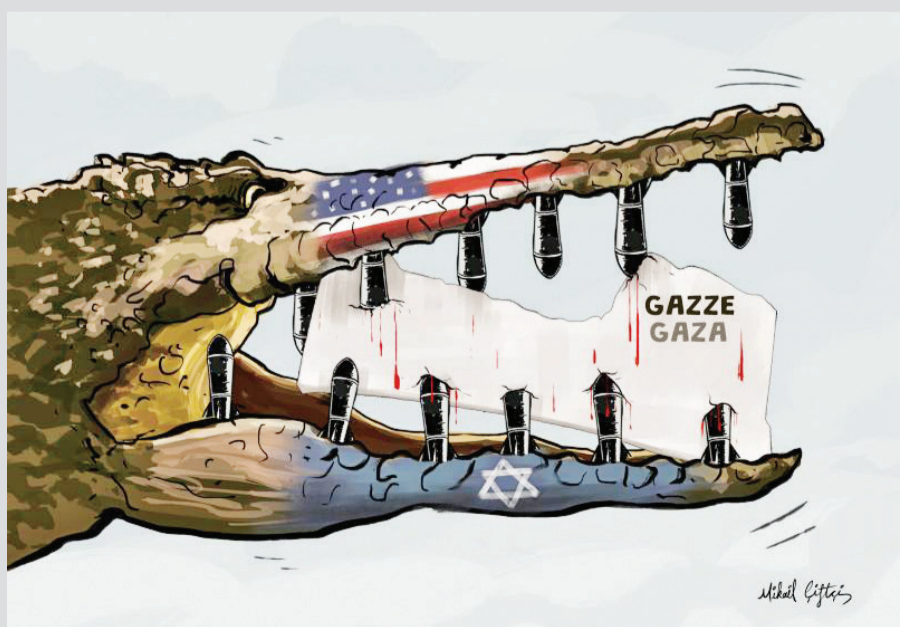
The creation of a convergence and mutual understanding about general themes such as justice, truth, dignity, discrimination, tyranny, conflict and conflict resolution are other agendas of the fifth congress.

The sub-topics on which discussions and viewpoint exchanges will be formed include nature and monotheistic ontological view towards truth of rationality and science in the path of establishing universal justice, concrete examples and strategies to strengthen monotheistic justice in daily life of faithful people at national and transnational level, and establishment of justice based on tolerance and respect through strengthening opportunities for social and religious solidarity as well as cultural adaptability at national and transnational levels.

Some additional sub-topics of the event include understanding mechanisms of normalization as well as forms of discrimination, oppression and hatred alongside appropriate measures for confronting them, development of culture of resistance to establish justice and its connection with Jihad to repel oppression and social discrimination, and extraction of Razavi prudence for solving new social and intellectual issues.

A limited number of scholarships will be granted to the innovative and selected articles.

Cartoon of Day



Lower jaw - Upper jaw
Cartoonist: Mikail Çiftçi from Türkiye

History of Palestine narrated in Munir Shafiq's book of memories



Munir Shafiq (L), Ehsan Salehi (R), and Hossein Jaberi Ansari (fifth R) at the unveiling ceremony of the Persian translation of Shafiq's book in Tehran on May 12.

From Page 1 > containing memoirs of the 90-year-old Shafiq, has been published by Iran Publishing House, affiliated to the Iran Cultural and Press Institute.

The book was originally published in Arabic Beirut by the Centre for Arab Unity Studies in 2022. The following year, it was translated into English and now it is available in Persian.

At the beginning of the event, Jabari Ansari said: "Shafiq's book is not just his memories; Rather, it is the abstract of reflections on a life full of struggles and thoughts as he had a very unique life in terms of ups and downs and different phases he went through".

Also speaking at the event, Ehsan Salehi, Managing Director of Iran Institute, said: "Honoring Munir Shafiq is honoring Palestine".

"Shafiq is the living history of Palestine as he has seen the process of occupying his land since his childhood and, God willing, he will soon see the victory of Palestine," he added.

"Shafiq has done his duty in fighting and narrating his struggles, which is a motivation for the Islamic world," Salehi noted.

For his part, Shafiq explained a turning point in his life and said: "After 1970, Black September in Jordan and the expulsion of the Palestinian movement and Fatah from Jordan to Beirut, a few people and I together formed a closed political circle within the Fatah movement to focus on our main goal, which was the fight against the idea of compromise".

"It was decided that we should start the constructive guidance of the Palestinian movement through action by emphasizing several principles, the most important of which was that not even a piece of Palestine soil will be traded," he recalled.

"Later, all the members of this circle were martyred and only I survived because they prevented me from participating in the fights," Shafiq continued.

"The important point of our circle of four people was our

teachings from Imam Khomeini (RA). We read and heard that he relied on two principles: First, the U.S. is the great devil, and second, the Zionists are a cancerous entity that must be eradicated. Therefore, we emphasized and focused on these two important things in our performance in our intellectual circle and stuck to it," he underlined.

"Journey Through the Embers" has a pleasant narration by the author mentioning the memories and events of different periods of his life and also describing how Palestine was occupied over many years. The formation of resistance groups, the evolution of the thought process of this prominent Palestinian thinker and the change of his view on the issue of Palestine and the occupation of this land have been discussed in the book.

It should be noted that the book, which has received attention in the field of Palestinian studies and the resistance front, won the special prize of the first edition of the Palestine World Prize for Literature in 2022.

The pages of this book present the memoirs of a prominent Palestinian resistance figure who has lived through the Palestinian issue since the Nakba in 1948 until today. Shafiq accompanied this issue since his childhood, before the Nakba, and joined its path early.

