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Political Scandal

How the Biden-Trump debate exposed US political underbelly

People watch the debate in Washington, DC. President Joe Biden and former President Donald Trump faced each other on Thursday night, June 27, 2024.

Falsifying facts and showing complete disregard for ethical principles have become a norm in American politics while the US sees itself as the upholder of values.

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN - The fierce controversy surrounding the first televised debate between incumbent US President Joe Biden and former president Donald Trump remains in the limelight days after they locked horns over domestic and global issues.

Trump and Biden missed no opportunity to smear each other at the debate in Atlanta, Georgia, by trading terrible insults ahead of the November presidential election.

Real shame

The Republican and Democratic nominees exposed the scandals involving each other and their families.

Biden brought Trump's alleged affair with adult film star Stormy Daniels to light.

"The crimes that you are still charged with — think of all the civil penalties you have. How many millions of dollars do you owe in civil penalties for molesting a woman in public? For doing a whole range of things? Of having sex with a porn star...while wife was pregnant?" Biden said.

He added that Trump has the "morals of an alley cat."

Trump has been on trial stem-

ming from a hush-money payment to Daniels. He faces charges of falsifying business records to conceal the payment.

The film star has claimed she and Trump had sex in 2006. Daniels has also said she accepted \$130,000 from Trump's former lawyer before the 2016 election in exchange for her silence about the encounter.

In May, a Manhattan jury found Trump guilty of 34 felony counts of falsifying business records related to the matter.

Biden's scathing comments came after Trump attacked his son, Hunter, over criminal cases he has been embroiled in.

A jury recently found Biden's son guilty of three counts. These include lying on a federal background check form, giving a false statement and possessing a gun while using drugs.

"When he talks about a convicted felon, his son is a convicted felon. At a very high level. His son is convicted, going to be convicted probably numerous

other times, should have been convicted before but his Justice Department let the statute of limitations lapse," Trump said.

He called Biden a criminal and challenged the US justice system. "This man, you're lucky. You're lucky. I did nothing wrong. We have a system that was rigged and disgusting. I did nothing wrong."

The United States claims to be the world's leading democracy and boasts about the superiority of its justice system.

But Thursday's presidential debate clearly showed that the leaders of this so-called democratic system have no scruples about violating ethical principles. ▶ Page 5

Iran demands security measures in protest to UK after harassment of Iranian voters

TEHRAN - Iran has lodged a formal protest with the United Kingdom over incidents of harassment directed at Iranian voters participating in the country's recent presidential election.

Ali Matinfar, Iran's chargé d'affaires in London, revealed on Sunday that the Iranian embassy had sent a message to the UK Foreign Office expressing strong condemnation of the actions of anti-Iran elements who disrupted voting on June 28.

While talking to Iranian media, Matinfar stressed the need for enhanced security measures to ensure the safety of Iranian citizens during the upcoming runoff election, scheduled for July 5th. He further indicated that he will raise this issue directly with British Foreign Office officials during meetings this week.

Thousands of Iranians residing in Britain visited polling stations in London, Manchester, Birmingham, Newcastle, Glasgow, and Cardiff to cast their votes on Friday. They were subject to verbal, physical, and sexual abuse by anti-Iran individuals waiting outside the polling stations. ▶ Page 2

Acting FM honors victims of Sardasht chemical attacks

TEHRAN - Iran's acting Foreign Minister, Ali Baqeri Kani, has paid tribute to the victims of the chemical attacks on Sardasht, a northwestern city, which occurred forty years ago.

In a statement issued on Saturday to commemorate the anniversary of the chemical bombings and the National Day of Fight against Chemical and Biological Weapons, Baqeri Kani highlighted that sanctions by Western governments and the U.S. have hindered the provision of medical supplies and equipment necessary for treating Iran's chemical attack survivors.

The statement reads:

In the Name of Allah, Most Compassionate, Most Merciful

While honoring the memory of the martyrs of service, late President Ebrahim Raisi, late Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian, and their companions, I would like to pay respect wholeheartedly to the martyrs of the chemical attacks, especially the martyrs of the cowardly chemical attack on the city of Sardasht by Iraq's former Ba'athist regime, and ask God the Almighty to grant health and well-being to the honorable chemical veterans, who patiently endure the ordeal caused by the use of these inhumane weapons. ▶ Page 2

Concern over future forces "exodus" from Israel

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN- After Operation al-Aqsa Storm on October 7 and the ongoing war on Gaza, Canada granted Israelis a "humanitarian visa". According to estimates, thousands of Israelis seized the opportunity and migrated back to the West.

The Israeli website Walla has been the latest to report that thousands of Israelis have migrated to Canada since October 7 last year. But the number is believed to be on the rise.

According to the report, Canada has been offering Israelis the humanitarian visa, an initiative that has prompted many to seize the opportunity and relocate. ▶ Page 5



Iran's Constitutional Council confirms presidential election results

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN - Iran's Guardian Council has officially validated the results of the nationwide presidential election held on June 28th. The announcement, made on Sunday, paves the way for a runoff election scheduled for next Friday, July 5th.

Hadi Tahan Nazif, the council's spokesperson, stated that the body has verified the accuracy and legitimacy of the election, formally notifying the Interior Ministry of this confirmation. He added that despite a designated period for complaints and objections, none were received from either candidates or voters. ▶ Page 2

Iran's hard currency income up 18.6% in Q1: CBI

TEHRAN - Figures by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) show the country's hard currency income rose 18.6 percent in the quarter to late June compared to the same period last year.

The CBI figures published on Sunday showed that Iran's hard currency revenues had reached \$25.5 billion in the three months to June 20.

The figures showed that Iran's positive balance of trade had also soared 51.3 percent to \$11.2 billion in the June quarter.

The CBI said it had allocated \$3.975 billion to imports of basic goods and medicine in the 101 days to June 28, adding that some \$13.442 billion had been earmarked to imports of other commodities and goods over the same period. ▶ Page 4

TEHRAN PAPERS

Strategic cooperation
between Iran and Russia

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

In a note, Kayhan addressed the gas contract between Iran and Russia and wrote: Russia's willingness and gas cooperation with this country can be investigated from two aspects. First, this cooperation should not lead to the loss of the current and future export markets for Iranian gas and the replacement of Russian gas in these markets. If the Islamic Republic of Iran wants to become the natural gas exchange center of the region, it is necessary to maintain its market share in neighboring countries and increase it in the long term. The second important issue is that cooperation with Russia should lead to the attraction of Russian financial resources and the use of the technical capabilities of Russian companies in the development of the country's gas industry. Due to its strategic position and having huge resources of natural gas, Iran has a high ability to play a role in the sustainable supply chain of regional and global energy, and the global conditions have provided a suitable opportunity to strengthen the supply front. The signing of the agreement between Iran and Russia in the development of gas cooperation is considered the starting point.

Javan: Economic growth without JCPOA

In a conversation with Seyyed Ali Mortazavi, an expert in the field of economic policy, Javan dealt with the path of neutralizing sanctions in Raisi's government and said: The economic policies of the 13th government have had a positive effect on the country's economy. Through a combination of innovative strategies, active energy diplomacy, and purposeful policy reforms, the President's government was able to overcome the restrictive measures imposed on Iran's energy sector. By diversifying export markets and expanding regional and global partnerships, the government created a solid foundation for the sustainable growth of the industry on the country's economic path. By joining BRICS and the Shanghai Summit, Iran was able to increase the path of neutralization of sanctions and the development of Iran's oil and non-oil interactions with the countries that are members of these summits. This international energy cooperation provided more outlets for Iran's oil and gas exports and facilitated the acquisition of advanced technologies and investment. This in turn contributed to the overall modernization and competition of the country's oil and gas industry.

MP calls for strong voter
turnout in runoff election

TEHRAN – The Deputy Speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly has highlighted the critical role of voter participation in bolstering national strength, emphasizing that the Iranian nation faces a crucial test in the upcoming runoff election.

In a speech at the public session of the Islamic Consultative Assembly on Sunday, Hamidreza Haji-Babaei addressed the importance of civic engagement.

He remarked, "The Iranian nation went to the ballot boxes on Friday and, with their votes, once again affirmed their commitment to the sacred system of the Islamic Republic of Iran."

He underscored that the world was watching as Iranians turned out in large numbers to cast their votes. "One of the most important elements of national power is the presence of people at the ballot box," Haji-Babaei said. "This participation builds national power, which in turn ensures national security."

Haji-Babaei elaborated on the connection between national security and economic vitality. "National security is the prerequisite for a dynamic economy and the resolution of the people's problems. Therefore, I thank the Iranian nation for their presence at the ballot boxes," he stated. He also expressed gratitude to the executive and supervisory bodies, as well as all the candidates, for facilitating the electoral process.

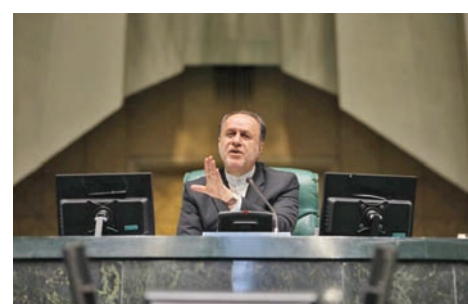
Looking ahead, the Deputy Speaker stressed the importance of the upcoming election. "The great Iranian nation faces

Arman-e-Emrooz: The activation of the
snapback mechanism

In a commentary, Arman-e-Emrooz accused Iran of violating the Safeguard Agreement by the Board of Governors and wrote: The new resolution of the Board of Governors is more focused on safeguard issues and accusing Iran of violating the Safeguard Agreement. The danger of the resolution is also here. It means that, from the point of view of the other party, the issue of reducing Iran's "voluntary" JCPOA obligations is no longer important and relevant, rather, it highlights the "violation" of the mandatory safeguard agreement. This incident itself has special indications in the direction of returning to the zero point and the era before the JCPOA, and the recent resolution can be seen as a prelude to the legal transition to the post-JCPOA era. To achieve this goal, the U.S. and the Europeans are moving towards activating the snapback mechanism by October 2025. In the event of Trump's victory, the issue is somehow clear, but in the event of Biden's re-election, if there is no serious opening in the Oman negotiations until October 2025 in order to reach another agreement, there is a high probability that the snapback will be activated.

Siasat-e-Rooz: Soldiers who became a
model of resistance

Security is the main keyword for every person, country, region, and world system so that even any economic, social, and cultural activity can be implemented in the context of security. The West Asia region, as the center of global development, has been facing a chain of imposed security crises in the last two decades, which have brought many human and financial losses, and this process is continuing in some regions. The defenders of Shiite Sanctuaries did not get caught in miscalculations during the presence of ISIS, and in a realistic approach, they took the path of resistance and sacrifice. Today, the brave resistance of the people of Gaza has made the Zionist regime and the United States desperate, the Yemeni resistance has conquered the Red Sea, and Lebanon's Hezbollah has also determined the equations of the region. All these struggles are based on the resistance of the defenders of Shiite Sanctuaries, a model that today has become a final solution in realizing the freedom-loving goals of nations.



another significant test next Friday and will once again be present at the ballot boxes, playing their role in national power," he said.

Haji-Babaei made a heartfelt appeal to the citizens of Iran: "I urge all Iranians to support the future government by participating widely in the elections."

A government backed by popular support will be able to address societal issues effectively. I hope that we all have a strong presence in the second round of elections and once again affirm our commitment to the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran."

In conclusion, Haji-Babaei called for widespread voter turnout to help form a government capable of addressing the country's challenges. He emphasized that such a government must be rooted in popular support to succeed, and reiterated his hope for robust participation in the upcoming election.

Results in Iran's 14th presidential election show that the votes have gone to a runoff between Massoud Pezeshkian and Saeed Jalili slated for July 5.

