

Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES



43 Years of Resistance and Counting

TEHRAN – Iranians from all walks of life poured out onto the streets across the country to mark the 43rd anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution on Friday.

The celebration was held amid coronavirus restrictions which have forced Iranians to mark the anniversary of the Revolution in a different fashion for the second straight year. Just like the previous year, the Iranians got behind wheels and drove through streets hoisting the three-color flag of Iran to keep alive the memory of a revolution that put Iran on a totally different path more than four decades ago.

The Islamic Revolution took place in February of 1979 when the U.S.-backed regime of Mohammad Reza Shah collapsed under the weight of continual protests across the country under the leadership of Imam Khomeini who had returned home from exile ten days earlier.

The Imam returned to Iran from France on February 1, a move that acted as a catalyst for the ultimate victory of the Revolution. Ten days after the Imam's return, the people brought down the entirety of the Shah regime, ending the monarchical rule and establishing a republican system for the first time in Iranian history.

Since then, Iranians have been celebrating the victory of the Revolution every year in February. People used to take part in nationwide rallies on foot before the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. But in 2021 and 2022, it was not possible to hold massive parades due to the pandemic.

That's why Iranians have held car processions to avoid infections and celebrate the Revolution at the same time. Of course, this year there were some on-foot processions in areas where the pandemic was less severe. ▶ Page 3

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Report

Is the Israeli apartheid regime on edge?

A coalition of around 300 human rights groups and civil society organizations have condemned the Israeli occupation, calling on the international community to hold the regime accountable for its apartheid practices against the Palestinians.

According to Palestinian media, groups and organizations from six European and Latin American states as well as more than a dozen Arab nations have called for Israeli authorities to be put on international trial for multiple crimes.

Those crimes have been listed as perpetration of genocide, war crimes, and racial discrimination against Palestinians. The coalition is also calling for an arms embargo against the regime as well as travel bans and the freezing of assets against Israeli military officials. ▶ Page 5

Interview

U.S. war on terror accelerated Iran's regional influence: researcher

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN – A research associate at the India Study Centre at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) says that the U.S. has accelerated Iran's influence in the region.

"I feel that the U.S. War on Terror (WOT) further accelerated Iran's influence in the region," Dost Muhammad Barrech tells the Tehran Times.

Barrech adds, "The history and geography of Iran manifest that it has remained a region's main power."

He also said the overthrow of the Taliban in 2001 and Saddam Hussein in 2003 favored Iran. ▶ Page 5

Iran, Oman ink comprehensive economic co-op MOU

TEHRAN – Iran and Oman signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for expanding economic cooperation in a variety of areas at the end of the two countries' 19th Joint Economic Committee meeting.

The MOU was signed by Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Fatemi-Amin and Omani Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef, who co-chaired the joint meeting.

During the mentioned committee meeting, the two sides stressed the need for further expansion of economic cooperation between Tehran and Muscat through Iran's southeastern Chabahar Port.

Speaking at the end of the meeting, Al Yousef underlined the significance of Chabahar port as a platform for boosting the level of trade between the two countries, saying that in order to implement the signed cooperation document, an Omani economic delegation will soon visit Chabahar port to assess

the infrastructure, equipment, and capabilities of Iran's oceanic port.

Fatemi-Amin visited Oman's capital Muscat on top of a high-ranking trade delegation to attend the 19th Iran-Oman Joint Economic Committee meeting which was held during February 8-9.

During his visit, the minister also met Oman's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sayyid Badr Bin Hamad Bin Hamood Al Busaidi to discuss ways for expanding ties between the two countries. ▶ Page 4

Opinion

FFIRI's board of directors want to remove Azizi Khadem

By Farrokh Hesabi

TEHRAN – Members of the board of directors of the Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI), who are dissatisfied with the way things are going in the federation, want to remove FFIRI president Shahaboddin Azizi Khadem from his position.

Azizi Khadem has two-week time to hold the board of directors' meeting; otherwise, after this period, the FFIRI board of directors can directly hold the extraordinary meeting without the presence of the president of the federation.

According to the FFIRI Statutes, the board of directors has the authority to dismiss the president of the federation. The final decision should be made at the FFIRI general assembly. ▶ Page 3

Health insurance provided for 170,000 refugees

TEHRAN – Some 170,000 refugees residing in Iran are now covered by health insurance, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

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

It seems that 4 to 5 million foreign nationals are not under the coverage of any health insurance because they entered the country through unofficial bases, Jafar Rahimi, deputy director of the Health Insurance Organization, said.

Vulnerable refugees with the support of the UNHCR and Iran are insured free of charge. However, those who are financially able should pay their insurance premiums, he stated, IRINN reported on Thursday. ▶ Page 7

Two-day conference to look at the puzzle of Halilroud, Jiroft civilizations

TEHRAN – The interwoven civilizations of Halilroud and Jiroft will be discussed by experts of various disciplines in a two-day international conference, which is scheduled to commence today at the University of jiroft in southern Iran.

The event will bring together archaeologists, historians, anthropologists, linguistics, and cultural heritage experts to discuss the puzzling cultures, which are believed to date from Bronze Age.

Archaeological studies show that Halilroud is one of the oldest civilizations in the East, and to understand its importance and status, terms such as "the oldest cradle of world civilization" are sometimes used, according to the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism, ISNA reported.

Organizers say that the conference would turn the spotlight on essays and articles so far being authored on ▶ Page 6

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President Raisi visits Fajr visual art festival

TEHRAN – President Ebrahim Raisi visited an exhibition of the 14th Fajr Festival of Visual Arts on Thursday.

Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad-Mehdi Esmaili and a number of the organizers accompanied Raisi on his visit to "Mirror on the Mirror", an exhibition of the festival underway at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art.

The exhibit is dedicated to showcasing a collection of artworks on the Islamic Revolution.

"An artwork can represent hours of speeches and materials discussed in a book in one single image, sustaining the messages of the speeches and the book for use by several generations," the president said during a speech made after his visit to the exhibition. ▶ Page 8

TENDER INVITATION NO. 1400-1013

IRAN ALUMINIUM COMPANY (IRALCO) would like to invite eligible suppliers for the supply of 150 MT, Ferro Phosphorus on tender basis. Interested companies are allowed to send their competitive offer till 26-February -2022. Based on our required instruction to following address: PO Box 31, opposite Bahonar Park, Manabe Tabiei (Natural Resources) Boulevard, Arak- Iran Postal code: 3818998116. Attention: Mr. Omid - Mr. Nabuini Tel: +98 86 32162014 +98 86 32162181 NO.49, Mollasadra Ave., Vanak Square, Tehran- Iran, Postal code: 1991614581 Name of office: Managing Director Office, Iranian Aluminum Company. Fax: +98 21 88049028 Tel: +98 21 88049024 For obtaining tender's documents and more information, please check: www.iralco.ir



Public Relations Department of Iran Aluminum Company

Foreign leaders congratulate Iran on Islamic Revolution anniversary

TEHRAN — On the 43rd anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution, several prominent foreign leaders sent congratulatory messages to top Iranian officials, including Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, President Ebrahim Raisi, and Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan of Armenia sent congratulatory messages to Leader and president on the anniversary of the Islamic Revolution.

Pashinyan's message addressed to the Leader reads as follows:

The smooth development of relations based on mutual trust and warmth with the neighboring and friendly Islamic Republic of Iran is of particular importance for the Republic of Armenia.

We can state with satisfaction that this year we mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our countries, the course of which has registered a steady path of development.

I am confident that the warm and neighborly Armenian-Iranian relations, firmly based on mutual respect and trust, will reach new horizons for the benefit of the development of our countries and the welfare of the peoples.

'Armenia highly praises warm ties with Iran'

The Armenian prime minister's congratulatory message addressed to the Iranian president is as follows:

In the Republic of Armenia, we highly appreciate the normal development of warm and neighborly Armenian-Iranian relations, which are based on centuries-old history and mutual respect.

We should record with satisfaction that this year we mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our countries, the course of which has been marked by achievements in various fields and the expansion of cooperation prospects.

Highlighting the determination of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Iran to strengthen peace and stability in the region, I reaffirm the official invitation to you to visit Armenia to discuss the issues on the bilateral agenda.

I am convinced that due to joint efforts we will be committed to the deepening of high-level Armenian-Iranian interstate relations, and the multifaceted agenda of our cooperation will be further expanded for the benefit of our peoples and countries.

'Azerbaijan-Iran ties stem from the will of our two peoples'

In a message written on Tuesday and published on Friday, Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, congratulated Raisi.

Aliyev's message is as follows:

Dear Mr. President,

On my own behalf and on behalf of the people of Azerbaijan, I convey to you and through you to all the people of your country my sincerest congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of the national day of the Islamic Republic of Iran, victory of the Islamic Revolution.

Relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Iran stem from the will of our two peoples, who have historically lived in an atmosphere of friendship and good neighborliness, and share common moral values. We attach special importance to our interstate relations built on such solid foundations.

Today, we are satisfied with the rapid development of our bilateral relations. High-level political dialogue, reciprocal visits and regular meetings, as well as signed documents give a strong impetus to strengthening of

bilateral cooperation. The everyday expansion of the framework of our cooperation in economic, trade, energy, transport and other fields is the clear example of this.

I recall with pleasure our meeting with you in Ashgabat held in an atmosphere of mutual understanding. I think that an in-depth exchange of views and discussions that we held will contribute to further development of our bilateral ties and ensure elevating them to a qualitatively new stage.

I do believe that through our joint efforts, Azerbaijan-Iran relations will continue to develop and strengthen to the benefit of our peoples.

On this remarkable day, I wish you the best of health, success in your endeavors, and the friendly and brotherly people of Iran peace and prosperity.

'Friendly ties will lead to welfare of Iranian and Kyrgyz nations'

Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov congratulated Ebrahim Raisi on the 43rd anniversary of the Islamic Revolution.

The text of the message is as follows:

Ayatollah Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

His Excellency,

Hereby, I congratulate you and the people of Iran on the 43rd anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution of Iran on behalf of myself and the people of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan.

The Kyrgyz Republic pays special attention to the development of mutual cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

I believe that the friendly relations between the two countries will lead to the welfare of the two nations more than before.

Kyrgyzstan is ready to use all bilateral and multilateral cooperation mechanisms to develop relations with Iran, including within the framework of the United Nations, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

I wish the people of Iran prosperity, peace and progress, and Your Excellency good health, success and prosperity in government affairs.

Qatari and Omani leaders congratulate Iran on Revolution victory

The Emir of Qatar, Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, has sent a congratulatory message to the Iranian president.

In the message, Al Thani congratulated the president on the 43rd anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution.

Haitham bin Tariq, the Sultan of Oman also congratulated the Iranian president in a message on the anniversary of the victory of the Revolution.

I congratulate brotherly Iranians on behalf of Turkish nation

Turkey's Parliament speaker Mustafa Sentop on Friday congratulated Iran as it marks the 43rd anniversary of the 1979 revolution.

"On the occasion of the National Day of the Islamic Republic of Iran, I sincerely congratulate the friendly and brotherly people of Iran on behalf of the Turkish nation and myself," Sentop said in a letter to his Iranian counterpart Mohammad Bagher Qalibaf.

"I hope that our relations, which are shaped on a solid basis with our strong historical, cultural and human ties, will become stronger with the joint efforts of our parliaments and mutual contacts," the Turkish top legislator concluded.

Taliban says committed to Iran's water rights

TEHRAN — In a statement on Friday, the Taliban Ministry of Water and Energy announced that Kabul is committed to the Iran-Afghanistan Water Agreement and announced the Islamic Emirates of Afghanistan is ready to implement the water rights agreement with the Iranian side.

The pronouncement of commitment to water share was made by Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid through Twitter.

The statement said that in connection with the management of the Helmand River, it will adhere to all legal, technical issues and annexes to the water treaty signed between Iran and Afghanistan in 1935.

The ministry stressed that it is ready to cooperate with friendly and neighboring country of Iran in an atmosphere of trust to implement the provisions of this permanent agreement.

On March 13, 1973, Iran and Afghanistan signed a water agreement on the Helmand River water rights.

According to the agreement, Iran must receive 820 million cubic meters of water from the Helmand River.

In his press briefing on January 31, Saeed Khatibzadeh, spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry, stressed that the ministry is seriously pursuing the implementation of the water rights agreement.

