

Exclusive

Columbia professor: Academic Atmosphere Irreparably Harmed

Gauri Viswanathan questions misguided administrative response to anti-war student protests in the U.S.



Law enforcement officers detain a protester at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), during an anti war protest in Los Angeles, May 2, 2024.

Tehran, IAEA progress in resolving nuclear issues

TEHRAN - Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have made significant progress in resolving outstanding issues, with only two cases remaining, according to Mohammad Eslami, chief of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization.

Following the recent visit of IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi to Iran, Eslami expressed optimism while talking to reporters on Wednesday about the positive results achieved. He noted that the IAEA had initially expressed concerns about the alleged existence of undeclared nuclear material at specific locations in Iran.

However, through ongoing negotiations, Iran and the IAEA have narrowed down the outstanding issues to just two. These cases are currently being addressed through a dialogue and interaction process between deputy chiefs from both sides.

Eslami emphasized that Iran's nuclear industry has made considerable advancements, which were acknowledged by Grossi during his visit. He expressed confidence that Iran's capabilities can be showcased to the international community.

Grossi's visit last week included participation in the International Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology 2024 in Isfahan. He announced that he had reached an agreement with Iran to implement joint operational steps based on a statement issued by both parties in March 2023. ▶ Page 3

Iran, China ink MOU on agricultural co-op

TEHRAN - Iran and China have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to expand cooperation in the agricultural sector, IRNA reported.

Covering various areas including horticulture, agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries, agricultural mechanization, and China's investment in Iran's agricultural development programs, the MOU was signed by Iran's Deputy Agriculture Minister Kazem Khavazi and his Chinese counterpart in Beijing.

The document was signed as part of the 5th Iran-China Joint Economic Cooperation Committee held in Beijing this week.

Heading a delegation, Khavazi visited China to attend the mentioned event.

Earlier this month, the Head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Samad Hassanzadeh said there is a potential for Iran-China trade to reach \$50 billion and the agricultural sector is one of the major areas for the expansion of economic ties.

Hassanzadeh made the remarks in an Iran-China Business Forum held on the sidelines of Iran Expo 2024.

He voiced the readiness of Iranian businesspeople for more enhanced trade with China, expressing hope that the Expo will help the promotion of ties between Tehran and Beijing. ▶ Page 4

Hezbollah chief underlines unity among resistance groups

The secretary general of Lebanon's Hezbollah resistance movement has underscored the significance of unity among resistance groups until achieving final victory in Operation al-Aqsa Storm, the largest anti-Israel operation by Palestinians in decades.

Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah made the remarks in a meeting in Beirut on Wednesday as he received a leading team from Hamas headed by Khalil al-Hayya, a member of the resistance movement's Political Bureau, and Osama Hamdan, who represents Hamas in Beirut, according to Press TV.

Nasrallah placed a premium on the "unity of positions and the continuation of making all political and popular field efforts in order to achieve the honorable goals sought by the al-Aqsa Storm, and to achieve the coming and promised victory, no matter the sacrifices."

The Hezbollah leader also praised and underlined the level of cooperation and solidarity between the various fronts and movements of the Axis of Resistance.

On Monday, the Hezbollah chief also affirmed the Lebanese resistance movement is continuing its anti-Israel operations in support of Palestinians both "quantitatively and qualitatively".

Israeli forces flee Gaza district for third time

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN- The Israeli occupation forces (IOF) have withdrawn from northern Gaza's Zeitoun neighborhood for the third time since October 7.

The region has proven tricky for Israeli ground forces to capture. In late December the Israeli military claimed it had cleared northern Gaza City, including the Zeitoun neighborhood, of Hamas forces.

An announcement by the Israeli military on March 3 said the regime's 162nd Division and 401st Brigade had wrapped up a two-week invasion of Zeitoun claiming to have removed remnants of Hamas fighters.

On Wednesday, the Israeli military, for the third time since October 7, announced that its Nahel brigade has withdrawn from Zeitoun after invading the area once more.

Daily footage published by the armed wing of Hamas, the al-Qassam brigades, highlights the difficulties that Israeli ground forces are facing in northern Gaza, in particular the regions of Zeitoun and nearby Jabalia, which has also been invaded again.

US is giving Israel license to kill Palestinians

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN- The US decision to send a \$1 billion package of military aid to Israel is indicative of Washington's long-term commitment to supplying Tel Aviv with weaponry regardless of the atrocious crimes that the regime is committing in the Gaza Strip.

According to the Associated Press, the package would include \$700 million in tank ammunition, \$500 million in tactical vehicles and \$60 million in mortar rounds.

Citing two unnamed American officials, Reuters said on Tuesday that the US Department of State has moved the package into the congressional review process.

This comes a week after President Joe Biden paused one shipment of "high payload munitions" to Israel over concerns about the regime's planned offensive in Rafah.

Israel has expanded its offensive in Rafah despite US warnings and global concerns over rising civilian deaths in the Gaza Strip's southernmost city.

Since May 6, Israel has moved deeper into Rafah and forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee the city.

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IBTO achievements are unparalleled worldwide: WHO official

TEHRAN - Jaffar Hussain, the representative of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Iran, has said the indicators and accomplishments of the Iranian Blood Transfusion Organization (IBTO) are remarkable and unique in the region and even the world.

"I am deeply impressed by the standards of health, healthcare, and treatment in Iran, not based on my personal point of view, but based on WHO and global standards", he stressed.

He made the remarks on Tuesday at the Fifth International Congress on Blood Transfusion Medicine, IRNA reported.

The congress aimed to showcase the capabilities and achievements of the country on a global scale. ▶ Page 7



5th Global Congress of Imam Reza (AS) concludes in Mashhad

TEHRAN-The 5th Global Congress of Imam Reza (AS) was concluded May 14 in Mashhad, Khorasan Razavi Province.

The closing ceremony of the two-day congress was held on Tuesday at the Quds Hall of Imam Reza (AS) Holy Shrine in Mashhad in the presence of the President Ebrahim Raisi, Mehr reported. More than 200 articles were submitted to the secretariat, of which the selected articles were granted scholarships.

Gathering focal thoughts around the oneness-based and justice-based thought of Imam Reza (AS) to plant divine truth instead of evil dominance was 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 were other agendas of the fifth congress.

Families of terror victims in southeast Iran to file complaint against US

TEHRAN - The families affected by the Jaish ul-Adl terrorist group attack are set to lodge a formal complaint against the United States, Mizan news agency reported on Wednesday.

The families' grievance stems from allegations of Washington's support for the Jaish ul-Adl terrorist group.

This move highlights growing concerns regarding potential ties between the U.S. and extremist elements, prompting a push for accountability from those implicated in facilitating such acts of terrorism.

The IRGC personnel were traveling between the cities of Zahedan and Khash in Sistan and Baluchestan Province on February 13, 2019, when their bus was targeted in a suicide car bomb attack. ▶ Page 2

TEHRAN PAPERS

Iran has become the biggest missile and drone power in the region

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

In a commentary, Kayhan discussed the report of CNN correspondent Frederik Pleitgen after his visit of the exhibition on the achievements of the IRGC Aerospace Force. He said: "Iran has become the biggest missile and drone power in the region."

Two weeks after the Middle East was on the verge of a comprehensive war and Iran fired about 300 missiles and drones at Israel in response to an Israeli air attack on the Iranian embassy in Damascus, it eagerly showed the world that it has such capabilities and it would be capable of countering a wider conflict.

Iran's ballistic missiles have long worried the United States and its allies; They want to limit the missile program as part of any agreement that Washington makes with Tehran. The United States believes Iran has the largest ballistic missile force in the Middle East and considers its missile capability a main tool of deterrence. However, Iran has emphasized in the past that its missile program is only for defense purposes.

Javan: A new chapter in promotion of the revolution discourse

Javan dedicated its editorial to the protests in different countries of the world especially in universities in support of the oppressed people of Palestine and against the criminal Zionist regime.

The paper said: These protests are a new wave of expansion and universalization of the discourse of the Islamic Revolution. Years ago, in two letters addressed to young people in North America and Europe, the Leader of the revolution called for correctly understanding the nature of the Zionist regime and Western governments and to play an effective role in confronting extremism.

Now, despite the boycott of those letters by the Western powers and media, the Islamic Revolution's foundations in support of the Palestinian resistance and the spread of the culture of the revolution were manifested in the gatherings of academics in America, Europe and other parts of the world.

Also, the intensification of the Zionist regime's crimes against the people of Gaza in recent months with the support and guidance of Americans and Western powers has given legitimacy and credibility to this wave. This new wave has also challenged the foundations of liberal democracy and Western civilization and can be a strong support for the continuation of the resistance movement and further isolation of the Zionist regime.

Foreign Ministry denounces Australian sanctions on Iran

TEHRAN- The Iranian Foreign Ministry issued a statement on Tuesday condemning the Australian officials over the imposition of sanctions against certain officials and state institutions of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani decried the silence of Australia and its allies in the face of Israel's violations of international law and its recent attack on the Iranian diplomatic premise in Syria. He went on to add that such silence proves the double-standard approach adopted by Australia and its allies to developments in West Asia. Australia and its partners remained silent "regarding the aggressive action and violation of international laws and human rights by the Zionist regime in attacking the diplomatic headquarters of the Islamic Republic of Iran," the spokesman pointed out. Kanaani stressed that such an approach only encourages Israelis to further violate international law and commit more war crimes.

Earlier on Tuesday, the European Union (EU) also expanded its sanctions regime to target Iran's defensive missile program.

The European Council, a body that defines the EU's overall political direction and priorities, said in a statement on its website that the sanctions regime on Iran had been expanded beyond current restrictions on the country's drone production capabilities to also cover its missile program.

Tehran has said that its mid-April military operation against Israel was a legitimate response to the Israeli regime's attack on Iran's consulate in Syria's Damascus on April 1.

Arman-e-Emrooz: Sanctions no longer prevent economic cooperation

In a reaction to the agreement between Iran and India, Arman-e-Emrooz wrote: After imposing sanctions on Iran, India cut off its economic cooperation with Iran in order not to be caught in secondary sanctions by America. But these days they are again present in Iran. A presence that may expire soon if Trump returns to power, and India once again being forced to cut off full cooperation with Iran, as it did before. After the signing of the agreement between India and Iran regarding the development of Chabahar port, the United States threatened that anyone doing business with Iran would be subject to possible sanctions. However, looking at trade with the Central Asia countries, India signed an agreement with Iran on Monday. Of course, it is not unlikely that this action of India was done with the green light of the Biden government, but according to Rahman Ghahremanpour, a senior analyst on international issues, India is embracing Iran to create a balance against China's activities in Pakistan in line with its national interests. The expansion of our cooperation with different countries in the world shows that the US sanctions are not a deterrent for countries that maintain their political independence and follow the path of cooperation with Iran.

Ham Mihan: Complex story of Tehran-Baku ties

In an article, Ham Mihan pointed to the normalization of relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Iran. It said: Relations between Azerbaijan and Iran have become normal after diplomatic crises and military maneuvers near the borders of the two countries in the past two years. Recent signals indicate a high commitment to the new rules of interaction, as the leaders of Baku and Tehran increasingly agree on managing conflicts and want to take advantage of the strategic opportunities arising from regional partnerships. Now that the tension between Iran and Israel has crossed its red lines, Baku considers it necessary to coordinate with all involved parties to prevent the escalation of tension in the South Caucasus. Tehran, in turn, is interacting with neighboring countries to avoid a comprehensive war with Israel and the United States. Although it seems that the normalization of relations between Azerbaijan and Iran has passed the stress test, the security dynamics taking place in the South Caucasus and the Middle East put more pressure on this process, which can easily put the parties on a collision course.

The following is the text of the statement, published on the Ministry's website:

The silence of Australia and its partners vis-à-vis the aggressive action and violations of international rules and law by the Zionist regime in attacking the diplomatic premise of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and their stance on Iran's legitimate action against the regime in question, which was taken within the framework of the inherent right of self-defense according to Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, represent the double-standard approach of Australia and its Western partners towards developments in the region.