Iran's Constitutional Council confirms
presidential election results

From page 1 ▶ The runoff will feature reformist Masoud Pezeshkian and conservative Saeed Jalili, the two candidates who garnered the most votes in the first round of the race. Both hopefuls are allowed to campaign until 24 hours before the runoff begins.

A total of 24,535,185 votes were cast, representing an almost 40% turnout from the over 61 million eligible voters. Pezeshkian received 10,415,991 votes (42.45%), while Jalili secured 9,473,298 votes (38.61%).

The election was held a year ahead of schedule following the passing of President Ebrahim Raisi in May. President Raisi, along with Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian and six others, perished in a helicopter crash in northwestern mountainous forests on May 19th.

Jalili kicks off runoff
campaign with visit to Tehran
Grand Bazaar

Jalili kicked off his campaign for the second round of presidential elections on Saturday with a visit to the bustling Grand Bazaar of Tehran, Iran's economic heart. The move signaled his commitment to addressing



the challenges faced by Iranian businesses and merchants.

During his visit, Jalili outlined his plans to tackle the issues facing the business community.

"Since 2018, we've held extensive discussions with various trade unions and business owners to understand their struggles," he stated. "We've identified 17 key problems and have formulated comprehensive plans to address them."

Jalili stressed that his visit was designed to engage directly with the business community and ensure their concerns are at the forefront of his campaign platform. He emphasized that supporting the private sector and meeting its needs would be a top priority for his administration.

After engaging with business owners, he headed to a Zoorkhaneh, a traditional Iranian sports club, where he spoke to male athletes about the importance of prioritizing women's sports.

"Given that women play a central role in families, it is vital to provide the necessary support and attention to women's sports for their empowerment and effective contribution to society," he said.

Pezeshkian needs to re-engage
disenchanted reformist voters

While Saeed Jalili has hit the ground running, Masoud Pezeshkian, the candidate with the highest vote count on Friday, has yet to fully activate his campaign for the runoff. His

only public engagement with supporters on Sunday was a social media post on X, promising a firm stance against forced patrols, internet filtering, and external pressures.

Analysts have raised concerns about Pezeshkian's ability to win the runoff election, highlighting the need to mobilize the traditional reformist voters who largely stayed away from the polls on Friday.

"Jalili has a better chance of retaining his current supporters and potentially attracting some of Qalibaf's supporters," explained Parviz Amini, a university professor and political analyst, in an interview with Farhikhtegan newspaper. "Pezeshkian, however, faces a more difficult task."

A significant number of reformist voters, who typically participate in elections, chose not to vote on Friday. He needs to win back their support and enthusiasm."

Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, the candidate ranking 3rd in the first round of the presidential elections, has told the over 3 million citizens who voted for him to rally behind Jalili in the upcoming runoff.

Tehran demands security measures in protest to UK after
harassment of Iranian voters

From page 1 ▶ Some of the attackers filmed themselves sexually abusing female voters by using derogatory terms against them and threatening them with rape. Some male voters were also attacked by individuals affiliated with terrorist groups, monarchists, and separatist factions. The predators later boasted on social media that they had managed to dissuade some voters through harassment.

Despite the anti-Iran groups' attempts at

disturbing participants, voting continued without disruptions. At least six attackers were arrested by UK police in Birmingham, Manchester, and London.

The June 28 snap presidential election was held 40 days after President Ebrahim Raisi lost his life in a helicopter crash in Iran's mountainous northwestern region. Either reformist Masoud Pezeshkian or conservative Saeed Jalili will be replacing the late Raisi after the run-off. Over 24 million Iranians voted in the first round of the elections.

Acting FM honors victims of Sardasht chemical attacks

From page 1 ▶ Choosing the anniversary of the chemical bombing of Sardasht as the National Day of Combating Chemical and Biological Weapons is meant to explain the fact that the Islamic Republic of Iran is both the biggest victim of the widespread use of chemical arms in contemporary history and is firmly resolved to oppose such armaments.

The extent of the Saddam regime's chemical attacks during the Iraqi imposed war that took place with the backing of some Western powers and the deadly silence of international organizations was such that no similar example can be found in contemporary history.

Hundreds of chemical attacks against Iranian forces and civilians in the cities and villages of the Islamic Republic of Iran resulted in the martyrdom and injury of more than 100,000 people.

The bitter silence of the international bodies in the face of the use of WMDs against ordinary citizens and combatants on the fronts of the imposed war was one of the most prominent signs of Iran's being oppressed in this unequal confrontation.

In return, the Islamic Republic of Iran adhered to its ethical and religious humanitarian obligations and refrained from taking any countermeasures against the use of these horrible arms.

The massive use of chemical arms by Saddam's regime during the eight years of the sacred defense became possible due to the effective material, scientific, and technical support of some European governments and companies, especially Germany, the Netherlands, and Britain, and the extensive political, military,

and diplomatic support of the United States and Britain for the war machine of that regime.

Today, damning documents prove that without extensive financial assistance, the export of technical and engineering know-how, materials, and equipment necessary for the manufacture and use of chemical weapons by the European and US governments to Iraq, Saddam was not able to produce and use these inhumane weapons.

Despite that the UN experts verified the continued use of chemical weapons against Iranian soldiers and citizens, the same Western countries imposed a serious media and news blackout on the issue, and at the same time, they did not stop providing political, diplomatic, and military support to the Saddam regime.

Even at the responsible international institutions and legal bodies, they prevented the voice of the Iranian nation from being heard and the proof of the rights and innocence of the chemical victims. Such inhumane and illegal actions will never be erased from the historical memory of the Iranian nation.

Lawsuits against the perpetrators of chemical attacks, and their accomplices, against the Islamic Republic of Iran will not be forgotten with the passage of time, and in addition to the trial of criminals in the court of human conscience and public opinion, national and international courts must also fulfill their responsibility in holding criminals accountable and reclaiming the moral and material rights of the chemical victims.

It is necessary to take such measures, among other things, to prevent the recurrence of such

tragedies in the future.

The government of the Islamic Republic of Iran will provide support for lawsuits against nationals and companies of other countries that are complicit in the crimes of Saddam's regime as part of its diplomatic efforts to protect its citizens.

During the past four decades, the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has not given up any efforts to provide medical and healthcare services to the victims of chemical weapons in order to alleviate their suffering.

However, in recent years, the provision of some medical items and equipment required for the treatment of chemical veterans has faced many problems due to the illegal and cruel unilateral sanctions of Western countries, especially the US.

In this regard, I would like to stress that the repeated claim of the US regarding the exemption of humanitarian items from the sanctions is an obvious lie and completely false, and this issue has also been confirmed in the special rapporteur's report on unilateral coercive measures.

The chemical veterans, as victims of the weapons supplied by Western countries, are still victims of inhumane sanctions by the same states.

Of course, such actions are an inseparable part of the nature of some Western governments, and the massive genocide of the child-killing Zionist regime in Gaza, which has been going on for the past nine months, is a clear example.

The very countries that fully supported Saddam to produce and use chemical weapons against Iran, including the oppressed women and children of Sardasht, today provide full

support to the Zionist regime and are direct accomplices in the genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity by the Israeli regime in Gaza.

The same governments that block Iran's access to medicine with embargoes are actually and openly supporting the Israeli regime's move to prevent the delivery of food and medicine to the people of Gaza and to weaponize starvation as a war tactic.

The Islamic Republic of Iran considers the realization of the goals of the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the achievement of a world free of chemical weapons as highly important and continues its efforts to implement all the convention's provisions in a complete, effective, balanced and non-discriminatory manner, especially to promote international cooperation in the field of peaceful use of science and chemicals and to help protect against chemical weapons.

Hosting the 11th international medical aid and protection course against chemical weapons in October 2023 in cooperation with the Technical Secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons with the aim of increasing the capacity and readiness of the member states of the organization in the face of using chemical weapons as well as industrial chemical incidents, is one of the measures the Islamic Republic of Iran has recently taken to that end.

In the end, I once again honor the memory of all the martyrs of the imposed war, especially the martyrs of the chemical attack on the city of Sardasht, and pray for the health and longevity of chemical veterans.

Interim president commends voter participation in presidential election

TEHRAN - Mohammad Mokhber, Iran's acting president, has praised the Iranian people for their participation in the June 28 presidential election, asserting that the upcoming runoff vote will prove a disappointment to the Islamic Republic's detractors.

Mokhber made these remarks on Saturday, following the initial election round held on Friday. The election will see a runoff between Saeed Jalili and Masoud Pezeshkian on July 5th to determine the successor to the late President Ebrahim Raisi.

The acting president lauded the citizens' participation, calling it "another manifestation of religious democracy."

"I commend you, the Iranian people, for your informed participation in this crucial moment in our country's history. Your active



engagement reflects a profound sense of religious democracy and a commitment to upholding the values of our Islamic Republic. As emphasized by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, the strength, dignity, and honor of our nation depend on the continued presence and participation of its people," he said in a statement.

The acting president further

asserted that the turnout in the runoff vote will undoubtedly dismay those opposed to the Islamic Republic.

"Undoubtedly, the continuation of this participation and informed presence of the nation in the second round of the national event of the fourteenth presidential election will cause more despair for the enemies of the country and the sacred system

of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and will strengthen the power and hope of the supporters of the ideals of the Islamic system worldwide," he said.

Lastly, Mokhber expressed gratitude to all individuals and organizations involved in the electoral process.

"I am grateful to all the people, various political groups, esteemed religious figures, and those who have played a responsible role in encouraging people to participate in the country's political fate. I also appreciate the efforts of all those involved, especially the Ministry of Interior, the Guardian Council, the country's election headquarters, executive bodies, supervision and inspection bodies, governors, military forces, law enforcement agencies, and intelligence agencies in ensuring the security of polling stations."

Terrorists planning to attack polling stations arrested before election day



TEHRAN - Iran's Deputy Minister of Interior revealed on Sunday that the country's security and intelligence forces successfully thwarted terrorist plots aimed at disrupting the June 28 presidential elections before voting commenced.

In an interview with Fars News Agency, Majid Mirahmadi, shed light on the strategies employed by enemies during the recent presidential elections in Iran.

Mirahmadi revealed that anti-Iran groups

and factions had devised multiple strategies to disrupt the electoral process. "Their first strategy was to discourage voter participation by promoting an election ban, and their second strategy was about infiltrating the candidates' election headquarters," he said, highlighting the efforts made by adversaries to create false polarization and intensify societal divisions.

Moreover, Mirahmadi emphasized that the enemies had planned to raise the issue of election fraud and repeat past incidents. "The final and fifth strategy of the enemies and adversaries was to raise the issue of voter rigging and repeat the bitter incident of 2009," he stated.

In addition to these challenges, Mirahmadi also addressed the persistent threat posed by terrorist groups during elections.

He revealed that these groups had planned to instigate fear and prevent people from

participating in the electoral process through terrorist operations. "They tried to turn the elections into a widespread security challenge by implementing hard and soft strategies," he added.

However, Mirahmadi provided reassurance by stating that due to effective intelligence operations, several terrorist elements who had been trained and prepared for disruptive activities during the elections were apprehended before they could carry out their plans.

"Before the start of the elections, some of the terrorist elements who had been sent into the country, received the necessary training, and were prepared for terrorist operations during the elections were arrested by the anonymous soldiers of Imam Zaman (a term used in Iran for intelligence forces) and thankfully, terrorist movements faced a complete defeat," he affirmed.

Leader advisor offers nuclear collaboration to Iraq

TEHRAN - A top military adviser to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has suggested that Iraq can tap into Iran's extensive 50-year experience in atomic energy.

Speaking at a ceremony where an honorary doctorate was awarded to Naeem Al-Aboudi, the Iraqi Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research at Imam Hussein University, Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi emphasized the potential for collaboration between the two nations in the field of nuclear energy.

"I am pleased with the steps you are taking towards nuclear energy knowledge development and I suggest that you benefit from Iran's 50-year experience in atomic energy and our students," General Safavi stated, highlighting the valuable expertise that Iran could provide to Iraq in this critical area.

