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Report

EU-UK trade war looms as London seeks Brexit changes

The British government's plan to take unilateral action and change the post-Brexit deal sparks anger and threats from the European Union.

UK foreign secretary Liz Truss has proposed legislation in parliament that would change one of the most sensitive elements of the Brexit agreement that handles how goods move in and out of Northern Ireland, known as the Northern Ireland Protocol.

Truss claims the relationship between Great Britain and Northern Ireland has been "undermined" by the Northern Ireland Protocol.

The European Commission, the EU's executive arm, has threatened to retaliate with "all measures at its disposal" if the UK Conservative government goes ahead and changed the rules of the Protocol.

The EU argues the Brexit Withdrawal Agreement is a legally binding international treaty that has been ratified and went into effect on January 31, 2020.

Germany has expressed outrage that the UK was taking unilateral action to change the treaty at a time when the West is accusing Russia of breaking international law.

Germany's envoy to the EU, Sebastian Fischer, wrote on social media "let's just all threaten each other with breaking international law. Makes for really good partnerships."

Maros Sefcovic, the European Commission's Vice-President issued a statement saying a "stable relationship with the United Kingdom must be based on the full respect of the legally binding commitments that the two sides have made to one another, based on the implementation of the [Brexit] Withdrawal Agreement and the Trade and Cooperation Agreement [TCA]. Both parties negotiated, agreed, and ratified these agreements." ► **Page 5**

Report

Stay young Iran!

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN – While celebrating the national population week, starting May 14, the country is experiencing below-replacement fertility and soon hosting an aging population. Is it possible to stay young?

The National Population Week is marked under a theme of "Stay Young Iran", as the population is an important and fundamental component of authority in each country.

The productive and young manpower is a factor in the economic and social growth of countries. Certainly, every society needs a young population to walk the path of development.

The first clause of the general population policies states that the development, dynamism, maturity, and youth population of a nation depend on the increase of the fertility rate and population growth.

Iran is experiencing below-replacement fertility — lower than 2.1 children per woman — which indicates that a generation is not producing enough children to replace itself, eventually leading to an outright reduction in population.

According to the population and housing census, the average population growth has decreased in recent years, and this declining trend is a serious warning.

The country's elderly population is projected to nearly double over the next 20 years, while this trend will occur in other countries over the next 100 years.

The aging population and its negative effects will penetrate into the political, economic, and security position of the country in the region and the world.

However, staying young needs care, facilities, happiness, financial stability and etc.

What are the main pillars of a healthy young population?

Access to high-quality primary and secondary education and appropriate training is perhaps the single most important investment countries can make in their youth, which is well received in Iran. ► **Page 7**

Iran's Advanced Military Technology Luring Customers

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Lebanon elections uphold longstanding status quo

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Iran, Cuba finalize roadmap on barter trade

TEHRAN – Iran and Cuba have finalized a roadmap for barter trade between the two countries and signed a document in this regard during the 18th meeting of their joint economic committee in Tehran on Tuesday.

As reported by the portal of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), the document was signed by Iran's Deputy Industry Minister for Commercial and Trade Affairs Mohammad-Sadegh Mofatteh and Cuba's Deputy

Prime Minister Ricardo Cabrisas Ruiz.

During the meeting, the officials explored the existing capacities and market needs of the other side in various fields and good agreements were reached for long-term cooperation in order to improve the level of trade exchanges.

The two countries also stressed the need for developing industrial, mining and trade cooperation between the two countries during the

mentioned event.

Attended by senior officials and representatives of various economic sectors from both sides, the 18th meeting of Iran-Cuba Joint Economic Committee was held in Tehran during May 15-17.

As the special envoy of the Cuban president, Cabrisas Ruiz headed a high-ranking delegation to Iran with the aim of meeting ► **Page 6**

UN special rapporteur: No good intention justifies illegal sanctions

TEHRAN — Speaking in a press briefing on Wednesday, the last day of her mission to Tehran, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Unilateral Coercive Measures (UCM) spoke about the reality of the sanctions' impacts on the lives of the Iranian people.

Alena Douhan, who visited Iran on May 7, said that the unilateral sanctions imposed mostly by the United States have reduced the quality of life of the Iranian people, especially the low-income class.

After 12 days in the country, Douhan presented her assessment of the Unilateral Coercive Measures on human rights in Iran.

The UN special rapporteur began her presser by explaining her observations, and then went on to recommend some points.

She said that everything detailed in her report is preliminary assessment and the final report will be released in September. ► **Page 2**



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Discover picturesque nature in Rijab

Rijab, literally meaning "waterdrop" in Kurdish language, is a scenic area full of waterways and greenery, especially oak trees, in the western province of Kermanshah.

All the water in this area derives from underground aquifers. So, tourists visit Rijab throughout the year.

Deir-e Gachin Caravanserai in Qom joins shortlist for collective UNESCO tag

TEHRAN – The millennia-old Deir-e Gachin Caravanserai has joined a shortlist of traditional inns that Iran pursues its possible inscription as a UNESCO World Heritage.

Located in the central province of Qom, the caravanserai has received cultural heritage experts' preliminary approval to join the shortlist, the provincial tourism chief has said.

An all-inclusive dossier for Deir-e Gachin

Caravanserai has been prepared and it is expected to gain UNESCO status due to its antiquity, special architectural style, and various features, Alireza Arjmandi explained on Tuesday.

Listing as a UNESCO World Heritage would lead to better and more protection for the caravanserai, which is estimated to date back to almost 1750 years ago and the Sassanid era (224-651 CE), the official added.

During that time, this building served as a fortification on the Silk Road, but during the Islamic period, it became a caravanserai, a place for travelers to rest, he noted.

The historical inn was inscribed on the national heritage list in 2003.

Deir-e Gachin Caravanserai is one of the greatest caravanserais of Iran, which is located in the center of Kavir National Park, 80 kilometers from Qom. ► **Page 6**

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Interview

Former Iran forward not optimistic about 2022 World Cup

By Farrokh Hesabi

TEHRAN – Former Iran national football team striker Edmond Bezik believes that the current situation of the Iranian football federation suggests that nobody should expect significant success from the national team in the 2022 World Cup.

Iran are in Group B of the World Cup with England and the U.S., which kicks off Nov. 21 in Qatar. But while Iran's rivals and other Asian representatives such as Japan and South Korea have established their preparation program with high-profile warm-ups, Iran just have confirmed one friendly match against Canada for the next month in Vancouver.

"Every coach has his own philosophy about team preparation. The ideas of Dragan Skocic should definitely be respected," said Bezik in his interview with Tehran Times.

"However, the question is: with the current situation of the Iranian Football Federation, can the plans of the head coach of the national team be implemented? Most teams have already arranged matches, and we will have to find the strong opponents to prepare our team," added the head coach of Persepolis' U23 team.

The interim president of the Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI), Mirshad Majedi, has said they will announce the friendlies until the details are finalized.

"The Iranian football community hopes for a greater urgency when the soccer federation meets to choose a new president in the upcoming months," he added. ► **Page 3**

Iranian children honored at Louis François Center art competition

TEHRAN – Iranian children have won awards at the 28th International Visual Art Competition in Troyes, France.

Avina Aliasghari, a member of the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA – Kanoon), won third prize in the category for the children aged between 3 and 5, the institute announced on Wednesday.

Sama Sheikhi received a prize in the category for the children aged between 6 and 9.

Miad Taqipur, Erfan Arbabi, Sana Sedqi, Mehrana Toluei, Atena Abbasi and Sadra Qolinia, all of whom are the members of Kanoon branch offices across Iran, were awarded diplomas of honor.

"Travels, Dreams or Nightmares" was the theme of the contest, which is co-organized every year by the ► **Page 8**

Iran, Ghana ready to deepen cooperation in copious areas



TEHRAN— Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has expressed hope that cordial ties with Ghana would be deepened in all areas of mutual interest.

Amir Abdollahian made the remarks in a meeting on Tuesday with Ghana's Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism Mohammed Awal Ibrahim in Tehran as the two countries held their 7th joint cooperation commission session.

The foreign minister pointed to Iran's skills in industrial, medicinal, and agricultural sectors, saying the Islamic Republic is willing to work with Ghana by exporting technical and engineering services.

The two sides also addressed numerous subjects of mutual interest during the meeting, which was also attended by Ghana's Deputy Foreign Minister Thomas Mbomba.

Amir Abdollahian cited a new session of the Iran-Ghana joint cooperation commission as evidence of both sides' unwavering desire to increase ties, saying the meeting demonstrates Iran's pragmatic approach to enhancing ties.

The Iranian government is fully dedicated to expanding relations and implementing agreements, according to the senior diplomat, and appropriate actions will be done as soon as possible, with representatives seeking to build a roadmap for Iran-Ghana relations.

"Iran has paid serious attention to the development of relations and the implementation of agreements, and for this purpose, at the earliest opportunity, a delegation will be sent to Ghana to draw a roadmap for relations between the two countries," the foreign minister said.

According to the Foreign Ministry's website, Amir Abdollahian also mentioned Iran's strengths in the domains of health, agriculture, industry, knowledge-based firms, and exports of technical and engineering services, saying Tehran is willing to work with Ghana in such

areas.

The foreign minister also complimented Iran's Ministry of Agriculture for its efforts as the joint commission's coordinating body, and expressed confidence that Iran-Ghana relations would improve.

Amir Abdollahian also underlined Iran's unique expertise in combating terrorism and extremism in the region, stating that this is one of Africa's major issues.

Finally, he emphasized Iran's willingness to work with Ghana in the fight against terrorism, notably in intelligence sharing.

Ghana's minister of culture, for his part, thanked Iran for its assistance to his country and its people in the areas of agriculture, health, and education.

Mohammed Awal Ibrahim also sought further collaboration with Iran in other sectors, including sea and air transportation, establishment of a direct flight to boost tourist business, particularly medical tourism.

The Ghanaian minister then underscored West Africa's potential, referring to Ghana as a "gateway" to the area and the growth of links with other nations in the region.

He praised Amir Abdollahian's initiatives for expanding relations while emphasizing the significance of exchanging delegations. He extended an invitation to the Iranian foreign minister to pay a visit to Ghana.