The double-standard approach of Australia and its partners in selectively adhering to international norms not only fails to reduce instability in the region but also, by remaining silent against the Zionist regime's attack on diplomatic premises and providing it with weapons for the brutal killing of the defenseless people of Gaza, encourages the Israeli regime to violate international rules and commit more war crimes, thus steering the region towards instability. The main cause of tension and insecurity in the region is the occupation and the criminal approach of the Zionist regime in killing the Palestinian people, along with the relentless support of the evil coalition, including Australia, for this regime.

The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly condemns Australia's illegal use of sanctions and its compliance with Washington, reserving the right to take reciprocal measures.

Senator's suggestion to Israel to nuke Gaza is 'horrible': Iran

TEHRAN - Iran has denounced the "horrible" proposal put forward by a top Republican U.S. senator suggesting that Israel attack Gaza with nuclear bombs.

The comments were made by Foreign Ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanaani in a post on X on Tuesday.

Senator Lindsey Graham compared the U.S. dropping atomic bombs on Japan during World War II and stated that Israel should bomb Gaza "whatever" it seems appropriate.

The Republican from South Carolina said on Sunday that Israel would be justified in destroying the embattled Gaza Strip. More than 200,000 people were murdered when the U.S. launched atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

Graham also urged President Joe Biden to provide the occupying regime with more bombs.

"These horrible statements by an American senator in justifying and encouraging the use of nuclear bombs by the Zionist regime reflect the brutality of those who advocate war and disregard human rights and international resolutions," Kanaani said. The Iranian official



said such statements are made by a senator whose country of origin has a history of using nuclear weapons while merely claiming to defend human rights.

The spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry urged the world community to reject such "demonic statements" in order to stop the genocide and humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip.

The Iranian official also demanded a firm international denunciation of the U.S. government's ceaseless assistance to the Israeli regime.

Graham made these comments a few days after Biden declared that he had stopped the shipment of

2,000-pound bombs to Israel and threatened to do so in the event that the regime attacked Rafah, the southernmost city of Gaza that is home to 1.5 million Palestinian refugees.

After the Palestinian resistance group, Hamas, carried out a historic operation on October 7 against the usurping regime in retribution for its intensified atrocities against the Palestinians, Israel has been committing untold atrocities since then. So far Israel has murdered over 35,200 Palestinians in Gaza, the majority of them women and children.

Last year, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian called on the United Nations

Security Council to immediately move to dismantle Israel's nuclear weapons following dangerous remarks by an Israeli minister who called for nuking the Gaza Strip.

His demand came after Israeli Heritage Minister Amichai Eliyahu urged the Israeli government to drop a nuclear bomb on the Gaza Strip, one of the most densely populated areas of the world with a population of 2.3 million.

Speaking in an interview, Eliyahu claimed that there were "no non-combatants" in the besieged strip and that using a nuclear bomb on the Palestinian enclave was one of the possibilities.

Amir Abdollahian said the remarks are indicative of Israel's failure. "Israel's regime minister's statement to use atomic bomb shows the real defeat of the regime against the resistance," the foreign minister said at the time.

The Iranian foreign minister added, "The UN Security Council and the International Atomic Energy Agency must take immediate and uninterrupted action to disarm this barbaric and apartheid regime. Tomorrow is late. Full responsibility for this genocide lies with the White House."

Families of terror victims in southeast Iran to file complaint against U.S.

From page 1 ► The IRGC's Quds headquarters said in a statement that an explosive-laden car rammed into the bus, which was taking the personnel back to their homes.

The attack martyred 27 IRGC members and injured 13 others.

The so-called Jaish ul-Adl terrorist group reportedly claimed responsibility for the bombing.

The terrorist outfit was formed in 2012 by members of the Pakistan-based Jundallah, another terror group dismantled by Iranian intelligence forces in 2010 after its ringleader Abdolmalek Rigi was arrested and

later executed.

Iranian border guards have repeatedly come under attacks by terror outfits active on Pakistan's soil.

The then Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi condemned the attack and said the victims will soon be avenged.

"The self-sacrificing military and intelligence sons of the Iranian nation will take revenge for the blood of the martyrs of this incident," the spokesman said.

The heinous terrorist act was evidently backed by the American government.

Such backing not only represents a blatant

disregard for fundamental human rights but also stands as a clear violation of established international regulations.

Consequently, the families of the valiant martyrs, who fell victim to this barbaric incident, have embarked upon the path of justice.

They are actively engaging in legal proceedings, seeking accountability from the U.S. for its involvement.

The legal proceedings pertaining to this case are scheduled to commence in November 2024.

The venue for these crucial legal deliberations is set to be the Shahid Beheshti Branch 55 in Tehran.

U.S. assassination of Gen. Soleimani should garner intl. attention: rights chief

TEHRAN - The international community should direct its attention toward the U.S. assassination of Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani in 2020 in the Iraqi capital Baghdad, Iran's top human rights official says.

The comments were delivered by Kazem Gharibabadi, secretary of Iran's High Council for Human Rights, during a meeting in Tehran on Tuesday to discuss the U.S. crimes against international law and breaches of human rights.

"We must identify, highlight and expose U.S. crimes against humanity, against the Iranian nation and other nations in different times. These crimes should be exposed at the domestic and international levels," Gharibabadi remarked as he pointed to decades-long terrorist acts committed by the U.S. across the globe.

Pointing to terrorism and the importance of dealing with the issue, the official said, "The U.S. criminal operation to martyr Soleimani should be the focus of attention. The first court session on that issue will be held on June 19, and the accusations against 70 American defendants on complicity in the martyrdom of General Soleimani will be investigated."

On January 3, 2020, General Soleimani, Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), and their companions were assassinated near Baghdad International Airport in a U.S. drone strike authorized by then-President Donald Trump.

Due to their critical roles in the war against the Daesh terrorist group, notably in Iraq and Syria, both leaders were held in the highest regard across West Asia.

In other parts of his remarks, Gharibabadi discussed Israel's brutality in the Gaza Strip, saying that Washington is involved in all the atrocities the Zionist regime is doing in the region and that Israel is committing these crimes with full assistance from the United States.

Israel has been indiscriminately bombarding the Gaza Strip since October 7, massacring over 35,200 Palestinians, the majority of them women and children.

The attack followed after Hamas made a surprise attack on southern Israel in retribution for the regime's intensified atrocities against the Palestinian people.

The Israeli regime's brutalities in Gaza have been described as a violation of international human rights law, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

"The United States has always prevented the investigation of these crimes in various international organizations and mechanisms," the human rights chief lamented.

"The so-called rights advocacy regime of America has supported the Zionist regime politically, militarily, logistically and financially in the Gaza war; therefore, the crimes of the Zionist regime in Gaza and the direct US role in it should be highlighted."

Gharibabadi further emphasized that Washington can never claim to be advancing international peace and security, highlighting the U.S. military's presence and its occupied bases in several nations.

"The reason for this presence in 80 countries with 750 bases is America's militaristic attitude. Beyond that, the deployment of American nuclear weapons in European bases shows this country is not after peace and security at all."

He added, "How can this country claim to be trying to establish peace and security? The countries where the U.S. nuclear weapons are deployed... have not had any security problems in recent decades."

Arrest of Assadollah Assadi breached 1961 Vienna Convention

Gharibabadi also referred to the fact that about a year has passed since the release of Assadollah Assadi, an Iranian diplomat who was jailed in Germany and Belgium on false charges, saying the first and most notable point in this regard is that the actions of the German government in arresting an Iranian diplomat were completely against international law and the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, without any evidence or reason.

"During the time Mr. Assadi was in prison in Germany and Belgium, the injustices committed by these self-proclaimed human rights advocates against the Iranian diplomat were somewhat covered in the media, but very minimally," he added.

The secretary of Iran's High Council for Human Rights also stressed that Tehran tried to expose some of these cases within the framework of



human rights and media mechanisms.

"A country that considers itself a human rights advocate has violated all basic human rights principles in its treatment of someone who was unjustly detained, from the right to contact family to the right to worship, health, the right to be held in prison spaces, and various forms of mental and psychological torture," the human rights chief stated.

Gharibabadi continued by saying that "Mr. Assadi documented all of these while he was in prison, and we also gained access to a version of these handwritten notes before his release and used this as the basis for correspondence with international human rights officials, including the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the President of the Human Rights Council, and countries, where we reminded them of these human rights violations, raised serious objections, and asked for explanations on these matters."

Gharibabadi said, "What happened to the Iranian diplomat in Germany and Belgium, as two countries claiming to uphold human rights? Are they acting on even a fraction of the slogans they preach in the field of human rights? It is not hidden from us that they do not act on these slogans, but it is very important to expose their human rights claims in these specific cases and concrete examples; just like what we are witnessing today in Gaza and the widespread atrocities."

Gharibabadi, who also acts as deputy Judiciary chief for international affairs, emphasized that these cases are also concrete examples that refute the human rights claims of these countries in the field of human rights, stating that "Western countries, especially the United States, have no authority to express opinions in the field of human rights."

Tehran ambassador emphasizes India's 'importance' amidst potential US bans

Indian FM says Chabahar is for 'everyone's benefit'

TEHRAN - The Iranian ambassador has said that the "importance of India" will prevent any country from imposing sanctions on New Delhi over its cooperation with Iran.

Iraj Elahi, in an interview with the Hindustan Times published on Tuesday, pointed out that any possible sanctions by the U.S. would harm the trade of many countries, not just India or Iran.

After India and Iran signed a long-term agreement for expanding Indian operations at Chabahar port on May 13, the U.S. warned that all entities engaging in business deals with Iran face the "potential risk of sanctions."

US State Department deputy spokesperson Vedant Patel said that any entity considering business deals with Iran needs to be aware of the potential risk of sanctions.

But Delhi backed the deal with Tehran and said the agreement would benefit the region. "I think it's a question of communicating, convincing and getting people to understand that this is actually for everyone's benefit. I don't think people should take a narrow view of it," Indian Foreign Minister S Jaishankar told reporters on Tuesday.



He was responding to a question about Washington's remarks on the deal.

Elahi told the Hindustan Times that any U.S. sanctions would harm the trade interests of numerous countries that are looking at Chabahar as a transit hub.

Ports and Shipping Minister Sarbananda Sonowal also said on Monday that the project is about encouraging Indian entrepreneurs to venture into the region from a long-term perspective. The 10-year agreement signed by India and Iran will facilitate the long-term development of Shahid Beheshti terminal at Chabahar port, where

operations are run by a subsidiary of state-run India Global Ports Limited (IGPL). The firm plans to invest \$120 million on equipping the terminal and India has also offered a credit window of \$250 million to improve infrastructure around Chabahar.

The U.S. had granted a carve-out for Chabahar from its sanctions regime for Iran when New Delhi, Tehran and Kabul signed a tripartite agreement for developing the port in 2016. At that time, the U.S. decision was influenced by the port's potential to facilitate trade and development in Afghanistan and lobbying by the Indian side. It should be noted that

Chabahar port had got a waiver from the U.S. sanctions under the U.S. administration led by former U.S. President Donald Trump. The U.S. and Indian officials will have to discuss the issue of waiver, what is expected to be extended to the pact as well.

Concluding his remarks, Elahi stated that the Chabahar project is not just for the benefit of Iran or India.

Chabahar will facilitate the transit of goods from Southeast Asia to Europe, Russia and Central Asia. If the U.S. imposes any sanctions on this project, it means that the U.S. is going to harm the trade of many countries, not just India or Iran."

Both India and Iran see Chabahar, a deep-water port in Sistan-Baluchestan province, as a hub for the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), which will allow shipping companies to use an alternative route that bypasses the sensitive and busy Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz. The port is also key to India's ambitious plans to forge greater connectivity and trade ties with Iran, Afghanistan and the landlocked Central Asian states.

