



**U.S. violates resolution 2231 by ending nuclear sanction waivers** **2**



**Stable drinking water supply to 10m villagers to be conducted by Mar. 2021** **5**



**Iranian clubs make excuse to resume the league** **11**



**“Hafez and Goethe”, “Vars” honored at Archaeology Channel Intl. Film Festival** **12**

# Non-oil export support system launched



See page 4

## Fuel delivery shows Iran’s geopolitical power: Venezuelan ambassador

By Negar Asadi

**TEHRAN** – Iran has demonstrated its “geopolitical power” and its ability to defy U.S. hegemony by sending fuel tankers to blockaded Venezuela, the Venezuelan ambassador to Iran says.

“Success in delivery of the fuel shows Iran’s geopolitical power which challenges the United States’ hegemony and shows the capability to create solidarity

in international energy market,” Carlos Antonio Alcala Cordones tells the Tehran Times.

Following is the text of the interview:  
■ Amid heightened tensions and threats from the United States, the first of five Iranian oil tankers heading to Venezuela entered the country’s waters on Saturday. What’s your take on this development? **→2**

## Protests spread across U.S. over George Floyd death

By staff & agencies

Protests erupt in cities across the United States over the deadly arrest of George Floyd, an unarmed Black man, who was pinned to the ground by the knee of a white officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The Minneapolis Fire Department said it was responding to 30 fires across the city. That included blazes at a Japanese

restaurant, a Wells Fargo bank and an Office Depot. Many burned for hours, with firefighters again delayed in reaching them because areas were not secure, al Jazeera reported.

In Washington, police and Secret Service agents were out in force around the White House before dozens of demonstrators gathered across the street in Lafayette Square chanting, “I can’t breathe.” **→10**

## Book fairs commemorate death anniversary of Imam Khomeini

**TEHRAN** – The Art and Cultural Organization of the Tehran Municipality has organized 25 book fairs across the capital to commemorate the 31st anniversary of the passing of Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic.

Twenty-five book fairs underway at Tehran’s libraries and cultural centers are offering a large, well-chosen selection of books, which are mostly about Imam Khomeini and the Islamic revolution.

The book fairs, which opened on May

28, have been organized in collaboration with Oruj Publications, which is affiliated with the Institute for the Compilation and Publication of Imam Khomeini’s Works.

The exhibitions running until June 4 are being held based on the health protocols required by the Coronavirus Combat and Prevention Headquarters for cultural events.

The 31st anniversary of the death of Imam Khomeini will be commemorated across Iran on Thursday.



### ARTICLE

Mehdi Zare

Professor of engineering seismology

## New challenges of disaster management in Iran

The Iranian plateau is located in a very seismically active region of the world and is known not only for its major catastrophic earthquakes, but also for the disasters relating to natural hazards, especially earthquakes. About 2% of the earthquakes of the world occur in Iran but more than 6% of the victims of the world earthquakes during the 20th century are reported from Iranian earthquakes. This shows the high level of vulnerability in Iran.

The major items to be focused in order to prevent more casualties in major earthquakes over the last two decades in Iran are:

- Disaster risk management in national and local government levels.
- Integrated disaster management, technical systems, implementation, processes and products.
- Improvement of resilient communities (national, regional and local).
- Disaster management in hospitals and health systems.

After earthquake hit Tabas in 1978 with Mw7.4, Manjil in 1990 with Mw7.3 and Bam in 2003 with Mw6.5, some discussions have been raised about the reliability of the different existing seismic hazard zoning maps (Fig. 1) and a comparison between the recorded and previously assessed ground motions. Thus, beside the several hazard maps developed during the last four decades for Iran, there are still ongoing challenges in hazard analysis.

A devastating earthquake with a magnitude of 7.3 at a depth of 18km struck west of Iran on November 12, 2017. The epicenter was in the Sarpol-e Zahab region within the Zagros Mountains. This study was focused on the damage distribution of epicentral region and the adjacent areas. The study comprised the results of a reconnaissance visit headed by the first author to Kermanshah Province a week after the main shock. Based on the field observations, damages to buildings, surface fissures and ruptures and landslides were determined. Based on intensity assessments, earthquake intensity was estimated to be about VIII for the epicentral region and around VI-VII for the cities of Qasr-e Shirin (on the EMS-98 scale) according to damages to the built-environment. **→9**

## Merkel declines Trump invite for in-person G7 summit

A German government spokesman has confirmed that Chancellor Angela Merkel will not attend an in-person summit of world leaders that President Donald Trump has suggested he will host in the United States despite concerns over the coronavirus.

Leaders from the G7 had been scheduled to meet by videoconference in late June after the pandemic scuttled plans to gather in-person at Camp David, the U.S. presidential retreat.

Trump last week, however, indicated that he could hold the huge gathering after all, “primarily at the White House” but also potentially parts of it at Camp David, in Maryland state.

Merkel has declined, according to the spokesman.

“As of today, considering the overall pandemic situation, she cannot agree to her personal participation, to a journey to Washington,” the spokesman said, confirming an earlier report

on the Politico website.

“The federal chancellor thanks President Trump for his invitation to the G7 summit,” he added.

The G7 is made up of the U.S., Italy, Japan, Canada, France, Germany and the United Kingdom, as well as the European Union. Member states take turns organising the annual gathering, with participants normally sending large delegations with their leaders to the summits and journalists from all the world convene to cover their meeting, as well.

The White House said it is putting the huge diplomatic gathering back on the agenda as a “show of strength” when global economies are gradually re-emerging from lockdowns imposed to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

Merkel is the first to give a firm no, while other world leaders have expressed vaguely positive responses. **→10**

## New survey to shed light on troglodytic architecture in central Iran

**TEHRAN** — The second archaeological season will be started soon on Tarkhoran troglodytic architecture in Tafresh, central Markazi province, deputy provincial tourism chief Seyyed Mohsen Rahmati said on Thursday.

“Tarkhoran troglodytic architecture is a sample of local subterranean construction which is situated in the modern neighborhood of the same name,” CHTN quoted Rahmati as saying.

The first phase yielded the discovery of urban

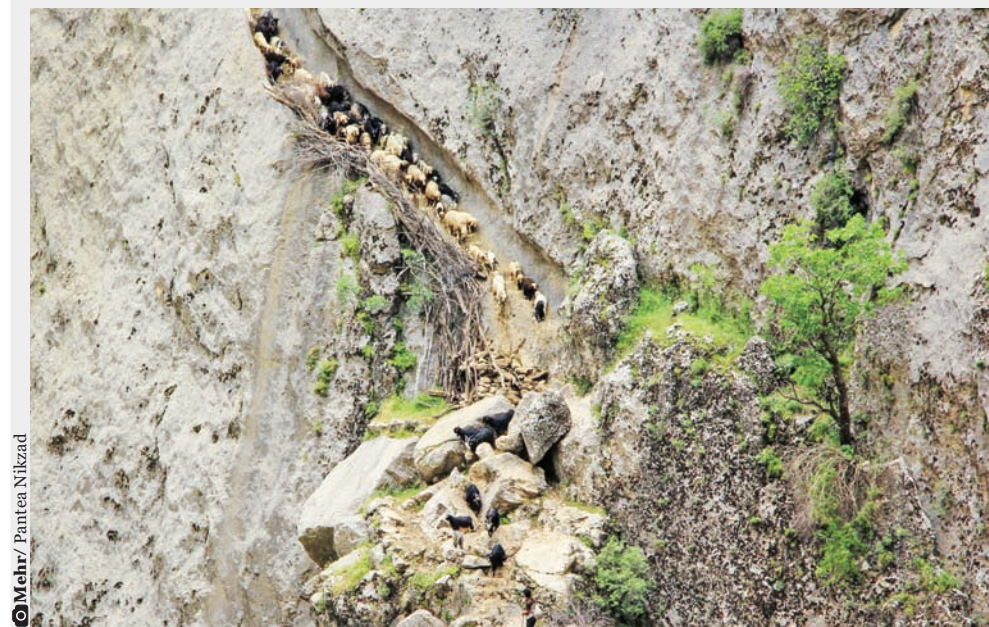
spaces in three stories that were connected by passageways, he noted.

