

Another Ethnic Cleansing; West Bank after Gaza



©AFP

Israel launches largest assault on Jenin and Tulkarem in 20 years as it goes ahead with genocide in Gaza ▶ Page 5

Israeli soldiers operate during a raid in the Nur Shams camp for Palestinian refugees near the city of Tulkarem in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, Aug. 28, 2024.

Iranian ambassadors in Persian Gulf meet with FM

TEHRAN – A gathering of ambassadors and heads of Iranian missions in the Persian Gulf convened for discussions with Abbas Araqchi, Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs.

During the meeting on Tuesday, the diplomats presented updates on their respective missions and engaged in dialogues concerning recent developments in relations with regional countries.

Minister Araqchi commended his colleagues for their efforts and provided strategic recommendations aimed at enhancing ties with Persian Gulf nations to foster a robust regional community through dedicated implementation of neighborhood policies.

Iran summons Austrian envoy

TEHRAN- Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has summoned the Austrian Ambassador stationed in Tehran.

This action follows the Austrian Foreign Ministry summoning Iran's ambassador. On August 27, 2024, the director general of Iran's foreign ministry's Western Europe Office summoned the Austrian Ambassador to discuss the matter.

Earlier that Tuesday, Iranian Ambassador to Vienna, Abbas Bagherpour, shared a post endorsing Hezbollah's recent airstrike on Israel.

In response, the Austrian Foreign Ministry summoned Iran's ambassador due to his online support for Hezbollah, which included the group's flag alongside the declaration "Hezbollah will win." ▶ Page 3

Expanding relations with Turkmenistan a top priority: Leader

TEHRAN – During a meeting with Turkmenistan's national leader on Wednesday, August 28, 2024, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei underscored the importance of strengthening relations with Turkmenistan, emphasizing that it is a top priority for Tehran.

He emphasized that, while Iran and Turkmenistan have experienced significant growth in their bilateral relations in recent years, there remain numerous untapped opportunities for further cooperation that must be explored.

Ayatollah Khamenei emphasized that expanding relations based on mutual interests is advantageous for both Tehran and Ashgabat. "We hope that with the presence of the newly elected government of Dr. Pezeshkian, the matters related to expanding relations between the



two countries will continue with increased vigor and strength," he said.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution pointed to the strong motivation of Pezeshkian to expand relations with Turkmenistan and noted that Farzaneh Sade-

gh, the Minister of Roads and Urban Development, will also work to advance the agreements between the two countries in her role as head of the joint commission to achieve favorable outcomes.

Ayatollah Khamenei highlighted the

comments made by the National Leader of Turkmenistan concerning collaborative projects between the two countries, particularly the North-South Transport Corridor and the development of the Turkmenistan gas pipeline. He emphasized the significance of these initiatives, noting that their successful implementation, with the involvement of Iranian experts and specialists, will further reinforce the strong bonds between Iran and Turkmenistan.

During the meeting, which was also attended by President Masoud Pezeshkian, Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov characterized Iran and Turkmenistan as being akin to relatives. "I had good, constructive negotiations with the President in Tehran, and I am hopeful that the agreements we signed will yield positive results," he stated. ▶ Page 2



UNGA Resolution 2758 brooks

no challenge and the one-China principle is unshakable

By Cong Peiwu
China's ambassador to Tehran

TEHRAN – The 79th UN General Assembly will be held in New York soon. Speaking at the UN General Assembly, there are still a few forces that have been deliberately distorting and challenging UNGA Resolution 2758 and the one-China principle. Therefore, I would like to explain this important question and clarify its root cause. ▶ Page 5

Americans should acknowledge the catastrophe they have created in Gaza

By Professor Hossein Askari

PORTLAND – Yes, we know the official Hamas count of Palestinian deaths as of August 23—a little over 41,000 and counting, with about 70 percent of the carnage women and children. Some observers estimate the associated deaths as of now could be at least another 100,000—those already killed and under the rubble and in those in the throes of death from lack of basic medicines and care, malnutrition and disease with Gaza reporting its first case of polio in twenty-five years on August 26. There are tens of thousands of children who are struggling as orphans and on a constant move when Israelis command them to evacuate every few days. The sub-par existence and infrastructure that Gaza had before the war is now 80-90 percent destroyed with Gazans surviving in a state few humans faced even a century ago. ▶ Page 5

Brazilian envoy to Tehran Times: Iran, Brazil set to deepen economic and cultural ties

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – The governments of Iran and Brazil are taking steps to boost bilateral trade and enhance cultural connections between the two countries, Brazilian envoy to Tehran Eduardo Ricardo Gradilone Neto announced during an exclusive interview with the Tehran Times.

During a visit to the Tehran Times building on Wednesday, Gradilone Neto met with the publication's CEO and editor-in-chief, engaging in discussions about bilateral relations. The Ambassador also participated in an interview with the newspaper's correspondent, offering insights into the state of Iran-Brazil relations.

The full text of the interview is as follows:

The current trade volume between Iran and Brazil stands at approximately \$5 billion. What potential do you see for increasing this figure, and what opportunities and challenges might arise in this endeavor?

With Lula as President of Brazil, the good relations with Iran are back as they were during his two previous terms. And now Iran is a member of BRICS. And our Vice-President Geraldo Alckmin attended the inauguration of President Pezeshkian, a medical doctor like him. Very good talks took place between them. During his visit, he held several meetings to discuss the resumption of our high-level bilateral visits and the next reunion of our Economic and Trade bilateral commission. ▶ Page 3

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

TEHRAN PAPERS

Defusing tensions comes first

In an analysis of the 14th government's policy on the JCPOA, Etemad wrote: Trump's withdrawal from the JCPOA did not bring any change in the international conditions for Iran. Also, geopolitical and political changes such as the war between Russia and Ukraine did not affect the JCPOA to influence its revival, but the only element is the need to modify the JCPOA in the technical part and increase the percentage of Iran's enrichment and the nuclear breakout time. If it is the will of both sides, the JCPOA should be updated based on Iran's current nuclear capacity, and the U.S. should return to the JCPOA by giving concessions, including the lifting of sanctions. Because Iran and America's problem is not only sanctions! Sanctions are the leverage of America's pressure on Iran, and they face a wide range of other political and geopolitical problems, especially the activities of resistance groups in supporting the people of Gaza and confronting Israel and America. These factors can make any agreement that is not stable fail. Therefore, the 14th government after the revival of JCPOA needs a new framework that starts with freezing the tensions with America and leads to the management and reduction of tensions. Apart from foreign policy, from the point of view of the American domestic policy, regardless of who is the president and which party is in office, it is not possible to remove the sanctions without removing the tensions.

Hemshahri: The importance of presence

In a note, Hamshahri discussed the visit of Qatar's Foreign Minister to Iran and said: On Monday, Tehran hosted Qatar's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. This trip is considered important from various regional, political, and economic aspects. Qatar's Foreign Minister's consultations with senior Iranian officials are taking place in the context of the continuing evils of the Zionist regime and increasing tensions in West Asia. Regional and international analysts believe that Iran's response to the assassination of martyr Haniyeh in Tehran, on the one hand, and the status of the ceasefire negotiations in Gaza, on the other hand, have doubled the importance of Bin Abdulrahman Al Thani's presence in Tehran. Regional observers believe that the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Qatar had multifaceted consultations in Tehran. Bilateral relations, the latest status of the ceasefire negotiations and Iran's response to the recent terrorist attacks in Tel Aviv were among the main topics that are

said to be discussed during Bin Abdulrahman Al Thani's consultations in Tehran. Now, however, it seems that in addition to bilateral issues, Qatar is playing a new role in order to prevent the increasing tension in the region, especially in recent days.

Ham Mihan: An important step to build trust?!

In an analysis, Ham Mihan dealt with the relations between Iran and Russia and Iran's future policy towards Europe. The paper said: With the intensification of the Western pressure on Russia on the Ukraine front and the increase of the pressure on Iran in the Middle East, the chance of Iran and Russia getting closer to each other increases. Recent developments in Russia's Western front are taking place in a situation where the new government in Iran wants to restore relations with Europe and America. Masoud Pezeshkian and his statesmen know that any evidence of selling Iranian weapons to Russia for use in the Ukraine war will once again challenge the plan to restore relations with the West. To improve relations with Europe and America, Iran has to provide proof and guarantees to the Western countries that from now on, the transfer of drones and ballistic missiles to Russia will not be done. Iran's assurance of not sending ballistic missiles to Russia can be an important trust-building step for Iran.

Iran: England's contradictory procedure

In a commentary, the Iran newspaper discussed the double and contradictory behavior of England. It wrote: British prisons are full of protesters of the recent demonstrations in this country. In the mass arrests of protesters in England, the prisons of this country do not have empty capacity. British media said arrests are likely to reduce as the unrest subsides, but the investigation will continue for months as officers are identifying the social media accounts of perpetrators and will trace the masked rioters through hours of CCTV moments before the cover-up. England's forceful treatment of protesters is while the government of this country, during the 2022 unrest in Iran, on several occasions introduced the rioters as libertarians and accused the Islamic Republic of Iran of anti-human rights actions due to its handling of the riots. Also, this support went to the point where the British government, along with France, Germany, and America, demanded new and more sanctions against our country.

Iran FM reaffirms support for Palestinians in phone call with Hamas official



TEHRAN – In a phone conversation with Khalil al-Hayya, the deputy Political Bureau Chief of Hamas, Iran's foreign minister Abbas Araqchi praised the resilience of the Palestinian people in the face of the Israeli regime's genocidal war.

Araqchi commended the Palestinians for their steadfastness over the past eleven months, expressing confidence that "final victory" will belong to them.

During the phone call on Wednesday, Araqchi emphasized that Iran's current administration remains committed to continuing the longstanding policy of supporting the Palestinian cause.

He reassured al-Hayya that the Islamic Republic would stand by the Palestinian people "until the end." Araqchi also reiterated Iran's support for any agreement that leads to a ceasefire and the cessation of hostilities in Gaza, provided it has the approval of the Palestinian people and their resistance groups.

Al-Hayya expressed his gratitude for Iran's unwavering support, highlighting the efforts of Iran's late foreign minister, Hossein

Amir Abdollahian, in backing the Palestinian resistance. He conveyed the Palestinian people's appreciation for the Islamic Republic's enduring commitment to their struggle against what he described as Zionist crimes.

The discussion between the two officials comes amid the ongoing conflict in Gaza, which erupted in October following a retaliatory operation by Gaza's Resistance groups. The Israeli military's response has been devastating, resulting in the deaths of at least 40,534 Palestinians, primarily women and children, and injuring over 93,778 more.

In July, Hamas had proposed a truce deal that included the withdrawal of Israeli forces, the return of displaced Palestinians, the lifting of the siege on Gaza, and the start of reconstruction efforts. However, the Israeli regime rejected this proposal and introduced new conditions, including maintaining a military presence along Gaza's border with Egypt.

After 10 months of war, 90 percent of Gaza's population has been forced out of their homes with most having to relocate multiple times. They face a lack of safety, sanitation and adequate food with some even forced to shelter in cemeteries.

The conversation also included congratulations from al-Hayya to Araqchi on his recent appointment as Foreign Minister, a role previously held by Amir Abdollahian. Araqchi expressed his gratitude for the warm wishes, reaffirming Iran's continued dedication to the Palestinian cause.

Expanding relations with Turkmenistan a top priority: Leader

From page 1 ▶ The National Leader of Turkmenistan commemorated the late Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, recognizing his significant contributions to strengthening relations between the two countries. He added that "the long and shared border between Turkmenistan and Iran has always been and will continue to be a border of peace and friendship, and we are prepared to expand relations in all areas."

Iran, Turkmenistan sign multiple strategic agreements

In a prior Wednesday meeting between Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and the Turkmen leader, the two countries signed a number of strategic agreements, as announced by Pezeshkian.

