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Millions of Iranians celebrate 45th anniversary of victory of the Islamic Revolution across Iran

Revolutionary Spirit: 45 Years on

Leader: Tragedy in Gaza proved current world order is false and will be destroyed

TEHRAN - On the occasion of the auspicious Eid al-Mab'ath, Ayatollah Khamenei met with Iranian officials, ambassadors and representatives of Islamic countries on February 8, 2024. During this meeting he emphasized that the tragic events in Gaza has proved that the current world order is false and will be destroyed.

"The tragedy of Gaza is the tragedy of humanity and it proves that the current world order is completely wrong, and that it will not last and will be destroyed," he said, according to khamenei.ir. ▶ Page 2

Iran FM in Damascus for talks with Syrian officials

TEHRAN - Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian has noted that violence is not a solution to the Palestinian issue and will bear no fruit for warmongers.

In a meeting with Lebanese Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri in Beirut on Saturday, the Iranian minister demanded a quick stop to Israel's attacks in Gaza.

According to Amir Abdollahian, all significant regional and international parties agree that Israel's violent assault has failed, despite the regime's full support from the U.S. officials.

Washington, he argues, does not intend to broaden the scope of the region's war, but there is no indication that the Americans are prepared to work for an end to Israel's barbarism.

The Iranian foreign minister also remarked on U.S. and British attacks in Yemen.

He stated that the two nations made a "strategic mistake" by violating Yemen's national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

He went on to continue that the bombings on Yemen exacerbate the regional and Red Sea crises.

According to the minister, Iran's foreign policy objective includes assistance for the Palestinian resistance. ▶ Page 2

Iranian Pearls in the Persian Gulf

By Amir Mohammad Esmaeili

PhD Candidate at Middle East Studies Institute, Shanghai International Studies University

The three islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb, despite their small size, carry strategic and distinctive importance. These islands indeed play a crucial role in controlling maritime movements at the entrance of the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz. The enduring and legitimate presence of Iran has been instrumental in upholding stability and security in this critical regional and global thoroughfare. This strategic presence has thwarted attempts by Western powers to assert control through their allies and undermine the region's security. However, the names of the three islands have Persian origins. "Abu Musa" is short for "Bum Musa," referring to the house of Musa, while "Tunb" is derived from the Persian Tangestani, meaning hill and mound.

Examining historical records reveals that these islands have been an integral part of Iran's territory until the interference of Western colonial powers in the region. In the early 16th century, the Portuguese were the first colonial power to enter into the Persian Gulf, subsequently seizing Hormuz Island. Over time, other colonial powers began to make their way into this region. British forces entered the Persian Gulf under the guise of securing shipping routes and curbing the slave trade. After some time, they occupied these Iranian islands and handed them over to the emirates of Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah. ▶ Page 3

People of Tehran heading to Azadi Square to commemorate the anniversary of the victory of Islamic Revolution on Sunday, 11 February, 2024.

Non-oil trade with neighbors reaches nearly \$50b in 10 months

TEHRAN - The value of Iran's non-oil trade with its neighbors reached \$49.83 billion during the first 10 months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2023-January 19, 2024), the spokesman of the International Relations and Trade Development Committee of Iran's House of Industry, Mining and Trade said.

Ruhollah Latifi put the weight of non-oil trade with the neighboring countries at 79.98 million tons in the said period and stated that trade with the neighbors increased by 1.8 percent in comparison to the same period last year.

During the mentioned 10 months, Iran exported 60.368 million tons of goods worth \$23.15 billion to its neighbors, while importing 19.61 million tons of commodities valued at \$26.68 billion.

He named Iraq, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Turkey, Pakistan, and Afghanistan as the top importers of Iranian goods among the neighboring countries, and the UAE, Turkey, Russia, Oman, and Pakistan as the main sources of imports in the said 10 months. ▶ Page 4

Full-scale Israeli ground offensive in Rafah looms with U.S. blank check

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN-Nothing is more synonymous with war crimes and crimes against humanity than targeting civilians, civilian infrastructure and medical facilities where displaced people take refuge.

Israel has been committing such despicable and barbaric acts since launching its military operation in the Gaza Strip more than four months ago.

According to the Health Ministry in Gaza, Israel's relentless strikes against the Gaza Strip have claimed the lives of over 28,000 Palestinians. Most of the victims are women and children.

Thousands of others are feared trapped under the rubble with Israeli forces preventing ambulances and rescue crews from reaching them. ▶ Page 5

Deep dive into Tehran Times archive

Iran marks 1st anniversary of sacred independence



The Tehran Times, which began publishing in 1979, was founded during the early years of Iran's quest for independence.

The English-language daily newspaper has been regarded by Mohammad Beheshti, one of the most influential and renowned figures of the Islamic Republic, as the "voice of the Islamic Revolution". Such a label, made the staff at the Tehran Times feel an even bigger responsibility to accurately and effectively report the daily occurrences in the country and become a helping hand in the consolidation and entrenchment of the new people-led governance.

For that, the paper needed to follow the events with a keen eye and try to draw attention to issues that were essential to be addressed.

That's why with the approaching of the 10-day Fajr occasion, the period from February 1st (Bahman 12th) to February 11th (Bahman 22nd) of 1977 during which Imam Khomeini returned to Iran after 15 years of exile, we have decided to take a look at how the Tehran Times commemorated the historic period in February of 1980. Such an act would help us understand where we stand today, and give us a clearer vision of the hardships Iranians had to endure to be able to celebrate

Iran eyes a bright outlook with Vietnam

TEHRAN- The Iranian ambassador says that Tehran and Hanoi both possess the potential to boost cooperation.

Ali Akbar Nazari, ambassador of Iran to Vietnam, made the remarks in an article for Vietnam News on February 11, 2024. Following are excerpts from the article: A very bright outlook and promising relations between Iran and Vietnam exist in the light of their leaders' political will, common interests, and huge potential.

The history of relations between Iran and Vietnam can be traced back to the 15th century when the first Iranian merchants traveled to Vietnam. These early interactions laid the foundation for future connections and paved the way for deeper engagement between the two countries. 2023 marked a milestone in the course of bilateral relations between Iran and Vietnam as both countries commemorated the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

The best proof of the good relations between Tehran and Hanoi is the frequency of high-profile political visits in the past several years. Particularly in the past year, we have witnessed strong development of our bilateral ties through high-ranking visits of Vuong Dinh Hue, Chairman of the National Assembly in August 2023, and of H.E. General To Lam, Minister of Public Security, in May 2023.

U.S., Israel face unsolvable quagmire: defense minister

TEHRAN- Iran's Defense Minister, Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani, says the U.S. and Israel are stuck in an intractable quagmire.

During the Bahman 22 rally commemorating the Islamic Revolution, General Ashtiani criticized U.S. support for Israel, claiming both Washington and Tel Aviv are embroiled in a complex issue without easy solutions. Highlighting the importance of public support for the country, General Ashtiani attributed the nation's stability and the revolution's advancement to public cohesion and participation.

He emphasized the large turnout at the rally, describing the attendees as enthusiastic, revolutionary, and opposed to foreign enemies, and supportive of the underprivileged.

"As long as this support exists, we will undoubtedly achieve victory," he declared, linking public backing to the Iranian government's success.

He further asserted that the rally served as a

the 45th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution today. February 1st in the year 1980 was a Friday. The Tehran Times's covering of the Fajr decade began a day later, on Saturday.

Tuesday, February 12, 1980

Iran celebrates 1st anniversary of Islamic Revolution

On February 12, a day after the first anniversary of the victory of the Iranian Revolution, the Tehran Times devoted a vast part of its coverage to celebrations that had taken place across the country. People from all walks of life had taken to the streets in various Iranian cities to voice their delight and express hope for the future of their now independent country. This tradition has persisted till today. On February 12th of 2024 even more people marched through the streets than the ones who had showed up in 1980, to let the global arrogance know that even after 45 years, the Iranian people are still committed to the Islamic Revolution and its values.

"Iran celebrated the first Anniversary of its Islamic Revolution yesterday with military parades here and in other major cities. Millions of Iranians, chanting slogans and burning incense, celebrated the first anniversary of the nation's revolutionary government with a victory parade through Tehran.

Roads leading to the parade route were filled with people as far as the eye could see, many of them chanting: "Allah-o-Akbar," God is Great. Many Iranians were so excited they stormed into the line of march and the radio appealed for them to move back to the sidewalk. Imam Khomeini from his hospital bed yesterday, warned the Islamic world against any accommodation with the East or the West. His message was read by his son, Hojjatoleslam Ahmad Khomeini, before a tumultuous gathering of hundreds of thousands of people at Liberty Square in Western Tehran," The Tehran Times reported.

A recordable number of agreements and MoUs between the two countries signed during these visits together with previous deals have provided a proper framework for boosting cooperation in all fields, including trade and economic cooperation, which was emphasized by leaders of the two countries as a major pillar of bilateral relations in the coming time.

Despite strong headwinds in the global economy and other challenges, two-way trade between the two countries in 2023 increased by 66 percent compared to 2022.

This cooperation is expected to be strengthened on the basis of the huge potential of the two nation's economies in 2024.

In addition, Iran, heir to an ancient civilization, possesses a rich cultural identity and unique customs. With a variety of historical and natural attractions, a long list of recognized World Heritages, diversity of traditions and hospitality, Iran is heaven for tourists. It is also one of the safest and most secure countries in the region and the world. It is also believed that thanks to the latest decision of the Government of Iran to waive tourist visas for holders of Vietnamese ordinary passports starting from February 4, 2024, people-to-people exchange and tourism cooperation between the two countries will develop robustly in the coming year.

message of solidarity with the Islamic Revolution and the Palestinian people, highlighting Iran's stance on both issues.

According to him, the high attendance confirms the Iranian people's opposition to "enemies of God and the domination system."

Finally, he expressed hope for high voter turnout in the upcoming elections, suggesting public participation remains crucial for the country's future.

Bahman 22, which corresponds with February 11, is observed each year with tremendous patriotic fervor in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

On this day forty-five years ago, the West-backed monarch Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was overthrown in a popular uprising led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the charismatic leader of the Islamic revolution. It also ended the meddling of foreign hegemonic powers, most notably the U.S., in Iran's internal affairs.

Leader: Tragedy in Gaza proved current world order is false and will be destroyed

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"The tragedy of Gaza is the tragedy of humanity and it proves that the current world order is completely wrong, and that it will not last and will be destroyed," he said, according to khamenei.ir.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution addressed the ongoing tragedy in Gaza, describing it as not only a tragedy for the Islamic world but also for all of humanity. He argued that this situation proves the ultimate failure of the



current global order. "Today, the US, England and many European countries and their followers are behind the criminal and blood-stained hands of the Zionist regime. This complicity signifies the false nature and fragility of the existing world order, which will [ultimately] be destroyed."

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution deemed the bombing of the hospital and the killing of nearly 30,000 people in Gaza as a stain on Western culture and civilization. He stated that America's funds, weapons, and political aid were the driving forces behind these atrocities. "Even the Zionists themselves

admitted they could not continue the war for a single day without US weapons and hence, the Americans are also guilty and responsible for this tragic incident."

Ayatollah Khamenei suggested that the resolution to the Gaza crisis lies in the world powers and pro-Western powers stepping back from the issue. He emphasized that Palestinian fighters have demonstrated their ability to handle the situation without major setbacks so far.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution emphasized that the governments have a duty to cut off political aid, propaganda, weapons and consumer goods to the Zionist regime. He pointed out that it is the duty of the nations to pressure the governments to perform this important duty.

Iran FM in Damascus for talks with Syrian officials

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He went on to continue that the bombings on Yemen exacerbate the regional and Red Sea crises.

According to the minister, Iran's foreign policy objective includes assistance for the Palestinian resistance.

Given Lebanon's support for Palestine, Amir Abdollahian voiced Tehran's appreciation for the Lebanese people.

He also underlined that Iran will try to promote the political process and stability in Lebanon.

