



Islamic Republic of Iran
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MFA DIGEST

CENTRE FOR PUBLIC AND MEDIA DIPLOMACY



Issue #33, February 16-28, 2021

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MFA NEWSLETTER

IRANIAN, QATARI FOREIGN MINISTERS HOLD TALKS IN TEHRAN

Qatari Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani met Foreign Minister Zarif on Monday, February 15, 2021, in Tehran.

During the meeting, Zarif welcomed his Qatari counterpart and offered congratulations on Doha's recent success in ending the blockade imposed against the Arab country.



The Minister further highlighted the importance of bilateral relations between Tehran and Doha in the eyes of the Iranian nation and government, and expressed the Islamic Republic's preparedness for expansion of collaborations with Qatar in different fields.

Elaborating on Iran's principled policy of opposing the policies that are based on coercion and force in the region, Zarif emphasised the necessity for

cooperation among regional countries to settle the issues and achieve a set of regional arrangements that brings about further stability, and said bilateral relations between Iran and Qatar play a key role in this path.

The Qatari foreign minister, in turn, expressed Doha's preparedness for expansion of bilateral relations at all levels, including in the economic fields.

He appreciated all the assistance provided by the Islamic Republic of Iran at the time when Qatar was under a blockade, and said his trip to Tehran is in line with expansion of bilateral relations and within the framework of regular consultations between the two countries.

He also underlined the region's need for a new approach and all-out collaborations, and expressed his country's preparedness for playing an effective and pivotal role in this regard.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani finally expressed hope that the existing problems will be settled within the framework of regional initiatives as soon as possible.

Exploring the avenues for promoting economic relations and the fields of mutual cooperation were also on the agenda of talks between the Iranian and Qatari top diplomats in Tehran.



MFA NEWSLETTER

IRANIAN, SOUTH KOREAN FOREIGN MINISTERS HOLD PHONE TALKS



Foreign Minister Zarif and his South Korean counterpart Chung Eui-yong had a phone conversation on Wednesday, February 24, 2021.

During the phone call, the two sides conferred on the latest developments in bilateral relations between Tehran and Seoul.

Minister Zarif expressed hope that Seoul will provide the Central Bank of Iran with access to its financial resources in South Korean banks as soon as possible.

Referring to the Korean vessel seized in Iran, Mr. Chung Eui-yong appreciated Tehran's move to release the crew, and expressed hope that the vessel will be released and allowed to return to its country of origin as soon as possible.

As regards the latest developments pertaining to the 2015 nuclear deal and Iran's measures in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Korean side said it supports the continuation of talks between member states for reviving the JCPOA.

MFA'S SPOKESPERSON HOLDS TALKS WITH SYRIAN OFFICIALS IN DAMASCUS

Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Saeed Khatibzadeh held talks with Syrian officials and attended meetings of think tanks, media outlets and elites in the Arab country.

The meetings were held in Damascus in line with Iran-Syria cooperation in public diplomacy, media and cultural arenas.

During his trip, Mr. Khatibzadeh held talks with Syrian Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad where the two sides discussed the latest situation of bilateral ties as well as cultural and media cooperation. The top Syrian diplomat underlined the importance of boosting mutual cooperation in cultural and media arenas.



Mr. Khatibzadeh also held talks with the Syrian minister of information and culture, minister of science, and senior advisor to the Syrian president. Bouthaina Shaaban.





MFA NEWSLETTER

IRANIAN, IRAQI FOREIGN MINISTERS MEET IN TEHRAN



Minister Zarif sat down with his Iraqi counterpart Fuad Hussein in Tehran (on February 27, 2021) where they discussed the different dimensions of political and economic cooperation as well as border exchanges between the two countries.

In the meeting, Minister Zarif condemned the United States' dangerous move to attack Iraqi forces in border areas of Iraq and Syria, dismissing the raids as violation of the two country's sovereignty.

He described as suspicious the recent attacks and events in Iraq, saying they could be aimed at disrupting Tehran-Baghdad relations as well as security and stability in Iraq.

