

Muslim Countries Condemn Israeli Aggression in Unison

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Report

U.S., Europe hit record inflation levels amid Ukraine crisis

The United States' Labor Department has announced that inflation has hit another record high level since 1981, rising 8.5 percent over the year to the end of March as the conflict in Ukraine drives up energy costs for average households.

The latest Consumer Price Index (CPI), which measures the prices of a basket of goods and services, comes after the prices rose by 7.9 percent in the year through February.

That means America is witnessing the fastest pace of annual inflation in 40 years.

To put that into perspective, the rise in prices of goods and services is now at levels not seen in the U.S. since Ronald Reagan took over the Presidency of Jimmy Carter.

Amid rising energy prices as a result of the Ukraine conflict; continuing supply chain problems and soaring demand are other factors weighing in.

The price increases are quite wide with the cost of rent, gas, and food causing the most hardship for lower and poorer class American households who are being affected the most.

Motorists at the gas pumps are facing soaring prices, which was the biggest component of the latest price rises. The gasoline index rose 18.3 percent in March and accounted for more than half of all the items' monthly increase. ► Page 5

Interview

Persepolis still have a chance to win IPL title: Mohsen Khalili

By Farrokh Hesabi

TEHRAN – Former Persepolis football team forward Mohsen Khalili says that the team still have a chance to win Iran Professional League (IPL) title.

Persepolis were knocked out of Iran's Hazfi Cup last week after losing 3-2 to Aluminum in the quarterfinals in Tehran's Azadi Stadium.

Yahya Golmohammadi's men sit six points behind Esteghlal in the Iran Professional League (IPL) title race with six rounds of fixtures to play.

But Khalili believes that the title holders, who have raised the expectations with their five league title in a row, still have a chance to win it for the sixth time.

"Persepolis have raised expectations with their good performance in recent years," Khalili said in his exclusive interview with Tehran Times.

"But at the same time, the team have lost big players and have not been able to sign suitable replacements. In any team, if the players that are signed are not at the same level or higher than the previous players, the coordination of the team will be lost, and the quality of the performance will decrease.

"Of course, the players that Persepolis signed are good players, but they could not fill the vacancies left by the departed players and failed to meet the expectations," he added. ► Page 3

Annual exports to African, Arab countries rise 20%

TEHRAN – The value of Iran's exports to its African and Arab trade partners increased by \$2.6 billion or 20 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), Farzad Piltan, director-general of Trade Promotion Organization (TPO)'s Office of Arabian and African Countries, said.

According to Piltan, Iranian exports to Arab and African countries reached \$16.293 billion in the previous year, while the figure stood at \$13.595 in the preceding year, the TPO portal reported.

Iraq with \$8.9 billion of imports, United Arab Emirates (UAE) with \$4.9 billion, Oman with \$716 million, Ghana with \$353 million, and South Africa with \$254 million were the top export destinations for Iranian products in the year 1400, the official said.

Report

Knowledge-based development reduces migration of educated elite

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN – The establishment of knowledge-based companies and the development of innovation ecosystems in the country, according to officials and people working in the technology sector, have decreased the rate of migration by the educated elite.

One of the main assets of any country is its human resources, especially the elite and the educated. In Iran, the issue of elite immigration has always been one of the important concerns of decision-makers and politicians. However, this area faces a serious lack of credible statistics and research needed for effective policymaking.

In such circumstances, one of the ways that can be effective in explaining the current situation in Iran is to examine the global indicators, according to the latest statistics in the immigrant population section 2021, the world's immigrant population in 2020 was estimated at 281 million people, which is 3.6 percent of the world's population. ► Page 7

Painter Abdolhamid Qadirian named Islamic Revolution Artist of the Year

TEHRAN – Painter Abdolhamid Qadirian has been named the Islamic Revolution Artist of the Year.

He was honored with the title on the closing day of the Islamic Revolution Art Week on Friday during a special ceremony attended by the managers of the Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization (IIDO), the organizers of the event.

Qadirian received the title for his artwork "Girls of the Sayed Al-Shuhada School", which he created in memory of the children killed in the terrorist attack on the Sayed Al-Shuhada

IRGC condemns Israeli attack on al-Aqsa Mosque, vows to support Palestinians

TEHRAN — In a statement issued on Saturday, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) condemned the Israelis' brutal attacks on Al-Aqsa Mosque in al-Quds (Jerusalem).

The IRGC also promised to support the Palestinians who are resisting the Zionist regime's brutality.

The resistance demonstrated by the Palestinians herald the emergence of a new in-

Syria, Kuwait, Qatar, Nigeria, and Mozambique with \$218 million, \$158 million, \$134 million, \$125 million, and \$98 million of imports from Iran, respectively, were ranked sixth to tenth among the Islamic Republic's Arab and African trade partners in the mentioned year.

Also, official data show that Iran's imports from its Arab and African trade partners also increased by 76 percent in 1400 compared to 1399 to stand at \$18.479 billion. Iran had imported \$10.470 billion worth of commodities from the mentioned counties in 1399, Piltan stated.

The UAE with \$16.523 billion of exports, Iraq with \$11.97 billion, Oman with \$619 million, Syria with \$30 million, and Lebanon with \$18 million worth of exports were the top five suppliers of goods to Iran

One million medical tourists arrive in Iran per annum

TEHRAN – The Islamic Republic of Iran hosts an average of one million medical tourists each year.

"About one million medical tourists, mainly from the neighboring countries, arrive in Iran annually," Mohammadreza Tarjoman who presides over the Health Ministry's tourism office has said.

"The majority of inbound medical passengers come from the neighboring countries including Iraq and Afghanistan," the official said in an address to a press conference held in Tehran on Friday.

Talking about hospitals and clinics, he said a selection of 200 Iranian medical centers have permission to accept foreign patients.

Many domestic experts believe that medical tourism in Iran is a win-win opportunity both for the country and foreign patients, as they are offered affordable yet quality treatment services and the country gains considerable foreign currency.

Iran is ranked 46th worldwide in the field of medical tourism, the official noted.

"The coronavirus pandemic has caused a 73 percent decrease in medical tourism during the past two years," Tarjoman added.

He went on to say that Iran attaches great importance to medical tourism marketing, adding "We are planning to hold international meetings

in the previous year, followed by Kuwait, Tanzania, Qatar, Ghana, and Ethiopia.

According to Piltan, the development of trade infrastructure including transportation, finance, banking, insurance, ports, customs, standardization, as well as supporting the establishment of commercial centers and upgrading the level of trade promotion activities such as holding exhibitions, exchanging trade delegations, and increasing the number of commercial attachés in target countries, in addition to holding economic and trade committee meetings, concluding trade agreements, and reducing trade tariffs, as well as increasing the exports of knowledge-based and high value-added products are among TPO's most important programs to increase trade with Arab and African countries.

and conferences to attract more medical tourists."

The First International Conference on Medical Tourism will be held in the northeastern Iranian province of Golestan from June 14-17, he said.

Iran's two most popular medical tourist cities are Tehran and Mashhad, but the coronavirus outbreak has significantly reduced the number of travelers.

According to available data, Mashhad played host to about 24,300 foreign travelers who reportedly spent some \$48 million to use medical services during the past Iranian calendar year, which ended on March 20.

"Last year (1400), Mashhad received 24,300 foreign medical travelers who were either hospitalized or gained outpatient treatments," said Davood Khoshashkan who presides over the medical tourism department at Mashhad University of Medical Sciences.

"Mashhad eyes to earn some \$400 million from medical tourism per year.... Our estimate is to host 200,000 medical travelers per year that would collect a revenue of \$400 million."

Khoshashkan believes that Iran has immense potential to become a hub for medical tourism, adding, for example, Turkey's revenues from medical tourism surpass Iran's as the neighboring country possesses lesser medics and hospitals yet it does not have pilgrimage capacities. ► Page 6

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Interview

Many Americans believe bearing arms is necessary to retain democratic rights: professor

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN – Shireen Tahmaasb Hunter, a professor of political science at Georgetown University, says many American citizens are of the opinion that carrying guns is necessary for self-defense and protecting democratic rights.

"Many Americans believe that bearing arms and having the right to organize militias is necessary to retain the peoples' democratic rights and prevent the emergence of a dictatorship. Others see having guns necessary for self-defense," Hunter tells the Tehran Times.

Pointing to the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution that guarantees the right to bear arms, Hunter emphasizes that "inclusion of this right in the Constitution is the reflection of the times just after the American Revolution when the country still faced threats from foreign sources."

A subway attack in Brooklyn on Tuesday morning left at least 29 people shot or otherwise injured, shaking a city already unnerved by a sharp rise in crime.

A "mumbling" lone gunman in a reflective vest and a gas mask threw smoke bombs into a subway car in Brooklyn and then began shooting at the height of the morning rush, with the manhunt continuing into the evening as new details emerged in the probe.

None of the injuries were considered life-threatening. Authorities said a magazine jammed in the gun, which possibly saved lives. ► Page 5



Rehabilitated eagle back into the wild

A golden eagle is being released back into its natural habitat in the highlands of Taleghan, northwest of Tehran, on Friday, April 15.

Hosting over 600 species of birds, Iran is a climatically rich country, so it is said that the number of bird species in Iran is higher than in the whole of Europe.

Biden's chance to remove Trump's poison pill: ECFR

TEHRAN - In a commentary on its website on April 13, the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) said Iran and the United States are close to a deal, but both sides need to give and take to achieve the wider benefits of a renewed Joint Comprehensive plan of Action (JCPOA), the official name for the 2015 nuclear deal.

Following is the text of the article by the pan-European think tank:

A year ago, Tehran and Washington began diplomatic efforts to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, which the Trump administration had sabotaged. The last 12 months of intense shuttle diplomacy by European governments have helped Tehran and the Biden White House agree on the technical steps needed to bring both sides back into compliance with the deal. Yet, Iran and the United States still find themselves in a standoff over political issues: the latest hot potato is what to do about the foreign terrorist organization (FTO) designation of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) imposed under Donald Trump.

I will spare readers the long list of reasons as to why the 2015 nuclear deal is the best one on offer. This deal is not perfect, and there is no doubt that political decision-makers in both Iran and the U.S. will face political heat for returning to it. But they are heading this way because its terms remain the best compromise on offer. And, in any case, behind the scenes those in charge in Tehran, Washington, and European capitals know their respective plan Bs look hideous.

Given this, it would be foolish for Washington to jeopardize the opportunity to contain Tehran's nuclear program over the lifting of what is a largely symbolic designation of the IRGC. Moreover, the FTO decision has done little to secure U.S. interests: in fact, U.S. officials have admitted that, since the designation, attacks by Iranian-backed groups in the region have spiked by 400 percent.

Iran has long maintained that, as a matter of principle and national pride, it wants this designation against a crucial part of it armed forces removed before returning to the nuclear deal. This should not be a surprise to the U.S. administration. The struggle has been over what Washington can get in return from Tehran – and whether Joe Biden is prepared to take the ensuing criticism.

The U.S. should not expect a big public gesture from Iran in return for lifting the FTO designation. For example, Iran is likely to reject proposals to state, publicly, that it will not take revenge for the assassination of General Qassem Soleimani during the Trump administration. The U.S. remains concerned that Iran may carry out a counter-assassination against high-level former officials involved in the decision to kill Soleimani.

