

# Arab Opinion Turns Against Normalization with Israel

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## Opinion

### New horizons of Tehran-Moscow partnership against West

By Ebrahim Fallahi

TEHRAN – As major players in the world and West Asia's political and economic scene, Iran and Russia have been expanding political and economic ties for many years, however, the relations between the two countries have entered a whole new level over the past few months.

The imposition of sanctions on both countries has been a major factor in bringing the two sides closer together, making them a strong alliance against U.S. pressures. Over the past few months, senior officials from the two sides have been meeting and visiting each other to consolidate bilateral cooperation in various fields, including energy, oil, gas, and transit, as well as diplomatic and political relations.

As the most significant event among the mentioned exchanges, Russia's President Vladimir Putin visited Tehran on Tuesday to attend the 7th Summit of the Guarantor States of the Astana Process.

During his visit to Tehran Putin met with Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei and President Raisi and exchanged views on the recent development in the world and in the relations between the two countries.

In these meetings, the two sides reached new agreements and stressed the need for taking the necessary measures for broadening political and economic ties between the two countries in order to nullify the impacts of the U.S. sanctions. ▶ Page 4

### Iran fall short against Syria at 2022 FIBA Asia Cup

TEHRAN – Iran failed to book a place in the semifinals round of the 2022 FIBA Asia Cup after losing to Jordan 91-76 on Wednesday.

Dar Tucker was unstoppable with his 29 points, six rebounds, and four assists as the Falcons reached the Final Four for the first time since a silver-medal finish in 2011 in Wuhan under Tab Baldwin.

Mohammad Jamshidi paced Iran with 23 points and five assists, as Hamed Haddadi got a 19-point, 16-rebound double-double in what could be his final go-round in the continental showcase.

Iran had defeated Syria, Kazakhstan and Japan in the preliminary phase.

Iran could have won the match but showed a lackluster performance in the fourth quarter at the Istora Senayan in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The 2022 FIBA Asia Cup (formerly known as the FIBA Asia Championship) is the 30th continental basketball championship in Asia. The tournament is organized by FIBA Asia.

Originally intended to be the 2021 edition, the tournament was initially scheduled to take place between 3 and 15 August 2021, but it was postponed due to 17 to 29 August 2021 to avoid scheduling conflict with the 2020 Summer Olympics which was postponed by a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It was later postponed again to 12 to 24 July 2022.

Indonesia is the tournament host for second time after staging the 1993 edition. Australia are the defending champions.



## Astana process in Tehran ends on positive note

TEHRAN— In the summit of the guarantors for the Astana process concerning Syria held in Tehran late on Tuesday ended on a positive note

The presidents of Iran, the Russian Federation and Turkey gathered in Tehran on Tuesday to participate in the tripartite meeting within the frame-

work of the Astana process.

According to the joint statement issued after the meeting, Ebrahim Raisi of Iran, Vladimir Putin of Russia and Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey discussed various points.

The following is the joint statement of the summit:

#### The presidents

1. Discussed the current situation on the ground in Syria, reviewed the latest developments after the virtual meeting of the heads of state on July 11, 2019, and once again reiterated their determination to strengthen tripartite coordination ▶ Page 2

### UK cost of living crisis worsens

The rate of inflation in the United Kingdom has reached a new 40-year high, putting further financial strain on household budgets as the cost of living crisis rises with the strongest inflation since 1982.

Data released by the UK's Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows rising petrol

and diesel prices for motorists and costlier food has pushed inflation to 9.4 percent for the month of June in comparison with the same month last year.

The ONS pointed out the inflation rate was partly due to a massive 42 percent year-on-year rise in petrol prices and an increase of

almost ten percent in food prices.

Reacting to the news, the ONS chief economist, Grant Fitzner has said "annual inflation again rose to stand at its highest rate for over 40 years. The increase was driven by rising fuel and food prices; these were only slightly offset by falling secondhand car prices." ▶ Page 5

### Some \$10m allocated to Lake Urmia revival plan

TEHRAN – A budget of 3 trillion rials (about \$10 million) has been allocated to accelerate the progress of Lake Urmia restoration program.

Shared between East Azarbaijan and West Azarbaijan provinces in northwest Iran, Lake Urmia, was once the most extensive permanent hypersaline lake in the world. Unsustainable water management in response to increasing demand together with climatic extremes has given rise to the lake's depletion during the last two decades.

The lake's restoration program was established in 2013 and aims to restore the lake within a 10-year program. The contribution is being implemented as a component of UNDP's ongoing Conservation of Iranian Wetlands Project – a joint project between Iran's Department of Environment and UNDP. ▶ Page 7



#### Iran FM hopes Damascus and Ankara can overcome difficulties

TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has expressed hope that Syria and Turkey would overcome their disputes regarding the crisis in Syria.

Amir Abdollahian made the remarks in a joint press conference with Faisal Mekdad, Syrian Foreign Minister. ▶ Page 2

### Isfahan second destination for Islamic Republic guests, governor-general says

TEHRAN – Over the past decade, Isfahan has been the second destination for the guests of the Islamic Republic of Iran, its governor-general has said.

"Isfahan is the second destination of foreign guests of the Islamic Republic of Iran... During the past decade, hundreds of foreign officials including presidents, prime ministers, parliament speakers, and ministers visited Isfahan and its attractions following

their Tehran visits," Seyyed Reza Mortazavi said on Tuesday.

Mortazavi made the remarks in a meeting with the provincial tourism chief Alireza Izadi and several other local officials, saying extra efforts are needed to develop tourism across the central province.

"Efforts to introduce tourism attractions is an important step that should be taken to help develop the tourism-based economy in

Isfahan province."

"I believe that Isfahan's existing capacities have not been introduced as they deserve," Mortazavi said.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the official attached great importance to the role the private sector can assume in developing a tourism-reliant economy. ▶ Page 6

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## Interview

### Arabs understand inclusion in a US-Israeli confrontation with Iran is a horrible idea: British expert

By Ramin Etesam

TEHRAN – A British political expert says Arab states, specifically those on the southern shores of the Persian Gulf, "understand that their inclusion in a U.S.-Israeli military confrontation with Iran is a horrible idea."

Robert Inlakesh also says Saudi Arabia has never supported the Palestinian resistance against the Israeli occupation.

"Saudi Arabia has never been a friend to the Palestinian resistance, nor any camp of resistance in the region," Inlakesh tells the Tehran Times.

The British expert also says, "Saudi Arabia, like the UAE, has long maintained secretive ties with Israel and now openly admits that it views a normalization deal as being 'strategic' in nature."

Following is the text of the interview:

**How do you see Biden's trip to Israel and Palestine? Is there any meaningful change in U.S. attitudes and behavior when it comes to Palestine?**

Joe Biden's trip could have had the potential for advancing U.S. and Israeli interests in the region, instead, his visit amounted to meaningless platitudes and the assertion of outdated Democratic Party ▶ Page 5

### "Drowning in Holy Water" wins Golden Global Award for best film at Malaysian festival

TEHRAN – "Drowning in Holy Water", a drama on Afghan migration, was picked as best film at the 5th Malaysia Golden Global Awards, the organizers of the Malaysia International Film Festival announced on Tuesday.

The Iran-Afghanistan co-production directed by Navid Mahmudi tells the story of Rona and Hamed, two young Afghans who are in love with each other. Searching for a better life, they have decided to immigrate to Europe but they have to make a big decision to make it happen, a decision that relates to their religion and beliefs.

The film's stars Neda Jebraili and Matin Heidarnia were also nominated for the awards for best actress and supporting actor for their roles, however, they failed to win the honors.

Instead, Laure Calamy was crowned best actress for her role in the French drama "Full Time" directed by Eric Gravel.

She received the award for the portrayal of Julie, who gets an interview for a job where she can better raise her children only to run into a national transit strike. ▶ Page 8



## Astana process in Tehran ends on positive note

From page 1 ► based on mutual agreements and the results of the foreign ministers' meetings and senior experts. They also reviewed the latest international and regional developments and emphasized the leading role of Astana in the peaceful settlement of the Syrian crisis.

2. They emphasized their unbreakable commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as to the goals and principles of the United Nations Charter, and stated that these principles should be respected by all and no action, regardless of its perpetrators, should weaken these principles.

3. They expressed their determination to continue cooperation to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. They condemned the increase in the presence and activity of terrorist groups and their affiliated groups under various labels in different regions of Syria, including attacks that target civilian facilities and lead to the loss of innocent lives. They emphasized the necessity for full implementation of all measures related to northern Syria.

4. In this regard, the presidents rejected all efforts to create new realities on the ground under the pretext of fighting terrorism, including the illegitimate initiatives of autonomy, and their determination to confront separatist agendas aimed at weakening the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria, as well as threatening the national security of neighboring countries through cross-border attacks and infiltrations.

5. They examined the conditions of northern Syria and emphasized that achieving security and stability in the region is only possible in the shadow of preserving the sovereignty and territorial integrity of this country, and for this purpose they decided to coordinate their efforts. They expressed their opposition to the illegal seizure and transfer of oil and the proceeds from its sale, which belongs to Syria.

6. They once again emphasized their determination to continue the current cooperation in order to finally destroy all individuals, groups, organizations and terrorist entities, and demanded the protection of civilians and civilian infrastructure according to international humanitarian law.

7. They examined the de-escalating situation in the Idlib area in detail and emphasized the need to maintain peace in the field by fully implementing all agreements related to Idlib. They expressed serious concern about the presence and activities of terrorist groups that threaten civilians inside and outside the Idlib region. They agreed to make more efforts to ensure the stable normalization of the situation in the de-escalation zone of Idlib and its surroundings, including the humanitarian situation.

8. They expressed their deep concern about the humanitarian conditions in Syria and all unilateral sanctions that are contrary to the international law and humanitarian law and the United Nations Charter, including discriminatory measures through the issuance of exemptions for certain areas that can disintegrate this country by helping separatist agendas. In this regard, they called on the international community, especially the United Nations and its humanitarian agencies and other governmental and non-governmental international institutions to increase their aid to all of Syria with greater transparency, away from discrimination, politicization and preconditions.

9. They once again stated their opinion that the Syrian conflict has no military solution and can only be resolved through the Syrian-Syrian political process with the facilitation of the United Nations according to the UN Security Council Resolution 2254.

In this regard, they emphasized the important role of the Constitutional Committee, whose formation is the result of the definite participation of the guarantors of Astana and the implementation of the decisions of the

Syrian National Dialogue Congress in Sochi.

They also expressed their readiness to support the work of the committee through continuous interaction with its members and the special envoy of the UN Secretary General on Syrian affairs, Geir O. Pederson, as the facilitator to ensure the sustainable and effective functioning of the subsequent committee meetings. They expressed the opinion that the committee in its work should respect the rules of reference and the rules of procedure in order to be able to carry out its mission in the direction of preparing and drafting constitutional amendments for popular approval, as well as achieving progress in its work with the spirit of compromise and constructive interaction without external interference and externally imposed timeframes with the aim of reaching the general agreement of the members. They stated that the activity of the Constitutional Committee should be free of any logistical and administrative obstacles.

10. They stated their determination to continue the operation of mutual release of detainees or abducted within the framework of the relevant working group in the Astana process. They emphasized that this working group is a unique mechanism that is effective in building trust between the Syrian parties and its existence as necessary, and they also decided to take measures to continue the efforts for the release of the arrested and kidnapped and to increase the scope of operations in accordance with the agenda of the working group to deliver the bodies and identify the missing persons.

11. While clarifying that refugees and internally displaced persons have the right to return and the right to be supported, they emphasized the need to facilitate their voluntary and safe return to their main residences in Syria. In this regard, they asked the international community to provide appropriate assistance in order to resettle them and return to normal life, and take more responsibility in order to participate in increasing aid to Syria, including the development of the primary recovery plans, including basic infrastructure, especially water, electricity, health, treatment, education, schools, hospitals, etc. - and humanitarian demining according to international humanitarian law.

