



Islamic Republic of Iran
Ministry of Foreign Affairs



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MFA DIGEST

CENTRE FOR PUBLIC AND MEDIA DIPLOMACY



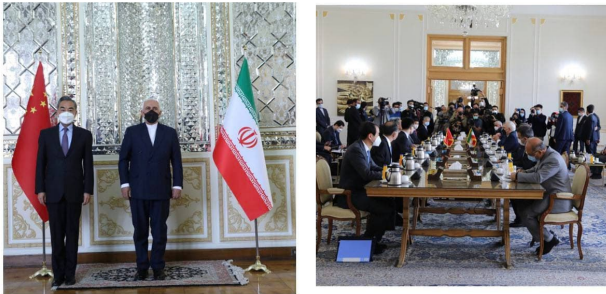
Issue #35, March 16-31, 2021

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MFA NEWSLETTER

IRANIAN, CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTERS HOLD TALKS IN TEHRAN, SIGN BILATERAL COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP DOCUMENT



Minister Zarif and Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi held their talks in Tehran on Saturday, March 27, 2021.

During the meeting, the two sides conferred on important issues in bilateral relations as well as regional and international affairs.

The Iranian top diplomat greeted his Chinese counterpart, highlighted the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Tehran and Beijing, and said, “the history of relations between the two great civilizations of Iran and China dates back to centuries ago.”

Minister Zarif also noted that the signing of the roadmap of Iran-China strategic comprehensive partnership will further reinforce bilateral relations between the two countries.

Dr. Zarif referred to China as the friend of hard times, and said, “we praise the stances and measures of China at the time of cruel sanctions against Iran.”

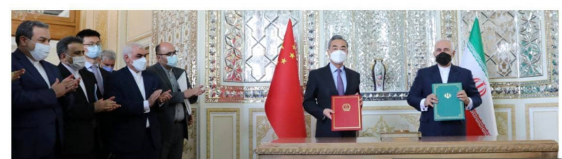
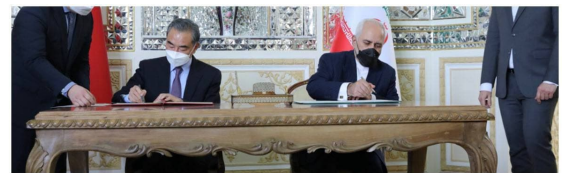
The Chinese minister, in turn, pointed to the 50th anniversary of Iran-China diplomatic

relations, and said, “relations between the two countries have currently grown to the level of strategic partnership, and China seeks all-out promotion of its relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. The signing of the roadmap of Iran-China strategic cooperation indicates Beijing’s resolve to arrange its ties [with Iran] at the highest level possible,” Minister Yi added.

Meanwhile, the Iranian and Chinese ministers signed the document of the bilateral comprehensive strategic partnership later the day.

In 2016, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the People’s Republic of China issued a joint statement on comprehensive strategic cooperation between the two countries, and agreed to sign a plan for comprehensive cooperation.

The document focuses on the capacities and perspectives for bilateral cooperation between the two countries in various areas including economic and cultural fields, among others, will further contribute to the continued development and comprehensive partnership of Iran and China, and bring about prosperity for the two nations.





MINISTER ZARIF VISITS TAJIKISTAN, ATTENDS 'HEART OF ASIA' CONFERENCE



The 9th edition of the Heart of Asia Conference kicked off in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on Tuesday, March 30, 2021.

Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Pakistan, China, Russia, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Saudi Arabia and the UAE constitute the 15 member countries of the Heart of Asia.

Minister Zarif left Tehran for Dushanbe on Sunday (March 28) to attend the conference, meeting with senior officials from states across the region.

Dr. Zarif and his Azerbaijani counterpart Jeyhun Bayramov, in a meeting on the sidelines of the conference reviewed issues of mutual interest. The two foreign ministers also discussed the latest developments in the Caucasus as well as bilateral cooperation in the Caspian Sea.