Iran, IAEA progress in resolving nuclear issues

From Page 1 ▶ The March 2023 statement is considered a key document that outlines the necessary actions to resolve the remaining issues and take additional steps.

During the trip it was agreed that the joint March agreement, which was reached during Grossi's trips to Iran, would be the basis for cooperation and

negotiations. 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.

According to the 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.

Israel's deterrence collapsed in True Promise Operation: IRGC

TEHRAN - A spokesman for the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) says Iran's Operation True Promise contributed greatly to the collapse of the Israeli regime's deterrence capability.

Brigadier General Ramezan Sharif made the remarks on Tuesday as he highlighted Iran's

45-year history of overcoming complex challenges.

On April 13, Iran fired about 300 missiles and drones against military installations in Israel in response to the regime's deadly attack on the Iranian consulate in Damascus, Syria, on April 1 that martyred seven Iranian military

advisors, including two generals.

According to the Vienna Conventions, an attack on a country's diplomatic premise is considered an attack on that country's soil. The Operation True Promise was a timely punitive measure against the Israeli regime's strategic blunder in attacking

the Islamic Republic's diplomatic premise in Syria.

The IRGC spokesman said the misjudgments by the Zionists and the decisive response from the Iranian leadership resulted in Operation True Promise.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Navy aims enhanced ocean navigation capabilities

maritime economy, harking back to the era of the Sacred Defense and extending into the contemporary global oceanic landscape.

The Sacred Defense refers to Iran's defense against the invading Saddam Hussein army in the 1980s officially known as the Iran-Iraq War.

Irani emphasized the pivotal role of the Army's Navy in safeguarding the Persian Gulf since the dawn of the Islamic Revolution, citing persistent threats such as maritime piracy and terrorism, reaffirming Iran's unwavering commitment to protecting maritime interests.

He attributed the successful execution of the 86th flotilla mission to the unwavering dedication of Iranian experts, acknowledging

their pivotal role in the recent achievements of the Iranian navy.

Irani commended the emergence of expertise across various domains during the 86th flotilla mission, particularly highlighting achievements in readiness, management, and military operations.

He lauded the comprehensive medical support provided during the mission, including surgeries and resuscitation efforts, which served as a testament to the Navy's capabilities.

Despite negative propaganda, Irani recounted the warm reception received during the mission in Jakarta, marking a significant milestone in the Iranian navy's journey into the Pacific Ocean.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

IAIO chief affirms Iran's self-sufficiency in missile, UAV production

TEHRAN - The Chief of the Iran Aviation Industries Organization (IAIO) has underscored Iran's self-reliance in the production of missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) affirming the nation's ability to transform threats into opportunities, guided by the directives of Ayatollah Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

Speaking on Wednesday, Brigadier General Afshin Khajeh Fard emphasized Iran's impressive scientific achievements, calling for utilization of this scientific prowess to pave the way for "a prosperous future." Insisting on Ayatollah Khamenei's focus on fostering a "civilization," he asserted that a civilization is defined not only by technological advancements but also by its beliefs, ethics, customs, and commitment to knowledge and progress.

General Khajeh Fard also

pointed to the motives behind the adversarial sanctions imposed on Iran, suggesting that these measures aim to undermine the prominence of Islamic civilization.

He highlighted the enemy's strategic error in underestimating Iran's resilience, noting that despite attempts to stifle progress through sanctions, Iran remains steadfast in its commitment to "turning challenges into opportunities," as stated by the Leader.

Expressing optimism for future advancements, he reiterated Iran's capability to develop independently, citing the successful retaliatory measures against the Zionist regime in the occupied territories on April 13, notably Operation True Promise, which showcased Iran's self-sufficiency in UAV manufacturing, thus reducing reliance on foreigners.

SPORTS

Shahrdari learn fate at 2024 FIBA WASL Final 8

TEHRAN - Groups for the 2024 FIBA West Asia Super League (FIBA WASL) Final 8 have been confirmed through an online draw.

A video conference attended by representatives from the host, the Qatari Basketball Federation, as well as envoys from BC Astana and Tamil Nadu, was held to determine the groups of the two teams.

The draw results are as follows:

Group A: Al Riyadi, Manama, Sagesse, BC Astana

Group B: Kuwait Club, Shahrdari Gorgan, Kazma, Tamil Nadu

Six teams from the FIBA WASL Sub-Zone Leagues make up the Final 8.

Reigning two-time Persian Gulf League champion Kuwait Club spearhead the sub-zone's delegation together with Manama, as well as third-placers Kazma.

Manama is the defending FIBA WASL kings, winning the league's inaugural competition by outlasting Kuwait Club in the Final held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

The West Asia ensemble, on the other hand, features back-to-back sub-zone champions Al Riyadi, Shahrdari Gorgan, and Sagesse Sports Club. All six will be joined by BC Astana and Tamil Nadu, representatives of Central and South Asia, respectively.

Following the single round-robin group stage, the top two teams from each group will progress to the Semi-Finals, while the third and fourth-placed teams will be eliminated from contention.

The Semis victors will then compete for the ultimate prize in the one-game Final.

The two finalists will earn spots in the inaugural Basketball Champions League Asia (BCL Asia) which will be played from June 9-15, 2024 in Dubai.

The 2024 FIBA WASL Final 8 will be held in Doha, Qatar from May 25 to June 1.

Chegini elected head of Iran Martial Arts Associations

TEHRAN - Afshin Chegini was elected as new president of Iran Martial Arts Associations Federation for a four-year term till 2028 on Tuesday.

In the elections held at Iran's Academy Olympic in Tehran, he was secured 30 of 53 votes cast.

Yousef Behtari finished in second place with 20 votes. Chegini replaced Behtari in the post.

Persepolis winger Sadeghi misses rest of Season

TEHRAN - Persepolis football team winger Saeid Sadeghi has sustained an ankle injury and has missed three upcoming matches in Iran Professional League (IPL).

Persepolis will have to win their next three matches and Sadeghi's absence is a big blow for the team.

Sadeghi has suffered the injury in the training.

Persepolis and Esteghlal are neck and neck in the table. Esteghlal sits top with 60 points, one point above Persepolis.

Iran lose to Kazakhstan at 2024 Indoor Hockey Asia Cup

TEHRAN - Iran lost to Kazakhstan 5-1 in the 2024 Women's Indoor Hockey Asia Cup on Wednesday.

Iran defeated Oman and Vietnam and lost to Malaysia and Kazakhstan and finished third in Pool A.

Iran will face Cambodia for the fifth place on

Thursday. The 2024 Women's Indoor Hockey Asia Cup is the ninth edition of the Women's Indoor Hockey Asia Cup, the biennial international women's indoor hockey championship of Asia organized by the Asian Hockey Federation.

The completion is being held at the Thailand National Sport University in Chonburi, Thailand from May 13 to 16.

The Women's Indoor Asia Cup 2024 holds significant importance as it serves as a qualifying tournament for the FIH Indoor Hockey World Cup 2025. With only the winners of the Asia Cup securing a spot in the World Cup, the level of competition and intensity in the tournament is expected to be exceptionally high. This format places immense pressure on all participating teams, as only the champions will earn the opportunity to compete on one of the grandest stages in indoor hockey, the FIH Indoor Hockey World Cup 2025.

Iran volleyball to play friendlies with Brazil

TEHRAN - Iran national volleyball team will meet Brazil in three friendly matches.

Team Melli will play the Brazilian team as part of preparation for the 2024 Volleyball Nations League (VNL). Iran is scheduled to play Brazil on Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Iran will open the campaign on May 22 in Brazil.

The 2024 FIVB Volleyball Men's Nations League will be the sixth edition of the FIVB Volleyball Men's Nations League, an annual men's international volleyball tournament. The competition will be held from May 21 to June 30.

Iran suffer second loss at CAVA Nation's Volleyball League

TEHRAN - Iran were defeated against Sri Lanka 3-0 (25-22, 25-17, 25-21) at the Central Asian Volleyball Association (CAVA) Nation's Volleyball League on Wednesday.

The Persians had defeated Turkmenistan and Afghanistan in the tournament and lost to Kyrgyzstan.

Iran will play hosts Pakistan on Thursday.

The competition is being held from May 11 to 17 at the Liaqat Gymnasium of Pakistan Sports Complex in Islamabad.

The event has brought six teams from Central Asian countries, including Iran, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and host nation Pakistan together in Islamabad.

The CAVA Nations League holds significant importance as it will be integrated into the world ranking system starting from next year, 2025. This elevation underscores the growing prominence and competitiveness of volleyball within the Central Zone, attracting attention and anticipation from across the globe.

The Central Asian Volleyball Association is the governing body for the sports of indoor, beach and grass volleyball in Central Asia and South Asia. In the spirit of the FIVB 2001 plan, AVC was the first to create five zonal associations at the 10th general assembly in December 1993.

Roma not to activate buy option for Azmoun

TEHRAN - Roma seem to have decided on the future of Sardar Azmoun who is now unlikely to remain in the Italian capital.

After reflecting upon the situation related to Azmoun's loan and the possibility of making his deal permanent, Roma is said to have decided against it. According to *Il Messaggero*, the Giallorossi will not activate Azmoun's buy option from Bayer Leverkusen.

Thus, in the coming weeks, the Iranian striker is expected to make his return to Germany where he will begin the process of looking for a new solution in the summer. So far during his spell at Roma, Azmoun collected a total of 28 appearances, scoring 3 goals in Serie A.



TEHRAN - Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani says Iran has made remarkable advancements in propelling scientific knowledge forward, paving the way for enhanced ocean navigation capabilities.

Admiral Irani made the remarks at a conference titled "Economy and Power in the Maritime Axis" on Wednesday.

He underscored Iran's enduring role in

New Chinese ambassador presents credentials to Iran FM

TEHRAN - China's newly-appointed ambassador to Iran, Cong Peiwu, has commenced his official duties by presenting his credentials on Wednesday to Hossein Amir Abdollahian, Iran's minister of foreign affairs. Iranian foreign minister extended a warm welcome to the Chinese ambassador, conveying his sincere wishes for success in his crucial diplomatic mission.

Amir Abdollahian also paid tribute to the former Chinese ambassador's efforts in strengthening Tehran-Beijing relations, expressing confidence in Ambassador Cong's commitment to advancing bilateral ties and executing agreements across diverse sectors. Ambassador Cong, in turn, expressed his gratification and privilege in undertaking his diplomatic responsibilities in the Islamic Republic of Iran, relaying greetings from his Chinese counterpart to Amir Abdollahian.

During the meeting, Ambassador

Cong underscored the extensive history of Tehran-Beijing relations, highlighting the reciprocal visits of both countries' presidents to each other's capitals. He emphasized the enduring nature of these ties, spanning over two millennia, and underscored China's president and foreign minister's keen interest in bolstering relations with Iran.

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, Iran and China entered into a significant 25-year partnership deal, aiming to bolster their enduring economic and political bond.

TEHRAN - The Chief of the Iran Aviation Industries Organization (IAIO) has underscored Iran's self-reliance in the production of missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) affirming the nation's ability to transform threats into opportunities, guided by the directives of Ayatollah Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

Speaking on Wednesday, Brigadier General Afshin Khajeh Fard emphasized Iran's impressive scientific achievements, calling for utilization of this scientific prowess to pave the way for "a prosperous future." Insisting on Ayatollah Khamenei's focus on fostering a "civilization," he asserted that a civilization is defined not only by technological advancements but also by its beliefs, ethics, customs, and commitment to knowledge and progress.

Knowledge-based companies export over \$2.5b of products in a year



TEHRAN - Iran's knowledge-based companies exported over 3.6 million tons of products, valued at \$2.506 billion in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended March 19, 2024), according to the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

Based on the IRICA data, some 1.158 million tons of goods, valued at \$5.141 billion were also imported by knowledge-based companies into the country from March 21, 2023, to March 19, 2024.