12. They also condemned the continuation of the Zionist regime's military attacks on Syria, including on civilian infrastructure. They considered these attacks as a violation of international law, international humanitarian law and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria, as well as destabilizing and intensifying tension in the region. They also reiterated the need to comply with internationally recognized legal decisions, including the provisions of relevant United Nations resolutions rejecting the occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights, especially United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 497, which invalidate all decisions and actions taken by the Zionist regime in this regard.

13. In addition to the Syrian issue, they emphasized their intention to strengthen tripartite coordination in various fields in order to increase joint political and economic cooperation.

14. They agreed to oblige their representatives to hold the 19th international meeting on Syria within the framework of the Astana process by the end of 2022.

15. They decided to hold the upcoming tripartite meeting of the leaders of the Astana process at the invitation of the President of the Russian Federation Mr. Vladimir Putin at the earliest possible opportunity in the Russian Federation.

16. The Presidents of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Turkey expressed their sincere gratitude to the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, His Excellency Mr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, for graciously hosting the tripartite meeting of the leaders of the Astana process in Tehran.

TEHRAN- Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Ami Abdollahian has stressed that Tehran is plowing ahead with plans to establish favorable ties with all nations, particularly neighbors.

Amir Abdollahian remarked on his Twitter account that the Islamic Republic extends a

TEHRAN — Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, whose countries are knowns as guarantors of the Astana peace process to end the Syria crisis, responded to series of questions after concluding their summit in Tehran on Tuesday night.

In a question addressed to Erdogan, a reporter asked about the agenda of the process, to which he responded, “In this meeting, we once again reviewed our activities to create a peaceful and stable environment in Syria in order to reach a political solution.”

He stated that the format of the Astana process is the most effective measure that will facilitate a political solution in Syria.

“At the Astana process, we once again emphasized our determination to carry out these activities,” the Turkish leader said.

Erdogan said the issue of terrorism was another topic of the tripartite meeting and Ankara does not see any difference between PJAK, YPG and PKK organizations.

“We do not accept that one is used as a tool to fight with the other,” he reiterated.

These terrorist organizations are the main problem for all regional countries and their goal is to divide the Turkish soil, Erdogan pointed out.

Erdogan went on to say that peace and tranquility should be established in Syria once again, elaborating, “Our main goal at the Astana process is to end the human tragedy in Syria.”

He went on to say that the process of implementing previous agreements on Syria was also reviewed in the talks.

“In this context, we also think that the Syrian crisis can only be solved politically,” he underscored.

He added that Ankara has told its Astana process partners to speed up the process of political negotiations to reach a “sustainable solution.”

Erdogan then pointed out that the activities of the Syrian Constitutional Committee should reach a conclusion as soon as possible.

He also stressed that this process should be concluded within the parameters of the United Nations. Resolution

# Tehran, Moscow, Ankara insist on resolving Syria conflict politically



2254 of the UN Security Council resolution must be implemented in Syria.

“Peace and stability once again will prevail in Syria,” Erdogan predicted.

**Raisi: Presence of Americans in east of Euphrates has no justification**

For his part, President Raisi said, “In this meeting, the presidents of the three countries emphasized the sovereignty of Syria and the territorial integrity of this country.”

The president went on to note that the heads of the three countries stressed that the Syrian government should have sovereignty over all parts of the country. Therefore, he insisted, the presence of the Americans in the east of the Euphrates is not justified under any pretext and they should leave there.

Raisi added, “Syria is a symbol of resistance and fight against terrorism,... but today's concern in Syria and Idlib regarding the presence of terrorists requires the serious determination of all countries to carry out the fight against terrorism. We are sure that this serious fight will be peaceful.”

He went on to note that during the trilateral summit it was agreed to continue to send humanitarian aid to the

oppressed people of Syria from all around the world as well as Iran, Russia and Turkey to help alleviate the livelihood problems of the “oppressed” Syrian people.

“Any action that leads to the violation of the Syrian sovereignty should not be done, but all efforts are to establish Syrian sovereignty,” the president concluded.

**Putin: Tehran, Ankara and Moscow insist on political solution to Syrian conflict**

For his turn, Russian President Vladimir Putin spoke about a wide range of issues, from the Syrian conflict to his meeting with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

“In this meeting, we discussed important issues in detail and it was emphasized that the consolidation of the movement of the three countries will benefit the normalization of the situation in Syria,” he stressed.

He also clarified about his meeting with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, saying that the two sides had “good bilateral talks.”

“It was announced by both sides to develop bilateral relations in all dimensions and cooperate on regional and international issues,” Putin continued.

Putin added he and Raisi also had a discussion in this regard and agreed to strengthen the use of the national currencies and develop economic and commercial relations.

The Russian president went on to say, “Iran, Russia and Turkey insist that a political solution to the Syrian crisis can resolve this conflict and the unity and territorial integrity of Syria must be respected and the fate of Syria must be decided by the people of this country.”

Putin said that the three presidents agreed to continue the Astana process, and that governments, opposition parties and the United Nations must participate.

“The Astana process must play a major role in solving the Syrian crisis,” he reiterated.

He then noted that during this meeting, terrorist threats were examined by the three countries, adding the main forces of Daesh (ISIS) in Syria have been destroyed and the Syrian government has gained more control over the country.

Pointing to the terrorist actions of Daesh, Putin emphasized, “Of course, the main forces of Daesh have been destroyed and the participants (involved countries) should continue their campaigns until the complete eradication of terrorists.”

The Russian president elaborated that the three countries emphasized to continue the fight against terrorism in Syria.

“Foreign forces in Syria must be eliminated. In the east of the Euphrates, they are trying to violate the sovereignty of the Syrian government. We emphasized that the east of the Euphrates must be under the control of the Syrian government,” he highlighted.

Putin then called on the international community to help the Syrian people and immigrants return to their country voluntarily.

**'We must try to preserve the JCPOA'**

On the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the JCPOA, Putin also said, “We must try to preserve the JCPOA and revive it based on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 and all parties have equal rights to develop plans without any discrimination.”

## Iran FM hopes Damascus and Ankara can overcome difficulties

From page 1 ► The comments by Amir Abdollahian came one day after the presidents of Iran, Russia and Turkey, whose countries are guarantors for the Astana process, met in Tehran on Syria. It was the seventh summit of its kind on Syria, which lasted until the early hours of Wednesday.

During the Syrian conflict, which started in 2011, Turkey sides with the armed Syrian opposition groups. However, Iran and Russia sided with the central government.

The joint press conference came one day after the leader of the Islamic Revolution warned Turkey against attack on northwest Syria.

“Considering the current sensitive situation in Syria and the possibility of a new conflict in the border areas of Syria, this meeting tried to help the course of developments in Syria move away from war and militarism, and the issues would be settled politically,” the Iranian foreign minister told reporters.

He then expressed hope that these recommendations, which were emphasized by the three presidents will be taken into consideration by the officials of the “friendly and brotherly country of Turkey, and that Turkey and Syria will pass this stage well.”

According to Iran's chief diplomat, the final

hand to anybody who does so.

He added Iran's foreign policy places a high importance on fostering relations with neighbors and that this goal is being achieved.

The top diplomat said that Iran reiterates

statement of indicates the success of the summit in sensitive regional condition.

In the case of Syria, Amir Abdollahian noted that the presence of armed men and terrorist groups in some areas of Syria is still a source of concern for Tehran and its allies in the region.

“We used the opportunity of the tripartite meeting of the Astana format to take a step forward on the issue of the withdrawal and cleansing of terrorist and armed groups from Syria and the return of security to the entire borders of Syria by maintaining the territorial integrity of this country by armed forces of this country,” the chief Iranian diplomat stated.

Amir Abdollahian added that Tehran emphasizes the importance of respecting Syria's territorial integrity and sovereignty and resolving the remaining issues regarding acts by terrorists in the country and ally some concerns that Turkey has about the presence of some groups in Syria.

“These concerns should be resolved through political means. Fighting terrorism and building the future of Syria based on the will of all the people of this country and protecting the rights of the people of this country far from foreign interference are at the top of Iran's priorities,” he stated.

its position that regional states should cooperate constructively and fruitfully to achieve overall economic growth and that they are responsible for creating security and stability in the area.

The foreign minister was ostensibly making reference to a remark made by a

**Mekdad: Turkey was trying to impose some policies in Astana process, but failed**

For his part, the Syrian foreign minister said nothing can threaten the independence and sovereignty of Syria.

“There is no benefit for Turkey or a country other than Turkey to enter the borders of Syria because this will cause a conflict between the Syrian government and Turkey and will affect the two friendly and brotherly nations of Syria and Turkey,” he stated.

He then went on to say that during the meeting in Tehran, the Turkish side intended to impose its own policies, but it failed due to the seriousness of Iran and Russia.

Mekdad then went on to say that during his meeting with Amir Abdollahian on Wednesday, he was briefed on the final statement of the summiteers. He then thanked Iran for issuing this joint statement which emphasizes Syria's values.

“We are against any interference of Turkey in Syrian lands and we are against the establishment of settlements in Syria and we are against the policy of Turkification. We are against supporting terrorist groups,” the Syrian foreign minister concluded.

number of Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC) members indicating their willingness to enhance their relations with Iran.

Relationships with neighbors have taken the top spot on the foreign policy priorities of the administration of President Ebrahim Raisi.

## Tehran says ready to welcome fraternity with neighbors



# Arab public opinion turns against normalization with Israel

TEHRAN – A recent poll by an American think tank has confirmed what every independent expert knows: Arab public opinion does not support the controversial policy of normalization between Israel and Arab states.

Almost two years into the signing of the controversial Abraham Accords between Israel and some Arab states, the already shaky support for normalization among Arab public opinion has dropped further, a poll by The Washington Institute showed.

“The wave of Arab countries officially normalizing relations with Israel over the past several years stands in contrast with a growing lack of public support for the Abraham Accords in the [Persian] Gulf,” the Institute said, noting that those who favorably view normalization with Israel are now a “minority” in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

It added, “TWI polling from March 2022 demonstrates that more than two thirds of citizens in Bahrain, KSA, and UAE view the Abraham Accords unfavorably less than two years out”

The polling stands in contrast



to another one from November 2020 in which some percentage of Emiratis, Bahrainis, and Saudis showed relative optimism about normalization. While in November 2020 nearly 40 percent of Saudis and Qataris supported the Accords, support for these agreements is now hovering between 19% to 25% in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the UAE, according to the new polling.

The number of those in Lebanon viewing the Abraham Accords “very negative” has increased from 41% in November 2020 to 66% this March, while support in Egypt has dropped from about a quarter to 13%.

Attitudes toward sub-state

business and sports relations with Israel have also been remarkable in the Persian Gulf Arab countries. A further 50% of Saudis and 47% of Emiratis strongly disagreed with allowing such ties. With the exception of Kuwait, disapproval rates of allowing business or sports ties with Israelis now edge closer to half (Bahrain – 58%, KSA – 60%, UAE – 55%), the Institute said. 94% of Kuwaitis and 93% of Lebanese surveyed disagreed with the notion—and a further 77% of Lebanese and 88% of Kuwaitis strongly reject it.

The figures from the poll bear witness to a widely held belief that ordinary Arabs do not support their leaders in establishing ties with Israel. The Abraham Accords

might have succeeded to generate a limited base of support in countries that normalized ties with Israel, but they absolutely failed to bring about a drastic change in Arab public opinion. And even that limited base is now evaporating.

The polling also gives substance to the remarks by Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, in his meeting with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

In the meeting, Ayatollah Khamenei described the Palestinian cause as being the number one issue in the world of Islam. “Despite certain governments’ interest in the Zionist regime, nations totally oppose this usurper,” he noted.