Tehran believes it has already conceded on some of its critical opening negotiating terms, such as seeking reparations from Washington for the billions of dollars' worth of trade it lost as a result of the U.S. walking out on a deal endorsed by the United Nations Security Council. Iran has also seemingly stepped back from pressing for written guarantees that a future American president would not withdraw from the agreement again.

The reality is that Biden will face opposition in Congress, and political backlash from Israel, no matter what kind of deal he reaches – purely

because he is doing a deal with the Islamic Republic of Iran. For the U.S. president, the longer he delays a final call, the closer he gets to the midterm elections in November, when his appetite for upsetting hawkish Democrats in Congress will shrink even further. In the meantime, Iran's nuclear program and knowledge continues to expand. With the Ukraine conflict already a geopolitical hotspot for the West, this is no time to add more crises to the mix by opening a new nuclear front in West Asia.

For Iran, delaying the return to the nuclear deal comes with a high price tag in terms of opportunities lost for its economy. In Tehran, power is now largely concentrated in the hands of the conservative political faction, which is eager to show it can manage the economy better than what its members view as their naive pro-Western predecessors.

The Ukraine conflict has also ignited internal debate in Iran over how to best to protect its national interests.

Given this, it would be foolish for Washington to jeopardize the opportunity to contain Tehran's nuclear program over the lifting of what is a largely symbolic designation of the IRGC.

In sharp contrast to its competitors in the Arab world, the stalemate over the nuclear deal means that Iran cannot take full advantage of high energy prices following Western sanctions against Russia. China has continued to buy Iranian oil despite U.S. sanctions – but it has done so on the cheap. So long as Iran remains in the U.S. sanctions box, it cannot find more buyers for its oil – such as South Korea, India, and European countries looking to reduce their dependence on Russia energy. Nor can Iran get free access to payment for its oil so long as U.S. secondary sanctions choke up global financial transactions with the country.

European parties to the nuclear deal need to double down on pushing both Tehran and Washington to clear the last political hurdle. A number of reasonable compromises are in circulation. One suggestion reportedly under review is to remove the IRGC's FTO designation but keep on the list its elite Quds force. Another pathway could come at the UN Security Council, which endorses the JCPOA under resolution 2231. As part of a U.S. return to the nuclear deal and the removal of the IRGC's FTO designation, a side-commitment can be publicly issued by all parties to the nuclear deal at the Security Council level stating that UNSC permanent members and Iran will de-escalate military tensions in West Asia (Middle East).

Such a commitment would help the U.S. reduce its military footprint in West Asia, while cooling tensions can open up greater space for regional talks. There is no way to guarantee this de-escalation will last – the same way that there is no way to guarantee that this or a future American administration would not U-turn on the JCPOA as Trump did. In coming to a final deal, Iran and the U.S. will need to accept these realities and exercise political will.

The core substantive differences on how to implement the nuclear deal have now been resolved. The parties even managed to keep the negotiations on track after Russia – a key member of the deal – almost brought the talks to a halt following the fallout with the West over sanctions linked to the Ukraine war. The longer Washington and Tehran wait, the more susceptible the process becomes to spoilers, and the more each side feels it cannot give an inch to save face domestically.

It is time to replace the JCPOA with JDIA: Just Do It Already.

From page 1 ▶ “The Zionist regime's new acts of aggression and crimes against Al-Aqsa Mosque, which have intensified in recent days after the operations of the faithful and brave soldiers of resistance and fervent Palestinian youth, especially in the heart of the regime, show the Zionists' fear of a new intifada, and the fact that it might increase the struggle of the Palestinian people to the Palestinian youth and adolescents and to upgrade the capacities and capabilities of the anti-Zionist resistance.”

The statement added, “The desecration of the holy values of Muslims and the attack on Al-Aqsa Mosque during the holy month of Ramadan, which was carried out by the Zionist regime's military and security forces by deploying military equipment and brutally attacking defenseless Palestinian worshippers... is doomed to failure and will have no effect on the heroic act and flare-up of the valiant chivalrous warriors of Intifada these days; instead it would expose the Zionists to more serious nightmares and challenges.”

In the statement, the IRGC stressed that it is necessary that the international community respond to the tragic events in Palestine and the crimes of the Israeli occupiers in Al-Aqsa Mosque and other occupied territories.

“Undoubtedly, the consequences of this action and the dangerous conspiracy will befall the silent people in the Islamic countries as well as the human rights claimants in the international forums, and they will be severely punished in the public opinion of the world,” the statement added.

The statement said the dramatic and futile action in normalizing relations with the

IRGC condemns Israeli attack on al-Aqsa Mosque, vows to support Palestinians



fake Zionist regime by certain Arab countries has resulted in the Zionists' unbridled arrogance in attacking the sanctities of Muslims in occupied Palestine.

It added, “The will of the Palestinian people in a direct confrontation with the Israelis in al-Quds and the intelligent and vigilant support of the people of the region and the supporters of the liberation of al-Quds in the world, in a surprising historical event and change, will make the Zionist regime and its regional and trans-regional supporters witness new manifestations of anti-Zionist resistance.”

“This will be a sign of the intensification of the successful movement of the Palestinian Intifada and the developments towards the end of the fake and child-killing regime and the reverse migration of the usurpers of Palestine.”

The statement ended with a strong condemnation of the Israeli attack on Al-Aqsa Mosque and the

deadly silence of the international human rights bodies and leaders of some Arab countries, saying the intensification of the regime's aggressions on Al-Aqsa Mosque will help form a new wave of support in support of the new Palestinian intifada.

It emphasized, “The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps - based on the eternal discourse and wills of Imam Khomeini and the strategies and guidelines of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khamenei, one of the main and strategic supporters of the Palestinian Intifada - praises the will of all valiant chivalrous warriors on the way to al-Quds and does not hesitate to support them. The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps will continue to support those who aid the Palestinian fighters, and will not allow the aspirations of the domineering regime and Zionism to de-prioritize the issue of Palestine from the Islamic world. The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps will prevent the cancerous

growth of Israel on the geography of Islam and the body of the Islamic Ummah.”

The outbreak of violence in al-Aqsa Mosque began when Israeli forces broke into the mosque and started firing on the worshippers, which resulted in more than 150 injuries among them. The Palestinian Red Crescent in al-Quds reported that its teams dealt with 153 injuries in the confrontations that took place inside the courtyards of the holy Al-Aqsa Mosque. The Palestinian organization noted that a number of attacks on its crews were recorded, including impeding access to the injured, direct attacks on them, and attacking ambulances.

The Israeli troops went on the rampage and caused damage to the mosque on Friday morning. But the Israeli violence did not intimidate the Palestinian worshippers into giving up on their plan to hold Friday prayer at the mosque.

After cleaning the mosque from the wreckage caused by the Israeli troops, Palestinian worshippers rushed to the mosque for prayer.

In addition to wreaking havoc on Al-Aqsa Mosque, Israeli security forces arrested more than 400 Palestinian worshippers in the holy site.

The raid on Al-Aqsa Mosque came against a backdrop of heightened tensions between Israeli troops and Palestinians in the West Bank. Just hours before the outbreak of violence at the holy mosque, a Palestinian teenager was killed by Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank city of Jenin. Palestine's official news agency WAFA reported that 17-year-old Shawkat Kamal Abed succumbed to his injuries sustained from Israeli military gunfire in Kafr Dan town, northwest of Jenin.

15 Afghans trying to harm Iranian embassy arrested

TEHRAN — The interim governing body of Afghanistan says it has detained 15 rioters who tried to vandalize the Iranian embassy in Kabul, Tolo news reported.

Tolo news sources in Kabul reported that about 15 people planned to appear in front of the Iranian embassy in Kabul on Friday and continue fake demonstrations, which were immediately arrested by Taliban forces.

In recent weeks, images and videos were released which tried to spread sedition and sow discord among the people of Iran and Afghanistan. These videos sparked reactions.

On Monday, protesters in Herat broke the windows and CCTV cameras of the Iranian consulate. They also set tires on fire in front of the consulate's building.

On Tuesday, the director-general of South Asia at the Iranian Foreign Ministry summoned the charge d'affaires of the Afghan embassy in Tehran to strongly protest against the attacks on the Iranian embassy in Kabul and the consulate in Herat.

Recalling the responsibility of governments

in ensuring the security of diplomatic missions, the diplomat called for legal action against the attackers on the Iranian missions in Afghanistan.

The director-general also informed the Afghan chargé d'affaires that the consular sections of the missions of Iran in Afghanistan have ceased their activities until further notice in order to get the necessary assurances from the Afghan Foreign Ministry about the full security of the diplomatic offices.

However, a large number of Afghan citizens participated in a gathering in Kabul on Wednesday to show their vigilance against the hypocrisy of the enemies of the Iranian and Afghan nations.

The rally in the Afghan capital to condemn the attack on Iranian diplomatic facilities ended with the reading of a joint statement.

The final statement, titled “No to seditionists”, is as follows:

“This gathering means raising the voice of saying no to the enemies and the hypocrites as well as the beautiful whisper of solidarity between the brotherly nation of Iran and

Afghanistan. We call on the two governments of Iran and Afghanistan to prevent a division of the two nations by the enemies through sound management and to prevent the destructive moves of the enemies.

Today, we will shout for the unity of the two heroic and brave nations many times, so that there will be a loud call against the enemy's conspiracies and a voice for empathy, friendship and convergence of the two nations.

If a number of ill-intentioned people threw stones at the door of the Iranian consulate in Herat on Monday, today, on behalf of the Afghan people, we will open the door of the Iranian embassy in Kabul as a sign of brotherhood and friendship.

The people of Afghanistan and Iran must say no to the conspiracies of the enemy with full vigilance and with empathy and brotherhood, punching the slaves of the hypocrites.”

At the end of the gathering, the participants, representing the people of Afghanistan, placed flowers on the doors of the Iranian embassy in Kabul.

IAEA will never get access to date of surveillance camera until JCPOA revived: envoy

TEHRAN - The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will never be given access to data recorded by surveillance cameras installed in Iranian nuclear facilities until the 2015 agreement, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), is fully revived, Iran's acting ambassador to the IAEA has said.

Mohammad Reza Ghaebi made the statements while speaking to reporters on Thursday in response to the latest IAEA report on the verification of the 2015 deal's implementation.

According to Ghaebi, the IAEA report was simply a technical update presented by the Agency's director general on monitoring the implementation of the JCPOA in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 2231, which provides the Agency's members with the most up-to-date information on Iran's nuclear activities.

Citing an IAEA “confidential report”, Reuters reported on Thursday that Iran is starting to run a new workshop at its nuclear plant in the central city of Natanz, which would create parts for uranium-enriching centrifuges using machinery relocated from its Karaj facility.

Ghaebi went on to say that the report showed Iran had informed the IAEA on April 4 that all centrifuge manufacturing machines have been transported from Karaj to Natanz, allowing inspectors to establish on the same day that the equipment were not operational.

