

Russia's Demand for Guarantees Highlights U.S. Irresponsibility

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Report



Ukraine conflict enters day 12

TEHRAN- The Ceasefire agreements between Moscow and Kyiv broke down, with both sides laying the blame on each other but appear to be partially back on track.

The Kremlin blamed Ukraine for the failure of a deal to evacuate civilians from the city of Mariupol and a nearby town, while Ukrainian officials claim attempts to create the humanitarian corridor in the east for civilians had collapsed because of shelling.

Now a second ceasefire attempt has been tested in Mariupol for the reported evacuation of around 400,000 civilians. Mariupol's city council said the ceasefire will be observed between 10 am and 9 pm local time on Sunday. The third round of talks between the two sides is also expected to resume on Monday.

A senior official from the NGO Doctors Without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontières MSF) has warned that the humanitarian situation in the southern Ukrainian port of Mariupol is "catastrophic" and it is vital that civilians be evacuated.

U.S. President Joe Biden spoke with his Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelensky, to discuss ongoing efforts by Washington to impose sanctions on Russia and speed up American military and economic assistance.

The White House said during the call the two leaders also discussed the negotiations taking place between Russia and Ukraine but refused to provide any additional details. ▶ Page 5

Islamic body chief censures terrorist attack in Peshawar

TEHRAN — Ali Akbar Velayati, the Secretary-General of the World Assembly of Islamic Awakening, issued a statement on Sunday condemning the criminal terrorist attack on the Risaldar Mosque in Peshawar, in northwestern Pakistan.

Referring to the crimes of extremist and terrorist groups, including Daesh, against the oppressed people of the region, Velayati also said, "The Americans have repeatedly and officially admitted that they were the founders and supporters of these groups such as Daesh, and therefore they have a share in the occurrence of these crimes and other catastrophes and sufferings in the region, which is unprecedented in history."

He added that according to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, the roots of the crisis in the region must be searched in the Americans' incitements.

"Through the resistance of the oppressed people of the region and the bravery and self-sacrifice of the commanders and soldiers of the Resistance Front, including martyr Soleimani as the international face of fight against terrorism, their sinister plans in the region were aborted," the veteran politician remarked.

The former foreign minister went on to say that today "America is isolated more than ever."

Velayati said Pakistani people will respond to these barbaric acts and that terrorists will fail to achieve their vicious goals. ▶ Page 2

High-ranking Iraqi delegation to visit Iran to discuss gas imports

TEHRAN - A high-ranking Iraqi delegation is due to visit Tehran next week to discuss settling the country's gas dues and resuming the imports of natural gas from Iran, Iraqi news portal sotalraq.com quoted the spokesman of Iraq's Electricity Ministry as saying.

As ISNA reported on Sunday, Ahmed Musa said that a high-ranking delegation comprised of three ministries of electricity, finance, and oil along with the director-general of Trade Bank of Iraq (TBI) will travel to Iran with the aim of finding solutions for settling Iraq's gas dues and importing energy from Iran.

Musa noted that after this visit and reaching an agreement Iraq is going to pay part of its gas dues to Iran.

He put Iraq's debts to Iran at \$1.692 billion, saying that the Iraqi delegation will discuss the possibility of paying these debts in three installments over three years, or all together after Iran increases gas exports to the country.

Musa had earlier said that supplying gas from Iran to Iraq is not satisfactory and is still very low, adding: "It is envisioned that Iran could supply more than 45 million cubic meters of gas to Iraq."

He had put the current supply of gas from Iran to Iraq at nearly eight million cubic meters.

Earlier in February, Iranian and Iraqi oil ministers discussed increasing Iran's gas exports to Iraq and "paying off Iraq's gas debts to Iran."

Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji met with his Iraqi counterpart Ihsan Abdul-Jabbar Ismail on the sidelines of a meeting of the Assembly of Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) in the Qatari capital Doha to discuss expanding energy cooperation between the two countries.

In December 2020, Iran reduced its gas exports to the neighboring country by over 45 million cubic meters a day to five million cubic meters per day.

IAEA chief tours National Museum of Iran

TEHRAN - On Saturday, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency paid a visit to the National Museum of Iran, which is chock-full of priceless objects showcasing the juicy history of the nation.

It was the second time that Rafael Mariano Grossi toured the major museum on the sidelines of his diplomatic mission to the Iranian capital.

"He visited the Museum of Archeology and Art of the Islamic era. The manuscripts of Khamseh Nezami and Masalak al-Mamalak, registered in the UNESCO World Memory List, as well as the single-page Quran, attributed to Baysonghor Mirza, the altar of the tomb of Rabieh Khatun Ashtarjan in Isfahan, were considered by the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency," a museum official told Tehran Times on Sunday.

"Honored to learn more about the history of Iran through the beauty of its art," wrote Rafael Mariano Grossi in the museum's memorial notebook.

Behrouz Kamalvandi, the spokesman of the Atomic Energy Organization, accompanied the IAEA chief during the visit.

"Praise is to God, the history of our country is full of honors and the attention of the people of this ancient land to the ancient Islamic values. That is why when Islam appeared, these people not only welcomed Islam but also did many services to spread Islamic culture. I am very grateful to all the staff of the Islamic Museum who preserve the cultural identity of our country," Kamalvandi wrote in the memoirs.

Grossi had previously visited the Museum of Ancient Iran on August 27, 2020. The National Museum of Iran also hosted Yukiya Amano, the former director of the agency, on October 29, 2017.

The National Museum showcases ceramics, pottery, stone figures, and carvings, mostly taken from excavations at Persepolis, Ismail Abad (near Qazvin), Shush, Rey, and Turang Tappeh to name a few.

The building, designed by French architect André Godard and completed in 1928, is one of the more attractive modern buildings in Tehran, blending Sassanian principles such as the grand iwan-style entrance with art deco-style brickwork.

Inside, among the finds from Shush, there's a stone capital of a winged lion, some delightful pitchers and vessels in animal shapes, and colorful glazed bricks decorated with double-winged mythical creatures. A copy of the diorite stele detailing the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi, found at Shush in 1901, is also displayed - the original being in Paris.

Exhibits from Persepolis include a magnificent human-headed capital, a cuneiform inscription proclaiming the might and godly affinity of Xerxes, ▶ Page 6

IRGC commander Mohammad Solgi's memoir published in Russian

TEHRAN - The publisher of the Persian edition of "Water Never Dies" announced on Saturday that the memoir of IRGC commander Mirza Mohammad Solgi has been published in Russian.

Sarir, which released the Persian edition in 2015, gave no information about the translator and the publisher of the Russian edition.

Hamid Hesam wrote "Water Never Dies" based on his interviews with Solgi who was the chief of the IRGC 32nd Ansar al-Hussein Army in Hamedan during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war. He passed away in April 2020 from the chemical injuries he suffered during the war. ▶ Page 8

IPL: Esteghlal move six points clear at top

TEHRAN - Esteghlal football team moved six points clear at top of Iran Professional League (IPL) on Sunday.

Esteghlal earned a late 2-1 win over Gol Gohar in Tehran thanks to a brace from Kevin Yamga at the Azadi Stadium. Gol Gohar winger Saeid Sadeghi missed his penalty in the 43rd minute but Yamga converted from the spot just before the interval.

With one minute left, the French forward scored the winner from the penalty spot after the referee showed the spot due to Gol Gohar player's handball into the area.

Persepolis suffered a shock 2-0 defeat to Sanat Naft. Mohammadreza Ghoobeishavi opened the

hosts' first goal just seven minutes into the match and Mahmoud Motlaghzadeh made the scoreboard 2-0 in the 69th minute.

In Mashhad, struggling teams Padideh and Tractor shared the spoils in a goalless draw, In Rafsanjan, Mes were held to a goalless draw by Naft Masjed Soleyman. In Tehran, Paykan suffered a 1-0 loss against Nassaji.

Aluminum lost to Havadar 1-0 in Arak.

Sepahan defeated Fajr Sepasi 2-0 in Isfahan.

And Foolad suffered a late 2-1 loss against Zob Ahan in Ahvaz.

Esteghlal remain top of the table with 51 points, six points above Persepolis.

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Interview



West views Ukraine more favorably than Yemen: academic

By Mohammad Mazhari

THRAN - An American academic says that Western powers regard the Ukraine crisis more favorably for assistance than Yemen or Afghanistan.

"Unfortunately, Europeans and Americans are viewing the Ukrainian situation more favorably for aid and assistance than Yemen or Afghanistan," William O. Beeman tells the Tehran Times.

"Some claim that this is due to the inherent racist or Islamophobic tendencies in Europe and the United States. There is no question that Ukraine is seen as White and Christian (President Zelensky is, however, the only international Jewish head of state outside of Israel)," Beeman adds.

Following is the text of the interview:

Some political pundits like John Mearnsheimer believe that Ukraine could be neutral and get rid of the West-Russia competition. But what happened is that Ukraine entered the competition. What is your comment?

A: It appears to be too late for Ukraine to remain both neutral and independent of the Russia-Euro American competition. Zalensky has already asked the EU for membership and has requested NATO membership. The only thing that Putin would accept is for Zelensky to be removed and some pro-Moscow puppet be put in his place, as in Belarus. Putin wants to recreate the Russian Empire, and "unite all Slavic people." His position is that Ukraine is a "fake country" created by Lenin/Stalin and is really part of Greater Russia. And as for neutrality, with even perpetually neutral Finland and Sweden now considering joining NATO, that ship has sailed. ▶ Page 5



Ayatollah Khamenei highlights clean energy development, environmental protection

TEHRAN - Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Sunday emphasized the need to develop non-fossil sources of energy, including renewables, and expand activities to protect the environment.

The destruction of forests and the environment and vegetation is equivalent to the degradation of national interests, and the depletion of part of the forests for construction, except in emergencies, is definitely to the detriment of the nation, he explained. ▶ Page 7

Islamic body chief censures terrorist attack in Peshawar

From page 1 ► “The people of Pakistan will respond to such barbaric acts and terrorist groups. Despite their barbaric crimes, massacres, killings and martyrdom of oppressed people, including children and teenagers, men and women, old and young, the oppressors will not be able to achieve their shameful goals, and victory will be for the resistance front and the oppressed people of the region,” Velayati remarked.

Pakistani police investigators said on Saturday that they had identified the suicide bomber and the network behind the deadly blast on Friday at the Risaldar Mosque that left at least 63 dead and nearly 200 wounded.

Thirty-seven people remained hospitalized, with five in critical condition, according to Muhammad Asim Khan, the spokesman for Peshawar's largest hospital, Lady Reading.

The Islamic State's regional affiliate, Islamic State Khorasan, or ISIS-K, claimed responsibility for the attack and said it was carried out by an Afghan suicide bomber, whom the militant group identified as Julaibeed al-Kabuli.

Pakistani security officials said that the name was an alias and that they had



identified the attacker and his family. Muhammad Ali Saif, a special assistant to the provincial chief minister, said at a news conference on Saturday that “the rest of the network will be exposed in the next 48 hours.”

Other security officials, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the case and continuing investigations, said the bomber was an Afghan national who had migrated to Pakistan decades ago and lived in the country along with his family. The officials said the bomber's parents had informed the police of their son's disappearance and suspected he had joined ISIS.

Investigators say the bomber trained in Afghanistan and appeared to have returned recently, the New York Times reported on Saturday.