Some 4,500 pieces of potteries and glazed tiles, dating back to a period between the 5th and 10th centuries BC, were also unearthed during the first round of excavation, he explained.

Based on the academic findings, the creation of handmade troglodytic architectural sites depends on several factors including climatic and geographical conditions, defense, security,

durability, and religion, which were deeply tied with the cultural, political, social and economic circumstances. This architecture can be classified in various formal types in terms of their external form, internal space, and function (religious, tombs, residential, and shelter).

Such tight labyrinthine underground “cities”, which were used as defensive shelters in wartime, still boast lots of charms as destinations for domestic and foreign travelers, the official noted. **→8**



© Mehr/Pantea Nikzad

## Nomads on arduous mountainous path

Nomads in southwestern Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province along with their cattle are moving on Khoda Afarin bridge, a difficult-to-pass mountainous path which overlooks a torrent.

During the history, the nomads have created steps along the path, which is said to date back to one thousand years ago.

WWW.TEHRANTIMES.COM INTERNATIONAL DAILY

# TEHRANTIMES

12 Pages | Price 40,000 Rials | 1.00 EURO | 4.00 AED | 42nd year | No.13656 | Monday | MAY 4, 2020 | Ordibehesht 25, 1399 | Ramazan 30, 1441

Following the guidelines of martyr Beheshti **2**

Tehran Times: An audible voice of the oppressed people worldwide **2**

Beheshti newspaper **3**

Revolutionary press should defend truth **11**

## JOB VACANCY

The Tehran Times is looking for journalists. Send your C.V. via email address below: [recruitment@tehrantimes.com](mailto:recruitment@tehrantimes.com)

**Required qualifications:**

- Adequate knowledge of English
- Relevant experience in media
- Familiarity with the principles of journalism

## German FM makes unfounded claims about Iranian government’s pressure on media regarding COVID-19

**TEHRAN (MNA)** — Some European governments have gone beyond planting opportunistic elements to put pressure on the Iranian media and government regarding the freedom of the Iranian press amid the pandemic, and have now reached a point where they make baseless claims without any evidence.

Political pressures hiding behind ‘freedom of the press’ façade

The baseless pressures of some European governments regarding the freedom of the Iranian press inside and outside the country have gone beyond planting opportunistic elements to put pressure on the Iranian media and government and have now reached making baseless claims without any evidence.

In his recent speech at Germany’s parliament, the German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas while noting the various dire consequences of the coronavirus pandemic, named what he called “repressive measures taken against journalists in Iran, Russia, Venezuela, Turkey, and China” as examples of such consequences.

Of course, Heiko Maas made the claim against these countries without providing any evidence, citing only the internal situation in Germany by saying: “Right here in Europe we are seeing how emergency measures are being used to cut back the rule of law.”

Deutsche Welle had previously cited UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres as voicing concern over the adoption of repressive measures under the pretext of the coronavirus pandemic. **→3**



## Iran: U.S. violates resolution 2231 by ending nuclear sanction waivers

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said on Saturday that Washington’s action in ending sanction waivers for nuclear cooperation with Iran by countries remaining in the 2015 nuclear deal – JCPOA - is a clear violation of UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

“This action ignores the Islamic Republic of Iran’s rights and disrupts the international public order,” IRNA quoted him as saying on Saturday. Mousavi noted that Iran will closely observe technical and political consequences of this action.

“If this action leads to negative effects on Iran’s nuclear rights based on international documents and the JCPOA, we will take necessary legal actions,” he asserted.

Donald Trump quit the agreement, negotiated under his predecessor Barack Obama, in May 2018.

But the Trump administration until now had issued waivers to allow companies, primarily from Russia, to keep carrying out the work of the agreement without risking legal ramifications.

However, Washington announced on Wednesday that it was ending the waivers.

European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell condemned on Thursday the United States’ move.

“Let me reiterate the enduring importance of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action – the so-called JCPOA – with Iran. As you know, I am the Coordinator of the Joint Commission and I am determined to do everything to ensure full and effective implementation and, in particular, Iran’s return to full compliance,” Borrell said at a United Nations Security Council meeting on Europe-UN relations.

“I have to regret yesterday’s decision by the United States not to prolong the waivers for the JCPOA-related nuclear projects,” he noted.

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) has said the decision by the Trump administration is primarily aimed to diverting public attention.

AEOI spokesman said the U.S. is trying to put pressure on Iran through such measure but “in reality nothing happens” and the repercussions of such a decision is nothing more than a “media commotion”.

“While Iran is powerfully advancing its goals, especially in regard to sale of oil derivatives to Venezuela.....and more importantly its notable progresses in nuclear industry, the publication of news about cancelation of nuclear waivers is a desperate attempt for deflecting public opinion at home and abroad from repeated U.S. defeats in face of Iran,” Kamalvandi stated.

## U.S. tankers in Persian Gulf will not be safe if Iranian oil shipments seized: analyst

**TEHRAN (Tasnim)** – A Canadian political analyst said the U.S. is well aware that its oil tankers that are freely moving in the Persian Gulf would be exposed to retaliation if it attempts to seize Iranian oil shipments carrying fuel to Venezuela.

“The fact that Iran militarily responded to the Trump administration’s murder of Iranian General Qassem Soleimani and the murder of Iraqi officials showed that Iran would protect its rights if the American’s seized the oil shipments. The United States has many oil tankers that transit the Persian Gulf and they would be exposed to retaliation. The Americans also realize that their military bases in the Middle East are exposed and not welcome by many host countries in the Middle East. They are vulnerable,” Edward Corrigan from Ontario told Tasnim.

Edward C. Corrigan is certified as a specialist by the Law Society of Ontario, Canada in Citizenship, Immigration and Immigration and Refugee Law. He is also an analyst and commentator for a number of media outlets around the world.

Following is the full text of the interview:

■ Iran is providing Venezuela with 1.53 million barrels of gasoline and refining components defying U.S. sanctions against both nations. The 4th cargo of an Iranian tanker flotilla carrying fuel for Venezuela reached the South American nation’s exclusive economic zone on Wednesday Refinitiv Eikon data showed. What are your thoughts on this?

