

Report

Russia declares breakaway Ukraine regions “independent” republics

Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed decrees recognizing the breakaway Ukraine regions and self-proclaimed Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics as independent territories.

Until now Russia had viewed the Donbas region which makes up Donetsk and Lugansk as part of Ukraine's east.

Donetsk and Lugansk declared themselves as republics in 2014 by ethnic Russians living in the region after a pro-Russian administration was replaced with a pro-western one. The move turned into a deadly conflict between Ukrainian government forces and armed pro-Russian separatists.

The Russian leader said that the Minsk process which was aimed at keeping the peace on Russia's border had failed and that the Ukrainian government is “not interested in peaceful solutions”. Moscow has accused Kiev of using the tension as a pretext to militarily take the Donbas region, saying this would lead to bloodshed. ▶ Page 5

Report

ICCIMA hosts Iran-Kazakhstan business forum

By Ebrahim Fallahi

TEHRAN – Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) hosted an Iran-Kazakhstan business forum on Monday prior to the two countries' 17th Joint Economic Committee meeting which was also held during February 21-22 in Tehran.

The forum was attended by senior officials from the two countries, including Iranian Agriculture Minister Javad Sadati-Nejad, Kazakhstan's Minister of Trade and Integration Bakhyt Sultanov, Kazakhstan's Ambassador to Tehran Askhat Orazbay, ICCIMA Head Gholam-Hossein Shafeie, and ICCIMA Deputy Head Mohammadreza Karbasi as well as Iranian ambassador to Astana Majiad Samadzadeh Saber.

Speaking in this gathering, ICCIMA Head Shafeie underlined Iran and Kazakhstan's deep cultural and historical roots and noted that despite the great political relations between the two countries the level of trade is unsatisfactory.

He noted that having economic relations with the neighboring countries is a priority of the government and private sector in Iran and Kazakhstan as one of the biggest countries in central Asia has a significant place among Iran's trade partners. ▶ Page 4

Iran, Armenia explore ways to strengthen security co-op

TEHRAN – Iranian deputy police chief Qasem Rezaei and his Armenian counterpart Aram Hovhannissyan on Tuesday discussed strengthening police interactions to guarantee the security of the two countries.

During a meeting held in Tehran, Rezaei expressed hope to enhance cooperation with Armenian police officials in various areas, announcing readiness to hold joint specialized meetings with the aim of expanding relations, IRNA reported.

Noting that the Iranian police has valuable and unique experiences in various police fields, he added that “I hope that holding such bilateral meetings, especially in border cities, will be a practical beginning to move in the direction of cooperation development.”

Today, Iran's police services are global, and due to the sacrifices of police forces in the fight against drug trafficking, the transit of drugs to other parts of the world, especially European countries, is prevented and the discovery of more than a thousand tons of narcotics per year is evidence to this claim, he further highlighted. ▶ Page 7

Neighborhood Policy Receives a Boost During Raisi Visit to Qatar

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FM: Iran is optimistic about a deal in Vienna

TEHRAN — In an interview with CNN published on Tuesday, Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian said that he is very optimistic about a deal in Vienna.

Amir Abdollahian also said Iran considers certain issues as red lines which should be observed in the Vienna talks.

“There are some issues that are part of our red lines,” the foreign minister told the interviewer conducted on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference.

The following is the text of the interview:

Q: There seems to be a lot of cautious optimism, goodwill about the possibility of signing the JCPOA, of getting this Iran deal back into shape. Do you share that optimism? Is that coming from your side as well?

A: We are optimistic about the outcome of the negotiations in Vienna, but about that part of it which has to do with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Why are we optimistic? Because the administration of Dr. Raisi has a strong will to achieve a good agreement in Vienna.



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Funeral ceremony held for jet crash martyrs

TEHRAN — A funeral procession was held on Tuesday for two pilots and a citizen who were martyred in an F-5 fighter jet crash in the northwestern city of Tabriz. A large number of people, the families of the martyrs and officials participated in the funeral. The accident happened on Monday. The citizen was killed on the ground.

Isfahan to offer off the beaten routes

TEHRAN – Isfahan tourism directorate plans to formulate novel itineraries to be proposed to potential travelers to the historical Iranian province.

On Monday, provincial tourism chief Alireza Izadi stressed the need to define new travel routes on the backbone of cultural tourism in Isfahan, CHTN reported on Tuesday.

“New axes of tourism will be defined based on the texture and historical monuments to introduce the unknown attractions of Isfahan, which is the capital of culture and civilization in the Islamic Iran...,” the official noted.

The official made the remarks during his visit to the UNESCO-registered Jameh Mosque of Isfahan well-known as a museum

The administration of Dr. Raisi is emphasizing an interested to achieve a good and urgent agreement. In order to achieve a good agreement, we have made a lot of efforts in the past weeks. I can say that we have never been this close to reaching a good agreement.

That sounds super optimistic. I don't think I have ever heard an Iranian official or frankly, a European or an American talk so optimistically about the possibilities.

In order to get close to a good agreement, the Iranian team showed good ▶ Page 2

Iran's women basketball move one place up FIBA ranking

TEHRAN – Iran's women's basketball team moved up one place at the latest FIBA World Ranking.

Iran have moved up one place to 77th.

While the top four teams remain unchanged, with the U.S. still having the No. 1 spot, followed by Spain, Australia and Canada, Belgium have leapfrogged France into the No.5 position on the strength of resounding victories over Puerto Rico and Russia in the World Cup Qualifying Tournament in Washington.

In the current system of ranking, all games matter.

The French dropped a place to No. 6 after suffering defeats in two of their games at the World Cup Qualifying Tournament in Belgium.

of architectural styles.

Also known as Atiq Mosque, the place of worship is the oldest preserved edifice of its type in Iran and a prototype for later mosque designs throughout Central Asia. UNESCO has it that the mosque can be seen as a stunning illustration of the evolution of mosque architecture over twelve centuries. ▶ Page 6

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Interview

Trump's defeat in 2024 election can lead to armed civil unrest: professor

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN – A professor of politics at the University of California predicts that if Donald Trump runs for the 2024 presidential election and loses the race it can ignite a civil war between the Coasts and Central America.

“Don't hold me to this, but if Trump runs and loses in 2024, there may well be civil unrest, with guns, and the possibility of some kind of civil war between the Coasts and what I like to call ‘Central America’ (the South, Midwest and West to the borders of Kansas or Colorado),” Professor Ronnie Lipschutz tells the Tehran Times.

He adds, “I don't think it is clear how big Trump's ‘social base’ actually is—but there are 300 million guns in civilian hands across the U.S.”

Following is the text of the interview:

How do you describe the U.S. political system? Is it a republic or a democracy? Apparently, the Republicans try their best to depict the country as a republic.

A country can be both a democracy and a republic at the same time. Democracy has to do with the means and extent to which eligible citizens (or residents) can participate in the periodic selection of representatives. A republic is a state without a royal head (whether a figurehead or not.) In a republic, you have citizens; in a monarchy, you have subjects. ▶ Page 5

Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra concert to celebrate 30 years of Iran-Croatia diplomatic relations

TEHRAN – The 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Iran and Croatia will be celebrated by a concert, which will be performed by the Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra.

“Zarathustra Spitama”, a symphonic poem composed by Iranian maestro Ali (Alexander) Rahbari who is also the conductor of the orchestra, will be performed during the concert, which will be held on March 4 at the Vatroslav Lisinski Concert Hall in Zagreb.

Iranian vocalist Reza Fekri will sing a tenor solo accompanied by the Ivan Filipovic Chamber Choir.

Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra director Mirko Boch met Iranian Ambassador Parviz Esmaeili on Monday to finalize the arrangements for the concert, the Iranian Embassy in Zagreb announced. ▶ Page 8

Raisi: I visited Doha to develop bilateral ties



TEHRAN — In a joint press conference on Monday with the Qatari Emir, Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani in Doha, Iranian President Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi said he was visiting Qatar to develop bilateral relations.

While appreciating the invitation of the Emir of Qatar to travel to Doha and attend the world gas summit, Raisi said, “Today I attended Doha with two goals, one was the development of bilateral relations between Iran and Qatar and another is attending the summit of Gas Exporting Countries Forum.”

Calling his meeting with the Qatari Emir “good and positive”, the president said both sides agreed that the two countries will benefit from the existing capacities and opportunities to expand cooperation and deepen relations in various fields and areas.

“Considering the territorial proximity and common interests of Iran and Qatar, we decided to take serious and new steps to increase relations and diversify areas of cooperation,” he continued.

Referring to his agreements with the Emir of Qatar to seriously increase cooperation between the two countries in the fields of transport, energy, trade, investment, food security, health and culture, the president added that Iran is ready to fully cooperate with Qatar in hosting the World Cup games in the best way possible.

Enumerating Iran's unique advantages in various fields such as geographical, environmental, transit, economic, scientific and especially young and educated forces, Raisi said that these advantages guarantee the ground for any bilateral or multilateral cooperation, economic growth and regional security.

He added, “The Islamic Republic is looking for a change and leap in regional relations and this trip will start a new chapter in Iran-Qatar relations.”

He then said that the trip is considered as one of the most transformational steps with neighbors, especially Iran's neighbors in the Persian Gulf countries.

The president stated that the level of cooperation between the countries of the region is not commensurate with the huge existing capacities, noting that Iran seeks to help strengthen these relations within the framework of neighborhood policy and to seek cooperation in the development of regional relations.

He continued, “Iran has proved that it always stands by the interests of independent countries and nations, and in difficult times, we have proved our friendship to all countries in the region.”

He added that many countries in the region have

realized this fact and have similar experiences in this field.

Iran is winner of fight against terrorism and maximum pressure campaign

Raisi then stated that Iran has won two battlefields against terrorism and the maximum economic pressure campaign.

The president was openly referring to Iran's success in helping defeat Daesh in Iraq and Syria and resisting the “maximum pressure” campaign introduced against Iran by former U.S. President Donald Trump.

About a revival of the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the JCPOA, the president said the United States must prove its seriousness by lifting the main sanctions on the Islamic Republic.

Raisi also said in order to reach an agreement in the Vienna negotiations with the Westerners, it is necessary to ensure the interests of the Iranian people, especially the lifting of sanctions, a valid guarantee and stopping political claims against Iran.

He added that the region has entered a new phase. “After decades of aggressive and occupying presence of the hegemonic forces, the region is returning to the nations of the region, and this victory has been achieved with the resistance of the people.”

The president outlined that the countries in the region should resolve crises regions through consultations.

Three great lessons of recent developments in region

In another part of the press conference, Raisi said three lessons from the developments of the last few decades are that aggression is doomed to failure, the resistance is responding and none of the problems in the region has a military solution.

“We also discussed and agreed on regional issues, including the fight against terrorism, the situation in Afghanistan and drug trafficking,” the president said.

He highlighted that the fight against terrorism and its forms is one of the priorities of Tehran-Doha ties, and Iran's experiences in this field in Syria and Iraq are a security-building force for the region and the world.

The president stressed that Afghanistan's neighbors and regional countries must help all Afghan groups with different ethnicities to establish an inclusive government, otherwise insecurity will return to this oppressed country.

The solution to Yemeni crisis is ending Yemeni siege

Raisi then went on to say that the two leaders also talked about the Yemeni people and emphasized the need to lift the siege on the oppressed nation as a humanitarian action.

“The solution to the Yemeni problem is to stop the aggression on Yemen and holding Yemeni-Yemeni dialogue,” he reiterated.

Raisi further said that as he announced on the day of his inauguration, he extends his hand of friendship to all countries of the region, especially neighbors, in order to maximize interaction.

“Once again I need to thank the Emir and the government of Qatar for their hospitality,” he added.

The president then expressed hope that these talks will bear fruit.



of Qatar paved the way for the activation of relations between the two countries.

For his part, Qatar's foreign minister stressed the importance of exchanging views between the Iranian president and the Qatari Emir and stressed the need to implement the decisions of high-ranking officials of the two countries.