During the meeting, Berri hailed Iran for supporting Lebanon, calling for more efforts to spell the end of war against the Palestinians and establish ceasefire.

The Lebanese official said Beirut supports any agreement among the Palestinian groups to run their territories.

"Iran vehemently backs stability of Lebanon"

In a separate meeting with Caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati in Beirut on Saturday, Amir Abdollahian reiterated Tehran's solid support for the augmentation of stability in Lebanon.

The top Iranian diplomat added that Tehran has gone to great lengths over the past few months to put an end to Israel's brutality in Gaza and thwart the spillover of the conflict.

Abdollahian pointed out that the Palestinians are sole owners of Palestine, adding that "we know they have political plans and initiatives for the post-war phase as well."

Mikati said in the meeting that more needs to be done to establish an immediate ceasefire in the besieged Gaza Strip.

"Peace will be restored in case of ending Israeli onslaught on Gaza"

Addressing a joint press conference with his Lebanese counterpart Abdallah Bou Habib in Beirut on Saturday, Amir Abdollahian said that peace will be restored to West Asia if Israel stops its war in Gaza.

The Iranian minister emphasized the obvious truth that the United States continues to supply weapons to Israel throughout its barbaric war on the beleaguered Gaza Strip.

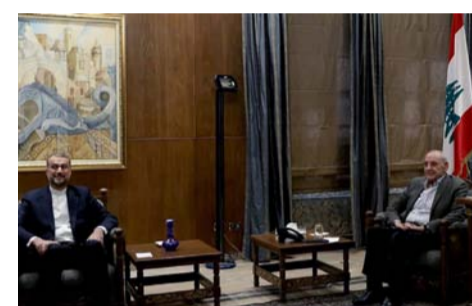
Amir Abdollahian also pointed out the absurdity of the U.S. speaking about seeking a political solution to the Gaza issue.

Pointing to his "good" conversations with Lebanese authorities on bilateral and regional matters, the Iranian minister stated that Tehran and Beirut have long opposed the extension of conflict in the region.

The top Iranian diplomat also averred that what Hamas did both in fighting the crimes of Israel and pursuing a political path is truly "wise and careful." "It is clear to the world that more than four months of war in Gaza and the West Bank have led to no tangible result for Israel and its supporters," he continued.

The Lebanese foreign minister, for his part, stated that Tehran and Beirut believe that all nations should work to cease the current assault in Gaza and send humanitarian relief to the war-torn Palestinians.

Bou Habib said in talks with his Iranian counterpart, the two sides discussed the necessity to implement UN Security Council



Resolution 1701 on stability in Lebanon.

Iran FM meets Hezbollah Leader, Palestinian groups

The Iranian foreign minister met with Lebanese Hezbollah leader Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah and leaders of Palestinian resistance groups during a visit to Beirut, discussing the Gaza conflict, the Palestine issue, and regional developments.

Nasrallah expressed gratitude for Iran's support for the Palestinians, and emphasized the strength and cooperation of resistance groups in Gaza.

He asserted that Israel faces a strategic impasse and has not achieved its objectives.

Calling resistance a key factor in regional dynamics, he expressed confidence in a Palestinian victory.

Amir Abdollahian also met with the leaders of Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hamas, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

They discussed the situation in Gaza, highlighting resistance successes and emphasizing the growing pressure on Israel.

The Palestinian leaders praised Iran's support and called for Palestinian unity in managing the conflict, political landscape, and post-conflict recovery.

World leaders congratulate Iran on anniversary of Islamic Revolution

TEHRAN- Iran has witnessed memorable emotional outpourings, with world leaders sending congratulatory messages over the anniversary of the victory of the Islamic Revolution of 1979.

Ceremonies have been held across the world to commemorate the 45th anniversary of the glorious victory of Iran's Islamic Revolution.

Along with ceremonies that took place in various countries, several world leaders sent messages of congratulations to Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi as well as the valiant Iranian nation. The

messages came from the leaders of Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Belarus, Azerbaijan, the Vatican, Russia, China, Japan, South Korea, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Spain, Hungary, Bangladesh, Denmark and Ireland.

Iran's Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali said during a ceremony at the Islamic Center in Moscow on Friday evening that the U.S. has sought to be the only hegemonic power in the world following the fall of the Soviet Union.

A similar event was held at the Iranian

Embassy in Beijing, with diplomats and foreign representatives, as well as media, cultural and economic figures in attendance.

Iran's Ambassador to China Mohsen Bakhtiar reminded the participants of the numerous achievements and breakthroughs in various fields under the tutelage of the Islamic Republic over the last 45 years. Each year on February 11, Iranians mark the overthrow of the U.S.-backed Pahlavi regime in a popular uprising led by Imam Khomeini, the leader of the revolution.

Daesh terrorist eliminated at Iraqi border: deputy minister

TEHRAN- Iran's Deputy Minister of Interior, Majid Mirahmadi, has announced the elimination of a Daesh (ISIS) terrorist during an attempted border crossing from Iraq last night.

He hailed vigilant security forces for preventing the incursion.

Mirahmadi also provided security updates regarding the Bahman 22

rally, commemorating the Iranian Revolution. He confirmed its peaceful and successful completion, despite concerns following a previous terrorist attack in the city of Kerman. He commended the public's participation in the rally, exceeding last year's turnout.

"This enthusiastic response promises a high voter turnout in

the upcoming elections," Mirahmadi stated, connecting the rally's success to potential electoral engagement.

He elaborated on the comprehensive security measures employed, highlighting continuous efforts by intelligence and security forces. He praised their effectiveness in monitoring and neutralizing potential threats posed by terrorist groups.

"Regular meetings by the Interior Minister and the Security Council ensure clear responsibility allocation for each organization," Mirahmadi continued, emphasizing coordinated security efforts. He attributed the lack of recent border issues to the combined vigilance of security forces and the public.

Iran Navy welcomes 94th flotilla after mission

TEHRAN- Following a protracted mission in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, the 94th flotilla of warships of the Iranian Navy has reached the territorial seas.

Amid tensions heightened by foreign intervention in the region, the Islamic Republic is increasing its naval presence in the high seas.

After traversing more than 12,000 kilometers of maritime channels over the course of 91 days, the

flotilla, headed by the frigate Alborz, reached the Islamic Republic's territorial seas on Saturday.

Rear Admiral Farhad Fattahi, deputy commander of the First Naval Region of the Iranian Navy, praised the presence of Iranian flotillas in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden at a welcoming ceremony held in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas.

The commander went on to note that the naval deployment protects Iran's national interests and

acts as a source of pride for the Iranian people.

Captain Ali Khazaei, commander of the Iranian Navy's 94th flotilla, stated that Iranian marines followed the guidelines established by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei for the protection of Iran's interests and assets on the high seas, and raised the Islamic Republic's flag in international waters.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Revolutionary Spirit: 45 Years On

TEHRAN - Citizens from all walks of life found themselves on the streets of Iranian cities on Sunday, as they marched through different parts of the country to celebrate the 45th anniversary of an event that gave them the independence and national harmony they have today.

On February 11, 1979, Iranians figured that years of unyielding fight and resistance against the tyrannical Shah regime had finally come to fruition. They marked their victory after the last remaining cohorts of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi fled the country, and the Shah's army announced that it would not be standing against the will of the Iranian people anymore.

Since then, Iranians have been taking to the streets every year to mark this grand victory and renew their allegiance to the Islamic Revolution by chanting slogans and waving the country's national flag.

This year, millions of people took part in the celebrations in over 1,400 cities and 35,000 villages all around Iran. Images captured during the rallies showed high-ranking officials joining ordinary people and walking with them side by side. The demonstrations that take place on the 22nd of the solar calendar month of Bahman each year are not exclusive to only one group of Iranians; everyone pours to the streets to honor one of the biggest days of their country's history. The day which gave



the Iranian people a new sense of motivation and hope to strive to get back to the astute regional role they had for thousands of years.

The demonstrations took place this year as Western-based media outlets as well as American and European politicians move away from a failed hybrid war they have been trying to wage on Iran in the past two years. With Sunday's mass rallies, they once again noticed that they would not be able to take the country down with the help of crippling sanctions and non-stop propaganda campaigns. People once again showed the global arrogance that they are resolute in their national and religious visions for Iran, even if they happen to have taken chagrin at some of the authorities' conduct.

The night before the event, fireworks illuminated the skies of Tehran and various cities at 9:00 p.m.

as crowds echoed the resounding chant of "Allahu Akbar" (God is the Greatest), symbolizing unity and support for the Islamic Revolution.

Iran will not abandon Palestinians
President Ebrahim Raisi on Sunday reiterated Iran's steadfast backing of the Palestinian people, emphasizing that Palestine remains the paramount concern of the Muslim world, echoing the sentiments of the Islamic Republic's founder, Imam Khomeini.

Speaking at a significant gathering in Tehran commemorating the 45th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, Raisi emphasized that Western powers exerted considerable effort to dissuade Iran from supporting Palestine, yet their attempts were futile.

Despite persistent pressure, including attempts through warfare, economic blockades, and sanctions,

Raisi emphasized that the Islamic Republic remained resolute in championing the cause of Palestine and the principles of the Islamic Revolution.

Forty-five years post-revolution, Raisi affirmed that Imam Khomeini was correct in asserting that Palestine holds primacy in the Islamic world and that the occupied al-Quds must be liberated.

He urged individuals seeking to understand the West, the U.S., and the Zionist regime to assess their ongoing violations of humanity, war crimes, and atrocities committed in Gaza.

The president spotlighted Israel's aggressive actions, specifically the genocidal assault on Gaza following a historic operation by the Palestinian Hamas resistance group in response to escalating Israeli brutality against Palestinians. The newest round of Israeli onslaughts which began on October 7 has so far resulted in the death of at least 28,064 Palestinians, predominantly women and children, with 67,611 others sustaining injuries.

Furthermore, President Raisi celebrated Iran as the "most independent nation" globally, attributing the Islamic Revolution with replacing indignity with honor and championing autonomy. He emphasized Iran's position as a nation free from dependencies on the East and West, delineating its capacity to make sovereign decisions and act autonomously.

Iranian Pearls in the Persian Gulf

From Page 1 ▶ After 68 years of persistent efforts by Iran, Iranian forces reasserted sovereignty over the Abu Musa and Tunb Islands on the morning of November 30, 1971. This took place one day before the official withdrawal of British forces from the Persian Gulf and two days prior to the formation of the United Arab Emirates. After the Iranian forces assumed control of the islands, the 1971 Memorandum of Understanding between Iran and Sharjah concerning Abu Musa Island stands as an official and valid document, preventing any interference by other external parties. Furthermore, the restoration of the Tunb Islands to Iran relies on an implicit understanding, given the absence of disputes over Iranian ownership and sovereignty. Avoiding a written agreement was intentional, as any such document could introduce uncertainty regarding Iran's unquestionable sovereignty and absolute ownership of these two islands. The memorandum of understanding between Iran and Sharjah on November 29, 1971, authorized Iran to deploy its

forces to Abu Musa. On November 30, 1971, Iranian forces landed on the three islands. This was carried out with the presence and approval of certain Sharjah officials and with prior notification to Britain. Iran's conduct since that date has been entirely grounded in this memorandum of understanding, fully respecting the rights accorded to the emirate of Sharjah and its citizens in Abu Musa.