“On April 12, the Agency finished installing all its cameras at the Natanz facility and had then removed the seals from the machines. Also, on April 13, Iran informed the Agency that the machines had started operating at the new workshop the same day,” the envoy explained.

“The Agency will have no

access to information recorded on the memory of its cameras and as long as the U.S. has not returned to full compliance with the JCPOA, that information would not be made available to the Agency and will be stored in Iran,” Ghaebi underscored.

In a statement issued on January 31, the IAEA stated that Iran has notified the UN body that production of centrifuge rotor tubes and bellows will be relocated from the TESA Karaj Complex to the central city of Isfahan.

The IAEA acknowledged that Iran has told the Agency that it would alter its surveillance and monitoring procedures accordingly, saying that manufacture of centrifuge rotor tubes and bellows at the TESA Karaj Complex has ended.

On January 24, IAEA inspectors placed surveillance cameras in a new workshop in Isfahan to guarantee the equipment meant

for the fabrication of centrifuge rotor tubes and bellows were being monitored, although production of the parts had not yet begun.

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) was tasked by a bill enacted by the Iranian Parliament in December 2020 with blocking IAEA inspections and pushing the country's nuclear program beyond the constraints imposed by the 2015 nuclear accord.

The bill, known as the Strategic Action Plan to Counter Sanctions, banned any inspections of Iran's nuclear facilities outside the Safeguards Agreement, in an effort to persuade the U.S. to lift the sanctions.

Under both Hassan Rouhani's and Ebrahim Raisi's administrations, the AEOI has continued its constructive engagement with the IAEA while complying with the law.

Muslim countries condemn Israeli aggression in unison

TEHRAN – Israel's move not to respect the sanctity of Al-Aqsa Mosque has united the international community in condemning the aggression against peaceful worshippers at the holy mosque.

On Friday, while hundreds of Palestinian Muslims were peacefully practicing their faith at Al-Aqsa Mosque in Al Quds (Jerusalem) Israeli security forces stormed the holy site, violating its sanctity, and injuring more than 150 worshippers.

Stun grenades, tear gas, and rubber and metal bullets were fired on the worshippers inside the mosque. The Palestinian Red Crescent in Al Quds reported that its teams dealt with 153 injuries in the confrontations that took place inside the courtyards of the holy Al-Aqsa Mosque. The Palestinian organization noted that a number of attacks on its crews were recorded, including impeding access to the injured, direct attacks on them, and attacking ambulances.

The dramatic rise in repression comes as Israel intensifies its crackdown against the Palestinians in the West Bank. Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor said that Israeli forces have significantly escalated the killing and repression of Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem during the past several days, following a green light from the political officials in Israel. Euro-Med's field team documented the killing of 18 Palestinians in the first half of this month, most of whom died following statements by Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett on April 8, granting a mandate to the



Israeli army to wage an unrelenting war on what was he described as terrorism, Palestine's official news agency Wafa reported.

The escalation of repression against Palestinians along with the desecration of sanctities in Jerusalem by Israeli forces has elicited strong criticisms against Israel. Resistance groups in the West Asia region denounced Israel's aggression in unison. Several countries in the region and beyond condemned Israel for violating the sanctity of holy sites in Jerusalem.

Iran strongly denounced Israel's aggression. Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has paid tribute to all martyrs of Palestine and resistance in a telephone conversation with Ismail Haniyeh, the leader of the Political Bureau of the Islamic resistance movement Hamas.

Also, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh has strongly condemned the Zionists'

shameless desecration of the sacred places in Palestine during the holy month of Ramadan and their raid on fasting worshippers in Al-Aqsa Mosque. Khatibzadeh warned against the continuation of brutal and terrorist acts of the occupiers in al-Quds and occupied Palestine.

Jordan strongly condemned Israel's grave violation of Al-Aqsa Mosque, calling on Israel to immediately withdraw its security forces from the holy mosque.

Notably, even countries that recently normalized or restored ties with Israel couldn't turn a blind eye to what was happening in Jerusalem. Turkey, which has begun embracing Israel, said in a statement, "We find unacceptable and strongly condemn that Israeli security forces have caused the death of seven Palestinian civilians, including a child, in several cities in Palestine, Jenin in particular, and inflicted injuries during their

intervention to the Muslims present in Al-Aqsa Mosque for prayers."

The United Arab Emirates "strongly condemned" Israeli forces' storming of Al-Aqsa Mosque. Bahrain took a similar stance, saying in a statement that it "condemned the Israeli police's storming of Al-Aqsa Mosque on Friday, and the resulting acts of violence, injury and arrest of dozens of worshippers, which acts as a provocation to Muslims, especially in the holy month of Ramadhan."

Germany, France, Italy, Spain, and Poland also expressed concerns about the violence in Jerusalem. Israel's violence also worried the European Union. "The European Union follows with deep concern the latest upsurge in violence across the occupied West Bank, including in East Jerusalem and the clashes at Al-Aqsa Mosque on Friday morning. Violence needs to stop immediately. Further civilian casualties must be prevented as a priority. The status quo of the holy sites must be fully respected," it said in a statement.

The Palestinian Foreign Ministry welcomed the international denunciation of Israel's violence. "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates welcomes the positions of the countries that have expressed their condemnation and denunciation of the dreadful Israeli assault against the holy Al-Aqsa Mosque and the worshippers and which held the Israeli government responsible for this aggression and its dangerous consequences on the conflict, and demanded to stop it immediately," it said in a statement, according to Wafa.

Iran monitoring Israeli moves to change regional geopolitical situation: commander

TEHRAN - The commander of Iran's Army Ground Force has underlined that Israel established a presence in the Caucasus region during the 2021 war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, noting that Iran successfully foiled the Israeli plots to change the geopolitics of the region.

Brigadier General Kiomars Heidari highlighted the success in foiling the Israeli regime's plot to change the region's geopolitical situation amid the most recent war between Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan, saying Iran keeps monitoring the Zionist activities, according to Tasnim.

The army general made the remarks in a speech delivered at the Friday prayers event in Tehran.

He said Iran obtained information during the 2021 war in the Karabakh region that the forces of the "illegitimate Israeli regime" had been present in one of the warring countries and had plans to change the



regional geopolitical condition.

Pointing to a military exercise that the Army Ground Force launched in northwestern Iran at that time, the general said two major and strategic conditions laid down by Iran were

fulfilled during the conflict. "We announced that we would not permit any change in the region's geopolitics, and secondly, the Zionist regime's elements must leave that region."

Brigadier General Heidari noted that Iran is still monitoring the Zionists' movements, Tasnim reported.

He also highlighted the Army's strong presence along the Iranian borders, saying the country enjoys a high level of security.

Last month, the commander described Iran as the safest country in the region, cautioning that any stupid move will be dealt with seriously.

In comments in December 2021, President of Iran Ebrahim Raisi cautioned the enemies that any bellicose move will draw such a decisive response from the Iranian military forces that it will bring about a significant change in strategic equations.

MPs praise Iran's negotiating team in Vienna

TEHRAN – A number of Iran's senior lawmakers have commended the Iranian negotiating team in Vienna for their revolutionary approach vis-à-vis the West.

Mahammad Javad Karimi Ghoddousi, a member of the Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said the Iranian negotiating team has shown a rarely seen resistance against the West.

"The negotiating team of the 13th government is negotiating with a revolutionary vision and unparalleled resistance against the Western side, and has been able to defend the country's achievements in the field of nuclear, science and technology," he told Iran's state news agency IRNA.

He added, "The strategy and policy of the negotiating team of the 13th government is logical and based on faith and revolutionary support. Based on these beliefs, the nuclear negotiating team has been able to prove its effectiveness in the negotiating environment. The negotiating team always represents the revolutionary and Muslim nation of Iran and must negotiate at the negotiating table with revolutionary and Islamic logic and with the literature of diplomats."

The lawmaker took a jab at the former Iranian negotiating team, saying they were soft on the West and gave in to the West's demands.

Karimi Ghoddousi stressed that the details of the Vienna talks had been monitored in several meetings of the parliamentary committee.

"The negotiating team's explanation of the system's red lines on nuclear technology and the lifting of sanctions at the committee meetings was quite logical and convincing and deserves praise."

"The negotiating team has even been able to get concessions from the other side. And the Westerners have been forced to back down from some of their irrational demands," he said.

According to Karimi Ghoddousi, in the new round of talks, the outcome will be in such a way that Iran implements its obligation and the other sides verifies that.

The attitude and resistance of the negotiating team led to the passivity of the Western side in the negotiations, the lawmaker said, adding that the nuclear negotiating team refused to back down even a bit from the revolutionary positions and the frameworks drawn.

Abbas Moqtadai, another lawmaker who is the deputy head of the parliamentary committee, also praised the Iranian negotiating team, saying that the negotiators' resistance made the West passive.

"The resistance of the negotiating team caused the West to be passive in the negotiations, in the war of wills, the Iranian nation dictated its resistance and victory to the other side," he told IRNA.

he added, "According to the instructions of the Leader, we must create a culture in the country that, despite the efforts of the diplomatic apparatus to advance the goals of the system, the internal affairs of the country should not be tied to negotiations."

In his Tuesday remarks, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei referred to the good direction pursued by the country's diplomats, suggesting "the officials should not wait at all for the nuclear issue to be resolved. Based on the realities of the country, they should plan and take action to solve the problems in the country."

Ayatollah Khamenei described the officials in charge of the negotiations as being revolutionary, pious, diligent individuals.

"The minister of foreign affairs and the other officials involved in the negotiations deliver detailed reports to centers within the country. It is alright to criticize and evaluate their performance provided that such opinions

are devoid of distrust and pessimism. As I have frequently said before, such opinions should not undermine the individuals involved or cause the people to lose hope," he pointed out.

Expressing his satisfaction with the resistance of the negotiating team to the other sides' avarice, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution stated, "The other side withdrew from the JCPOA and broke its commitments. Now they feel helpless and have reached a dead end. But the Islamic Republic will pass through this stage as it has passed through many stages before this by relying on its people."

Talks in Vienna over reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), have come to a standstill over a number of issues.

Iran has demanded that the Biden administration remove the IRGC from a U.S. list of foreign terrorist organizations because it believes that the Trump administration's move to designate the group as a Foreign Terrorist Organization was politically motivated and designed to make it difficult, if not impossible, for the next administration to resuscitate the 2015 nuclear deal.

The U.S. first refused to delist the IRGC and is now, according to press reports, trying to keep a relatively small branch of the IRGC on the list while removing the military group from the list.

Lebanese newspaper Al Akhbar reported Wednesday that Washington made an offer to remove the IRGC from the list and instead keep the IRGC Quds Force on the list, a move that was rejected by Iran.

Citing a diplomatic source, the Lebanese newspaper said the logic behind turning down the U.S. offer is that Iran is concerned that any U.S. decision to keep part of the IRGC under sanctions will increase the risks associated with doing business with Iran for some foreign firms, thereby reducing Iran's economic benefits from a revived JCPOA.

IRAN IN FOCUS

APRIL 17, 2022

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

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SPORTS

Persepolis still have a chance to win IPL title: Mohsen Khalili

From Page 1 ► During the 2007/08 season, Khalili became the top goalscorer by scoring 18 goals during the Persian Gulf Cup, which Persepolis won at the end.