The two ministers also discussed important issues and developments related to the Vienna talks, as well as regional issues, including Afghanistan and Yemen.

From page 1 ► initiatives and flexibility. But now, to the western side. The U.S. and the three European countries that should show flexibility and initiative. Flexibility and initiative by the Western side can bring the negotiations to a conclusion in a matter of a few hours or days. And all of us can then talk of the good agreement.

I would like to explain to you as to where we stand now in Vienna. On the one hand, we are receiving messages from Mr. Biden through different intermediaries. Mr. Biden is trying to tell the Iranian side that he has good will. On the other hand, Mr. Rob Malley does not show any flexibility of the negotiating table.

At the same time, they are requesting direct dialogue with the Iranian side. The American side is responsible for the JCPOA. The JCPOA was sabotaged by the U.S., and now, the U.S. should responsibly accept the responsibility for this and should show the required flexibility in order for the negotiations to come to a definite conclusion.

OK. So, two questions there. What exact flexibility are you asking for?

There are some issues that are part of our red lines. Regarding the issue of guarantees, we have not yet received a practical and reliable initiative from the American side. We believe that all the issues, the nuclear issue and the removal of sanctions should be resolved in the form of a package.

On the return of all sides to the JCPOA, it cannot be that we should both accept the strict supervision system by the IAEA, but at the same time, see that some of our issues still remain part of the agenda of the board of governors of IAEA.

In 2015 also, the issue of safeguards were resolved in a political agreement. We think we can repeat that model. I said this to the German foreign minister last night as well. We think that if the U.S. and the Western side do not act real realistically at this sensitive moment and sensitive condition in Vienna, they will definitely be responsible for the probable failure of the negotiations. Well,

EU's Mora: Vienna talks have reached ‘crucial moment’ that entails fixing ‘key issues’

French, Russian and UK negotiators see outcome within days

TEHRAN – Enrique Mora, the European Union's deputy secretary general for political affairs who acts as coordinator in the talks in Vienna to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, said on Tuesday that that talk has reached a “crucial moment”, suggesting it is necessary to fix “key issues”.

Mora said after ten months of negotiations the “result is still uncertain”. However, he said negotiators from Iran, Russia, China, France, Germany, France and the U.S. are engaged in intensive talks in the Palais Coburg.

Negotiations to revive the nuclear deal, officially known as the JCPOA, started in April last year. The talks started after U.S. President Joe Biden said his administration is willing to rejoin the nuclear deal abandoned by his predecessor Donald Trump.

“#JCPOA #ViennaTalks are at a crucial moment. We are nearing the end after ten months of negotiations. The result is still uncertain. Key issues need to be fixed. But all delegations are fully engaged. Intense work in Coburg,” Mora wrote on his Twitter account.

Sides are expected to convene a Joint Commission meeting

European and Russian diplomats agreed that negotiations over Iran's nuclear program have reached the endgame, signaling potential relief for global energy markets if sides can agree to settle final differences, Bloomberg reported.

Iran urges all sides in the Ukraine conflict to show restraint

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday that the Islamic Republic is closely monitoring developments in Ukraine and asked all the conflicting sides to shows “restraint” and avoid any move that would intensify tensions.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran

FM: Iran is optimistic about a deal in Vienna



we are trying with seriousness and optimism to achieve a good agreement.

Unlike the last time, the United States is not speaking directly with Iran and vice versa. Your, I believe, it's the supreme leader has said no, that there shouldn't be direct talks. Why not? Because it would be much quicker and much to easier to know because it's really between you two. Wouldn't it be just quicker and easier?

There is a tall wall of mistrust between us and the Americans. I think you and your viewers know its reason.

The wrong policies of the Americans vis-a-vis the Islamic Republic of Iran. You see, over the last few weeks, we have received messages from different channels that U.S. officials are interested to have direct talks with us. Even a few days before coming to the Munich Security Conference, we received messages asking whether we were interested to talk to U.S. officials in the margins of the Munich conference. I clearly replied that the Americans should change their behavior. Mr. Biden

cannot talk of good will on the one hand and on the other hand, in the past few months, he has imposed sanctions against real and legal persons three times. This means that Mr. Biden is following the method of Mr. Trump and continuing the sanctions. But at the same time, he's interested in returning to the JCPOA. We cannot understand these paradoxical behaviors. American official talking about good will and then imposing sanctions. Therefore, we have the right to monitor the behavior of American and judge them accordingly instead of considering their rhetoric of the criteria and trust them.

In Vienna also, Mr. Rob Malley is interested to talk with our senior negotiator, my colleague, Dr. Bagheri. Currently, this exchange is being carried out in the form of non-paper through Mr. Mora. But for us, the key question is, is there any benefit in talks between us and the U.S.? Is there any clear picture of this dialogue?

In September, when I was in New York, I said, if Mr. Biden had good will and was serious, as a gesture of good will, he should show a

practical initiative, for instance, by unfreezing some of the Iranian assets. We are not asking Mr. Biden to give us loans through U.S. banks. We want him to release the funds that are owned by the Iranian nation as a gesture of good will. But so far, we have been told that things can happen after direct negotiations.

This shows that the Americans want negotiations for the sake of negotiation, not for a result that can help reach a good agreement.

OK. So, the last question is this. It's a human rights question, but it's also a money question. Because you just brought up this issue about the U.S. unfreezing Iranian assets. We understand that the U.K. signed an agreement with your country to secure the release of Nazanin Zaghari Ratcliffe. It was meant to have been last summer, but the deal fell through.

Now, as we all know, also, there's a lot of money involved. Iran is due 400 million pounds for former arms purchases from the U.K. under the Shah, which it never received. So, you paid, you didn't receive. You want that money back. Would payment of that outstanding debt to Iran secure the release of Nazanin?

For us, the issue of swapping prisoners is completely a humanitarian issue. Last year also, there was an agreement on the basis of which prisoners were supposed to be exchanged regardless of Vienna talks. Even in the list of exchange of prisoners, the person you mentioned was also included. But unfortunately, in the last minute, the Americans announced that all of this should be included in a complete package.

The release didn't take place. Maybe the American are interested in covering the issue of exchange of prisoners as part of the Vienna negotiations. We believe this is a humanitarian issue and can be considered as an urgent measure outside the Vienna negotiations.

Mr. Foreign Minister, thank you very much for joining us.

Thank you so much. All the best to you.



and No. 4 oil reserves.

Russian diplomats have continued working with European and U.S. counterparts to revive the Iran deal, even as their bilateral relations erode because of the Kremlin's decisions over Ukraine. Germany, which is also a party to the talks, said on Tuesday that it was stopping the process of certifying a key Russian gas pipeline.

France's negotiator at the talks, Philippe Errera, drew a parallel between the crisis in Ukraine and the nuclear talks with Iran. Diplomacy is aimed at upholding nuclear non-proliferation norms to prevent “a major regional crisis on a new front,” he wrote on Twitter, accusing Russia of a “flagrant violation of international law.”

Iran has also indicated that negotiators have made significant progress, while cautioning it still expects economic, legal and political guarantees the U.S. won't jettison the accord again.

Footage released overnight appeared to show Russian military vehicles heading towards the Ukrainian border.

Russia said the troops would be “peacekeeping” in the breakaway regions. Ukraine's president said his country was “not afraid of anything or anyone.”

Neighborhood policy receives a boost during Raisi visit to Qatar

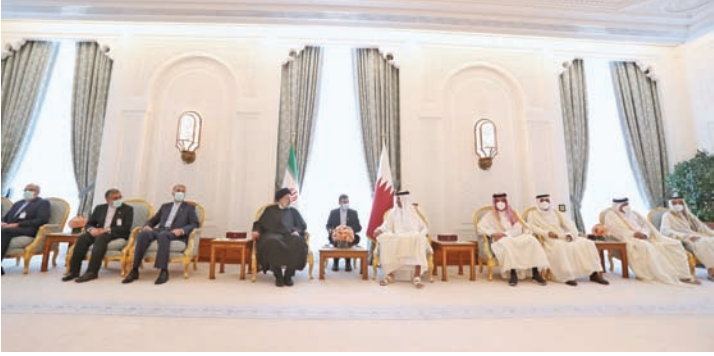
TEHRAN – Iranian President Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi paid a two-day visit to neighboring Qatar that gave a boost to Iran's renewed push to develop closer ties with its neighbors.

The aim of the visit was to participate in the 6th summit of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) but it also highlighted the “neighborhood policy” the Raisi administration is pursuing to enhance Iran's relations with its numerous neighbors.

Iran is one of the few countries in the world that has more than a dozen maritime and land neighbors. Iran has a total of 15 neighbors of which seven share land borders while the remaining shares maritime borders with Iran.

When Ayatollah Raisi took over as president in August last year, Iran's relations with most neighbors were either politically tense or economically stagnant. And that had to change. The new president and his foreign policy team assumed power with a clear foreign policy vision in mind: Neighborhood Policy.

The new policy was devised to accomplish the lofty goal of boosting Iran's economic ties with most neighbors as much as possible. And it served as a guiding principle in almost all the foreign visits Raisi and his top



diplomat, Hossein Amir Abdollahian, have made since last August.

So far, the foreign policy record of Ayatollah Raisi and Amir Abdollahian has been a success. The first achievement in this regard was Iran's permanent membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) which was achieved during the first foreign visit by Ayatollah Raisi to Tajikistan.

The president himself described the membership as a “diplomatic success” in line with his neighborhood policy.

“One of the dimensions of the visit [to Tajikistan] was the implementation of the government's foreign policy in the field of economic diplomacy and neighborhood policy, which will bring about a new chapter in relations with Tajikistan,” Ayatollah

said in September last year.

Earlier in March of that year, the president had said that “ECO constitutes a priority in the paradigm governing Iran's regional and neighborhood policies.”

Ayatollah Rasis similarly assessed his trip to Qatar. He said the visit was in line with the neighborhood policy.

He said that his administration has put a lot of energy and effort into developing Iran's relations with its neighbors. According to Raisi, shoring up ties with neighbors is at the center of his plan to develop foreign relations.

“In the months since the beginning of the Popular Administration, relations with neighbors have tripled with some countries, indicating that little attention was paid to these capacities

in the past,” the president said, taking a jab at derelictions that occurred during the previous administrations.

Underlining that he has no doubt that the future of Iran is very bright and hopeful, the president stated, “This is not just a claim, I know the country and its potentials.”

Ayatollah Raisi made the remarks at a meeting with Iranians living in Qatar during his visit to the tiny Persian Gulf nation.

At the same meeting, the president put emphasis on a core objective of the neighborhood policy which is increasing Iran's exports.

He said, “We are all obliged to try to increase Iran's exports. Today, unfortunately, our share in the region's economy is not in its proper place, while Iranian products in the region have an acceptable and competitive standard.”

It seems that the president succeeded in laying the ground for such an increase. “In the talks [I had] with the Emir of Qatar and in the conversation I had with the Prime Minister of this country, there is a serious will to expand trade and economic relations, so you Iranians living in Qatar can play a very effective role in realizing this will,” Ayatollah Raisi said.

SPORTS

Iran learn fate at AHF Cup Hockey

TEHRAN – Iran discovered their opponents at the 2022 Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) Cup Men's Hockey.

The Iranian team have been drawn in Pool B along with hosts Indonesia, Oman, Bangladesh and Singapore.

China, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan are in Pool A.

Iran will start the competition with a match against Singapore on their opening match.

The tournament will commence on March 11, and the final will be played on March 20 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Iran football director Khorshidi steps down

TEHRAN – Mojtaba Khorshidi stepped down as director of Iran national football team on Tuesday.

He was appointed as Iran football director in April 2021.

His appointment had attracted controversy.

Iran Football Federation President Shahaboddin Azizi Khadem was removed from his role last week by members of board directors.

The federation is leading by Mirshad Majedi as caretaker president until an extraordinary assembly is held.

Mahdavia remains as Iran U23 football team coach

TEHRAN – Mehdi Mahdavia remains as head coach of Iran's U23 football team, Hassan Kamranifar, the secretary general of the football federation, said on Tuesday.