What renders the UAE's claim legally invalid?
Despite the wealth of historical documents, some of which are in languages other than Persian, there is no doubt about the historical ownership of the three islands by Iran. Before the imperialist presence of Portuguese and British naval forces in the Persian Gulf, Oman and Saudi Arabia were the only Arab states in the region. During that period, the sheikhdoms of Sharjah and Ras al-Khaimah were not recognized as states at all. Consequently, for the few Arab residents of Abu Musa it was legally impossible to have their citizenship. This is while, most of the Persian Gulf islands, including Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb, have been under

Iran's ownership and sovereignty. Indeed, after Iran reasserted its sovereignty over three islands in 1971, the United Arab Emirates declared its establishment through the union of six emirates on the southern coast of the Persian Gulf, including the sheikhdom of Sharjah (claiming Abu Musa). A year later, the emirate of Ras al-Khaimah, the sheikhdom claiming Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb, joined the union as the seventh member. Therefore, Sharjah's assertion that the residents of Abu Musa belonged to the Ghasemi tribe, and the ruler of Sharjah shared the same lineage, does not constitute evidence for the citizenship of the state established in the subsequent years. Moreover, historical records indicate that the Ghasemis were divided into two groups, one Iranian and the other Arab.

In the claims put forth by the sheikhdoms of Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah, it has been consistently asserted that Britain recognizes these three islands as belonging to these two emirates.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Book Review Part 3:

West waiting for the perfect moment to pull the trigger on Iran

TEHRAN - In chapter 3 of the 'Mirage of Shadows' Mehdi Mohammadi explains how a dossier of evidence collated by Iran's intelligence forces shows Israel and the West had their finger on the trigger for several years, waiting for the perfect moment to strike Iran and unleash turmoil in the country.

In the previous chapter, Mohammadi elaborated on how the West had been able to identify potential "soldiers" among different groups of Iranian civilians and groom them for the time they would have to take to the streets and create unrest under the banner of "freedom" and "democracy".

The West needed to create the grounds for a total explosion to put this small but trained group of future rioters to use. For that, it assembled different anti-Iranian and so-called "opposition" members in a meeting attended by high-ranking American, European, Israeli, and certain Arab officials.

The meeting, held in Tel Aviv in March of 2022, had gathered individuals from different groups of Iranians; heads of Western-based media outlets, self-proclaimed defenders of human rights, and even terror outfits that have killed thousands of people in the past decades. The participants were told that Israel had assumed command of all Western initiatives dedicated to toppling the Iranian government and that it is looking to form a

collaborative framework with all anti-Iranian factions to get ready for an imminent "crucial opportunity."

Another audio file belonging to Iranian monarchists residing abroad revealed that the West had come up with a comprehensive plan that would lead to the overthrow of the Iranian government by the beginning of 2023. According to the file recorded months before the riots, after the assassination of a top Iranian military general and a sabotage attack at a military base in Esfahan, protests would take over Iranian cities in September of 2022. These demonstrations will snowball into an armed struggle and eventually lead to the downfall of the Islamic Republic by January.

Mahsa Amini's passing served as the long-awaited catalyst sought by Israel and the West to incite widespread unrest within Iran. To ensure the mobilization of a substantial portion of the Iranian population, meticulous consideration was given to selecting the prime instigators and target demographics for the ensuing turmoil.

Israel and the West particularly aimed to influence three key groups within the Iranian populace: Women, celebrities and influencers, and Generation Z.

Recognizing the diverse segments within Iranian society, the strategy entailed using women's narratives to invoke a collective sense of moral duty, leveraging

the prevailing view of women experiencing "oppression" in Iran. By tapping into an incident that supposedly highlighted the plight of "oppressed Iranian women", the agitators sought to compel bystanders to join the unrest and show "support" for their fellow female compatriots.

Celebrities and influencers were strategically employed as agents of amplification and propaganda. With large audiences and persuasive capabilities, they were integral to disseminating information about the perceived "atrocities" inflicted upon Iranian women. Investigations have since revealed that while some influencers did align with Western spy agencies, the majority felt coerced to engage in the discourse out of fear of losing their popularity.

It is important to note that between September 16 and the same day in October, at least 50,000 accounts seemingly belonging to Iranian users joined Twitter. Further scrutiny revealed that these accounts were predominantly managed from the occupied Palestinian territories. These fabricated profiles were tasked with launching attacks and denunciations against public figures who chose to remain silent on the matter and refrain from stoking the flames of unrest.

The most immediate focus for the West was on influencing Gen Z, individuals aged between 18 and

24, who were deemed susceptible to manipulation by intelligence agencies. The architects behind the 2022 unrest believed that it would be relatively easy to present a distorted version of reality to Gen Z through social media and make them engage in risky and destructive behavior. Interrogations of young rioters in custody revealed a lack of full comprehension regarding the gravity of their actions. Many were under the impression that they were partaking in a "revolution" and viewed themselves as heroes in the unfolding events. To them, the acts of vandalism against buildings, vehicles, and infrastructure seemed akin to a thrilling movie rather than deeds with potentially severe repercussions. While the bigger presence of Generation Z participants in the 2022 riots compared to other age groups showcased their susceptibility to influence, it also highlighted their proclivity for swiftly disengaging and reverting to normalcy upon grasping the implications of their actions. This group was easily swayed but lacked enduring strategic impact.

The Iranian judiciary, quickly realizing that the majority of Gen Zers had been influenced by a massive propaganda campaign, proceeded to release most of the young detainees that had laid physical waste to their towns.

To be continued...

SPORTS

100-year-old Iranian Asgari performs dive at the 2024 World Aquatics

TEHRAN - Seventy-three years since diving to a silver and bronze medal at the inaugural Asian Games in New Delhi, Iran's Taghi Askari once again took to the springboard, this time at the 2024 World Aquatics Masters Championships in Doha at the age of 100.

The oldest competitor at the championships, Askari performed a dive before the Women's 3m Springboard final at the Hamad Aquatic Centre to mark the two-week countdown to the world's largest masters aquatics competition.

Earlier this week Askari told World Aquatics that he had given away the sport as a forty-one-year-old but was returning to dive in Doha due to his love of the sport, worldaquatics.com reported.

"When I was competing at a national level the last championships I did was when I was 41 years old," said Askari.

"I achieved a gold medal at the national level, and after that, I said goodbye to the sport, but at least with a gold medal."

Askari's international diving career commenced at the Asian Games in New Delhi at the very first staging of the competition which has grown from 489 athletes competing in six sports in 1951 to 11,935 athletes competing across forty disciplines at the 2022 edition.

Persepolis hijack Esteghlal move for Oston Urunov

TEHRAN - Persepolis football team snatched Oston Urunov from under the noses of their archrivals Esteghlal.

Urunov has joined the Iranian giants on an undisclosed fee. He represented Uzbekistan national football team in the 2023 AFC Asian Cup.

The 23-year-old winger has most recently played for Uzbekistan's Navbahor.

Persepolis have also completed the signing of Fajr Sepasi young striker Abolfazl Babaei on an 2.5-year deal.

Ghalenoei to stay Iran coach until 2026 FIFA World Cup

TEHRAN - Iran football federation will extend Amir Ghalenoei's contract until the end of the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

The 60-year-old coach was named as head coach of Team Melli in March 2023.

Under his leadership, Team Melli advanced to the 2023 AFC Asian Cup semifinals, where they lost to Qatar 3-2.

Ghalenoei could bring an end to Iran's 48-year title drought in the Asian Cup but missed the golden opportunity.

Now, the Federation is going to extend the coach's deal until the end of the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Iran beach soccer edge Colombia in friendly match

TEHRAN - Iran beach soccer team defeated Colombia 3-2 in a friendly match on Friday.

Mohammad Masoumizadeh (two goals) and Mohammadali Mokhtari scored for Team Melli.

The warm-up match was held as part of preparation for the 2024 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup. Iran are drawn in Group B along with Spain, Tahiti and Argentina. Team Melli will face Spain in the opening match of the prestigious campaign on Feb. 15.

Iran beach soccer team played three warm-up matches with Belarus in late January as part of preparation for the 2024 Beach Soccer World Cup.

Iran are one of the powerhouses teams in beach soccer as the Persians won a bronze medal in the 2017 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup. Team Melli are also the current champions in

the Beach Soccer Intercontinental Cup. Russia and Iran are the most successful teams, having won four tournaments each.

The 2024 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup will be held in Dubai, the UAE from Feb. 15 to 25.

Iranian Fencer Pakdaman wins silver at 2024 World Cup

TEHRAN - Iranian sabre fencer Ali Pakdaman claimed a silver medal at the 2024 World Cup.

He lost to Hungarian fencer Áron Szilágyi 15-7 in the final match.

Georgian Sandro Bazadze defeated Luigi Samele 15-6 in the bronze medal match.

The competition was held from February 9 to 11 in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Salem Aldawsari fit for Sepahan match

TEHRAN - Al Hilal football team star Salem Aldawsari is fit for match against Sepahan.

The Iranian team will host Al Hilal on Thursday in the 2023-24 AFC Champions League Round of 16 in Isfahan's Naghsh-e Jahan Stadium.

The Saudi Arabian club have announced that the player is ready for the first leg against Sepahan.

The second leg of the tie between Al Hilal and Sepahan will be played on February 22 at Prince Faisal bin Fahd City Stadium in Riyadh.

Sadegh Moharrami undergoes knee surgery

TEHRAN - Iran international right-back Sadegh Moharrami underwent knee surgery on Sunday. He missed the rest of the season after scans confirmed a ruptured anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) in his left knee.

In the first half of the match against the UAE in the 2023 AFC Asian Cup, he was forced to leave the field after suffering ligament damage and MRI scan determined its severity.

His absence was a big blow to Team Melli in the competition and Iran lost to eventual champions Qatar. The Dinamo Zagreb star has also missed the rest of 2023/24 Prva HNL season.

Esteghlal new signing Masharipov arrives in Tehran

TEHRAN - Uzbekistani star Jaloliddin Masharipov arrived in Tehran, capital of Iran on Sunday.

The 30-year-old winger has recently joined the Iranian club after parting company with Greek side Panserraios.

Masharipov was a member of the Uzbekistan national football team in the 2023 AFC Asian Cup, where it lost to Qatar in the competition's semifinals. He has traveled to Tehran to participate in medical test.

Two Iranian female athletes fail dope test

TEHRAN - Iranian rower Sara Abdolmaleki and kurash practitioner Melika Omidvand have been banned for three years each for the use of the prohibited substance.

Abdolmaleki was tested positive for the banned anabolic steroid methasterone.

She had claimed a bronze medal in the Canoe Sprint women's KL1 event of the 2022 Asian Para Games. Abdolmaleki is ineligible from Oct. 25, 2023 to Oct. 24, 2026.

Omidvand was also tested positive for using anabolic steroid Oxandrolone, which resulted in a three-year ban. She is ineligible from Nov. 19, 2023 until Nov. 18, 2026.

Omidvand had also won a bronze medal in the Women's 87 kg of the 2022 Asian Games.

NIOC to ink deals worth \$14b to develop oil, gas fields by late March



TEHRAN – The head of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) has said the company is going to ink contracts worth \$14 billion with domestic companies for the development of the country's oil and gas fields by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 19).

Speaking in a televised interview, Mohsen Khojasteh-Mehr said a plan for boosting the recovery factor of south Pars gas field wells is also on the agenda and will be started by the end of the current year, Tasnim News Agency reported.

"We are active in exploration, development, production, transfer, and export in almost all provinces of the country," Khojasteh-Mehr said.

Mentioning the maintenance of gas production in the cold season, the official said: "Currently, the National Iranian Oil Company

produces one billion cubic meters of gas per day, most of which is used for domestic and commercial purposes, and the rest is consumed in power plants and industries."

He further stressed that all the projects defined in the Oil Ministry and the National Iranian Oil Company have been aimed at production growth, adding: "In the 13th government, oil production has increased by 60 percent, and this increase in production is due to the increase in crude oil and gas condensate exports which have been up to three times more than the previous government."

"During the current government administration, 70 million cubic meters have also been added to the country's gas production capacity, which leads to more income and export value for the country," the official added.

According to the NIOC head, currently, the production of gas from the South Pars gas field, which accounts for 70 percent of Iran's gas output, has reached more than 700 million cubic meters per day.

South Pars gas field, which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf, is estimated to contain a significant amount of natural gas, accounting for about eight percent of the world's reserves, and approximately 18 billion barrels of condensate. The field is divided into 24 standard phases.

