



What is Tehran's message to the various actors in the Caucasus and Central Asia?

Borderlines: Iran's Red Line

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Iran, Spain to expand cooperation in maritime transport services

TEHRAN - The Shipping Association of Iran has inked a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Advanced Training Course in Transport and Logistics in Barcelona, Spain, to enhance bilateral relations in the field of shipping lines.

Under the agreement, the two sides will cooperate in developing joint training programs, holding digital simulation courses, and providing specialized training content for operators working in the field of port and maritime transport services, IRNA reported.

Increasing the technical know-how, knowledge, and skills of manpower in the maritime transport and logistics sector has been cited as the main goal of this cooperation.

The memorandum of understanding was signed with the aim of taking advantage of the advanced platform of Port Virtual Lab (PVL) and improving the level of knowledge and practical skills in supply chain and international transportation. ► Page 4

Tehran summons UK envoy over new anti-Iran sanctions

TEHRAN- The Iranian Foreign Ministry summoned the UK's chargé d'affaires in Tehran on Tuesday, September 3, to protest new sanctions imposed by the British government on three Iranian individuals and one entity.

Iran's foreign ministry denounced the sanctions as contradicting the UK's stated policy of engagement and cooperation with Iran. It accused the UK of hypocrisy, highlighting the British government's unwavering support for the Israeli regime, which is the primary source of instability in the region.

The ministry's director for Western Europe emphasized that the UK's support for Israeli actions against Palestinians and its attempts to shield Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu contribute significantly to the volatile situation in West Asia.

The UK chargé d'affaires assured Iran that he would convey their message to the government in London.

The UK's Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation added three Iranian individuals and a unit of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Quds Force to its sanctions list on September 2.

"West hypocritical in advocacy for the two-state solution"

On Thursday, The Iranian Embassy in London criticized the West's advocacy for a two-state solution regarding the long-standing Israel-Palestine conflict as hypocritical. ► Page 2

Iran, Iraq set to strengthen security ties during Pezeshkian's upcoming visit to Baghdad

TEHRAN - Significant security cooperation memoranda will be signed during the upcoming visit of Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian to Iraq, according to the Iranian envoy in Baghdad.

In remarks to the media, Mohammad Kazem Al-Sadiq emphasized the importance of this visit, noting, "This trip occurs against the backdrop of regional conditions and developments, particularly concerning the situation in Gaza, as well as our ongoing efforts to strengthen ties in political, cultural, economic, and security fields."

Highlighting Iraq's pivotal role in the region, Al-Sadiq remarked, "Iraq is considered an important country in the region and is a focus of Pezeshkian's foreign policy." He underscored Iraq's potential as a mediator between Tehran and other regional nations, referencing recent diplomatic strides: "Iran has taken significant steps towards restoring relations with Saudi Arabia, and discussions are ongoing regarding strengthening ties with Egypt and Jordan."



Exclusive

Hezbollah Commander Fouad Shukor's daughter talks to the Tehran Times My father always told us to hold firmly to the path of Seyyed Ali Khamenei and Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah

BEIRUT - Khadija Shukor says his father Fouad Shukor "always told us to hold firmly to the path of Seyyed Ali Khamenei and Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah."

Fouad Shukor, the chief Hezbollah commander, was assassinated in an Israeli bombardment on southern Beirut on July 30.

In an interview with the Tehran Times, Khadija also says, "My father had a certain kind of dignity that influenced those around him."

Following is the text of the interview:

How old were you when you found out that your father was a fighter and a commander in Hezbollah? How did you find out, and what was your reaction?

"As a child, my first awareness was the resistance knew its martyrs not when they were alive. So we didn't know the mujahideen among us unless they were martyred. When someone was martyred we knew he was a mujahid. The evidence being that they were martyred amidst their role in the Jihad.

Regarding my father and his friends, who were battlefield companions also, later these friends would be martyred as well. Those days, as a child, I connected the dots. He was with them;

he was their friend and they got martyred.

This was at the beginning. Later, the Islamic Resistance became a symbol, a military force amid the events that we saw and heard about as children. Also, the instructions we received as we grew up. These all made us aware that we are an environment of resistance. Any absence of my father, his friends, if it was for days or months, is for the sake of the resistance.

Overtime, this definitely developed, I knew he was with the resistance, but with an education of awareness. Awareness about the importance of the resistance. At the same time, awareness about the issue of secrecy.

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Suicide by seppuku: Israeli troops disillusioned as Hamas remains invincible

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN - The Israeli army's Gaza-like offensive in the West Bank has left a trail of death and destruction but the regime has failed to achieve its goals.

On August 28, Israel launched its largest military assault on the northern West Bank since 2002 with the aim of eliminating resistance fighters. It has carried out raids in Jenin, Tulkarm, Tubas, and the Al-Fara camp.

More than three dozen Palestinians have been killed during the 10-day offensive and 140 others injured.

Israeli forces began to withdraw from Jenin early on Friday which has been the focus of the regime's brutal offensive since late last month. ► Page 5

Safarzadeh wins silver at 2024 Paralympic Games

PARIS - Hajar Safarzadeh of Iran won a silver medal in the women's 400 meters T12 of the 2024 Paralympic Games on Tuesday.

She crossed the line with a time of 55.39 seconds.

Cuban sprinter Omara Durand Elías seized the gold with 53.59 seconds and the bronze medal went to Ukrainian Oksana Boturchuk with 55.67 seconds.

Athletics at the 2024 Summer Paralympics take place at Stade de France in Paris.

Iran has sent 65 athletes in 10 sports to the Games.



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

TEHRAN PAPERS

China's ambiguous support for Iran's revenge against Israel

In a note, Donya-e-Eqtasad dealt with China's positions regarding Iran's awaiting revenge against Israel and wrote: Shortly after Iran promised vengeance against Israel following the assassination of (Hamas leader) Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said that China will support Iran in defense of its sovereignty, security, and national honor.

But China has neither the desire nor the ability to provide facilities for its comprehensive strategic partner. Iranian officials have said the Gaza ceasefire talks with the leadership of the U.S. may prevent them from retaliating, but the ceasefire talks have so far remained inconclusive and Iran's retaliation may be imminent.

While China emphasizes its public support for Iran's right to "defend its sovereignty," these words do not reflect China's deep concern about the possibility of a wider regional conflict. According to Professor Niu Shinchun, director of the Institute of Middle East Studies at the China Institute of Contemporary International Relations, if the Middle East enters full-scale chaos, China, as the largest trading partner in the region and the main buyer of Middle East oil, will be the biggest victim.

Ettelaat: A delusive Zangezur Corridor should not be created

In a commentary, Ettelaat discussed Russia's recent support for establishing the so-called Zangezur corridor between Azerbaijan proper and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic because such a corridor, going through Armenia's most southern province, severs Iranian access to Armenia and then Europe. The newspaper said: Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has said Moscow favors a quick conclusion of a peace treaty between Baku and Yerevan and removing the obstacle to connection between Nakhchivan and the mainland.

Due to the closure of Zangezur by Armenia, the journey in the region has become very difficult. This position of the Russian foreign minister led to different interpretations by the media and speculation about Moscow's desire to open the Zangezur Corridor. Opening the Zangezur Corridor means closing one of Iran's

gates to Europe.

Most likely, if they want to open this corridor, the Westerners will resist. It will then cause a new center of contention next to the very sensitive borders in northwest Iran. If any country thinks that it can solve its problems outside its borders by creating a new contentious issue, no place in the world will be safe and there will be permanent chaos in the world.

Iran: The failed scenario of the Israelis in the psychological war against Iran

In an analysis, the Iran newspaper discussed the failed scenario of the Israelis in the psychological war against Iran. It wrote: The successful implementation of the recent operations of Hezbollah in Lebanon and the neutralization of the Zionist regime's spy system caused the media to make efforts to distort the reality and put false narratives on their agenda.

Publishing fake interviews of Mojtaba Amani, the Iranian ambassador in Beirut, was one of the Zionists' efforts to reduce the size of this disgraceful defeat. This was the latest Zionists' effort to divert the world's attention from the intelligence failure of the regime, which, of course, failed in this case as well.

Siasat-e-Rooz: The bravery of Iranians has defeated the enemy

Siasat-e-Rooz dedicated its editorial to the bravery of Iranians. The paper said: Today, the enemy has launched a new war called the war of perceptions with the new weapon of the media and virtual space. A war that, on the one hand, seeks to humiliate, devalue, and create an atmosphere of hopelessness and despair among Iranians, and on the other introduces the old colonialists as the saviors of today's humanity to make the Iranians accept a solution for their problems.

The enemy wants to make the spiritual capitals of the Iranian nation worthless, impose their worthlessness on them as a value, and pretend that the solution to the problems is not to confront colonialism but to give in to its domination. However, the great nation of Iran, following the example of the great men of the history of its land, will make this tactic of the enemy a failure.

Iran, Bahrain discuss future diplomatic ties amidst regional challenges



TEHRAN – Foreign ministers of Iran and Bahrain recently held a significant discussion focused on strengthening bilateral ties and fostering political dialogue between the two nations.

The conversation, held over the phone on Thursday night, saw Bahrain's foreign minister, Abdullatif bin Rashid al-Zayani, extend his congratulations to Abbas Araqchi on his appointment as Iran's new foreign minister.

Al-Zayani expressed his hopes for an era of enhanced cooperation, specifically promoting joint political discussions between Tehran and Manama.

Araqchi, in response, thanked the Bahraini foreign minister for his kind words and his participation in the inauguration of Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian.

He emphasized the importance of Iran's relations with neighboring countries, stating that strengthening these ties is a top priority for the new administration. Araqchi highlighted that the Pezeshkian administration will continue to focus on developing positive diplomatic relations within the region.

Both ministers reiterated their commitment to continuing discussions and working together within the framework of existing agreements.

They agreed that maintaining an open line of communication is essential to fostering mutual understanding and cooperation.

This conversation follows an earlier discussion between Bahrain's foreign minister al-Zayani and Iran's acting foreign minister Ali Baqeri Kani, which took place last month.

During that conversation, Bagheri Kani raised concerns over the ongoing aggression by the Israeli regime, particularly in Gaza.

He condemned the regime's attacks on civilians, including children and women, and noted the recent escalation of violence.

Bagheri Kani called for an immediate end to Israeli actions in Gaza and criticized the regime's expansion of hostilities to other areas, including Lebanon and Yemen.

Bagheri Kani also referred to the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, which he claimed was carried out by Israel, describing the silence from international powers on the actions as enabling further instability in the West Asia region.

He reaffirmed Iran's right to take countermeasures, in accordance with international law, against the Israeli regime's aggression.

Al-Zayani echoed Bahrain's stance on the situation in Gaza, calling for an immediate ceasefire and the need to provide humanitarian aid to the region's civilians.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

IRGC commander highlights growing defensive strength of trio islands

TEHRAN – The commander of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps Navy emphasized the strategic importance of the trio islands, which include Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb, and Abu Musa.

Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri, head of IRGC Navy, noted that the defensive capabilities of these islands are continuously advancing, stating: "The defensive strength of these islands is increasing with each passing moment."

In his remarks, Commander Tangsiri stressed that the morale of the IRGC Navy forces deployed to these islands remains high, and their defense capabilities continue to grow. "The operational status of all IRGC Navy personnel on the trio islands is strong, and our defense capabilities on these islands are expanding every moment," he stated, underscoring the ongoing efforts to fortify the region.

Commander Tangsiri also emphasized the broader significance of maintaining security in this area, noting



File picture shows an aerial view of Iran's Abu Musa Island in the Persian Gulf.

that the trio islands are a core operational zone for the IRGC Navy.