Independent polls confirmed that Arabs do not support normalization with Israel. And even in 2020, most polls evinced that the majority of Arabs view normalization unfavorably. A poll conducted in October 2020 by the Arab Center of Research and Policy Studies showed an unequivocal Arab opposition to normalization. It was conducted in 13 Arab countries with 28,000 respondents. The polling showed that 88 percent of Arabs refused the idea of recognizing Israel.

## Iran envoy for Afghanistan travels to Pakistan: report

TEHRAN – Iran’s special envoy for Afghanistan, Hassan Kazemi Qomi, is paying a visit to neighboring Pakistan for talks on Afghanistan, Pakistani media said.

Pakistani newspaper The Nation said early on Wednesday that Qomi will arrive in Islamabad on a day-long official visit for talks with Pakistani leaders on issues related to Afghanistan.

Diplomatic sources told The Nation that Iran’s special envoy for Afghanistan would meet Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Afghanistan Muhammad Sadiq and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at the Foreign Office. Issues related to border management between Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan and regional connectivity would come under

discussion. Hassan Kazemi Qomi to hold talks with Pakistan’s leaders on Afghan issue, The Nation said.

Emerging terrorism threats from Afghanistan would also come under discussion during his talks with Pakistani leaders.

Bahador Aminian, Iran’s ambassador to Afghanistan, recently met with the Taliban’s acting foreign minister, Amir Khan Muttaqi.

The Iranian ambassador considered the establishment of security and stability in Afghanistan in the interest of the region, stressing the need for Iran and Afghanistan to reach an agreement to settle border issues.

Hafeez Zia Ahmad, the spokesman for the Afghan foreign ministry, announced the

meeting on Twitter.

Zia Ahmad confirmed that the talks focused on the issue of migrants and Afghan detainees in Iran, fight against drugs, border issues, in addition to trade cooperation between the two countries, according to Al Alam.

Muttaqi expressed his satisfaction with the strengthening of relations between Tehran and Kabul, stressing that Afghanistan is making efforts to turn into a regional transit center and will participate in transporting commercial goods between Iran and Tajikistan to achieve this goal.

Zia Ahmad confirmed that the Iranian and Afghan sides discussed border issues in the meeting and reached an agreement in this regard.

## Tehran Summit a successful model for multilateral cooperation: Iran

TEHRAN – Nasser Kanaani, spokesman for the Iranian foreign ministry, has hailed the Tuesday trilateral meeting in Tehran between the leaders of Iran, Russia, and Turkey as a successful model for regional multilateral cooperation to solve disagreements.

Speaking at a weekly press conference, Kanaani said, “Yesterday’s successful and constructive meeting of the heads of the three countries that are guarantors of the Astana Process is a very successful model of regional multilateral cooperation to resolve regional and international disputes.”

He added, “The success of this process will have positive effects on other issues and regional cooperation and problems, and this approach and common will exists among the three countries.”

Kanaani noted, “There is the same view between the three countries about the developments in the South Caucasus. Astana Process regarding Syria has become a model”

On Tuesday, the 7th summit of the heads of guarantor states of the Astana Process was held in Tehran with the presence of the presidents of Iran, Turkey, and Russia.

In the summit, the presidents of Iran, Russia and Turkey emphasized their unshakable commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria; rejecting efforts to create new realities on the ground under the pretext of fighting terrorism, including illegitimate autonomy initiatives; confronting separatist agendas aimed at weakening the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria; and condemning the continuation of the Zionist regime’s military attacks on Syria, according to the official website of the Iranian presidency.

The summiteers, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, issued a joint statement condemning the continuation of the Zionist regime’s military attacks on Syria, including on civilian infrastructure, and described the attacks as violation

of international law, international humanitarian law and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Syria as well as destabilizing and intensifying the tension in the region.

In their statement the presidents of the three countries “discussed the current situation in the field in Syria, reviewed the latest developments after the virtual meeting of the heads of state on July 1, 2020, and once again expressed their determination to strengthen tripartite coordination based on the agreements between them and the results of the meetings of foreign ministers and senior experts. They also reviewed the latest international and regional developments and emphasized the leading role of the Astana Process in the peaceful settlement of the Syrian crisis.”

They “expressed their determination to continue cooperation to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. They condemned the increase in the presence and activity of terrorist groups and their

affiliated groups under various names in different regions of Syria, including attacks that target civilian facilities and lead to the loss of innocent lives. They emphasized the necessity of the full implementation of all measures related to northern Syria.”

They “expressed their deep concern about the humanitarian conditions in Syria and rejected all unilateral sanctions that are contrary to international law, international humanitarian law and the United Nations Charter, including discriminatory measures through the issuance of exemptions for certain areas, which can be done with the help of separatist agendas that would cause the disintegration of this country. In this regard, they called on the international community, especially the United Nations and its humanitarian agencies and other governmental and non-governmental international institutions, to increase their aid to all Syrians with greater transparency, away from discrimination, politicization and preconditions.”

and in recent months they have held two meetings in Tehran and one meeting in Oman, and these relations can improve day by day.”

He added, “The Islamic Republic has major capacities, especially in the field of defense industry and military relations. There are no restrictions on relations, and all the facilities that you saw in the defense exhibition can be provided to you.”

Bagheri stated, “The two countries have valuable experiences in the field of combating terrorism and maritime affairs, and by exchanging experience, they can create the basis for improvement of combat and naval power, and we welcome the development of relations in various fields.”

He pointed out, “Our Army’s navy has been trying to establish security in the north and west of the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea by sending fleets for many years, and they have gained good experience. We are establishing a maritime security center in Chabahar and we welcome your presence in this center as well as holding joint exercises.”

two countries, and we also appreciate your hosting of Iranian Navy ships in Oman ports,” the Chief of General Staff of the Armed Forces said, according to Iran’s state news agency IRNA.

Hailing political relations between the two countries, General Bagheri also said, “For about 16 years, the relations between the armed forces of the two countries have continued in the form of joint communication, and meetings and visits are held regularly, and the military stability of the two countries is an indication of the closeness of the interests of the two countries.”

He added, “The Islamic Republic of Iran is taking steps to develop relations with neighboring countries, and for this reason, we do not place any restrictions in the field of relations between the two countries, especially the relations between the armed forces of the two countries.”

The Iranian general said, “The tripartite committees that work for the working group on relations between the two countries are in a favorable situation today,

# IRAN IN FOCUS

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Straight Truth  
TEHRAN TIMES

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## SPORTS

### Iran look to earn third consecutive win and Poland ready for revenge

TEHRAN – Iran and Poland volleyball teams will lock horns on Thursday night at Italian city Bologna. The Persians have emerged victorious in their past two matches against the world giants and the Poles are ready to take revenge on Iran.

It will be the 26th encounter between the two rivals at major world-level competitions.



The Poles have won 15 of the previous 25 and lost 10 times.

In last year’s competition, on June 22, 2021 in Rimini, Poland produced a 3-0 (25-20, 25-20, 25-16) shutout of Iran, with middle blocker Jakub Kochanowski delivering the match high of 12 points, while Iran’s outside hitter Morteza Sharifi scored 11. The European side went on to claim silver, their second VNL podium, on a 13-4 win-loss record, while the Asian team finished 12th on 5-10.

Iran and Poland’s most recent encounter took place about two weeks later at the Pool 6. In their opening match at Tokyo 2020 on July 24, the Iranians had defeated the Poles in an extended tie-breaker after a five-set battle, 3-2 (18-25, 25-22, 25-22, 22-25, 23-21).

As it turned out, it was Poland’s only defeat in the pool stage and they advanced to the quarterfinals as Pool A winners, while Iran finished fifth in the pool on 2-3, just below the line for advancement.

The winners of Poland and Iran (Quarterfinal 2) will take on the winners of the U.S. vs. Brazil (Quarterfinal 3).

The quarterfinals will be held in Bologna, Italy from July 20 to 24.

### President Raisi invited to Islamic Solidarity Games

TEHRAN – Turkey’s President Recep Tayyip Erdogan invited his Iranian counterpart Ebrahim Raisi to attend the 2021 Islamic Solidarity Games.

The Games are scheduled to be held in Istanbul from Aug. 9 to 18.

Iran will participate in 18 events in the Islamic Solidarity Games.

Erdogan traveled to Iran for a summit with his Iranian and Russian counterparts on the Syrian conflict.

### Sports Minister Sajadi tests positive for COVID-19

TEHRAN – Minister of Sport and Youth Hamid Sajadi has tested positive for COVID-19.

Iranian Health Minister Bahram Einollahi has said that the seventh wave of COVID-19 infections has started in the country.

Some 19 people have died because of the coronavirus disease over the past 24 hours bringing the total deaths to 141,532, Iran’s Health Ministry said on Tuesday.

A total pf 5,377new cases of infection with COVID-19 were found over the past 24 hours, 774 of whom were hospitalized.

### Bust of 1974 Asian Games boxing champion unveiled in Iran

TEHRAN – A bust of 1974 Asian Games boxing champion Masis Hambarsonian has been unveiled in Tehran.

Hambarsonian claimed light-heavyweight gold in the very same city when Iran’s capital staged the 1974 Asian Games.

Now 71, Hambarsonian also secured a silver medal at the Jakarta 1973 Asian Championships and bronze medals at Bangkok 1977 and Mumbai 1980.

Hamid Sajadi, Iran’s Sports Minister, and Syed Reza Salehi Amiri, the President of the National Olympic Committee of the Islamic Republic of Iran (NOCIRI), led a ceremony in which Sajadi conducted a short welcome speech.

Various boxing veterans were in attendance to pay tribute to Hambarsonian.

The Sports Minister used the occasion to praise all veteran athletes for their dedication to bringing success to the country and for their service.

Amiri labelled the celebration a historic day for Iranian boxing and called former athletes a national asset.

He also remarked that commending athletes of the past will show the current crop that their individual work will not be forgotten.

The NOCIRI regularly commissions busts of successful athletes.

### Friendly: Foolad edge Umm Salal

TEHRAN – Iranian football club Foolad defeated Qatar’s Umm Salal 1-0 in a friendly match Tuesday night.

Hamid Bouhamdan scored the only gal of the match.

The match was held in Bursa, Turkey.

The Ahvaz-based football team prepare for the upcoming season of the Iran Professional League.

Foolad are also scheduled to play Saudi Arabian team Al-Faisaly in February at the 2022 AFC Champions League Round of 16.

### Iranian, Turkish sports ministers stress stepped-up relations

TEHRAN – Iranian and Turkish sports ministers emphasized close interaction and cooperation in the two fields of sports and youth in a meeting in Tehran.

Minister of Sport and Youth Hamid Sajadi held a meeting with Turkiye’s sports minister Mehmet Muharrem Kasapo?lu, who is accompanying President Erdogan on the visit to Tehran, according to the news service of the Iranian sports ministry.

In the meeting, which lasted for 90 minutes, Mehmet Muharrem Kasapo?lu expressed his great interest in Iran and the broad potential for cooperation between the two countries in the two fields of sports and youth and once again invited the Iranian counterpart to participate in the competitions of Islamic countries in his country.

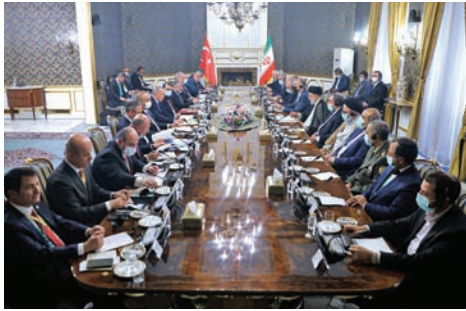
During the meeting, it was decided that Iran and Turkiye will sign a joint memorandum of understanding in the two fields of sports and youth, based on the negotiations between Sajadi and his Turkish counterpart, with eight paragraphs of this memorandum related to the cooperation of the two countries in the field of youth. Accordingly, the two ministers agreed to organize extensive programs for cooperation.

