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Arabs and Israel After April 14

Arab states face new reality following success of Operation 'True Promise'



Israeli military deputy head of the IDF International press department, first lieutenant Masha Michelson, display to the media remnants of an Iranian missile, in Julis army base, Tuesday, April 16, 2024.

Over 2000 foreign traders, businessmen to visit Iran Expo 2024

TEHRAN – Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister has said over 2,000 traders and businesspersons from various countries are expected to visit the 6th International Export Potential Exhibition of the Islamic Republic of Iran, dubbed Iran Expo 2024,

“High-ranking officials of 70 countries have been invited to visit the sixth exhibition of Iran’s export capabilities (Iran Expo 2024),” Abbas Aliabadi said.

The exhibition will be inaugurated on April 27 and run through May 1, 2024, the minister said.

Noting that the first edition of the Iran Expo was held in 2013, Aliabadi predicted that more than 2,000 foreign traders and merchants from various countries would partake in the latest edition of the exhibition.

This exhibition will cover seven major groups of commodities including food industries, agriculture and fisheries, handwoven carpets, handicrafts and tourism, medicine, medical equipment and chemical products, building industry, technical and engineering services, and also the petrochemical group, he stated.

Promoting trade and economic relations with other countries, booming production, propelling the business environment of the private sector to the international arena, and creating a new trade and economic discourse with various countries have been cited as the main aims of holding the exhibition.

U.S. tech giants abet Israeli genocide

By Shahrokh Saei

TEHRAN- Big technology companies such as Google and Amazon have been accused of complicity in Israel’s war of genocide in the Gaza Strip which has claimed the lives of around 34,000 Palestinians.

Since Israel launched the Gaza war on October 7, a controversial contract between these two American companies and the regime has been pushed to the forefront of debate.

The \$1.2 billion contract, known as Project Nimbus, was signed in 2021 to provide cloud services and data centers to the Israeli government and military.

On Tuesday, Google and Amazon workers held protests to vent their anger at the tech giants’ work with Israel. They demanded that the companies pull out of the contract.

Google employees staged sit-ins at its offices in New York City and Sunnyvale, California.

According to The Washington Post, New York Police Department officers arrested at least 9 protesters at Google’s offices.

Pro-Palestinian activists also gathered outside Google’s Seattle offices in South Lake Union, just a short distance from Amazon’s headquarters. ▶ Page 5

Rishi Sunak resorts to distortion

By Assad Jamshidi

Talking in the House of Commons on Monday afternoon, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak doubled down on London’s backing for Israel after Iran launched a legitimate retaliatory attack on Israel on Saturday night for its April 1 deadly air raid on the Iranian diplomatic mission in Syria.

Sunk claimed the “reckless and dangerous escalation” by Iran risked plunging the region into a deeper crisis.

In fact, it was Israel that acted dangerously by attacking the Iranian consulate, which is considered part of the Iranian territory. Even British Labour Party leader Keir Starmer was more critical of the original Israeli attack on the Iranian consulate. “Diplomatic premises should not be targeted and attacked,” the Labour leader said, according to the Guardian. “That is a point of principle.”

Also contrary to Sunak’s claims, it is Israel that is seeking “chaos” in the region in order to ethnically cleanse the Palestinians from their motherland.

Sunak also said Israel’s security “is non-negotiable” as part of a “fundamental condition for peace in the region”. ▶ Page 5

‘Israel deterrence against Iran has come to an end’

TEHRAN- Mohammad al-Hindi, deputy secretary general of Islamic Jihad Movement has emphasized that new rules have been formed today and Iran’s response is actually a warning to Israel in the region.

In an interview with Al Mayadeen on Tuesday, he said that “Netanyahu wants to drag the region into war, but he talks about a decisive response that does not lead to a regional war. How is that possible? The weight and strategic position of Israel at all levels have been declining.”

Al-Hindi went on to add that the balance of power in the world is changing, and now America is not in its best position and Israel cannot dominate the region.

The senior official of Islamic Jihad said that Israeli crimes in Gaza and Palestine are carried out under the cover and support of the West, and Westerners are complicit in these crimes, but a new phase is forming that requires a reassessment.

During the interview, he stressed that Gaza is the most painful area for Israel, and its face has been shattered there because the battle in Gaza is facing groups that, despite the siege, produce their own weapons.

Al-Hindi added that America does not want a regional war, especially in the election year.

Iran struck Israeli forces, intelligence hubs connected to assault in Syria: FM

TEHRAN- The “precise and calculated” aspect of Operation Truthful Promise, which targeted Israeli military and intelligence sites connected to the attack on Iran’s diplomatic premises in Syria, has been emphasized by Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian.

He stated as much during a Tuesday phone call with his Japanese counterpart, Yoko Kamikawa.

Amir Abdollahian said the unprecedented missile and drone strike was carried out “within the framework of legitimate defense” and as a “punitive warning” to Israel for its brazen attack on Iran’s embassy in Damascus.

“Iran’s military action was very precise and calculated, targeting the military and intelligence bases that were the origin of the attack on our country’s diplomatic premises in Damascus,” he pointed out.

In retaliation for the attack on Iran’s embassy in Damascus on April 1, the Iranian Armed Forces launched over 300 drones and missiles into the occupied areas late on Saturday.

This was the first military operation against the Israeli regime from Iranian soil.

▶ Page 2-3

Over 300 drugs being produced from medicinal plants

TEHRAN – More than 300 medicines are made out of 1,200 medicinal plants in the country. The production of medicines from plants in the country dates back to 1980.

About 4,400 natural products and over 2,000 traditional products are being supplied by domestic companies to the market.

So far, about 30,000 plant species have been identified in the world, with Iran’s share of about 8,000 species which is more than the whole of species found in Europe.

The per capita consumption of medicinal plants in Iran is about one kilogram of dried plants, in other words, 83,000 tons of medicinal plants worth 1.2 trillion rials (around \$4 million) are consumed in the country, while in Europe this amount is 900 grams and in the United States is 2.5 kilogram. ▶ Page 7



Iran hails Operation True Promise on National Army Day

TEHRAN – Multiple Iranian officials have spoken on Iran’s recent retaliation against Israel, stating that while the response was able to deal a heavy blow to the regime, Tehran will not hesitate to respond even stronger if Zionists dare make another mistake.

The remarks were made on National Army Day, as senior dignitaries marked the occasion during a ceremony held at a military base in Lavizan, Tehran.

The event saw units from four Army divisions, namely the Ground Force, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Air Defense, showcase their broad range of advanced gear such as missiles, tanks, armored vehicles, rifles, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), fighter jets, radar systems, and air defense missile systems. ▶ Page 3

Israeli army participating in deadly West Bank settler violence

By Wesam Bahrani

The United Nations has demanded that the Israeli military end its active participation with armed settlers attacking and killing Palestinians across the occupied West Bank.

The Palestinian territory, with its ever-growing swathes of illegal settlements, has been subject to a significant rise in deadly attacks by armed settlers accompanied by Israeli soldiers over the past week.

Despite the fact there are no Israeli captives in the West Bank nor a presence by Hamas, the devastating events unfolding in the Gaza Strip have overshadowed other Israeli war crimes in the occupied territories. ▶ Page 5

TEHRAN PAPERS

New order in West Asia
with the role of Iran

In the following column, we take a look at some important contents and views in yesterday's Iranian newspapers.

Kayhan devoted its editorial to the withdrawal of projects such as the IMEC commercial corridor for an indefinite period and said: The "India-Middle East-Europe" economic corridor and more precisely the "India-Israel-Europe" corridor was originally an "American-Israeli" idea.

The main purpose of this corridor is to connect India to Israel and then to Europe through the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. One of the reasons for creating this corridor was competition with Chabahar port, in other words, competition with the north-south corridor centered on Iran.

Arun K. Singh, the former ambassador of India to America and Israel, recently said in a statement that influence in West Asia without considering the role of Iran is a strategic mistake. Now, for many reasons, America and the Zionist regime are the two biggest losers in the West Asia region.

There is nothing left of the American hegemony, and Israel is also in trouble. Currently, the war of wills between Iran and America extends from the Strait of Hormuz to the Panama Canal. We are now facing a new world order and the new Middle East is also defined in this puzzle.

Arman-e-Melli: Iran is a field of diplomacy

In a note about Israel's failure to terrorize Iran, Arman-e-Melli wrote: There is no end to Tel Aviv's bluffs in attacking Iran. It was the last hours of Monday night when official and unofficial news agencies announced the convening of the Zionist War Cabinet meeting.

The meeting was about the response to Tehran's attack on Tel Aviv. An hour later, however, the news came that Tehran had announced to Israel and America through several sources, including Egypt, that if Tel Aviv plans to attack Iran, Tehran will immediately respond with stronger intensity than the initial attack on Israel and it will be devastating.

The opposition media also heavily maneuvered the news published by Israel about the possibility of attacking Iran and even suggested military locations for the attack.

The fact is that they could not create a psychological war among the Iranian people, and the Iranian people neither left the streets nor were afraid of these psychological wars. The traffic in the streets of Tehran and the citizens' indifference to Israel's threats were even witnesses to this issue.

Iran struck Israeli forces, intelligence hubs connected to assault in Syria: FM

From page 1 ▶ Operation Truthful Promise was a "limited" military operation, according to Amir Abdollahian.

He stated that Iran will keep up diplomatic efforts to bring about a long-lasting truce in Gaza and that it expects Japan and other G7 countries to follow suit, describing the conflict in Gaza as the "root cause" of the escalating tensions in the region.

For her part, the foreign minister of Japan voiced worry about the worsening humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip and the rising tensions in the region.

In addition to advocating for international talks to put an end to the current conflict and bring peace and stability back to the region, Kamikawa emphasized the significance of sending humanitarian supplies to Gaza.

She said that Japan views attacks on diplomatic property as abhorrent and reaffirmed her nation's clear condemnation of the Israeli attack on Iran's embassy in Damascus.

The two foreign ministers also conveyed optimism for Tehran and Tokyo's bilateral ties to grow.

During a phone call with his counterparts from Turkey, Syria, Saudi Arabia, India, Qatar, Egypt, Malta, UK and Russia, Amir Abdollahian reiterated Iran's right to lawful

Sobh-e-No: The effects of repetitive stupidity

Sobh-e-No devoted its editorial to the consequences that Israel would expect if it responded to the True Promise of missile operation. It wrote: Although in the past days, some Israeli officials or media close to them have claimed that they would respond to Iran's attack and the media atmosphere created at the end of Monday also indicated the certainty of the Israeli regime's reaction to Iran's attack but after a few hours, the published news and positions indicated that the Zionist regime has given up on this reaction. Western countries have realized that any strategic mistake towards Iran will result in a new Middle East. Therefore, behind the scenes, they are trying to prevent the adventurism of the Israeli regime, and so far, these consultations have worked.

If the Israeli regime wants to give a strong response to Iran's attack, then it must wait for an all-out attack by Iran and its allies. In that case we will probably witness a classic war in southern Lebanon between Hezbollah and the Israeli regime and the rain of missiles and drones from Iran, Iraq and Yemen will be headed towards the occupied territories, and from these events, a new Middle East will be born, which will be 180 degrees different from the great Middle East that America was looking for.

Javan: It was just us!

In its editorial, Javan pointed out the authority and independence of Iran in its direct attack on Israel. The paper said: In Iran's attack on the occupied Palestinian territories on Saturday night, the polarization of analysts was not based only on their relationship with the Islamic Republic. From the opposition to Western experts, they took the issue beyond their political tendencies, and this phenomenon is unique in its kind. Analyzing Iran's attack within the scope of a military operation is a reduction and diversion of the issue. This attack changed the route of contemporary history. The basic value of this work is that in today's world, Iran makes independent decisions in front of the arrogant and hegemonic world and does not ask permission from anyone, and the second value is that it has done so with its own weapons. This is a valuable time to have a clear picture of 220-year-old Iran, where we have come from, and how we have ended those historical humiliation, shameful contracts, partition, occupation, and coup.

self-defense.

The Iranian foreign minister has increased diplomatic efforts following Tehran's military action against Israel in response to the Zionist regime's attack on Iran's consulate in Damascus.

Amir Abdollahian clarified that Iran purposefully limited its retaliatory operation against the Israeli regime, characterizing it as a preventive measure meant to chastise and caution the Zionist regime.

Amir Abdollahian made it abundantly evident to the foreign diplomats that Tehran's right to a legitimate defense and international law, as guaranteed by Article 51 of the UN Charter, were fully upheld by Iran's armed reaction against the Israeli regime.

