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WWW.TEHRANTIMES.COM INTERNATIONAL DAILY

TEHRAN TIMES

12 Pages | Price: 10,000 Rials | 17th year | No. 12497 | Tuesday FEBRUARY 16, 2016 | Bahman 27, 1394 | Jumada Al Awwal 7, 1437

Iran leaning neither towards the West nor the East: professor

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
By Davood Heshmati

TEHRAN — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani is pursuing an independent policy and he is neither leaning toward the East nor the West, a former senior research fellow at Harvard University says.

This position does not show any leaning either towards the East or towards the West, Fahmeh Jahangour tells the Tehran Times.

President Rouhani traveled to the West (Italy and France) only after having signed massive deals with Russia and China, Jahangour says.

What is the significance of President Hassan Rouhani's trip to Italy and France?

Al: The Iranian president did not waste any time in making the best use of the lifting of the sanctions and the Implementation Day of the Iranian nuclear agreement with world powers on 16 July 2016. In fact, even before the official lifting of the sanctions, President Vladimir Putin reached to Iran in November 2015, his first visit for ten years. During his visit to Tehran, the two sides agreed to expand their bilateral economic cooperation in many fields.

The Russian engineering company Technocomp will build a 1.4 GW thermal power plant in Iran and a desalination plant with a capacity of 200,000 cubic meters of water per day near the city of Bandar Abbas.

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Zarif says Iran to broaden ties with EU

POLITICAL TEHRAN — The Iranian foreign minister has said Tehran is seeking to broaden its ties with the European Union in the near future.

"It seems that such relations with the European Union, particularly Germany that hosts the EU meetings, will expand in the near future," Mohammad Javad Zarif said reporters upon his arrival in Brussels on Monday.

Tecnimont signs €1b petchem deal with Iran

ECONOMIC TEHRAN — Italy's Tecnimont has signed a €1 billion deal with Iran's Petrochemical Company (PICCO) on petrochemical cooperation, according to the Tehran Times.

The deal is on providing finance, parts and equipment for Iran's petrochemical companies as well as solutions for their processing problems in addition to helping them boost production capacity, said Tecnimont's CEO, the CEO of Iran's Petrochemical Company (PICCO) on petrochemical cooperation, according to the Tehran Times.

The Italian group Maire Tecnimont is a subsidiary of the Italian industrial group Maire Tecnimont, which is active in the petrochemical sector. The managing director of PICCO, had PICCO made a considerable sum of petrochemical production in the region.

Masoud Shafiqi, the managing director of Iran's National Petrochemical Company has said the Iranian petrochemical sector should attract \$5-10 billion finance per annum mainly through foreign direct investment.

According to Shafiqi, foreign companies mainly from Europe and East Asia are seeking to make investments in the implementation of scientific petrochemical projects in petrochemical Iran.

Ali-Akbar Velayati's books on history of Islam and Iran published

TEHRAN — Ali-Akbar Velayati's books on the history of Islam and Iran were published in Tehran on Monday.



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Ghana seeks to use Iran's experience in countering terrorism

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Ghana is seeking to use Iran's experience in countering terrorism, Ghanaian National Security Coordinator, New Donkor said on Sunday.

During a meeting with Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Ali Shari'ati in Tehran, Donkor also highlighted the necessity of expanding cooperation for his part. Shari'ati called on the international community to counter the ideology and extremist factors that provoke the youth to join the terrorist movements. He also said that financial and arms aid to the terrorist groups should be cut which is possible through an international effort.

Pointing to some countries' double standards in ignoring terrorism, the Iranian security official said sending any troops to Syria will further complicate the crisis in the country.

The remarks by Shari'ati came as Turkey's foreign minister said on Saturday that his country and Saudi Arabia may launch ground operations against Daesh militants.

Iranian-French scientific collaboration

PERSPECTIVE
By Mehdi Zare

The collaboration between Iran and France in the field of scientific and technological studies. The first traces of the presence of French scientists in the Iranian petrochemical industry can be traced back to 1955, when the French professors taught the students of the oil industry the foreign language of the oil, established by their Iranian Prime Minister, Amir Kalyan, with French in the early 20th century. At the end of the 1950s, a group of Iranian students dispatched to France for higher education. These students formed the preliminary pillars of Modern Iran at the end of the 1950s and during the 1st Pahlavi era (1925-1941). An interesting sign of such collaboration was the establishment of "Institut Pasteur" in Iran in 1965, after World War II when the two countries experienced major difficulties resulting from the war.

France was a major destination for Iranian students up to 1960. This might be the major cause for the dominance of French speaking professors in the first generation of Iranian scholars (between 1950's to 1960's). Over the last 50 years, higher levels of development have been transferred from France to Iran. The first university professors and scholars in different disciplines from the human sciences to basic and natural sciences, engineering and medicine have been either French or the French speaking Iranians.