Strengthening the sports tourism between the two countries, establishing joint sports camps and exchanging visits of different teams of the two countries in Iran and Turkiye were among other agreements made between the ministers of sports and youth of the two countries.





## Tehran, Ankara discuss broadening of economic ties



TEHRAN – Iran and Turkey discussed ways of expanding economic relations along with political ties in the Turkish-Iranian High-Level Cooperation Council in Tehran on Tuesday, IRNA reported.

During the meeting, which was co-chaired by Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the two sides negotiated the extension of the gas export contract between the two sides for the next 25 years.

In the meeting, President Raisi noted that the Islamic Republic of Iran is determined to expand economic relations with neighboring countries.

The president also evaluated Tehran-Ankara ties as positive and progressive, saying that the

two countries should pursue appropriate policies to move towards increasing their annual trade exchanges to \$30 billion.

On the sidelines of the mentioned meeting, Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian also held talks with Turkish Minister of Energy and Natural Resources Fatih Dönmez in which the two sides exchanged views on cooperation in energy fields.

Later on, Head of Turkey's Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organization (KOSGEB) Hasan Basri Kurt met with Head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) Ali Rasoulzadeh to discuss ways of expanding cooperation between the small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) of the two countries.

In this meeting Rasoulzadeh referred to the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the two countries on cooperation between SMEs, saying: "President Raisi has emphasized on setting up joint industrial parks in the country's special economic zones, considering the good infrastructure for setting up such parks in the free and special economic zones and the active presence of economic enterprises in these areas."

## Iran increasing oil export to Venezuela

TEHRAN- Iran is increasing oil export to Venezuela, documents seen by Reuters on Tuesday showed.

As reported, Iran is increasing supplies of a key crude grade that Venezuela is using to boost its aging refineries' productivity and free domestic oil for exports.

The two U.S.-sanctioned countries have strengthened energy cooperation in recent years, swapping Venezuelan heavy oil and other commodities for Iranian gasoline, condensate, refinery parts and technical assistance.

The exchange has grown since May when state companies from both nations struck a contract to revamp Venezuela's El Palito refinery, after earlier work at the country's largest facility.

Venezuela's state-run oil company PDVSA is set to receive 4 million barrels of Iranian Heavy crude this month, an increase from 1.07 million barrels imported in June and a volume similar to May, when a supply contract with Iranian state firm Naftiran Intertrade Co (NICO) was signed, one of the documents showed.

The cargoes are expected to arrive in Venezuela's Jose port by the end of the month on Iran-flagged supertankers Herby and Serena, according to the document. The vessels' transponders were last recorded passing near Fujairah, in the United Arab Emirates last month, according to Refinitiv Eikon data.

PDVSA and Venezuela's oil ministry did not immediately reply to requests for comment.

PDVSA is refining the Iranian crude at facilities cravng suitable crude to increase output of motor fuels. The supply also is allowing the state-run company to free its lightest grades for blending and exporting.

In mid-June, Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji met with Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro in Tehran, during which the two sides stressed the expansion of energy ties, especially in the oil industry.

In that meeting, Oji and Maduro discussed and decided on issues such as fuel supply to Venezuela and also the exports of petroleum products,

petrochemical products, and petrochemical catalysts to the south American country.

Other topics discussed at the meeting included decisions on the export of technical and engineering services to Venezuela by Iran with the aim of the reconstruction and modernization of the country's refineries and the development of its oil and gas fields.

Heading a high-ranking politico-economic delegation Maduro arrived in Tehran on June 10 for an official visit.

The presidents of Iran and Venezuela, as holders of more than 460 billion barrels of crude oil reserves, formally held talks during that visit in which a 20-year cooperation document was inked between the two sides.

The strategic document includes cooperation in the fields of politics, culture, economy, oil, petrochemicals, and tourism.

The document was signed in the presence of President Ebrahim Raisi of Iran and his Venezuelan counterpart Nicolas Maduro.

After the signing of the strategic cooperation document, the two presidents held a joint press conference.

Raisi said Iran's foreign policy has always been focused on building relationships with independent countries.

"Venezuela has shown exemplary resistance to enemy threats," Raisi said.

Back in May, Oji headed a delegation to Latin American countries including Venezuela to pursue expansion of ties.

Earlier on January, the two countries had signed a memorandum of understanding on the sidelines of the 6th Summit of the Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF) in Doha, Qatar, to cooperate in a variety of areas including technical services, technology transfer, training services, manpower training and cooperation in the refining sector.

The document was signed by Oji and Venezuelan Foreign Minister Felix Plasencia Gonzalez.



(IRENEX), and Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB).

# New horizons of Tehran-Moscow partnership against West

From page 1 ► **Using national currencies: an end to U.S. dollar dominance**

During his meeting with President Putin, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Khamenei said global developments entail mutual and growing cooperation between Iran and Russia. He stressed the need for the two countries to implement a monetary agreement to use national currencies for trade exchanges.

The talks over using the national currencies in trade exchanges have been ongoing between Iran and Russia for years and the two sides have even implemented the idea in some of their exchanges over the past few years, however, the imbalance in the level of trade between the two sides have been a major impediment in the way of the full realization of the mentioned goal.

In the meeting with Putin, the Leader stressed the necessity of implementing the agreements and contracts between the two countries, saying such collaborations will benefit Tehran and Moscow in the distant future.

He advocated the use of national currencies in the trade between the two countries and also using other currencies instead of dollar, suggesting, "Dollar should be slowly removed from the path of global transactions, and this is possible step by step."

The Leader emphasized that economic cooperation between Iran and Russia, especially in the wake of Western sanctions, is necessary for securing the



interest of both countries.

### Outlook of a free trade agreement

Among other issues, Tehran and Moscow have been negotiating a free trade agreement to ensure acceleration in the economic relations between the two countries.

According to Kambiz Mir-Karimi, the deputy head of the Iran-Russia Joint Chamber of Commerce, the two sides have been implementing a preferential agreement that is applied to several commodity items since 2018, however, turning this preferential agreement into a free trade agreement would mean that 80 percent of the items exchanged between the two countries will be subject to free trade and will have zero tariffs.

"Negotiations on this issue are progressing rapidly, as Iran is also in talks with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) to reach a free trade agreement as well," he said.

## Iran's export to Qatar falls 17% in 3 months on year

TEHRAN- The value of Iran's export to Qatar dropped 17 percent in the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21), from the first quarter of the previous year, the spokesman of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Ruhollah Latifi said that Iran exported commodities worth \$28 million to Qatar in the three-month period.

On June 6, Iran and Qatar inked a memorandum of understanding (MOU) at the end of the two countries' eighth Joint Economic Committee meeting in Doha to outline avenues for future cooperation.

The MOU was signed by Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian and Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry Sheikh Mohammed Bin Hamad Bin Qassim Al-Thani who co-chaired the committee meeting.

This memorandum determines the framework of cooperation in various fields including transit, transportation, industry and trade, energy, customs and free zones, tourism, culture, agriculture, sports, etc.

Speaking at the eighth meeting of the Iran-Qatar Joint Economic Committee, Mehrabian emphasized the Iranian government's approach to developing international relations and said: "Considering our good relations in the past, this meeting should be a new chapter in the development of cooperation between the two countries."

"We hope to see a significant increase in



interactions with the agreements reached in this meeting," he added.

"One of the most important goals of the meeting is to support the Iranian and Qatari private sectors, and we are happy to see that a large conference with the participation of Iranian businessmen is being held in Doha at the same time as the meeting of the joint committee," Mehrabian said

According to the official, eight MOUs on food, medical industry, knowledge-based companies, etc. were also signed between businessmen of the two countries on the sidelines of the mentioned meeting.

The Iranian energy minister noted that Iran and Qatar have set financial goals for 2023 and hope to see doubled economic relations and trade balance between the two countries.

Meanwhile, in the same day, Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) and Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry also signed an MOU to form a Joint

Economic Council.

The document was signed by Sheikh Khalifa bin Jassim Al-Thani, Chairman of the Qatar Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and his Iranian Counterpart Gholam-Hossein Shafeie in Doha.

In the signing ceremony, Al-Thani hailed the formation of the council that makes up of elites of different economic sectors of the two countries.

He said that the council will help discover investment opportunities in both countries and develop mutual cooperation.

The Qatari official stressed the importance of the positive role that the private sector can play in developing trade between the two sides.

Shafeie, on his part, announced Iran's willingness to boost trade ties with Qatar and said that there are numerous grounds for cooperation in this regard.

In another event held on the sidelines of the two countries' Joint Economic Committee meeting, TPO Head Alireza Peyman-Pak held talks with the private sector representatives of the two countries to discuss trade related issues and challenges.

Speaking in that meeting, Peyman-Pak expressed the Iranian government's determination to fully support Qatari traders and investors who decide to do business in Iran.

"Holding joint meetings between businessmen and private sectors of the two countries is one of the issues emphasized by the governments of Iran and Qatar, and both countries are working to establish stable trade relations," he said.



powder, rebar, silicon, ceramic tile, evaporative cooler, sweets and chocolate, and sodium chloride as the major exported items which were exported to 39 countries including Afghanistan, Iraq, UAE, Turkey, Pakistan, China, England, India, Croatia, Serbia, Hong Kong, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Italy.

for the transit of up to \$10 million worth of goods through the Islamic Republic. The country is also making new investments in Iran's transportation projects along the INSTC routes.

### Final words

The new developments in the political relations between Iran and Russia depict a bright outlook for the two countries' economic relations as well.

However, in the economic sense, the important issue that should be taken into consideration is that the trade exchanges between the two sides should be balanced as soon as possible otherwise the realization of the economic targets set by the leaders of the two countries would be difficult if not impossible.

Currently, Iran's imports from Russia are three to four times more than the exports to the country, so if the two countries are to use their national currencies for trade, this imbalance would result in a lack of Ruble for Iranian traders to pay for the imported goods.

The best way to compensate for this shortage is for Russia to invest in Iran for the joint production of the goods that are demanded in Russia. Also, investment in transportation and transit projects in the Caspian Sea region can benefit both sides, as it will increase the volume of transit through Iran, and this way, the Islamic Republic can also access third markets in East Europe and especially in the EAEU region more easily to export its commodities to the said region.

## TEDPIX gains 3,000 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 3,000 points on Wednesday.

The index closed at 1,471 million points.

As reported, over 3,514 billion securities worth 26.619 trillion rials (about \$100 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index rose 1,396 points, and the second market's index gained 8,531 points.

TSE is on the four Iranian stock exchanges, the other three ones are Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), Iran Energy



# Arabs understand inclusion in a US-Israeli confrontation with Iran is a horrible idea: British expert

“U.S. has no clear solutions for Palestine-Israel issue and the wider region”

from ► page 1 policy positions. What has become clear is that the U.S. has no clear solutions, not only when it comes to its Palestine-Israel policy positions but also in the wider region. The difference here is that whilst the Trump administration took an aggressively pro-Israel stance, completely undermining all those in opposition to Tel Aviv's interests, the Biden administration has attempted to pretend as if they can simply go back to the old policy positions traditionally held by the United States; lightly condemning some of the more outrageous Israeli actions, without actually holding them accountable and giving lip-service to reviving a non-existent “peace process”. The trip seemed to be more focused on assuring the support of different Israeli political forces, as the Zionist regime prepares itself for another round of elections in a few months, rather than focusing on wider issues.

Is there any hope that the Biden administration will advance peace talks between Palestinians and Israel?