About 85 percent of the goods imported by the knowledge-based companies came from China, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Turkey, Germany, and India, IRNA reported.

The domestic knowledge-based companies exported their products to China, Iraq, the UAE, Turkey, and Russia in this period, IRICA said.

In this period, the knowledge-based companies accounted for 2.6 and 5 percent of the country's total exports in weight and value respectively.

Advanced materials and products based on chemical technologies accounted for about 80 percent of the export value of these companies.

China was Iran's first buyer of knowledge-based products in this period.

According to Iran's Deputy Industry Minister Mohammad-Majid Fouladgar about 10,000 knowledge-based industrial companies are currently active across the country.

Speaking to the press during a visit to a factory in Chahar Mahal-Bakhtiari Province, Fouladgar said the industry ministry is trying to increase this

number even further.

"Although the ministry's main approach in recent years has been to increase the number of knowledge-based industrial units in the country, it is also following a plan to benefit from the available capacities in the field of knowledge-based industries to improve the quality of such units," Fouladgar said.

According to the official, the ministry is trying to create new markets for such companies to develop the activities of this sector even more.

"Out of the total number of knowledge-based companies in the country, about 100 companies operate on a large economic scale, which indicates that more actions should be taken to support this field," he said.

Fouladgar put the number of semi-finished production units in the country as 21,000 units and said: "Of the mentioned figure, 8,000 units have a physical progress of over 60 percent and 2,300 units have a progress of over 80 percent."

Back in October 2023, the head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) said 717 knowledge-based production units are operating in the country's industrial parks and zones.

According to Farshad Moghimi, 1,800 deals have been signed in the country's industrial parks in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22, 2023) of which 50 have been with knowledge-based firms.

"One of the most important requirements of knowledge-based companies is the distribution of their products in the market; Knowledge-based companies should check the country's needs and make sure that after producing a product or investing in knowledge and technology, their capital will return," Moghimi said.

According to the official, the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry has recently unveiled a support package for knowledge-based companies.

Annual egg exports reach 130,000 tons

TEHRAN - Iran exported 130,000 tons of eggs valued at more than \$140 million to the target countries in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), the deputy agriculture minister for livestock, and poultry affairs said.

According to Mohammad-Ebrahim Hassannejad, Iranian eggs have been exported to various countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Qatar, Oman, and the UAE, ISNA reported.

Iran's egg exports increased by 75,000 tons in the previous year as compared to the year before when the total export was 55,000 tons.

Iran has the capacity to produce 1.6 million tons of eggs annually.

Iranian eggs are mainly exported to neighboring countries including Iraq,

Afghanistan, Kuwait, and Qatar.

The official noted that more than 1.25 million tons of eggs have also been consumed in the country last year.

He further noted that the export of eggs is expected to reach 160,000 tons in the current Iranian calendar year.

Pointing to the chicken production in the country, he said: "More than 18,300 poultry units are active in the country. We produce about 2,600,000 tons of chicken meat annually."

"This year, we plan to reach self-sufficiency in chicken meat production, and the plan is to supply all strategic reserves from domestic production in addition to meeting domestic needs," Hassannejad added.

Iran's April oil output rises 14,000 bpd: OPEC

TEHRAN - Iran produced 3.212 million barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil in April, registering a 14,000 bpd increase compared to the previous month, according to OPEC's latest monthly report.

Based on secondary sources, Iran produced 3.198 million bpd of crude oil in March, the report said.

The Islamic Republic's average crude output for the first quarter of 2024 stood at 3.174 million bpd indicating a 22,000 bpd increase compared to the figure for the fourth quarter of 2023, the report said.

The report put the average Iranian crude output for 2022 at 2.554 million bpd, while the average output in 2023 was 2.859 million bpd.

These statistics show that the Islamic Republic has maintained its place as the third-largest oil producer among the OPEC members.

The country's heavy crude oil price stood at \$88.79 in April, registering a 6.4 percent rise compared to the previous month, according to

the OPEC report.

Iran sold its heavy crude oil at \$83.46 per barrel in March.

The country's average heavy crude price was \$83.21 since the beginning of 2024 up to the report's publishing date, in comparison to \$81.56 in the previous year's same period.

Earlier in April, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reported that Iran's oil production in 2023 saw an increase of 500,000 bpd in comparison to the previous year, reaching 3.1 million bpd.

According to the IMF data, the oil sector of Iran's economy recorded a noteworthy growth of 15 percent in 2023. Over the three years of President Ebrahim Raisi's tenure, this sector experienced a double-digit growth; therefore, the oil sector saw 10.1 percent, 10 percent, and 15 percent growth respectively in 2021, 2022, and 2023.

It is predicted that Iran's oil production will increase by another 100,000 bpd, reaching 3.2 million bpd in 2024.

TEDPIX falls 1,000 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN - TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 1,075 points on Wednesday to stand at 2,164,497.

TSE is one of the four Iranian stock

exchanges, and the most important one. The other three ones are the Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX), and Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB).

Iran, China ink MOU on agricultural co-op

From page 1 ► Noting that China is presently Iran's main trade partner, he said that the volume of trade between the two countries stands at \$30 billion which can even be increased to \$50 billion.

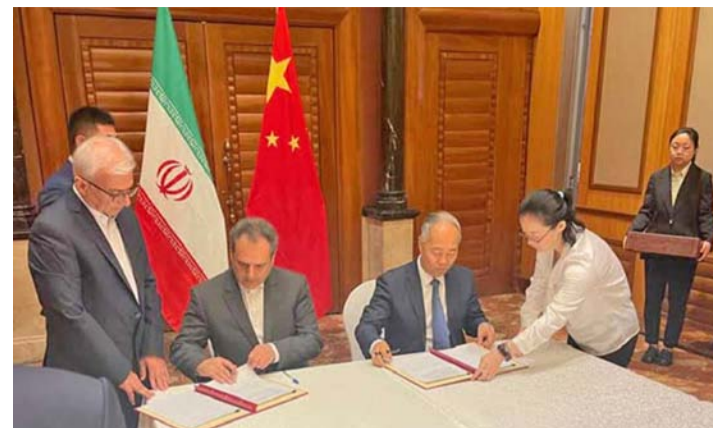
The ICCIMA head further stressed that the private sectors of Iran and China can cooperate in different areas including agriculture and industry.

China is one of Iran's main trade partners that has maintained strong trade ties with the Islamic Republic despite the strict U.S. sanctions.

Iran and China officially signed the document for 25-year comprehensive cooperation in March 2021.

The document was signed between Iran's former Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

According to the latest data released by China Customs, trade between Iran and China in the first two months of 2024 amounted to \$2.879 billion, marking a 37 percent increase compared to the same period last year.



China exported \$2.5 billion worth of products to Iran and imported \$829 million from Iran from January to February 2024, representing a 45 percent and 20 percent year-over-year increase, respectively.

Analysts believe that China's imports from Iran may be even higher than \$829 million, as the purchase of Iranian oil by Chinese refiners is not included in the official statistics of the country's imports from Iran.

The value of trade between Iran and China in 2023 exceeded \$14.6 billion, registering a 6.2 percent decline compared to 2022, according to China's Customs data.

Iran's Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ehsan Khandouzi has said the 25-year strategic partnership plan between Iran and China has entered a new phase with new agreements being reached between various ministries of the two countries.

Back in December 2022, Iran and China finalized 16 memorandums of understanding (MOU) under the framework of the two countries' strategic 25-year agreement.

The MOUs were signed in an Iran-China comprehensive cooperation program summit which was held in Tehran on December 13 in

the presence of Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber and China's Vice Premier Hu Chunhua.

Iran and China also signed 20 memoranda of understanding in the presence of the presidents of the two countries in Beijing in mid-February, 2023.

Heading a high-ranking delegation, Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi was on a three-day state visit to China starting February 14, 2023.

During President Raisi's visit to China, Tehran and Beijing signed a number of bilateral cooperation documents in the fields of agriculture, trade, tourism, environmental protection, health, disaster relief, culture, and sports.

The documents include agreements in the field of transportation and industry worth \$12 billion and \$3.5 billion, respectively; the agreements cover various joint projects like the high-speed rail link between Tehran and Mashhad, and investment in the Imam Khomeini Airport City.

Raisi's visit served as an example of the high level of mutual trust between China and Iran, as well as a milestone for bilateral ties.

Modern irrigation systems to be established in 1.75m ha of farmlands by 2027

TEHRAN - Iran's Deputy Agriculture Minister Safdar Niazi has said during the seventh five-year national development plan (2023-2027) every year 350,000 hectares of farmlands across the country will be equipped with modern irrigation systems.

"Annual implementation of modern irrigation systems on 350,000 hectares of farmlands during the seventh development plan is one of the tasks of the Ministry of Agriculture, for which appropriate financial resources and requirements must be provided," Niazi said.

Back in March 2023, Niazi said 2.8 million hectares of the country's farmlands were equipped with modern irrigation systems.

According to Niazi, the mentioned figure was achieved since the beginning of the implementation of the Agriculture Ministry's modern irrigation systems development

program.

Referring to the construction of irrigation and drainage sub-networks in 1.6 million hectares of the country's farmlands, Niazi said: "So far, 33,000 kilometers of piped water transfer projects and 813,000 hectares of traditional river cover projects have been also implemented across the country."

The official noted that acceleration of the completion of semi-finished projects, the development of new technologies to improve agricultural water productivity, and strengthening the relationship with universities, research institutions, and specialized organizations are among the most important policies and approaches of the Agriculture Ministry.

Recent droughts in Iran have raised the need to use new methods of irrigation. This issue is especially important in rural areas.

It is necessary to develop modern methods of irrigation and replace them instead of traditional irrigation by farmers due to the lack of water in most areas.

Considering the current situation when the country is facing water challenges, the Agriculture Ministry has been implementing the development plan for new irrigation systems.

The main purpose of implementing the plan of modern irrigation systems is to increase the productivity and sustainability of water and soil resources in the country to ensure the sustainable production of agricultural products.

The Agriculture Ministry is also taking the necessary measures to support the domestic manufacturing of equipment used in these systems.

Water storage in Iranian dams exceeds 33b cubic meters

TEHRAN - Over 33.09 billion cubic meters of water is stored behind the dams across Iran, indicating that 67 percent of the capacity of the country's dams is full, according to the Iranian Energy Ministry data.

Based on the Energy Ministry data, the total capacity of the country's dam reservoirs currently stands at 50.5 billion cubic meters.

Since the beginning of the current water year (late September 2023) up to late May

11, the total volume of water inflow to the reservoirs of the country's dams stood at 30.34 billion cubic meters, three percent less than the figure for the last year's same period. Water inflow to the country's dams was 31.12 billion cubic meters in the previous water year's same period.

According to the mentioned data, compared to the figures for the previous water year, the volume of water outflow from the country's dams has increased by

five percent to stand at 18.9 billion cubic meters.

Back in April, the Water Resources Management Company reported that the water inflow to Iran's dams decreased by 10 percent since the beginning of the current water year (September 23, 2023) up to April 13, 2024, compared to the same period last year.

According to the said report, during the mentioned period, 22.89 billion cubic meters of water

entered the country's dam reserves, while the figure stood at 25.57 billion last year.

Despite the recent perspirations across the country, the total volume of water in dam reservoirs has not changed significantly compared to the previous year.

Recent rains have led to the melting of snow cover, increasing the level of water behind dams. However, the water level of dams is still not high in comparison to last year.

All-China Journalists Association hosts Tehran Times



Wang Chuanjun briefs the Tehran Times' journalist on the ACJA's major activities.

By Mahnaz Abdi

BEIJING - As the representative of my country and also the Tehran Times, I was invited to visit All-China Journalists Association (ACJA) in Beijing.

The invitation was made by Mr. Wang Chuanjun, from the International Liaison Department of ACJA.

During the visit, Mr. Wang showed me different parts of the building and briefed me on the activities of the ACJA.

