

Leader Meets Lawmakers, Urges Vigilance

► Page 3

Opinion **T** Some major challenges in Iran's mining sector

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- Having 81 different types of minerals, Iran is one of the top 10 mineral-rich countries across the globe. In this regard, the Iranian government is pursuing several programs for promoting the mining sector as a major contributor to the country's economic growth.

But despite these programs, this sector is facing several challenges.

According to a report released in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20) by the Research Center of the parliament, the challenges of the mining sector are 44 percent related to laws and the lack of a long and clear mining strategy, 33 percent are related to mismanagement and problems of miners, 13 percent to environmental and natural resources problems, and 10 percent are related to international problems.

Measures such as correct and principled management changes, approval of mining strategy, elimination of inconsistencies with upstream laws, and removing some legal interferences will solve about 75 percent of the above-mentioned challenges.

The status of job creation in this sector and many labor problems is among the other challenges of mining sector.

Adherence to the necessary standards in the field of wages and determining the legal and fair conditions of wages will solve this challenge.

Environmental and natural resources problems related to the mines is one of the most important inter-sectoral challenges of mining sector. ► Page 4

Silence on Israeli atrocities led to death of Palestinian journalist: diplomat

TEHRAN - Iran's Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations noted on Tuesday that veteran Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, who was fatally shot by Israeli troops in the occupied West Bank, was the victim of the international community's apathy on Israel's atrocities.

Zahra Ershadi made the statements before the UN Security Council Arria-Formula Meeting on Journalist Protection.

Shireen Abu Akleh was just another victim of the international community's silence on the Zionist regime's "war crimes" and ongoing brutality against the Palestinian people, the female diplomat remarked.

"Nowadays, we are witnessing yet another heinous crime committed against the Palestinian people by the Israeli regime," the diplomat underlined.

Below is the full text of Ershadi's statements to the UN meeting:

"I am grateful to Ireland for organizing today's discussion on the Protection of Journalists. I would also like to thank the briefers for the insightful remarks.

We emphasize the importance of protecting civilians in armed conflicts, including journalists, media professionals, and associated personnel, and call on all parties to an armed conflict to fully comply with their international law obligations. ► Page 2



Another mass shooting at a U.S. school has left the country in a state of shock, grief, and anger at the bloodshed of 21 victims.

The lone gunman, identified as an 18-year-old, stormed the Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas, where he launched the bloody

rampage.

The indiscriminate shooting spree murdered 19 children and two teachers, making the massacre the deadliest school shooting in the state's history and the deadliest in the United States over the last decade.

The school caters to children who were in their third and fourth grade, meaning many of the victims, the majority of whom have been identified, are between the ages of seven and ten. ► Page 5

Iran-Russia business forum held in Tehran

TEHRAN - Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) hosted an Iran-Russia business forum on Wednesday in which the opportunities and challenges of trade between the two countries were explored.

As reported by the TCCIMA portal, the meeting was attended by senior officials from the two

sides including TCCIMA Head Masoud Khansari, Deputy Minister of Economic Development of the Russian Federation Vladimir Ilyichev, as well as the representatives of several companies active in a variety of fields.

Speaking in this meeting, Khansari emphasized the need to further strengthen and devel-

op economic relations between the two countries, saying: "Although Iran-Russia relations have experienced many ups and downs throughout history, according to international analysts, expanding economic cooperation between the two countries has never been so important in all these years." ► Page 4

Intl. scientific festival announces winners

TEHRAN - The 14th International Festival of Movement, aiming to introduce top scientific achievements of students, announced winners at the closing ceremony on Tuesday.

This year, students from 63 countries participated in this international festival.

Held annually, the festival also aims to attract students to participate in scientific activities, identify outstanding scientific students, transfer experiences and synergies between scientific associations, strengthen the relationship between society and industry and focus on solving the country's issues, strengthen interdisciplinary activities, and get acquainted with companies and owners of industries and the increase of scientific interactions.

In 2008, the first edition of the event with the title "National Festival of Movement" was hosted by the University of Tehran. ► Page 7

Iranian artisan honored at Bukhara festival

TEHRAN - On Tuesday, Iranian artisan Ali-Asghar Khaksar was honored at the first International Festival of Gold Embroidery and Jewelry, which was will held in Bukhara, Uzbekistan.

Khaksar, who is a master at cutting precious and semi-precious stones, along with several other craftspeople from other countries, were honored during the closing ceremony of the festival, Mehr reported.

Eight Iranian craftspeople and goldsmiths took

part in the five-day festival, which, according to organizers, hosted some 150 representatives of gold embroidery and jewelry art from 50 countries.

The event was aimed to promote gold embroidery as a tool to create job opportunities for young people in particular. Moreover, it embraced folk festivals, folklore and drama groups, theatrical performances of musicians and comedians, concert programs of artists and master classes by

masters, artists' squares, and excursion routes.

With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the number of cities and villages registered by the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next. In January 2020, the cities of Shiraz, Malayer, and Zanjan and the village of Qassemabad were designated by the WCC- Asia Pacific Region, putting Iran's number of world crafts cities and villages from ten to 14. ► Page 6

From Inside **T**

- Iran says Greece's move in hindering vessel from sailing violates intl. standards **P2**
- Iran's security chief to attend regional forum in Dushanbe **P2**
- Amir Abdollahian talks to Syrian, Iraqi, Kuwaiti FM's as dust storms blanket Iran **P3**
- Iran among world's leading producers of agricultural products: FAO **P4**
- Over 28m tons of crude steel produced in a year **P4**
- TV sets manufacturing rises 3.6% in a year **P4**
- Iran to inaugurate 14 museums dedicated to 'sacred defense' by 2025 **P6**
- More than 500 historical monuments, sites in Yazd undergo restoration in year **P6**
- Iran plans to enhance technical cooperation with GSP **P7**
- Sanctions failed to affect successful coronavirus fight: minister **P7**
- Tehran, Islamabad seeking further cooperation in health sector **P7**
- War photojournalist Maryam Kazemzadeh, widow of guerilla Asghar Vesali, dies at 66 **P8**
- "Utopia for Realists" at Iranian bookstores **P8**

Report **T**

Records broken by Esteghlal in Iran football

By Farrokh Hesabi

TEHRAN - Esteghlal football team clinched their first Iranian Professional League (IPL) title in 10 years after earning a 2-1 win against Foolad in Ahvaz with three games to spare. However, Farhad Majidi's side are trying to end the domestic campaign on a winning note and without a single defeat as they beat their host Mes Rafsanjan 2-0 on the penultimate day of the league Tuesday night.

They say that you learn more from a defeat than a victory and Majidi would certainly not subscribe to that theory.

The Blues will go into the final round of fixtures knowing a point would be enough for them to finish the IPL as the first "Invincible" side in the Iranian football league history.

Farhad Majidi's men had a stunning performance this season and are now on the verge of setting THREE new records in Iranian football. They can become the first undefeated team, the first team to earn more than 67 points, and the first team to concede the fewest goals.

Esteghlal will take on Naft Masjed Soleyman on the last day of the league at Azadi Stadium, a team that try to boost their survival hopes against the champions. But what is needed for the Blues to register the three records, as mentioned earlier? ► Page 3

"The Situation of Mehdi" director Hadi Hejazifar receives IAA Plaque of Glory

TEHRAN - The Iranian Academy of Arts (IAA) decorated director and actor Hadi Hejazifar with its Plaque of Glory on Tuesday evening.

He received the honor for his acclaimed directorial debut "The Situation of Mehdi", which depicts part of the life story of Mehdi Bakhtiari, the chief of IRGC 31st Shura Division that carried out several major operations during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, and his brother Hamid.

The academy established the IAA Plaque of Glory in 2021 to recognize an outstanding work recently done by an artist.

After director Majid Majidi, Hejazifar is the second artist that has received the decoration. Majidi received the plaque for his latest movie "Sun Children" about child labor.

"We should appreciate Mr. Hejazifar for recalling some issues that we had forgotten by making the film," IAA director Bahman Namvar-Motlaq after watching "The Situation of Mehdi". ► Page 8



Iran says Greece’s move in hindering vessel from sailing violates intl. standards

TEHRAN - Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) issued a statement on Wednesday afternoon about the arrest of an Iranian cargo vessel in Greek waters, describing the move as an act of piracy and violation of international standards.

The PMO asked the Greek government to fulfill its international obligations and immediately release the vessel.

Following is the text of the statement:

Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) as the duly authorized maritime administration of the Islamic Republic of Iran reacted against the actions of the Greek Government as to hindering the Iranian vessel from sailing and arresting her cargo, and urged the Greek Government to fulfill its international obligations.

According to PMO's official website, a tanker vessel operating under the flag of the Islamic Republic of Iran has been held by the Greek Government on the coasts of that country, and the cargo on board the vessel has been arrested through a court order and in coordination with the U.S. Government. This is while the vessel had been forced to seek a place of safety at the Greek coasts, in order to ensure safety of the vessel and the crew on board. Unfortunately, no cooperation or assistance has been provided to the vessel from the Greek authorities, while the military forces of that country have proceeded to discharge to cargo, which can be construed as a vivid instance of piracy.

The vessel had faced bad weather conditions, and experienced a number of technical problems, which led the vessel to call for assistance. Under international and technical regulations and standards, the State with the nearest coastline to the vessel calling for assistance due to safety threats should cooperate by guiding the vessel to a place of safety. The vessel can then take the required measures to resolve any technical problems and resume her international voyage once the danger has been completely eliminated.

While Greece has undertaken such international obligations, and is responsible toward the Islamic Republic of Iran as a Member State of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), such unacceptable measures have unfortunately been taken by the Greek Government, toward a vessel in need of being transferred to a place of safety,

Qalibaf elected parliament speaker again

From page 1 ► Qalibaf, Morteza Agha Tehrani, Feraydoun Abbasi Davani, and Elyas Naderan ran for the post of speaker.

After a paper ballot, Qalibaf took the position for the third year in a row with 194 votes out of a total of 281.

Agha Tehrani received 53 votes, while Naderan acquired 23 votes.

Feraydoun Abbasi gained the least number of votes, winning only 3 votes. 10 votes were also declared invalid.

Silence on Israeli atrocities led to death of Palestinian journalist: diplomat

From page 1 ► Unfortunately, the rise in violence, intimidation, and harassment directed at journalists in armed conflict in many parts of the world, in particular deliberate attacks in violation of international humanitarian law, has reached a tipping point.

In the meantime, impunity for war crimes committed against journalists in armed conflict has posed a serious threat to their safety and protection. In this regard, we emphasize the necessity of strengthening UN action toward protecting journalists and ensuring accountability for crimes committed against them in situations of armed conflict.

Nowadays, we are witnessing yet another heinous crime committed against the Palestinian people by the Israeli regime. Shireen Abu Akleh, a veteran Palestinian journalist was murdered in cold blood by the occupying forces in Jenin in occupied Palestine. She was a courageous voice for her people and a national symbol of truth and resilience in the face of a cruel occupation and injustice that the Palestinian people have endured for far too long. Israel's assassination of Shireen is part of

experiencing technical problems, and facing bad weather conditions. Hence, the vessel has been held under a court order, and the oil cargo of the vessel arrested.

In reaction to such measures, the IMO Secretary-General and the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs have repeatedly and emphatically urged the Greek Government to allow the vessel to proceed with her journey, once the safety threats have been eliminated. Despite the above requests and pursuits of the matter, however, the Greek Government has still failed to cooperate accordingly, and take the requested measures.

It must be noted that since last night, when the cargo was arrested through the mentioned court order, U.S. Forces have commenced to discharge the cargo on board the vessel, and due to technical problems of the vessel, such unsafe discharge could easily result in an oil spill and pollution of the marine environment. Thus, the Greek Government is being repeatedly urged to fulfill its international obligations, and cease such perilous and high-risk actions that threaten the marine environment, especially within the Greek waters.

According to international regulations approved by IMO regarding safety of lives at sea, all countries are required to provide assistance to vessels in distress near their coastlines, until the danger is resolved, and safety of the vessel and people on board can be guaranteed, while any necessary repairs and facilities should be provided to achieve or facilitate the above.

Moreover, the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) has also stipulated limitations for bunker operations or any other activities that pose the risk of pollution to the marine environment. The Greek Government, nevertheless, has been acting in full violation and negligence of these provisions as well.

In conclusion, it must be noted that the Greek Government has not only hindered the commercial voyage of the vessel, which is among its responsibilities as per international standards, but has also violated regulations pertaining to marine environment protection, as well as its obligations toward countries, whose vessels may need safety assistance. It is therefore obvious that the Greek coasts cannot be considered as safe havens for vessels in distress anymore!