He believes that the Persepolis players were lucky that the fans were not allowed in the stadium this season due to the Covid-19 issues. Otherwise, they would have been under a lot more pressure and stress.

When asked about the role of the Reds' technical staff in the recent failures, Khalili said: "When a team succeed, their technical staff is praised, so in case of failure, the role of the head coach and the technical staff should be considered, and they are definitely responsible for this situation.

"However, with the Persepolis' exit from the AFC Champions League and the Hazfi Cup, now the team should focus only on winning the league.

"Problems can be analyzed after the end of the season, but Persepolis need to raise team spirit and maintain their focus and unity in the current situation," the former Iran national team player added.

Khalili expressed his belief that Persepolis can still beat Esteghlal in this season's IPL title race.

"It is not impossible to make up for six points in six remaining games. Persepolis have no margin for error as they look to continue putting pressure on Esteghlal. They must be a team that will drop very few points from now to the end of the campaign. In the final weeks, the fans' support, who are the main motivating factor of the team, can play an important role to help Persepolis achieve their goal," Khalili concluded.

Iran to send two weightlifters to 2022 IWF Junior World Championships

TEHRAN – Alireza Yousefi and Yekta Jamali will represent Iran at the 2022 International World Federation's (IWF) Junior World Championships.

The competition will be held in Heraklion, Greece from May 2 to 10.

Yousefi, who won a gold medal at the 2018 Buenos Aires Youth Olympic Games, will compete at the men's +109kg.

He registered a new record in the 2021 World Weightlifting Championships in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Yousefi made 238kg in the clean and jerk and bettered the world junior record by one kilogram set by his compatriot Ali Davoudi in the 2019 Asian Weightlifting Championships in Ningbo, China.

Jamali claimed Iran's first-ever medal in the weightlifting championships in women's division.

She won a bronze medal in the 87kg weight class at the 2021 IWF Junior World Weightlifting Championships in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

Jamali lifted the 92kg in snatch and 116kg in clean and jerk. She won the bronze medal with a total of 208.

Farzad Abdollahi named Lebanon taekwondo coach

TEHRAN – Former Iran taekwondo player Farzad Abdollahi was named as new head coach of Lebanon national team.

Abdollahi will head the Lebanese team in the 2022 Asian Games and 2022 Asian Taekwondo Championships.

He has penned a deal until the end of 2022.

Abdollahi won a gold medal in the 2011 World Championships in Gyeongju and two gold medals in 2008 and 2010 Asian Championships.

Sayyadmanesh scores his first goal for Hull City

TEHRAN – Iranian winger Allahyar Sayyadmanesh scored his first goal for Hull City Friday night.

He started up front the second game in a row after leading the line in the win at Middlesbrough last weekend.

The youngster scored after just eight minutes after rounding Bluebirds' goalkeeper Dillon Phillips and slotting into the empty net.

Lewie Coyle then added a second shortly after and the Tigers led 2-0 at half-time. Aden Flint pulled a goal back in the 81st minute.



Agricultural Support Services Company

INVITATION TO ONE STEP INTERNATIONAL TENDER

First Announcement

55/1/1308

04/17/2022



Ministry of Jihad-e-Agriculture

AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES COMPANY

Agricultural Support Services Company, hereinafter will be referred as ASSC, a subsidiary of the Ministry of Agricultural Jihad of I.R. of Iran, is considering the purchase of 40000±5% MTS of Granular Potassium Chloride (GMOP) through one step international tender.

All of the qualified and interested companies are invited to receive tender documents from **Monday** dated **18/4/2022** until **Wednesday** dated **27/4/2022** (7 working days) from our purchasing committee (located at the 9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi St., Tehran, Iran).

The bidders are requested to submit their letters of introduction, along with remittance bill of Iranian Rial 1,200,000 to ASSC's account no. 4001039704005791 with SHEBA no. IR250100004001039704005791 at the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran through payment order of SATNA or PAYA with the 30 character identification code of 358039782263500650000000000006.

The bidders are required to submit their sealed and stamped envelopes containing offers latest on **Monday** dated **30/5/2022** (during official working hours) to our security office, located on the 8th floor. Meanwhile the meeting for the opening of the envelopes will be on **Tuesday** dated **31/5/2022** at 15:00 with the presence of bidders' representatives in our purchasing committee (9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi St., Tehran, Iran).

- The bid bond value should be at **€ 623748** or in equal value of that in any other foreign currencies, except US dollars, based on Telegraphic Transfer rate in Sana rate website, www.sanarate.ir. It should be noted that this site lists the Currency Transactions, executed in Integrate Currency Transactions System [Nima website] on 10/4/2022 for each lot of 40000 MTS ± 5% in bank guarantee.

– The bidders are permitted to submit the bid bond in Iranian Rial. Therefore, the value of bid bond for 40000 MTS ± 5% will be **IR 167274000000** which must be only submitted by the bidders.

- After approval of ASSC's Financial Manager, the bidders are permitted to use their previous and definite outstanding claims as the bid bond.

For more information, you may refer to our website www.assc.ir, and <http://iets.mporg.ir> or contact us by phone no. 00982188776325.

PR & Intel Affairs Dept. of Agricultural Support Services Company (ASSC)

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‘Govt. should direct resources allocated to knowledge-based movement’



TEHRAN – Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Gholam-Hossein Shafeie has said the government must ensure the appropriate use of the financial resources allocated for the development of the knowledge-based companies in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21), the ICCIMA portal reported.

Referring to the current year's motto, which has been named the year of “Production:

Knowledge-Based and Job-Creation” by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Seyed Ali Khamenei, Shafeie considered the knowledge-based movement an excellent step in the direction of industrial development and stressed the need to prevent possible deviations regarding the financial supports allocated in this field.

“This movement is very valuable because today our industries need to move in the direction of technology and knowledge-based development more than ever, but there are also concerns that need to be addressed,” he said in a meeting with the members of the Mashhad Chamber of Commerce.

Unfortunately, when a new field is stressed and comes under the spotlight in the country and the government decides to provide financial support in that specific field, rent and deviations also become abundant in that area, he added.

TEHRAN – Iran's thermal power plants generated 324 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20) to register an eight-percent rise compared to the preceding year, an official with the Thermal Power Plants Holding (TPPH) announced.

According to Omid Abdolmaleki, the director of TPPH's Production Planning and Operation Office, of the mentioned figure, 181 billion kWh was the share of combined cycle units, 84 billion kWh was the share of steam units, and 59 billion kWh was generated by gas units, IRNA reported.

The official noted that a total of 359 billion kWh of electricity was generated by all the power plants across the country (thermal, hydro, nuclear, and renewable) in the previous year, of which the share of thermal power plants (steam, gas, combined cycle) was more than 324 billion kWh.

Thermal power plants accounted for over 91 percent of the country's total power generation in the previous year, according to Abdolmaleki.

He mentioned the inauguration of several steam units in the country's thermal power plants in the previous year, saying: “With

Thermal power plants' annual output up 8%



the inauguration of the steam units of Jahrom, Harris, Urmia, and Chabahar power plants, we witnessed an output increase in combined cycle power plants which are environmentally friendly power generating units.”

According to Abdolmaleki, turning gas power plants into combined cycle ones is one of the most efficient ways to improve the efficiency of the country's electricity network, which is very effective not only for the electricity

industry but also for preserving the environment and saving fuel.

“By placing a 160-megawatt steam turbine along with two 159-megawatt gas turbines and forming a complete combined cycle block, the power plant's efficiency increases from 34 percent to nearly 50 percent without the need for additional fuel and only by using the heat recycled in the first cycle of power generation,” he explained.

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

Earlier this month, Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehriban said the country's electricity generation capacity was going to increase by 6,000 megawatts (MW) by the end of spring (June 22) in order to meet the summer's peak demand.

Mehriban noted that 4,500 MW of the mentioned figure will be provided through developing the country's thermal power plants and another 1,000 MW will also be provided by implementing overhaul operations, while the other 500 MW is going to be supplied by new renewable power plants.

Iran to increase penalties for illegal cryptocurrency mining

TEHRAN – Iranian government is going to pass new regulations to increase the penalties for illegal cryptocurrency mining using subsidized electricity, an official with the country's Power Generation, Distribution, and Transmission Company (known as Tavanir) announced.

According to Mohammad Khodadadi Bohlouli, based on the new regulations, the increase in punishments includes rising fines by a minimum of three and a maximum of five times, imprisonment of the offender, and revocation of their business license in case of repeated violations, IRNA reported.

“Any use of subsidized electricity, intended for households, industrial, agricultural and commercial subscribers, for mining cryptocurrency is prohibited,” Khodadadi said.

Misusing subsidized electricity to mine cryptocurrencies reduces the quality of the electricity supply in the national grid and damages peoples' electrical appliances such as televisions, refrigerators, air conditioners, and so on, the official noted.



Following the Iranian government's approval of cryptocurrency mining as industrial activity in 2019, numerous companies started mining cryptocurrency across the country thanks to the extremely low-cost electricity, and now Iranian power plants started to see this industry as an opportunity to increase their revenues.

In January 2020, the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade issued over 1,000 licenses for cryptocurrency mining units.

In addition to the approved units, some unauthorized miners have also

started using household electricity for cryptocurrency mining and this has created major issues for the country's electricity industry which is already facing serious problems created by drought and reduced rainfall.

Back in May 2021, the Iranian Energy Ministry's Spokesman for the electricity sector Mostafa Rajabi Mashhadi had said that those cryptocurrency miners, who use subsidized electricity, will have to pay a heavy fine if identified.

In addition to paying the mentioned fines, those miners must also compensate for the damages they cause to the electricity network, Rajabi Mashhadi added.

Unauthorized mining of cryptocurrencies creates problems in supplying electricity due to the damage to the local power grid and transformers, Mashhadi Rajabi noted, adding continued activity of these miners will definitely make the power supply more difficult and there is a possibility of blackouts due to the damage they cause.

Housing rental rises 28% in a quarter yr/yr

TEHRAN- The Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) has announced that the rental price has increased 28.1 percent in the country during the last quarter of the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), from the same quarter in its preceding year.

The SCI said that in the last quarter, Yazd province, in the center of Iran, with 8.6 percent had the highest and Sistan-Baluchestan province, in the southeast of the country, with 1.5 percent had the lowest rental inflation rate among the provinces of the country.

Back in April, 2021, the head of Iran's Property Advisers Union had said that housing prices in the country should decrease at least 25 percent in order for people to be able to afford to purchase.

Mostafa Gholi Khosravi stressed the need for



establishing a market regulation headquarters for the housing sector to monitor the activities of dealers and real estate agencies in order to balance the prices.

Housing prices in Iran have been constantly rising over the past three years due to various internal and external factors.

Bushehr province's annual fishery export stands at over 25,000 tons



TEHRAN- As announced by a provincial official, 25,342 tons of fishery was exported from Bushehr province, in the southwest of Iran, during the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20).

Mohammad-Mehdi Seymarouni, the deputy head of the province's Veterinary Department for the health affairs, said that of the mentioned figure, 19,000 tons were farmed shrimps, and 6,000 tons were the other types of fisheries.