Furthermore, General Safavi underscored the importance of strengthening scientific and research ties between Iraq and Iran, noting that the presence of the Iraqi Minister of Science in Iran presented a significant opportunity for mutual advancement. He

highlighted the shared destiny of the two nations, describing them as complementary in geopolitics, geostrategy, geoeconomics, and geoculture.

General Safavi also commended Iraq's efforts in promoting education and collaboration with Iranian universities. "Currently, more than 80,000 Iraqi students are studying at Iranian universities," he revealed, emphasizing the positive impact of such educational exchanges on both countries.

Moreover, the advisor to Iran's Leader praised Iraq's potential as

a center of scientific talent in the Arab world and encouraged the country to leverage its resources for progress and prosperity. He emphasized the strategic partnership between Iran and Iraq in supporting initiatives such as the 'Resistance Studies' program at Iraqi universities and aiding the people of Gaza.

In conclusion, the military official reiterated Iran's willingness to share its knowledge and experiences in various fields with Iraq, including humanities, technology, economics, and defense.

Iran's special envoy highlights the need for comprehensive dialogue on Afghanistan

TEHRAN - Iran's special envoy to Afghanistan, Hassan Kazemi Qomi, has emphasized the need for thorough consultations with all involved parties due to the complex situation in Afghanistan and the surrounding region.

In an early Saturday message on his X account, Kazemi Qomi, who traveled to Qatar to attend the 3rd Doha meeting, stated his intention to clarify Iran's positions, express Tehran's concerns about Afghanistan, and outline Iran's humanitarian policies towards foreign nationals in the country to United Nations officials and other participating nations.

Kazemi Qomi expressed hope that the upcoming negotiations would help alleviate the suffering of the Afghan people and lead to peace, stability, security, sustainable development, and a government based on the people's will, free from foreign interference and domination.

The UN's third meeting on Afghanistan will take place on June 30-July 1 in Doha, Qatar. U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres initiated the Doha process in May 2023 to establish a cohesive global approach to engaging with the Taliban interim government.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan will request the lifting of sanctions and the development of relations at the UN meeting on Afghanistan,

which begins on Sunday. The interim administration's chief spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, is leading the Afghan delegation.

In a message on X, Mujahid confirmed that representatives of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan have traveled to Qatar for the Doha meeting.

Ahead of their departure, Mujahid addressed journalists, emphasizing their goal to enhance interaction with all parties and resolve existing issues, stating they hold no hostility towards any party.

Mujahid extended an invitation to representatives of the participating countries to visit Afghanistan to foster relations. He stressed the importance of addressing economic problems and lifting sanctions against their administration at the meeting, urging the international community not to abandon Afghanistan amid its challenges. However, he noted that internal Afghan affairs would not be discussed at the meeting.

Women's issues are expected to feature prominently on the agenda. Suhail Shaheen, head of the Qatar office of Afghanistan's interim government, expressed hope to Russian media that the meeting would aid in lifting sanctions against Afghanistan.

UNAMA's chief explained that the third Doha meeting would focus on assisting Afghan

private businesses, addressing financial and banking sector issues, and finding alternative livelihoods for farmers impacted by the Taliban's nationwide ban on opium poppy cultivation. She highlighted that these issues significantly affect women, noting that there are five million addicts in Afghanistan, over 30% of whom are women.

Otunbayeva stated that the Taliban expect international assistance and capacity building in the security, agriculture, and health sectors.

Afghanistan is grappling with various economic, social, and security issues after two decades of U.S. occupation. Since Washington's military withdrawal from the war-torn country in 2021, the White House has frozen billions of dollars of Afghanistan's assets under different pretexts, further worsening the plight of Afghan civilians.

The Afghan frozen assets are the second-largest amount of financial money from a country that was seized by the U.S. since the Iranian frozen assets from 1980.

Iran, which is home to the largest number of Afghan refugees in the world, has been urging regional and extra-regional countries as well as international bodies to help Tehran soothe the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. It has also repeatedly condemned the U.S. for obscuring the establishment of peace and security in the war-stricken nation.

Iran will qualify for 2026 World Cup: Ghalenoei

TEHRAN - Having emerged from the second round of the AFC Asian Qualifiers™ with an unbeaten record, the Islamic Republic of Iran will be aiming to continue their impressive form when the next stage kicks off in September.

The second-highest ranked Asian side in the FIFA rankings at 20, IR Iran are seeking a seventh FIFA World Cup appearance and head coach Amir Ghalenoei is optimistic about qualification despite being drawn in a tough Group A of the AFC Asian Qualifiers - Road to 26 on Thursday.

Despite Iran's impressive record, they will face a tough challenge with reigning AFC Asian Cup champions Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and DPR Korea having all qualified for the FIFA World Cup previously, while Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic will be no pushovers.

Ghalenoei, however, firmly believes Iran - given their recent form - will seal a spot in what would be a fourth consecutive FIFA World Cup Finals.

The three-time AFC Asian Cup winners have lost just once in their last 18 international matches, winning 14 of those since the start of 2023, which underlines Ghalenoei's belief.

"All of the teams are close (in level) and there are no easy teams," said the Tehran native, who took charge of the team for a second spell in March 2023 and earned a contract extension until the end of the FIFA World Cup 2026 after leading Iran to the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023 semi-finals.

"Nothing in football can be taken for granted but if you look at our results from the past one year, (we believe that) we can qualify."

Sitting volleyball to compete at Dutch Tournament

TEHRAN - Iran men's sitting volleyball team have been invited to the 2024 Men's Sitting Dutch Tournament.

The competition will be held in Assen, the Netherlands from July 5 to 7.

The tournament will bring the Netherlands, Egypt, Ukraine, Italy, Kazakhstan, Brazil, Germany, France, and the U.S. together in Assen.

Iran will also host a sitting volleyball tournament in Mashhad from Aug. 5 to 10 with participation of Russia, Iraq and Kazakhstan.

Team Melli will prepare for the 2024 Paralympic Games, where they have been drawn in Pool B along with Ukraine, Germany and Brazil.

Iran's men's sitting volleyball team are most-decorated team in Paralympic Games, winning the title seven times.

Iran ready for 2024 Asian Women's U20 Volleyball Championship

TEHRAN - Iran are ready to participate in the 22nd Asian Women's U20 Volleyball Championship.

The tournament will bring China, Hong Kong, Australia, South Korea, Kazakhstan, India, Japan, Chinese Taipei, Iran, New Zealand, Vietnam and Thailand together in Jiangmen, China from July 1 to 8.

Pool A comprises China, Kazakhstan and Australia, with Japan, India and Hong Kong, China in Pool B. Thailand, Vietnam and Iran are in Pool C, while Pool D features Korea, Chinese Taipei and New Zealand.

Since the championship inception in 1980, China captured 12 titles, while Japan took seven including the previous two editions in 2018 and 2022. Korea claimed one in 1980. The 2020 edition was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the previous edition in Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan, two years ago, Japan stunned China in straight sets in the final showdown to successfully defend their title, while Thailand edged past Korea 3-2 to secure bronze medal. A total of 12 teams will vie for top honor and four berths at stake for the 2025 FIVB Volleyball Women's U21 World Championship.

Padideh Bolourizadeh will lead the Iranian team in the tournament.

Amir Abedzadeh linked with Persepolis

TEHRAN - Iran international goalkeeper Amir Abedzadeh has been reportedly linked with a move to Persepolis.

Persepolis will most likely part company with Alireza Beiranvand after the keeper canceled his deal with the team shortly after the end of the league.

Abedzadeh most recently played at Portuguese team Maritimo and is a free agent player at the moment.

Abedzadeh was a member of Persepolis from 2024 to 2014.

Amir is son of Iranian legendary goalkeeper Ahmad Reza Abedzadeh.

Esteghlal reach agreement with Almedin Ziljkic

TEHRAN - Iranian football club Esteghlal have reportedly reached an agreement with Bosnian winger Almedin Ziljkic.

The 28-year-old player is free agent at the moment. Ziljkic played for Bosnian team FK Sarajevo last season.

The local media have reported that Ziljkic has traveled to Tehran to undergo medical exams.

Also, Esteghlal have reportedly set their sight on signing Macedonian goalkeeper Vedran Kjosovski.

Hemmati wins silver at Para Archery Ranking series

TEHRAN - Fatemeh Hemmati of Iran claimed a silver medal in the Para Archery Ranking series in Czech Republic.

She lost to English archer Jodie Grinham 144-143 in the final of compound women open.

Indian archer Sarita won the bronze medal.

The Ranking series started on June 22 in Nové Město nad Metují and will run until June 30.

Iran to host U18 basketball event

TEHRAN - Iran will host the first round of international basketball competitions featuring U18 men's teams from Iran, Turkey, and Russia.

The trilateral basketball tournament will take place from July 6 to 8, 2024, at Mahmoud Mashhoun Basketball Hall of the Azadi Sports Complex in western Tehran.

Iran will meet Russia on July 6 and meet Turkey a day later.

Iran come third in FIBA U18 Women's Asia Cup Division B

TEHRAN - Iran lost to Samoa 64-59 in the 2024 FIBA U18 Women's Asia Cup Division B third-place match on Sunday.

With five lead changes and a barrage of three-pointers in the third quarter, Samoa reigned supreme in the play-off for third.

Iran had defeated Samoa 76-73 in the preliminary stage.

It was the dynamic trio of Kira-May Filemu finishing with 20 rebounds, 19 points, and 5 assists/steals, Peata Manumaleuga (22 points, 6 rebounds and 3 steals) and surprise packet Tereise Sufia Reupena, 11 points, 4 rebounds, and 4 steals, who carried the might of Samoa to victory.

Sanaz Lashkari and Helya Houdneh led Iran with 21 and 18 points, respectively.

The Philippines also won the title and booked their secure in Division A after thrashing Lebanon 95-64.

Iran's hard currency income up 18.6% in Q1: CBI



From page 1 ▶ Back in March, Iran's Expediency Discernment Council authorized the government and the state management apparatuses, including the CBI, to spend 13.6 billion euros at a preferential exchange rate for the import of basic items such as agricultural products, medicine, and its raw materials as well as medical equipment.

Council members took the decision on the import fund allocation while meeting under the chairmanship of Ayatollah Amoli Larijani to discuss and review the budget for the current

financial year.

They stressed that the government would offer preferential rates for clearing or exchanging foreign resources resulting from the export of oil, gas, and gas condensates for the import of "only basic agricultural goods and medicine", the list of which was approved by the Council of Ministers at the end of April.

The imports are overseen by a working group consisting of the first vice president, the head of the central bank, the head of the country's planning and budget organization, the minister of economic affairs and finance, the minister of agriculture as well as the minister of industry, mining, and trade. The Minister of Health along with other relevant bodies are also required to implement and monitor the allocation, distribution, and use of currency for medicine and equipment.

In addition, the central bank is obliged to prepare monthly reports on the implementation of Clause 4(A) of the Budget Law.

Agrofood exports increase nearly 30% in 3 months yr/yr

TEHRAN - Iran's export of agricultural and food products increased by 29.8 percent in terms of value in the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20), year on year.

The exports of the mentioned products also rose by about 24 percent in terms of weight, the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Iran also exported 1,562,000 tons of agricultural products worth \$684 million since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20) to May 20, registering an increase of 28 percent in value year on year.

The country exported some 1,260,000 metric tons (mt) of agricultural products worth \$536 million in the same period last year.

In terms of value, the main agricultural items exported in the mentioned period are apples worth \$96.3 million, in-shell pistachios worth \$74.1 million, watermelons worth \$73.8 million, field tomatoes worth \$50.3 million, and greenhouse tomatoes worth \$44.7 million, the report added.

The statistics show that agricultural items

account for about 6.66 percent of the total weight and 8.53 percent of the total value of Iran's exports in the same period this year.