Also, Ali Nikzad, Abdolreza Mesri, Mojtaba Zolnouri, Ebrahim Azizi and Hajar Chenarani were candidates for the post of deputy speaker.

Nikzad was reelected as the deputy speaker with 168 votes. Mesri also gained the same number of votes.

Due to the fact that the number of votes of Nikzad and Mesri was equal, lots were drawn to appoint the first and second vice speakers, with Nikzad becoming the first vice speaker and Abdolreza Mesri the second.

its longstanding, well-documented war of harassment, intimidation and violence against journalists aiming at covering up its crimes perpetrated against Palestinians in grave breach of relevant international laws and norms.

She is also yet another victim of the international community's inaction in the face of continuous Israeli war crimes and terrorism against the Palestinian people.

We call on the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, to take urgent action to put an end to Israel's impunity, ensure protection for the Palestinian people, and pursue measures to hold this regime accountable for the most international crimes committed throughout the decades.

In conclusion, we restate our consistent position that issues of human rights including the protection of journalists are the responsibility of the General Assembly and other relevant UN organs. The Security Council should only address this issue when it is directly related to the maintenance of international peace and security."

President: Rights of Iranians abroad must be protected

‘Iran-Oman chamber of commerce to be established soon’

TEHRAN — Speaking at a meeting with a number of Iranians living in Oman Monday evening, President Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi said Iran believes that just as it must protect the rights of Iranians inside the country, it also must protect the rights of Iranians abroad.

Insisting on maintaining cultural connection with the motherland, the president added, "The identity and culture of Iranians are linked to their religious culture."

Stating that Iranians abroad, including those living in Oman, have always followed Iran's domestic issues with sensitivity, Raisi said the ground for safe investment with guaranteed profit in Iran is provided and that Iranians living overseas are best fitted for investment.

The president stated that in the meeting with Omani economic actors, he felt that they had a high motivation to work with Iranians, adding, "Today, Iranian products can fully compete with world-famous brands in terms of standards."

Noting that it is necessary to facilitate economic relations with Iran both for Iranians living in Oman as well as Omani economic actors, he said it was decided to establish an Iranian Chamber of Commerce in Oman as soon as possible.

"The establishment of this center will help to recognize the mutual

capacities of Iran and Oman," the president reiterated.

He also called on Iranians in Oman to help establish Iran's Chamber of Commerce in Oman as soon as possible.

The president added another important problem facing the Iranian community in Oman is lack of Persian-language school.

"Establishing an Iranian school here and educating our children about Iranian culture and education is important given the population of 10,000 Iranians," Raisi underscored.

He also reiterated that the government strongly supports the establishment of knowledge-based units, adding, "We also welcome and support cooperation in the field of Islamic banking."

The president called health tourism one of the important capacities for the development of cooperation between Iran and Oman and said that in the meeting with the Sultan of Oman, the two leaders discussed health tourism, which was welcomed by Haitham bin Tariq.



According to Raisi, Omani officials believed that what is being done in Iran today in the field of health is at an acceptable level and on par with European and Western countries.

Emphasizing the need to speed up the completion of Iran's semi-constructed hospital in Oman, Raisi said, "This hospital can facilitate cooperation between the two countries in the field of health tourism."

He also reiterated the need for the Council of Iranians abroad to become more active.

Raisi added, "All issues of Iranians abroad, from personal status, marriage and divorce issues, education and work issues, etc., should be pursued through this council"

The president then stated that most of the Iranian people abroad care about Iran.

"We must always maintain this connection, because this connection is capital for both the country and them."

"Customs problems for trade relations must be resolved ASAP"
Also, speaking in a meeting with

Omani entrepreneurs and economic actors, Raisi stressed that there is a serious will between Tehran and Muscat to expand interactions, especially with the focus on economic and trade relations, saying, "We are determined to expand fields of relations between the two countries to all areas of interest."

The president added that it seems that the traders of the two countries do not have enough knowledge of the economic capacities of the two countries, so it is necessary for the economic actors of both sides to take steps towards recognizing the mutual capacities.

Raisi stated, "The first step is to establish an active Iranian business center in Oman. One of the functions of the business center is to identify the capacities of the two countries, especially in Iran."

Referring to his meeting with the Sultan of Oman, the president said that resolving the problem of transportation and monetary and bank payments was discussed in this meeting and it was decided to resolve these issues.

Describing the joint investments between the two countries necessary, Raisi said, "One of the investments can be in the field of energy."

FM: Iran-Oman relations are of loyal one

TEHRAN — In an article published on Monday in Fars news agency, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian characterized Iran-Oman relations as a "beyond-fraternal" relations, labeling as "loyal ties."

He also wrote, "...the prominent and effective role of the Omani kingdom in diplomacy, dialogue and peace is respected and considered by the Islamic Republic of Iran."

The following is the full text of the foreign minister's article.

"Oman has always sympathetically sought to play a positive role in regional equations without entering into categorizations, conflicts and polarizations. In the course of regional challenges, the Islamic Republic of Iran has always considered the moderate and balanced policy of the Omani kingdom as part of the solution. Oman, like the Islamic Republic of Iran, has made every effort to reduce gaps, pave the way for peace, friendship and religious brotherhood, and is a loyal friend and trusted neighbor to the Iranian people.

In the meantime, the prominent and effective role of the Omani kingdom in diplomacy, dialogue and peace is respected and considered by the Islamic Republic of Iran. The good relations between the two countries have continued in the path of interaction and progress during the reign of His Highness Sultan Haitham bin Tariq, as well as during the time of the late Sultan Qaboos bin Said.

Undoubtedly, the principle of balanced foreign policy, dynamic diplomacy and smart interaction between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kingdom of Oman, along with the serious efforts of the leaders and high-ranking officials of the two countries in developing relations, are of serious interest to both sides. The two countries have always considered the relations between Iran and Oman as a successful model of bilateral interactions. This successful model has led to no turmoil in relations between Tehran and Muscat in recent decades, and we have always witnessed the development of positive, constructive relations based on the political realities of the region between the two countries. In this direction, the continuous consultations of the political officials of the two countries have led to a mutual and common



understanding of relations in various areas of bilateral, regional and international.

Comprehensive development of relations, facilitation of visas for Iranian and Omani citizens, expansion of private sector cooperation and more competitive prices of Iranian export products in the Oman market than in the past, show the efforts of officials and activists of the two countries in this field.

Given the great indigenous capacity of the two countries, we believe that the economic relations between the two countries have a much wider capacity than the current level and with the necessary effort and planning, ground should be prepared more to promote economic cooperation between the two countries.

In the political dimension, the Islamic Republic of Iran has acted at the highest level through consultations and political cooperation in regional and international cases. The Islamic Republic of Iran considers and supports the irreplaceable role of the (Omani) kingdom's policies in supporting peace, avoiding tension and helping to resolve various crises. In fact, Oman is an old friend and partner for us, which not only has vast capacities and facilities in the political and economic fields, but also, due to its geopolitical and geostrategic position, provides innumerable capacities for regional development.

We hope that the Kingdom of Oman, using its great potential and strategic position, can successfully achieve its goals within the framework of the 'Oman Vision 2040' and in this context, the Islamic Republic of Iran in various economic, political and cultural dimensions will be the friend and brother of the kingdom of Oman.

Activation of the North-South Corridor, in

Iran’s security chief to attend regional forum in Dushanbe

TEHRAN — Admiral Ali Shamkhani, Special Representative of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution and Secretary of Iran's the Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), will participate in the fourth session of the Regional Security Dialogue Forum, scheduled to be held on Friday in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

According to reports, the meeting will be attended by secretaries, advisers and representatives of the national security councils of Iran, Russia, China, India, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan.

Recent developments in

Afghanistan will be discussed in the forum.

Pakistan has not yet informed the dialogue officials about its presence in the forum, as the new government has not appointed a national security advisor yet.

On the sidelines of the meeting, Shamkhani will meet with some of

his counterparts to discuss bilateral, regional and international issues.

The regional security forum was established in 2018 on the initiative of Iran.

It is worth mentioning that the first and second meetings were hosted by Tehran and the third by New Delhi.

Leader meets lawmakers, urges vigilance

TEHRAN – Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei met Wednesday with members of the Islamic Consultative Assembly (Iranian parliament) to address a variety of issues pertaining to governance.

Ayatollah Khamenei started off with the anniversary of “the Conquest of Khorramshahr” marked on Tuesday and described it as an example of turning a bitter equation into a sweet one.

He also extrapolated a general rule of how to overcome difficult situations from the conquest of Khorramshahr. To overcome tough situations, he said, one should rely on God, take initiative, have a long-term outlook and determination, and be altruistic.

“The liberation of Khorramshahr transformed a bitter situation into a sweet one. The Iranian nation was saved. This was due to their jihad, self-sacrifice, strong determination and having initiative. The spirit behind all these virtues was sincerity and reliance on God,” he said.

The Leader then pointed out how difficult is to run a country as large, populous, and diverse as Iran.

“Running such a country as dear Iran is important and, in the current circumstances of the world, naturally difficult and complicated,” the Leader said, noting the importance of the Majlis in running the country.

Underlining the important role that the Majlis (parliament) plays



in running the country, Ayatollah Khamenei called on the lawmakers, even those who represent cities with fewer populations, to take into account the status of the Majlis and pay heed to the difficulty and complexity of running the country.

Ayatollah Khamenei pointed to several issues that are globally making it hard for countries to handle their affairs. Hostile competition among world powers and the threats of nuclear powers against each other, growing military threats and war in the vicinity of Europe, pandemics, and global food crisis are among the issues that are further complicating the management of countries, according to Ayatollah Khamenei.

These challenges are affecting almost all the countries around the

globe.

In addition to the foregoing challenges, Iran faces multi-dimensional, continuous challenges due to its political system which rests on a combination of Islam and democracy, the Leader noted.

“A religious, Islamic democracy is a new idea. We have brought this into the world’s political literature. This is what provokes the animosity of the top powers in the world against the truth and phenomenon,” the Leader said, according to khamenei.ir.

The Islamic Republic is all in on confronting all kinds of hostilities and animosities. “And it is making progress and achieving success, notwithstanding,” the Leader said.

This is why the Leader called on all the three branches of govern-

ment to appreciate the fact that they participating in a “great and important” management. Accordingly, they should take care of themselves in accordance with their status, the Leader emphasized.

Ayatollah Khamenei called on the authorities to correctly know the country’s capabilities and vulnerabilities so that they don’t make mistakes. “Because the enemy is pinning hope more on our mistakes than its capabilities,” he asserted.

The Leader also cited reasons why he called the parliament with its current cast of lawmakers “a revolutionary Majlis”.

“Some didn’t like this appellation but this appellation was real because the people voted for representatives with revolutionary slogans and orientations,” Ayatollah Khamenei remarked.

He added, “The slogans of the Revolution are beneficial to the country, despite what some profess that the Islamic Revolution creates problems for Iran. No, it is the other way around. The Revolution and paying attention to these ideals are cures for the country’s sufferings.”

Thus, the Leader underlined the need to remain revolutionary. He pointed to some who once were “ultrarevolutionaries” but then abandoned their revolutionary trait. He said remaining revolutionary is more important than being revolutionary.

Will Turkey block Finland, Sweden NATO bid?

By Morteza Karimi

TEHRAN – Despite opposing bids by Sweden and Finland to join NATO, Turkey will try to control the level of tension with other member states because the country is well familiar with its economic weaknesses.

Efforts by Finland and Sweden to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have become a hot topic in international relations.

On May 13, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan clearly announced Ankara’s objection to applications by these two Nordic states. According to Anadolu Agency, Erdogan said that Turkey had made a mistake by not blocking Greece’s membership in NATO and does not want to repeat that mistake. He also accused Finland, Sweden, and the Scandinavian countries as a whole of backing the PKK and its supporters.

Despite the Turkish objection, Finland and Sweden officially submitted their bid on May 18.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said during a Thursday visit to Copenhagen that he was “confident that we will come to a quick decision to welcome both Sweden and Finland to join the NATO family.”

“We are addressing the concerns that Turkey has expressed, because when an important ally (like) Turkey raises security concerns, raises issues, then of course the only way to deal with that is to sit down and find common ground,” Associated Press quoted him as saying.

NATO states consider PKK a terrorist organization but are not in agreement with Turkey about the PYD and its military wing YPG, which is active in Syria. This is still a source of discord between Turkey and other NATO members, including the United States.

When Turkey started military operations in northeast Syria back in 2019, some European countries – including Sweden and Finland – imposed restrictions on arms sales to Ankara. These restrictions are one of the many reasons behind Turkey’s opposition to the new bid. Turkish Foreign

Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu referred to this issue after an unofficial meeting of NATO members on May 15, Anadolu Agency reported.