He said that European Union countries, Russia, China, Persian Gulf littoral states, Malaysia, Turkey, Taiwan, Armenia, Belarus, Bangladesh, Hong Kong, Azerbaijan, Thailand, and South Korea were the destinations of the province's fishery exports.

Bushehr province is the top producer of farmed shrimps in the country, the official underscored.

As stated by an official with Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO), production of 714,000 tons of fishery has been targeted for the current Iranian calendar year.

Morteza Afrasiabi, the acting head of the IFO's fishery development department, said that of the mentioned figure, 277,000 tons will be fishes bred in cages and 70,000 tons will be shrimps.

Achieving the targeted 714,000 tons of fishery requires infrastructure as well as credits and banking facilities, the official added.

Fishery production has increased noticeably in Iran in recent years.

Enjoying high quality, Iran's fishery products were sold easily in the export markets, and also some new export destinations welcomed these products in the past three years; as new markets including China, South Korea, and the Eurasian Union nations opened up for Iranian fishery products.

Commodities worth over \$720m exported from South Khorasan in a year

TEHRAN- Products valued at \$723.907 million were exported from South Khorasan province, in the east of Iran, during the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20), a provincial official announced.

Hasan Rahimi-Zadeh, the director-general of the province's customs department, put the weight of exported goods at 2.123 million tons.

He said that export from South Khorasan province in the past year fell 14 percent in value and 40 percent in weight,

from its preceding year.

The official named cement, light hydrocarbons, ceramics and tiles, gas oil, distilled fuel oil, dates, bitumen and rebar as the major exported items and Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Turkmenistan as the main export destinations.

As previously announced by the head of Islamic Republic of Iran's Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of Iran's non-oil trade rose 38 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1400, as compared to its previous year.



Alireza Moqadasi put the country's non-oil trade at 162 million tons worth \$100 billion in the past year.

He said that Iran exported 122 million tons of non-oil products worth \$48 billion in the previous

year, which was \$14 billion (41 percent) more than the figure for its preceding year.

The country's non-oil trade record in 1400 was reached while the toughest sanctions were imposed on Iran, but thanks to God and the efforts of entrepreneurs, producers and the cooperation of foreign trade-related organizations, a historical record was achieved in the past year which was unprecedented in recent decades, the official underlined.

TEDPIX gains 13,000 points on Saturday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 13,539 points to 1.467 million on Saturday.

As reported, over 8.434 billion securities worth 47.857 trillion rials (about \$173.3 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index rose 11,054 points, and the second market's index gained 23,747 points.

TEDPIX rose 9,000 points to 1.454 million in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

As reported, the indices of Iran Khodro Investment Development Company (IKIDO), Social Security Investment Company (SSIC), Iran Khodro Company (IKCO), Saipa Company, and Isfahan Oil Refinery were the mostly followed ones during the past week.

As stated by the head of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO), the monthly

sales of the shares of companies listed on the Tehran Stock Exchange has been very good in the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20), and it is predicted that the growing trend of the exchanges will continue in the present year as well.

“Considering the general provisions approved in this year's budget bill we expect that companies will have good capital increase and take positive development measures, and it will be easier for investors to make decisions,” Majid Eshqi told the press on March 12.

Mentioning the measures taken for the improvement of the market in the past year, the official said: “For nearly 12 years, no new brokerage companies were established across the country, but since late October 2021, a licensing permit has been issued in this



regard and a new brokerage firm has also been established.”

The establishment of new financial institutions including investment funds, investment consulting companies, financing firms, and financial information processing companies were also mentioned as other steps taken in

this regard.

Eshqi also pointed to the launch of Iran's largest and most advanced capital market data center earlier this month and said that in order to promote the use of information technology in this sector, a smart system is also going to be unveiled for monitoring and assessing the

capital market and investment companies.

The above-mentioned data center was 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.

Back in October 2021, 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 de-monopolization, 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 had explained.

Many Americans believe bearing arms is necessary to retain democratic rights: professor

From page 1 ► Tuesday evening, the authorities identified the suspect, 62-year-old man called Frank R. James.

Following is the text of the interview about the causes and implications of incidents like Brooklyn:

What are the causes and consequences of a shooting at a subway station in New York City? Is the level of violence in big cities ramping up?

Any time a shooting happens, be it at a school, a shopping mall, and now the subway, it raises the level of public anxiety. In the last two years, shootings in public places have increased. This development is likely to strengthen those who have been arguing for more effective policing. This will also undermine the so-called progressives, who have been advocating the reduction of funding for the police. In the forthcoming midterm elections, issues related to law and order could become more important and could undermine Democrats' chances to win the elections.

Where is the problem when it comes to restricting gun bearing? Who should be blamed? Legislative establishment or the public culture?

The Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution guarantees the right to bear arms. The inclusion of this right in the Constitution is the reflection of the times just after the American Revolution when the country still



faced threats from foreign sources. Rightly or wrongly, many Americans believe that bearing arms and having the right to organize militias is necessary to retain the peoples' democratic rights and prevent the emergence of a dictatorship. Others see having guns necessary for self-defense.

How do you see the role of weapon businesses in hindering the legal process to restrict gun bearing in the U.S.?

Shootings are mostly the result of

people having easy access to small arms. The manufacturers of this type of arms are not as powerful as those who produce sophisticated and heavy arms. The most influential lobby in this regard is the National Rifle Association or NRA. More than the profit motive it is the belief that bearing arms is a defense against the dictatorship that stymies gun-control efforts.

How do you see the role of public media like cinema and films in

spreading violence?

Certainly television and films have contributed to the development of a culture of violence. But data shows that a good number of people involved in mass shootings are mentally disturbed or suffer from serious mental illness. What is needed, in addition to other measures, such as making the obtaining of arms more difficult, is to improve care for the mentally disturbed. However, here, too, the government's hand is tied. Many human rights organizations, such as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), oppose restricting the movement of such people. Also, often only it is after a shooting or similar incident that a person's mental illness becomes clear.

Do you think Biden's policies to restrict gun bearing are effective?

Because of the factors cited above, so far, efforts to curb gun violence and limit gun ownership have failed. President Biden's administration is no exception. Passing gun laws requires the cooperation of Congress. But many Congressmen and Senators, especially the Republicans, oppose such measures. However, the most significant barrier to gun control is the continued belief of a large number of Americans that bearing arms is guaranteed by the Constitution, it is a guarantee against dictatorship, and thus should not be tampered with.

Certainly, television and films have contributed to the development of a culture of violence.

Falk talks of West hypocrisy regarding refugees, occupation

TEHRAN— Describing the reasons behind the West's double standards towards the issue of refugees and occupation, Richard Falk says the most immediate relevant answer is race, location, and control of the global humanitarian discourse.

Since the start of the Ukraine war on Feb. 24, 2022, Western countries have condemned Russia and helped the displaced by mobilizing facilities and holding various meetings, and these actions are in stark contrast to the Western approach to bloody wars and the people of the Middle East.

The double standards of the West regarding the war in Ukraine and the Middle East can be seen in the reception of refugees, reactions to the war under the titles of occupation, terrorism, defense, resistance, military aid, humanitarian aid and sanctions. Their treatment of Palestinian, Syrian, Iraqi, and Yemeni refugees and asylum seekers and other Middle Eastern countries has always been harsh and accompanied by acts of violence to repatriate them to another country or homeland.

On the other hand, the Russia-Ukraine conflict has triggered turmoil in the financial markets, and drastically increased uncertainty about the recovery of the global economy.

The Ukraine-Russia conflict had several consequences for the world economy, and since Russia is one of the countries exporting oil and gas to Europe and sanctions and tensions against Russia will continue, we have to see an increase or persistence of oil prices above \$100 for a long time.

Meanwhile, Ukraine and Russia are global players in agri-food markets, representing 53% of global trade in sunflower oil and seeds and 27% in wheat. This rapidly evolving situation is especially alarming for developing nations. As many as 25 African countries, including many least developed countries, import more than one-third of their wheat from the two countries at war. For 15 of them, the share is over half.

According to some reports, the risk of civil unrest, food shortages and inflation-induced recessions cannot be discounted particularly given the fragile state of the global economy and the developing world due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To know more about the issue, we reached out to Richard Anderson Falk, an American professor emeritus of international law at Princeton University and former UN official.

What is the reason behind the west's double standards towards the issue of refugees and bloodshed in different parts of the world? Why refugees from the Middle East are treated differently from the European ones?

The most immediate relevant answer is race, location, and control of the global humanitarian discourse. Europeans and North Americans more easily identify with white Christians than with dark-skinned Muslims who are generally perceived as a threat or burden. Ukraine is part of the West, indeed geographically part of Europe, and for this reason, seems natural to fall within the existential parameters of 'the European security community'. It seems evident that print and TV media discursively reinforce these double standards by their selective practices of coverage that mirror the impact of race and location. The obsessive daily attention given to the destruction attributable to Russian military action in Ukraine contrasts with the scant attention given to such occurrences in prior similar situations as in

Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya.

Beyond these considerations, the war in Ukraine is also a crucial geopolitical battleground, pitting the U.S. against Russia, reviving the Cold War spirit of ideological confrontation although rephrased as 'democracy' versus 'autocracy'. Part of the political mix in this present setting is also China, and the evident motivation of the U.S. to warn China (by way of Russia) that if it attacks Taiwan it will face a unified national resistance reinforced by military and diplomatic support from the West that at the minimum will impose punitive, damaging sanctions. As the war drags on it has become evident that the U.S. Government cannot make up its mind whether it should solicit China as a peacemaker to end the Ukraine War or treat China as a secondary adversary, lending indirect support to Russia, and this to be confronted and even sanctioned. U.S. uncertainty at this stage may reflect a split among foreign policy advisors in Washington who favor diplomacy to end the Ukraine War and those who give priority to humiliating Russia and Putin even at the cost of extending the war indefinitely.

And also it seems there are different kinds of occupation, good occupation, and bad occupation. Why occupation of Palestinian lands is treated totally differently from the occupation of European lands?

Once more the different responses to foreign occupations reflect the tensions between the norms of international law that specify equal treatment for foreign occupations and the practices of geopolitics that allow certain states to defy this norm without suffering adverse consequences. Israel is shielded from compliance with international law because it is freed from the burdens of accountability by the geopolitical protection it receives from the U.S., often reinforced by further support received from France and the UK. Other situations that manifest similar problems are Western Sahara and Kashmir. Geopolitics is based on inconsistency arising from varying patterns of inter-governmental alignment, whereas international law is in conception independent of alignment and relative capabilities, although in practice its applicability is often subject to being subordinated to the logic of dominance, performing as a tool of geopolitical actors.

What is the main reason behind the war in Ukraine? Is it a geopolitical one? Isn't it endangering world security? Won't the west sanctions and pressures on Russia make Moscow's behavior more aggressive?