After a while, Mr. Nicolas Zhang, the acting director of Asian, African and Latin American Affairs in the ACJA, joined us and explained more about the association for me.

We had a very fruitful and informative negotiations, expressed our desire for the expansion of media relations, and discussed the

possible ways of such expansion between Iran and China, the two countries that have a very strong bilateral political-economic relation.

Thanks to Mr. Wang for the invitation.

All-China Journalists Association (ACJA) is a national non-governmental organization composed of the press institutions at the national level, journalists associations of provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities, journalists associations of special trades, and major institutions engaged in journalism education and research.

As a non-governmental organization well known in press circles both at home and abroad, ACJA has 217 institutional members including local and professional journalists associations, which embraces a total of more than 1,000,000 people engaged in journalism.

The supreme decision-making body of ACJA is the Board of Directors with five years in each term. The directors, elected by the institutional members, include heads of media organizations, noted public figures within the profession and outstanding editors, reporters and program hosts. The secretariat appointed by the standing committee of the Board of Directors handles daily affairs. There are four departments and one center in this Association. They are the Domestic Work Department, the International Liaison Department, the Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Department, the General Office and the

Journalism Training Center.

ACJA carries out the nation-wide journalism awards. There is an award named by Fan Changjiang, a famous Chinese reporter. It is specially set for the reporters. Another award named by Zou Taofen is to give reward to the outstanding editors. All of the awards organized by ACJA are the most important awards in China, which presents the highest respect and regard to the journalists.

ACJA takes responsibility of safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of journalists. It carries out self-discipline and professional ethics education, and criticizes the behaviors that violate the professional ethics.

ACJA has so far, in various forms, established exchanges and cooperative relations with press institutions of more than 100 countries across the world. It sponsors bilateral and multilateral exchanges with foreign press institutions, sends Chinese press delegations abroad and receives foreign journalists, provides services to foreign correspondents stationed in Beijing such as arranging reportage trips, holding press conferences, news release sessions, international seminars and workshops, and organizing visits and various recreational activities; and participating in activities arranged by international journalists organizations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Columbia professor: Academic atmosphere irreparably harmed

Gauri Viswanathan questions misguided administrative response to anti-war student protests in the U.S.

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN - Student protests and the Gaza Solidarity Encampments taking place at American universities have been a global topic of discussion in recent weeks.

Some universities in the U.S. have engaged in negotiations with their students to end the protests peacefully. Others have been quick to call in police forces and use other pressure tactics, such as suspension and expulsion, to quell the demonstrations.

Among the most controversial universities is Columbia, where school administrators have faced pressure from both the government and students regarding their response to the student activism.

The Tehran Times spoke to Dr Gauri Viswanathan, a distinguished Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University who has been bestowed with the honorary title of Class of 1933 Professor for her significant contributions to the institution and her field of study. She shared her insights on the nature of the student protests taking place on Columbia's campus and her thoughts on the administrators' response to the demonstrations.

Below is the transcript of our conversation with her:

What is your perspective on the student protests currently taking place in universities across the U.S.? Do you believe they are predominantly peaceful or driven by antisemitism?

Speaking from my observations of the situation at Columbia, I can say that the student protests have been predominantly peaceful. Mainstream media have willfully mischaracterized the protests as antisemitic, equating criticism of Israel and its policies towards Palestinians with anti-Jewishness. Look at the headlines: protesters are invariably characterized as "pro-Palestinian" or "anti-Israel." Rarely are they described as antiwar protesters.



Where speech was once protected by academic freedom, the strict regulation of speech that now takes place shows how far administrators have moved the goalposts of violence from actions to words. Slogans like "from the river to the sea," "intifada," and "free Palestine" are practically outlawed in universities because they are viewed as threatening to Jewish students. However, it should be noted that no student was threatened with or experienced physical violence at Columbia. It's hard not to conclude that "Palestine" is the offensive word, sought to be erased in speech as in geography and history. Across the US, students have exercised their right to protest against policies and actions that have resulted in mass-scale suffering, devastation, and loss of life in Gaza. They are laser-focused in their demand that universities cease their complicity with companies that profit from Israel's military assault on Gaza. Students can see what mainstream news outlets have obscured: the images of untold suffering and destruction in Gaza. They have taken a principled stand to oppose the universities' participation in any war efforts that result in such large-scale loss of civilian life.

This is not to deny, however, that the chanting crowds outside university gates have at times given off frightful vibes to Jewish students. It is a fact

that some Jewish students are genuinely troubled by the chants and fearful about their personal security. Occasionally there have been scuffles between protesters and counter-protesters. But the students in the encampment were typically more subdued, comporting themselves as if they were in a commune. The proliferation of signs and banners undoubtedly unsettled some Jewish students, but at Columbia the encampment did not block access to academic buildings or prevent instruction from taking place. The reason why people objected to them goes to the heart of what the encampment stood for: drawing attention to the plight of Gazans and demanding that Columbia divest from companies that profited from Israel's war on Gaza. No administrator or counter-protester addressed this basic statement of fact made visible by the encampment. Instead, they appealed to rules of conduct in the case of administrators and antisemitism in the case of the counter-protesters.

How do you assess the authorities' response to the protests? Do you believe their use of force has been justified and proportionate?

Calling in the police is an invitation to use force that I believe was completely unjustified. Columbia's president asserted that she did not have a choice, but the fact remains that the breakdown in communications

with the students and faculty showed that the university was all too willing to associate itself with the mechanisms of state power. Rather than acting or speaking in behalf of students and faculty, top university officers bent too quickly to the pressures of trustees and donors. Their actions undermined the very notion of the university as a unique institution that engages with conflicting ideas to reach a point of mutual understanding, if not agreement. Calling in the police short-circuited this crucial mission of education. I find it astounding to observe that university officials across the US refer to the present unrest on campuses as something that will eventually "subside," like a fever. This suggests that they have no real interest in working through difficult issues to arrive at possible resolutions. All they have is a misplaced confidence that the issues will go away if you lock down a campus.

How will the reaction of university administrators towards protesting students affect the academic atmosphere in the United States?

The academic atmosphere has been irreparably harmed in my view. Many faculty and students regard the administrators' action to call in the police as an ultimate betrayal of the vaunted bonds between the university and its community. I do not see how we can come back from this violation of trust. Students who might have been indifferent to the protests of their fellows became energized when they saw hordes of police in riot gear overrun their campus and forcibly remove their peers. The shock and distress they experienced will haunt them for a long time, I am sure. It affected their ability to write their final papers or study for their exams. It's worth noting that the protesters in the encampment had less of a negative impact on students' ability to concentrate on their studies than the police arrests that unfolded before their eyes.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

US is giving Israel license to kill Palestinians

From page 1 ▶ Over the past months, US officials have publicly criticized Israel for high civilian casualties in Gaza.

Over 35,200 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza since Israel launched war on the territory following Hamas' surprise military operation in southern Israel on October 7.

Nonetheless, the US plan to send a new batch of weapons to Israel highlights the fact that Washington seeks to perpetuate the Gaza war despite expressing concerns over civilian

casualties in the small territory.

The plan also comes as a recent State Department report found that Israeli forces likely used US-supplied weapons in a manner "inconsistent" with international law.

For now, the US move to pause an arms shipment and then go ahead with sending another brings to light Washington's hypocritical policy which could be analyzed from two angles.

First, the Biden administration has been un-

der pressure from pro-Palestine groups in the US over its support for Israel's genocidal war on Gaza. Arab American voters and the young who can play a key role in helping Biden in his bid for re-election are dissatisfied with his handling of the Gaza war.

They have demanded a shift in the US policy toward Israel. Recent college campus protests at American universities clearly demonstrate discontent over the White House's backing for Israel.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

Israeli forces flee Gaza district for third time

Occupation troops forced to withdraw from Zeitoun

From page 1 ▶ Video clips show numerous operations in which Israeli troops, tanks and other military vehicles are being targeted at close range with direct hits.

At times, Hamas fighters appear from holes in the ground, crawl toward an Israeli tank, the occupation's troops can be seen in the background, an explosive device is planted under the tank and the fighters, who are accompanied by two cameramen, return underground in a matter of seconds.

Among the other footage published during the latest invasion of Zeitoun and Jabalia show Hamas fighters firing anti-tank missiles, again achieving direct hits.

The filming of the operations and the ability to upload them on the internet has proven to be a key element in the success of Hamas and other Palestinian factions operating against the invading forces in the enclave.

In the majority of the clips there appear to be at least two cameramen. One is film-

ing and another can be seen in the footage standing side-by-side by the operative who is firing a projectile against the occupation forces. This is most likely to document the direct hits.

Experts say with the videos being widely circulated on social media, Israeli occupation forces have been forced to withdraw from the regions as the footage will likely reach the families of Israeli soldiers and captives in Gaza who are increasing their protests against the war being waged by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his hawkish cabinet.

Hamas has picked up on the psychological element of the rising public anger against the war among the Israelis and is clearly tapping into that sentiment.

The other element of the regular video clips, which experts have pointed out offers evidence to highlight how Israeli forces are fleeing under fire rather than defeating

Hamas.

The north of the Gaza Strip has been subject to constant airstrikes and ground invasions yet Hamas appears to be holding its position firmly with surprise attacks and ambushes.

The underground tunnels appear to continue having an effective and deadly effect on the Israeli occupation forces. Analysts say there is no evidence the tunnels have been destroyed and they appear to be everywhere.

Northern Gaza has proven to be a very tedious task for the Israeli occupation forces to achieve Tel Aviv's goal of eliminating Hamas. The north also offers insight into how difficult it would be for the IOF to dismantle Hamas and other Palestinian factions in the southernmost city of Rafah. Many Western as well as former Israeli military officials have pointed this out.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

WORLD HEADLINES

OIC: Repercussions of the Nakba continue to unfold

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) issued a statement on the 76th anniversary of the Nakba when Palestinians were violently expelled from their lands to make way for the formation of the Israeli regime.

The statement said the Nakba continues today "through crimes of murder, destruction, forced displacement, and genocide as a result of the continuing Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people," Al Jazeera reported.

"The OIC reaffirms the responsibility of the international community towards the necessity of putting an end to the Israeli occupation and activating international justice mechanisms to hold Israel, the occupying power, accountable for the crimes it has committed against humanity, and to rectify the historical injustice that continues to befall the Palestinian people," the statement added.

200 authors back divestment from companies that profit from Israel

More than 200 authors, including Naomi Klein and Sally Rooney, have signed a letter calling for increased pressure on investment management firm Baillie Gifford - sponsors of the Baillie Gifford prize for nonfiction - to divest "from companies that profit from Israeli apartheid, occupation and genocide".

The letter was inked by Fossil Free Books, a UK-based group of workers in the literary industry, who has worked on pressuring the company to stop investing in the fossil fuel industry. Now it is also focusing on divestment as it believes that "solidarity with Palestine and climate justice are inextricably linked".

Literary organizations that accept sponsorship from Baillie Gifford "can expect escalation, including the expansion of boycotts, increased author withdrawal of labor, and increased disruption until Baillie Gifford divests," the letter said.

Australian senator: Israel is committing genocide

Senator Fatima Payman has become the first member of the Australian Labor Party to call Israel's war on Gaza a "genocide".

Payman called for sanctions and divestment from Israel and declared "from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free" - a politically charged phrase that Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has criticized, the Guardian reported.

But Payman characterized the call as signifying "freedom from the occupation, freedom from the violence and freedom from the inequality".

"My conscience has been uneasy for far too long. And I must call this out for what it is. This is a genocide and we need to stop pretending otherwise," Payman said.

The senator said she saw leaders, instead of advocating for justice, "performatively gesture defending the oppressors' right to oppress while gaslighting the global community about the rights of self-defense".

Putin to meet Xi in Beijing

Chinese leader Xi Jinping will welcome Vladimir Putin to China on Thursday for the Russian president's second visit in less than a year, according to CNN.

