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MFA DIGEST

COMMEMORATING
THE DIGNITY WEEK IN IRAN

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MFA News



Iran's FM in Telephone Talks

Seyed Abbas Araghchi, Iran's Foreign Minister held telephone conversations with Nechirvan Barzani, President of Kurdistan Region, Asim Munir, Pakistan's Chief of Defense Forces, and counterparts from Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Turkiye, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Russia, France, Japan and Italy.



FM Araghchi visited Islamabad, then flew to Muscat and returned to Islamabad for further political consultations on issues of mutual and regional interests and concerns.



In Oman, FM Araghchi conferred with the Sultan of Oman and Omani Foreign Minister about the status of the Strait of Hormuz. Dr. Araghchi then went to Moscow and met President Putin and Foreign Minister Lavrov.

In Moscow, FM Araghchi held fruitful discussions with Russia about the US-Israeli aggression.





Science & Tech



AI education to expand for students, teachers

Iran's deputy minister of education announced the implementation of a plan designed to teach students in the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth grades basic training in artificial intelligence (AI), while teachers will also become familiar with the applications of AI in education.



Referring to the division of the country into five hubs for implementing the plan, he said training courses have already begun for both public and non-governmental schools.



Referring to the obligations set out in the Seventh Development Plan, he said one of the most important missions of the education system is to train a skills-oriented workforce aligned with the needs of the labor market and the country's future economy.

The Ministry of Education, in cooperation with the Ministry of Communications and several educational institutions, has placed the implementation of this initiative on its agenda.



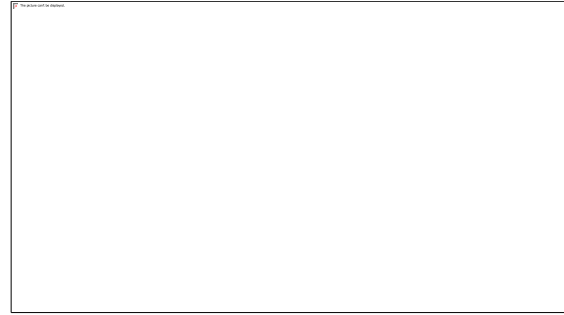
He added that the martyred Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei had, in recent years, emphasized expanding skills-based education for the younger generation. "Human capital, he said, is the country's most important asset, and the economic development depends on the scientific and practical capabilities of this human capital," he concluded.

VP pushes for rapid reconstruction, economic relief after war damage

Aref announced during a meeting with Science Minister Hossein Simaie that 32 scientific centers and universities nationwide had been damaged in the US-Israeli war that began February 28, with Sharif University of Technology, Isfahan University of Technology, Iran University of Science and Technology and Shahid Beheshti University sustaining the most severe losses.



The first vice president made the remarks as part of ongoing government sessions to coordinate recovery efforts.



Aref stressed the necessity of rapidly reviving Iran's scientific infrastructure.



During a meeting with the head of the Department of Environment, officials presented a report on environmental damage resulting from the destruction of certain industries, buildings, and areas under the organization's management, as well as harm caused by oil tank explosions.



The organization's programs in air pollution monitoring, water resources protection, hazardous waste management, and biodiversity conservation were also outlined.

Hundreds of Turkish academics slam strikes on Iranian universities

As many as 239 prominent Turkish professors and scholars have issued a joint statement strongly condemning the recent US-Israeli attacks on Iranian universities and research institutions, describing them as an act of “epistemicide,” a crime against knowledge and humanity’s intellectual heritage.

The signatories stress that universities must remain safe havens of humanity beyond the reach of warfare.

The declaration warns that the targeting and intimidation of Iranian scientists threaten global academic security and turn centers of learning into battlefields.

The scholars also urged UNESCO and the UN to establish an emergency mechanism to safeguard universities in conflict zones.

The document also calls for the suspension of academic cooperation with Israeli institutions involved in the development of military technologies and suggests barring war-supporting organizations from international conferences.



Health minister calls attack on Pasteur Institute of Iran “international catastrophe”

Minister of Health, Treatment and Medical Education Zafarghandi has condemned the US-Israeli attack on the Pasteur Institute of Iran, describing it as “an international catastrophe” and evidence of attempts to undermine the country’s scientific progress.



He highlighted the Pasteur Institute’s century-long role as one of Iran’s most reputable scientific and research institutions, particularly in vaccine production, infectious disease research, and medical innovation.



