



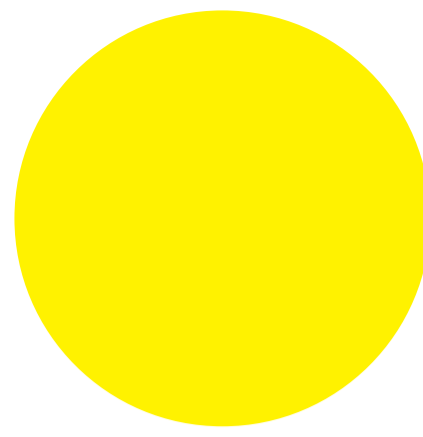
**New era for Esteghlal as fans' favorite Nekounam takes charge**

5 >



**Iran, Russia sign MoU for film production, joint events**

8 >



# Iran Daily



irandaily.ir | newspaper.irandaily.ir

Vol. 7321 • Thursday, June 22, 2023 • Tir 1, 1402 • Dhu al-Hajjah 3, 1444 • Price 40,000 Rials • 8 Pages

## Iran became world's seventh steelmaker in May

6 >



Albanian police pepper spray members of the Mujahedeen Khalq Organization during a raid on their camp in Tirana, Albania, on June 20, 2023.

## End of despised terror group

**Political Desk**

Did it truly require 42 years, spanning from June 20, 1981 to June 20, 2023, for the followers of the terrorist Mujahedeen Khalq Organization (MKO) to come to terms with its true nature? This particular date marked the beginning of the MKO's open defiance and armed conflict against the newly established Islamic Republic of Iran. While it initially held promise for the organization's leaders and members as a means to seize power in Iran and serve the people, it also marked the onset of a decline characterized by abandonment of their idealistic claims, a descent into malevolent paths, and ultimately, betrayal of the nation resulting in widespread animosity and forced exile. The MKO's failure to effectively challenge the Islamic Republic through armed confrontation pushed them into a realm of seeking revenge and resorting to blind acts of terror. As the war launched by the Iraqi Baath regime, led by Saddam Hussein, unfolded against Iran, the MKO's activities transformed into acts of treachery. Its members

began by divulging intelligence to the enemy forces and subsequently establishing a presence in Iraq, officially aligning themselves with the invading army and launching attacks against the Iranian people. The organization's illusory military aspirations were dealt a severe blow in 1988, following the conclusion of the Iran-Iraq war, with Operation Forough Javidan. This operation resulted in a crushing defeat and the crippling of their military capabilities. Following this defeat, the MKO leadership shifted their focus toward bomb attacks, acts of vandalism, and targeted assassinations. Official statistics indicate that throughout their campaign against the Islamic Republic, the MKO has been responsible for the assassination of approximately 17,000 Iranian citizens and officials. The ousting of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq dealt a significant blow to this widely despised group. The removal of the protective cover provided by the Iraqi dictator laid bare the undeniable fact that terrorists had no place in Iraq. Consequently, they were compelled to abandon their bases in Iraq and were relocated to Alba-

nia, a European nation, under the auspices of Western supporters, primarily led by the United States. After their military endeavors to overthrow the Islamic Republic proved unsuccessful, the terrorists redirected their attention toward political pursuits, receiving support from Western nations, all while persisting in their acts of terrorism. Each year, they meticulously orchestrated elaborate shows on various pretexts to showcase their presence and relevance. The participation of political figures, as well as certain European or American officials who harbored opposition to the Islamic Republic of Iran, in the organization's propaganda events, served as a source of encouragement for the MKO leaders and members. Such events made them believe that they enjoyed substantial backing from Western governments, although their presence and the expenses incurred for organizing such programs undoubtedly cost the MKO an arm and a leg. Prominent figures such as Rudy Giuliani, the former mayor of New York and a close associate of former US president Donald