The Iranian foreign minister reaffirmed Iran's opposition to war and tensions, describing the Zionist regime as the primary cause of insecurity and instability in the region and advocating for coordinated measures to put an end to the Zionist regime's atrocities and genocidal crimes in the Gaza Strip.

He also said that Iran supports the development of security and tranquility throughout the region, spanning from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea, as well as long-term peace in Gaza.

Raisi says Zionists will know Iran real response if they make mistakes

TEHRAN- According to Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, the Zionists in charge of the Israeli regime won't realize the full scope and severity of Iran's military reaction until they choose to launch another assault on Iran.

Raisi said this at a meeting with Sheikh Ali al-Khatib, vice president of the Supreme Islamic Shiite Council of Lebanon, on Tuesday in Tehran.

The statements were made in the midst of rumors that the Israeli regime would choose to take revenge for a flurry of Iranian drone and missile strikes that occurred over the weekend in retaliation for an Israeli airstrike on the Iranian embassy in the capital of Syria on April 1.

Following the operation on Sunday, which targeted Israel, Iranian officials stated that their actions were simply a minimal retaliation for what the Tel Aviv regime had done in Damascus.

They have warned that any escalation of the situation will be met with a much stronger and heavier response from Iran.

"If there is any miscalculation, the Zionists and their backers will understand the significance of Iran's genuine and comprehensive reaction," Raisi declared.



The Supreme Islamic Shiite Council of Lebanon's positions in favor of the resistance movement in the region were also hailed by the Iranian president during the discussion.

The president stated that today the correctness of the position of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding the inefficiency of the approach of compromise and submission regarding the Palestinian issue and the effectiveness of resistance in confronting the domination and oppression has been proven to everyone, and said, "Today's bloody picture of Gaza is a picture without a mask and the manifestation of the truth of Western civilization and American culture."

For his part, Khatib stated that he was sending Iran a note of

appreciation for its robust military action against the Israeli regime on behalf of the Lebanese people.

The Lebanese cleric asserted that Iran's resilience in the face of pressure, sanctions, and animosity over the years had made Muslim nations proud.

He further stressed that no other nation in the region has ever been able to stand up to a regime that, in his opinion, has the backing of all major international powers.

"Resistance appreciates Iran over 'Operation Truthful Promise'"

In a meeting with the Iranian foreign minister in Tehran on Tuesday, Khatib praised Iran for its rightful counteroffensive against Israeli military targets, adding that this daring move has strengthened

the resistance movement and undermined the political and military force of the Zionist regime.

He also commended the Iranian Leader, government, and people for the successful and lawful operation that the Iranian Armed Forces carried out against the military objectives of the Zionist regime that was waging aggression.

According to the ministry's website, he stated that the operation had bolstered the confidence of Muslim countries, particularly the Palestinian people and the resistance front, depleted the confidence of Israeli military and political figures, and strengthened the solidarity of the Muslim world against Zionist aggressors.

Thankfully, the Lebanese official stated, the Palestinian issue has once again emerged as the top concern for elites from many religious and ethnic backgrounds in the Muslim world and throughout the world.

He continued by adding that current events validated Iran's moral stances against the Israeli regime and that the nation continues to maintain its ground and protect Palestine in the face of intense pressure.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran aims for regional stability despite Zionist aggression



TEHRAN - Iran's deputy foreign minister for political affairs says Iran's approach prioritizes stability and security in the region over aggressive tactics employed by the Zionist regime.

In a television program on Monday, Ali Bagheri Kani discussed Tehran's response to the Zionist regime's attack in Damascus, known as Operation Truthful Promise.

He highlighted the incident in Damascus on April 1st, pointing out the strategic error made by the Zionist regime after facing setbacks in Gaza, where they attempted to shift the confrontation scene, leading to this mistake.

Discussing diplomatic efforts before Iran's retaliatory attack, Bagheri Kani mentioned engagements with various countries, including correspondence with foreign ministers and participation in international forums like the United Nations Security Council. "Despite some support for Iran against Zionist aggression, major powers hindered meaningful action in the Security

Council," he noted.

Bagheri Kani emphasized Iran's approach of pursuing authority and dignity through wisdom, utilizing international mechanisms to uphold rights and consolidate national security and defensive capabilities.

He explained that Iran's decision to respond to Israeli aggression aimed at safeguarding national interests was part of a broader strategy. Bagheri Kani highlighted Iran's commitment to a neighboring policy under President Raisi's administration, emphasizing the importance of fostering strong relations with neighboring countries to counter destabilizing forces in the region.

Bagheri Kani highlighted that Operation Truthful Promise demonstrated that those seeking to disrupt regional stability will bear the consequences, as Iran will not tolerate threats to its security and sovereignty.

He noted the international support garnered after the operation, contrasting it with the Zionists' failure to secure backing in a recent Security Council meeting.

Bagheri Kani highlighted the logical stance of countries supporting Iran, emphasizing the principle of regional stability and the need to hold disruptors accountable.

He concluded by emphasizing the operation's significance in showcasing Iran's capabilities and

sending a strong message to adversaries.

Bagheri Kani stressed Iran's decision to utilize Article 51 of the United Nations Charter for reciprocal action, employing defensive and military capabilities within a targeted and legitimate framework.

Regarding the Zionist regime, he emphasized Iran's non-recognition of Israel and criticized U.S. support for the illegitimate regime. He asserted that if the Zionist regime disregards established frameworks, Iran will act in its interests and prevent any external intervention.

The deputy foreign minister underscored Iran's self-reliance in military capabilities and its commitment to national security and territorial integrity, contrasting this with Israel's dependence on external actors.

He reiterated Iran's readiness to respond decisively to any aggression, warning against further mischief with a promise of swift retaliation.

Bagheri Kani praised Iran's armed forces for their targeted, calculated, and efficient response, affirming that attempts to undermine the operation's significance would ultimately fail.

Shortly before midnight Sunday, Iran launched a swarm of drones and missiles at the occupied Palestinian territories in response to the Zionist regime's cowardly strike on Iran's consulate in Damascus on April 1st.

Minister announces progress in satellite development

TEHRAN - Iran's Minister of Information and Communication Technology, Issa Zarepour, has revealed progress in the country's satellite program.

He stated that several satellites are ready for launch, with a focus on imaging capabilities.

"We are actively developing multiple satellites to enhance our national space imaging capacity," Zarepour said on Wednesday. He emphasized the ongoing construction of the second Pars I satellite, expressing hope for its completion soon.

The minister highlighted the benefits of having more satellites in Low Earth Orbit (LEO). "While LEO satellites offer frequent coverage throughout the day, their high speeds limit continuous observation," he explained, adding

that "Increasing the number of satellites will provide more consistent access to data and information."

Zarepour emphasized the significance of satellite system development, a complex capability possessed by only a handful of nations worldwide. He expressed pride in Iranian scientists achieving this expertise.

Concluding his remarks, the minister voiced optimism that Iran will take significant steps in the development of telecommunication and imaging satellites this year.

Back in late September 2023, Iran launched an imaging satellite into orbit, one that would improve Iran's intelligence capabilities.

The announcement by the aerospace division of the Islamic

Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) included details about new Iranian technological advances in the aerospace industry.

The new satellite, Nour-3 (literally meaning light in Persian) was put into an orbit 450km (280 miles) from the surface of the Earth. It was launched by a missile named Qased, which has been used before to carry the two earlier versions of the same satellite into space. The Qased carrier was also developed by the IRGC.

Minister of Communications and Information Technology Issa Zarepour said via X, "With the efforts of IRGC Aerospace Force specialists, a few moments ago, the Nour-3 imaging satellite was successfully placed into a 450 km orbit of the earth with the Iranian Qased satellite carrier."

"I congratulate all Iranian people, those active in the country's space industry, and the IRGC's space experts for this success. God willing, this year will be a fruitful year for the country's space industry," he added.

"We are involved in the development and launch of satellites. Under our plan, we will have 2 to 3 satellite launches this year, something we hope to be successful," Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Ashtiani said.

Iran is among the world's top 10 countries capable of developing and launching satellites.

The IRGC Aerospace Force sent Nour-2 into orbit using the Qased satellite carrier in March of last year, two years after it launched Nour-1.

'Israel deterrence against Iran has come to an end'

From page 1 ▶ The official of Islamic Jihad noted that Americans and Israelis want to return the captives with the least cost, but the issue of the captives will be in our hands.

He continued by saying that the proposals presented by mediators are clearly the proposals that Israel has in mind, and some of their terms are deceptive.

The deputy leader of Islamic Jihad in Palestine underscored that Israel's deterrence against

Iran has ended, and the regime has faced a real dilemma while its options are also limited.

"The face and position of Israel, as well as its strategic weight, have weakened, and many countries will reconsider their calculations regarding this regime after the end of the war," he asserted.

Given the resistance's response to proposed plans, Al-Hindi said that the resistance presented its response, and its position was

completely transparent because the resistance considers a withdrawal (from Gaza) necessary, which can gradually be achieved along with a ceasefire.

The official of Islamic Jihad continued that the regime of Israel will have to pay the price of the agreement due to its apparent retreats on the ground.

"We have more time ahead of us for Israel to realize that it must pay the price for this defeat."

Arabs and Israel after April 14

Arab states face new reality following success of Operation "True Promise"

By Mona Hojat Ansari

TEHRAN – With Iran penetrating Israel's long-inflated defense system with a relatively small number of its old technology missiles, the Abraham Accords and the future of Arab-Israeli relations have once again come under the limelight.

Israel has been downplaying Iran's attack claiming that only 1% of the fired projectiles managed to hit their targets. To prove that, it has been filming only specific parts of the affected areas while banning the distribution of any other footage captured during or after Iran's offensive.

In a video released by the Israeli regime, a Persian-speaking member of the Israeli military can be seen standing next to a missile booster claiming it to be an "Iranian missile that missed the aim". "This shows that despite the Islamic Republic's claims, Israeli bases suffered no damage," he said, seemingly unaware that boosters are designed to separate from the missile before the warhead reaches its target.

Other videos Israel has published to demonstrate the "minor damage" inflicted on its military installations have also raised doubts. One clip shows a rather small hole in the ground with soil and dirt perfectly accumulated in one spot next to it.



Another exhibits the aftermath of 1-tonne warheads in an area, where small pipelines are remarkably left fully intact. Notably absent from the footage provided by the authorities are any indications of explosions or fire. Furthermore, viewers are conspicuously deprived of any wide-angle shots depicting the targeted bases.

Military analysts have also challenged Israeli claims of a 99% success rate in downing Iranian missiles and drones. It is believed that the three highly protected military sites Iran targeted have either been destroyed or suffered heavy damage.

The undeniable success of Iran's operation, dubbed True Promise, came while Israel and its allies had been preparing for a standoff for

over 12 days. Tehran allegedly, also informed regional countries about its imminent attack, 72 hours before it took place. With all the time in the world as well as the help of the U.S., the UK, France and Jordan, Israel still did not manage to stop Iran from precisely hitting the bases involved in the regime's April 1 attack on the Iranian embassy in Damascus.

The Iranian attack on the occupied territories seems to have once again debunked Israel's lies about its invincibility after the regime failed to "eradicate" Hamas over a six-month war in Gaza.

Arab countries also a recipient of Iran's message
Operation True Promise was massively hailed across Arab countries. Some Arab citizens even

took to the streets to celebrate the fact that for the first time in the past 6 months, Palestinians in Gaza could let out a sigh of relief, knowing the projectiles lighting up the skies were not meant for them.

Strong anti-Israel public sentiments in the Arab world and the new-found popularity of Iran could mean that Arab states will have to rethink the idea of growing intimate with Israel, which began with the introduction of the Abraham Accords in 2020.

"The U.S. has been trying to persuade regional countries that a deal with Israel could ensure security for them. That importuning is going to stop now that the true capabilities of Israel have been revealed. Arab rulers will no longer feel obliged to form ties with Israel in order to protect themselves," said Saedollah Zareie, a senior expert on West Asia.

Zareie added that with Iran's policy of good neighborliness, forging stronger ties with Tehran could be far more beneficial than getting involved in the Israeli regime's endless woes. "I think regional countries are going to gravitate more towards Iran in the future. Different states in the region should try to ensure peace and security without relying on foreign forces. That would be the best for all of us."

Iran hails Operation True Promise on National Army Day

From Page 1 ▶ Israel suffered strategic defeat

Speaking at the ceremony on Wednesday, the Iranian President declared that Tehran's retaliatory strike against Israel not only dealt a military blow but also inflicted a significant strategic setback on the occupying Tel Aviv regime while it deterred certain regional Arab countries from normalizing diplomatic ties with Israel.

"The Zionist regime's defeat was an intelligence, security, and military one; but it was a strategic setback above all. Some countries sought to normalize relations with the Zionist regime, but they are now humiliated in the eyes of their own nations. This was a strategic failure for that regime," Ebrahim Raisi stated.