Zafarghandi confirmed that several specialized laboratories, such as virology, bacteriology, and parasitology, have suffered

significant structural and equipment damage.



He emphasized that destroying buildings cannot erase Iran’s scientific capacity, noting that the country’s knowledge base is rooted in the expertise and dedication of its researchers.



The head of the Pasteur Institute of Iran says that the research institution has been targeted by the US and Israeli terrorists three times since the beginning of the US-Israeli war against Iran. The latest attack occurred on April 2, causing significant damage to some departments, including the cell bank,



Trade & Economy



as well as malaria, clinical, and biotechnology research centers.

Iran exports \$2.690m knowledge-based products in 4 years

The official statistics of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) have shown that the country exported \$2.690 million worth of knowledge-based goods overseas in the recent four years.



The export value of the country's knowledge-based companies has reached from \$296 million to \$2.690 million over the recent four years, showing a considerable jump in the foreign trade of these companies, the IRICA stated.



On the other hand, the domestic knowledge-based companies imported \$4.436 million worth of products over the past four years, showing the improvement of the trade balance of these companies.



The IRICA went on to say that about 80 percent of the foreign trade of the knowledge-based companies is done with the Asian countries.

Over 8m tons of goods loaded, unloaded in Hormozgan ports during war

Mohammad Ashouri stated during a visit to Shahid Bahonar Port in

Bandar Abbas: "During this period, more than 4.2 million tons of goods were exported from Hormozgan's ports, and nearly 3.8 million tons of goods were imported into the country."

The Governor of Hormozgan emphasized the important role of transportation in loading and unloading this volume of goods, stating: "The General Department of Road Maintenance and Railways of Hormozgan Province played a significant role in creating this record, which deserves appreciation."



Shahid Bahonar Port — a port with a long-standing heritage in the heart of the Persian Gulf — remains one of the vital pillars of the country's maritime trade network. This port, which before the construction of Shahid Rajaei Port was the main commercial terminal of Hormozgan and even the entire country, still plays a key role in the trade exchanges of the eastern province with an annual cargo handling capacity of 2.5 million tons.



Situated along the northern shores of the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, Hormozgan Province is the undisputed maritime heart of Iran's economy.

Economic might of Hormuz: Redefining an Iran-centric West Asia's economic order

In the collective memory and civilizational consciousness of the Iranian people, the Strait of Hormuz stands as the central pillar of both economic sovereignty and national identity. Years before any physical confrontation, the Martyred Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Grand Ayatollah Khamenei (RIP), asserted Iran's absolute authority over this strategic waterway, rejecting any foreign claim or intervention (Grand Ayatollah Khamenei, 2016).



Indeed, since the Achaemenid Empire- when strategic ports and maritime corridors along the Persian Gulf shores first linked disparate civilizations- this artery has remained the lifeblood of Iranian prosperity and regional influence.

Iran's capacity of renewables exceeds 4,500MW

Quoting the Ministry of Energy news portal, based on an announcement by the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Organization (SATBA), the development trend of renewable power plants in the country continues uninterrupted, and it is expected that with the commissioning of new projects, installed capacity will soon reach 5,000 megawatts—a fact that indicates the stability of development programs in this sector even under wartime conditions.

The report further states, referring to the continuation of the construction and connection of renewable power plants to the national grid, that executive operations in this sector did not stop even in the final days of last year, concurrent with attacks on some regions of the country, and that construction and commissioning of approximately 1,200 megawatts of renewable power plants have been carried out nationwide with the presence of the Minister of Energy.



The National Development Fund (NDF), in order to support the development of renewable energy and reduce dependence on fossil fuels, has announced investment in the construction of 15,000 megawatts of solar and wind power plants.





Persian Cuisine



Sateri polo (Carrot pilaf)

Sateri polo is a local and tasty dish of Khorasan in Iran, which has a great color and aroma and has many fans. It is used for dinner and lunch, and it is used for parties and occasions.

Iranians consider rice as their main meal and there are many ways to cook it, including Esfenaj polo, Kalam polo, and Somagh polo. Due to the presence of carrot in it, has a very beautiful color and makes the taste of rice more delicious.

This dish has a very simple and easy recipe that you can easily prepare at home and have a new experience in your meals.

Necessary ingredients for preparing Sateri polo: Delicious and simple Khorasani rice

In this dish, you can use minced chicken or mutton. We have used minced mutton in this recipe.