A: These sanctions are unilaterally imposed by the American Trump Administration. They are not imposed by the United Nation’s Security Council. Accordingly, they are not legally binding on Iran or Venezuela. The United States cannot unilaterally impose its sanctions on other countries to stop legal trade between Iran and Venezuela or any other country. The American unilateral sanctions are illegal under International law and Maritime law. To impose unilateral sanctions on another country and to enforce them by military means is seen as an act of war.

■ The United States has criticized the shipment, as both OPEC nations are under unilateral U.S. sanctions. A Washington official said earlier this month that President Donald Trump’s administration was considering responses to the shipment, prompting the Iranian government to warn Washington against military action. Why do you think the vessels did not appear to encounter interference?

A: Apparently saner and cooler heads prevailed. The United States would look like a bully and also foolish in the eyes of World opinion. Venezuela and or Iran could go to the International High Court of Justice for a ruling. The United States would lose. Iran and Venezuela could also go to the UN General Assembly for a symbolic vote and again the United States would lose. In my opinion, the Europeans would not support unilateral sanctions by one country that would jeopardize free trade and break International law and accepted principles of Maritime law.

The fact that Iran militarily responded to the Trump administration’s murder of Iranian General Qassem Soleimani and the murder of Iraqi officials showed that Iran would protect its rights if the American’s seized the oil shipments. The United States has many oil tankers that transit the Persian Gulf and they would be exposed to retaliation. The Americans also realize that their military bases in the Middle East are exposed and not welcome by many host countries in the Middle East. They are vulnerable. The fact that Venezuela sent ships and fighter aircraft to escort and protect the Iranian oil tankers also showed Venezuela’s resolve to not be intimidated by American sanctions. The fact that there are Russian troops in Venezuela also would give a strong reason for the Americans to not to come into direct conflict with the Russian military.

■ President Nicolas Maduro has expressed gratitude to the Iranian leadership, government, and nation from “the bottom of my heart.” He said Iran and Venezuela had a right just like any other nation in the world to engage in trade. We are “two revolutionary nations that will never kneel down before U.S. imperialism. Venezuela has friends in this world, and brave friends at that,” he said. What is your take on this?

A: I agree with President Maduro. Under International law and Maritime law, free trade and free transit are protected. The United States cannot use the argument for free navigation in the South China Sea against China and then turn around and not allow free trade in the Atlantic Ocean and in the Caribbean Sea. It would show that the American administration was being hypocritical and would look foolish. This episode is a clear victory for Iran and Venezuela. It is also a victory for the principle of free trade, Maritime Law, and International law and supports the view that no country can unilaterally impose its law on a third country and impose sanctions on other countries.

# China firmly opposes U.S. move to end nuclear sanction waivers on Iran

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Chinese Foreign Ministry

spokesman Zhao Lijian said on Friday that China is firmly opposed to the United States’ move to end sanction waivers for countries remaining in the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA.

“The U.S. has chosen to stick to its maximum pressure campaign on Iran. It has not only unilaterally withdrawn from the JCPOA in violation of the UNSCR, but also ratcheted up efforts to thwart other parties’ implementation of the deal. Its latest decision to end sanctions waiver on relevant nuclear projects hampers the international non-proliferation progress and shared efforts to preserve the JCPOA. It demonstrates a consistent pattern of unilateral and hegemonic practice. China is firmly opposed to that,” Chinese Foreign Ministry’s website quoted Zhao as saying in a press conference.

He added, “The Arak reactor conversion is an important part of the JCPOA and a joint project of parties to the agreement. China is ready to work with other parties to continue upholding the deal and safeguarding its own legitimate rights and interests.”

He also said, “The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), a multilateral agreement endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231, is an important component of the international non-proliferation regime and is essential to peace and stability in the Middle East. Arrangements in this deal regarding



nuclear programs reflect a balance of Iran’s non-proliferation obligations and rights to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and embody the purpose and principle of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Complying with and acting on these arrangements serves

**“It (the U.S.) has not only unilaterally withdrawn from the JCPOA in violation of the UNSCR, but also ratcheted up efforts to thwart other parties,” the Chinese Foreign Ministry says.**

## EU, E3 regret U.S. decision to end nuclear waivers

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** – In a joint statement, spokespersons of the High Representative of the European Union and the foreign ministries of France, Germany and the United Kingdom expressed regret over the United States’ move to end waivers covering key JCPOA nuclear projects in Iran.

France, Germany and Britain – three European countries party to the JCPOA – are referred to as E3 or European trio.

“We deeply regret the U.S. decision to end the three waivers covering key JCPOA nuclear projects in Iran, including the Arak Modernisation Project,” the statement read.

Washington announced on Wednesday that Washington had ended the last remaining sanctions waivers in the JCPOA.

Following is full text of the statement published by the website of the UK Foreign Ministry on Saturday:

We deeply regret the U.S. decision to end the three waivers covering key JCPOA nuclear projects in Iran, including the Arak Modernisation Project.

These projects, endorsed by UN Security Council resolution 2231, serve the non-proliferation interests of all and provide the international community with assurances of the exclusively peaceful and safe nature of Iranian nuclear

activities.

We are consulting with our partners to assess the consequences of this decision by the United States.

The JCPOA is a key achievement of the global non-proliferation architecture and currently the best and only way to ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran’s nuclear program. That is why we have worked continuously with the aim of ensuring the full and effective implementation of commitments under the JCPOA, in particular the return of Iran to full compliance with its nuclear commitments without delay.

## U.S. wants to kill nuclear deal before Nov. election: Fitzpatrick

*By staff and agency*

Writing an article in the tank Atlantic Council on Friday, Mark Fitzpatrick said the Trump administration is bent on to fully destroy the 2015 nuclear agreement, officially known as the JCPOA, before the presidential election in November.

The comments came as U.S. Secretary State Mike Pompeo on Wednesday announced the end of waivers that allowed countries to cooperate with Iran on civil nuclear projects under the 2015 nuclear deal.

“The Trump administration wants to kill off the JCPOA before then. When asked in a May 14 interview about Democratic Party presumptive presidential candidate Joe Biden seeking to revive the JCPOA, Special

Representative for Iran Brian Hook boasted that there would not be much left of it to rejoin. It is a scorched earth policy,” wrote Fitzpatrick, an associate fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies IISS.

“Trump and Pompeo claim that their goal is to pressure Iran into renegotiating a new, ‘better’ deal. But they show little interest and even less aptitude in actually negotiating with Tehran. Putting Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif on the Treasury blacklist certainly was not an action intended to further prospects for talks. Neither was assassinating Quds Force commander Qassem Soleimani. Nor has the Trump team made any observable effort to bring European partners to its side in prospective

bargaining,” Fitzpatrick noted.

Fitzpatrick who had a 26-year career in the U.S. Department of State, including as deputy assistant secretary for non-proliferation, added, “As Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Sam Rayburn said, ‘any jackass can kick down a barn, but it takes a good carpenter to build one.’ The Trump administration is good at kicking down the JCPOA barn. They know nothing about carpentry.”

U.S. President Donald Trump quit the agreement, negotiated under his predecessor Barack Obama, in May 2018 and slapped the harshest sanctions in history against Iran.

The former IISS director also said the current U.S. administration is seeking to

goad Iran into taking further steps that can be castigated as provocative and contribute to snapback UN sanctions.