IAEA chief meets Iran FM, stresses finding ‘creative solutions’



TEHRAN — Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian met with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief on Saturday to discuss Tehran's collaboration with the UN nuclear watchdog.

Rafael Grossi, Director General of the IAEA, traveled to Tehran for technical talks with the officials of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI).

During the meeting, the Iranian top diplomat stressed the need for an independent, professional and impartial approach by the IAEA, and the importance of strengthening the agency's relations and cooperation with Iran in areas beyond oversight and inspection, including supporting Iran's peaceful nuclear industry.

Amir Abdollahian also expressed hope that the negotiations and understandings between the IAEA and AEOI will pave the way for the implementation of agreements more than ever before.

In the meeting, Iran's foreign minister also referred to the role of the Israeli regime in creating discord and crisis and drew the attention of the IAEA chief to the regime's abuse of the mechanisms of the agency.

Amir Abdollahian expressed hope that during the visit of the IAEA chief, mutual trust and cooperation between the two sides will be strengthened.

For his part, Grossi underlined a technical and professional approach by the body under his leadership and stressed the need to strengthen relationship, cooperation and finding “creative solutions”.

He also underscored the IAEA's readiness to support joint projects for peaceful use of nuclear energy and described his visit to Iran as a sign of the will to hold dialogue, find common ground, resolve issues and enhance cooperation with Iran.

Amir Abdollahian lauds high-ranking Saudi official's remarks

TEHRAN – On Saturday, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian stated that recent comments by a senior Saudi official indicate a readiness by Riyadh to reestablish ties, saying that Iran appreciates such remarks.

“The recent remarks of a high-ranking Saudi official show their desire to establish bilateral relations with Iran, and we welcome that,” Amir Abdollahian told state news agency IRNA.

He said Iran and Saudi Arabia have so far held four rounds of and “we are happy with Saudi Arabia taking the path of dialogue.”

The Iranian administration, led by President Ebrahim Raisi, is determined to improve relations with neighboring countries, the foreign minister added.

In an interview published last week, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman told the Atlantic that his kingdom and Iran were “neighbors forever.”

“We cannot get rid of them, and they can't get rid of us,” he said, according to a transcript issued by the official Saudi Press Agency.

“So it's better for both of us to work it out and to look for ways in which we can coexist,” he added, expressing hope that “we can



reach a position that's good for both countries.”

Following the execution of famed Shiite cleric Nimr al-Nimr by the kingdom in 2016, angry protesters attacked the Saudi embassy in Tehran and its consular office in Mashhad. Though the attacks were condemned by senior Iranian officials, Riyadh severed relations with Tehran.

However, since April, the two countries have had four rounds of talks in Iraq aimed at restoring ties.

“These talks created a good atmosphere and brought results, albeit small ones, and we are pleased that Saudi Arabia has taken the path of dialogue,” Iran's top diplomat said.

“We have different views and approaches on some issues in the

region, but the management of differences by the sides can serve the interests of the two nations,” he added.

Amir Abdollahian said Tehran and Riyadh have opposing views on regional problems, but managing those disagreements may benefit both countries.

Iran and Saudi Arabia differ greatly over the Yemen war.

Amir Abdollahian stated that a solution to Yemen's seven-year-old war must be “political and based on Yemeni-Yemeni dialogue, away from foreign interference.”

Iraj Masjedi, Iran's ambassador to Iraq, has announced that the fifth round of Iran-Saudi talks would be held in Baghdad soon.

Recently, Amir Abdollahian said

that Iran welcomes a new round of talks with Saudi Arabia.

“We have left the path open for Saudi Arabia. Whenever Saudi Arabia decides to return its diplomatic relations with Iran to normal, we welcome a reopening of embassies and the return of relations to normal and even development of relations with Saudi Arabia. We are pleased that three of our diplomats were stationed in Jeddah a few weeks ago,” the foreign minister told a national conference on Iran and neighbors.

Noting that the ball is in Riyadh's court, the foreign minister added, “Saudi Arabia must now decide when to open the embassies of the two countries. We welcome the new round of talks, and we would also like to point out that long talks do not necessitate a return to normal relations alone, but a political decision. We in the government have decided that Saudi Arabia can take the necessary steps to restore relations with Iran whenever it reaches a conclusion.”

Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein announced during a visit to Tehran that talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia in Baghdad would resume soon.

Iran, IAEA release joint statement

TEHRAN — The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Iran issued a joint statement late on Saturday for closer cooperation.

The statement was released immediately after IAEA director general Rafael Grossi returned to Vienna after his talks with Mohammad Eslami, chief of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), in Tehran on Saturday.

The statement reads as follows:

“The Vice-President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and President of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) and the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) agreed on the following Joint Statement for the clarification of the issues mentioned in GOV/2021/52 of 17 November 2021.

The AEOI and the IAEA agreed, in continuation of their cooperation as stated in the Joint Statement of 26 August 2020, to accelerate and strengthen their cooperation and dialogue aimed at the resolution of the issues.

In this context, the AEOI and the IAEA agreed on the following:

1. The AEOI will provide to the IAEA no later than 20 March 2022 written

explanations including related supporting documents to the questions raised by the IAEA which have not been addressed by Iran on the issues related to three locations.

2. Within two weeks after receiving the AEOI's written explanations and related supporting documents, the IAEA will review this information and will submit to the AEOI any questions on received information.

3. Within one week after the IAEA has submitted to the AEOI any questions on such information, the IAEA and AEOI will meet in Tehran to address the questions. Separate meetings will be held for each location.

4. Upon completion of the activities set out in paragraphs 1 to 3 above and following the corresponding evaluation by the Agency, the Director General will aim to report his conclusion by the June 2022 Board of Governors.”

The joint statement can outline the achievements of Grossi's trip to Iran.

Knowing that the purpose of the trip was to agree on a common solution for the three current safeguards issues between Iran and the Agency, although the Vienna talks have had relatively notable results, Iran has stated that reaching a final agreement

requires resolving the remaining issues between Iran and the IAEA.

Iran has repeatedly stressed in the Vienna talks that simultaneous acceptance of restrictions and extensive monitoring resulting from the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Actions (JCPOA) on Iran's nuclear program by continuing the process of pursuing the previously closed safeguards file and reopening a new file with political instincts is unfair and cannot be done at all.

Although the trip in the midst of the ongoing talks in Vienna has removed one of the few obstacles to reaching a strong agreement, the way Iran's future interaction with the IAEA and Western countries depends on the proper implementation of the joint statement and future developments.

Meanwhile in a tweet on Sunday, Mikhail Ulyanov, Russia's ambassador to the international organizations in Vienna, said, “The visit of the #IAEA Director General Mr. Rafael Grossi to Iran yesterday was very successful. The two sides agreed on concrete steps aimed at settling outstanding safeguards issues within a reasonable period of time. Great achievement!”



Russia's demand for guarantees highlights U.S. irresponsibility

TEHRAN – Talks in Vienna over reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal have taken a new turn after Russia demanded guarantees from the United States.

The new Russian demand comes as the Vienna talks are inching toward a conclusion day after which the reimplementation of the resuscitated nuclear deal, formally called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), will begin.

The draft of the possible agreement has been prepared and only a few things remain unresolved. Some of Iran's demands, particularly those pertaining to verification measures and guarantees have been incorporated into the draft agreement.

The agreement will be implemented in six phases, with Iran having weeks to verify the lifting of U.S. sanctions without having to implement its commitments under the revived deal.

As regards the guarantees, Iran's demands to include "inherent guarantees" in the deal were taken into account. This kind of guarantee refers to Iran's ability to keep some materials and nuclear machinery inside the country. Under the JCPOA of 2015, Iran is not allowed to use or develop the highly advanced IR6 centrifuges for a period of 13 years after the implementation of the JCPOA.

But after the U.S. withdrew from the nuclear deal in May 2018, Iran gradually developed its centrifuges and used even more advanced ones such as IR9 and IR8 machines.

Under the revived JCPOA, Iran will keep its advanced centrifuges and nuclear materials inside the country as a form of inherent guarantee to make sure that its



nuclear program is fully reversible if the U.S. reneged on its commitments again. Iran will also be authorized to continue its nuclear R&D activities. All in all, Iran will retain the ability to quickly resume 60 percent uranium enrichment as a way to prevent the U.S. from leaving the JCPOA again, according to Mostafa Khosh-cheshm, an Iranian analyst.

This kind of guarantee was innovated to overcome the American negotiating team's continued insistence that the U.S. is unable to provide robust, legal guarantees that it won't quit the JCPOA again. In other words, the guarantees in question have little to do with American innovation as much as it pertains to the proactive Iranian approach.

The guarantees incorporated into the JCPOA shed light on the guarantees now the Russians are demanding. Iran persistently demanded legal guarantees but when the U.S. showed unreasonable intransigence, Iran innovatively presented

its inherent guarantees. Whether Russia would be able to follow in Iran's footsteps in regards to guarantees remains to be seen.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said the sanctions the West imposed on Russia over Ukraine will create a problem for the Iran nuclear deal and demanded written guarantees from the U.S. that these sanctions won't impede Russia-Iran cooperation in case the JCPOA is revived.

"We want an answer - a very clear answer - we need a guarantee that these sanctions will not in any way touch the regime of trade-economic and investment relations which is laid down in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action," the Russian foreign minister said.

He added, "We have asked for a written guarantee ... that the current process triggered by the United States does not in any way damage our right to free and full trade, economic and investment

cooperation and military-technical cooperation with the Islamic Republic."

A senior Iranian lawmaker has said that the Russian demand for guarantees from the U.S. is a "bilateral" issue between Moscow and Washington.

The lawmaker, Abolfazl Amouei, who is a member of the Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy, said the Russian demand stems from wider concerns in the world over the U.S. compliance with its commitments.

In remarks to Tasnim News, Amouei said Iran hasn't put forward a Russian-styled demand on guarantees and "in fact, this issue should be settled between Russia and the United States because it has to do with bilateral issues currently happening between the two countries in Ukraine."

"Iran has done its utmost to distance the Vienna talks from the ongoing relations in Eurasia, Eastern Europe and the developments in Ukraine. For this reason, Americans must be able to convince all parties of their intentions," he added.

In a sense, the onus is now on the U.S. to convince other partners to the Vienna talks to proceed with what is taking shape in the negotiations.

According to Amouei, the U.S. track record in not complying with its commitments has aroused concerns in countries beyond Iran. "The fact is that today the concern about the implementation of U.S. commitments is a concern beyond Iran. And various countries are concerned about whether the Americans will live up to their obligations under the agreement if the JCPOA is revived."

MP calls on Saudi crown prince to resolve differences through dialogue

TEHRAN – Ebrahim Azizi, deputy chairman of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, urged Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman to pursue dialogue with neighbors.

In remarks to the Islamic Consultative Assembly News Agency (ICANA), Azizi said bin Salman's remarks that Saudi Arabia need peaceful co-existence with Iran is right.

"Mohammad bin Salman made right remarks but he was expected to make such remarks earlier," Azizi said.

He added, "The Islamic Republic of Iran has repeatedly stated in recent years that the countries of the region should resolve their differences and problems through dialogue, not follow the path drawn by foreign countries."

The lawmaker also called on the Saudi crown prince to demand withdrawal of foreigners from the region.

"If he believes in his statements, he should explicitly state that the foreigners should leave the region," Azizi remarked.