Export from Qom province rises 13% in 10 months on year

TEHRAN – The value of export from Qom province rose 13 percent during the first 10 months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2023-January 20, 2024), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, a provincial official announced.

Esfandiyar Darikvandi, the director-general of the province's Customs Department, said that commodities worth \$194,718,648 were exported from the province in the 10-month period.

He said that the commodities were exported to over 30 countries around the world, and named Iraq, the UAE, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Russia, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Georgia, Syria, and Armenia as the major export destinations.

As previously announced by the head of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department, the value of non-oil export from Qom province increased by 22 percent in the past Iranian calendar year 1401 (ended on March 20, 2021), as compared to the preceding year.

Akbar Ebdali said that 379,70 tons of non-oil goods valued at \$347.743 million were exported from the province in the previous year, indicating also 28 percent growth in terms of weight, year on year.

He named plastic materials, mineral fuels, shoes and sandals, copper wire, iron wire, eggs, polyester fibers, chemical products, and mechanical machines as the major

exported items, and Iraq, Afghanistan, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Pakistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Syria, Russia, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan as the main export destinations.

As announced by the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), Iran exported 113 million tons of non-oil goods valued at \$40.5 billion during the first 10 months of the present year.

Mohammad Rezvani-Far said that the 10-month non-oil export indicates a nine percent growth in weight, but an 11 percent fall in value, year on year, IRIB reported.

The official also said the country exported \$29.9 billion of crude oil in the mentioned 10 months, registering a 10-percent rise, year on year.

Rezvani-Far further announced that Iran has imported 32.7 million tons of goods worth \$54.8 billion in the first 10 months of the present year, which indicates an 11.6 percent rise in value and six percent growth in weight.

He named China, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Turkey, and India as the major export destinations of Iranian goods in the said period, and the UAE, China, Turkey, Germany, and India as the main sources of import.

Gold, car parts and accessories, and smartphones were the main imported items during this period, according to the official.

North Khorasan province exports medicinal plants for 1st time

TEHRAN – As announced by a provincial official, medicinal plants were exported from North Khorasan province, in the northeast of Iran, for the first time.

Mohammad Rezaei, the director of plant protection in the province's Agriculture Department, announced the export of three shipments of medicinal plants with the total weight of over 49 tons from the customs of this province in this month.

He said that the exported plants were mostly processed and named Germany as the export destination.

Last week, Hossein Zeynali, the director of Iran's Agriculture Ministry's medicinal plants national plan, announced that new regulations have been set for the export of medicinal plants.

He said that in the new export

regulations, medicinal plants have been divided into three categories: prohibited, conditionally permitted, and cultivated.

New export regulations were formulated in accordance with the ecological, economic and technical conditions of medicinal plants of the country, he added.

The official further stated that this action has been taken due to the challenges and obstacles in the way of exporting medicinal plants due to some shortcomings of the past regulations.

Iran exported over 850 tons of medicinal plants since the beginning of current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2023), an official with the country's Natural Resources and Watershed Management Organization announced.

Tarohom Behzad, the director-general of the pasture affairs office of the organization, said that 14 natural climates are known in the world, of which there are about 11 climates in Iran, and it is the breeding ground of all kinds of medicinal plants.

So far, about 8,600 plant species have been identified in Iran, of which 2,300 species are medicinal and are directly used in the field of medicine, health and food supplements, the official added.

He said benefitting from a special climate and the area of about six million hectares of medicinal plant habitats is a very suitable opportunity for Iran for proper exploitation, more serious entry into the field of processing, creating employment, more specialized exports in the field of processed products, and earning foreign currency.

Non-oil trade with neighbors reaches nearly \$50b in 10 months

From page 1 ▶ As previously announced by the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), Iran exported 113 million tons of non-oil goods valued at \$40.5 billion during the first 10 months of the current Iranian calendar year.

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in the first 10 months of the present year, which indicates an 11.6 percent rise in value and six percent growth in weight.

According to the official, China, Iraq, UAE, Turkey, and India were the major export destinations of Iranian goods in the said period, and the UAE, China, Turkey, Germany, and India were the main sources of import.

Gold, car parts and accessories, and smartphones were the main imported items during this period, he said.

In the first 10 months of this year, 14.2 million tons of goods were also transited through Iran, which was 29 percent more compared to the same period last year, Rezvani-Far said.

TPO head stresses need for resolving problems of industrial units

TEHRAN – The Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Mehdi Zeyghami has stressed the need for removing the barriers in the way of the activities of production units active in the country's industrial parks.

Speaking on the sidelines of a visit to an industrial park in Alborz Province on Saturday, Zeyghami also emphasized the need for reviving production units and increasing the production capacity of industries, expressing hope that the measures taken by the Industry Ministry will lead to an increase in the production and export capacity of the mentioned units and strengthen domestic sales.

He further underlined the significant role that production units play in the country's economy and noted that the Industry Ministry's plan for reviving idle industrial units is also going to help create employment across the country.

The Head of Iran Small Industries and

Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) Farshad Moghimi said the government has put it on the agenda to help increase the production capacity of 3,300 industrial units across the country in the next Iranian calendar year (begins on March 20).

"Stabilizing and increasing the capacity of active production units with the approach of helping production growth and preventing stagnation is on the agenda," Moghimi said in late January.

He announced the reactivation and increase of the capacity of 8,910 industrial units with the implementation of support measures and added that the implementation of the mentioned support measures has created employment for 92,500 people in the industry sector.

"The implementation of a monitoring plan for reviving idle industrial units, with a focus on small industries active in industrial parks, has led to the reactivation of 4,010 industrial units to the production cycle since

the beginning of the 13th government and increased the capacity of 4,900 industrial units," he said.

According to Moghimi, some 1,192 units have been revived since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2023) which has created employment for 23,262 people.

"When the current government administration took office (in August 2021), 17 percent of the industrial units located in the country's Industrial parks and zones were inactive, and now the figure has been reduced to 13 percent with the measures taken," the official added.

According to the Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry's latest statistics, more than 59,000 industrial units are active in the industrial parks and zones of the country, which have created jobs for about 1.3 million people.

Commodities worth over \$880m traded at IME in a week

TEHRAN – During the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday), Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) witnessed trade of 3,029,447 tons of commodities with a total trading value of more than \$883 million on its physical market.

As reported by the IME's Public Relations and International Affairs Department, the exchange saw on its metals and minerals trading floor trade of 2,323,199 tons of commodities valued at nearly \$585 million.

On this floor the IME sold 1,147,302 tons of cement, 595,856 tons of steel, 460,000 tons of iron ore, 85,500 tons of sponge iron, 20,000 tons of cast iron, 8,750 tons of aluminum, 7,270 tons of copper, 700 tons of zinc, 250 tons of molybdenum concentrate and 21 tons of precious metals concentrate.

Moreover, the IME witnessed on both domestic and export rings of its oil and petrochemical trading floor 601,555 tons of commodities worth more than \$270 million.

Commodities traded on this floor included 224,971 tons of bitumen, 175,000 tons of vacuum bottom, 107,289 tons of polymeric products, 41,671 tons of chemicals, 19,000 tons of lube cut, 11,450 tons of sulfur, 5,503 tons of oil, 500 tons of waterproofing materials and 350 tons of feedstocks.

The IME also traded within the same week

63,692 tons of goods on its side market.

As previously reported, IME witnessed trade of 13,986,385 tons of commodities, 29 vehicles and four apartment units with a total trading value of nearly \$3 billion on its physical market, during the past Iranian calendar month (ended on January 20), logging growths of 16.7 percent in volume and seven percent in value of trades compared with the month before that.

The exchange saw on its metals and minerals trading floor, trade of 11,144,000 tons of commodities and 29 vehicles valued at almost \$2 billion.

On this floor the IME sold 4,900,284 tons of cement, 4,249,500 tons of iron ore, 1,725,807 tons of steel, 520,500 tons of sponge iron, 69,725 tons of zinc, 36,206 tons of copper, 32,835 tons of aluminum, 800 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 600 tons of coke, 200 tons of cast iron, 175 tons of lead, 57 tons of precious metals concentrate and 29 vehicles.

It's worth noting that the IME also traded four apartment units on its real estate and housing trading floor.

Moreover, the exchange saw trade of 2,361,184 tons of commodities worth more than \$1 billion on both domestic and export rings of its oil and petrochemical trading



floor.

Items traded on this floor included 754,131 tons of bitumen, 737,400 tons of vacuum bottom, 419,600 tons of polymeric products, 223,500 tons of lube cut, 152,463 tons of chemicals, 46,500 tons of sulfur, 17,819 tons of oil, 9,612 tons of petroleum products, 1,860 tons of feedstocks, 1,148 tons of waterproofing materials and 500 tons of slops wax.

Last was the IME's side market on which the exchange traded 122,990 tons of goods.

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



Call for Tender 2st Announcement for the Purchase of Subsea Fiber Optic Cable (SFOC) needed for Kish Gas Field Development Phase 1 project, Tender No. 949258

Iranian Offshore Engineering and Construction Company intends to **Purchase of Subsea Fiber Optic Cable (SFOC) needed for Kish Gas Field Development Phase 1 project**, through a public tender. Therefore, the applicants are allowed to have **30 days** after the date of 1st publication of the tender notice in the newspaper to participate in this tender.

To download the tender documents, please visit the tender's section of the IOEC's website: WWW.IOEC.COM/EN/TENDERS, and Please do not hesitate to contact with Transaction Committee office with Mr. Amir Nosrathzadeh, with Tel: +9821-82841533 under sign for any inquiries and more information.

WORLD HEADLINES

 Hamas: Two Israeli captives killed in Israeli bombing

The armed wing of the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas, the Qassam Brigades, says the Israeli military's continued bombing of the Gaza Strip has resulted in the killing of two Israeli captives and the wounding of eight others, according to Al Jazeera.

The Brigades added that the conditions of the captives are becoming more dangerous in light of the inability to provide them with appropriate treatment, and is holding Israel fully responsible for the lives of the injured captives.

 Hamas: Israeli claim about a command tunnel under UNRWA HQ 'lies'

Senior Hamas official Sami Abu Zuhri has dismissed the Israeli military statement that the group operated a tunnel network hundreds of meters long and running partly under UNRWA's Gaza headquarters as "lies."

He told Reuters that Israel aimed to undermine the work of UNRWA and was "covering up to that decision by making these allegations."

Israel attacked al-Shifa Hospital in the earlier phase of the war claiming that Hamas ran a command center under Gaza's largest medical facility. Israel has not provided proof for its claims.

Israel has also accused 12 UNRWA staff of involvement in the October 7 Hamas attack inside Israel. This has led to the organization facing an unprecedented funding crisis after more than a dozen international donors withdrew their aid. But the UNRWA chief has said that Israel has yet to provide evidence for its claims.

Since UNRWA was established roughly 75 years ago, it has provided tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees with basic support, including food, healthcare and education.

 PRCS: Three patients died as Israeli forces prevented oxygen from reaching al-Amal Hospital

The Palestinian Red Crescent said three patients died in its Al-Amal Hospital in Khan Yunis, southern Gaza, as a result of the Israeli occupation forces blocking the entry of oxygen into the hospital for nearly a week.

In a press statement, the Red Crescent refuted the Israeli occupation's claim of delivering oxygen cylinders or any other medical equipment to the hospital, Wafa News Agency reported.

It confirmed that Israeli forces destroyed medical devices and equipment during their raid on the hospital on Saturday.

The Israeli forces also assaulted the staff, subjecting them to beatings, abuse, and humiliation, according to the society.

Nine members of the medical and administrative staff, along with four wounded individuals and five patient companions, were subsequently arrested.

The Red Crescent added that the Israeli occupation forces «continue to block the entry of the necessary fuel for the hospital's electricity generators, despite the fuel reserves being nearly depleted within the next two days.»

It said, «the Israeli measures threaten to halt the hospital's operations amid the ongoing blockade, now in its twenty-first consecutive day, affecting patients, the injured, and medical and administrative staff alike.»

take immediate steps to protect Palestinians' rights and cease all activities that could constitute genocide.