Exactly one year after Trump unilaterally and illegally quit the nuclear agreement and imposed the harshest ever sanctions in history, including a total oil embargo, against the Islamic Republic, Iran started to gradually reduce its commitments to the JCPOA at bi-monthly intervals. However, seeing on action on the part of the European Union, Iran took the last step on January 5 and removed all bans introduced under the JCPOA.

Iran has repeatedly said if the remaining parties to the deal honor their commitments, it will immediately reverse its decisions.

## Fuel delivery shows Iran’s geopolitical power: Venezuelan ambassador

**1 →** A: The Iranian oil tankers entered Venezuela amid heightened tension with the United States while threats against our country and the Islamic Republic of Iran have not stopped. The two countries have challenged threats of the United States’ imperialism to defend their right to do foreign trade, have diplomatic relations and strategic ties which have been maintained for 70 years. Iran and Venezuela are committed to international law and regulations of the United Nations Charter. Transfer of fuel shows not only the business relations between two independent countries but also shows that unilateral sanctions by the White House will not prevent this legal action. So, it must be recognized by the international community.

■ How would this development impact the Iran-Venezuela relations?

A: Iran and Venezuela’s relations have started since 1950. The relations promoted to a strategic level since 1999 when our everlasting commander Hugo Chavez took the office. Since then, the relations include cooperation in various areas of energy, technology, business, defense, education, and healthcare. The two countries also formed channels of cooperation based on trust and solidarity.

Today, President Nicolas Maduro continues the path of strategic cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran and is strengthening diplomatic relations. Now, the relations are in the best state. In difficult times, such as the present one, when both countries are under unfair and cruel sanctions of the United States, a strategy of economic interaction has been developed which will be definitely beneficial for the two countries. Now, shortage of fuel in Venezuela has been caused by the unilateral and extra-territorial actions of the United States. The country [Venezuela] is not able to refine its crude oil because of the sanctions even though it has largest volume of oil reserves, so it has to ask for help of countries such as Iran to help in the fuel crisis.

This new chapter in relations is full of courage, justice, and solidarity. Leaders of the two countries guide their nations wisely and bravely and counter the United States.

■ In your view, what is the major reason behind the United States’ increasing hostilities towards Iran and Venezuela?

A: The main reason is destabilizing and weakening governments of these two independent countries. They have been besieged by the United States and its allies since the revolutions in the two countries. However, such strategies have always failed, because Iran and Venezuela are being supported by the



people who have elected their leaders in democratic ways. Our government is legitimate and has been elected by the people. Despite the policies adopted in line with the people’s progress and well-being, there have been many impediments over the past 20 years after the Bolivarian revolution.

During these years of revolutionary struggle, we have faced attempts of coup, assassination attempts against our president, economic sanctions, looting of properties including 31 tons of gold. The Venezuelan people have countered these attempts vigilantly.

■ Both Venezuela and Iran have warned Washington against any act of interference with the fuel delivery. What message does the success of the delivery convey to the world?

A: In fact, Iran had warned against any harassment by the United States in a letter to United Nations Secretary-Gener-

**“Iran and Venezuela are committed to international law and regulations of the United Nations’ Charter,” Ambassador Carlos Antonio Alcalá Cordones says.**

all parties’ common interests and is a shared responsibility.”

The United States announced the end of waivers that allowed countries to cooperate with Iran on civil nuclear projects under the 2015 nuclear deal.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced on Wednesday that the waivers will end following a 60-day wind-down period that is meant to allow businesses to cease operations.

“I am announcing the end of the sanctions waiver covering all remaining JCPOA-originating nuclear projects in Iran – the Arak reactor conversion, the provision of enriched uranium for the Tehran Research Reactor, and the export of Iran’s spent and scrap research reactor fuel,” Pompeo said in a statement, according to CNN.

Russia and the European Union have also expressed dismay over the U.S. decision.

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran has said the new move by the Trump administration is out of desperation.

Majid Takht-Ravanchi, Iran’s ambassador to the United Nations, has said that ending sanction waivers for countries remaining in the 2015 nuclear deal by the United States pulls final plug in violating the resolution 2231.

“Two yrs ago @realDonaldTrump ceased participation in #JCPOA. Now, in further violation of JCPOA & UNSCR 2231 @SecPompeo pulls final plug, imposing penalties for compliance EVEN w/nuclear provisions of 2231,” Takht-Ravanchi tweeted on Thursday.

al Antonio Guterres. In this letter, Iran’s Foreign Minister [Mohammad Javad Zarif] said that any illegal action will be piracy and the United States would be responsible for consequences of any illegal action.

On the other hand, the Venezuelan government had condemned the United States’ sanctions at the United Nations and made clear that it has the legitimate right to defend its independence and territorial integrity. President Nicolas Maduro commanded Venezuelan armed forces to take security actions to protect the Iranian tankers. His command was carried out completely which shows integrity and power of Venezuela’s armed forces.

Success in delivery of the fuel shows Iran’s geopolitical power which challenges the United States’ hegemony and shows the capability to create solidarity in the international energy market.

■ Why was the delivery of Iran’s oil to Venezuela so important for ordinary Venezuelans? What has happened in Venezuela and what’s the impact of Iran’s oil on that country?

A: Undoubtedly, it has impacts on both Chavists and opponents, because shortage of fuel had paralyzed the country’s development. Venezuelans are active and seek progress and peace. We seek to develop a free and independent country.

■ As we saw in photos, even the Venezuelans protected the Iranian tankers. Was a military intervention by countries such as the U.S. possible? Why did most news agencies describe the successful transfer of Iran’s oil to Venezuela as a heavy strategic defeat for the U.S.?

A: This is a correct understanding because the United States has not stopped besieging our country and the Islamic Republic of Iran. In our country, all the military and defense protocols become active when we face threats. In line with this, the Venezuelan armed forces are constantly on alert. Both countries have found ways to counter the United States’ economic sanctions and neutralize their effects. This action shows the failure of the United States’ hegemonic claims to reach our resources. It can be a role model for all the oppressed people in the world. Successful delivery of the fuel is a victory for diplomacy. The two nations, being led by President Maduro, [Iranian President] Hassan Rouhani, and Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei [Leader of the Islamic Revolution] showed that the United States’ imperialism can be countered.

Today, 41 years after the Islamic Revolution and 21 years after the Bolivarian Revolution of Venezuela, the two countries are role models of dignity and power for humanity.



# Iran denounces deadly racial profiling in U.S.

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iran says **d e s k** it regrets the tragic murder of African-Americans, blaming the U.S. regime for deadly racial profiling against African-Americans.

“Iran regrets the tragic murder of black Americans, denounces deadly racial profiling in the United States & urges authorities to do justice for every case,” the Foreign Ministry wrote in a tweet on Friday night. “The protestors’ voice must be heard,” the ministry stated. “In doing so, suppressing the suffering Americans & #PressFreedom must URGENTLY be stopped.”

It came as protests erupted in cities across the United States over the deadly arrest of George Floyd, an unarmed black man, who was pinned to the ground by the knee of a white officer in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The fired officer who knelt on Floyd’s neck for several minutes, as Floyd pleaded “I can’t breathe”, has been charged with murder and manslaughter.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said on Thursday that the brutal killing was a harrowing demonstration of “systematic racism” exercised by the current rulers of the White House.