Rice; 3 Cups

Minced meat; 0.25 Kg

Onion; 1 Pc

Carrot; 0.5 Kg

Raisins; 1 Cup

Brewed saffron; In the required amount

Oil; As needed

Salt, pepper, turmeric; As needed

How to prepare Sateri polo

Step 1

First, put the rice in water for two hours, then drain it after two hours.

Step 2

Grate the onion and mix it with the minced meat and fry it in a small amount of oil on a low heat in the form of small balls.



Step 3

Cut the carrots into wedges and fry them in a small amount of oil, then add raisins and saffron to the carrots, add the spices, and finally add the meatballs and remove from the heat.

Step 4

Put the rice in boiling water and add a spoon to it, and the kernel of the rice should soften a little. Drain the rice and add some rice in a pot, then add the carrot and meat ingredients and do this step by step until the ingredients are finished. It takes about 40 minutes to prepare.

Sateri polo Birjandi pilaf carrot with Qalkhli meat



High protein and muscle strengthening

Vitamin A

High fiber



Sateri polo is used as lunch or dinner due to the presence of rice and meat, and the sweet taste of carrots gives you a good experience in eating rice. The presence of carrots helps a lot in the digestion of this food due to its high fiber content.



Iran Sports



No plan for Azzurri to replace Iran at 2026 World Cup: minister

Paolo Zampolli, a special envoy to Donald Trump, had suggested Italy should be fast-tracked to the World Cup despite their shock defeat by Bosnia and Herzegovina in last month's playoffs. Zampolli proposed the four-time winners Italy replace Iran and said they would "have the pedigree to justify their inclusion". But Abodi said football's showpiece tournament should remain meritocratic.



The Italian sports minister, Andrea Abodi, has described a proposal for his country to replace Iran at the World Cup as "not appropriate", rejecting any idea that the Azzurri will be granted a last-minute berth at this summer's tournament.

Iran gear up for World Cup with friendly against North Macedonia

As the countdown to the 2026 FIFA World Cup intensifies, the Iranian national team are sharpening their tools for the global stage.



Amirmehdi Alavi, the official spokesman for the Football Federation of Iran, confirmed on Saturday that Team Melli will face a formidable test in Turkey, squaring off against the resilient North Macedonia in a high-profile friendly.



Ajami wins Iran's first gold medal at 2026 Asian Beach Games

Hassan Ajami Bakhtiarvand on Sunday claimed Iran's first gold medal in the 2026 Asian Beach Games underway in Sanya, China.

He finished in first place with a throw of 20.17 meters.

The home crowd witnessed a fierce battle for the remaining podium spots, with Chinese athletes Chengyu Chen and Haochen Zhang pushing hard to capitalize on local support. Ultimately, Chen secured the silver medal with a throw of 19.95 meters, while Zhang claimed the bronze with a mark of 19.69 meters.



Representing Iran alongside the champion, Mehran Khorand put in a commendable effort, finishing in fifth place with a best throw of 17.63 meters.

The sixth edition of the prestigious Asian Beach Games, now hosted by the dynamic city of Sanya, has made a triumphant return.

The Games officially commenced on Tuesday, bringing together athletes across 14 sports, 15 disciplines, and a total of 61 events, running from April 22nd to April 30th.

Iran handball earn fourth win at 2026 Sanya



Iran men's beach handball team defeated Bahrain 2-0 (18-16, 18-16) in the 2026 Asian Beach Games on Sunday.

Team Melli had previously defeated the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Hong Kong.

Iran are scheduled to face China in Group A on Monday.



Iran beach soccer edge Saudi Arabia in 2026 Sanya

Iran beach soccer team secured their place in semifinals of the 2026 Asian Beach Games on Sunday after beating Saudi Arabia 2-1.



Reza Dayeri and Ali Mirshekari were on target for Team Melli while Ahmed Al Hamami scored for Saudi Arabia.

Team Melli are scheduled to meet Palestine on Monday, while Saudi Arabia face Oman in another match.



Golnoosh Khosravi reflects on Asian Cup journey



Iran's national women's football team winger, Golnoosh Khosravi, has opened up about the squad's 2026 AFC Women's Asian Cup campaign, revealing that a World Cup berth was within reach had circumstances aligned differently.

The talented attacker also shed light on the emotional pull of home that led the players to turn down lucrative opportunities abroad and return to Iran.



The team found themselves in what was widely considered the “Group of Death,” a formidable challenge against strong opposition. “It’s true we were placed in an incredibly tough group, facing formidable opponents,” Khosravi admitted.