The value of Iran's exports of agricultural and foodstuff products increased by 22.5 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), the spokesman of the International Relations and Trade Development Committee of Iran's House of Industry, Mining and Trade said.

According to Ruhollah Latifi, Iranian producers managed to export about \$6.3 billion worth of the mentioned products in the said year.

As reported, agro-food products accounted for 12.8 percent of the country's total non-oil exports in the previous year.

Iraq was the top destination for Iran's agro-food products in the mentioned year importing \$1.986 billion worth of the said items. The Arab neighbor accounted for 31.5 percent of the total exports of food and agricultural products from Iran.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) stood in second place, importing \$751 million of the mentioned products, followed by Russia with \$521.5 million.

Iran's domestic wheat purchase at over 5.6 million tons since April

TEHRAN - Iran has purchased some 5.6 million tons of wheat worth over \$1.647 billion from domestic producers since April in carrying out a national plan that guarantees the purchase of domestic production of the crop, according to a senior official with the Agriculture Ministry.

Sohrab Sohrabi told IRNA's economic correspondent on Saturday that the figure is 450,000 tons (eight percent) more than that of last year's corresponding period when the government purchases stood at 5.125 million tons.

He added that the government has so far paid over \$692 million to the farmers which is nearly half of the sum that has to be paid.

The southwestern province of Khuzestan has been the number one province in the supply of wheat with 1.6 million tons of supply, followed by the provinces of Golestan, Fars and Ilam which ranked second to fourth, respectively, the official said.

It is estimated that between 14.5 and 15.5 million tons of wheat will be harvested from both irrigated and rainfed fields by the end of the crop year which will totally meet the domestic needs.

Wheat production in Iran increased by six percent in 2023, putting the Islamic Republic in 14th place among the world's top producers of the strategic grain, according to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s World Agricultural Production report.

Based on the said report, Iranian farmers managed to produce 14 million tons of wheat in the 2023 crop year, 800,000 tons more than the figure for the previous year in which the total production stood at 13.2 million tons.

According to USDA, Iran was the world's 13th largest wheat producer in 2022.

The department has also predicted that Iran will produce 14 million tons of wheat in 2024, which will not change compared to 2023.

The increase in Iran's wheat production during 2023 comes as the world's total wheat production this year has decreased by about seven million tons to reach 782 million tons. According to this report, Iran, which is the 18th most populous country in the world, has produced more wheat than many countries including Brazil and Egypt.

'Naan' encapsulates Xinjiang culture, cuisine

By Mahnaz Abdi

XINJIANG- There is no other food that better encapsulates the culture and cuisine of the ethnic group in China's northwestern Xinjiang province than "Naan", a baked flatbread.

Naan is a leavened, oven-baked (usually using a tandoor) or tawa-fried flatbread. It is characterized by its light and slightly fluffy texture and golden-brown spots during the baking process. Naan is found in the cuisines mainly of Iran, Afghanistan, Central Asia, the Indian subcontinent, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, and the Caribbean.

Naan is also the Uyghur bread served all

throughout Xinjiang province.

There is plenty of unique food in Xinjiang worth trying, but this local bread is different.

Naan is a daily necessity for locals in Xinjiang. Shops making and selling naans can be found everywhere. The term "naan" comes from Persian nan, a generic word for any kind of bread. This word was borrowed into a range of languages in the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia, where it came to refer to a specific type of bread. The term then spread around the globe along with the style of bread itself.

'Xinjiang's market proper for Iranian product due to many cultural similarities'

Interview by Mahnaz Abdi

XINJIANG- The market of Xinjiang province, in the northwest of China, is very proper for Iran, because there are many cultural similarities between Iran and this region, the secretary of Iran-China Chamber of Commerce told the Tehran Times in an exclusive interview.

Maryam Sadat Samiani-Fard made the statement in the pavilion of Iranian products in the 8th China-Eurasia Expo, which was held in Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang province, during June 26-30.

"We have been present at the exhibition since its first edition, and Iranian companies have presented their export products. This year, which is the 8th edition of the exhibition, we have participated as usual", she stated.

"This exhibition was previously more local and its name was Urumqi Fair. We also were present at that time", she added.

"As you know, China is Iran's first trade partner and we have a very good relationship with the Chinese. And Xinjiang province



Iran's pavilion in 8th China-Eurasia Expo in Urumqi City, Xinjiang Province, China

is considered a more suitable market for us because of the cultural similarities we have with each other", the secretary of Iran-China Chamber of Commerce further noted.

"It [Xinjiang's market] is a very, very good market and we are working together well, but we have not yet reached the maximum cooperation that we should have together and there is a possibility of working together more and we hope that

it can be more and we can do more activities", Samiani-Fard commented.

She went on to say that "It is clear that, apart from the Chinese market, this exhibition can have the market of other countries, including the Eurasian region, for us, but our main customer is China."

She named carpet, saffron, chocolates and sweets, and jams, as well as fisheries as some Iranian products proper to offer

in the Xinjiang's market.

She further said, "This year we had also a booth of Iranian stones in the exhibition, that is a good product to offer here".

Iranian Ambassador to China Mohsen Bakhtiyar visited the pavilion of Iran in the first day of the 8th China-Eurasia Expo, according to Samiani-Fard.

Themed "New Opportunities of Silk Road, New Vitality for Eurasian Cooperation", 8th China-Eurasia Expo, which was held at the Xinjiang International Convention and Exhibition Center, has drawn over 1,900 participants from 50 countries, regions and international organizations, showcasing over 6,000 varieties of products.

Covering an area of 140,000 square meters, this year's expo encompasses four major exhibition zones including investment cooperation, international exhibitions, special industries and equipment manufacturing, Xinhua reported.

Since 2011, seven editions of the China-Eurasia Expo have been successfully held, yielding fruitful results.

Exchange of food products between Iran, Turkmenistan rises 35%



TEHRAN - The trade of food and agricultural products between Iran and Turkmenistan increased by 35 percent in the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-May 21), an official with Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) said.

According to Akbar Godari, the trade between the two countries has been following an upward trend over the past two years, IRIB reported.

Back in November 2023, The TPO head of announced the beginning of drafting a comprehensive economic cooperation document between the Islamic Republic and Turkmenistan.

Referring to the holding of the 17th Iran-Turkmenistan Joint Economic Committee meeting in Ashgabat and the visit of the Iranian delegation to Turkmenistan, Mehdi Zeyghami said: "This trip was very fruitful because the minister of foreign affairs of Turkmenistan and the Iranian head of the joint committee are working to create a comprehensive economic and trade document between the two countries."

According to Zeyghami, the Islamic Republic is going to dispatch a commercial attaché to Turkmenistan over the next four months to pursue the drafting of the mentioned document.

Saying that last year \$500 million of trade exchange was done between Iran and Turkmenistan, the official noted: "This year we will witness the same amount of trade between the two countries, and according to the agreements made, there is a possibility of significant growth in trade exchange."

He further referred to Turkmenistan's interest in participating in Iran's specialized exhibitions, saying: "The two countries have good interactions in the field of construction materials and technical and engineering services, but there is no extensive interaction in other specialized fields such as industrial machinery, knowledge-based industries, and medical equipment, and the visit of Turkmen companies to Iranian exhibitions will create the opportunity for such interactions."

Pakistan improves facilities at border points with Iran: envoy

TEHRAN - Pakistan's Ambassador to Iran Muhammad Mudassir Tipu has said that facilities at two border points between the two countries have been beefed up as part of efforts to facilitate trade and trips by passengers.

"Absolutely delighted to share that to facilitate Zaireen, business community and promote bilateral trade- immigration facilities at Taftan and Gabd border have been substantially beefed up. Now almost 4-6,000 passengers can cross both points everyday", the ambassador said on his X account on Saturday.

He also said in his post on X, formerly Twitter that relations between Iran and Pakistan "see promising future".

The value of Iran's non-oil exports to Pakistan in the first four months of 2024 has reached \$360 million, showing an 18 percent growth compared to last year's corresponding

period.

The Pakistani Ministry of Commerce's statistics show that Pakistan has imported \$360 million in products from Iran in the first four months of 2024, 18 percent higher than in January-April 2023.

Pakistan's import of products from Iran in April 2024 has hit \$73.2 million, registering a 30 percent growth compared to the same month last year.

The value of Iran's exports to Pakistan totaled \$944 million in 2023, indicating a 13 percent rise compared to a year earlier.

In a meeting between the Head of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Samad Hassanzadeh and Pakistani Ambassador to Iran Muhammad Mudassir Tipu in Tehran on Sunday, the officials stressed the need for Iran and Pakistan to exercise barter trade and free trade to materialize a \$10 billion trade target.

Noting that Tehran and Islamabad can cooperate in different areas including pharmaceuticals, petrochemicals, energy, auto parts, techno-engineering services, and electronics, he said that the ground is also prepared for cooperation on health tourism.

Hassanzadeh further stressed that an agreement for activating a joint trade council between the two neighboring countries is still in place.

The Iran Chamber of Commerce president said that the two countries have had many talks on the launch of a barter trade system while no practical step has been taken.

He called on the Pakistani government to ease visa requirements for Iranian businesspeople.

The Pakistani ambassador, for his part, referred to his country's agreement with the

late Iranian president Ebrahim Raisi for increasing bilateral trade to \$10 billion, adding that Islamabad continues to pursue this agreement.

The Pakistani government has decided for the joint border customs to work round the clock, the ambassador said, adding that it would be very effective if Iran also decides to do so.

He noted that the trade balance is one of the main obstacles on the way of trade between the two neighbors, as he said Iran's exports to Pakistan stand at \$1.6 billion while Pakistan's exports to Iran are so insignificant.

He believed that the exercise of free trade rests upon win-win connections.

The ambassador added that if the Iran Chamber of Commerce recommends businesspersons to the embassy, there would be no problem with the issuance of visas for traders.

Iran ready to cooperate with BRICS members on agricultural sector: Official

TEHRAN - Iran's Deputy Minister of Agriculture Alireza Mohajer has voiced his country's readiness to cooperate with BRICS member countries on agricultural sector.

Mohajer made the remarks addressing the 14th meeting of the BRICS ministers of agriculture in Russia on Saturday.

He referred to Iran's exemplary geographical position, being situated in the intersection of the North-South and East-West transit corridors, noting that the country can help expand regional

and international trade networks in the area of agriculture.

The deputy minister highlighted that Iran is an effective partner in bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

Iran will make efforts to remove the obstacles on the way of enhancement of agricultural cooperation among BRICS members and expects other member countries to help open new chapters in agricultural economy and trade, the official said.

The 14th Meeting of the BRICS Ministers of

Agriculture was held in Moscow with the Iranian delegation in attendance.

Representatives of Brazil, China, India, South Africa, and South Africa took part in the meeting on Friday.

New members of the association, namely Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Ethiopia, also participated in the event.

The meeting addressed the development of sustainable agriculture, the establishment of the BRICS grain exchange, and other issues.

Political scandal

How the Biden-Trump debate exposed US political underbelly

From page 1 ▶

Disregard for humanity

Besides personal attacks, Trump and Biden threw a spotlight on Washington's utter disregard for loss of human life as they clashed over Israel's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip. The war has claimed the lives of nearly 38,000 Palestinians since October 7.

The Biden administration has thrown its political and military weight behind Israel since the war erupted. The White House, however, has made critical remarks about Israel's brutal onslaught as it seeks to appease growing domestic opposition to Washington's unwavering support for the regime of Benjamin Netanyahu.

Israel's barbarism in Gaza, however, has not satisfied Trump.

During the debate, Trump called Biden "a very bad Palestinian" who doesn't want to help Israel "finish the job".

He, in fact, meant Biden has not provided Israel with sufficient weapons to defeat Hamas. This is an Israeli dream which has remained elusive. Israeli military officials have admitted that the regime won't be able to eliminate Hamas.