"Unfortunately, despite the fact that the governing body of Afghanistan has announced that this right is definite and they have opened the dam, but the water has not arrived. It is important to us how committed the governing body is to international and bilateral law," Khatibzadeh said in response to a question posed by the Tehran Times correspondent.

Saeed Jalili: Maximum pressure failed miserably

TEHRAN— Saeed Jalili, a member of the Expediency Council and Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), said on Thursday night that the maximum pressure campaign on Iran has failed.

Speaking at a live TV show, Jalili said that the United States has declared and implemented a maximum pressure campaign on Iran.

Noting that they did not put anything behind in the "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran, Jalili added, "The American officials have taken this position (of denouncing the campaign) and explicitly stated in February this year that our policy of maximum pressure has failed miserably and this is a great victory."

Emphasizing that the Iranian nation created this victory, the former SNSC chief who also served as Iran's chief nuclear negotiator said that the Iranian nation has shown that it understands the politics and the enemy well, and in spite of all the problems that exist, it "stands", "resists" and "wins".

He continued by saying that another "golden leaf" has been added to the honors of the Iranian nation.



Jalili, who ran for the presidential post in the June election but withdrew in favor of Ebrahim Raisi, said that a U.S. official says that the United States was isolated and, more interestingly, he states that not only the U.S. could not "push Iran back", but Iran "came forward".

The Expediency Council member emphasized, "I congratulate the people of Iran... because it was the people who doomed the maximum pressure to failure and achieved this victory."

"The Americans, from the time of Bush and Obama and Mrs. Clinton, have said that we are pursuing crippling sanctions, and Trump has said that 'maximum pressure' and Mr. Biden's slogan was a different one from Trump, but now more than

a year from now, after his election, he has not reduced any of the Trump-era sanctions. He has even added more sanctions," Jalili said.

Stating that the U.S. policy is to put maximum pressure on the Iranian nation as much as they can, he added that the U.S. sanctions and pressure are not just primary sanctions, meaning the sanctions not only do not allow anyone from the United States to sell anything to Iran, but it also imposes sanctions on any country that wants to have economic relations with Iran.

The former nuclear negotiator said, "One of their slogans was that no one should buy oil from Iran until Iran's oil sales reaches zero. They announced and implemented this

issue, but today our minister of oil officially announces that we sell 1.2 million barrels of oil and receive the income."

Jalili added that if now other countries are challenging the United States and do not listen to it and are buying oil from Iran, this is a great opportunity for the country.

"Countries, powers and governments for any reason entered the challenge with the United States and ignore its sanctions," the Expediency Council member highlighted.

Jalili went on to say that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was reporting that Iran was fully loyal to its obligations under the 2015 nuclear deal, nevertheless, the United States withdrew from the agreement and announced the imposition of maximum pressure on the Islamic Republic.

He concluded, "European countries were not willing to condemn this action of the United States and only expressed regret. That means the United States also had the support of the European countries, but they themselves came to the conclusion that their action not only did not bear fruit but also failed miserably."

Amir Abdollahian: Vienna is a big test for U.S.

Iranian show "dignity with dignity and threats with resistance," FM says

TEHRAN — On the sidelines of President Ebrahim Raisi's meeting with foreign ambassadors residing in Tehran, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian said that Vienna is a big litmus test for the United States.

"Today in Vienna there is a big test for the United States and the West to show their real behavior to the international community," Amir Abdollahian said.

He stressed that the time for concluding the negotiations will be determined by the will of the Western parties to fully honor their obligations under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the official name for the 2015 nuclear deal.

The Iranian diplomats in Vienna are negotiating to lift the oppressive sanctions, the top diplomat asserted.

He added, "We are present at the negotiating table with seriousness, plan and initiative, and

we are determined to reach a good agreement."

Pointing out that the new government's approach is popular and transformational, the foreign minister added, "The new government's approach is pragmatic and it seeks to implement the concluded documents, as well as the postponed laws. This issue is also pursued in foreign policy."

He stressed that Iran pursues development of bilateral relations based on common interests and equality.

"We have a special view on regional and international cooperation," the foreign minister added.

Pointing to the 43rd anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the top diplomat said Iranians have shown throughout history that they answer "dignity with dignity and threats with resistance, and mutual language."

Foreign ministry officials honor Islamic

Revolution victory

Meanwhile, senior foreign ministry officials congratulated the 43rd anniversary of the Islamic Revolution on Twitter.

"I was honored to accompany President Raisi in hosting foreign ambassadors on the 43rd anniversary of our nation's Islamic Revolution. Values of the revolution will continue to lead Iran's foreign policy," Foreign Minister Amir Abdollahian tweeted on Friday.

Saeed Khatibzadeh, spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry, also honored the victory of the Islamic Revolution in a tweet on Friday.

"43yrs ago, the agelong struggle of our nation for self-determination, & a free & independent Iran ended in victory. Our nation has made many sacrifices to safeguard those values & principles. Our resolve to stand & strive for Iran's rights & interests remains unwavering. #IRI43" Khatibzadeh tweeted.

Sherman rejects argument that Iran has upper hand in Vienna talks

TEHRAN — U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman, in an interview with MSNBC on Thursday, denied assertions that Iran has the upper hand in the Vienna talks intended to lift illegal sanctions on Iran.

"We're not going to (just) accept anything Iran has to offer," Sherman said. "We will reenter the JCPOA in its fullness if Iran maintains compliance with it."

"And all of our options always remain on the table, regardless of what gets chosen here," she said.

JCPOA or the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action is the official name for the 2015 nuclear deal.

Supporters and opponents of the agreement have been making their voices heard in Washington in recent days as U.S. chief negotiator Rob Malley gave a closed-door briefing to the Senate on Wednesday.

Senator Bob Menendez, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, is among the Democrats who are more skeptical.

"I think we're at a critical moment, a serious moment and we'll see which way it turns," Menendez told AFP after the briefing. "But I certainly walked away with a sense of the difficulties of the moment we are in."

Earlier this month, Menendez warned the White House against reviving the agreement as it is. "At this point, we seriously have to ask what exactly are we trying to



salvage?" he said.

Opposition to the deal is strong on the right and 32 Republican senators wrote Biden recently saying any deal would need to be submitted to Congress "for evaluation" with the "possibility of Congress blocking implementation."

The Biden administration has not responded to the letter so far, apparently considering that any deal reached would be a return to an existing agreement and not a new one.

Republican lawmakers have also made it clear they oppose lifting economic sanctions imposed on Iran, saying it would reward Tehran for what they call its "destabilizing activities."

Donald Trump pulled the United States out of the nuclear deal, which was negotiated by the

Obama administration, in 2018 and reimposed sweeping sanctions on Iran.

In an interview published on December 3, 2021, U.S. Secretary Antony Blinken said, "I think the decision to pull out of the agreement was a disastrous mistake."

Blinken added "the JCPOA was a very effective agreement" that resulted in the "most effective and intrusive monitoring" of Iran's nuclear activities.

In a recent tweet, Democratic Senator Christopher Murphy said, "Iran got stronger and their behavior got more dangerous after we left the deal."

Mark Dubowitz, who heads the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, which opposed the 2015 nuclear agreement, said the Iranians "know President Biden is desperate for a deal."

"So they've been squeezing the administration for concessions," he told AFP.

Dubowitz, who advocates returning to "maximum pressure, said the administration wants "to put the Iranian nuclear program back in a box" so they can concentrate on other priorities such as China.

"Problem is the box has no lid," he claimed.

Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, is

in favor of reviving the agreement arguing that "there are no good alternative options to promptly restoring compliance with the JCPOA."

"The fact is that without a prompt return to mutual compliance with the JCPOA, it is more than plausible, possible, and maybe even probable that Iran will try to become a threshold nuclear weapon state," Kimball said.

Iran has been insisting that it has no intention to build nuclear arms. Moreover, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has issued a fatwa (decree) declaring production, stockpiling and use of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear arms, as haram (religiously forbidden).

Additionally, before Iran reduced its cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency in retaliation to the U.S. pullout of the nuclear deal and imposition of illegal sanctions, the Islamic Republic was subject to the most intrusive sanctions in the history of the UN nuclear watchdog.

Iran reduced its commitments to the JCPOA in accordance to paragraph 36 of the JCPOA which has provided a mechanism to resolve disputes and allows one side, under certain circumstances, to stop complying with the deal if the other side is out of compliance.

Iran looking for new chapter in bilateral and multilateral cooperation: president

TEHRAN – Iranian President Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi on Thursday laid out the principles and characteristics of his administration's foreign policy in a meeting with foreign ambassadors, heads of foreign missions and organizations in Tehran.

Speaking a day before the celebration of the 43rd anniversary of the glorious victory of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Raisi expressed hope that the current year would be "the year of peace and excellence of high human values."

The 43rd anniversary of the revolution rolls around on February 11. But Iran commemorates the period from February 1 to February 11 every year to mark the consequential ten days from the arrival of Imam Khomeini to the country to the total overthrow of the Shah regime ten days later in 1979. This period is known as the Ten-Day Dawn. During the commemoration of the victory of the Revolution, Iran's high-ranking officials often deliver speeches. On Friday, the president also delivered speech at the Imam Khomeini Mosallah which coincided with the anniversary of the Revolution.

Addressing foreign diplomats, Ayatollah Raisi described the clear message of the Islamic Revolution as the denial of hegemony and domination, defending the oppressed and the right to self-determination. "These ideals are universal values, disagreement with which means denying human and moral values, and the proud Iranian nation still stand by these ideals," he stated.

On celebration of the 43rd anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the president said, "This revolution is the product of the people's deep belief in the transcendent principles and values of Islam, freedom, justice and intelligent leadership."

Ayatollah Raisi stated, "The strategic thought of the Islamic Republic of Iran is rooted in the school of Imam Khomeini (RA), the founder of the Islamic Revolution and the concept of pure Islam."

'Denial of hegemony and domination'

The president described the message of the Islamic Revolution as the denial of hegemony and domination, the non-interference of world powers in the internal affairs of independent nations, defending the oppressed, the right to self-determination and independence in domestic and foreign policies, according to the official website of the Iranian presidency.

"These ideals are universal values, disagreement with which means denying human and moral values, and the proud Iranian nation still stand by these ideals," he said.

Ayatollah Raisi described comprehensiveness, dynamism and in-



telligence as the characteristics of the Islamic Republic's foreign policy, adding, "The foreign policy of the popular administration, since the beginning of its office, has been based on the Supreme Leader's guidelines, which are 'maximum interaction with neighboring countries and allies,' 'attention to the capacity of regional and international organizations' and 'development of economic diplomacy.'"

The president said his government has proved its sincerity in strengthening relations and friendly relations with neighbors and other international partners in the period since its inauguration. "In our efforts for a new approach in the field of diplomacy, we are trying to create a new chapter of cooperation and multilateralism."

Ayatollah Raisi added, "In this regard, we have implemented an important part of the 25-year strategic partnership agreement with the People's Republic of China. We have a similar agreement with the Russian Federation on the agenda, and trying to strengthen cooperation with the Eurasian Economic Union and becoming a permanent member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization."

The president continued, "We have also taken effective steps to improve relations with all neighbors and by strengthening ports and transit corridors, we have prepared the way for the development and expansion of cooperation with neighbors."

Ayatollah Raisi stated, "Development of relations with neighboring countries and Asia and the activation of economic diplomacy... is one of the priorities of the diplomatic apparatus, but due to balanced, dynamic and intelligent foreign policy, special attention is paid to deepening relations and increasing cooperation with the aim of benefiting from reciprocal capacities with other geographical regions such as Africa, Latin America and Europe."

The president added, "We are trying to establish and operate a coherent and continuous relationship with other geographical areas and in accordance with the strategic weight, political, economic and commercial

position of each region, with a realistic view and away from any influence of external factors and redundant variables."

"Being in a sensitive and important political and economic situation and having wide sea coasts and very high capacities, especially in the fields of transit, energy, trade, agriculture, industry and technology, the Islamic Republic of Iran is interested in creating and continuing a new atmosphere of cooperation and beneficial relations with neighboring, surrounding and friendly countries in order to meet the mutual needs and interests based on the policy of maximum interaction."

The president continued that

Iran enjoys "unique investment opportunities, suitable domestic market, privileged geographical position along with stable and continuous internal security."