He also commented about the positive and developing connections between Iran and Ghana, as well as his country's willingness to expand cooperation in all areas.

In light of Ghana's participation in the World Cup in Qatar and the climate similarities between Qatar and the Iranian Island of Kish in the Persian Gulf, Amir Abdollahian proposed stationing the football team and fans in Kish throughout the tournament.

Iran's advanced military technology luring customers

TEHRAN— Iran has taken a big stride forward in its military knowledge by establishing a drone factory in Tajikistan. What does this imply?

The drone production unit was opened in Tajikistan's capital at the presence of Iran's Armed Forces Chief of Staff Mohammad Bagheri and Tajik Defense Minister General Shirali Mirzo.

The production of Ababil 2, an all-Iranian UAV, in Dushanbe is intended to increase defense and military cooperation between Iran and Tajikistan. The factory was built with the assistance of specialists from the Iranian Ministry of Defense.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Major General Bagheri pointed out that Iran, with the efforts of its committed specialists and scientists and the use of domestic capabilities, has been able to achieve a significant growth in all military and defense dimensions, especially drones.

"Today, we are in a position where we can export military equipment to allied and friendly countries in addition to meeting domestic needs in order to increase security and lasting peace," he pointed out.

According to Fars News, General Bagheri described the opening of the Ababil 2 plant in Tajikistan as a turning point in military cooperation between the two countries.

"God willing, in the future, we will see more cooperation and interaction from all levels of military defense between Iran and Tajikistan," he added.

The first essential aspect that this springs to mind is that, unlike many other countries in West Asia, Iran is willing to share its technological knowledge with other countries. The fact that Iran and Tajikistan have agreed to strengthen defensive cooperation demonstrates that Iranian defensive knowledge has many potential clients.

However, most countries are scared of the world's biggest bully imposing illegal extraterritorial sanctions, and hence refuse to work with Iran. However, Tajikistan is showing its affinity to Iran by pledging to cooperate with Tehran.

Given that Iran is subject to illegal severe sanctions for importing and exporting defense technology and weaponry, this collaboration will be even more significant. Also, Iran's dependence on domestic technology in creating military equipment is proving appealing to the West Asian market.

Iran's cooperation with Tajikistan can serve as a model for West Asia if they abandon their subordination to the U.S. and live in a fearless world.

Iran's military advances to build unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) has piqued the interest of surrounding countries. As previously said, this technology has attracted many customers, but many have been hesitant to purchase it.

Today, Iran is in a position to export military equipment to allied and friendly countries and also meeting domestic needs to promote regional security and guarantee long-term peace.

UN special rapporteur: No good intention justifies illegal sanctions

"My task is to show facts, which sometimes are horrible," Alena Douhan says

From page 1 ► "I met with a number of civil society members, representatives of financial centers, (and) diplomatic community," she said.

The Tehran Times has learned that over the course of 12 days, Douhan met with over 30 executive officials, as well as civil society organizations. The total number of her visits exceeded 50.

She then went on to express her gratification to the UN office in Tehran.

"Iran have been subjected to unilateral sanctions for a long time. The U.S. has imposed economic and trade sanctions on Iran from 1970s. These expanded in 2000s. The U.S. sanctions now consists Iran's central bank," she added.

She then highlighted that despite the conclusion of the JCPOA, which is endorsed by the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 in 2015, the U.S. still bans trade and investment in Iran and this illegal.

"Most foreign international companies have left Iran," Douhan added, noting that based on her observations, Iran's frozen assets are estimated at \$120 billion.

"Canada imposed sanctions on key Iranian individuals and has listed 200 entities on sanctions list. Statistics show that the unilateral sanctions have had drastic impact on the status of Iran," the UN Special Rapporteur added.

"I need to mention that the sanctions have affected academic and sports situation, as well as the low-income sector of Iran," she explained.

She then told reporters that she will address her concerns about the illegality of sanctions in her final report.

"Applying extraterritorial sanctions on Iranian companies or companies working with Iran or pay Iran in U.S. dollar is illegal under international law," the special rapporteur noted.

According to Douhan, sanctions have affected the whole scope of Iranian people's lives.

She added, "The whole scope of unilateral and secondary sanctions as well as over-compliance has urged Iranian organizations to seek alternative solutions."

She then welcomed the efforts of the Iranian government to support



the Afghan refugees in Iran, both documented and undocumented.

"I call on the sanctioning states, particularly the U.S., to abandon the illegal unilateral sanctions," she reiterated. "I also remind the U.S. that no good intention will justify the violation of human rights. I urge the states that have frozen the assets of Iranian central bank to immediately unfreeze Iran's funds based on international law and humanitarian issues."

Douhan also urged the JCPOA member states and the U.S. to continue their negotiations with Iran.

Elsewhere in the briefing, Douhan recommended the sanctioning states, including the United States, to adhere to international law.

"The least of my recommendation to the sanctioning states is to observe the human rights situation in Iran, and adhere to international law."

She also touched on the issue of Iranian diplomats and diplomatic missions having trouble to receive their salaries and annual budgets.

"I have been reported that Iranian diplomats are having problems receiving their monthly salaries due to the over-compliance of foreign banks (with U.S. sanctions)," she stated.

She said that the scope of sanctions that were imposed between 2010-2015 differs from 2018 up to now.

"Today, we have no United Nations Security Council sanctions on Iran," she added.

She said the human rights situation

in Iran is severely affected due to the unilateral sanctions.

Responding to a question about the impact of sanctions on Iran's income, Douhan said the shrinking revenue means that the government will have less money for building houses and schools.

"I called on the international community to gather support for Iran. I hope very much that the UN agencies will listen to me," she added.

She then said that her purpose was to analyze the situation and present "facts".

"I tried to show specific examples in my report," Douhan stressed.

Outlining the illegality of extraterritorial behavior towards Iran, Douhan noted that extraterritoriality is one of the complex issues in Iran's sanctions.

"States should not behave extraterritorially based on international law," she insisted.

About external factors that might affect her final assessment, Douhan said external pressure comes from the countries that are committing illegal actions.

According to the special rapporteur, she is acting on her individual capacities, and is independent of all states, and even the UN. Douhan also said that she insists and promises to behave independently.

Citing examples about external pressure, Douhan said, "Before I started my trip to Iran, there were

active social media campaigns, appeals to the UN High Commissioner, etc. This is natural. My task is to show facts, which sometimes are horrible."

In response to a question posed by the Tehran Times correspondent about the expected practical actions to end over-compliance with sanctions and due diligence, Douhan said, "I tried to initiate multi-level discussions to end the issues of over-compliance and due diligence."

She then noted that multi-level discussions are needed to overcome the secondary sanctions issues.

"Unilateral sanctions have become tougher today, and have tightened since the United States withdrew from the JCPOA, as the U.S. has been imposing sanctions that included commodity insurance and banking transactions," she said.

She then went on to say that she will do her best to address the illegality of sanctions against Iran.

"We must note that the actions taken against Iran are a violation of human rights. I do not think the sanctions will be lifted so quickly, but I will try to raise the issue," Douhan reiterated.

She then called on the U.S. government to release all assets owned by the Central Bank of Iran, adding, "I urge all banks and private companies not to comply with these sanctions for the sake of human rights."

In this regard, Douhan added, "I call on all sanctioning countries, particularly the United States, to end sanctions against the Iranian people in the fields of food, medicine, water and health. I urge the U.S. government to end imposing sanctions on Iran."

The special rapporteur went on to say that sanctions have reduced the quality of life in Iran, and this has led private companies to look for alternative ways to engage in international trade.

"The sanctions have also prevented humanitarian aid to Iran," she said, expressing her disappointment.

She continued by saying that even the academic articles of Iranian scientists are bounced back and this violates the right to academic and active education.

Biden must consider costs of passivity and find a way to save JCPOA: Solana, Bildt

Two ex-European officials say it's puzzling that Biden who said 'America is back' is slow-walking to revive nuclear deal

TEHRAN - In an op-ed in the Washington Post published on May 17, former Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt and Javier Solana, the former NATO secretary general and EU foreign policy chief, have criticized U.S. President Joe Biden for being slow to revive the 2015 nuclear deal (JCPOA) that was ditched by his predecessor Donald Trump.

"It's puzzling that, after running on a return to the nuclear deal and promising that 'America is back,' Biden has been slow-walking diplomacy that U.S. allies strongly support," the two former senior European officials wrote.

The nuclear talks in Vienna have stalemated since March mainly because the U.S. is refusing to take a political decision to remove the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), a branch of the Iranian military, from the list of the Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO). Trump put the IRGC on the FTO list in 2019 in order to make a return to the nuclear deal by a future Democratic president difficult.

"Washington and Tehran would be foolish to allow domestic ideological positions to sabotage a nuclear deal that managed — against heavy odds — to survive the presidency of Donald Trump," Bildt and Solana said.

Last week, Enrique Mora, the European Union's coordinator for Iran nuclear deal negotiations, visited Iran to help salvage the deal that Bildt and Solana said is "stuck in the political quicksand in both Washington and Tehran."

After Mora concluded his visit to Tehran, the current EU foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, said the sides have agreed to resume the talks in Vienna. Borrell said the talks in Tehran had "gone better than expected". The EU chief diplomat added the "stalled" talks had been "reopened".

Bildt and Solana said Iran is "expanding nuclear program" and argued "unless we can get the 2015 nuclear deal back on track, we are headed to a new conflict with Tehran."



The two former officials also expressed dismay over an approval by the Senate that links a revitalization of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action to issues not related to the original agreement. "Earlier this month, the U.S. Senate, including members of Biden's Democratic Party, passed a measure asking that a deal with Iran should also cover non-nuclear-related issues — an almost-certain dealbreaker," they regretted.

They also said, "Though negotiations on the essence of the deal are effectively concluded, the Europeans are trying to break a deadlock on the issue that continues to snarl the works: the U.S. designation of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps as a foreign terrorist organization. This designation is a largely symbolic measure with little or no relation to the dispute over the nuclear program. Washington and Tehran would be foolish to allow domestic ideological positions to sabotage a nuclear deal that managed — against heavy odds — to survive the presidency of Donald Trump."

As EU foreign policy chief Solana was leading the nuclear talks with Iran on behalf of the European trio -Germany, France, Britain - the U.S., Russia and China before he was replaced by Catherine Ashton in 2009.