No. It's not even on the U.S. agenda and doesn't seem to be of interest to the Biden administration. The Oslo Accords are only alive in the rotting minds of the Palestinian Authority (PA) elite - who have no popular support from the Palestinian people - and the US politicians who refuse to accept that Israel is becoming more extreme by the day and has resorted to its rhetoric, on the Palestinians, that it formerly held to during the 1970s and early '80s. The joke of the so-called “Two-State Solution” can be seen clearly through Joe Biden's entertainment of PA President Mahmoud Abbas's, “Arab Peace Initiative” talk, an initiative that died in the late 2000s and the final nails in its coffin came with the recent wave of Arab normalization. In reality, the US official position, of fostering further Arab normalization deals, contradicts its alleged support for a peace settlement based on the 1967 borders. The only way that there could ever be a revival of “peace talks” and a return to the Oslo Accords, is if the Palestinian Authority has political leverage and it only has two means of achieving that leverage; number one is through the backing of the Arab world and number two is through armed struggle. The PA is viewed as something of a joke in the Arab world, it has no power, not even symbolically anymore. The PA also serves as a South Lebanon army-type force that not only refuses to resist Israel but instead serves the sole function of combating Palestinian resistance and aiding the Israeli



occupation in being the domestic police force of the West Bank, this is the only reason that the U.S. has not sanctioned it yet, because the PA is in the way of Palestinian liberation and is Israel's only hope in controlling the West Bank.

How do you see the position of Arab states, especially Saudi Arabia, toward Palestine? There are reports that claim Riyadh has established secret ties with Israel but is reluctant to reveal it.

Saudi Arabia, like the UAE, has long maintained secretive ties with Israel and now openly admits that it views a normalization deal as being “strategic” in nature. Like Abu Dhabi, Riyadh is attempting to diversify its economy and may be looking at opening up its ties with Israel further in the future, unlike the UAE; Riyadh has many other factors to consider for the longevity of its own leadership if they seek normalization with Israel. In my opinion, opening up their airspace to the Israelis is a form of normalization and their continual “secret” meetings with members of Israel's military, political and intelligence leaderships suggests that they have already normalized ties; it's just lacking an open economic and symbolic relationship at this point that is left. Saudi Arabia has never been a friend to the Palestinian resistance, nor any camp of resistance in the region and is a reactionary regime that seeks to follow along with whatever policy their ruling elite suggest is best for them. Now, however, the U.S. is not the only foreign power that they have to consider, so it is notable that no such Arab-Israeli air

defense alliance has been formed - as many suggested would be an outcome of Biden's visit to the region - instead, opting to stay out of any Israeli-U.S. plot to put them in the firing line for now.

Do you think Biden can unite the Arab world against Iran?

Unlike was the case in the past, the U.S. no longer possesses the power that its rhetoric suggests. Prior to Biden's visit, the Hashemite ruler of Jordan, King Abdullah II, had suggested the idea of an “Arab NATO”, yet this was not even discussed with Riyadh, according to official accounts. The Arab Summit did not conclude a GCC air-defense alliance with Israel, something that many saw as the worst-case scenario - from a U.S. point of view - of Biden's visit, in the event that nothing else significant could be achieved. From the get-go, the UAE opted out of any Arab-Israel alliance, voicing its intent to form closer ties with Tehran, what this demonstrates is that the Arab regimes, specifically the GCC countries, understand that their inclusion in a U.S.-Israeli military confrontation with Iran is a horrible idea. The GCC nations are focused on maintaining their wealth, opening themselves up to tourism and getting caught in the middle of war is counterproductive to their goals, something which the UAE quickly got a grasp of earlier this year when the Yemeni resistance targeted Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

As an interesting side note, the so-called “Jerusalem Declaration”, signed between Washington and Tel Aviv, included “maintaining

Israel's qualitative military edge over the region”, something which helps with what Israel calls its “deterrence capacity”. No such thing exists anymore, the only place Israel has superiority is in the air and you cannot win a war purely through F-16s and F-35s. The air defense systems of the U.S. and Israel are extremely limited in what they can do against the more sophisticated weapons produced by Iran and its allies, this is something that I'm sure the GCC nations have taken note of. When Ansarallah struck Abu Dhabi during Israeli President Isaac Herzog's visit, it sent a clear message, your only option is a dialogue with the camp of resistance and there is no military solution. This is a lesson that the GCC appears to be learning, but the arrogance of the U.S. and Israel is preventing them from accepting reality, their understanding of the region seems to exist in the confines of the 1990s and early 2000s.

Could you give us a comparison between the Biden, Trump and Obama administrations when it comes to the Palestine-Israel conflict?

The Obama administration did not seem to value a so-called peace solution as an important foreign policy goal, the former U.S. administration seemed to have attempted to maintain the status quo and refused to prioritize the issue. During Barack Obama's Presidency, however, an important development was the deterioration of the relationship between former Israeli Premier, Benjamin Netanyahu, and the Democratic Party, this occurred during the buildup to the signing of the Iran nuclear deal of 2015. During the Trump years, the neo-Conservative hardline approach was then taken on the Palestine-Israel conflict, it was a militantly pro-Israel administration that followed the Likud Party's every desire and cared little even for the Palestinian Authority, even attempting to destroy it. The Biden administration now pursues an incoherent policy, it pledges support to Israel and is attempting to keep the rapidly declining PA in power; at the same time, however, it chases Arab normalization and simultaneously claims to maintain the policy positions that the Obama administration took, whilst again refusing to undo many of the pro-Israel moves taken by the Trump administration. Whilst it was clear to read the Obama and Trump administrations' positions, Biden's government seems to be all over the place and asleep at the wheel, whilst maintaining all the arrogance of the governments it follows.

## UK cost of living crisis worsens

From page 1 ► While energy costs was a leading cause of rising inflation, food prices also played a leading role, with particularly sharp increases in the cost of milk, eggs, and cheese all contributing to a 1.2 percent increase between May and June and a 12-month rise of 9.8 percent.

This is while the prices paid by factories for their materials as well as their energy was 24 percent higher in June than a year earlier, that's the biggest increase since records began in 1985, while prices charged by factories jumped by 16.5 percent.

The data is slightly higher than what forecasters had expected, many economists had been predicting inflation would climb by up to 9.3 percent after the price of unleaded petrol increased by around 20 pence a liter in June.

The new figures are yet another increase from the numbers released last month for May which showed inflation had risen by 9.1 percent.

The latest data means the UK had the highest rate of inflation in June among the Group of Seven industrialized states. While Canada and Japan have both yet to report their June data, economists say neither are likely to come close to the UK's consumer price index.

While their has been a global rise in the costs of energy and different commodity prices, the world's supposedly fifth largest economy has been among the hardest hit among the world's wealthiest nations

Last year, in June 2021, inflation stood at 2.5 percent and has now increased for nine consecutive months but the worrying signs for the UK are that inflation has yet to hit its peak in the UK.

More inflationary pressure could be on the way, according to separate ONS data for producer prices, which measures how much firms are paying for their fuel and raw material and the prices they charge their customers.

“The cost of both raw materials and goods leaving factories continued to rise, driven by higher metal and food prices respectively,” Fitzner said, “these increases saw raw materials post their highest annual increase on record, with manufactured goods at a 45-year high.”

The Bank of England also expects the cost of living to increase even further with inflation hitting above eleven percent in the Autumn when bills for energy are expected to rise again.

The stock markets are expecting the Central Bank to respond to the record inflation levels since February 1982 by raising interest rates by either 0.25 or 0.5 percentage points next month.

Yael?Selfin, chief economist at KPMG UK, told British media the peak in inflation is “still some way off”, adding that energy bill increases at the start of Autumn would stop it from falling to two percent before the middle of 2024.

“This means more pain is on the way for household budgets as the high rate of inflation continues to outpace wage growth, bringing down the real value of incomes across the UK.” He said, adding “we also expect the Bank of England to continue raising the base interest rate, which we now expect to reach two percent early next year, to stave off further rounds of inflation rises.”

The main opposition party's Labour's shadow chancellor, Rachel Reeves, said “the cost of living crisis is leaving families more worried every day, but all we get from the [ruling Conservative Party] is chaos, distraction and unfunded fantasy economics.”

“Rising inflation may be pushing family finances to the brink, but the low wage spiral facing so many in Britain isn't new. It's the result of a decade of Tory mismanagement of our economy meaning living standards and real wages have failed to grow.”

“We need more than sticking plasters to



get us back on course - we need a stronger and more secure economy.”

Economic experts say that like the eurozone, the UK is heavily dependent on gas imports, which has left it exposed to volatile energy prices. These have been driven first by a resurgence in demand in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic and then by the conflict in Ukraine.

The latest grim data comes on the backdrop of news that British workers are suffering from the biggest drop in wages in more than 20 years, as rising food, energy, and oil prices are strongly affecting the paychecks of workers.

According to the ONS data, when taking into consideration the effect of inflation, workers' wages slumped by 2.8 percent between March and May in comparison with the same time

frame last year. That's the fastest decline since the records office started keeping track in 2001.

Meanwhile, data released by the research company Kantar this week, inflation for grocery prices hit nearly ten percent in the four weeks ending on July 10. That means British households can expect to spend an extra £454 (\$545) this year on food and other vital essentials.

In addition, the energy research firm Cornwall Insight says bills for energy usage which had risen by 54 percent in April, is estimated to top £3,000 (\$3,603) per year for millions of households starting from October. Households are, in essence, the ones feeling the strain of the rising costs of the energy and food crises.

The British currency the pound has also been strongly hit this year, losing eleven percent of its value against the U.S. dollar, which is making it more expensive for families to travel abroad or for businesses to import goods

It has also been one of the key talking points of public debates among the remaining candidates in the race to replace Boris Johnson as prime minister. Yet critics say not much will be done and the campaign pledges are only aimed at gaining popularity with the public ahead of the General elections.

Critics argue that government officials and whoever replaces Johnson are out of touch with working-class families and not taking any real measures to address their financial problems. The soaring cost of living crisis has triggered a wave of industrial action by trade unions.

These have hit a whole range of sectors including transport such as railway and airport causing travel chaos. In addition to railway workers, barristers, firefighters, doctors, postal office workers, teachers, nurses, civil servants, and council workers; even British telecom engineers are among a wave of Britons considering or taking strike action.

The country has also witnessed protests, in which people from all walks of life, have participated to vent their mounting anger at the government for its failure to provide a sufficient safety net against a population that is increasingly heading into poverty.

## China warns U.S. of ‘forceful measures’ if Nancy Pelosi visits Taiwan

China warned Tuesday it would take “resolute and forceful measures” if U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi visits Taiwan, in what would be the highest-level delegation from the United States to the self-governing island in 25 years.

Pelosi, who is second in line of succession to the U.S. presidency, has reportedly outlined plans to take a delegation to Taipei in August, according to the Financial Times, citing people familiar with the matter. Pelosi's office declined to comment on her travel plans.

August 1 is the anniversary of the founding of China's People's Liberation Army.

On Tuesday, China's Foreign Ministry lashed out at the potential visit, saying it would “have a severe negative impact on the political foundation of China-U.S. relations, and send a gravely wrong signal to ‘Taiwan independence’ separatist forces.”

“If the U.S. insists on going down the wrong path, China will definitely take resolute and forceful measures to firmly defend its national sovereignty and territorial integrity,” ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian told a news conference.

“The United States must be fully responsible for all the consequences caused by this.”

Beijing's ruling Communist Party has long claimed Taiwan as part of its territory and has repeatedly vowed to “reunify” the island of 24 million people with the Chinese mainland -- by force if necessary -- despite having never governed it.

Pelosi had previously planned to lead a U.S. congressional delegation to Taiwan in April, but the trip was postponed after she tested positive for Covid-19. At the time, China had strongly opposed the trip and issued similar warnings.

Her visit would be the first by a sitting House Speaker since Republican Newt Gingrich traveled to Taiwan in 1997.