Meanwhile, a growing belief in Turkey is that NATO is not taking into account the country’s security concerns and that even some member states are providing arms support to YPG that is acting against Turkey’s interest and territorial integrity.

As a West Asian member of NATO, Turkey has a special geopolitical status and this boosts the country’s political maneuver. The main question is how far Ankara can go in opposing bid by Finland and Sweden to join NATO that is backed by all other members of the military alliance.

When acting as Turkish Prime Minister in 2009, Erdogan had opposed the appointment of former Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen as NATO Secretary-General. Ankara eventually withdrew its opposition after diplomatic negotiations.

Differences between Turkey and other NATO members, especially the U.S., have since deepened as the former has insisted on some positions such as buying the S-400 missile system from Russia; however, one should take notice of the level that the Turkish economy can tolerate political confrontation with other member states.

According to the Turkish Statistical Institute, the country is witnessing significant inflation (that hit 70% in April). Therefore, swimming against the tide may incur economic costs such as the fall of the lira and increase in inflation besides bringing about social discontent.

Accordingly, Erdogan’s top foreign policy advisor Ibrahim Kalin opted for a milder stance while talking to Reuters on May 14. He said that Turkey is “not closing the door” to Finland and Sweden’s bid.

Turkish authorities are aware that although the veto right can be used on paper, the ultimate decision will be taken by main players such as the U.S.

Turkey has good relations with Russia but this does not mean that it has been influenced by Moscow for confronting other NATO members. Ankara has earlier expressed clear opposition to Russia



on issues such as the Crimea annexation, Syrian developments, and the war in Ukraine while also preserving its relations with Moscow.

What are Turkey’s demands?

Turkey wants the Finnish and Swedish governments to condemn and put pressure on the PKK and its supporters. Although, this is not the only demand put forward by Ankara.

Three Turkish officials, speaking to Bloomberg on May 17 on condition of anonymity, said Ankara wants the two European countries to put an end to arms-export restrictions that they had imposed on Turkey. Other demands of Turkey include a return to the F-35 program, purchasing F-16 warplanes, and removal of sanctions imposed on the country after possession of the S-400 missile system.

It will not take too long before realizing how far Ankara can preserve this approach. Turkey may suffer political and economic consequences by continued insistence on blocking Finland and Sweden.

Accordingly, it seems that Ankara will refrain from standing against the demands of other NATO members in the long run. However, it clearly sees current circumstances as a good opportunity for meeting parts of its needs. Turkey will try to obtain concessions from key NATO members such as the United States while also controlling the level of tensions.

He pointed out that the people can’t bear air pollution happening every day and they expect the government to seriously address the problem.

Accordingly, the president tasked the Department of Environment and the Foreign Ministry to immediately address the issue through negotiation with neighboring countries from which sand and dust storms originate.

The choking dust storm has caused disruptions in daily lives in Tehran and many other Iranian cities over the last few days as local authorities announced shutdown of government institutions such as schools and universities. Sand storms also coated other parts on the West Asia region such as Iraq, Kuwait, Syria, and the United Arab Emirates.

In the telephone consultations between the foreign ministers of Iran, Iraq, Syria and Kuwait, the top diplomats decided that a joint expert regional meeting should be held over the matter.

Kuwait’s top diplomat promised to follow up the issue of dispatching the Iranian technical committee.

It should be noted that prior to the telephone talks, the Iranian foreign minister discussed the matter with his Turkish counterpart in their latest phone conversation and the Turkish foreign minister announced his country’s readiness to actively participate in these consultations and cooperation.

During a cabinet session on Wednesday, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi

underlined the people’s right to “clean air,” saying, “The people’s health is a vital issue and air pollution in intolerable for the people.”

IRAN IN FOCUS

MAY 26, 2022

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

3

SPORTS

Records broken by Esteghlal in Iran football

From Page 1 ▶ Esteghlal, with a draw, can set a record for most points in one IPL season with 68 points. They have already equaled Persepolis, but just one more point is needed to become the best ever.

The Thran giants simply should not lose against Mohammadreza Mohajeri’s Naft to end the season undefeated. This has never happened before for any team in the history of the Iranian Pro League.

Former Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson once said: “Attack wins you matches, defense wins you the titles,” and his managerial career with Manchester United proves the fact.

Esteghlal followed the Ferguson’s rule as they have conceded only 10 goals so far. The fewest goals conceded in a single season of the IPL was 13, and now Esteghlal goalkeeper Hossein Hosseini only needs to concede less than three goals in his team’s final game to make the Blues leading the list with the fewest goals conceded.

The rock-solid Esteghlal’s 2021/22 season are considered one of the best defensive performances in history.

Iran top group at IWB Asia Oceania Championships

TEHRAN – Iran’s men’s team confirmed top seeding heading into the playoff stage of the International Wheelchair Basketball Federation (IWBF) Asia Oceania Championships in Phuket, Thailand on Wednesday.

Iran defeated Malaysia 82-36 and finish in front of Australia and South Korea, who were also on nine points and picked up victories today.

South Korea defeated the hosts Thailand 72-42, while Australia won 20-0 by default over Japan, who had withdrawn from the tournament.

Australia finished second and South Korea were third.

The top seeds are to face the three qualified teams for the quarter-finals from division two on Thursday. Iran are scheduled to meet the Philippines who defeated the UAE 55-43.

Furthermore, Iran’s women team lost to Japan 85-21.

All teams are to face each other twice.

Iran sit third just now, while Thailand recorded their fourth defeat in a row.

Ali Moradi to stand for IWF Presidency

TEHRAN – Ali Moradi of Iran is among eleven candidates who have been cleared to stand for the Presidency of the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF), which will hold arguably the most important elections in its history next month.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) stressed the importance of the elections, scheduled for June 25-26 in Tirana, Albania, when it sent another warning letter to the IWF.

Yousef Al-Mana (Qatar), Mohamed Jalood (individual application), Jinjiang Zhou (China), Antonio Urso (Italy), Tom Liaw (Singapore), Karoliina Lundahl (Finland), Ursula Papandrea, Paula Aranda (The U.S.), Pyrros Dimas (Greece), Ali Moradi (Iran) and Zhanat Tussupbekov (Kazakhstan) are candidates for the IWF Presidency.

Many candidates are standing for multiple positions, and there are 16 for general secretary/treasurer, 33 for vice-president and 46 for a seat on the Board.

Candidates aged 70 or over are ineligible, but three over-age Board members can be voted in by the Congress.

The Board will eventually comprise a President, general-secretary/treasurer, five vice-presidents, 10 elected Board members, five continental federation Presidents, and three members of the Athletes’ Commission – whose elections will be held in November.

Iran U23 football team defeat Iraq

TEHRAN – Iran U23 football team defeated Iraq U23 team 1-0 in a friendly match Tuesday night in Baghdad.

Aria Yousefi scored the solitary goal of the match in the 12th minute.

Iran are scheduled to meet Iraq once again on

Friday.

Mehdi Mahdavia’s team played the friendly as part of preparation for the 2022 AFC U23 Asian Cup.

The fifth edition of the AFC U23 Asian Cup will be played in Central Asia for the first time, with Uzbekistan hosting 32 matches across the cities of Tashkent and Karshi.

Iran are pitted against hosts Uzbekistan, Qatar and newcomers Turkmenistan in Group A.

Boavista eye Persepolis forward Abdi: A Bola

TEHRAN – Portuguese football club Boavista have set their sight on Persepolis forward Mehdi Abdi.

According to Portuguese news outlet A Bola, Boavista are going to sign the player in the summer.

The 23-year-old striker has scored 19 goals in the last two seasons for Persepolis.

Former Persepolis goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand had been loaned to Boavista from Belgian club Antwerp but parted ways with the team at the end of the season.

Founded on 1 August 1903 by British entrepreneurs and Portuguese textile workers, they are one of the oldest clubs in the country and play in the Primeira Liga, Portuguese football’s top flight.

Shabanibahar re-elected head of Iran archery federation

TEHRAN – Gholamreza Shabanibahar was re-elected as president of Iran archery federation on Wednesday for a four-year term till 2026.

In the elections held at the Iran’s Academy Olympic in Tehran, Shabanibahar secured 34 of 57 votes cast.

Mohsen Bagherian Farahabadi earned 22 votes and Sekineh Ghasempour came third with one vote

Iran in Pot 1 of AFC Futsal Asian Cup Kuwait 2022

TEHRAN – The official draw ceremony of the AFC Futsal Asian Cup Kuwait 2022 will be held on Thursday in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The draw will set the stage for the return of top-flight Continental futsal after a four-year hiatus caused by the pandemic.

After an intensive round of qualifying battles, the draw will reveal the opponents of Asia’s 16 teams who will compete for futsal’s grandest prize at the showpiece, staged in West Asia for the first time after 10 years, from September 27 to October 8, 2022.

The contenders will be divided into four groups of four teams, with hosts Kuwait placed as the top seeded Member Association (MA) while the ranking of the AFC Futsal Championship Chinese Taipei 2018 will determine the seeding of the remaining challengers.

Joining Kuwait in Pot 1 are the defending champions Iran, also the most successful side in the competition with 12 titles, Japan, runners-up in 2018, and Uzbekistan, who finished second on four occasions.

Iraq, Lebanon, Vietnam and Bahrain will occupy Pot 2 followed by Thailand, who are the Southeast Asian Games gold medalist, Chinese Taipei, Tajikistan and Korea Republic in Pot 3.

Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Turkmenistan and debutants Oman will have their names drawn from Pot 4.

As futsal makes a safe return on the Continent, the AFC Futsal Asian Cup Kuwait 2022 draw ceremony is poised to unveil thrilling encounters in the Group Stage where the top two sides in each group advance to the next stage.

Futsal continues to grow at a rapid pace in Asia and this was evident when a record five teams – Iran, Japan, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Vietnam – qualified for the knockout stage of the FIFA Futsal World Cup Lithuania 2021 for the first time.

Amir Abdollahian talks to Syrian, Iraqi, Kuwaiti FM's as dust storms blanket Iran

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian spoke over the phone with his Syrian, Iraqi and Kuwaiti counterparts to discuss ways to address environmental challenges, including the sand and dust storms (SDSs).

The phone conversations were held in line with the foreign minister’s intensive consultations with some of his regional counterparts over the problem, the Iranian Foreign Ministry reported.

Over the last few days, huge dust storms have swept across several western and central Iranian provinces, prompting authorities to shut down public activities.

In the phone conversations, the top Iranian diplomat underlined the urgency of controlling the problem of the haze in different countries, that has a foreign origin and has disrupted normal life and poses a threat to people’s health.

In this regard, Amir Abdollahian and his counterparts agreed that an expert and technical committee formed by the Department of Environment, Foreign Ministry, and other relevant bodies of Iran be immediately sent to Iraq and Syria for a field review of the matter and exchange views with their peers in the two countries. The committee will then put the issue of collective regional cooperation on its urgent follow-up agenda to tackle the haze and to examine effective and swift measures to this end.

In this vein and given that regional cooperation to tackle the haze to some extent calls for Saudi Arabia’s involvement and active cooperation, it was agreed that Iraq’s top diplomat to pursue the issue along with his Saudi counterpart so that Riyadh participate in the regional initiative and help with the solving of the problem.

In the telephone consultations between the foreign ministers of Iran, Iraq, Syria and Kuwait, the top diplomats decided that a joint expert regional meeting should be held over the matter.

Kuwait’s top diplomat promised to follow up the issue of dispatching the Iranian technical committee.

It should be noted that prior to the telephone talks, the Iranian foreign minister discussed the matter with his Turkish counterpart in their latest phone conversation and the Turkish foreign minister announced his country’s readiness to actively participate in these consultations and cooperation.

During a cabinet session on Wednesday, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi

underlined the people’s right to “clean air,” saying, “The people’s health is a vital issue and air pollution in intolerable for the people.”

Some major challenges in Iran's mining sector



From page 1 ► Reviewing existing laws and implementing measures to protect the environment and natural resources in accordance with scientific principles and international experience is the solution to this part of the challenges.

The export of raw minerals, instead of processing them and selling the final product, is another challenge.

Stopping the rent-seeking in terms of raw minerals export, while establishing modern and up-to-date processing units can help solve this problem.

Insufficient attention to the use of new technologies in exploration, extraction, processing and exploitation of mineral resources is the other challenge.

Applying nanotechnology and biotechnology, as well as robotics and artificial intelligence, and being up-to-date to

increase productivity of the mines, especially with regard to the strategic approach to the development of knowledge-based economy, can alleviate the mentioned challenge.