Australia presented tempting prospects for the players, with offers extending beyond the tournament. “During those days, several offers were made, offers that many would find tempting,” Khosravi revealed.

“Life in another country, better facilities, a home, a car, income, and the opportunity to play in Australia’s top-tier league. Things that many would say come along perhaps only once in a lifetime – opportunities that, to some, would seem incredibly difficult to refuse. But despite all that, we made our decision.”

Concluding with a powerful message of pride and hope, Khosravi stated, “We have a people who deserve peace. They deserve a life where hope outweighs worry. I have always been proud to be a national team player; to wear a jersey bearing my country’s name. This honor is not just a sports title for me; it’s a responsibility I feel in my heart. At times, one feels small in the face of great events, feeling that one’s voice should be louder, that one could do more. But despite all these feelings, one thing has always remained constant in my heart: love for the people to whom I belong and the land that is my home, and a hope that must never be extinguished – hope for brighter days for all.”



Iran aim LA Paralympic quotas in China

Hadi Rezaei, head of Iran's national sitting volleyball teams, has outlined the squad's objectives for the upcoming World Championships in China. The men's team will be laser-focused on securing qualification spots for the Los Angeles Paralympics, while the women's team aim for a top-8 ranking at the event.



The Hangzhou World Championships, scheduled for late July, will serve as the primary qualifying tournament for the LA Paralympics. Sixteen men's and sixteen women's teams will compete, with the two finalists in each category punching their tickets to Los Angeles.



“Teams have faced some training camp delays due to ongoing conflicts, but we are working diligently to catch up,” Rezaei stated. “The men’s team have successfully completed its initial training camp in Mashhad, which yielded positive results. Our singular goal for the men in Hangzhou is to qualify for the 2028 Paralympics. For the women, achieving a top-eight ranking would be a significant accomplishment.”



Rezaei acknowledged the formidable international competition, highlighting the presence of strong rival nations. He underscored the critical need for consistent training camps and international expeditions to enhance the competitiveness of the women's squad.



Tourism & Nature



Urmia Lake comes back to life



Unusually heavy precipitation this water year has given Lake Urmia a fresh boost, with rainfall doubling, about 50% of the lake's surface refilling, and water levels rising by one meter over the past seven months.



The rebound, driven by above-average rains and stronger inflows, has pushed water back into parts of the basin and sparked early signs of recovery after years of drought.



Historic Owltn Castle seen as tourism hub in northwest Iran

Jalil Jabbari, head of the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department of Ardabil province, said the site in Owltn could play a key role in promoting tourism and cultural activities in the county.



“The historic Owltn Castle has the capacity to become a focal point for cultural and tourism development in Parsabad,” Jabbari said on Friday.

He said plans to establish a national cultural heritage base at the site have been pursued both through coordination with the county’s parliamentary representative and during visits by the minister of cultural heritage to the province.



Jabbari added that the creation of such a base could contribute to improved protection and promotion of the historical structure.

“All sectors of the provincial cultural heritage department, particularly the heritage deputy, protection unit and legal office, are engaged in efforts to safeguard Owltn Castle,” he said.

Owltan is a small city in northwestern Iran near the border with Azerbaijan. It was granted city status in 2021 and lies in a fertile plain known for agricultural activity.



The area has drawn attention for its historical significance. In 2022, road construction work between Parsabad and Sarband led to the discovery of ancient tomb chambers. Archaeologists identified nine pit graves dating back to the Parthian period and early Islamic centuries through the Seljuk era, according to findings supervised by Iran’s Research Institute for Cultural Heritage and Tourism.

Ilam province draws visitors with lush spring landscapes

Covering more than 20,000 square kilometers and bordered by the provinces of Kermanshah, Lorestan, and Khuzestan, the region combines deep historical roots with a striking natural landscape. By the month of Ordibehesht (late April to late May), Ilam reaches the height of its beauty, transforming into what many describe as a “paradise of tourism,” where nearly every corner offers a scene worth exploring.



Spring has always been a favorable season in Ilam, but in years of abundant rainfall the province takes on an exceptional character.

Vast oak forests, interspersed with wild pistachio and other native species, spread across the mountainous terrain, forming shaded landscapes where local communities have long lived in close connection with nature. These forests are not only ecological treasures but also part of the cultural identity of the province.





Society & Culture



Iran participating in 40th Tunis International Book Fair

Iran is participating in the 40th edition of the Tunis International Book Fair, which is underway at the Exhibition Center in Kram in the Republic of Tunisia.