"He doesn't want to do it. He's become like a Palestinian - but they don't like him because he's a very bad Palestinian, he's a weak one," Trump said.

Both Republicans and Democrats have the blood of Palestinians on their hands due to their unequivocal support for Israel.

But Trump's comments have brought a bitter irony to the fore.

Racist politicians

Ayah Ziyadeh, director of American Muslims for Palestine, told Al



Jazeera that the "bad Palestinian" comment spotlights America's racist nature.

She added that one candidate is "blatantly racist. Wants to deport all of us. And said that President Biden isn't, essentially, being genocidal enough and that he should let Israel finish off its war on Gaza. And the current president has been consciously and willingly, politically and financially, backing an evident genocide in Gaza. There is no lesser than two evils here".

Generational divide

Over the past months, people in the US have held rallies calling on their government to stop supporting Israel and end the Gaza war.

Protesters have described President Biden as "Genocide Joe" over his complicity in the Israeli massacre of Palestinians. Arab American voters and the young who can play a key role in helping Biden win reelection marked their ballots uncommitted in Democratic primaries, particularly on Super Tuesday.

Such moves along with the

college campus protests have highlighted a generational divide in Washington's policy towards Israel.

The comments made by Trump in the first presidential debate and Biden's support for Israel clearly show that they are detached from reality.

Power struggle

In addition to turning a blind eye to the pain and suffering of Palestinians in Gaza, the statements of Trump and Biden over the Ukraine war, Washington's withdrawal from Afghanistan and other domestic and global issues made it clear that what matters to Republicans and Democrats is clinging to power.

The age of the two nominees was another matter of concern which seems to have tarnished the image of the United States.

American media outlets are exerting pressure on Biden to drop out of the present race due to his weak performance in the debate.

The tip of the iceberg

Thursday's presidential debate has not only highlighted the true

colors of American politicians but also humiliated and disgraced the US which sees itself as the core of democratic values.

But it was just the tip of the iceberg.

During the previous election, which saw Biden beat Trump, they were engaged in name-calling. The January 2021 riot at the US Capitol where Trump's supporters stormed Congress in a bid to thwart the certification of Biden's election victory also brought shame on the United States.

In the 2016 presidential campaigns Trump's comments about Washington's support for terror groups further disgraced the US.

In August 2016, he accused then president Barack Obama of creating the ISIS terror group, also known as ISIL/IS or Daesh.

"ISIS is honoring President Obama. He is the founder of ISIS. He is the founder of ISIS, OK? He's the founder. He founded ISIS. And I would say the co-founder would be crooked Hillary Clinton."

The comments made by American politicians during presidential campaigns have exposed the US crimes against the backdrop of its warmongering policy and military adventurism.

They have also taken the lid off America's complicity in the atrocities perpetrated by Washington's allies.

Nonetheless, Thursday's debate uncovered widespread corruption in the US and the drastic fall of ethical norms in the country.

Concern over future forces "exodus" from Israel

Thousands of Israelis have immigrated to Canada since October

From page 1 ▶ Tel Aviv was already suffering from brain drain before October 7 as a result of Israelis growing increasingly delusional with the policies of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. That trend is also on the rise.

Michal Harel, who moved to Canada approximately five years ago and now manages a site assisting Israelis in their migration process, highlighted Canada's appeal.

Harrel underlined how Canada offers a more comfortable lifestyle, a diverse and inclusive society, a better public health system, educational opportunities, and promising economic prospects for future generations.

All the factors are said to be worse off in Israel.

The website also detailed a specialized Canadian program designed to facilitate the integration of Israeli immigrants.

Initially announced earlier in the year, the program was recently extended for an additional year, most likely influenced by escalating tensions in the region.

Moreover, a specific project has been launched that grants Israeli nationals a

three-year work visa in Canada, during which they can pursue applications for permanent residency or full citizenship.

When questioned about the issue of "national allegiance to Israel", Harrel responded that while there have been isolated instances of less enthusiastic reactions on social media platforms, overall, the initiative has been positively received.

She emphasized that the project aims to assist Israelis seeking a respite or new opportunities abroad.

The website highlighted Canada's historical appeal as a favored destination for Jewish migration worldwide, offering a peaceful and anti-Semitism-free environment where Jewish communities can thrive.

Recent estimates from the 2021 census indicate that approximately 400,000 Israelis currently reside in Canada, with the majority concentrated in the city of Toronto.

An additional 2,000 to 3,000 Israelis reportedly immigrate on an annual basis, though this figure has likely risen notably since the onset of the war on Gaza and wider regional tensions.

Since the outbreak of the Israeli genocid-

al war on Gaza, Hebrew media has reported a significant exodus of Israelis from the occupied Palestinian territories, underscoring a notable trend of reverse migration among Jewish communities seeking tranquility and security.

Many Israelis have also been internally displaced from their homes since October 7.

Tens of thousands have evacuated the settlements that surround the blockaded Gaza Strip.

Near the border with Lebanon, Tel Aviv acknowledges that tens of thousands have also fled or have been ordered to evacuate from the north since October.

But many argue the number of displaced Israelis in the north is much higher, suggesting that a quarter of a million settlers have fled to Tel Aviv and elsewhere as a result of Hezbollah's daily military operations in solidarity with Gaza.

Many are living in hotels, angry at the lack of any genuine government plan to return them to the north after eight months amid no end in sight to the Hezbollah operations on northern settlements that have been turned into military zones.

and campaigner for migrant safety at the NGO Medecins du Monde.

"Eviction operations are not new, they were not created with the Olympic Games in mind," he said. "But what has changed as the Games draw closer is the frequency with which occupied sites are cleared, and the systematic sending of those removed to another French region."

To get an overall picture of the action taken by the authorities, the participating groups of the Revers de la medaille have collected their findings from field research for the period of April 2023 to May 2024 in a report published on June 5.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

French authorities accused of 'social cleansing' of migrants and homeless before Paris Olympics

Just a day after the ceremonial lighting of the Paris 2024 Olympic flame in Greece on April 16, accompanied by oaths to friendship and solidarity, French authorities began evicting hundreds of migrants from France's largest squat in Vitry-sur-Seine, south of Paris. Those evicted were encouraged to board buses that would take them to other parts of France.

It was the third major eviction operation carried out in the Île-de-France region, comprising Paris and its surrounding areas, since the start of 2023. In April 2023, some 400 people were removed from a squat located near the Olympic Village on Ile-Saint-Denis in the capital's northern suburbs. Two hundred more were evicted in July 2023 from a squat

in Thiais south of Paris.

These evictions, among other operations seen as targeting the homeless, quickly caught the attention of the associations tasked with helping those in vulnerable situations.

In October 2023, more than 80 non-profits who work with migrants and the homeless joined forces to form the umbrella group Le Revers de la medaille, ("The Other Side of the Medal") to denounce what they called the "social cleansing" taking place on the streets of Paris in the run-up to the Olympic Games.

"There are various pieces of evidence that allow us to use the term 'social cleansing,'" said Paul Alauzy, the group's spokesperson

WORLD HEADLINES

Hezbollah warns Israel against crossing its "red lines"

TEHRAN - Hezbollah Deputy Secretary General Sheikh Naim Qassem has said the resistance movement will respond in kind if Israel launches a full-fledged war against Lebanon.

"If Israel expands the war, we will do the same. If it launches a full-scale conflict, we will not hesitate to respond in kind," Qassem told Mehr News Agency.

He warned Israel against any "foolish" acts against Lebanon.

Over the past weeks, Israel has threatened to go to direct war with Hezbollah if the resistance movement does not stop its attacks against the regime.

Israel and Hezbollah have been exchanging fire since the regime declared war on Gaza on October 7. Hezbollah has stressed that it won't stop its attacks unless Israel ends the genocidal war on Gaza.

"We will never surrender in the face of threats such as the expansion of war. This is because we are determined to continue supporting Gaza. We will not stop our operations against Israel as long as occupiers continue massacres and acts of aggression in Gaza," the deputy Hezbollah chief noted.

He said Hezbollah has drawn up plans in case Israel crosses its "red lines" as he referred to the military capabilities of the resistance movement.

Nearly two weeks ago, Hezbollah published footage of its reconnaissance drones flying over sensitive Israeli sites in areas such as the city of Haifa.

The drones carried out their mission successfully and returned home without being detected by the regime's anti-air systems.

"The footage taken by Hoopoe drone is just an example of the extensive capabilities of the resistance in hitting targets deep inside the Israeli occupied territories if the regime crosses the red lines. The army and officials of the occupying regime have understood this message very well," he said.

Hezbollah one of 5 superpowers in rocket stockpile

Hezbollah in Lebanon is one of the five superpowers in terms of the number of rockets it possesses, a former Israeli official suggested on Saturday.

Ram Aminach, the former economic advisor to the Israeli Chief of Staff, pointed out that "the Israeli public does not understand the extent of Hezbollah's threats as it has a large stockpile of rockets and is considered one of the five superpowers, alongside the United States, China, Russia, and Germany," Al Mayadeen reported.

Aminach considered that "Israel" cannot confront Hezbollah without facing the whole of Lebanon.

A couple of days ago, US-based Media Line news website highlighted that, with tens of thousands of fighters and over 100,000 missiles, Hezbollah poses a "significant military challenge to Israel."

"Hezbollah is an army. It does not have the firepower or sophistication of the Israeli military, but it has the ability to cause significant damage and death," indicated Boaz Shapira, a researcher at the Alma Research and Education Center, The Media Line reported.

Sisi: International community silent amid Gaza war

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah al-Sisi said Sunday that the West Asia region is going through "serious changes" amid a deadly Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip, Anadolu reported.

"The region is going through serious changes recently amid intense Israeli war in the Gaza Strip and attempts to impose forced displacement towards Egyptian territories," he said.

In this war, "the conscience of humanity was absent, and the international community remained silent, turning its face away from tens of thousands of innocent victims," he added.

More than 37,800 Palestinians have been killed and nearly 87,000 others injured in deadly Israeli raids on Gaza since October 7.

Over eight months into the Israeli war, vast tracts of Gaza lie in ruins amid a crippling blockade of food, clean water and medicine.

Netanyahu vows to 'eliminate Hamas'

Israeli tanks pushed further into Rafah and parts of central Gaza and Shujaiya on Sunday as it intensified its ground assault on the besieged enclave.

Residents told Reuters that Israeli tanks had killed at least six people and destroyed several homes in Rafah on Sunday.

Speaking after his weekly Sunday cabinet meeting, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised his troops and said they would continue fighting until "Hamas is eliminated".

Israeli officials have repeatedly said that the regime won't be able to defeat Hamas.

"This business of destroying Hamas, making Hamas disappear - it's simply throwing sand in the eyes of the public. Hamas is an idea, Hamas is a party. It's rooted in the hearts of the people - whoever thinks we can eliminate Hamas is wrong," Israeli army spokesman Daniel Hagari said on June 19.

Palestine calls for Arab League extraordinary meeting

Palestine called an extraordinary meeting of the Arab League to discuss Israel's ongoing war on the Gaza Strip and settlement expansion in the West Bank.

"The meeting will be held at the level of permanent delegates this week to discuss confronting the Israeli crimes of genocide and colonial expansion in the West Bank," Palestinian delegate Mohammad al-Aklouk told the official news agency Wafa.

On Thursday, the Israeli cabinet approved steps proposed by far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich to "legalize" settlement outposts in the occupied West Bank and impose sanctions on the Ramallah-based Palestinian Authority.

International law regards both the West Bank and East Jerusalem (al-Quds) as occupied territories and considers all Jewish settlement-building activity there illegal.

Lack of medical supplies leads to 'catastrophic' health scenario

The head of a UK-based medical charity working in Gaza says the health situation has reached a "catastrophic stage" because of the impossibility of acquiring supplies to treat the hundreds of patients flowing into field clinics.