"We insist that the Iraqi government identify those behind these incidents," said the top Iranian diplomat.

Dr. Zarif touched upon the problems facing Iranian fuel tankers at Tamarchin border area between Iran and Iraq, expressing hope that the travel restrictions facing the tankers will be resolved through the good offices of Iraqi officials.

He further said making arrangements to begin work to build and complete the Shalamcheh-Basra railway will contribute to the enhancement of trade ties between the two countries.

Minister Zarif called on relevant authorities to expedite work to break ground for the railway project as soon as possible.

Iraqi foreign minister Fuad Hussein, in turn, urged both sides to work together closely to further boost mutual relations, and said Baghdad stands ready to expand its relations with Iran.

He referred to the headway made with negotiations over Iran gaining access to its financial resources in Iraq, and expressed Baghdad's readiness to facilitate Tehran's access to its financial assets in the Arab country.

He gave assurances that the Iraqi government will not allow the recent incidents in Iraq to affect the very good relations between the two sides. In this meeting, the two sides also exchanged views on regional developments.



TWIPLOMACY

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei Hails' Islamic Republic of Iran's Scientific Advances



Khamenei.ir
@khamenei_ir

The #IslamicRevolution was able to transform Iran's image from that of a scientifically backward, dependent country - dependent on major powers - into one of the top 10 countries in the world in key scientific fields - an independent, free, respected country.

2:07 PM · Feb 17, 2021 · Twitter Web App

Minister Zarif's Message on New Developments vis-à-vis JCPOA



Javad Zarif ✓
@JZarif
Iran government official

Obliged by law, we halted voluntary implementation of Add'l Protocol.

Fully compatible with JCPOA 136 since:
-@POTUS has yet to cease US violation
-E3 continue to fail to meet obligations

Understandings w/ @rafaelgrossi show our good faith.

All remedial measures reversible.

2:24 PM · Feb 23, 2021 · Twitter for Android

MFA's Spokesperson Highlights Importance of Iranian-Chinese Partnership



Saeed Khatibzadeh
@SKhatibzadeh

伊中两国文明关系导致双方把问题变成加强关系的机遇。携手遏制疫情重申两国战略关系的重要性。我们衷心感谢中国政府捐赠的25万剂疫苗援助，这将成为两国人民友谊新的象征。🇮🇷🇨🇳

4:22 PM · Feb 28, 2021 · Twitter for Android

Translation:

"The civilizational relation between Iran and China has even turned problems into an opportunity for reinforcement of ties. Cooperation in containing the coronavirus once again proved the significance of strategic relations between the two countries. We appreciate the donation of 250,000 doses of coronavirus vaccine by the government of the People's Republic of China as a new symbol of friendship between the two nations."

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Shares Minister Zarif Interview with Iranian English News Network Press TV



Iran Foreign Ministry 🇮🇷
@IRIMFA_EN

In an interview with @PressTV, FM @JZarif urges the US administration to fulfill commitments.
#CommitActMeet



Press TV @PressTV
Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif speaks to Press TV in an exclusive interview. @JZarif @IRIMFA_EN

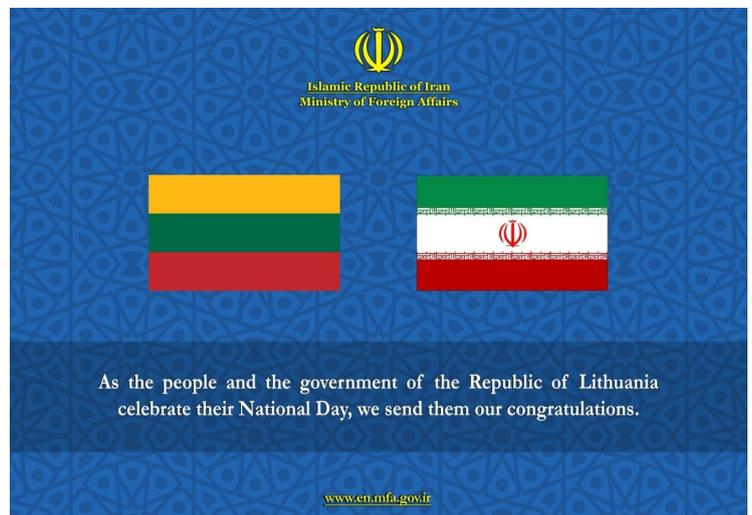
1:17 PM · Feb 22, 2021 · TweetDeck





Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs marks
the National Day of Serbia
(February 15)

Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs marks
the National Day of Lithuania
(February 16)



Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs marks
the National Day of Brunei
(February 23)



Culture & Society

MOBARAK FESTIVAL OPENS WITH MESSAGE CALLING PUPPETS REPRESENTATIONS OF ANCIENT MYTHS, FUTURE DREAMS

The 18th Mobarak Puppet Theater Festival opened on Sunday with a message from Deputy Culture Minister for Artistic Affairs Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini calling puppets the representations of the myths of the past and a visualization of the dreams of the future.



“Man is the child of hope, the soul-seeker looking for immortality. Puppets and dolls are the children of this worship,” he said.

“The puppet shows are representations of the myths of the past and visualization of the future. They are made in order to remember beauties and discover the virtues for a better world built on simplicity and honesty,” he added.

The 18th edition of the festival has begun with emphasis on personal creativity, and, due to the

coronavirus restrictions, many artist and cultural events have gone online, he said.

He also paid tribute to puppet show director Golzar Mohammadi, who was the secretary of the 18th edition of the festival and died in March 2020 after months of suffering from cancer at the age of 42.

A lineup of 57 puppet shows will be performed during the 18th Mobarak Puppet Theater Festival which opened Sunday.

The photo section of the festival also opened on Sunday at the Iranian Artists Forum under the supervision of Amir Abedi.

“29 puppet shows from Tehran and 28 from other cities will be performed online from February 28 to March 7 available at tiwall, namayeshnet and Hashure, the Iranian platforms providing video on demand (VOD) service for films,” secretary of the festival Mehdi Hajian had said earlier.

Hajian said that the veteran artists of Puppet Theater, Iraj Mohammadi and Mohammad-Hassan Abuyi Mehrizi, will be honored with lifetime achievement awards this year.

Three books on puppet shows will also be published to promote the art of puppet theater, he said, adding that several virtual workshops and meetings have also been held that were warmly received by puppet theater artists in the country.



IEURORDIS PRAISES IRAN'S NATIONAL DOCUMENT ON RARE DISEASES

Yann Le Cam, the chief executive officer of the European Organization for Rare Diseases (EURORDIS), has praised Iran for preparing a national document on rare diseases, saying that it will change the lives of one million rare disease patients in the country.

In a video message on the occasion of the International Day of Rare Diseases, Le Cam said that “I would like to congratulate Iran on the development of the first national document on rare diseases.