Pointing out that some hegemonic powers are trying to prevent Iran from being in a position that it is entitled to, the president said, "Nevertheless, the Islamic Republic of Iran, backed by domestic efforts and having a rich history, civilization and culture, is an undeniable reality in the politics of the region and the world and a friendly and reliable partner for economic integration with neighbors and other international partners."

Also on Thursday, ambassadors and heads of foreign missions and organizations residing in Tehran congratulated Ayatollah Raisi on the 43rd anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, and wished success and happiness to the people and government of Iran. The ceremony was inaugurated by the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkmenistan in Tehran, Ahmad Gurbanov.

Iran FM meets ambassadors

Also, on the occasion of the Ten-day Dawn, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian held the first video conference with Iranian ambassadors and heads of country's diplomatic missions abroad on Wednesday, February 9

Amir Abdollahian's deputies and Foreign Ministry directors were also present at the video conference.

After a number of ambassadors presented their views, Amir Abdollahian presented a speech during which he commemorated the anniversary of the Islamic Revolution and the memory of Imam Khomeini and the martyrs of the Islamic Revolution. He also congratulated the blessed Ten-day Dawn and the arrival of the holy month of Rajab and then spoke about the latest political developments regarding Iran's foreign policy, according to the Iranian foreign ministry.

Referring to the transformational plans of President Raisi's government, Amir Abdollahian described balanced foreign policy, dynamic diplomacy and smart interaction as the framework practiced by the Foreign Ministry to preserve the original values of the Islamic Revolution and ensure the maximum interests of the great Iranian nation.

The foreign minister also spoke of foreign policy achievements over the past few months like urgently providing vaccines on a large scale to fight Covid-19.

Ayatollah Raisi describes comprehensiveness, dynamism and intelligence as the characteristics of the Islamic Republic's foreign policy.

Amir Abdollahian called on the heads of Iran's diplomatic missions to make every effort in line with the new government's policies to deepen Iran's relations with other countries and pay special attention to the needs of Iranian nationals abroad.

He stressed that it is necessary for the esteemed diplomats to meet Iranians abroad to get informed about their possible problems and resolve them.

The foreign minister stressed although Iran's neighbors and the Asian region are among the main priorities in the country's foreign policy, at the same time the Islamic Republic is determined to expand balanced and good relations with countries in other regions, including Africa, Latin America and Europe.

At the end, Amir Abdollahian spoke about the latest developments in the nuclear negotiations in Vienna aimed at lifting sanctions on Iran.

43 years of resistance and counting

From Page 1 ▶ In the capital Tehran, the car processions began at 09:30 a.m. Local time and drivers headed to their usual destination: the iconic Azad Square. The cars were adorned with Iran's flags and photos of Imam Khomeini as well as placards reading slogans such as "Death to America," "Death to Israel," and "Death to England." Photos of the Leader of Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei and martyr Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani also were waived in the processions.

Some drivers chanted slogans of "Death to America" and "We Will Resist Until the End" from windows as they drove by, according to an AFP report.

This year's anniversary of the Islamic Revolution coincided with Friday during which a weekly congregational prayer is held. President Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi delivered a sermon at the Friday prayer in which he congratulated the Iranian people on the victory of the Islamic Revolution. The president described the February 11 as a "Day of God" and a "manifestation of divine might at the hand of the great people of Iran under the leadership of Imam Khomeini."

ship of Imam Khomeini."

Ayatollah Raisi said the Iranian people and the world's nations want the Iranian political system to remain revolutionary. "The slogans of the Islamic Revolution were rational and today, not only the great nation of Iran but the world's nations are pinning great hope on this revolution. What everybody wants is that this system continues to be revolutionary and not lose [its revolutionary fervor] due to ups and downs and developments," the president said.

Ayatollah Raisi also touched on foreign policy issues, saying that his administration seeks to strike a balance in Iran's foreign policy.

"Our relations in foreign policy are to create balance. Looking to the West has made the country unbalanced. We must pay attention to all countries and capacities, especially our neighbors. But we pin hope on God, we pin hope on Khuzestan, Khorasan, Azerbaijan, east, west, north, and south of the country, and we never pin hope on Vienna and New York," the president said.

Other Iranian officials also made remarks about

the 43rd anniversary of the Islamic Revolution. The spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry, Saeed Khatibzadeh, said the revolution was a struggle for self-determination. "43 years ago, the age-long struggle of our nation for self-determination, & a free & independent Iran ended in victory. Our nation has made many sacrifices to safeguard those values & principles," he said on Twitter.

He added, "Our resolve to stand & strive for Iran's rights & interests remains unwavering."

Iranian Foreign Minister Amir Hossein Amir Abdollahian, for his part, said the values of the revolution will continue to serve as a guiding principle for Iran's foreign policy.

"I was honored to accompany President Raisi in hosting foreign ambassadors on the 43rd anniversary of our nation's Islamic Revolution. Values of the revolution will continue to lead Iran's foreign policy," the foreign minister said on Twitter.

in various scientific, technological, industrial, defense and other fields.

Do not doubt that the economic prosperity of the country will be realized quickly and powerfully and with serious planning and pursuit in the near future. The thirteenth administration in the Islamic Republic of Iran, by looking at a balanced foreign policy approach, dynamic diplomacy, and

smart interaction will press ahead forcefully and will achieve the goals and interests of the great nation of Iran," the foreign minister said.

He added, "At the negotiating table in Vienna, we are pursuing serious talks to reach a good and lasting agreement. All our efforts are aimed at effectively removing sanctions on the great nation of Iran. We are optimistic about the future and we hope that all parties will return to their commitments in the Vienna talks."

He concluded, "At the same time, at home, we vigorously pursue sustainable economic development policies and programs. We cherish the memory of the dear martyrs and war veterans. Good luck."

Iran FM issues message on anniversary of Islamic Revolution

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has issued a video message offering congratulations on the occasion of the anniversary of the Ten-Day Dawn and the victory of the glorious Islamic Revolution of Iran.

"I am very pleased to stress that our country, in the fifth decade of its new life, is witnessing development

SPORTS

FFIRI's board of directors want to remove Azizi Khadem

From Page 1 ▶ From the beginning of his tenure in this position, he has faced controversies and they were widely covered in the Iranian media. Many sports media and experts criticized the legal and economic ambiguities in the contracts related to the football federation.

Mehrdad Seraji, Bahram Rezaian, Shohreh Mousavi, Ehsan Osuli, and Mirshad Majedi are the five members of the board who have signed the letter of request for the meeting to remove the head of FFIRI.

Among the problems that have been observed during Azizi Khadem's presence in the football federation was the removing of the popular teams of Persepolis and Esteghlal from the 2022 AFC Champions League competitions by the Asian Football Confederation due to the team's failure to satisfy all of the mandatory criteria to get the professional license.

It is an incident that has not yet been cleared who is to blame for it.

FFIRI's board of directors will meet soon to decide whether to appoint a temporary replacement as the federation's president.

Iran still 21st in FIFA ranking

TEHRAN – Iran national football team remained unchanged in the FIFA World Ranking released on Thursday.

The 'Persian Leopards' are 21st in the world and first in Asia, followed by Japan and Korea Republic.

Dragan Skocic's side booked their place in the 2022 FIFA World Cup as the first Asian team in late January.

Belgium remain top of the updated international football teams' ratings list, followed by Brazil, France, Argentina and England.

The next FIFA World Ranking will be published on March 31.

Iranian Alpine skier Saveh Shemshaki suspended after positive doping test

TEHRAN – Iranian Alpine skier Hossein Saveh Shemshaki has been provisionally suspended after a sample collected returned an adverse analytical finding (AAF), the International Testing Agency said on Wednesday.

He carried Iran's flag at the opening ceremony.

The ITA said the sample, collected during an out-of-competition anti-doping control on Monday in Beijing, tested positive for an anabolic androgenic steroid on the World Anti-Doping Agency's list of prohibited substances.

"The athlete is prevented from competing, training, coaching, or participating in any activity, during the Olympic Winter Games Beijing 2022," the ITA said in a statement.

"The athlete has the right to challenge the imposition of the provisional suspension before the Court of Arbitration for Sport – Anti-Doping Division (CAS ADD). The athlete also has the right to request the analysis of the B-sample."

Saveh Shemshaki, 36, earned his best Olympic result so far in 2014 in Sochi, where he finished 31st in slalom.

Iran invites 19 players for 2023 FIBA World Cup qualifiers

TEHRAN – Iran national basketball team head coach Mostafa Hashemi has called up 19 players to the team for two matches against Kazakhstan and Syria in the 2023 FIBA Basketball World Cup Asian Qualifiers.

The second window of the FIBA Basketball World Cup 2023 Asian Qualifiers is inching closer and closer and with that, competing nations have begun to confirm their preliminary player rosters.

Iran have been scheduled to face Kazakhstan on Feb. 24 in the 2023 FIBA Basketball World Cup qualification Group D in Tehran. Hashem's men will play Syria three days later.

Iran lead the group with two wins over Bahrain.

Iran squad:
Matin Aghajanzpour, Jalal Aghamiri, Mohammad

Jamshidi, Mohammad Hassanzadeh, Navid Khatibzadeh, Saeid Davarpanah, Ehsan Dalirzahan, Navid Rezaeifar, Arman Zangeneh, Asghar Kar-doust, Arsalan Kazemi, Mehdi Kamrani, Sajad Mashayekhi, Salar Monji, Meysam Mirzaei, Mohammad Sina Vahedi, Amir Hossein Yazarloo, Behnam Yakhchali, Mohammad Yousefvand

Shahad named Iraq football coach

TEHRAN – Abdul-Ghani Shahad has been appointed as new head coach of the Iraq national football team.

The 53-year-old replaces Montenegrin Zeljko Petrovic following Iraq's poor results in Group A of the AFC Asian Qualifiers – Road to Qatar.

After retiring as a player in 1999, the former defender coached Al-Najaf before moving to several other clubs in Iraq.

Shahad has also coached the Iraq U-23 national team on several occasions, including the 2016 AFC U23 Championship where they finished third. He was also appointed as an interim coach for the senior side in 2016.

Iraq are fifth in Group A of the AFC Asian Qualifiers on five points with just two matches – against UAE and Syria next month – remaining.

Maatouq appointed coach of Syria football team

TEHRAN – The Syrian Football Federation announced the appointment of Ghassan Maatouq as head coach of the national team.

He replaced Romanian Valeriu Tita who was sacked following poor results in the 2022 World Cup qualifiers.

"The interim committee of the Syrian Arab Football Federation has decided to name Ghassan Maatouq as the coach of the team. This is in preparation for the next two games of the 2022 World Cup qualifiers against Lebanon and Iraq on the 24 and 29 of March," it reads.

Tita lost his job after only three months in charge because of his failure to keep Syria in qualification race. They suffered losses against the UAE and South Korea and officially bid farewell to the World Cup qualifiers.

Central Asian futsal's next generation set to shine at CAFA U19 Championship

TEHRAN – Future stars will emerge as Kyrgyz Republic plays host to Central Asia's brightest futsal talents at the CAFA U19 Futsal Championship, starting Saturday.

Five teams will battle for regional bragging rights over five Matchdays at Bishkek's Gazprom Arena, with every CAFA Member Association except for Turkmenistan taking part in the inaugural U19 event.

Played on a round-robin basis, the tournament will not only provide a platform for the region's next generation of senior internationals but deliver competitive preparation for regional and continental competitions to come over the next two years, the-afc.com reported.

While many of the players are yet to establish themselves on the international stage, there will be several familiar faces among the head coaches.

Islamic Republic of Iran will be led by former senior national team head coach Ali Sanei and Afghanistan's squad will be tutored by former senior national team assistant Mahmood Seyed, while Kyrgyz Republic boss Vadim Kondratkov appeared at five AFC Futsal Championship final tournaments during his playing career.

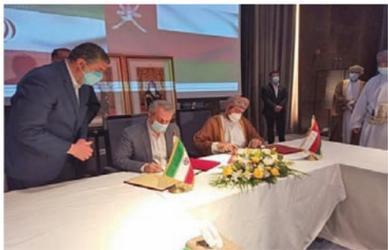
Saturday's opening match will be played by Iran and Afghanistan, with Uzbekistan to face Tajikistan in the evening kick-off, while hosts Kyrgyz Republic will begin their campaign against Afghanistan on Sunday.