Weakness in exploitation activities is a real challenge faced by the mining sector; to remove it, it is necessary to increase investment, change structures, and seriously strengthen the geological survey to conduct systematic exploitation in all areas in order to discover new mineral reserves.

Lack of machinery is also a major challenge in the mining sector.

A board member of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) has said: "At present, due to the shortage of these machines, purchase prices have skyrocketed and, in addition, their rents have become very expensive. At these prices, it is not profitable for small and medium-sized mines to rent machinery and become active. Finally, the miner has the mine and the raw material, but it is not economical due to the expensive operation of the machinery."

Removing all the above-mentioned challenges, in addition to some other problems and limitations, can lead to the development of mining sector, which can play a noticeable part in economic development of the country.

Iran-Russia business forum held in Tehran



From page 1 ► "In the regional and global perspective, Iran-Russia relations are based on the principle of mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. Regional developments have always led to more cooperation between Iran and Russia, and the two countries have common interests and alignment in Central Asia, the Caspian Sea, the Caucasus, and the Persian Gulf, taking into account the two neighbors' geopolitical, geostrategic, geoeconomics and energy capabilities," Khansari said.

Referring to the Western sanctions against Iran and Russia, he said that this issue has become a reason for closer relations between the two countries and the further development of trade relations.

"It has become a great incentive for cooperation between the two neighbors in various fields including energy, transportation, information technology, mining and medicine, medical equipment, food industry, agriculture, scientific subjects, etc."

He noted that the visit of President Raisi to Russia and the exchange of several delegations at other levels between the two countries have had a direct impact on strengthening Iran's exports to Russia, especially since the beginning of the conflict with

Ukraine.

The signing of the Preferential Trade Agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) in addition to reducing the role of the dollar in bilateral trade will further streamline this process, the official said.

"Using barter trade mechanism between the private sectors of the two countries with the support of governments will also improve economic partnership, he added.

A high-ranking delegation from the Russian Federation headed by the country's Deputy Minister of Economic Development Vladimir Ilyichev, arrived in Tehran on Tuesday to pursue expansion of economic relations with the Islamic Republic.

Prior to the trade conference, the Russian delegation visited Iran's Oil Ministry on Tuesday and

Ilyichev visited Iranian Deputy Oil Minister for International and Trade Affairs Ahmad Asadzadeh to discuss the expansion of energy ties between the two countries.

Also, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak and the Russian delegates met Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji on Wednesday.

A roadmap for developing mutual trade

Meanwhile, Director General of the Russian Export Center Veronika Nikishina met with Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) on Wednesday and stressed the need for the development of economic relations and the elimination of intermediaries in trade exchanges.

The two sides agreed on preparing a roadmap for joint cooperation and removing customs barriers, amending

customs regulations, establishing joint ventures, and boosting financial and banking exchanges and interactions in order to develop trade exchanges between Iran and Russia.

In this meeting, Peyman-Pak underlined the need to provide a clear and online mechanism to introduce companies and businessmen of the two countries to each other.

He also pointed to the exchange of specialized trade delegations and holding joint exhibitions as measures to further promote trade exchanges and added: "After the establishment of the Russian trade office in Iran, Iran seeks to expand its trade offices in Russia as well."

Peyman-Pak also referred to the recent visit of the Iranian President to Oman and said: "In this visit, the subject of activating the North-South corridor with the participation of Iran, Russia, India, and Oman was discussed and it was decided to review and implement this issue in a meeting hosted by Tehran."

The TPO head also mentioned the Iranian government's trade policies based on barter trade, saying: "Since we currently have about five billion dollars of barter trade with China, we intend to implement this mechanism with Russia as well."

Iran's president steps up economic diplomacy with Oman visit

By Hossein Zadeh Qashami

TEHRAN- President Ebrahim Raisi is stepping his economic diplomacy a notch up with a trip which is believed to play a crucial role in expanding relations with the Persian Gulf and Sea of Oman littoral states.

The president paid an official visit to Oman with which Iran has its longest sea border and the best of enduring relations between the Persian country and an Arab state.

Over the past 50 years, the two countries have moved on a trajectory of sustained coexistence and mutual respect in their diplomatic relationship, irrespective of occasional hiccups in ties between Iran and some Arab states of the region.

Last year, Iran and Oman recorded bilateral trade of \$1.3 billion, but they are looking to make maximum use of their potentials in various sectors of economy and investment opportunities

to raise it to new highs.

Ahead of the visit, Iran's Oil Minister Javad Oji reached an agreement in Muscat to revive a long-stalled project to lay an undersea pipeline to carry gas to Oman.

The project dates back to 2013 when the two countries signed a deal, valued at \$60 billion over 25 years, for Iran to supply gas to Oman through an undersea pipeline.

Currently, some 2,710 Iranian companies are registered in the Sultanate of Oman, 1,163 of which are 100 percent Iranian owned, according to Omani media reports.

President Raisi seeks to promote trade with neighboring countries instead of waiting for Western powers to ease the U.S.-led sanctions regime against Iran.

He has vowed to prioritize "economic diplomacy" to boost investments. His administration is trying to explore preferential trade agreements, diversify imports, encourage

joint ventures, and set up trade promotion offices in Iran's 15 neighboring countries.

To this end, Raisi has called for strengthening regional bonds especially in the Persian Gulf region.

This was the Iranian president's fifth foreign trip in the nine months since coming to office during which several MOUs and trade agreements were clinched.

The visit was decisive, sensitive and effective which can pave the way for further improvement of Iran's relations with other Persian Gulf states at a time of the most draconian sanctions on Iran.

Given Iran's unparalleled relationship with Oman and the two countries' joint management of the Strait of Hormuz as the most important highway for shipping, transportation and transfer of world energy, further strengthening of this cooperation can also play a crucial role in boosting security in the region.

TV sets manufacturing rises 3.6% in a year



TEHRAN- Manufacturing of TV sets in Iran increased 3.6 percent during the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20), from its previous year, according to the data released by Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry.

The ministry's data show that 1,305,400 TV sets were manufactured in the past year.

Manufacturing of home appliances in Iran rose 7.56 percent during the previous year from its preceding year.

According to the industry ministry's data, over 6,273,600 sets of large home appliances, including TV sets, refrigerators and freezers, washing machines, and air coolers were manufactured in 1400, while the figure was 5,832,400 in 1399.

Among the mentioned products, just air cooler experienced a production drop, and production of the other items increased.

Over the past few years, the Iranian government has been following a new strategy for supporting domestic production to neutralize the impacts of the U.S. sanctions while reducing the reliance of the economy on oil revenues.

The home appliances sector has been one of the pioneers in this regard and like many other areas, the production of home appliances has witnessed a significant rise in the past four years.

Monthly export from East Azarbaijan province increases 16% yr/yr

TEHRAN- The value of export from East Azarbaijan province, in the northwest of Iran, rose 16 percent in the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21- April 20), as compared to the same month in the previous year, an official with the customs department of the province announced.

Leili Orangi said that more than 164,000 tons of commodities worth over \$102 million were exported from the province in the previous year, indicating three percent fall in terms of weight year on year.

The official also announced that over 26,000 tons of products valued at over \$75 million were imported to the province in the first month, showing 30 percent rise in terms of value, while no change in weight.

As previously said by the official, the value of export from East Azarbaijan rose 16 percent in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), from its preceding year.

Orangi said that commodities worth \$1.654 billion were exported from the province in the previous year.

In terms of the weight, the exports indicate nine percent annual growth, she added.

The official named carpets and handicrafts, sweets and chocolates, glass and glass products, steel and cast iron, objects made of plastic materials, minerals and stones, nuts, petrochemical products, machinery and mechanical devices, components and parts, leather and shoes as the major exported items, and Turkey, Iraq, Armenia, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Pakistan, Georgia, Bulgaria, United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Italy as the main export destinations.



She further announced that 441,000 tons of products worth \$1.189 billion were imported to the province in the previous year, showing 19 percent rise in value, and six percent drop in weight year on year.

The official named Turkey, Germany, UAE, China, Japan, South Korea, Spain, Russia, India and Austria as the main sources of imports to the province in the past year.

The deputy head of Islamic Republic of Iran's Customs Administration (IRICA) has announced that the value of Iran's export of non-oil products has increased 25 percent in the first month of the current year, as compared to the same month of the past year.

Foroud Asgari also said that the country's non-oil trade with other countries registered a \$875-million positive balance in the first month.

Iran exported 7,324 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$3.699 billion in the said month, with 10 percent drop in weight as compared to the first month of the previous year, the official stated.

The country's monthly non-oil import stood at 2,252 million tons worth \$2.824 billion, with one percent rise in value and 10 percent growth in weight year on year, he added.

Iran among world's leading producers of agricultural products: FAO

TEHRAN - Latest statistics published by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) show that Iran currently stands among the world's top producers of agricultural products, IRNA reported.

Based on the FAO data, the Islamic Republic is the third-largest producer of dates, honey, pistachios, and walnuts in the world.

Iranian farmers produce 1.28 million tons of dates annually, making the country the third-largest producer of this product in the world after Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

Honey production in Iran is 80,000 tons per year, which is the highest honey production in a country after China and Turkey. China's honey production is

estimated at 458,000 tons per year.

The FAO has put Iran's pistachio production at 190,000 tons in 2020, placing the country in third place among the world's top producers of the mentioned products after the United States and Turkey.

Iran has been usually ranked first or second in the world in terms of pistachio production, but due to the drought in 2020, production fell sharply. The U.S. pistachio production this year was 474,000 tons.

The Islamic Republic is also ranked third in the world in the production of walnuts with 356,000 tons of annual output. China stands in first place with 1.1 million tons of production and the United States is in second place.

Iran is also ranked fourth in terms of almond and watermelon production. The country's almond production is reported to be 164,000 tons per year. The United States is in first place with 2.37 million tons of almonds, followed by Spain and Australia in second and third places.

In terms of Kiwi output, the country is the world's fifth major producer of the product with 289,000 tons per year. China, New Zealand, and Italy are the first to third-largest producers of kiwifruit in the world. China's Kiwi production is 2.23 million tons per year.

Iran also ranks sixth in eggplant production, seventh in onion and tomato production, eighth in spinach output, ninth in terms of orange

production, and 11th for grapes and sugar.

According to the FAO, Iran is the 12th largest producer of wheat in the world. The country's wheat production in 2020 amounted to 15 million tons. China is the world's largest producer of the strategic grain with 134 million tons, followed by India and Russia.

In the production of tea, Iran is ranked 12th as well with a production of more than 84,000 tons. China topped the list with 2.97 million tons of tea output, followed by India and Kenya.

The Islamic republic is also ranked 13th in barley production, 18th in terms of olive production, and finally 19th in the production of pears and tomatoes.

Over 28m tons of crude steel produced in a year

TEHRAN- As announced by Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry, 28,040,100 tons of crude steel was produced in Iran during the past Iranian calendar year 1400 (ended on March 20), falling 2.1 percent from the output in 1399.

Iran has maintained its place as the world's 10th biggest steel

producer during January-March 2022, according to the latest report released by the World Steel Association (WSA).

Production of crude steel in Iran reached 6.9 million tons during the mentioned three months, registering a 4.4 percent decline year on year, the report said.

As reported, over 7,795 billion securities worth 49,192 trillion rials (about \$190 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index rose 6,047 points and the second market's index gained 18,912 points.

A market analyst believes that the Iranian stock exchange market can grow by 30 percent by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2023).

In an interview with IRNA on May 8, Ahmad Eshtiaqi pointed to the growth of

sanctions and the coronavirus outbreak that has severely affected the performance of the world's top producers.

The country is expected to climb to seventh place among the world's top steel producers by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025).

the stock market index and the factors affecting it and said: "It seems that the shares of companies still have room for growth and according to the forecasts, the stock market can grow by about 30 percent by the end of the year, but this growth will be gradual and slow."

TEDPIX gains 8,700 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 8,789 points to 1,564 million on Wednesday.

From page 1 ▶ One of the two teachers murdered has also been identified as Eva Mireles, who had spent 17 years teaching fourth graders at the school.

The state's Senator says four people have sustained injuries with some in critical condition.

University Health, the medical facility caring for two patients who are in critical condition has said another 10-year-old girl is in its care but is in a “good condition”. Also, a nine-year-old girl has been admitted and is in a “fair condition”.

Reports say among the injuries is a fourth-grade teacher, who is expected to survive after undergoing “intense surgery”.

The shooter, armed with two military-style rifles, was confronted and gunned down by police at the scene, after going from classroom to classroom sparking terror among children and teachers.