Tehran carried out a massive drone and missile attack against the occupied territories last week after the regime struck Iran's embassy in Damascus on April 1. While several countries including the U.S., UK, France, and Jordan aided Israel in intercepting the aerial weapons, military bases targeted by Iran were eventually destroyed by the country's less-advanced missiles.

Raisi emphasized Iran's commitment to regional security and sovereignty, urging neighboring countries to rely on their own resources and Muslim forces rather than foreign intervention and alliances with Israel. He described Iran's Operation True Promise as

a measured response, warning Israel against further military adventurism and asserting that a stronger strike could have obliterated it entirely.

"Operation True Promise was a limited and not a comprehensive measure. If we had carried out a stronger operation, nothing would then have been left out of Israel," he said.

Highlighting the Iranian Armed Forces' prowess, industrial independence, and indigenous innovations, attributing these achievements to the dedication of young specialists. He emphasized Iran's production of advanced military equipment, positioning the nation as a formidable force regionally and globally.

"Our equipped and updated Army, alongside the IRGC (Islamic Revolution Guards Corps) and (other) armed forces, constitute the pillars of our nation's authority."

Iran fully prepared to respond to any aggression

On the sidelines of the ceremony, the Army commander told reporters that the Iranian armed forces are fully prepared for defense while warning potential adversaries that any act of aggression would prompt a devastating response from Iran. Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi emphasized that the military capabilities Tehran showcased during the attack

on Israel were just a fraction of its overall strength.

General Mousavi said Iran's Army units are currently on high alert and reiterated that any aggression against Iran's interests would elicit a fierce retaliation, with the aggressor regretting their actions.

The commander also noted that due to continuous monitoring of Iran's military progress, enemies have refrained from considering military aggression against the West Asian nation.

New definition of power balance introduced

In a message to the Army Commander, Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian said Operation True Promise has presented a new definition of the balance of power in the West Asia region.

"Undoubtedly, this valuable and complex military action, which was carried out based on the [universally] acknowledged principle of legitimate defense and in accordance with generally recognized international laws and regulations, redefined the balance of power in the West Asian region and once again demonstrated the deterrence power of the country's Armed Forces to the sworn enemies of Islam and Iran," the top Iranian diplomat said.

Amir-Abdollahian also praised Iran's defense and military capabilities in its recent retaliatory operation against the illegal entity.

Iran claims Israeli ship seizure a retaliation for U.S., Israeli actions

TEHRAN - Mohammad Dehghan, Iran's deputy president for legal affairs, has said the country's seizure of an Israeli vessel was a response to "Zionist and American acts."

Dehghan made the comments on Wednesday to reporters.

Dehghan also addressed the possibility of legal action over a reported Israeli attack on the Iranian embassy in Damascus on April 1st. He stated that lawyers are currently investigating the incident, but no decision on legal action has been made yet.

The vice president added that Iran is closely monitoring developments,

particularly in Gaza, and is seeking involvement with international authorities on relevant issues.

Dehghan did not provide details on the seized vessel but reiterated that the action was retaliation against the U.S. and Israel.

He concluded by stating that Iran's actions are often a response to "hostile behavior" by Israel.

The special naval forces of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) seized Israel-linked MSC Aries container ship near the Strait of Hormuz on Saturday.

The ship was impounded by the Sepah Navy Special Force (SNSF) in

a heliborne operation and rappelling of forces on the ship's deck.

"The ship has now been directed towards the territorial waters of our country," IRNA said.

The Portuguese-flagged ship, operated by Zodiac Maritime, was owned by Israeli real estate, energy, technology and shipping magnate Eyal Ofer, it added.

Zodiac Maritime is part of the Israeli billionaire's Zodiac Group.

A video released by the IRGC shows SNSF commandos rappelling down onto a stack of containers sitting on the deck of the vessel.

A crew member on the ship could

be heard saying: "Don't come out." He then tells his colleagues to go to the ship's bridge as more commandos come down on the deck.

Reports said the MSC Aries had been last located off Dubai heading toward the Strait of Hormuz on Friday. The ship had reportedly turned off its tracking data, which has been common for Israeli-affiliated ships moving through the region.

The incident comes amid Israel bracing for Iranian retaliation after the regime's April 1 strike on a building in the Iranian embassy compound in the Syrian capital of Damascus, which killed seven IRGC military advisors, including two generals.

IAEA inspectors regularly visit Iran's nuclear facilities, affirms AEOL chief

TEHRAN- The head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOL) has emphasized the regular visits of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors to Iran's nuclear facilities.

Mohammad Eslami highlighted the presence of 120 approved inspectors, some stationed within Iran while

others conduct mobile inspections.

Eslami underscored the importance of these visits during a cabinet meeting on Wednesday.

He addressed assertions made by Rafael Grossi, the head of the IAEA, regarding the ambiguity of Iran's nuclear program.

Eslami differentiated between

reports submitted to the Board of Governors or the UN Security Council, highlighting their dual focus on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and safeguards under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Regarding Iran's cooperation with the IAEA, Eslami emphasized

the installation of surveillance cameras and continuous monitoring of nuclear activities, ensuring up-to-date information sharing. He clarified that visits by IAEA inspectors are conducted in accordance with agreed-upon programs and subjects.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

IRAN IN FOCUS

APRIL 18, 2024

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

3

SPORTS

PGPL: Unsportsmanlike conduct to be met with fines

TEHRAN - The Iranian Football League Organization has announced the conclusion date for the Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL) and outlined the allocation of AFC club competition slots for the Iranian teams.

Additionally, in response to recent accusatory remarks made by coaches in press conferences and repetitive club statements against opponents, the Organization has released a list of punishments for the managers and coaches who continue these behaviors.

The PGPL will conclude before June 3rd, subject to approval by the national team coach.

Cup Final: The remaining Hazfi Cup matches, including the semi-finals and final, will be played after the FIFA international break. The final match is expected to take place by June 21st, marking the end of the 2023/24 club season.

AFC Champions League slots: A maximum of four Iranian teams will participate in AFC Champions League next season.

Elite League and ACL2: The Asian club competition format will undergo a change next year, replacing the current AFC Champions League with an Elite League and an ACL2.

Elite League Qualification: The top two teams from the 23rd PGPL season will automatically qualify for the Elite League next season. The winners of the Hazfi Cup will enter a playoff for the remaining slot.

ACL2 qualification: The third-placed team in the PGPL will qualify for the ACL2. The playoff losers for the Elite League will also enter the ACL2.

Head-to-Head Record: In case of equal points between two teams, the head-to-head record will determine the champions.

Goal difference: If two or more teams have equal points and head-to-head records, goal difference will be used as the next tiebreaker.

Goals scored: If all other tiebreakers are inconclusive, the team with the most goals scored will be declared the champions.

Addressing unsportsmanlike conduct

The League Organization has taken action to address the recent rise in unsportsmanlike conduct by the coaches and clubs. A list of punishments has been released for those who continue to engage in accusatory remarks or repetitive statements against opponents. These penalties include significant financial fines.

The Organization hopes that these measures will promote a more respectful and sporting environment within the Iranian football.

Iran a team to beat at 2024 AFC Asian Cup

TEHRAN - Iran will be the team to beat in Group D of the 2024 AFC Asian Cup as they aim to secure a record-extending 13th title after falling to a 3-2 defeat to Japan in the 2022 final.

Four-time AFC Futsal Player of the Year Ali Asghar Hassanzadeh will return to the fold in the absence of 2022 Yili Top Scorer Hossein Tayyebi, who is sidelined through injury, the-afc.com wrote.

Team Melli are schedule to meet Afghanistan on Thursday at the Bangkok Arena in Bangkok, Thailand.

"We had a training camp, 35 days before the tournament including a series of friendlies against Vietnam, Morocco and New Zealand in Ho Chi Minh City," said head coach Vahid Shamsaee.

"Hossein Tayyebi couldn't recover in time for this tournament. However, despite losing one of our best players, the team are well prepared to achieve our targets in this competition.

"Afghanistan are a talented team and can certainly spring a surprise in this tournament. They are very technical and we analyzed them as much as we could and we believe it will be a challenging match."

As newcomers, Afghanistan are determined to make a bold statement with head coach Mohammad Haidari leading the charge.

"The Afghanistan futsal team have undergone rigorous training and preparation, including training camps in both Iran and Thailand. With an average age of 21, the team are focused on developing young talent eager to showcase their potential in the tournament," said Haidari.

"Facing powerhouse teams like Iran presents a significant challenge for Afghanistan, especially in the first group game. Many Iranian players compete in top leagues, making the task even more daunting.

"However, Afghanistan have shown significant improvement recently. We aspire to establish ourselves as a formidable force in Asian futsal."

Iran Greco-Roman crowned champions of 2024 Asian Wrestling

TEHRAN - Iran's men's Greco-Roman wrestling team claimed the title of the 2024 Asian Wrestling Championships on Tuesday.

Iran won four golds overall and easily won the team title for the third straight year with 200 points. Kyrgyzstan, with one champion, finished second with 144, just two points ahead of third-place Japan and their three gold medalists.

Iran, which put four wrestlers into the final on Day 2, won the other golds at stake, with former world champion and Tokyo Olympic bronze medalist Mohammadhadi Saravi completely dominating at 97kg, and young Saeid Esmaili winning his first Asian title at 67kg.

Saravi showed the might of the top tier of wrestlers from the Middle East powerhouse when he overwhelmed Kazakhstan's Iussuf Matsiyev 9-0 in the 97kg final, UWW.org reported.

Saravi, a world bronze medalist the past two years after winning the gold in 2021, put together a pair of gut wrenches from par terre, then executed a takedown-roll combination to put away 2022 world U20 silver medalist Matsiyev in just under two minutes.

Saravi has now medaled in 16 consecutive international tournaments dating back to 2019, all of which ended with victories -- 11 golds and five bronzes. His most recent triumphs include last October's Asian Games and the Yasar Dogu tournament in Turkey in March.

Earlier, 2022 world U20 champion Esmaili denied the host country a gold when he edged Kyrgyzstan's Razzak Beishekeev 3-1 in the 67kg final.

The 21-year-old wrestler held out while on the bottom of par terre in the first period, then scored 2 in the second period with a good second effort when he was on top.

Leader felicitates winning Asian title by wrestling team

TEHRAN - The Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei congratulated the winning of the title of Asian Greco-Roman Wrestling Championships by the national Iranian team, MNA reported.

In his congratulatory message, the Leader thanked the Iranian Greco-Roman wrestlers and their coaches for making the Iranian nation happy.

Iran's national Greco-Roman wrestling team became Asia champions with four gold medals, three silver medals, and two bronze medals in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

Sepahan edge Zob Ahan in Isfahan derby: PGPL

TEHRAN - Sepahan football team defeated Zob Ahan 1-0 in the 2023/24 Iran Persian Gulf Pro League (PGPL) on Wednesday.

In the match held in Isfahan's Naghsh-e Jahan Stadium, Shahriar Moghanlou was on target from the penalty spot in the 69th minute.

Sepahan moved up to third place with 42 points, eight points behind leaders Esteghlal.

Iran to share agricultural experiences with Venezuela



TEHRAN - An official at Iran's Ministry of Agriculture said the ministry is keen to share agricultural experience and technical know-how with Venezuela.

Deputy Minister of Agriculture Mojtaba Khayyam Nekouei said in a joint meeting with Ambassador of Venezuela to Iran José Rafael Silva Aponte and a number of agricultural researchers of the South American country that competent Iranian private companies are ready to transfer technical know-how and modern technologies in the agricultural sector to Venezuela.

The first edition of short-term training courses hosted by the Agricultural Biotechnology Research Institute of Iran is underway in Tehran on April 12- May 17 with the participation of eight agricultural experts from Venezuela, Mehr news agency reported.

Nekouei went on to say that establishing private sector companies at agricultural

science and technology villages and parks is a golden opportunity for enhancing economic ties between the two countries.

The ambassador of Venezuela, for his part, stated that dispatching the agricultural experts of his country to Iran to get familiar with modern agricultural sciences and technologies is in line with preserving and improving the food security of Venezuela.

The first Science and Technology Park of Venezuela was set up in early 2023 in cooperation with Iran, Aponte added.

Back in February, Iranian Oil Minister Javad Oji traveled to Venezuela and visited with Venezuela's senior officials including the country's oil and foreign ministers to explore ways to expand economic ties.

Exporting technical engineering services, following up on the construction of extraterritorial refineries, overhauling Venezuela's refineries, and expanding agricultural ties were among the issues that the minister pursued during his visit.