Each team will play four matches, with the final Matchday to be held on Saturday, February 19.

Central Asia has long been considered an Asian futsal hotspot, with 12-time continental champions leading the way, while Uzbekistan have reached the AFC Futsal Asian Cup final on four occasions.

Kyrgyz Republic has reached the semi-finals of the continental finals on three occasions, and Afghanistan were runners-up in the inaugural AFC U-20 Futsal Asian Cup in 2019, while Tajikistan have qualified for the last nine AFC Futsal Asian Cups.

Iran, Oman ink comprehensive economic co-op MOU



Industry Minister Reza Fatemi-Amin (L) and Omani Minister of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion Qais bin Mohammed Al Yousef sign MOU documents in Muscat on Thursday

From page 1 ▶ Speaking in this meeting, Al Busaidi expressed his country's readiness for expanding economic relations with the Islamic

Republic of Iran.

Fatemi-Amin also underlined the close relations between the two countries and said: "We have long-standing relations based on friendship and mutual closeness with Oman, and these friendly relations will pave the way for the promotion of trade relations."

During his visit to Oman, Fatemi-Amin also met with the private sector and political and economic officials of the Kingdom, including the minister of Health, the minister of Economy, Foreign Affairs, Energy, and Minerals and the minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology of Oman and the heads of Oman's free and special economic zones to discuss the latest state of economic and trade relations between the two countries.

Prior to his visit to Oman, Fatemi-Amin had traveled to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) this week to attend Expo Dubai.

'Domestic manufacturers fully able to meet country's industrial equipment needs'

TEHRAN - Chairman of the Board of Iranian Industrial Equipment Manufacturers Association (known as SATSA) has said domestic manufacturers have the capacity to indigenize the knowledge for the production of over \$5 billion worth of industrial equipment, IRNA reported on Thursday.

According to Amir-Abbas Ekhteraei, currently, only 44 percent of the capacity of Iran's industrial equipment manufacturing units is active, and by providing the necessary infrastructure, all of this capacity can be activated and the country would no longer need to import such equipment.

Mentioning the recent meeting of the country's industrial equipment manufacturers with Leader of the Islamic Revolution Seyed Ali Khamenei, the official expressed hope that this meeting will lead to new developments in the production of industrial equipment.

Expressing that in the meeting with the leader of the Islamic Revolution, a report was presented on the situation of Iran's industrial equipment and machine-building organizations, Ekhteraei said: "Currently, 3,500 companies are active in the design and manufacturing of industrial equipment, machinery, and production lines for the oil, gas, petrochemical, as well



as mining and food industries."

He put the annual turnover of the mentioned companies at \$3.2 billion and noted that currently about \$8 billion worth of industrial equipment is imported into the country every year, so there is the capacity to indigenize the knowledge for the manufacturing of the other \$4.8 billion.

The official further noted that Iranian industrial equipment manufacturers have the capacity to even export to other countries and meet the demands of the neighboring countries in this regard.

He mentioned the regulation of imports, focusing on decision-making, drafting appropriate laws, dealing decisively and quickly with cases of divergence from regulations, balancing the supply and demand, and publishing annual reports on the industry as the most important issues raised in the meeting with the leader of the Islamic Revolution.

TEHRAN - Head of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) Masoud Khansari and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Iran Dmitry Koltsov met on Wednesday to discuss ways of expanding trade ties between the two countries.

During the meeting, the officials stressed the need for promoting bilateral economic ties between the private sectors of the two nations, the TCCIMA portal reported.

Discussing the bilateral relations and the problems facing the traders of the two countries, Khansari and Koltsov also explored the conditions for the development of trade relations between the two countries.

Speaking at the meeting, Khansari mentioned his visit to Belarus in 2019, saying: "during that visit, we had very positive meetings with government officials and the private sector of Belarus, and it was decided that more trade delegations would be exchanged between the two countries; unfortunately, the

Tehran, Minsk stress promoting bilateral trade ties



TCCIMA Head Masoud Khansari (L) and Belarusian Ambassador to Tehran Dmitry Koltsov

coronavirus pandemic postponed all meetings."

Khansari also praised the performance of the former

Belarusian ambassador to Tehran, saying that there were good and deep relations between TCCIMA and the Belarusian embassy

during his tenure which led to constructive cooperation.

He further expressed hope that during Koltsov's tenure these relations would deepen and the cooperation would become broader than before.

Referring to the problems created by the sanctions in the relations between the two countries, the TCCIMA head added: "Now seems to be an important time to take steps to revive the past relations and develop them. Therefore, I suggest a virtual event to be established between the chambers of commerce of the two countries in collaboration with the embassies in order to provide a suitable platform for the serious development of economic relations."

Koltsov for his part praised the performance of the TCCIMA in cooperation with the Belarusian embassy and underlined the high potential of the two countries' private sectors for cooperation in various areas.

Belarus, as a member of the Eurasian Union, could play an important role in improving Iran's trade relations with the bloc, he said.

Over 760,000 tons of products exported from South Khorasan in 10 months

TEHRAN - As announced by a provincial official, 768,429 tons of products worth \$98.081 million were exported from South Khorasan province, in the east of Iran, during the first 10 months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2021-January 20, 2022).

Bakhtiar Rahmani-pour, the director-general of the province's Customs Department, said that the export indicates four percent drop in terms of value and 41 percent fall in terms of weight, as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

The official named cement, ceramic and tiles, light hydrocarbons, gas oil, bitumen, rebars, and dates as the main exported items, and Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan as the export destinations in the said time span.

He further announced that 2,052 tons of products worth \$360,657 have been imported to the province in the first ten months of the present year.

As previously announced by the head of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of Iran's non-oil exports rose 38 percent during the first 10 months of the current year, as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Alireza Moghadasi said Iran exported over 100 million tons of non-oil products worth \$38.763 billion in the mentioned period.

According to the official, the weight of exports in the mentioned period also grew by seven percent in comparison to the figure for the previous fiscal year's same 10 months.



He said major export destinations of the Iranian non-oil goods were China, Iraq, and Turkey during the said 10 months.

The IRICA head further announced that the Islamic Republic imported 33 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$41.473 billion in the mentioned period, with a 34-percent growth in value and a 17-percent rise in weight, year on year.

The United Arab Emirates was the top exporter to Iran in the said period, followed by China, Turkey, Germany, and Switzerland, he stated.

According to the official, out of the total non-oil goods imported into the country in the first 10 months of this year, 25 million tons worth \$15 billion were basic goods, which indicates an increase of 26 percent in weight and 56 percent in value, year on year.

Moghadasi noted that currently about five million tons of commodities are stored at the country's customs for which the clearance procedures will be carried out soon.

"There are 160 customs active in the country, and this number is increasing with

the creation of new free zones and economic areas," he added.

IRICA has previously announced that the value of Iran's non-oil trade stood at \$73 billion in the past Iranian calendar year.

IRICA former Head Mehdi Mir-Ashrafi had put the weight of non-oil trade at 146.4 million tons and said that the figure showed a 25-million-ton annual decline, which is the result of sanctions and coronavirus pandemic.

Iran's non-oil export was 112 million tons valued at \$34.5 billion, and that of import was 34.4 million tons worth \$38.5 billion in the past year, the official added.

Among the country's non-oil export destinations, China was the first, with importing \$8.9 billion worth of products, Iraq was the second with importing \$7.3 billion, the United Arab Emirates the third with importing \$4.6 billion, Turkey the fourth with importing \$2.5 billion, and Afghanistan the fifth with importing \$2.2 billion, Mir-Ashrafi announced, and named gasoline, natural gas, polyethylene, propane, and pistachio as Iran's major exported products during the past year.

He further named Iran's top sources of non-oil imports in the said time, as China with exporting \$9.7 billion worth of products to the Islamic Republic, the UAE with \$9.6 billion, Turkey with \$4.3 billion, India with \$2.1 billion, and Germany with \$1.8 billion, respectively, and mentioned corn, cellphone, rice, oil meal, and oilseeds, wheat, and raw oil as the major imported items.

Monthly transit of goods via Iran increases 61% yr/yr

TEHRAN- Transit of goods through Iran rose 61 percent in the tenth month of the current Iranian calendar year (December 22, 2021-January 20, 2022), as compared to the same month of the past year, the spokesman of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Ruhollah Latifi said that over 1.07 million tons of commodities were transited via Iran in the mentioned month.

Earlier this month, IRICA Head Alireza Moghadasi said, "Based on the policies of the resistance economy and the fifth and sixth national development plans of the country, every year we should have witnessed a 10-percent growth in transit via the country, which unfortunately in recent years, after proper growth, we had a decreasing trend in transit."

"In the Iranian year 1393 (March 2014-March 2015), the transit of goods via Iran reached more than 13 million tons, after which not only did we not have growth in this due, but in 1398 and 1399, this amount reached 7.5 million tons," he added.

"Fortunately, transit has returned to its growth path in



1400 [the present Iranian year], and is expected to reach 12.4 million tons by the end of this year", Moghadasi further stated.

Iran is one of the countries that have a special status in trade and transit relations due to its strategic location and special geography, as the country is the passage of several important international corridors.

In the south of Iran is the Persian Gulf, which is home to the world's major oil-producing countries. This region is considered the energy bottleneck of the world.

In the north of Iran is the Caspian Sea, which is the best bridge between Iran, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan and can play an important role in trade between these countries.

The country, on the other hand, borders Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan, and Afghanistan to the west and east.

In other words, it can be said that Iran communicates with 15 countries through land and water borders, and at the same time it can act as a bridge between these countries (with each other and other parts of the world).

These countries have a large population and high income which can be effective as a factor in the development of transit and trade in the region.

The connection of Central Asian countries with the Persian Gulf, as well as the establishment of trade relations between East Asia and European countries through Iran, is very cost-effective so that many of these countries seek to establish such relations through

Iran.

This status has provided the country with many opportunities and by optimal use of these opportunities through the expansion of the transportation network and reliable and efficient communication, Iran can achieve foreign currency earnings and economic growth, and make transit revenue a suitable alternative to oil export while improving its strategic position in the region.

Considering its geographical location, Iran can play a significant role in the transit of goods in the region and benefit a lot from its status in this due. To take full advantage of its location for transit, the country has many plans underway and, on the agenda, to boost its transit capacity.

Some of these plans include developing Shahid Rajaei Port, Iran's largest and most-equipped container port in the south, and also Chabahar Port in the southeast of the country, connecting the ports to the railway network, development of transit via railway, and also some customs measures such as improving transit procedures in the customs offices.

Iran's oil exports hit 3-year high as nuclear talks resume

TEHRAN - Iranian oil exports have risen to more than one million barrels per day (bpd) for the first time in almost three years as diplomats from Iran and world powers have reconvened in Vienna to seek a deal reviving Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal, Reuters reported, citing Consulting firm Petro-Logistics.

As reported, Iran's crude oil exports reached the mentioned figure in December 2021, however, the shipments have once again settled at 700,000 bpd in January 2021.

Furthermore, SVB International, another consulting firm that tracks Iranian oil supply, also noted an increase in Iranian crude exports to more than 1 million bpd, although it registered the increase in January rather than December 2021.

Tehran's oil exports have been limited since former U.S. President Donald Trump in 2018 exited a 2015 nuclear accord and reimposed sanctions aimed at curbing oil exports and the associated revenue to Iran's government, Reuters has reported.

Iran managed to increase oil exports in 2021 despite the sanctions, according to estimates from oil industry consultants and analysts.

The Islamic Republic has kept exports flowing despite sanctions as intermediaries find ways to send shipments to various destinations. Tanker tracking companies say China is the destination of most of those shipments.

President Joe Biden's administration has



discussed the imports with China but has not imposed sanctions on Chinese individuals and companies. Beijing has urged the United States to lift the sanctions on Iran, which China opposes.

Reuters added that if the Vienna talks are successful in removing the sanctions, Iran could restart open oil sales.

The increase in Iranian exports comes as tight global supply has helped to push oil prices to a seven-year high of \$94 a barrel. A lifting of U.S. sanctions would allow Iran to start bringing crude exports back toward 2.5 million bpd, a rate last seen in 2018.

China's foreign ministry, in response to a question on China's Iranian oil imports, said: The international community, including China, has been conducting normal cooperation with Iran under the global legal framework, which are both reasonable and legitimate.

