



Happy Nowrouz on the Threshold of New Calendar Year 1397

Salaam dear young friends, and heartiest felicitations to you all on the threshold of the New Calendar Year to start a week later on next Wednesday.

Since, today happens to be our last chat of the outgoing year, 1396 solar hijri, in view of the New Year holidays to start coming Tuesday, we wish you a Happy Nowrouz in advance.

Yes dear youngsters, the Iranian Calendar Year 1396, like all other years, had its share of joys and sorrows – such as the million-man-marches throughout the country for several days on the start of the 40th year of the Islamic Revolution that showed the jubilation of the whole nation; while one of the sad incidents was the aircraft crash in the Zagros Mountains that left some 65 compatriots martyred.

Overall, despite the vain attempts of the enemies of Iran, Islam, and humanity, to create trouble, the Islamic Republic continued its forward march, bringing new glories to the nation in various fields, including medicine, stem cell technology, art, aerospace sciences, urban and rural development, heavy industries, agriculture, economy, trade, architecture, missile defence, political and diplomatic victories on the international scenes, and of course, the brilliant success of our campaign against terrorism, both at home and abroad.

Your youthful endeavours in all these areas are indeed a matter of pride for us.

For the information of the foreign readers of our weekly column, the Calendar Year in Iran, since ancient times, is based on the Vernal or Spring Equinox, starting on March 21, and is more perfect than the Gregorian Calendar of the West.

Since Iran is a Muslim country, the official calendar, like its lunar hijri counterpart, is dated as per the auspicious migration of Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) from Mecca to Medina.

Our friends abroad may also be aware that the last Wednesday eve – the night that went by – is marked as Chaharshambeh Sourī in Iran, with many people, especially children, setting off crackers or engaging in a brilliant display of fireworks. The fire brigade, Red Crescent, medics, and disciplinary forces are on alert on this occasion to prevent any mishap.

As precautionary measures, for the past few days, TV channels have advised citizens against improper use of the seemingly harmless crackers and screened footage of the mortal dangers of playing with fire that often leads to death or permanent disfigurement.

Last week, Iran marked the annual Tree Planting Day and Week, as winter nears its end and spring approaches. It was a wonderful sight to see, the young and the old, plant saplings, as individuals or in groups, throughout the country.

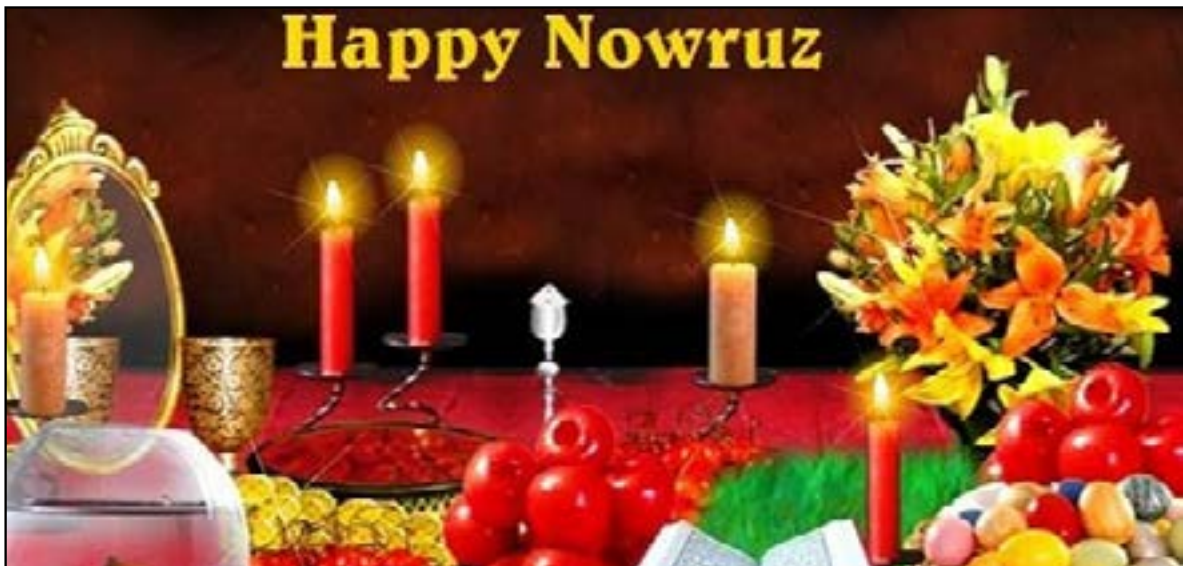
In view of Islam’s emphasis on protecting the nature, Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, as usual, also planted a sapling, and spoke about the blessings of trees and the harm to ecology if forests are destroyed.

Senior Iranian officials, including the President, the Speaker of the Parliament, the Judiciary Chief, as well as ministers and other officials, joined in to make the land green, by planting saplings in various parts of the country.

The enthusiasm amongst school and university students in planting saplings was fully evident, as millions throughout Iran took part.

Iran is a semi-arid country and the rapid process of urbanization leads to decrease of forests, which are indeed the lungs of the nation, and therefore the vital need for reforestation.

Goodbye and God bless you dear young friends, until our next chat in the new Iranian Year 1397 in the first week of April.



Funny Questions & Answers

Question: Why are elephants so wrinkled?

Answer: Because they take too long to iron!

Question: Why do bees have sticky hair?

Answer: Because they use honey combs!

Question: What do you call an alligator in a vest?

Answer: An investigator!

Question: Why did the math book look so sad?

Answer: Because it had so many problems!

Question: Where do cows go for entertainment?

Answer: To the moooo-vies!

Question: How do all the oceans say hello to each other?

Answer: They wave!

Q: What did one wall say to the other wall?

Answer: I’ll meet you at the corner!



Send your jokes. Heard any jokes lately? Well, try and make us laugh too!

Don’t hesitate! Mail it to us.

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The Eagle and the Fox

An Eagle and a Fox formed an intimate friendship and decided to live near each other. The Eagle built her nest in the branches of a tall tree, while the Fox crept into the underwood and there produced her young.

Not long after they had agreed upon this plan, the Eagle, being in want of provision for her young ones, swooped down while the Fox was out, seized upon one of the little cubs, and feasted herself and her brood.

The Fox on her return, discovered what had happened, but was less grieved for the death of her young than for her inability to avenge them.

A just retribution, however, quickly fell upon the Eagle. While hovering near an al-tar, on which some villagers were sacrificing a goat, she suddenly seized a piece of the flesh, and carried it, along with a burning cinder, to her nest.

A strong breeze soon fanned the spark into a flame, and the eaglets, as yet un-fledged and helpless, were roasted in their nest and dropped down dead at the bot-tom of the tree.

There, in the sight of the Eagle, the Fox gobbled them up.

MORAL: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

Imam Ali (AS):

“Often your utterances and expressions of your face leak out the secrets of your hidden thoughts.”