In his meetings with Venezuelan officials, the two sides discussed issues related to the development of relations and followed up on the progress of ongoing joint projects.

Taking office in August 2021, Iran's incumbent administration has paved the way for private and semi-governmental companies' presence in Venezuela's lucrative market.

TEDPIX gains over 6,000 points on Wednesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 6,231 points on Wednesday to stand at 2,208,214. TSE is one of the four Iranian stock exchanges, and the most important one. The other three ones are the Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX), and Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB).

SEO determined to support shareholders: Eshqi

Head of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) Majid Eshghi has said the organization is determined to support

shareholders in the stock market, IRNA reported.

Speaking in a meeting attended by economic operators from financial institutions, analysts, and capital market media, Eshqi said "Political, social, and economic debates have created some high expectations from the stock market."

As IRNA reported, the official referred to the complexity of the prevailing conditions in the market, announcing the serious determination of this organization to support the rights of shareholders.

Iran-EU trade reaches €380m in January



TEHRAN - The value of trade between Iran and the European Union (EU)'s member states reached €380 million in January, according to the data released by the European Union's statistics office Eurostat.

Based on the Eurostat data, the trade between the two sides fell 10 percent in the first month of the current year in comparison to the preceding year's same month when the figure stood at €424 million.

As reported, the EU's exports to Iran in January stood at €311 million, registering a decrease of nine percent compared to the same month in 2023 when the EU's exports to Iran were reported to be €344 million.

The European Union's imports from Iran also reached €69 million in the mentioned month with a 15 percent decrease compared to 2023. EU imported €80 million of goods from Iran in January 2023.

According to Eurostat, Germany was Iran's top trade partner in Europe in January. The country accounted for 38 percent of the Iran-EU total

trade in the said month. The total trade between Iran and Germany reached €119.7 million in the first month of 2024.

Germany exported €100 million of goods to Iran and imported €19.7 million from Iran. German exports to Iran didn't change much but imports decreased by 26 percent, year on year.

The exports from some other European countries to Iran, however, increased significantly in January 2024. Spain's exports to Iran this month experienced a 62 percent growth compared to the same period last year and increased from €15.4 million in

January 2023 to €25 million in January this year.

Italy's exports to Iran also increased by 13 percent and reached €43.9 million. Italy had exported €38.8 million of goods to Iran in January 2023.

While Germany's imports from Iran decreased by 26 percent in January, Greece's imports from Iran tripled and reached €2.3 million. Dutch imports from Iran have also almost doubled, from €3.5 million in January 2023 to €6.8 million in January this year.

Romania's imports from Iran also increased by 47 percent to €3.4 million, and Italy's imports

by two percent to €12.2 million.

As previously announced by Eurostat, trade between Iran and the EU stood at €4.732 billion in 2023.

Based on the Eurostat data, the trade between the two sides fell nine percent in 2023 in comparison to the preceding year when the figure stood at €5.244 billion.

The EU's exports to Iran from January to December 2023 stood at €3.993 billion, registering a decrease of six percent compared to the same period of 2022 when the EU's exports to Iran were reported to be €4.187 billion.

The European Union's imports from Iran also reached €799 million in 2023 with a 24 percent decrease compared to 2022. EU imported €1.057 billion of goods from Iran in January-December 2022.

According to Eurostat, Germany was also Iran's top trade partner in Europe in 2023. The country accounted for 36 percent of the Iran-EU total trade in 2023. The total trade between Iran and Germany reached €1.432 billion last year.

Biden unlikely to intensify sanctions on Iran's oil sector: report



TEHRAN - A Reuters report on Tuesday said the Biden administration is unlikely to take any dramatic sanctions action on Iran's oil exports after Iran's response to Israel, due to worries about boosting oil prices and angering top buyer China.

Several regional analysts said they doubted Biden would take significant action to ramp up enforcement of existing U.S. sanctions on Iran's crude exports, the report said.

"Even if these bills pass, it's hard to see the

Biden administration going into overdrive, to try to spring into action or enforce existing sanctions or new ones to try to cut or curb (Iranian oil exports) in any meaningful way," Reuters quoted Scott Modell, a former CIA officer, now CEO of Rapidan Energy Group as saying.

Former President Donald Trump reinstated U.S. sanctions on Iran's oil in 2018 after pulling out of an international deal on Tehran's nuclear program.

Rapidan estimates Iran's oil exports have hit 1.6 million to 1.8 million barrels a day, excluding condensates, a very light oil. That is close to the 2.0 million barrels a day Iran exported before sanctions, said Modell.

The possible effect on gasoline prices is one reason Biden may not move strongly to curb Iran's oil exports.

Kimberly Donovan, a sanctions and anti-money laundering expert at the Atlantic Council, said that oil-related sanctions have not been strictly

enforced in the past couple of years.

"I would not expect the administration to tighten enforcement in response to Iran's missile and drone attacks against Israel over the weekend, mainly for concerns (that) could lead to increases in oil prices," she said.

"The price of oil and ultimately the prices of gas at the pump become critical during an election year."

Aggressively enforcing sanctions could also destabilize the U.S.-China relationship, which Chinese and U.S. officials have tried to repair following a rocky period after the U.S. last year downed a suspected Chinese surveillance balloon that crossed U.S. territory.

Tanker tracking specialist Vortexa Analytics estimated China acquired a record 55.6 million metric tons or 1.11 million barrels of Iranian crude a day last year. That amounted to roughly 90 percent of Iran's crude oil exports and 10 percent of China's oil imports.

Central Party School of Chinese Communist Party visited by foreign journalists

By Mahnaz Abdi

BEIJING- Journalists from around the world paid a visit to the Central Party School of the Chinese Communist Party, officially the Party School of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and commonly known as the Central Party School, on Tuesday (April 16).

The school is the higher education institution which trains Chinese Communist Party (CCP) cadres.

It is located in Haidian, Beijing, close to the Old Summer Palace and Summer Palace.

The following is a short history of the Party School of the Central Committee of CPC (CCPS).

The Marxist-Communist School was founded in March 1933 in Ruijin, Jiangxi Province.

In the winter of 1941, Mao Zedong created the motto "Seeking Truth from Facts and Refraining from Empty Talks" for the CCPS.

Mao Zedong acted as president of the CCPS from March 1943 to March 1947.

In July 1948, in order to adapt to the developing political situation, the CPC Central Committee decided to establish a top tier Party School (the Marxism-Leninism College), in Pingshan County, Hebei Province.

In March 1949, the Marxism-Leninism College - along with the members of the CPC Central Committee - moved to Beijing. In August of 1955, it was renamed "Senior Party School" and it operated under the CPC Central Committee (a.k.a Central Senior Party School).



The statue of Mao Zedong in the Central Party School of the Chinese Communist Party

In May 1978, an article titled "Practice Is the Sole Criterion for Testing Truth" was published in the CCPS's journal Theoretical Trends (Lilun Dongtai), which triggered a major debate over what exactly constitutes as truth nationwide. This led to ideological emancipation, Reform and Opening-up.

Important Party and State leaders in different stages of Chinese history including Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, Hu Jintao, and Xi Jinping have all presided over CCPS.

Comrade Xi Jinping served as the president of CCPS from 2007 to 2012.

The CCPS has significantly advanced the causes of the Party and the people, particularly in advancing Reform and Opening-up, by supporting the Party's theoretical innovation and upholding their ideological line.

Leading cadres can improve their political acumen and theoretical knowledge by spending some time in the Party School, helping them to align their ideas more closely with the Party's lines, values, and programs,

while consciously protecting the Party's unified leadership.

Since the 18th National Congress of the CPC, Chinese Communists have developed the Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era by fusing the principles of Marxism with China's practical realities and with fine traditional Chinese culture.

Comrade Xi Jinping is the main representative of this movement. The Thought represents a significant advancement in the application of Marxism to the Chinese environment and is the pinnacle of contemporary Chinese culture and spirit.

Following the Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era, the CCPS has been continuously improving its teaching and scientific research while strengthening the development of think tank. This has helped to advance the building of the whole Party ideologically and theoretically and the capacity of cadres, the development of Chinese philosophy and social sciences with Chinese characteristics,

the creation of a moderately prosperous society and the Chinese path to modernization.

The National Academy of Governance, established in 1994, trains senior and middle-level civil servants, as well as senior administrators and policy experts. It delivers scientific research, notably studies pertaining to theories of public administration and other subjects, as well as consultation on decision-making to the CPC Central Committee.

It should be noted that the foreign journalists visited the school in a program organized by China International Press Communication Center (CIPCC).

CIPCC, under the China Public Diplomacy Association (CPDA), has initiated a program to build a platform for the media from countries around the world, especially developing countries, to observe China and study development in this country.

The program aimed at media exchange was halted in 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid-19 epidemic.

In each edition of the program, journalists from all around the world gather together to get familiar with the modern China and exchange their experiences in the field of journalism.

In 2024 edition of the program, scheduled to be held from late February until late June, over 100 journalists from more than 90 countries are participating.

A brief history of CPC

The Communist Party of China (CPC) was founded on July 1, 1921.

In fact, the CPC traces its origins to the May Fourth Movement of

1919, during which radical Western ideologies like Marxism and anarchism gained traction among Chinese intellectuals. Other influences stemming from the Bolshevik revolution and Marxist theory inspired the CPC. Chen Duxiu and Li Dazhao were among the first to publicly support Leninism and world revolution. Both regarded the October Revolution in Russia as groundbreaking, believing it to herald a new era for oppressed countries everywhere.

From 1921 to 1949, the CPC led the Chinese people in their arduous armed struggle and finally succeeded in overthrowing the rule of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism and establishing the People's Republic of China (PRC). After the founding of the PRC, the CPC led the Chinese people of all ethnic groups in defending the independence and security of the country, successfully completing the transition from new democratic revolution to socialist revolution, carrying out systematic large-scale socialist construction, and achieving economic and cultural progress unparalleled in Chinese history.

After the founding of the PRC, the CPC continued to lead the nation to make constant progress: triumphing over repeated threats, sabotages and armed provocation of imperialists and hegemonists, safeguarding the nation's independence and security; successfully achieving a great transfer of the Chinese society from new-democratism to socialism, accomplishing, in a general sense, the socialist transformation of the private ownership of the means of production; and launching the large-

scale socialist economic construction in a planned way, and enabling Chinese economic and cultural causes to attain unprecedented development.

At its nature, the CPC is the vanguard of the Chinese working class as well as the Chinese people and the Chinese nation. It is the core of leadership for the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The Party represents the development trend of China's advanced productive forces, the orientation of China's advanced culture and the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people (the Three Represents).

After the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Party Central Committee at the end of 1978, the country embarked on the biggest change in the history of New China. From 1979, the CPC began to carry out the reform and opening-up policy initiated by Deng Xiaoping. In more than two decades since the initiation of the reform and opening-up, China's economic and social development has been crowned with remarkable success and the country has taken on a new look. This has been the best period since the founding of the PRC in which the Chinese people have reaped the most material benefits.

Since Xi Jinping took power, Xi has initiated a wide-reaching anti-corruption campaign, while centralizing powers in the office of CPC general secretary at the expense of the collective leadership of prior decades. In 2021, CPC celebrated its centenary, and China lifted all people across the nation to walk out of extreme poverty. This marks a significant milestone for China as well as the world.

U.S. tech giants abet Israeli genocide

Google, Amazon accused of complicity in Gaza massacres

From page 1 ▶ The events were organized by a group called "No Tech for Apartheid".

"We want to end the project," a protest organizer with the Palestinian Youth Movement and a tech worker with Apple said.

Tariq Raouf added, "We want to stop the funding for AI, machine learning [going] toward government programs that are actively participating in a genocide against innocent civilians."

Google software engineer Emaan Haseem was among the protesters outside the company's office in Sunnyvale.

"Not only is the lack of transparency concerning, but just the context of this contract taking place. We know the genocide taking place in Gaza is the first AI-powered genocide. So, we find that Big Tech is streamlining this genocide against Palestinians," Haseem said.

Nimbus supports Israel's war

On April 12, Time Magazine reported that the Nimbus contract is specifically aiding Israel's military efforts. Citing evidence, it said Google Cloud is providing services to the Israeli Ministry of Defense, allowing the "ministry to store and process data, and access AI services."

Protesters have expressed concern over the potential use of AI-enabled technology by Israel in the Gaza onslaught.



"It is more important than ever that we put attention to where we use AI and machine learning, especially when it comes to wars," Raouf said.

Zelda Montes, a software engineer at Google-owned YouTube, was one of the demonstrators during Tuesday's sit-ins.

Google fired him in March after he stood up and protested during a speech by Google's top executive in Israel at a conference in New York.