U.S. war on terror accelerated Iran's regional influence: researcher

From page 1 ► Following is the text of the interview:

How do you see Iran's position and importance in West Asia after the 1979 Islamic revolution?

Iran, no doubt, has remained the world's oldest civilization and Persian Empire for centuries, currently, is a major Islamic country and the second most populous state in the Middle East (West Asia). Iran's importance in the Middle East (West Asia) particularly in the post-1979 Islamic revolution era cannot be underestimated.

The history and geography of Iran manifests that it has remained a region's main power. I feel that the U.S. War on Terror (WOT) further accelerated Iran's influence in the region. The invasion of Iraq by the U.S. in 2003 resulted in removing Saddam Hussein's government. The transformation of the power to the Shia majority to say the least bolstered the Iran position in Iraq. The toppling of the Taliban regime by the U.S. in the post 9/11 era also went in Iran's favor as the latter did not have cordial ties with the Taliban. I believe that China-Iran 25-year economic cooperation deal signed on March 27, 2021, will further enhance Iran's importance in the region. China is fully cognizant of the Iranian importance in the Middle East (West Asia), thus, will have 100 projects in the deal and will be investing in Iranian telecommunications, healthcare, banking, ports, railways and information technology. The deal also deepens the military cooperation, training exercises and intelligence sharing between both states.

How can Islamic states like Iran and Pakistan help the unification of the Islamic world?

I reckon international politics is dominated by realpolitik. We need to see how modern statehood emerged. The prevailing statehood system emerged in the Treaty of Westphalia signed in 1648 after the culmination of the Thirty Years' War between Protestants and Catholics. Treaty of Westphalia reminds the statecrafts not to embroil religion in politics. However, Pakistan and Iran have ethnic, cultural and historical ties, tapping the untapped potentials will prove more effective and beneficial for both states. I believe China-Iran deal will further bolster the ties of



Islamabad and Iran. Tehran has a great deal of potential to export 3,000 MW of electricity to Islamabad at low rates. Iran's presence under the Chinese umbrella will strengthen the security of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The deal increases Pakistan's geo-strategic significance; the country in near future would be a supply route of Iranian oil and gas to China. Iran, as far as the deal is concerned, is willing to grant massive concessions to China in oil and gas. Offering Chinese concessional offer of Iran to Pakistan will reduce the latter's oil dependency on other countries. Gawadar and Chahbahar under the Chinese tutelage can work as sister ports. Pakistan can provide easy access to Turkey and Iran under CPEC in the functioning of Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD). Realistically speaking, both Tehran and Islamabad in the Chinese bloc should exploit existing geo-political and geo-economic dividends.

As you know Iran has an old history and legacy in Pakistan. For example, Farsi once was a formal language in Indian subcontinent. How can Iran revive or consolidate its common ties with Pakistan?

It is an established fact that the "future belongs to the past". Parts of Pakistan like Balochistan were under Persian influence in multiple time frames from the 16th century to the 20th century. These parts were like peripheries for Persia. Apart from

cultural and lingual attachments in the past, there was a geographical connection as well. For instance, the Iranians who migrated from Persia settled in the Indian subcontinent, especially the Zoroastrians and Persian Jews from the 15th to 19th century, played a pivotal role in the economic development of the Indo-Pak economy.

The British always considered Persia as an extremely important neighbor for its colonial existence. The Anglo-Persian relations from the 18th to 19th century are a clear manifestation of their powerful relationship. British policymakers never missed any chance to boost up their diplomatic and trade relationship with the Persians. I suggest to both Pakistan and Iran that the way China is reviving its Silk Road via Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), they should emulate China's model in reviving and consolidating their common ties.

Why do Western powers and their media outlets make every effort to depict Iran as a destabilizing player in the region?

It is a fait accompli that interest has no replacement in international politics. When there was the convergence of interests between the Western powers and Iran in the pre-1979 Islamic revolution, Tehran at that time remained the apple of the Western power's eye. The Iranian 1979 Islamic revolution, by and large, altered the complexion of

the geopolitics in the region. Iran a strategic ally of the West turned out to be a destabilizing player. It is pertinent to quote Napoleon Bonaparte here who says that "there are only two forces that unite men - fear and interest". In prevailing circumstances, the Western powers see Iran with fear nor do they have interest in the former resulting in the depiction of Iran as a destabilizing player.

Don't you predict that Asian powers like China form a coalition with regional players like Iran and Pakistan to confront U.S. influence?

Honestly speaking, predicting the future to me is an uphill task. However, international politics in the current arena has constantly been witnessing two blocs underpinned by the U.S. and China. The U.S. is trying to promote its own values through reinforcing the Quad known as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue. China, meanwhile, is committed to promoting its "alliance" attributed to countering the Quad. Beijing seeks to form a Quad-type system named the "trans-Himalayan Quad" grouping consisting of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Nepal. Beijing's 'Himalayan Quad' is believed to have been balancing out New Delhi's outreach in the region.

I assume Iran is well placed in China's 'Himalayan Quad' against the backdrop of the former's geo-political and geo-economic interests with the latter. In the meanwhile, the controversy of the diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Olympics by the U.S. and its allies showcasing a deep rift between the U.S. and China splitting the world ostensibly into two blocs. The U.S. and Western countries including India have already unleashed an ideational war against China maligning China's image by rubbishing its BRI, an authoritarian regime, a debt trap policy under BRI, human rights violation in China, and labor exploitation in African states. I reckon Pakistan cannot keep all its eggs either in the U.S. or China, putting all eggs in any of the country's baskets will prove counterproductive. Maintaining a balanced approach in the U.S.-China great power competition will serve the national interests of Pakistan.

Is the Israeli apartheid regime on edge?

From page 1 ► The statement commends all the support for pro-Palestinian groups who document and expose Israel's atrocities and racism, topping the list is the international Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement.

The statement accuses the regime of racist practices against Palestinians and its treatment claims of Palestinians as an inferior class, urging the start of a new campaign to end Israeli apartheid once and for all.

The statement is directed at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague to include apartheid crimes in the Occupied Palestinian Territories in its investigations of war crimes committed by the regime's forces in the besieged Gaza Strip; among other possible crimes committed by the regime.

Last year judges at the ICC ruled that the court has jurisdiction to investigate suspected war crimes in the occupied and besieged Palestinian territories since 2014.

The decision was made a year after ICC Chief Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda concluded a probe and determined that there was sufficient evidence Israeli war crimes had been committed and are ongoing.



This comes as more groups back a very lengthy report released last week by the prominent Human Rights Group Amnesty International, which declared Israel as an "apartheid" regime.

The latest reaction coming from the non-profit news agency Common Dreams promotes rights and justice and concurred that human rights groups agree Israel is an apartheid regime.

In an editorial, it says "the U.S. gives Israel's military \$3.8 billion a year. According to a new Amnesty report, that money funds apartheid".

The agency also notes that other prominent rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch have also issued recent reports on Israeli apartheid.

It denounces the U.S. State Department for relying on Amnesty International "to bolster reports" but rejected Amnesty International's detailed report on Israeli apartheid "without even engaging with its research or conclusions".

Common Dreams concludes that this isn't surprising saying "the U.S. has a long history of supporting Israel regardless of its human rights violations".

Also, at least 14 civil groups based in Israeli-occupied Palestine have defended Amnesty International's report, in spite of the Israeli regime dismissing the report as anti-semitic.

This is a tactic that many experts agree the regime uses regularly to deflect any criticism of its crimes.

The tactic, however, appears to be waning, especially when some NGOs inside occupied Palestine itself are not buying it.

The groups, which also include B'tselem, issued a joint statement saying "we wholeheartedly reject the idea that Amnesty International's report is baseless, singles out Israel or displays antisemitic animus. However, we are particularly concerned by the extremely irresponsible allegation of antisemitism".

The statement adds "many of the most pre-eminent scholars of Jewish life, history and persecution have warned that the struggle against antisemitism in the world is being weakened by the unbearable, inaccurate and instrumentalized use to which the antisemitism accusation is lodged for political ends, in order to avoid debate about Israel's oppressive policies towards the Palestinians".

"Attempts to distract from Israeli violations and to avoid substantive debate by hurling spurious accusations is the standard and ongoing practice of successive Israeli [cabinets] and their echo chambers overseas".

The statement concludes "we are especially concerned about this approach in an international climate, in which antisemitism and racism are on the rise and human rights defenders are under assault".

The report by Amnesty International certainly

wasn't the first time Israel has been labeled as an apartheid regime and it certainly won't be the last.

Many analysts agree that Israel can get away with apartheid, war crimes, crimes against humanity, or the disproportionate use of force because it has Washington's blanket support.

Over the past five decades, the U.S. has vetoed more than 53 UN Security Council resolutions critical of Israel.

However, for how long can Washington sustain this support?

The U.S. firmly opposed the ICC's decision to investigate the regime's war crimes in the occupied Palestinian Territories claiming that the ICC has no jurisdiction.

This is despite the fact that international ICC legal scholars determined the UN court has jurisdiction, so the U.S. already lost that argument.

If the U.S. believes the Israeli regime is innocent of the charges then why oppose a probe?

Critics argue that Washington is fully aware of Israeli crimes against the Palestinians and is concerned that the Israeli military occupation of Palestine which the Pentagon views as America's largest "military base" in West Asia could by in

trouble.

Former U.S. President went to the extent of imposing sanctions on top ICC officials but even that didn't work.

Plan B? according to an exclusive by AXIOS, Israel's "top priority" right now is to discredit the ICC probe with a wide-scale campaign before the potentially very damaging report by the UN commission is set to be published in June.

According to AXIOS, Israeli regime officials "say they are highly concerned that the commission's report will refer to Israel as an 'Apartheid [regime]' and that its findings could damage Israel's reputation, particularly among progressives in the West".

The regime is said to have "sent a classified cable to all Israeli missions around the world. It designated the commission of inquiry as its 'top priority' at the UN in 2022".

The cable is reported to have said the regime was about to start a diplomatic campaign on the issue that will be increased ahead of the UN Human Rights Council meeting in March".

AXIOS notes "Israel has had some partial successes in the past when seeking to discredit UN commissions. In some cases, UN investigators have resigned, and the judge behind a probe of the 2008 Gaza war later backtracked on some of his conclusions".

Bit suspicious isn't it?

Israel's sudden move late last year to declare six Palestinian civil society and human rights groups as "terrorist organizations" despite international outrage is also widely believed to be linked to the ICC probe.

According to the leader of one of the organizations, the one thing, the six groups have in common is that they have all handed over some evidence to the ICC.

Reports and speculation have been rife that Israel took this desperate move against the groups (which have been operating for decades with international organizations) to undermine the ICC probe.

The latest report by Amnesty International and the backing of the report that has come following its publication by other rights groups highlights the discussion of Israeli apartheid is becoming embedded in international forums.

There is an emerging consensus of the reality on the ground and that reality will make it very difficult for the U.S. to come to Israel's rescue time and time again. The U.S. itself has plenty of problems to deal with domestically with reports of a nation that has never been so polarized and it's people carrying a record number of firearms.

As for the apartheid regime, as international awareness grows by the day, it may disappear sooner rather than later; It's very similar to how South African apartheid disappeared after decades of action by advocacy groups.

Biden warns Americans in Ukraine to leave, says sending troops to evacuate would be 'world war'

President Joe Biden issued a warning Thursday to any Americans who remain in Ukraine as Russia continues to threaten an invasion: Leave.

"American citizens should leave now," Biden said in an interview with NBC News anchor Lester Holt.

"It's not like we're dealing with a terrorist organization. We're dealing with one of the largest armies in the world. It's a very different situation, and things could go crazy quickly," he said.

Holt asked Biden what scenario could prompt him to send troops to rescue Americans fleeing the country. Biden replied: "There's not. That's a war when Americans and Russia start shooting at one another."

"We're in a very different world than we've ever been," he added.

Separately on Thursday, the State Department issued an advisory warning that the U.S. "will not be able to evacuate U.S. citizens in the event of Russian military action anywhere in Ukraine." It warned that regular consulate service — including aiding citizens trying to leave the country — would be "severely impacted."

According to a U.S. military and intelligence assessment, the Russian military could launch a full-scale invasion, with tanks that potentially could reach Kyiv, the capital, within 48 hours.