Taiwan has seen a flurry of visits by American delegations in recent years, especially after the Taiwan Travel Act was signed into law by then U.S. President Donald Trump in March 2018. Since then, U.S. officials and lawmakers have embarked on more than 20 trips to the island, according to a CNN tally.

China, meanwhile, has sent record numbers



of war planes near Taiwan, as cross-strait tensions soared to their highest in recent decades.

Asked if he was worried that Pelosi's Taiwan trip could send the wrong message for the U.S.-China relationship, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer told CNN: “I think the President's position is pretty clear on our relationship with Taiwan. So the answer to that question is I don't think it will be a surprise to the Chinese or be a different message than we've been sending.”

Hoyer told CNN he would not join Pelosi on her trip to Taiwan, and did not know when she would be going.

(Source: CNN)



## Over 700 tourism events held in Iran during four months, deputy minister says



TEHRAN – More than 700 tourism events have been held across Iran during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21), the deputy tourism minister has said.

“710 tourism events in the forms of festivals, exhibitions, and different rituals have been held in various provinces during the first four months of the year,” Mehr quoted Ali-Asghar Shalbafian as saying on Wednesday.

That number shows over a two-fold increase in comparison to the same period last year, the official said.

Festivals on agritourism, indigenous rituals, gastronomy, and cooking -- on local, regional, and national scales -- constituted the lion's share of the tourism events this year, Shalbafian said.

The ancient country has a culturally-diverse society dominated by a wide range of interethnic relations. Native speakers of Persian (Farsi language) are considered as the predominant ethnic generally of mixed ancestry, and the country has important Turkic, Kurd, and Arab elements in addition

to the Lurs, Baloch, Bakhtiari, and other smaller minorities such as Armenians, Assyrians, and Jews.

Experts say that ethnic tourism provides the ground for potential sightseers to feel like indigenous people by living with a nomad or rural family or enjoying an independent stay. However, as the name implies, it's a trip for recreational purposes rather than an expedition for anthropological research.

Iran is a paradise for foodies when it comes to gastronomy tourism. No Persian meal is complete without an abundance of herbs. Every table is set with sabzi-khordan, a basket of fresh herbs, radishes, and scallions, which are eaten raw and by the handful, often tucked into a piece of fresh flatbread with a bite of feta, cucumber, or walnuts.

Experts believe that food tourism has become one of the most dynamic and creative segments of tourism and, at the same time, has naturally positioned itself as an element of diversification of tourism with a high impact on the promotion of sustainable development at the regional and local levels.

In 2020, Iran joined an online campaign launched by the UNWTO to promote gastronomy as an essential part of tourism. Iranian cuisine, usually dominated by fragrant herbs, varies from region to region. It principally accentuates freshness, deliciousness, and colorfulness.

## Iran's Rig Yelan records temperature of 73C

TEHRAN – A team of experts has recorded the temperature of 73 degrees Celsius in the Rig Yelan region, which is situated in the UNESCO-registered Lut desert.

Known as one of the hottest places on Earth, the desert is encircled by the provinces of Kerman and Sistan-Baluchestan, and South Khorasan.

It is the first time that a team of experts inside South Khorasan province started measuring Lut's temperature, a local

official said on Sunday.

Seven years of satellite temperature data analyzed by NASA showed in 2005 that the Lut Desert was the hottest place on Earth. Based on the research, it was the hottest during 5 of the 7 years and had the highest temperature overall: 70.7°C in 2005.

The project was part of a program to commemorate the 6th anniversary of Lut Desert's registration on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

## Khorasan Razavi estimates 14m overnight stays in summer

TEHRAN – Khorasan Razavi province estimates to register more than 14 million overnight stays during the summer, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

“Throughout the summer, some 14.3 million travelers are expected to stay overnight in the official accommodation centers across the province,” Yousef Bidkhorri said on Wednesday.

In the summer before the coronavirus outbreak, more than 12.7 million overnight stays were recorded in accommodation units of the



province, the official added.

Iranians also made over seven million overnight stays across the northeastern province in the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 21), he noted.

The provincial capital of Mashhad is Iran's holiest and second-largest city which embraces the shrine complex of the eighth Shia Imam.

Before the coronavirus puts almost everything on

lockdown, Mashhad, played host to thousands of travelers and pilgrims who come from various Iranian cities, neighboring countries, and even across the globe to visit the holy shrine.

According to official statistics, some 37 million Iranian pilgrims and travelers visited the shrine city of Mashhad during the first ten months of the past Iranian calendar year 1398 (March 21, 2019- March 10, 2020). Of whom some eight million came by road, six million by rail, 3.8 million by air, and 18 million by private cars.

# Isfahan second destination for Islamic Republic guests, governor-general says

From page 1 ► Soaked in a rich history, Isfahan was once a crossroads of international trade and diplomacy in Iran and now it is one of Iran's top tourist destinations for good reasons. It is filled with many architectural wonders such as unmatched Islamic buildings, bazaars, museums, Persian gardens, and tree-lined boulevards. It's a city for walking, getting lost in its mazing bazaars, dozing in beautiful gardens, and meeting people.

The ancient city is renowned not only for the abundance of great historical bridges but also for its 'life-giving river', the Zayandeh-Rood, which has long bestowed the city an original beauty and



fertility. Isfahan has long been nicknamed as Nesf-e-Jahan which is translated into “half the world”; meaning seeing it is relevant to see half the world. In its heyday, it was also one of the largest cities in the

region with a population of nearly one million.

The cool blue tiles of Isfahan's Islamic buildings, and the city's majestic bridges, contrast perfectly with the encircling hot, dry Iranian countryside.

The huge Imam Square, best known as Naghsh-e Jahan Sq. (literary meaning “Image of the World”), is one of the largest in the world (500m by 160m), and a majestic example of town planning. Constructed in the early 17th century, the UNESCO-registered square is punctuated with the most interesting sights in Isfahan.

Modern Isfahan is home to some heavy industry, including steel factories and a nuclear facility on its outskirts, however, its inner core wants to be preserved as a priceless gem. The city is also home to a gigantic, professional, and state-of-the-art healthcare city, which is a major destination in the realm of medical tourism.

## Kal-e Jeni Geosite: efforts underway to uplift merits

TEHRAN – Kal-e Jeni (“canyon of jinn”) Geosite in Tabas, South Khorasan province has undergone some rehabilitation works in a bid to enhance tourism standards, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

“Building a new access road, parking spaces, restrooms, stairs at the north and south entrances to the Kal-e Jeni valley, installing warning signs throughout the valley, and building an info center and entertainment center are all part of this project,” Morteza Arabi explained on Wednesday.

In addition to being registered on the national heritage list, the geosite is waiting to receive UNESCO recognition as part of the Tabas Geopark.

Last December, Mehr reported that Iran submitted an all-inclusive dossier on its Tabas Geopark to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization amid hopes to win UNESCO status for the gigantic landscape.

UNESCO experts are set to visit the geopark during summer to have field research, inspect and evaluate the landscape, which is situated in east-central Iran, the report said.

Situated in South Khorasan province, Tabas Geopark includes 50 geo-sites, a variety of scenic landscapes, and untouched terrains with the mysterious Kal-e Jeni located in Azmighan village. Initial studies on Tabas Geopark commenced in 2011 with the task of identifying its various sites and choosing names for them.

One of the highlights of the geopark, Kal-e Jeni is still unexplored by many potential travelers and adventurers who may not even know such a wonderful attraction exists on Earth!

A geopark is a unified area that advances the protection and use of geological heritage in a sustainable way and promotes the economic well-being of the people who live there. A UNESCO definition of the global geopark is a unified area with a geological heritage of international significance. Geoparks use that heritage to promote awareness of key issues facing society in the context of our dynamic planet.

Experts believe that the majority of geoparks help promote awareness of geological hazards, including volcanoes, earthquakes, and tsunamis and many help prepare disaster mitigation strategies with local communities. Geoparks embody records of past climate changes and are indicators of current climate changes as well.

A UNESCO Global Geopark fosters socio-economic development that is culturally and environmentally sustainable directly affecting the area by improving human living conditions and the rural environment. It gives local people a sense of pride in their region, strengthens public identification with the area, and promotes a better understanding of the area's geological, natural, archaeological, cultural, and industrial heritage.



According to the UN body, UNESCO Global Geoparks has multiple aims which included the protection and conservation of its territorial geoheritage and culturally and environmentally sustainable development of the area.

“UNESCO Global Geoparks are fundamentally about people and about exploring and celebrating the links between our communities and the Earth. The Earth has shaped who we are: it has shaped our farming practices, the building materials and methods we have used for our homes, and even our mythology, folklore, and folk traditions. UNESCO Global Geoparks, therefore, engage in a range of activities to celebrate these links. Many UNESCO Global Geoparks have strong links to the arts communities where the synergy released by bringing science and the arts together can yield surprising results.”

Furthermore, one of the primary aims is to promote geoscience education within local communities and to visitors by conveying the importance of the geological heritage to students, teachers, local decision-makers, and the broad public.

## Iran domestic tourism: over 56 million passengers traveled by bus last year

TEHRAN – More than 56 million passengers used busses for their overland journeys across Iran during the past Iranian calendar year (ended March 20).

Data compiled by the Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization indicates that 103,364,000 passengers used overland public transportation during the past Iranian year 1400, Mehr reported.

Some half of the figure, which counts 56,453,000 passengers, opted to travel by busses for their domestic journeys, the organization said.

According to the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, over 1,957,000 international travelers, the

majority of whom were from neighboring countries, arrived in the country in 1400. However, the country's tourism industry tremendously suffered from the international coronavirus restrictions so the number of foreign arrivals in 1399 decreased by more than 94% in comparison to the year 1398.

The ancient land is potentially a booming destination for travelers seeking cultural attractions, breathtaking sceneries, and numerous UNESCO-registered sites. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, Iran aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025.

## 206 tourism projects underway in Mazandaran

TEHRAN – A total of 206 tourism-related projects are currently underway across the northern province of Mazandaran, the provincial tourism chief has said.

An investment value of 250 billion rials (\$834,000) has been channeled into the projects, CHTN quoted Mehdi Izadi as saying on Wednesday.

Hotels, guest houses, tourist complexes, and traditional restaurants are among the underway projects, the official added.

The projects are expected to create more than 15000 job opportunities upon their completion, he noted.

Sandwiched between the towering Alborz mountain range and the Caspian Sea, Mazandaran has a rich yet turbulent history. An early civilization flourished at

the beginning of the first millennium BC in Mazandaran (Tabarestan).

Its insecure eastern and southeastern borders were crossed by Mongol invaders in the 13th and 14th centuries. Cossacks attacked the region in 1668 but were repulsed. It was ceded to the Russian Empire by a treaty in 1723, but the Russians were never secure in their occupation. The area was restored to Iran under the Qajar dynasty.

The northern section of the region consists of lowland alongside the Caspian and upland along the northern slopes of the Alborz Mountains. Marshy backlands dominate the coastal plain, and extensive gravel fans fringe the mountains. The climate is permanently subtropical and humid, with very hot summers.

## National cities, villages of handicrafts selected

TEHRAN – Three cities and a village have been designated as national handicraft hubs in Iran, the deputy tourism minister has said.

Bayg and Firouzeh, both in northeastern Khorasan Razavi province, and Bafq in the central province of Yazd were registered as national cities of handicrafts while Besk, also in Khorasan Razavi, was named a national village of handicrafts, Maryam Jalali said on Wednesday.

“The registration of handicraft cities and villages at the national level can boost tourism, increase production, and help prevent migration,” she noted.

With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the number of cities and villages



registered by the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next. For instance, Shiraz is named a “world city of

[diverse] handicrafts”, Malayer is a global hub for woodcarving and carved-wood furniture, while Zanjan has gained the title of a “world city of filigree”.