Bildt and Solana defended the Europeans' stance toward the JCPOA. They said Europe backed Barack Obama's diplomatic overtures toward Tehran that resulted in the conclusion of the nuclear deal in July 2015. They also said they objected Trump's unilateral pullout from the agreement in May 2018.

"Europeans supported President Barack Obama's diplomatic efforts in Iran, protested Trump's withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and have now again been at the forefront of diplomatic efforts to end the nuclear crisis with Iran and avoid another disastrous war in the Middle East (West Asia). So it's puzzling that, after running on a return to the nuclear deal and promising that 'America is back,' Biden has been slow-walking diplomacy that U.S. allies strongly support."

Fearing to antagonize the opponents of the JCPOA in the runup to the midterm congressional election, the Biden administration is hesitant to delist the IRGC from the FTO list. But Bildt and Solana warn the losses of a failure to put the JCPOA on the right track are "much bigger" than angering the opponents.

"The common refrain is that he is 'playing it safe' on Iran ahead of the upcoming midterms. But frankly, being the president under whose watch efforts to contain Iran's nuclear efforts succeeded would be a much bigger hit for Biden and the Democrats in advance of the 2024 elections," they said.

Iran has been insisting that even if the nuclear deal is not revived, it has no intention to build nuclear arms. Such a principle falls within a fatwa (decree) issued by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei that states producing, stockpiling and using weapons of mass destructions (WMDs), including nuclear weapons, is haram (religiously banned).

The two former senior European officials concluded their article by drawing a comparison between Iran and the Soviet Union, saying, "The West did not make arms control agreements with the Soviet Union because we endorsed the country's leadership or sought to normalize relations. We did it because it benefited our national security. The same is true with respect to Iran. Biden must seriously consider the costs of his passivity vis-a-vis Iran and find a way forward — or we may find ourselves in another conflict that no one asked for."

Lebanon elections uphold longstanding status quo

TEHRAN – Following inconclusive parliamentary elections that were seen as a litmus test for many political factions, Hezbollah and its ally Amal movement underlined their supporters to rein in their celebratory mood for fear that celebrations would create frictions with troublemakers.

In a joint statement on Wednesday, the Shiite groups said they understand the feelings of their supporters after all the incitement and provocations that came before the elections. Thanking their supporters for their expressions of happiness over the results of the elections, Hezbollah and Amal movement called on their supporters to avoid staging motorbike processions so that some troublemaking people do not take matters to places that would disturb the electoral success.

They also encouraged their supporters to refrain from any provocative moves. “The elections have passed, and what is required today is for everyone to return to the logic of dialogue and convergence in order to get out of the stifling economic and financial reality,” they said.

The statement came amid preparations for celebrating the results among the Shites who voted for Hezbollah and Amal candidates. Despite the fact that Hezbollah and Amal retained all their seats, there have been speculations over the



possible loss that Hezbollah and its allies incurred in the elections.

Some media outlets and pundits rushed to conclude that Hezbollah allies were delivered a heavy blow, losing their parliamentary majority.

CNN said in a report from Beirut that “Hezbollah has lost its parliamentary coalition majority in a Lebanese election that delivered significant gains to its rivals as well as to a protest movement that swept the country in a 2019 uprising.”

But disputes over who had parliamentary majority were far from settled, with many sides claiming to have secured majority.

Aside from these disputes, Hezbollah and its allies stuck to the principle of resolving problems

through dialogue, distancing Lebanon from any insecurity and addressing pressing economic issues.

Following a meeting of the Loyalty to the Resistance Bloc, which is the political wing of Hezbollah in parliament, called on “called on all political forces and factions to stop all electoral disputes, in order to advance the country.”

It referred to the “necessity of a calm and permanent objective approach to the development of the law and electoral performance.”

At the same time, Hezbollah appeared decisive in countering any efforts to create political deadlock. Following the announcement of election results, Samir Geagea, who is now heading a remarkable

parliamentary bloc, said his bloc won't participate in a national unity government, a position that seemed to be aimed at Hezbollah.

Hezbollah's response was clear and decisive. Lawmaker Mohammad Raad who is heading the Loyalty bloc, replied to Geagea: “If you do not want a national government, then you are leading Lebanon to the abyss and be careful not to be the fuel of a civil war.”

Raad added, “You have to cooperate with us, or else you will be destined to be isolated.”

The war of words between the two rival politicians came amid efforts to use results of the elections to undermine Hezbollah despite the fact that Hezbollah retained all its seats and the real loss was incurred by the Free Patriotic Movement led by President Michel Aun.

According to results announced by Interior Minister Bassam Mawlawi, the Lebanese Forces (LF) won 20 seats, the Free National Movement 18 seats while Hezbollah and the Amal movement gained 31 seats out of the 128-member parliament. The independents have obtained 11 seats.

Some believe that the results showed that Hezbollah and Amal movements still enjoy massive support in their own constituencies despite the multifaceted pressures they have been subject to before the elections.

Slovak deputy FM meets Amir Abdollahian

TEHRAN – A senior Slovak diplomat met on Tuesday afternoon with Iranian Foreign Minister Amir Hossein Abdollahian a day after meeting her Iranian counterpart and an economic assistant to the top Iranian diplomat.

Ingrid Brockova, the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Slovak Republic, has traveled to Tehran to attend a political consultation meeting with the deputy foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Brockova and Amir Abdollahian held talks over issues of mutual interest, according to the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

In the meeting, Amir Abdollahian said he's satisfied with the results of political consultations between the Iranian and Slovak deputy foreign ministries. He also announced Iran's readiness to deepen political and economic cooperation with Bratislava at bilateral level and in international organizations.

The foreign minister said a plan to hold joint economic commission meeting is a good opportunity for talks over new trade and economic areas.

Amir Abdollahian also pointed to the current developments in the region, reiterating the Islamic Republic's principled stance and its opposition to war and harming civilians.

The top Iranian diplomat said, “Unfortunately, in our region, including in Afghanistan, Palestine and Yemen, we witness heart-wrenching scenes of harm to ordinary people, women and kids.”

It is necessary that international and European institutions and organizations adopt a proper approach and pay more attention to this issue, Amir Abdollahian pointed out.

Slovakia's deputy foreign minister, for her part,

expressed satisfaction with political consultations between the two countries. Brockova underscored the significance of strengthening political and economic relations between Iran and Slovakia.

Brockova also held talks with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Economic Diplomacy Mahdi Safari on Monday to exchange views on how to invigorate economic cooperation between the two countries.

Safari, a career diplomat, touched on Iran's potential in the fields of energy, petrochemicals, pharmaceutical and food industries as well as new and knowledge-based technologies, expressing readiness for cooperation with the Slovak side.

Safari said the field of pharmaceutical and medical industries, including production of coronavirus vaccines, is another area where the two sides can cooperate.

Brockova also expressed pleasure at her Iranian visit, expressing hope that holding a joint economic commission meeting between the two countries will be a major step in the expansion of trade cooperation.

In his meeting the Slovak diplomat on Monday, Bagheri Kani also said the global situation has made energy and food security a priority for many countries more than ever before. Therefore, Bagheri Kani suggested, efforts should be made to make global concern about “food security” and “energy security”, which are two strategic pillars of national security of all countries, an opportunity for interaction, cooperation and even solidarity on the world stage.

In this way all nations can have a secure and clear vision for the future, he opined.

Bagheri noted that today every country, including

Europeans, acknowledges the correct approach and vision of Iran over the past decade or two in trying to resolve crises in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria.

The Iranian deputy foreign minister said the costs of the failure of the policies of the United States and some European governments in the region are not only borne by these governments, but it's the people of those countries who have suffered the greatest costs and damages resulting from the implementation of wrong policies.

He also pointed to Iran's regard for human rights, saying, “The dimensions and consequences of meeting the basic needs of the Afghan people, as well as the resulting issues, especially the phenomenon of Afghan refugees, place specific responsibilities on all governments that claim to be protecting human rights, especially the Europeans.”

He also emphasized that Tehran is seeking to develop relations with European countries, especially Eastern European countries.

It is necessary to remove obstacles to the development of relations, the Iranian deputy foreign minister said, adding the joint economic committee meeting of the two countries that will be held next week will pave the way for expanding bilateral relations.

During the meeting, Brockova also said Bratislava views Iran as an important partner to develop bilateral and regional relations with. She also called for regular consultations between the foreign ministries of the two countries on bilateral, regional and international issues.

Such an approach can help expand bilateral and European trade and economic relations with Iran and help strengthen people-to-people interactions, she remarked.

military, cultural, political, and economic areas.

Referring to the inauguration of an Iranian factory for building drones in Tajikistan, the Tajik leader said that the armed forces of his country welcome any kind of defensive and military cooperation with Iran.

In the meantime, the Iranian side referred to the strategic position of Iran and Tajikistan in the region and said that expansion of different military cooperation with Tajikistan is high on the agenda of Tehran.

and foreign nationals, have been arrested.

Meanwhile, Colonel Gholamhossein Hosseini, head of the media office of the Second Field of the IRGC Navy, told Fars News that the IRGC forces have seized a foreign vessel carrying 200,000 liters of contraband fuel in the north of the Persian Gulf.

The colonel said eight crew members of the vessel were handed over to judicial officials in Bushehr.

Corps (IRGC) Navy said it had detained a number of vessels in the southeast and south of Iran smuggling fuel.

The commander of the IRGC Navy's Imam Ali Base in Chabahar said his forces had seized three hauls of smuggled fuel that amounted to 150,000 liters, Tasnim reported.

Captain Mohammad Nozari said the vessels were planned to smuggle the fuel into a neighboring country, adding all people involved in the act, including Iranian



Iran seizes ship smuggling 550,000 liters of fuel

TERHAN - The commander of the border guards in Iran's southern province of Hormozgan announced on Tuesday the seizure of a ship smuggling 550,000 liters of fuel.

Colonel Hossein Dahki said in a press statement that “during an operation in the protection area, the border guards at the Bandar Lengeh Naval Base, in cooperation with the border guards in Bushehr Province, succeeded in spotting a ship carrying smuggled fuel to be

transported to the east of Maru Island.”