"Strategic agreements between



us and Turkmenistan have been signed, and we hope these interactions and agreements will lead to expanded cooperation in other areas," Pezeshkian said in remarks to Iranian media. The President also revealed that he will soon visit Ashgabat to follow up on the agreements.

Berdimuhamedow echoed Pezeshkian's positive sentiments, confirming that the talks were held in a "friendly and brotherly atmosphere." He expressed hope that the negotiations will yield results and further strengthen the "brotherly relationship between Iran and Turkmenistan."

Berdimuhamedow highlighted key topics discussed during the talks, including "gas, energy, electricity, roads, and transportation." He expressed optimism that the outcomes will be "positive for the implementation of these plans."

He further emphasized the importance of a joint commission to oversee the implementation of the agreements, stating, "We also agreed to assign the follow-up of these cooperations to a joint commission so they can oversee the implementation of the plans."

Berdimuhamedow also emphasized the significance of these plans, not just at the bilateral level, but also "at the regional level." He extended an invitation for President Pezeshkian to visit Turkmenistan in the near future.

Iran human rights chief decries ex-UN envoy's presence at MKO event

TEHRAN- The secretary of Iranian High Council for Human Rights in the UN has strongly condemned Javid Rehman, the former UN special rapporteur on human rights in Iran, for his association with the leader of Mujahedin Khalq Organization (MKO).

As reported by IRNA, in response to Rehman's participation and statements at a gathering of the MKO in Paris, which significantly harmed the credibility and reputation of the United Nations human rights mechanisms, Kazem Gharib Abadi addressed a letter to the president of the Human Rights Council, Omar Zinger, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, denouncing the former special rapporteur's involvement in such events.

The announcement from this terrorist organization, which has been implicated in the deaths of 17,000 innocent Iranians and has committed crimes that transcend both time and borders, indicated that the meeting coincided with what was purported to be Rehman's final anti-Iran report as the United Nations special rapporteur.

Gharib Abadi asserted that Rehman's report was filled with falsehoods and unfounded allegations against the Islamic Republic of Iran, aimed at appeasing the MKO terrorist group and acknowledging their financial backing after his term as special rapporteur.

He pointed out, "The Human Rights Headquarters of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in a letter dated July 10, 2024, provided a detailed response to the accusations and warned that the creation of such unlawful and overreaching reports by a United Nations expert, ostensibly to support a terrorist organization, could jeopardize the integrity of international human rights institutions and the United Nations framework."

Gharib Abadi highlighted that the Islamic Republic of Iran has persistently informed all United Nations human rights officials and member states of the Human Rights Council about Javid Rehman's apparent links to the MKO terrorist organization through various reports. Unfortunately, these concerns and criticisms have largely been ignored despite the ongoing controversies.

"The release of memorial photographs depicting Javid Rehman alongside the leader of an armed terrorist group has further questioned the integrity and objectivity of his numerous reports against the Islamic Republic of Iran during his time at the United Nations," he added.

Gharib Abadi pointed out that the collaboration, complicity, and acquisition of data from dissident groups and individuals, particularly the MKO terrorist organization, are not unique to Javid Rehman.

He added, "The previous special rapporteurs have also participated in similar activities to varying degrees, which have considerably diminished the credibility of their reports and the effectiveness of international human rights institutions and frameworks."

The Mujahedin Khalq Organization, often known as the People's Mujahedin of Iran (PMOI), is an Iranian opposition group founded in 1965 to overthrow the Iranian government, guided by Marxist ideology.

The MKO has a documented history of engaging in violent and terrorist actions directed at the Iranian government and its representatives during the imposed war in the 1980s.

Additionally, it has faced allegations of executing terrorist operations against civilians within Iran. The organization was classified as a terrorist group by the United States until 2012 and continues to be listed as a terrorist organization by the European Union.

Javid Rehman is a distinguished British-Pakistani legal scholar, author, and academic. He holds the position of Professor of Islamic Law and International Law at Brunel University London. In 2018, he served as the United Nations special rapporteur on human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Tehran warns Israel against Al-Aqsa desecration



TEHRAN- The spokesperson for Iran's foreign ministry, has issued a warning regarding the Israeli regime's intentions to undermine the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

On Tuesday, Nasser Kanaani

expressed on the X platform that the cabinet of the Zionist regime is actively pursuing its sacrilegious agenda against the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

He emphasized that the Israeli authorities persist in their plans to build a synagogue in place of the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran firmly denounces these recent remarks and actions, cautioning against any infringement upon the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the crossing of the Islamic Ummah's boundaries by the Zionists," he added.

"In light of the awakening of global conscience and widespread condemnation of Zionist actions, Muslims and advocates for freedom around the world are increasingly rallying in support of Palestine, the Al-Aqsa Mosque, and the accountability of Zionist offenders," Kanaani concluded.

The Al-Aqsa Mosque, situated on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, holds significant importance in Islam. It has also become a focal point of tension between Israelis and Palestinians, as the Temple Mount is the historical location of

the ancient Jewish Temple.

Israeli regime asserts its sovereignty over the Temple Mount, whereas Palestinians assert their claim over Al-Aqsa and its vicinity. This ongoing dispute has frequently resulted in violent confrontations between Muslims and Jews over the centuries.

After the Al-Aqsa Storm operation, most Palestinians view Israel's actions on the site, such as allowing Jewish prayer and visits to the site, as attempts to gradually assert control over the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Five Iranians repatriated from Armenian jails

TEHRAN- Five Iranian citizens who were detained in Armenia have been released and returned to the Islamic Republic, representing the 15th instance of Iranian prisoners being repatriated from the neighboring nation.

As reported by IRNA, Askar Jalalian, the deputy head of Human Rights and International Affairs at the Iranian Ministry of Justice, announced that their release was made possible through the implementation of a treaty concerning the transfer of sentenced individuals between the

two countries.

Jalalian emphasized the importance of adhering to travel advisories issued by the Ministry of Justice, especially following the recent removal of visa requirements for travel to Armenia, which has led to an increase in visits to neighboring nations, particularly Turkey and Armenia.

He specifically cautioned travelers against bringing tranquilizers, pain medications, cold remedies, or any other prohibited substances, including narcotics, as those apprehended by

border authorities face severe consequences.

With the support of the Armenian government and the coordination of the Iranian Embassy in Armenia, the five detainees were officially transferred at Yerevan Airport on Wednesday to return to Tehran.

This event marks the third group of Iranian prisoners to be returned to Iran in the past year, facilitated by the collaborative efforts of the Iranian embassy in Yerevan and the Armenian authorities.

Iran vows increased EAEU trade through Armenia ties

TEHRAN- The deputy head of the Aras Free Zone Organization has indicated that enhancing collaboration between Iranian and Armenian enterprises will lead to an increase in trade exchanges with member states of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

According to Ali Navid's remarks, these exchanges encompass a wide range of products, including cellulose, wood and furniture,

automotive and related sectors, construction materials, metals, cosmetics, food, apparel, oil and gas, and chemicals.

He noted, "Armenia can source necessary items for its market from the offerings of the Aras Free Zone. Additionally, the Aras Free Zone provides Armenia with the advantage of optimal productivity at the Nordooz border, which can be utilized for the storage and

transfer of goods."

Navid further stated that the trade volume between Iran and Armenia has reached \$600 million, highlighting that Armenia can also import goods from India and China via the Nordooz border.

A delegation of Armenian business representatives, comprising traders and investors from sectors such as furniture and wood, construction materials,

electricity and electronics, food, and tourism, recently visited the Aras Free Zone.

The Aras Free Zone Organization (AFZO) is an economic zone situated in the northwest of Iran, adjacent to the borders of Armenia and Azerbaijan. Founded in 1993, AFZO's primary objective is to draw foreign investments and foster economic growth within the area.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran, Brazil set to deepen economic and cultural ties



From Page 1 ▶ And in a short time, we will have an agriculture attaché working with us at the Brazilian embassy, who – among other things – and with Iranian counterparts will help solve sanitary issues that hinder unnecessarily an important part of our bilateral trade.

Then trade will certainly increase even more. The challenges, in addition to what was just mentioned, relate to the situation in the Middle East, the problems between Iran and Israel, and other factors that create uncertainty and difficulties in scheduling dates for our bilateral meetings.

Iran and Brazil are both members of BRICS. What are the common goals of the two nations within this organization?

A: There are many. The opening of more channels of communication among different countries with different governments, the discussion of subjects related to their regions or of international concern, the harmonization and defense of common positions in other fora, etc. Recently I participated, with other BRICS ambassadors posted in Teheran, in a student's simulation of a meeting of the group.

During an entire day, with the help of our staff, they discussed many issues of the BRICS agenda and presented their conclusions to the ambassadors at the end of the event.

I think this was one of the pioneering initiatives of that

nature, similar to United Nations simulation models with which we are already familiar.

You recently mentioned the development of a common BRICS currency. Can you provide an update on its progress, and what significance do you believe its establishment would hold for member countries?

A: Our former President Dilma Rousseff presides over the BRICS bank where this issue is being discussed.

It has to be examined through different points of view and evaluation of consequences depending on the approach.

We will have more information about that when Russia presents its report of its rotating presidency after the meeting of BRICS presidents at the end of the year.

Mr. Geraldo Alckmin, the Vice President of Brazil, recently met with Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in Tehran. How do you assess the future state of relations between Iran and Brazil during Dr. Pezeshkian's administration?

A: Geraldo Alckmin was the highest Brazilian authority to visit Iran since Lula was here in 2010.

The new Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi was then there in the meeting between Alckmin and Pezeshkian, together with his predecessor, Bagheri Kani, whom I knew during the Brazil-Iran political consultations meetings that took place in Brazil last

year when he was a Secretary for Political Issues at the Iranian Foreign Office.

Araghchi was for years Iran's negotiator of nuclear issues, something Brazil, Turkey, and Iran were involved in very serious negotiations years ago, with successful results, which were unfortunately boycotted by great powers.

At the beginning of September, we will celebrate our National Day and hope to have the attendance of authorities of both the former and current members of the government, to continue and strengthen even more our already very good relations.

The relationship between Iran and Brazil spans over 120 years. In your view, how do current relations reflect this historical context, and what specific actions could be taken to further deepen and expand these ties?

A: The restart of our high-level visits will be very important for that, because we plan to review all aspects of our relations in the existing and the new groups to be created to deal with specific issues, including parliamentary diplomacy – something we want to resume as soon as possible and a subject that I am already discussing with members of the Iranian parliament –, cooperation among law studios in our countries, cultural exchanges, media collaboration and so on. We need to know better each other because this is very important to open new and mutually beneficial links and opportunities to the

strengthening of our relations.

Your background indicates a strong emphasis on cultural issues and relations. Given the crucial role that media plays in fostering mutual understanding, why do you think media cooperation between Iran and Brazil is currently lacking? What initiatives do you envision to strengthen this aspect of bilateral relations?

A: I can mention our project with the embassy of Portugal and Tabataba'i University to create a Portuguese language course in Iran and the incentive to Iranians to have more information about Brazil and our culture, and vice-versa.

On our National Day celebration, the National anthems will be performed by Iranian children, we will probably have Capoeira – Brazilian martial art – performed by Iranians, Brazilian food and drinks prepared by local people, and many other kinds of cultural initiatives related to photography and Iranian tile exhibitions, book translations, etc.

Contacts and cooperation between the press of our countries would be another interesting project to develop.

What is the position of Brazil regarding the Israeli war on the Gaza Strip? Has Brazil taken any diplomatic moves in this regard?

A: Relations unfortunately are not good with the current Israeli administration, although the respective peoples have a strong friendship and we have solid and historical links.

Our ambassador in Tel Aviv was called to Brasilia for consultations; we are almost every day condemning Israel for its atrocities in Gaza; we voice our indignation regarding the acts of the current Israeli government in every multilateral forum, including the International Court of Justice.