Minister Zarif also had another meeting with Tajikistan's President Emomali Rahmon exploring ways for mutual cooperation on economy, trade, energy, industry, transportation, science and

culture. During the meeting, the two sides underlined the significance of an Iran-Tajikistan Joint Cooperation Commission.

Dr. Zarif has also met with his Indian and Afghan counterparts as well as the executive secretary of CICA.

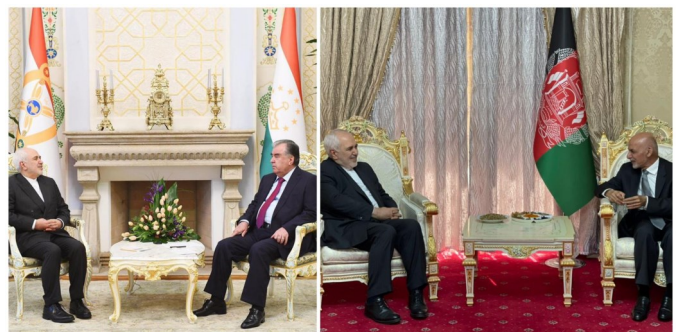
In his speech at the 9th ministerial meeting of Heart of Asia, Minister Zarif said Iran is making every effort to bring about regional convergence and help bring Afghanistan into regional engagement.

The Minister invited the UN to facilitate intra-Afghan negotiations, stressing that any peace agreement in the country should guarantee Afghan people's right to self-determination.

Dr. Zarif touched upon Afghanistan's railway network getting linked to that of Iran in 2020, describing the development as a major step towards the construction of a regional and international rail network.

The Minister highlighted Afghan people's invaluable accomplishments in getting the rule of law to take hold, especially the drawing up of the constitution.

Dr. Zarif said it is necessary that regional countries work towards facilitating intra-Afghan peace talks underscoring intra-Afghan talks as the only way to establish lasting stability, saying "Iran will move forward with its attempts to facilitate the talks."





TWIPLOMACY

Supreme Leader Felicitates Nowruz To Iranians and Other Nations



Khamenei.ir
@khamenei_ir

I congratulate all our dear compatriots, especially the respected families of martyrs and disabled war veterans, on **#Nowruz** 🇮🇷 and the Persian New Year. I also congratulate all the nations that celebrate Nowruz.

1:13 PM · Mar 20, 2021 · Twitter Web App

Minister Zarif Hails Pakistan's National Day



Javad Zarif ✓
@JZarif
Iran government official

On this day 65 years ago, Pakistan became the world's 1st Islamic republic.

We're proud to count Pakistan among our close fraternal neighbors, and we look forward to jointly working to expand ties between our Govts and nations.

ایران پاکستان دوستی زنده باد
#PakistanZindabad



8:30 PM · Mar 23, 2021 · Twitter for Android

MFA's Spokesperson Khatibzadeh Shares His Remarks at the Tehran Dialogue Forum



Saeed Khatibzadeh
@SKhatibzadeh

For decades, the US has attempted to exclude Iran from international law & politics. It has profoundly failed. It is high time for the US to adopt fundamental changes in its thinking and thus its approach.

My address at this year's Tehran Dialogue Forum:



سخنرانی سخنگوی وزارت امور خارجه در مجمع گفت‌وگوی تهران ...an
سخنرانی دکتر سعید خطیب زاده سخنگوی وزارت امور خارجه در
...Spokesman of the Ministry of (2021) تهران گفت‌وگوی تهران
youtube.com

7:12 PM · Mar 19, 2021 · Twitter for Android



Ministry of Foreign Affairs Releases Photos of the Exhibition on the Iran-China Diplomatic Relations



Iran Foreign Ministry 🇮🇷
@IRIMFA_EN

An exhibition of documents related to Iran-China relations was opened at the Iranian Foreign Ministry's Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS) on the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the IR **#Iran** and the PR **#China**.