No more Wellington House propagandas

COMMENT
By Hossein Velayati

There is no doubt Syria harbors a special place in the media as one of the most mentioned conflicts that has had a huge effect on the entire world either directly or indirectly. There have been many attempts to get each side to a ceasefire in the country, yet no concrete solution has been reached thus far. Certainly, Turkey and Iran, two important players in the region would and could play a vital role to bring peace in the region, but only if they reconcile on some of the misunderstood points vis-a-vis the future of Syria.

Regrettably, there has recently been a surge in propaganda trying to drive a wedge between Turkey and Iran. According to some prominent media organizations, Iran believes that Turkey is financially aiding some terrorist organizations. This notion turns the situation into a quagmire, and what's more is that there is very strong Iranian public perception that Turkey is on the side of Saudi Arabia in the recent ambiguity. Iranian media carries concerned reports regarding Turkey's role in the Syria conflict. In similar fashion, there is an intense propaganda war in some renowned Iranian media organizations.

Who is behind the propaganda between Turkey and Iran?

It is completely wrong to think there is trouble between these two Muslim countries. The region that is already a scene to numerous conflicts, terror and instability, is neither the most volatile nor the most dangerous of the world.

Int'l. forum on internal combustion engines, oil opens

TEHRAN — The 9th International Conference on Internal Combustion Engines and Oil (ICEISO-9) starts today in Tehran and will close on February 18.

The conference has been organized by the Iranian Society of Engine (ISE) in collaboration with the Research Institute for Petroleum Industry (RIPI).

The meeting has on target to come up with a blueprint for Iran's fuel and power future. It focuses on environmental issues and guidelines for the resistance economy.

The forum aims to bring researchers, postgraduate students and engineers together to share their latest research findings and innovations in the field of internal combustion engines.

In addition to technical speeches, poster articles will be on display along with workshops and seminars.

MOU signed to protect Central Zagros landscapes

TEHRAN — The Department of Environment, the Management and Planning Organization, the Interior Ministry and governor generals of the four provinces neighboring Central Zagros Mountain signed a memorandum of understanding on the Conservation of Biodiversity in Central Zagros Landscapes.

In 2014, Conservation and Sustainable Development Program for over an area of 3.1 million hectares, equaling 10 percent of Central Zagros Mountain was developed by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The model includes strategic framework, management system, policies, and tools for mainstreaming biodiversity into national and provincial development plans and strategies.

Project closure by the end of 2016. It has now been handed over to permanent Central Zagros Mountain management executive successful in Iran to carry on the project. The Global Environment Facility (GEF), the UNDP and the government of Iran will provide \$3.8 million, \$50,000, and \$5,075 million for the project, respectively.

Iran denies reports about discount on crude price

TEHRAN — A senior official at the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) has rejected recent reports about Iran having considered a discount for foreign customers of its crude oil, noting that the Iranian crude is only sold at the official market price.

According to the Oil Ministry's official SpAANA news agency, Seyed Morteza Qassemi, NIOC deputy managing director for international affairs, dismissed as false recent foreign media reports claiming that the country is selling its crude oil below the official price in order to undercut Saudi Arabia.

On February 15, Reuters released a report claiming that Iran has cut its heavy crude price for export to the Mediterranean by a larger extent compared with Saudi Arabia in a bid to attract more buyers after sanctions imposed on the country were lifted.

In another part of its report, Reuters claimed that the March official selling price (OSP) for Iranian heavy crude to the Mediterranean was set at USD 6.40 a barrel, below the Brent Weighted Average (BMEC) down 25 cents from the previous month.

Rejecting the report, Qassemi said in all new contracts signed by Iran for selling its oil, the price of the country's crude is set on the basis of the official rate that is in effect at the time of signing the contract and Tehran has no claim to consider any discount for foreign customers.

(Source: Press TV)

Velayati: Iranian election is focus of international attention

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Ali Akbar Velayati, a senior adviser to the leader of the Islamic Revolution, said on Monday that participation in the Feb. 26 elections is a matter of utmost importance.

"The 'tone of a new page' is being formed in the world and any development, including Iran elections, is the focus of attention, noted the senior politician, who served as foreign minister from 1981 to 1997.

For the first time will hold a simultaneous Majlis and Assembly of Experts elections. The Assembly of Experts House of Representatives started their campaigns on Thursday. Parliamentary candidates will also launch their campaigns for the 26th Majlis on Feb. 18. Any division in election should be avoided, Velayati said on the sidelines of a ceremony unveiling a series of his books on Iranian history.

Iran denies reports about discount on crude price

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Regrettably, there has recently been a surge in propaganda trying to drive a wedge between Turkey and Iran. According to some prominent media organizations, Iran believes that Turkey is financially aiding some terrorist organizations. This notion turns the situation into a quagmire, and what's more is that there is very strong Iranian public perception that Turkey is on the side of Saudi Arabia in the recent ambiguity. Iranian media carries concerned reports regarding Turkey's role in Syria conflict. In similar fashion, there is an intense propaganda against Iran in some renowned Turkish media organizations.

Who is behind the propaganda between Turkey and Iran?