He pointed out that safeguarding these islands is one of the IRGC Navy's primary missions and is carried out under the direct guidance of the Commander-in-Chief of Iran's Armed Forces.

During his visit, Commander Tangsiri also touched on the recent phase of equipment integration,

which took place last month. "One of the primary objectives of this visit was to assess the operational status of the newly deployed defense systems, particularly on the islands and around the Strait of Hormuz," he explained. These systems include missile platforms, unmanned aerial vehicles (drones), and other critical defensive technologies, all of which are fully operational, ensuring the security and stability of the region.

In a message directed to neighboring and friendly countries in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, Commander Tangsiri reiterated Iran's stance of promoting peace and unity. "Our message to our neighbors and the Muslim nations is one of friendship, brotherhood, and unity. The presence of foreign powers in this region only serves to create division and discord," he said, reiterating that Iran will stand firm against any attempts by foreign forces to undermine regional stability. Citing a verse from the Quran, he added, "We stand by the divine command: 'And prepare against them whatever forces you can muster.'"

Commander Tangsiri's visits also included an evaluation of some of the latest defense systems integrated into the units stationed on Iran's southern islands. The newly deployed equipment, including strategic cruise missile systems, was put through rigorous tests to ensure readiness in any defensive scenario.

No deviation in Iran's nuclear program, nuclear chief says

TEHRAN – Mohammad Eslami, Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), has firmly denied any deviations in Iran's nuclear program, referencing a recent anti-Iran announcement by the UN nuclear watchdog.

"There are no deviations in Iran's nuclear program," Eslami declared. He went on to accuse the U.S. and its allies of unjustly targeting Iran with false accusations of a secret nuclear program. "For over two decades, the nuclear case has been unjustly targeted against Iran," he stated, "The arrogant system and the Zionists falsely claim a secret, undeclared nuclear program, utilizing this fabrication to pressure Iran's Atomic Energy Agency."

Eslami also criticized the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), stating, "The IAEA's

responsibility is to investigate nuclear activity worldwide, but its arrangement is orchestrated by the arrogant system."

Regarding the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the Iran nuclear deal, Eslami said that Iran fulfilled its commitments. "Iran and the P5+1 participated in this agreement," he explained. "Iran agreed to limit enriched uranium capacity and place it under strict IAEA supervision. It was decided that these restrictions would be applied at a specific time, under double IAEA supervision, effectively closing the case of alleged locations and programs, while also terminating sanctions."

However, Eslami highlighted the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA under former President Donald Trump as the root of the

current impasse. "Iran signed this document and agreements were reached," he acknowledged, "but after a period, the U.S. withdrew from the agreement."

He emphasized that Iran's progress under the JCPOA was halted due to U.S. actions. "The IAEA announced no deviations in Iran's nuclear program, but this progress was halted when the U.S. withdrew from the JCPOA, coinciding with the imposition of an economic war against Iran," Eslami said.

Eslami also asserted Iran's commitment to its nuclear obligations. "The U.S. proclaimed that Iran would not witness the 40th anniversary of the revolution's victory, but Iran remained faithful to its commitments," he stated. "We have witnessed Iran's strength in this regard."

Tehran summons UK envoy over new anti-Iran sanctions

From page 1 ▶ The embassy's statement came on Thursday, shortly after the Israeli Prime Minister addressed foreign media in occupied al-Quds concerning the Gaza war. During his remarks, Benjamin Netanyahu displayed a map that seemingly omitted the occupied West Bank.

The Iranian diplomatic mission stated on its official X account, "The map presented by Netanyahu to foreign media completely excludes the West Bank. Yet, many continue to hypocritically advocate for a two-state solution. A Palestinian government on what territory?"

The two-state solution is a suggested approach to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which envisions the establishment of two independent states: one for Israel and another for Palestine.

Israeli officials, who have grown more hawkish and aggressive

over the years, have made it clear in recent months that they will not allow a Palestinian state to be established. Despite that, Western states say they are working to make the two-state solution happen while continuing to arm Israelis to kill Palestinians and occupy more lands.

Iran sounds alarm over potential terrorist access to chemical weapons



TEHRAN– Iran's Permanent Representative to the United Nations has expressed grave concern about the threat posed by terrorist organizations seeking to obtain chemical weapons.

Amir Saied Iravani underscored the pressing necessity for enhanced international collaboration to address this danger to global peace and security.

He made the remarks during a United Nations Security Council meeting focused on "The situation in the Middle East: (Syria – Chemical)" held in New York on September 5.

Tehran, Belgrade vow closer cooperation in high-ranking meeting

TEHRAN– Iranian Ambassador to Serbia, Rashid Hassanpour, recently engaged in discussions with the Serbian President regarding a range of bilateral, regional, and international matters.

As reported by IRNA, this meeting follows a recent phone call in which President Aleksandar Vucic congratulated Iran's newly elected president, Masoud Pezeshkian, on his electoral success.

During that conversation, Vucic noted the significant growth in relations between Iran and Serbia under the late President Ebrahim Raisi and expressed optimism that this positive trajectory would persist with Pezeshkian's presidency.

The Serbian President underscored the necessity of strengthening collaboration across various sectors. In turn,

Hassanpour, who previously served as the head of the Iran-Serbia Parliamentary Friendship Group, conveyed his deep understanding of Serbia and expressed his aspirations for enhanced mutual cooperation to realize the full potential of the partnership between the two countries.

Iran and Serbia have had diplomatic relations for many years, and have enjoyed relatively

between the experts of the Syrian National Authority and the Declaration Assessment Team after September 10, according to dates that suit both parties.

As such, the Syrian National Authority agreed to extend the Tripartite Agreement – between the Syrian Arab Republic, the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW, and the United Nations Office for Project Services – for an additional six months, to facilitate the tasks and activities of the OPCW in Syria.

We share this view that the OPCW must be able to perform its duties in an impartial, professional, and objective manner to establish facts and develop evidence-based conclusions.

It is in the interest of the Convention, the OPCW, the rule of law, and the maintenance of international peace and security.

We reiterate our full support for the Chemical Weapons Convention and the promotion of its authority.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

friendly relations despite their different political systems. The two countries have cooperated in various fields, including trade, energy, education, and culture.

In recent years, there has been a push from both sides to strengthen ties, with Iranian and Serbian officials meeting regularly to discuss cooperation in various areas.

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – After 11 months of war and unrest in Gaza, a new conflict might be brewing in the region. Ilham Aliyev has doubled down on his efforts to establish a corridor to connect Nakhchivan to mainland Azerbaijan even if it leads to another military confrontation between the two old rivals, as stated by the president himself.

The proposed "Zangezur" corridor, as dubbed by Azeri and Turkish officials, would slice through Armenia's historic Syunik province, a region that has shared a border with Iran for centuries. Iran has repeatedly reiterated its opposition to the proposed corridor, emphasizing its commitment to preserve and protect its historic borders and the geopolitical stability in the region.

Tehran voiced its opposition once again on Thursday, with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi stating that any endangerment to Iran's neighbors' territorial integrity and its own borders is a "redline."

"Peace, security, and regional stability are not just a priority but one of the pillars of our national security," Araqchi warned on X.

The top diplomat's remarks came in response to recent statements by his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov, who threw its weight behind Baku during a visit to Azerbaijan and condemned Armenia for "sabotaging" attempts to open the Zangezur, which he claimed Yerevan had already agreed to. The last agreement signed



between Armenia and Azerbaijan after the Nagorno-Karabakh war in 2020, makes no mention of such a corridor.

Lavrov's remarks also drew criticism from other high-ranking and influential Iranian figures. Mohsen Rezaei, the former chief of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) and the current secretary of the Expediency Council, said: "The behavior of Russian statesman was not acceptable and in clear contradiction with their declaration of friendship with Iran; these ambiguities should be resolved." In Armenia, Iran's ambassador told reporters on Friday that "the dreams that some have about Armenia under different names, including the so-called corridor, will never come true."

Mehdi Sobhani suggested that even if a transit route were to be created to connect Nakhchivan to Baku, it would need to be under the

control of Armenia. "The Armenian government has clearly stated this itself.

We support the idea that all controls and oversight should be under the sovereignty of Armenia," the envoy said, adding, "We are no longer in the 19th century; we are in the 21st century. Countries have independence and sovereignty."

Baku and Ankara, Azerbaijan's main patron in its wars against Armenia, have expressed a desire for the proposed corridor to be under either their joint control or the control of Moscow.

Although Azerbaijan has expressed its intent to claim Armenian territory and create transit routes for at least four years, Lavrov's statement to Russian media marks the first instance in which Moscow has clearly articulated its stance on Zangezur. The top diplomat's public backing of the plan surprised many observers,

who did not anticipate Russia would overlook Iran's position on an issue it has repeatedly designated as a "redline."

Tehran and Moscow have been on the course to strengthen ties in the past years, with many Western media outlets expressing concern that the two are becoming each other's "strategic allies".

"For four years, Russia remained ambiguous on Azerbaijan's proposed corridor. However, with the war in Ukraine and the occupation of its Western territories, Russia finds itself in a precarious position and is now seeking to appease Azerbaijan, likely by supporting its corridor plan, which could provide a vital energy export route to Europe," Hossein Salar Seyfodini, a researcher and expert on the South Caucasus region, told the Tehran Times.

Seyfodini warned that the so-called Zangezur corridor might also give Israel, a close ally of Azerbaijan, a strategic advantage by enabling it to "encircle" Iran and exploit vulnerabilities in its borders. He, however, said it is very unlikely that the proposed corridor would be established in the face of Iran's strong opposition.

"In the past few years, various Iranian officials, including the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, have made it clear that Tehran will not allow changes to its borders.

I think Iranians will resist Zangezur all the way even if that means they need to intervene militarily."

Pakistan-Iran defense cooperation: navigating regional tensions and non-kinetic threats



By Maryam Noureen

RAWALPINDI – Pakistan's Defense Day on September 6 serves as a symbolic reminder of the nation's resilience and growing defense capabilities. It marks a day when Pakistan not only celebrates its military achievements but also reflects on its role in fostering regional stability.

In recent years, Pakistan has found itself at the crossroads of major regional transformations, with a focus on fostering cooperation with neighboring countries. Among these, Pakistan-Iran defense cooperation has become increasingly significant, particularly as both nations face common security threats such as non-state actors, cyber terrorism, and the ever-evolving dynamics of West Asia.

The recent exchange of fire between Pakistani and Iranian border forces is a stark reminder of the challenges both countries face along their shared border. It also reminds us how non-state actors can aggravate war between two states with unforeseen consequences. However, these incidents also underscore the importance of deepening defense cooperation to address

security concerns more effectively by using military diplomacy and respecting each other's sovereignty.

The Pakistan-Iran border, stretching over 900 kilometers, has long been a zone of concern for both countries. The region is marked by complex terrain and porous borders, making it susceptible to the activities of non-state actors, drug traffickers, and militant groups. Non-state actors pose a significant threat to the stability of both Pakistan and Iran. These actors, including separatist groups, militant factions, and drug traffickers, often operate in the border regions, taking advantage of the difficult terrain and weak governance structures.

The recent skirmishes between border forces underscore the fragility of the situation. Despite the tensions, both nations have repeatedly emphasized the need for cooperation to secure the border and prevent non-state actors from exploiting it. By strengthening defense cooperation, Pakistan and Iran can jointly tackle the threats posed by these groups, enhancing border security and fostering greater regional stability.