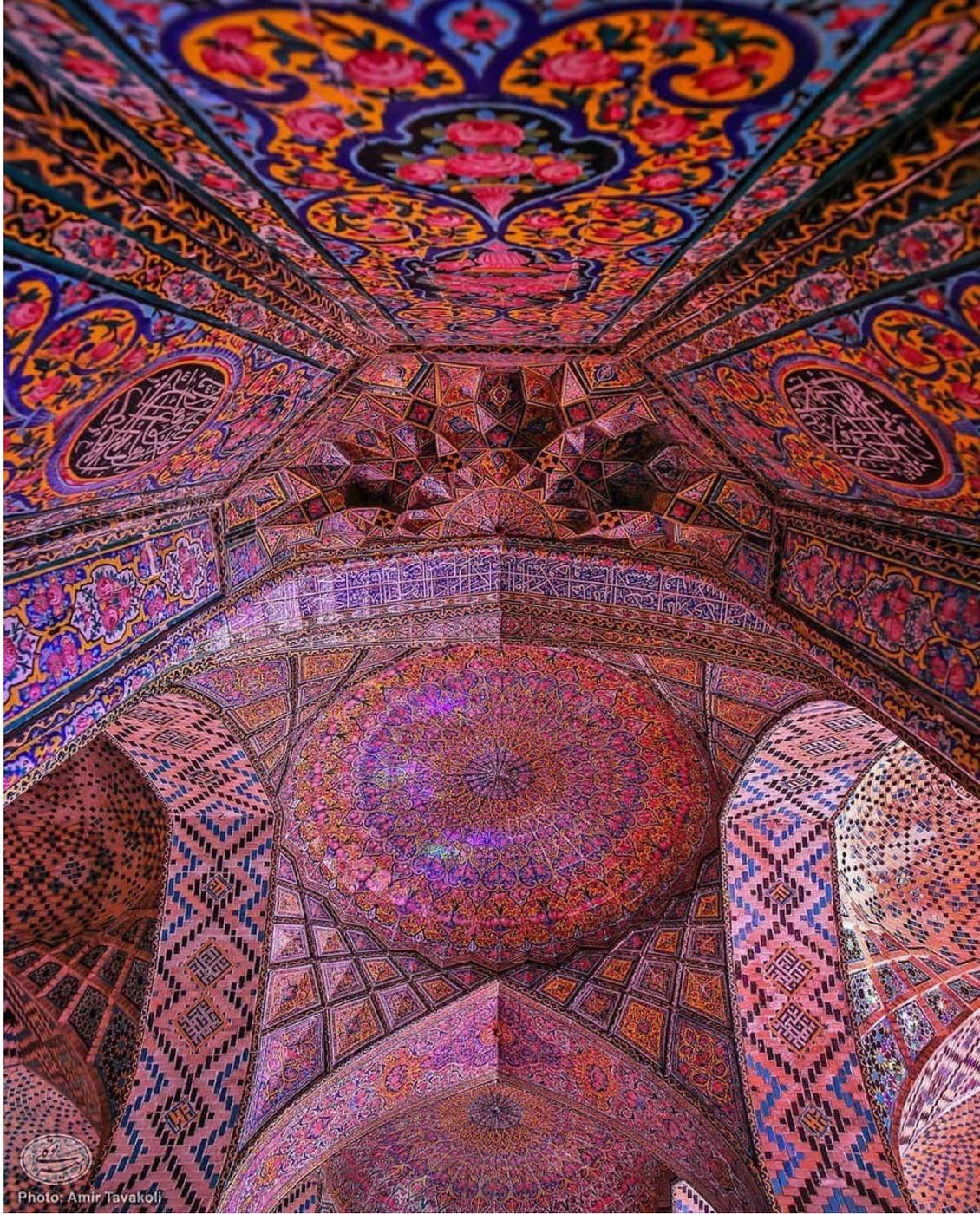
The move paves the way to improve the lifestyles of the one million rare patients living in Iran today. The document, created with the participation of the Rare Diseases Foundation, which is a full member of EURORDIS, is a great success.”

The Document, approved by the Ministry of Health in December 2020, is being studied by the cabinet of ministers for final approval.

ANCIENT HOME OF PIGEONS IN IRAN

Across Iran, there are these beautiful mud dovecotes, known as Kabootar-khaneh in Persian, that have been built for thousands of years as homes for pigeons. Isfahan alone is home to hundreds, some of which can hold thousands of pigeons each.





Beautiful tiling of the altar of Nasir Al-Molk Mosque, Shiraz



TRADE AND ECONOMY

IRAN REPORTS 6.2% SURGE IN NON-OIL EXPORTS FOR MONTH TO FEB. 18



The Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced that exports of non-oil goods from the country increased by 6.2 percent in the month to February 18.

IRICA Spokesman Rouhollah Latifi said that the total value of non-oil exports from Iran in the 11th month of the current Iranian year reached \$3.1 billion, up by \$184 million against the previous month,

Imports declined by \$50 million or 1.32 percent compared to the month ending late January, to stand at \$3.682 billion, said Latifi.

That comes against a 19 percent month-on-month drop recorded for exports in the month to late January.

The total value of non-oil exports from Iran for the 11-month period between late March last year and late February this year had amounted to \$31.2 billion, said Latifi, adding that the country had imported \$34.3 billion worth of goods over the same period.