According to Azizi, the Islamic Republic of Iran has good relations with its neighbors. "Accordingly, we will pursue negotiations with Saudi Arabia and other countries in the region. For example, we are witnessing four rounds of negotiations with a positive view between our country and Saudi Arabia," the lawmaker stated.

He added, "It seems that the Saudi crown prince should

consider the process of bilateral talks with Iran, whether it is based on his recent remarks or not, and take steps to correct it."

On Saturday, Iran's top security official explained the goal of Iran's negotiations with Saudi Arabia, reminding the kingdom that Israel is the biggest enemy of the Islamic and Arab worlds.

Ali Shamkhani, who is the secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, made the remarks after the Saudi de facto leader said in a recent interview that Riyadh does not view Israel as an enemy, but a potential ally.

"Iran's active participation in bilateral talks with Saudi Arabia -hosted by Iraq- stems from the Islamic Republic's principled strategy for [fostering] cooperation & amity with neighbors based on securing bilateral and regional interests. We should not forget that the Zionist regime is the biggest enemy of the Islamic and Arab worlds," Shamkhani said on Twitter.

In addition to Persian, Shamkhani posted the tweet in other languages such as Arabic, Hebrew, and English.

Saudi Arabian officials have said that they don't mind establishing relations with Israel if the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is settled. Recently, Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan said that Israel's integration into the region would be beneficial not only for Israel but for the region as a whole. He made the remarks in an interview with the Israeli



newspaper Maariv on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference.

The Saudi foreign minister added that his country will continue the peace process with Israel if the Palestinian issue is resolved fairly.

He noted that this situation would strengthen extremist movements in the region without resolving the deep-rooted problems of the Palestinian people and respecting their sovereignty. The Saudi foreign minister pointed out that that the priority now is to find a solution so that the Israelis and Palestinians can sit together to pursue a peace process. He also stressed that this will make things easier for all countries that do not yet have relations with Israel.

IAEA chief's visit paves the way for potential deal: MP

TEHRAN – A senior Iranian lawmaker has said that the visit to Tehran by the head of the UN nuclear watchdog was intended to address technical issues and lay the ground for a potential deal in Vienna.

The lawmaker, Mahmoud Abbaszadeh Meshkini, who is the spokesman for the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said the visit of Rafael Grossi, the director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), had no political aspects and was only related to technical issues.

Meshkini told the Islamic Consultative Assembly News Agency (ICANA) that Iran's negotiations with Grossi are only within the framework of safeguards and that Iran won't accept issues that fall beyond the scope of the safeguards.

Grossi paid a visit to Iran on Saturday and met with Mohammad Eslami, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), and Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian.

The visit comes against a backdrop of a highly charged atmosphere in Vienna. The talks there have been moving ahead slowly in the last few weeks. Despite significant

progress, the negotiating parties have been unable to conclude and announce a deal. And over the past few days, there have been a lot of projections that the deal could be announced at any moment.

After the visit, Eslami and Grossi issued a joint statement outlining a deal between Iran and the IAEA.

"The AEOI and the IAEA agreed, in continuation of their cooperation as stated in the Joint Statement of 26 August 2020, to accelerate and strengthen their cooperation and dialogue aimed at the resolution of the issues," the statement said.

Under the new AEOI-IAEA deal, "the AEOI will provide to the IAEA no later than 20 March 2022 written explanations including related supporting documents to the questions raised by the IAEA which have not been addressed by Iran on the issues related to three locations."

"Within two weeks after receiving the AEOI's written explanations and related supporting documents, the IAEA will review this information and will submit to the AEOI any questions on received information," according to the joint statement.



The statement added, "Within one week after the IAEA has submitted to the AEOI any questions on such information, the IAEA and AEOI will meet in Tehran to address the questions. Separate meetings will be held for each location."

It concluded, "Upon completion of the activities set out in paragraphs 1 to 3 above and following the corresponding evaluation by the Agency, the Director General will aim to report his conclusion by the June 2022 Board of Governors."

Ulyanov, also wrote, "There are some issues that need to be finalized ... the outstanding issues are relatively small, but not yet settled."

Enrique Mora, the European Union diplomat coordinating the talks, also tweeted, "Some relevant issues are still open and success is never guaranteed." He added, "We are definitely not there yet."

According to Reuters, an Iranian official in Tehran told the news agency on Saturday that an alleged demand by

Russia for written guarantees by the U.S. that sanctions on Moscow would not harm Russian cooperation with Iran is not constructive.

Reuters has a long history of creating media hype by quoting "informed officials" without naming them which follows policy of lies against Iran.

The quote from a Tehran official comes at a time when Reuters has no correspondent in the Iranian capital, and no Iranian official has spoken to Reuters, according to sources.



IRAN IN FOCUS

MARCH 7, 2022

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

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SPORTS

Iran to face Kazakhstan at Asian Women's Junior Handball opener

TEHRAN – Iran will play Kazakhstan in their opening match of the 2022 Asian Women's Junior Handball Championship on Tuesday.



The Championship will be 16th edition of the championship scheduled to be held from Mar. 7 to 14 in Almaty, Kazakhstan under the aegis of Asian Handball Federation.

Kazakhstan, Iran, Uzbekistan, India and Thailand will compete in the edition.

It will be the fifth time in history that the championship will be organized by the Kazakhstan Handball Federation.

It also acts as the qualification tournament for the 2022 Women's Junior World Handball Championship, with top two teams from the championship directly qualifying for the event to be held in Slovenia.

Previously, the championship was supposed to be held in Uzbekistan, but in December 2021, AHF decided to move the event to Kazakhstan due to unavoidable circumstances. In January 2022, the championship was further postponed from the planned dates of Feb. 13 to 20 due to the 2022 Kazakh unrest.

Hazfi Cup quarterfinals draw to be held on Tuesday

TEHRAN - Iran's 2021-22 Hazfi Cup quarterfinals draw will be held on Tuesday.

The draw ceremony will be held in Iran League Football Organization's headquarters.

Persepolis, Mes Kerman, Aluminum, Kheybar Khorramabad, Esteghlal, Nassaji, Mes Rafsanjan and Khalij Fars Mahshahr have qualified for the quarterfinals.

Iran's Hazfi Cup was founded in 1975 and Esteghlal is the most successful club with seven titles, followed by Persepolis with six titles.

Hossein Vafaei fails to book place at 2022 Welsh Open

TEHRAN – Hossein Vafaei failed to qualify for the final match of the 2022 Welsh Open.

The Iranian snooker player lost to Judd Trump 6-5 in the semifinals.

"He played well, his game is very attacking so it puts you under a lot of pressure," admitted Trump. "When it went 5-3, all pressure kind of left me then; it was looking like he was going to win.

"To be honest he was much the better player today."

Vafaei was less inclined to suggest he was superior to Trump, but was nevertheless keen to take the positives with him to next week's event in Turkey.

"I am disappointed, because I didn't perform that well," said Vafaei. "I had my chances but didn't take them, as simple as that. He potted some unbelievable long balls, but I was 5-3 up. "He deserved the victory, he was the better player today. I had a very good week, you have to see the positives."

Joe Perry awaits Trump in the final after he held firm to beat Jack Lisowski 6-5.

South Africa's Mokoka breaks world record in first 50km race

TEHRAN - South Africa's Stephen Mokoka, who had never run a 50km race before, broke the world record on home soil in Gqeberha on Sunday.

Mokoka, 37, crossed the finish line in two hours, 40 minutes and 13 seconds, beating the record set by Ethiopian Ketema Bekele Negasa (2:42:07) at the same event last year.

"I'm tired," Mokoka, a three-times Olympian, said. "It's a long way and I don't know how I'm going to feel later, but I enjoyed it."

Ethiopia's Amelework Fikadu Bosho dominated the women's race to finish in a time of 3:04:58, nearly four minutes ahead of the rest but 34 seconds short of the world record, Reuters wrote.

Brawl during football match in Mexico leaves 22 injured

TEHRAN - Pictures and videos shared on social media showed people being beaten, kicked and dragged.

Mexican authorities said at least 22 people have been injured in a brawl on Saturday when football fans stormed the field during a top flight match between mid-table Queretaro and last year's Liga MX champions Atlas.

Pictures and videos shared on social media showed people being beaten, kicked and dragged while others had been left lying on the ground, covered in blood, in what appeared to be the seating area of the stadium in the central city of Queretaro.

Reuters could not independently verify the footage, which was also shown by local television channels.

"The violence in the La Corregidora stadium in Queretaro is unacceptable and unfortunate," Liga MX said on its Twitter account. "Those responsible for the lack of security in the stadium will be especially punished."

Liga MX suspended the match after 62 minutes with visitors Atlas leading 1-0.

Civil protection authorities said nine of the 22 injured have been transferred to hospital, with two in serious condition.

Van Dijk makes donation to help fund Netherlands team travel for Deaflympics

TEHRAN - The Oranje defender has put up the money for the national deaf team to get to their biggest world tournament

While injury and misfortune have prevented Virgil van Dijk from playing at a major tournament in his career, the Liverpool defender knows how important representing your country on the world stage is.

The Netherlands international has therefore made a large donation to help fund the travel of his nation's deaf football team, allowing them to compete at the Deaflympics this May, Goal.com reported.

The competition, in which deaf athletes from around the world compete, will take place in Caixas do Sul in Brazil - where Netherlands look set to compete, thanks to Van Dijk.

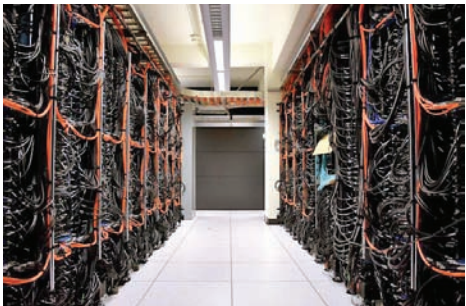
Van Dijk told De Telegraaf: "I have discussed this with my family and we are happy to help. That's why we support these guys, who have delivered a great performance by moving from 21st to seventh place in the world ranking. I admire the way these guys practice their sport."

The 30-year-old centre-half has also donated his match shirt from Liverpool's victorious League Cup final against Chelsea, which will be put up for auction to help raise funds.

The Dutch football team still need to raise €90,000 for travel and expenses, according to De Telegraaf, with fundraisers and other donations from businesses and benefactors helping them achieve their dream.

They are on their way to their financial goal thanks to Van Dijk, who missed out on the 2018 World Cup as Netherlands failed to qualify, before injury ruled him out of Euro 2020.

Iran's biggest capital market data center launched



TEHRAN – Iran's largest and most advanced capital market data center was officially opened in a ceremony on Sunday, IRIB reported.

Held at the place of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), the opening ceremony was attended by Head of Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) Majid Eshqi as well as SEO board members and senior managers active in the stock market.

The center has been established with the aim of stabilizing and developing technology infrastructure in all areas of processing, storage, and security in order to protect the interests of shareholders and meet the technological needs of the capital market.

As reported, this data center is an effective step in reducing security risks, developing electronic and intelligent services in the capital market, while providing the necessary platform for future development plans.

Providing data to brokers and order

management systems (OMS) are also among the services that can be provided by this operational data processing center.

Back in October, Eshqi had outlined new strategies and programs for the country's stock market during his tenure among which supporting investors, creating a transparent, efficient, and equitable market, as well as reducing inclusive risk based on the market's broad objectives can be mentioned.

Eshqi had stressed the use of modern technologies and mechanisms to increase public access to market data as a major strategy in this regard.