Non-state actors are not the only concern for both nations. The rise of cyber terrorism and non-kinetic warfare poses an evolving challenge that transcends physical borders. In the age of digital connectivity, cyber threats have become increasingly sophisticated, with non-state actors and state-sponsored entities targeting critical infrastructure, government institutions, and military capabilities. Pakistan and Iran, having dealt with various non-kinetic threats in the past, have developed a level of expertise that

can be shared with Iran.

Pakistan's defense capabilities, particularly its cyber defense infrastructure, have grown significantly in recent years. Pakistan has placed a strong emphasis on building cyber defense units, focusing on both defensive capabilities. The country's experience in countering non-kinetic threats, such as information warfare, cyber espionage, and propaganda campaigns, makes it well-positioned to deal with such threats. Similarly, Iran has fought a long war in the non-kinetic domain without any external help. This has allowed Iran to develop indigenous capabilities to fight any cyber or non-traditional threat. Both sides need to share experience and collaborate to deal with non-traditional threats.

The regional dynamics of West Asia are undergoing significant shifts, particularly in the aftermath of the ongoing Gaza conflict. The conflict has not only exacerbated tensions between Israel and Palestine but has also drawn in various regional powers, including Iran. The geopolitical landscape of West Asia is becoming increasingly complex, with rivalries intensifying and alliances shifting. Amidst these changing dynamics, Pakistan and Iran find themselves facing common challenges. Both nations have a vested interest in maintaining stability in the region and preventing the escalation of conflicts that could have far-reaching consequences.

The changing regional dynamics and growing threats demand deepening defense ties between Iran and Pakistan. Pakistan's defense capabilities have evolved significantly over the years.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran rejects U.S. claims of election interference, calls accusations 'groundless'

TEHRAN – Iran has strongly dismissed recent accusations from the U.S. administration, which alleged that Tehran is attempting to interfere in the upcoming 2024 US presidential election.

Iran's foreign ministry spokesperson, Nasser Kanaani, responded to the U.S. accusations, categorically rejecting them as part of a larger pattern of political maneuvering within the United States. "Once again, we consider these allegations to be hackneyed, baseless, and designed to serve domestic political purposes in the US," Kanaani said in a statement on Friday.

He went on to criticize the U.S. for deflecting attention from its internal political and social challenges by blaming external

forces.

Kanaani further argued that the United States, which has a well-documented history of interfering in the internal affairs of other nations, was attempting to distract from its own domestic crises by casting blame elsewhere. "The U.S. government, which leads illegal interference in the internal affairs of independent nations and has a long record of destructive measures, cannot escape accountability for its own problems by making accusations against others," he said. He accused Washington of trying to cover up its history of extrajudicial actions and intervention in other countries' internal affairs.

These accusations follow remarks from U.S. intelligence

agencies, including the FBI, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), which jointly alleged last month that Iran was conducting cyber and influence operations aimed at targeting political campaigns and the broader American public.

This year's presidential race, set for November, is expected to see a contest between former President Donald Trump and Democratic candidate Kamala Harris, with polls currently showing Harris holding a slight edge.

Iran condemns U.S. seizure of Venezuelan president's plane

In another statement published on Friday, Kanaani strongly criticized the United States for seizing a plane

belonging to Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, calling the move "unacceptable" and a clear violation of international law.

The plane, a Dassault Falcon 900EX, was seized by US authorities after being flown from the Dominican Republic to Florida. The US Justice Department claimed the aircraft was purchased in violation of American sanctions imposed on Venezuela.

Kanaani denounced the U.S. action as a unilateral and coercive move that breaches international legal norms. "This act by the United States contradicts international law and promotes chaos, posing a risk to aviation safety and security," Kanaani stated.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

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Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

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SPORTS

Iran edge Kyrgyzstan in 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifier

TEHRAN – Iran made a winning start to their Group A campaign in the AFC Asian Qualifiers – Road to 26 on Thursday as Amir Ghalenoei's side handed Kyrgyzstan a 1-0 defeat at Foolad Shahr Stadium.

Mehdi Taremi hit the only goal of the game 11 minutes before the end of the first half.

Team Melli will have to play the UAE in Group A on Sept. 10 at the Hazza bin Zayed Stadium in Al Ain. The third round of AFC matches for the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualification will be played from Sept. 5, 2024 to June 10, 2025.

Banitaba collects silver at 2024 Paralympics judo

PARIS – Iranian judo athlete Meysam Banitaba won a silver medal in the 2024 Paralympic Games on Thursday.

Algerian Abdelkader Bouamer was able to earn a waza-ari win over Banitaba in the final match of the Men's -60kg Judo competition.

Banitaba had defeated judo athletes from China and India on his way to the final match.

The judo competition takes place in the Champ-de-Mars Arena in Paris.

Roberto Piazza appointed Iran volleyball coach till 2028

TEHRAN – Roberto Piazza took charge of Iran national volleyball team until 2028 Olympic Games to be held in Los Angeles, the U.S. Piazza, 56, leads Power Volley Milano and will officially start his work from May 2025.

His main mission is to reach Team Melli to 2028 Olympic Games. Iran failed to book their place in the 2024 Olympic Games under leadership of Brazilian coach Mauricio Motta Paes.

Piazza's compatriot Tomaso Totolo has been named as Iran assistant coach.

Iran goalball come fifth: 2024 Paralympics

PARIS – Iran's men's goalball team defeated the U.S. 4-3 to finish in fifth place in the 2024 Paralympic Games on Tuesday.

The Persians had defeated France 12-8 in their opening Pool A match and were held to a 7-7 draw by Brazil and suffered a 14-7 loss against the US. Iran also lost to Ukraine 6-3 and failed to qualify for the semifinals.

Goalball at the 2024 Summer Paralympics takes place at the Stade Pierre de Coubertin (Pierre de Coubertin Stadium) in Paris, France.

Arab Ameri wins bronze in archery: 2024 Paralympics

PARIS – Iranian archer Mohmmadreza Arab Ameri seized a bronze medal in the 2024 Paralympic Games on Wednesday.

He finished in third place in the Men's Individual Recurve after beating his Australian opponent Smith Kenton 6-0.

His countryman Gholamreza Rahimi was defeated against Indonesian archer Setiawan 6-4 in the 1/16 round.

Harvinder Singh of India won the gold medal, beating Poland's Lukasz Cizek 6-0.

AFC Women's Champions League: Bam Khatoon advance in style

TEHRAN – Iran's Bam Khatoon booked their place in the group stage of the AFC Women's Champions League 2024/25 after defeating Kitchee of Hong Kong, China 2-0 in their Preliminary Stage Group D tie at the Changlimithang National Stadium on Saturday.

Bam Khatoon finished with a perfect record, having beaten Bhutan's Royal Thimphu College FC 2-1 on Matchday One and will join Australia's Melbourne City, Kaya-Iloilo of the Philippines and Thailand's College of Asian Scholars in Group B of the inaugural edition of the tournament.

Bam Khatoon had their first look on goal in the third minute with Danielle Voss forcing Sara Didar's headed attempt from inside the box just wide, before Zahra Ghanbari capitalized on a stray pass a minute later only to finish with a tame grounded effort.

Bam Kharoon should have added a third but Amineh mistimed her header off a corner in the 91st minute but it didn't matter as the Iranian side took the points and their place in the group stage.

Para shooter Javanmardi announces retirement

PARIS – Four-time Paralympic Games gold medalist Sareh Javanmardi announced her retirement from the sport on Wednesday.

Javanmardi, the Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020 champion, retained the P2 –women's 10m air pistol SH1 title for the third successive Games putting up a pillar to post victory in Paris.

She had started her brilliant career at the London 2012 Paralympic Games, winning a bronze medal in P2.

Javanmardi, known as queen of pistol, said she brought an end to her career with happiness due to winning gold medal in 2024 Paralympic Games.

Iran into FIBA U18 Asia Cup 2024 quarterfinals

TEHRAN – Iran showed Chinese Taipei the door, 86-73, to qualify for the FIBA U18 Asia Cup 2024 Quarter-Finals, Friday at the Prince Hamza Hall.

The young Team Melli bucked a tepid start before pouring it in the third quarter, but still needed to fend off a tough stand by their counterparts in the endgame to punch their ticket to the next round – and forge a rematch with a fellow contender.

Iran set up a duel with New Zealand in another meeting between the two countries. The also met in the Quarters in 2018, where the Junior Tall Blacks went all the way to the Final before settling for a runner-up finish to rivals Australia.

Mahdi Heydari finished with 20 points, 12 rebounds, and 6 assists for an efficiency of 28 as he bannered the victors' balanced attack in the triumph.

Sina Mohammadi supplied 15 points. Amirmahyar Keramati had 14 points, 4 rebounds, 6 assists, and 3 steals, while Radin Alizadeh and Pedram Fallah added 13 and 12 points, respectively, as four of the five starters finished in twin digits.

Leading Chinese Taipei, on the other hand, was Liu Geng-Hao with 23 points in the loss. Huang Han-Sheng was his lone support with 17 points.

Iran, Spain to expand cooperation in maritime transport services

From page 1 ► PVL is a digital and innovative training platform in the field of maritime, port, and international transport logistics and allows users to gain practical experiences of the real operations in the supply chain through interactive simulations and strengthen their skills in facing routine challenges of this field.

Considering the vital role of the maritime transport industry in international trade, this cooperation can significantly improve the quality of training and skills of the special-

ized workforce in this sector.

The use of advanced simulation and digital learning technologies will prepare participants to face real challenges in maritime transport and port services and help develop more efficient human resources.

This memorandum can be the starting point for further cooperation between Iran and Europe and help the sustainable growth and development of Iran's maritime transport industry.

OPEC chief praises Iran's former oil minister



TEHRAN – The secretary general of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) has thanked Iran's former Oil Minister Javad Oji for his positive contribution to the organization, Tasnim News Agency reported.

In a message to Oji, Haitham al-Ghais said: "I have received the news of the change in the oil ministry of your honorable country, in recognition of your valuable services to the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, on my behalf and on behalf of this organization and the staff of the OPEC secretariat, I express my gratitude and appreciation."

According to Shana, Haitham al-Ghais sent a letter to the oil and energy ministers of 12 OPEC member countries calling them to support the celebration of the 64th anniversary of the establishment of the Organization.

"[The organization] has an instrumental role to play for decades to come on the path

towards an inclusive energy transition for our global energy future," he said.

As we reach a significant milestone in the history of our organization, it is with immense pride and gratitude that we celebrate our 64th Anniversary of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting on 14 September.

This momentous occasion offers us a unique opportunity to reflect on our journey between 10 and 14 September 1960, OPEC's five Founding Fathers descended on the Al-Shaab Hall in Baghdad, Iraq, to establish the Organization.

Through their visionary leadership and undisputed commitment to dialogue and cooperation, the esteemed Member Countries have created an organization that today represents a key pillar in the international energy community.

Working towards the noble goal of a balanced and stable global oil market in the interest of producers, consumers, and investors, through the decades, we have grown, adapted, and thrived, emerging as a leading entity in the Energy Industry.

Elsewhere in the letter we read: It is evident more than ever that OPEC has an instrumental role to play for decades to come on the path towards an inclusive energy transition for our global energy future.

Gasoline consumption in Iran hits new record high

TEHRAN – Increasing inter-city trips in the last month of summer in Iran have sent gasoline and gasoil consumption to new highs, according to the head of the National Iranian Oil Products Distribution Company (NIOPDC).

Keramat Veis-Karami said that since the beginning of Shahrivar, the last month of summer in Iran, on 22 August, gasoline consumption has reached 132 million liters per day, up by eight percent against the similar period last year when daily consumption of the product stood at 122 million liters.