Putin will arrive in China just over a week since entering a new term in office.

His visit, set to take place May 16-17, according to Chinese state media, mirrors Xi's own state visit to Moscow just over a year ago.

Their meeting comes months ahead of the

American presidential elections and as Washington faces mounting international backlash over its support for Israel's war on Gaza.

In an interview with Chinese state news agency Xinhua published Wednesday ahead of his travel, Putin hailed the "great prospects" of the countries' partnership and their joint efforts to "strengthen the sovereignty, protect the territorial integrity and security of our countries."

The leaders aimed to deepen cooperation in "industry and high-tech, outer space and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, artificial intelligence, renewable energy and other innovative sectors," Putin added.

Zelensky cancels all foreign trips

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's office has said that he has postponed all his upcoming foreign visits amid a new Russian offensive.

Zelensky canceled all foreign visits "that were planned for the coming days", his office said on Wednesday on Telegram.

The head of state instructed his team to re-schedule the visits.

"We are grateful to our partners for understanding," the announcement said.

Zelensky had been expected to visit Spain, and perhaps Portugal.

Both Ukraine and Russia are increasingly using drones to carry out short-range, as well as long-range attacks.

Ukraine and the West were caught by surprise by the Russian advance in the Kharkiv region and Putin's troops seized a number of settlements including parts of the town of Vovchansk.

The Russian defense ministry also said on Wednesday that its air forces destroyed ten long-range missiles known as ATACMS that Ukraine's military launched overnight at Crimea.

Blinken: US to send additional 2\$bn in Ukraine aid

The United States will provide an additional \$2 billion in aid to Ukraine, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Wednesday during a press conference in Kyiv with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba.

The foreign military financing will be used not only for purchasing weapons from the US, but also by Ukraine as it invests in manufacturing its own machinery and weapons, Blinken said. Ukraine will also use some of the funding to purchase weapons from other countries, he said.

"All of this -- in particular as we think about the defense industrial base -- builds on an incredible spirit of innovation, of ingenuity, of entrepreneurship that we see here in Ukraine," Blinken said.

Blinken on Wednesday said the United States is "rushing" much of the military aid in the \$60 billion package President Joe Biden approved in April.

Russia has repeatedly warned the West that supplying weapons to Ukraine prolongs the conflict.

Slovakia's prime minister wounded in shooting

Slovakia's populist Prime Minister Robert Fico was wounded in a shooting Wednesday afternoon and taken to hospital.

Reports on TA3, a Slovakian TV station, said that Fico, 59, was hit in the stomach after four shots were fired outside the House of Culture in the town of Handlova, some 150 kilometers northeast of the capital, where the leader was meeting with supporters, AP reported.

Police sealed off the scene, and Fico was taken to a hospital in Banska Bystrica.

The shooting in Slovakia comes three weeks ahead of crucial European Parliament elections, in which populist and hard-right parties in the 27-nation bloc appear poised to make gains.

Kerman captures Korean ambassador's heart

TEHRAN – Paying a visit to Kerman, the South Korean ambassador to Iran has expressed readiness to promote the province's tourism capacities to his fellow Koreans.

Speaking on the sidelines of the Kerman IDEX 2024 Exhibition, dedicated to presenting hidden investment opportunities within the province, Kim Junpyo demonstrated his willingness to recommend Kerman as a crowd-pleasing destination for Korean tourists.

Kerman is really different from what people usually have in mind [dessert picture], the envoy added.

"Visiting a bazaar and historical Karvanica boutique hotel, Kim brought to light. "Made me realize the capacities lie within the province."

Kerman boasts, he underscored, remarkable capabilities in different spheres such as cultural heritage, handicrafts and tourism.

Beating the drum for promoting Kerman as a visit-worthy destination for inbound tourists, the ambassador indicated South Korean embassy's preparedness for creating tourism contents and sharing them on Korean social medias.

Kerman province, located in southeastern Iran, boasts a rich tapestry of historical sites, natural wonders and cultural treasures, making it a compelling destination for travelers seeking diverse experiences. The province's capital, Kerman city, serves as a gateway to its many attractions, including ancient citadels, mesmerizing desert landscapes and vibrant bazaars.

One of the province's most renowned landmarks is the UNESCO-listed Bam Citadel, an ancient fortress dating back over 2,000 years and a testament to the region's rich history.



Kerman province is also home to numerous historical sites, such as the Ganjali Khan Complex, a stunning ensemble of Safavid-era architecture featuring a bathhouse, a mosque and bazaar.

For those seeking cultural immersion, the province's diverse ethnic communities, offer unique insights into traditional lifestyles, crafts and cuisine. The province's vibrant bazaars, such as the one in Kerman city, are vibrant hubs of activity where visitors can sample local delicacies, shop for handicrafts, and engage with friendly locals.

Additionally, Kerman province boasts natural wonders like the Shazdeh Mahan Garden, an oasis of lush greenery, and the impressive Rayen Castle, often dubbed the "miniature Bam" for its similar architectural style and historical significance.

With its blend of history, culture and natural beauty, Kerman province stands as a captivating destination with endless opportunities for exploration and discovery.

Whether wandering through ancient citadels, traversing desert landscapes, or immersing oneself in vibrant bazaars, visitors to Kerman are sure to be enchanted by its diverse tourist offerings.

9,000-year-old copperware excavated from Tepe Chaman to go on public view

TEHRAN – Newly excavated prehistoric items from Tepe Chaman will be showcased at the Azarbaijan Museum in Tabriz.

These findings are expected to significantly impact the understanding of Neolithic human settlement and metallurgy in the village of Leylan and its surrounding lands situated in East Azarbaijan province, CHTN reported on Wednesday.

According to organizers, the exhibit is intended to mark Iran's Cultural Heritage Week and International Museum Day.

The recently discovered copper artifacts, dating back 9,000 years, push the timeline for copper usage in Iran further back than previously thought.

Archaeologists unearthed these copper plates mostly from graves, providing historical evidence of early human habitation in the area. Alongside these, stone and plaster jewelry, ancient tools, and pottery from the Neolithic period were also discovered, the report added.

The copper plates and other artifacts will be on display to the public starting Saturday, May 18, coinciding with International Museum Day, offering a rare glimpse into the early

use of metal by humans in Iran.

Glimpses of coppersmithing in ancient Iran

When studying the history of copper use, it is best to divide it into the Chalcolithic or Copper Age, and the Bronze Age, among other eras. Copper is thought by some anthropologists to have been the first metal used by humans because of its softness and simplicity of manipulation.

During the 5th and 4th millennia BC in Iran, craftspeople were able to create enough heat to reach temperatures required for the melting of most of the then-known raw materials, and thus extract metals.

On top of that, copper-smelting techniques became well-known in various parts of Iran in this period. With the advancement of the knowledge of metallurgy in the Achaemenid era, finely crafted copper and bronze objects were created, continuing through ancient times.

Although copper is mentioned in geographical texts much less often than precious metals, it appears to have been mined over wide areas of Persia in early Islamic times.

Iran in frames



Lake Ovan is a picture-perfect destination situated some 75 km from Qazvin in the Alamut region.

Zayandehrud mismanagement threatens Isfahan's heritage

TEHRAN – Iran Ghazi, a retired university professor and geography researcher, has expressed grave concerns over the mismanagement and misuse of water resources from the Zayandehrud river, warning that such practices endanger both human life and the rich cultural heritage of Isfahan.

In a recent interview with ISNA, Ghazi emphasized the deep cultural significance of the Zayandehrud river to Isfahan, stating,

"Without knowledge, understanding, and a sense of responsibility, the foundation of Isfahan's cultural identity, which is historically tied to the Zayandehrud, will weaken."

Ghazi said that the water scarcity in Zayandehrud is not due to a lack of rainfall or snowfall, which she continuously monitors, but rather due to the poor management of water resources. "There is no shortage of water. The issue is misuse," Ghazi asserted.

The retired professor lamented the impact of the dry river on the spirit of Isfahan's residents, saying, "The first effect of the Zayandehrud's dryness is seen in the overall people's mood in



Isfahan."

She pointed to a dramatic change in people's spirits whenever water returns to the river and urban canals, providing a temporary escape from their confined urban living spaces.

Recounting his observations from nearly a decade ago, Ghazi described walking from Pole-Kaleh (one of Zayandeh Rud basins) to the dam site and witnessing over 600 large pumps drawing water to higher elevations for irrigation purposes.

"When I asked where the water was going, I was told it was being used to irrigate newly established gardens on elevated

land. I questioned what would happen to the environment, the people, a downstream wetland... But there were no answers."

Reflecting on historical water levels, Ghazi noted that groundwater in one of the dry regions used to be accessible at 20 meters, sustaining lush farms. Now, water is extracted from depths of 300 meters!

The cracks in the foundations of the Jameh Mosque of Isfahan are an outcome of this issue," she said. "When asked about the cause, I stated that, based on available data, nature is not to blame—people are."

Her call to action underscores

the urgency of adopting sustainable water management practices to preserve Isfahan's heritage and ensure the well-being of its people.

Half the world?

Soaked in a rich history, Isfahan was once a crossroad of international trade and diplomacy in Iran and now it is one of Iran's top tourist destinations for good reasons.

The city is filled with many architectural wonders, such as unmatched Islamic buildings, bazaars, museums, Persian gardens, and tree-lined boulevards. It's a city for walking, getting lost in its mazing bazaars, dozing in beautiful gardens, and meeting people.

Isfahan is renowned not only for the abundance of great historical bridges but also for its 'life-giving river', the Zayandeh-Rood, which has long bestowed the city an original beauty and fertility.

Interestingly, the city is nicknamed Nesf-e-Jahan, which is translated into "half the world", meaning seeing it is relevant to see half the world. In its heyday, it was also one of the largest cities in the region, with a population of nearly one million.

Thai envoy visits Yazd attractions, welcomes closer relations

TEHRAN – As a notable effort to boost tourism ties between the two nations, the Thai ambassador to Iran has discussed possible future initiatives with Yazd's tourism activists.

Ambassador Pichit Boonsud meeting with Yazd's governor and provincial tourism professionals on Tuesday, shared insights on the bilateral tourism ties.

Referring to Yazd as a historically civilized province, the envoy mentioned great capacities within the region.

It's an excellent opportunity, he added, to introduce Yazd's touristic capabilities to the other nations.

Efforts to implement visa-waiver programs, arranging educational partnerships and hosting events showcasing both sides' tourism potentials were also discussed.

Additionally, marketing strategies were followed in conversations, including planning familiarization tours with an eye toward attracting and exchanging tourists.

"We can collaborate in gold and jewelry spheres," the ambassador further noted, pointing to Yazd's renowned industrial characteristic.

Moreover, elaborating the Yazd's tourism status as Iran's only UNESCO-listed city, provincial tourism activists shed light on potential tourism collaboration opportunities.

Yazd province, located in central Iran, boasts a rich cultural heritage spanning millennia.

Renowned for its ancient cities, 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 handicraft industry, producing intricately designed carpets, textiles, ceramics, and metal-



work. 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.

Volkswagen enthusiasts to unite in Iranian cities

TEHRAN – In a nationwide celebration, Volkswagen owners and enthusiasts will gather in six Iranian cities on Friday, May 17, to mark the national Volkswagen Day.

Organized by the Touring & Automobile Club of Iran in collaboration with the Historic Vehicles Association of Iran, the event will showcase various Volkswagen models, honoring the legacy of the renowned German automaker.

The simultaneous gathering will take place in Tehran's Azadi Tower, Shiraz's Afif-Abad Garden, Isfahan's Chehel Sotoun Palace Museum, Mashhad's Er-

shad Raceway, Rasht's General Directorate of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, and a Volkswagen dealership in Tabriz.

Each city's gathering will feature a variety of Volkswagen vehicles, from vintage models to more recent productions, allowing participants to celebrate the iconic brand's impact on the automotive world.