Available data compiled by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts suggests the value of Iran's handicrafts exports stood at \$120 million during the first eleven months of the Iranian calendar year 1399 (March 20, 2020 – February 18, 2021), Mehr reported. The country's handicrafts exports slumped during the mentioned months in comparison to the same period last a year earlier due to the damage the coronavirus pandemic has inflicted on global trade.



# Iran seeking to open ‘house of innovation’ in Uzbekistan

TEHRAN – Iran is ready to establish a house of innovation in Uzbekistan in a bid to broaden bilateral cooperation in the field of technology, Vice President for Science and Technology, Sourena Sattari, has said.

The Iranian house of innovation will be established in cooperation with the private sector, IRIB quoted Sattari as saying on Tuesday.

He made the remarks in a meeting with Uzbekistan's Minister of Innovative Development Ibrohim Abdurakhmonov.

“The achievements of the two countries in the field of biotechnology, common views, and the desire for mutually beneficial cooperation are of particular importance,” said the Iranian vice president.

“We are ready to scale up the production of innovative products as part of start-up projects, by financing start-up and scientific projects in the field of biotechnology, creating conditions for joint scientific work of our scientists, as well as commercializing the results of scientific work. I believe that investments in this area will serve to further develop innovative entrepreneurship in accordance with the interests of both countries,” he explained, according to the portal of Uzbekistan's Ministry of Innovative Development.

In turn, Ibrohim Abdurakhmonov said that following his trip to Iran in March this year, cooperation was established with more than 20 Iranian companies, research institutions, and innovation infrastructure facilities. He noted that Sattari's visit to Uzbekistan will provide an opportunity to further ex-



pand this cooperation.

A total of 35 leading Iranian innovative companies operating in the field of medicine, animal husbandry, food industry, and other fields took part in an exhibition with their innovative products and projects.

Within the framework of the exhibition, meetings of business representatives of the two countries were organized in the “B2B” format in order to further strengthen cooperation between businessmen of Uzbekistan and Iran, and establish mutually beneficial relations in such areas as agriculture, animal husbandry, medicine, IT and food industry.

Over the few past years, with the support of the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, the Iranian houses of innovation have been set up in several countries to develop the global

market for knowledge-based products.

These centers have already been set up in countries such as Russia, Turkey, China, Syria, Kenya, Armenia, and Iraq.

supporting innovative ideas, and holding technological and innovative events, the centers will be a platform for the development and promotion of Iranian knowledge-based companies, startups, and creative industries.

The centers are mainly formed with the investment and support of the private sector to provide the necessary infrastructure for their exports through the innovation houses.

Mehdi Ghalehnoei, an official with the vice presidency for science and technology, said in February that in the past Iranian calendar year which ended on March 20, knowledge-based companies gained about \$800

million in revenue from export, and in the current year, the figure seems to reach up to \$2 billion.

Africa, neighboring countries, Southeast Asia and Eurasia are our export target priorities, and we hope to create Iranian innovation and technology in all these areas, he added.

Over the few past years, the Iranian houses of innovation have been set up in Russia, Turkey, China, Syria, Kenya, Armenia, and Iraq.

## Tehran-Ankara scientific cooperation can be a role model for Islamic nations

TEHRAN – The will of Iran and Turkey for expanding scientific cooperation can be a role model for other Islamic nations, Hasan Mandal, the president of the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK), has said.

Emphasizing the need to boost collaboration between knowledge-based companies of the two countries, the Turkish official said science and technology parks can also enhance relations, IRNA reported.

He made the remarks in a meeting in Tehran with Deputy Science Minister Vahid Haddadi-Asl, calling for industries to help universities and scientific centers upgrade the level of cooperation.

The Iranian official, for his part, said that 47 research projects are being carried out jointly by the two countries, and the two sides are ready to add 30 more projects in different fields, especially in the water sector.

### Science diplomacy

One of the indicators of the growth of sci-

ence diplomacy is conducting joint research between two or more countries, Iran has written more than a third of its articles in Scopus in 2020 with international participation, which is about 30.7 percent.

In 2019, the articles with international participation reached 27.4 percent, so compared to 2019, Iranian researchers increased their international scientific contributions by 3.3 percent. It should be noted that in 2020 more articles were published internationally by Iranian researchers, but nevertheless, the amount of international participation has increased.

### Scientific growth

Studies show that Iran entered the year 2022 with the 15th rank in science production worldwide and it is expected to make progress over the next years.

In reviewing scientific products, various indicators such as publication of articles in prestigious international journals, citations, validity of journals, the level of productivity, and scientific impact of scientists are con-



sidered quantitatively and qualitatively.

According to the latest information on science production, Iran is ranked 15th in the world in the international system of Web of Science in 2021, with an h-index of 383, which indicates the quality of Iranian articles registered.

Iran's scientific position in the Web of Science over the last 5 years shows that the production of conference papers has been on a downward trend during 2020 and 2021 due to the outbreak.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## Philanthropists support 28,000 orphans, deprived children

Iranian benefactors have made cash and kind contributions from the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan (starting on May 6) to help 28,000 children who are either orphaned or whose parents are financially struggling, deputy director of Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation has announced.

There are currently 600,000 philanthropists who support orphaned children as well as children living in families in financial distress, IRNA quoted Alireza Asgarian as saying on Wednesday.

The foundation also intends to build housing units for families who cannot afford to rent houses, he added.

## مردم ۲۸ هزار کودک بی سرپرست را تحت حمایت قرار دادند

معاون توسعه مشارکت‌های مردمی کمیته امداد امام خمینی (ره) گفت: خیرین و نیکوکاران کشور از ابتدای ماه مبارک رمضان تاکنون ۲۸ هزار کودک بی‌سرپرست را تحت حمایت‌های مالی و غیرمالی خود قرار دادند.

علیرضا عسگریان روز چهارشنبه در گفت و گو با خبرنگار اجتماعی ایرنا افزود: ۶۰۰ هزار حامی در سطح کشور در یاری‌رسانی به ایتم و فرزندان محسنین با کمیته امداد همکاری دارند.

عسگریان اظهار داشت: ساخت مسکن برای خانواده‌های تحت پوشش کمیته امداد از دیگر برنامه‌های اجرایی و دارای اولویت کاری این نهاد در سال جاری است.

## SOCIETY

JULY 21, 2022

Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

7

## Some \$10m allocated to Lake Urmia revival plan

From page 1 ► The budget has been paid to the ministries of energy and agriculture in order to expedite the restoration plan, IRIB quoted Mohammad-Sadeq Motamedian, the governor-general of West Azarbaijan province, as saying.

If related water transfer and agriculture projects are implemented successfully, more than one billion cubic meters of water will be poured into the lake annually, he stressed.

Researchers have realized that the situation of Lake Urmia in the last 20 years is not fully related to lack of rainfall, which shows that the share of human factors has been higher.

Paleontological studies conducted by two Iranian researchers at the University of Miami on Lake Urmia show that even when the rainfall was 180 mm, the lake did not dry up,

and this shows that the lake's condition in recent years has been affected by human factors.

The share of natural factors in the drying of

Lake Urmia is 31 percent, which includes an 18 percent decrease in rainfall and a 1.5-degree increase in temperature in the last two decades compared to the long term, and the share of human factors is 69 percent, which includes agricultural development and construction of dams and extraction from groundwater sources.

The amount of water consumption in the Urmia catchment area for the agricultural sector is 4,699 million cubic meters and the consumption for drinking, health, and industry is 588 million cubic meters.

The budget has been paid to the ministries of energy and agriculture in order to expedite the restoration plan.

## Astrology and astronomy in Iran

Part 16

Islamic astrology, following the traditions of its various sources, comprises a number of branches differing both in their objectives and in their methods.

These branches are: Genethliology, which describes the lives of individuals on the basis of their natiivities (mawalid); astrological history, which recounts the rise and fall of dynasties and religions (dowal and adyan or melal); catarchic astrology, which guides its adherents in the choice of the propitious times for initiating activities (ekhtiarat); interrogations, which provide answers to queries addressed to the astrologer (masa'el); and iatromathematics, which applies astrological doctrine to medical practice. Closely related to astrology are astral magic and divination from celestial omens.

### Genethliology

The basic tool utilized in all astrological predictions is the horoscopic diagram or theme (za'era or sura), which was originally developed in Hellenistic Egypt for the practice of genethliology.

The theme in Islamic astrology was normally a rectangle divided by two parallels to each of its two pairs of opposite sides into nine equal rectangles; the four corner rectangles were further each divided by diagonals to make twelve places (amken, amaken) surrounding the central rectangle.

Each of the twelve places has influence over specific aspects of the native's life. The first, fourth, seventh, and tenth are cardines (awtad), and are the most influential places; the next four are succedents, and the remainder cadents.

The ecliptic with its twelve zodiacal signs (boruj) is superimposed on the twelve places. The precise fit is computed with the help of the local oblique ascensions; the longitude of the beginning of the first place is that of the point of the ecliptic on the local eastern horizon at the moment of the nativity as confirmed by the nomudar.

Each zodiacal sign is the house (bayt) of a planet (kawkab), which is its lord (rabb or saheb). Each sign is further subdivided into three equal parts called decans (wojuh), into nine equal parts called in Sanskrit navamsas (nowbahra), and into



five unequal parts called terms (hodud); each part also is ruled by a planet.

In addition, the twelve zodiacal signs are grouped into four triplicities (mothallathat), each of which is connected with one of the four elements and is ruled by a diurnal and a nocturnal planetary lord.

The longitudes of the planets and of the lunar nodes at the time of the nativity are recorded in the appropriate places in the theme, as are those of some of the lots (seham), which are points on the ecliptic as distant from a specified point in the theme (e.g., the ascendent) as are two other specified points from each other.

The strengths of the planets in influencing the native are affected in various ways: by their distances from their exaltations (sharaf) and dejections (habuthat); by their presence in their own houses, decans, navamsas, or terms, or in those of their friends and enemies; by their configurations with the other planets—conjunction (qeran) or one of the four aspects (anzar), i.e., sextile (tasdis) to 60°, quartile (tarbi') to 90°, trine (tathlith) to 120°, and opposition (moqabala) to 180°; and by their modes of motion, such as retrogression (roju') or conjunction with the sun (taht al-sho'a' or ehteraq).

The moon experiences three additional conditions related to its relative swiftness; it may approach (ettasala) another planet, leave (ensarafa) it, or be unimpeded in motion (khali al-sayr). The first two conditions are occasionally applied to the other planets when appropriate.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

To be continued

## COVID-19 UPDATES ON JULY 20

New cases	7,093
New deaths	32
Total cases	7,296,635
Total deaths	141,564
New hospitalized patients	907
Patients in critical condition	688
Total recovered patients	7,070,379
Diagnostic tests conducted	52,924,694
Doses of vaccine injected	151,514,096



TEHRAN TIMES



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Managing Director: **Mohammad Shojaeian**  
Editor-in-Chief: **Ali A.Jenabzadeh**

Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895  
Email: info@tehrantimes.com  
Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000  
Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051430  
Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807  
Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603  
Printed at: Jame Jam Bartar Borna - 44197737



Tehrantimes79

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

JULY 21, 2022

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Value of each man depends upon the art and skill which he has attained.  
**Imam Ali (AS)**

Prayer Times » Noon:13:11    Evening: 20:38    Dawn: 4:24 (tomorrow)    Sunrise: 6:05 (tomorrow)

## Middle Persian literature

Part 6  
The structure of the Pahlavi Rivayat resembles that of the Dadestan i Denig, since it treats miscellaneous subjects on the ground of a detailed knowledge of other religious texts.

Stylistically, however, it presents a more varied picture, since it does not follow the rigid question and answer schema of the Dadestan i Denig.

It consists of sixty-five chapters, the last three of which follow Manushchih'r's book. In contrast to the Dadestan i Denig, the subject matter of the chapters of the Pahlavi Rivayat cannot be resumed under a few general headlines, since the author touches on many different matters.