The geopolitical stakes are high. It is a two-level war, consisting of direct combat on the ground and in the air between Russia and Ukraine and a second geopolitical war between Russia and the United States over the character of world order after the Cold War. Russia is seeking to reassert a traditional sphere of influence over its 'near abroad,' and by doing so, challenging the American claims to be responsible for global security throughout the planet, which the U.S. has been doing since the world political system became unipolar after the collapse of the Soviet Union 30 years ago. Russia and China are trying to establish a more traditional type of geopolitical relations based on the premise of multipolarity as well as spheres of influence of the sort respected throughout the Cold War. Even during the provocative Soviet interventions in East European countries during the 1950s, the West refrained from counter-intervening, sensing that such an escalation could trigger World War III and the use of nuclear

weaponry by both sides. The secondary objective of the U.S. in carrying forward the geopolitical war is to warn China not to challenge the existing situation in the South China Seas, especially bearing on the future of Taiwan.

What will be the impact of this war on the EU economy especially the economy of countries like Germany?

It is difficult to assess the economic effects of the Ukraine War. It depends on a number of imponderables—the longer the war continues, the more severe the inflationary impact on prices of food and energy, as well as causing shortages of supply; the greater the effort made by Russia to impose costs on European countries that go along with anti-Russian sanctions, the greater will be the burdens borne, especially by Germany. The U.S. does not have a sufficient capability to offset this burden by becoming an increased source of food and energy at affordable prices. It is faced with its own critical internal problems, among them a huge over-investment in unusable military assets and an inflationary spiral that is already generating political instability.

What is the impact of this war on the US economy?

It is difficult to trace causal relations, but most economists agree that rising prices of food and energy, and declining prospects of trade and investment, are having a generally harmful effect on U.S. economic conditions, especially in certain sectors, with the poor feeling most of the pain. To be sure, some private sector interests are benefitting: arms sales, gas and oil development, nuclear power, and looking to the future, construction industries and suppliers partaking

in likely massive post-conflict restorative activity in Ukraine, likely to be subsidized by generous funding from Europe, North America, and possibly Japan.

How will the result of this war affect the world order? Can it also lead to changes in the UN structure? After the Ukraine war, will the US and western powers enjoy the same influence in the world order that they enjoyed before the war?

As indicated by earlier responses, it is difficult at this stage to speculate about the effects of these two interlinked wars as they are each at midstream and relate to each other in complicated inconsistent ways. If the Ukraine-Russian War is resolved quickly it is likely to bring the world closer to the pre-1992 Cold War Era, a new phase of geopolitical confrontation and containment with the focus this time on Asia as well as Europe. If this war lingers, the world order impacts will reflect the outcome. If the Russian troops remain in East Ukraine, then the post-Cold War era will come to an end, and a new reality of bipolarity or tripolarity is likely to emerge to replace unipolarity. If Russia's attack is reversed, sanctions maintained, and Putin replaced as leader, then the U.S. governance of unipolar world order will be confirmed for the present, although still somewhat vulnerable to Chinese economic and regional challenges. There will be questions raised as to whether the U.S. can pay the costs of sustaining unipolarity, which requires large military investments throughout the world and in space, even if Russia's challenge is defeated and the Putinesque scenario makes Russia again a major geopolitical actor proves to be an occasion of national humiliation.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

U.S., Europe hit record inflation levels amid Ukraine crisis

From page 1 ► According to the American Automobile Association (AAA), nationally the average price of a gallon of gas is now \$4.11, compared with \$2.86 a year ago.

The crisis in Ukraine which many have accused the U.S.-led NATO military alliance of instigating has rocked energy prices after Washington and its Western allies banned all Russian gas and oil supplies.

Then comes the food index which rose another one percent in March compared with February, and is up 8.8 percent compared with the prior 12 months.

Chicken parts rose 15.1 percent, citrus fruits, including lemons, limes, and grapefruits, climbed 19.5 percent. The prices for oranges and tangerines rose 18.3 percent.

The price of rice rose an extra 3.2 percent from February to March, while canned fruit and vegetable prices rose 3.8 percent, potatoes 3.2 percent, and ground beef 2.1 percent.

Experts say the latest figures will be a major setback for the administration of U.S. President Joe Biden.

The Biden White House has already lost popularity and Democrats are widely expected to face a very tough challenge in trying to retain control of Congress in November's midterm elections.

Earlier this week, the White House tried to cushion the blow by issuing a warning ahead of the March data release saying it was expecting a bad set of figures.

Biden even deflected the blame for America's economic mess on the Russian President Vladimir Putin saying "I am doing everything in within my executive power to bring down the Putin price hike."

Last year critics denounced Biden's "Build Back Better" plan to fix the economy saying it would have imposed the largest tax increase in over 50 years.

Some Democrat Senators joined Republicans to reject the bill but despite the heavy blow, the U.S. President is refusing to abandon his tax agenda.

Biden's latest proposal to tackle inflation includes the same tax hikes he proposed last year. Analysts say the plan is a path toward higher inflation and an economic recession.

Biden claims his tax increases are aimed at corporations and millionaires, but critics say they would in fact hurt American workers, families, and job creators during a time of economic uncertainty.

Even Senator Bernie Sanders has questioned how Biden's plans will benefit the poor and not millionaires.

Expert economists believe the latest inflation figures are likely to strengthen the Federal Reserve's resolve to increase interest rates as it struggles to control inflation levels.

However, history shows that doesn't exactly fix the problem.

With higher interest rates there also comes a negative impact on the stock market. Rises in the Fed rates make borrowing money in the market more expensive and the cost of doing business rises for public and private companies; which in turn results in layoffs and higher unemployment rate across the country.

Adding to the economic hardship, Americans are not even receiving their tax refunds on time at a time when inflation is hurting family budgets.

Observers are arguing it is important that Americans at least receive their own money back on time to ease their financial problems.

The Internal Revenue Service says it is still backlogged after extensive pandemic delays and does not expect to finish processing the returns

until the end of the year.

But can Americans afford to wait months to receive their own money back from their government?

Analysts say this can be easily fixed by all federal employees returning to the office; many of whom are still working from home.

According to the Ludwig Institute for Shared Economic Prosperity, Inflation-adjusted earnings for the first quarter of 2022 show that American workers are losing ground, forcing a larger percent of the workforce out of a living-wage job status for the month of March and into the ranks of the "functionally unemployed."

The Think Tank says "being forced to make decisions between food and shelter versus health-care and education is not a sustainable long-term situation for a healthy society."

Meanwhile, in Europe, prices in the eurozone have risen 7.5 percent in March from a year earlier.

Again it's a surge Europeans have not seen in four decades and it far exceeds the central bank's target of 2 percent.

Like America, inflation is being fueled by energy prices, which soared 45 percent last month from a year earlier.

According to the President of the European Central Bank Christine Lagarde, energy prices are expected to remain high in the near term and then "moderate to some extent."

Food prices are also rising sharply because of higher transportation costs and the elevated price of fertilizer, of which Russia is a top producer.

The European Central Bank says overall, price increases are becoming more widespread.

The bank is literally stuck between a rock and hard place. On the one hand, high inflation means it has the space to withdraw stimulus measures. But the worsening economic growth outlook means there are major risks to tighten monetary policy.

If the Central Bank raises interest rates it could cool the economy too much when economic growth is already slowing and pointing towards a recession.

It's a similar dilemma facing the Fed in the U.S. and also similar to America, the European Central Bank says the conflict in Ukraine is "weighing heavily on the confidence of businesses and consumers."

Trade disruptions are leading to new shortages of materials, and surging energy and commodity prices are holding back production, it added.

Lagarde says "while risks relating to the pandemic have declined, the war may have an even stronger effect on economic sentiment."

Concerns about the future of the economy are particularly stark in Germany, Europe's largest economy, because of its heavy reliance on Russian energy.

Late last month, economic advisers to the German government said the outlook had "worsened sharply" because of the war, with a growing risk of recession along with higher inflation rates.

Outside the Eurozone, the UK is also facing similar crises, related to higher inflation, especially oil prices.

It's a very bleak economic outlook for the West with concerns about skyrocketing gas prices across the U.S. and Europe becoming a major worry for Americans and Europeans this year.

How do you replace Russian gas? helping in the efforts to find a peaceful solution to the war in Ukraine is a good first step.

Lifting sanctions on major oil-producing countries is a close second.



One million medical tourists arrive in Iran per annum



From page 1 ► Although the Islamic Republic has favorable conditions in terms of competitive price, presence of skilled physicians, and low waiting time among the studied countries, other medical tourism infrastructures are not enough invested. For example, until 2017, Iran has not been able to obtain a JCI license even

for one hospital, and the average per capita physician/nurse index is much lower than the global one.

Experts say, to promote medical tourism, it is necessary to recognize the strategic medical tourism status of each province in the country, supply a specialized workforce, provide high-quality services, improve infrastructure, and promote a positive attitude toward authorities to support medical tourism industry.

Amongst Iran's trump cards are the presence of credible surgeons and physicians, cutting-edge medical technologies, high-tech medicine and diverse specializations, super affordable procedures, and finally its hospitable people.

The Islamic Republic has set goals to exceed its yearly medical travelers to around two million in [calendar year] 1404 (March 2025–March 2026).

Millennia-old petroglyph on the verge of destruction

TEHRAN – An ancient petroglyph in Sehtolan village, southern Fars province has been damaged by environmental factors.

The Kurangun petroglyph, estimated to date from the Elamite era (c. 2700 – 539 BC), has been damaged by cold, heat, and acid rain, a local tourism official said, IRIB reported on Saturday.

Despite the value of this work, it has not been fortified yet, and unauthorized diggers have dug around it in search of antiques, the official added.

It is urgent that a budget is allocated for the preservation, restoration, and protection of the ancient petroglyph, he noted.

The Kurangun petroglyph was inscribed on the national heritage list in 1936.

The ancient region of Fars, also spelled Pars or Persis, was the heart of the Achaemenian Empire (c. 550–330 BC), which was founded by Cyrus the Great and had its capital at Pasargadae. Darius I the Great moved the capital to nearby Persepolis in the late 6th or early 5th



century BC.

The capital city of Shiraz is home to some of the country's most magnificent buildings and sights. Increasingly, it draws more and more foreign and domestic sightseers flocking to this provincial capital which was the literary capital of Persia during the Zand dynasty from 1751 to 1794.

Shiraz is home to some of the country's most magnificent buildings and sights including Eram Garden, Afif-Abad Garden, Tomb of Hafez, Tomb of Sa'di, and Jameh Mosque of Atigh.

Gonbad-e Qabus restoration may take two years, World Heritage director says

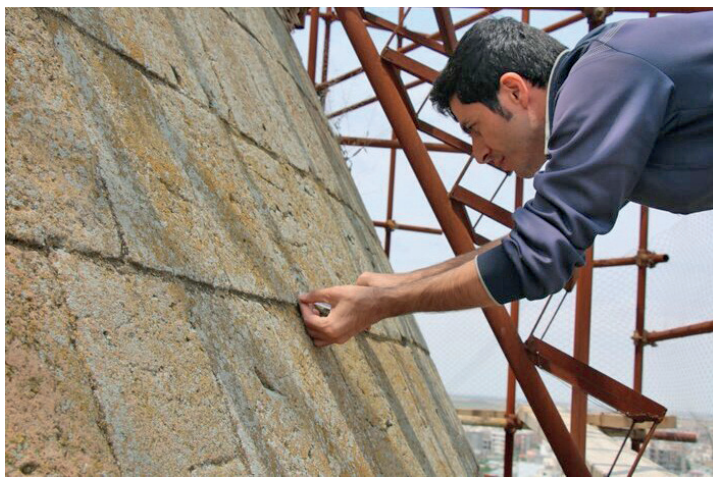
TEHRAN – The restoration and monitoring process of the UNESCO-designated Gonbad-e Qabus may take two years, the director of the World Heritage has said.