It's worth noting that Ordibehesht 29 (May 18) is recognized as "Volkswagen Day" in Iran.

However, this year's festivities are scheduled a day earlier, on Friday, to accommodate the weekend holiday in Iran.

Iran is home to thousands of remarkable classic and vintage vehicles.

For instance, Tehran's classic car museum embraces collections of the best classic and unique automobiles, some of which are single in the world.

Volkswagen, abbreviated as VW, is a German motor vehicle manufacturer headquartered in Wolfsburg, Lower Saxony, Germany.

Founded in 1937 by the German Labour Front under the Nazi Party and revived into a global brand post-World War II by British Army Officer Ivan Hirst, it is known for the iconic



Beetle and serves as the flagship brand of the Volkswagen Group, the largest automotive manufacturer by worldwide sales in 2016 and 2017.

Its name is derived from the German-language terms Volk and Wagen, translating to "people's car" when combined.

Long-lived trees made national heritage

TEHRAN – Three long-lived trees in Gilan province have gained national heritage status, underscoring efforts to protect the region's cultural and natural heritage.

"Two ancient oak trees in Jalibil village and Imamzadeh Pir Asad in the city of Rezvanshahr along with the sycamore tree of Benun Mashayekh in Talesh county have been registered on the national list of heritage sites," the provincial tourism chief

said. Shedding light on the inscription process, Vali Jahani on Wednesday emphasized that a session was held with the presence of experts and judges intended to review the provincial files of natural, and ultimately, three sites in Gilan were registered in the national heritage list.

He considered the purpose of registering natural elements in line with the enhanced protection of the nation's heritage.

"We hope that with the cooperation of all institutions, people, and enthusiasts of valuable cultural, historical and natural heritages," the director-general wined up.

"The necessary ground for the protection and preservation of valuable sites of the province will be provided more than ever before."

Demographic changes affecting family well-being

By Maryam Tavassoli

TEHRAN – Celebrated annually on May 15, the International Day of Family provides an opportunity to reflect on social, economic, and demographic changes that affect the structure and stability of families.

This year, the day aims to raise awareness of how climate change impacts families and the role families can play in climate action.

Climate change negatively impacts the health and well-being of families through increased pollution, while extreme weather events exacerbated by climate change, such as hurricanes, droughts, and floods, often lead to forced displacement and loss of livelihoods for families and individuals.

Such events impact agricultural productivity and access to water, intensifying hunger and vulnerability.

They cause economic disruption in industries sensitive to climate impacts such as agriculture and fisheries.

Empowering families through education, changing consumption habits, and advocacy is critical for meaningful and effective climate action.

Through family and community initiatives, we can foster climate action with education, access to information, training, and community participation.

Families pass values across generations, so instilling sustainable habits and climate awareness in families from an early age is important.

Integrating circular economy principles into early childhood education can help build a sustainable



economic model based on minimizing waste and regenerating natural resources. Families as consumers and advocates can drive the transition to a circular economy.

Law on Family and Youth Support

President Ebrahim Raisi has urged all responsible bodies and organizations to adopt national policies in line with the goal of population growth.

All the institutions and organizations of the country are obliged to prepare their plans and programs within the framework of the population growth policy and follow up on their implementation seriously, he said, IRIB reported.

He referred to "population" as one of the important and key points in the 7th national development plan (2023-2027).

Multiple measures are forecast to be implemented in the seventh national development plan (2023-2027) to strengthen the pillars of family and remove obstacles to the growth and prosperity of women.

"Increasing the birth rate to at least 2.5 within five years with com-

prehensive support for childbearing and providing incentives" are other objectives of the plan.

In this regard, "promoting the correct pattern of choosing a spouse and encouraging timely, easy and sustainable marriage", "boosting non-governmental organizations supporting women and children", "improving women's abilities and job skills" and "increasing the fertility rate" are prioritized.

Each of the executive bodies in charge of women and families has duties to achieve the mentioned four goals.

Presidential office

The presidential office for women and family affairs is obliged, in cooperation with other executive bodies, to review and analyze the laws and regulations in order to support families and remove obstacles to the growth and prosperity of women.

It is also tasked with proposing amendments to laws and regulations that contradict the population growth policies in cooperation with the presidential office for legal affairs not later than the end of the first year of the plan.

Interior ministry

The Ministry of Interior is obliged to prepare and develop a comprehensive plan for the empowerment of women heads of households in cooperation with the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor, and Social Welfare within six months of the promulgation of the law.

Labor ministry

The Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor, and Social Welfare is obliged to formulate the women's employment program, respecting the role of women in the family, by determining the duties and functions of each of the executive bodies not later than the end of the first year of the plan.

Health ministry

The Ministry of Health is obliged to provide the necessary support in relation to the Law on Family and Youth Protection, including regarding the scientific methods of embryo and egg preservation.

National Headquarters for Population

The National Headquarters for Population is obliged to implement the necessary measures toward the annual growth of marriages and births, the annual reduction of abortion and infertility, the reduction of the average age of marriage, the reduction of the interval between the births of children, and the management of migration.

Considering the negative consequences of population decline in the lives of families and the negative effects of aging and population aging in the coming years, necessary measures should be taken to promote the culture and improve people's attitudes towards having children.

IBTO achievements are unparalleled worldwide: WHO official

From page 1 ▶ The event provides a good opportunity for the participants to gain insight into Iran's unparalleled advancement in healthcare in the region and the world, he said.

Certain departments of the blood transfusion organization are particularly involved in reforming medical and health services, which presents a great opportunity for participating experts from foreign countries to benefit from training courses.

Regarding the services provided by Iran to Afghan refugees, the official said, "In addition to the 85 million population, the Islamic Republic of Iran officially hosts 5 million refugees, who receive many health and medical services free of charge."

"I am strongly influenced by Iran's blood transfusion system, which is very special and unique in the Eastern Mediterranean and Western Asia.

The system is renowned worldwide and boasts impressive institutional capacities," Hussain added.

Lauding Iran's efforts to expand health in the region, the official mentioned the participants in the congress are very well aware of Iran's capabilities and all the information published by Iran in this field is clear.

Hussain highlighted that Iran is a WHO member and adheres to WHO's Universal Health Coverage (UHC), which aims to improve health and wellbeing levels.

In fact, the country plays an effective role in promoting UHC.

Iran has adopted UHC as a common goal and strives to provide these facilities for those who do not have adequate access to health or cannot afford treatment costs.

Being a disaster-prone country, experiencing floods, earthquakes, and other hazards, there is always a need for blood in the country.



5th intl. transfusion medicine congress

The two-day scientific event started in Tehran yesterday.

It demonstrates the knowledge and capabilities of the Blood Transfusion Organization and the High Institute for Research and Education in Transfusion Medicine (IRETM), Bashir Haji-Beigi, an official with IBTO who is also the executive chairperson of the congress, said.

It was the fifth experience of hosting a major scientific event at the international level in the field of blood transfusion medicine, a testament to the abilities and proficiencies of specialists in this field and the efficiency of Iran's blood transfusion system, the health ministry's website reported.

The IBTO and the IRETM have been selected as research training partners of the World Health Organization for multiple consecutive periods. With the cooperation of the WHO, they have contributed to the development of the knowledge and skills of the regional countries in establishing an efficient blood transfusion system.

"The congress serves as a platform to introduce scientific standing, capabilities, and achievements of the country in the field of blood transfusion medicine on a global scale. It provides an opportunity to learn from the participants' experiences and knowledge, as well," he added.

The main objective of the congress includes sharing the latest research findings and scientific achievements among the participants, blood transfusion organizations, institutions, and regional countries, the official noted.

Scientific analysis of management in blood transfusion centers, blood banks, and medical centers, improving blood transfusion work processes through information exchange among blood transfusion centers and blood banks of Iran and regional countries, enhancing the attitude and performance of clinical and laboratory specialists in medical centers in transfusion medicine were among the expected outcomes of the congress.

Participants from 30 countries of the world attended the international congress and some 100 abstracts were submitted.

More than 15 speakers from Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, Denmark, Spain, Oman, Nepal, Italy, and Egypt were scheduled to deliver speeches both in person and online.

Moreover, research posters by Iranian and foreign students and specialists were showcased to help participants learn about new research findings more effectively.

Over 50 professors and academic staff members of the IRETM and universities across the country cooperated as members of the scientific steering committee, scientific committee, scientific reviewers, executive committee, and student committee.

The Iranian Blood Transfusion Organization (IBTO) is still known as a regional training authority of the World Health Organization (WHO) in blood transfusion medicine, Bashir Haji-Beigi, the IBTO spokesman, has said.

The official underscored the high position of the IBTO in the region and the world for providing healthy blood voluntarily, IRNA reported.

Haji-Beigi said conducting nucleic acid testing (NAT), a molecular technique for screening blood donations to reduce the risk of transfusion-transmitted infections; antibody screening to ensure the recipient and the donor's blood are compatible to prevent complications from blood transfusion; as well as genetic sequencing using Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) method for human leukocyte antigens (HLA) to check tissue compatibility and facilitate hematopoietic stem cell transplantation for patients are among the activities that have been put on the agenda since last year.

Iran observing Organ Donation, Life Donation week

TEHRAN –The national Organ Donation, Life Donation week kicked off on Tuesday and will wrap up on May 20.

The health ministry has designated particular names for each day of the week as follows.

Tuesday, May 14, The importance of organ donation to save lives and improve the life quality

Wednesday, May 15, Education, an effective component in raising public awareness about organ donation in cases of brain death

Thursday, May 16, Providing comprehensive information and promoting the culture of organ donation in cases of brain death

Friday, May 17, Empowering and strengthening the collaborative approaches of governmental and non-governmental institutions towards organ donation and transplantation

Saturday, May 18, 'Organ donation coordinators are the main pillar of organ transplantation'

Sunday, May 19, Transplant donor families are the most exalted/ respectable people for their selfless act of sacrifice and forgiveness

Monday, May 20, The National Organ Donation, Life Donation Day

Rise in organ donation

The number of organ donors in Iran increased

from 7.8 per million population (PMP) in the year 1399 (March 2020-March 2021) to 12.2 in the year 1401 (March 2022-March 2023).

"In 1399, the number of organ donations in the country was 645, which reached 928 in 1400 and increased to 1,016 in 1401," Amir-Hesam Alirezai, the head of the Health Ministry's Center for Transplantation and Disease Management, said.

"Currently, 30 kidney transplant centers, 11 liver transplant centers, 3 lung transplant centers, 4 pancreas transplant centers, 18 bone marrow transplant centers, 22 procurement centers, and 35 transplant identification centers are active in the country," he explained.

With 40,095 cases, kidney transplant has had the highest number of transplants in the country, he noted.

Between 5,000 and 8,000 brain deaths occur annually in the country, he said, adding that 2,500 to 4,000 cases of brain deaths are eligible for organ transplantation, and there are 18,000 patients in need of receiving organs in the country, and more than 1,410 cases of organ donation were done last year, he concluded.

According to the Iranian Society of Organ Donation, there are two types of death in the medical world; Heart death (common death), which

accounts for 99 percent of deaths worldwide, and brain death, which accounts for one percent of deaths.

There are over 25,000 patients in need of transplants on the waiting lists for various organs, but unfortunately, 7 to 10 of them die every day due to the lack of a transplanted organ, accounting for over 3,000 a year.

Organ donation is an altruistic decision that can be made by family members after brain death. Although many organizations and medical centers have implemented various interventions and training courses to increase satisfaction with organ donation, a lack of organs for donation still is a serious problem in the world.

Iran tops Asian countries in organ donation

Mehdi Shadnough, former head of the Health Ministry's Center for Transplantation and Disease Management, announced in June 2020 that Iran is ranked first for organ donation among Asian countries.

"The country's organ donation rate is 14.34 per one million people," he noted.