Mahdavia was named as head coach of Iran U23 football team in September 2021 and the Iranian team booked their place at the 2022 AFC U23 Asian Cup under his leadership.

Iran have been drawn in Group A of the competition along with hosts Uzbekistan, Qatar and Turkmenistan.

The AFC U23 Asian Cup will be held in Uzbekistan from June 1 to 19.

“We've reached an agreement with Mahdavia and he will continue his job as the team head coach. The federation will support the U23 team to achieve the best possible results in Uzbekistan,” Kamranifar said.

Iran to send two swimmers to World Series Italia 2022

TEHRAN – Iran will send two swimmers to the World Series Italia Para Swimming 2022.

The competition will be held in Lignano Sabbiadoro, Italy from March 11 to 13.

Shahin Izadyar and Sina Zeighami will represent Iran in the championship.

The competition serves as qualification for the 2022 Asian Para Games in Hangzhou, China.

The event will bring 40 teams and 150 athletes together at the Bella Italia Village Pool in Lignano Sabbiadoro.

Netherlands invites Iran's Karate team to hold joint camp

TEHRAN – The Netherlands' Taekwondo Federation has invited 10 members of the Iranian national Karate team and the team's technical staff to hold a joint training camp in the European country.

The Iranian national Karate team is facing several important events such as the Asian matches, the Asian Championship matches, the matches of Islamic countries, and several others.

The Iranian Karate Federation is deciding on the invitation, and if the conditions are right, Iran's national karate team will leave for the Netherlands on April 9.

The Iranian national karate team is facing important events such as the Asian Games, the Asian Championship, the Games of Islamic countries and several other events.

The second round of the World League competitions will kick off in Portugal's Porto on April 22, 2022, MNA reported.

The Iranian karatekas will leave Rotterdam for Porto if the Federation's technical staff and related officials confirm.

Al Sadd clinch record 16th Qatar Stars League title

TEHRAN – Al Sadd won the 2021-22 Qatar Stars League title following an 8-2 win over Al Ahli.

The emphatic win secured Al Sadd a record-extending 16th league title with four matches to spare, the-afc.com reported.

The victory took Al Sadd to 52 points, 10 ahead of Al Duhail SC who have only three matches remaining to the champions' four.

Akram Afif opened the scoring for Al Sadd in the 10th minute with Hassan Al Haydos (penalty, 29th), Boualem Khokhi (33rd), Santi Cazorla (36th) and Baghdad Bounedjah (43rd) given them a 5-0 lead going into the break.

Abdulrasheed Umaru (51st) and Al Dokali Al Seyed (61st) pulled two back for Al Ahli but Al Sadd celebrated in style with Andre Ayew (62nd, 90+4) and Yousuf Abdurisag (77th) confirming the massive win. With the domestic title secured, Javi Gracia's side will now turn their attention to the 2022 AFC Champion League.

Al Sadd are in Group E with Al Faisaly of Saudi Arabia, Jordan's Al Wehdah and winners of a playoff.

The group stage will be played in April.

Saudi Arabia confirmed as centralized hosts for 2022 ACL West Group Stage

TEHRAN – The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has confirmed Saudi Arabia will host the AFC Champions League 2022 (West) Group Stage matches.

The competition will be held

The group stages will be played from 15 April to 1 May 2022 for the East Region and from 7 to 27 April 2022 for the West Region.

A total of 40 teams will be competing in the group stage to decide the 16 places in the knockout stage of the 2022 AFC Champions League.

Foolad and Sepahan are Iran's representatives in the 2022 ACL edition.

In the group stage, each group will be played on a double round-robin basis in centralized venues.

The winners of each group and three best runners-up from each region will advance to the round of 16 of the knockout stage.

Top Iranian sides Persepolis and Esteghlal were kicked out of the Asian Champions League after having their licenses withdrawn by the Asian Football Confederation.

In its crackdown, the AFC declared the clubs “had not satisfied all of the mandatory criteria”.

Tehran-based Persepolis are two-time finalists while Esteghlal were winners of the 1970 and 1991 Asian Club Championship – the forerunner to the Asian Champions League.

Gol Gohar Sirjan, a third Iranian team, have also been stripped of their license.

President Raisi meets foreign officials in Qatar

TEHRAN – Iranian President Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi held meetings with a number of foreign officials participating in a gas summit in the Qatari capital Doha.

Ayatollah Raisi met with Qatari Prime Minister Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz Al Thani.

In the meeting, the Iranian president described the relations between the two countries as very deep and based on the religious and heartfelt closeness of the two nations, according to the official website of the Iranian presidency.

Raisi said, “There are good relations and interaction between the two nations in political, economic and social fields, but this level of relations is not commensurate with the existing capacities in the two countries.”

Noting that good relations between the two countries can lead to constructive regional and international relations, the president added, “The existing capacities in Iran and Qatar, especially the huge capacities that exist in Iran, have not being used appropriately to expand relations between the two countries.”

Proposing the establishment of an Iranian business center in Qatar to introduce Iran's capabilities to Qatari economic and commercial actors, Raisi said, “The Islamic Republic of Iran today has made great achievements in various fields of production, industry, technology, nanotechnology and biotechnology and knowledge-based activities that can be used to improve the level of bilateral interactions.”

Referring to the activities of six Iranian companies in the field of COVID-19 vaccine, of which four have succeeded in producing the vaccine completely independently, the president stated, “Today, the Islamic Republic of Iran has trained a large number of educated youth who have very good abilities in technical and engineering fields, and this capacity can be a basis for expanding cooperation between the two countries.”

Ayatollah Raisi stressed, “Iran has succeeded in neutralizing the imposed sanctions in spite of widespread sanctions and threats, and has achieved great progress despite the wishes of the enemies, in a way that the Americans recently officially declared that the policy of maximum pressure has failed.”

Referring to the hosting of the FIFA World Cup in Qatar, Raisi said, “The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready for any cooperation to hold this event as well as possible by Qatar.”

Raisi added, “In this trip, good agreements have been reached to expand the relations between the two countries and I have instructed my ministers to follow them differently from the past so that we can see the results in the field of implementation and improvement of the relations between the two countries.”

The Prime Minister of Qatar, Khalid bin Khalifa bin Abdulaziz Al Thani, described the visit of Ayatollah Raisi to Doha as historic and said, “There are great potentials and horizons for expanding relations between the two countries and holding regular meetings of the Joint Economic Cooperation Commission plays an effective role in the realization of these capacities.”

The prime minister also referred to the great interest of the Iranian and Qatari people in football, and congratulated Iran's national football team for qualifying for the 2022 World Cup and said, “Sport is one of the best ways to strengthen nations”

interactions beyond the quality of political relations between governments.”

‘Standing up to hegemony biggest asset of Iran and Venezuela’

The Iranian president also met with Venezuelan Foreign Minister Felix Plasencia.

The Iranian president said that “countries like Venezuela and Iran have assets more important than oil and gas, which is the people who have decided to resist the extravagance, and this is the greatest asset of our countries.”

He pointed out that “the relationship between countries like Iran and Venezuela is a strategic one, which should be seriously pursued, and the agreements between the two countries should be implemented as soon as possible.”

“One example of this is Venezuela, which has overcome sanctions despite intense pressure, but with the support of the people through resistance, today we see that the situation in this country is improving.”

The president said that Iran plans to expand cooperation and interaction with Venezuela in various fields, adding, “We are ready to be with the people of Venezuela in changing the economic situation for the benefit of the people.”

“The countries of the Latin American region are a great example of the certainty of the victory of the resistance of nations against the hegemony of world powers,” said Raisi.

Ayatollah Raisi stressed, “The relationship between our countries is a strategic relationship that must be pursued seriously and the agreements between the two countries should be implemented as soon as possible.”

The president noted that relations with Latin American countries in his administration are different and far better than before to reach new horizons of cooperation.

Ayatollah Raisi attributed the continuous improvement of Venezuela's economic situation to the efforts and resistance of the Venezuelan people and said, “The United States thought that Latin America would be the backyard of its extravagances, but today, contrary to expectations, the region has become one of the biggest obstacles to U.S. hegemony.”

For his part, Plasencia said that his country was strongly committed to the fight against U.S. imperialism.

“The United States wants all countries to succumb to its wishes, but the Venezuelan nation has stood against its extravagance and will not let the U.S. prevent Venezuela from playing a leading role in the freedom-seeking of the nations of the Latin American region,” he pointed out.

The Venezuelan foreign minister stressed his country's interest in strengthening relations with Iran.

In this ceremony, a memorandum of understanding on technology transfer and cooperation in the field of oil and gas between Iran and Venezuela was signed at the presence of Raisi by the Iranian oil minister and the Venezuela foreign minister.

Iran supports independence of Latin America nations

On the sidelines of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum, President Raisi met with Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago Keith Rowley.

Tehran, Doha sign 14 cooperation documents



Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi (L) and Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani

TEHRAN – Iran and Qatar signed 14 cooperation documents during a meeting between Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani on Monday, Shana reported.

As reported, the signed cooperation documents are in the fields of aviation, trade, shipping, radio and television, foreign policy, electricity, standards, culture and education.

The mentioned documents were signed by the ministers of foreign affairs, oil, transport and urban development, culture and Islamic guidance and energy of Iran with their Qatari counterparts in the presence of President Raisi and Sheikh Thani.

Iranian Industry Minister meets with Qatari counterpart

Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Fatemi-Amin, who also accompanied President Raisi during his visit to Qatar, met with his Qatari counterpart Ali bin Ahmed Al Kuwari on Monday.

In this meeting the officials stressed the need for the expansion of economic relations between the two countries using the existing capacities.

At present, the trade between Iran and Qatar stands at about 300-400 million dollars, which considering the great capacities for mutual cooperation the figure can be increased to one billion dollars next year.

Qatari trade delegation to visit Iran soon

According to Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Alireza Peyman-Pak, who also accompanied Raisi in the visit to Doha, Iranian industrial and knowledge-based projects have been welcomed by the Qatari side, and according to the negotiations, an economic delegation from this country will travel to Iran in the coming months to visit and assess some projects.

Iran, Venezuela ink MOU for co-op in oil industry

TEHRAN – Iran and Venezuela have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for expanding cooperation in various areas of the oil industry, Shana reported.

The MOU was signed by Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji and Venezuelan Minister of Foreign Affairs Felix Plasencia Gonzalez in a ceremony on Tuesday.

The agreement covers a variety of areas including cooperation in technical services, technology transfer, training and educational services, and cooperation in the development of the refining industry.

Oji traveled to Qatar on Monday to attend the 6th Summit of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) which was held in Doha on Tuesday.



in the country's water resources as well as a new wave of illegal cryptocurrency mining across the country have also worsened the situation.

Iran's Power Generation, Distribution, and Transmission Company (known as Tavanir) has previously announced that the company is implementing over 40 different programs for managing the situation and to prevent blackouts in the country, however, so far these programs do not seem to be working as expected.

ICCIMA hosts Iran-Kazakhstan business forum

From page 1 ► Shafeie further mentioned the fact that despite all the restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, Iran and Kazakhstan's borders were never closed on each other, and trade relations between the two countries were ongoing at all times.

Pointing to the great potentials and capacities of the two countries for mutual cooperation, Shafeie said petrochemicals, oil, gas, mining, industry, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, as well as technical and engineering services all have the potential for mutual cooperation and investment between the two sides.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the official mentioned Kazakhstan's membership to the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and Shanghai Agreement, saying: "Kazakhstan's position in such international treaties can be a good platform for Iran to expand its trade with the world."

He further put the two countries' trade level in 2020 at \$235 million, saying that the Islamic Republic's share of Kazakhstan's total foreign trade in the mentioned year (which was \$85 billion) is really insignificant.

The ICCIMA Head further mentioned some of the problems in the way of trade between the two countries including lack of appropriate banking relations, lack of enough direct flights between the two countries, problems regarding the issuance of visas for Iranian traders, lack of appropriate infrastructure in Iran's northern ports as well as the need for issuing guarantees for the exporters of technical and engineering services, and noted that resolving these



problems should become the priority of the two countries officials during the Joint Economic Committee meeting.