“During the inspection of the ship, the border guards were able to find 550,000 liters of smuggled diesel, and arrested 7 smugglers in this regard,” he stated, adding plans are underway to combat smuggling of fuel and goods, clean up polluted and criminal areas, and fight smugglers across the border strip in the southern coastal province.

In April, the Islamic Revolution Guards

SPORTS

Former Iran forward not optimistic about 2022 World Cup

From Page 1 ► Bezik sees a big challenge ahead of the national team: “The current condition of Iran national team is like a club that does not have a general manager. Can we expect accurate planning and implementation of programs in such a team?”

“The big problem of the FFIRI is that there is no proper budget to set up appropriate fixtures in the build-up to the World Cup. Also, this federation has no ability to communicate with the top football federations.

“Iran have been drawn into a difficult group. We should not expect much from our national team because we have tough matches ahead of us and the conditions for preparing the team are not good,” Bezik concluded.

Sport brings people together from different backgrounds, Canada football official says

TEHRAN - Canada Soccer Marketing Director Sandra Gage responded to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on playing friendly with Iran national football team. She said sport can bring together people from different backgrounds and political persuasions for a common purpose.

Canada are scheduled to host Iran at Vancouver's B.C. Place Stadium on June 5.

“This was a choice by Soccer Canada,” Trudeau said. “I think it wasn't a very good idea to invite the Iranian soccer team here to Canada. But that's something that the organizers are going to have to explain.”

Sandra Gage released a statement following the Prime Minister's comments.

“At Canada Soccer, we believe in the power of sport and its ability to bring together people from different backgrounds and political persuasions for a common purpose.

“Iran are one of 32 Member Associations participating in the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and Canada Soccer continue to follow all international protocols when hosting this match. We are focused on preparing for our men's national team to compete on the world stage,” the statement reads.

The warm-up match will be part of Canada's preparations for the 2022 FIFA World Cup which will take place in Qatar from Nov. 21 to Dec. 18.

Iran qualified for the World Cup, out of the Asian Football Confederation. They were drawn in Group B with England, the U.S. and a European qualifier yet to be determined; either Wales, Scotland or Ukraine.

Iran are 21st in the FIFA world rankings.

Canada were also drawn into a Group F with Belgium, Croatia and Morocco.

Iranian basketballer Shaverdi banned for four-year for doping

TEHRAN – Adnan Shaverdi has been banned for four years after testing positive for performance-enhancing stanozolol and methandienone.

He came up positive in out-of-competition testing by Iran's National Anti-Doping Organization (Iran NADO).

The four-year ban has started on Feb. 20, 2022 and will expire on Feb. 19, 2026.

Shaverdi currently plays for Abadan's Palayesh Naft basketball team.

Paykan into Asian Club Volleyball Championship semis

TEHRAN – Iran's Paykan overpowered Iraqi side Erbil Sport Club 3-0 (25-13, 25-19, 25-14) on Wednesday to book a place in the 2022 Asian Men's Club Volleyball Championship semifinals.

The Iranian star-studded team will play Kazakhstan's Taraz in the stage on Thursday.

Paykan are the most decorated Asian club, winning the competition seven times.

The winners of the Asian Men's Club Volleyball Championship will qualify for the FIVB Volleyball Men's Club World Championship.

Asian Para Games delayed until 2023

TEHRAN - The 2022 Asian Para Games that were scheduled to take place in the Chinese city of Hangzhou have been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Asian Paralympic Committee (APC) and the Games' organizing committee (HAPGOC) said on Tuesday.

A task-force formed by the two committees and the Chinese Paralympic Committee will work on rescheduling the Games -- originally set for Oct. 9-15 -- for 2023.

The announcement follows the postponement of the Asian Games to 2023 earlier this month due to the pandemic. The Games were scheduled to be held in Hangzhou in September.

“The Games preparations have been going very well and HAPGOC was ready to deliver outstanding games. This was not an easy decision to make,” APC President Majid Rashed.

“We will now work with the organizing committee on securing a new date that works for the para-sport calendar.”

Shanghai, China's most populous city of 25 million people, has been under a lockdown that is now in its seventh week but is reopening in stages with plans to lift restrictions next month.

The World University Games, scheduled for next month in the southwestern Chinese city of Chengdu, was also postponed to next year.

Beiranvand a step closer to returning to Persepolis

TEHRAN - Antwerp football team goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand has moved a step closer to returning to Persepolis.

Beiranvand was loaned to Portuguese first division team Boavista this season but remained an unused substitute in the team.

Now, the Iranian media reports suggest that Beiranvand will pen a three-year deal with Persepolis.

The 30-year-old goalie joined Royal Antwerp from Persepolis in 2020 but failed to meet the expectations.

Iran football to hold camp in Turkey

TEHRAN – Iran national football team will hold a training camp in Istanbul, Turkey in late May.

Iran's camp will start on May 30.

Dragan Skocic's side will travel to Vancouver from Istanbul to meet Canada at the B.C. Place Stadium on June 5.

The friendly match will be part of Iran's preparations for the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

Iran is drawn in Group B with England, the US and a European qualifier yet to be determined; either Wales, Scotland or Ukraine.

Canada is also pitted into a Group F with Belgium, Croatia and Morocco.

Iran, Cuba finalize roadmap on barter trade

From page 1 ► with the officials of the Islamic Republic and to attend the meeting of the two countries' joint economic committee.

During his stay in Tehran, Cabrisas Ruiz also met with Iranian Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ehsan Khandouzi, during which he stressed the expansion of economic ties between the two countries.

Speaking in this meeting, Khandouzi stated that the Iranian government has always welcomed the establishment of long-term and stable economic relations with Latin American countries, especially Cuba, the Economy Ministry's news portal Shada reported.

"Given the excellent political relations between the two countries, Cuba is of particular importance to the Islamic Republic of Iran," he added.

Referring to the history of cooperation between the two countries in the fields of health and agriculture, Khandouzi emphasized the need to improve economic relations between the two countries and said: "We are expected to take more serious steps to develop cooperation and implement agreements."

The minister further pointed to the lack of proper knowledge regarding business and economic opportunities and advantages of trade and



Cuba's Deputy Prime Minister Ricardo Cabrisas Ruiz (L) and Iran's Deputy Industry Minister for Commercial and Trade Affairs Mohammad-Sadegh Mofatteh sign a document for barter trade between the two countries on Tuesday in Tehran.

investment between the two countries as the most important reason for the weak trade collaborations between Iran and Cuban private sectors.

He then announced Iran's readiness to hold online meetings with the presence of representatives of the government and private sectors of Iran and Cuba in order to exchange knowledge about the business and investment opportunities of the two countries.

Govt. provides special facilities to support fisheries



TEHRAN - Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO) is implementing a program to provide the country's fisheries with low-interest bank loans since subsidized input is no longer provided for them, an official with IFO said.

According to Director-General of IFO's Planning and Budget Office Rajab-Ali Qorbanzadeh, Agriculture Ministry is seriously pursuing a program for providing working capital at a rate of 10 to 12 percent for the country's livestock, poultry and aquaculture production units.

As reported by IRIB, IFO head has held several meetings with the representatives of Agriculture Ministry after which primary agreements have been reached for the allocation of the mentioned resources.

Hopefully the allocation of the mentioned facilities will begin in the next few days after Agriculture Ministry finalizes the directive in this regard, Qorbanzadeh said.

Details on the conditions for benefiting from these facilities will be released soon, according to the official.

He further noted that one trillion rials (about \$3.9 million) of facilities with a 14-percent interest rate will also be provided for the country's fisheries by

Bank Keshavarzi (Agriculture Bank).

Fishery production has increased noticeably in Iran in recent years and the Islamic Republic of Iran plans to further boost its annual fishery production to 714,000 tons in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21).

Back in April, 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.

Over the past three years, the efforts of Aquatics Production and Trade Union of Iran, and the non-governmental sector have led to the addition of markets in countries such as Oman and Malaysia to Iran's target export markets in the field of fishery.

Iran exported 62,500 tons of fisheries in the first half of the past Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22, 2021), according to an official with the IFO.

Isa Golshahi, the IFO's director-general for quality improvement, processing and market development, said that live, frozen and processed fisheries and aquatic products have been exported to different countries in the first six months of the previous year.

More than 27,000 tons of fish, 201 tons of ornamental fish, 8,900 tons of shrimp, 6,500 tons of canned fish, 11 tons of farmed caviar based on the country's customs statistics, and two tons of trout baby were exported from the country, the official stated.

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.

TEHRAN - The capital city of Sultanate of Oman hosted a grand business forum on Tuesday in which opportunities and challenges for expanding trade between Iran and the Sultanate were explored, the portal of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) reported.

The event was attended by senior officials from the two sides, including TPO Head Alireza Peyman-Pak and Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) Readh Juma Mohammed Ali Al Saleh, as well as the representatives of the two countries' private sectors.

Speaking in this meeting, Peyman-Pak referred to the strategic position of Iran and Oman in the region and noted that the two countries can use their geopolitical capacities to expand their economic ties especially through transiting goods.

The official also mentioned Oman's free trade agreements with other countries and the region's \$1.5 trillion trade capacity, saying that the two countries should take necessary measures to increase their share in the regional market by developing trade infrastructure and activating the North-South corridor.

The OCCI chairman for his part referred to the recent increase in trade between the two countries, saying "Despite the banking and transportation problems, with the efforts of both sides, trade relations between Iran and Oman will continue to improve."

Establishing a joint shipping company

Prior to attending the business forum, Peyman-Pak met with the chief executive officer of Oman Shipping Company.

During this meeting, the two sides discussed various issues including the establishment of a joint shipping company.

The officials stressed the need for activating the transport capacities of the two countries



TPO Head Alireza Peyman-Pak (C) and OCCI Chairman Readh Juma Mohammed Ali Al Saleh (2nd R) attend an Iran-Oman business forum in Muscat on Tuesday.

Muscat hosts Iran-Oman business forum

in order to develop bilateral and multilateral relations, especially in the fields of transit.

Developing transit co-op a prerequisite for boosting trade

Peyman-Pak also held talks with Omani Minister of Transport, Communications, and Information Technology Saeed Bin Hamoud Al-Mawali during his visit to the Sultanate.