Let me finish by expressing my opinion that religion has to be a factor of union, not disunion and dissent, among countries.

In particular among monotheist countries where the majority of the population follows Judaism, Christianity, or Islam.



Parliament, as chairman of the Government's Information Council.

Iran summons Austrian envoy

From Page 1 ▶ The Austrian foreign ministry expressed strong disapproval, stating, "We strongly condemn the use of the image of the Hezbollah flag in the Iran's ambassador's message."

Following significant backlash from various Austrian political parties, Bagherpour subsequently deleted the post.

Austria's stance on Hezbollah is integrated into a wider global initiative aimed

at diminishing the group's influence, which encompasses its participation in military conflicts, political activities, and the provision of social services in Lebanon.

This perspective is consistent

with that of other Western countries that regard Hezbollah as a major security risk.

In 2021, Austria joined several other EU countries in designating Hezbollah as a terrorist organization.

Iranian national Mohammad Khazaei released from Saudi prison

TEHRAN – Mohammad Khazaei, who was among the individuals detained during this year's Hajj pilgrimage, has been freed from prison in Saudi Arabia.

Khazaei was expected to make his way back to Tehran by the conclusion of Wednesday.

The detainment of Khazaei by Saudi authorities on June 20 had raised questions due to unspecified reasons surrounding his arrest.

On August 20, Alireza Mahmoudi, the Director General of Consular Affairs at Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, met with the Saudi Arabian ambassador Abdullah Al-Anazi to address the issue of Iranian citizens who were imprisoned in Saudi Arabia.

Mahmoudi stressed the importance of resolving the issue promptly, underscoring the humanitarian and diplomatic significance of the matter.

Ambassador Al-Anazi, reflecting on this

positive trajectory, expressed optimism that the situation would be resolved soon.

He emphasized the strong ties developing between the two countries and conveyed his hope that the two detained Iranian pilgrims would be released in the near future.

Al-Anazi reassured that efforts are being made to ensure their safe return to the Islamic Republic of Iran, where they can reunite with their families.

SPORTS

Iran's Safarzadeh determined to win a medal in 2024 Paralympics



TEHRAN – Iranian runner Hajar Safarzadeh is determined to win a medal in the 2024 Paralympic Games.

Athletics at the 2024 Summer Paralympics will be held at the Stade Charléty from Aug. 30 Sept. 8.

The 24-year-old female athlete will carry Iran's flag in the Opening Ceremony.

She will experience her first ever Paralympics and is going to make quite a splash in the Games.

"I am in my best form at the moment and well-prepared for the 2024 Paralympic Games.

I would like to thank my coaches who helped me prepare for the competition," Safarzadeh told in an exclusive interview with Tehran Times.

"I have worked really hard the last five years for the Paralympic Games and I want to achieve fruitful results in Paris.

Of course, I know that I should be the best version of myself in the Games," she stated.

She said the to carry her country's flag is a dream has come true.

"I am so excited and cannot wait for the ceremony. I hope to win a medal as well," Safarzadeh added.

Safarzadeh became Iran's first female athlete to win a world title in May.

She came first with a time of 57.56 seconds at the Women's 400m T12 Final at the 2024 World Para Athletics Championships in Kobe, Japan.

"I know that the Paralympic Games will bring the best runners of the world together. I am fully aware of importance of the competition but I am determined to step up to the podium," Safarzadeh concluded.

Iran on road to Paris 2024 for conquest of 10th Paralympic medal

TEHRAN – Men's sitting volleyball was first included in the 1980 Paralympic Games with the women's version following in 2004.

And from August 29, we will be able to see them again, this time at Paris 2024. 16 teams, 8 men and 8 women, will compete for gold at the Arena. Among them, we will have Iran, China and Kazakhstan, representing the Asian continent.

Without a doubt, the king of this para sport is Iran. The interest started decades ago, helped by the fact that you don't need a lot of equipment to play sitting volleyball.

As an easily accessible para sport, the Iranians turned their attention to the qualification for the Paralympics at Seoul 1988.

Since then, the eyes of the citizens of this country have been on the athletes, who wait every Paralympics for a gold, just as Argentina expects a goal from Messi.

The Asian continent does not let the team led by Hadi Rezaei go unnoticed, with 7 gold medals and 2 silver medals in its nine appearances in the Paralympics, it has been 100% of the time on the winners' podium, making them the great favorites to perform at the Arena Paris with their debut on August 30.

Over the years, the Iran team has updated the techniques and involved advanced technology, without leaving behind the 200 days of practice per year, which are an essential key to declaring victory.

Davoud Alipourian: Maestro of Iran's symphony of success

TEHRAN – Davoud Alipourian, at age 39, is one of the Iranian volleyball legends in sitting volleyball. As a playmaker and driving force behind Iran's symphony of success, his career spans six Paralympic Games with an impressive tally of three gold medals (Beijing 0208, Rio 216 and Tokyo 2020) and two silver medals (Athens 2004 and London 2012).

Reflecting on his success, he attributes it to a combination of persistence, rigorous training and the wisdom passed down through generations. "The key to success, in my opinion, is persistence in training, and techniques and tactics that were passed down from generation to generation over the years," he shared.

Joining the national team at just 18, he benefitted immensely from the support of his teammates and coaches. "When I joined the team, I was 18 years old, and all my teammates and coaches helped me in this way," he recalled.

A significant influence on his career has been Hadi Rezaei, whose masterful coaching has ensured both seamless integration and consistent development of new players. "The continuity of Hadi Rezaei has really worked masterfully in changing generations," Alipourian noted, highlighting the strategic continuity and impact of his mentor on his personal and team's success.

His role on the team has evolved over the years. Initially starting as a hitter, he shifted to the role of setter after the coaches saw his potential. "I started working as a spiker, but then I started working as a setter after being recognized by the coaches," he explained.

"With the help of the experience of the team and the head coach, who was a full-fledged playmaker himself, I gained enough experience."

The camaraderie within the team has also played a crucial role in his development. "When you have a friendly and close relationship with your teammates, I think you are halfway there," he said.

Throughout his career, Alipourian has witnessed significant changes in the sport, many driven by the innovative approaches of the Iranian team.

"I think the most important change has been made by the Iranian team, which has removed sitting volleyball from the traditional mode," he remarked. "You will see in Paris how the plans of the Iranian team are progressing, and you will really see the ultimate changes."

One of his latest feats was a World Cup title in Cairo, where he earned honors as Best Setter and Most Valuable Player. This accomplishment demonstrates his continued excellence on the court and adds to his already impressive legacy.

As a veteran player, he now takes on a mentorship role, guiding younger athletes and sharing his vast knowledge.

"During training, we review all the team's plans, and I think the coach of the team, if there is any point during the matches, will share it through me," he explained.

His mentorship is crucial not only for technical skill development but also for fostering confidence and unity among the players. This kind of leadership and guidance will be invaluable for the future of Iran's sitting volleyball, ensuring that the team continues to thrive and succeed for years to come.

Iranian athlete claims gold medal at World Corporate Games

TEHRAN – An Iranian athlete has claimed the gold medal at the 1st World Corporate Games held in Russia.

Ribvar Moradpour climbed to the top of the podium in the athletics – Men's 1500m competitions of the Games.

The 1st World Corporate Games gathered 2,500 athletes from 20 countries, including Russia, Belarus, Senegal, the United Arab Emirates, Haiti, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Vietnam, Venezuela, Serbia, Uzbekistan, Bangladesh and others, who competed in 24 sports.

The 1st World Corporate Games was held in Moscow.

Investment in mining exploration projects rises 173%: IMIDRO

TEHRAN – The director of the Exploration Office at Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) said investment in the country's mining projects increased by 173 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19).

According to Ahmad Fattahi Mojaleji, IMIDRO, and its subsidiaries invested 33.466 trillion rials (about \$66.9 million) in the exploration sector last year, while the figure was about 12.250 trillion rials (about \$24.5

million) a year earlier, IRNA reported.

Back in July, Fattahi said that IMIDRO has prepared new investment packages for the country's private sector to participate in mining exploration projects.

"Considering IMIDRO's approach in line with the slogan of the year which is the realization of public participation in the leap of production, the private sector should be ready to invest in the exploration sector," the official said.

Iran exports over 18,000 tons of chicken meat in 5 months



TEHRAN – Iran exported more than 18,000 tons of chicken meat in the first five months

of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21), head of Iran's Poultry Farmers Union said.

According to Ali Ebrahimi, the government removed the ban on chicken exports in the last month of the previous Iranian year and farmers managed to export 1,800 tons of chicken in the mentioned month, Mehr News Agency reported.

This year, with the increase in production and supply being more than demand, the exports have increased, the official said.

Annual export from Hamedan province increases 10%

TEHRAN – As announced by a provincial official, the value of export from Hamedan province rose 10 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1402 (ended on March 19), as compared to its previous year.

Rahim Mortezaei, the head of Hamedan Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, said that commodities worth \$1.135 billion were exported from the province in the past year.

As previously announced by the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the country's non-oil exports, excluding exports of electricity, crude oil, and techno-engineering services, stood at 136.4 million tons worth \$49.33 billion in the past year, which shows a 9.82 percent rise in terms of tonnage and an 8.87 percent decline in terms of value.

According to Mohammad Rezvanifar, Iran exported \$35.87 billion of crude oil, \$370 million of

electricity, and \$1.293 billion of technical engineering services in the mentioned year.

Based on IRICA data, during this period, 48.8 million tons of petrochemical products worth \$19.4 billion were also exported, which shows a decrease of 11.32 percent and 28.59 percent in terms of weight and value, respectively.

During this period, liquefied natural gas with \$3.9 billion, liquefied propane with \$3.62 billion, and bitumen-oil with \$2.19 billion were Iran's top exported items.

Iran's top export destination during this period was China with \$13.915 billion worth of imports from the Islamic Republic, followed by Iraq with \$9.215 billion, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with over \$6.611 billion, Turkey with \$4.16 billion, and India with \$2.17 billion.

The official put the average customs value of each ton of exported goods at \$362 which has decreased by 17 percent compared to the preceding year.

TEDPIX gains 8,200 points on Wednesday



TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 8,246 points to 2,076,272 on Wednesday, which is the fifth day of the Iranian calendar week.

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

The Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has approved a directive allowing the banks of the country to provide up to 100 trillion rials (about \$200 million) of funding to support the stock market.

The mentioned directive was approved on August 20, in a meeting of the CBI Supreme Council chaired by the CBI Governor Mohammadreza Farzin.

As reported, The CBI governor has urged the Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) to consider the concerns of the shareholders when injecting these resources into the capital market and to plan in such a way that the funding has an effective role in the capital market.

Farzin has also announced the CBI's new measures for supporting the capital market.

Referring to the central bank's three new

measures to support the stock market and small shareholders, the official said these plans are mainly focused on financing listed companies to accelerate their development.

"The first step is to guarantee 3.6 quadrillion rials (about \$7.2 billion) of bonds of the operating banks to issue Riyal financing bonds to supply working capital to companies listed in the stock market," Farzin said.

The official also mentioned the issuance of 2.0 billion euros of foreign currency sukuk bonds to support the development plans of listed companies active in the field of petrochemicals and mining as the second measure to support the stock market.

The third measure is to grant 1.5 billion euros in foreign currency loans to listed companies that have foreign exchange income and quick-return plans, in order to increase their exports, according to the CBI governor.

The head of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) Majid Eshqi has also said the country's banks, major holdings and government organizations are going to collaborate in order to support the stock market.

Referring to the latest decisions made by the Supreme Council of the Stock Market, Eshqi said most of the measures that are going to be taken to support the market are focused on providing funding and capital via the Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund (CMDSF), Tasnim News Agency reported.