Biden argued that if Russian President Vladimir Putin is "foolish enough to go in, he's smart enough not to, in fact, do anything that would negatively impact on American citizens."

"Have you ever told him that?" Holt asked.

"Yes," Biden responded.

"You've told him that, that Americans will be a line that they can't cross?" Holt asked.



"I didn't have to tell him that. I've spoken about that. He knows that," Biden said.

Indoor mask mandates

On the issue of lifting indoor mask mandates, Biden signaled that it may be too soon to end the requirements that apply to federal government offices and public buildings.

California, Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey, New York and Oregon — all states led by Democratic governors — announced this week that they were easing or ending mask mandates.

"I've committed that I would follow the science as put forward by the CDC and federal people, and I think it's probably premature, but it's, you know, it's a tough call," Biden said, referring to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Asked whether children should have to wear masks in schools, another debate raging at the state level, Biden pointed to schools that are being reopened. The CDC suggests wearing masks in places where the new case rate is higher than 50 cases per 100,000 people or the testing positivity rate exceeds 8 percent, a recommendation that still covers most of the country.

"When I got in office, only 46 percent of

schools were opened. Now 98 percent of them are open, and they're wearing masks," Biden said. "What's happening is every day that goes by, children are more protected. We're now on the verge of being able to have shots for children under the age of 7 and young children, and so the more protection they have, probably you're going to see less and less requirement to have the mask."

Supreme Court

Biden said there has been a "deep dive" on four candidates for his pending nomination to replace Justice Stephen Breyer, who announced last month that he will step down from the Supreme Court at the end of the current term.

"The shortlist are nominees who are incredibly well-qualified and documented," he said. "They were the honor students. They have come from the best universities. They have experience, some on the bench, some on the practice of law."

Breyer is one of three liberal justices on the court serving alongside six conservatives, and his decision to retire after more than 27 years will not change the political leanings of the court.

Biden has said he will fulfill his campaign promise to select a Black woman, which some Republicans have criticized.

Biden predicted that whoever he picks will find some support among Republicans.

"I'm not looking to make an ideological choice," he said. "I'm looking for someone that replaces Judge Breyer with the same kind of capacity Judge Breyer has, with an open mind, who understands the Constitution, interprets it in a way that is consistent with the mainstream interpretation of the Constitution."

(Source: NBC News)

Two-day conference to look at the puzzle of Halilroud, Jiroft civilizations



From page 1 ► civilizations that emerged near the Halilroud basin, and it is expected to provide a platform for researchers and archaeologists to exchange views.

In the very early 21st century, rounds of heavy floods along the Halil River swept the topsoil off thousands of previously unknown tombs and led to the discovery of many artifacts believed by archaeologists to belong to the Early Bronze Age (late 3rd millennium BC).

Astonishingly the chlorite vases found in Jiroft were not an unfamiliar object for the archeologists. Chlorite vessels similar to the stunning examples unearthed at Jiroft had been found from the Euphrates to the Indus, as far north as the Amu Darya and as far south as Tarut Island, on the Persian Gulf coast of Saudi Arabia.

The primary Jiroft site consists of two mounds a couple of kilometers apart, called Konar Sandal A and B, and measuring 13 and 21 meters high, respectively. It was at Konar Sandal B that the archeologists dug out the seal impressions bearing writing.

So far, the archeologists have excavated around nine vertical meters of Konar Sandal B, discovering vestiges of a monumental, two-story, windowed citadel whose base covers nearly 13.5 hectares (33 acres). Madjidzadeh speculates that this imposing

edifice once housed the city's chief administrative center and perhaps a temple and a royal palace.

Finding the structure's façade was difficult enough, but locating an entrance took the team weeks of digging through clay packed hard by millennia of rain-wash.

In 2019, a team of Iranian and German archaeologists discovered remnants of a prehistorical settlement during a survey in an ancient hill in Jiroft. Senior Iranian archaeologist Nader Alidad-Soleymani and German Professor Peter Pfalzner co-led a comprehensive survey, which aimed to record evidence about previously excavated sites in the counties of Jiroft, Kahnouj, Anbarabad, Faryab, Rudbar, Qalehganj, and Manujan.

Jiroft, a fertile plain situated in Iran's Kerman province, is a splendid cradle of civilization, which dates from the Early Bronze Age (late 3rd millennium BC). Geological factors have led to it being overlooked for years by tourists and archeologists, who have generally been more interested in Mesopotamia some 1,000 km away.

Jiroft is surrounded by mountains on three sides, rising some 4,000 meters high. Many Iranian and foreign experts see the findings in Jiroft as signs of civilization as great as Sumer and ancient Mesopotamia.

160 tourism projects inaugurated in northern Iran

TEHRAN - A total of 164 tourism-related projects have been inaugurated across the northern province of Gilan to mark the 43rd anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution, which is known as the Ten-Day Fajr celebrations (this year from February 1 to 11), the provincial tourism chief has announced.

The projects received an investment budget of 1.5 trillion rials (\$5.7 million), IRNA quoted Vali Jahani as saying on Friday.

The projects include accommodation centers and eco-lodge units as well as handicrafts workshops and exhibitions, the official added.

Over 100 jobs are expected to be created for local residents as a result of the projects, he noted.

The lush green province of Gilan is known for its tourist attractions and warm-hearted and hospitable people. The people of Gilan from different ethnic groups, including Gilak, Talesh, and Tat, have come together and formed a very rich and diverse culture and customs.

Gilan was within the sphere of influence of the successive Achaemenian, Seleucid, Parthian, and



Sasanian empires that ruled Iran until the 7th century CE. The subsequent Arab conquest of Iran led to the rise of many local dynasties, and Gilan acquired an independent status that continued until 1567.

The capital city of Rasht has long been a weekend escape for residents of Tehran who are looking to sample the famous local cuisine and hoping for some pluvial action – it's the largest, and wettest town in the northern region. Gilan is divided into a coastal plain including the large delta of Sefid Rud and adjacent parts of the Alborz mountain range.

Nine archaeological mounds in northern Iran named national heritage



TEHRAN - Nine archaeological mounds situated in Iran's Golestan province have recently been gained national status amid hopes to receive further care and protection.

Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Ezzatollah Zarghami has officially informed Golestan's governor-general of the inscriptions by issuing nine separate letters to, CHTN reported on Wednesday.

Golestan is home to hundreds of historical and natural sites, with UNESCO-registered

Gonbad-e Qabus – a one-millennium-old brick tower – amongst its most famous. Narratives say the tower has influenced various subsequent designers of tomb towers and other cylindrical commemorative structures both in the region and beyond. According to the UN body, the mudbrick tower bears testimony to the cultural exchange between Central Asian nomads and the ancient civilization of Iran.

Gorgan, formerly Asterabad, is the capital of Golestan province. The city came into existence since Achaemenian times, long suffered from inroads of the Turkmen tribes who occupied the plain north of the Qareh River and it was subjected to incessant Qajar-Turkmen tribal conflicts in the 19th century. It was renamed Gorgan in the 1930s after being devastated by an earthquake.

Moreover, the province is home to famed for its ruined defensive wall, the Great Wall of Gorgan, which was once one of the longest brick barriers of the ancient world.

Houses in Persian Gulf port named national heritage sites

TEHRAN - Iran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts has inscribed four historical houses, which are located in the ancient port town of Kong, on the national list of cultural heritage.

Last week, following rounds of discussions and debate, a panel of cultural heritage experts, archaeologists, and historians gave their approval to the inscriptions of three historical houses of Golbat, Rashid, Imeni as well as the mansion of Karchi, all of which situated in the port town of Kong overlooking the Persian Gulf, CHTN reported.

The architectural concept of the historical houses of the Kong town has been deeply inspired by the culture, traditions, and environmental conditions and notably affected by the Kong sailors and traders who traveled abroad frequently.

The national designation is expected to bring more care and support to the historic houses as Iran seeks to have the Kong cultural landscape registered on the UNESCO World Heritage List in the future.

The cultural landscape is an integral combination of a port town with unique architecture, a smart system of water collecting and irrigation, and its rich and remarkable intangible heritage which has surrounded by beautiful natural and manmade landscape.

According to the historical documents, the historical center of the Kong port has been relocated five times over 2500 years. What we know as the port of Kong today embraces a vital and valuable fabric that is more than 400 years old.

Kong is one of the best interactions between the marine, architecture,



land use, and culture. The historic port of Kong is the most important place in manufacturing the cargo and sailing boats and ships, with a unique geostrategic location of the port and thanks to the great advantages given to this city by nature, it became a long-lasting port for trade, fishing, and traditional timber boats and ships builder.

Furthermore, Kong use to be the most important place to find the best sailors and sea folks and still is the best place for maintenance and order the traditional ships called "Lenj" which are still used for intercontinental marine trips and long fishing journeys.

The integrated historical urban texture of Kong port and as well as its ancient settlements and related archeological sites are the strong evidence of continuity of living background in this place which is

reminding the traditional Iranian coastal urban planning and land use in The Persian Gulf.

Having within itself a considerable part of the Persian Gulf history and myths, Kong is an outstanding living historic city amongst regional and international coastal cities. In addition to the cultural values of the general structure, the town comprises hundreds of historical houses with large numbers of intact wind catchers (Badgirs), in its skyline. This is one of the most important signs of the authenticity and integrity of this historical port town in a semi-tropical coastal area of Iran.

In addition, historical evidence shows that it was, and to some extent still is, an important incoming and outgoing Iranian port to and from East Africa and South East Asia within the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

Mazandaran boosts ecotourism

TEHRAN-Northern province of Mazandaran has developed its ecotourism by adding over 25 new eco-lodge units to its hospitality sector, IRNA reported on Friday.

A total of 28 eco-lodges along with an apartment hotel and a hydrotherapy center were inaugurated across the province on Thursday on the occasion of the anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution, which is known as Fajr Ten-Day celebrations (this year from February 1 to 11), the report added.

The private sector invested a budget of 12 trillion rials (\$4.5 million) in the projects, which have generated over 120 job opportunities.

Stretched along the Caspian Sea and Alborz mountain range, Mazandaran is a popular destination for domestic holidaymakers and it is home to more than 3,500 villages and rural areas, hosting millions of domestic night-stays in a year.

As a four-season country with pristine and beautiful nature in different parts of the country, Iran has a lot to



offer nature lovers and eco-tourists.

Eco-lodge units in rural areas and the heart of nature, away from the hustle and bustle of the city, smoke, and pollution, could free people from the chaos and turmoil of modern life.

In recent years, several historical mansions and rural houses across the country have been repurposed into eco-lodge units to attract more domestic and foreign tourists.

The houses represent the indigenous culture, local

customs, traditions, and stories, while the guests are served delicious food with local ingredients.

The growing tendency of tourists to experience indigenous and local cultures has made them want to get closer to natural and indigenous living conditions, experiencing the old-fashioned way of life, considering that staying in these eco-lodge units is much cheaper than other accommodation centers.

Iran's tourism body said in 2018 that 2,000 eco-lodges will be constructed nationwide until 2021. Experts say each eco-lodge unit generates jobs for seven to eight people on average so that the scheme could create 160,000 jobs.

Having a very diverse natural setting, Iran offers varied excursions to nature lovers. Sightseers may live with a nomad or rural family or enjoy an independent stay. The country is home to abundant historical mansions, caravanserais, bathhouses, madrasas, and other massive monuments, which can buttress its budding tourism and hospitality sectors if managed appropriately and refurbished properly.

Workshop on UNESCO-tagged forest held in northern Iran

TEHRAN - A workshop has recently been held to introduce local communities and tourists to Iran's UNESCO-registered Hyrcanian forests (also known as Caspian forests).

The event was held in Rudkhan Castle, a centuries-old military medieval fortress in Fuman, northern Gilan province on Thursday, the provincial tourism chief announced, CHTN reported on Friday.

The workshop was intended to increase awareness of the unique characteristics of Hyrcanian forests, the official added.

Spanning from the south of Azerbaijan to about 850 km eastward

to the provinces of Gilan, Mazandaran, and Golestan, the Hyrcanian forests are witnesses of the ancient forests of the world since they have survived between 35 and 50 million years.

According to UNESCO, these forests are between 25 and 50 million years old. Their surface area was reduced during the Quaternary Period's dramatic climate changes and glaciations and expanded again when the temperatures stabilized.