“Brutal killing of #GeorgeFloyd by



Minneapolis’ white man in uniform in cold blood is a harrowing demonstration of systematic racism and white supremacy glorified by the current administration,” Mousavi tweeted. The Iranian Foreign Ministry said via Twitter on Wednesday that the U.S. po-

lice’s brutality against African-Americans knows no boundaries.

“6 yrs after ‘I can’t breathe’ pleas of Eric Garner, #GeorgeFloyd, another black man, dies after a cruel, inhumane arrest,” the ministry tweeted.

“It seems that US #PoliceBrutality

against blacks knows no boundaries. And as always, the response to calls for justice is employing even more force.”

On Friday, in the midst of the protests, U.S. President Donald Trump described the protesters as “thugs”.

In a tweet, he also said “when the looting starts, the shooting starts.”

Trump’s tweet was widely interpreted as threatening those protesting Floyd’s death and prompted further outrage.

Twitter decided to hide the tweet, saying it violates rules about glorifying violence.

Instead of being deleted, the tweet can be viewed by clicking on a prominent warning.

It says that “Twitter has determined that it may be in the public’s interest for the Tweet to remain accessible.”

The U.S. president later sought to clear up the tweet by saying he was misunderstood.

“Looting leads to shooting, and that’s why a man was shot and killed in Minneapolis on Wednesday night - or look at what just happened in Louisville with 7 people shot,” he wrote in a tweet

“I don’t want this to happen, and that’s what the expression put out last night means,” he added.

## Iran’s UUV to add new dimension to its warfare capability: Forbes

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iran’s newly unveiled **d e s k** Uncrewed Underwater Vehicle (UUV) will add a new dimension to the country’s systematic warfare capability, Forbes reported on Friday.

According to the report, the vehicle is loosely comparable to the Boeing BA Orca extra-large uncrewed underwater vehicle (XLUUV), which is being developed for the U.S. Navy, in terms of size category and, crucially, diesel-electric propulsion, if not sophistication.

It means that “Iran joins an elite club with only the U.S. Navy and Britain’s Royal Navy having such large UUVs.”

The vessel was displayed at a ceremony to introduce over 100 new boats to the Islamic Revolution Guard Corp (IRGC) Navy.

Two people were on the casing during the parade. One was perched on a makeshift chair using a heavy-duty remote controller to steer the vessel. The other appeared to be helping with the connection cable for the controller.

This may reflect the early development phase of the vehicle, although we should not place too much weight on this, the report said, adding that parades are often done differently from operations.

“The absence of a protective sail where a crew person



can stand while it is on the surface indicates that the craft is not intended to be crewed.”

“Many IRGC-N craft appear garage-built, and this UUV is no different. On the side it proclaims ‘we can do it’ in the Farsi language. But it does appear to use a cylindrical steel hull which is essentially the same as a submarine. Iran builds many midget submarines so this is well within their industrial capabilities,” it added.

IRNA on Thursday published photos of delivery of more than 100 vessels in various classes to the IRGC naval base in Bandar Abbas in the presence of Defense Minister Brigadier General Amir Hatami and the IRGC Commander Hossein Salami.

Pointing to the photos, The National Interest said they appear to show several types of fast boats that Iran favors in the Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf, as well as a rather odd assortment of submarines or semi-submersibles.

It said that though not exactly an upgrade in terms of Iran’s naval capabilities, the likely unmanned nature of their newest sub points to one of Iran’s most important strengths.

The National Interest further said, “In the Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf Iran doesn’t have to be prepared to win a conflict, it just has to have enough leverage to hinder traffic and make more powerful, more sophisticated opponents take pause.”

“The likely-UUV does just that—it could never go head-to-head with the United States Navy, but it could give a surface group pause—just enough of a threat to hinder operations and slow down their potential adversaries. Beware the homemade ships of Iranian origin,” it added.

## German FM makes unfounded claims about Iranian government’s pressure on media regarding COVID-19

**I→** This was a kind of warning against restrictions and violation of human rights under the pretext of the pandemic only in certain countries and either refuses to report on or under-states the dire situation in the U.S. or European countries.

For example, U.S. President Donald Trump recently announced that no media outlet is allowed to independently publish news and statistics about the pandemic, and several cases of cover-up in the early weeks of the outbreak of the virus in the United States became headline news and even led to a legal dispute between the executive of the Erie County and the governor of New York.

Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz in a press conference accused the governor of New York Andrew Cuomo of breaking the law by revealing the number of Erie County residents being monitored for possible exposure to the coronavirus.

“The state violated the law,” Poloncarz said. “We’ve been told that we can’t disclose that.”

This instance shows the extent of the role of the U.S. government’s delay in disclosing information on the widespread outbreak of the coronavirus in the U.S. and was, in fact, a clear structured violation of the freedom of the press.

In spite of that, the Reporters without borders (RSF) website claimed in a report that China is ranked 177th and Iran 173rd in censorship of information related to coronavirus outbreaks in their countries, while there is no information in the report about how the research was conducted and what kind of criteria and scales was considered for the ranking. In the RSF report, similar to the claims by the UN chief and the German foreign minister, the risk posed by countries in opposition to European governments has been exaggerated and the report is clearly biased in favor of the political angle of the other side.

**■ Press Deputy Minister of Islamic Guidance: German FM must present evidence**

We asked the Press Deputy Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Mohammad Khodadi about the sources of the

information used in the RSF report, and what documents had convinced the RSF that the freedom of the press in those countries, including Iran, was restricted.

**■** Based on what information has Mr. Maas taken this stance (against Iran)?

A: This you should ask the German foreign minister himself. If there is any evidence, he should present it to us as well. I’m also bewildered based on what information the German officials have made such a claim!

**■** Do you think there is a kind of psychological warfare going on against Iran by the German government?

A: I think the German government’s intelligence sources are in disarray. There are only two possible scenarios here: either the information they received was incorrect or they do not actually have any information and just wanted to take a position without basing it on a source, which is also a wrong move to make. I expect the German embassy in Iran to have at least explained the real situation to their own foreign minister. The embassy should at least send him real information and documents.

Has any journalist been arrested amid the pandemic? Has the activity of any journalist been restricted due to the coronavirus? Are there any open cases? Have any orders been issued to the media? Has any media been banned from releasing statistical information? If they [German officials] have seen or been reported to of any such instances, they should let us know.

At the very least, we expect that without evidence and actual information, they refrain from harassing a media community that is struggling with the pandemic while under sanctions, and if they cannot provide the right information, at least they refrain from spreading the false one, especially when it comes to the foreign minister of a country that claims to support freedom of speech.

**■** Have you had any meetings with foreign journalists or ambassadors after the pandemic?

A: Yes, indeed there have been many meetings with foreign journalists stationed in Tehran, but there have never



been any talks about restrictions. We actually are waiting for the German foreign minister to provide evidence for his claim.

**■** Reporters at foreign news outlets in Tehran: ‘We have had no problems’

A: We talked to a number of reporters at foreign news outlets in Iran to find out if they had experienced any restrictions while reporting on the coronavirus situation in Iran.