“A new restoration project on Gonbad-e Qabus may take about two years of fieldwork, analysis of the samples produced, substitutes of the worn-out bricks with exact replicas, and a thorough monitoring process,” ILNA quoted Abdolmajid Nourtaqani as saying on Saturday.

Located in Golestan province, the monument is of high architectural importance as an exemplar and innovative design of the early-Islamic-era architecture.

“It can be mentioned that the necessary assessments have been performed so far to identify the exact material and know-how needed for the restoration,” the official said.

“Within the next two weeks, we will form a special working group at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.... The new restoration work will begin based on the decisions that are approved,” the official explained.



“A few cracks will be repaired for the first stage. Then, after exact monitoring of the results and checking the condition of newly-embedded bricks, the production of bricks and the restoration process will be continued.”

“Moreover, we should continue tracing other cracks in the roof.”

It is not possible to open all segments of the roof at once and then see that the samples produced are not suitable. Restoration work must proceed according to principles, the official explained.

All the bricks in the tower that need to be replaced are less than 50 bricks, he said.

For years the World Heritage has suffered from weeds growing on the surface.

“We hope that repairing and replacing the bricks of the ceiling can prevent the continued growth of shrubs on the dome,” the official said.

Experts say that growing plants on the Qabus tower is not a new issue and is witnessed in all brick buildings across the country, especially in northern provinces,

Boundaries defined for seven caravansaries

TEHRAN – The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts has determined the boundaries of seven caravansaries located in Gilan province, northern Iran.

In a letter to Gilan's governor-general Assadollah Abbasi, the tourism minister Ezzatollah Zarghami has declared the legal boundaries for seven caravansaries and some other historical monuments as well, Mehr reported.

Part of the letter reads: “Any intrusion and seizure within the defined boundaries or the violation of protection rules is considered a crime and the perpetrator will be subject to legal penalties.”

The declaration is aimed to safeguard the centuries-old caravansaries named Sa'adat, Golshan, Chini-Chian, Tagi Kouchak, Tagi Bozorg, Malek, and Mohtasham, the report said.

The Islamic Republic is hoping to win a UNESCO recognition for a selection of its caravansaries so it submitted an inclusive dossier to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization last year.

Caravansarai is a compound word combining “caravan” with “sara”; the former stands for a group of travelers and the latter means the building. They often had massive portals supported by elevated load-bearing walls.



Guest rooms were constructed around the courtyard and stables behind them with doors in the corners of the yard.

Iran's earliest caravansarais were built during the Achaemenid era (550 –330 BC). Centuries later, when Shah Abbas I assumed power from 1588 – to 1629, he ordered the construction of a network of caravansarais across the country.

For many travelers to Iran, staying in or even visiting a centuries-old caravansarai, can be a wide experience; they have an opportunity to feel the past, a time travel back into a forgotten age.

Such roadside inns were once constructed along ancient caravan routes in the Muslim world to shelter people, their goods, and animals. The former Silk Roads may be the most famous example dotted by caravansarais.

Rosewater festival held in southeast Iran

TEHRAN – A rosewater distillation festival, commonly known as “Golab-giri”, was held in Nahur village, Zabol county, the southeastern province of Sistan-Balouchestan on Friday, Zabol's tourism chief has said.

Traditional music performances, recitation of Shahnameh, the epic masterpiece of Persian poet Ferdowsi, and Sistan's sword dance were parts of the festival, CHTN quoted Sadeq Mirhosseini as saying on Saturday.

The efforts of gardeners in revitalizing rose flower gardens in this region are especially meaningful due to the droughts here, the official added.

Organizing such seasonal festivals could boost tourism and attract more domestic travelers and foreign tourists to the region, he noted.

Golab or rosewater is obtained from a particular kind of Rose, known as Mohammadi roses in Iran. Harvesting flowers seems to be the most important part of the process. They should be picked from dawn through morning very carefully. The petals are put into massive copper pots and boiled, and then the extracted water is kept in special bottles. The longest the distillation is, the better will be the quality of the rosewater.

due to their climatic conditions.

Visible from great distances in the surrounding lowlands near the ancient Ziyarid capital, Jorjan, the 53-meter high Gonbad-e Qabus dominates a modern town of the same name laid out around its base in the early 20th century.

Its hollow cylindrical shaft of unglazed fired brick tapers up from an intricate geometric plan in the form of a ten-pointed star to a conical roof. Two encircling Kufic inscriptions commemorate Qabus Ibn Voshmgir, Ziyarid ruler and literati as its founder in 1006 CE.

As mentioned by UNESCO, the monument bears testimony to the cultural exchange between Central Asian nomads and the ancient civilization of Iran.

Narratives say the tower has influenced various subsequent designers of tomb towers and other cylindrical commemorative structures both in the region and beyond. The structure capped by an eye-catching conical roof boasts intricate geometric principles and patterns which embellish parts of its load-bearing brickwork.

Cozy chambers that are meticulously laid out around a vast courtyard may easily evoke spirits of the past. It's not hard to fancy the hustle and bustle of merchants bargaining on prices, recounting their arduous journeys to one another while their camels chewing hay! You can also conceive the idea of local architectural style and material in its heyday.

It's not hard to fancy the hustle and bustle of merchants bargaining on prices, recounting their arduous journeys to one another while their camels chewing hay!

Passing major roads in the country, one may see crumbling caravansarais many of which were abandoned for ages. In the Information Age, such guest houses have largely lost their actual usage.

However, a couple of years ago, the Iran tourism ministry introduced a scheme to keep them alive and profitable; tens of caravansarais are ceded to the private investors for better maintenance. Now, some are exclusively renovated and repurposed into boutique hotels and tourist lodgings.

They often had massive portals supported by elevated load-bearing walls. Guest rooms were constructed around the courtyard and stables behind them with doors in the corners of the yard.

Efforts being made to develop Bushehr's handicraft exports, official says

TEHRAN – There are efforts being made in the southwestern Bushehr province to increase handicraft exports, the provincial tourism chief has said.

Handicrafts from Bushehr are unique, well-made, and well-known products in the country, Esmail Sajadimanesh explained on Saturday.

The craftspeople of the province could benefit from the capacity of the markets of the Persian Gulf states as well as European countries to ensure their prosperity, productivity, and economic development, the official added.

In this regard, related organizations such as the Foreign Ministry as well as Iranian ambassadors and commercial attachés in different countries might be able to assist, he noted.

The province should also make

use of the World Cup in Qatar in order to stimulate foreign tourism since it has the shortest distance to this country and should take advantage of this opportunity, he mentioned.

With over 6,000 years of history and significant monuments from the Elamite, Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sassanid eras, Bushehr is one of Iran's most important historical centers.

Besides its cultural heritage, beautiful beaches and lush palm groves make it an attractive destination for world travelers.

The historical and architectural monuments of Bushehr include Islamic buildings like mosques and praying centers, mansions, old towers, castles, as well as gardens.

When it comes to cultural attractions, there are many

historical mounds in Bushehr including Tall-e Khandaq with Sassanid architectural style, Tall-e Marv located near an Achaemenid Palace, and Qajar era Malek al-Tojar Mansion. Qajar era Kazeruni Mansion, which has been inscribed on the World Heritage List, is another attraction that world travelers love to see among various ancient sites.

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

In January 2020, the cities of Shiraz, Malayer, and Zanjan and the village of Qassemabad were designated by the WCC- Asia Pacific Region, putting Iran's number of world crafts cities and



villages from ten to 14.

Shiraz was named a “world city of [diverse] handicrafts”. Malayer was made a global hub for woodcarving and carved-wood furniture. Zanjan gained the title of a “world city of filigree”. And Qassemabad village, which is nationally known for its traditional costumes, was also promoted to a world hub of handicrafts. Chador Shab, a kind of homemade outer garment for women, was, however, the main subject for the WCC assessment for the village.

Handicrafts with the highest sales were hand-made copper dishes, hand-made knives, carpet, kilim, and filigree works, he mentioned.

Knifemaking is one of the oldest handicrafts practiced for centuries in several Iranian cities, of which the northwestern city of Zanajn is the most famous.

Knives, swords, and daggers were produced and a lot of knife-making workshops were active in these cities. But due to their design, cut, diversity,

and durability, Zanjan knives have been the most successful.

Hand-made copper dishes are very popular in the central province of Isfahan and Zanjan. In addition to being useful for human health, these products can also be used as decorative pieces and are considered to be superb works of art.

Filigree consists of curling, twisting, or plaiting fine, pliable metal threads and soldering them at their points of contact with each other with metal

Zanjan handicraft sales reach record of \$3.4m in Noruz

TEHRAN – A record-breaking 970 billion rials (\$3.4 million) was spent on handicrafts in the west-central Iranian province of Zanjan during the Iranian new year holidays (Noruz), the provincial tourism chief has said.

It is a record figure for handicraft sales in the

province in recent years, which has increased the motivation of artisans and craftsmen in the province, Amir Arjmand said on Saturday, CHTN reported.

The number of tourists visiting the province during Noruz, compared to the same period two years earlier, has increased by 51 percent, the official added.

Due to this increase in the number of tourists, the demand for handicraft products increased in the province, resulting in almost empty warehouses of the province's handicraft factories, he explained.

groundwork.

In January 2020, Zanjan was designated as a “world city of filigree” by the World Crafts Council after the WCC assessors visited various craft workshops, stores, exhibits, and bazaars of the city in a two-day itinerary in December 2019.

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

Article published on first homegrown adenovirus vaccine

TEHRAN – The results of pre-clinical studies of “Pastu Covad” vaccine, the first Iranian-made coronavirus vaccine based on adenovirus, has been published in one of the prestigious international journals.

Vaccine production is done with different technologies. The first generation of vaccines relies on the complete virus particle, including the live, attenuated, and killed virus. The next generation of vaccines relies on recombinant proteins, and finally, a new generation of technology vaccines are developed based on adenovirus.

Adenoviruses are medium-sized, nonenveloped viruses with an icosahedral nucleocapsid containing a double-stranded DNA genome. Adenoviruses can cause cold-like symptoms, fever, sore throat, bronchitis, pneumonia, diarrhea, and pink eye.

Adenovirus-based vaccine production technology, which has important features such as significant efficacy as well as the ability to produce and redesign rapidly, is available in a few countries.

In Iran, domestic vaccines are protein-based or inactivated vaccines. The Pasteur Institute has previously managed to develop and produce Pastu Covac vaccine in cooperation with Cuba's Finlay Vaccine Institute,



which has a unique technology of conjugate protein.

In September 2020, Pasteur Institute started to develop Pastu Covad. Preclinical studies of this vaccine have been performed in the country and its documents have been sent to the Food and Drug Administration for review.