According to the SEO head, another strategy would be amending the market's rules and regulations to increase justice and accountability, while strengthening the medium- and small-scale level financing through new mechanisms.

"Diversification and promotion of the capital market (in terms of market, tools, and institutions), increasing the transparency and quality of information published in the capital market, reforming business processes and increasing the efficiency of financial markets, development of financial institutions and demonopolization, development and strengthening of technical infrastructure, facilitating and clarifying the issuance of licenses in the capital market and the development of the debt market and increasing its liquidity will also be pursued," Eshqi explained.

Iran's export to Iraq rises 20% in 11 months on year

TEHRAN – The value of Iran's export to Iraq rose 20 percent during the first 11 months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2021-February 19, 2022), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, the spokesman of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Ruhollah Latifi said Iran exported over 28 million tons of commodities worth \$8.222 billion to its neighbor in the said 11-month time, indicating also 17 percent growth in terms of weight.

According to the official, Iran's export to Iraq accounted for 19 percent and 15 percent of the country's non-oil export value and weight, respectively, during the first eleven months of the present year.

As previously announced by the IRICA deputy head, the value of Iran's non-oil trade rose 38 percent during the first 11 months of the current year.

Foroud Asgari said that Iran traded over 149.4 million tons of non-oil products worth \$90 billion with other countries in the mentioned period.

He noted that the weight of trade in the mentioned period also grew by 12 percent in comparison to the figure for the previous year's same 11 months.

The official put the 11-month non-oil exports at 112.658 million tons valued at \$43.517 billion, with a 40-percent rise in value and 10 percent growth in weight.

The Islamic Republic imported 36.777 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$46.577 billion in the first 11 months of the present year, with a 36 percent growth in value and a 19 percent rise in weight year on year, according to the official.

As stated by the chairman of Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce, Iran is planning to boost its annual trade with neighboring Iraq to \$20 billion.

Yahya Al-e Eshagh, made the remarks in a business forum between Iran and Iraq's



Kirkuk province in last December, saying that Iranian and Iraqi governments are determined to develop regional cooperation in all areas.

"Despite all events that are happening in the region, the relationship between the two countries of Iran and Iraq are on the upward trajectory," the official said.

The current administration of Iran under President Raisi has shown great interest in broadening and enhancing trade and economic ties with neighboring states, he emphasized.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the chairman of the Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce pointed to the country's planning for a \$20 billion trade with Iraq and put the current trade volume exchange between the two countries at about \$13-\$14 billion.

Iran and Iraq signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on economic cooperation back in January 2021, at the end of the fourth meeting of the two countries' Joint Economic Committee.

During the committee meeting, technical committees were formed in various business fields to discuss technical and engineering services and other topics of interest. The meeting also proposed and supported the establishment of a joint investment fund between the two countries and hopes to continue its path.

Good agreements were also reached to review establishing a shipping corridor and increasing the number of Iraqi aircrafts passing over Iran.

worth 51.38 trillion rials (about \$205.52 million) were traded at the TSE.

TEDPIX lost 7,000 points (less than one percent) to 1.281 million in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

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

As stated by Market Analyst Peyman

Oil Ministry gets green light to build 300,000-bpd petro-refinery

TEHRAN – Based on the national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year (begins on March 21), Oil Ministry has been authorized to use various resources including private sector and foreign investments to construct a petro-refinery with a total capacity of 300,000 barrels per day.

The decision in this regard was announced during a Parliament's (Majlis) open session on Sunday in which MPs reviewed the government expenditures in the next year's national budget bill, Shana reported.

The ministry is also allowed to barter crude oil for paying the contractors of the mentioned project.

Earlier in January, Oil Minister Javad Oji said some major domestic banks are going to form a consortium with a total investment capacity of four billion dollars to implement petro-refinery projects across the country.



"A large part of the financial resources required for the implementation of the country's oil projects will be provided with the support of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, and this includes the financial resources needed for the refining sector as well," Oji said.

Increasing the country's petro-refining capacity has recently become a hot topic among Iran's top research institutions and research centers as a key defense mechanism against the impacts of

the U.S. sanctions on the country's oil industry.

Experts and analysts argue that in addition to generating more revenue, the conversion of crude oil to oil products will have many other benefits including creating new job opportunities, economic prosperity, and reviving other industries. And most importantly, it will lead to a stronger economy that could easily withstand the U.S. pressures.

In this regard, the importance of moving toward the construction of

petro-refineries instead of refinery complexes has been emphasized.

Recent studies indicated that the Internal Rate of Return (IRR) of petro-refiners, depending on their configuration, varies from 16 percent to 20 percent, which is 3-4 times more profitable compared to the old refineries and petrochemical complexes.

Back in 2019, the Research Center of Iran's parliament had said in a report that petro-refineries are two times more profitable than refineries and suggested that National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC)'s new refinery projects should be defined as petro-refineries.

The report dubbed "Petro-refineries, their role in completing the oil value chain and the status in Iran's oil industry" stated that constructing petro-refineries is one of the most important ways to alleviate severe economic impacts of price fluctuations and achieve a much higher margin of profit.

IME's weekly trades value increases 15%

TEHRAN- The value of trades at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) rose 15 percent in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday), as compared to its previous week.

According to a report by the IME's International Affairs and Public Relations Department, 2.874 million tons of commodities worth \$920 million were traded at the exchange, indicating also a 23-percent weekly growth in terms of weight.

The exchange traded on its metals and minerals trading floor 2.565 million tons of commodities valued at almost \$680 million.

Commodities sold on this floor included 1.21 million tons of cement, 641,479 tons of steel, 550,000 tons of iron ore, 120,500 tons of sponge iron, 27,330 tons of zinc, 12,060 tons of aluminum, 5,080 tons of copper, 250 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 50 tons of lead and 14 kg of gold bars.

Furthermore, the IME saw trade 298,568 tons of commodities on both domestic and export pits of its oil and petrochemical trading floor valued at more than \$228 million.

The exchange customers purchased on this floor 94,285 tons of polymeric products, 46,864 tons of bitumen, 62,000 tons of vacuum bottom, 51,000 tons of lube cut, 39,762 tons of chemicals, 5,250 tons of sulfur, 3,203 tons of base oil, 200 tons of insulation and 100 tons of argon.

Last but not least was the IME's side market with 11,010 tons of commodities traded on it.

As previously reported, more than 7.297 million tons of commodities worth over \$2 billion were traded at Iran Mercantile Exchange in the tenth Iranian calendar month (ended on January 20).

The exchange sold on both domestic and export pits of its oil and petrochemical trading floor more than 1.529 million tons of commodities worth over \$856 million.

On this floor the exchange traded 415,000 tons of vacuum bottom, 490,000 tons of bitumen, 306,534 tons of polymeric products, 171,000 tons of lube cut, 108,463 tons of chemicals, 26,285 tons of sulfur, 14,653 tons of oil, 450 tons of argon and 225 tons of insulation.

Next was the metals and minerals trading floor with trades of 5.724 million tons of commodities valued at more than \$1 billion.

Commodities changing hands on this floor included 3.606 million tons of cement, 1.332 million tons of steel, 367,000 tons of iron ore, 241,000 tons of sponge iron, 35,090 tons of aluminum, 133,340 tons of zinc, 26,911 tons of copper, 630 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 500 tons of coke, 500 tons of lead, 42 tons of precious metals concentrate and 23 kg of gold bars.

On its agricultural trading floor the exchange saw offering of 50 kg of saffron strands.



It's worth noting that the IME also played host to trade of 43,899 tons of commodities on its side market.

The value of trades at Iran Mercantile Exchange in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20, 2021) rose 108 percent compared to the preceding year.

During the past year, about 3.5 quadrillion rials (about \$83.5 billion) worth of commodities were traded at the mentioned market.

In the past year, several new records were achieved in terms of the volume and value of transactions in the mentioned market's various floors including the industrial, petroleum, and petrochemical floors.

IME is one of the four major stock markets of Iran, the other three markets are Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market known also as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), and Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX).

NIORDC, Tejarat Bank ink MOU for building oil pipeline

TEHRAN – Iran's Tejarat Bank signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC) on Sunday to fund the project for constructing a pipeline to transfer oil and petroleum products from southern Hormozgan Province to Fars Province.

The MOU was signed in a ceremony attended by Oil Minister Javad Oji, Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ehsan Khandouzi, NIORDC Head Jalil Salari, and Managing Director of Tejarat Bank Hadi Akhlaghi-Feyz, Shana reported.

As reported, the pipeline (known as Pars pipeline) extends over 400 kilometers from Mehravaran in Hormozgan Province to Shiraz city and is going to transfer 12 million liters of oil and petroleum products on a daily basis.

Optimal fuel distribution in Fars



Oil Minister Javad Oji (4th R) and Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ehsan Khandouzi (2nd R) attend MOU signing ceremony in Tehran on Sunday

Province, using the pipeline as an alternative to road transportation of products, reducing traffic and fuel consumption, reducing operational costs, reducing road hazards and pollution, and increasing the storage volume of petroleum products in the mentioned province are among

the goals of constructing this new pipeline.

NIORDC had previously signed an MOU with Bank Mellat in January for cooperation in the construction of a strategic pipeline for transferring oil products in eastern provinces.

Valued at about €372 million the 948-kilometer-long pipeline is going to pass through Kerman, South Khorasan, and Khorasan Razavi provinces. The mentioned pipeline is projected to transmit 150,000 barrels per day (bpd) of petroleum products.

According to Shana, the construction of the mentioned pipeline, which is aimed at transmitting petroleum products from Rafsanjan in Kerman Province to Mashhad in Khorasan Razavi, is going to ensure a sustainable supply of fuel needed in the east and northeast provinces while shortening the transmission route, reducing fuel consumption and reducing transportation costs, as well as facilitating the export of oil products to eastern neighboring countries.

The project also included the construction of two pump stations and three terminals.

TEDPIX gains 23,000 points on Sunday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 23,000 points to 1.322 million on Sunday.

As reported, over 9.431 billion securities



Hadadi, the national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year indicates that the

government has a more positive view of the market for the upcoming year.

According to Hadadi, the allocation of a separate budget for the Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund shows that the government is taking the necessary measures to provide stronger support for the market and to ensure its growth in the future.

"The allocation of a budget line for the Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund is considered one of

the most important points of the [Iranian calendar year] 1401 budget bill," Hadadi said.

The expert also pointed to the imposition of tax on rival markets including the housing market as another important and influential change in the next budget bill and said: "Taxation of luxury cars and expensive housing, along with taxation of bank deposits of legal entities, is also one of the important issues that should be appreciated about the budget bill."

From page 1 ► Zelensky has insisted the West should establish a no-fly zone over Ukraine, or at least provide it with fighter jets to help its forces fight the Russian military.

Despite the pleas from Kyiv, Poland, which has accepted an influx of refugees from Ukraine, has so far refused to supply its eastern neighbor with warplanes. “We are supporting Ukrainians with humanitarian aid. However, we are not going to send any jets to the Ukrainian airspace” President Andrzej Duda recently declared.

The White House has told U.S. media that Washington does not mind if Poland supplies Ukraine but only with some of its old Soviet-era warplanes to help repel the ongoing Russian advance. “We are also working on the capabilities we could provide to backfill Poland if it decided to transfer planes to Ukraine,” a spokesperson said.

Four U.S. officials have been quoted as saying that Washington may fill the gap in Poland's Air Force if it decides to give its used MiG-29s to Kyiv.