Referring to the Time Magazine report, Montes said, "It's deplorable that Google has been selling this technology to the Israeli government and military and lying to its employees about it."

He also warned that other workers of the tech giant may be given the axe.

"We often have the privilege of looking the other way and not to have

to think about the impact of our work on the world," Montes said. "I have been waiting for months for people to be in the same position as me and be ready to put their job on the line."

Project Nimbus has incited protests since it was signed. But protests have ramped up over the past seven months as Israel continues its brutal war on Gaza.

Following the signing of the contract Israeli officials said Project Nimbus "bars the firms from denying services to particular government entities." This raised concerns among some tech employees that their work could be used for military purposes.

A professor of information studies at UCLA told Al Jazeera that "there's a shocking lack of transparency" over Google's Project Nimbus that's being used by the Israeli military in Gaza.

Ramesh Srinivasan said big technology companies working with Israel's army could be found complicit in the attacks on civilians there.

"Corporate America Big Tech is actually aligned with many of the Israeli military's actions. The fact that AI systems are being used indicates there's a lack of regard by the Israeli state. Everybody knows these AI systems will make mistakes," he added.

Earlier, UN rights experts condemned the purported use of artificial intelligence by Israel in Gaza which has resulted in an unprecedented toll on the civilian population in the Palestinian territory.

Israel has committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza over the past months. The regime has turned a blind eye to a ruling issued by the International Court of Justice which ordered the regime to take action to prevent acts of genocide.

The U.S. government has provided unwavering military support for Israel in its war on Gaza. American tech companies have now been implicated in Israel's massacres in the Palestinian territory.

It seems that U.S. tech firms have turned into the lackeys of the Israeli regime.

As the regime of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu continues to perpetrate atrocities, American tech companies like Google and Amazon are waiting on Israel hand and foot!

Rishi Sunak resorts to distortion

The prime minister must also be reminded that the security of Iran is also non-negotiable. But there is a major difference. Iran is seeking a stable and secure region while Israel is seeking superiority over other regional nations and forcing them into submission by relying on the West's unwavering support.

Iran was forced to take military action against Israel. The Israeli regime has been targeting Iranian military advisors in Syria for some years. However, this time it crossed Iran's red line by assassinating seven Iranian military commanders among them a brigadier general in the diplomatic premise.

Add to these terrorist attacks in Syria the assassinations of five Iranian nuclear experts and sabotage attacks at the nuclear sites and its complicity with the Trump administration in assassinating the IRGC Quds Force chief Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani in January 2020.

Sunak also claimed that the security of Israel is a

"fundamental condition" for peace in the region. The bitter point is that Israel is not seeking peace.

If has it really been seeking peace why has it been refusing to return to the 1948 borders based on the UN Security Council resolutions and instead is annexing more and more Palestinian lands in the occupied West Bank?

And why in the midst of its genocidal war on Gaza has it decided to seize 800 hectares of Palestinian land in the occupied West Bank to build Jewish settlements? And has it been killing all diplomatic efforts to create an independent Palestinian state and numerous other anti-peace efforts?

Even Saudi Arabia, the most important country in the Arab world that is cherished by the West, has conditioned a normalization of relations with Israel to the formation of a Palestinian state based on the 1948 borders.

Israel has also annexed the Syrian Golan Heights occupied in 1967 and astonishingly former U.S. Pres-

ident Donald Trump recognized Golan as part of Israel in violation of international law and moved the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, which the Palestinians want as their future capital.

By describing Iran's retaliatory and legitimate attacks on Israel as reckless and expressing Britain's "full support", Prime Minister Sunak is most probably seeking to vindicate the Israeli regime which has been committing war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide by using arms provided by Britain and some other Western countries.

He is reprimanding the victim instead of the offender.

Iran just simply responded to the deadly attack on its consulate in Damascus which is part of its land and choreographed its drone and missile attacks on Israel in a way that it would not cause damage to civilian and economic infrastructure. And more importantly, Tehran said it is not seeking to widen the scope of the war.

Israeli army participating in deadly West Bank settler violence

UN demands "independent" investigation over joint army-settler attacks

From page 1 ▶ As an occupying entity, Tel Aviv has a legal responsibility under international law to provide security for the Palestinian population living under its occupation.

The regime has shown little appetite for complying with international humanitarian law in the Gaza Strip. The same Israeli violations of international law have been occurring in the West Bank, with the notable difference being the scale of death and destruction.

The repeated deadly attacks by settler gangs who go on rampage in towns and villages have drawn "grave concern" from the UN. Backed by assault rifles and Israeli soldiers, the gangs kill innocent Palestinian civilians.

"Palestinians have been subjected to waves of attacks by hundreds of Israeli settlers, often accompanied or supported by Israeli Forces," the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk has said.

Whilst these incidents are nothing new to West Bank residents, there has been a significant surge in the last few days. Human Rights Watch says the Israeli army is "complicit" in the settler violence that is displacing Palestinian communities.

Since Friday, armed settlers, backed by the army, have killed at least eight Palestinians, including a child, a woman, and an elderly man. They have also injured many others, some left in a serious condition.

According to the UN Human Rights Office, armed settlers and Israeli forces have stormed more than ten Palestinian towns lately.

Dozens of Palestinian civilians have been injured, including "through the use of firearms, by settlers and the Israeli army, while hundreds of homes and other buildings, as well as cars, were torched," the UN rights body said.

Before this latest wave of deadly raids, armed settlers and the Israeli army had killed nearly 500 Palestinians in the occupied West Bank since October 7, while forcibly removing hundreds of others from their indigenous land.

"Israel, as the occupying power, must take all

measures in its power to restore, and ensure, as far as possible, public order and safety in the occupied West Bank. This obligation includes protecting Palestinians from settler attacks, and ending unlawful use of force against Palestinians by the [Israeli army]," Turk underlined.

Over the month of Ramadan, reports suggested the Israeli army had launched nearly 1,000 raids against Palestinian civilians across the West Bank.

The senior UN official demanded that the Israeli army immediately cease its "active participation in and support for settler attacks on Palestinians."

Israeli authorities "must instead prevent further attacks, including by bringing those responsible to account," Turk highlighted.

Both settlers and Israeli soldiers "suspected of criminal acts, including murder or other unlawful killings, must be brought to justice through a judicial process that complies with international human rights standards," Turk said.

He emphasized that this must be done through "a prompt, impartial, independent, effective and transparent investigation."

Experts say the chances of that happening in Tel Aviv are zero.

The cabinet of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu includes ministers who squat on illegal West Bank settlements themselves.

The Israeli security minister, Itamar Ben-Gvir, a member of Netanyahu's deeply divided cabinet, and a former designated terrorist, personally handed out assault rifles to his fellow settlers in the West Bank and ordered tens of thousands more for distribution to more settlers.

"I have given instructions for massively arming [the settlers]," he said in October last year.

The fascist minister's "inflammatory comments" and "racist rhetoric" against Palestinians have even raised eyebrows in the West, yet no action has been taken to sanction Ben-Gvir, despite widespread calls to do so.

Experts say Ben-Gvir and other fascist ministers such as finance minister Bezalel Smotrich, who once publicly called for "erasing" an entire West Bank town, should have faced punishment from the West for having the blood of thousands of Palestinians on their hands during the time they have served Netanyahu's cabinet (which hasn't been too long).

Yet critics say in the U.S.-led Western world's interpretation of international law, there is one rule for the Israelis and another for opponents of ethnic cleansing and genocide against the Palestinians.

On April 13, armed settler gangs, encouraged by Netanyahu's extremist ministers and accompanied by Israeli soldiers, engaged in a large-scale attack on the village of al-Mughayyir, where they killed one Palestinian man and injured more than two dozen others.

It's been a harrowing plight for Palestinian residents living under occupation in the West Bank for many decades. Their suffering has been made much worse after the Israeli regime got the U.S. greenlight to begin its genocidal war on Gaza.

Data released last month by the Ramallah-based Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Organization showed the Israeli army had arrested more than 7,350 Palestinians in the West Bank since October 7.

Reports indicate the Israeli military continues to forcibly detain around a dozen Palestinians on an almost daily basis amid regular campaigns to arrest Palestinians across the West Bank. Nearly 70 journalists have also been arrested.

On Wednesday, Israeli forces arrested at least nine Palestinians and injured others during raids in several areas.

Palestinians have argued they have no option but to take up arms and defend their land from consistent pre-dawn Israeli military raids, at times backed by tanks and helicopters. This is on top of the occupying army storming towns and villages alongside armed settlers.

Under the shadows of the Israeli genocidal war in Gaza, the situation in the West Bank is on the verge of spiraling out of control.

WORLD HEADLINES

Qatar: Gaza truce talks have stalled

Negotiations between Israel and Hamas to secure a truce in Gaza and a release of captives have stalled, Qatar's prime minister said on Wednesday.

"We are going through a sensitive stage with some stalling, and we are trying as much as possible to address this stalling," Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani told a news conference with Romanian Prime Minister Marcel Ciolacu.

The Qatari premier said Doha had "warned from the beginning of this war against the expansion of the circle of conflict, and today we see conflicts on different fronts".

"We constantly call on the international community to assume its responsibilities and stop this war," he said, adding people of Gaza faced "siege and starvation" with humanitarian aid being used as a "tool for political blackmail".

Hamas has already put forward its demands for ending Israel's war on Gaza.

The resistance group has called for a permanent ceasefire, the withdrawal of the Israeli army from the entire Gaza Strip, the return of the displaced to their areas and places of residence and intensification of the entry of relief and aid.

UN appeals for \$2.8bn for Gaza, West Bank aid

The United Nations appealed on Wednesday for \$2.8 billion in funding to assist more than three million people in Gaza and the West Bank until the end of the year, to help ease food shortages and prevent looming famine in Gaza.

A flash appeal published by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said that sum was needed to help 3.1 million people and "reduce human suffering and prevent further loss of life," Reuters reported.

A major chunk of funding - \$782.1 million - will be destined for food aid for 2.2 million people in Gaza and 400,000 people in the West Bank, the appeal said.

A senior UN aid official said on Tuesday that the United Nations was struggling to prevent famine in the Gaza Strip.

CAIR denounces U.S. backing for 'Israeli crimes'

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) has denounced the continuing US government acquiescence of Israel's bloody war on Gaza.

"These Israeli crimes against humanity are being committed daily - even hourly - with the active support of the Biden administration," said CAIR communications director, Ibrahim Hooper, in a statement.

"Without concrete action to end the genocide, ethnic cleansing and forced starvation in Gaza, our nation's reputation on the world stage will be irreparably harmed."

Hezbollah attacks Israeli military forces

Lebanon's Hezbollah carried out an attack against Israel on Wednesday in response to the killing of three of its members, including two commanders, in the regime's strikes in southern Lebanon a day earlier.

The resistance movement said the attack targeted a building used by the Israeli military with guided missiles and explosive-laden drones.

The attack wounded eighteen people, Israeli military officials said Wednesday afternoon.

They said one victim was listed in critical condition and two others were seriously wounded.

Israel has imprisoned over 9,500 Palestinians

More than 9,500 Palestinians are held in Israeli prisons, prisoners' affairs groups said.

The detainees include 80 women and more than 200 children, the Commission of Detainees' Affairs, the Palestinian Prisoner Society and Addameer Prisoner Support and Human Rights Association said in a joint statement marking the Palestinian Prisoner's Day, which fell on April 17.

"This figure does not include Palestinians held by Israeli forces in Gaza," the statement said.

Among the detainees are 3,660 Palestinians held without trial or charge under Israel's notorious policy of administrative detention, the statement said.

"More than 40 children and 20 women are held administratively without trial or charge," it added.

There are 56 journalists in Israeli jails, including four women reporters, the statement said.

UN: Israel's 'war on women' orphaned 19,000 Gaza kids

United Nations (UN) Women on Tuesday announced the deaths of more than 10,000 women in the Gaza Strip, which has been suffering a devastating Israeli war for more than six months.

The authority conveyed in a statement: "Six months into the war, 10,000 Palestinian women in Gaza have been killed. Women who have survived Israeli bombardment and ground operations have been displaced, widowed, and facing starvation. This devastating differentiated impact continues to make the war on Gaza also a war on women."

The war on Gaza has left nearly 34,000 Palestinians dead.

The UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, also known as UN Women, concerned with gender equality and the empowerment of women, stated that of the 10,000 women killed, an estimated 6,000 were mothers, leaving 19,000 children orphaned.

Record rain in UAE

The desert nation of the United Arab Emirates attempted to dry out Wednesday from the heaviest rain ever recorded there after a deluge flooded out Dubai International Airport, disrupting travel through the world's busiest airfield for international travel.