"Such measures will be taken by holdings and investment companies in order to reassure shareholders about the future of their shares", the official said.

NISOC's oil production increase target 65% realized

TEHRAN – The National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) has managed to realize 65 percent of its target for increasing and maintaining oil production in the oil fields under the company's supervision in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), an official with the company said.

"Last year, with the launch of 25 development and workover wells with a capacity of 35,000 barrels per day, 65 percent of the commitment of the company for maintenance and production increase was realized," Ebrahim Piramoun said.

Back in September 2023, NISOC Head Alireza Daneshi said his company was planning to raise the output of the oil fields under its supervision to 3.27 mil-



lion barrels per day in the next five years, Shana reported.

Speaking in a press conference, Daneshi said the company also plans to develop its 16 gas storages in order to ensure a stable supply of feed to the region's petrochemical complexes.

The official had earlier said that his company's five subsidiaries are currently operating in an area of 400,000 square kilometers in seven different provinces.

Daneshi said his company is going to work on a total of 802

oil wells, including 254 development wells and 546 operational wells to reach the above-mentioned output within the next five years.

The official also mentioned the collection of associated gases (flare gases) as one of the important priorities of his company and said: "Nearly 80 percent of associated gases are currently being collected in provinces under the supervision of the NISOC and 20 percent is being wasted for which new projects have been defined."

The National Iranian South Oilfields Company is a government-owned corporation under the direction of Iran's Oil Ministry, and operates as a subsidiary of National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC).

Container operation rises 4% in Iran's ports in 5 months yr/yr

TEHRAN- Based on the data released by the Iranian Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO), container operation has increased four percent in the ports of country during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21), as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

According to the mentioned data, 1,079,516 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of container goods have been unloaded and loaded in the country's ports in the first five months of this year, while the figure was 1,052,590 TEUs in the first five months of the previous year.

Based on the PMO's released data, some 94,284,476 tons of goods were loaded and unloaded at the country's ports in the first five months of the present year.

As reported, during the mentioned five months more than 10.964 million tons of oil products and over 21.291 million tons of non-oil goods were unloaded at the Iranian ports, while the loading of oil products in ports was reported to be 32.132 million tons, and the loading of non-oil goods was 29.896 million tons.

Totally, more than 32.255 million tons of oil- and non-oil goods were unloaded at the Iranian ports in the said five months, and over 62.029 million tons of oil- and non-oil products were loaded.

While Iran is combating the U.S. unilateral sanctions on its economy, the country's ports



as the major gates of exports and imports play a significant role in this battle. This role makes all-out support for ports and their development serious and vital.

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

It is worth mentioning that Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization has defined a high number of projects to develop and improve the country's ports, as the country aims to double the capacity of its ports in five years.

Ports and Maritime Organization has put it on the agenda to attract 300 trillion rials (about \$600 million) of investment from the private sector in the country's ports by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (late March 2025).

As reported by the PMO portal, the mentioned investment is going to be used to develop the infrastructure and operational

capacity of the country's ports.

Earlier this month, PMO Head Ali-Akbar Safaei said over the past few years the organization has managed to attract nearly \$1.7 billion of foreign and domestic investment in the country's ports and maritime sector.

Speaking in a press conference on July 10, Safaei said some 620 trillion rials (about \$1.24 billion) of domestic investment and \$470 million of foreign investment have been attracted in the mentioned sectors.

"The attraction of this amount of private sector investment is significant compared to the total budget of the government in the sea and port sectors," he said.

According to the official, regarding foreign investment, PMO has signed contracts with five countries including India which has so far invested \$120 million in the port sector and \$250 million in the rail, roads, and infrastructure sectors.

Referring to the growth of maritime trade in the country, Safaei continued: "Maritime trade increased from 215 million tons in [the Iranian calendar year] 1401 (2022-2023) to 237 million tons last year (ended on March 19, 2024)."

"In the first quarter of the current year, 60 million tons of maritime trade was recorded, which shows a 10 percent growth compared to the same period last year, and even a 70 percent growth was recorded in some parts of the Caspian Sea," he added.

Iran exports 1,469 tons of honey in a year

TEHRAN- As announced by an official with Iran's Agriculture Ministry, the country exported 1,469 tons of honey in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19).

Mohammad-Ebrahim Hassan-Nejad, the deputy minister for livestock products affairs, has also said that 155,000 peo-

ple are working in the apiaries of the country, adding this number of people are working in 94,932 apiaries.

Based on the data released by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Iran is the third-largest producer of honey in the world.

The chairman of the Animal

Science Research Institute has said that the amount of honey production in the country should be increased by three to four kilograms per colony.

Mokhtar Mohajer said, "According to the Seventh National Development Plan (2022-2026), the amount of honey production should be increased by at least

three to four kilograms per colony according to the diversity of plants and the area of pastures that we have in the country".

He announced that 8,300 kilograms of royal jelly, 406 tons of pollen, 2,536 tons of beeswax, 247 tons of propolis, and 3,917 grams of bee venom are produced annually in the country.

Agriculture Ministry allocates \$35m for establishing modern irrigation systems

TEHRAN - Iran's Deputy Agriculture Minister Safdar Niazi said the ministry has allocated 18.5 trillion rials (about \$35 million) to be provided as facilities to farmers across the country for establishing modern irrigation systems, IRNA reported.

According to Niazi, over 50,000 hectares of farmlands are expected to be equipped with modern irrigation systems by the end of the current crop year (late September).

Stating that more than eight million hectares of land in the country can be equipped with modern irrigation systems, the official said that 4.3 million hectares of farmlands have been equipped with such systems so far.

He further noted that under the framework of the seventh National Development Plan (2023-2027) over 1.75 million hectares of farmlands should be equipped with modern irrigations systems by the end of the mentioned plan which brings the total area of established irrigation systems in the country to 2.1 million hectares.

He stated that currently, 40 percent of the farmlands in the country are equipped with modern irrigation systems 10 percent of which is irrigation networks.

"The irrigation efficiency in the country is 50 percent and the productivity percentage is one and a half kilograms of product for every one square meter of water consumption," Niazi explained.

Earlier in May, Niazi said that based on the seventh five-year national development plan every year 350,000 hectares of farmlands across the country will be equipped with modern irrigation systems.

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

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

The official noted that acceleration of the completion of semi-finished projects, the development of new technologies to im-

prove agricultural water productivity, and strengthening the relationship with universities, research institutions, and specialized organizations are among the most important policies and approaches of the Agriculture Ministry.

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

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

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

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

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

Another ethnic cleansing; West Bank after Gaza

Israel launches largest assault on Jenin and Tulkarem in 20 years as it goes ahead with genocide in Gaza

By Wesam Bahrani

TEHRAN - Armed resistance in the northern West Bank has confronted the second day of a broad Israeli invasion, engaging in intense clashes that include detonating explosive devices at various combat points.

Reporters in the West Bank said the Israeli occupation forces (IOF) raided a town east of Tulkarem, where they deployed additional military reinforcements from the city's north.

Reports indicate that the current flashpoint refugee camp of Nur Shams, adjacent to Tulkarem, is being defended by resistance forces against the IOF.

Elsewhere, the West Bank resistance forces detonated explosive devices against the occupation forces that had raided the Far'a camp south of Jenin, where the IOF stormed homes and demolished roads.

The extent of the Israeli war on the occupied West Bank, which is the largest in two decades, shows that the Zionist regime has also turned against the Palestinians in the West Bank to commit war crimes while it is still going ahead with genocidal crimes in the Gaza Strip, which started in October last year.

The Tulkarem municipal emergency services stated that the occupation regime is causing heavy destruction to infrastructure to cut services to the city and its refugee camp.

The IOF has kept a presence around Jenin's hospital and is pushing new military reinforcements toward the city, according to the governor of Jenin, Kamal Abu al-Rub, who said that the occupation regime informed authorities of its intention to raid the hospital.

It has also been reported that the IOF is obstructing the work of medical teams and searching ambulances in front of Jenin's hospital amid the ongoing aggression.

Palestinian media reported that the number of dead Palestinians from the Israeli invasion has risen to 11 in the northern West Bank, with six in Jenin and five in Tubas City.

The Red Crescent stated that its teams managed to evacuate two of the dead from a house in the Far'a camp, while a woman was injured after an IOF attack in the village of Qarawat Bani Zeid in Ramallah.

The Palestinian health ministry confirmed it managed to transfer seven dead Palestinians to Tubas Hospital and two others to Jenin Hospital as a result of the Israeli onslaught since midnight on Tuesday.

The ministry added in a state-



ment on Wednesday that dozens of patients are currently being treated inside Jenin's government, private, and charitable hospitals, warning that any raid on them poses a direct threat to their lives and the lives of medical teams.

The ministry has directed all medical teams in the Jenin governorate to head to the nearest health center to support doctors in what has been described as an emergency situation in the governorate, especially after the IOF began demolishing roads surrounding hospitals in the city.

It also called on the international community and the Red Cross to intervene to protect medical institutions while the IOF obstructs the access of ambulances, noting that this constitutes a gross violation of human rights and international humanitarian law and human rights law.

The occupation forces had blocked roads to two other hospitals nearby, and the headquarters of the Red Crescent.

In the city of Qalqilya, reports emerged of a large-scale IOF arrest campaign. This is while Palestinian news platforms reported the IOF arrested 25 young men during a raid on the town of Arura northwest of Ramallah.

The Tulkarem Brigades announced that its fighters successfully targeted and downed an Israeli "drone" and targeted sniper positions entrenched inside a house in the Nur Shams camp, "bombarding them with bursts of direct fire," resulting in injuries.

Additionally, the brigades detonated a pre-prepared explosive device against an Israeli military bulldozer in the camp, achieving a direct hit.

Another explosive device was detonated under an armored Israeli military bulldozer in the camp's main street, rendering it out of service.

The al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades in Tulkarem have said they are continuing to engage in fierce clashes with the IOF in the Nur Shams camp from several positions, using ma-

chine guns and explosive devices.

There have been almost daily IOF raids in the occupied West Bank. The latest invasions on Tuesday and Wednesday are believed to be amongst the most extensive that the IOF has waged since October 7 last year.

The National and Islamic Forces Committee in Gaza released a statement concerning the ongoing aggression in the northern West Bank, emphasizing that this is an extension of the campaign of extermination and displacement against the Palestinian people and their land.

They affirmed that "the resistance is steadfast and will thwart the occupation's objectives".

The committee mourned the dead who fell due to Israeli gunfire and shelling, urging the Palestinian Authority to "fulfill its duties in protecting the Palestinian people".

It also called upon Palestinian security forces in the West Bank to "initiate action in defense of honor, dignity, and to confront Zionist aggression and settler mobs".

The committee also called on the Palestinian masses in all areas of the West Bank, occupied al-Quds, and the lands occupied in 1948, to "mobilize for an open confrontation with the enemy to defend the land, identity, and support our people in northern West Bank".

In a separate statement, the Gaza-based movement, Hamas, asserted that this aggression "is an attempt to implement the extremist government's plans", stressing that it, alongside the ongoing extermination in Gaza, is a natural result of the global silence over Tel Aviv's blatant violations of all international laws.

In its statement, Hamas called for escalating all forms of resistance and confronting the occupation regime and its settlers "in all our occupied lands", directing the call of the resistance movement to the masses, fighters, and rebellious youth in all areas of the West Bank to declare a general uprising.

Hamas emphasized in its statement that "the current military

campaign of occupation will inevitably break before the steadfastness of our people living in cities, towns, and camps in the West Bank".

Other Gaza-based factions have also called on "everyone who can bear arms to raise them against the Israeli aggression", as well as urging security agencies to engage in defending the Palestinians in the West Bank.