5:21 PM · Mar 27, 2021 · Twitter Web App



Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs marks the
National Day of the Republic of Ireland
(March 17)

Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs marks the
National Day of Tunisia
(March 20)



Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs marks the
National Day of Namibia
(March 21)



Culture & Society

LITERACY PROGRAMS PROVIDED FOR 1.3M PRISONERS, ARMED FORCES



The Literacy Movement Organization of Iran has so far provided more than 1.3 million prisoners and armed forces with literacy programs.

The Organization established in 1979, has held literacy courses for around 800,000 prisoners and 500,000 armed forces, head of the Organization, Shapour Mohammadzadeh, said.

In addition to illiterate armed forces, the plan also covers prisoners between 10 and 60 years of age, he added.

In January, Mohammadzadeh said the rate of literacy among Iranians between 10-49 years has reached 96.6 percent.

“Before the [1979] Islamic Revolution, according to a census conducted in 1976, over 51 percent of the people were illiterate. But, over the past four decades, in the Iranian calendar year 1395 (March 2016-March 2017), the average literacy rate in the age group of 10 to 49 has reached 94.7 percent,” he noted.

TEHRAN'S ICONIC MILAD TOWER GOES DARK ON 'EARTH HOUR'

Lights off for earth; along with other landmarks across the world, Tehran's iconic Milad Tower also went dark for one hour in honor of planet Earth.

The global dark-out comes as part of the annual initiative called Earth Hour. Taking place at 8:30 to 9:30 PM in each time zone on the last Saturday of March. Earth Hour is a symbolic gesture aimed at raising awareness of energy consumption and climate change.

Iran joined the global initiative in 2011 and has so far been expanding its participation in the global event. Along with Milad Tower, other urban elements across Tehran and other major cities have gone dark for one hour.

Organized by the World Wildlife Fund, Earth Hour was first launched in Australia in 2007, and since then, it has grown to engage more than 170 countries around the world.

“Protecting nature is our moral responsibility but losing it also increases our vulnerability to pandemics, accelerates climate change, and threatens our food security,” WWF International Director General Marco Lambertini said in a press release.





IRAN ROOM AT ZAGREB'S COLLEGE OF PHILOSOPHY



Iran's ambassador to Croatia Parviz Esmaili has signed a agreement with the rector of the University of Zagreb on establishment of an Iran Room commissioned to introduce the Iranian cultural heritage, history, thought trends, and culture.

In the meeting which was carried out in the presence of Dean of the University of Zagreb Professor Miloch Judash, the two sides prepared a list on scientific, research, technological and cultural cooperation between various universities of the two countries.

It was agreed that the Iran room at the University of Zagreb will focus on the introduction of the Iranian cultural and intellectual heritage, history and culture.

The two sides also agreed on updating the memoranda of understanding between the University of Zagreb and a number of Iranian universities and holding two seminars on shared cultural roots of Iran and Croatia, first in Tehran and then in Zagreb.

The University of Zagreb is the largest Croatian university and the oldest continuously operating university in the area covering Central Europe.

DISCOVERY OF GATE OF ANCIENT PARSE CITY IN PERSPOLIS

After about 10 years of archeological excavations by a joint Iranian-Italian delegation in the Persepolis area of Fars province, a new perspective of the oldest Persian city in ancient Iran was opened.

The new finding is the discovery of the gate of the city of Parseh. The gate is located in the oldest part of the city, three and a half kilometers west of the Persepolis complex's palaces.

The gate is made up of bricks and clay, and the whole facade is decorated with colored glazed bricks, and inscriptions in the Babylonian and Elamite script have been found in the gate of Parseh city.



Parseh city's gate is 30 meters wide and 40 meters long, with a height of approximately 12 meters; it has a corridor in the center, the central part of which consists of a rectangular room with 8 and 12 meters of width and length, respectively.

According to archaeologists, the historical monument was built after 539 BC in honor of Babylon's conquest by order of Cyrus the Great.