The state-run WAM news agency called the rain Tuesday "a historic weather event" that surpassed "anything documented since the start of data collection in 1949." That's before the discovery of crude oil in this energy-rich nation then part of a British protectorate known as the Trucial States, AP reported.

Rain also fell in Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. However, the rains were acute across the UAE. One reason may have been "cloud seeding," in which small planes flown by the government go through clouds burning special salt flares. Those flares can increase precipitation.

Several reports quoted meteorologists at the National Center for Meteorology as saying they flew six or seven cloud-seeding flights before the rains.

Marreh Wetland: a gem for migratory birds

TEHRAN - Nestled on the western edge of a protected desert area, Marreh Wetland, also known as the "Desert Gem" stands as one of the five significant wetlands in Qom province, becoming a sanctuary for various bird species.

Situated approximately 50 kilometers off the Qom-Garmsar highway, the wetland plays host to flamingos, cranes, waterfowl, and herons, among other species of migratory birds.

Especially during the winter season and flooding periods, the wetland area expands to over 10,000 hectares, accommodating numerous migratory bird species.

The wetland's vegetation, predominantly observed in its northern and northeastern perimeters, hosts rare migratory birds.

With over 40 plant species such as desert thornbush, tamarisk yellow and black thistles, and spinach, the area provides a rich habitat for diverse wildlife.

Thousands of migratory birds, including flamingos, herons, and various waterfowl, flock to Marreh Wetland these days.

Originating from Siberia, these birds make their way through the country's northern and southern wetlands during winter and early spring, eventually settling in Marreh Wetland.

The name "Marreh" derives from a mountain located on the wetland's northern border, honoring its geographical proximity.



Marreh Wetland offers an excellent opportunity for tourists to marvel at its natural beauty, with vast water expanses, migratory birds along the adjacent road, and dense vegetation in the wetland's north.

Facilitating bird watching and visitations during the winter and spring seasons stands as one of Marreh Wetland's unique advantages within the province, inviting visitors to immerse themselves in its serene charm and ecological diversity.

National recognition

It's noteworthy that earlier this month, Alireza Arjmandi, the director-general of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts of Qom province, announced the official national registration of Marreh Wetland.

Marreh Wetland has been registered under number 1200 in the list of national natural heritage sites of the country following legal procedures, according to the official.

Glimpses of World Heritage sites: City of Quito

Quito, the capital of Ecuador, was founded in the 16th century on the ruins of an Inca city and stands at an altitude of 2,850 m above sea level. Despite the 1917 earthquake, the city has the best-preserved, least altered historic centre in Latin America.

The UNESCO-designated city offers a remarkable example of the Baroque school of Quito (Escuela Quiteña), that brings together the indigenous and European artistic traditions and which is renowned for providing the greatest contribution of Spanish America to universal art.

The height of this art is represented by veritable spiritual citadels, among which are San Francisco, San Domingo, San Augustin, La Compana, La Merced, the Sanctuary of Guapulco and the Recoleta of San Diego, to name just the principal ones. These are recognized not only for their artistic value from the architectural viewpoint but also for their decorative elements (altarpieces, paintings, sculptures).

The city of Quito forms a harmonious ensemble where nature and man are brought together to create a unique and transcendental work. The colonizers knew how to adapt their artistic sensibility to the reality that surrounded them, building

their architecture in a very complex topographical environment. Despite this, the architects were able to confer stylistic and volumetric harmony to the ensemble.

The urban routes are based on the original plan and include central and secondary squares as well as checkerboard-patterned streets and are aligned on the cardinal points of the compass. In the city centre, there are convents and churches as well as houses (1 or 2 floors with one or several patios), usually built with earthen bricks and covered with stucco, combining the monumental with the simple and austere.

The city of Quito, the cradle of Pre-Colombian cultures and an important witness of Spanish colonization maintains, for the time being unity and harmony in its urban structure despite centuries of urban development.

Elevated to the title of capital of the Audience of Quito, it assumed the political direction and patronal control over the villages and towns. This is the maximum representation of the step towards forming socio-economic development, creator of a true national idiosyncrasy expressed through its unique tangible and intangible heritage.

Iran in frames



A foreign sightseer wearing a floral-patterned Chador (a loose robe that covers the body from head to toe) stands next to the ornate tiles of Nasir al-Mulk Mosque in Shiraz, southern Iran. The harmony between her attire and the tiles of this 19th-century mosque is striking, both sharing a predominantly pink color theme.

Russian consul marvels at beauty of Shazdeh Garden during visit

TEHRAN - On Tuesday, Russian Consul in Isfahan Andrey Zhiltsov paid a visit to the UNESCO-listed Shazdeh Garden

Zhiltsov, who was in Kerman province to join an official meeting, toured various parts of the vast Persian Garden and learned about the history and details of its construction, IRNA reported.

On the sidelines of this visit, he said: that Kerman province is known for its mineral, industrial, and agricultural capacities, but its important tourism sector may have not been introduced properly.

The Russian diplomat said the beauty of Mahan's Shazdeh Garden is "incredible".

Kerman province has the potential to become the tourism capital of Iran considering its high tourism potential, he said.

Zhiltsov also expressed readiness to introduce special historical monuments and tourism capacities of Kerman to Russian tourists.

During the tour, Kerman's tourism chief who was accompanying the Russian consul, mentioned a pro-



posal for twinning Kerman with one of the provinces of Russia, saying: This province is home to 10 World Heritage sites in historical, tourism, and natural arenas, which are great tourist appeals for and traveler.

Shazdeh Garden meaning "The Prince's Garden" is located some six km away from Mahan in Kerman province, southern Iran. The garden forms an enigmatic green oasis in the heart of a barren desert. Many visitors consider Shazdeh Garden a miracle due to its location.

The garden was constructed under the command of Mohammad Hassan Khan, the ruler of Kerman, during the Qajar era (1789-1925). Apart from the beauties of the garden, two-story mansions in the western and eastern parts of the garden perfectly represent Persian architecture. The main material used in them is brick, and the art of tiling is easy to recognize.

In 2011, a selection of nine Iranian gardens, including Shazdeh Garden, which bears important architectural, traditional, and cultural elements,

were collectively inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list under the title of "The Persian Garden."

One outstanding feature of Persian gardens is the arrangement of a pond in the center of the structure. The dance of fountains in the middle of Shazdeh Garden has given an admirable view of it that leaves everyone in wonder and appreciation.

For millennia, Iranian gardens have combined the magic of nature with the aesthetic qualities of art and architecture to create a symbolic representation of paradise on Earth.

A typical Persian Garden interweaves natural elements with man-made components to embody the idea of creating a paradise on Earth by means of artistic, philosophical, figurative, and religious notions.

According to the UN cultural body, the flawless design of the Persian Garden, along with its ability to respond to extreme climatic conditions, is the result of an inspired and intelligent application of different fields of knowledge, i.e. technology, water management, and engineering, architecture, botany, and agriculture.

Kordestan emerges as hotspot for domestic travelers

TEHRAN - Kordestan province emerged as a hotspot for domestic travelers during the recent Persian New Year holidays and days beyond, attracting over three million travelers.

During a press conference held on Tuesday, Kordestan's director-general of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts shared extensive insights into the province's remarkable tourism achievements during a month-long period, covering the Nowruz and Eid al-Fitr holidays.

Mansour Mehrzad revealed that Kordestan emerged as the third most sought-after tourist destination province across the country, having warmly welcomed over 3,500,000 travelers.

"During the Nowruz festivities, spanning from March 15 to April 14, Kordestan experienced a notable surge in tourist arrivals," Mehrzad noted, "drawn by its diverse array of cultural and natural attractions."

Despite the challenges posed by limited accommodation capacity, Kordestan successfully hosted 615,000 visitors across various lodging options, according to the director-general.

Mehrzad further detailed the figure, stating that the province boasts approximately 5,500

hotel and non-hotel beds, supplemented by emergency accommodation services that cater to an additional 41,000 individuals.

Highlighting Kordestan's commitment to tourism development, Mehrzad emphasized ongoing efforts to attract investment, particularly in the accommodation sector.

Kordestan has made significant strides in enhancing its tourism infrastructure, positioning itself as one of the leading provinces in terms of tourism facilities and services, the official added.

He also claimed that Kordestan, compared to its neighboring provinces, has managed to mitigate the effects of the reduction in travelers due to weather warnings.

"Additionally, this reduction was compensated for by increased traffic during Eid al-Fitr holidays," Mehrzad stated.

The director-general also revealed that during the course of the previous year, Kordestan allocated 180 billion rials (about \$300,000) towards the restoration and preservation of its rich historical heritage.

"This investment has yielded tangible results,"

the official added, "with several historical sites undergoing extensive renovation, contributing to the preservation of Kordestan's cultural legacy."

He continued by stating that in the past year, three new historical sites were also nationally registered in Kordestan.

He added, "This province has many historical artifacts, and we are currently making every effort for them to be registered on the UNESCO World Heritage list."

Moreover, the official underscored the significance of cultural events in promoting the province's identity and heritage.

Five cultural events, including Pir-e Shalyar traditional wedding ceremony, komsay festival, Palangan, and Sanandaj's Nowruz, and Shiyan's strawberry festival, were nationally recognized last year, showcasing Kordestan's vibrant cultural tapestry, the official stated.

"Kordestan was recognized as the second province in the country in terms of hosting cultural events last year," Mehrzad noted in his concluding remarks, "and this trend will continue in the current year as well."

Sassanian coins: from royal portraits to economic insights

TEHRAN - The coinage of the Sassanian Empire (circa 224-651 CE) serves as the most crucial primary source for its monetary and economic history and holds significant importance for both history and art history.

The Sassanian emperors minted a considerable number of silver coins, known as drachms (pronounced 'drams').

The royal portraits on these coins allow for the identification of kings depicted in other forms of Sassanian art, such as silverware or rock and stucco reliefs.

Coin-striking remained a royal prerogative throughout Sassanian history, with a consistent typology employed across the empire, indicating central control over

the mints. Initially, coin dies were primarily produced locally, but from the mid-5th century onwards, they were centrally manufactured and distributed to various mints, resulting in homogeneity not only in typology but also in style.

Under the Arsacid rulers, Iranian coins bore Greek script, which had become the lingua franca of the Middle East following Alexander the Great's conquests. However, the Sassanian emperors distinctly used the Middle Persian script called Pahlavi, emphasizing Zoroastrianism.

The reverse of Sassanian drachms depicted an Atashkan, a 'fire altar', sometimes flanked by incense burners or attendants, often representing Magi or Zoroastrian priests. Contrary to common belief,

Zoroastrians do not worship fire itself but communicate with God, known as Ahura Mazda, through the holy flame. The presence of the Atashkan on Sassanian coins mirrors the cross on the coins of their rivals, the Late Roman/Byzantine Empire.

The obverse of Sassanian drachms featured the Emperor's bust, known as the Shahanshah, meaning king-of-kings. Each emperor wore a personalized crown, with different elements symbolizing various aspects of kingship such as victory, glory, manliness, and piety.

Sassanian drachms were among the first truly flat coins, signifying a transition in coinage from the chunky, thick-flan coins of the ancient world to the wafer-thin coins of the Medieval era. This change aimed to deter forgery by increasing the



Gold double denar of Ardashir I (r.224-242), struck at the Ctesiphon mint.

surface area to volume ratio, making it more difficult and expensive for forgers to produce counterfeit coins.

Although Sassanians minted gold and base metal coins, these were exceedingly rare.

Sassanian drachms played a global role, serving as the basis for the Caliphal dirham and influencing coinages in the Indian region and Central Asia.

Rasht's culinary heritage: Reshteh-Khoshkar and beyond

TEHRAN - Rasht, recognized as a Creative City of Gastronomy by UNESCO, stands as a vibrant amalgamation of flavors and traditions. Here, food transcends mere sustenance, becoming an intrinsic part of the culture and identity of its people.

The bustling historical bazaars of Rasht beckon with an aromatic medley of spices, herbs, and freshly baked bread, enticing both visitors and locals to embark on a gastronomic adventure.

Among Rasht's renowned dishes, Reshteh-Khoshkar holds a place of honor. Passed down through generations, this traditional treat is a Ramadan mainstay. Comprising rice flour, wheat flour, sugar, almonds, walnuts, cardamom, cinnamon, ginger, and a symphony of spices, it embodies the essence of Rashti cuisine.

Navigating the labyrinthine passages of Rasht's bazaar, one is enveloped in a sensory symphony.

The vibrant marketplace resounds with the laughter of patrons and the melodious calls of vendors peddling their wares.

The aroma of freshly baked pastries permeates the adjacent alleyways. Amidst the bustling milieu, a quaint confectionery catches your eye, its vibrant array of sweets and pastries extending a warm invitation. Stepping inside, you are greeted by the comforting warmth of ovens and the alluring scent of freshly baked cookies.