The West Bank-based Fatah movement affirmed that the aggression of the occupation army on Gaza and the West Bank "will not intimidate our people or diminish their will for freedom and independence", pointing out that the ongoing IOF invasions in Jenin, Tulkarem, Tubas, and their camps will not achieve their objectives of displacing the Palestinians.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine stressed that "official Arab betrayal has reached the level of partnership in the comprehensive genocide waged by the occupation against our people, while al-Quds and its Islamic and Christian sanctities are violated, and occupation crimes extend to all West Bank governorates".

The Popular Front added in a statement that the Palestinian Authority is obliged to fulfill its duties in defending the people and halt all security coordination with Tel Aviv.

The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine has also issued a statement stating that what the occupation government and its settlers are committing in the West Bank is done with the complicity of some Western forces led by the United States.

It added that "amidst shameful Arab silence, the occupying enemy is empowered and emboldened".

Later on Wednesday the newly-born West Bank resistance engaged in fierce clashes and carried out "effective operations causing casualties among various units of the occupation forces participating in the "wide-ranging aggression".

The occupation forces acknowledged the intensity of the battles and their losses, the resistance said.

The official spokesperson for the Palestinian presidency said, "This policy of escalation, destruction of cities, killing civilians, arrests, and colonization will not bring security and stability to anyone, and everyone will pay the price for these Israeli follies".

Critics have accused Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas of clinging onto the Oslo Accords, arguing that the policy of diplomacy with Tel Aviv has only seen decades of more land theft, Israeli aggression, and war crimes.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

UNGA Resolution 2758 brooks no challenge and the one-China principle is unshakable

From page 1 ▶ On October 25, 1971, the 26th session of the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 2758 with an overwhelming majority. The resolution resolved once and for all the question of the representation of the whole of China, including Taiwan, in the United Nations as a political, legal and procedural issue. It made clear that there is only one China in the world and that Taiwan is a part of China, not a country. It also made clear that there is only one seat of China in the United Nations, and the Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal representative, precluding "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan".

UNGA Resolution 2758 is based on factual and legal basis. Taiwan has been part of China since ancient times. Before the UNGA Resolution 2758, this is a historical fact and of an international consensus. This is an important political prerequisite for the adoption of the resolution. The 1943 Cairo Declaration and the 1945 Potsdam Proclamation clearly stipulated that Taiwan, a Chinese territory stolen by Japan, shall be restored to China. These documents with international legal effect formed an integral part of the post-WWII international order and also affirmed Taiwan's status as China's inalienable territory from a legal perspective.

The one-China principle embodied in UNGA Resolution 2758 has been widely recognized and applied by the international community. Over the past half a century and more since the adoption of the resolution, UN secretaries-general and their spokespersons, in their Taiwan-related remarks, have clearly stated the UN is guided by UNGA Resolution 2758 and committed to the one-China principle. The official legal opinions of the Office of Legal Affairs of the UN Secretariat made it pretty clear that Taiwan is "an integral part" of China and that "the United Nations considers 'Taiwan' as a province of China with no separate status." There are 183 countries that have established diplomatic relations with China on the basis of the one-China principle, which covers more than 93% of UN member states. This clearly demonstrates that the one-China principle is not only a pre-

vailing international consensus, but also a basic norm of international relations.

The US is a signatory to the Cairo Declaration and the Potsdam Proclamation. In the three China-US joint communiqués, the US clearly states that "the government of the United States of America recognizes China's position that there is only one China and Taiwan is part of China". US leaders have, on multiple occasions, reaffirmed the commitment of not supporting "Taiwan independence", "two Chinas" or "one China, one Taiwan". As a founding member of the UN and a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the US is supposed to take the lead in observing the UNGA resolutions and abiding by international law and basic norms in international relations. However, the US is now publicly questioning and misinterpreting UNGA Resolution 2758. Some in the US claim that UNGA Resolution 2758 "did not make a determination on the status of Taiwan" and "does not preclude Taiwan's meaningful participation in the UN system." This is a lie. They are trying to reopen the closed case that Taiwan is part of China—a matter already settled by the international community once and for all—to deny UNGA Resolution 2758 and the one-China principle. This move of turning backward the wheel of history is not only challenging China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, but also challenging international justice and conscience and the post-WWII international order.

As comprehensive strategic partners, China and Iran firmly support each other on issues of core interests and major concerns. In 1971, China and Iran formally established diplomatic relations on the basis of the one-China principle. China highly appreciates Iran's righteous stance of consistent adherence to the one-China principle. China will work with Iran to jointly safeguard the UNGA Resolution 2758, one-China principle and other basic norms of international relations, and resolutely push back efforts to distort and challenge UNGA Resolution 2758 by the US, making due contributions to the establishment of a just and equitable new international order.

US universities, Meta team up to prevent pro-Palestine protests

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN- US universities and American-based giant tech firm Meta are collaborating to suppress potential protests against Israel's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip as the fall semester begins.

American officials are deeply concerned that pro-Palestine protests once again sweep through US universities and colleges.

Students held huge demonstrations in the 2023-2024 school year across many educational centers in the US to vent their anger at their institutions' cooperation with companies advancing Israel's war in Gaza.

The protest movement was sparked at New York's Columbia University on April 17 when students set up tents on the campus and began rallying in support of the Palestinian people in Gaza.

A day later, police raided the campus and made more than 100 arrests.

Protests began to snowball and spread to more than 100 colleges and universities across the country with students establishing tent encampments calling on their institutions to meet their demands.

But police launched heavy-handed clampdowns; arresting thousands of people, including faculty members.

With the start of the new semester, officials at New York University and Columbia University, which have been at the forefront of anti-war protests, are trying to nip any demonstrations against Israel's onslaught in the bud.

A week ago, NYU's administration warned students that speech critical of Zionism could be classified as antisemitism. This is while students, many of whom Jews, have always rejected accusations that their protests are antisemitic.

Columbia University has also built fences around the areas that the encampment once stood forcing students to pass through security checks.

US universities impose 'police state'

Earlier this month, reports suggested that universities across the US are planning tougher rules to restrict protests when students return from summer vacation.

"It's going to be more of a police state than it was, but I don't think that means no one's going to do anything," said Ben-Menachem, the Columbia graduate student, according to the Guardian.

The student added, "The war is still there ... nothing has changed in Palestine."

Meta hypocrisy

Meta, which owns and operates Facebook, Instagram, Threads, and WhatsApp, among other products and services, is also colluding with US universities to stifle voices of students who are opposed to Israel's brutal war on Gaza.

The tech company has increased pressure on accounts that feature pro-Palestine and anti-Israel content. It stands accused of censoring pro-Palestine and anti-Israel sentiment.

A few days ago, Instagram permanently banned Columbia Students for Justice in Palestine and suspended the account of NYU Palestine Solidarity Committee. The move has caused widespread outrage on social media.

Meta also said in July that it recognizes the word "Zionist" as a "proxy for hate speech".

Condoning crimes

Restrictions imposed by American universities and Meta cast doubt on Western claims of upholding freedom of expression, revealing a willingness to stifle the voices of the voiceless. Besides, they expose a broader pattern of support for Israel despite the regime's carnage in Gaza. According to health officials in Gaza, more than 40,500 Palestinians have been killed in the territory since Israel began its brutal onslaught on October 7.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Americans should acknowledge the catastrophe they have created in Gaza

And change course now

From page 1 ▶ In revenge for the Hamas attack and hostage taking of October 7, Netanyahu vowed to annihilate Hamas, an impossible task as Hamas is a movement for liberation after years of Israeli oppression, an idea that cannot be expunged unless its aspiration is fulfilled. Instead of obliterating Hamas, Israeli forces wanting to minimize their own casualties from close combat have cowardly bombed and bombed, dropping 2,000 and 1,000 pound bombs designed to kill indiscriminately and destroy blocks of buildings.

Israel's carnage of Palestinians has been enabled by the United States. Bombs and every weapon imaginable have been rushed to Israel's war machine. Yes, the U.S. has publicly highlighted its pressure on Israel to minimize civilian deaths while it has stepped up Israel's supply of weapons of massive destruction. The U.S. has given financial aid too. The U.S. has defended Israel in all fora. It has vetoed reso-

lutions that would condemn Israel's atrocities, murderous acts that no human being with eyes, a brain and a dose of honor could justify as self-defense. The United States, a country that professes upholding the rule of law, has undermined lawfulness in a number of ways. It has threatened countries not to initiate or enjoin cases against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and at the International Criminal Court (ICC). Further, the U.S. has even stooped so low as to threaten judges and prosecutors—reminiscent of Mafia tactics that it has abhorred and outlawed at home. No matter how you look at it, the United States is complicit in all that Israel is doing and has done and Washington will ultimately be held accountable.

To ensure the support of Americans, the U.S. government has worked overtime to misinform and deceive its own people. It has said over and over again that it is working tirelessly

ly to minimize civilian deaths and to achieve a ceasefire to free the Israeli hostages, yet it supplies more untargeted massive bombs to Israel and defends Israel behind the scenes. It hunts for the Hamas leader Sinwar and shares intelligence, maintaining that it is not involved in Israel's war. It mentions Israeli hostages in every breath and hardly ever acknowledges the thousands of Palestinians that have been killed, arrested and tortured without charge by Israeli forces (IDF) since October 7 in the West Bank. After all, a hostage is not only those taken by Hamas on October 7 but also a Palestinian incarcerated without charge by the IDF. One is somehow portrayed as acceptable and the other beyond the pale because Hamas is labelled a terrorist organization by the U.S. and its allies whereas the IDF is portrayed as a "humanitarian army."

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

House of 20th-century poet set for restoration and revival



TEHRAN - A house that once belonged to Aref Qazvini, a renowned 20th-century Iranian poet, is set to undergo restoration and repurposing as part of a broader initiative to enhance the region's tourism.

Alireza Khazaeli, Qazvin's tourism chief, on Tuesday announced that the house will eventually serve as a hospitality space after being restored, adding to the province's tourist attractions.

The decision follows recent controversy after images surfaced online suggesting the destruction of the historical property, prompting concerns among the public and cultural heritage advocates.

Khazaeli clarified that the building remains on the national heritage list, despite numerous legal attempts by the owner to deregister the property in recent years.

"As part of the judicial proceedings, and with the approval of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, it was determined that a proposal

for the preservation and repurposing of this historical building should be prepared by the owner," Khazaeli stated. "This proposal was needed to be approved by both regional and national heritage authorities."

According to the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department of Qazvin, the restoration plan was submitted last year and received approval from the provincial and national heritage councils after extensive evaluations.

Khazaeli explained that new construction will take place in parts of the courtyard that lack historical value... and the historically significant parts will be carefully restored and revived. Once completed, the building will function as a hospitality venue within a larger tourism complex.

The underlined that the project is closely monitored by the restoration experts of the Cultural Heritage Department, ensuring the preservation of the site's historical integrity. "We hope that this project will not only preserve this historic site but also create a vibrant space offering services to tourists."

Abolqassem Aref Qazvini (1882-1934) was a distinguished Iranian poet, lyricist, and musician known for his evocative poetry and lyrical compositions that reflect the cultural and social intricacies of his time. The restoration of his house aims to honor his legacy while contributing to the cultural landscape of Qazvin.

Pelas Bafi: a glimpse into traditional weaving artistry



TEHRAN - Pelas Bafi has been practiced for centuries across Iran and in particular within North Khorasan province.

Pelas, a type of woolen kelim carpet, serves as a versatile floor covering designed to protect against the humidity, cold, and heat of the ground.

According to Visit Iran, this ancient craft continues to thrive among the region's rural and nomadic communities, where Pelas is an essential part of daily life and cultural heritage.

Pelas is made by weaving colorful twisted wool yarns into horizontal strips that form the fabric's background. The weaving process starts with setting up the loom by stretching the warps, similar to techniques used in carpet and Kelim making. Colorful wool wefts are then passed through the warps, creating horizontal lines that are distinct to Pelas.