He further said that since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year of 1403, on 20 March, average daily gasoline consumption has hit 123 million liters, up by seven percent compared to the corresponding period last year, Shana reported.

On Saturday, 31 August, gasoline consumption reached new high of 142 million liters per day while a day earlier its consumption stood at 138 million liters which was mainly due to the summer holidays and the growing number of travelers who hit the roads.

According to the official, since the begin-

ning of Shahrivar, 22 August, daily gasoil consumption has reached 65 million liters on average and sometimes the transportation sector's gasoil consumption has risen by 14 percent which should be managed because the sector's fuel consumption has gone up by 10 percent when compared with last year figures.

"In cooperation with other public and governmental bodies especially road transportation officials, we should move in a way that gasoil and diesel allocation to the trucks carrying cargoes in intra-city and inter-city roads be based on the actual distance they travel," the NIOPDC head told Shana.

He also said that the increasing number of vehicles in the country, rising summer vacation trips, using air conditioners by cars in warm weather, and worn-out vehicles are several reasons behind rising gasoline consumption.

It's noteworthy that cheap prices of gasoline and gasoil in Iran also tempt fuel smuggling. Turkey, Pakistan, and Afghanistan are among the main destinations where smuggling fuel to them is lucrative.

How Oman plays a role in Iran's plan to become an LNG superpower

By Simon Watkins for Oilprice.com

Liquefied natural gas (LNG) has become the world's most sought-after emergency energy source following Russia's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022. This is because it is readily available in the spot markets and can be moved quickly to anywhere required, unlike gas or oil sent through pipelines.

Unlike pipelined energy as well, the movement of LNG does not require the build-out of a vast acreage of pipelines across varying terrains and the associated heavy infrastructure that supports it.

Iran is still largest gas producer in West Asia, having tripled production over the past decade to around 1 billion cubic meters (bcm/d). It also holds the second-largest gas reserves on the planet after Russia, at about 34 trillion cubic meters (tcm). It is little wonder that the Islamic Republic has long planned to become a global LNG superpower through a variety of methods, including one that involves longstanding ally Oman.

Iran's plan to use Oman in its LNG plans was part of the broader cooperation deal made between Oman and

Iran in 2013, extended in scope in 2014, and fully ratified in August 2015. It was centered on the Sultanate's importing at least 10 billion cubic meters of natural gas per year (bcm/y) from Iran for 25 years. The deal was to have begun in 2017, valued at roughly \$60 billion at that time. The target was then changed to 43 bcm/y to be imported for 15 years, and then finally altered to at least 28 bcm/y for a minimum period of 15 years.

According to a statement at the signing of the 2014 deal from the then-managing director of the National Iranian Gas Export Company (NIGEC),

Indonesia's Independence Day celebrated in Tehran

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- The Indonesian Embassy in Iran celebrated the 79th anniversary of the country's Independence Day at the place of Parsian Azadi Hotel in Tehran on Thursday evening (September 5).

The event was attended by a number of high-ranking officials and diplomats, including Ali-Asghar Mohammadi from Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Addressing the ceremony, Indonesian Ambassador to Tehran Ronny Prasetyo Yuliantoro delivered a speech, the text of which comes as follows:

It is an immense pleasure that we gather here this evening to celebrate the 79th anniversary of Indonesia's Independence Day.

This Independence Day has always been a special day for us, Indonesians, which we celebrate annually and joyously. This celebration not only commemorates Indonesia's hard-fought independence but also an opportunity of us to reflect upon Indonesia's remarkable journey of achievements over the past 79 years.

There has been many obstacles and challenges that Indonesia has overcome to reach to this point, where we made significant progress in maintaining political and economic stability, eradicating poverty, building infrastructure and stable business landscape, and facilitating investment.

Indonesia's economic growth has always been maintained at around 5.0%, higher than the global average growth of 3.4%.

This year, our 79th Anniversary Celebration theme is "Nusantara Baru Indonesia Maju", which implies to Indonesia's new capital to advancing Indonesia.

This theme directly underlined the relocation of Indonesia's capital from Jakarta to Nusantara. The capital relocation is a strategic step taken by



Indonesian Ambassador to Tehran Ronny Prasetyo Yuliantoro

Indonesia to balance regional development and economic equality throughout the country.

The relocation to new capital, Nusantara, is also one of the fundamental steps for Indonesia in order to achieve success of the Vision of Golden Indonesia 2045, which implies a future view of Indonesia achieving the status of a developed and prosperous country 100 years after its independence.

With the country's strength opportunities, including the estimated population of 309 million people, economic growth projections of 5 to 6 percent, GDP of 9 point 1 trillion US dollar, and with per capita income to reach more than 25 thousand US dollar in the next 22 years, we are optimistic that Indonesia will become the world's fourth-largest economy by its centenary in 2045.

Please allow me to extend my sincere congratulations to the Government and the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the successful election of the new President and the formation of the new cabinet under His Excellency Dr. Masoud Puzeshkian.

Similar to Iran, Indonesia will also have a new president and cabinet this year. To this note, we are hopeful that Indonesia and Iran will further boost bilateral cooperation espe-

cially in the fields of trade, health, science and technology.

Over the years, Indonesia and Iran have shared deep-rooted historical and cultural ties that have evolved into a dynamic partnership encompassing various sectors such as trade, culture, education, and people-to-people exchanges.

As a foundation for stronger trade cooperation between Indonesia and Iran, the Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) has been signed by both countries. Currently, the PTA is in the final process of ratification by both Iran and Indonesia.

Health sector is also one of the cooperation priorities between Indonesia and Iran. Both countries have signed several agreements in the health sector, such as:

a. MoU Pilot Project for Construction of a Robotic Telesurgery Center at four Indonesian General Hospitals

b. MoU Pilot Project on Telemedicine System which has been running in four Provinces in Indonesia

c. In the field of higher education, there are four MoUs on Sister University Collaboration that have been signed between Health Polytechnics in Indonesia and Tehran University of Medical Science (TUMS)

Government-to-government cooperation remains an essential

component of our bilateral relationship. We have actively engaged in diplomatic discussions through government and parliamentary officials visits to address various challenges and opportunities based on mutual respect and understanding.

In this regard, I am confident that Indonesia and Iran bilateral relationship will further strengthen for many years to come.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Iranian government and people... for their warm hospitality and support extended to the Indonesian community here in Tehran and in many cities in Iran.

'Iran, Indonesia hoped to witness a new chapter in deepening ties'

Addressing the same event, Ali-Asghar Mohammadi said: "I hope that during the tenure of the new governments in Iran and Indonesia, we will witness opening a new chapter of expanding and deepening the relationship between the two great countries."

He also stated:

I'm pleased to say that relations between our two countries have always been marked with friendship, cooperation, respect and mutual understanding.

Our engagement in Indonesia as one of the most influential Islamic countries is beyond bilateral ties, since we both believe in multilateralism in international relations, and I'm honored to state that the two major powers in the South East Asia and West Asia have been successful to achieve their common goals in this regard.

I would like to reiterate that Islamic Republic of Iran is willing to maximize its cooperation with Indonesia in political, economic, trade, energy, scientific and technological, as well as cultural fields at the bilateral level and even more in regional and international levels. Photo:

ICCIMA to dispatch trade delegation to Tashkent in late September



TEHRAN – Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) is scheduled to dispatch a trade delegation to Uzbekistan's capital on September 19, the ICCIMA portal reported.

The delegation will be headed by ICCIMA Head Samad Hassanzadeh upon an invitation by Uzbekistan's embassy in Tehran.

Electricity supplied to 510 villages in 3 years

TEHRAN- Electricity has been supplied to 510 villages throughout the country during the past three years, Iran's Power Generation, Distribution, and Transmission Company (known as Tavanir) announced.

Head of Tavanir Mostafa Rajabi Mashhadi has said the country's

Energy Ministry plans to construct new power plants with a total capacity of 22,000 megawatts (MW) across the country.

Stating that in the past three years, up to three billion dollars have been invested annually in the electricity industry, Rajabi Mashhadi said: "the construction of

22,000 megawatts of new power plants, half of which will be renewable, has been targeted."

According to the official, the mentioned power plants, including 12,000 MW of renewable power plants and 9,000 WM of cycle power plants, should be commissioned within the next

The visit is aimed at giving a further boost to trade cooperation between Iran and Uzbekistan.

During their five-day stay in Uzbekistan, the Iranian delegation will explore cooperation in different areas including tourism and handicrafts, auto industry, textile industry, pharmaceuticals, chemicals and hygienic products, energy, petrochemicals and polymer, techno-engineering services, mining and constructional products, agricultural and food industries and information technology.

The visit will also include business forums and B2B meetings in Tashkent and Khiva as well as visiting trade and industrial centers across the Central Asian country and holding a meeting in the Iranian embassy in Uzbekistan.

Back in May, Iran's Ambassador in Uzbeki-

stan Mohammad-Ali Eskandari met with the Minister of Investment, Industry, and Trade of Uzbekistan Laziz Kudratov to discuss expanding economic, trade, and industrial ties.

Referring to the recent mutual visits of economic officials from both countries and the resulting agreements, Eskandari emphasized the need to facilitate the process of economic and trade relations between the two countries.

Meanwhile, Kudratov expressed satisfaction with the increased trade relations between the two countries in recent years and the goals set by the two countries' presidents to raise the volume of bilateral trade to one billion dollars.

Additionally, he called for advocating plans that would accelerate the implementation process.

three years.

Statistics indicate that Iran's generation of electricity during the administration of the late President Ebrahim Raisi registered a 13.5 percent growth, with Iran generating more electricity than industrialized countries like the UK and Italy.

a plan modified to avoid the territorial waters of the then-U.S. ally, the United Arab Emirates (U.A.E.).

Once the gas had made its way to Oman, the technicalities of Iran becoming an LNG producer were extremely straightforward. The original plan, according to Alireza Kameli, managing director of the National Iranian Gas Export Company (NIGEC), would have entailed Tehran utilizing about 25 percent of Oman's then-total 1.5 million tons per year LNG production capacity to produce Iranian LNG.

(See full text at www.tehrantimes.com)

WORLD HEADLINES

Hezbollah Commander Fouad Shukor's daughter talks to the Tehran Times My father always told us to hold firmly to the path of Seyyed Ali Khamenei and Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah

From page 1 ▶ My feelings were always a strong sense of pride and dignity. I understood what is occupation and what is Israeli oppression. So, I was very happy to be part of this environment standing in the face of the enemy.

As for my knowledge, he was a commander. This took a very long time. He never spoke about it. Even when one of my siblings, after hearing rumors about his position and rank, used to ask him, he would always say he had no special position.

To me, he would always say the resistance divides the commanders and its members for work-related matters, but all the mujahideen, all of Hezbollah, the entire resistance are all mujahideen for the sake of Allah. And that dividing the ranks is to adapt a system that works correctly, not because there is a team in Jihad, between a commander and anyone else.

Later, I learned he was a commander. He confirmed that to me and many other things. Apart from feeling proud, I also felt a strong sense of responsibility.

Being a son or daughter of a commander is not something that allows you to be open or relaxed. Every word you say has a responsibility attached to it, anything that risks security, the overall appearance [of the resistance], etc. So, at this point, apart from the sense of pride and dignity, I also felt I hold more responsibility."

What are the qualities of martyr Fouad Shukor as a father and a human being?

"My father had a certain kind of dignity that influenced those around him. His gaze carried an air of seriousness and intensity, like that of a military leader. However, in contrast, he also had the qualities of highly distinguished people. It was immediately clear to anyone in front of him that, alongside his commanding presence, he possessed deeply humane traits, such as compassion, kindness, and a willingness to help others and bring happiness to people.