In the heart of the bakery, a skilled artisan orchestrates the creation of Reshteh-Khoshkar with finesse. Surrounded by a team of adept bakers, each a master in their craft, he brings the delicate concoction to life.

The air is imbued with the fragrant essence of cardamom and cinnamon, mingling with the savory aroma of spices and nuts emanating from trays of freshly roasted walnuts. Crafting

Reshteh-Khoshkar is a labor of love, as the baker's hands move with practiced precision, expertly measuring ingredients.

The rice flour batter is delicately poured onto a skillet, forming intricate patterns as it fries to golden perfection. A delectable filling of crushed walnuts, sugar, and spices is nestled within the pastry, which is then folded and fried until crisp and golden.

Each bite of Reshteh-Khoshkar transports you to the vibrant streets of Iran during the festive month of Ramadan, a testament to the rich culinary heritage of Rasht.

This cherished tradition unites families, as they come together to savor these delightful cookies. Whether enjoyed with a steaming cup of tea or shared among loved ones, Reshteh-Khoshkar brings joy and warmth to all who partake.

TEHRAN –The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has announced its commitment to support and assist the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS).

Referring to the challenges faced by sanctioned countries, including Iran, Xavier Castellanos Mosquera, the IFRC undersecretary general for national society development and operations coordination, has assured to assist these countries in tackling their problems.

Castellanos Mosquera made the remarks during a video call with Razieh Alishvandi, the IRCS director for international affairs, on April 16, according to the IRCS website.

The IFRC official went on to laud the emergency response activities and the services provided by IRCS during emergencies, calling it essential to introduce them as a role model for other societies.

During the meeting, Alishvandi elaborated on some of the taken measures by the IRCS in response to various incidents.

Within the last 2 years, she said, the IRCS provided different services to the victims affected by an earthquake in Khoy city and floods in Sistan-Baluchestan province.

Alishvandi went on to highlight that the IRCS needs additional support from the IFRC to address the challenges caused by drought and assist victims of natural hazards in the country.

In the end, the two officials highlighted the need to boost cooperation to promote the activities of IRCS and its capabilities at the international level.



international level.

IRCS recent services

The IRCS offered first-aid training services to more than four million people from March 14 to April 5.

Some 63,000 other people also received rescue services.

Among 4,370 operations and services carried out by the IRCS, 2,525 were rescue operations, ISNA quoted Babak Mahmoudi, an IRCS official, as saying.

The IRCS provided emergency shelters for 3,931 individuals, treated 5,257 wounded people, and transferred 1,567 others to health centers.

Moreover, within the framework of a program initiated on March 14, more than four million individuals were trained in first aid by the IRCS trainers, and 400 others received online training.

Also, kids were made aware of natural hazards, such as floods and earthquakes, and other dangers using virtual reality or playing games.

Holding joint workshop

A training workshop focusing on lowering harms caused by drug addiction was held with the cooperation of the IRCS and Villa Maraini Foundation of Italy in Tehran in December 2023.

Pirhossein Kolivand, the head of the IRCS, and Massimo Barra, the head of the Villa Maraini Foundation, met on the sidelines of the event.

Kolivand stated that drug users encounter severe health issues, suffering from an identity crisis which leads to their exclusion by both their families and society, the IRCS website reported.

However, initiative projects, such as Harm Reduction on Drug Addiction, serve the purpose of educating and offering healthcare to these individuals, enabling them to reintegrate into society, reunite with their families, and restore self-esteem.

Barra, for his part, emphasized the significance of the problems resulting from drug addiction. Since a large number of individuals are

globally affected by addiction, it is crucial to provide them with additional support through greater cooperation, he added.

Dispatching volunteers to deprived area

In December 2023, volunteer physicians were sent to provide free health and pharmaceutical services to people in deprived areas, an official with the IRCS said.

The program was implemented on the occasion of World Volunteer Day, commonly known as IVD, which is celebrated on December 5 every year.

It's a day where volunteers are acknowledged and the spirit of volunteerism is promoted at the local, national, and international levels.

"Volunteer physicians would be sent to deprived areas from Ilam, Kermanshah, Yazd, Bushehr, Markazi, West Azarbaijan, and Kerman provinces to serve the people in these areas," Vahid Salimi said.

They would provide free health and pharmaceutical services, including visiting patients, dental and midwifery services, and traditional medicine and acupuncture consultation.

They would also check people's health, blood pressure, height, and weight.

Moreover, oral and dental health care would be taught to the students of the villages.

The main objective of dispatching volunteers was to improve the health of the villagers due to the unavailability of specialist doctors in these areas and reduce medical expenses.

VP invites Uzbekistan to join global movement of commitment to family

TEHRAN –The Vice President for Women and Family Affairs, Ensieh Khazali, has asked Uzbekistan to join the global movement of commitment to family.

She made the remarks in a meeting with the ambassador of Uzbekistan, Nasriev Fariddin Badriddinovich, in Tehran on Tuesday, April 16.

Referring to Uzbekistan's successful demographic policies and emphasizing the cultural affinity of the two countries regarding family issues, Khazali asked for Uzbekistan's support in strengthening family foundations in international communities.

She further stated that the historical, cultural, and religious commonalities of the two countries can lay the ground for the further development of relations between the two countries.

Badriddinovich, for his part, said thanks to the intelligent policy-making of the officials of the two countries, the ties between Iran and Uzbekistan are expanding well.

He, particularly, referred to the reciprocal visits of President Ebrahim Raisi and his Uzbek counterpart last year saying that they have helped foster bilateral ties.

Badriddinovich stressed that the women and family-related collaboration have grown noticeably since last year.

Sharing their successful experiences, the two officials also exchanged views on joint economic cooperation, such as creating virtual markets and facilitating goods exchange with women's management and participation, supporting women's entrepreneurship and employment.

global movement of commitment to the family

On the second day of his trip to New York, at the 78th General Assembly of the United Nations, on September 20, 2023, President Raisi described the power of the Islamic Republic of Iran as a security-creating power that by removing the options of war, occupation, and secession of countries from the table of the dominating powers, has opened new horizons for the region and stated, "The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the priority of the region is Islamic unity and collective development.

Undoubtedly, stabilization of security depends on collective development and this is the only way to prosperity in West Asia".

He went on to say that in addition to the war against Islam, we are also witnessing a war against the family.

The family is the most authentic, lasting, fundamental, and natural human institution that is under threat today.

Today, the crime against humanity is not only the occupation of lands, the killing of innocents, and the colonization of nations, but the attack on the natural shelter of human beings, which is the family, is also a crime against humanity.

Protecting the privacy of family and marriage, which is formed by the union of a woman and a man, is a global reality that should become a common global agenda. Education, development, and human excellence cannot be achieved except in the framework of family values.

Fake narratives of marriage and gender are actually an attempt to eliminate transcendental concepts such as mother, father, and natural family; Actions that can be seen as examples of crimes against humanity and cause the end of the human race. It is our human duty to deal with such approaches.

Today, we need a global movement of commitment to the family so that all family members can experience a warm life together.

We ask all the leaders of the world and the leaders of divine religions to fulfill their historical duty in supporting the original position of the concept of family and confronting fake narratives. We expect the United Nations to place respect for the noble position of the family at the top of its agenda.

ENGLISH IN USE

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SDSs mitigation plan to take effect next year

Sand and dust storm (SDS) mitigation plan will be implemented in the southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan as of the next Iranian calendar year (beginning March 21), Department of Environment (DOE) chief has announced.

A total fund of \$150 million from the National Development Fund has been proposed to counter dust storms in Sistan-Baluchestan province, IRNA quoted Issa Kalantari as saying on Tuesday.

Referring to the SDSs hitting southeastern part of the country causing the residents severe health problems, he noted that the president is pursuing the issue and as long as the fund is provided the plan will go into effect.

طرح مهار گرد و غبارهای سیستان از اول سال آینده اجرایی می شود

رئیس سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست گفت: طرح مهار گرد و غبارهای منطقه سیستان و بلوچستان از ابتدای سال آینده اجرایی می شود. عیسی کلانتری روز سه شنبه در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایرنا اظهار داشت: برای مبارزه با گرد و غبار این منطقه رئیس جمهوری تقاضای ۱۵۰ میلیون دلار اعتبار از صندوق توسعه ملی کرده است. وی بیان کرد: توفان ها و گرد و غبار مساله جدی در منطقه سیستان است و مردم سالها با این مشکل مواجه و از آن رنج می برند و رئیس جمهوری به شدت پیگیر حل این مساله هستند. طرح مهار گرد و غبارهای منطقه سیستان به محض تایید منابع مورد نیاز اجرایی می شود.

Iran is self-sufficient in dealing with narcotics: official

TEHRAN –After four decades of effort, Iran is now self-sufficient in preventing addiction, treating addicts, and combating narcotics, an official with anti-narcotics headquarters has said.

Alireza Kazemi made the remarks on Wednesday on the sidelines of an exhibition showcasing the capabilities of the anti-narcotics headquarters.

The exhibition was held with the participation of knowledge-based companies.

Despite unfair sanctions, knowledge-based companies have achieved significant scientific progress in dealing with the harms of addiction and drugs which has made the country independent from foreign aid.

Domestically-made products which are used to treat drug addiction, can be exported to other countries, even advanced countries, he added.

The affordability and the minimal side effects of these products have made them competitive compared to foreign samples. In some cases, they have proved to be even much more effective.

Effective implementation of anti-narcotics programs

In March, the secretary general of the anti-narcotics headquarters stressed the need for effective implementation of anti-narcotics programs in the region free from political considerations.

"One of the most important challenges of the present era is the narcotic drugs, industrial substances and new psychedelics and the sufferings that I would like to refer to as the quiet war against humanity," IRIB quoted Eskandar Momeni as saying.

He made the remarks in the 67th UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs, urging all countries



to be committed to the sustainable and effective implementation of international drug control conventions.

"In the past five years, adopting a balanced strategy in the fight against drugs, the Islamic Republic of Iran has taken effective measures to promote security and public health in alignment with the implementation of the 2019 Ministerial Declaration, international treaties, and conventions," Momeni added.

He referred to the compilation and implementation of the comprehensive document on treatment and harm reduction; the expansion of treatment centers both quantitatively and qualitatively, the maximum use of the private sector and non-governmental organizations (7,200 centers), employing diverse treatment methods including pharmaceuticals and psychological and social interventions, ensuring access to medicinal substances for medical and scientific purposes, boosting harm reduction programs by providing various services to people at risk and managing the spread of AIDS and Hepatitis C as other measure taken by the country.

Momeni further underscored the need to stop the cruel and unilateral sanctions and foster cooperation between the United Nations, international communities, and Iran in various aspects to strengthen the global fight against drugs.

Over 300 drugs being produced from medicinal plants

From page 1 ▶ Iran holds some 40% share of market

In October 2023, an official with the Ministry of Health said that Iran holds some 40 percent share of the market for medicinal plants in the neighboring countries.

"A large volume of pharmaceuticals, supplements, food products, and beverages are exported to Iraq, Turkey, Georgia, Armenia, and Afghanistan," IRNA quoted Hamidreza Banafsheh as saying.

Iran is among the leading countries in the field of medicine and health technology, supplying 98 percent of pharmaceutical items to the domestic market, the official noted.

"Nearly 450 out of 1,400 knowledge-based companies are active in the field of herbal medicines, biotechnology, and food industries."

He went on to say that the National Institute



Medicinal Plants Exporters of Iran, the country's export of medicinal plants can be increased through compliance with world standards.

Mohammad-Ali Rezaei Kamal-Abad stated that world standards are increasing due to the health-oriented consumption of herbal products, and failure to comply with these standards will lead to the return or destruction of these products.

"In the past years, poisons have entered the country, which is not only not used in other countries, but has also caused water and soil pollution in our country," he lamented.

Referring to the importance of agricultural product export standardization, he added: "Standardization is done in our country, but this standardization is not up-to-date. With the coordination of ministries, expenditure and updating of information can help to standardize agricultural products and develop the export of these products," he commented.

He said that having more than 11 climates out of 13 climates, Iran has 8,000 varieties of medicinal plants, which is at least twice as much as Europe.

People highly welcome traditional medicine

On January 7, Nafiseh Hosseini-Yekta, the director of the health ministry's Persian medicine office, said surveys show that more than 80 percent of people in the country intend to benefit from Iranian traditional medicine, ILNA reported.

Their interest in traditional medicine has never faded, she said, adding that traditional medicine is being taught in universities.

Traditional medicine has its roots in the culture, customs, and traditions of Iranians and has always been of interest to them, the official highlighted.