Perspolis historical and archeological complex is one of the important tourist attractions in Fars province, which is of a global reputation.





Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs marks the
National Day of Pakistan
(March 23)

Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs marks the
Independence Day of Greece
(March 25)



Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs marks the
Independence Day of Bangladesh
(March 26)





TRADE AND ECONOMY

IRAN CUTS IMPORTS BILL BY \$10BN AMID GROWTH IN MANUFACTURING



Iran slashed its imports bill last calendar year by some \$10 billion, says the country's minister of trade as he insists the achievement was made possible by considerable growth in the manufacturing sector.

Alireza Razm Hosseini said on Wednesday that Iran had ended the year to late March with a record 7.5% growth in manufacturing activity.

Razm Hosseini said the growth had enabled the government to cut back on imports for thousands of products that were previously supplied from abroad.

Razm Hosseini said his ministry of MIMT, which is also responsible for manufacturing and mining activity, would do its utmost to "eliminate unnecessary laws and regulations that hamper production".

Iran's growing efforts to boost domestic manufacturing is in line with the country's general policy of diversifying the economy away from crude and to minimize the impacts of unilateral foreign sanctions targeting crude exports.

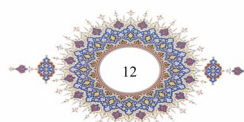
IRAN TO INCREASE EXPORTS TO AFRICA

Iran has dedicated 200mln euros as guarantees and bonuses to support exports to Africa, the country's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) announced.

Farzad Piltan, the head of TPO's Arab and African office, said on Saturday that Iran's exports to Africa declined by a fourth in the 11 months to February 18 compared to the similar period over 2019-2020 to stand at \$478 million, while imports were stable at nearly \$90 million over the same period.

The official said that Iran could have easily met a target of \$700 million in exports to African countries in the calendar year to March this year if the pandemic had not caused closures at borders and trade gateways.

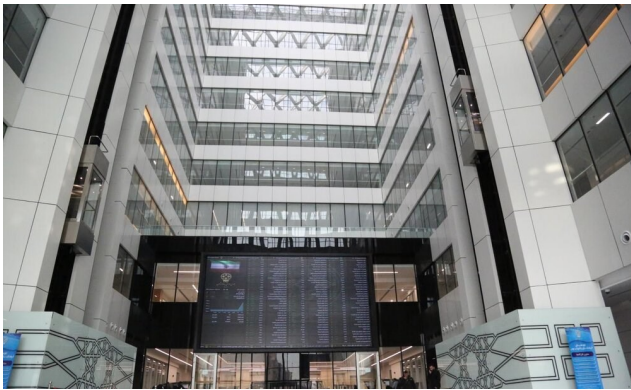
Ghana was the top customer of Iranian goods in the 11 months to late February as the West African country took delivery of \$142 million worth of shipments from Iran. Algeria came second at \$109 million followed by Kenya at \$41 million, according to TPO figures.





FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN IRAN'S STOCK MARKET DOUBLED IN 10 MONTHS

As announced by the advisor to the head of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO), the value of investment made by the foreign investors in the country's stock market grew by two times in 10 months.



Bahador Bijani said the value of foreign investment basket in this market was about 25 trillion rials (about \$595.2 million) at the end of the first month of the past Iranian calendar year (April 19, 2020), while the figure reached 46 trillion rials (about \$1.95 billion) at the end of the eleventh month (February 18, 2021).

TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), Iran's major stock exchange, rose eight percent in the last week of the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

The index increased 101,000 points to 1.307 million in the week ended on March 20, 2021.

CHABAHAR PORT RECEIVES NEW INDIAN EQUIPMENT CARGO

The second batch of equipment supplied by India has reached Chabahar, Iranian and Indian officials say, bringing New Delhi closer to full operation of the two terminals which it is developing in the port.

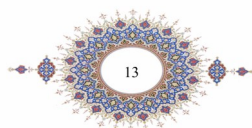
India has been developing a part of Chabahar on Iran's southeastern coast along the Gulf of Oman in order to expand trade with Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asian nations.