The results of this study, recently published in the prestigious international journal of Vaccine, show that the vaccine has the ability to stimulate the cellular immune system against coronavirus and to produce neutralizing antibodies against new strains such as Wuhan, Lambda,

Delta, and Omicron.

The localization of this valuable technology in the country is of great importance because, in addition to having advantages such as easy mass production and low production costs, this achievement can easily be used in the prevention and treatment of other diseases and cancers.

Domestically-made vaccines

Iran is the sixth country in the world and the first country in West Asia to gain the ability to produce the Coronavirus vaccine.

Considering that five coronavirus vaccines have so far been pro-

duced domestically, Mohammad Reza Shanehsaz, the former head of the Food and Drug Administration, said in June 2021 that Iran is one of the few countries that has all vaccine production platforms.

A total of 21 knowledge-based companies are operating to produce 50 million doses of vaccine monthly and 600 million doses annually, IRNA quoted Bahram Dariaei as saying on March 9.

Made by researchers at the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam, COVIRAN BAR-KAT was unveiled on December 29, 2020, and received the license for public use on June 14.

COVIRAN is the first vaccine in West Asia that is in the process of global registration.

Developed by the Razi Vaccine and Serum Research Institute, Razi Cov Pars is the second Iranian-made vaccine that started the clinical trial on February 27.

Moreover, the Iranian-Australian Spikogen vaccine and Pastu Covac, are other vaccines, which have received the emergency use license and are being used in mass vaccination.

Health Minister Bahram Einollahi has said the country is currently exporting domestically-made vaccines for coronavirus to ten African countries.

Majlis to discuss bill on immigration organization

TEHRAN – A bill approved by the cabinet of ministers to establish the national immigration organization was brought before the Majlis (the Iranian Parliament), with the aim of organizing immigrants and granting them residency.

Iran is one of the top three countries in the world in accepting immigrants from other countries, especially neighboring countries, and since our neighboring countries are generally involved in civil wars, we must have an organization to manage the related issues, MP Abolfazl Abutorabi said on Saturday.

“There are certain laws in the field of citizenship, but in the issue of residency, the last law passed in this regard is related to the year 1931,” he stated.



Through national immigration organization, we seek to organize immigrants in the country by giving them residency, and they

will be obliged to pay tax, in addition, a platform is provided for immigrants to invest in the country, he noted.

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

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

Drug trafficking gang disbanded in southeast

TEHRAN – The anti-narcotics police have dismantled a drug trafficking gang in Mirjaveh county of Sistan-Baluchestan province, Ahmad Ali Goudarzi, Commander of the Border Police, has announced.

Over half a ton of narcotics was discovered from the smugglers by the border guards, he said, IRIB reported on Saturday.

The anti-narcotics police officers traced the haul of narcotics through extensive operations, arresting members of the drug trafficking cell while trafficking drugs, he explained.

In this operation, the border guards succeeded in seizing two vehicles and arresting two smugglers and discovered 686

kilograms of various drugs, including 436 kilograms of hashish, 219 kilograms of opium, and 31 kilograms of morphine.

The police force is actively present working to fight drugs, he further highlighted.

Iran, which has a 900-kilometer border with Afghanistan, has been used as the main conduit for smuggling Afghan drugs to narcotics kingpins in Europe.

Despite high economic and human costs, Iran has been actively fighting drug trafficking over the past decades.

The country has spent more than \$700 million on sealing its borders and preventing the transit of narcotics destined for Eu-

ropean, Arab, and Central Asian countries.

Iran seized some 1,000 tons of narcotics in the Iranian calendar year 1399 (March 2020-March 2021), putting the country in the first place in the world.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has praised Iran's efforts to fight against narcotics trafficking on the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

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

UNODC World Drug Report



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

Iran's drug control efforts led to the seizure of 266 tons of different types of drugs during the period of April-June 2020, a 20 percent increase compared to the same period in 2019.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

COVID-19: Iran reopens schools under strict health protocols

Over 15 million students attended schools nationwide on Saturday for the new school year under strict health protocols to protect teachers, staff, and students against the coronavirus pandemic.

The opening bell of the new academic year was rung symbolically by President Hassan Rouhani at a girls' high school in downtown Tehran.

The back-to-school ceremony is officially inaugurated by the president each year, as he rings the bells in a symbolic gesture at a chosen school.

Mohsen Haji Mirzaei, Education Minister, symbolically attended the virtual festival. More than 15 million students started the new school year in 116,000 schools across the country, Haji Mirzaei stated.

This year, education is followed in three forms of in-person, virtual, and television-based, but our priority is school attendance, he noted, highlighting, all schools should strictly follow the health regulations so that the students are protected. Maintaining a shorter duration for classes, the students will sit 35 minutes in each class, he emphasized.

Haji Mirzaei concluded that students have been banned from morning ceremonies and sports activities in schools this year.

بازگشایی مدارس با پروتکل های سختگیرانه بهداشتی

بیش از ۱۵ میلیون دانش آموز سال تحصیلی جدید را با رعایت پروتکل های سختگیرانه بهداشتی آغاز کردند.

رنگ آغاز سال تحصیلی به صورت ارتباط تصویری در مراسمی به دستور رئیس جمهور در دبیرستانی در تهران نواخته شد.

محسن حاجی میرزایی وزیر آموزش و پرورش در این مراسم گفت: بیش از ۱۵ میلیون دانش آموز سال تحصیلی جدید را در ۱۱۶ هزار مدرسه آغاز کردند.

وزیر آموزش و پرورش در این مراسم گفت: امسال آموزش دانش آموزان مجازی، و تلویزیونی دنبال می شود. اما اولویت ما آموزش حضوری دانش آموزان است.

او افزود: همه مدارس باید شیوه نامه های بهداشتی را به طور جدی رعایت کنند تا مشکلی برای دانش آموزان پیش نیاید.

وی تأکید کرد: کلاس های مدارس امسال ۳۵ دقیقه ای خواهد بود و زمان حضور دانش آموزان در کلاس ها به حداقل رسیده است.

حاجی میرزایی افزود گفت: دانش آموزان امسال از مراسم صبحگاهی و فعالیت های ورزشی در مدرسه ها منع شده اند.

Knowledge-based development reduces migration of educated elite

From page 1 ► The population of Iranian immigrants in the world is reported to be 1.8 million people, which is 2.23 percent of the country's population. However, according to national statistics, the population of Iranian immigrants abroad is estimated at 4.04 million, a figure that cannot be verified based on international sources.

The population of Iranian immigrants in the world in 1990 was 820,000 people, which in 2020 reached 1.8 million people. In fact, over the past 30 years, it has increased 2.2 times.

While Iran's share of the world's population is about 1.07 percent, its share of the world's immigrant population has increased from 0.54 percent in 1990 to 0.70 percent in 2020. Which is still lower than the global share of Iran's population.

Regarding the status of international student transfers, in 2018 the total number of students in the world in the field of higher education was 227 million, with international students accounting for only 2.4 percent of this population.

During a 10-year period from 2008 to 2018, the number of international students in the world has increased by about 67 percent. Over the past two years, the coronavirus epidemic has slowed the growing international student relocation process.

The number of Iranian students abroad has gradually increased in line with the increase in the total population of international students in the world, which reached from 19,000 students in 2003 to 56,000 students in 2018.

Factors such as the rising dollar and subsequent increase in student immigration costs, visa restrictions imposed by the U.S. government on Iranian students, and the recent outbreak of the coronavirus have prevented Iranian students from migrating over the past few years. Of course, the above factors have also increased the number of Iranian students in Turkey and countries such as Germany, Canada, and Italy, which have simpler visa rules.

On the other hand, the development of the innovation ecosystem in Iran and the establishment of knowledge-based companies,

especially by talented and prominent academics, has caused the number of migrants to decrease, according to Vice President for Science and Technology, Sourena Sattari.

The migration of the elite is decreasing, but the migration of the middle classes is one of the new debates that has arisen, Sattari told IRNA on Saturday.

The National Foundation for the Elite has been compiling a database since 2013, when the Foundation was formed, which shows that about 70,000 people have used the facilities of the Foundation, he stated.

The facilities of the foundation are granted to each person through their records of activities, including education, research, honors, and other cultural and social activities, he said, adding, the facilities are always available to talented students, top university graduates, selected inventors, and selected specialists.

Currently, elites mostly work in knowledge-based companies or universities, but recently, another path has been opened by the government is the recruitment of elites in state-run organizations, he announced.

Moving towards a knowledge-based economy

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei designated the Iranian New Year (1401) as “The Year of Production: Knowledge-Based and Job-Creating”.

Strengthening knowledge-based companies is on the agenda, raising hope for reducing obstacles on the path to development.

The Innovation and Prosperity Fund has paid a total of 240 trillion rials (nearly \$960 million) to support knowledge-based companies over the last [Iranian calendar] year (March 2021-March 2022).

The share of knowledge-based companies in the country's economy has exceeded 9 quadrillion rials (about \$34 billion), and since 2019, it has experienced a growth of more than 450 percent, he stated.

The knowledge-based ecosystem is a newly-emerged ecosystem but has so far been able to solve many of the country's problems.

A peek into veterinary medicine in Iran

Part 3

Works on veterinary science continued to be written under the Safavids (1501-1732). According to Hasan Rumlu, Moseleh-al-Din Mohammad Lari (d. 980/1571) wrote a treatise on veterinary science. Another noted scholar of the period, Molla Mohsen Fayz Kashani, wrote Wasf al-kayl, a description of horses. In the reign of Shah Tahmasb (1524-76) equine diseases like pterygium and quitor were mentioned in a book composed in verse by a certain Safi.

At the behest of Shah Abbas II (1642-66), Nezam al-Din Ahmad wrote a book in three chapters and a conclusion; it was devoted to the training of horses and symptoms and cures of equine diseases.

D. N. Marshall) mentions a book written by Mohammad-Ali Hazin in Isfahan in about 1127/1715; the author prepared an abridged version of the book during his later stay in India.

In fact, during the 16th and 17th centuries numerous books on veterinary subjects were written in the Persian language in India. Nota-

ble among them is a book with the title Tohfat al-sadr, by Sadr-al-Din Mohammad Khan b. Zabardast Khan in the reign of Awrangzeb (1657-1707); its sixteenth chapter is devoted to a wide range of equine ailments, for example, the growth of superfluous teeth preventing insertion of the bit and the swallowing of food.

Another, similar work is a book translated from an old Sanskrit work into Persian by Abul-Hosayn Hashemi during the reign of Mozaffar Shah of Gujarat (1561-73). It deals first with equine diseases of particular parts of the body, beginning with the head, eyes, and mouth, then with fevers, catarrh, and so on.

From the Qajar period there are more reports about infectious animal diseases then common. Najm-al-Molk, in his account of his travels in Khuzestan described infectious diseases that afflicted dogs and human beings and methods used to treat them.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica
To be continued

COVID-19 UPDATES ON APRIL 16

New cases	1,015
New deaths	23
Total cases	7,205,064
Total deaths	140,800
New hospitalized patients	195
Patients in critical condition	1,420
Total recovered patients	6,942,220
Diagnostic tests conducted	50,370,520
Doses of vaccine injected	148,217,986