Authorities say the motive for the attack was not immediately clear and it is believed that he acted alone.

Investigators say the attacker had a handgun and an AR-15 semi-automatic rifle with high-capacity magazines. Texas Governor Greg Abbott said that two officers were struck by gunfire, though the governor noted their injuries were not serious.

The massacre took place on the last week of the school year and parents made long desperate attempts to find their children, begging authorities for information as they waited for hours outside in the parking area. Some were asked to give DNA samples to help identify the young victims.

Speaking to American news outlets, Mrs. Arizmendia said “It’s like a horror movie, If it’s not our kid, it’s someone we know. It’s our neighbors.”

The school district superintendent Hal Harrell, said “my heart is broken today... we’re going to need your prayers to get through this.”

The latest shooting comes just a week after a white gunman killed ten Black Americans in a “racially motivated attack” at a Buffalo supermarket in a predominantly black community.

The United Nations Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres said “I’m deeply saddened by the heinous mass shooting at an elementary school in Texas. It is particularly heart-wrenching

U.S. school shooting terror, 19 kids and 2 adults killed



that most of the victims are children.”

Pope Francis said he is “heartbroken” at the news and called for action.

“I pray for the children and the adults who were killed and for their families. It is time to say ‘enough’ to the indiscriminate trafficking of weapons. Let us all make a commitment so that tragedies like this cannot happen again,” he said.

The shooting; ten years after the Sandy elementary school massacre in Sandy Hook, Connecticut when a gunman killed 20 children and six adults has sparked angry outbursts from different sectors of American society about the urgent need to reform gun regulations.

Democrat Senator Chris Murphy made an emotional speech where he pointed out that these massacres only occur in the United States.

“This isn’t inevitable. These kids weren’t unlucky. This only happens in this country and nowhere else,” It is a choice. It is our choice to let it continue.”

He strongly slammed the Republicans who claim the problem arises from mental illness and that firearms themselves are not the problem saying “spare me the bulls**t about mental illness, we don’t have any more mental illness than any other country in the world.”

He added “we’re not an outlier

on mental illness... We’re an outlier when it comes to access to firearms and the ability of criminals and very sick people to get their arms on firearms. That’s what makes America different.”

Murphy, who represented the district where the Sandy Hook massacre took place pleaded with Republicans to help Democrats pass gun reform legislation.

“I am here on this floor to beg, to literally get down on my hands and knees to beg my colleagues: find a path forward here,” he said.

Despite the pleas by Murphy and the many other similar reactions that have poured in, very little is expected to change.

The deadliest school shooting in the U.S. was an attack on Virginia Tech in 2007. The eleven-minute rampage killed 32 people and injured dozens more.

Following the latest massacre, Republican leaders in Texas have faced intense scrutiny for their longstanding opposition to gun control measures and their push to expand gun rights. Over the past few years, some of the most deadliest mass shootings in the country have taken place in the state.

The state’s governor Greg Abbott and Senator Ted Cruz are scheduled to speak at the National Rifle Association’s (NRA) annual convention in Houston. A powerful gun lobby in the American congress.

This weekend, the NRA is expected to host its annual

meeting as planned in Houston, which would be just days after the deadly school shooting. An estimated 55,000 people are expected to be in attendance.

U.S. President Joe Biden asked, “when, in God’s name, are we going to stand up to the gun lobby.”

Judging by the regular massacres in the U.S., the answer to that question appears to be never.

It also displays a level of weakness and lack of leadership on the part of U.S. Presidents who try to take on the gun lobbies but are unable to do so, whereby they can invade countries thousands of miles away, killing innocent children on the other side of the world.

Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell has also taken to social media to express his shock at the shooting but he refrained from mentioning anything about the urgent need for gun reform.

Reacting to the news, New Zealand’s Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, says her country’s quick change to gun laws following its 2019 terrorist attack where 51 Muslims were killed by a white supremacist at a Mosque was a “pragmatic” response, where “we saw something that wasn’t right and we acted on it.”

Last year, the FBI recorded the highest ever mass “active shooting” incidents on record and a 52 percent increase from the previous year.

Attacks in 2021, spread across 30 states according to the report by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Mass shootings in America have frequently led to public protests and calls for stricter background checks on gun sales and other firearm controls which are very common in other countries, but such measures have repeatedly failed in the face of strong Republican-led opposition.

According to a University of Michigan research letter published in the New England Journal of Medicine, last month firearms became the leading cause of death for U.S. children and adolescents starting in 2020, surpassing motor vehicle accidents.

The deadly trend of gun violence doesn’t appear to be slowing down anytime soon, with a record number of firearms and ammunition on the streets of the United States.

decaying British Empire occupies this fringe of expertise – not exclusive, it is true – within the Five Eyes System, made up of the Queen’s subjects (UK, Canada, New Zealand and Australia) as well as the USA.

Q: In Pandora papers, it is revealed the same financial structures that we heard about in the Panama and Paradise papers are still being used. Why does the situation not appear to be improving?

A: This is the most sinister and complex dimension of the debate. The sanctions imposed by the US against a sovereign country go so far as to disconnect a lawful banking network from the Swift System. Therefore, the Empire’s surveillance capability is still enormous. So why do not you increase surveillance on the whole range of financial crimes? Simply because that would mean ending judicial bargaining agreements, where there is always a pardon for the big fraudster. By maintaining selective punishment, the deep state in Washington can reveal partial secrets without having to systematically interfere. All made easy because the UK operates as the largest laundry in the world, in the shape of octopus. British imperialism, by the way, has had this expertise since the 1st opium war, and continues to exercise it today. Effectively fighting financial crime requires a pact at the United Nations, something the US would certainly veto.

(Source: Fars News Agency)

Henry Kissinger: Ukraine must give Russia territory

Veteran US statesman Henry Kissinger has urged the West to stop trying to inflict a crushing defeat on Russian forces in Ukraine, warning that it would have disastrous consequences for the long term stability of Europe.

The former US secretary of state and architect of the Cold War rapprochement between the US and China told a gathering in Davos that it would be fatal for the West to get swept up in the mood of the moment and forget the proper place of Russia in the European balance of power.

Dr Kissinger said the war must not be allowed to drag on for much longer, and came close to calling on the West to bully Ukraine into accepting negotiations on terms that fall very far short of its current war aims.

“Negotiations need to begin in the next two months before it creates upheavals and tensions that will not be easily overcome. Ideally, the dividing line should be a return to the status quo ante. Pursuing the war beyond that point would not be about the freedom of Ukraine, but a new war against Russia itself,” he said.

He told the World Economic Forum that Russia had been an essential part of Europe for 400 years and had been the guarantor of the European balance of power structure at critical times. European leaders should not lose sight of the longer term relationship, and nor should they risk pushing Russia into a permanent alliance with China.

“I hope the Ukrainians will match the heroism they have shown with wisdom,” he said, adding with his famous sense of realpolitik that the proper role for the country is to be a neutral buffer state rather than the frontier of Europe.

The comments came amid growing signs that the Western coalition against Vladimir Putin is fraying badly as the food and energy crisis deepens, and that sanctions may have reached their limits.

“We’re seeing the worst of Europe,” said German vice-chancellor Robert Habeck in an angry outburst in Davos, accusing Hungary and other recalcitrant states of paralysing attempts by the rest of the EU to craft a full-fledged oil embargo.

Mr Habeck, who doubles as economy minister, said Germany is more or less ready to endure the shock of a total cut-off in Russian oil imports but others want to carry on as if nothing had changed. “I expect everyone to work to find a solution, and not to sit back and work on building their partnership with Putin,” he said.

Yuri Vitrenko, head of the Ukrainian energy consortium Naftogas, said the refuseniks are demanding exemptions from the embargo on false pretences. “What they really want is a free-ride on discounted Russian oil,” he said.

Eleven Republican senators and 57 congressmen in the US voted against the colossal \$40bn aid package for Ukraine, an early sign of fragmenting cohesion in Washington.

“Putin is counting on the West to lose focus and that is our real challenge. People are as concerned, or more concerned, about the rising price of gas and groceries,” said Senator Christopher Coons.

“I’m not sure the unity will last. We may not get the next vote,” said Eric Cantor, former House Whip and a key figure in the sanctions policy against Iran.

Nobody is sure whether the US is trying to punish Russia for its aggression or whether the goal is a subtler use of policy that gives the Kremlin a “route out of sanctions” if it changes course. The fundamental divisions over the West’s war aims in Ukraine have so far been masked by an outpouring of solidarity and emotion, but these rifts are coming to the fore.

President Volodymyr Zelensky



delivered his usual tour de force in a video address to the forum, saying “this is the year when we learn whether brute force will rule the world”. If it does, he added with his trademark touch, there will be no point in any more World Economic Forums in Davos.

Yet he also said Russia should be shut out of the civilised world entirely, and that all trade should stop until Russian forces are driven from Ukraine. “Sanctions should be maximum, so that Russia and every other potential aggressor that wants to wage a brutal war against its neighbour would clearly know the immediate consequences of their actions,” he said.

It is doubtful whether the West can maintain a united front in pursuit of such far-reaching war aims with absolutist aims. Mr Cantor said it would require secondary sanctions against other countries, putting the West in a head on clash with China, India, and almost 60 states that refused to back a UN resolution denouncing Russia’s invasion.

India’s energy minister Shri Hardeep Puri brushed aside suggestions that his country should stop buying Russian oil. “The Europeans buy more Russian energy in an afternoon than we do in a quarter,” he said in Davos.

Mr Cantor said the US was in danger of overplaying its hand. “We have got to have multilateral support. We are already being accused of weaponising the world’s reserve currency. Even allies and friends are starting to ask, if you are using it in this way, we too could one day be subject to these sanctions,” he said.

The US Congress is split on the ultimate war aim. Senator Joe Manchin said the US should keep going until there was a clear “win” that restored all of Ukraine’s territory and led to the toppling of Vladimir Putin but other members of the Congressional delegation in Davos want a negotiated outcome.

Saudi Arabia and the Opec states have made it clear that they will not draw on their spare capacity to cover the lost Russian supply of oil, estimated at around one million barrels a day at the end of April. This makes it extremely hard to plug the gap if Europe cuts off purchases of Russian barrels.

Francisco Blanch from Bank of America said the oil market is now extremely tight. “The energy buffer is nearing a vanishing point. Crude oil inventories are down to a dangerously low point across Europe, North America, and OECD Asia. Inventories have also fallen to precarious levels for middle distillates and even gasoline as the market heads into the peak of the US driving season,” he said.

Unless there is a global recession and violent demand destruction, crude prices could soon spiral higher. “We’re not living in a dream world: we have to replace the lost oil with other oil,” said Fatih Birol, head of the International Energy Agency.

Mr Birol said that the OECD bloc of rich states are releasing 1.5m barrels a day of oil to stabilise the market, and have so far depleted 9pc of their stocks. This is before the European embargo against Russia even begins. “This winter in Europe will be tough,” he said.

(Source: The Telegraph)

Political analyst: UK money laundering octopus

Mohamad Abdull Aziz Diniz, a Brazilian political analyst specialized in conflict management and economic engineering, says the British imperialism is the world’s largest money laundry thanks to its territories under special legislation.

In an interview with Fars News Agency (FNA), Diniz said, “UK turnover is correlated at some 70% of the total amount with financial crime... British banks are the most responsible for the circulation of undeclared capital of dubious origin... The financial complex connected to the big banks and their subsidiaries in British territories under special legislation constitutes the biggest loan shark on the planet.”

Below is the full text of the interview.

Q: ‘Pandora papers’ indicate Britain and its offshore territories are a key hub for tax avoidance and money laundering. Why is that the case?

A: According to the New Economics Foundation, an entity based in London and dedicated to a productive, less unequal economy that fights parasitic and fictitious capital, British banks are the most responsible for the circulation of undeclared capital of dubious origin. In 2012, the RBS is reported to have 404 subsidiaries in “tax havens”, HSBC 505, Lloyds TSB 290 and Barclays 385. Relevant is the fact that these subsidiaries are in overseas territories or with special legislation but responding to policy and legally to the Great Britain cabinet. As these



are data from the previous decade, we can consider that these numbers, as well as transaction volumes, are increasing. One of the facilities is to operate with dual legislation, where the law fluctuates according to the host British sovereignty of financial parasites. Clearly this is a decision between the British deep state and the UK ruling class, in line with the US.

Q: How do you think Brexit has helped the UK restore its “dark financial services”?