Two Mobile Harbor Cranes (MHC), each weighing 100 tonnes, arrived in the port Sunday, more than a month after the first consignment of two 140-tonne MHCs was supplied.

"Continuing with our commitment to develop Chabahar Port, second shipment of equipment reaches Shahid Behesti Terminal," India's Ports Shipping and Waterways Minister Mansukh Mandaviya tweeted Monday (March 22, 2021).



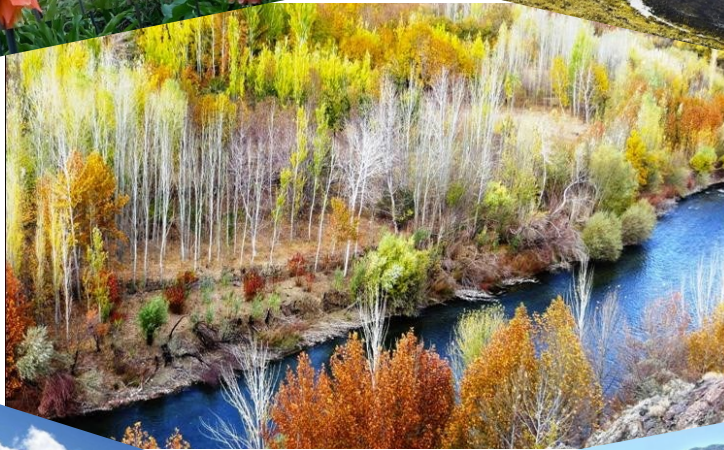
Indian officials expect to start full-scale operations at the terminals by the end of May. Earlier this month, Mandaviya said he expected to visit Iran in April or May for the inauguration of full operations.





CHAHARMAHAL AND BAKHTIARI BEAUTIES

Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province lies in the southwestern part of the country. Its capital is Shahr-e Kord.





SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

IRAN EXPANDING HIGH-SPEED INTERNET IN RURAL AREAS



Iran has managed to link tens of thousands of villages to high-speed internet in a matter of eight years, a report showed on Sunday.

It added that the number of villages with access to high-speed internet across Iran had been boosted from almost zero in 2013 to a total of 35,519 at the end of the calendar year to March 20.

It said the figure represents all villages in Iran with a population of more than 20 households, adding that another 17,000 villages have been provided with access to lower-quality communication services.

Citing figures by Iran's telecoms regulator, the report said that some 137,000 customers in rural regions in Iran have currently access to broadband through mobile or landline networks.

Landline phones have reached four million households in 47,000 villages, it said, adding that postal offices are now operating in 1,000 locations in rural regions across the country.

IRAN TO START PRODUCING SPUTNIK V VACCINE IN APRIL

An Iranian company is cooperating with Russia to produce the "Sputnik V" vaccine in April, the Iranian ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali has announced.

In addition to joint-production, Iran has received the fifth shipment of "Sputnik V" containing 100,000 doses, the Ambassador added.

Meanwhile, COVIRAN BAREKAT, the first coronavirus vaccine made by researchers at the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam which was unveiled on December 29, 2020, started to be mass-produced on March 29.

The second Iranian coronavirus vaccine, Razi Cov Pars, started the clinical trial by injecting it into two volunteers during a ceremony on February 27.

Fakhra vaccine, the third homegrown vaccine, was unveiled and started the clinical trial on March 16.

On January 27, Health Minister Saeed Namaki said Iran will soon be one of the world's important manufacturers of the COVID-19 vaccine.





IRAN SETS UP NANOTECHNOLOGY EXPORT CENTERS IN SIX ASIAN COUNTRIES

Iran has created centers in six Asian countries for exporting nanotechnology products, the head of Iran Nanotechnology Innovation Council said on Saturday, March 27, 2021.