According to Shafeie establishing communication between the two countries' organizations and institutions will also help facilitate the trade relations between the two sides.

He also underlined the significance of the Bandar Abbas-Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan corridor and noted that this route can connect Kazakhstan to the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf and also to the East Asian countries.

He also pointed to the areas in which the two countries' private sectors can cooperate, saying: "Industrial sector, tourism, biotechnology, mining, and joint investment in production units can be among the fields in which the two countries' private sectors can also work together."

Shafeie also mentioned the capabilities of Iranian contractors in the field of technical and engineering services and said Iranian companies have previously worked on several projects in various areas including roads,

highways, construction, etc. in Kazakhstan.

Iran-Kazakhstan trade can reach \$3b in 3 years

Elsewhere in the forum, Sadati-Nejad also expressed dissatisfaction with the current level of economic relations between the two countries and noted that the level of trade between Iran and Kazakhstan can reach \$3 billion in the next three years.

"If we provide the groundwork for cooperation between the two sides, we can increase the level of mutual trade to \$3 billion over a three-year period," he stressed.

According to Sadati-Nejad, the two sides have discussed positive steps for long-term cooperation between the two countries, including an agreement to establish a joint trade council, holding a specialized exhibition of Iranian products in Kazakhstan in the coming months, a joint banking committee to implement using national currencies in trade, transport development and reducing tariffs as well as strengthening maritime transport.

Deals worth \$5 billion already signed between Iran, Kazakhstan private sectors

Finally, Kazakhstan's Minister of Trade and Integration Bakhyt Sultanov, for his part underlined the positive relations between the two sides and said Iranian and Kazakh companies signed deals worth over \$5 billion in 2021.

He stressed the need for complete use of the logistic capacities of the two countries for increasing the level of economic exchanges between the two sides.

He considered the role of the logistics sector in the expansion of trade between the two countries very important and noted that the Iran-Turkmenistan-Kazakhstan corridor has a significant role in reducing trade costs.

"We are already negotiating with Turkmenistan to reduce transit tariffs and facilitate trilateral trade; They have agreed to implement the reduced tariffs scheme for three months and I hope it will continue," Sultanov stated.

Iran-Kazakhstan ink 5 co-op documents

Later on Monday, the 17th Iran-Kazakhstan Joint Economic Committee meeting was held at Spinas Hotel in Tehran, during which the two sides signed five cooperation documents in various fields including standards, economic, scientific, technical and cultural as well as customs.

The mentioned documents were signed by Iranian Agriculture Minister Javad Sadati-Nejad, and Kazakhstan's Minister of Trade and Integration Bakhyt Sultanov who co-chaired the two countries' 17th Joint Economic Committee meeting.

TEDPIX gains 3,000 points on Tuesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 3,211 points to 1.284 million on Tuesday.

As reported, 5,433 billion securities worth 33.034 trillion rials (about \$127.05 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index rose 2,393 points, and the second market's index increased 6,345 points.

TEDPIX dropped 2,000 points (less than one percent) to 1.282 million in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

During the past week, the indices of Mobarakeh Steel Company, Tehran Oil Refining Company, Iran Khodro Company, Saipa Company, and National Iranian Copper Company were the most widely followed ones.

The government has applied several new changes in the national budget bill for the

next Iranian calendar year (begins on March 21) which according to experts and analysts will ensure the stock market's stability and growth in the coming years.

Reducing taxes on production units active in the stock market, strengthening the Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund, eliminating subsidized foreign currency allocations, and stabilizing the ownership interest of the mines are some of the measures considered in the budget bill to support the capital market.

Allocating a 20-percent tax on legal entities is considered in next year's budget bill which is less than the previous years. Reducing the taxes imposed on production units will make them more profitable and therefore their performance in the stock market will improve.

Also, the direct taxes collected from



production units is expected to be injected into the Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund in order to be used to improve and develop the market.

Electricity generation rises over 7% in 10 months on year

TEHRAN- Electricity generation in Iran rose 7.4 percent during the first ten months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2021-January 20, 2022), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, Managing Director of Iran Grid Management Company Mostafa Rajabi Mashhadi announced.

He also announced that 261.921 billion kilowatt-hours (Kwh) of electricity has been consumed in the country since the beginning of the present year, which is 18,083 Kwh more than the figure for the same period of time in the past year.

Rajabi Mashhadi further said that power supply to industry sector has risen five percent in the first ten months of this year from that of the previous year.

In the past decade, constant temperature rising and the significant decrease of rainfalls across Iran have put the country in a hard situation regarding electricity supply during peak consumption periods.

This year, however, new deteriorating factors like severe drought and the decline

Back in October 2021, Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry inked a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Energy Ministry for constructing 10,000 megawatts (MW) capacity of power plants across the country.

The MOU was signed by Industry Minister Reza Fatemi Amin and Energy Minister Ali Akbar Mehrabian in Tehran on Monday.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Mehrabian noted that these power plants will be built to meet the needs of industrial sectors and according to the signed MOU, industries will meet their electricity needs through them and the surplus power will be injected into the national grid.

The minister stated that the country is currently facing 14,000 MW of electricity shortage, adding: "This figure

percent of the country's total electricity demand, which we cannot provide in various sectors including domestic, industrial, administration and agricultural areas."

Industry Ministry ink MOU with Energy Ministry for constructing power plants with capacity of 10,000 MW across country

Pointing out that the construction of these power plants will be operational in the near future, Mehrabian said: "Our industries haven't been able to fully implement their development plans due to lack of electricity. We hope to see good cooperation between the two ministries and thus create prosperity in near future."

He said that one of the plans of the Energy Ministry is to increase the capacity of the country's power plants in proportion to the demand.

"We plan to construct 35,000 MW of power plants in various fields, of which 15,000 MW will be combined cycle and steam power plants established by the Energy Ministry and the

private sector, while the other 10,000 MW will be renewable power plants," the official added.

Stating that several investors have expressed readiness to build renewable power plants, Mehrabian said: "Iran has a high capacity for the construction of renewable power plants and having 300 sunny days during the year, several projects can be implemented in the solar energy sector."

Back in July, Deputy Industry Minister Saeed Zarandi had said that the mentioned power plants are financed by 12 investors from various industrial sectors and will be constructed within 2.5-3 years.

According to Zarandi, the said power plants will be constructed in Isfahan, Hormozgan, Markazi, Yazd, Kerman, Fars, Semnan, and Khuzestan provinces.

One of the main goals of this program is to provide reliable and sustainable electricity to high-consuming industries and the country's industrial parks in order to reduce the pressure imposed on the national grid in the industry and mining sector, Zarandi had explained.

Russia declares breakaway Ukraine regions “independent” republics

From page 1 ▶ Over the past days people in the region have been fleeing to Russia in their droves amid reports of heavy shelling.

Putin has now instructed the Russian Defense Ministry to send peacekeepers into Donbass, while telling the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to establish diplomatic relations. Putin said Moscow was sending troops into the territory “to keep the peace”.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky says he would not concede his country's land amid escalating tensions with Russia.

Despite months of predictions of a full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine by Western leaders, Zelensky addressed the nation saying “as soon as we see a change in the situation, as soon as we see an increase in risks, you will know all this, there is no reason for chaotic action.

He also says “we believe there will be no war against Ukraine, and there will be no broad escalation on the part of the Russian Federation”.

U.S. and European countries have vowed to target Moscow with new sanctions.

The U.S. administration of Joe Biden says Moscow's move did not trigger a broad package of sanctions that the U.S. and its allies had been working on if Russia invades Ukraine because Washington claims Russia already had troops in the Donbas region.

This accusation has been repeatedly dismissed by the Kremlin since 2014.

Instead the White House has announced separate, less severe and more targeted sanctions.

UK PM Boris Johnson says “we will immediately institute a package of economic sanctions. This is, I should stress, just the first barrage of UK economic sanctions against Russia”

Russia's foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, has brushed off the threat of sanctions, describing the west's actions as predictable.

Lavrov says “our European, American, British colleagues will not stop and will not calm down until they have exhausted all their possibilities for the so-called ‘punishment of Russia’. They are already threatening us with all manner of sanctions or, as they say now, ‘the mother of all sanctions’. Well, we’re used to it. We know that sanctions will be imposed



anyway, in any case. With or without reason”.

There appears to be divisions between the UK and the EU over the expected presence of Russian troops in Donbas. The UK says its evidence the invasion of Ukraine has already begun, but the EU's foreign affairs chief, Josep Borrell, voiced a more cautious tone “I wouldn't say that is a fully fledged invasion”.

Russia's legislature is expected to confirm the Kremlin's decision to recognise the self-proclaimed territories as independent states on Tuesday, paving the way for Russian peacekeeping troops to enter the region.

It's not clear the size of the force that Moscow will dispatch and when they would travel to the breakaway regions.

During an emergency UN Security Council session, Russian ambassador Vasily Nebenzya says “we remain open to diplomacy, however, allowing a new bloodbath in the Donbass is something we do not intend to do”.

Critics accuse the U.S. of stoking the crisis as it failed to meet Russian security proposals at a time when Moscow was withdrawing troops from its border with Ukraine and Washington doing the opposite by sending more troops and weapons to Ukraine.

Analysts also say the West has increased tensions with its war-mongering rhetoric of an imminent Russian invasion of Ukraine, claims that have been made time and again since late October last year.

Speaking in a televised address to the nation, Putin explained “I believe it is necessary to take this

long overdue decision. I immediately recognize the independence and sovereignty of the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) and the Lugansk People's Republic (LPR).”

Later, Putin met with the DPR and LPR leaders and signed treaties on friendship, cooperation and mutual aid between Russia and both territories.

Putin warned Ukraine's aspiration to join NATO poses a direct security threat to Russian territory saying “In NATO documents, our country is officially and directly declared the main threat to North Atlantic security. And Ukraine will serve as a forward springboard for the strike”.

He said Russia “has every right to take retaliatory measures to ensure its own security. That is exactly what we will do.”

The recognition of the breakaway Ukrainian regions, eight years after Russian speaking people there declared loyalty to Moscow, amounts to a declaration by Russia that it no longer considers the region to be part of Ukraine.

Putin said it was a long overdue response to “those who embarked on the path of violence, bloodshed, lawlessness and did not recognize and do not recognize any other solution to the Donbass issue, except for the military one”.

He demanded an immediate cessation of hostilities by Ukraine,

“Otherwise, all responsibility for the possible continuation of the bloodshed will be entirely on the conscience of the regime ruling on the territory of Ukraine” he said.

The U.S. is portraying Russia as an enemy for the sole reason it does not want to see such a big country, the

Russian President added.

“Our political stance or something else does not matter. They simply do not want to see such a large and independent country as Russia” Putin noted.

Ukraine will serve as a NATO foothold for a strike against Russia, should it join the alliance, he warned.

“The U.S. strategic planning documents stipulate an option of the so-called preemptive strike on enemy's missile systems. And we know who the main enemy for the U.S. and NATO is. It is Russia. NATO documents officially, straightforwardly declare Russia as the main threat for Euro-Atlantic security. And Ukraine will serve as a foothold for such a strike”

The Russian leader says the Ukrainian troop command and control systems are already directly integrated with NATO and the alliance has started exploiting Ukraine's territory.

“This means that the command of the Ukrainian armed forces and even separate formations and units can be directly exercised from NATO headquarters. The United States and NATO have already begun shamelessly exploiting Ukrainian territory as a theater of potential military operations” Putin said.

He also noted “In recent months, Western weapons have been continuously flowing into Ukraine demonstratively as seen by the entire world... Regular joint drills [of Ukraine and NATO] have a clear anti-Russia bias”.

He pointed out that “last year alone, they involved over 23,000 troops and more than 1,000 pieces of equipment. A law has already been adopted on admitting the armed forces of other states to Ukrainian territory in 2022 for participation in multinational drills”.