**■ Javier Hurtado, a reporter from Spanish newspaper ‘El Mundo’**

**■** Have you run into any problems while making reports in Iran amid the pandemic?

A: No, I had no problems. Just like any other person who feels responsible and tries to take care of others during these days. Honestly, I have had no problems in Iran.

**■** Was there any problem while asking questions from people or the government?

A: No. They were actually very helpful when they saw me at work. As a reporter, I’ve had no problems while doing my job.

**■ Motaharibina, a reporter from German news agency Deutsche Presse-Agentur GmbH (dpa)**

**■** Have you run into any problems while making reports in Iran amid the pandemic?

A: We actually don’t make reports on

our own to run into any problems. The domestic press makes the reports, and they are usually the ones being invited to certain places to cover the news. We just use domestic news sources.

**■** You mean you don’t go looking for news at all?

A: The Ministry of Guidance has to invite us. There were some programs too, but the German side did not allow us to participate. It wasn’t just our agency. Everyone else was the same. I mean, they’d say this piece of news was not important enough to risk sending a reporter out there and having them possibly get infected.

**■ Siavash Ghazi, from Radio France Internationale**

**■** Have you run into any problems while making reports in Iran amid the pandemic? Were there any restrictions while questioning people, the hospital staff, or the government?

A: I didn’t go to any hospitals, but I did talk to the people while observing the social distancing protocols and I ran into no problems.

**■** Have you received any orders of restrictions from the government or any other organizations for reporting about the pandemic?

A: No, I have received no such orders from the government.

## All Iran’s JCPOA deviations resulted from U.S. provocation: Russia

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — All of Iran’s deviations from **d e s k** the 2015 nuclear pact resulted from the provocative maximum pressure policy of the United States, says Mikhail Ulyanov, Russia’s permanent representative to the Vienna-based international organizations.



“All Iran’s deviations from #JCPOA resulted from provocative maximum pressure policy of US,” Ulyanov tweeted on Friday.

“During the first year after US withdrawal Tehran fully complied with its commitments under the deal, but in May 2019 US compelled Iran to respond to attempts to introduce oil embargo,” he added.

The Russian envoy said in another tweet that “One UNSC Member State (US?) recognising US as a JCPOA participant is not enough.”

He was responding to a tweet by Omri Ceren, national security adviser to Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Tex.), who opined that there is at least one UNSC member who recognizes the U.S. as a JCPOA participant. “And, conveniently one is enough,” Ceren argued.

“In accordance with UNSC rules of procedure US needs to get support of 9 Members, as a minimum. Forget about snap back,” Ulyanov responded, adding. “Don’t compromise your country.”

U.S. President Donald Trump quit the multilateral nuclear deal in May 2018 and introduced the harshest ever sanctions on Iran as part of his administration’s “maximum pressure” campaign against Iran.

The U.S. move was in violation of UN Security Council Resolution 2231 that endorsed the JCPOA.

Under the JCPOA, Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear activities in exchange for the termination of economic and financial sanctions.

In May 2019, exactly one year after the U.S. unilaterally quit the deal and imposed sanctions on Iran, Tehran began to gradually reduce its commitments under the JCPOA to both retaliate for Washington’s departure and Europeans’ failure to honor their commitments.

On January 5, Iran took a fifth and last step in reducing its commitments and said it would no longer observe any operational limitations on its nuclear industry, whether concerning the capacity and level of uranium enrichment, the volume of stockpiled uranium or research and development. However, Iran has insisted if the Europeans honor their obligations it will immediately reverse its decisions.

Iran’s move is in line with paragraph 36 of the JCPOA.

President Hassan Rouhani said on May 6 that Iran will return to full implementation of the JCPOA if other signatories do the same.

## Expert lauds shipments to Venezuela as ‘victory’ for Tehran

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — An international relations **d e s k** expert has lauded the arrival of Iranian fuel tankers in Venezuela as a “victory” for Tehran, saying the shipments greatly help the people of Venezuela.

“It is not so much helping the government of Venezuela as much as it is helping the people and society of the victim country, Venezuela,” Bilveer Singh, the associate professor in the Department of Political Science at the National University of Singapore, said in an interview with ILNA published on Saturday.

He said it is good that Iran is one of the few countries that dares to do this, which is morally and ethically great and daring in the face of Washington’s gangster-like behavior.

“If any country understands what it means to be a victim of economic sanctions, which I consider to be something akin to economic terrorism, in this case, by the U.S. against Iran and other states such as North Korea and Venezuela, then what Iran has done in terms of helping Caracas is highly heart-warming.”

“What Iran has done is to signal to the U.S. that Washington cannot always get it way; might is not always right,” the academic stated.

The professor further said, “I am happy that some supplies have reached the Venezuelans and one should not be surprised that the U.S. Navy may intercede on some frivolous pretext and try to stop these and again the world will not do anything as they fear the U.S. might especially when you got an Iran-hater in the White House, supported by neo-cons and hawks and pro-Israeli political leaders.”

He called “Iran’s move a victory for Tehran and a defeat for Washington”. However, he added, one should not “start enjoying because Trump and the Israelis will find a new excuse to hurt Iran in the name of having violated their sanctions.”

“It may be an Iranian victory but you must be prepared for an American offensive of one kind or another in the name of Iran now supporting ‘rogue’ regimes, these are states that the U.S. does not like,” he Singh pointed out.





## Non-oil exports to neighbors can be doubled in 2 years: TPO head

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) says the country is capable of doubling non-oil exports to its neighbors in two years.

Making the remarks in an interview conducted by IRIB on Friday, Hamid Zadboum said that considering the future capacities, the TPO has planned increasing non-oil exports to the neighboring countries to about \$100 billion in a two-year time span, in a way that Iran's share of the regional markets will significantly go up.



The official has previously said: "Pakistan and Turkey have the highest capacity to import Iranian goods, which is good news for Iranian businessmen and exporters."

Pointing to the Persian Gulf states as good markets for some Iranian-made commodities, Zadboum said that large markets such as Russia and China should also be considered by exporters.

Iran shares border with fifteen countries, namely the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Russia, Oman, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kuwait, Qatar, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia whose total value of annual imports exceed \$1000 billion.

Increasing non-oil exports to the neighboring countries is one of the major plans that the Iranian government is pursuing in the current Iranian calendar year.

Earlier this month, First Vice-President Es'haq Jahangiri called for developing non-oil exports as the only way for realizing the motto of the surge in production.

"The Foreign Affairs Ministry should provide the necessary bases for the development of [non-oil] exports by expanding and strengthening economic diplomacy," he said in a meeting on reviewing ways of boosting economic relations with the neighboring countries and supporting non-oil exporters.

Emphasizing that 15 neighboring countries and countries such as China and India and Eurasian members should be targeted as the most important export destinations of the country, Jahangiri called on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other relevant agencies to strengthen economic diplomacy and focus on these export destination countries to provide the necessary infrastructure for the development of exports to these nations.

As announced by the head of Islamic Republic of Iran Custom Administration (IRICA), despite the U.S. sanctions Iran managed to export commodities to 128 countries in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19).