In this meeting, the officials had also emphasized the development of transportation infrastructure in order to facilitate trade between the two countries.

The two sides decided that Iran and Oman will consider long-term and joint cooperation in the field of transportation and transit and will have the necessary follow-ups in order to implement their mutual projects in this regard.

It was also decided that the two sides would hold a joint working

group on maritime transport to carry out research, discuss the challenges and find the necessary technical solutions for expanding cooperation in this field.

Alireza Peyman-Pak, who is also a deputy industry minister, led a 30-member trade-marketing delegation to Muscat on Monday, as Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi is due to visit the Arab country in the near future.

The head of the Export Guarantee Fund of Iran (EGFI) and the deputy head of the Iranian Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) also accompanied Peyman-Pak on this trip.

As previously announced by the head of Iran-Oman Joint Economic Committee, the value of trade between Iran and Oman hit a record high in the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20), from its previous year.

Mohsen Zarrabi put the annual

trade between the two countries at \$1.336 billion in the past year, showing 53 percent growth year on year.

The official also said that Iran's export to Oman rose 63 percent to stand at \$716 million in 1400, from \$438 million in 1399.

Iran shares borders with fifteen countries, namely the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Russia, Oman, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kuwait, Qatar, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia.

Expansion of trade with these neighbors, especially increasing non-oil exports to them, is one of the major plans that the Iranian government is now pursuing.

Among the mentioned countries, Oman is one that the Islamic Republic has attached priority in this due, as the two neighbors enjoy an old history of good political and economic relations as well as many religious and cultural commonalities.

As stated several times by the officials of the two countries, the ground is completely prepared for the expansion of trade relations between Iran and Oman.

Emphasizing that the basic infrastructure is prepared for the development of trade relations between Iran and Oman, the head of Iran-Oman Joint Chamber of Commerce, had previously said that with the beginning of sanctions and the severance of some countries' relations with Iran, the government of Oman not only did not cut its trade relations with Iran, but also they are trying to increase economic relations with the Islamic Republic in the framework of international relations and with a win-win approach.

Oman not only did not close its borders during the pandemic, when most countries closed their borders to Iranian goods, but also increased shipping lines to Iran, Zarrabi further noted.

Russia's Bashkortostan welcomes Iran for extraterrestrial cultivation

TEHRAN - Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) hosted a meeting with a trade delegation from Russia's Republic of Bashkortostan during which the two sides discussed ways for expanding trade ties.

In this meeting the Russian side invited the Iranian private sector to cooperate with their Bashkir counterparts in various areas, especially for extraterrestrial cultivation in Bashkortostan, the TCCIMA portal reported.

The Russian delegation, who traveled to Tehran to attend the 26th International Oil, Gas, Refining and Petrochemical Exhibition of Iran (Iran Oil Show 2022), expressed their willingness for the development of economic cooperation between Iran and the Republic of Bashkortostan.

Speaking at the meeting, TCCIMA Deputy Head for International Affairs Hesamedin Hallaj underlined the importance of developing economic relations between Iran and Russia and said that recent international developments have created new opportunities for cooperation between the two countries, and an important part of these opportunities is related to oil and gas sectors.

Hallaj expressed hope that the two sides



would be able to interact with each other to identify short-term and long-term opportunities for cooperation by providing transparent information.

"The volume of trade between Iran and Russia is about four billion dollars, of which approximately three billion dollars are related to Russia's exports to Iran and the value of Iran's exports to Russia is about one billion dollars," he said.

Iran and Russia have been taking serious steps for boosting their mutual trade over the past few years.

In late January, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi said that the Islamic Republic and Russia have reached an agreement to boost the trade between the two countries up to \$10 billion.

"We agreed to remove trade barriers and boost the economic exchanges between the two countries. Currently, the level of mutual trade is not acceptable, so the two countries agreed to increase trade to \$10 billion a year," Raisi said on January 21, upon arrival to Tehran after a two-day visit to Moscow.

The president also noted that the two sides had also discussed monetary and banking issues during his talks with Russian officials.

"The two countries can take steps to break the dominance of the dollar over monetary and banking relations and trade with the national currency," Raisi stressed.

The two sides also agreed to identify mutual agricultural capacities as well as suitable areas for the exchange of agricultural products in order to increase the level of trade in the agricultural sector, according to the official.

He went on to say that the Islamic Republic of Iran has very good capacities in the field of transit and transportation, saying: "During this visit, it was agreed to activate the north-south corridor. This transit route will make the time and distance of transiting goods from Russia and different northern countries to the southern regions much shorter."

Tehran to host Iran SCOCOEX in early July

TEHRAN- The first international conference and exhibition of economic cooperation opportunities between Iran and member countries, supervisors and dialogue partners of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and neighbors will be held in Tehran in early July.

The event, so called Iran SCOCOEX, which is an opportunity for economic cooperation between Iran and the organization's members, will be held in the fields of industry, mining, trade, agriculture, oil, gas, petrochemical, electricity, artificial intelligence, knowledge-based, cyber, and informatics services.

The mentioned conference will be held in International Conference Center of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Summit Hall) and the exhibition will be held in Shahr-e Aftab International Exhibition Center.

Some of Iran's goals for joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and holding the mentioned conference and exhibition is maintaining, creating and expanding a large and sustainable consumer market for oil and non-oil exports, meeting some of the country's technology needs and required raw materials, and strengthening trade with East Asian countries.

TEDPIX loses 11,000 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 11,047 points to 1.594 million on Wednesday.

As reported, over 9.503 billion securities worth 54.881 trillion rials (about \$182.93 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index lost 9,099 points, and the second market's index dropped 19,126 points.

TEDPIX surpasses 1.6 million points after 20 months on Tuesday, as it gained 22,225 points to 1,606,025.

As published on the website of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), 58.919 billion securities worth 351.381 trillion rials (about \$1.171 billion) were traded at the exchange during the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday, May 13).

As reported, 27,161 billion securities worth 178.394 trillion rials (about \$594.646 million) had been traded at the TSE, which is Iran's major stock exchange, during the week ended on May

6.

TEDPIX rose 145,000 points (10.5 percent) in the past Iranian month Farvardin, the first month of the Iranian calendar year (March 21-April 20).

The Money and Capital Market Committee of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) hosted a meeting with Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) Head Majid Eshqi on January 30 to discuss the capital markets' current issues and challenges.

The meeting was attended by the members of the mentioned committee as well as the representatives of some of the companies active in the stock market.

Lack of sufficient training for shareholders, facilitating the entry of new companies into the stock market, offering bonds by the capital market instead of banks to provide fixed and working capital for production units, accelerating the formation of credit

rating companies in the stock market, and tax exemption for undistributed dividends of companies, as well as pricing problems, were some of the most important issues pointed out by the businessmen and officials attending the mentioned meeting.

Government Economic Coordination Headquarters in its meeting in the last week of January approved five new resolutions for supporting the country's stock market, and the directives in this regard were sent to relative ministries, First Vice President Mohammad Mokhber announced at the time.

The mentioned resolutions include the reduction of petrochemical feed prices, the reduction of interbank interest rates, the restriction of the sale of securities, preventing the increase of government mining salaries, and the increase of the exchange rate of banks.

According to Mokhber, the decisions made

EU-UK trade war looms as London seeks Brexit changes

From page 1 ▶ Sefcovic highlighted that the Northern Ireland protocol was chosen by the UK following “long and intensive discussions” to reach a Brexit deal.

He also noted the “protocol is an integral part” of the “international agreement signed by the EU and the UK.”

Sefcovic warned that “unilateral actions contradicting an international agreement are not acceptable.”

“Should the UK decide to move ahead with a bill disapplying constitutive elements of the Protocol as announced today by the UK government, the EU will need to respond with all measures at its disposal,” he added.

Other critics of Boris Johnson's government say violating the Brexit deal would pose risks to a united European front in response to the Ukraine war and could further damage the British economy amid record levels of inflation.

The main opposition Labour Party MP Stephen Doughty insisted that “this is not a time for posturing or high-stakes brinksmanship, the prime minister negotiated this deal, signed it, ran an election campaign on it. He must take responsibility for it and make it work.”

Even a Conservative member of parliament, Simon Hoare, admitted the government move would break international law saying “respect for the rule of law... runs deep in our Tory veins, I find it extraordinary that a Tory government needs to be reminded of that.”

Experts say the EU could retaliate by triggering clauses in the TCA that would terminate the entire Brexit trade agreement, spelling the end of tariff-free trade in both directions along with all the other elements of the deal,

This will leave the UK in a no-deal Brexit scenario, serious measure analysts argue, with long-term consequences for future ties between the UK and the 27-member bloc.

The EU could also implement



retaliatory measures more quickly by suspending only the trade aspects of the TCA, leaving other Brexit deal areas intact.

As stipulated in the TCA this allows the EU to “suspend, in whole or in part”, access to its waters. Analysts argue the EU would only have to give seven days' notice which means a trade war could be triggered within a week.

Observers point out that for the EU to be considering any retaliation just 18 months after the two parties sided ways with an international agreement reflects how the West can negotiate in bad faith.

The timing of the British government's decision is not coincidental as it comes on the backdrop of elections in Northern Ireland which was won by the Nationalist Party Sinn Fein.

The stunning victory, the first in Northern Ireland's history, saw a party that advocates for the reunification with the Republic of Ireland come out on top amid growing popularity.

After Brexit, England, Scotland, and Wales (all connected by land) left the European single market. However, sending goods to and from Northern Ireland requires additional checks.

Unionists in Northern Ireland are opposed to this as they believe it creates a border in the Irish Sea and threatens Northern Ireland's place in the United Kingdom.

Northern Ireland is the only region of the UK that has a land border with the European Union, namely the Republic of Ireland which is not part of the UK.

The Northern Ireland Protocol prevented the creation of a physical border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland as any physical barriers could have been the target of armed fighters and bring back unrest to the region.

To avoid the physical border and checks on the island of Ireland, the UK and EU drew up the Northern Ireland protocol, which moved the trade border to the Irish Sea.

The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), labels the protocol as an “an existential threat” to the future of Northern Ireland.

In the Northern Ireland Assembly election earlier this month, the DUP refused to return to a power-sharing deal with Sinn Fein.