Unlike other woven items like Jajims, where the stripes are vertical, the stripes in Pelas are always horizontal, adding to its unique appearance.

Pelas is used for various purposes, including prayer rugs, bridal tablecloths, and floor coverings. It is especially valued by the nomadic tribes of North Khorasan, who often set up their tents on damp and un-

prepared ground. The thick, woolen fabric of Pelas provides excellent insulation, protecting against the elements and offering a durable, practical solution for covering the floors of their tents and rural homes.

The weaving technique known as "Pich-bafi" is used in North Khorasan, which involves passing the wefts from both the front and back of the warps, giving Pelas an embossed appearance. The weavers, often women from nomadic families, use wool from their own sheep to spin the yarns. They dye the yarns using natural colors, prepare the loom based on the desired size of the product, and weave Pelas along with other items like rugs.

The process of weaving begins with the stretching of yarns onto the loom using the Persian or "Zarb Dari" (cross) style. To prevent the loosening of the warps, clay or a paste made of flour and water is applied to the top and bottom of the loom. This simple yet effective technique ensures the stability of the weave and maintains the integrity of the Pelas even if a warp thread is accidentally cut.

While Pelas Bafi is practiced in other parts of Iran, the distinctive method and designs of North Khorasan make it unique. The weavers' skill and the vibrant, earthy designs of Pelas are a testament to the region's rich cultural heritage. Despite modernization, this traditional craft remains an integral part of the community's lifestyle, preserving an art form that connects the present with the past.

Pelas Bafi not only reflects the creativity and resilience of the weavers but also stands as a symbol of the enduring cultural traditions of North Khorasan, where ancient practices continue to shape everyday life.

Glimpses of World Heritage sites

Los Glaciares National Park

Los Glaciares National Park is located in the Southwest of Santa Cruz Province in the Argentine part of Patagonia. Comprised of a National Park and a National Reserve it has a total surface area of 600,000 hectares.

According to UNESCO, Los Glaciares owes its name to the numerous glaciers covering roughly half of the World Heritage property. Many of these glaciers are fed by the massive South Patagonian Ice Field, the most extensive South American relict of the glaciological processes of the Quaternary Period. In addition, there are impressive glaciers inde-

pendent of the main ice field. The property therefore constitutes a massive freshwater reservoir.

The Upsala, Onelli and Perito Moreno Glaciers calve into the icy and milky waters of the huge Lake Argentino, which is partly included in the property. The most striking sight is the famous Perito Moreno Glacier. This large glacier blocks a narrow channel formed by Lake Argentino thereby raising the water level temporarily. This in turn causes regular thunderous ruptures of the glacier tongue into the lake.

Restoration efforts underway in Kandovan ahead of UN registration anniversary

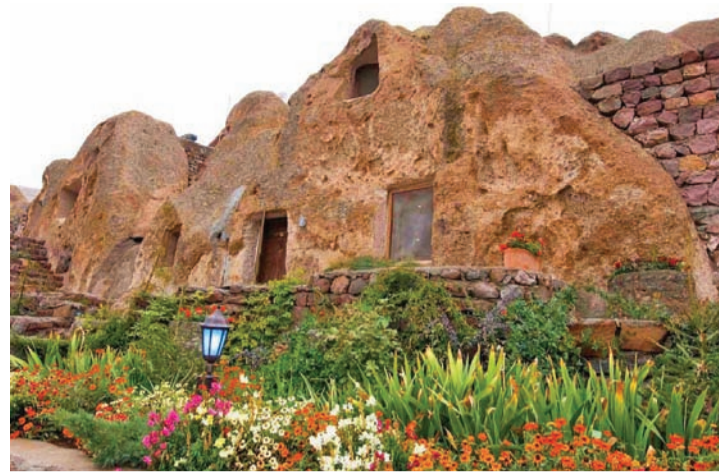
TEHRAN - Restoration work has begun in Kandovan, a historic village known for its unique cone-shaped, stone-carved houses, as part of efforts to eliminate unauthorized architectural interventions and enhance the village's visual harmony.

This initiative marks the first anniversary of Kandovan's inclusion on the UN Tourism list of Best Tourism Villages.

On Wednesday, Vahid Navadad, an official with East Azarbaijan's tourism directorate, announced the commencement of plastering operations in the village, aimed at restoring the historical texture, removing disruptive architectural modifications, and visually unifying the historic site.

"Restoration efforts are being intensified to preserve and enhance the village's unique heritage as we approach its first anniversary of designation by the UN Tourism."

Navadad made the remarks during a coordination meeting



on the village's restoration, saying: "Completing the plastering operations will not only protect the village's structures but also play a crucial role in maintaining visual harmony and preserving Kandovan's architectural identity."

Kandovan is celebrated for its distinctive architecture, featuring cone-shaped stone houses hand-carved into the mountainside. It is one of the few remain-

ing rocky villages in the world where residents still live, making it both a natural wonder and a historical treasure. Its unique blend of natural and traditional architecture continues to attract tourists and highlights the importance of preserving such heritage sites for future generations.

In 1997, the village was inscribed on Iran's Cultural Heritage list. Since then, the villagers

have decided to make a living through tourism and preserve their traditional houses, whereby emigration rates to big cities decreased considerably.

The resemblance of the stone houses to hives also encouraged the local community to introduce honey as a main product. Furthermore, local women decided to collect herbs to sell to visitors and transform a part of their houses into lodgings whereby tourists could experience a truly unique accommodation experience. As a result of their innovative efforts, the villagers' houses have been preserved and the village remains an active presence in the rural tourism sector.

Alongside the village being inscribed in the country's National Heritage List because of its unique natural condition, this has resulted in some challenges relating to construction work where strict rules and regulations exist.

Ancient rock-cut tomb to undergo restoration after years of vandalism

TEHRAN - The Sun Rostam rock-cut tomb, located south of Iran's Kermanshah, is set to undergo restoration after suffering years of vandalism.

The head of Kermanshah's Cultural Heritage Department, Fardin Zarei, announced the project, highlighting the need to preserve this unique and historically significant site, ISNA reported on Wednesday.

Zarei explained that unlike other rock-cut tombs, Sun Rostam (also spelled as Son Rostam or San Rostam) is not carved into a cliff but rather into a gigantic stone, located near a busy road and river, which makes it highly accessible.

"This easy access, however, has also made it a target for vandals. Over the years, the tomb has been defaced with graffiti, including personal messages, political slogans, and commercial advertisements," the official said.

"Unfortunately, despite a previous cleanup effort to remove the graffiti, vandals have returned to cover the tomb with new writings," Zarei noted. He added that treasure hunters have also damaged the tomb, mistakenly be-



lieving that it might contain valuable artifacts, leading them to drill holes into the stone.

Zarei pointed out that the tomb's open entrance has allowed people to enter freely, sometimes lighting fires inside, which has left the interior blackened with soot. When asked why protective barriers have not been installed, Zarei responded that any fencing or doors are quickly stolen.

Despite its challenges, Zarei emphasized that Sun Rostam has the potential to become a tourist attraction in Kermanshah. "We are working to transform Sun Rostam from just a name into a tourist destination," he said. Last year, funding was allocated for landscaping

around the site, and further efforts are underway to restore the tomb's damaged exterior.

The rock-cut tomb, situated 64 kilometers from Kermanshah between the villages of Buzhan and Chenar in the Sar-Firuzabad rural district, was registered as a national monument nearly half a century ago. However, due to a lack of inscriptions or decorative motifs, its exact age remains undetermined, with historians attributing it to various periods including the Median, Achaemenid, Seleucid, Parthian, and even Sassanian eras.

Despite the site's significance, its exposure and lack of protection have made it vulnerable to looting and damage. According to some sources, there have even been reports of smugglers planning to blast the rock in search of hidden treasures.

Looking forward, Zarei expressed hope that, alongside restoration, new facilities will be added to attract more visitors. "Our goal is to not only restore this historical site but also to develop it into a welcoming and accessible destination for tourists," he concluded.

Falak-ol-Aflak's former barracks transformed into museum



TEHRAN - The Sassanid-era Falak-ol-Aflak Fortress in Khorramabad, Lorestan province, is set to undergo assessment by ICOMOS experts for potential inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage list.

The assessment comes as restoration work on its "Sarbazkhaneh" (barracks), part of the fortress complex, has been completed with a budget of over 300 billion rials (\$500,000), converting the structure into a museum.

The announcement coincides with the upcoming visit of ICOMOS evaluators to the site, highlighting the fortress's rich cultural

and historical significance, CHTN reported on Wednesday.

Ali Darabi, the deputy minister of cultural heritage, cut the ribbon on the newly restored museum and assessed the final steps of its transformation into a museum.

The Sarbazkhaneh, dating back to the Pahlavi I era, is a two-story, 2,450-square-meter building characterized by Iranian-European architecture, complete with intricate stone and brick decorations, the report said.

Moreover, the former barracks is a registered national heritage site, listed under registration number 3765.

Currently, the museum within the fortress displays notable artifacts, including a 2200-year-old coffin of a Lurestani man and a 9,000-year-old skull of a man from Delfan, attracting both local and international visitors.

Falak-ol-Aflak Fortress, a prominent eight-towered structure that dominates the city of Khorramabad, is one of the most visited attractions in the region. Known for its

dramatic appearance, particularly when illuminated at night, the fortress offers striking views of its crenelated battlements, making it a centerpiece of the city's cultural landscape.

According to Ata Hasanpour, Lorestan's tourism chief, the fortress and its surrounding areas possess all the attributes needed for UNESCO recognition, interconnected in a way that mirrors the ensemble of Sassanian historical cities already listed as a World Heritage site.

The Sassanid era (224 to 651) is of very high importance in the history of Iran. Under the Sassanids, Persian art and architecture experienced a general renaissance. Architecture often took grandiose proportions, such as the palaces at Ctesiphon, Firuzabad, and Sarvestan, which are amongst the highlights of the ensemble. Crafts such as metalwork and gem engraving grew highly sophisticated, yet scholarship was encouraged by the state. In those years, works from both the East and West were translated into Pahlavi, the language of the Sassanians.

Southern Europe is sick of tourists

Water scarcity, overcrowded streets and rising housing costs are infuriating locals.

Rome, Barcelona and Athens have had it with holidaymakers.

While the Covid-19 pandemic provided a welcome respite to many locals from the hordes of travelers flying in, troublesome tourists are once again getting on their nerves.

So much so, that locals and activists have been hitting the streets in various cities across Spain, Italy, Portugal and Greece, some armed with water guns and stickers telling rowdy visitors to go home.

Protestors say over-tourism drives up housing

prices, accelerates gentrification and makes already-stretched water supplies more scarce. In drought-stricken urban centers like Barcelona, tourists consume considerably more water than the average resident. In parched Sicily, a number of cities have started to turn away tourists due to water scarcity.

Governments, for their part, are less inclined to implement durable measures. For many EU countries, especially those in southern Europe, tourism is a key pillar of their economy: 11.3 percent for Croatia, and between 6 and 8 percent for Portugal, Greece, Spain and Italy, according to an analysis by Allianz.

After the pandemic all but halted tourism for

two years, people eager to travel embarked on so-called "revenge tourism" — reaping back the trips they had missed out on.

In part due to tourism, Spain, Portugal, and Greece — long the laggards among Europe's big economies — outperformed the rest of the EU in 2023. While GDP across the bloc rose at 0.5 percent, the economies of Portugal, Greece and Spain all posted rates above 2 percent.

"What we are seeing in the media is what we started to see even before the pandemic," Sandra Carvão, director of market intelligence, policies and competitiveness at the United Nations tourism agency told POLITICO.

(Source: POLITICO)

Tehran playing host to Royan Intl. Twin Congress

TEHRAN –Royan International Twin Congress, including the 25th Congress on Reproductive Biomedicine, and the 20th Congress on Stem Cell Biology and Technology, kicked off on Wednesday at Shahid Beheshti University, Tehran, and will run till August 30.