The Wall Street Journal has reported that Washington is considering giving Poland F-16 jet fighter jets if it transfers some of its old aircraft to Ukraine.

But Washington will not give F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine, which critics say is another sign of America effectively abandoning Ukraine on the battlefield.

The Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister, Olha Stefanishyna lashed out at the U.S. NATO alliance saying “It is very upsetting when the group of 30 leaders or ministers or even ambassadors are ... gathering itself in a fancy cabinet, with the fancy furniture, and talking about the fancy thing, knowing that Ukraine was over this table for all of [these] years sitting in this fancy offices... But now knowing that we can't be there because we are operating under the bombing of [the] Russian Federation.”

Russia's Defense Ministry Spokesman Igor Konashenkov briefed journalists that “missile troops have eliminated [Ukraine's] S-300 air defense weapons system.” According to Konashenkov, Russia's aviation and air defense have also downed four Su-27 aircraft and one MiG-29 near Zhitomir, one Su-27 and one Su-25 aircraft near Radomyshl, one Su-25 aircraft near Nezhin,

Ukraine Conflict enters Day 12



and two Mi-8 helicopters near Kyiv. In all, six drones have been eliminated over the past 24 hours, including one Bayraktar TB2.

According to the Washington Post, the U.S. and its allies are secretly drafting “contingency plans” in case the Russian military succeed in their operation in Ukraine and “forces the current government into exile.”

According to the report, officials in Washington and European capitals, anticipate that the Russian army will soon make swift advances which will set the stage “for a long, bloody insurgency.”

Several U.S. and European officials say the methods with which Western governments would support a Ukrainian insurgency are developing into something definite or tangible.

Moscow has time and again reiterated that it has no plans to occupy Ukraine and announced a “special operation” to prevent further bloodshed against ethnic Russians in the country's eastern Donbas region, the demilitarization and neutrality of Ukraine alongside the end of its NATO membership requests.

The Kremlin argues Ukraine's membership in NATO threatens Russian security by allowing the U.S.-led alliance to place dangerous weapons on Russian borders and being part of NATO means sharing your intelligence

with the North Atlantic Alliance.

Meanwhile, Germany has collapsed to NATO's pressure, performing a historic U-turn by announcing it will allow weapons to be delivered to Ukraine. The new German government will deliver 1,000 anti-tank weapons and 500 Stinger anti-aircraft defense systems to Ukraine.

Berlin has also given authorization for the Netherlands to send Ukraine 400 rocket-propelled grenade launchers and has told Estonia to transfer nine howitzers. The government has said the weapons will be delivered “as soon as possible.”

U.S.-based credit card giants Visa and Mastercard have announced they will suspend their Russian business operations.

British prime minister Boris Johnson has announced a six-point plan in response to Russia's military action and is urging other leaders to endorse it in efforts to ensure Russia fails in its alleged attempt to “take over” its neighbor.

The plan includes additional economic sanctions against Russia. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his Dutch counterpart Mark Rutte are set to visit Downing Street on Monday to discuss the measures.

Analysts say European sanctions will backfire on European consumers who will see higher costs in their energy

bills as Europe heavily relies on Moscow for energy.

The International Monetary Fund has warned about the global economic impacts of sanctions on Russia. In a statement, it said “the economic consequences are already very serious. Price shocks will have an impact worldwide, especially on poor households for whom food and fuel are a higher proportion of expenses”

The IMF says “the sanctions on Russia will also have a substantial impact on the global economy and financial markets, with significant spillovers to other countries”.

The global monetary group also warned, “should the conflict escalate, the economic damage would be all the more devastating.”

The IMF has also announced it could approve \$1.4 billion in emergency funding as early as next week as the body warns of the conflicts “severe impact” on the global economy.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova has slammed Britain for advocating financial punitive measures against Moscow saying “the sanctions hysteria in which London plays one of the leading, if not the main, roles, leaves us no choice but to take proportionately tough retaliatory measures,” she warned, adding that Britain's interests in Russia will be “undermined” by Moscow's response.

The Russian President has delivered a warning to the Ukrainian government saying “the current leadership needs to understand that if they continue doing what they are doing, they risk the future of Ukrainian statehood. If that happens they will have to be blamed for that.”

Touching on Ukraine's demand for NATO to impose a no-fly zone over the country, which Nato has so far rejected, Putin further warned “the realization of that demand would bring catastrophic results not only to Europe but to the whole world.”

Elsewhere, the Chinese foreign minister, Wang Yi says Beijing rejects any measures that “add fuel to the flames” in Ukraine. Wang called for negotiations to end the crisis, highlighting how the U.S. and Europe have failed to pay attention to the negative impact of Nato's eastward expansion on Russia's security concerns. He made the remarks to the U.S. secretary of state, Antony Blinken.

West views Ukraine more favorably than Yemen: academic

From page 1 ► **How do you see reactions of the American public to the Ukraine war? Apparently, some Republicans, particularly Trump, praise Putin.**

Part of the American public listens to former president Trump and right-wing media such as Fox News. Commentator Tucker Carlson has been rooting for Russia, and there is a segment of the American population that follows this line of thinking without much real examination of the issues. However, recent polls show that more than 80% of the American public does not support Putin's actions, and many say they would be willing to pay more for energy if it would stop Putin's invasion.

What is America's record when we talk about respecting sovereignty? Is there a good invasion and a bad invasion? For example, when America invades Iraq it is reasonable but when other countries do the same thing it is a violation of international law?

The United States has a terrible record when it comes to honoring the sovereignty of other nations. Over decades the United States has been involved in efforts of regime change in many nations including Latin America, the Middle East (West Asia), and Southeast Asia. Many of these actions before the fall of the Soviet Union were aimed at Cold War containment of “Communism”. More recently actions directed at Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria were directly aimed at regime change or regime support. So, in purely historical terms, the United States doesn't have much room to lecture other nations about the morality of hegemony.

How may the Ukraine crisis affect the Vienna talks?

If the JCPOA is restored and sanctions against Iran are lifted—especially sanctions against oil and natural gas exports, it would greatly relieve petroleum scarcity in the world market. Iran has a large stockpile of unsold petroleum products that could be immediately released. Iran's oil export capacity could



meet 1/3 of all European needs for oil. So resolving the JCPOA would be a huge benefit for Europe and the United States in its conflict with Russia. It would also help curb the current worldwide inflation not only by reducing the price of oil but by opening Iran with 84 million people to the world market.

The Ukraine war reminds us of other wars in the region like the war on Yemen. What can we learn when we see different approaches to these wars?

Unfortunately, Europeans and Americans are viewing the Ukrainian situation more favorably for aid and assistance than Yemen or Afghanistan. Some claim that this is due to the inherent racist or Islamophobic tendencies in Europe and the United States. There is no question that Ukraine is seen as White and Christian (President Zelensky is, however, the only international Jewish head of state outside of Israel). And that seems to be a factor in driving aid to Ukraine as opposed to other countries where help is needed.

U.S. officials travel to Venezuela, a Russia ally, as the West isolates Putin

The trip is the highest-level visit by American officials to Caracas in years, driven by a desire to separate Russia from its remaining Latin American allies.

Senior U.S. officials were traveling to Venezuela on Saturday to meet with the government of President Nicolás Maduro, according to people familiar with the matter, as the Biden administration steps up efforts to separate Russia from its remaining international allies amid a widening standoff over Ukraine, the New York Times reported.

The trip was the highest-level visit by Washington officials to Caracas, Venezuela's capital, in years. The United States broke off diplomatic relations with Mr. Maduro and closed its embassy in Caracas in 2019, after accusing the its leader of electoral fraud. The Trump administration then tried to topple Mr. Maduro's government by sanctioning Venezuelan oil exports and the country's senior officials, and by recognizing the opposition leader, Juan Guaidó, as Venezuela's lawful president.

Mr. Maduro responded to the sanctions by seeking economic and diplomatic help from Russia, as well as from Iran and China. Russian energy companies and banks have been instrumental in allowing Venezuela to continue exporting oil, the country's biggest source of foreign currency, despite the sanctions, according to U.S. officials, Venezuelan officials and businessmen.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has prompted the United States to pay closer attention to President

Vladimir V. Putin's allies in Latin America, which Washington believes could become security threats if the standoff with Russia deepens, according to current and former U.S. officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive policy matters.

As Russia's economy craters, the U.S. is seizing on an opportunity to advance its agenda among Latin American autocracies that might start seeing Mr. Putin as an increasingly weak ally.

When the U.S. and its allies began considering sanctions on Russian oil and gas exports this month to punish the country for devastation wrought in Ukraine, prominent voices affiliated with both major American political parties pointed to Venezuela as a potential substitute.

Well-connected Republicans have been involved in talks about restarting the oil trade, including Scott Taylor, a former Republican congressman from Virginia who is working with Robert Stryk, a Washington lobbyist who briefly registered to represent Mr. Maduro's government in 2020 and remains in contact with people around it.

Mr. Taylor said he spoke on Friday night to a Venezuelan businessman who signaled that Mr. Maduro's team was eager to re-engage with the United States.

Kremlin says the West is behaving like a bandit

The Kremlin said on Saturday that the West was behaving like a bandit by cutting economic relations over the conflict in Ukraine but that Russia was far too big to be isolated as the world was much larger than just the United States and Europe.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that the West was engaged in “economic banditry” against Russia and that Moscow would respond. He did not specify what response there would be but said it would be in line with Russian interests.

“As you understand, there must be a corresponding response to economic banditry,” Peskov said.

“This does not mean Russia is isolated,” Peskov told reporters. “The world is too big for Europe and America to isolate a country, and even more so a country as big as Russia. There are many more countries in the world.”

Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which it calls a

“special military operation” aimed at disarming its neighbour, has triggered a barrage of sanctions and led to an exodus of big companies from the Russian market.

Peskov noted that channels for dialogue between Moscow and Washington still existed.

He said that if the United States imposed sanctions on Russia's oil and gas exports then it would give a considerable jolt to world energy markets.

Asked about a law which President Vladimir Putin signed that stiffens punishments for discrediting the Russian armed forces, Peskov said such laws had to be obeyed.

The law was introduced urgently in an extraordinary situation, he said, because Russia was facing an unprecedented information war unleashed by the West.

(Source: Reuters)

Libya: UN offers mediation after swearing in of new rival gov't

The United Nations' top official in conflict-scarred Libya has offered to mediate between political rivals in a renewed push for long-delayed elections, warning against “escalation” after a parallel government took office.

Stephanie Williams' call on Friday came a day after the country's eastern-based parliament swore in a prime minister in a challenge to interim Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah – a move observers fear could tip Libya into a new schism.

Williams, UN chief Antonio Guterres's special adviser on Libya, warned in a series of tweets that “the solution to Libya's crisis does not lie in forming rival administrations and perennial transitions”.

She said she had asked the eastern-based House of Representatives and the High Council of State (HCS), an upper house based in Tripoli, to nominate six delegates each to form a “joint committee dedicated to developing a consensual constitutional basis”.

According to Williams, once the politicians appoint a committee, it would meet on March 15 under UN auspices for two weeks, to work towards a constitutional framework for elections.

Williams also asked Libyans to refrain “from all acts of escalation, intimidation, kidnapping, provocation & violence”.

HCS chief Khalid al-Mishri welcomed her offer, saying the body had already “adopted a constitutional basis last September that could be built upon to find a national consensus”.