At times, we would witness a softer side, in stark contrast to his toughness and imposing presence. In an instant, even his gaze would shift, reflecting great gentleness, especially with his children, grandchildren, and other family members and loved ones. He was particularly kind in moments that called for human compassion.

My father excelled at making others feel included and stood by them during their significant moments. He also had a sharp intuition about people, often knowing what they liked or disliked, which allowed him to connect with and



empathize with them on a human level.

As for our relationship with him at home, it was a very beautiful one, despite his occasional strictness in raising us. He had certain non-negotiable boundaries in terms of discipline and the path he wanted us to follow. Yet, at the same time, he was always keen to surround us with care, helping us solve our problems in a way that was pleasing to God and for our own good.

He was an ideal husband to my mother, always striving to maintain a strong bond with her and with us, despite the challenges of life. He constantly wanted to know our news, follow up on us, and stay close to us. His kindness extended even to those outside the family. If he was that much compassionate with others, how much more so with us, his own children? He was our pillar, like a mighty rock, the strong support we all leaned on, and the warm embrace we sought in both good and difficult times. His strength, wisdom, and ability to protect us were ever-present, and when a situation called for tenderness, he was our refuge."

Undoubtedly, life with your father had its own restrictions and difficulties. Can you tell us about them and how you adapted?

"Regarding the issue of life with a commander as a parent, it is true that it comes with many restrictions and difficulties, more than what people outside the circle of knowledge about commanders and their lives can imagine.

From the beginning of our lives with our father, our mother played a crucial role in compensating for his absence. She would try to make up for it and make us understand that his absence did not affect our lives. Sometimes, she would even make us believe

that, while we were asleep, he came to see us and kissed us.

The difficulty in this life has several aspects. The first is that a child feels the absence of their father, who plays a role in their life. This absence was incomprehensible to us, and we did not know how we could cope with it. However, our mother had the largest role in compensating for this absence, and she played the biggest part in handling it. When our father was present, he would make up for his absence in many ways.

As we grew older, we stopped demanding his presence so that we wouldn't affect his work, allowing him to focus on the issue of resistance.

The second part, and by the way, sometimes his absence would last for days, months, or even up to a year, without any verbal communication between us, except for letters, which would arrive very late.

The second part of the difficulties and restrictions is that we did not have the luxury of thinking that we had a father in the usual sense. I couldn't ask my father to go and buy things for me. Even during my graduation, he wasn't there. When we were young, he didn't sit and play with us like other fathers do with their children. I remember, for example, during our graduations, even though he wasn't physically present, he would try to create some sweet surprises to make us happy, either before or after graduation, to make us feel that he valued the occasion and that his presence was important.

Another challenge in this regard was our inability to go out with him to family events. Similarly, during holidays, when any child needs his father; he would sometimes appear suddenly and unexpectedly.

He always tried to resolve and alleviate these restrictions and

difficulties for us, helping us understand the nature of this life. Over time, we became accustomed to it and learned how to handle these tough situations and turn the hardships into a better life. We came to appreciate our father's absence in any special event or family gathering, and we would invest these challenges into family gatherings. He always taught us to be patient with difficulties and restrictions, emphasizing that participating in Jihad meant that both our mother, my siblings, and I shared this feeling during times of difficulty, and it never affected us when our father wasn't present. We always wished he could be there, and we took pride in the fact that we never complained to him about the hardships we faced in life.

Any form of deprivation was considered a form of participation in Jihad and patience, and we never showed any pressure to our father. On the contrary, we felt that we were sharing in the reward and the Jihad."

How do you assess the role of Commander Shukor in leading the resistance in Lebanon?

Honestly, assessing the role of any person in the resistance or my father in particular is not something I can conduct, nor do I have the capability and knowledge to do so.

Nobody can address this issue more than his eminence Seyyed [Hassan Nasrallah], who touched on many issues and will expand on other aspects later.

I have nothing to add to what his eminence Seyyed [Hassan Nasrallah] has said. He is the highest [authority] to make such assessments, the role of my father, what my father offered to this resistance.

Of course, if anyone wants to speak about this issue, they can go back to the speech of his eminence Seyyed [Hassan Nasrallah].

All I know is from what his eminence Seyyed [Hassan Nasrallah] and others close to him said, which is that my father was among those who played an essential role in starting the resistance.

For me, this may be the most important issue. The era when the resistance was founded, my father, along with other brothers, had an essential role in it.

As for the other issues about the commanders of the resistance, his eminence Seyyed [Hassan Nasrallah] spoke about it and, as I understand it, will expand on it again later.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Hezbollah hits Israeli military targets

Lebanon's Hezbollah said on Friday that it targeted and hit buildings in northern Israel's Metula as well as an Israeli military barracks in the Shebaa Farms.

The Lebanese resistance movement added that it struck "buildings used by enemy soldiers in the settlement of Metula with appropriate weapons, and hit them directly".

Hezbollah also said it hit Ruwaisat al-Qarn in the Shebaa Farms.

"We bombed the Zabadin barracks with rockets and achieved a direct hit," Hezbollah said in a separate statement.

Shebaa Farms was captured by Israel during the 1967 Six-Day War.

Zelenskyy urges Ukraine allies to allow long-range weapons use in Russia

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged his Western allies to allow Ukraine to use long-range missiles to hit targets inside Russia and increase pressure on Moscow to end the war.

"We need to have this long-range capability, not only on the divided territory of Ukraine, but also on the Russian territory, so that Russia is motivated to seek peace," Zelenskyy said on Friday at a meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group (UDCG) at Germany's Ramstein Air Base.

"We need to make Russian cities and even Russian soldiers think about what they need: peace or [Russian President Vladimir] Putin."

The United States pledged an additional \$250 million in military aid to Ukraine, which was announced by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin at the meeting of the UDCG - also known informally as the Ramstein group.

Legacy of Izz ad-Din al-Qassam's anti-colonial struggle alive in West Bank

By Xavier Villar

TEHRAN - Amid ongoing clashes in southern Lebanon and the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, Israeli military forces have escalated their attacks in the West Bank, targeting the cities of Jenin and Tulkarem. On Wednesday, August 28, according to Palestinian authorities, hundreds of Israeli soldiers, supported by drones and armored vehicles, launched an offensive that resulted in the deaths of at least 10 Palestinians and injuries to dozens more.

Israel has conducted repeated assaults on the West Bank, a region home to approximately three million Palestinians. United Nations reports indicate that since October 7, 2023, when Hamas initiated Operation "Al-Aqsa Flood," over 600 Palestinians have died in the West Bank due to attacks by Israeli settlers and military forces, with thousands more arrested.

Israel asserts that these operations aim to "counter militant groups," but analysts argue that the increase in Israeli military violence and settler actions have driven more young Palestinians to join armed resistance.

Lebanon's Al-Arabi Al-Jadeed reports that "the situation in eastern Jenin is dire, with widespread destruction of infrastructure and streets, and residents facing an ongoing blockade. Concerns over the worsening humanitarian situation are rising, especially since the inhabitants were unprepared for a large-scale Israeli military incursion."

Residents of the West Bank report that since October 7, 2023, Israeli military forces have been conducting daily attacks on cities and towns in the region. These incursions, which range from a few hours to several days, severely disrupt civilian life and result in numerous casualties, including women and children.

ICC chief prosecutor defends arrest warrants for Netanyahu

The chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court has defended arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, saying that justice must be seen to be done.

In an interview with BBC, Karim Khan said that it was important to show the court would hold all nations to the same standard in relation to alleged war crimes, welcoming the UK government's decision to drop its opposition to the arrest warrants.

In July, the British government reversed its opposition to the ICC seeking an arrest warrant against Netanyahu.

Khan announced in May that the court was seeking arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and war minister Yoav Gallant on charges of committing war crimes.

Poll: 61% of Israelis do not trust Netanyahu

Sixty-one percent of Israelis do not trust Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's management of the war on the besieged Gaza Strip; or his ability to form a cabinet if early elections are held, an opinion poll by Israeli public broadcaster Kan revealed.

According to the poll, if early elections are held, Netanyahu's Likud Party will win only 22 seats in the Knesset while the National Camp Party, headed by Benny Gantz, will win 23.

The poll showed that the Yesh Atid Party, headed by Yair Lapid and the Yisrael Beiteinu Party, headed by Avigdor Lieberman, would come in third place with 14 seats, followed by the Shas with ten seats, while Itamar Ben-Gvir's Otzma Yehudit Party and the Labor-Meretz alliance would each get eight seats.

Suicide by seppuku: Israeli troops disillusioned as Hamas remains invincible

From page 1 ▶ The withdrawal has provided an opportunity for the Jenin residents to return to their homes and assess the damage to their properties. They fear that the Israeli military may return to the city and launch further attacks.

Nonetheless, Israeli raids elsewhere in the West Bank have continued. Settlers backed by the Israeli army have also ratcheted up violence against Palestinians.

According to Al Jazeera, settlers attacked the Palestinian villages of Khader Kayed Bani Odeh and Khader Shahada Bani Odeh in the northern Jordan Valley.

Israel's brutal tactics

The Palestinian Foreign Ministry has accused Israel of transferring to the occupied West Bank its brutal destruction and devastation in the Gaza Strip.

The ministry said the Israeli raids in Jenin and Tulkarem were "a clear targeting of Palestinian civilians and the foundations of their national and human existence on their homeland".

Nonetheless, Israeli far-right ministers have called for an intensified crackdown in

the West Bank.

Flight of imagination

National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir urged Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to include the defeat of Hamas in the occupied West Bank among the goals of the war in Gaza.

"We must not repeat the mistakes, war on Hamas - also in Judea and Samaria!" Ben-Gvir, who has repeatedly and openly called for Israel's annexation of the West Bank, said on X, formerly known as Twitter.

A surge in Israeli military and settler violence against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank has unfolded in the shadow of the regime's genocidal war on the Gaza Strip.

Since Israel launched war on Gaza on October 7 last year, it has killed around 40,900 Palestinians and destroyed much of the territory. But it has failed to eliminate Hamas which has been Netanyahu's main goal since the start of the conflict.

Hence, Ben-Gvir's request for including the eradication of Hamas in the West Bank in Israel's war goals is like going on a wild goose chase.

Resistance fighters have not only put up stiff resistance against occupation forces in the West Bank, particularly in Jenin, but have also proved that they have the upper hand on the Gaza battlefield.

Israel was under the illusion that its deadly military campaign in Gaza would pit Palestinians against Hamas. But over the past months, support for Hamas has grown both in Gaza and the West Bank.

Israel's continued crackdown in the West Bank will further encourage Palestinians to throw their weight behind resistance groups. Ultimately, rising resistance will lead to more casualties among Israeli soldiers.

Meanwhile, senior Israeli military officials have admitted that Netanyahu's "total victory" dream over Hamas will remain futile which has resulted in widespread disillusionment among the regime's troops.

To prevent further disgrace, Netanyahu could at least embolden his soldiers to commit seppuku which was the honorable method of taking one's own life practiced by men of the samurai (military) class in feudal Japan.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Mazandaran sets new tourist record with 3.1 million overnight stays



TEHRAN – Mazandaran has experienced an unprecedented influx of visitors this summer, with 3.1 million overnight stays recorded in less than ten days, according to a local tourism official.

This exceptional surge compared to previous years and even the Nowruz holidays has overwhelmed local accommodation and amenities, underscoring the region's growing appeal as a travel destination, Hossein Izadi outlined.