China, India, Indonesia, Syria, Turkey, and Iraq have received Iranian nanotechnology products and services, IRNA quoted Saeed Sarkar as saying Iranian-made nanotechnology products are currently exported to 49 countries in five continents, he added.

For the time being, 725 nanotechnology products in 10 fields of industry are manufactured relying on indigenized technologies, the official noted.

Prioritizing nanotechnology in Iran has led to this country's steady placement among the five pioneers of the nanotechnology field in recent years, and approximately 20 percent of all articles provided by Iranian researchers in 2020 are relative to this area of technology.

Iran has been introduced as the 4th leading country in the world in the field of nanotechnology, publishing 11,546 scientific articles in 2020.

IRAN TO LAUNCH 4TH 'HOUSE OF INNOVATION' IN RUSSIA SOON

A delegation of Iranian knowledge-based companies will visit Russia on May 24-25 in order to hold business-to-business (B2B) meetings with their Russian counterparts.

On the sidelines of the meetings, the fourth house of innovation will officially come on stream.

Iran has already set up houses of innovation in China, Kenya, and Syria.

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

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



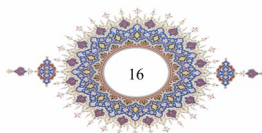
Currently, some 5,000 knowledge-based companies are active in the country, manufacturing diverse products to meet the needs of the domestic market while saving large amounts of foreign currency.





ILAM BEAUTIES

Ilam is a city and capital of Ilam Province, Iran. It is the third largest Kurdish city in Iran. From the west, Ilam Province borders Iraq.





SPORTS

SAREH JAVANMARDI WINS GOLD AT WORLD SHOOTING PARA SPORT WORLD CUP



As Sareh Javanmardi of Iran won a silver medal in the P4 - Mixed 50m Pistol SH1 of the World Shooting Para Sport World Cup on Tuesday.

She claimed the silver medal with a score of 223.4. Manish Narwal from India seized the gold with 229.1. Nawal's score surpassed the previous world record of 228.6, which was held by Serbia's Rastko Jokic.

India's Singhraj placed third on 201.7 points.

Javanmardi had also claimed a gold medal at the P2 women's 10m air pistol SH1.

A total of 120 athletes from 24 nations are competing in the event until 24 March at Al Ain Equestrian, Shooting & Golf Club, the same shooting range that will host the next World Championships in 2022.

IRAN DEFEAT SYRIA IN FRIENDLY

Iranian Iran national football team defeated Syria 3-0 in a friendly match here at the Azadi Stadium on Tuesday.

Iran and Syria prepare for the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

Hossein Kanaanizadegan opened the scoring for the Iranian team with a header just two minutes into the match.

Sardar Azamoun made it 2-0 in the 38th minute.

With nine minutes remaining, substitute Karim Ansarifard scored the third goal for Dragan Skocic's team with a shot from outside the area.

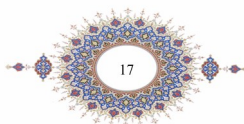


Iran are scheduled to play Hong Kong and Cambodia on June 3 and 7 in the 2022 World Cup qualification.

The matches against Bahrain and Iraq will be held on June 11 and 15.

Due to the coronavirus concerns, the remaining matches will be held at the centralized venue in Bahrain.

The 'Persian Leopards' are third in Group C behind Iraq and Bahrain.





ELAHEH GHOLI FALLAH TRIES TO SHOW HOW STRONG SHE IS



Iranian Elaheh Gholi Fallah has always been an inspiring, defiant figure but the PyeongChang 2018 Paralympic Winter Games changed everything.

“It is when I understood we can try and we can live regardless of discrimination, regardless of difference of culture, regardless of different category. We can be together and try together,” said Fallah, who competed in Para cross-country skiing.

“It was one of the best experiences of my life.”

Fallah was the first and so far the only Iranian woman to qualify for the Paralympic Winter Games. Vision impaired from the age of five, due to fluid in the brain and a tumor, she has long refused to let her disability define her. Six months after losing her sight, she started riding a bicycle and was soon going out on her own, despite her parents’ understandable fury. Track and field followed at school but then came Para Nordic skiing and the opportunity to change her life and the lives of others.