UNESCO has documented the existence of over 3,200 vascular plants and 58 species of mammals, including the iconic Persian panther and endangered wild goat in the



forest.

Due to its isolation, the areas now protected by UNESCO are home to many endangered and endemic plant species at a regional and local level.

In July 2019, the UN cultural body designated the vast woodland as a World Heritage site, making it the second such Iranian natural site after Lut Desert, which was granted the tag

in 2016.

According to UNESCO, the forest contains the most significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation. It also contains superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance.

Having an opulent tourist circuit with 26 UNESCO World Heritage sites Iran seeks to acquire a greater share of the global tourism industry by 2025.

Ground broken for massive water tourism complex

TEHRAN - Construction of the first phase of a vast water tourism complex officially began on Thursday with a ground-breaking ceremony in the western province of Kermanshah.

A budget of 400 billion rials (\$1.5 billion) has been allocated to the project, CHTN quoted the deputy provincial tourism Asghar Reshno as saying during the ceremony.

The project aims at developing the tourism infrastructure of the nearby Jamishan Dam to promote and enhance water tourism in the atmospheric region, the official explained.

"In addition to water games such as jet skiing, the complex will embrace piers, sea buses, floating huts, and accommodations and catering as well as cycling track."

The project is estimated to generate over 100 job opportunities upon its completion, he noted.

Back in May 2019, the Ministry of Energy inked a memorandum of understanding with the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Ministry to lay the ground for launching dam tourism.

Though much of Iran is composed of arid and semi-



arid lands, the country has many rivers, waterfalls ponds, and wetlands offering scenic vistas to nature lovers and eco-travelers, backpackers, birdwatchers, and fishers.

Hydro tourism or water tourism involves traveling to places specifically to take part in water-based activities. Some individuals who do not wish to partake in water-related activities embark on water tourism trips so that they can visit tourist sites that

sit close to bodies of water such as lakes, rivers, dams, oceans, etc. Water tourists are regularly independent travelers, although some travel businesses do organize group trips.

While water tourism often includes active chases, some water tourists visit islands and shore regions to join more relaxed pursuits such as diving or swimming. Travel businesses organize tours of coral reefs and arrange for local tour guides to preside over excursions on which travelers can swim with local marine life such as dolphins or even sharks. Some tour operators also cater to families who are primarily focused on swimming and tanning rather than interacting with aquatic life.

Water trips occasionally involve inland destinations such as lakes and rivers. Holidaymakers can sail or swim on lakes while many rivers are ideally suited to white water rafting. Additionally, some leisure businesses operate water parks that contain swimming pools, water slides, and areas for kayaking or canoeing.

Kermanshah embraces a variety of awe-inspiring historical sites including Taq-e Bostan and the UNESCO-registered Bisotun.

Teacher recruitment on agenda to shore up education after pandemic

TEHRAN - The Ministry of Education is planning to employ up to 50,000 teachers as the administration has decided to give a boost to the education sector in the country once schools are fully recovered from closures imposed during the coronavirus pandemic.

A nationwide exam for recruiting new teachers will be held before the end of the current calendar year in late March, Education Minister Yusef Nouri said on Thursday.

The Ministry of Education had obtained a government permit to recruit an extra 15,000 teachers it needs to ease staff shortages in Iranian schools, he added, Fars reported.

Education Ministry authorities

had earlier indicated that the Iranian government had issued permits for the recruitment of 34,731 teachers across the country.

Iran recruits its teachers from a higher education system where applicants must go through at least four years of study and training, according to Press TV.

However, the law allows emergency recruitment programs covering the graduates of other universities and seminaries if the Education Ministry is faced with shortages in some staff areas.

The new recruitment drive comes as Iran is still struggling with repeated school closures because of new waves of the coronavirus pandemic.

Classes have been held several



days a week in elementary and secondary schools in Iran since the country expanded its coronavirus vaccination coverage to nearly 70 percent of the population late last year.

It also comes despite Iran's strained finances because of the U.S. sanctions and the economic impacts of the pandemic.

The Iranian parliament passed a law in December ordering the administrative government to raise wages paid to the teachers in the country by up to 15 percent.

Online education

Around 92.5 percent of Iranian students aged 12-18 have so far received the first dose of coronavirus vaccine and some 75 percent are inoculated with the second dose.

All educational centers in Iran have been closed since February 2020.

In order for students to keep in touch with their studies, the Ministry of Education launched a homegrown mobile application on April 9, 2020, called SHAD, providing students with distance learning programs. More than 60 percent of students and 94 percent of teachers attended 64 percent of classes through the SHAD app, whose acronym in Persian translates as the Students Education Network.

Moreover, the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) also began to broadcast televised educational programs on a daily basis after school closures.

Organ donation increased by 66% yr/yr

TEHRAN - Organ donation in the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21, 2021) has increased so far by 66 percent compared to the same period in the previous year, Kattayoun Najafizadeh, Director of Iranian Organ Donation Association, has stated.

Since the beginning of this year, 446 organs have been donated across the country, which shows a 66 percent increase compared to last year (with 269 cases), she further noted, IRNA reported on Thursday.

Due to the prevalence of the coronavirus pandemic, organ donation decreased by 53 percent last year compared to a year before, while it is still short by 22 percent compared to 574 cases of organ donation before the outbreak, she said.

Donation, there are two types of death in the medical world; Heart death (common death), which accounts for 99 percent of deaths worldwide, and brain death, which accounts for one percent of deaths.

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

In Iran, about 5,000 to 8,000 people die each year from brain death, half of whom, or about 3,000, have transplanted organs. Unfortunately, 1,000 families, or one-third, are



Pointing to the upward trend of organ donation in Iran, she noted that the organ donation rate in Iran has increased from 0.2 in 1998 to 10.9 in 2021.

She referred to the survival of more than 65,000 Iranians by organ transplants, emphasizing that it has saved a considerable amount of foreign exchange due to the localization of organ transplantation and efficient forces.

Some 14,000 people in the country are waiting for organ transplants, 7 to 10 of whom die every day due to the lack of a transplanted organ, Mehdi Shadnough, head of the transplant management and treatment center of the Ministry of Health, said.

In Iran, the organ donation rate reached 14.7 two years ago, which was the highest rate in the long run. But the ideal point is the organ donation of 26 brain dead patients per a million population, he noted.

According to the Iranian Society of Organ

satisfied with organ donation.

Top in Asia

Shadnough announced in June 2020 that Iran was ranked first for organ donation among Asian countries.

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

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

Organ donation of brain death has reached up to 60 percent, he said, lamenting that the country ranks 21st regarding organ donation from brain dead patients in the world while ranking 14th regarding organ transplant from alive patients.

According to the figures revealed by the International Registry in Organ Donation and Transplantation (IRODaT), Spain leads the world in organ donation.

Health insurance provided for 170,000 refugees

From page 1 ▶ Over 2 trillion rials (nearly \$7.5 million) have been spent to provide insurance to foreign nationals this year, he further concluded.

World's fourth-largest refugee community

Iran is hosting the world's fourth-largest refugee community. The country has generously hosted approximately 1 million refugees for the past 30 years. The majority, which mainly came from Afghanistan and Iraq, live in urban areas. Approximately 31,000 of the most vulnerable refugees are living in 20 settlements located throughout the country.

Based on the latest statistics, over 3 million Afghans are living in Iran - some 780,000 Afghan refugees, over 2 million undocumented Afghans, and another 600,000 Afghan passport-holders with Iranian visas.

The recent fast-paced turn of events in Afghanistan has the potential to create additional population movements; displacing families internally and potentially driving



them to seek refuge in neighboring countries.

It is estimated that up to 300,000 Afghan asylum-seekers have fled to Iran this year alone in search of safety, while UNHCR has only been able to screen some 24,000 newly arrived Afghans for protection needs.

However, in light of the pandemic, all refugees, even those undocumented, benefited from access to free primary health services and free COVID-19 related testing, treatment, and hospitalization, just like Iranian nationals.

The same happened for the vaccination

when the country has generously considered refugees for vaccination against coronavirus.

In Iran, UNHCR is seeking \$16.2 million for its COVID-19 emergency, while requires an additional \$98.7 million to support Iran in maintaining and sustaining its commendable inclusive refugee policies, under the umbrella of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR).

António Guterres, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, has praised Iran's generosity which - for decades - has hosted millions of Afghans in need.

"At this moment, we need the global community to put their hands on the wheel of progress, provide resources, and prevent Afghanistan from spiraling any further.

I will never forget the generosity of countries like Pakistan and Iran, which - for decades - have hosted millions of Afghans in need," Guterres said in a statement released on January 26 to the Security Council on Afghanistan.

India hosting permanent exhibition of Iranian knowledge-based products

TEHRAN - A permanent exhibition of Iranian knowledge-based products, aiming to facilitate exports to India, kicked off in the Indian state of Odisha, ISNA reported on Friday.

This export base in the industrial sector of Odisha State, in cooperation with the Odisha Assembly of Small and Medium Enterprises (OASME), has provided an exhibition space for products with export potential and has facilitated the possibility of establishing relations with small industries in India.

It is worth mentioning that plans have been made for joint cooperation with the Indian government, especially the National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC) to accelerate the process of successful pres-

ence and economic interactions of Iranian companies.

In this center, services include displaying companies' products for a year in a permanent exhibition, marketing in India, monitoring and initial price analysis of similar products and pricing consulting, holding meetings and business negotiations with Indian companies, consulting for obtaining certificates and product standards, benefiting from local expert marketers, facilitating the transfer of currency, consulting the transportation of goods and products to the target country for knowledge-based companies.

The Indian market of more than 1.3 billion people has provided a unique opportunity for Iranian companies to



introduce and sell knowledge-based products. At present, the volume of trade between the two countries in 2020 is about \$2.1 billion, which includes \$330 million in exports of Iranian products to India.

Innovation houses abroad

The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology also supports the establishment of innovation houses in other countries to develop the export of knowledge-based prod-

ucts.

Exporting technological products of Iranian knowledge-based companies is one of the important and key programs of the vice presidency for science and technology, and in this regard, three houses of innovation and technology were inaugurated in Kenya, China and Syria.

And countries like Turkey, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan are set to host the innovation houses in near future.

By supporting innovative ideas, holding technological and innovative events, the centers will be a platform for the development and promotion of Iranian knowledge-based companies, startups, and creative industries.

The centers are mainly formed with the investment and support of the private sector to provide the necessary infrastructure for their exports through the innovation houses.

In each center, the products of more than 50 knowledge-based and creative companies are presented, such as health and medicine, information technology, machinery, and equipment.

Iranian knowledge-based goods to be produced in 7 countries

Iran will launch production lines of knowledge-based products in seven countries, namely Turkey, Armenia, Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Syria, Iraq, and Kenya, Marzieh Shaverdi, the manager of the Innovation and Prosperity Fund,

said on December 4.

The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology will provide special support to facilitate export for knowledge-based companies with quality products over the next 6 months.

Mehdi Ghalehnoei, an official with the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, said in February that last year, knowledge-based companies gained about \$800 million in revenue from export, and this year it seems to reach up to \$2 billion.

"Africa, neighboring countries, Southeast Asia and Eurasia are our export target priorities, and we hope to create Iranian innovation and technology in all these areas," he added.

ENGLISH IN USE

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'Further measures required to preserve forests'

Iran's forest area is approximately 12 million hectares with 0.2 hectares per capita, which is one quarter of the world average, so attention to preserve the forest areas must be four times the global attention, faculty member of the Research Institute of Forests and Rangelands has said.

Mohammad Darvish made the remarks on the occasion of the National Tree Planting Day, in which people are encouraged to plant trees across the country, held on the first day of the National Week of Natural Resources annually observed on March 6 to 13.

Unfortunately, forests have been taken for granted in the country, as 2 million hectares of the northern forests has been depleted since 1330s (1950s), thus no serious protection measures have been taken, he said.

Currently, 16 million hectares of the northern forests remain in the country, which was 3.5 million hectares in 1330s, so 2 million hectares of forest areas have undergone deforestation, he further lamented.

حفظ جنگل ها نیازمند اقدامات بیشتر

بر اساس آخرین آمار موسسه تحقیقات جنگل ها و مراتع، وسعت رویشگاههای جنگلی ایران حدود ۱۲ میلیون هکتار و سرانه هر ایرانی از جنگل، کمتر از دو دهم هکتار است که یک چهارم سرانه جهانی می شود بنابراین باید توجه ما به حفظ رویشگاههای جنگلی، ۴ برابر توجه جهانی باشد.