Trump, John Bolton, the former US national security advisor, Bernard Kouchner, the former German foreign minister, Stephen Harper, the former Canadian prime minister, Philippe Douste-Blazy, the former French foreign minister, and Fatmir Mediu, the chairman of the Republican Party of Albania, have been featured speakers at conferences hosted by the MKO. These spendthrift shows and victim playing failed to rally support for the MKO inside Iran. Over the past four decades, due to their ideologies and actions against the Iranian people, the Mujahedeen organization has lost all credibility, not only among Iran's overseas opposition but also among dissident factions within the country. A survey conducted in 2022 by an opposition organization presented 34 candidates for the chair of the self-proclaimed opposition leadership council. Maryam Rajavi, following the disappearance and presumed death of her husband Massoud Rajavi, the group's primary leader, was ranked last in this poll. The organization's lack of credibility within Iran is so apparent that in October

2018, Elizabeth Stickney, a Farsi-speaking spokesperson for the US Department of State, stated in an interview with Deutsche Welle television network, "We have previously stated and continue to maintain that the MKO has no standing among the people of Iran." The terrorists operating in Albania encountered significant challenges. Firstly, they observed a surge in animosity from their intended target, namely the Iranian nation. Additionally, they were simultaneously grappling with escalating setbacks in their activities that were detrimental to the general public. These setbacks were primarily caused by the effectiveness of the Islamic Republic's intelligence forces. Furthermore, they were also contending with a surge of defections. The political standing also suffered a decline both among governments and public opinion worldwide. In response, they sought to expand their activities in the realm of cyber warfare and malicious online propaganda by recruiting mercenaries. However, they failed to gain any success the virtual space.

Page 2 >

## Leader: Palestinian youths' battle holds promise for bright future



Khamenei.ir

**International Desk**

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali

Khamenei said the involvement of Palestinian youths in the struggle against the Israeli regime is of great importance. Ayatollah Khamenei made the comments in a meeting with the head of the political bureau of the Palestinian Hamas resistance movement, Ismail Hanieh, in Tehran on Wednesday. He referred to recent developments in the West Bank city of Jenin as a clear example of the youths' involvement in the Palestinians' battle against the Israeli regime, which hold promise for a bright future, with complete victory. On Monday, the Israeli regime was forced to scramble helicopters to rescue its troops trapped in the firefight with Palestinian fighters during its deadly raid on the Jenin refugee camp. Pointing to the importance of the unity among the Palestinian resistance groups, the Leader said that the Israeli regime tried to create division among the resistance groups during the recent Gaza war, but it failed to do so.

## Baqeri Kani, Mora hold 'serious, intense' talks in Doha

Iran's deputy foreign minister and chief nuclear negotiator Ali Baqeri Kani said on Wednesday he held talks with the European Union's Iran nuclear talks coordinator Enrique Mora in Doha. In a tweet, Bagheri-Kani described the meeting as "serious and constructive." He added that several issues were discussed, including the negotiations on sanctions lifting. Mora also in a Twitter message said he held "intense" talks with Baqeri Kani on a range of difficult bilateral, regional and international issues, including the way forward on the Iran nuclear agreement. Iran said last week it had been engaged in indirect negotiations with the US through Oman, with nucle-



ar issues, US sanctions and detainees on the agenda. The following day, Baqeri Kani said he had met with diplomats from three European countries in Abu Dhabi to discuss a number of issues including Iran's nuclear program. In recent weeks, Washington and Tehran have denied media reports that they were close to reaching an interim deal to replace the 2015 agreement.

## China lashes back as Biden labels Xi 'dictator'

China on Wednesday called comments by U.S. President Joe Biden referring to Chinese leader Xi Jinping as a dictator "extremely absurd and irresponsible," as a new rift threatened to upset tentative efforts to stabilize the relationship between the two countries. The clash of words comes just over a day after Secretary of State Antony Blinken concluded a visit to Beijing that sought to break the ice in a relationship that has hit a historical low. Biden, at a fundraiser in California on Tuesday night, said Xi was embarrassed by recent tensions over a suspected Chinese spy balloon that was shot down by the Air Force over the East Coast. "That's a great embarrassment for dictators. When they didn't know what happened," Biden said. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning, responding to a question about Biden's remarks, said they "go totally against facts and seriously violate diplomatic protocol, and severely infringe on China's political dignity."