It is completely wrong to think there is trouble between these two Muslim countries. The region that is already a scene to numerous conflicts, terror and instability, is irrefutably the most volatile region of the world. It is not a conspiracy theory to think that some Western shadow states have extended covert plans to fragment the biggest center and the most strategic region of the Islamic world. The strategies, implementation, or presentation methods may vary from time to time, yet the main goal has always stayed the same: To put a barrier to the idea of the formation of unity and alliance among Muslims. Furthermore, the desire to be in control over the natural resources and natural wealth appeared as an extra benefit. Besides, it should not be forgotten how particular arm traders benefit from the unending bloody conflicts in the region. In this current situation, the strategy to ruin the relations between Turkey and Iran is by propagating such propaganda by means of some prominent media organizations since shadow states control them.

Historically such propaganda methods have also been used

For Islamic countries to be strong is not something the west desires. Shadow governments that operate behind the scenes in these western countries have tried and are currently trying to damage the relations between Muslim countries. This is true both historically as well as occurring in recent times.. For instance, at the beginning of the 20th century these shadow entities appointed some of their members for some assignments in the region by disguising their own identities. Iran and Turkey are leading examples in the region where many intelligence officers of the shadow states have participated. During the years 1882-1914 Britain backed some separatist movements within the Ottoman at times in order to dominate the Middle East. The British worked systematically to weaken the Islamic identity and assigned many missionaries, diplomats, and religious figures who acted under the command of the British Foreign Affairs[1].

They used psychological warfare methods of influence to distort the facts and disseminated propaganda through the media at the beginning of the Great War. According to the French political writer Jacques Driencourt *"everything can be attained through propaganda"* and he also calls the 20th century as the century of propaganda[2]. Indulging propaganda campaigns against opponent states became a tradition for the British especially during the WWI. The British established a propaganda institution called the Wellington House, which carried out very serious activities against the central powers including Turkey. Actually, the British started to make propaganda against Turkey via a propaganda office founded in 1870 to spread anti-Turkish information in foreign countries[3]. This propaganda became so widespread that many people all around the world came to believe in the disinformation disseminated by the Wellington House. However, some people with sanity and reason considered them with objectivity. For example, Reverend Cyrus Hamlin, first president of the Robert College in Istanbul had to admit: "Whenever I pick up a paper of eastern news, I pray, 'Oh Lord, endow me with a suitable sense of unbelief.[4]" Similarly, the popular writer Claude Farrere stated the following regarding the disinformation against the Turks in a lecture he gave in 1922: *"Is there wonder that the world sees the Turk in the wrong?.. Think that the enemies of the Turks have money, and money opens every door... They are using a language which is easier to understand in the West than Turkish. Moreover, they [the Turks] belong to a non-articulate race. Their enemies, however, are very talkative and skillful in putting their case. What terrible qualities for those who use lies as their main weapon! ... [The enemies of the] Turk poured lies over him. Therefore why should the Turk be right and his enemies wrong in the eyes of the misinformed?[5]"*

Why Turkey and Iran should be on the same side

It seems very likely that similar smear campaigns are being indulged to damage our relations with our neighboring country Iran. How can we have a problem with our Muslim brothers in Iran? According to the Quran, it is an obligation of Muslims to be allies with our Muslim brothers. Both governments should take the matter very seriously with reason and not fall into the plots of the shadow states, which have intelligent officers covertly making propaganda between the two Islamic countries. Both should make the necessary actions to get rid of such evil-minded people trying to have control over the region. The leaders of both sides should give messages of friendship and collaboration. Turkey not only on the level of leaders but also people at the grassroots level became very happy for Iran for the lifting of the sanctions. This is assuredly a nice gesture and similar acts should continue. Otherwise, this would turn into a disaster and this is what the region needs the least at the time being. Furthermore, both nations should sign joint defense and collaboration agreements. Iran is the strongest Islamic nation full of religious, devout people burning with the love of Hazrat Ali (ra) and Ahl Al-Bayt. If both states cannot remove the cancer embedded secretly in the region, they would drag the Muslims countries to other conflicts, may God forbid. As Muslims, as lovers of God, we should eradicate the plots of shadow states that are yearning to take control in the region and we should never let another Muslim blood be spilled.

[1] <http://www.akademikbakis.org/eskisite/14/ingiltere.pdf>

[2] Driencourt, Jacques (1950), *La Propagande, Nouvelle Force Politique*, Paris, p.18

[3] <http://sam.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/SalahiSonyel2.pdf>

[4] Grinnel Mears, Eliot (ed.) (1924), *Modern Turkey*, New York, pp. 4-5

[5] Farrere, Claude (1922), 'Les beaux voyages, Stamboul Conferencia', *Journal de l'Universite de Annales*, Paris, 1 October, No. 20, p. 360.

Adnan Oktar's piece in Tehran Times & Jefferson Corner:

http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=253018

<http://www.jeffersoncorner.com/no-more-wellington-house-propagandas/>

<https://www.harunyahya.info/en/articles/no-more-wellington-house-propagandas>