"Mazandaran experienced a total of 19.8 million overnight stays this summer," Izadi brought to light, adding that the province's 4,000 accommodation units, including hotels, motels, and hotel-apartments, were

fully booked during the September holidays, leading to overcrowded conditions and even camping in tourist spots.

Mazandaran, located in northern Iran along the Caspian Sea, is renowned for its diverse tourist attractions and natural beauty. The province boasts approximately 2,500 historical and natural sites, including ancient buildings and picturesque landscapes. Its diverse terrain ranges from lush coastal plains to verdant mountains, providing a variety of outdoor activities and scenic vistas.

The region's appeal is further enhanced by its eco-lodges and rural tourism options, which offer a unique experience of traditional Iranian hospitality and natural surroundings.

The province's coastline along the Caspian Sea features 15 cities with beach access, attracting tourists looking to enjoy the sandy shores and maritime activities. Additionally, Mazandaran's array of museums, waterfalls, and mountainous resorts provide further opportunities for exploration and relaxation. This combination of historical richness, natural beauty, and diverse accommodations makes Mazandaran a key destination for both domestic and international tourists.

Sassanid-era fire temple ruins found in Lorestan after illegal excavation



TEHRAN – Archaeologists have unveiled a Sassanid-era fire temple in Rashidabad, Lorestan, after illegal excavation activities prompted an urgent excavation, revealing key elements of this ancient structure.

"The discovery was prompted by illegal excavation activities earlier in the spring, which led to an immediate response from authorities," said a local official in charge of cultural heritage on Thursday.

The unauthorized diggers, Ata Hasanpour added, were apprehended following security monitoring. After securing the necessary funding through several months of negoti-

ations, an emergency excavation was conducted over the past 15 days, supervised by Sajad Alibeygi, he further elaborated.

Hasanpour highlighted that the excavation revealed a substantial portion of the Sassanid fire temple, characterized by its four-iwan architectural style—a structure typical of Sassanid religious sites.

Key features uncovered include the main four-iwan structure, an altar (or fire altar), decorative plasterwork, a circumambulatory hall, and the temple's outer enclosure, according to the director-general.

These findings, he continued, are crucial for filling in gaps in the historical record of the Sassanid period in western Lorestan, providing new insights into the architectural and cultural practices of the time.

In his final words, Hasanpour commended the collaborative efforts of various stakeholders in this successful excavation.

This discovery not only enhances the understanding of the Sassanid period but also underscores the importance of preserving and protecting Iran's rich archaeological heritage from unauthorized activities.

New Zealand to nearly triple tax on international tourists

New Zealand has announced plans to nearly triple a tax on international tourists, prompting backlash from the country's tourism industry.

New Zealand's National Party-led coalition government said on Tuesday that it would raise the so-called International Visitor Conservation and Tourism Levy (IVL) from 35 New Zealand dollars (\$22) to 100 New Zealand dollars (\$62) from October 1.

Tourism Minister Matt Doocoy said the hike would allow the country to grow its tourism industry while ensuring visitors contribute to "high-value conservation areas and projects, such as supporting biodiversity in national parks and other highly visited areas and improving visitor experiences on public conservation land."

"A \$100 IVL would generally make up less than 3 per cent of the total spending for an international visitor while in New Zealand, meaning it is unlikely to have a significant impact on visitor numbers," Doocoy said.

Tourism Industry Aotearoa, the peak body for New Zealand's tourism sector, said the increase would make the country "incredibly expensive" to visit.

The peak body said the hike, along with a recent 60 percent increase in visitor visa fees, would bring the cost of visiting New Zealand to as much as 500 New Zealand dollars (\$310) per person, more than double the cost of visiting Canada and two-thirds more than visiting Australia.

"New Zealand's tourism recovery is falling

behind the rest of the world, and this will further dent our global competitiveness. Airline connectivity isn't nice to have for a country at the bottom of the world – it's essential," TIA Chief Executive Rebecca Ingram said in a statement.

The International Air Transport Association also expressed disappointment, describing the hike as a "double whammy" for the sector.

"These changes make travel to New Zealand more expensive and less attractive and could further delay the recovery in visitor numbers to beyond 2026," Xie Xingquan, IATA's Regional Vice President for North Asia and Asia-Pacific, said in a statement.

New Zealand's previous Labour Party government introduced the levy in July 2019, saying it would help fund infrastructure and ease the strain on services and the natural environment.

Tourism was brought to a screeching halt several months later when the arrival of COVID-19 prompted the government to close the international borders.

While the sector has recovered from the worst of the pandemic fallout, visitors are still only at about 80 percent of pre-COVID levels.

Tourism last year contributed about 13.2 billion dollars (\$8.2bn) to New Zealand's economy, accounting for 3.5 percent of gross domestic, making it one of the country's biggest export industries.

(Source: Al Jazeera)

Minister calls for overcoming negative stereotypes to boost tourism

TEHRAN – Iran's Tourism Minister, Seyyed Reza Salehi-Amiri, has called for efforts to change global perceptions of Iran, promoting tourism and positioning Yazd as a gateway for this transformation.

Speaking at a meeting of the Government-Private Sector Dialogue Council in Yazd on Thursday, Salehi-Amiri highlighted the importance of overcoming misconceptions and presenting Iran, particularly Yazd, as a safe and appealing destination for tourists.

"We must break the lock of Iranophobia," he stated. "Iran is secure, but the media has created a perception of insecurity. This challenge requires a unified effort across all sectors."

Salehi-Amiri suggested that Yazd could serve as a platform to challenge misconceptions about Iran, asserting that increased tourism could bolster national power.

"When our oil is used abroad, it generates revenue, just as our tourism does, showing our national soft power," he remarked.

In his address, Salehi-Amiri expressed his dedication to supporting Yazd and its virtuous people.

He described Yazd as a symbol of national unity and an example of social and administrative cohesion.

The official expressed optimism that with the removal of obstacles, Yazd could experience



significant progress and become a major tourist hub.

The minister stressed that a shift in priorities is needed, with tourism becoming a top focus. "Countries that have achieved leaps in tourism and investment have prioritized this sector," he said.

Salehi-Amiri emphasized that stakeholders in this sector have the capacity to drive change in perceptions and beliefs, which could help create jobs and promote the production of handicrafts domestically.

He mentioned the necessity of doubling exports and tourism, which would only be possible through mutual understanding and agreement.

"Our soft power should create a positive image of beautiful Iran," he noted, adding that Iran's handicrafts can help convey the country's culture to the world.

The minister identified "be-

lieving in the private sector and investors" as the first step and argued that reliance on the government alone will not achieve desired goals.

"For years, we have seen this issue, and it requires urgent action to remove these obstacles in the path of these individuals and to encourage investment," he said.

Salehi-Amiri stated that all resources would be utilized to remove these obstacles, emphasizing the critical role of investors in achieving success.

Salehi-Amiri arrived in Yazd on Wednesday for a two-day visit, during which he explored the province's tourism potential.

Yazd province, located in central Iran, boasts a rich cultural heritage spanning millennia. Renowned for its ancient cities, exquisite architecture and deep-rooted traditions, the province stands as a testament to Iran's diverse cultural tapes-

try.

One of the province's most notable features is its historic city of Yazd, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

With its maze-like alleys, distinctive wind catchers (badgir) and adobe structures, Yazd preserves the architectural marvels of ancient Persia.

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

Yazd is also celebrated for its vibrant handicraft industry, producing intricately designed carpets, textiles, ceramics, and metalwork. Traditional crafts such as silk weaving, pottery, and copper engraving continue to thrive, passed down through generations of skilled artisans.

In recent years, Yazd has emerged as a popular tourist destination, attracting visitors from around the world eager to explore its historical sites, experience its unique culture, and immerse themselves in its timeless charm.

With its commitment to preserving its cultural legacy and promoting sustainable tourism, Yazd province continues to enchant and inspire all who venture within its ancient boundaries.

Kashan, Kazanlak blossom as sister cities through rose heritage

TEHRAN – Iran's Kashan and Bulgaria's Kazanlak formalized their sister city relationship on Sunday, highlighting their shared heritage in rose production.

The agreement was signed during a recent visit by Kashan's mayor Kiumars Mohammadi to Bulgaria, following an invitation from Kazanlak's mayor Galina Stoyanova, IRNA reported.

Kashan, renowned for its rich history and cultural heritage, is one of Iran's ancient cities, famous for its traditional architecture, historical gardens, and significant role in the production of carpets and textiles.

The city is also celebrated for its production of Damask roses, a key ingredient in many traditional Persian perfumes and cosmetics.

Kazanlak, located in Bulgaria's Rose Valley, is similarly famous for its extensive



rose cultivation. The city and its surrounding region are known globally for producing high-quality rose oil, which is a crucial element in the perfume industry.

Kazanlak's rich history and cultural significance are also marked by its ancient Thracian tombs, which are recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

The sister city agreement aims to strengthen the ties between these two cities through a variety of collaborative efforts. The discussions during the visit covered a broad spectrum of potential partnerships, including cultural exchanges, academic cooperation, commercial ventures, urban development projects, and tourism initiatives.

Both cities share deep historical and cultural connections, particularly in their production of roses, which has been a central theme in their mutual interest and cooperation.

This new relationship is expected to foster closer collaboration and enhance the cultural and economic ties between Kashan and Kazanlak, benefiting both communities.

1,500-year-old gold coins from Byzantine Empire discovered in medieval dwelling in Bulgaria

Archaeologists in Bulgaria have unearthed five gold coins dating to the time of the emperor Justinian the Great (ruled from 527 to 565 CE). Although it is not unusual to discover coins during excavations, these ones were located on the floor of a 10th-century house — suggesting the dwelling's medieval occupants may have kept the coins as a kind of heirloom or artifact.

The coins were found in August during an archaeological dig in the village of Debnevo in northern Bulgaria.

Excavations in Debnevo and the nearby fortress, which was built in the early fifth century, have been ongoing since 2019, and archaeologists have so far found the remains of a large fourth to third century BC settlement, as well as evidence of habitation from the fourth to sixth centuries CE, when the area was part of the Byzantine Empire.

During a recent expedition, archaeologists excavated a medieval dwelling in Debnevo that had been badly damaged by fire.

The occupants appeared to have abandoned their house following the fire in the 10th century, and the team recovered iron tools, including two sickles and two axes; a belt buckle; ceramic vessels; and three bronze rings — in addition to five gold coins that were around 400 years older than the house.



The coins were minted during the reign of Justinian the Great, whose rule saw the Byzantine Empire reach its greatest geographical extent in the mid-sixth century, after the Western Roman Empire had fallen. Justinian's legacy includes the publication of a body of Roman laws as well as the development of new art and architectural styles that would come to be known as Byzantine.

One of Justinian's goals was to "restore the empire of the Romans," which he accomplished by reestablishing control over Western European and North African provinces.

All five coins are of the same type: a "tremissis" — a small gold coin worth one-third of a "solidus" — that depicts the emper-

or wearing a pearl diadem on the front, while the back depicts the personification of Victory holding a wreath in her right hand and a cross and globe in her left.

The inscription on the front reads "Our Lord Justinian Perpetual Augustus," a reference to the first Roman emperor, whose name was later used to refer to all emperors, while the back reads "Victory of the Augusts." Two of the coins, likely burned in the fire that destroyed the house, are stuck together.

"The dwelling was built on the remains of an early Byzantine building," expedition leader Stiliyan Ivanov, an archaeologist at the National Archaeological Institute with Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, told Live Science in an email.