However, a general eschatological concern is shown by the many chapters touching on sins, merits, and the afterlife. The text was edited by Dhabhar (1913), followed by H. K. Mirza (1942), in a doctoral thesis limited to the sixty-two chapters that precede the Dadestan i Denig, and by A. V. Williams (1990), who founded his authoritative translation on Dhabhar's text.

The Epistles of Manushchih'r, Dadestan i Denig, and Pahlavi Rivayat share a manuscript tradition, in common with the Selections of Zadspram.

This is divided into an Iranian branch, represented by K35, TD, and BK, and an Indian branch represented by manuscripts deriving from a codex lent to T. D. Anklesaria by Dastur Namdar Shahryar, who had also brought TD2. Unfortunately, that manuscript went back to Iran, never to surface again.

Codex TD2 containing the Iranian Bundahishn also preserves three rivayats and an Avesta-Pahlavi work known as the Pursishniha. Of these, the Rivayat i Emed i Ashawahishtan, which bears the name of a 10th-century head of the believers, was edited by B. T. Anklesaria in 1928.

He submitted the work for an award of the University of Bombay. In 1938 he similarly submitted his edition of the other two rivayats in a two-volume work entitled Pahlavi Rivayat of Aturfarnbag and Farnbagsrush (publ. 1969).

The work contains: (1) Rivayat of Adurfarrbay; (2) Rivayat of Farrbaysrush; and (3) a text of thirty questions and answers.

The text of the Pursishniha was first edited by J. Darmesteter; B. T. Anklesaria published the Avestan text of the first 44 questions, and K. M. Jamasp-Asa and H. Humbach (1971) edited the complete text.

The Rivayat i Emed i Ashawahishtan, the Rivayats of Adurfarrbay and Farrbaysrosh, the thirty questions, the Pursishniha, and another text called Zand i fragard i Widewdad, are all found in TD2, written in Kerman ca. 995-98 Y./1626-29.

The three rivayats are also found in a manuscript called G by B. T. Anklesaria and written by Gubedshah Rustam Bundar, author of the ms. TD1 of the Bundahishn and TD of the Dadestan i Denig. The Pursishniha are also found in ms. R242 of the K.R. Cama Oriental Institute.

The Shayast ne-shayast is a text which belongs, according to Boyce (1968) to the same circle which produced the last commentary to the Widewdad and the Nerangistan.

We cannot date it precisely, but the lack of references to Islam, as well as the freedom with which the author discusses subjects which could offend a Muslim ear, may justify a date in the late Sassanid period.

The first to translate the Shayast ne-shayast,

together with the so-called Supplementary texts, was West (1880). In his introduction he correctly remarked that these should be considered different texts, since in the most ancient codices they were separated by other works, such as the Frahang i Uim.

Moreover, he suggested considering them as treatises dealing with the same subject matter but compiled by different authors. In his opinion, the first ten chapters constitute the Shayast ne-shayast, while the Supplementary Texts should be divided into two parts, the first comprising chaps. XI-XIV, the second, XV-XXIII.

Its author mentions eleven nasks by name, and in the Shayast ne-shayast proper he also cites various commentators. In the Supplementary texts only one commentator, Windohrmazd, is mentioned.

In about 1912, M. B. Davar (n.d.) published an edition of the Shayast ne-shayast. Tavadia (1930) published the ten chapters which constitute the Shayast ne-shayast proper; the Supplementary texts were published by M. F. Kotwal (1969).

The Shayast ne-shayast and the Supplementary texts are transmitted in three independent codices. Two, K20 and M51, were described among the Bundahishn manuscripts, the third, F33, belonging to the Meherji-Rana Library of Naosari, was identified by Kotwal.

The border between the didactic and the andarz genres is not always easy to fix. The andarz genre has been extensively discussed by Sh. Shaked, though here a more restrictive definition of this genre (closer to that used by Boyce) has been adopted, limiting it to those texts presenting collections of gnomes and to riddle literature such as found in the Madayan i Jusht i Friyan and in the Draxt i Asurig, or again to those "mirrors of princes" preserved in Arab or Persian texts of Sassanid origins.

The Dadestan i menug i xrad is a perfectly fit example of this contiguity, so much so that many scholars have classified it under the andarz genre.

The interest of this book resides especially in its first two chapters; the first is written in a complex and refined style, the second describes in many details the journey of the soul in the afterlife.

The text, with the exception of its first chapter, is characterized by fluent language and direct style meant to reach the heart and mind of the laity.

Its language, far from the complex baroque of later Pahlavi texts, may suggest an early composition, perhaps in the late Sassanid period.

It is composed of sixty-three chapters that, with the exception of the first two, consist mainly, but not exclusively, of moral advice. Dadestan i menug i xrad was first translated by West in his Pahlavi Texts, then by T. D. Anklesaria (1913), in an edition of which only few copies circulated.

A. Bonshahi (1938) prepared a Persian translation, A. Bausani (1957) translated it into Italian, and Tafazzoli published both a glossary (1969) and a Persian translation (1975).

The Pahlavi version is preserved in codex K43 and in a manuscript belonging to the T. D. Anklesaria collection, both of Iranian origin. Before the 19th century, the Parsis of India only preserved, as far as we know, the Pazand and Sanskrit versions; the oldest codex including these versions is L19, kept in the India Office Library, London.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica  
To be continued

# “Drowning in Holy Water” wins Golden Global Award for best film at Malaysian festival

From Page 1 ▶ Afia Jahin Jaima was awarded as best supporting actress for her role in the Bangladeshi film “Rehana” directed by Abdullah Mohammad Saad.

Arif Shaikh and Asik Shaikh were selected as best actors for their role in “Two Friends” directed by Prasun Chatterjee from India, while Kim Hyun-Bin from Taiwan won the best supporting actor award for his role in “The Silent Forest” by Ko Chen-nien.

“White Building”, a co-production of Cambodia, France, China and Qatar, received the New Hope Award.

Directed by Kavich Neang, the film is about a building that was built in the 1960s as affordable housing for the growing population of Phnom Penh. Since then, the paint has fallen off, and demolition is looming. Young Samnang wants to pursue his dream of becoming a hip-hop dancer while his father is trying to negotiate better compensation for residents willing to leave.

The award for best screenplay

Neda Jebraili and Ali Shadman act in a scene from “Drowning in Holy Water”.

went to the Malaysian drama “Hail, Driver!” written by Muzzamer Rahman.

The film follows Aman, a young writer who moves to Kuala Lumpur to follow his dreams. However, he struggles to find a job and, due

to his color blindness, is forced to become an illegal e-hailing driver, where he meets the mysterious Bella.

The best cinematographer award was given to Lim Teck Siang for his work in “Whether the

Weather Is Fine” co-produced by the Philippines, France, Singapore, Indonesia, Germany and Qatar.

The Malaysian movie “The Story of Southern Islet” directed by Chong Keat-aun won the audience choice award.

## Iranian movies honored at Yerevan Golden Apricot festival

A scene from “The Apple Day” directed by Mahmud Ghaffari.

TEHRAN – Iranian movies have won several awards at the 19th Yerevan Golden Apricot International Film Festival.

The event in Armenia kicked off on Sunday by honoring the winners at the Aram Khachatryan concert hall, the organizers said on Monday.

“Subtotals” by Iranian director Mohammadreza Farzad won the Golden Apricot in the Apricot Stone category, which is dedicated to short films of any genre from West Asia.

In this film co-produced by Poland, Germany and

Iran, the director intends to say that it makes no real difference in a life lived beyond numbers; the record of your gray hair; the number of houses you have owned or rented; the number of times you have flown in your dreams.

In the Regional Panorama, dedicated to feature and documentary film competition from West Asia, the Iranian drama was awarded the Silver Apricot and FIPRESCI Prize.

Directed by Mahmud Ghaffari, “The Apple Day” follows a first-grade primary school teacher in a poor suburb of Tehran, who assigns a letter to each student and asks them to bring items starting with the assigned letter related to their fathers' jobs.

Mehdi's father is a fruit seller and he must bring 30 apples (seeb in Farsi) to class on the S Day. However, an unfortunate event immerses the family in a crisis. Saeid, Mehdi's older brother, has to find a way to overcome this challenge and help Mehdi for “the apple day”.

A jury composed of Iranian director Mohammad-Mehdi Asgarpur, Terry George from Ireland, Orwa Nyrabia from the Netherlands, Florian Hoffmann from Germany and Nora Martirosyan from France selected the winners in

## “I Will Never Leave You”, “The Gift” win awards at Anthem Libertarian Film Festival

TEHRAN – Iranian short movies “I Will Never Leave You” and “The Gift” have won awards at the Anthem Libertarian Film Festival in Las Vegas.

Directed by Alireza Biglari based on a true story, “I Will Never Leave You” was selected as best international short narrative.

The film shows that Kabul has fallen and the Taliban have taken control of the city, killing ordinary people, journalists, artists and women. A journalist has filmed one of the executions by the Taliban, and now he wants to send the truth to all the news agencies in the West. But the Taliban have found out about him and are looking for him to destroy his camera and kill him.

“The Gift”, a science fiction and

A scene from “I Will Never Leave You” directed by Alireza Biglari.

horror film directed by Farbod Ardebili, was given the best short drama award.

The film explores the darker side of human nature and how catastrophic events can occur when a climate of fear is cultivated.

It is set in the near future after alien ships appear in the

skies above Earth's major cities, throwing the world into chaos. But instead of destroying the planet or invading, the aliens do nothing. They simply hover in place for years; silent, inscrutable. Unable to determine the alien's motivations or why they refuse to make contact, the media feeds the planet a steady diet of fear,

uncertainty and doubt. When the alien's true intentions are finally revealed, an unspeakable tragedy unfolds.

Winners were announced at the Mirage Hotel in Las Vegas on July 16.

The Anthem Grand Prize was given to the documentary “Created Equal: Clarence Thomas in His Own Words” directed by Michael Pack.

In this film, Justice Clarence Thomas recounts his extraordinary life story from living in poverty as a child to serving on the Supreme Court.

It also won the Anthem Vault Prize for best original score and the audience choice award in the feature film category.

## The book which was written and published at the request of General Soleimani

A review of the book “The fall of turning fifty”

The story of Sardar Soleimani and his 50-year-old soldier continued after the soldier was killed in battle, and five years later, Haj Qasem Soleimani, despite all of the country's security concerns, persisted to ensure that the book of Haj Mohammad Jamali was written.

The biography of the martyr Haj Mohammad Jamali, as told by his wife Maryam Jamali, is found in the book “The fall of turning fifty.” On November 12, 2013, Martyr Jamali was killed in battle in Syria, and on November 14, he was laid to rest in the Kerman Martyr's Cemetery.

Fateme Behbodhi, the book's youthful author, has previously written war-related stories. She traveled to Mashhad after obtaining the subject to begin and complete the work there by

interviewing the martyr's wife.

Within three days, the writer received a life narrative from the wife of the martyr Haj Mohammad Jamali. Maryam Jamali married her cousin Mohammad Jamali when she was 18 years old, and she has been his supporter and companion ever since.

The martyr's wife claims that Haj Qasem Soleimani and Haj Mohammad have been close for a very long time. There aren't many photos of them because Haj Mohammad didn't like taking photos, thus the sole one that has survived is from the gathering of his retired friends and Haj Qasem at an iftar meal five months before to Haj Mohammad's martyrdom.

Maryam Jamali says that despite reading “The fall of reaching fifty,” the book of her life, 100

times, she still cries uncontrollably every time. Even after seven years have passed since his loss, Haj Mohammad's memories are still vivid. Sardar Soleimani, also, wept many tears following the martyrdom of his old friend and gave his best during his funeral.