“Yes to elections, no to extensions,” he added.

‘Without resorting to violence’

Williams' proposal comes after presidential and parliamentary elections, set for December

24 as part of a UN-brokered peace process, were abandoned amid bitter disputes over their constitutional and legal footing, as well as the candidacies of several highly contested figures.

That had dashed hopes of drawing a line under a decade of conflict since the 2011 revolt that toppled longtime ruler Muammar Gaddafi.

Dbeibah was appointed through the UN-led process in February 2021 on the condition that he shepherd the country until elections that were supposed to take place in December. The vote never took place, triggering the push to replace him with Fathi Bashagha, a former interior minister backed by the eastern parliament.

Dbeibah, based in Tripoli, has refused to cede power except to an elected government. He has proposed a four-point plan to hold a simultaneous parliamentary vote and referendum on constitutional amendments late in June.

The country was split between rival administrations from 2014 to 2021 based in Tripoli in the west and a Tobruk-based parliament in the east.

Meanwhile, Britain, France, Germany, Italy and the United States voiced concern on Friday at the latest developments, including “reports of violence, threats of violence, intimidation and kidnappings”.

“Any disagreement on the future of the political process must be resolved without resorting to violence,” foreign ministers from the five countries said in a joint statement.

‘Transparently’

Reacting to the statement from Western foreign ministers, Bashagha tweeted that his government's “mission” was to “organise

(Source: aljazeera.com)

IAEA chief tours National Museum of Iran



From page 1► and a striking frieze of glazed tiles from the central hall of the

Apadana Palace. Also on display are a famous trilingual inscription from the time of Darius I, a bull-headed capital and carved staircase, a statue of a sitting dog that looks like it was carved just weeks ago, and four foundation tablets inscribed in cuneiform.

One of the more startling exhibits is the Salt Man from Zanjan. He is estimated to have been a miner who died in the 3rd or 4th century CE, but whose white-bearded head, leg in a leather boot, and tools were preserved by the salt in which he was buried.

IranAir operates Mashhad-Damascus flights devoted to pilgrims

TEHRAN – On Sunday, Iran's flag carrier IranAir began its new service dedicated to pilgrims visiting Syria from the holy city of Mashhad where the shrine of Imam Reza (AS) is located.

"The first direct flight to transfer pilgrims from Mashhad to Syria was operated today by the Airline of the Islamic Republic of Iran, branded as IranAir," ISNA quoted a local official as saying on Sunday.

The service will be running through March 31 for applicants willing to visit Syrian shrines, the official added.

Last November, Tehran and Damascus discussed ways to facilitate tourism and pilgrimage, which was frozen in war years.

As a result of the Syrian War, which began in 2011, tourism in Syria has greatly declined,



even though Syria has some of the oldest cities in West Asia, such as Damascus and Aleppo (a UNESCO World Heritage Site).

Before the Syrian Civil War, 8.5 million tourists visited Syria in 2010, generating revenue of \$8.4 billion and contributing 14% to the national economy. Tourist numbers had decreased by more than 98% by 2015.

Intl. conference to discuss sustainable tourism



TEHRAN –Kordestan University in western Iran, will be hosting an international conference on tourism and development, the provincial tourism chief has said.

The event will explore topics on different branches of tourism, management,

marketing, economics, education, culture, and tourism infrastructure, CHTN quoted Yaqub Guylani as saying on Sunday.

A major aim of the conference is to examine the barriers and problems of tourism development and to propose novel solutions to attract domestic and foreign investment.

Moreover, attendees will discuss the role of proper tourism infrastructure to achieve sustainable development, the official added.

The event is scheduled to be attended by Iranian deputy tourism minister Ali-Asghar Shalbafian and participants from Iraq, the UK, and Finland, he noted.

It will be held on March 9 and 10 in collaboration with Kordestan's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, he mentioned.

Further efforts needed to draw Turkish sightseers, expert says

TEHRAN – Iranian travel agencies and tour operators should devote more efforts to attract Turkish travelers, the Head of the Iranian Tour Operators has said.

So far, Turkish officials have been unwilling to introduce Iran's tourism in their country, while Iranian authorities have not taken any action in this regard either, explained Ebrahim Pourfaraj on the sidelines of the 5th edition of the Travel Expo Ankara, ISNA reported on Sunday.

Turkish travel insiders have visited Iran several times on fam tours, but their Iranian counterparts have not traveled to Turkey much to promote Iran's tourism, the official added.

Ankara's tourism fair, which is attended by 10 Iranian tourism agencies and tour operators, is an opportunity to introduce Iranian tourist attractions to interested parties, he noted.

Because of the conditions created by the coronavirus outbreak in the Iranian tourism

industry over the past two years, it is necessary to work more on new markets that were previously ignored, he mentioned.

Back in November, the official said that the restoration of tourism flow to the country is very important for Iranian tour operators and travel insiders.

Furthermore, Pourfaraj said that the Islamic Republic must rebuild trust with the global tourism market, referring to the high levels of health security and vaccination that the country has achieved against the coronavirus.

He said some of his colleagues have commenced talks in various tourism fields with target markets of China, Japan, Russia, and some European countries.

As mentioned by Pourfaraj, Iran has made its best to maintain contact with global tourism markets and companies that worked with Iran in the past, especially since virtual communication and meetings have thrived.



Some experts believe Iran is still somehow "unknown" for many potential travelers due to Western "media war". Several estimates have been released so far on the extent of the tourism-related losses incurred by the pandemic.

According to the data compiled by the tourism ministry, the tourism of the country was growing before the corona outbreak, its revenues reached \$11.7 billion in 2019, which accounted for 2.8% of GDP, nearing the average share of tourism in the world GDP, which was 3.2 percent. Some 8.7 million foreign nationals visited Iran during the Iranian

year (1398) and Iran was ranked as the second fastest-growing country in tourism based on data compiled by the World Tourism Organization.

Even before the pandemic, Iran's tourism was already grappling with some challenges, on top of those Western "media propaganda" aimed at scaring potential travelers away from the Islamic Republic. Some experts believe Iran is still somehow "unknown" for many potential travelers due to such a "media war". They, however, consider bright prospects for the tourism sector of the country if it vigorously pursues comprehensive strategies to counter U.S.-led propaganda and strict sanctions, yet does its best to loosen tough travel regulations.

Iran is potentially a booming destination for travelers seeking cultural attractions, breathtaking sceneries, and numerous UNESCO-registered sites.

Cypress trees planted in UNESCO-tagged garden

TEHRAN – A total of 100 cypress trees were planted in the UNESCO-designated Shazdeh Garden to mark National Tree Planting Day, the director of the World Heritage site has said.

Seeds from the original cypress trees in the garden, which is situated in Kerman province, were used to grow these 100 cypress trees in the greenhouse, Fuzieh Farahbakhsh said on Saturday. Cypress trees planted in UNESCO-tagged garden

This garden currently has over 320 historical trees, the official said, adding, "Whenever possible, seedlings from the native and original species of the garden are planted in a suitable place according to the pre-determined plans for the preservation of the garden and its trees, so if an old tree needs to be removed, a new tree can be planted in its place."

The preservation of the historical and old trees of Shazdeh Garden is a priority, so any action such as deciding whether to remove or even heavy prune the trees will be done with the necessary permissions, she noted.

Based on the opinion of specialized consultants on trees



and green spaces, the garden is now in a good condition due to regular control and monitoring of the trees, she mentioned.

Shazdeh Garden, which is an enigmatic green oasis in the heart of a desert in the southeast Kerman province, was constructed under the command of Mohammad Hassan Khan, the ruler of Kerman during the Qajar era (1789–1925). Apart from the beauties of the garden, two-storey mansions in the western and eastern parts of the garden perfectly represent Persian architecture. The main material used in them is brick and the art

of tiling is easy to recognize.

In 2011, a selection of nine Iranian gardens, including Shazdeh Garden, which bears important architectural, traditional, and cultural elements, were collectively inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list under the title of "The Persian Garden."

One outstanding feature of Persian gardens is the arrangement of a pond in the center of the structure. The dance of fountains in the middle of Shazdeh Garden has given an admirable view to it that leaves everyone in wonder and

appreciation.

For millennia, Iranian gardens have combined the magic of nature with the aesthetic qualities of art and architecture to create a symbolic representation of paradise on Earth.

The genuine concept of the Persian Garden that is deeply rooted in time interweaves natural elements with manmade components to embody an idea of creating a paradise on Earth by the means of artistic, philosophical, figurative, and religious notions.

UNESCO says the flawless design of the Persian Garden, along with its ability to respond to extreme climatic conditions, is the result of an inspired and intelligent application of different fields of knowledge, i.e. technology, water management and engineering, architecture, botany, and agriculture.

National Tree Planting Day, is annually celebrated on the fifteenth day of Esfand, the last month on the Iranian calendar, which usually corresponds with March 6. The day marks the beginning of the National Week of Natural Resources (March 6-13).

Cable car installation poses no threat to Hyrcanian forests, official says

TEHRAN – Plan to install a cable car system in the northern province of Golestan poses no threat to the UNESCO-registered Hyrcanian forests, a senior advisor to the tourism minister has said.

"The project to build Kabudval cable car would be outside the forests and it does not threaten the World Heritage site," said Mohammad Hassan Talebian on Sunday.

His remarks follow concerns expressed by environmentalists and cultural heritage activists about the implementation of a cable car project within the forest area, as indicated by the remarks by Iranian tourism minister Ezzatollah Zarghami.

During his visit to Golestan on Friday the minister announced that in accordance with the agreements of the Department of Environment and the Forests, Range and Watershed Management Organization, and the implementation of cultural heritage rules, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts approves the Kabudval cable car project.

A great deal of effort has been expended on gaining the UNESCO label for the Iranian Hyrcanian forests, which are recognized as being among Iran's most precious natural resources and there is no plan to implement projects within them, Talebian added.

A team of experts in the field of environment and natural resources is involved in the implementation of the cable car project, he



noted.

Back in 2020, an official with the Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization warned that Hyrcanian forests could lose their prestigious UNESCO status if the project of setting up cable car is implemented as planned.

Although parts of the Hyrcanian forests have been registered on the UNESCO World Heritage List, the follow-ups for setting up cable car in this area continue and if this happens, the forest may be removed from the list, the official said.

"We have to be responsive not only to our country but also to the world for the damages done to this forest," he added.

Spanning from the south of Azerbaijan to about 850 km eastward to the provinces of Gilan, Mazandaran, and Golestan, Iran's UNESCO-registered Hyrcanian forests (also known as Caspian forests) are witnesses of the ancient forests of the world since they have survived between 35 and 50 million

years.

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

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

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

In July 2019, the UN cultural body designated the vast woodland as a World Heritage site, making it the second such Iranian natural site after Lut Desert, which was granted the tag in 2016.

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

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

Iranians visiting France advised to hold vaccine cards

TEHRAN – Iranian travelers to France have been recommended to acquire special vaccine cards as one of the prerequisites for the journey.

Regular vaccine certificates issued in Iran do not be accepted in France, ISNA reported on Sunday.

As recommended by the French Embassy in Tehran, Iranian travelers to France should apply for [special] vaccination cards, which can be acquired from certain Iranian pharmacies, the report said.

"Travelers must present their original passports and vaccination cards to pharmacies approved by the embassy."

Otherwise, it is not possible to go to closed places such as hotels, restaurants, museums, shopping malls, and public transportation.