"Therefore, we assume that the coins were found during the construction of the early medieval dwelling. Our working hypothesis is that the owners kept the coins because of the gold value."

Although it was never a large settlement, Debnevo has a deep history, as the archaeological team has found evidence of structures, burials and artifacts dating as early as 5000 BC and as late as the 18th century.

(Source: Live Science)

Iran to boost ICT ties with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan

TEHRAN - Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Minister, Sattar Hashemi, in separate meetings with his Kazakh and Kyrgyz counterparts, explored ways to foster cooperation in the ICT field.

The officials met on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Digital Inclusion and Transformation held from September 3 to 5 in Astana, Kazakhstan, Mehr news agency reported.

Kazakh Minister of Digital Development, Innovation and Aerospace Industry, Zhaslan Madiyev, and Hashemi exchanged views on enhancing cooperation in technology infrastructure, e-government, and research cooperation, IRNA reported.

Also, Bagdat Batyrbekuly Musin, the chairman of the Board of Kazak Telecom, offered specific recommendations for expanding cooperation between the two countries. The proposals will be examined and a joint working group will be formed over the course of a month to follow up on the cooperation between Kazakh Telecom and Iranian operators.

Moreover, Minister of Digital Development of the Kyrgyz Republic, Nuria Kutnaeva, expressed interest in defining joint projects and developing scientific cooperation. The official emphasized the necessity of cooperation in the field of ICT in addition to economic and cultural collaborations of the two countries.

During the meeting, the two sides welcomed cooperation in local platforms and postal affairs and decided to prepare a draft of a memorandum of understanding in this regard.



The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is the most inclusive intergovernmental platform in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Commission promotes cooperation among its 53 member States and 9 associate members in pursuit of solutions to sustainable development challenges. ESCAP is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations.

Attending ESCAP meeting, Hashemi met Armida Salsiah Al-Isjhabana, Executive Secretary of the UN ESCAP. Referring to previous cooperation between Iran and ESCAP, the officials expressed optimism to organize a joint project on the role of technologies in addressing natural disasters.

Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference

The ministerial conference considers a blueprint for regional cooperation, which is imperative to accelerate digital innovation for sustainable development.

This year, it brought together government leaders and ministers from across Asia and the Pacific, as well as other key stakeholders, to discuss how digital

inclusion and transformation can accelerate sustainable development in the region.

The ministerial conference also aimed to foster digital cooperation among members and associate members in order to bridge the digital divide, ensure the provision of digital skills training, strengthen digital connectivity, address and enhance digital trust and security, share good policies, practices and lessons learned, and promote inclusive digital economies and societies.

Status of ICT in Iran

The Ministry of Information and Communication Technology is the highest authority in the field of ICT in the country. All activities related to the information and communication technology industry are directly related to the ministry.

The government pays special attention to plans and policies in this sector in order to maximize the use of ICT to facilitate people's lives.

The successful designing, building, and launching of a satellite show the growth of the national technology and scientific power of a country.

Space technology has been considered a tool to expand prosperity, peace, scientific-cultural development, and economic progress in human societies.

Different nations of the world exploit this technology in some way based on their capacity, capabilities, and efforts.

Currently, 13 universities and a research institute affiliated to the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology are offering aerospace majors, thus Iran has a high capability in training specialists and experts in the aerospace sector and is a leading country in the region.

Access to telecommunication services in rural areas of the country had improved over the period as the overall number of villages with access to communication services rose to 52,182, around 93 percent of all villages, while 47,837 villages had access to home landline services.

Moreover, the number of Iranian mobile users reached nearly 135.890 million, according to the CRA which put the mobile phone penetration rate in the country at 161.67 percent.

The figures showed, however, that fixed broadband adoption in Iran had stalled at 14 percent with nearly 11.921 million customers having access to the Internet via those services.

This statistic shows that fixed broadband internet has grown by less than 2 percent compared to last year and mobile internet has experienced a growth of 10 percent. However, it can be said that the speed of mobile internet expansion is 5 times the speed of fixed internet.

Invest in clean air now!

By Maryam Tavassoli

TEHRAN -The International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies is observed annually on September 7 highlighting the significance of raising public awareness at all levels, as well as promoting and facilitating actions to improve air quality.

With the theme of 'Invest in Clean Air Now', this year's observance emphasizes the urgent need for stronger partnerships, increased investment, and shared responsibility to combat air pollution.

Clean air is important for the health and day-to-day lives of people, while air pollution is the single greatest environmental risk to human health and one of the main avoidable causes of death and disease globally.

It disproportionately affects women, children, and older persons, and also has a negative impact on ecosystems.

Air pollution is the second leading risk factor for death, causing around 8.1 million premature deaths annually from conditions such as stroke, heart disease, lung cancer, and acute respiratory infections.

As the biggest environmental health risk of the time, it also exacerbates climate change, causes economic losses, and reduces agricultural productivity.

It knows no borders - everyone has a responsibility to protect our atmosphere and ensure healthy air for all.

Today, the international community acknowledges that improving air quality can enhance climate change mitigation and that climate change mitigation efforts can improve air quality.

By collaborating across borders, sectors, and silos, we can reduce air pollution through collective investments of time, resources and efforts.

This International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies calls upon everyone—from governments and corporations to civil society and individuals to invest in clean air now.

By tackling air pollution proactively, we can

achieve transformative change and secure healthy air for all.

National Clean Air Week

Running from January 16 to 22, the National Clean Air Week was observed this year under the theme of 'Clean Air, Responsible Official, Responsible Citizen'.

Every year, January 19, is the National Clean Air Day in Iran in order to remind and highlight the main factors in maintaining air quality, as well as promoting a sense of responsibility and citizen participation in protecting the urban environment and fulfilling social responsibility for the environment.

This year's theme highlighted the significance of raising people's awareness about the effects of air pollution, providing necessary information and health recommendations when confronting unhealthy conditions caused by air pollution, and attracting people's contribution.

Clean Air Law

Air pollution is one of the main concerns of the government; Therefore, all organizations are obliged to act based on the Clean Air Law.

The Clean Air Law, enacted in July 2017, was supposed to be a solution to ease air pollution across the country. Still, the air is severely polluted, as the responsible bodies neglect their legal duties to implement the law.

The law has defined responsibilities for the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Oil, the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development, the Ministry of Industry, Mining, and Trade, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Department of Environment, the police, the municipality, the National TV, and some other organizations.

In this regard, according to the three-year plan of the Ministry of Oil, which was presented to the Department of Environment, the amount of sulfur in diesel fuel is supposed to be reduced to a great extent, in order to meet the national standard.

The importance of having clean air is such that a week in the country is named after the Clean Air Week.

Tehran to host Iranian Plant Protection Congress

TEHRAN -The 25th Iranian Plant Protection Congress will commence today in Tehran and is scheduled to wrap up on September 10.

The biennial congress will be hosted by the Scientific and Industrial Research Organization of Iran. More than 1,300 plant protection specialists have applied to participate and some 1,000 research articles have been received so far, IRNA reported.

The congress focuses on six main topics including the identification and utilization of biological diversity and genetic resources; the role of plant protection in food security; entrepreneurship and new job opportunities; the production of safe, high-quality agricultural products; the expansion of new technologies in plant protection; climate change, invasion, and the emergence of new pests.

Enhancing knowledge and experiences in plant protection, showcasing the latest achievements as well as scientific and technological developments, establishing scientific and industrial communication, and exploring ways to address plant protection challenges

are among the main goals of the congress.

Unique plants' diversity

The diversity of plants in Iran is unique in West Asia to the extent that the country ranks second following Turkey.

In addition to native plants, there are also some other species in the country known as endemic species which are much more limited than native species. Out of 8,000 native species, some 1,800 are endemic. These species are found only in a certain geographical area.

Due to human activities, biodiversity has faced numerous threats, including habitat loss and fragmentation, overexploitation of natural resources, pollution, invasive species, and climate change, which has led to the extinction of many species and the degradation of ecosystems worldwide.

Habitat destruction is one of the main factors that affects the extinction of a species. Road construction, mining, overgrazing, and land use change greatly damage wildlife habitats and reduce population size and genetic

diversity within a species.

Drought has resulted in decreased vegetation diversity and lack of food for herbivorous species.

Several measures can be taken to mitigate the impacts of climate change, particularly drought, on the destruction of plants, such as managing the exploitation of natural resources and preventing the destruction of ecosystems to prevent severe conditions and lessen pressures on plants.

Also, raising public awareness to protect nature is an important step that helps governments to preserve nature.

By improving local communities, private sectors, and individuals' roles in preserving wildlife along with the help of today's science and technology, we can make sure that ecosystems can thrive and plant and animal species can exist for future generations.

In addition, it is essential, for all countries, to reduce greenhouse gases by making comprehensive, decisive, and coordinated decisions.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

\$4m budget allocated to promote non-motorized transport

A total budget of 170 billion rials (around \$4 million) has been allocated to promote bike lanes across the capital city of Tehran, encouraging the residents to ride bicycles, Sakineh Ashrafi, deputy mayor of Tehran for planning, urban development and council affairs has said.

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

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

تصویب اعتبار ۱۷ میلیاردی برای توسعه دوچرخه‌سواری همگانی در پایتخت

سکینه اشرفی معاون برنامه‌ریزی، توسعه شهری و امور شورای شهرداری تهران از تصویب حدود ۱۷۰ میلیارد ریال اعتبار برای توسعه دوچرخه‌سواری همگانی در پایتخت خبر داد.

وی اظهار کرد: یکی از موضوعاتی که در بودجه سنواری سال آینده شهرداری تهران به آن توجه شده، موضوع توسعه حمل و نقل عمومی غیرموتوری از جمله دوچرخه‌سواری همگانی است.

به گزارش روز یکشنبه برگزار ایسنا وی ادامه داد: در برنامه سوم توسعه شهر تهران، موضوع توجه به دوچرخه‌سواری به عنوان یک حمل و نقل پاک برای کاهش ترافیک و آلودگی هوا مورد توجه و تاکید قرار گرفته است.

Intl. symposium on traditional, complementary medicine slated for November

TEHRAN -The international symposium on the policy, legacy, and regulatory landscape of traditional and complementary medicine is scheduled to be held from November 21 to 23 in Tehran.

The event will provide a platform to discuss and share global experiences in the field of integrating traditional medicine into the healthcare system, the health ministry website reported.

Researchers, specialists, students, and those interested in traditional medicine will get to know the latest developments in the field by participating in the scientific event.

Training and higher education in traditional and complementary medicine; integration of traditional and complementary medicine in the health care system; and laws and regulations in standardization and provision of traditional and natural products are among the main topics of the event.

Kim Sungchol, head of the World Health Organization's Traditional, Complementary and Integrative Medicine (TCIM) Unit, will attend the event.

Several other officials from around the world like Brazil, Kenya, Indonesia, the USA, and Thailand will present lectures at the event.

Health maintenance, disease prevention

Iranian traditional medicine strongly focuses on prioritizing health maintenance and disease prevention over treatment.

It is one of the most ancient forms of traditional medicine. It is grounded in the concept of four senses of humor: phlegm (Balgham), blood (Dam), yellow bile (Safra), and black bile (Sauda). The concept of the four senses of humor is based on the teachings of Rhazes and Avicenna in an elaborate medical system.

So far, about 30,000 plant species have been identified in the world, with Iran's share of about 8,000 species which is more than the whole of species found in Europe.

Persian medicine experts

Around 500 Persian medicine experts are pro-



viding health and medical treatment services across the country.

More than 1,000 general practitioners who have passed the Persian medicine courses approved by the health ministry are also offering services, Mehr news agency quoted Nafiseh Hosseini-Yekta, the director of the health ministry's Persian medicine office, as saying.