Israel has not only turned a blind eye to the ICJ ruling that was issued late last month, but has also stepped up its deadly strikes in Gaza.

The shockwaves of Israel's genocidal war in Gaza have spread across West Asia. Many people in countries across the region have expressed their anger at the regime's atrocities.

Other cities across the globe, including in the U.S. and the UK have also been the scene of anti-Israeli protests over the past four months.

Besides, high-ranking officials from across the world have denounced Israel's deadly strikes in Gaza.

The U.S. and some of its western allies including Britain, Germany and France, which are Israel's staunchest allies, have expressed concern over the continuation of the regime's war and the potential carnage in Rafah.

U.S. President Joe Biden has called Israel's conduct in the Gaza war "over the top" and urged the regime to stop starvation, suffering and killing of civilians. He recently sent Secretary of State Antony Blinken to West Asia where he met with Arab and Israeli officials with a purported aim to establish a ceasefire.

But neither Biden's criticism nor Blinken's tour could push Israel to put a halt to its deadly war campaign in Gaza.

Currently, despite international outcry and Washington's stance, Israel continues to perpetrate crimes in Gaza. This is because the U.S. criticizes Israel but its actions are precisely the opposite. Washington has chosen not to attach conditions to its huge military and diplomatic support for Israel and continues to supply the regime with weapons.

Biden's calls for protecting civilians in Gaza are also nothing more than shedding crocodile tears.

Other Western countries such as the UK, Germany and France have almost adopted a similar approach.

The U.S. and the three above-mentioned European countries sometimes implement the good cop and bad cop scenario to exonerate themselves amid huge public protests over their unwavering support for Israel.

In short, certain western countries led by the United States have given Israel a "blank check" for its genocidal assault on Gaza.

 Full-scale Israeli ground offensive in Rafah looms with U.S. blank check

From page 1 ▶ In the face of the international community's failure and inaction to stop Israel's genocidal campaign in Gaza, the regime has been emboldened to press ahead with its atrocious crimes in the besieged Palestinian territory.

For now, the last remaining so-called safe zone in southern Gaza has become the focus of Israel's military offensive.

Over half of Gaza's population of 2.3 million people have sheltered in Rafah after the Israeli military invaded the strip on October 7 and ordered people to evacuate northern and central sections of the besieged territory. Most people in Rafah are living in tents made of plastic sheeting, next to pools of sewage.

Israel has routinely bombed the so-called designated safe zones, including Rafah after telling Palestinians to evacuate to them.

Presently, Rafah is the last refuge for Gazans.

This comes as Israel has pressed deeper into the city of Khan Younis, which is less than 10 miles from Rafah. The Israeli military has raided a hospital complex in Khan Younis under a pretext that Hamas is operating inside it without providing any evidence to substantiate its claim.

Israeli airstrikes have also killed many Palestinians in Rafah over the past days. Rafah residents are now approaching panic about an Israeli ground assault into the city.

On Friday, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered the Israeli military to prepare to evacuate civilians from Rafah ahead of the regime's anticipated large-scale ground assault.

Netanyahu's office claimed in a statement that four Hamas battalions are in Rafah. Since launching the Gaza onslaught in October, the Netanyahu regime has said its goal is to smash Hamas. The statement now says it would be impossible to realize this goal without destroying the alleged Hamas battalions in Rafah which is near Egypt's border.

Netanyahu has not made it clear where the Palestinian residents of Rafah might go considering they are already squeezed up against the Egyptian border.

The only clear thing is that the Netanyahu cabinet seeks to expel Palestinians from their own land. Undoubtedly, thousands more civilians will be massacred in Rafah if Israel launches its ground military offensive in the city under the pretext of targeting Hamas.

 **Warnings mount**

The Palestinian resistance movement Hamas has warned that any Israeli ground offensive in Rafah will "blow up" the captive exchange negotiations.

The Omani Foreign Ministry has also raised the alarm about the consequences of Israel's imminent storming of Rafah.

"We warn of the serious repercussions of the continuation of the occupation in its indiscriminate aggression in the Gaza Strip and its plans to storm Rafah," the ministry said.

It also called on the international community to "take concrete measures to dissuade Israel from its arrogance and push it to ceasefire and open the crossings."

UN humanitarian coordinator Jamie McGoldrick, who has been to Gaza to assess the situation there, has weighed in on Israel's likely storming of Rafah.

"The safe areas that were declared are no longer safe. And if these people have to move - where can they move? We are really fearful of the horrific nature of where we are could only ever get worse," he said.

In the U.S., Congresswoman Rashida Tlaib has demanded that the White House end support for Israel.

"Over 1.5 million displaced Palestinians are sheltering in Rafah, and now they are being threatened with attacks. There is nowhere left for them to go. When will it be enough for @POTUS to end support for Netanyahu's genocide?" she wrote on X.

Addressing the U.S. Senate, Senator Bernie Sanders also slammed Congress for considering sending \$14 billion in military aid to Israel.

 Israeli war crimes, genocide

As fears grow over Israel's assault on Rafah, a glance at international law turns the spotlight on the intensity of Israel's atrocities in the

 Gaza Strip.

According to Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, collective punishment has been clearly forbidden under international humanitarian law and no exceptions are permitted.

On the basis of this article of the Fourth Geneva Convention, Israel is illegally punishing all the residents of Gaza over the accusations that it has made against Hamas, regardless of the fact that the resistance group is fighting against occupation and seeking to liberate the Palestinian land.

According to Article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, "willful killing, torture or inhuman treatment, willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health, unlawful deportation or transfer or unlawful confinement of a protected person...extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly," amount to war crimes.

This article shows that Israeli war crimes against Palestinians are crystal clear as the regime's indiscriminate attacks have killed a large number of civilians in Gaza since October and destroyed many residential buildings.

The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (CPPCG), or the Genocide Convention, is also an international treaty that criminalizes genocide.

According to Article II of the Convention, genocide is a crime committed with the intent to destroy a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, in whole or in part.

Undoubtedly, the definition of genocide is exactly what Israel has been doing in Gaza.

In addition, Israel appears to be in breach of the orders issued by the International Court of Justice requiring the regime to

 Iraqi resistance vows to end U.S. occupation **American military assassinates senior Iraqi commander**

By Ali Karbalaie

TEHRAN- The assassination by the American occupation in Iraq of a senior commander with the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) has been met with a sharp rise in demand for the U.S. military presence to end.

A U.S. drone strike blew up a car on Wednesday night in Baghdad assassinating Abu Baqr al-Sa'adi, a senior commander with the PMF's Kata'ib Hezbollah along with two of his comrades.

The late PMF commander helped liberate Iraq from Daesh occupation in 2017 and the U.S. occupation in 2011.

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq has said that the "American occupation" will not end through dialogue or more negotiations (as the Iraqi government is seeking), emphasizing that the U.S. military "only understands the language of arms."

The Iraqi resistance stated that "recent events have revealed to the nation, allies, and responsible authorities that the occupying enemy does not depart (from Iraq) out of exhaustion or treachery."

In a statement on Friday, the Islamic Resistance in Iraq vowed to resume its operations against the U.S. bases in Iraq and Syria, underlining that the Americans are "violating all the rules of engagement."

The Iraqi resistance said "this became evident in its recent targeting of the PMF in al-Qaim, Akashat, and other locations. The assassination of the great commander Abu Baqr al-Sa'adi in Baghdad further violates all rules of engagement,

reinforcing the Islamic resistance's commitment to its responsibilities towards its people, country, and nation under any circumstances."

Reports say in the aftermath of the statement, attacks against U.S. forces in Iraq and Syria intensified. In one operation by the Iraqi resistance, six drones were used to target the Conoco oil field, occupied by American troops in Syria near the Iraqi border.

The Islamic Resistance in Iraq has also called on all "brothers" fighting the U.S. military presence on Iraqi soil to "join the ranks of the resistance", noting that "they should prepare themselves for active participation in expelling the occupation," in what the statement termed as a "historical phase for Iraq and the region".

Since the Israeli war on Gaza erupted on 7 October, there have been more than 200 operations by the Islamic Resistance in Iraq against the U.S. bases in Iraq and Syria, which the Iraqi resistance says is in response to the "U.S. occupation" as well as in solidarity with "the children, women and elderly in Gaza."

The assassination of a commander with the PMF, whose armed factions have been integrated by the Iraqi parliament into the National Armed Forces, also drew strong condemnation from Iraqi government officials, including Prime Minister Mohammed al-Sudani.

In a sign of how serious the Iraqi government is viewing this latest act of terror by the U.S. occupation, National Security Adviser Qassem

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

 Trump says he would encourage Russia to attack NATO allies who pay too little

Donald Trump has said he would «encourage» Russia to attack any NATO member that fails to pay its bills as part of the Western military alliance.

At a rally on Saturday, he said he had once told a leader he would not protect a nation behind on its payments, and would «encourage» the aggressors to «do whatever the hell they want», the BBC wrote. The White House called the comments «appalling and unhinged.»

Addressing crowds during the rally in South Carolina, Trump said he had made his comments about Russia during a meeting of leaders of NATO countries.

He recalled that the leader of a «big country» had presented a hypothetical situation in which he was not meeting his financial obligations within NATO and had come under attack from Moscow.

Trump said the leader had asked if the U.S. would come to his country's aid in that scenario, which prompted him to issue a rebuke.

Tehran to boost tourism initiatives for people with disabilities

TEHRAN - Amir Ghasemi, the head of the tourism headquarters of Tehran Municipality, has recently unveiled a comprehensive commitment to enhancing accessibility in tourist facilities across the capital, prioritizing individuals with disabilities.

Engaging tirelessly with representatives from 22 districts since the beginning of the year, Ghasemi has been at the forefront of these transformative efforts. Issuing directives to mayors, he urged the swift implementation of necessary measures to adapt tourist facilities, particularly focusing on museums and popular tourist destinations. This strategic approach aims to ensure a more inclusive and accommodating experience for members of the disabled community.

Ghasemi shared valuable insights into the successful execution of adaptation initiatives, highlighting specific landmarks that have undergone improvements. Among them are the Golestan Palace Museum Complex and the central parks of Tehran, where a deliberate emphasis on museums has played a crucial role in these accessibility enhancements.

Underlining the paramount importance of adaptation as a core agenda for the tourism headquarters of Tehran Municipality, Ghasemi outlined future plans to conduct informative sessions. These sessions, orchestrated in collaboration with coordinators of people with disabilities associations in various regions through the Health Department, are designed to foster awareness and understanding. The ultimate objective is to actively propel the committee responsible for adapting pathways across diverse districts, emphasizing increased determination and commitment to this vital initiative.

As the vision of a more accessible Tehran takes shape, these initiatives not only contribute to the welfare of the disabled community but also position Tehran as a beacon of inclusivity in the global tourism landscape. The ongoing commitment of Amir Ghasemi and his team signifies a progressive step towards a more welcoming and accommodating tourist experience for everyone in the vibrant capital of Iran.

Improving border terminals crucial for tourism in West Azarbaijan province

TEHRAN - Morteza Safari, the Director-General of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism in West Azarbaijan, has underscored the pivotal role of organized border terminals in boosting tourism and ensuring visitor satisfaction at historical and tourist sites of the province.

During a recent meeting of the West Azarbaijan Tourism Committee, Safari emphasized the need for a traveler-friendly experience starting from their arrival in the country. Proposing aesthetically designed border terminals equipped with billboards showcasing tourist attractions and city-wide TVs for a captivating atmosphere, Safari also suggested the presence of guides to introduce visitors to the potential of the province.

Recognizing borders as the country's gateways, Safari highlighted the potential negative impact of bad experiences and unsightly environments on deterring travelers from choosing Iran as their destination.

The importance of improving road infrastructure to attract tourists, particularly along routes leading to historical and tourist attractions, was also stressed by Safari.