The per capita consumption of medicinal plants in Iran is about one kilogram of dried plants.

for Medical Research Development aims at expanding exports of medicinal products.

Since most of the raw materials for the production of herbal medicines are native to the country, these products can internationally compete with those of the other countries, he added.

Besides, some 15 to 20 percent of Iran's herbal medicines are unique in the world. Iran has the capacity to introduce new herbal medicines to the world, he highlighted.

Producing and commercializing pharmaceutical plants are the best ways to introduce the rich resources of herbal medicines which, in addition to making foreign currency revenues for the country, will lead to the scientific authority of Iran in this field, he concluded.

Medicinal plant exports can be increased

According to the chairman of the Union of



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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

When two persons are together, two of them must not whisper to each other, without letting the third hear; because it would hurt him.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Prayer Times > Noon:12:04 Evening: 18:59 Dawn: 3:57 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 5:26 (tomorrow)

Historical record of COVID-19 in Wuhan published in Persian

TEHRAN-The book "Deadly Quiet City: True Stories from Wuhan" written by Murong Xuecun has been released in the Iranian book market.

Translated by Masoud Yusef-Hasirchin, the book has been published in 280 pages by Qoqnoos Publishing Group, Mehr reported.

Originally published in 2022, the book is a harrowing compilation of testimonies from people living in Wuhan, China, during the beginning of COVID-19.

When a strange new virus appeared in the largest city in central China late in 2019, the 11 million people living there were oblivious to what was about to hit them. But rumors of a new disease soon began to spread, mostly from doctors. In no time, lines of sick people were forming at the hospitals. At first the authorities downplayed medical concerns. Then they locked down the entire city and confined people to their homes.

From Beijing, Murong Xuecun—one of China's most popular writers, silenced by the regime in 2013 for his outspoken books and New York Times articles—followed the state media fearing the worst. Then, on April 6, 2020, he made his way quietly to Wuhan, determined to look behind the heroic images of sacrifice and victory propagated by the regime to expose the fear, confusion, and suffering of the real people living through the world's first and harshest COVID-19 lockdown.

"Deadly Quiet City" focuses on the remarkable stories of eight people in Wuhan. They include a doctor at the frontline, a small businessman separated from his family, a volunteer who threw himself into assisting the sick and dying, and a party loyalist who found a reason for everything. Although the Chinese Communist Party has devoted enormous efforts to rewriting the history of the pandemic's outbreak in Wuhan, through these poignant and beautifully written firsthand accounts, Murong tells us what really happened in Wuhan, giving us a book unlike any other on the earliest days of the pandemic.

the book explores how the totalitarian

Chinese government's "propaganda machine" allowed the emergence of a new virus to become a global pandemic of major consequence. But first, Murong describes his background and explains why he chose to travel to Wuhan when most people wanted to get out. His account of the secrecy and danger involved, should the government become aware of his actions and intentions, make it clear just how much his subjects risked in order to tell the truth.

The testimonies are graphic and heartrending. They range from people who were forced to bend to the official narrative, as with a doctor who wasn't allowed to wear protective gear lest the public learn that the virus existed, to those who were denied care because no official wanted the responsibility of signing off on a hospital transfer, as with a man who died from COVID-19 while caring for his ill wife. Throughout the volume, two common threads emerge: that the Chinese government will go to any length to silence those speaking against its decisions, and that their much acclaimed "transparency" and successful handling of the virus aren't based on fact.

The book's prose is precise and straightforward. It includes a few metaphors—a spare but effective technique to bring emotions forward, highlighting even more the devastating experiences of the people from Wuhan. And this work closes with a timeline of the pandemic compiled by Clive Hamilton, providing further context for the horrifying events described herein.

Murong Xuecun, 50, is the pen name of the Chinese writer Hao Qun. On July 22, 2008, Murong made the long list for the Man Asian Literary Prize. He lives in Australia.

Murong's writing deals mostly with social issues in contemporary China, exploring themes such as corruption, business-government relations, and general disillusionment over modern life. His literature is known for its realist, racy, and fatalist style. Following his rise to fame, Murong has emerged as one of the foremost critics of censorship in China.

Cartoon of Day



Netanyahu Wars
Cartoonist: Emad Hajjaj from Jordan

35th TIBF to provide opportunity for getting acquainted with Indian literature

TEHRAN-The 35th Tehran International Book Fair (TIBF) will create a suitable opportunity for the Iranian society to get familiar with the Indian literature, Yasser Ahmadvand, the director of the fair has said.

He made the remarks in a meeting with the Indian ambassador to Tehran Rudra Gaurav Shresth on Tuesday, ISNA reported.

"We are eager for the presence of Indian writers and cultural figures in Iran so that contemporary Indian literature can be better introduced to the literary community of Iran," he added.

This year's edition of the TIBF is due to be held from May 8 to 18 at the Imam Khomeini Mosalla (prayer ground) in central Tehran with India as the special guest.

"Proposals for the translation of a number of Indian works into Persian have been presented to us and we are currently examining them. We will also offer suggestions for translating Iranian works into Hindi," Ahmadvand noted. "We hope that in addition to the official pavilion of India at the fair, Indian publishers will also take part in the international section of the fair as Iranian people are interested in getting to know about Indian publications".

He expressed hope that with the assistance and cooperation of cultural activists of Iran and India, cultural communication between the two countries would grow.

For his part, the Indian ambassador stated that there was no limit to increase the capacity of cultural activities between Iran and India and said: "There are thousands of years of interactions between Iran and India and we can see its impact in Indian culture from clothes to food. In other



Indian ambassador to Tehran Rudra Gaurav Shresth (L) and director of TIBF Yasser Ahmadvand

words, a shadow of the influence of Iranian culture on Indian culture can be seen. Most Indians' image of Iran is an aesthetic image of architecture, poetry, literature, etc. of this country. This influence is always seen on the development of Indian civilization. In India, Persian language is considered among the 9 classical languages of the country and we do not consider it as a foreign language".

Regarding the presence of India as the special guest in the upcoming edition of the Tehran International Book Fair, Shresth said: "We should not miss this opportunity as the young generation is less aware of the strong connection between the two countries. Attending the book fair will guarantee cultural communication in the future.

"We are very excited to participate in the fair as a special guest. India is Iran's brother in the field of literature and this cultural relationship should be conveyed to the people of the two countries," he added.

Based on a cultural memorandum of understanding signed between the officials of the Tehran International Book Fair and the New Delhi International Book Fair earlier this year, Iran will also serve as the special guest at the New Delhi International Book Fair in 2025.

Referring to the programs proposed by the Indian pavilion during the 35th TIBF, Shresth said: "We will select a number of classic books from Iranian and Indian authors and publishers for translation and unveil them during Iran's presence at the New Delhi International Book Fair. Iranian writers can also attend the book fair in New Delhi and interact with Indian authors and publishers. Indian people are familiar with Hafez, Rumi, Saadi, etc., but they do not know much about the works of contemporary Iranian writers".

In the end, Shresth said: "I hope the presence of Iran and India in the book exhibitions of the two countries will bring

about good results in the field of cultural interactions. We are looking forward to Iran's presence in the next edition of the New Delhi International Book Fair and I hope this presence will lead to the reproduction of the existing interest in literature in both countries".

Being Iran's major trade fair for books, the TIBF has been turned into a landmark, momentous book fair in West Asia after 34 editions in a row. Millions of visitors inspect the fair every year, including thousands of university students, scholars, and their families.

The cultural event currently serves as the most significant cultural event in Iran. On average 2,500 domestic and 600 foreign publishers participate in the landmark event. The foreign publishers substantially offer their materials in English or Arabic however titles in French, German, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese are also available.

IAF to celebrate Sadi Day in Tehran

TEHRAN- The Iranian Artists Forum (IAF) will be hosting a session on Friday to celebrate Sadi, one of the giants of classic Persian poetry and literature.

During the event, which will be held at Shahnaz Hall of the IAF, Abdolmohammad Rezvani, Abdolmehdi Mostakin, Ali Khodai, and Shahou Andalibi will deliver speeches and perform music based on Sadi's poems.

As one of the greatest figures of classical Persian literature, Sadi, the byname of Musharraf ad-Din ibn Muslih ad-Din, is famous worldwide for his Bustan (The Orchard) and Gulistan (The Rose Garden), which have been translated into many languages.

Iranians celebrate Sadi Day on 1st Ordibehesht in their national calendar. The day marks the anniversary of the completion of the Gulistan.

Sadi was introduced to the generation of Iranians that are now in their fifties with the following verses at the primary school level:

The sons of Adam are limbs of each other
Having been created of one essence.

When the calamity of time afflicts one limb

The other limbs cannot remain at rest.

If thou hast no sympathy for the troubles of others
Thou art unworthy to be called by the name of a man.

For Western students the Bustan and Gulistan

have a special attraction; but Sadi is also remembered as a great panegyrist and lyricist, and as the author of a number of masterly general odes portraying human experience as well as particular odes such as the lament on the fall of Baghdad after the Mongol invasion in 1258.

His lyrics are to be found in Ghazaliyat ("Lyrics") and his odes in Qasayed ("Odes"). Six prose treatises on various subjects are attributed to him; he is also known for a number of works in Arabic. The peculiar blend of human kindness and cynicism, humor and resignation displayed in Sadi's works, together with a tendency to avoid difficult dilemmas, make him, to many, the most widely admired writer in the world of Iranian culture.

Iranian shorts on screen at Italian film festival

TEHRAN-Six Iranian short movies and animations are on screen in different sections of the 25th edition of the International Festival Corti da Sogni - Antonio Ricci, which is currently underway in the Italian city of Ravenna.

"In the Shadow of Cypress" by Hossein Melayemi, "The Steak" by Kiarash Dadgar Mohebi, "Katvoman" by Hadi Sheibani and "The Gold Teeth" by Alireza

Kazempur are among the films competing at the festival.

"In the Shadow of Cypress" portrays an aging sailor grappling with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Living with his daughter in a modest seaside home, their relationship has grown distant. Despite the captain's deep desire to be a devoted and caring father, he finds himself unable to fulfill his role and connect with his daughter in the

way that he longs to. One morning, their lives take an unexpected turn.

In the eight-minute flick "The Steak," a birthday ceremony preparation gets upside down as something horrible takes place.

An Iranian-Indian joint film, "Katvoman" shows a mom and son playing dressed up as Batman and Catwoman before dad returns for dinner. Through the play, the child discovers a difficult truth about his

parents.

"The Gold Teeth" is about an Afghan refugee in Canada, who asks a refugee dentist to extract her late father's gold teeth before they bury him.

"Spider-Zan" by Maryam Khodabakhsh and "Footprint" by Mustafa Alami are also on screen at the festival, which will come to an end on April 20.

Nellie McCaslin's children play on stage at Tehran Pardis Theater Complex

TEHRAN-Tehran Pardis Theater Complex is hosting a children's play titled "Who Laughs Last" written by Nellie McCaslin.

Directed by Maryam Kazemi, the play, originally written in 1996, is an adaptation of a Polish folktale in which an aging court jester and his wife find a clever way to return to work after retirement.

It is a production of Free Will Theater Group and the cast includes Parnia Cheraghchi, Mehraban Hajinejad, Negar Sadat Hosseini, Arman Darabi, Helena Saeedipour, Hana Alipour, Dina Alipour, Ava Ghouschi, Helma Kazemi, Niki Gomrokchi, Ava Masahi,

and Fatemeh Montazeriha, ISNA reported.

McCaslin (1914-2005) was often recognized as the leading authority in the United States on children's theater. Educated at what is now Case Western University, she earned a B.A. in 1936 and an M.A. in 1937. She became a drama teacher in Indianapolis for several years before joining the faculty at the National College of Education in 1944 where she taught drama and English until 1956.

From 1957 until 1972, McCaslin was a drama instructor and dean of students at Mills College of Education

in New York City. The last part of her career was spent at New York University, where she was a professor of educational theater from 1972 until 1990. She remained active, even after retirement, as an adjunct professor at the university's Steinhardt School of Education until 2002.

Although many critics of theater view children's plays with some contempt, McCaslin recognized plays for young audiences as an important art form with many talented contributors. In addition to teaching, she promoted this position by publishing several important books in this field.

She also contributed original works to the genre, writing over two dozen plays for children. For her many contributions to children's theater, she received a lifetime achievement award from the Children's Theater Association of America in 1996; she also received the Outstanding Research award from the American Alliance of Theatre and Education in 1987, and the Newton D. Baker award from her alma mater in 1985.

The staging of the Persian adaptation of "Who Laughs Last" began on April 17 and will remain on the stage of Tehran Pardis Theater Complex until April 26.