David Wightwick, CEO of UK-Med, said his team is focusing on the southern city of Khan Younis where the largest proportion of the population is now located. His aid group set up a field hospital in al-Mawasi and has two others in the south.

About 1,400 victims of war violence in the region seek medical help from UK-Med each day, Wightwick told Al Jazeera. Most of the conflict-related emergencies are blast injuries and gunshot wounds.

But medical supplies have become scarce ever since Israeli forces captured the Rafah border crossing with Egypt in May.

Hamedan draws 1.7 million sightseers in Q1

TEHRAN – Hamedan's historical and natural allure has captivated more than 1.7 million tourists in the course of the spring season.

1,764,144 tourists visited the historical sites, natural attractions, and museums of Hamedan province in the first three months of this year, a local official in charge of tourism told IRNA on Sunday.

Mohsen Masoum-Alizadeh highlighted that this number includes 3,786 foreign visitors who explored the region's touristic hotspots.

"Ali Sadr Cave emerged as the top attraction within the province, drawing 198,292 visitors," he brought to light.

In the city of Hamadan, Avicenna's Mausoleum attracted 84,260 domestic tourists and hundreds of foreign tourists, securing the second spot, according to Masoum-Alizadeh.

"Baba Tahir's Mausoleum followed closely with 70,302 domestic tourists and tens of foreign tourists," he further elaborated.

A total of 62,426 overnight stays, the official underscored, were recorded in official accommodation facilities, which include hotels, hotel apartments, traditional lodgings, eco-tourism residences, and guest houses.

Believed to be among the oldest Iranian cities, Hamedan dating its historical roots back to the 700 BC, brings to light how precious is the city to every tourist who wants to immerse themselves in the rich atmosphere of the area.

As the first capital of Iran from 2550 to



2700 years ago, the ancient city of Hamedan was founded by the first king of the Medes and was called Hegmataneh which means "place of aggregation" in ancient language.

It was also the summer capital of the Achaemenid and Parthian kings. Artifacts from the archaeological site of Hegmataneh as well as the inscriptions in Ganjnameh date back to this time.

Over time, the name of Hegmataneh was changed in the Sassanid era converted to Ahmatan /Ahmadan, and eventually to Hamadan.

With 1,800 historical and natural attractions, more than 1000 of which are registered as national heritage, Hamedan stands out as a prime destination for tourism.

The province boasts a rich tapestry of historical and natural wonders, from the majestic Ali Sadr Cave, the world's largest water cave, to the tomb of Avicenna and the Alavian Dome, awaiting exploration.

Ryton-inspired potteries on show at Khorasan Great Museum

TEHRAN – An exhibition showcasing a number of modern earthenwares in the form of Ryton, an animal-shaped conical container from which fluids were intended to be drunk or to be poured, has opened doors in Mashhad.

Speaking to IRNA on Saturday, on the sidelines of the event inauguration, the director of the Great Museum of Khorasan detailed that 22 terracotta artifacts are on show till July 4.

"The exhibition features 22 pieces of pottery by the veteran pottery artist Mohammad-Ali Fazlinejad and his students, showcasing over 50 years of artistic creation," said Ali Safamejad.

Fazlinejad, he added, is a prominent figure in the field of pottery in Khorasan Razavi and one of the early pioneers in designing art curricula focused on pottery for the Ministry of Educa-



tion and university centers.

In his concluding remarks, Safamejad outlined that this collaborative approach, where artists draw inspiration from Iran's historical artifacts and treasures, serves as an excellent starting point for introducing these cultural and historical values to both domestic and international tourists and visitors.

Glimpses of World Heritage sites

Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid

The Lake Ohrid region, a mixed World Heritage property covering c. 94,729 ha, was first inscribed for its nature conservation values in 1979 and for its cultural heritage values a year later. These inscriptions related to the part of the lake located in North Macedonia.

The property was extended to include the rest of Lake Ohrid, located in Albania, in 2019.

Lake Ohrid is a superlative natural phenomenon, providing refuge for numerous endemic and relict freshwater species of flora and fauna dating from the tertiary period. As a deep and ancient lake of tectonic origin, Lake Ohrid has existed continuously for approximately two to three million years.

Its oligotrophic waters conserve over 200 species of plants and animals unique to the lake, including algae, turbellarian flatworms, snails, crustaceans and 17 endemic species of fish including two species of trout, as well as a rich birdlife.

Situated on the shores of Lake Ohrid, the town of Ohrid is one of the oldest human settlements in Europe.

Built mostly between the 7th and 19th centuries, Ohrid is home to the oldest Slav monastery (dedicated to St. Pantelejmon) and more than 800 Byzantine-style icons of worldwide fame dating from the 11th century to the end of the 14th century.

Ohrid's architecture represents the best preserved and most complete ensemble of ancient urban architecture of this part of Europe.

Slav culture spread from Ohrid to other parts of Europe.

Seven basilicas have thus far been discovered in archaeological excavations in the old part of Ohrid.

These basilicas were built during the 4th, 5th and beginning of the 6th centuries and contain architectural and decorative characteristics that indisputably point to a strong ascent and glory of Lychnidos, the former name of the town.

The structure of the city nucleus is also enriched by a large number of archaeological sites, with an emphasis on early Christian basilicas, which are also known for their mosaic floors. Special emphasis regarding Ohrid's old urban architecture must be given to the town's masonry heritage.

In particular, Ohrid's traditional local influence can be seen among its well-preserved late-Ottoman urban residential architecture dating from the 18th and 19th centuries.

The limited space for construction activities has led to the formation of a very narrow network of streets.

On the Lin Peninsula, in the west of the Lake, the Early Christian Lin church, founded in the mid-6th century, is related to the basilicas of Ohrid town in terms of its architectural form and decorative floor mosaics, and possibly also through liturgical links.

(Source: UNESCO)

Isfahan's renowned bazaar of Persian carpets

TEHRAN – Nestled near the UNESCO-listed Naqsh-e Jahan Square, Isfahan's carpet bazaar stands as a testament to centuries of tradition, craftsmanship, and cultural heritage.

The bazaar, itself a relic of the Safavid era, is more than just a market; it is a living museum, showcasing a comprehensive archive of Iranian carpets.

Many of the merchants in this bazaar are not just businessmen but custodians of a family legacy. For generations, these traders have passed down the secrets of carpet-making, from spinning and dyeing to drawing and weaving, preserving the ancient techniques that make Isfahan carpets so unique.

As you step into the bazaar, you are greeted by the architectural grandeur of the Safavid period.

The brick-built structure features two-story shops lining both sides of the pathway, crowned with a dome roof adorned with intricate tiles and plasterwork.

The design is both functional and aesthetic, with skylights in the arches providing natural ventilation and lighting.

These domes also regulate the market's temperature throughout the seasons, making it a comfortable haven for both merchants and visitors.

Wandering through the bazaar, you will discover a vibrant



world where the ancient art of carpet-making is still alive.

Each shop is a treasure trove of beautifully crafted carpets, ranging from small rectangular pieces to large octagonal designs.

The carpets of Isfahan are renowned for their aesthetic appeal, often considered the pinnacle of Iranian carpet design.

They serve as a reference for artists and researchers, with their intricate patterns and motifs adorning many buildings across Iran.

The diversity of designs in Isfahan carpets is astounding.

Traditional patterns such as Lechak and Toranj, Afshan, Eslami, Aksi, and hunting grounds captivate the eye with their complexity and beauty.

Some of the most famous car-

The air is filled with the rich scents of natural dyes and the rhythmic sounds of weavers at work.

Each stall tells a story, from the raw wool and silk used in the carpets to the finished products displayed with pride.

The shopkeepers, often keen to share the history and significance of their wares, provide a deeper understanding of the cultural and artistic importance of Isfahan carpets.

Whether you are an art lover, a history enthusiast, or simply a curious traveler, this bazaar offers a unique glimpse into the timeless beauty and craftsmanship of Iranian carpets.

A visit to Isfahan's carpet bazaar is not complete without exploring the surrounding area of Naqsh-e Jahan Square.

This UNESCO World Heritage site is a masterpiece of Persian architecture, featuring stunning monuments such as the Shah Mosque, the Ali Qapu Palace, and the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque.

The square itself is a bustling hub of activity, where locals and tourists alike gather to admire the beauty of Isfahan.

61,000 visitors explore Saholan Cave in spring

TEHRAN – Saholan Cave, a geological marvel that nature has sculpted over millions of years, has drawn some 61,000 sightseers throughout the first quarter of this Persian year (started on March 20).

"One-tenth of the explorers were inbound tourists," said Saholan Water Cave's director on Monday, adding that the number of tourists is shy of the 66 thousand visitors of the previous year, primarily due to unexpectedly lower temperatures at the start of this year.

Yousef Mahmoudzadeh further elaborated that the cave is currently equipped with 13 rowing boats and staffed by six lifeguards and divers to ensure the safety and enjoyment of the visitors.

Tours, he continued, are available daily.

The director also mentioned the development of local accommodations, with eight suites and eco-lodges capable of hosting around 40 guests in the nearby village of Saholan, providing convenient lodging options for travelers.

"Last year, the cave attracted more than 200

thousand domestic and international tourists, showcasing its enduring appeal as a natural attraction," Mahmoudzadeh wended up.

Saholan cave, located amidst a picturesque village with the same name, approximately 42 kilometers southeast of Mahabad city in north-west Iran, stands as a testament to the geological marvels that nature has sculpted over millions of years.

Perched at an elevation of over 1700 meters above sea level, this extraordinary cave boasts a unique blend of water, soil, and limestone, making it one of the most remarkable natural formations in the country.

With its geological structure characterized by water channels, soil formations, and limestone formations, the Saholan cave distinguishes itself as the second-largest water cave in Iran, following the renowned Alisadr cave.

Dating back to the end of the Cretaceous period, approximately 70 million years ago, this cave served as a dwelling and refuge for humans during the second and first millennia BC.

Saholan Cave's interior is adorned with calcareous sediments in various shapes, creating a visually stunning landscape.

Tourists exploring the cave will find facilities for boating within the 300 meters of the waterway, as well as dry land routes spanning 250 meters.

The cave's pure calcium carbonate-covered roof, elevated 10 meters above the water in some sections, adds to the allure, exhibiting a captivating mixture of elements.

Tourists visiting the Saholan cave area can avail themselves of various facilities, including accommodation, sightseeing opportunities, and entertainment services.

The region also offers climbing opportunities, providing adventurers with a chance to experience the breathtaking landscapes surrounding this natural wonder.

As Saholan cave continues to reveal its secrets, it stands as a testament to the geological wonders that lie beneath the surface of Iran's northwest region.

Discoveries challenge myths about griffins

TEHRAN – Shirdal, or griffin, is the name of a legendary creature that features the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion. However, a new discovery might change beliefs about this mythical being.

Shirdal is visible in many ancient cultures. From the ruins of the UNESCO-designated Persepolis to ancient Greek mythology, the legendary creature appears frequently.

The question of what inspired the creation of this mythical animal has always been a topic of intrigue. Recent scientific discoveries about Shirdal may provide an answer.

Shirdal has appeared in various forms across different cultures. Despite minor differences, it is always depicted with the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion. Some believe the oldest depictions of Shirdal in art date back to 3000 BC in ancient Egypt, while others think the mythical creature was first discovered in Central Asia or Greece.

According to Science Alert, an outline imprinted in clay from an

engraved Mesopotamian stamp found in what is now Iran is the oldest known depiction of a griffin, dating back to 3000 BC.

Previously, it was commonly believed that the idea of Shirdal was based on the fossil of a dinosaur. About 30 years ago, a folklore researcher named Adrienne Mayor suggested that the Scythians (an Iranian tribe living in Central Asia) might have encountered the fossil of a herbivorous dinosaur from the ceratopsian family while searching for gold.

This supposedly led to the creation of stories about a strange creature with four legs and a beak that lays eggs.