Emphasizing the province's annual influx of travelers passing through West Azarbaijan, Safari suggested creating recreational and tourist facilities to encourage longer stays in the province. He urged the promotion of the region's potential by relevant authorities and tourism activists.

West Azarbaijan, renowned for its unique historical artifacts and tourist attractions, hosts visitors from across the globe annually. The province's five terminals, including Sarv in Urmia, Razi in Khoy, Bazargan Maku on the Turkey border, Sanam Blaghi Poldasht on the Nakhchivan border, and Tarmachin Piranshahr on the northern Iraq border, witness millions of travelers, primarily from Asia, Europe, West Asia, and some East and Southeast Asian countries.

In the view of experts and commentators, border terminals serve as the initial showcase of a country for foreign visitors and should be aesthetically pleasing to attract more tourists.

West Azarbaijan province, whose capital and largest city is Urmia, is bordered by Turkey, Iraq, and Azarbaijan's Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, as well as the provinces of East Azarbaijan, Zanjan and Kurdistan.

Cultural heritage ministry participates in 22 Bahman rallies in Tehran

TEHRAN - The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts fervently marked the 45th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in a simultaneous tribute alongside the grand procession on the 22nd day of the month of Bahman on the Persian calendar (11th of February).

Transforming Azadi Street into a hub of celebration, the Ministry orchestrated an array of cultural and artistic programs, engaging diverse communities and march participants.

Mehr News Agency reports that the Ministry's strategic location along the main route of the February 11th procession served as a focal point for commemorating the Revolution's



victory. The vibrantly adorned booths played host to cultural competitions themed around revolution heritage, enticing the February 11th marchers with enticing prizes for the winners.

Adding to the festive ambiance, Iranian ethnic music groups and choir singers graced the booths with spirited performances. The Ministry's celebration encompassed a handicrafts booth fea-

turing skilled artisans and their craft, a Basij booth representing civic volunteers, and an engaging children's booth where young talents explored artistic pursuits like painting and pottery. Another booth distributed cultural items while spotlighting tourist attractions and historical-cultural artifacts, showcasing the Ministry's commitment to honoring the legacy of the Islamic Revolution.

As the central building of the Ministry is positioned along the procession's main route, many participants in the February 11th procession found solace and reverence as they observed their midday and afternoon prayers in the Ministry's dedicated prayer rooms.

Medical tourism to take center stage at Tehran International Exhibition

TEHRAN - The 17th International Tourism and Related Industries Exhibition in Tehran aims to promote traditional Iranian medicine to boost medical tourism in Iran.

The 17th Iran International Tourism and Related Industries Exhibition 2024 is scheduled to take place at the Tehran International Permanent Fairground from February 12th to 15th, 2024. Representatives from 11 countries are expected to attend, with the Secretary-General of the United Nations' World Tourism Organization as a special guest.

This exhibition is considered Iran's premier tourism industry event, given the country's regional prominence in the health sector, evolving into a hub for medical tourism. The Office of Persian and Complementary Medicine at the Iranian Ministry of Health is actively participating to attract health-conscious tourists interested in traditional medicine.

The Director-General of the Office of Persian and Complementary Medicine, highlighting Iran's unique capabilities in traditional medicine and herbal remedies, stated, "Leveraging the tourism potential of Iranian medicine, recommendations for lifestyle, coping with various climates (deserts, forests, seas, etc.), and strategies for health preservation and improvement, alongside simple and effective treatment methods, will be culturally presented to tourists through Iranian medical tourism."

Nafiseh Hosseini-Yekta added, "The diverse climates in Iran, including mountains, deserts, and salt lakes, offer enormous capabilities for preventing and aid-

ing in the treatment of diseases based on the principles of Persian medicine. The capacities of Persian medicine in the tourism industry can play a significant economic role for the country. Furthermore, the development of health villages and towns using the capacities and teachings of Persian medicine would be highly effective in health economics and revenue generation.

Hosseini-Yekta emphasized that this emerging industry holds numerous benefits for the country, including job creation, economic prosperity, promoting the culture of Persian medicine, and enhancing public health.

She underscored: "Persian medicine, as a component of Iran's culture and civilization, can act as a driving and effective force for cultural variables."

Hosseini-Yekta addressed challenges facing Iranian medical tourism, stating: "Lack of necessary equipment and infrastructure in centers providing Iranian medical services, a shortage of specialized tourism companies active in Iranian medical tourism, insufficient international introduction and advertising of the capacities of Iranian medical tourism, a shortage of specialists in Iranian medicine, a lack of sufficient training for service providers in medical tourism, and a lack of justification for activists and enthusiasts of medical tourism regarding the capacities of Iranian medical tourism are some challenges facing this industry."

Hosseini-Yekta, emphasizing that overcoming these challenges requires cooperation and synergy between various government and private agencies, the medical community, and specialists in traditional medicine, stated: "By addressing these chal-



lenges and with proper planning and policy-making, we can witness the prosperity of Iranian medical tourism in Iran and benefit from its economic and social advantages."

She highlighted that this exhibition provides a suitable opportunity for introducing and promoting this emerging industry to tourism industry professionals and the general public.

Iranian traditional medicine strongly focuses on prioritizing health maintenance and disease prevention over treatment. It is one of the most ancient forms of traditional medicine, grounded in the concept of the four senses of humor: phlegm (Balgham), blood (Dam), yellow bile (Safra), and black bile (Sauda). This concept is based on the teachings of Rhazes and Avicenna in an elaborate medical system.

Experts say medical tourism in Iran is a win-win opportunity for both the country and foreign patients, offering affordable yet quality treatment services while the country gains considerable foreign currency.

Archeologists unearth fortune-telling bone slips at ancient Chinese city 'Gan'

Archaeological excavations in Puyang, Central China's Henan Province, recently unveiled bone slips used for "fortune-telling activities" and "ancient sacrificial ceremonies."

This archaeological site in Puyang was recently revealed to be an ancient Chinese city known as "Gan" from the Warring States Period (475BC-221BC) to the Han Dynasty (206BC-AD220).

A grand wall separates the ancient ruins into two sections. More than 40 ancient tombs have been found. With similar long and narrow designs, these tombs have yielded many burial artifacts, including chess pieces, pottery, and bronze mirrors.

Archaeologist Qu Fulin told the Global Times that based on the tombs' long and narrow configuration as well as the abundant pottery and bronze relics, they "were very likely built during the Han, particularly the Western Han Dynasty [206BC-AD25]."

The rarest and most surprising item discovered among the site's relics is a batch of bone slips, totaling 10 pieces. Each was inscribed with the ancient Chinese ordinal system known as the Ten Heavenly Stems and Twelve Earthly Branches, or Tiangan (Dizhi) in Chinese. The remains of cinnabar paint were found on the surface of these bone slips.

The Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches are ancient China's systems of keeping time. These two counting systems, originally based on sky observations, became very influential in many aspects of daily life in China and spread to other parts of Asia.

These two systems have been in use since nearly the beginning of recorded history in China, during the Shang Dynasty. Archaeologists discovered a piece of oracle bone from 1000 BC that had been carved with the complete sexagenary cycle, which consisted of Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches.

Although many people believe that this is a rudimentary calendar used by the Shang rulers, some scholars disagree. For example, Xiong Gang, an expert on Chinese folk culture, told the Global Times that due to the precious nature of bone as a carving material, those slips were unlikely to have been used as a calendar despite the presence of the 10 Heavenly Stems and 12 Earthly Branches, which were mainly associated with ancient Chinese astronomical calendars.

Those bone slips were most likely objects used for "fortune-telling activities" and "ancient sacrificial ceremonies," Xiong emphasized. He also added that those bone slips were "often made of the bones of animals

like oxen," and they were very representative of Western Han Dynasty culture.

Oracle bones are animal bones that were used in ancient Chinese divination ceremonies. They are commonly made from an ox scapula bone or the lower side of a tortoise-shell.

The oracle bone divination ceremony was a way to seek guidance from deities or ancestors. People sought advice on topics ranging from military strategy, the harvest, childbirth, and hunting, to the cause of the king's toothache.

The history of the city of Gan was also revealed after the archaeological site was excavated. It was an ancient regime that was once a vassal state dating back to the Western Zhou Dynasty. Similar to the city, there was another ancient city called "Qi" dating back to the Spring and Autumn Period (770BC-476BC) that was also founded in Puyang.

"The discovered ancient city also sheds light on studies into the urban planning and construction systems of the Han Dynasty," archaeologist Qu Fulin said.

The excavation project was carried out by the Henan Provincial Institute of Cultural Heritage and Archaeology.

(Source: Arkeonews)

First Announcement



Khouzestan Steel Company

International tender announcement

No. 52469346

Khouzestan steel company (KSC) intends of the contractors' qualification for new Electric Arc Furnace and auxiliaries in EAF, LF, FTP, STATCOM, EOT Crane, MHS, ... at KSC plant by EPC tender.

- Location of project: north of existing steel shop in KSC plant in AHWAZ south west of Iran.

- Capacity: 1.3 mtpy

- Time schedule: 36 months

- Bid bond guarantee: 1.4 million Euro or equal rial

- Performance bond guarantee: 5% contract value (for contractor)

Company interested in taking part the tender having the following qualification, can declare their readiness:

1. Technological knowledge of Electric Arc Furnace and related auxiliaries or ability to contract with technology companies according to vendor list

Attention, in this regard, the necessary documents must be submitted at the time of declaration of readiness.

2. Experienced in executing EAF, LF, FTP, STATCOM, EOT Crane, MHS

Attention, please send the lists and references (name, location, capacity and contract price) of similar EPC projects

3. Rank one from industry government institutions

4. HSE certificate from government institutions

The interested companies shall enter above documents in the KSC's web site and send them to KSC by the date: 09.03.2024.

After receiving the documents and evaluating the companies' competency, the KSC will send tendering document to the selected company.

Address: IRAN, Khouzestan province, Ahwaz, Khouzestan steel company, post box: 1378, post code: 61788-13111; Purchasing Department.

For more information please contact to Mr. pour Moghadam

Email: m.pourmoghadam@ksc.ir

Telephone: +98-6132136414

Web site: <http://pim.ksc.ir>

Khartoum seeks to deepen sci-tech ties with Tehran

TEHRAN –The Sudanese acting foreign minister has stressed the need to develop scientific and technological cooperation with Iran.

"I am happy that Islamic countries such as Iran have made rapid advances in the field of technology," Ali Al-Sadiq Ali said in a meeting with Amir-Hossein Mirabadi, the director of the Center of International Science and Technology Cooperation (CISTC), at Iran's House of Innovation and Technology (iHit) in Tehran on Tuesday, February 6,

"Nowadays, countries with low scientific productivity and power are not respected. Therefore, we should expand our knowledge and exchange experiences so that all Muslims can benefit from advancements in science and technology," the Sudanese official added.

He went on to say that Sudan is a large country with a population of about 50 million. The country has vast areas of agricultural land. However, these resources cannot be utilized without the use of technology. "I hope the two sides would be able to develop cooperation in science and technology in areas of common interest."

During the meeting, Mirabadi said there are many opportunities for cooperation in the field of science and technology between Iran and Sudan.

"The two countries can collaborate in various fields. Iran is interested in expanding technological cooperation with Sudan."



Some 10,000 knowledge-based companies, a large number of startups, and science and technology parks are active in our country, which provides a good capacity for cooperation with Sudan," Mirabadi added.

Iranian companies are ready to cooperate with African companies. The two governments also agree on the necessity of technological cooperation, and Iran is well prepared for technology transfer to Sudan, he concluded.

Iran targets East Africa

Mirabadi said earlier that accessing new markets is a newly adopted strategy, that is, deepening trade ties with countries, like Africa, that the country has failed to note before.

Lack of knowledge and sufficient information about a region makes one assume there is no market or that it would be impossible to do business there, he added.

Assessing African countries' market capacities, it was found that there are potential opportunities for market entry and expanding ties. What matters is earning foreign currency revenue not where it comes from, it can be an advanced European country or an African country.