Under the rules of the Northern Ireland Assembly, there must be a power-sharing executive with both a First and Deputy First Minister who represent both Unionist and Nationalist communities.

The DUP refused to nominate one, citing the Northern Ireland Protocol.

The DUP welcomed the decision by Truss, saying that they will take “cautious” steps towards rejoining the power-sharing executive in Northern Ireland.

Observers say the British government is taking unilateral measures on the Brexit deal to please the unionists in Northern Ireland (who want the Protocol scrapped) at the expense of legal action and a trade war with the EU.

The DUP's leader in Westminster, Jeffrey Donaldson, says Truss's statement was “a welcome if overdue step.”

His party would like to see progress on the legislation “in days and weeks, not months,” he added.

Sinn Fein accuses the government of letting the DUP “hold society to ransom”.

Most other parties in Northern Ireland want to keep the protocol, with some minor changes to ease the burden on businesses.

The EU argues this was all addressed in the NI protocol saying “It avoids a hard border on the island of Ireland, protects the 1998 Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement in all its dimensions, and ensures the integrity of the EU Single Market.”

For instance, the same medicines continue to be available in Northern Ireland at the same time as in the rest of the UK, the EU commission said.

The Irish foreign secretary, Simon Coveney, says “I deeply regret the decision of the British government to introduce legislation in the coming weeks that will unilaterally dis-apply elements of the protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland.”

Coveney said such action was “damaging to trust and will serve only to make it more challenging to find solutions to the genuine concerns that people in Northern Ireland have about how the protocol is being implemented”.

Johnson has defended his government saying “there will be a necessity to act” over the protocol if the EU's position does not change. He said the Protocol was now out of date as it was designed before the coronavirus pandemic, a rising cost of living crisis, and Russia's war with Ukraine.

Syria: World attention wanes while millions slide into poverty and despair

Over eleven years of crisis in Syria has exhausted the population's capacity to cope, even as global attention is shifting toward other high-profile crises. The extensive destruction and gradual deterioration of vital infrastructure – water, electricity and health care – are stretching the population's ability to cope, while thousands of children stranded in camps and other places of detention in north-east Syria are still spending their childhoods in appalling, harsh conditions no child should ever experience.

Today, as world attention is waning, the complex crisis in Syria is putting essential public services under a huge strain, bringing them close to their breaking point. There is a need to think long-term when designing solutions before it's too late. Years of conflict are bringing the drinking water systems of major Syrian cities, like Aleppo, closer to their breaking points. Today, only 50% of water and sanitation systems are still functioning properly across Syria, a major water crisis affecting millions.

“The long-term effect of the crisis has led to the degradation of critical infrastructure. When water, health, electricity and education are not available to the population, then millions of Syrians risk to slide into poverty and despair”, said Peter Maurer, the president of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

In north-east Syria, thousands of children are spending their childhoods in misery, and it is high time to find the political will to act before more lives are lost. The world must not look away while children draw their first and last breaths in camps or grow up stateless and in limbo. Of the more than 56,000 people living in Al-Hol camp, two thirds are children living in conditions far below international standards in terms of access to food, water, health care and

education. These children are endlessly exposed to dangers and their rights often ignored.

“I dream about tasting lemons, tomatoes and meat. I wish I can eat those”, said 12-year-old Rami, a resident in Al-Hol camp. “My only hope is to leave the camp as soon as possible.”

This is one of the biggest and most complex child protection emergencies of our times, but in spite of the complexity of the situation, both on legal and practical levels, it is not impossible to act. Collective action is required as there are positive examples of repatriations and states can learn from one another. They do not have to tackle this crisis alone.

“We welcome the efforts that have been made to repatriate women and children back to their home countries, but more must be done, and swiftly. The lack of attention on the Syrian conflict is not an excuse not to focus on the return of women and children from the camps in north-east Syria”, said Mr. Maurer while he visited Al-Hol camp on 12 May.

In Aleppo, the al-Khafsah power plant is also irremediably destroyed, and it would take at least five years to rebuild this facility under stable conditions.

Across Syria, a declining economy due to the consequences of the crisis and sanctions dramatically reduces the population's ability to address vital needs and access basic services. Humanitarian needs in the country remain massive; 90% of the population is living under the poverty line, and some 14.6 million people, out of 18 million, are still in need of humanitarian assistance. In Aleppo, the al-Khafsah power plant is also irredeemably destroyed, and it would take at least five years to rebuild this facility under stable conditions.

(Source: icrcnewsroom.org)

West undermines strategic stability in Europe: Russian Security Council's chief



Nikolay Patrushev recalled that the Western countries had unilaterally severed a number of major international treaties, including those in the field of arms control

The Western countries have undermined strategic stability in Europe and the Middle East and jeopardized the architecture of security in the Asia-Pacific Region, as well as destabilized the world situation in general, the secretary of Russia's Security Council, Nikolay Patrushev, said in a message of greeting to foreign ambassadors who were meeting with the Security Council's staff on Wednesday.

Patrushev stressed that amid the emergence of new centers of power the world was turning increasingly unstable due to certain countries' reluctance to lose their geopolitical dominance. These countries, Patrushev said, acting in defiance of the others' interests have intentionally ruined the system of international stability that had taken years to build and ignored Russia's security guarantee proposals.

“As a result, strategic stability has been upset in Europe and the Middle East and the architecture of security in the Asia-Pacific Region placed in

jeopardy. The war of sanctions against Russia has sharply destabilized the economic situation around the world. Many countries are faced with the risk of famine,” Patrushev said.

He recalled that the Western countries had unilaterally severed a number of major international treaties, including those in the field of arms control. At the same time, projects beneficial to select few were being promoted to create new closed military-political blocs in various regions of the world, Patrushev added.

“The very same forces are stubbornly devaluing the potential of international law in an attempt to replace it with some kind of a “rule-based order”, the rules of those who create it, and not of the entire world community,” Patrushev noted. In addition, he stressed, attempts are continuing to undermine the key role of the United Nations and a number of other multilateral institutions, primarily in the field of maintaining global security and conflict resolution. The activity of special and specialized structures of the United Nations is being politicized.

“Under these conditions, the countries that are really striving to ensure stability in the interests of the entire world, including Russia, suggest developing a peaceful, secure, open and cooperation-based unifying agenda, ultimately aimed at the socio-economic development of states, at improving the well-being of their peoples and at building a single and indivisible architecture of international security. However, this will be difficult to achieve without coordinated and concerted action by of the entire world community,” Patrushev concluded.

(Source: TASS)

Sweden and Finland formally apply to join NATO



Jens Stoltenberg (left) shakes hands with Sweden's ambassador to NATO, Axel Wernhoff, in Brussels on Wednesday. Photograph: Johanna Geron/EPA

to work through all issues and reach rapid conclusions,” Stoltenberg said. “All allies agree on the importance of NATO enlargement. We all agree that we must stand together and we all agree that this is an historic moment which we must seize.”

Ankara has said its objections are rooted in what it describes as Sweden and Finland's support for members of Kurdish militant groups, and their decisions in 2019 to impose arms export embargos on Ankara over Turkey's military operations in Syria.

Helsinki, Stockholm and the other Western allies have said they are optimistic they can overcome Turkey's objections. Many analysts believe the Turkish president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who faces elections next year, is seeking concessions

for domestic political advantage and unlikely ultimately to veto the applications.

In the hope that speedy ratification by the U.S. would help advance the process, the Swedish defence minister has already headed to Washington and will be followed by the Finnish president, Sauli Niinisto, and Sweden's prime minister, Magdalena Andersson, who are due to meet U.S. president Joe Biden on Thursday.

If successful, the applications would represent the most significant expansion of NATO in decades, doubling the alliance's border with Russia which has repeatedly warned it would be forced to respond to “restore balance” after what it called “a serious mistake”.

However, Moscow's response has so far been relatively muted, with the Russian president,

Vladimir Putin, describing Finland's and Sweden's accession as not a threat in itself. Only the deployment of military infrastructure on their territories would provoke a response, Putin said.

Andersson and Niinisto told a joint press conference in Stockholm on Tuesday that the Nordic neighbors, which have abandoned decades of military non-alignment since Russia's onslaught on Ukraine, would go through the accession process “hand in hand”.

The Finnish parliament voted overwhelmingly on Tuesday to back the Helsinki government's proposal to apply for NATO membership, while Andersson confirmed on Monday after a parliamentary debate in Stockholm that Sweden would do likewise.

Finland shares an 810-mile (1,300km) border with Russia and has maintained strict policies of neutrality then non-alignment since the end of the Second World War, viewing NATO membership as a provocation of Moscow. Sweden has stayed out of military alliances and has not fought a war for more than 200 years.

However, Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine on 24 February has led to a profound change in both countries' thinking, with public support for NATO accession in Finland trebling to about 75% and rising to between 50% and 60% in Sweden.

Kohgiluyeh-Boyer Ahmad to boost tourism infrastructure



TEHRAN – A budget of 50 billion rials (\$173,000) has been allocated for the tourism development of the southwestern Kohgiluyeh-Boyer Ahmad province.

The money is planned to spend on developing rural tourism as well as increasing the number of eco-lodge units across the province, Saeid Talebipur, the provincial tourism chief, said on Wednesday.

Earlier this month, the deputy tourism minister Ali-Asghar Shalabafian announced that the Iranian government has allocated a budget of 60 trillion rials (\$213 million) to boost tourism infrastructure all over the country.

The money will be used to complete, restore, and equip accommodation centers, as well as strengthen tourism infrastructure

nationwide, he added.

Last year, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts announced that the national tourism sector was growing before the coronavirus outbreak, its revenues reached \$11.7 billion in 2019, which accounted for 2.8% of GDP, nearing the average share of tourism in the world GDP, which was 3.2 percent.

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

Experts expect Iran to achieve a tourism boom after the coronavirus is contained, believing its impact would be temporary and short-lived for a country that ranked the third fastest-growing tourism destination in 2019.

The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 26 are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, Iran aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025.

Restoration completed on Sassanid-era bas-relief

TEHRAN –An urgent restoration project on a Sassanid-era (224–651) bas-relief in Mamasani, southern Fars province, has come to an end, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

The bas-relief has been the identity of this ancient land for centuries, but over the years, it has suffered many damages, the most important of which is damage caused by plant growth, Ali-Akbar Sadeqi explained on Wednesday, CHTN reported.