محمد درویش روز چهارشنبه همزمان با روز درختکاری و آغاز هفته منابع طبیعی در گفتگو با خبرنگار ایرنا افزود: به نظر می رسد در کشور آن طور که باید به درختان و حفاظت از آنها توجه نمی شود؛ نبودن دو میلیون هکتار از جنگل های شمال از دهه ۳۰ تاکنون گواه این ادعاست.

بنابراین گفته عضو هیات علمی موسسه تحقیقات جنگل ها و مراتع کشور، حدود ۱۶ میلیون هکتار از جنگل های شمال کشور باقی مانده است که این رقم در دهه ۳۰ حدود ۳۵ میلیون هکتار بود یعنی در این مدت حدود دو میلیون هکتار عرصه جنگلی را از دست دادیم، البته نیمی از ۱۶ میلیون هکتار موجود نیز تا حدود زیادی تخریب شده است.

COVID-19 UPDATES ON FEBRUARY 11

New cases	31,247
New deaths	143
Total cases	6,761,855
Total deaths	133,437
New hospitalized patients	2,781
Patients in critical condition	3,261
Total recovered patients	6,260,240
Diagnostic tests conducted	45,898,905
Doses of vaccine injected	137,110,534

Be generous but not extravagant, be frugal but not miserly.
Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon: 12:19 Evening: 18:02 Dawn: 5:29 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:54 (tomorrow)

What's in Tehran art galleries



Painting

* Golestan Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Ali Qahramani.

The exhibition will be running until February 23 at the gallery that can be found at 34 Kamasai St. in the Darus neighborhood.

* Hoor Gallery is currently playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Ahmad nasrollahi.

The exhibition will be running until March 9 at the gallery located at 12 Naemi Alley, North Mirza Shirazi St., off Motahhari Ave.



* Paintings by Leila Mehrvar are on view in a posthumous exhibition at Shokuh Gallery.

The exhibit will continue until February 21 at the gallery located at 19 Amir Nuri Alley, North Salimi St. off Andarzgu Blvd.

* Mina Katebi is hanging her latest paintings in an exhibition at Zhinus Gallery.

The exhibit will continue until February 17 at the gallery, which can be found at 21 Fatemi St., off Vali-e Asr Ave.

Calligraphic painting



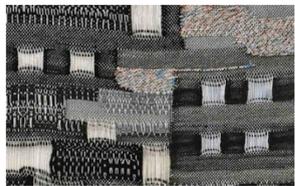
* Nushin Qayyumnia is showcasing her latest collection calligraphic paintings in an exhibition at Naqshe Jahan Gallery.

The exhibit will run until February 16 at the gallery located at 9 Ayatollah Mahmudi St. in the Niavaran neighborhood.

Sculpture

* An exhibition of sculptures by Armin Purfahimi is currently underway at Vaali Gallery.

Entitled "Shroud", the exhibit will continue until February 22 at the gallery located at 72 Khoddami St., Vanak Sq.



Installation

* Sets of installation by Afsaneh Mpdir-Amani are on view in an exhibition at O Gallery.

The exhibition will run until February 22 at the galleries located at 18 Shahin St., Sanai St.

* Shalman Gallery is hosting an exhibition of sculptures and photos by Behdad Najafi, Dorsa Hashemi, Kimia Kaveh, Ainaz Purdehqan, Azin Fallahi, Fatehmeh Moradhaseli and several other artists.

The showcase will run until February 16 at the gallery located at 27 Kavusi Alley, West Rudbar St., off Mirdamad Blvd.



Multimedia

* Artworks in different media by a group of artists, including Manuchahr Niazi, Manuchahr Motabar, Mahin Monfared, farshid Maleki, Ali Golestaneh and Parvaneh Etemadi are on display in an exhibition at Negar Gallery.

Entitled "Gaze It", the exhibition will be running until February 22 at the gallery located at 33 Delaram Alley, East Roshanai St. in the Qeitarieh neighborhood.

* Hamed Qasri, Romin Mohtasham, Parisa Fahami, Sina Farzadipur and several other artists are showcasing their latest artworks in various media in an exhibition at Vista Gallery.

Entitled "Boredom", the exhibition will run until February 21 at the gallery located at No. 11, 12th Alley, Mir Emad St.



PAINTING EXHIBITION BY AHMAD NASROLLAHI



نمایشگاه انفرادی آثار نقاشی مینا کاتبی



تکتین Shroud



نمایشگاه گروهی عکس و حتم زاویه گوشه نشینی Seculation angle



نمایشگاه گروهی هنرهای تجسمی و عکس بیروت بیروت بیروت

President Raisi visits Fajr visual art festival

From Page 1 ▶ "For people with any language in any era, artwork is expressive and doesn't need to be interpreted or explained," he added.

Raisi stressed the need to develop the art market to improve artists' standard of living, and said that the culture ministry must provide the necessary facilities to offer artworks in an appropriate way.

In order to sustain the presence of art in the public arena, he asked cultural officials to use Iranian embassies across world, organizations, recreational

parks and other public centers for showcasing artworks.

He also pointed to the key role that art can play in international diplomacy and asked cultural officials to fully exploit the country's art potential to boost cultural relations with other nations, especially with neighboring countries.

In a statement published by the organizers, Fajr Festival of Visual Arts Secretary-General Abbas Mirhashemi expressed his thanks to Raisi for the visit.

"Certainly, Mr. President's remarks on the art market can



President Ebrahim Raisi accompanied by several cultural officials visits an exhibition of 14th Fajr Festival of Visual Arts at the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art on February 10, 2022. (President.ir)

remove bureaucratic obstacles to the development of visual arts," he said.

"His remarks on art's important place in regional and international diplomacy represent the government's strong will to regulate affairs in visual arts," he added.

The 14th Fajr Festival of Visual Arts officially opened at the Saba Art and Cultural Institute in Tehran on February 4.

Several other art centers across the capital are also playing host to exhibitions of the festival running until February 19.

Bulgarian director Elena Panayotova praises Ferdowsi's efforts to maintain Persian language

TEHRAN – Bulgarian stage director Elena Panayotova has praised the efforts made by Persian poet Ferdowsi over a millennium ago to protect Persian against foreign language threats.

She is in Tehran to stage her latest production "Shahnameh: A Story of Zal" based on a story from Ferdowsi's magnum opus Shahnameh at the 40th Fajr International Theater Festival.

"We know that the Shahnameh has produced abundant attractive literature for humanity," she said a press release published by the organizers of the Fajr theater festival on Thursday.

"I have studied about Ferdowsi's life, death and his masterpiece, and gradually came to understand that it was his Shahnameh that managed to maintain the Persian language, and that the Persian language would have been ruined if the masterpiece had not been created," she noted.

She called Persian a wonderful language by which numerous stories were created that are still fascinating after over a millennium.

Panayotova said that she has directed many plays from classic Western



Bulgarian stage director Elena Panayotova's troupe performs "Shahnameh: A Story of Zal" during the 40th Fajr International Theater Festival at Tehran's Sangalaj Theater on February 6, 2022.

literature during her career spanning 30 years. However, she noted that plays and plots from Oriental literature always appeal to her.

UNESCO's decision to register the Shahnameh millennium on its 2010 calendar of events inspired Panayotova to increase her knowledge of the Persian epic Shahnameh.

Accordingly, she found stories from the book interesting to be performed for audiences from other cultures.

Tehran's Sangalaj Theater hosted Panayotova's troupe performing

"Shahnameh: A Story of Zal".

The play tells the mythical story of Zal, a son who is born to King Sam but the baby has hair as white as snow. Sam thinks his son is either an old man or a demon and orders the baby to be taken to the foothills of the Alborz Mountains and left there.

Zal is found by the magical Simorgh, the phoenix-like bird with red and gold feathers who has her nest on the summit of the mountain. She carries the baby to her nest and brings him up as her own.

Some years later King Sam is reminded in a haunting dream how badly he has behaved towards his son. Sam feels remorse and sets out to the Alborz Mountains to see if his son might still be alive.

He finds his son a grown handsome young man, well brought up by the bird. Zal doesn't want to leave the Simorgh, but she gives him one of her feathers and tells him if he is ever in trouble he must burn the feather and she will come to his aid.

He is reestablished as an Iranian ruler and falls in love with the Arab princess Rudabeh, who marries the greatest Iranian hero.

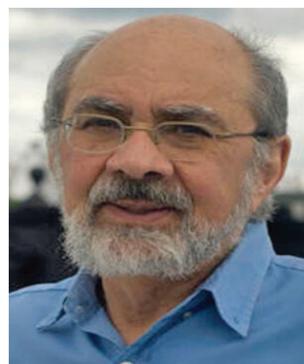
"Iran Between Two Revolutions" published in Persian

TEHRAN – "Iran Between Two Revolutions" by Ervand Abrahamian, an Iranian-American historian of the West Asia, has been published by the Ney publishing house in Tehran.

Originally published in 1982, the book has been rendered into Persian by Ahmad Golmohammadi and Mohammad-Ebrahim Fattahi.

Emphasizing the interaction between political organizations and social forces, Abrahamian discusses Iranian society and politics during the period between the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1909 and the Islamic Revolution of 1977-1979.

Presented here is a study of the emergence of horizontal divisions, or socio-economic classes, in a country with strong vertical divisions based on ethnicity, religious ideology and regional particularism.



A combination photo shows Ervand Abrahamian and the front cover of the Persian translation of his book "Iran Between Two Revolutions".



and India Office that have only recently been opened; newspaper, memoirs, and biographies published in Tehran between 1906 and 1980; proceedings of the Iranian Majles and Senate; interviews with retired and active politicians; and pamphlets, books and periodicals distributed by exiled groups in Europe and North America in the period between 1953 and 1980.

Abrahamian explores the impact of socio-economic change on the political structure, especially under the reigns of Reza Shah and Mohammad Reza Shah, and throws fresh light on the significance of the Tudeh party and the failures of the Shah's regime from 1953 to 1978.

Abrahamian is a distinguished professor of history at Baruch College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.

Abrahamian, who is widely regarded as one of the leading historians of modern Iran, focuses on the class and ethnic roots of the major radical movements in the modern era, particularly the Constitutional Movement of the 1900s, the

communist Tudeh party of the 1940s, the nationalist struggle of the early 1950s, and the Islamic upsurge of the 1970s.

In this examination of the social bases of Iranian politics, Abrahamian draws on archives of the British Foreign Office

Hafez and "rendi"

Part 9

He also maintains that the "rend", through his purity of heart (and absence of tazwir), opens doors with his prayers. The tomb of Hafez will be a shrine to which the "rends" of the world make pilgrimage. Let us conclude that this rendi is then, after all, a symbolic libertinism, Hafez elsewhere tells us that sometimes others understand his acts of rendi and nevertheless forgive his sins and cover his faults.

More than any other character encountered in his Divan, the "rend" encapsulates the message of Hafez, and comes closest to projecting the poet's own weltanschauung and his heroic ideal.

Daryush Ashuri emphasizes the literary pedigree of the "rend" and calls it a fundamental mystical-poetic trope in Sufi literature and in Hafez. Khorramshahi sees the "rend" in Hafez as a mythological or archetypal figure, like the Magian elder (pir-e moghan) or the Grail of Jamshid (jam-e Jam), composed of various strains which Hafez has sculpted into transcendent form.

Hafez's "rend" is a composite of the Perfect Man of gnostic Sufism, the impoverished beggar in the road, the libertine, and the political rebel who refuses to bow the knee to hypocrisy and values imposed by force.

He is the antithesis of the ascetic (zاهد),

a would-be free spirit enjoying the pleasures of life who sees it his mission to combat inauthenticity in all its forms. For Ashuri the distinctive development in Hafez's concept of rendi is that the "rend" does not strive to slay the lower passions (nafs) as in the eastern Iranian mystical-ascetic tradition, but to live in harmony and equilibrium with them, without pretense or hypocrisy.

The "rend" is thus a new spiritual ideal, a reconciliation of the Perfect Man (ensan-e kamel) with the human condition. Hafez, then, if not a perfect man, is perfectly human.

(Source: Encyclopedia Iranica) (Concluded)