Iran sent a trade-technology delegation to East Africa from October 15-22, 2023, to expand exports in three countries.

Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania were the three target countries, IRNA reported.

Health (medicines and medical equipment), agriculture and animal husbandry, machinery, food, and industries have been determined as the most suitable fields for export.

In July 2023, Iranian knowledge-based companies concluded contracts for exporting medical equipment and medicine to Africa.

On July 13, President Ebrahim Raisi wrapped up his three-nation tour of Kenya, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, becoming the first Iranian president to engage in an African tour in more than a decade.

Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, who accompanied Raisi, spoke about Iran's perspective on the continent and the potential for collaboration with African nations.

"Iran's view on Africa is quite different from that of neo-colonialism or its older version," Amir-Abdollahian told Press TV in Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe.

"We aim to empower Africa through technology transfer," he said.

The foreign minister continued his remarks by elaborating on two key points of convergence between Iran and African countries.

African people and their leaders are now quite sensitive to protecting their independence and this is among the commonalities between Iran and African nations, Amir-Abdollahian underlined.

"Another issue of equal importance for Iran and Africa is the U.S. sanctions regime. With Africa's assistance, we should prevent the U.S. and certain states that still have a colonial mindset from utilizing the deadly tool of sanctions against nations," Iran's top diplomat pointed out.

Women and girls in science leadership, a new era for sustainability



The number of female students and female faculty members has increased significantly experiencing an upward trend in the last 45 years.

The number of female students has increased from 19,027 in the 1970-71 academic year to 1,510,426 in 2020-21 which signifies female students' number increased 56 times. However, the average growth of the total student number during the same period has been 50 times.

Women's participation in higher education can be considered as a criterion for measuring educational justice and a factor for the progress of society, which can lead to balanced development.

In 2001s, the share of women in Iran's higher education reached more than 50 percent. Consequently, there were more female than male students.

The number of female faculty members in Iran's higher education has been on the rise, too. The number of female faculty members has increased 30 times during the last four decades, while during the same period, the number of faculty members increased only 11 times.

Iranian female scholars

According to the recent report of Islamic World Science and Technology Monitoring and Citation (ISC) in the list of one percent of researchers in the world which is based on the Essential Science Indicators (ESI) database, a total of 135 Iranian female researchers have

been recognized in the areas of Agricultural Sciences, Clinical Medicine, Biology, Biochemistry, Chemistry, Pharmacology and Toxicology, Neuroscience and Psychology, Engineering, Material Science, Psychiatry/Psychology, Computer Science, Interdisciplinary, Social Science, generalities and some have obtained the necessary points even in several fields.

Moreover, according to the Stanford University List which was conducted by a number of researchers from Stanford University and the Elsevier Institute via analyzing the data of the Scopus database, 60 highly cited Iranian female researchers are among the top two percent in the world (service performance) in eight subject areas including Clinical Medicine, Chemistry, Biomedicine, Strategic Technologies (Artificial Intelligence, Nanotechnology, etc.), Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Physics and Astronomy, Information and Communication Technology, and Engineering.

A total of 316 female Iranian highly-cited researchers are among the top two percent of the world (one-year performance) in 14 subject areas of Clinical Medicine, Biomedicine, Chemistry, Engineering, Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Strategic Technologies (Artificial Intelligence, Nanotechnology, etc.), Information and Communication Technology, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Physics and Astronomy, Environment, Design and Construction, Public Health and Health Services, Biology, Social Sciences, Communication and Textual Research have obtained the necessary points.

ENGLISH IN USE

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'Further measures required to preserve forests'

Iran's forest area is approximately 12 million hectares with 0.2 hectares per capita, which is one quarter of the world average, so attention to preserve the forest areas must be four times the global attention, faculty member of the Research Institute of Forests and Rangelands has said.

Mohammad Darvish made the remarks on the occasion of the National Tree Planting Day, in which people are encouraged to plant trees across the country, held on the first day of the National Week of Natural Resources annually observed on March 6 to 13. Unfortunately, forests have been taken for granted in the country, as 2 million hectares of the northern forests has been depleted since 1330s (1950s), thus no serious protection measures have been taken, he said.

Currently, 1.6 million hectares of the northern forests remain in the country, which was 3.5 million hectares in 1330s, so 2 million hectares of forest areas have undergone deforestation, he further lamented.

حفظ جنگل ها نیازمند اقدامات بیشتر

بر اساس آخرین آمار موسسه تحقیقات جنگل ها و مراتع، وسعت رویشگاه های جنگلی ایران حدود ۱۲ میلیون هکتار و سرانه هر ایرانی از جنگل، کمتر از دو دهم هکتار است که یک چهارم سرانه جهانی می شود بنابراین باید توجه ما به حفظ رویشگاه های جنگلی، ۴ برابر توجه جهانی باشد.

محمد درویش روز چهارشنبه همزمان با روز درختکاری و آغاز هفته منابع طبیعی در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایرنا افزود: به نظر می رسد در کشور آن طور که باید به درختان و حفاظت از آنها توجه نمی شود؛ ناپودی دو میلیون هکتار از جنگل های شمال از دهه ۳۰ تاکنون گواه این ادعاست.

بنا به گفته عضو هیات علمی موسسه تحقیقات جنگل ها و مراتع کشور، حدود ۱.۶ میلیون هکتار از جنگل های شمال کشور باقی مانده است که این رقم در دهه ۳۰ حدود ۳.۵ میلیون هکتار بود یعنی در این مدت حدود دو میلیون هکتار عرصه جنگلی را از دست داده ایم، البته نیمی از ۱.۶ میلیون هکتار موجود نیز تا حدود زیادی تخریب شده است.

Key educational achievements of Islamic Revolution

By Maryam Tavassoli

TEHRAN –The growth of literacy rate, especially among women, and per capita educational space are among the most important achievements of the country after the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

The Islamic Revolution was a cultural revolution based on the slogans of independence, freedom, and rejection of domination by hegemonic powers. The current academic achievements can be observed specifically in public education and the eradication of illiteracy.

The extensive efforts of educational authorities over the past four decades have realized the goal of public education and expansion of educational spaces thanks to which Iran has been placed among the top five countries in the international Olympiads. The Constitution has highlighted free education for everyone at every level. As per the Constitution, the government is obliged to provide free education for all up to the end of secondary school and to expand free higher education to attain self-sufficiency for the country.

50% increase in the literacy rate

Statistics show that before the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the literacy rate of people aged 10 to 49 was 47 percent, which means 53 percent of the people were illiterate.

One year after the Islamic Revolution and due to the importance and necessity of literacy, Imam Khomeini ordered the establishment of the Literacy Movement Organization to eliminate illiteracy in the country. Promoting cultural independence, and educational justice, were among the most important goals in the formation of the literacy movement. Now, some 16.5 million students are studying in schools across the country to play key roles in the country in the not-too-distant future.

The literacy rate of people aged 10-49 has reached 98 percent and the educational coverage of primary school students has reached 99 percent. In the last 45 years, the growth of literacy was about 18 percent in the world, while in the same period, this figure was 50 percent in Iran. In other words, the literacy growth rate in Iran has been 2.5 times the world average.

Also, the results of the census conducted between 1976 and 2016 show that the gender gap in literacy rate decreased from 23.4 percent in 1976 to about 6 percent in 2016.

Also, based on censuses, the gap between literacy in urban and rural areas decreased from 34.9 percent in 1976 to 11 percent in 2016. The literacy index in deprived areas of the country increased from 65.4 percent to 90.8 percent.

220% increase in girls' access to education

Access to education is another step towards the realization of educational justice. The girls' access to education has improved by 220 percent compared to the years before the Revolution.

The scientific progress of Iranian women in the years after the Islamic Revolution has been very impressive. Some 135 out of 938 Iranian researchers who have been recognized among the world's top one percent most-cited researchers in 2023 are female scholars.

Despite some difficulties, the Iranian female population has been provided with the opportunity to study at universities in various fields so that educated women are seen as one of the most important social assets of the country today.

In the pre-Revolution era, most of the female pupils were keen on studying art and medical sciences at universities, but nowadays, they study in all fields including engineering, mathematics, economy, and agriculture.

As of 2006, women accounted for over half of university students in Iran and 70% of science and engineering students. In 2012, according to UNESCO data, over 2 million out of 4 million students in tertiary education in Iran were females, thus marking the fifth largest female enrollment after China, India, the US, and Brazil. In engineering fields, Iranian female enrollment ranked first in the world and in science fields second, after the US.

Iranian women have been able to achieve countless successes in various fields. It is difficult to name all these women. There are also many successful Iranian women all over the world who are famous in many fields of science and technology. A number of these women have achieved the highest honors in certain fields.

Per capita educational space

With the growth of literacy and the increase in the number of students, the need for a safe and comfortable learning environment has also increased. Schools with facilities such as large halls, sports grounds, culture, and art centers in addition to classrooms. In the last few years, about 1000 new schools have been opened. Currently, the educational space per capita in Iran is about 5.2 square meters while before the Islamic Revolution, the space was measured at 1.5 square meters.

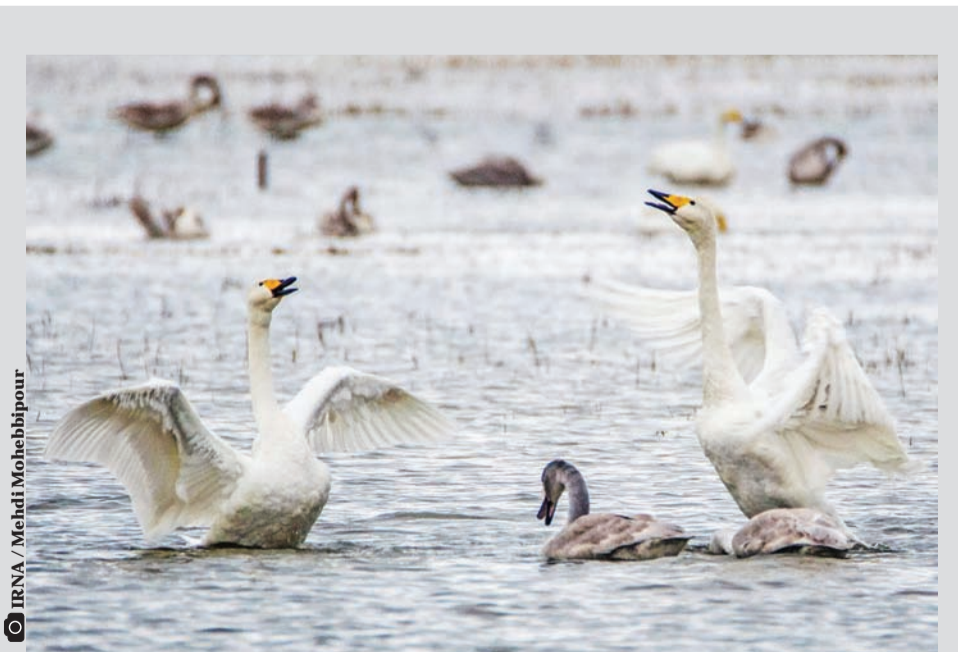
Literacy movement

The implementation of the general mobilization plan for literacy in 1990 increased the literacy rate to 97 percent in 2023.

In 1990, more than 4.1 million illiterate people were educated within a decade, and in 1996, the literacy rate in Iran reached 79.5 percent (an 18 percent increase). In 2015, 2016, and 2017, the figures reached 84.6 percent, 84.8 percent, and 87.6 percent respectively. In 2021, the figure was 90.5 percent (in the age group of six and older).

Meanwhile, the literacy movement did not fail to consider foreign nationals, especially Afghans, as some one million refugees have become literate in the past years. Over the past years, the Literacy Movement Organization has implemented projects that have been effective in blocking the causes of illiteracy and have been able to promote literacy in different age groups and strata, including foreigners, prisoners, soldiers, parents of illiterate students, employees, workers and women who are the heads of the household.