A: Inequality in the capitalist economy is proportional to fiscal fraud and illegal accumulation. After Brexit, there was a considerable increase in the movement of financial capital of dubious origin and also the result of both tax evasion and tax avoidance. In addition to the stated, in deep finance, UK turnover is correlated at some 70% of the total amount with financial crime. We can say without a shadow of a doubt that today the financial complex connected to the big banks and their subsidiaries in British territories under special legislation constitutes the biggest loan shark on the planet. The

More than 500 historical monuments, sites in Yazd undergo restoration in year



TEHRAN – Yazd's tourism chief has said over 500 historical monuments and sites underwent restoration in the central Iranian province during the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

"504 aging monuments and historical sites were restored in 1400," Abdolmajid Shakeri said on Wednesday.

Moreover, cultural heritage experts of the province documented 3,000 relics, and restored 80 ones in the same period, the official noted.

In addition, 24 historical sites and buildings underwent monitoring to gain a deeper understanding of how they react against natural forces, he added.

A total of 88,972 people visited museums and historical sites across the province last year, he said, adding "A cultural heritage museum opened to the public in the same period."

On Monday, the capital city of Yazd, which its historical core gains UNESCO status, unveiled a new route to lead sightseers to its beating heart. The unveiling ceremony was attended by a host of provincial and local officials, academics, university students, tour operators, and other travel insiders.

According to the Yazd tourism directorate, tourism itineraries in Yazd can be divided into three main categories; the historical core of the ancient city, ancient water management facilities and sites, and Zoroastrians' cultural sites.

In July 2017, the historical core of Yazd was named a UNESCO World Heritage. Wedged between the northern Dasht-e Kavir and the southern Dasht-e Lut on a flat plain, the ancient city enjoys a very harmonious public-religious architecture that dates from different eras.

Yazd is regularly referred to as a delightful place to stay, or a "don't miss" destination by almost all of its visitors. The city is full of mudbrick houses that are equipped with innovative badgirs (wind catchers), atmospheric alleyways, and many Islamic and Iranian monuments that shape its eye-catching city landscape.

Heritage museum opened to public in northeast Iran

TEHRAN – On Tuesday, a heritage museum was officially inaugurated in northeast Iran.

"It is the first cultural heritage museum inaugurated in the town of Kadkan, Torbat-e Heydarieh and Zaveh county, northeastern Khorasan Razavi province," the county's tourism chief said.

The museum has been set up in one of the city's cultural-historical complexes in collaboration with the local people and related organizations, CHTN quoted Ali Mohammadi as saying on Wednesday.

Kadkan has a great deal of potential for developing specialized museums, as it has numerous attractions in the fields of history, culture, handicrafts, and spiritual heritage, the official added.

Artifacts previously discovered at Kadkan historical sites and stored in other museums of the region due to lack of space have been returned to this museum to be displayed for the public, he explained.

Several historical relics have also been donated to the museum by the locals, he noted.

Over the past couple of years, Torbat-e Heydarieh and its surroundings have yielded traces of the ancient settlements. Last year, an archaeological site was exposed on the outskirts of Torbat-e Heydarieh after torrential rains washed the soil away. The site was accessed to date from the early



and middle Islamic eras, according to preliminary studies carried out by cultural heritage experts.

According to archaeological studies, Torbat-e Heydarieh is home to several historical caves due to its favorable habitat conditions and traces of habitation from about 40,000 years have been identified in the caves of the region. The history of the area stretches back to the Achaemenian Empire from the 6th to 4th century BC and the Parthian Empire from the 3rd century BC to the 3rd century CE.

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

In July 2017, the historical core of Yazd was named a UNESCO World Heritage.

Some say it is a living testimony to the intelligent use of limited available resources in the desert for survival. Water is brought to the city by the qanat system. Each district of the city is built on a qanat and has a communal center.

Furthermore, the use of earth in buildings includes walls and roofs through the construction of vaults and domes. Houses are built with courtyards below ground level, serving underground areas. Wind-catchers, courtyards, and thick earthen walls create a pleasant microclimate.

The historical core of Yazd is chockfull of mudbrick houses, bazaars, public bathhouses, water cisterns, mosques, synagogues, Zoroastrian temples, and the historical gardens.

From the divine point of view, the city enjoys the peaceful coexistence of three religions: Islam, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism.

Furthermore, Yazd is home to numerous qanats which have supplied water to agricultural and permanent settlements for thousands of years. The man-carved underground qanat system, in fact, relies on snow-fed streams flowing down the foothills of surrounding mountains.

The earliest water supply to Yazd is estimated to date from the Sassanid era (224 to 651 CE). However, many others have been continually repaired and used over time, and most surviving Ab-Anbars (traditional mudbrick cisterns) can be today traced to the late Safavid and Qajar periods.

In the realm of water management, Yazd Water Museum is a top destination devoted to the brave men who built such underground aqueducts in the past. Located in a restored mansion with a visible qanat running underneath, the museum offers its visitors a fascinating glimpse into the hidden world of qanats through a series of photographs, exhibits, and architectural drawings. It represents nearly 2000 years of unique irrigation structure that has been in operation, yet describes the drilling of mother wells and associated underground water networks stretched to the ancient city.

Iran to inaugurate 14 museums dedicated to 'sacred defense' by 2025

TEHRAN – Iran plans to inaugurate 14 museums dedicated to the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, known as the 'sacred defense' by 2025.

"23 sacred defense museums are currently operational in the country, and it is planned to increase the number to 37 by [the Iranian calendar year] 1404 (starting March 2025)," IRNA quoted the director of Tehran's Sacred Defense Museum as saying on Wednesday.

Ali-Asghar Jafari considered the sacred defense as a vital fragment of the country's cultural heritage, adding

"Remnants from the nation's resistance, which have been gathered from (former) battle fronts, constitute an important share of our tangible cultural," the official said.

Jafari made the remarks in a Tehran meeting held to commemorate the anniversary of the liberation of Khorramshahr from Saddam Hussein's invading army back in May 1982.

Iranians hold special ceremonies to honor the fallen soldiers and to cherish the strength and resistance



of the nation during "the Sacred Defense Week", starting on Shahrivar 31 (September 21 this year) when Iraqi armed forces invaded western Iran.

Last September, a selection of eleven elements and properties involving the Iraqi-imposed war, was added to the national heritage list. Designated from the provinces of Khuzestan, Khorasan Razavi, and East Azarbaijan, the new entries include a customs building, an embankment,

an underground hospital, as well as war elements and evidence existing in a mosque, and a garrison, Mehr reported.

The Iranian capital embraces several destinations for those interested in visiting an epitome of frontlines elsewhere from the former battlefields; the Sacred Defense Museum, Tehran Peace Museum, and Behesht-e Zahra—a graveyard where many of the martyrs are buried.

Moreover, the epic-scale Sacred Defense Museum does bargain something different in modern Iranian history where you can delve into wreckages of rockets, tanks, rifles, vessels, mortars, radars, air defense systems, grounded jets, military supplies, and artillery pieces amongst others.

It is equipped with a state-of-the-art visual system including projections and video walls, while audio recordings relevant to each period contribute to its charm. The recreation of the liberation of the city of Khorramshahr by the means of virtual exhibits and video projections is among the main features of the museum where stands a replica of the Khorramshahr mosque adorned with creamy and turquoise patterned tiles.

Some avid travelers say they are not just interested in visiting live or former warzones out of curiosity. In fact, what motivates them is guessing the stories of people who lost their lives, were displaced, wounded, captured or lost their loved ones in those bitter moments of the history of mankind.

Ancient petroglyphs discovered in northwest Iran

TEHRAN – Tens of rock-carved petroglyphs have recently been discovered in Varzeqan county, East Azarbaijan province, northwest Iran, the provincial tourism chief has said.

As a result of the previous studies and evidence about some historical rock carvings in Varzeqan, a specialized team composed of archaeologists and experts from the county's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts department visited and identified tens of petroglyphs, Ahmad Hamzehzadeh explained on Wednesday.

According to the relative and early chronology of these petroglyphs, they date from prehistorical times, the official added.

In order to complete the information on these



petroglyphs, the experts have specially undertaken research and study, he noted.

Soaked in history and culture for millennia, Tabriz, the capital of East Azarbaijan embraces

several historical and religious sites, including the Jameh Mosque of Tabriz and Arg of Tabriz, and UNESCO-registered Tabriz Historic Bazaar Complex to name a few. The city became the capital of the Mongol Il-Khan Mahmud Gazan (1295-1304) and his successor. Timur (Tamerlane), a Turkic conqueror, took it in 1392. Some decades later the Kara Koyunlu Turkmen made it their capital, it was when the famous Blue Mosque was built in Tabriz.

The city retained its administrative status under the Safavid dynasty until 1548 when Shah Tahmasp I relocated his capital westward to Qazvin. During the next two centuries, Tabriz changed hands several times between Persia and Ottoman Empire. During World War I, the city was temporarily occupied by Turkish and then Soviet troops.

Workshop looks at pottery know-how practiced in Ilkhanid era

TEHRAN – A workshop on the pottery techniques used by the craftspeople in the Ilkhanid era (1256 to 1335) was held in Varamin, a city in southeast Tehran on Monday.

The course aimed to introduce artisans and crafters to the pottery techniques customary during that period, Varamin's tourism chief has said.

"Varamin was significant during the Ilkhanid period, so valuable items like pottery were left in this region, which should be recognized and introduced today, Zhila Khodadadi explained on Tuesday.

Ilkhanid dynasty, also spelled Il-Khanid, was a Mongol dynasty that ruled Iran from 1256 to 1335. Il-khan is Persian for "subordinate khan."

Hulegu, a grandson of Genghis

Khan, was given the task of capturing Iran by the paramount Mongol chieftain Mongke. Hulegu set out in about 1253 with a Mongol army of about 130,000. He founded the Il-Khanid dynasty in 1256, and by 1258 he had captured Baghdad and all of Iran, according to Britannica.

Members of the Ilkhanid court wore expensive clothes and accessories, whether they were traveling in luxurious tents or settling in one of their palaces for a while. Little is known about direct sponsorship and court workshops because few extant objects include inscriptions with dedications or signatures.

Nevertheless, the elaborate vessels inlaid with silver and gold and the lavish gilded blue-glazed lajvardina ceramics must have been a familiar



sight for the ruler and his entourage and the most affluent people in Ilkhanid Iran and Iraq. Lajvardina (from the Persian lajvard, or lapis lazuli) tiles, painted in white, black, and red enamels and gold over a monochrome dark blue or turquoise glaze, were often used as well. The lajvardina technique seems to have been a specialty of Iranian potters

during the Ilkhanid period alone and was abandoned after their rule.

However, it is still possible to appreciate the technical and artistic skills of the craftsmen who found inspiration in the new visual language brought by the Mongols.

The Il-Khans consolidated their position in Iran and reunited the region as a political and territorial entity after several centuries of fragmented rule by petty dynasties.

During the reign of the Il-Khanid Maumud Ghuzun (reigned 1295-1304), the Il-Khans lost all contact with the remaining Mongol chieftains of China. Mahmud Ghuzun himself embraced Sunni Islam, and his reign was a period of Iranian cultural renaissance in which such scholars as Rashid al-Din flourished under his patronage.

Iranian artisan honored at Bukhara festival

From page 1 ► The value of Iran's handicrafts exports stood at \$120 million during the first eleven months of the past Iranian calendar year 1399 (March 20, 2020 – February 18, 2021), Mehr reported. The country's handicrafts exports slumped during the mentioned months in comparison to the same period last a year earlier due to the damage the coronavirus pandemic has inflicted on global trade.

The Islamic Republic exported \$427 million worth of handicrafts during the first eleven months of the



calendar year 1398. Of the figure, some \$190 million was earned via suitcase trade (allowed for customs-free and tax-free transfer) through 20 provinces, according to data compiled by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts. Ceramics, pottery vessels, handwoven cloths as well as personal ornamentations with precious and semi-precious gemstones are traditionally exported to Iraq, Afghanistan, Germany, the U.S., the UK, and other countries.

National Seal of Excellence awarded to 37 handicrafts

TEHRAN-The National Seal of Excellence has been granted to 37 high-quality works handcrafted by artisans of Qazvin province, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

Potteries and ceramics, traditional jewelry, glasswork, woodwork, kilim, and traditional embroidery are among the works awarded with the National Seal of Excellence, Seyyed Meysam Hessari explained on Wednesday.

Quality, originality, innovation in design and implementation, and compatibility with the environment were the criteria used to choose selected handicrafts, the official added.

The National Seal of Excellence is

given to high-quality, selected works to support craftspeople, improve the quality of their works and preserve the originality of this industry, and create sustainable employment.

With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the number of cities and villages registered by the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next. In January 2020, the cities of Shiraz, Malayer, and Zanjan and the village of Qassembad were designated by the WCC- Asia Pacific Region, putting Iran's number of world crafts cities and villages from ten to 14.