These stories traveled along trade routes until Shirdal or griffin found its way into Greek art and literature.

However, Dr. Mark Witton, a paleontology professor at the University of Portsmouth, does not believe that the legendary creature Shirdal has any connection to the discovery of a dinosaur fossil.

Examining griffins in various works shows that this strange

creature has little anatomical similarity with dinosaurs. Ancient Greek texts mention Shirdal as a guardian of gold treasures in Central Asia, but ceratopsian fossils have never been discovered near ancient gold mines.

Witton's team believes the idea of Shirdal may have spread from Greece and the Near East to Central Asia, based on artistic evidence. For instance, on a vase belonging to the Mycenaean from the second millennium BC, a griffin laying eggs is depicted. At that time, the Greeks were not yet aware of dinosaurs.

Witton acknowledges that Shirdal held various meanings for different peoples and cultures, with these beliefs merging over centuries.

However, he believes the origins of this mythical creature are quite simple: people merely used their imagination to create a combination of a bird and a large feline. According to him, the dinosaur story became popular because it combined three beloved fields: archaeology, mythology, and paleontology.



Furthermore, the dinosaur theory suggests the high intelligence of ancient civilizations, which, in a strange way, appeals to modern culture. They not only managed to discover a complete fossil but also used it to create the mythical creature Shirdal.

On the other hand, Witton still holds his belief about griffins. He emphasizes that ancient Greek and Roman authors repeatedly stated that Shirdal belongs to Central Asia. They heard stories about the discovery of Shirdal from caravans traveling between China and the Mediterranean.

Although the dinosaur story may not be close to reality, this researcher believes Shirdal does not belong to Greek culture either.

Iranian, Russian universities to foster scientific ties

TEHRAN –A delegation from Synergy University of Moscow has paid a visit to Amir Kabir University of Technology in Tehran to explore ways to enhance scientific cooperation between the two institutions.

During a meeting, the two sides introduced their competencies and capabilities, IRNA reported.

Also, four programs on holding short-term joint courses in the fields of business management; professor and student exchange; Persian and Russian language teaching; and conducting joint interdisciplinary courses were developed to be implemented.

These training courses will cover business management; robotics and artificial intelligence; entrepreneurship and technology; smart cities; and information technology; as well as emerging and interdisciplinary fields.

As per the agreement, representatives from the two universities will hold an online meeting next month to discuss further details and ways to initiate the joint programs.

Joint courses on sustainable development

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

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

It was organized by the Russian Academy of Foreign Trade and



the management faculty of Amir Kabir University of Technology.

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

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

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

from both nations.

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

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

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

Joint innovation center

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

After the meeting, the Russian delegation visited Sharif University of Technology.

Iran attends 57th session of IOC Executive Council

TEHRAN – Head of the National Institute for Oceanography and Atmospheric Sciences has participated in the 57th session of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) Executive Council.

The event took place at UNESCO Headquarters from June 25 to 28 preceded by a meeting of the Officers and a meeting of the Intersessional Financial Advisory Body.

As Iran's representative, Morteza Tavakoli presented an account of the country's activities in marine, oceanic, and atmospheric sciences, ISNA reported.

The IOC of UNESCO is composed of 150 Member States from all over the world.

Member States oversee the work of the IOC through two Governing Bodies, the Assembly and the Executive Council.

The IOC Assembly meets once per biennium, while an Executive Council meets every year.

The purpose of the Assembly is to review the work of the Commission, including the work of the Member States and the Secretariat, and formulate a common work plan for the coming two years.

The Executive Council reviews issues and items from ongoing work plans and makes preparations for the Assemblies.

The Executive Council consists of up to 40 Member States, including the six Member States

represented by the Chairperson and the five Vice-Chairpersons. The Executive Council meets every year to review issues and items from ongoing work plans and make preparations for the IOC Assembly.

Commitment to marine, oceanic sciences

The National Institute for Oceanography and Atmospheric Science observed World Ocean Day on June 8th under the slogan of "Awakening the deep spirit of cooperation and commitment in the field of marine and oceanic sciences."

World Oceans Day reminds everyone of the major role the oceans have in everyday life. They are the lungs of our Planet and a major source of food, medicine, and a critical part of the biosphere.

The purpose of the Day is to inform the public of the impact of human actions on the ocean, develop a worldwide movement of citizens for the ocean, and mobilize and unite the world's population on a project for the sustainable management of the world's oceans.

"The National Institute for Oceanography and Atmospheric Science has organized various programs including 5 scientific lectures, 3 workshops, and several educational, research, and promotional programs, to observe the day," ISNA quoted Ali Mehdiinia, an official with the Institute, as saying.

"The programs aim to raise awareness about

the country's priorities in the field of marine sciences and sustainable use of sea resources," the official said.

The programs mostly focused on current issues of oceanography at the international level.

Scientific lectures with topics such as 'operational oceanography'; 'satellite oceanography'; 'digital twin of the ocean'; 'marine geological capacities of surrounding waters'; 'assessing the impacts of developing Pars special energy and economic zone on the region's coastal-marine habitats', were some parts of the programs.

Holding a painting course and acquainting students with the sea and the environment (Caspian Sea Oceanographic Center-Noshahr); running a workshop on climate change in the Caspian Sea highlighting the effect of rising sea surface temperature on benthic nematodes of Noshahr's coast; conducting Indian Ocean Tsunami warning workshop in Jask port (flooding map and evacuation plan); and offering workshop on the current state of the surrounding sea ecosystem in the northwest of the Indian Ocean were parts of educational, research, and promotional programs offered by the Institute.

The Institute also planned to hold a training course on seas and oceans for students (Bandar Abbas Port and Chabahar Oceanographic Center) and monitoring the corals of the coast of Chabahar Bay (Chabahar Oceanographic Center).

ENGLISH IN USE

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Significant increase in refugee literacy

The literacy rate among refugees has increased significantly in recent decades, so that the literacy rate of Afghan immigrants in Iran is higher than the number of literate people in Afghanistan, according to a report published in June by the research center of the Iranian Parliament (Majlis).

According to the Census in 2016, the population of refugees officially residing in Iran was 1.654 million, a majority of whom were Afghan, Iraqi and Pakistani immigrants.

In fact, 95% of the immigrants are "Afghan", 2% are "Iraqi" and about 1% are "Pakistani".

افزایش معنادار باسوادی مهاجران

به طور کلی سطح باسوادی در میان مهاجران طی چند دهه اخیر به طرز معناداری افزایش پیدا کرده است. به طوری که میزان باسوادی مهاجران افغانستانی ساکن در ایران از تعداد افراد باسواد در افغانستان بیشتر است. براساس سرشماری سال ۱۳۹۵، جمعیت مهاجران بین‌المللی که به صورت رسمی در ایران سکونت دارند، بالغ بر یک میلیون و ۶۵۴ هزار نفر بود که از این تعداد مهاجران افغانستانی، عراقی و پاکستانی اکثریت مهاجران بین‌المللی را تشکیل می‌دهند. در حقیقت ۹۵ درصد مهاجران حاضر در ایران «افغانستانی» و دو درصد «عراقی» و حدود یک درصد «پاکستانی» هستند.

Tehran, Baghdad to expand ties in education sector

TEHRAN –An Iraqi delegation headed by Naeem Al-Aboudi, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, has met Mohammad-Ali Zolfigol, Minister of Science, Research, and Technology, in Tehran on Sunday to discuss the potential for enhancing educational cooperation.

Over the past three years, scientific and academic cooperation between Iran and Iraq has been promoted, leading to the signing of important memorandums of understanding, IRNA quoted Al-Aboudi as saying.

The Iraqi official considered the education of 100,000 Iraqi students in Iran as a great opportunity to promote cultural cooperation.

This substantial student population can play a significant role in teaching and learning respective languages and developing language exchanges, Iraqi official added.

"Since 2003, education in Iraq has been free for students from Islamic and neighboring countries, and we are willing to grant one hundred scholarships to Iranian students," Al-Aboudi stressed.

Zolfigol, for his part, proposed cooperation in the fields of oil and gas research, climate, and environment.

The official also suggested the establishment of a university and a joint research center; the establishment of a science and technology park in Iraq; and the teaching of Persian and Arabic languages to increase cultural communication.

Iran is also ready to accept interested Iraqi professors to complete their studies in Iran and benefit from study opportunities in the country.

Moreover, the Islamic World Science Citation Center in Shiraz can advise Iraq on international indexing of scientific and research journals, Zolfigol noted.

Al-Aboudi welcomed the proposal to set up a science and technology park in Iraq and develop scientific cooperation based on the needs of the two countries saying "We are ready to hear Iran's proposals to promote scientific cooperation between the two countries."

Iraq welcomes Iranian universities branches

On June 8, Al-Aboudi welcomed Iranian universities to open branches in Iraq.

"We are interested in boosting collaborations in areas such as artificial intelligence and nanotechnology. We also support sisterhood agreements between universities of the two countries," Al-Aboudi said.

The official made the remarks in a meeting with the head of Iran's Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO), Mohammad-Mehdi Imanpour.

Al-Aboudi also expressed willingness to

admit Iranian students to Iraqi universities, IRNA reported.

Imanpour, for his part, highlighted the significance of enhancing educational ties and conducting joint scientific research calling it essential for making a shared future.

Supporting knowledge-based centers is one of the ways to develop science and technology in Iraq, he stressed.

The official went on to suggest boosting cooperation between the Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education and the Iranian Vice Presidency for Science and Technology.

Iran-Iraq science week

The second Iran-Iraq science week, which was supposed to be held in Karbala, is currently postponed due to the martyrdom of late President Ebrahim Raisi and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian, alongside other officials.

The first Iran-Iraq Science Week was hosted by the Iranian city of Mashhad from October 9 to 12, 2023.

Representatives of over 60 universities and educational institutions attended the event.

Hosted by Ferdowsi University, this scientific event aimed to develop diplomatic interactions, academic relations, and cultural exchange.

"The development of academic cooperation and the exchange of scientific knowledge and modern technologies is one of the main goals of holding this 5-day conference," IRNA quoted Vahid Haddadi-Asl, the Iranian deputy science minister for international affairs, as saying.

He stressed the importance of exchanging experiences and expertise and formulating scientific understandings in many files, some of which relate to the environmental aspect and joint educational programs.

Mohammad Kafi, chancellor of Ferdowsi University, for his part, explained that the universities of the two countries are keen to take successful steps of joint talks and reach a vision that serves the scientific and research side between the two countries.

Meanwhile, the Iraqi Undersecretary for Scientific Research Affairs, Haider Abed Dahud, who headed the delegation of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, said that the science week between the two countries summarizes the level of understanding and coordination resulting from the agreement between the Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology in the Islamic Republic of Iran and completes the dialogues that took place in Baghdad, the University of Baghdad's website reported.

Some \$100m allocated to complete semi-finished educational projects

TEHRAN – A sum of 60 trillion rials (around \$100 million) has been allocated to completing semi-finished educational projects by the end of the current Iranian year (March 20, 2025), an official with the Ministry of Education has said.

During the late President Ebrahim Raisi's administration, 33,000 classrooms were built and retrofitted with benefactors contributing to half of the funding, IRNA quoted Hamid-Reza Khanmohammadi as saying.

Referring to the construction of schools for Refugees, the official said 111 schools have been built by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in the past 10 years.

Highlighting that 600,000 foreign students are currently utilizing the educational capacities of Iran's schools, Khanmohammadi said 22 schools are currently being constructed, and 6 projects are proposed in challenging locations, which are under review.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees should help construct up to 50 schools per year, he stressed.

Per capita education space extended

"Per capita education space has extended to five meters and 35 cm as eight schools were

constructed on a daily basis on average, ISNA quoted Education Minister Reza-Morad Sahraei as saying in June.

Also, some 2,700 sports and educational spaces have been built in the same period, the official stressed.