Analysts say this crisis could have been avoided if NATO and the U.S. in particular did not pump weapons and send troops to Russian borders over the past months and instead given assurances to Moscow that NATO's eastward expansion would not continue.

Critics also say Washington is trying to damage Russia's relations with Europe, especially energy cooperation between Moscow and Berlin. On Tuesday, Germany announced the suspension of the Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline certification.

Trump's defeat in 2024 election can lead to armed civil unrest: professor

From page 1 ▶ But that is not the point of your question: The U.S. is notionally a “representative democracy”: voters cannot participate in a mass democratic process. Instead, they select individuals to represent their interests and values at different levels of government (federalism), culminating in the President, who is both leader and head of state. Democrats want to increase participation of representative democracy by increasing access to the vote to those who have not, historically, voted in great numbers (e.g., ethnic and racial minorities and other under-represented groups). The Democrats believe that by enrolling these individuals and groups to vote, they can create a permanent national majority in the government. But things are not that simple, as I shall explain below.

The Republicans see “too much democracy” as taking away power from their primarily white, constituency, which has run the U.S. for the past couple of centuries. They also think that too many groups with particular interests create political disorder and make it impossible to run a government (and they may be correct on this second point). More to the point, perhaps, a republic is a country to which its citizens profess love and loyalty and hew to a shared set of values historically established by economic and social classes and elites. The country has functioned and succeeded on the basis of these historical verities and values (e.g., from the “Founding Fathers”—no mothers involved) so why should those be changed now? Allowing under-represented groups to vote and contrary values to triumph means “disorder” and the end of white domination. So, they are bent on restricting access to the ballot.

The contradiction I mentioned above has to do with the federal nature of the U.S. political system. States have a considerable number of powers, including regulation of voting, that they can use to limit access to the vote, and there are a fair number of “Red” states that are doing this. The U.S. constitution mandates two Senators from each state, whether 500,000 people or 40 million. If there are more Red states than blue, it is difficult for the Democrats to control the Senate, whatever the popular vote (and minorities tend to live in Democratic cities and states, and cannot vote in Red states). The House of Representatives is somewhat less non-representative, but still subject to domination by Red states. Each state is allotted a number of Congressional districts based on population, but no state can have less than one representative. Some districts are much more populous than others. State governments draw new congressional district lines every 10 years, and a state's Republican government can draw these largely as it pleases. The lines can be manipulated to give Republicans advantages in elections for Representatives.

U.S. foreign policy has not been stable over the last years. The difference between Trump and Biden is an example. Maybe you say that is the natural result of democracy. But what about governments' responsibilities? Is it reasonable that the next administration dodges America's international obligations?

U.S. foreign policy has been pretty unstable since the end of the Cold War. But it has long been and continues to be a policy that seeks to keep the U.S. internationally dominant. The difference between Trump, who was an avatar of 1930s “isolationism,” and Biden, who represents the “liberal interventionism of the Democrats” (and until the 1990s, of some Republicans, as well) differ only in methods but not in goals. Over the post-Cold War period, the U.S.—which has 700 military bases around the world—tended to think about intervention with air power and only “boots on the ground” as a last resort (as in Iraq and Afghanistan). This has not worked too well, as a lesson from Vietnam that has largely been forgotten.

The Trumpists want the U.S. to be dominant but do not want to expend the resources required to support this, militarily, diplomatically, economically (and there are many on the political left who support this position, like Bernie Sanders). They think, oddly enough, that the U.S. can lead by example and reputation and behaves as others should behave (which is too nonsensical for words). Trump, moreover, views international politics and foreign policy as a set of transactional contracts that can be broken, willy-nilly, just as he ran his various businesses. If others won't pay, the U.S. will not pay.

Finally, at least until this point, Ukraine illustrates just what the Biden Administration is willing to do. It will not go to war for Ukraine—but does it have any obligations to Ukraine? It will not move a serious number of troops and military equipment to the eastern border of NATO, since that will upset everyone but Poland and make war that much more possible. It will talk and talk and issue dire warnings to Russia, but little more. Diplomacy is the art of negotiating reasonable compromises (keep Ukraine out of NATO forever and ever). What the U.S. is doing is brinkmanship and, as the Cuban Missile Crisis illustrated, that is not always a good idea.

Given that Trump enjoys a big social base, how do you see the future of U.S. democracy? Do you expect the division to get deeper?

I don't think it is clear how big Trump's “social base” actually is—but there are 300 million guns in civilian hands across the U.S. (I don't have any). Don't hold me to this, but if Trump runs and loses in 2024, there may well be civil unrest, with guns, and the possibility of some kind of civil war between the Coasts and what I like to call “Central America” (the South, Midwest and West to the borders of Kansas or Colorado). In that case, all bets are off about the “future” of U.S. democracy.

But then, again, Trump's base, the white populism, is declining in numbers, so maybe his populism will die out first. No one knows.

How do you see the relations between ideology, interests and values in U.S. policymaking? To what extent can ideologies like evangelical Christianity or values like democracy affect U.S. interests domestically and internationally?

I used to believe that foreign policy reflected some version of U.S. national interests, but was deeply inflected by ideology (see my Ph.D. dissertation). Ideologies provide the value structures for policymaking—what is the ideal society (and the world) in which people want to live. But ideologies are like slogans—they are not well-developed systems of thought and action. Most Americans don't want much more than slogans.

I've come to the view that most foreign policy is shaped by domestic politics. Leaders of countries used to think that war was a good way to cover over political divisions, at least until the war ends, but that is no longer the case in most of the West. We either have volunteer armies that depend on certain social segments with little power or money, or short periods of military service, in armies that are not very competent. So, most parents have little stake in supporting a shooting war, since their children will not be drafted and killed, and those who do have children in the military see it as a way to get trained or go to college.

In other words, what foreign policy will generate the greatest political support for the next election? Joe Biden wants to appear supportive of NATO and Ukraine, but a shooting war will lose him Democratic support, especially on the left. At the same time, doing nothing will lead the Republicans to accuse him of betraying “freedom-loving Ukrainians” (not those allied with the Russians, of course). It is difficult, these days, to identify any foreign policy that is not shaped by American domestic politics.

What are the implications of electing (or possibly re-electing) characters like Trump in the U.S.? Does it mean a crisis in American society?

As my comments above suggest, the crisis is already here. The problems you raise are fundamental and not easily dealt with. What will Trumpism be after Trump? Is he unique or will his politics carry on (much like Franklin Roosevelt after World War II)? Obviously, any kind of civil war in the U.S. will have serious ramifications for the world. Military forces abroad will either be stranded or forced to declare loyalties. International travel and communication will be badly disrupted. The dollar will collapse and lose its status as a reserve currency, leading to worldwide depression until a stable monetary order is restored (there is not enough gold in the world to support international trade, except at very low levels; oil could be bartered, especially because global warming will decrease as emissions decline due to lower economic activity). I do not believe that China will be either able or ready to step into the economic role and the EU cannot even implement a stable currency for all its members. Not a pretty picture.

High-ranking Kazakh delegation visits Tehran

TEHRAN- Deputy Prime Minister – Minister of Trade and Integration Bakhyt Sultanov undertook a visit to the capital Tehran to hold talks with the Iranian authorities on February 22, 2022.

The accompanying delegation, consisted of over 50 members, was comprised of Deputy Ministers of Trade and Integration, Industry and Infrastructural Development, Agriculture, Ecology, Geology and Environment, Chairmen of State Revenue Committee and the Committee of Technical Regulation and Metrology, heads of “KazTrade” State Company, Kazakhstan Institute of Standardization and Metrology, National Accreditation Center, Aktau Sea Port as well as representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Office of the General Prosecutor, “SK-Pharmacy” State Company and others.

Among the delegation were 15 Kazakh exporting companies producing food, milling, meat, edible oil, chemical, metal, IT, telecommunication products and construction materials.

The Deputy Prime Minister together with the Minister of Agriculture of the Islamic Republic of Iran Seyed Javad Sadati Nejad co-chaired the 17-th Meeting of the Intergovernmental Kazakhstan-Iran Commission of Trade-Economic, Scientific-Technical and Cultural Cooperation during which a wide spectrum of issues on the bilateral cooperation in the fields of trade, economy, investments, agriculture, health, banking, transportation and logistics including air, road, railway and marine transportation, industry, mining, tourism, culture, energy, customs, standards, accreditation and conformity assessment, education, labor, social security, legal and judicial cooperation, as well as collaboration between Free Zones and Chambers of Commerce were discussed.

The Meeting resulted in signing the final Protocol of the Commission a Protocol between State Revenue Committee of Kazakhstan and the Customs of Iran, a Memorandum of Understanding between “KazTrade” State Company and Iran Trade Promotion Organization as well as three Memorandums between Standardiza-



tion Organizations.

The Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Agriculture of the Islamic Republic of Iran together with the President of Iran Chamber of Commerce opened a Trade Mission of Kazakhstan to Iran and Kazakhstan-Iran Business Forum which were attended by over 200 companies.

During the Mission and the Forum business contracts amounted in 14 million of USD including export of Kazakh meat, food products, flour and others were inked.

The Deputy Prime Minister met with the First Vice-President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Mohammad Mokhber to discuss ways of enlargement of trade-economic cooperation between Kazakhstan and Iran. It was agreed to put joint efforts in reaching the trade-turnover of 3 billion USD in the recent perspective. Cooperation in the field of SWOP exchange with a wide range of goods especially food products was suggested as the main way of achieving the said target.

In the framework of the visit the Deputy Minister of Trade and Integration of the Republic of Kazakhstan Kairat Torebayev met with Deputy Minister of Industry, Trade and Mines of the Islamic Republic of Iran – President of Iran Trade Promotion Organization Alireza Peymanpak and discussed the ways for increasing trade turnover and solving existed impediments in the bilateral trade.

The Deputy Minister of Industry and Infrastructural Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan Ruslan Baimishev had a meeting with Deputy Minister of Industry, Trade and Mines – President of IMIDRO company Vajiholla Jafari and discussed issues related to cooperation with Iranian companies in mining. He also received Iranian companies working in mining and discussed possibilities of investing in Kazakhstan mining.

The Deputy Minister of Ecology, Geology and Environment of Kazakhstan Talgat Momyshev met with the Deputy Minister and Head of Iran Geological Survey and Mineral Explorations Organization Alireza Shahidi during which disc issues of development of cooperation in Geological Science and Technology, Natural and Mineral Resources were discussed. As result of the meeting the side agreed to sign an agreement on exploration of non-ferrous and precious metals.

He also had a meeting with the Head of Iran Forests, Rangelands and Watershed Organization Masood Mansoor during which issues of cooperation in water field.

The Chairman of State Revenue Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan Ali Altynbayev met with Head of Iran Customs Administration Alireza Moqaddasi. The main topic of that meeting was intensification of the bilateral cooperation in Customs.

The Chairman of the Committee of Technical Regulation and Metrology of the Republic of Kazakhstan Arman Abenov met with Iranian National Standard Organization Ehsan Sadeh and discussed some matters in the sphere of standards.

The Senior Assistant to the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Kazakhstan Zeinelgabden Kussainov met the Deputy Attorney General of the Islamic Republic of Kazakhstan Dr.Favaedi and the Director General of International Cooperation Office of the Ministry of Justice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Dr. Fallah. The both sides discussed issues in related matters.

200-million-year-old coral reefs transported to Iran museum



TEHRAN – Collections of 200-million-year-old coral reefs and Bivalvia species have been transferred to the geological museum of Tabas Geopark, a local tourism official has announced.

A new fossil site within the geopark has recently revealed corals and Bivalvia species dating back to 205 to 220 million years ago, CHTN quoted Gholam-Hossein Shoeibi as saying on Tuesday.

A team of experts visited the southern areas of the Geopark recently and found these fossils, which are extremely rare and valuable, the official added.

The Tabas Earth Heritage Museum, which houses 600 specimens of various types of rocks, minerals, and fossils, has attracted many people interested in the topic, he noted.

Covering an area of 200 square meters, the museum displays minerals, stones, and fossils from all over the world, he

mentioned.