Qazvin was once the capital of the mighty Persian Empire, under Safavids,

from 1548 to 98. It is a major tourist destination with a wonderfully restored caravanserai-turned-arts precinct, some quirky museums, and a handful of decent eating options. For most travelers, Qazvin is also primarily the staging point for excursions to the famous Castles of the Assassins and trekking in the sensational Alamut Valley.

Also known as the castle of the Assassins, the 12th-century Alamut castle is nestled on top of a peak. It was once a shelter for the followers of Hasan-e Sabbah (1070-1124) who was a spiritual leader of an Islamic sect. In the early 1930s, British-Italian explorer and travel writer Freya Stark described her exploration of the place in her book "The



Valleys of the Assassins'.

Qazvin is also home to one of the biggest roofed caravanserais in the country, Sa'd-al Saltaneh caravanserai. Dating back to the Qajar era, it's a place for discovering tens of Hujreh or shops, cafes, yards, and a stunning mosque. It's a place for visitors who want to experience the culture, cuisine, and hospitality of Iran.

TEHRAN – Iran has the necessary planning and coordination on the agenda to improve the quantity and quality of technical cooperation with the Global Soil Partnership (GSP), Fariborz Abbasi, the deputy agriculture minister for water and soil, has said.

He made the remarks at the 10th Plenary Assembly of the Global Soil Partnership (GSP) held online on May 23-25.

Since its inception a decade ago, the event has worked to raise global and local awareness of the importance of sustainable soil management and guide policies to tackle issues ranging from erosion, salinization, and pollution to biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration, and nutrient imbalances.

In his speech, Abbasi referred to the experiences and achievements that have been gained in Iran in recent years in cooperation with the GSP.

Communicating the instructions for requiring soil science studies as one of the requirements for implementing the new irrigation systems plan, approving and notifying the soil law, establishing an office for agricultural soil affairs, forming a technical and national soil committee to cooperate with GSP, and paying attention to capacity building and promoting soil protection culture, were among the mentioned achievements.

The World Summit is hosted by the GSP Secretariat at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy, which was

Iran plans to enhance technical cooperation with GSP



attended by 300 participants from 115 countries, including ticated livestock member states.

Soil importance

This natural resource hosts over 25 percent of biodiversity and about 90 percent of living organisms spend part of their life cycle in the soil; it also plays an important role in supporting animal biodiversity above ground, including wildlife and domes-

The United Nations Development Program has put the total amount of global soil erosion at 24 billion tons, one-twelfth of which occurs in Iran.

The most widely recognized function of the soil is its support for food production. It is estimated that 95% of our food is directly or indirectly produced in the soil. Healthy soil supplies the essential nutrients, water, and oxygen that our food-producing plants need to grow and flourish.

Soil is also crucial for ensuring the continued growth and maintenance of natural and managed vegetation, including diverse forests and grasslands and the huge breadth of species and varieties that are cultivated or managed for their food, feed, fuel, fiber, and medicinal products.

Soil erosion 8 times above global average

According to the latest statistics, Iran loses 2 billion tons of soil annually, according to the 2018 report of the United Nations Development Program, the total amount of global soil erosion is 24 billion tons, so one-twelfth of all global soil erosion occurs in Iran.

This is while, Iran has about one percent of the world's land area, which means that its erosion rate is eight times higher than the global average, so Iran is suffering from severe degradation and soil erosion.

To understand the importance of soil protection, it should be said that it takes an average of 400 years to form a centimeter of soil on the planet.

In Iran, due to the severe erosion, it takes an estimated 800 years to produce a centimeter of soil, so the attention of the people and the government should be on average twice the global average.

Each ton of soil is valued at \$28 in terms of metal ores, so the loss of two billion tons of soil annually means the annual loss of \$56 billion, which is more than revenues from the sale of oil and agricultural products, gardens, livestock, poultry, and fisheries.

U.S. sanctions failed to affect successful coronavirus fight: minister



TEHRAN – The cruel U.S. sanctions and global arrogance against Iran did not hinder the country's success in controlling the coronavirus, as people rushed to the aid of the health system, Health Minister Bahram Einollahi has said.

He made the remarks in a meeting with the Secretary-General of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom, on the sidelines of the 75th World Health Assembly.

With the support of the people and the efforts of the health forces, the COVID-19 pandemic in Iran has been controlled, and for more than two weeks now, the daily mortality rate has reached less than 10, he stated.

So far, about 150 million doses of vaccine have been injected into the Iranian population and the coverage of

vaccination in the total population is about 75 percent, he highlighted.

The successful experience of the Islamic Republic of Iran in controlling the coronavirus pandemic was made known in the seventy-fifth session of the World Health Assembly.

Stating that the country has been able to reduce the Covid mortalities from 700 cases to less than 10, he added that this success has even been considered by the world's scientific circles.

Focused on the theme of “Health for Peace, Peace for Health”, the Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly was held in Geneva, Switzerland, from May 22 to 28.

Health development

Based on innovative indicators of health technology development in 2021, Iran was ranked 60th among 132 countries, which shows an improvement of 60 steps compared to 2014, the deputy health minister for research and technology, has announced.

A total of 1,670 knowledge-based firms are operating in the health sector, ISNA quoted Younes Panahi as saying.

He added that there are 13 science and technology

parks and 95 technology growth centers in the field of health, while 343 technological products have so far been licensed, and 335 inventions in medical sciences have been patented.

The health technology development is evaluated by the Global Innovation Index with seven indicators, including institutional structure, human capital and research, infrastructure, market and business complexity, technological knowledge, and creativity, he explained.

In June 2021, Ahmed al-Mandhari, the World Health Organization director for Eastern Mediterranean Region, said the Islamic Republic of Iran is a role model for primary health care.

For the past four decades, its PHC network has aimed to ensure that people have timely access to affordable, accessible, and acceptable essential health services, he explained.

“At the outset of the COVID-19 epidemic, the Islamic Republic of Iran made its primary health care system a core part of its national response. This PHC infrastructure allowed systematic outreach activities for early case detection, contact tracing, and triage for hospital referral (if necessary) by community health workers.

Tehran, Islamabad seeking further cooperation in health sector

TEHRAN – Iran and Pakistan on Wednesday decided to form a joint working group to explore opportunities for strengthening cooperation in this area.

The decision was made during a meeting held between Iranian Health Minister Bahram Einollahi and Pakistani Federal Minister for Health Abdul Qadir Patel on the sidelines of the World Health Assembly in Geneva, the Associated Press of Pakistan reported.

During the meeting, it was high-

lighted that in the global health context, both countries should work closely with the other EMRO Member States and WHO to ensure that realization of tangible measures to promote health remains at the forefront of the global development agenda.

For this purpose, it was agreed that the respective Missions of both countries in Geneva may work closely, especially on important matters like the upcoming negotiations on the proposed pandemic treaty, International

Health Regulations amendments, and sustainable finances of WHO.

The Pakistani minister said that Iran has carried out excellent reforms in the health sector, especially in terms of improving health care services. Iran has done commendable work in extending health insurance coverage, he said.

Both dignitaries considered areas of cooperation including enhanced cross border cooperation for infectious disease control, exchange of experts for technical assistance on Universal

Health Coverage focusing on strengthening public health and primary health care delivery, exchange of healthcare financing experts for lesson sharing and guidance for developing health-care financing policies, cooperation in medical training and research, and assisting medical professionals by granting fellowships from respective institutions and cooperation in developing mental health infrastructure and training regarding mental health services in outreach facilities.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

System to be set up for monitoring, forecasting agricultural drought

A system will be launched to monitor, forecast and report the agricultural lands being hit by drought, Amir Qaderi, an official with Disaster Management Organization has announced.

Over a meeting of a special working group for addressing drought and risks threatening agricultural sector, a plan for establishing a system for monitoring and forecasting agricultural drought in the country was approved and submitted to the Disaster Management Organization for review, he explained.

“Following the study of other countries’ experiences and existing global methods, the necessity of establishing a domestic system to recognize the lands prone to agricultural drought was emphasized,” he noted.

سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران ایجاد می‌شود

معاون امور بازسازی و بازتوانی سازمان مدیریت بحران کشور از ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران خبر داد. به گزارش پایگاه اطلاع رسانی سازمان مدیریت بحران کشور، امیر قادری روز یکشنبه با اعلام این خبر گفت: طرح ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران طی جلسه‌ای با حضور مدیران و کارشناسان سازمان مدیریت بحران و وزارت جهاد کشاورزی بررسی شد.

وی ادامه داد: پس از بررسی تجارب داخلی و روش‌های موجود جهانی، ضرورت استقرار نمونه بومی پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی مورد تأکید قرار گرفت و با مشارکت مراکز پژوهشی سازمان هواشناسی کشور و پژوهشکده حفاظت خاک و آب‌خیزداری طرح ایجاد سامانه پایش و پیش‌بینی خشکسالی کشاورزی ایران پیشنهاد شد.

SOCIETY

MAY 26, 2022

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

7

Intl. scientific festival announces winners

From page 1 ► In this regard, over 60 countries have submitted their works, which include 1894 cases, to the Secretariat. Associations from Nepal, Mauritius, India, Ukraine, Iraq, etc. participated in the festival in person. Other countries such as the Netherlands, Spain, the United States, Poland, France, Syria, Pakistan, Canada, Brazil, Malaysia, etc. also followed the event virtually.

The first to third selected projects will receive cash prizes and all the worthy and selected groups honored at the closing ceremony of the festival.



Tribes in Iran

Part 12

Many of the dispersed remnants of the former confederacy still live in the province: Among them are the Javanrudi tribe, consisting mainly of the Rostam Begi tayefa, in the dehestan of Javanrud, and the Tala tribe, consisting of the Qobadi, Walad Begi, and Baba Jani tayefas.

Many of the Qobadis are now settled in the dehestan of Azgala. The Walad Begis have homes in Ravansar, in the southwest of Javanrud, and in the south of Bayengan, and winter pastures at Sar-e Qal'a.

Most of the Baba Jani tribesmen have become sedentary farmers and stockbreeders in the dehestan of the same name.

Also counted as Jaf are the Owraman (Avroman) tribes, who are divided according to their abodes into the Owraman-e Lahuni in Nowsud and Pava in Kermanshah, and the Owraman-e Takht in Kordestan.

The very small Inaqi (or Inakhi and Emami groups are also remnants of the Jaf confederacy.

The Sanjabi tribe, one of the most important in Kermanshah, apparently came into being in the second quarter of the 19th century as a coalition of groups of immigrants into the area from Fars, Iraq, and Lorestan (M. K. Mokri, “Ashayer-e Kord,” Yadgar 5/1-2, p. 85).

They used to move between summer quarters in the Mahidasht plain in the west of Kermanshah and winter quarters in the Zohab district on the Iraqi frontier, but are now either settled, for the most part in the Mahidasht, in the dehestan of Sanjabi in the shahrestan of Eslamabad, or make only short transhumances, though some still move annually to Zohab where they grow crops and rear livestock.

The principal Sanjabi tiras are the Dalian, Chala-bi (or Chalavi), and Khorda-Dasteja. Some groups, such as the Pir Ali and Buli tiras, speak dialects which differ from the main Sanjabi dialect.

The Guran tribe is one of the oldest in this region. Its center is the village of Gahvara in the dehestan of Guran. The Qalkhani tayefeh was formerly included in the tribe, but the present tayefehs of the Guran are the Bivanij (Bivanij), with summer quarters north of Kerend and winter quarters in Zohab; the Chupankara, now mostly sedentarized around Qal'a-e Qazi; the Haydari, who move between Siavana (north of Kerend) and Tang-e Zohab; and the Tofangchi, now sedentarized in the north of the dehestan of Guran.

In religion the Guran are generally Ahl-e Haqq

(q.v.). They are thought to be of non-Kurdish origin. The Qalkhanis, who lived in the dehestan of the same name in the north of the bakhsh of Kerend, are today regarded as a separate tribe.

The majority of the Kalhor, another big Kurdish tribe, live in Bakhtaran and either are sedentarized or move between summer and winter quarters within the province, though a few migrate annually to the Mehran-Dehloran belt in Ilam.

The following components of the Kalhor have been mentioned: the Chenar o Kenar tireh, the tayefehs of the Hasanabad area 40 km southwest of Kermanshah, a Kalhor tireh in the Mahidasht, and “foreign” tayefehs who are not pure Kalhor and probably came from Posht-e Kuh (Ilam) and Khuzestan, as well as some others.