A major threat to this historical bas-relief was human destruction in the past decades and the growth of lichen, the official noted.

A modern and up-to-date method was used by young restorers to clean plants' roots and lichen, and carry out an urgent restoration project, he noted.

Sarab-e Bahram bas relief shows five figures carved on stone. In the middle of the relief, Bahram II is depicted sitting while holding his sword in both hands as a symbol of strength, authority, and power. During the Sassanid period, each king had his own crown, which led to the attribution of this relief to Bahram II because of this king's unique crown shape. The two elders of the country, who stand on either side of the king, hold up their index fingers in honor of him.

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.

UNESCO World Heritage sites in Iran: Cultural Landscape of Maymand



Maymand is a rocky and dugout village and one of the primary habitats of man in Iran with approximately 2 - 3 thousand years history. The close relationship between life and the surrounding nature is the particular values of this historical village in such a way that it continues, even currently and in spite of the new technology developments, to be an original site and keeps its original appearance without any tangible manipulating the nature.

Each dugout house in Maymand which may include one or more rooms and stables is totally called a Kicheh. The structure of all Kichehs is not the same and they are different in the number and

size of rooms. In addition, the rooms have been separated, in Maymand houses, from the back part of the house (Pastoo) and sometimes they cover the niches using certain fabric curtains.

Maymand bathrooms are especially wonderful because of their traditional system with a Khazaneh and they also indicate the importance of hygienic conditions. There are also other places in this historical village such as mosques, schools, Hussaynia, Caravanserai.

Some special customs are popular in the village and the words of Sassanid Pahlavi are still used in their language and conversations.

In the first four months of the year, people live in the lower plains of Maymand in order to graze their cattle. They immigrate to the neighboring villages, farms, and gardens to live there in the second four months of the year and for the third four months, they prefer to stay in the dugout houses at the heart of the mountains to seek shelter from the cold winter. These houses are cool during summer and get warm in winter due to their architectural style.

(Source: Visit Iran)

Deir-e Gachin Caravanserai in Qom joins shortlist for collective UNESCO tag

From page 1 ► Considered the “Mother of Iranian Caravanserais” due to its unique features and antiquity, the caravanserai was built during the Sassanid era (224 CE–651), which means it is more than 1750 years old.

The caravanserai, which was once of the most prosperous roadside inns across the country, was renovated and restored during the Seljuk and Safavid eras, and new sections were added to it during the Qajar period.

The name Deir-e Gachin (literally meaning “cloister of plaster”) comes from the fact that gigantic loads of plaster were used for its construction.

Iran's second holiest city after Mashhad, Qom is home to the holy shrine of Hazrat-e Masumeh (SA), several major seminaries, madrasas as well as many tourist resorts both cultural and natural.

Qom, which its antiquity goes back to the Sassanid era (224 CE–651), has many must-see destinations such as historical mosques, mansions, and natural sceneries scattered across the city as well as towns and villages nearby.

Possible UNESCO tag for Iranian caravanserais

Iran has put forward a selection of 56 caravansaries as a candidate for a collective inclusion in UNESCO's cultural heritage list.

Last year, the tourism ministry announced that Iran is developing a dossier for a selection of its historical caravanserais for a possible inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage list. In this regard, cultural heritage experts are assessing such monuments that are scattered across the country to make a shortlist in terms of their architecture, as well as historical



and cultural values.

Caravansary (also Caravanserai or Caravansaray) is a building that served as the inn of the Orient, providing accommodation for commercial, pilgrim, postal, and especially official travelers.

According to Encyclopedia Iranica, from the number of surviving caravansaries and their sizes, it is clear that in Safavid and Qajar times there was a state architectural department that was specifically concerned with the construction of caravansaries and stations on the overland routes. Furthermore, in the cities, several caravansaries were erected as lodging houses, depots, and commercial offices in the vicinity of the bazaars.

Atypical caravansary consists of a square or rectangular plan centered around a courtyard with only one entrance and arrangements for defense if necessary. Whether fortified or not, it at least provided security against beasts of prey and attacks by brigands.

The earliest caravanserais in Iran 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 caravanserais across the country.

For many travelers, staying in or even visiting a centuries-old caravanserai, 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 caravanserais.

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 is 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 caravanserais 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 Iranian tourism ministry introduced a scheme to keep them alive and profitable; tens of caravanserais 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.

1500 beds to be added to accommodation capacity of West Azarbaijan

TEHRAN –Some 1500 beds is expected to be added to the hospitality sector of West Azarbaijan province, the provincial tourism chief has said.

The northwestern province will increase its accommodation capacity by 1500 beds upon the completion and inauguration of 30 unfinished tourism-related projects, Jalil Jabari explained on Wednesday.

A budget of 400 billion rials (\$1.4 million) has been allocated to the projects, the official added.

Last April, the official announced that tourism-related projects generated 1,767 job opportunities across the province during the Iranian calendar year 1399 (ends March 21, 2020).

“The largest number of jobs is related to the issuance of licenses for handicraft producers, which has led to the employment of 549 persons,” he noted.

Last July, ISNA reported that the tourism industry of the country has suffered a loss of some 320 trillion rials (\$11 billion) since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

The pandemic has also ruined more than 44,000 jobs in a once budding travel sector of the country, the report added.

Experts believe accommodation centers suffered the most as a result of the outbreak of the coronavirus in Iran and its subsequent unemployment and financial losses.

Months of steep recession has taken its toll. Many travel insiders, hoteliers, and tour operators have faced big dilemmas such as bankruptcy, unemployment, debts, and the prospects of not being competitive on the international level.

Panels of travel experts have mapped out new marketing strategies hoping Iran's tourism would get back on its feet once again. For instance, the Head of the Iranian Tour Operators Association has said the international tourist flow to Iran will return to normal until 2022.

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

West Azarbaijan embraces a variety of lush natural sceneries, cultural heritage sites, and museums including the UNESCO sites of Takht-e Soleyman and Qareh Klise.

the Iranian Tour Operators Association has said the international tourist flow to Iran will return to normal until 2022.

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

European tourists visit northeast Iran



coronavirus outbreak successfully controlled, domestic tourists have returned to the region, he noted.

Currently, the arrival of the first group of European tourists could promise a resurgence of tourism in the region, he mentioned.

Khaf is known for its historical Asbads (vertical windmills), along with other tourist attractions.

ran seeks UNESCO recognition for

arrays of its ancient windmills that can be found in the provinces of Sistan-Baluchestan, South Khorasan, and Khorasan Razavi.

UNESCO says Asbad is a smart technique to grind grains, a technique that goes back to ancient times when the people living in the eastern parts of Iran, in an attempt to adapt themselves to nature and transform environmental obstacles into opportunities, managed to invent it.

Constructed of clay, wood, and straw, those ancient gears which are inherited from preceding generations, are perched on a cliff overlooking the village, milling grain for centuries.

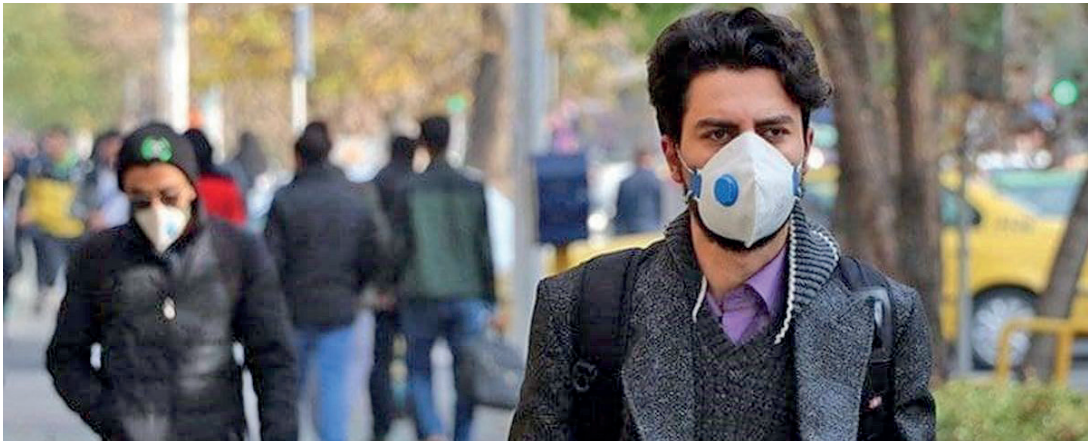
Technically speaking, unlike European windmills, the Persian design is powered by blades arrayed on a vertical axis in which the energy

of wind is translated down without the need for any of the intermediary gears found on the horizontal-axis windmills.

The development of Asbads took place due to strong and continuous 120-day winds, which annually sweep through the east and southeast of the Iranian Plateau from late May to late September.

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, the earliest known references to windmills are to a Persian millwright in 644 CE and windmills in Seistan [Sistan], Iran, in 915 CE. In the early second millennium, some Eastern and Western states acquired the technology of making mills from Persia, though the prototype design constantly underwent amendments over time.

Stay young Iran!



From page 1 ► For youth, work may be an economic necessity and can also increase their independence, and self-esteem, and be the source of their family's future well-being. The ability of girls and young women to compensate for the men's low income may influence their ability to make choices about marriage and fertility.

Without adequate support services and appropriate economic growth policies, the informal sector offers few prospects for a healthy and prosperous future for today's youth.

Unemployment is another important concern for youth. More

than half of 15- to 24-year-olds in poor countries are both out of school and out of work, with myriad potentially negative consequences. Many factors contribute to unemployment including a lack of skilled workers, and government policies.

The latest employment report released by the Statistical Center reflects the growing trend of unemployment in Iran. In 2020, Iran's unemployment rate was estimated to amount to 10.96 percent of the total labor force.

The country's economy has also been in a recession, which has exacerbated the difficulties to meet the employment demands of its inhabitants.

In times of a struggling economy, it is typically more difficult to create jobs and introduce people to the labor force.

Law on Family and Youth Support

By a decree issued by President Ebrahim Raisi, the "Law on Family and Youth Support" approved by the Majlis (Iranian Parliament) was notified to the Ministry of Health and the Vice Presidency for Women and Family Affairs.