During the opening ceremony of the fair, the President of Tunisia Kais Saied visited the pavilion of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

During this visit, Mir Massoud Hosseinian, Iran's ambassador to Tunisia, presented the president with a printed edition of a precious Qur'an manuscript whose writing dates back to the first century AH.

The pavilion of the Islamic Republic of Iran displays symbols related to the American-Israeli military aggression against the country, especially honoring the student martyrs of the Shajareh Tayyebah school in Minab.

Art Bureau connecting artists, raising global awareness through universal language of art



After Iran was attacked by the United States and Israel on February 28, a committee was established at the Art Bureau in Tehran, focusing on the production and collection of artworks related to the war, which lasted for 40 days.

“The idea of forming this Situation Room actually began to take shape during the 12-day war last June, when the US and Israel attacked Iran. When the war started, communication infrastructures were naturally disrupted, and our artists, who wanted to react quickly to the ongoing issues, faced numerous challenges. One of the main functions of this Situation Room was therefore to maintain connections among artists, to keep them informed about one another's activities, and to ensure that their efforts could be coordinated,” the head of the committee, Mohammad Zaruee Nasrabad said.

Roudaki Hall to host Fereydoun Nassehi's piano recital

A piano recital is scheduled for May 14 at the Roudaki Hall in Tehran, where the Iranian veteran pianist Fereydoun Nassehi will perform pieces from famous composers.



Nassehi will perform “Piano Sonata No. 23” by Beethoven and “Études Nos. 4, 23, and 24” by Chopin.

He will also play “The Angel of Death” by Liszt and two selections from “Six Paganini Études,” which Liszt composed based on works by Niccolò Paganini.

Tehran International Book Fair to be held online

The 37th edition of the Tehran International Book Fair (TIBF), the country's largest annual cultural event, is scheduled to go online in mid-May, the organizers have announced.

Organized by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, the fair is widely regarded as Iran's most significant publishing event,

annually drawing hundreds of domestic and international publishers as well as large crowds of book lovers, academics and cultural figures.

The decision was finalized during the first meeting of the policy-making council in the new Iranian year, following a comprehensive review of the country's current situation and the status of the publishing industry.

In the meeting, council members discussed several proposals after considering the exceptional circumstances facing the nation. The impact of the recent war has led to the closure of some publishing units and has hindered many publishers' ability to organize a physical presence at a large-scale venue, the report added.



Ultimately, the virtual format was chosen and the book fair will be held online for its upcoming edition, following a model successfully established and tested during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Deputy Culture Minister for Cultural Affairs and the head of the book fair Mohsen Javadi said.

Honoring Saadi equals honoring living Iranian spirit

The Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, in a message on the occasion of the National Day of Saadi Shirazi (April 21), said: “Honoring Saadi is honoring the living Iranian spirit, a spirit the world needs today more than ever.”

According to Honaronline, the full text of Seyyed Abbas Salehi’s message is as follows:

“Commemorating the great Saadi is not merely celebrating the name of a renowned poet; it is a tribute to a deeply rooted truth within Iranian Islamic identity, the truth of compassion, wisdom, dialogue, and respect for human beings.

Throughout history, Iranians have always been messengers of peace, friendship, and coexistence, and the culture of this land has flourished not on the basis of aggression and hostility, but on knowledge, tolerance, and human kindness.

Among this vast heritage, Saadi is one of the clearest voices of the Iranian conscience, a poet whose message crossed geographic borders and became a shared language of humanity.

In one of his famous poems, he composed: ‘Human beings are members of a whole, In creation of one essence and sou’. This verse was not only an eternal poem but a moral charter of a nation that, for centuries, has viewed humanity beyond race, borders, and language.



City Theater hosts “Iran. Theater. City Theater” to honor martyred children, war-affected artists

The lobby of the Main Hall of the City Theater in Tehran hosted a cultural event titled “Iran. Theater. City Theater” bringing together a large group of artists and cultural officials to express solidarity and commemorate those affected by the recent conflict.



The ceremony was attended by high-ranking officials including Mehdi Shafiei, the Deputy Culture Minister for Artistic Affairs; Reza Mardani, Director General of the Performing Arts Center; Saeed Asadi, Managing Director of the Association of Performing Arts; and Kourosh Soleimani, the Director of the City Theater Complex, Mehr reported.





Iranian athlete dedicates int'l award to Minab schoolgirls killed in US strikes