The tribes of Kerend, a collection of small tribes most of whom broke away from larger tribes, are the Baba Jani, Jaf-e Gandomban (an offshoot of the Tala?), Simani-ye Gasur, Jowzaga (Ahl-e Haqq, originally Guran), Kolah-pahn (related to the Kalhor), and Habibavand (immigrants from Posht-e Kuh).

Other tribes of Kurds, Laks, and Lors whose presence in Kermanshah is mentioned are the Jalilvand at Danavar, the Jomeyr (or Jomur), the Torkashvand, and the Zula.

The last three make annual migrations from Kermanshah to Hamedan province and to the Mehran-Dehloran belt in Ilam, some going as far as Khuzestan. (Keyvanpur Mokri, 1326/1947-1327/1948; Sazman-e Barnameh wa Budjeh, 1355/1976, II. pp. 1-81; Borqai, 1352/1973).

In Ilam (the old Posht-e Kuh), Kurdish, Lak, and Lor tribes converge and are so intermingled that identification of them as such is not easy (Kayhan, Joghrafia II, p. 465). The Kurdish tribes of the ostan live on the bakhshes of Abdanan and Zarrinabad and parts of Mehran, Dehloran, and Musian; they are the Jayervand, Mamsivand, Koll-e Kuh, Qa'ed-e Khorda, Dinarvand, and Dast-Alivand.

The principal mixed Kurdish-Lori tribes are the Arkawazi, Malekshahi, Gachi, Shuhan, Khezal, Bijanvand, Hedomini, Alishirvan, and Mishkhas, and there are some others. In addition, there are tribes which annually migrate to Ilam from Hamadan, Kermanshah, and Lorestan, e.g., the Zangana, Zula, Kalhor, Jomeyr, and Beyranvand. (Sazman-e Barnameh wa Budjeh, 1355/1976, III, pp. 1-44; Ref'ati, 1356 /1977).

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

To be continued

COVID-19 UPDATES ON MAY 25

New cases	293
New deaths	5
Total cases	7,230,882
Total deaths	141,293
New hospitalized patients	76
Patients in critical condition	626
Total recovered patients	7,039,343
Diagnostic tests conducted	52,090,424
Doses of vaccine injected	149,796,958

TEHRAN TIMES

www.tehrantimes.com

Managing Director: **Mohammad Shojaeian**

Editor-in-Chief: **Ali A.Jenabzadeh**

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895

Email: info@tehrantimes.com

Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000

Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051430

Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807

Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603

Printed at: Jame Jam Bartar Borna - 44197737

Tehrantimes79

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

MAY 26, 2022

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Time wears out bodies, renews hopes, brings death nearer and takes away aspirations. Whoever gets anything from the world lives in anxiety for holding it and whoever loses anything passes his days grieving over the loss.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:13:01 Evening: 20:31 Dawn: 4:10 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:52 (tomorrow)

Arabic literature in Iran

Part 4

The Anwar al-tanzil owes its popularity to its hermeneutical approach, which is neither strictly literalist nor purely allegorical, but somehow combines both in a thorough exposition that is neither too long nor too greatly detailed.

That these Persians wrote in Arabic, rather than in Persian, was owing to the prestige that Arabic had acquired as an international language of learning for the Islamic community in general.

Sad ad-Din Masud Taftazani (d. 1389), perhaps one of the best many-sided Persian Muslim scholars, wrote all of his works in Arabic, including his well-known and still authoritative Sharh al-aqa'ed al-nasafiya, a commentary on the al-Aqa'ed of his fellow Persian Najm ad-Din Omar ibn Mohammad Nasafi (d. 1142).

Taftazani's contemporary and rival, Ali ibn Mohammad Jorjani (d. 1413), author of the famous work on definitions called the Tarifat, also wrote all of his works in Arabic.

These men knew Persian, to be sure, and by their time numerous scholarly works in Persian existed, so that they could have written in that language. But they preferred Arabic.

While all of the above-mentioned authors are Sunni, the Persian Shia writers in Arabic have also left behind a mass of religious literature of great importance for the Shia tradition.

In the field of Hadith literature, for example, the important early works were the *Osul al-kafi* of Kolayni (d. 941), the *Man la yahzorohu'l-faqih* (For those without access to a religious teacher) of Ibn Babawayh (Babuya, d. 991-92), and the two works of Shaykh al-Ta'efa Abu Jafar Mohammad Tusi (d. 1067), the *Tahzib al-ahkam* and *al-Estebсар*.

All four of these works have become mainstays of Shiism. The only difference between the Shia and Sunni Hadith collections is that the former are transmitted by the Shia Imams and therefore contain their remarks too, for they function as guardians over the Imamate inherited from the Prophet (S) by Imam Ali (AS), at least in the view of Shia theologians.

In any case, it is remarkable that the principal collections of Hadith both in the Sunni and Shia world were all made by Persian Muslims.

When we turn to the domain of Arabic Sufi literature, we soon realize that here too Iran has been instrumental in establishing the foundations of Islamic spiritual doctrines.

The early Sufis are to be found mostly in Khorasan where a strong religious fervor had been created by the Holy War in the early days of Islam.

Of those first Khorasanian Sufis, such as Abu Yazid Bestami (d. 874), we have only brief statements dispersed in later Sufi anthologies. Soon, however, there appeared important formulations of Sufism, as we can discover in the many works of Abu Abdullah Mohammad Hakim Termezi (d. 898).

One of his books, the *Khatm al-welaya* (The sealing of sanctity), is an important Sufi doctrinal text, written in a much more analytical manner than we find in other early Sufis; it shows already the extent of Greek influence on the thought patterns of mystically-inclined Muslims, especially those who had a penchant for speculations.

The book spells out in some detail the question of sanctity as it relates to saints, sages, and prophets, and it discusses the important question of the "sealing of sanctity," his identity,

“The Situation of Mehdi” director Hadi Hejazifar receives IAA Plaque of Glory

From Page 1 ▶ “The film will be studied in narrative, semiotics and several other issues, and the results will be published in a book in the future,” he added.

“Art essentially exaggerates facts to represent events that normally happen in daily life, however, the issue of martyrdom and the Sacred Defense do not need any exaggeration. Martyrdom is an art in itself, and we all should know that all other arts can never surpass the art of martyrdom, because it carries numerous meanings and is truly miraculous,” Namvar-Motlaq stated.

In his short speech, IAA deputy director Ali-Akbar Salehi also said, “We do not want to



IAA director Bahman Namvar-Motlaq (L) awards director Hadi Hejazifar with the IAA Plaque of Glory for his film “The Situation of Mehdi” in Tehran on May 24, 2022.

transform the life story of Martyr Bakeri into a legend, because he and other persons like him are the reality and the truth taken from the history of our nation.”

In his acceptance speech, Hejazifar referred to the shooting of his film on location in Abadan and expressed his sympathy with the families of the victims of the collapse of the Metropol Building in the southwestern Iranian city.

He also went on to declare his intention to make the film and said, “Many persons in my family, including my father and uncles, were serving in the 31st Shura Division. When I went to the University of Tehran, my father asked me to make a film about the life story of Mr. Mehdi.”

He said that people from every walk of life joined together to defend their country during the war and express his hope that his film could bring the hearts of the country's people closer together.

“The Situation of Mehdi” premiered in February at the 40th Fajr Film Festival and won the Crystal Simorghs for best film and best directorial debut at Iran's most important film event.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei also praised the war drama for its “accurate details and true narrative.”

War photojournalist Maryam Kazemzadeh, widow of guerilla Asghar Vesali, dies at 66

TEHRAN – War photojournalist Maryam Kazemzadeh, best known for a photo collection depicting Iran's war against separatists in the Kordestan region in 1980, passed away on Tuesday from cancer at the age of 66.

She was the widow of Asghar Vesali, the leader of Dastmal Sorkhha, an Iranian guerilla group that joined Mostafa Chamran, the chief of the Iranian volunteers fighting a war against the separatists in the Kordestan region in the early 1980s.

Kazemzadeh was one of the few freelance Iranian women photojournalists, who recorded scenes of battles against Iraqi



An undated photo shows war photojournalist Maryam Kazemzadeh and her husband Asghar Vesali in the warzone.

invaders in the early days of the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war.

Most parts of her career in war photography included the days

she accompanied Chamran in his guerilla war in the Kordestan region, where she met Vesali.

He was the leader of Dastmal Sorkhha, a guerilla group having a narrow piece of red cloth around their necks. The pieces of cloth were from a shirt one of their comrade wore in an operation. The comrade was killed and they tore up his shirt into pieces and tied them around their neck, swore not to remove the piece of the cloth until they would get his revenge.

War for the motherland joined Kazemzadeh to Vesali and they began their married life in the warzone in Mahabad. Following

the defeat of the separatists in Kordestan, the couple left the region for the frontline in the Sar-e Pol-e Zahab region. A few days later, Vesali was killed in a battle in the Hajian Strait in Gilan-e Gharb.

Part of Kazemzadeh's collection was published in “War Photographers”, a book published by the Revayate Fath Cultural Foundation.

The Iranian Artists Forum also showcased a number of her photos in a solo exhibition in 2015.

Kazemzadeh was buried on Wednesday after a special funeral in Tehran's Behesht Zahra Cemetery.

“Utopia for Realists” at Iranian bookstores



Front cover of the Persian edition of Rutger Bregman's book “Utopia for Realists”.

TEHRAN – Dutch writer Rutger Bregman's book “Utopia for Realists: How We Can Build the Ideal World” has been

published in Persian.

Now is the publisher of the book translated into Persian by Mazda Movahed.

After working all day at jobs we often dislike, we buy things we don't need.

Bregman, a Dutch historian, reminds us it needn't be this way—and in some places it isn't. Bregman's TED Talk about universal basic income seemed impossibly radical when he delivered it in 2014.

A quarter of a million views later, the subject of that video is being seriously considered by leading economists and government leaders the world over. It's just one of the many utopian ideas that Bregman proves is possible today.

“Utopia for Realists” is one of those rare books that takes you by surprise and challenges what you think can happen.

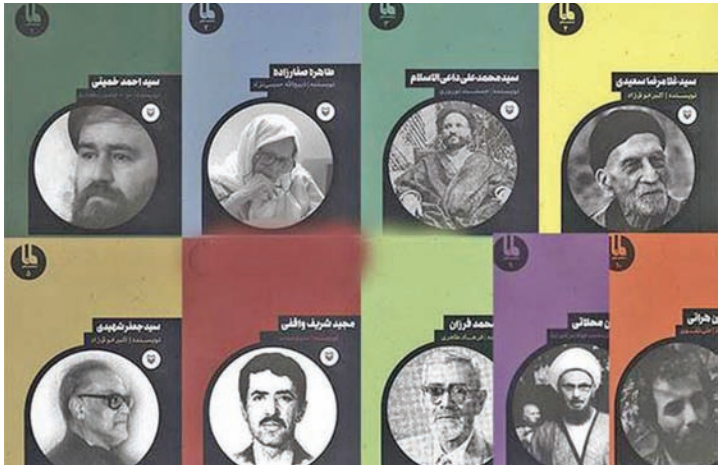
Mana Characters

An interview with Muhammad Ghobadi

The “Mana Characters” book series has recently been published by Soore Mehr, which was compiled by the Mana Characters research group. The group has compiled biographies of people who are unknown or lesser-known yet were involved in a variety of political, scientific, economic, and artistic activities during the revolution, using archive information from the Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization.

Hussein Qomi, Seyyed Ahmad Khomeini, Muhammad Farzan, Salman Harati, Gholam Reza Saeedi, Tahereh Safarzadeh, Muhammad Ali Daei al-Islam, Jafar Shahidi, Majid Sharif Waqefi, and Baha'uddin Mahallati are among the people introduced by this collection.

Some of the books in this



series are written by Muhammad Ghobadi, who has a master's degree in Iranian history from the Islamic period.

* What were your concerns when you decided to write the books, and how did you come up with the idea?

In 2009, I and a group of researchers from the Art Bureau discussed how to use famous figures from diverse social, political, cultural, and artistic fields as role models for educated young readers who do not necessarily study history. As a result, we developed the Mana characters group to introduce these

characters and began working on it with the help of writers who were interested in and experienced in those subjects. We have been able to publish about thirty books so far, twelve years after its inception, and the process is still ongoing.

* Is it necessary to preserve oral history in today's society? How did you make a historical book more engaging?

I must mention that the “Mana Characters” collection is a collection of research books, with interviews and oral history serving as one of the sources for their creation. Also, we aimed to have a fluent text with normal literature to convey a research work rather than thinking about the interestingness of a text, which was of course on our minds. On the other hand, we wanted our readers to read a history that focused on characters rather than events.