Munir Shafiq, born in 1936, grew up in a distinguished family environment. He belongs to a Christian family, cultured, open, Marxist, patriotic and proud of their Arabism and Islamic civilizational heritage. This image, which seems closer to "Mosaic," was consistent with the Palestinian cases that know and cherish the Palestinian identity, stand against the British occupation and the dangers of the Zionist project, and seek change, advancement and liberation.

Shafiq's father graduated as a lawyer in 1925, and his mother graduated from the Teachers Training College in 1927. Because the father was proud of his Arabism and heritage, he was keen to augment his son's Arabic

tongue, so he encouraged him to recite the Qur'an and poetry.

By the age of 13, Shafiq had memorized three parts of the Qur'an, many poems of al-Mutanabbi and Abu Tammam, and Nahj al-Balaghah book. He also memorized many articles from Majallat al-Ahkam al-Adliyyah, which is the first code of Islamic jurisprudence in the civil field within the framework of legal provisions.

He lived through the major historical stations that this issue went through, and the Arab, regional and international transformations that affected it, and dealt with them according to different intellectual, ideological and organizational approaches, sometimes even contradictory; but he was in control of those approaches, putting ideology in the service of the national cause, not the national cause in the service of ideology, as many did. This prompted him to switch from one ideological framework to another when he felt that this or that framework was no longer capable of accommodating the national issue, which also prompted him to join the political and militant organizations of different ideological orientations, but he maintained his distinct positions within each of these organizations, so he had his vision and his reading of events, alignments and contradictions.

Therefore, these memoirs do not reflect the viewpoint of the leaders of the first row in the Palestinian resistance. Rather, they were dominated by the presentation of the personal experience of Shafiq, which is undoubtedly a rich and distinguished experience, and it provides many struggles, intellectual and moral lessons. Also, the memoirs were dominated by his approach to the political situation at every stage of his struggle.

"Journey Through the Embers" is an expression that meticulously describes the conditions lived by the Palestinian patriotic intellectual, who has been committed to Palestinian fundamentals, facing difficulties patiently and paying heavy prices

with years of imprisonment, displacement, injustice and pain, without deviating even an iota from his position.

The book is appealing for its smooth and captivating style and it is rich in experiences, stances and lessons. It provides a critical and objective reading of Palestinian political and resistance action over 70 years, from the midst of the leftist and Fatah, while conveying the atmosphere of Islamic and nationalist trends. He was close to Palestinian decision-makers, but at the same time has never assumed first-tier leadership positions.

The personality of Shafiq unfolds throughout the chapters of the book. With a free, self-harmonious character holding firm convictions, Shafiq adopts rational reasoning, systematic analysis and self-criticism. When he is convinced of an idea, he is ready to defend it to the end, whatever the costs. He is a person who does not like compliments or social hypocrisy, especially when it comes to national action or the requirements of objective evaluation.

There are also basic values that Shafiq has maintained and adhered to as a communist and a Fatah affiliate, and when he embraced Arab and Islamic perspective. On top of these are honesty with oneself and refusal to lie, including self-criticism when he errs.

Therefore, he does not care much about the consequences of contradicting public opinion or general trends, if his objective scrutiny leads to such conclusions, even if it might sometimes shock the elites or the general public. Thus, he was a "pioneer" seeking to establish trends rather than justifying the paths of others. This can be found in his affiliation with and exit from the Communist Party, when he was in Fatah, when he established the "Trend" within Fatah, and when he converted to Islam and adopted Islamic thought as well as in his interpretation of the 1948 catastrophe and the 1967 defeat, besides when the fida'yyin (guerrillas) left Jordan and other issues.

Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt's "The Sect of the Egoists" published in Persian

TEHRAN-A Persian translation of the book "The Sect of the Egoists" written by Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt has been released in the bookstores across the country.

Siamand Zandi has translated the book from French and Now Publications has published the book, Mehr reported.

In the book, originally published in 1994, the main hero who does not even have a name accidentally discovers that there once was a philosopher named Gaspar Langenheart, who started a theory that he was the creator of everything. So the hero starts looking for information on this philosopher, but it turns out that there's little to find. Not many people considered him significant, and more than that - there was no real proof that he ever existed and ceased to exist.

But what happens is that the main hero partly becomes Gaspar himself, and it is a thing like that - every 50 years a man jumps out of

nowhere and starts digging up information on Gaspar Langenheart, trying to prove that the man was something like God and that he couldn't die. Or could he? The book digs deep but manages to stay entertaining.

Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt, 64, is a Franco-Belgian playwright, short story writer and novelist, as well as a film director. His plays have been staged in over 50 countries.

Schmitt has become one of the most popular writers not only in his homeland, France, but throughout the world. He is now one of the most read and acted French-language authors globally.

He attended the prestigious Ecole Normale Supérieure where he was awarded a doctorate in Philosophy and the top French teaching qualification. Schmitt first made a name for himself in the theater with "The Visitor," a play that posits a meeting between Freud and - possibly - God; the work soon became

a classic and is now part of international repertoire.

Further successes quickly followed, including "Enigma Variations," "The Libertine," "Between Worlds," "Partners in Crime," and "My Gospels and Sentimental Tectonics".

Acclaimed by audiences and critics alike, his plays have won several awards. More recently, the four novellas that make up his "Cycle de l'Invisible," a series of tales dealing with childhood and spirituality, have met with huge success both on stage and in the bookshops.

These are "Milarepa," "Monsieur Ibrahim and the Flowers of the Koran," "Oscar and the Lady in Pink," and "Noah's Child". Much of his literary career has been devoted to writing novels. An early novel, "The Sect of the Egoists," was followed by novels "Light," "The Gospel According to Pilate," and "Shadows".