The event will also include the 19th Seminar on Nursery and Midwifery.

This year, the Royan International Congress mainly aims to boost the links between researchers and practitioners from all over the world despite the extant challenges. It will cover main topics through highly scientific & extremely innovative online sessions.

The congress revolves around various fields including genetics of infertility, new insight into prediction and diagnosis, animal biotechnology, infection and antiretroviral therapy (ART), and how to improve reproductive outcomes.

A total of 33 international scientists and researchers from the U.S., England, Germany, Austria, Italy, Belgium, Turkey, China, Russia, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland, Qatar and India are scheduled to present lectures.

The event will also include four lectures and 169 articles in the form of poster presentations on topics like stem cell engineering, cancer and immune therapy, and revolutionary eye and vision re-



search.

Moreover, Professor Thomas Braun from Germany, and Nicholas Rivron from Austria, will officially receive the 6th Kazemi Prize - a major scientific award in recognition of the late Saeid Kazemi Ashtiani's efforts in the field of stem cells, on August 28.

Royan Institute

Royan Institute was established in 1991 by the late Dr. Saeid Kazemi Ashtiani and a group of researchers and physicians in the Iran University of Medical Sciences of Academic Center for Education, Culture, and Research (ACECR) as an outpatient surgery center to provide medical services to infertile couples as well as research and training in reproductive sciences.

Reproductive Biomedicine and Stem Cells Biology and Technology has been demonstrated to be one of the most successful experiences of scientific gathering in Iran and West Asia since 2000.

In 2002, the research fields at Royan Institute also extended into stem cell studies. Afterward, the research findings were adjusted for application in regenerative medicine and cell therapy approaches. After succeeding three decades, Royan Institute focuses on increasing the success rate of infertility treatment alongside embryo health, and the level of public health through cell therapy clinical services.

During these twenty years of active involvement in sharing and exchanging scientific knowledge and expertise with renowned scientific institutes and scientists, the Royan Congress has helped to form many shared scientific projects and exchanges.

Infertility treatment

In 2022, the deputy head of the Salamat Health Insurance Organization said a total of 5 trillion rials (around \$8 million) had been spent on infertility treat-

ment and population growth in the first six months of the year which began on March 21.

Iran's universal public health insurance scheme, known as Salamat Health Insurance, covers hospitalization, para-clinical, and outpatient services, including doctor's visits, radiology, lab tests, and medication costs at any public hospital affiliated with the Ministry of Health.

Mehdi Rezaei stated that some 56 government centers, 44 private centers, and about 30 independent and non-independent public centers are contracting parties with Health insurance.

By a decree issued by President Ebrahim Raisi, the "Law on Family and Youth Support" approved by the Majlis (Iranian Parliament) was notified to the Ministry of Health and the Vice Presidency for Women and Family Affairs.

The Guardian Council approved the law on November 17, 2021 to implement a population growth and family support plan for 7 years to change the declining trend of childbearing.

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

Rural cooperatives to inaugurate some 80 projects in government week



TEHRAN –A total of 79 projects will be inaugurated by rural cooperatives during the government week (August 24-30) by allocating 1.43 trillion rials (about \$2.38 million).

Technical and mechanized warehouses, laboratories, and animal feed production lines are among the most important projects, IRNA reported.

Expanding agricultural infrastructure is one of the main programs of the Central Organization of Rural Cooperatives.

Rural development

Villagers and nomads play a vital role in the political, economic, and social developments of Iran. So, October 7 was declared in 2013 as the National Day of Village and Nomads.

Despite their low population, they have a great role in all-out national development.

Although oil, industry, and service sectors hold a significant share of the national econ-

omy, the rural and nomadic economy is considered an inexhaustible source for the nation, compared to exhaustible natural resources.

Living far from pollution and current problems of cities and being less dependent on oil resources, they play a critical role in sustainable development.

Villagers and nomads take the lead in providing food, food security, and healthy food production.

Warehouses, laboratories, and animal feed production lines are among the most important projects.

They have a major role in the tourism and handicraft industry and they are sources of many cultures and traditions in the country playing an important role in ensuring the country's security, especially in borders and remote areas.

Some 25 percent of the country's population lives in villages, producing around 70 percent of food for the domestic market.

Currently, more than 90 percent of agricul-

tural and food products are produced in villages. Some 25 percent of the country's meat products and 35 percent of handicrafts, as well as a major part of organic dairy products, including vegetable oil, milk, curd, and other materials, are produced by nomads.

In fact, the economy of the rural areas is not limited to agriculture; it includes various industries such as handicrafts, creative industries, clothing, processing industries, food, medicinal plants, carpentry, furniture, tourism, ecotourism, fisheries, carpets and rugs, and dried fruits.

Products of villagers and nomads are being presented in an exhibition named "Rusta Abad" (Developed Village), ISNA reported.

The Majlis (the Iranian Parliament) approved a total of 31 trillion rials (nearly \$62 million) for rural development in the budget bill for the previous Iranian calendar year (March 2022-March 2023), IRIB reported.

By allocating this amount of budget, the whole credit of comprehensive development plans will reach 42 trillion rials, Akbar Nikzad, head of the Housing Foundation, said in June 2022.

The comprehensive development plans aim to develop rural areas in line with cultural, economic, and social conditions, as well as housing provision for the rural residents and improving environmental service.

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Iran spends \$477m on refugee education annually

Iran spends about 20 trillion rials (nearly \$477 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) every year on the education of foreign national students residing in the country, head of the international affairs department of the Ministry of Education has said.

Over 558,000 foreign national children are receiving education in Iran completely free of charge, 474,000 of whom are Afghan children, ISNA quoted Gholamreza Karimi as saying on Wednesday.

Karimi said that there are currently about 137,000 undocumented Afghan students in the country, adding that their parents do not have valid residency documents, "but we have provided the conditions for enrolling them in schools."

ایران سالی ۲ هزار میلیارد تومان برای دانش آموزان اتباع خارجی هزینه می کند

ایران هر سال حدود ۲ هزار میلیارد تومان برای ۵۵۸ هزار دانش آموز اتباع خارجی در مدارس سراسر کشور هزینه می کند. به گزارش روز چهارشنبه ایسنا، غلامرضا کریمی رئیس مرکز امور بین الملل و مدارس خارج از کشور وزارت آموزش و پرورش گفت از این تعداد ۴۷۴ هزار نفر آنها اتباع افغانستانی هستند. کریمی با بیان اینکه در حال حاضر ۱۳۷ هزار دانش آموز غیرمجاز در کشور داریم گفت پدر و مادر این افراد مدارک اقامتی معتبر ندارند اما ما شرایط ثبت نام آنها را مدارس فراهم کردیم.

Global challenges require local solutions, intl. cooperation: Tehran city councilor

TEHRAN —The chief of the Tehran City Council, Mehdi Chamran, has announced that global challenges such as climate change, human crises, and economic inequalities require local solutions, as well as enhanced international cooperation.

"In today's fast-paced world, the need to develop sustainable infrastructure, improve the quality of urban life, and foster coordination between public and private institutions is felt more than ever," Mehr news agency quoted Chamran as saying.

He made the remarks in an address to the 6th BRICS International Municipal Forum which took place from August 27 to 28 in Moscow.

Highlighting that the forum provided an exceptional opportunity to analyze and promote the essential role of urban parliaments in the present era, Chamran said, "Today, cities are recognized as the main hubs of growth and change in the modern world, and urban parliaments are at the heart of sustainable development processes".

Cities are responsible for managing natural resources and achieving sustainable development goals by developing and implementing strategic policies and plans, he added.

In this regard, promoting public transportation, optimal waste management, and supporting green initiatives are part of their responsibilities. This role becomes significantly important when facing global challenges such as climate change and environmental crises, Chamran stated.

Urban parliaments help strengthen local democracy and increase transparency by providing proper platforms for active and effective participation of citizens.

These institutions strengthen social responsibility by creating systems to receive people's opinions and suggestions, the official noted.

Public participation in decision-making processes leads to the promotion of social justice and the reduction of inequalities at the local level, he said.

Nevertheless, the existing challenges require synergy and international cooperation, as well, he stressed.

"The current forum helps locate effective solutions for urban problems by exchanging experi-

ences, discussing challenges, and leveraging new ideas. It also strengthens relations between cities and BRICS member states," Chamran stated.

The goal to create a better future for the cities is only achievable through close cooperation, exchange of expertise and experiences, as well as benefiting from each other's achievements.

By fostering international cooperation and exchanging knowledge, urban parliaments can provide effective solutions to address global crises like challenges in the fields of food, water, energy, and security.

"As a member of the BRICS, we always look for ways to be able to address sustainable and comprehensive urban development more effectively," the official further noted.

BRICS International Municipal Forum

BRICS is a platform for intergovernmental cooperation. It was founded in June 2006 as an informal grouping of countries by Brazil, Russia, India, and China. The original name Bric transformed into BRICS, with the addition of South Africa in 2010. On Jan 1, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and UAE became full-fledged members of BRICS.

The first BRICS Summit took place in 2009 in Yekaterinburg, Russia. Since then, BRICS has come a long way from an informal cooperation platform for sharing views on topical issues on the international agenda and has developed a vast and diverse network of cooperation and dialogue mechanisms covering all three pillars of the strategic partnership -- policy and security, economy and finance, cultural and humanitarian exchanges.

The 6th BRICS International Municipal Forum is known as one of the largest platforms for discussing municipal cooperation issues and exchanging experience in the run-up to the BRICS Summit.

The Forum program included more than 70 business events and a major exposition.

Experts discussed the development of trade and investment relations and exchanged experience in the use of digital technologies, artificial intelligence, and green technologies to create a comfortable living environment. The program discussions addressed environmental issues, climate change, and solutions in education, healthcare, culture, and tourism in an effort to enhance the attractiveness of cities, territories, and regions.

Health ministry, UNICEF highlight significance of enhanced cooperation

TEHRAN – In a farewell ceremony held on Wednesday in Tehran for Robin Nandy, the outgoing representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Iran, he underscored the importance of enhancing collaborations.

During the meeting, Nandy lauded the health ministry's support during his mission in Iran and called for the preservation and enhancement of collaborative efforts between UNICEF and the health ministry.

Hassan Farshidi, an official with the health ministry, for his part, commended some important achievements in the health sector, including facilitating the import and procurement of rotavirus, pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV), and the enhancement of cold chain system for the transportation and storage of vaccines.

The official expressed optimism that under the new management of UNICEF, in addition to maintaining present cooperation, more joint programs for improving the health of the society be implemented.

Collaborative efforts in health sector

In May, the ministry of health in cooperation with UNICEF organized two training of trainers (ToT) workshops to help health experts boost their knowledge of media health literacy.

The workshops were held in Tehran in the first week of May.

Some 80 health education and health promotion experts from the ministry of health participated in the workshops.

The participants enhanced their knowledge and exchanged views on media health literacy to tackle misinformation and disinformation in different health-related areas.

Participants in this three-day ToT engaged in fruitful discussions on media health literacy and reviewed lessons learned in the past years, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic as well as charted the way forward.

In March, UNICEF supported the delivery of 564,000 doses of Pneumococcal Conjugate Vac-

cine (PCV) for the prevention of pneumococcal-related infections and deaths among children in Iran.

The measure was adopted in support of the introduction of PCV in the national childhood immunization program in the country, the UNICEF website reported on March 17.

The consignment was the first shipment of PCV to the country, using Iran's financial resources left over from the procurement of COVID-19 vaccines, and delivered in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education of the Islamic Republic of Iran, through UNICEF procurement services.

The shipment arrived from India and landed at Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport on March 17.

In January, UNICEF in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education enhanced the country's vaccine cold chain system by providing walk-in cold rooms and refrigerated vehicles.