Sprawled in the eastern province of South Khorasan, Tabas Geopark includes some 50 geo-sites, a variety of scenic landscapes, and untouched terrains with the mysterious Kal-e Jeni (canyon of Jinn) located in Azmighan village, amongst them.

Tabas Geopark, which is situated in a vast county of the same name, has enormous potential to be registered as “the biggest” geopark in the West Asia region.

In recent years, Iran has sought UNESCO recognition for the geopark as one of the UNESCO Global Geoparks (UGGp).

A geopark is a unified area that advances the protection and use of geological heritage in a sustainable way and promotes the economic well-being of the people who live there. A UNESCO definition of the global geopark is a unified area with a geological heritage of international significance. Geoparks use that heritage to promote awareness of key issues facing society in the context of our dynamic planet.

Geoparks usually promote awareness of geological hazards, including volcanoes, earthquakes, and tsunamis and many help prepare disaster mitigation strategies with local communities. Geoparks embody records of past climate changes and are indicators of current climate changes as well.

Handicrafts yearbook published in Tehran

TEHRAN – An all-inclusive handicrafts yearbook has recently been published in Tehran, a cultural official said on Tuesday.

The book contains all the information related to different handicraft sections, including names of artisans, producers, workshops, and authorized retailers, Seyyed Hossein Alavi said

With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the number of cities and villages registered by the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next.

In January 2020, the cities of Shiraz, Malayer, and Zanjan and the village of Qassemabad were designated by the WCC-Asia Pacific Region, putting Iran’s number of rural crafts cities and villages from ten to 14.

The value of Iran’s handicrafts exports stood at \$120 million during the first eleven months of the past Iranian calendar year 1399 (March 20, 2020 – February 18, 2021), Mehr reported. The country’s handicrafts exports slumped during the mentioned months in comparison to the same period last a year earlier due to the damage the coronavirus pandemic has inflicted on



global trade.

The Islamic Republic exported \$427 million worth of handicrafts during the first eleven months of the calendar year 1398. Of the figure, some \$190 million was earned via suitcase trade (allowed for customs-free and tax-free transfer) through 20 provinces, according to data compiled by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.

Ceramics, pottery vessels, handwoven cloths as well as personal ornamentations with precious and semi-precious gemstones are traditionally exported to Iraq, Afghanistan, Germany, the U.S., the UK, and other countries.

Furthermore, he expressed his wonder at the presence of Thai stamps and banknotes displayed among the museum’s treasures.

Situated adjacent to salt-covered deserts, golden dunes, running sands, and jagged mountains, Qom is home to major religious madrasas (schools) as well.

Apart from sightseers and pilgrims who visit Qom to pay homage, it is also a top destination for Shia scholars and students who come from across the world to learn

collaboration with the private sector, aims at empowering the inmates, Alireza Arjmandi said on Tuesday.

In addition to providing employment, this workshop will provide an income source for the prisoners, the official added.

In October 2020, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts signed a memorandum of understanding with the Prisons, Security, and Corrective Measures Organization to create jobs and

From page 1 ▶ Last month, the Isfahan pavilion at the 15th Tehran International Tourism Exhibition offered free-of-charge virtual tours of untold stories of the ancient city. It turned the spotlight on the Leaning Tower of Isfahan, newly-discovered historical places, golden room, European consulate, pre-Edison street lighting, Room of the Queen of England in Iran, European neighborhood in Iran, 400-year-old ‘peacock’, a German heritage in Iran, secrets behind geometrical patterns, missing clock tower, a model of Amsterdam, a Guinness-assessed mosque, and the mystery of 33 to name a few.

Half the world?

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

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

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

Isfahan to offer off the beaten routes



Isfahan has long been nicknamed as Nesf-e-Jahan which is translated into “half the world”; meaning seeing it is relevant to see half the world. In its heyday, it was also one of the largest cities in the region with a population of nearly one million.

The cool blue tiles of Isfahan’s Islamic buildings, and the city’s majestic bridges, contrast perfectly with the encircling hot, dry Iranian countryside.

The huge Imam Square, best known as Naghsh-e Jahan Sq. (literary meaning “Image of the World”), is one of the largest in the world (500m by 160m), and a majestic example of town planning. Constructed in the early 17th century, the UNESCO-registered square is punctuated with the most interesting sights in Isfahan.

It was laid out under the reign of the Safavid ruler, Shah Abbas the

Great, to signal the importance of Isfahan as the capital of his powerful empire.

It is hemmed on four sides by magnificent buildings: to the east, the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque; to the west, the palace of Ali Qapu; to the north, the portico of Qeysarieh; and to the south, the eminent Imam Mosque.

“The square was at the heart of the Safavid capital’s culture, economy, religion, social power, government, and politics. Its vast sandy esplanade was used for celebrations, promenades, and public executions, for playing polo and for assembling troops,” according to the UNESCO website.

Right at the northern limit of the Imam Square, one will find “Qeysarieh Gate”, which leads to the unique and unforgettable “Grand Bazaar of Isfahan”. This vaulted marketplace is one of the largest and most labyrinthine bazaars in the country. Shops offering handicrafts, souvenirs, jewelry, silverware, traditional ceramics, and authentic Persian carpets.

On its outskirts, modern Isfahan is now home to some heavy industries, including steel factories and a uranium processing center, however, its inner core has somehow been preserved as a priceless gem. Also, Isfahan is a destination for medical tourism as it embraces an all-inclusive professional healthcare city.

UNESCO-registered Uramanat to launch research institute

TEHRAN – The UNESCO-designated Uramanat seeks to launch a special research institute to conduct surveys across the vast rural landscape situated in western Iran.

“The institute is to be established based on a memorandum of understanding we have inked with Kermanshah’s Razi University,” the director of the World Heritage site said on Monday.

“We are planning to gain the expertise of local elites, researchers, cultural heritage experts in the institute to solve problems existing in the region,” Pouya Talebnia added.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the official attached importance to efforts needed to be made to publicize achievements attained by the recent UNESCO inscription.

“Demonstrating the achievements of the global registration of Uramanat is essential for the entire western region of the country.”

According to Talebnia, preliminary archaeological assessments suggest the Uramanat region is composed of over 700 ancient sites.

Up to the moment, 120 sites of significant historical values have been discovered within the vast Uramanat cultural landscape.... However, the number is estimated to reach over 700 in future archaeological expeditions, he explained earlier this year.

“So far, 120 historical sites have been identified in the Uramanat region of Kermanshah province, and to further identify more sites, more detailed studies should be carried out.”

“We are planning to conduct additional archaeological studies on [the Paleolithic] Ravansar hill and the cultural landscape of Uramanat, using the expertise of local archaeologists and in collaboration with the



University of Heidelberg,” Talebnia noted.

UNESCO added Uramanat cultural landscape to its list of world heritage sites in July 2021. The UN body accepted the landscape, which holds hundreds of villages, 106,000 hectares of land, and 303,000 hectares of surrounding properties, during the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, which will be running through July 31 in China’s Fuzhou.

Stretched on the slopes of Sarvabad county, and shared between the provinces of Kordestan and Kermanshah, the rural area embraces dense and step-like rows of houses in a way that the roof of each house forms the yard of the upper one, a feature that adds to its charm and attractiveness. It boasts dense and step-like rows of houses in a way that the roof of each house forms the yard of the upper one, a feature that adds to its charm and attractiveness.

Uramanat enjoys unique tranquil landscapes. Last September, Hessam Mahdi, the representative of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) said that he was “impressed” by the status of the rural landscape during his visit. He made the remarks on the sidelines of a visit to the western province of Kermanshah. “I am proud of being chosen to assess the case and traveling to Iran as I could

visit the local people in the region.”

Local officials and travel insiders believe that inscription of the property on the prestigious list of the UN body could jumpstart tourism in the region and also look at it as a tool for better conservation of its natural landscapes and unique cultural scenes for the next generations, saying its unique rural texture, architecture, lifestyle, and agriculture is a prominent example of the integration of man into nature.

Last December, a team of archaeologists from Iran and Germany finished a field survey to shed new light on the history of Uramanat by unearthing remnants of historical monuments and relics. It yielded the discovery of “several” archaeological sites and objects yet it resulted in a change in the chronological sequence of several previously-found ancient sites, according to Talebnia. Moreover, several historical fortresses and their legal properties were demarcated during the survey, which was co-directed by Talebnia and Sheler Amelirad from Heidelberg University.

Over the past couple of years, western Iranian provinces have held several meetings to discuss ways to expand tourism, bringing together local officials, hoteliers, travel agents, and tour operators from provinces of Lorestan, Ilam, Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, Kermanshah, Kordestan, Hamedan, Zanjan and East Azarbaijan, amongst others.

The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 26 are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Iranian museums to showcase rarely-seen objects in new year vacations

TEHRAN – Iranian museums consider showcasing collections of their rarely-seen objects during the two-week Noruz (new year) vacations, which begin on March 21.

“We proposed countrywide museums to display their rarely-seen objects as well as old manuscripts including copies of Shahnameh (the epic magnum opus of Persian poet Ferdowsi) during Noruz vocations,” Morteza Adibzadeh, the director of museums and historical properties, said on Tuesday.

Iran is home to one of the world’s oldest continuous major civilizations, embracing settlements dating back to 4000 BC. It also hosts some of the world’s oldest cultural monuments including bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, gardens, rich natural, rural landscapes as well as 26 UNESCO World Heritage sites.

The name of Iran, formerly known as Persia, mostly conjures up the first Persian Empire, ruled by the Achaemenids (ca. 550 – 330 BC) and sites such as Pasargadae and Persepolis. However, there are tens of prehistorical sites as the Burnt City in Sistan-Baluchestan, Tepe



Sialk in Kashan, Susa, and Chogha Zanbil in the Khuzestan province, and Ecbatana in Hamedan which predate the Achaemenid period.

From a wider point of view, Iranian history can be divided into Pre-Islamic and Islamic eras. The Medes unified Iran as a nation and empire in 625 BC. The Islamic conquest of Persia (633–656) that put an end to the mighty Sassanid Empire (224–651) was a turning point in the history of the nation.

Iranians traditionally make hundreds of thousands of domestic trips during Noruz holidays, when most businesses and workplaces are closed, as are schools.

Handicrafts workshop to empower inmates in Qom

TEHRAN –A stone-cutting workshop has been inaugurated in the central prison of Qom aimed to help inmates learn a new occupation, the provincial tourism chief has announced.

The project, which has been carried out in



Islamic studies at its madrasas and browse through eminent religious bookshops.

Qom, which its antiquity goes back to the Sassanid era (224 CE–651), has many must-see destinations such as

historical mosques, mansions, and natural sceneries scattered across the city as well as towns and villages nearby.

One of the most visited natural spots of Qom is Hoz-e Soltan, an eye-catching salt lake is in the middle of the desert. The visitors could easily walk in the shallow parts and enjoy the shapes created by the salt, however, the center of the lake could be dangerous, as it is muddy and could easily trap people.

make income for prisoners.

The MOU also aimed at implementing special educational and promotional programs, identifying talented prisoners, and improving their social status.

The deputy tourism minister Pouya Mahmoudian said that handicraft products made by prisoners have been displayed in various exhibitions, and the income generated from selling these products has been returned to the prisoners and their families.

Iran, Armenia explore ways to strengthen security co-op

From page 1 ► Hovhannisyan also for his part said that I bow my head in respect to all the courage and sacrifice of the Iranian police officers in the fight against drug traffickers, as evidenced by the number of martyrs who have lost their lives in this way.

The main purpose of this meeting is to develop cooperation and improve the situation in various fields, especially in dealing with and combating drug traffickers, he stated, expressing preparedness to take action in this regard.

Today, we witnessed the high capabilities of the Iranian police in various fields of science, skills, tactics, specialized equipment, and I hope that by improving police interactions between the two countries, we can benefit from the highly specialized knowledge of Iran in strengthening the Armenian police, he concluded.

Iran holds world record for narcotics confiscation

Iran holds the record for narcotics confiscation in the world, Eskandar Momeni, the director of headquarters



for the fight against narcotics, said in December 2021.