In February 2019, Shadnough said that the organ donation rate has increased by 60 times over the past 18 years. Although Iran ranks 26 in organ donation in the world.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

\$4m allocated to promote non-motorized transport

Some 170 billion rials (around \$4 million) has been allocated to promote bike lanes across the capital city of Tehran, Sakineh Ashrafi, deputy mayor of Tehran, has said.

One of the main issues in the next year's budget bill was development of non-motorized transportation, which focuses on active transportation and human powered transportation including walking and bicycling.

According to Tehran development plan, biking as a green transport has been taken into consideration in order to mitigate traffic congestion and air pollution, she further noted, ISNA reported on Sunday.

تصویب اعتبار ۱۷ میلیاردی برای توسعه دوچرخه‌سواری همگانی در پایتخت

سکینه اشرفی معاون برنامه‌ریزی، توسعه شهری و امور شورای شهردار تهران از تصویب حدود ۱۷۰ میلیارد ریال اعتبار برای توسعه دوچرخه‌سواری همگانی در پایتخت خبر داد. وی اظهار کرد: یکی از موضوعاتی که در بودجه سنواتی سال آینده شهرداری تهران به آن توجه شده، موضوع توسعه حمل و نقل عمومی غیرموتوری از جمله دوچرخه‌سواری همگانی است. به گزارش روز یکشنبه برگزاری ایستنا وی ادامه داد: در برنامه سوم توسعه شهر تهران، موضوع توجه به دوچرخه‌سواری به عنوان یک حمل و نقل پاک برای کاهش ترافیک و آلودگی هوا مورد توجه و تاکید قرار گرفته است.



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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

If you cannot get things as much as you desire than be contented with what you have.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:01 Evening: 19:23 Dawn: 3:20 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:58 (tomorrow)

Oliver Stone's memoir published in Persian



Stone's early success came with his 1986 film "Platoon," which won four Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Director. This critically acclaimed film cemented Stone's reputation as a master of cinematic storytelling and marked the beginning of a long and successful career in Hollywood.

Throughout his career, Stone has continued to push the boundaries of filmmaking with his bold and uncompromising style. His films often tackle complex and controversial topics, such as war, politics, and social justice. Some of his most notable works include "Midnight Express," "Scarface," "Wall Street," "Born on the Fourth of July," and "JFK." Stone's films are known for their intense drama, complex characters, and historical accuracy. He has received numerous awards and accolades throughout his career, including three Academy Awards for Best Director and two Golden Globe Awards for Best Director. Stone's contributions to the film industry have been recognized by his peers and audiences alike, solidifying his position as one of the most respected and influential filmmakers of all time.

Stone's unique style is characterized by his use of non-linear storytelling, experimental camera techniques, and a focus on social and political commentary. His films often challenge audiences' perceptions and spark controversy, making him a polarizing figure in the film industry.

Despite this, Stone remains a beloved figure among many film enthusiasts, who appreciate his commitment to telling important and thought-provoking stories. In addition to his work in feature films, Stone has also directed several documentaries and television shows, including the acclaimed series "The Untold History of the United States."

Throughout his career, Stone has remained true to his artistic vision, earning him a reputation as one of the most innovative and daring filmmakers of his generation.

TEHRAN- "Chasing the Light: Writing, Directing, and Surviving Platoon, Midnight Express, Scarface, Salvador, and the Movie Game", a book by American film director Oliver Stone, has recently been published in Persian.

Iranian film critic Kourosh Jahed is the translator of the book, which has been published by Aban Publications in Tehran.

"Chasing the Light" is a memoir by Oliver Stone, a renowned director and screenwriter, which recounts his tumultuous childhood in New York, his experience as an infantryman in Vietnam, and his struggles to make a name for himself in the film industry.

The book delves into the highs and lows of Stone's life, including his meetings with famous actors like Al Pacino, his battles with cocaine addiction, and his intense research for films like "Scarface" and "Midnight Express".

The memoir also sheds light on the behind-the-scenes drama of his films, including tensions with fellow director Michael Cimino and the financial struggles to produce his Academy Award-winning film, "Midnight Express". Overall, "Chasing the Light" offers a candid and intimate look at Hollywood's tumultuous years of the 1970s and 1980s through the eyes of one of its most iconic figures.

Oliver Stone is a renowned American film director, screenwriter, and producer who has made a significant impact on the film industry. His career spans over four decades, during which he has written and directed some of the most iconic and influential films of all time.

Cartoon of Day



Ongoing Nakba

Cartoonist: Mohammad Sabaaneh from Palestine

Iran's culture minister calls for strengthening cultural ties with SCO member states

TEHRAN- Iranian Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaeili has emphasized the importance of cultural cooperation between Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States.

He made the remarks during the 21st Meeting of the Ministers of Culture of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which was held online at the Tehran International Book Fair on Wednesday morning, ISNA reported.

Esmaeili stressed that the world is facing numerous challenges, including economic, political, and cultural ones, and that cultural cooperation is crucial to addressing these challenges.

He noted that the Western world is trying to impose its culture on non-Western societies, and that it is essential for SCO member states to promote their own cultural heritage.

The minister emphasized that each SCO member state has its own unique cultural identity, shaped by its history and traditions and added: "In addition to national aspects, we must strive to introduce and promote the outstanding cultural characteristics of SCO member states."



This meeting is crucial in explaining the authenticity of Eastern cultures and promoting influential opinions on global culture, he noted.

The minister emphasized that Islam, a religion of peace and friendship, promotes equality and brotherhood.

He emphasized that cultural commonalities, such as traditions and customs, can be a strong bond between nations in the region, leading to greater understanding and better outcomes.

The minister praised the

wisdom of the SCO's founders in establishing an organization that prioritizes people's security and fighting extremism and terrorism.

"It is our responsibility as SCO member states to work towards achieving this goal," Esmaili emphasized.

He noted that the world is currently facing a grave injustice perpetrated by the Zionist regime against the Palestinian people, and that we must react to this atrocity by promoting cultural cooperation and preventing the

destruction of national identities by Zionism.

The minister concluded his speech by proposing two practical initiatives to promote cultural cooperation among SCO member states. The first proposal is to hold the second Shanghai Cooperation Organization

International Film Festival in Tehran, while the second proposal is to establish a Shanghai Cooperation Organization film union. He emphasized that film is a powerful tool for conveying messages.



TEHRAN-The 1st National Iranian Ethnic Film Festival was launched at the Iranology Foundation in Tehran on May 14, named Ferdowsi Day in Iran, commemorating Persian language and literature.

Organized by the Iranology Foundation and Fasl-e Honar (Art Season) Cultural and Artistic Institute, the festival is held from May 15 to 19 at Tehran's Book Garden Cineplex under the slogan "Ethnic Groups, Roots of Iran," Mehr reported on Wednesday.

Mohammad Hossein Rajabi Davani, the head of the Iranology Foundation and the head of the festival's policymaking council said: "The Iranology Foundation, as a center for better introducing the honors, greatness and beauty of Iran, has established this festival in line with national unity and cohesion. We hope that the

1st National Iranian Ethnic Film Festival opens in Tehran

festival will be the first step to introduce the great role of the Iranian ethnic groups".

"Iran proudly has the oldest and greatest history, with its civilizational geography reaching from the east to China and from the west to the Mediterranean; it also stretches from the north to the Caucasus and from the south to India and Yemen. Therefore, we strive to hold the festival internationally and for all cultures related to Iran next year," he added.

A part of the opening ceremony was dedicated to honoring the late filmmaker Khosrow Sinai (1941-2022). He was a director and writer, known for "Bride of Fire" (2000), "The Inner Beast" (1983) and "Long Live..." (1980).

During his professional career, Sinai produced nearly 30 documentaries, nine feature films, eight short films, and four animations.

He was also the director of the documentary "Talking with a Shadow" about Iran's foremost short story writer Sadeq Hedayat, who was influenced by world literature, especially

European literature, and had read the works of Kafka, Poe and Dostoyevsky.

In 2008, Poland decorated Sinai with the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit for his documentary "The Lost Requiem" (1970-1983) about the story of the wartime exodus to Iran of thousands of Polish citizens after being released from the Soviet labor camps of Siberia during World War II.

"Bride of Fire", his feature drama, won the Crystal Simorgh for best screenplay at the 18th Fajr International Film Festival in Tehran.

The National Iranian Ethnic Film Festival is held in competitive sections including feature films, short fiction films, animated films, documentaries, music videos and screenplays in accordance with the theme of the festival, which comprises cultural and religious rituals, lifestyles, customs, traditions, and history of Iranian ethnic groups as well as tangible and intangible cultural heritage and tourism capacities.

The festival will conclude on May 19, named Iranology Day in Persian calendar.

Ferdowsi Badge's winners announced

TEHRAN-In a ceremony held on Tuesday in Tus, the prestigious Ferdowsi Badge was awarded to outstanding individuals in the fields of epic creation, epic research, and epic poetry.

The first recipient of the award was Brigadier General Amir Ali

Hajzadeh, the commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Aerospace, who was honored for his bravery and leadership during the Operation True Promise.

The second winner was Professor Mohammad Jafar

Yahaqi, who was recognized for his extensive research and teaching on Persian language and literature.

The third winner was Maryam Qorbanizadeh, who was awarded for her outstanding literary work in the field of epic poetry,

including her book "Khatun and Commander".

The Ferdowsi Badge is given to outstanding individuals who have made significant contributions to the field of epic poetry, literature, and research.

15 books on Ahl al-Bayt (AS) and Shia culture unveiled at 35th TIBF

TEHRAN-15 Books on Ahl al-Bayt (AS) and Shia culture have been released in nine languages by the Ahlulbayt (AS) World Assembly at the 35th Tehran International Book Fair.

In a ceremony attended by Ayatollah Reza Ramazani, Secretary-General of the Ahlulbayt (AS) World Assembly, the books were unveiled on Tuesday, IRNA reported.

Ahl al-Bayt is a designation in Islam referring to the holy family of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), particularly his daughter Hazrat Fatemeh, her husband Imam Ali, their sons Hassan and Hossain, and their descendants.

"Sunset in the West" in German, "Special Rulings for Women" and "Guardian of the Ahl al-Bayt School (The Life of Allameh Seyyed Morteza Asgari)" in English, "Introduction to Islam" in Russian, and "Shi'a and the Arts of Islam" in French were among the books unveiled at the ceremony.

The publications of the Ahlulbayt (AS) World Assembly is a pioneer in producing

audiobooks on Ahl al-Bayt (AS) teachings in various languages. Last year, it produced two audiobooks in Spanish: "Exemplary Youth of Islam" by Mohammad Ali Chenarani, translated by Martha Golzar and Rahmatollah Golzar, narrated by Soheil As'ad, and "The Perfect Model (An Ethical Look at the Life of the Prophet)" by Hemmat Sohrabpour, translated by Martha Golzar and Rahmatollah Golzar, narrated by Abdul Hakim Agilar.

"A progressive society is an informed society. The more knowledge grows, the more the community will develop and become powerful. Knowledge empowers society and establishes its authority. Wherever knowledge flourishes in various fields of basic sciences, physics, chemistry, theology, philosophy, and logic, the society will also thrive. The growth of society is the growth of its individuals in ethical and practical terms.

The more awareness and knowledge there is, the wealthier and more prosperous that society becomes," Ayatollah Ramazani said during the event."

He emphasized the role of books in connecting the past and the future and said: "Books allow humans to connect with both the past and the future. The history of the past, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, scientific developments, and wars—all have been transmitted to us through books".

"Books bridge the gap between the past and the future, shedding light on the path and carrying humanity from the past to the future," he added. Ayatollah Ramazani also highlighted the importance of scholarly authority in scientific matters. "At the beginning of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran ranked 57th in scientific achievements, but today we have reached the 15th position globally in certain fields.

This scholarly authority should extend to the production of knowledge in religious and theological domains as well," he asserted.

"The art lies in being able to convey this content (religious and theological issues) to today's generation in contemporary literature," he concluded.