

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran to
compensate
families hurt
by 2022 riots:
MP

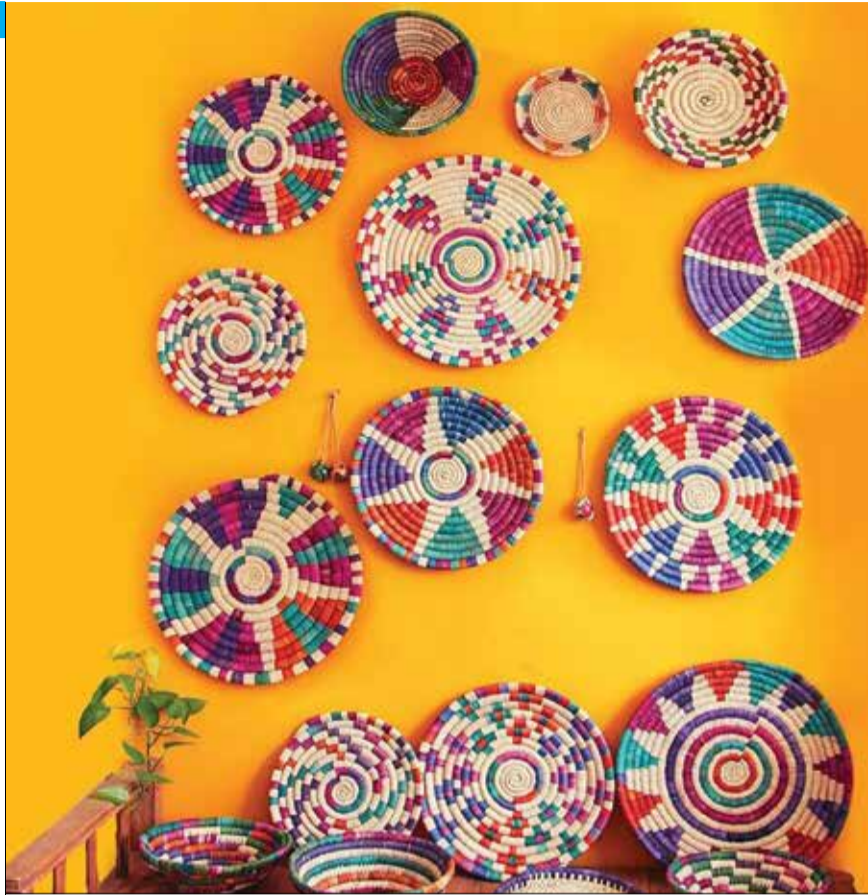
IRNA - The chairwoman of the Iranian Parliament's Human Rights Committee, Zohreh Elahian, said that the damage inflicted on those whose rights have been violated during the 2022 riots is to be compensated. Elahian said Wednesday that the recent meeting of Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi with members of a committee aimed at investigating various aspects of the 2022 riots.

Report
unmasks
Shiraz terror
attack gunman

TASNIM - New information indicates that the main element behind a recent deadly terrorist attack on a religious site in Shiraz, southern Iran, had joined Daesh (ISIL or ISIS) in Turkey and received training in Afghanistan. The Tajik national who carried out the fatal attack on Shah Cheragh Shrine on Sunday has been identified as Rahmatollah Norozov, alias Salman Islomiyar. The Iranian security forces are planning to deal a heavy blow to the network that may have assisted the gunman inside Iran.

Terrorists
ambushed
soldiers in
Niger, killing 17

REUTERS - Niger's junta on Wednesday said 17 of its soldiers were killed in an ambush by insurgents, the deadliest attack since a July 26 coup. The ambush took place on Tuesday about 60 km from the capital Niamey, in a southwestern area that borders Burkina Faso, the defence ministry said, adding that 100 attackers it referred to as "terrorists" were killed. Niger, like other countries in West Africa's Sahel region, has been struggling for years to contain an insurgency by groups linked to al Qaeda and Islamic State that have killed thou-

Dezful, Kashan cities
recognized by WCC

Iran's Minister of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism, Ezzatollah Zarghami, announced that the cities of Dezful and Kashan have earned a prestigious accolade from the World Crafts Council (WCC). These cities have been registered by the WCC for their exceptional contributions to the world of traditional craftsmanship. Dezful earned distinction for its mastery of kapubafi, a unique handicraft prevalent in southern Iran. Kapubafi involves weaving wicker baskets from palm

leaves and adorning them with vibrant colored yarns. Kashan, on the other hand, secured its place on the global handicraft map for its expertise in traditional textiles, IRNA reported. Zarghami highlighted the meticulous evaluation process, thorough documentation, and on-site inspections that supported the registration of these cities. He underscored that this recognition comes with both a responsibility and an honor, urging a concerted effort to further develop these

crafts. Kapubafi, an art form rooted in palm tree waste, was elaborated by Zarghami as a testament to the beauty, durability, and practicality of these artifacts. This craft avoids excessive spending on imported raw materials, thereby contributing to economic resilience. The announcement marks an important milestone, as Iran's tally of world-recognized handicraft cities and villages now stands at 13, including Dezful and Kashan.