However, great achievements in the field of countermeasures have been gained, and the United Nations has officially announced that 90 percent of opium, 70 percent of morphine, and 20 percent of world heroin have been discovered by Iran.

Last year, about 1,200 tons of drugs were discovered, which was the highest rate of discovery in the

world,” he explained.

According to figures released by the United Nations in 2000, Afghanistan produced about 200 tons of narcotics, but in 2018, it has grown to 9,500 tons.

In other words, the production of narcotics has increased fifty times, which has doubled the need for prevention efforts, he highlighted.

Despite the conditions caused by the coronavirus outbreak and the im-

position of harsh sanctions against the country, fortunately, with the efforts of anti-narcotics police in 2020, drug detection increased by 41 percent.

After the Islamic Revolution (in 1979), 3,800 were martyred, 12,000 were wounded and disabled in the fight against drug trafficking.

The UNODC has praised Iran's efforts to fight against narcotics trafficking on the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

The organization also officially announced that the world's first place in the discovery of opium, heroin, and morphine belongs to Iran.

According to UNODC, Iran remains one of the major transit routes for drug trafficking from Afghanistan to European countries and has had a leading role at the global level in drug-control campaigns.

UNODC World Drug Report 2020 estimates that in 2018, 91 percent of world opium, 48 percent of the world morphine, and 26 percent of the world heroin were seized by Iran.

Over 200 non-Iranian specialists granted residence permit

TEHRAN – More than 200 non-Iranian specialists in the country have been identified and supported through providing them with residence permits, Parviz Karami, an official with the Vice Presidency of Science and Technology, has said.

Due to its proximity to some countries or its various attractions, Iran has been hosting immigrants from different countries for many years, some of whom are scientific and knowledge elites, he added, ISNA reported.

“Iran has been hosting a large immigrant population for nearly four decades. Many of whom, despite the difficulties they faced in education and business, have been able to achieve great success and live as professional elites in Iran.

The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, by implementing a program of cooperation with international experts and entrepreneurs, provided special support for non-Iranian specialists. The program defined a set of services and facilities for elite immigrants and entrepreneurs, one of which is the provision of a special residence permit for three to five years,” he explained.

They can have a special residence card, except for the right to vote; To enjoy all citizenship rights in Iran, he added.



To date, more than 450 international professionals and entrepreneurs have been identified through this program, and over 200 applicants have been able to benefit from the “Special Residence” card, he added.

The primary objective of this plan is establishing an effective interaction between experts and top science and technology centers of the country in the form of supporting research and technology projects, such as post-doctoral, sabbaticals, visiting and selected professors, creating technological businesses and occupation in knowledge-based companies and holding specialized workshops and lectures.

Iranian elites return

Iran has also implemented a plan to return elites from the top 100 universities in the world.

Through a national model, the facilities are provided for their return by creating technology parks, innovation centers, and factories.

The plan was able to bring back 2,000 Iranian students from around the world over a three-year period.

About 500 Iranian researchers have returned home over the past four years to transfer their knowledge and expertise to the country's universities, according to the vice presidency for science and technology.

With the support of the National Elites Foundation and Science and Technology Vice Presidency, universities, knowledge enterprises, technology parks, and incubators launched a plan titled ‘cooperation with Iranian expatriate entrepreneurs and elites’ in 2015.

The plan aims to attract Iranians abroad to share knowledge in different forms including postdoctoral research, research opportunity, and visiting fellows, in addition to being faculty members.

So far, it has attracted more than 500 prominent Iranian researchers living in other countries as faculty members of the country's top universities, which has had a significant impact on raising the quality of research, educational and international activities of universities.

Darreh Tafi locals celebrate return of storks

TEHRAN – People in Darreh Tafi, a village located near Zarivar Lake in western Kordestan province, have once again celebrated the return of 60 pairs of migratory storks.

Zarivar Lake, a major tourist attraction in Kordestan, is hosting again thousands of storks that wing their ways to make their nests around the lake's mountainous areas, however, locals in surrounding villages, including Darreh Tafi, have decided to build safer nests for them.

The village of Darreh Tafi annually hosts about 300 storks, Bilo village hosts about 400, and Qolqoleh village also hosts about 70 white

storks that begin to nest and reproduce, ILNA reported.

The nests are typically used for years, so nest change is often related to a change in the pairing and failure to raise young the previous year, and younger birds are more likely to change nesting sites.

Oak forests near Zarivar Lake are the main nesting spots for storks. Villagers on the outskirts of Zarivar Lake believe that white storks are a symbol of good fortune and peace, which is why the people of the villages around the lake build nests for these birds.

Storks are large, long-legged, long-necked wading birds with long,

stout bills. They belong to the family called Ciconiidae and make up the order Ciconiiformes. Many species are migratory. There are nineteen living species of storks in six genera.

Years ago, storks have managed to find a way of living with humans, preferring human settlements and rooftops for nesting to more natural habitats like treetops, and surprisingly, humans also have rarely attacked or persecuted them.

Myths about the storks' immunity go back to ancient beliefs. In Egypt, it was believed that their souls were human, while in ancient Greece beliefs storks have been protectors of



elderly people and take care of the aged parents while living on their roofs. The Greeks also held that killing a stork could be punished by death.

The storks were also revered in Islamic beliefs which held that storks were thought to go on pilgrimage to Mecca, where they headed for after staying in Iran.

Ban single-use plastic, say 3 in 4 people worldwide: survey

Three in four people worldwide want single-use plastics to be banned as soon as possible, according to a poll released on Tuesday, as United Nations members prepare to begin talks on a global treaty to rein in soaring plastic pollution.

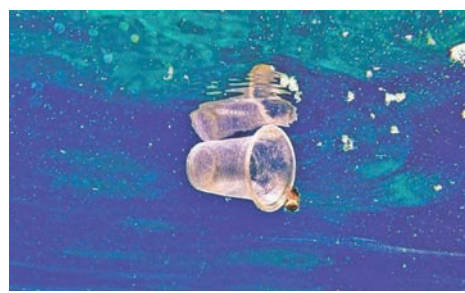
The percentage of people calling for bans is up from 71 percent since 2019, while those who said they favoured products with less plastic packaging rose to 82 percent from 75 percent, according to the IPSOS poll of more than 20,000 people across 28 countries.

Activists say the results send a clear message to governments meeting in Nairobi this month to press ahead with an ambitious treaty to tackle plastic waste, a deal being touted as the most important environmental pact since the Paris Agreement on climate change in 2015.

“People worldwide have made their views clear,” said Marco Lambertini, WWF International's director general. “The onus and opportunity is now on governments to adopt a global plastics treaty ... so we can eliminate plastic pollution.”

Nearly 90 percent of those surveyed said they supported a treaty, but it remains to be seen whether any such deal will focus on waste collection and recycling or take more radical measures such as curbing production and use of throwaway plastics.

Reuters revealed last week that big oil and chemical industry groups were devising strategies to persuade conference participants to reject any deal that would limit production of



plastic, which is made from oil and gas and a key source of their revenues.

If the United Nations cannot agree on a deal to put the brakes on plastic pollution, there will be widespread ecological damage over the coming decades, putting some marine species at risk of extinction and destroying sensitive ecosystems such as coral reefs and mangroves, according to a WWF study released this month.

It is likely to take at least two years to finalise any treaty. But whatever is agreed at the Nairobi conference from Feb. 28 to March 2 will determine key elements of any deal.

The biggest support for single-use plastic bans in the poll came from the likes of Colombia, Mexico and India, developing countries at the sharp end of a waste crisis.

The IPSOS poll also showed that 85 percent of respondents globally want manufacturers and retailers to be held responsible for reducing, reusing and recycling plastic packaging, up from 80 percent previously.

Climate change report to sound warning on impacts

A new report on the impacts of climate change will likely be the most worrying assessment yet of how rising temperatures affect every living thing.

This will be the second of three major reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and its first since November's COP26 summit, reports the BBC.

Scientists and officials will publish their conclusions on February 28.

The study will focus heavily on regional impacts as well as on cities and coastal communities.

The IPCC carries out these large-scale reviews of the latest research on warming every six or seven years on behalf of governments. This set of three is their sixth assessment report.

Researchers are formed into three working groups that look at the basic science, the scale of the impacts and the options for tackling the problem.

For many major cities and developing countries, the report will highlight that tackling climate change is not about cutting emissions and hitting net zero sometime in the future, but about dealing with far more short-term threats.

“It is always the immediate, that takes precedence. So if you've got to deal with a big influx of migrants, or a massive flood event, that's where the focus is going to be,” said Mark Watts, the ex-

ecutive director of the C40 group, a network of around 100 major cities that are collaborating to tackle climate change.

“In the global south, there really aren't any city climate programme funds at the moment. Of those that exist, almost none of them are about adaptation. They're all trying to get poor countries that have relatively low emissions, to reduce their emissions further, not about adapting to the impacts that they're already feeling.”

Under the umbrella of the IPCC, scientists working on the report, who all volunteer for this work, review and write up thousands of papers to summarise the latest findings.

They then meet with government officials to go through their findings line by line and, upon reaching consensus, a short summary of their findings is published.

The study will also outline key “tipping points” that are likely to be passed as the world warms – some of which are irreversible like the disintegration of the Greenland ice sheet.

The report will also look at some of the technological solutions to climate change, but is likely to be quite dismissive of efforts to manage solar radiation or even to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Overall it will have a much broader focus than just the science of what we can do about climate change.

COVID-19 UPDATES ON FEBRUARY 22

New cases	22,073
New deaths	223
Total cases	6,983,635
Total deaths	135,499
New hospitalized patients	2,399
Patients in critical condition	3,918
Total recovered patients	6,539,783
Diagnostic tests conducted	46,780,865
Doses of vaccine injected	140,067,676

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Hospital beds capacity rises to improve medical system

Health Minister Saeed Namaki inaugurated 23 health centers, including 201 hospital beds, in Lorestan, Kermanshah, and Khuzestan provinces on Tuesday.

Built on 26,935 square meters area, the centers were constructed with a budget of 2.9 trillion rials (nearly \$70 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials).

The Ministry of Health is scheduled to add 10,600 hospital beds to the capacity of the country's medical system within the next 7 months.

Two years ago, there were a total of 140,859 beds in the country, which means 1.7 hospital beds per 1,000 population.

افزایش ظرفیت تخت های بیمارستانی

سعید نمکی وزیر بهداشت امروز به صورت مجازی ۲۳ مرکز بهداشتی و درمانی را شامل ۲۰۱ تخت بیمارستانی در استان های لرستان، کرمانشاه و خوزستان افتتاح کرد.

به گزارش ایرنا این مراکز در زیربنای ۲۶ هزار و ۹۳۵ مترمربع و با اعتباری بالغ بر ۲۹۸۰ میلیارد ریال ساخته شده است. وزارت بهداشت قرار است تا ۱۲ فروردین سال ۱۴۰۰، ۱۰ هزار و ۶۰۰ تخت بیمارستانی به ظرفیت بیمارستان های کشور اضافه کند.

در انتهای سال ۱۳۹۷ مجموعاً ۱۴۰ هزار و ۸۵۹ تخت فعال در کشور فعال بود که اگر این میزان را به ازای جمعیت محاسبه کنیم، ضریب تعداد جمعیت به تخت مان، ۱.۷ تخت به ازای هر ۱۰۰۰ نفر است.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

He who is greedy is disgraced; he who discloses his hardship will always be humiliated; he who has no control over his tongue will often have to face discomfort.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:18 Evening: 18:12 Dawn: 5:17 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 7:41 (tomorrow)

Sadi: works and life

Part 7

Sadi boasts in the epilogue that he did not borrow verse from other poets to adorn the Golestan, as was common epistolary practice. Despite the appearance of one line from Asadi, and a pair from the Rahat al-sodur, this claim holds true, though Sadi does apparently quote lines of his own.

The suggestion that many lines of Sadi’s verse were inspired by particular Arabic examples in Motanabbi (Mahfuz) has been unanimously rejected.