TABRIZ MAKING NEW TRACTORS WITH DOMESTIC KNOWLEDGE, EXPORT CAPABILITY

The production line of new tractors of WD4120 and WD455 models with Iranian knowledge has started in Tractor Manufacturing Company of Tabriz, the capital of East Azarbaijan Province, which is an important success for Iran's economy and exports.

The WD4120 tractor is equipped with a turbocharged six-cylinder engine with 120 hp of power and an electro-hydraulic differential lock upgraded compared to other tractors.

The WD455 tractor also is equipped with a 3-cylinder turbocharged engine with a power of 55 hp and hydraulic output, being capable of working in farms and gardens.

Tabriz Tractor Manufacturing Company, which produces all kinds of tractors, trucks, and tools, annually produces 20,000 tractors, 30,000 diesel engines, 33,000 tons of forging parts, and 54,000 tons of casting parts.



TEHRAN TO HOST 1ST EAEU INTL. EXPO IN MID-MAY



Tehran is planning to host an international exhibition for introducing the Eurasia Economic Union's trade potentials during May 17-20,

Five major members of the Eurasian union are going to have exclusive pavilions in this four-day exhibition, the Exhibition Organizer Alireza Jafari said on Thursday.

According to Jafari, businessmen, traders, and powerful export companies from Iran are also going to participate in this exhibition along with the Eurasian countries so that the two sides would be able to have positive negotiations and expand their mutual cooperation in the future.

"We also invited representatives from Oman, Qatar, Turkey, China, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, India, and Pakistan to visit this exhibition, to hopefully ink tripartite memorandums of understanding with Iranian companies as well as the EAEU member nations," he added.

Iran and Eurasian Economic Union reached a preferential trade agreement in October 2018 based on which about 862 commodity items were subjected to preferential tariffs.

IRAN ALLOCATES €200M FOR PROMOTING EXPORTS TO AFRICA

Iran's National Development Fund (NDF) has opened a €200 million credit line for the country's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) to use for developing exports of commodities and services to African countries.

The mentioned fund has been allocated as part of a \$2-billion support package which has been allocated by NDF for developing the country's non-oil exports, Farzad Piltan, the director-general of TPO's Office of Arabian and African Countries said.

"The board of directors of the National Development Fund has approved this fund and it has scheduled to notify the relevant agencies for its implementation after the plan is reviewed and finalized in the next meeting of the African headquarters headed by the First Vice President," Piltan stated.

The official noted that the TPO and other relevant government bodies and agencies are preparing various programs in order to boost the Islamic Republic's trade with African trade partners.





SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

IRANIAN COVID-19 VACCINE UNDERGOES CLINICAL TEST

One of several Iranian vaccines under development, COV-Pars started its clinical test in an event in presence of Iranian Minister of Agricultural Jihad Kazem Khavazi, Chancellor of Iran University of Medical Sciences Jalil Kouhpayezadeh, and a group of officials and researchers in Rasoul Akram Hospital in Tehran.

COV-Pars vaccine will be administered to 13 volunteers in the first stage, and then 120 volunteers will receive the vaccine in four groups of 30.



The vaccine is the first injected-inhaled recombinant corona protein which was unveiled last month in Razi Vaccine and Serum Research Institute in Karaj, Iran.

The institute started working on the vaccine in February last year and after the initial stages, it passed the animal test phase in April 2020.

COV-Pars is developed under the leadership of Iran's Health Ministry and Food and Drug Organization expertise.

COVIRAN BAREKAT, the first coronavirus vaccine made by Iranian researchers of the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam, was unveiled and injected into three volunteers during a ceremony on December 29, 2020.

Immunogenicity tests have been performed on about 35 volunteers so far, and the results show that the vaccine has higher immunogenicity than we expected, Mohammad Reza Salehi, clinical conductor of the Iranian coronavirus vaccine announced.

“Test results show that about 90 percent of people who received the second dose of the vaccine showed evidence of immunity after two weeks,” he added.