In August 2023, the Organization for Development, Renovation, and Equipment of Schools announced that the number of newly built schools across the country has increased by 104 percent over the past two years.

\$335m a year on foreign students

In August 2023, Mehdi Fayyazi, the deputy minister of education for international affairs and schools abroad, said some \$335 million is spent annually on the education of foreign students in Iran.

The figure is tantamount to 527 dollars per student, he added.

About 22,000 classrooms nationwide have been allocated to the education of foreign nationals, IRNA quoted Fayyazi as saying.

"Some 17 million euros in international aid is received annually to spend on the education of foreign students," he said, highlighting that the figure is very low."



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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

One can purchase the world with contentment and live in happiness with benevolence.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:08 Evening: 19:45 Dawn: 3:07 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 4:53 (tomorrow)

“Madam Sara” detective stories published in Persian

TEHRAN-A collection of detective stories titled “Madam Sara” has been published in Persian by Morvarid Publication.

It is the translation of the book “The Sorceress of the Strand,” written by Elizabeth Thomasina Meade (L. T. Meade) and co-written by Robert Eustace, in which “Madam Sara” is one of the short stories.

Ramin Azar-Bahram has translated the book, originally released in 2006. It has been published in 189 pages, ISNA reported.

The book is a collection of periodical mystery stories that appeared in The Strand magazine from 1893 to 1903. These stories are crime fiction, similar to the stories of Sherlock Holmes which also appeared in The Strand. They feature the criminal genius villain, Madame Sara, and tell stories of medical mysteries, dangerous criminal women, and explored themes related to gender and consumerism.

At the heart of “Madam Sara” lies a compelling anthology that marries the intrigue of detective fiction with the nuanced depth of character study, hallmarked by a distinctive place within the literary landscape of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The collection, consisting of tales woven with a rich tapestry of literary styles, showcases an admirable diversity in storytelling. This anthology is particularly notable for capturing the essence of the time period, blending the suspenseful elements of the mystery genre with the sophisticated exploration of social narratives, highlighting the nuanced and often overlooked perspectives of women within societal confines.

The contributors, L.T. Meade and Robert Eustace, bring a remarkable synergy to the anthology, combining Meade’s prolific writing career, particularly in the realm of literature for young women, with Eustace’s expertise in the field of science and his keen eye for detail.



This unique collaboration infuses the collection with a depth of realism and scientific intrigue, positioning it at a unique crossroad of literary and cultural movements. Their collective work not only entertains but also serves as a critique and reflection of societal norms and the complexities of human behavior during their era.

during their era.

“Madam Sara” offers readers not just a mosaic of thrilling detective stories but an opportunity to journey through a pivotal era in literary history. It beckons to those with a fondness for mystery and a curiosity about the past, presenting a gateway to explore the convergence of science, society, and storytelling. Beyond mere entertainment, this collection serves as a scholarly resource that enriches one’s understanding of the interplay between genre fiction and cultural commentary, making it a crucial addition to the libraries of both the casual reader and the discerning scholar.

L. T. Meade (1844–1914) was a prolific children’s author of Anglo Irish extraction. Moving from Ireland to London as a young woman, after the death of her mother, she studied in the Reading Room of the British Museum in preparation for her intended career as a writer.

The author of close to 300 books, Meade wrote in many genres, but is best known for her girls’ school stories. She was one of the editors of the girls’ magazine, Atalanta from 1887–93, and was active in women’s issues. She died in 1914.

Robert Eustace (1869–1943) was the pen name of Eustace Robert Barton, an English doctor and author of mystery and crime fiction with a theme of scientific innovation. He often collaborated with other writers, producing a number of works with the author L. T. Meade and others.

Cartoon of Day



Gaza Tragedy
Cartoonist: Ahmad Rahma from Turkey

Ardeshir Kamkar to perform Kurdish music at Vahdat Hall

TEHRAN-Iranian veteran musician Ardeshir Kamkar and his ensemble will hold a concert at Vahdat Hall in Tehran on July 1.

Kamkar’s music band will perform Kurdish music on stage, where Shahrokh Hedayati will accompany the band as a vocalist, IRNA reported.

At the concert, Kamkar, Faraz Maroufi, and Abbas Jafari will play kamancheh (spike fiddle). The ensemble also includes Pouria Vaziri on qanun, Zanyar Pendar on divan and oud, Kavan Karimi on santur, Maziar Yektayar on tar, Hamed Pira on balaban and sorna, Mahur Zamanepur on tombak, Tara Kamkar on bendir, and Pejman Naghshbandi on daf and cajon.

Ardeshir Kamkar, 62, was born in the city of Sanandaj, the capital of Kordestan Province. He started his music training under the supervision of his father Hassan and later learnt it from his brother Pashang as well as late renowned tar and setar player Mohammad Reza Lotfi.

He has always been keen to explore the range and capabilities of



the kamancheh, for which he has written several pieces and books and made numerous pieces.

He has played with famous ensembles such as Dastan, Aref, Sheyda, and Kamkars, which comprises his six brothers and one sister. In the album “Dastan,” (1985) he accompanied the

improvisation of the late Iranian master of Persian avaz Mohammadreza Shajarian and has recently worked with this singer’s son, the talented vocalist Homayoun Shajarian.

Kamkar also has international collaboration. One of his well-received albums is “From Pontos

to Persia,” in which Matthaios Tsahouridis plays the Pontic lyra accompanied by Kamkar on kamancheh and Hussein Zahawy on the daf.

Vahdat Hall is located on Shahr-yar Blvd, Hafez Street, south of Enqelab Avenue.

TMOCA to examine Antonio Saura’s painting

TEHRAN-Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art will hold the second session of the series of “One Work, One Session,” on July 1, in which a painting by the Spanish artist Antonio Saura will be examined.

Lecturer, author, and researcher Erfan Nazari and lecturer Davood Baniardalan will speak at the session, Mehr reported.

Antonio Saura (1930–1998) was an artist and writer, one of the major post-war painters to emerge in Spain in the fifties whose work has marked several generations of artists and whose critical voice is often remembered.

He began painting and writing in 1947 in Madrid while suffering from tuberculosis, having already been confined to his bed for five years. In his beginnings, he created numerous drawings and paintings with a dreamlike surrealist character that most often represented imaginary landscapes, employing a flat smooth treatment that offers a rich palette of colors. He claimed Hans Arp and Yves Tanguy as his artistic influences.

He stayed in Paris in 1952 and in 1954–1955 during which he met Benjamin Péret and associated with the Surrealists, although he soon parted with the group, joining instead the company of his friend the painter Simon Hantaï.

Using the technique of scraping, he adopted a gestural style and created an abstract type of painting, still very colorful with an organic, aleatory design.

The first appearances in his work of forms that will soon become archetypes of the female body or the human figure occur in the mid-1950s.

Starting in 1956, Saura tackled the register of what will prove to be his greatest works:

women, self-portraits, shrouds and crucifixions, which he painted on both canvas and paper.

In 1957 in Madrid, he founded the El Paso Group and served as its director until it broke up in 1960. During this period Saura met Michel Tapié.

During the 1950s, he had his first solo exhibition at the Rodolphe Stadler Gallery in Paris, where he regularly exhibited throughout his life.

Stadler introduced him to Otto van de Loo in Munich and Pierre Matisse in New York City, both of whom exhibited his work and represented him, and eventually his paintings were collected by major museums.

Limiting his palette to blacks, grays and browns, Saura asserted a personal style that was independent of the movements and trends of his generation.

His work followed in the tradition of Velasquez and Goya.

Starting in 1959, he began creating a prolific body of works in print, illustrating numerous books including Cervantes’s Don Quijote, Orwell’s Nineteen Eighty-Four, Nöstlinger’s adaptation of Pinocchio, Kafka’s Tagebücher, Quevedo’s Three Visions, and many others.

In 1960, Saura began creating sculptures made of welded metal elements which represented the human figure, characters and crucifixions.

In 1967, he settled permanently in Paris, and joined the opposition to Francoist Spain.

In France he participated in numerous debates and controversies in the fields of politics, aesthetics, and artistic creation.

He also broadened his thematic and picto-



rial register.

In 1971, he temporarily abandoned painting on canvas to devote himself to writing, drawing and painting on paper.

In 1977, Rolf Lauter and Antonio Saura met for the first time in the Rodolphe Stadler gallery Paris and started a dialogue and a long-standing friendship.

In 1979, the collaboration gave rise to the first major retrospective at the Galerie de Margarete Lauter Mannheim with more than 50 images and drawings, followed by many other presentations.

In 1977, Saura began publishing his writings, and he created several stage designs for the theater, ballet and opera, thanks to the collaboration with his brother, the film director Carlos Saura. From 1983 to his death in 1998, he revisited all of his themes and figures.

The Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art aims to critically review a valuable artwork from its collection every Monday.

These artworks have been less frequently exhibited in recent decades.

The session is held at 3 p.m. at the conference hall of the TMOCA, which is located next to Laleh Park, on North Kargar St. Admission is free for the public.

Tehran cultural center reviews Nanni Moretti’s “Three Floors”

TEHRAN- “Three Floors” (“Tre Piani”), a 2021 comedy film by Italian film director Nanni Moretti, was reviewed at the Arasbaran Cultural Center in Tehran on Sunday.

Film critic Kurosh Jahed attended a screening of the film followed by a review session.

“Three Floors” follows the interconnected lives of three families living in a building in Rome. The film begins with a dramatic scene, where a car crashes into the building’s ground floor, injuring a woman and leading to the arrest of the driver, Andrea, the teenage son of judges Dora and Vittorio.

As the story unfolds, we see the struggles of Monica, who is expecting her first child, but feels abandoned by her husband Giorgio’s frequent absences.

Her visions of a mean black bird hint at a deeper psychological turmoil, similar to her mother’s experiences. Meanwhile, Giorgio’s

reactions to his new role as a father are unenthusiastic and even violent, revealing a deep-seated anger.

The third family we meet is that of Sara and Lucio, who entrust their seven-year-old daughter to the care of their elderly neighbors, Renato and Giovanna.

However, when Lucio becomes convinced that Renato has abused their daughter, he lashes out at him without evidence or logic. As the story progresses, the characters’ lives continue to intersect in unexpected ways, with new characters entering the scene and old conflicts resurfacing.

The second half of the film accelerates in pace as it jumps forward in time, with the title “Five Years Later” appearing twice. The storylines continue to unfold without much resolution, leaving viewers with a sense of unease and disconnection.

Despite its talented cast and intriguing premise, “Three Floors”

ultimately feels like a disjointed and aimless exploration of human relationships and emotions.

“Three Floors” stars a talented ensemble cast including Margherita Buy, Riccardo Scamarcio, Alba Rohrwacher, Adriano Giannini, Elena Lietti, Alessandro Sperduti, Denise Tantucci, and Moretti himself.

The film premiered at the 74th Cannes Film Festival on July 11, 2021, where it received a standing ovation of eleven minutes. It also screened as a special presentation at the 2021 Toronto International Film Festival.

Nanni Moretti is a renowned Italian film director, screenwriter, and actor.

Born in 1953, in Italy, Moretti has established himself as one of the most respected and acclaimed filmmakers of his generation. He is known for his introspective and emotionally charged dramas that often explore themes of identity, relation-

ships, and the human condition. His films often feature complex characters and storylines that are both deeply personal and universally relatable.

He has made a significant impact on the film industry, winning numerous awards for his work, including a Palme d’Or at the 2001 Cannes Film Festival for “The Son’s Room” and a Silver Bear at the 1986 Berlin Film Festival for “The Mass is Ended”. His films often explore themes of identity, relationships, and the human condition, and have been screened at various international film festivals.

He is an outspoken political leftist and has been involved in protests against the government of Silvio Berlusconi.

His films often reflect his views on politics and society, as seen in “Il caimano” (2006), which deals with Berlusconi’s controversies.