Despite all these efforts, some two percent of people have remained illiterate due to various reasons such as lack of learning ability. As the new definition of "literacy" is no longer confined to reading and writing, the first mission of the literacy movement is not to overcome basic illiteracy.



Migratory swans wintering in Sorkhrud

Sorkhrud Wetland in the northern province of Mazandaran is hosting flocks of migratory swans.

The number of birds varies year by year. Some 2,000 migratory swans are wintering in the wetland this year.



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FEBRUARY 12, 2024

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Recommended prayers cannot attain the pleasures of Allah for you when obligatory prayers are left unattended.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:18 Evening: 17:56 Dawn: 5:34 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:59 (tomorrow)

What's in Tehran art galleries



Painting

* Ech Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Sahar Jafari.

The exhibit entitled "White" will run until February 23 at the gallery located at 10 Mirza Taraj opposite Dowlat St., Shariati Ave.

* A collection of paintings by Ali Sadeqi is on view in an exhibition at O Gallery.

The exhibit will be running until February 20 at the gallery, which can be found at 8 Shahin St., Sanai St.



* Sarina Salimi is showcasing her latest paintings in an exhibition at Bostan Gallery.

The exhibit named "Maturation" will run until February 21 at No. 71, 22nd Alley, Larestan St. off Motahhari Ave.

* A collection of paintings by Soheila Inanlou are currently on display in an exhibit at Binesh Gallery.

Named "Green Trees' Leaves", the exhibition runs until February 16 at the gallery located at 22 Khakzad Alley, Vali-e Asr Ave.



* Sohrab Gallery is hanging a collection of paintings by Mohammad Ali Tarqijah in an exhibition.

The exhibit will run until February 19 at the gallery located at 142 Somayyeh St.

* A collection of paintings by Milad Purhaqgu is on view in an exhibition at Vista Gallery.

The exhibit named "Leaf/Layers" will run until February 19 at the gallery located at No. 11, 12th Alley, Mir Emad St.

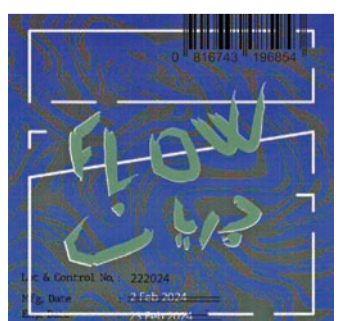


* Paintings by Fereshteh Hemmati are currently on view in an exhibition at Vaali Gallery.

The exhibit named "Fictional Wildlife" will continue until February 23 at the gallery located at 72 Khoddami St., Vanak Sq.

* An exhibition of paintings by Khatereh Duraki is underway at Jinus Gallery.

The exhibition titled "Game Yard" will run until February 15 at the gallery located at 21 Fatemei St., off Vali-e Asr Ave.



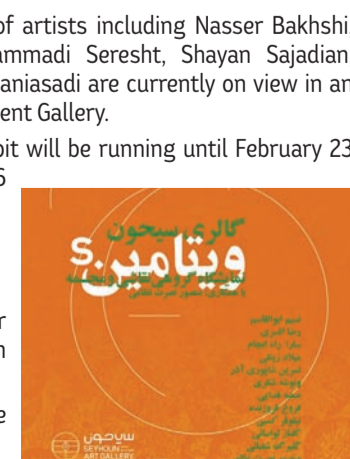
* Paintings by a group of artists including Nasser Bakhshi, Hanieh Sadri, Mina Mohammadi Seresht, Shayan Sajadian, Sofia Yeganeh and Sadra Baniasadi are currently on view in an exhibition at Dastan Basement Gallery.

Entitled "Flow", the exhibit will be running until February 23 at the gallery located at 6 Bidar St., off Fereshteh St.

Painting/sculpture

* A collection of paintings and sculptures by a large number of Iranian artists is currently on view in an exhibition at Seyhoun Gallery.

The exhibit named "Vitamin S" runs until February 21 at the gallery located at No. 11, 4th St., Vozara Ave.



Cinema should be voice of Gaza, Palestine, COI director says

TEHRAN- Mohammad Khazaei, the director of the Cinema Organization of Iran (COI), has emphasized the role of cinema in advocating for Gaza and Palestine.

Speaking at a meeting with international participants of the Fajr International Film Festival in Tehran on Friday night, Khazaei highlighted the crucial role of cinema in amplifying the voices of the oppressed, ISNA reported.

He stressed that free cinema and filmmakers should use their platform to speak out for the marginalized people of Gaza and Palestine. Khazaei noted that cinema has a duty to serve justice and truth, especially in the face of ongoing injustices against Palestinians.

He called on filmmakers to shed light on the atrocities being committed in Palestine and to use their art as a tool for raising awareness and advocating for change.

He highlighted the global significance of the Palestinian cause, stating that cinema has the power to bring people together and unite them in solidarity with the oppressed.

Khazaei underscored cinema's power as a medium capable of conveying the full spectrum of human emotion, urging the global community to take note of the profound atrocities inflicted upon the people of Palestine.

He lamented the failure of cinema to fully discharge its responsibility in this critical arena,



emphasizing the imperative for artists worldwide to engage earnestly with this issue.

Emphasizing the universal kinship shared through cinema, Khazaei stressed the role of the art form in uniting nations and giving voice to the oppressed. He outlined the contemporary mission of art and cinema as being rooted in enlightenment, justice advocacy, and the dissemination of truth.

In response to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza, Khazaei called on all artists and filmmakers to act as storytellers and champions for the plight of the Palestinian people. He underscored the collective duty to amplify the voice protesting against the injustice and oppression faced by

Palestinians—a duty that must be held with utmost seriousness.

He also commended the Fajr International Film Festival for its longstanding reputation and praised the organizers and participants for their dedication to promoting cinema as a means of social and political expression.

He mentioned that all provinces of the country are simultaneously holding this festival and due to its remarkable activities for over four decades, this festival has a very shining record among the people, artists, and officials.

Moreover, in a symbolic gesture of solidarity, guests at the gathering stood up for one minute to show their support for the oppressed people of Gaza and Palestine, emphasizing the urgent need for action and advocacy in

the face of ongoing injustices.

As of October 7, the Health Ministry in Gaza reported a devastating toll of 28,064 Palestinians killed and 67,611 wounded as a result of Israeli aggression.

In an update on Sunday, the Ministry revealed that the Israeli occupation had perpetrated 16 massacres targeting families in the Gaza Strip, resulting in the deaths of 117 individuals and the injury of 152 others within the past 24 hours.

Additionally, there are countless individuals still missing and feared deceased, either buried under the rubble or left unattended in the streets amidst the chaos and destruction.

Roudaki Hall to host foreign performances of 39th Fajr International Music Festival

TEHRAN-Roudaki Hall in Tehran will host the foreign performances of the 39th Fajr International Music Festival (FIMF) that will be held from February 12 to 17.

On Monday night, renowned Armenian pianist and composer Hayk Melikyan will perform a piano recital at the venue, ILNA reported.

Melikyan, 43, is recognized internationally as one of the most versatile and imaginative performers of the 20th century and contemporary music and among today's most engaging virtuoso pianists by classical music audiences and critics.

He leads an active concert life, playing throughout Europe, Asia, and the Americas on prestigious stages such as Geneva's Victoria Hall, Lisbon Gulbenkian Grand Auditorium, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, etc.

Melikyan is a laureate of international piano

competitions, such as Concours d'Orléans (France), Ibla Grand Prize (Italy), Yvar Mikhashoff Trust for New Music (USA), Premio Valentino Bucchi (Italy), etc. Moscow Composers Union awarded him a gold medal for his contribution and promotion of world contemporary music in 2012.

As a composer, Melikyan is an author of piano solo, chamber, instrumental, vocal, and symphonic works. The piano transcriptions, concert paraphrases, and arrangements by him are among the favorite ones in the repertoires of many pianists worldwide.

Famous Dutch pianist Nicolas van Poucke, 31, is another participant in this year's edition of the festival, who will perform on February 14 at Tehran's Roudaki Hall.

The Dutch musician, acclaimed as a "true poetic musician," stands among the Netherlands' foremost pianistic talents. With

his evocative performances and acclaimed recordings, he epitomizes musical excellence.

Nicolas has performed at the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Philharmonie Berlin, Philharmonie Essen. In addition, other tours have taken him to Cuba (Havana Mozart Festival), Korea (Changwon and Tongyeong), Italy and France.

Musicians and bands from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Afghanistan will also perform during the music festival.

The Fajr International Music Festival encompasses various sections such as the competitive (Barbad Award), non-competitive, and research sessions.

Organized by the Music Office of the Deputy for Artistic Affairs of Iran's Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, the 2024 FIMF takes place simultaneously in Tehran as well as other Iranian provinces.

Veteran sculptor, painter Iraj Tanzifi passes away at 85

TEHRAN-The veteran Iranian sculptor, painter, and scholar Iraj Tanzifi passed away on February 9 in Tehran.

The artist was admitted to Tehran's Khatam-ol-Anbia Hospital last week due to a heart disease, and the doctors found it necessary to perform a heart operation; however, he died before the surgery at the age of 85, ISNA reported.

Born in Gorgan, Golestan Province, Tanzifi studied sculpture and painting at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Tehran.

After graduation, he worked as a sculptor and painter and also started teaching these fields. For many years, he served as a lecturer at various universities

inside the country. In 2007, he was a guest professor in Paris for three months. In addition to painting and sculpture, he was also a poet.

During the 1970s, he held several painting exhibitions and made his name known as one of the prominent artists of surrealism in the country.

In the last years of the 1970s, after learning about the Iranian Repoussé and chasing, he created modern sculptures using copper. He is considered the founder of modern sculpture by copper and thus was labeled "Father of modern sculpture in Iran".

Repoussé is a metalworking technique in which a malleable metal is shaped by hammering

from the reverse side to create a design in low relief. Chasing or embossing is a similar technique in which the piece is hammered on the front side, sinking the metal. The two techniques are often used in conjunction. Many metals can be used for chasing and repoussé work, including gold, silver, copper, and alloys such as steel, bronze, and pewter.

In the 1980s, Tanzifi promoted hyperrealism, a genre of painting and sculpture resembling a high-resolution photograph, in Iran.

Hyperrealism is considered an advancement of photorealism by the methods used to create the resulting paintings or sculptures.

This artistic trend is in complete



contrast with the abstract painting, which was the dominant trend of the country's artists in the 1980s and 1990s.

From the 1990s, he focused on painting a series of works inspired by the 1980-1988 war that Iraq imposed on Iran and its psychological effects.

Opera singer Reza Fekri to hold concert, master classes in Iran

TEHRAN-Fars Symphony Orchestra has invited Reza Fekri, Iranian opera singer, based in Croatia, to hold two master classes and a concert in Iran.

The concert is scheduled to be held on February 23, in Shiraz, Fars Province, where a repertoire of Iranian and international pieces will be performed, Mehr reported.

Pieces by the Italian composers Gioachino Antonio Rossini and Gaetano Donizetti, and French composer Georges Bizet as well as

Iranian composers Hossein Dehlavi and Ebrahim Bazrafkan will be played at the concert.

During his stay in Iran, Fekri will also hold two master classes, one in Karaj, Alborz Province, and the other in Shiraz.

In 2022, the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Iran and Croatia was celebrated by a concert performed by the Zagreb Philharmonic Orchestra with Fekri singing a tenor solo accompanied by the Ivan Filipovic Chamber Choir.

Iranian maestro Ali Rahbari, the composer of the symphonic poem, conducted the orchestra during the concert.

Fekri was also invited by Rahbari to sing with the Mariinsky Orchestra performing Rahbari's symphonic poem "Zarathustra Spitam" in a concert last October at the Mariinsky Theater in Saint Petersburg, Russia.

It was part of a repertoire, which also comprised pieces from Richard Strauss, Antonin Dvorak and several other renowned composers.