Meanwhile, according to Christoph Hamelmann, the representative of the World Health Organization in Iran, the country has one of the most successful platforms in the world for Covid-19 vaccine production.

Iran is a special model in the primary healthcare system and using healthcare providers (called Behvarz), who are the connection between the physical health system, the facilities, people, and families who refer to it, Dr. Hamelmann stated.



IRAN AFTER FORMING “TECH DIPLOMACY” IN WORLD



Startups are powerful components of Iran’s defense against global sanctions, Vice President for Science and Technology Sorena Sattari said, adding that technology diplomacy is a new form of diplomacy that Iran tries to build up in the world.

“Startups are the elements of Iran’s powerful defense against international sanctions,” Sattari said at the Iran-Syria Business Matchmaking event in Damascus on Tuesday (March 2, 2021), noting that Tehran is seeking to shape a new kind of diplomacy in the world called, “Technological Diplomacy”.

“Today, Iran has the largest startups in the region in advanced sciences,” he added referring to the managers of over 40 Iranian knowledge-based companies attending the event.

Sattari emphasized that the new generation of Iranian knowledge-based companies developed by youth, and added, “These companies have learnt how to export their product.”

IRAN RANKS 1ST IN MIDDLE-EAST IN POLYMER INDUSTRY SCIENCE

A senior Iranian academic official said on Tuesday (March 2, 2021) that the country stands atop other Middle-Eastern states in the development of polymer industry science.

“Iran’s scientific ranking in the polymer industry is first in the Middle-East and 18th in the world,” Head of Iran Polymer and Petrochemical Institute (IPPI) Mehdi Nikoumanesh said.

He added that Iran also enjoys highly professional experts in polymer industry at present, stressing the need for universities to admit more students in this field.



Earlier this month, Iranian Vice-President for Science and Technology Sorena Sattari said that the country is standing among the 10 best world states in various engineering sciences, adding that over 10,000 types of laboratorial equipment are being produced in Iran.

“Iran ranks 15th in the world in the number of scientific essays and we are among the first 10 world states in many engineering sciences,” Sattari said.

CARPET MUSEUM OF IRAN

Carpet Museum of Iran was established on February 11, 1978 with the purpose of research about history and quality of carpet industry in Iran. The museum puts on display invaluable carpets from Iran woven over the past 500 years.

(Photo credits: IRNA News Agency)





SPORTS

ZAHRA NEMATI RUNNER-UP AT FAZZA PARA ARCHERY WORLD RANKING TOURNAMENT



Zahra Nemati from Iran fell short in the final match of the Fazza Para Archery World Ranking Tournament, losing to her Turkish rival Sengul Yagmur 6-2 at the recurve women open.

The back-to-back Paralympic champion had previously defeated Pooja Khanna from India and Nataliya Malykh from Ukraine in the previous round.

Merve Nur Eroglu from Turkey also won the bronze medal after beating Ukraine's Nataliya Malykh 6-2.

More than 70 Para archers from 11 nations took part in the seventh edition of the event in Dubai, the UAE.

Nemati by winning gold medal became the first ever female Para-athlete in both Iran and Asia and also the thirteenth in history who could be qualified for Olympic or Paralympic games.

THE WORLD NEVER FORGETS SIAMAND RAHMAN'S SMILE

One year ago today, the world's strongest Paralympian Siamand Rahman passed away due a heart attack. It was one of the most unexpected things that has ever happened to the world of the sports.

The two-time gold medalist in London 2012 and Rio 2016, who was preparing to win his third successive gold at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, died on March 1, 2020 and his death shocked the world.

Rahman broke the 300kg barrier in the men's over 107kg at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games, lifting an unprecedented 310kg. The mark he set is the equivalent of three baby elephants.



President of Iran's National Paralympic Committee (NPC) Mahmoud Khosravi Vafa said the 'Siamand Rahman Grand Prix' will be held after him.

The world will never forget the strongest man who surprised the fans by his incredible power.