Vaccine cards are planned to replace health pass and masking requirements as of March 14.

France tightened the rules of its vaccine pass as Omicron cases spiked but in an interview Thursday with France's TF1, Prime Minister Jean Castex confirmed the rollback of requirements as "the situation is improving", Lonely Planet reported.

What is the difference between a health and vaccine pass?

The vaccine pass (pass vaccinal) indicates that the holder has been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and applies to anyone over the age of 16. However, people over the age of 18 must now have a booster shot to keep their pass active.

In France, that means they must get their booster no more than four months after receiving the second dose of an AstraZeneca, Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, or no more than two months after a Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Tourists will need to show proof of a booster shot if they are over the age of 18 to enter venues where the vaccine pass is required.

The health pass (pass Sanitaire) applies for people aged between 12 and 15 and is either proof of vaccination, recovery, or a negative COVID-19 PCR or antigen test (taken within 24 hours prior).

This is to announce that the Invitation to Tender no. 1400/52 related to Tabas Parvadeh Coal Company should have not been published on Sunday.

Iran, Qatar to develop scientific co-op

TEHRAN – Iran's Ministry of Science and Qatar's Ministry of Education and Higher Education inked a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to expand scientific cooperation, IRNA reported on Sunday.

Respect for equality and common interests of the two countries have been declared as basic principles of the MOU with the observance of intellectual property laws, Hossein Salar-Amoli, head of the international scientific cooperation center of the Ministry of Science, said.

According to the cooperation agreement, the two countries support the creation of rules for the admission of university degrees and the exchange of certificates issued by scientific institutions.

"Supporting the exchange of scientific resources and documents related to the civilization, culture, and art of the two countries to be reflected in the educational books is one of the areas of scientific and cultural cooperation between Iran and Qatar.

Moreover, advanced educational programs, management of scientific research in the university community, teaching,



and supervising student research are the priorities of the two countries for joint academic cooperation.

Exchanging faculty members and researchers, exchanging scientific and research information, holding seminars and scientific conferences, holding joint educational workshops, admitting undergraduate students in universities of both sides, and offering postgraduate study opportunities for faculty members are other important points.

Iran supports the development of Arabic in its education system and Qatar supports the

development of Persian language in its education system," he explained.

Iran's science diplomacy at highest level in 20 years

Data from the Scopus International Citation Database show that Iran's scientific diplomacy has reached more than 34 percent since the beginning of 2021, the highest level in the past 20 years.

Science diplomacy is the use of scientific collaborations among nations to address common problems and to build constructive international partnerships. It is a form of new diplomacy

and has become an umbrella term to describe a number of formal or informal technical, research-based, academic, or engineering exchanges, within the general field of international relations.

Comparing the rate of 2020 with 2019, Iran with a growth of 12.5 percent and with a slight difference with India has gained second place in the world in terms of the growth of world science diplomacy, Mohammad Javad Dehghani, head of the Islamic World Science Citation Center (ISC), said.

In 2011, the share of Iranian articles with international participation was about 16.5 percent, which increased to 19.7 percent in 2016 and gradually in the following years, so that in 2020 and 2021, reached up to 30.5 and 34.2 percent, respectively, he added.

The share of Iranian articles with international participation has had significant growth of 209 percent during an eight-year period (2013-2020), becoming the Islamic world's leading country in science diplomacy, according to the Scopus International Citation Database.

'Projects without environmental assessment not to be funded'



From page 1 ► Today's world is moving towards zero carbon. Under a law enacted by the European Union in 2005, the operation of industrial units with non-standard carbon footprints is prohibited. In addition to the commitment to international standards, we need to pay attention to domestic standards, in addition to the implementation of incentive and punishment schemes.

The planet has lost its tolerance and does not have the capacity to survive irrational withdrawal. Ecosystem capacity assessment and resource evaluation have been considered in the agenda of the DOE.

We emphasize that projects without evaluation should not be funded. The damage that these projects does to the environment is calculated and should be paid to the DOE.

One of the admirable points is that some of the industries have taken steps to reduce the negative impact on the environment. Some mines have felt responsible and have realized that if they reduce the production of pollutants, they will have a higher economic outcome and consequently there will be an increase in revenue.

With these incentive schemes, in addition to introducing environmentally friendly units, we also tried to identify polluting units and take steps to prevent emission," he observed.

Iran selected vice president of UNEA-6

Iran was elected Vice President of the Sixth United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-6), during the Fifth Session of

the UNEA held in Nairobi from February 28 to March 2.

The 5th UN Environment Assembly concluded today in Nairobi with 14 resolutions to strengthen actions for nature to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The Assembly is made up of the 193 UN Member States and convenes every two years to advance global environmental governance.

The world's ministers for the environment agreed to establish an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee with the mandate to forge an international legally binding agreement to end plastic pollution.

Inger Andersen, Executive Director of the UNEP, has praised Iran's approach toward environmental protection.

Environmental measures and protection of natural resources, waste management, and other measures show Iran's environmental approach, she concluded.

Ayatollah Khamenei highlights clean energy development, environmental protection

From page 1 ► He made the remarks on the occasion of National Tree Planting Day, which is annually celebrated on the fifteenth day of Esfand, the last month on the Iranian calendar. The day also marks the beginning of the National Week of Natural Resources.

"One of the serious tasks toward protecting the environment is to preserve the two natural assets and vital reserves, namely

water and soil, and to avoid taking them for granted. In this line, authorities must pay attention to expert points of view."

Inattention to "wildlife protection" is another issue which will be detrimental to national interests, the Leader said, noting that in Islam, hunting is allowed only if it (human) needs to be fed, otherwise, it is illegal, and even hunting trip is forbidden, so we must take

steps to prevent illegal hunting seriously and pay attention to the issue of wildlife conservation.

Emphasizing the need to develop clean energy, he said that "the development of non-fossil energies, such as nuclear energy, which is increasingly used in the world and the countries of the region are moving towards it, as well as wind and solar energies, should also be taken seriously."

The Leader further called on people to plant and protect trees, saying that doing such important works requires national support. Tree planting is among the activities that can prevent the disappearance of forests around and inside cities through expanding vegetation cover.

To mark the occasions, Ayatollah Khamenei planted two fruit tree saplings.

ENGLISH IN USE

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'Salt particles raising from Lake Urmia contained by 80%'

Salt particles raising from the catchment basin of Lake Urmia has been contained by nearly 80 percent, Farhad Sarkhosh, head of the provincial department for the Lake Urmia restoration program at West Azarbaijan has said.

In cooperation with the Forests, Range and Watershed Management Organization, some saplings and shrubs have been planted in the catchment basin of Lake Urmia to slow down the wind giving rise to salt particles since past three years, which cost 600 billion rials (nearly \$14 million), Sarkhosh said.

He went on to say that the major salt particle hotspots in the West Azarbaijan province include Jabal Kandi village in Urmia County, Saporghan, Urmia, Chooapanloo and Miandoab, which are highly contained by planting vegetation, ISNA reported on Saturday.

According to the law, agricultural development around the lake's basin is banned, and investigation results demonstrated that no land seized illegally for the agricultural development, he highlighted.

کنترل ۸۰ درصد ریزگردهای نمکی دریاچه ارومیه

مدیر دفتر استانی ستاد احیای دریاچه ارومیه در آذربایجان غربی گفت: نزدیک به ۸۰ درصد از ریزگردهای نمکی حوضه آبریز دریاچه ارومیه کنترل شده است.

فرهاد سرخوش در گفت‌وگو با خبرنگار افزود: خارج از بستر دریاچه ارومیه و در حوضه آبریز با همکاری منابع طبیعی و کشت نهال و درختچه‌ها ریزگردهای نمکی کنترل می‌شود که از سال ۹۳ تا ۹۶ در این راستا ۶۰ میلیارد تومان هزینه شده است.

وی خاطرنشان کرد: کانون بحرانی ریزگردها در استان شامل منطقه جبل کندی در ۴۵ کیلومتری ارومیه، منطقه سپورغان ارومیه، چوپان لوسلماس و میاندواب است که با نهال کاری تا حدود زیادی از این ریزگردها مهار شده‌اند. طبق مصوبه دولت توسعه اراضی کشاورزی در حوضه آبریز دریاچه ارومیه ممنوع است و با بررسی‌های انجام شده در حوضه آبریز دریاچه نیز هیچ توسعه‌ای انجام نشده است.

Iranian researcher wins Humboldt Prize

TEHRAN – Iranian researcher, Farzaneh Momtazi, has received the internationally renowned Humboldt Research Award, ISNA reported on Sunday.

Every year, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation grants up to 100 Humboldt Research Awards to leading researchers of all disciplines from abroad in recognition of their academic record to date.

The award amount is €60,000. Award winners are also invited to conduct a research project of their choice at a research institution in Germany in cooperation with specialist colleagues.

Momtazi is a researcher of the National Institute of Oceanography and Atmospheric Sciences, who received a one-year scholarship from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in the



field of "The effect of climate change on the distribution of amphibians in the Persian Gulf".

So far, young researchers as well as many experienced scientists from Iran have been able to obtain this valuable research grant, but this is the first time that a researcher in the field of zoology and marine sciences has won this award.

The influence of Avicenna on medical studies in the West

Part 6

From the end of the fifteenth century onward, efforts were made to remedy the linguistic deficiencies of the medieval version of the Canon, e.g., its clumsy word-for-word renderings and many transliterated borrowings of Arabic terms.

Andrea Alpago (d. 1522), who had acquired a deep understanding of both the language and the subject during his thirty years of service as physician to the Venetian embassy at Damascus, supplied emendations derived from Arabic manuscripts to the Latin versions of the Canon, the Cantica, and De viribus cordis (which he more accurately entitled De medicamentis cordialibus), and compiled a new glossary, mainly of Arabic names of drugs.

His corrections were published posthumously in 1527 by his nephew Paolo in the first edition of the Canon from the Giunta press at Venice (d'Alverny, "Avicenne," pp. 184-89).

The tater Giunta editions of the 1544, 1555 (reprinted at Basel in 1556), 1562, 1582, 1595, and 1608 were based on Alpago's revised text, from 1555 onward augmented by marginal notes—taken from Alpago's manuscript—by Benedetto Rinio, which show parallel readings in ancient Greek and Arabic works (d'Alverny, pp. 196f.). To facilitate reference, an index by Giulio Palamede was also printed (Venice, 1557, 1584).

Alpago's was to be the only textual revision of the entire Canon. Andrea Grazioli brought out a new version of only book 1 (Venice, 1580) based on an unfinished translation by Girolamo Ramnusio (d. 1486), Alpago's predecessor at Damascus (d'Alverny, pp. 182-84). Another translation by Miguel Jerónimo Ledesma (Valencia, 1546) went no further than Canon 1.1. Jacob Mantino's translations of Canon 1.4 (five editions between 1530 and 1555) and Canon 3.11.29 (on headache; Bruges, 1538) and the translation of excerpts from Canon 3.1-2 by Jean Cinqarbres (Paris, 1570, 1572) are not from the original Arabic but from the Hebrew version, while Jean Bruyerin's new rendering of the book on heart drugs (Lyons, 1559) was from the Arabic.