Influence: Now universally regarded as the outstanding practitioner of “inimitable simplicity” (sahl-e momtane’) in Persian literature, Sadi describes himself in the Golestan’s preface as already celebrated far and wide for his style, claiming that copies of his compositions were considered quite valuable.

We know that Sadi’s ghaazals were celebrated in distant parts during his lifetime, though evidently not before the mid-1250s, and perhaps not until after 1260.

Sadi himself had complained in 1257 (Bustan,intro.) that he was not properly appreciated in Shiraz, but with the appearance of the Bustan and Golestan that certainly changed.

Sadi was quite prescient in offering the Golestan as a model of epistolary style for the emulation of orators and secretaries (motakalleman-ra ba kar ayad wa motarasselan-ra balaghat biazfayad).

Its fame spread widely and rapidly, displacing Abul-Ma’ali Nasr-Allah’s Kalila wa Demna-ye bahramshahi (which Awfi had encouraged secretaries to study) as the pinnacle of Persian prose style.

The Golestan was known in Anatolia within a few years of its composition, perhaps facilitated by the fact that Ghias ad-Din Kaykhosrow, the Seljuk ruler in Konya, had married the daughter of Sadi’s patron, Abu Bakr ibn Sa’d.

In a letter written sometime before 1278, a certain Abu Bakr al-Motatabbeb “Sadr” in Konya quoted a qet’a from the Golestan without mentioning Sadi’s name, and Aflaki in his Manaqeb al-arefin (compiled 1318-1353), also quotes without attribution an Arabic verse occurring in the preface.

The Golestan inspired numerous imitations, beginning with the Rawza-ye khold of Majd Khafi (1333) and including most notably Jami’s Baharestan (1497) and Qaani’s Parishan (1836), the latter published in the margins of an early Golestan lithograph (Tabriz, 1869).

The aptness and vitality of Sadi’s proverbs and aphorisms can be measured by their continued currency in modern Persian conversation; Gholam-Hossein Yusefi (1984) cites 405 proverbs coined in the Golestan and Jalal ad-Din Homai (1938) remarks how these have permeated all social classes, even the illiterate.

In Ottoman Turkey, the plethora of Golestan commentaries from the 16th century testifies to its widespread use by this time as a textbook, both of the Persian language and of Islamic ethics.

Arabic commentaries were produced by Yaqub Efendi Sayyed Alizada (d. 1525) and by Mostafa ibn Sha’ban Soruri (d. 1550) in Amasya; points in both of these, as well as in the Turkish commentaries of Lamei Celebi

(d. 1532) and Sham’i (d. 1592), are frequently refuted by Sudi of Bosnia, who wrote an extensive interlinear Turkish commentary with copious grammatical points in 1595-96.

Though Sudi’s Sharh has remained the standard Turkish commentary, others continued to appear through the 1890s, testifying to the continued use of the Golestan as a medium of Persian language and, more generally, of ethical instruction in Ottoman lands.

In India, the commentaries were written in Persian, the earliest by Oways ibn Ala ad-Din Adam for the Bahmani sultan in 1494. In his Khiaban-e Golestan, Seraj ad-Din Ali-Khan Arzu (d. 1756) alludes to prior commentaries by Mir Nurallah Ahrari and Molla Sa’id Tattavi, among others.

Commentaries continued to appear in the subcontinent throughout the 19th and into the 20th century, in both Persian and in Urdu. In 1771, Sir William Jones advised students of Persian to pick as their first exercise in the language an easy chapter of the Golestan to translate.

Thus the Golestan became the primary text of Persian instruction for officials of British India at Fort William College and at Haileybury College in England, with selections of the text being repeatedly published in primer form.

Michael John Rowlandson provided a manual to help Persian readers with the Arabic passages; diacritics were included to mark the short vowels in at least two Golestan editions published in Calcutta, and two other editions appended glossaries.

Neoclassical writers of the 18th and 19th century desirous of a return to the lucid eloquence of the past took Sadi’s Golestan as their example. Abul-Qasem Qaem-maqam Farahani, who copied out a small vade mecum edition of the Golestan and read it whenever the opportunity arose, attempted in his Monshaat, not to write a pastiche of the Golestan, but to recapture the genius of Sadi’s language.

Though rhyming prose and elegant proverbial witticisms fell out of favor in the 20th century as a modern prose literature influenced by European models developed, Sadi remains the “most eloquent of orators” (afsah al-motakallemin), and the Golestan still retains the title of “the most beautiful book of prose in Persian”.

Translations: Ottoman Anatolia produced at least seven Turkish translations of the Golestan, exclusive of interlinear commentaries. Among the earliest were the Kipchak translation of Sayf Sarayi in 1391 and that of Mahmud ibn Qazi Manyas, who completed a full prose translation (second quarter of the 15th century), and set about rendering the poems into verse in a second redaction.

The Golestan retained its popularity under the Turkish Republic, when the Ministry of Culture supported its translation into modern Turkish.

Sadi had been first introduced to the West in a partial French translation by André du Ryer (1634), upon which Friedrich Ochsenbach based a German translation (1636).

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

To be continued

Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra concert to celebrate 30 years of Iran-Croatia diplomatic relations

From Page 1 ▶ Due to the Persian language of the concert and the Iranian musicians in the concert, Esmaeili called the program unique and said, “It gives me great pleasure that the celebration for the Iran-Croatia 30 years of diplomatic relations starts with a cultural event.”

Earlier on October 23, 2020, the Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra also performed “Zarathustra Spitama” to celebrate its 150th anniversary.

In a statement for the concert, Rahbari referred to “Also Sprach Zarathustra”, a tone poem by Richard Strauss, composed in 1896 and inspired by Friedrich Nietzsche’s philosophical 1883-1885 novel, “Thus Spoke Zarathustra”, and said, “Regarding the two greats, Nietzsche and Strauss, I did not



Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra in an undated photo.

dare to compose music inspired by the words of Zarathustra until in 2018.

“Mr. Barbad Bayat encouraged me to deal with the words of

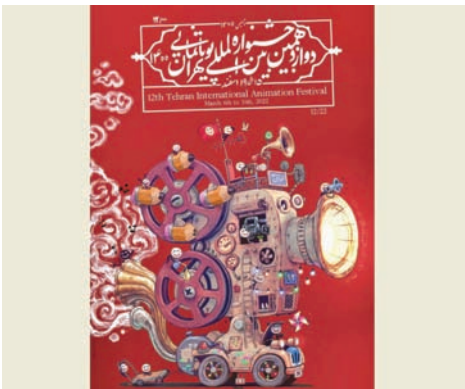
the great Zarathustra, which ultimately spawned this symphony inspired by Persian music, and after much effort and thorough research, I finally

composed an exceptional and extremely melodious symphonic poem about Zarathustra for tenor, choir and symphony orchestra.

“Spitama is actually the surname of a Zoroastrian family. After finishing the song, I decided to present it to the Croatian people who boast of their Persian origins. My wife, with whom I have four children, is also a Croat and they were all delighted with my decision.

“I would also like to express my satisfaction that this is happening during the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Zagreb Philharmonic, which I conducted for many years, and for two years I was its chief conductor, and the members of the orchestra were extremely close to my heart.”

Tehran animation festival postponed as city battles COVID surge



A poster for the 12th Tehran International Animation Festival.

TEHRAN – The 12th edition of the Tehran International Animation Festival, scheduled to be held in March, was postponed for three months as the Iranian capital battles to control an accelerating surge in Omicron infections.

“Due to a decrease in COVID-19 infections in the country, we hoped to organize the festival

from March 6 to 10... however, the spread of the virus brought the event to a halt,” the secretary of the festival, Mohammadreza Karimi-Saremi, said in a press release on Monday.

He noted that the decision to postpone the festival was made in order to respect the festival’s guests and health workers on the frontline of the country’s fight against the Omicron variant of the Coronavirus.

Accordingly, the festival will be held from May 29 to June 2.

Due to the pandemic, the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA – Kanoon), which is the main organizer of the festival, canceled the event in 2021.

Over 180 movies from overseas filmmakers along with 36 Iranian movies will be competing in the festival as the organizers announced the official lineup in January.

The animations come from South Korea, Chile, Poland, the Netherlands, Czech, Japan, China, France, Austria, Germany, Norway, Sweden,

Italy, Brazil and dozens of other countries.

“Lajka” by Czech director Aurel Klimt and “The Nose or Conspiracy of Mavericks” by Russian director Andrey Khrzhanovskiy are the sole two feature animations in the international competition.

Klimt’s movie shows that life is not easy for Laika, a dog on the outskirts of a big Russian city. She is caught and forcibly retrained to become a pioneer in astronautics. Soon after her lift-off into space, a number of animals follow that are hurriedly launched from Houston and Baikonur. The animals manage to colonize a faraway planet. After a short period of harmonious, undisturbed co-existence with indigenous life forms, the first human cosmonaut comes ashore on their planet, and they are suddenly in jeopardy.

“The Nose or Conspiracy of Mavericks” is a cheerfully grim look at the follies of the twentieth century, anchored in Gogol’s proto-surrealist novella, “The Nose”, and Shostakovich’s opera of the same name.

Brooklyn Academy of Music to review Shahram Mokri films

TEHRAN – The Brooklyn Academy of Music plans to review movies by Iranian filmmaker Shahram Mokri during a special program beginning Friday.

Screenings will be followed by question and answer sessions, which will be attended by Mokri, the academy has announced.

His latest drama “Careless Crime”, which won the Premio Bisato d’Oro for Best Original Screenplay at the Venice Film Festival, is one of the films selected to be screened during the weeklong program.

In this film, Mokri’s mind-bending mystery merges past with present and fact with fiction inspired by a real-life tragedy, the infamous Cinema Rex fire in 1978.

The academy has called “Careless Crime” “a mysterious



Abolfazl Kahani in a scene from “Careless Crime” directed by Shahram Mokri.

puzzle box, equal parts Abbas Kiarostami and Chris Marker.”

The program also features “Invasion”. Sports, murder and a swirl of overlapping identities and reality comprise Mokri’s third film. The time-bending, single-shot experiment and hybrid science fiction-detective-vampire story is set in a future

dystopia, with nods to stylized 1980s New Wave-era films like “Liquid Sky”.

“Fish & Cat” and “Ashkan, the Charmed Ring and Other Stories” will also be reviewed.

In “Fish & Cat”, young Iranian kite-flying enthusiasts gather at a dismal lake, near a restaurant with grisly fare straight out of The

A souvenir for teens from the past

Fatemeh Eftekhari

It had happened many times in my class that when students were reading their essays, it was clear that they hadn’t understood the difference between spoken and written language yet, so I had to explain it again, and now with the COVID-19, that schools are closed, and the classed are online, texting and writing in social media and online classes are all in spoken language, so the problem I had with their essays has gotten worse. But to be honest, telling students that essays shouldn’t be written in spoken languages, and dictating some rules about writing all the time, isn’t really resultful. The truth is that this generation has distanced from formal and written language because of texting and communicating in social media.

Consequently, we can’t expect them to read Qabus-nama, Busta, or Kalila and Demna; instead, we can use old tales that have been rewritten in simple language for teens. Using

these rewritten books will help the new generation to feel more connected to the Farsi language and their history. We shouldn’t forget that anecdotes and old tales can revive a generation’s historical identity.

The Book “Tutinama” is one of these books which has been rewritten by Zahra Heidari, from an old book called “Seventy Tales of the Parrot”. It has been published by Soore Mehr in 2019.

The story is narrated by a parrot whose owner is a merchant. They go on a trip, and the merchant asks his parrot to tell him a story every night so that he will not miss his wife so much.

This book has 19 narrations, and each of them is not more than two or three pages. The author has tried to summarize each story as much as possible to make it amusing for the generation that get used to the short captions of Instagram. Most topics of the stories are



moral issues such as patience, hardworking, respect for parents, and so on.

The images in the book which has been drawn by Mahrokh Mofid Nakhaei, are amazing too and you can easily find the connection between the text and the images.