SAEID MAROUF: THE MASTER OF HIS GAME

To say that Saeid Marouf is like no other is actually an understatement. The Iran captain and setter is in a league of his own, a man who has caused a significant shift in his country's sporting consciousness through his ability to orchestrate plays and lead a team that has become one of the best in the world.

Marouf has showcased an amazing range of skills in defense and attack, and regularly assembles jaw-dropping plays that have left millions of fans in awe. He is truly a top-class entertainer and wizard of volleyball.

Against all odds, and putting in countless hours of training, Marouf has led his team up to the top of the Asian continental rankings, and Iran now certainly stack up against the world's best men's teams.



“In the last 10 years, the Iranian men's national team has achieved historic successes,” Marouf told Volleyball World.

“These successes include retaining a high-level ranking in Asia, three consecutive qualifications to the World Cup and most importantly, for the first time in the history of Iranian Volleyball,

our qualification for two consecutive Olympic Games.

“But in my opinion, apart from all these amazing accomplishments, our most endearing achievement has been to ignite passion and give great joy to the Iranian people. In turn, this has catapulted volleyball into a popular and favorite sport in my country. It has also brought a lot of excitement and self-confidence to our youth.”

The 35-year-old prides himself in being the leader of the pack, but is also humbled by the kind of support fans have given him throughout his journey.

“We demonstrated that Iran can be a successful contender on the world stage, and I am overjoyed and humbled to be part of this long and golden era of Iranian men's volleyball.

“In retrospect, this era naturally brought many good and hard memories with it, and its entirety can not be broken down into details. But what I can definitely say is that I am very appreciative of all the people who have supported me during this journey.”

Marouf is from Urmia, a province known for its great volleyball history. He followed in his uncles' footsteps in the sport, but also enjoyed playing other sports like cross-country running, basketball and handball.

At club level, Marouf has showcased his skills at various clubs in his country and has been sought after by foreign clubs for his ability to lead a team to victory. He has played in Russia for Zenit Kazan and in Italy for Emma Villas Siena. He currently plays for Beijing BAIC Motor in the Chinese Volleyball Super League.





FOREIGN MISSIONS IN IRAN

Switzerland Embassy underscores Polo's Invention in Iran



Polo - or Chogan – might have been invented as early as the 6th century BC in ancient Persia, but in 1985 the Swiss have added an additional touch: every winter, the Snow Polo World Cup takes place on the frozen lake of [@stmoritz_ch](#) [@polowcstmoritz](#)



7085665/photo/2

Italy Embassy Shares Music Performance In Iran In Memory of Italian Ambassador to Congo



Watch the Concert performed by Dino De Palma (violin) and Istgah Orchestra (string quartet) at [@Assafir_Perrone's](#) Residence, in loving memory of Amb. Luca [#Attanasio](#), Vittorio [#Iacovacci](#) & Mustapha [#Milambo](#), brutally killed in the D.R.Congo on February 22.



De Palma (violin) - Istgah (string quartet) Concert at the Itali...
Concert by Dino De Palma (violin) and Istgah Orchestra (string quartet) at the Italian Ambassador's Residence in Tehran, in ...
[youtube.com](#)

12:36 PM · Feb 26, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone



Japan Embassy Shares News About Online Workshop in Iran Organized by JICA

Embassy of Japan in Iran Retweeted



[#Iran](#) 🇮🇷: JICA has implemented online ["#MetaFacilitation"](#) Workshops for agricultural extension experts. Participants are enthusiastic to obtain the special dialogue skills in order to grasp the situation of [#farmers](#) as well as to solve regional problems! [jica.go.jp/iran/english/o...](#)



11:30 AM · Feb 20, 2021 · Twitter Web App

Slovenia Embassy Shares Link to Webinar on "Save the Bees"



You can watch the entire video conference SAVE THE BEES on our Youtube channel.

Don't miss the Q&A segment - A lively discussion among [Slovenian](#) and [Iranian](#) experts on beekeeping 🐝, health care of [bees](#) and education of beekeepers.

[youtube.com/channel/UCQdu4...](#)



1:00 PM · Mar 2, 2021 · Twitter Web App