Western Europe also has to thank Andrea

Alpago for his translation of two other medical treatises by Avicenna, De removendis nocu-mentis quae accidunt in regimine sanitatis (On harmful things in the regulation of health which have to be prevented—Daf al-mazarr al-kolliya an al-abdan al-ensaniya) and De syrupo acetoso (On oxymel—sekanjabin), as well as the only Latin versions of two Arabic commentaries on the Canon, those of Qotb-al-din Shirazi on books 2, 3, and part of book 4, and of Ebn al-Nafis on book 5 (pharmacopeia), in which, incidentally, there is no mention of Ebn al-Nafis's discovery of pulmonary circulation. These four texts were published by Paolo Alpago at Venice in 1547; the first two were also appended to several later editions of the Canon.

But even the availability of these new texts and the improved versions of previously known works could not arrest the growing rejection of Avicenna's authority in the universities.

In the context of humanist efforts to reform medicine, criticism of the Canon spread and gained strength in the course of the sixteenth century. The most spectacular onslaught was the public burning of the Canon by Paracelsus in the Midsummer-Day bonfire at Basel in 1527—though a gesture admittedly motivated by his rejection of all written authorities, and by no means typical of the age.

In general the humanist critics of Arabic medicine, who made Avicenna their prime target, strove for a revival of ancient Greek and Roman medicine. Scholars such as Niccolò Leonceno, Giovanni Manardi, Symphorien Champier, Janus Cornarius, and Leonhart Fuchs, who were intent on demolishing the medieval system, dismissed its textbooks of Arabic origin as verbal and factual misrepresentations of ancient teachings and replaced them by newly recovered Greek and Latin medical writings.

Their criticism of detail focused mainly on Avicenna's prescriptions, where the indications and dosages differed from the ancient traditions. On the other hand, Avicenna's innovations were praised as practical advances by his defenders, such as Sébastien Monteux, Bernhard Unger, and Lorenz Fries.

(Source: Encyclopedia Iranica)

(To be continued)

COVID-19 UPDATES ON MARCH 6

New cases	5,586
New deaths	201
Total cases	7,089,892
Total deaths	137,948
New hospitalized patients	1,014
Patients in critical condition	3,722
Total recovered patients	6,730,318
Diagnostic tests conducted	47,726,758
Doses of vaccine injected	142,884,337

TEHRAN TIMES



www.tehrantimes.com

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Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603
Printed at: Jame Jam Bartar Borna - 44197737



Tehrantimes79

No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran P.o. Box: 14155-4843 Zip Code: 1599814713

MARCH 7, 2022

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The mind of a wise man is the safest custody of secrets; cheerfulness is the key to friendship; patience and forbearance will conceal many defects.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:15 Evening: 18:23 Dawn: 5:02 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:25 (tomorrow)

Jalal ad-Din Rumi: philosophy

Part 6
Need arises when people recognize that they have nothing of their own. Only God, the Rich and Praiseworthy is truly real.

In order to gain any hold on reality, people must intensify their awareness of their own nothingness—their love, need, hunger, thirst, pain, suffering.

“What is it to be a lover?” asks Rumi; he answers by setting down the program of his teachings: “Perfect thirst—so let me explain the water of life” (Divan).

His role is to describe the beauty and attractiveness of the true Beloved, who alone can deliver the soul from separation (feraq, jodai), its basic problem—hence the first verse of the Masnavi, the complaint of the reed at having been cut off from its source.

Awareness of separation stirs up need and love: “Pain is an alchemy that renovates. ... Beware, do not sigh coldly in your indifference! Seek pain! Seek pain, pain, pain!” (Masnavi).

Acknowledging pain, recognizing thirst, and focusing on the Beloved call down mercy and gentleness: “Where there is pain, the cure will come, where the land is low, water will run. // If you want the water of mercy, go, become low! Then drink mercy’s wine and become drunk” (Masnavi).

“No physician gives pills and medicine without illness—I will become totally pain so that I may reach the Remedy” (Divan).

“Every hungry man finds food in the end” (Masnavi). “No matter what your state may be, seek! ... Seek water, for your lips bear witness that you will find a fountain” (Masnavi).

Suffering pain and anguish is a sign of one’s true situation, one’s separation from the reed bed. It follows that “Whoever is more awake has greater pain, whoever is more aware has a yellower face” (Masnavi).

Referring to a hadith about the Prophet’s own suffering, Rumi points out that it is precisely this awareness and wakefulness that explains “why the suffering and tribulation inflicted upon the prophets is greater than that inflicted upon all the world’s creatures” (Masnavi).

Nonetheless, there can be no severity without gentleness, so the alchemical power of love transmutes pain into the most exquisite joy.

(4). God as man’s beloved: Rumi goes to

Jalal ad-Din Rumi: Teachings

Part 1
Rumi’s magnum opus is his didactic poem, the Masnavi, and his main prose work is the Fihe ma fihi, which was compiled from the notes of students at his teaching circle.

These works, which represent the last two decades of his life, constitute the most substantial sources for his teachings without need for recourse to his many biographies.

We do not have sources dating from his young adulthood, before he met his mystic mentor Shams ad-Din Tabrizi, though his later writings arguably provide insight into the world of scholarship he had been raised in. Accordingly the focus of this entry is Rumi’s mystical teachings.

The Fihe ma fihi is the most important source for the actual situation of Rumi’s teaching, since it is a collection of the notes of students attending his circle.

This work represents sessions at Rumi’s teaching circle that date from the mid- to late 1250s in all likelihood, when one takes into account the references to other living individuals.

The full text, which forms the basis of Badi uz-Zaman Foruzanfar’s edition, is found in a manuscript dating from 1350 and a manuscript containing approximately the first two-thirds of the other, dating from 1317.

(Source: Encyclopedia Iranica) (To be continued)

IRGC commander Mohammad Solgi’s memoir published in Russian

From Page 1 ► The book is a new style in oral history and also contains narratives of soldiers from the Abolfazl Brigade and the four commanders of the 32nd Ansar al-Hussein Army.

“Water Never Dies” won an honorable mention in the documentation section of the Jalal Al-e Ahmad Literary Awards in 2015.

In a commendation published in 2015, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei called the book “one of best among war memoirs.”

“Hello to the companions of Hussein (AS), hello to the Ansar al-Hussein Army... hello to the living martyr, Mirza

A combination photo shows the front cover of the Persian edition of “Water Never Dies” and Ayatollah Khamenei’s commendation for the book.

Mohammad Solgi, and his pious and patient wife; and hello to

Hamid Hesam who acquainted us with special and conversable

Stuntman Arsha Aqdasi’s memorabilia donated to Film Museum of Iran

TEHRAN – Iranian stuntman Arsha Aqdasi’s mother has donated a collection of his memorabilia to the Film Museum of Iran.

Aqdasi, who collaborated in a number of international projects including the James Bond 2012 adventure “Skyfall”, died last August from the injuries he suffered in a car crash while shooting a film project in Beirut, Lebanon.

His Organ Donor Card is among the items donated to the Film Museum of Iran, the museum announced on Saturday.

Based on Aqdasi’s last will and testament, his organs were donated to save lives.

The collection also includes a Simpson racing helmet Aqdasi wore while working on the film project in Beirut.

Another highlight of the collection is the suit worn by Aqdasi during the ceremony he was decorated with a Knight’s Cross, an order of the Serbian government.

A number of his awards and diplomas of honor he received from international festivals and film projects have also been donated to the museum.

Working for Indian director Siddharth Anand’s new project “Bang Bang”, Aqdasi broke his neck on July 28, 2021 when a car he was in turned over. He was placed in an

A photo published by the Film Museum of Iran shows some of stuntman Arsha Aqdasi’s memorabilia donated by his mother to the museum.

induced coma by doctors to prepare him for surgery. However, his injuries caused a disorder in the cerebral circulation system and ultimately led to his demise.

Born in Tehran in 1982, he learned aikido, becoming a coach in this modern Japanese martial art.

In 2005, he won a physical education scholarship to an Italian university, however, he changed his plans just days before leaving his hometown for Italy after he came across an announcement advertising a stunt training course offered by renowned Iranian

stuntman Payman Abadi, who also was killed in 2009 while shooting a scene for the action telefilm “Invisible Eyes”.

Aqdasi stayed in Iran to become a skilled stuntman, who worked in over 50 screen and stage projects and set new records in stunts, one of which was doing three somersaults with a car in the air.

He also founded Stunt 13, a major studio for Iranian stuntmen.

In interviews with Persian media, Aqdasi said that he had a phobia about speed and height, but he could communicate with them, however, he called death “an enjoyable experience” that can happen once.

In January 2019, he and a group of his Iranian colleagues came together in a meeting in Tehran to ask the organizers of Iranian film festivals and events to recognize them as an active group in the film industry.

He also announced his plan to organize a festival for Iranian stuntmen. The first edition of the festival was scheduled to open on May 7, 2019, however, the plan was never implemented.

He lamented that so far stuntmen have been ignored at the Oscars, and said that only three festivals in Russia, America and Hong Kong are held for stuntmen.

Director Farnush Samadi on jury of Beirut Intl. Women’s Film Festival

International Women’s Film Festival this year.

She was also a member of the Meeting Point jury at the SEMINCI – Valladolid International Film Festival 2021 in Spain and the jury of the Same Boat Short Film Competition at the International Migration Film Festival in Turkey in 2020.

Two Iranian films, including the acclaimed drama “Bandar Band”, are also competing in the Beirut International Women Film Festival running until March 11.

Directed by Manijeh Hekmat, the film is about some Iranian women singers who are going to enter an unofficial competition in a coffee shop in Tehran.

Pregnant Mahla along with the other members of Bandar Band, her husband and one

of their closest friends, start their journey to Tehran from a southern province just when they have lost all they had in a flood.

They still keep their hopes alive, although every road they take leads to a dead-end in a flood-stricken land. They intend to go to Tehran, but they wonder if it is just another turn around a vicious circle.

The Beirut festival is also screening “Barter” by Iranian filmmakers Ziba Karamali and Emad Arad in the short fiction films competition.

The short drama is about Parsa, a 13-year-old boy who is trying to hide a secret from his father. The film depicts a dramatic situation in a family, and how people change when their interests are at stake.

“Why Trust Science?” at Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN – A Persian translation of Naomi Oreskes’ “Why Trust Science?” has been published by Now in Tehran.

Meisam Mohammad-Amini is the translator of the book originally published in 2019.

Do doctors really know what they are talking about when they tell us vaccines are safe? Should we take climate experts at their word when they warn us about the perils of global warming? Why should we trust science when our own politicians don’t?

In this landmark book, Oreskes offers a bold and compelling defense of science, revealing why the social character of scientific knowledge is its greatest strength—and the greatest reason we can trust it.

Tracing the history and philosophy of

A combination photo shows writer Naomi Oreskes and the front cover of the Persian translation of her book “Why Trust Science?”.

science from the late nineteenth century to today, Oreskes explains that, contrary to popular belief, there is no single scientific method.

Rather, the trustworthiness of scientific claims derives from the social process by which they are rigorously vetted. This process is not perfect—nothing ever is when humans are involved—but she draws vital lessons from cases where scientists got it wrong.

Oreskes shows how consensus is a crucial indicator of when a scientific matter has been settled, and when the knowledge produced is likely to be trustworthy.

Based on the Tanner Lectures on Human Values at Princeton University, this timely and provocative book features critical responses by climate experts Ottmar Edenhofer and Martin Kowarsch, political scientist Jon Krosnick, philosopher of science Marc Lange, and science historian Susan Lindee, as well as a foreword by political theorist Stephen Macedo.