“I would like to be a pioneer in skiing for vision impaired people. When I started skiing that was one of my goals; for example that we make a team of athletes,” Elaheh said. “I don’t like to try just for my life, I like to try for all disabled people who I can help.”

Having taken up Para Nordic skiing in 2017, the Paralympic Games came fast. Elaheh finished 11th in the B1 women’s 1.5km sprint classic but she picked up things far more important than just a finishing position.

“I found some friends from different nationalities. I learned new things, new techniques in skiing, new things in sport, in different cultures,” she said. “One of the German coaches and athletes taught me a new technique to ski. I really appreciated it because it really helped me.”

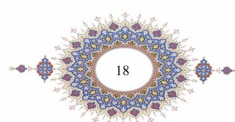
And it is these experiences, these benefits that she wants to share, that she intends to share.

“Now I want in the next Paralympic Winter Games to not be alone,” Elaheh said, before adding modestly, “I think there are a lot of women better qualified [to compete] than me, ladies who are better than me and can be more successful than me. I will try to find them and motivate them to join us and come and try.

“If we see a vision impaired team in 2022, really it will be one of the best feelings of my life.”

An untimely recent injury, which required surgery and a recovery period of more than a month, means Elaheh has not yet qualified for Beijing 2022. But she intends to do all she can to cement her spot in the coming months.

“I try to show, not just speak,” she said, “not in a formal way but with my friends, with my actions.”





FOREIGN MISSIONS IN IRAN

Italian Embassy Shares Holds Webinar about the State/Future of Theatre



Italy in Iran
@ItalyinIran

Today on [#WorldTheaterDay](#) let's celebrate this [#art](#) as old as mankind which over the centuries has been the mirror of our souls. On March 15 we discussed in [#Tehran](#) w/ [#Italian](#) and [#Iranian](#) artists about its state and future. Watch the video of the event 📌



Theatre Talk - "8 1/2 Theatre Clips. How Covid-19 Has Chan...
"8 1/2 Theatre Clips. How Covid-19 Has Changed Our Lives" - a talk on the state of Theatre and its future prospects. The ...
🔗 youtube.com

5:46 PM · Mar 27, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone



Romanian Embassy Celebrates Nowruz and Iranian New Year



Nowruz Mubarak!



1:23 PM · Mar 20, 2021 · Twitter for Android

Japanese Embassy Shares Message of its Staff about Nowruz and the New Year in Iran

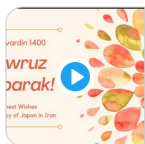


Embassy of Japan in Iran
@japaniniran

[#Happy_Nowruz](#) from Embassy of [#Japan](#) 🇯🇵

youtu.be/sLiO5PXEnRg

[#Japan_in_Iran](#) [#Nowruz](#) 🇯🇵



Nowruz Greeting 1400 from Embassy of Japan in Iran
🔗 youtube.com

12:55 PM · Mar 19, 2021 from Islamic Republic of Iran · Twitter for iPhone



UNICEF in IRAN Exports Healthcare Facilities for Children with Special Disease



UNICEF Iran
@UNICEF_IRAN

UNICEF has so far procured and shipped to Iran 160 best quality nebulizers for children suffering from [#CysticFibrosis](#)(CF) disease, who are highly vulnerable to serious complications or death from [#COVID19](#).



UNICEF procured nebulizers for children suffering from Cystic Fibrosis in Iran
🔗 unicef.org

11:43 AM · Mar 18, 2021 · Twitter Web App



DISCOVER IRAN IN PICTURES

FLOWER GARDEN OF ISFAHAN

The Flower garden of Isfahan was one of Iran's great green space projects, completed in 1990s in Isfahan. The garden serves multiple purposes. It is a recreational, cultural, educational and research center.