According to a press release by the UNICEF website on January 10, procuring, transporting, storing, and delivering vaccines to children in all corners of the world is a complex process that needs a well-functioning cold chain system.

Concerning the fact that the provision of standard immunization services to the community, especially children under five, is a key component of primary health care, in 2020, the Ministry of Health and Medical Education conducted an assessment in cities with more than 200,000 population to check the number of walk-in cold rooms for storing vaccines.

In 2023, considering the existing need for a strong cold chain system to preserve and maintain the quality and potency of vaccines nationwide, 19 medical universities were prioritized for the installation of walk-in cold rooms.

Inadequate walk-in cold rooms, population in each region, and climate conditions, which affect vaccine delivery and storage, are among the important factors in prioritizing an area.



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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Overlook and forgive the weaknesses of the generous people because if they fall down, Allah will help them.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:05 Evening: 18:55 Dawn: 4:06 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:34 (tomorrow)

Academy stands by Emmy nomination of Gaza documentary

In response to calls for disqualification, the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS) said it stands by the Emmy nomination of Palestinian reporter Bisan Owda's eight-minute film about surviving the Israeli attack on Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza in April, where she and thousands of others were sheltering.

The backlash against Owda's film came from the Creative Community for Peace (CCFP), a nonprofit whose stated mission is "to educate about rising antisemitism within the entertainment industry, and to galvanize support against the cultural boycott of Israel," Hyperallergic reported.

The CCFP's open letter called on NATAS to remove the "Outstanding Hard News Feature Story: Short Form" nomination for Owda's film "It's Bisan From Gaza and I'm Still Alive" (2023), circulating through Al Jazeera's social media project AJ+, after alleging that the Gaza-based journalist was affiliated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).

The letter provided photos of what appears to be Owda as a teenager in military garb, speaking at a PFLP event in 2015. Since October 7, Owda has posted interviews, footage, livestreams, photos, and journalistic accounts of Palestinian strife throughout Gaza amid Israeli attacks across various designated humanitarian safe zones.

Signed off by the likes of Debra Messing, Sherry Lansing, David Drayman, and over 100 others in the entertainment sector, CCFP's letter accuses NATAS of "glorifying someone who is a member of an organization that has carried our numerous aircraft hijackings, participated in the Oct. 7 massacre in Israel, carried out waves of bombings on markets and restaurants and murdered innocent women and children."

In response published through Deadline, Adam Sharp, chief executive officer of NATAS, wrote that the Academy was aware of the reports tying Owda to the PFLP as a teenager, but "has been unable to corroborate these reports, nor has it been able, to date, to

surface any evidence of more contemporary or active involvement by Owda with the PFLP organization."

Sharp also clarified that "It's Bisan From Gaza and I'm Still Alive" underwent review by two successive panels of independent judges for its nomination, and that the Academy "found no grounds, to date, upon which to overturn the editorial judgment of the independent journalists who reviewed the material."

Bisan Owda, 25, is a Palestinian journalist, activist, and filmmaker. She is best known for her social media videos documenting her experiences during the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

She won a 2024 Peabody Award in the News category and an Edward R. Murrow Award for News Series for her Al Jazeera Media Network show, "It's Bisan from Gaza and I'm Still Alive."

During the Israel-Hamas war, which began in October 2023, Owda garnered attention for her semi-regular video and livestream updates on social media documenting Palestinian civilians' experiences. She became known for opening her videos with some variation of the phrase, "I'm still alive."

Her videos are mostly in English, though some are in Arabic. Her work has been shared by BBC News, Al Jazeera, ABC News, and Save the Children. In her videos, she has reported on Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) attacks as well as the lack of food, shelter, medical care, and other resources. By May 2024, Owda had accumulated 4.1 million followers.

After the IDF told Gaza residents to evacuate from the North of Gaza in October 2023, Owda and her parents relocated from Beit Hanoun to Al-Shifa Hospital.

Her family's home and her office in Rimal were both bombed, destroying all of Owda's filming equipment. As a result, Owda uses her phone to record video. From Al-Shifa Hospital, Owda reported on the spread of illness among the 50,000 displaced people who lacked adequate shelter, water, and sanitation.

Iranian feature film "For Rana" to get world premiere at Busan International Film Festival

TEHRAN-The Iranian feature film "For Rana" directed by Iman Yazdi will have its world premiere at the 29th Busan International Film Festival, due to be held in South Korea from October 2 to 11.

Screening in the Asian film competition section New Currents, "For Rana" is about the struggles of parents with a daughter needing a heart transplant, both of whom captivate the audience with their emotional narratives.

Well-known actors Hamed Behdad and Pantea Panahiha play in the main roles in this family drama, ISNA reported.

This year's New Currents includes two films each from Japan and South Korea, with others hailing from Myanmar, Kazakhstan, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, and Iran. Among these films, two will be nominated for the New Currents Award.



29th BUSAN International Film Festival 2-11 October 2024

New Currents competition section is reserved for less experienced filmmakers and has acted as an important platform for talent discovery over many

years.

The Busan International Film Festival has grown from Korea's first international film

festival to Korea's largest, and has become an event loved by many filmmakers and audiences not only in Asia but also in the world.



TEHRAN-An exhibition titled "Mirror of Love" featuring works by artists specializing in the traditional Iranian coffeehouse painting style opened on Wednesday at the Azadi Tower's Mirror Hall in Tehran.

Organized by the cultural and artistic complex of Azadi Tower, the exhibition will be open to the public until September 4, ISNA

Traditional Iranian coffeehouse paintings at Azadi Tower

reported.

The exhibition showcases a collection of oil paintings and Ashura-themed canvases. These works offer a unique perspective on the historical and religious events of Ashura, the day Imam Hussein, the third Shia imam, was martyred in 680 CE. as interpreted by artists of the coffeehouse painting style.

Coffeehouse painting, also known as "qahveh-khaneh" painting, is a traditional Iranian art form that flourished in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

It is characterized by its vibrant, narrative-driven compositions that often depict scenes from Persian folklore, religious stories,

and epic poetry. The style is notable for its expressive use of color and its emphasis on storytelling, making it a beloved cultural treasure in Iran.

The "Mirror of Love" exhibition will feature a blend of works from both veteran and emerging artists, providing a comprehensive look at the enduring legacy and contemporary evolution of this distinctive art form.

Visitors will have the opportunity to experience the powerful visual narratives that have captivated generations of Iranians and explore the deep emotional and spiritual resonance of Ashura through the lens of these talented painters.

Tehran Gallery hosting exhibition of Afghan calligraphy, honoring Imam Hossein (AS)

TEHRAN- An exhibition of calligraphy works by Afghan female artist Fereshteh Ahmadi is currently underway at Tehran's Taraneh Baran Gallery.

The exhibit features 22 pieces of illuminated Nastaliq calligraphy, focusing on themes related to Imam Hossein (AS), Ashura, and Arbabeen, ILNA reported.

This exhibition supports the objectives of the Taraneh Baran Gallery, which aims to promote Iranian-Islamic arts on both domestic and international levels, and it represents the first showcase of Afghan female calligraphy in West Asia, the report added.

On the sidelines of the event, Afghan calligraphy master Mohammad Mehdi Mirzai highlighted that despite substantial challenges, Afghan

women are striving for knowledge and art, achieving remarkable levels of success.

He further noted, "Fortunately, the Islamic Republic of Iran has provided a very conducive environment for women to attain knowledge and artistic skills. This has created suitable conditions for Afghan women to flourish their talents in Iran."

Mahbubeh Kazemi, founder and director of the Taraneh Baran Gallery, underscored that supporting Iranian-Islamic arts was a core goal in establishing the gallery.

"Our main objective is to support artists across the Islamic world.

We strive to provide support to active artists in Iranian-Islamic arts both domestically and

internationally, employing various methods, from exhibitions to other forms of assistance."

She also noted that the cultural tapestry of Iran is significantly broader than its geographic borders.

"I am delighted to witness this beautiful exhibition of calligraphy by Afghan women at the Taraneh Baran Gallery, bringing together Iranian and Afghan artists.

I hope this effort yields fruitful results, as supporting artists—especially women—is a key goal for both myself and the Taraneh Baran team. It's essential to recognize that women's issues are a focal point today, particularly in culture and arts, which is paramount among global topics."

Kazemi added, "I am

grateful that the Calligraphers' Association has supported us throughout the challenging years in promoting Iranian-Islamic arts and calligraphy.

I hope that, through our collaboration, we can continue to shine in promoting Iranian-Islamic arts, especially in calligraphy, both nationally and internationally."

Mahtab Sahel, Afghanistan's representative at the ECO Cultural Institute, addressed the status and conditions of Afghan women: "The struggles faced by Afghan women are well-known.

A woman who introduces herself as an artist has certainly overcome numerous challenges to reach this point."

The exhibition will be running until Friday.

Cartoon of Day



Netanyahu's Achievement

Cartoonist: Rucke Souza from Brazil

Sahne-ye Abi to host reading performances of Neil Simon's "Fools"

TEHRAN- Sahne-ye Abi Cultural and Artistic Center in Tehran will be playing host to reading performances of renowned American playwright Neil Simon's comic fable "Fools".

The performances will take place from Wednesday to Friday and will be directed by Mehdi Emdadi.

The cast will include Chakavak Aqajari, Damoun Ebrahimi, Alireza Baqeri, Hamed Tarokh, Fahimeh Shamsi, and Hanieh Kokabi.

The story of the play is set in the small village of Kulyenchikov, Ukraine during the late 19th century.

It follows Leon Steponovich Tolchinsky, a schoolteacher who takes a new job educating Sophia, the daughter of Dr. Zubritsky and his wife, Lenya. Leon soon learns that there is a curse on the village that makes everyone stupid, but complications ensue when Leon falls in love with his pupil.

Simon's masterful writing is on full display as he weaves together historical facts and fiction to create a story that is both informative and laugh-out-loud funny. The play pokes fun at the conventions of traditional Russian culture, as well as the absurdities of the Czarist regime, all while maintaining a lighthearted

and playful tone.

Throughout the play, Simon uses his signature quick wit and clever dialogue to keep the audience laughing. From mistaken identities to wacky misunderstandings, the comedy never stops in "Fools". The play also explores themes of love, family, and cultural identity, adding depth and heart to the humor.

The play, premiered on Broadway at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre in 1981, allegedly was written as the result of an agreement Simon made with his wife during their divorce proceedings. She was promised the profits of his next play, so he attempted to write something that never would last on Broadway.

"Fools" was adapted as a stage musical in 1984 titled "The Curse of Kulyenchikov", with book and music by Peter Melnick, lyrics by Pat Pattison and direction by Paul Warner.

It ran from April to May 1984 at the Old Library at Leverett House, at Harvard University.

With the permission of Simon, the play was adapted into another musical in 1990, this time with the title "Kulyenchikov". It was produced in San Jose, California in November

of that year.

"Fools" has also been staged by several Iranian directors, including Nader Naderpur, Hooman Rahnemoun, Majid Behnamifar, Mohsen Sotudeh, Majid Kashiforushan, Faezeh Rastegar and Satia Nuruzi, at Tehran theaters over the past few years.

Neil Simon was a celebrated American playwright and screenwriter. Known for his sharp wit and keen observations of human relationships, Simon emerged as a leading figure in American theater during the mid-20th century.

His prolific career produced numerous iconic works, including "The Odd Couple," "Brighton Beach Memoirs," and "Biloxi Blues," blending humor with poignant social commentary. Simon's ability to capture the complexities of family dynamics and personal struggles resonated deeply with audiences.

Over his lifetime, he received numerous accolades, including multiple Tony Awards and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama for "Broadway Bound," part of his autobiographical trilogy. His works have been widely adapted into successful films, further amplifying his influence on popular culture.