### Surge in exports requires surge in production

During the Friday interview, Zadboum also said that a surge in the exports requires a surge in the production, and it means that the quality of Iranian products should be elevated in a way that besides meeting the domestic needs they can meet the target markets' requirements.

The current Iranian calendar year (began on March 20) is named the year of "Surge in Production" by the Leader of Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei.

It should be considered that the trend of strengthening domestic production has been started in Iran a couple of years ago, as the country is determined to nullify the U.S. sanction on its economy through boosting production to reach more and more self-reliance.

Iranian Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dehpasand has said the country needs at least 10 quadrillion rials (nearly \$238.1 billion) to realize the motto of "Surge in Production".

## Non-oil export support system launched

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Head of Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) of Iran announced the launching of an integrated system for processing the requests for loans (in local currency rial) submitted to the National Development Fund (NDF).



NDF loans are made in local currency (rial) or hard currency.

As reported by the TPO portal on Saturday, the mentioned system called "SEPIDAR" was designed by TPO following a government decision on providing a support package for non-oil exporters.

According to Hamid Zadboum, a working group comprised of Trade Promotion Organization, National Development Fund (NDF), Export Development Bank of Iran, Export Guarantee Fund of Iran, and the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) were tasked to design a mechanism for using the non-oil export support package which is expected to be spent on improving export infrastructure.

Accordingly, all exporters that are interested in applying for NDF funds, which are provided at preferential rates, can visit the TPO website as from Monday, June 15 to register their application, the official said.

The system automatically processes the information and sends the received requests to the operating banks to pay the requested facilities, he explained.

The deputy minister stated that the NDF facilities for the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 20) amount to 40 trillion rials (about \$952.38 million), of which 20 trillion rials (over \$476 million) is provided from the NDF resources and the rest is supplied by the banks.

Back in January, Iran's Resistance Economy Headquarters approved a "Non-Oil Export Support Package" prepared by TPO for the current Iranian calendar year.

The package was developed by the Iranian Trade Promotion Organization, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, the National Planning and Budgeting Organization (PBO), and the National Development Fund.

# Single-window system to improve business environment

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Head of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA)

says establishing a single-window system for the starting businesses would be a great step toward improving the business environment in the country, ILNA reported.

Speaking in the inauguration ceremony of the TCCIMA's business single-window system, Masoud Khansari said the first step in improving the business environment is to establish a single-window to facilitate the process of starting a business.

As reported, the inauguration ceremony, held at the place of TCCIMA in Tehran, was attended by Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dehpasand, Deputy Economy Minister Mohammad-Ali Dehqan Dehnavi, along with ministry officials and TCCIMA representatives.

Addressing the attendees, Khansari noted that in order to turn threats [U.S. sanction] into opportunities the government needs to support the private sector by reducing unnecessary bureaucracies and facilitating



Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dehpasand cutting the ribbon to inaugurate the single-window business system at the place of TCCIMA on Saturday.

license issuances.

To this end, improving the business en-

vironment and improving competitiveness indicators are of utmost importance, and

fortunately, in both areas, the Tehran and Iran chambers have taken very good steps that can help government agencies, Khansari said.

"We are happy to have been able to do that in the Tehran chamber, and we hope that this will be a prelude to other measures to improve the business environment," he stressed.

Also speaking in the ceremony, Deputy Economy Minister Dehqan Dehnavi said that with the single-window system going operational, the time for issuing business licenses, which previously took 72 days on average, is going to be reduced to three days.

"Up until now, it took an average of 72.5 days to obtain these licenses, and in this regard, we are in the 178th place among the world countries," Dehnavi noted.

Referring to the Economy Minister's support for the single window project, the official said: "With the approval of the minister, the 55 days required to authenticate in the tax system is now eliminated, which means there is no need to obtain an economic code to start a business."

## Energy ministers of Iran, Russia discuss trade, investment



Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian (R) and Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak.

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian discussed trade ties and investment cooperation with his Russian counterpart Alexander Novak in a phone conversation on Friday, Reuters reported, citing Russia's Energy Ministry.

According to the ministry report, the two ministers who are the chairs of the two countries' joint economic committee, discussed cooperation in the energy, agricultural and transport sectors.

"In this conversation, agreements were also reached on the purchase of some basic goods by Iran from Russia," Iranian Energy Ministry portal (Paven) said in a statement. The ministry report gave no further details about the purchases.

Earlier in May, traders and Iranian officials said Iran was scrambling to buy millions of tons of wheat, corn, and soybeans to shore up its reserves.

Back in February, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Morgulov said that the trade turnover between Iran and Russia was following an upward trend in the past two years despite the challenging external conditions.

"Despite the challenging external condi-

tions, the Russian-Iranian trade turnover is rising. It increased to \$2 billion last year," he said.

Mentioning the preferential trade agreement between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), Morgulov expressed hope that the agreement would facilitate the trade between the two sides and give an extra impetus to the expansion of ties.

According to the official data, trade turnover between Russia and Iran amounted to \$1.74 billion in 2018 and \$1.589 billion in the period between January-September 2019.

Also in late December 2019, Moscow's commercial representative in Tehran, Rustam Zhiganshin had announced that more than 50 percent of Iran and Russia's total bilateral trade was being conducted through national currencies.

"If in 2018 payments in national currencies comprised 40 percent [of the two countries' trade], in 2019 this quota has already exceeded 50 percent," Zhiganshin told sputnik.

Russia's exports to Iran include machinery, steel, wagons, wood, vegetable oil, corn, barley, red meat, and other goods, while its imports from the Islamic Republic are mostly dairy products, vegetables, and fruits.

## 1st phase of National Housing Action Plan completed in southern Iran



**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The first phase of the National Housing Action Plan, which started in August 2019 to provide affordable houses to Iranians, are completed in the southern Kerman Province and will soon be handed over to the owners, IRNA reported on Saturday.

According to the Managing Director of National Land and Housing Organization of Iran Ali Nabian, some residential units of the National Housing Action Plan have been completed and landscaping operations are underway for them.

They will be inaugurated in the coming days as the first opening of the National Housing Action Plan units, Nabian said.

Back in August 2019, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani officially launched the government's National Housing Action Plan, by inaugurating a project for constructing 110,000 affordable housing units across the country.

Speaking in the inauguration ceremony which was held in Tehran, Rouhani issued directives for the start of construction operations in several provinces including Khorasan Razavi, South Khorasan, Isfahan, Hormozgan and Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari and Kerman.

The National Housing Action Plan aims to construct 400,000 small and medium-size apartments (70-100 square meters in size) across the country and particularly in Tehran, where housing prices have risen most sharply.

Nearly half of the total number of the said homes will be constructed in Tehran's suburban "new towns" such as Parand and Pardis, respectively located in the west and east of the city.

According to Iran's Minister for Transport and Urban Development Mohammad Eslami, the government plans to complete the new units by April 2021.

While the ministry will provide the land for the new developments, it will only supervise construction, enlisting private sector construction firms who will bid for contracts that entitle them to receive state loans and subsidized building materials.

As reported, the government's investment in construction will help create new jobs across the country and is expected to boost wages among laborers.

Providing housing to low-income families could also help alleviate economic hardship, especially if government's assistance can help inflation-hit renters become homeowners.