Currently, nine faculties of Persian medicine enroll students in the country's universities, she added.

Training Persian medicine experts has always been at the top of the Persian medicine office's agenda. Therefore, different skill courses have been developed and held under the supervision of the health ministry.

People highly welcome traditional medicine

On January 7, Hosseini-Yekta said surveys show that more than 80 percent of people in the country intend to benefit from Iranian traditional medicine, ILNA reported.

Traditional medicine has its roots in the culture, customs, and traditions of Iranians and has always been of interest to them, the official highlighted.

With over five hundred graduates in the field and numerous research articles that have been published, the country has been able to improve its position by being ranked fourth in the production of science in the field of traditional medicine in the world, following China, India, and the United States.



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SEPTEMBER 7, 2024

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

If you overpower your enemy, then pardon him by way of thankfulness to Allah, for being able to subdue him.

Imam Ali (AS)

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

What's in Tehran art galleries



Paintings

* Paintings by Amir Mansour Almalou are currently on view in an exhibition at Vaali Gallery.

The exhibition will continue until September 20 at the gallery located at 72 Khoddami St., Vanak Sq.

* Nian Gallery is currently playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Hajar Rahgozar.

The exhibition entitled "Hamlet" will be running until September 16 at the gallery located at 5 Abhari Alley, Vafai St. off Tur St. off South Mofatteh St.



* A collection of paintings by Amin Shayani is on view in an exhibition at Soo Gallery.

The exhibit named "Borderline" will continue until September 13 at the gallery located at 30 Purmusa St. off Somayyeh St.



Soo Contemporary | Amin Shayani | Borderline | 23 August - 13 September 2024 | First Floor | Opening Hours 4 - 9 pm | Mon to Fri 4 - 8 pm | Soo is closed on Sat and Sun |

* Saeid Gholami is showcasing his latest paintings in an exhibition at Far Gallery.

The exhibition will run until September 27 at the gallery that can be found at 17 Bidar St., Fereshteh Ave.



* A collection of paintings by Sanaz Hamzeh is on view in an exhibition at Vista Gallery.

The exhibit named "Lonely Plain" will run until September 16 at the gallery located at No. 11, 12th Alley, Mir Emad St.



* An exhibition of paintings by a group of artists including Sadeq Tabrizi, Ali Rokhsaz, Manouchehr Niazi, Nasser Ovissi and Jalal Shabhanghi is underway at CAMA - Contemporary and Modern Art Gallery.

The exhibition named "Glory" will be running until September 11 at the gallery located at No. 44, 10th Golestan, Pasdaran St.



* Aran Gallery is showcasing paintings by a large number of artists including Hamed Sahihi, Parisa Taqipur, Samira Eskandarfar, Kousha Mousavi, Bahar Samadi and Morteza Ardalan in an exhibition.

The exhibition titled "Iran: Black or White" will be running until September 20 at the gallery located at 5 Lolagar St., Neauph-le-Chateau St.



* An exhibition of paintings by a number of artists is currently underway at Baharin Gallery.

The exhibit named "Escape to Color" will run until September 11 at the gallery located at No. 509, Hafez St., Karim Khan Ave.



Sculpture

* Sculptures by Amir Taheri are currently on display in an exhibit at Adapa Gallery.

The exhibition entitled "Regret and Heft" will run until September 20 at the gallery located at No. 5, Sumesara Alley, Sazesh St., Vali-e Asr Square.

* Ech Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of sculptures by Amir Golshani, Doma Asef, Sepehr Vakili, Ashraf Saedi and several others.

Entitled "Center of Gravity", the exhibit runs until September 16 at the gallery that can be found at 10 Mirza Taraj opposite Dowlat St., Shariati Ave.



Iran participating in Moscow International Book Fair with 400 titles

TEHRAN-Iran has participated in the 37th Moscow International Book Fair (MIBF), underway in the Russian capital from September 4 to 8.

Iran pavilion at the fair is presenting 400 titles from 64 Iranian publishers in the fields of Persian language education, Islamic studies, children and adolescents, Iranian studies, art, and classical and contemporary literature, IRNA reported.

Various events have been programmed to be held at the Iran pavilion including workshops on Iranian calligraphy and painting, specialized meetings, book launches and introductions, and meetings with publishers and authors.

A total of 27 books in Russian were unveiled at the Iran pavilion during the past days. They are mostly in the fields of humanities and Islamic sciences.

In a visit to the Iran pavilion, the ambassador of Iran to the Russian Federation Kazem Jalali underlined that the main foundation of relations between countries should be based on the pillar of culture. "Translation of Persian and Russian works are the basis for the mutual acquaintance of the Iranian and Russian nations, which is well underway," he said.

"The translation of Russian works and novels into Persian was common



in the past decades, and now this process is being followed along with the translation of Persian works into Russian," the ambassador added.

He pointed out that reading books and attending each other's exhibitions are ways to develop cultural relations between the two countries and increase mutual understanding between the people, especially the elites of Iran and Russia.

"According to the officials at the Iran pavilion, the books in Russian language about prominent people,

especially the leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran and also the leaders of the resistance, have been more popular in the exhibition. Likewise, the books regarding the resistance of our country against sanctions for more than four decades have also attracted the attention of visitors," Jalali asserted.

The Iranian ambassador noted that scientific and philosophical books of Iranian publishers have been of interest among Russian experts as well.

Over 300 publishing houses from Russia and other countries such as Iran, Germany, China, Azerbaijan, and Belarus have showcased their books at the 37th MIBF.

Book presentations, meetings with authors, lectures, discussions, and master classes are among the programs presented at the 5-day event. The Moscow International Book Fair is the most important international book event in Russia, and the most significant annual event for the Russian book industry.

TMoCA to show award-winning war film "The Battle of Algiers"

TEHRAN-The cinemathèque of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMoCA) will show "The Battle of Algiers," a 1966 Italian-Algerian war film co-written and directed by Gillo Pontecorvo, on Sunday. The film screening, from the program dedicated to showing movies about resistance, is set to start at 3 p.m. Entry is free and open to the public, Mehr reported.

Pontecorvo's film is based on action undertaken by rebels during the Algerian War (1954-1962) against the French government in North Africa, the most prominent being the eponymous Battle of Algiers, the capital of Algeria.

It was shot on location in a Roberto Rossellini-inspired newsreel style: in black and white with documentary-type editing to add to its sense of historical authenticity, with mostly non-professional actors who had lived through the

real battle. The film's score was composed by Pontecorvo and Ennio Morricone.

The film concentrates mainly on revolutionary fighter Ali La Pointe during the years between 1954 and 1957, when guerrilla fighters of the FLN went into Algiers. Their actions were met by French paratroopers attempting to regain territory.

The highly dramatic film is about the organization of a guerrilla movement and the illegal methods, such as torture, used by the French to stop it. Algeria succeeded in gaining independence from the French, which Pontecorvo addresses in the film's epilogue.

It is often associated with Italian neorealist cinema and is considered one of the most significant political films ever made.

The film was met with international acclaim, and it is considered to be one of the greatest

films of all time. It won the Golden Lion at the 27th Venice Film Festival among other awards and nominations. It also was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. A subject of sociopolitical controversy in France, the film was not screened in the country for five years.

Insurgent groups and state authorities have considered it to be an important commentary on urban guerrilla warfare.

In Sight and Sound's 2022 poll of the greatest films of all time, it ranked 45th on the critics' list and 22nd with directors.

In 2008, the film was included on the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage's 100 Italian films to be saved, a list of 100 films that have changed the collective memory of the country between 1942 and 1978. TMoCA is located next to Laleh Park on N. Karegar St.

Iran joins youth theater program in Moscow

TEHRAN- Iran has participated in the InteRussia theater training program currently taking place in Moscow, which immerses young talents from BRICS+ countries in the rich traditions of Russian theater.

Developed in collaboration with the TV BRICS International Media Network and the Russian Institute of Theater Arts (GITIS), the program is a noteworthy initiative implemented by the Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Fund, supported by the Presidential Grants Fund.

Among the twelve aspiring artists selected to partake in this prestigious fellowship is Zahra Janmohammadi from Iran, who joins her peers, all aged between 21 and 35, in a journey of artistic discovery at GITIS. Over the course of several weeks, participants will be engaged

in a comprehensive educational and cultural program designed to deepen their understanding of Russian theatrical heritage.

The curriculum includes insightful lectures on the history of Russian theater, exploration of the careers of revered playwrights, and masterclasses from renowned actors.

Under the mentorship of distinguished faculty members, attendees will analyze plays and productions, thereby gaining invaluable insights into the time-honored practices of the Russian acting tradition.

Vera Kamyshnikova, Head of the Department of Stage Speech at GITIS, emphasized the significance of the program, noting that it not only enhances the participants' professional skills but also fosters



cultural connection among diverse cohorts. "This is more than just an exchange of ideas and exercises; it's about discovering the shared cultural landscapes and languages that bind us," she stated.

Participant Zahra Janmohammadi echoed this sentiment, highlighting the sense of camaraderie fostered among the interns. "Our shared backgrounds allowed us to connect quickly, finding

common ground in similar experiences and emotions. Theater indeed unites us all, transcending geographical boundaries," she remarked.

This landmark event marks a significant cultural milestone, coinciding with Russia's BRICS chairmanship, and exemplifies the commitment to strengthening ties among member nations through the universal language of art.

Pro-Palestinian protesters interrupt TIFF opening night screening

An opening night screening at the Toronto Film Festival was interrupted by pro-Palestinian protesters rallying against the Royal Bank of Canada, which is the official bank partner of TIFF.

The four protesters entered the Princess of Wales Theatre ahead of the 6 p.m. showing of "Nutcrackers," a dramedy starring Ben Stiller and directed by David Gordon Green, while chanting, "RBC funds genocide," in an apparent reference to the bank's ties to Israel, as the country's war with Gaza enters its 11th month. According to Variety, the protesters held signs with messages including "RBC is killing our future," as seen in videos posted by New York Times reporter Kyle Buchanan. The protesters were escorted out of the theater by security after about five minutes.

RBC said in a statement, "We respect the right of individuals to make their voices heard, but it's

unfortunate to see activist groups attempting to co-opt this important cultural event. Protestors targeting corporate sponsors are shifting attention from the work of artists and weakening support for essential arts and cultural programs.

"The humanitarian crisis in Israel and Gaza continues to have a devastating impact and we feel deeply for everyone who is affected. We continue to hear from employees, clients and community members, and we know this is difficult for anyone with ties to the region."

This isn't the first time that RBC's involvement at TIFF has caused controversy. Last year, before the October 7 attack, a group of Canadian filmmakers joined together with Hollywood stars urging the Toronto Film Festival to cut its ties with RBC because of its funding of the oil and gas industry. The campaign, called RBC Off Screen, recruited A-listers

such as Mark Ruffalo, Rachel McAdams and Joaquin Phoenix to sign an open letter outlining its concerns about TIFF's partnership with RBC, which is the "No. 1 financier of fossil fuel development in the world," according to CBC. A press release from RBC Off Screen framed the protest at "Nutcrackers" as "an act of solidarity with those fighting to address the climate emergency, as well as end the war in Gaza, and support Indigenous sovereignty."

"TIFF's relationship with RBC is art-washing crimes that threaten both human life and the planet," said Elza Kephart, a filmmaker at Midnight Kingdom Films and an organizer and spokesperson for RBC Off Screen. "As film workers, we refuse to allow our industry to be co-opted by those profiting from the destruction of our climate and communities."