Appointment of Saudi ...

Establishing relations with Saudi Arabia holds **Page 1 >** para - mount significance for Israel, as it breaks down barriers of resistance from other Islamic and Arab countries to engage with Israel.

Saudi Arabia has important conditions for this endeavor, which have been covered recently in the media. Do you believe that the United States and Israel would agree to these conditions?

Saudi Arabia has three major conditions. One involves the agreement of the US and Israel for Saudi Arabia to become a nuclear state. Another is the signing of a security agreement with the US, acting as a guarantee from the United States to defend Saudi Arabia. The third condition relates to Riyadh and Palestine, involving the realization of the idea of forming two states. Appointing an ambassador to Palestine at this juncture serves to prepare public opinion in Saudi Arabia and the Arab world to accept normalization. This is because,

according to polls, 50% of Saudis are against normalization, believing that the normalization of relations between Bahrain, the UAE, and Israel has not benefited Palestinians in any way and not brought any specific advantage to these countries.

Moreover, the appointment of an ambassador also conveys a message to the Palestinian people that Saudi Arabia stands alongside them, and normalization doesn't entail abandoning support for the Palestinians.

What do you think about the Israeli regime's reaction to Riyadh's conditions as well as the appointment of an ambassador to Palestine?

The conditions that are related to the Israeli regime is Saudi Arabia's development of its own nuclear program and the formation of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel. The Israelis are not happy with these conditions. Recently, Israeli opposition leader Yair Lapid said that they are opposed to Saudi Arabia's uranium enrichment on its soil. Israel's foreign minister, Eli Cohen,

has clearly said that he is against the formation of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel. It seems that Saudi Arabia announced its ambassador to Palestine after this remark. The Israelis believe that there is no link between normalization with Saudi Arabia and the Palestinian issue. They are offering the establishment of economic relations as well as security and military cooperation against Iran. But the Saudis know that the promises of Israel and the US in this case have not gone beyond statements, and none of them have been implemented. For example, regarding the normalization of Israel's relations with the UAE, the Americans did not fulfill their promises and, finally, they did not sell the advanced F-35 fighter jets to the Persian Gulf Arab country. On the other side, the Palestinians have welcomed the Saudi move. They believe that Saudi Arabia's decision to appoint an ambassador is a historical step and, in fact, it is a move to promote its diplomatic relations with Palestine before normalization

with the Israeli regime. Of course, the opinion of Palestinian resistance groups is different.

Will Saudi Arabia retreat from its demands and accept the US's and Israel's conditions?

No. Riyadh is seeking normalization. It doesn't want to enter the negotiations from a position of weakness and without securing concessions. Basically, the appointment of the ambassador was a signal and even a serious warning to Israel that Saudi Arabia is not the UAE. Riyadh has sent a message that it will sit at the negotiating table with Israel when Tel Aviv recognizes the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. Saudi Arabia now believes that it is in a good position. A recent thaw in relations between Tehran and Riyadh has also promoted Saudi Arabia's position.

Will normalization pose a threat to Iran?

Yes, this agreement can be a threat to Iran in any form, and that is why Tehran is against it. Iran and Israel are enemies and have threatened each



Majdi Khalidi (R), diplomatic adviser to Palestinian Authority President, and the new Saudi envoy to the Palestinian authority, Naif bin Bandar Al-Sudairi on August 12, 2023, in Amman, Jordan
● TWITTER

other many times. The Israelis want to challenge Iran's support for Palestine with normalization with Arab countries. Another concern of Iran is that normalization with Saudi Arabia will not be limited to this. Normalization with Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Bahrain means Israel's vast presence in the Persian Gulf, which is not in Iran's interests. The purpose of normalization is altering the balance of power in Palestine to the detriment of the resistance axis and Iran's allies in Palestine. Therefore, although Saudi Arabia and Israel are seeking to normalize relations, it does not seem possible in the short term.



Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Iran FM: Recent deal tests US

Iran's foreign minister says a recent agreement with the United States that led to the release of Iran's frozen assets is a new test to see whether Washington would honor its promises. "The release and transfer of our country's assets from South Korea is part of the realization of the honorable diplomacy emphasized by the Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution," Hossein Amir-Abdollahian wrote in a post on his social media account, according to IRNA. "Of course, this phase of

the agreement is also a new test for America," he said. Amir-Abdollahian further stressed that the diplomatic efforts of the incumbent government to lift the sanctions and bring all sides to their international commitments towards Iran will continue. Last Thursday, Iran's Foreign Ministry announced that the process of releasing billions of dollars of Iran's assets, which had been illegally blocked by the United States for several years, has begun.



Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian
● IRNA