The Guardian Council approved the law on November 17 last year to implement a population growth and family support plan for 7 years to change the declining trend of child-

bearing.

The plan stipulates health insurance for infertile couples, providing services and facilities to working women, providing health and nutrition support packages to mothers and children, educational opportunities for student mothers, providing livelihood support to families, and ongoing medical services to pregnant women.

The national budget bill for the current [Iranian calendar] calendar year, which began on March 21, has proposed 120 trillion rials (nearly \$480 million) to implement childbearing and family support plans in the country.

‘Family Doctors—Always There to Care’

By Ebrahim Noori-Goushki

We wish you a happy family doctor's day, May 19. The World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA) has declared May 19th as World Family Doctor Day since 2010.

Reminding and celebrating this occasion shows the importance of family doctors in advanced health systems as well as the inevitable development of family physician programs in the future of other countries. Congratulations on this day to family doctors, those who have been and are in charge of the first line of treatment and prevention of diseases, especially in the Covid 19 pandemic, we celebrate World Family Doctors Day.

Family medicine is a type of medicine in which family physicians are in direct contact with families. These doctors are responsible for primary health care and are physicians who are always present. They are usually in contact with families in case of illness or accidents.

Due to accurate knowledge of the people covered by them and familiarity with their medical history, these doctors can find out their illnesses sooner and treat them continuously in case of illness, and only if they need more extensive services, the person should A specialist or subspecialist will refer you. People who have a family doctor have a trusted and knowledgeable counselor for their medical problems.

Family physicians are also always available and present, caring for the target population.

Periodic examinations and monitoring of people's health status, easy and round-the-clock access to basic services and primary care, and preventing frequent visits to doctors are the characteristics of a family physician.

According to the legal requirements approved by the Islamic Consultative



Assembly and emphasizing paragraph B of Article 91 of the Fourth Development Plan and paragraph B of Article 37 of the Budget Law of 2009 on establishing a referral system using the family physician strategy and launching this system for individuals in the country We also design and implement a rural family physician program since 2005, to continue to meet the needs of the community, the need to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the health sector, balance health care costs and provide access to services to 28 million people living in rural areas.

Nomads and cities with less than 20,000 people, with the location of about 7,000 general practitioners and 5,000 midwives, have been implemented as the second revolution in the health system after the first revolution, which was the "establishment of a health care network system based on PHC."

The implementation of the family doctor program in urban areas also began in June 2012 in Fars and Mazandaran provinces. Between the patient and physician, reducing out-of-pocket payments has been an important effect and benefit of the urban family physician program.

In this regard, in the Islamic Republic of Iran since 2015, following the changes in the demographic model, and since people preferred to share their problems with specialists, even in the first contact, the desire for super-specialized fields had weakened the general fields.

The field of family medicine was launched in 12 universities of medical sciences and health services. The pur-

pose of launching a specialized field of family medicine in the country, saving health costs, providing better services by family medical professionals, strengthening health care, provide continuous services and more effective follow-up, control the supply and demand system, and proper allocation of resources, referral Correcting patients to other specialists, reducing the pressure of clients from specialists, recording patient medical records over time, reducing the burden of various diseases, improving health indicators, creating the necessary capabilities to implement the programs in question and the desired community-based Definitions and global standards of family physician has been the gradual provision of a suitable platform for the establishment of family medicine based on the definitions and standards of global and the World Health Organization.

Training of people at the professional level who can perform more powerful actions in the field of service delivery independently, people who have the degree of expertise as family physicians to be able to perform procedures. Therefore, at present, with the training of more than 220 family medicine specialists, the training of assistants in the field of family medicine in Iran has been stopped for unknown reasons, and the Iranian Ministry of Health has not been able to place family medicine specialists in their real position.

It is expected that with the full implementation of the family medicine-based referral system, the Islamic Republic of Iran, like other leading countries with a model following international standards, will cover all members of society in the family medicine program and take effective steps to improve the health of Islamic Iran.

Ebrahim Noori-Goushki is a family medicine specialist and faculty of Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences.

Traffic-related fatalities increase by 9%

TEHRAN – Traffic-related accidents have claimed the lives of 16,778 Iranians during the past [Iranian calendar] year (March 2021- March 2022), which shows an increase of 9 percent compared to the same period last year, according to the Legal Medicine Organization.

Of the total casualties of the accidents, 13,467 were men and 3,311 were women.

In the aforementioned period, the highest casualty rates were related to the provinces of Fars, Tehran, and Sistan-Baluchestan, respectively, and the lowest in Ilam, Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, Ardebil, and Kohgiluyeh-Boyer-ahmad.

Some 317,120 people were injured in traffic accidents and referred to forensic medicine centers, which increased by 14.6 percent compared to the same period last year.

One person dies in a road accident every half hour in Iran, taking the annual death toll to 17,000, the Legal Medicine Organization announced on July 1.

According to Majlis [Iranian parliament] Research Center, the costs of road crashes amount

to 8 percent of Iran's gross domestic product.

Car crashes responsible for 1.3m deaths annually

According to the World Health Organization, every year the lives of approximately 1.3 million people are cut short as a result of a road traffic crash. Between 20 and 50 million more people suffer non-fatal injuries, with many incurring a disability as a result of their injury.

Road traffic injuries cause considerable economic losses to individuals, their families, and to nations as a whole. Road traffic crashes cost most countries 3% of their gross domestic product.

More than half of all road traffic deaths are among vulnerable road users including, pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists.

Some 93% of the world's fatalities on the roads occur in low- and middle-income countries, even though these countries have approximately 60 percent of the world's vehicles.

Road traffic injuries are the leading cause of death for children and young adults aged 5-29 years.

Tribes in Iran

Part 6

The Qashqa'i (= Qashqa'i) tribe in Fars is also mentioned in the document.

The other group of tribes "from outside" is that of the Arab tribes: the Cha'ab (Ka'b) at Dawraq (the later Fallahiya and the present-day Shadagan); the Mawla'i at Hawiza; the Arab tribe in Fars; and the Mishmast Arabs in the Torshiz and Qa'emat districts, the Zangui Arabs in the Tabas district, and the Omari Arabs, all in Khorasan (pp. 406-15).

This document shows that the geographical distribution of the tribes of Iran had very nearly acquired its final shape before the end of the Safavid period.

3. Population figures

Figures of the tribal population of Iran betray obvious confusion. R. F. Thomson ("La Perse," pp. 17-18), on the basis of J. Sheil's Notes on Persian Eelyats, reckoned the tribal population in the mid-13th/19th century to be about 1,700,000 or approximately 39 percent of the total population of Iran, and Lady Sheil took it to be about one half.

Most other writers, however, think that it was not then more than one third. In the later decades of the century, the proportion was generally put at not more than one quarter; estimates by European writers.

In the 20th century, statistics of the urban and rural population have been greatly improved, but knowledge of the size of the tribal population has remained vague.

One reason has been the difficulty of taking censuses of persons with no fixed abode, but the main cause has been the use of different definitions for computing tribal numbers. Sometimes tribes have been implicitly identified with ethnic groups; for

example, Zolotarev assumed that all the non-Persian-speaking groups were tribal.

At other times the implicitly or explicitly used criterion has been attachment to a tribal organization. A more refined use of this criterion was advocated by the late Iranian anthropologist N. Afshar Naderi (Afshar-Naderi).

To determine whether a community is tribal, he considered it necessary and sufficient to ascertain the existence of (1) a tribal organization, i.e., an il (confederacy) divided into tayefas (tribes or sections), tiras (clans or subsections), and awladiyat (lineages), and (2) a common territory. On this definition, all persons conscious of relationship to a lineage, clan, tribe, and confederacy belong to the tribal population (Afshar-Naderi, pp. 4-5).

If the above definition is accepted, groups which are now sedentary but have preserved a tribal organization ought to be counted as tribal. However, such a broad definition has not been generally accepted since many consider only nomadic and potentially nomadic groups as tribal.

In the Iranian national census of 1355/1976, the definition was even narrower, being restricted to nomadic groups which were on the move or encamped in tents at the time of the count (generally in Aban/October-November).

The instructions stated that "tribes-people who have become sedentary, or if not sedentarized, are at the time of the census living in ordinary dwelling-units or for the time being in shacks and reed or palm frond huts in their summer or winter quarters, will be counted as part of the normally resident families" (op. cit., p. 77).

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica
To be continued

COVID-19 UPDATES ON MAY 18

New cases	288
New deaths	8
Total cases	7,229,074
Total deaths	141,244
New hospitalized patients	56
Patients in critical condition	752
Total recovered patients	7,026,733
Diagnostic tests conducted	51,877,878
Doses of vaccine injected	149,588,884

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Iran will defeat COVID-19, we believe: Chinese envoy

Chinese Ambassador in Iran, Chang Hua, has said he believes that Iran would overcome the crisis of coronavirus outbreak.

"We believe that by sending humanitarian aid, Iran will overcome the crisis," he said in a meeting with Mahmoud Reza Peyravi, secretary general of the Iranian Red Crescent Society, IRNA reported.

The envoy praised Iran's Red Crescent Society as the first organization affiliated with the Red Cross and the Red Crescent societies which sent humanitarian shipments of aid to the Chinese people.

A delegation of Chinese medical experts arrived in Tehran on Saturday with a cargo of aid to help combat the novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19.

سفیر چین: باور داریم ایران بر بحران کرونا غلبه خواهد کرد

سفیر جمهوری خلق چین در تهران ابراز امیدواری کرد ایران بر بحران شیوع ویروس کرونا غلبه خواهد کرد.

به گزارش ایرنا، چانگ هوا روز دوشنبه در حاشیه دیدار با محمودرضا پیروی دبیرکل جمعیت هلال احمر ایران گفت: ما باور داریم که با ارسال کمک های انساندوستانه از سوی دوستان دولت ایران از بحران این بیماری عبور خواهد کرد. دیپلمات ارشد چین در ادامه ضمن قدردانی از جمعیت هلال احمر ایران به عنوان نخستین سازمان بشردوستانه عضو جمعیت های ملی صلیب سرخ و هلال احمر که محموله های کمک را برای مردم چین ارسال کرد، گفت: ما هم با شدت گرفتن ویروس کرونا در کنار ایران هستیم.