## Over \$238b required to realize economic growth

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dehpasand said 10 quadrillion rials (over \$238 billion) is needed to reach a desirable economic growth, IRNA reported.

Speaking in the inauguration ceremony of a single-window system for businesses at Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) in Tehran on Saturday, Dehpasand said: "part of these required resources is going to be provided through government resources as well as the banking system."

Emphasizing that the banking resources should be used to meet the needs of the private sector, the minister said "We should also attract micro-resources into the capital market to provide the necessary funding for a minimum growth."

Investors should be encouraged to invest and contribute to domestic production, he stressed.

Referring to the Leader's close attention to the economy and domestic production, Dehpasand said: "In the past decade, the Leader of the Islamic Republic has underlined economy, economic growth, and surge in domestic production in the slogans chosen for the years."

## More borders reopening while taking preventive measures against coronavirus

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — More borders of Iran with its neighbors, which are some major trade partners of the Islamic Republic, are being reopened, while considering the health protocols regarding the coronavirus pandemic.

Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA)'s spokesman has announced that Iran's borders with

Turkmenistan will be reopened on June 1 amid the coronavirus global pandemic by fully observing health protocols, Mehr news agency reported.

If measures taken jointly by Iran and Turkmenistan are approved, Iranian borders with Turkmenistan will be reopened on June 1, Rouhollah Latifi added.

Turning to the latest situation of borders of the country, he stated, "Pakistan is

authorized to accept 20 Iranian trucks every other day through borders and marketplaces including Pishin, Jalagh, Koohak border crossings. In addition, about 75 Iranian trucks are admitted every other day through Pakistan's Mirjaveh border crossing."

Iran's trade and business activities with neighboring Afghanistan through borders of Milak, Dogharoun and Mahirud have been restricted due to the outbreak of the

novel coronavirus, he said, adding that it is predicted that Iran's trade activity with Afghanistan will be resumed soon.

Afghanistan has announced its readiness for Iran-Afghanistan-Tajikistan and Iran-Afghanistan-Uzbekistan transit routes and transit trucks can start their activities via this route to Uzbekistan or Tajikistan provided that Iranian borders are reopened with Turkmenistan, IRICA spokesman stressed.



The Economy Minister added that in the last nine years the country has not had a good condition in terms of investment growth, saying: "We should try to minimize the obstacles to economic activities while our country is facing all kinds of sanctions

and pressures.

"We need to provide desirable conditions for investment and production to reduce the unemployment rate, improve the country's position in the global economy, and boost domestic production, he emphasized.

Earlier this month, Dehpasand had stressed the need for achieving acceptable economic growth in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 20), saying that public, private, and cooperative sectors all could play an important role in this regard.

Iran is following a comprehensive program for raising capital through attracting public resources into the stock market, so the government has been encouraging both private sector and state-owned companies to offer their shares in the country's stock market.

In early March, Dehpasand said offering the shares of state-owned companies, which are planned to be privatized, would be sped up.

The minister further highlighted that Iran's stock market is reaching its real status, adding, "People are gradually getting acquainted with the capital market's potential and welcoming it."

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has also stressed the need for the expansion of the privatization program.



# Stable drinking water supply to 10m villagers to be conducted by Mar. 2021

**ENERGY** **TEHRAN** – Iran's deputy energy minister says over 10 million people in the country's rural areas will be supplied with drinkable water through pipelines by the Iranian calendar year of 1400 (starts in March 2021).

Over 7.7 million people in villages with over 20 households across the country, currently, have access to drinkable water through pipeline and the figure is expected to reach 10 million by the end of the current presidency (ends in about a year), Ghasem Taghizadeh Khamesi wrote on his social media.

According to the official, about 20 million people live in 62,000 villages in Iran, 23,000 of which have less than 20 households and a population of about five million; this dispersion is the main challenge of Energy Ministry for providing drinkable water to the rural areas.

Underlining Iran's good position among

the world countries in terms of water supply, Khamesi said: "About 63 percent of cities around the world have access to drinkable water networks, while in Iran nearly 100 percent of the cities are connected to the drinkable water network."

"Nearly 2.5 million people in the world do not have access to healthy drinkable water, and 800 million people are provided with water only half an hour a day on average," he regretted.

Back in November 2019, Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian had said that his ministry planned to provide all 10 million people living in the rural areas of Iran with healthy drinking water by the end of the summer of Iranian calendar year of 1400 (September 2021).

This measure prevents migration of villagers to the cities, while encouraging urban-rural migration and promoting production in the rural areas, Ardakanian had stressed.



## ‘Smart petchem industry required for stable presence in global markets’

**ENERGY** **TEHRAN** – The managing director of Iran's National Petrochemical Company (NPC) said that making the petrochemical industry smart is the only way for a stable presence in the global markets.

Making the remarks in an interview conducted by Shana, Behzad Mohammadi reiterated, "In the petrochemical sector we should have a global view."

He also emphasized moving in the way of attracting more investors to this industry.

The official further mentioned production of petrochemical products in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19) and said, "Last year was a successful year in terms of petrochemical production, there was no problem in this due, and the projected annual output was achieved."

According to Mohammadi, petrochemical industry is not like oil industry and it is practically unsanctionable.

"For oil the ways of selling and the costumers are specific and limited but that is not the case with petrochemicals. There are hundreds of holdings which are eager for buying our diverse petrochemical products", Behzad Mohammadi has told the Tehran Times in a press conference on the sidelines of the 24th Iran International, Oil, Gas, Refining and Petrochemical Exhibition (Iran Oil Show 2019).

"However, we are holding meetings with our customers to explore various aspects of possible impacts of the U.S. sanctions on our trade", he added.

■ **Projects worth \$12b to be inaugurated by Mar. 2021**

NPC managing director further announced that the company plans to inaugurate projects worth about \$12 billion by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2021), which will increase the country's annual petrochemical output to 86 million tons from the current 66 million tons.

The output of Iranian petrochemical production units in the first 50 days of the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 19) increased by six percent compared to the previous year's same period.



According to Jalal Mirhashemi, the NPC's production control manager, the country's petrochemical complexes are producing with a desired capacity, and many complexes have shown production growth since the beginning of the current year.

He said that Iran's petrochemical industry is ready to realize the surge in production intended for the current year, adding that in addition to launching and operating new projects, the existing idle capacity of some complexes will also be used with the measures taken.

The petrochemical industry is one of the most important pillars and the driving force of development for various sectors of the country's economy, he stressed.

In late December 2019, President Hassan Rouhani had stressed the significant role of the petrochemical industry in the country's economy in the face of U.S. sanctions, saying that it is at the forefront of the country's non-oil exports.

Later in April 2020, Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said 17 new petrochemical plants are planned to be inaugurated across the country during the current Iranian calendar year.

The current Iranian calendar year (began

on March 20) is named as the year of "Surge in Production" by the Leader of Islamic Revolution Seyed Ali Khamenei.

Petrochemical industry is playing a crucial role in Iran's non-oil economy, so that based on official data, petrochemical exports constitute the second largest hard currency earner in Iran after crude oil. Petrochemical exports already make up nearly 33 percent of the country's non-oil exports.

Also, as announced by the NPC's managing director, currently over 108,000 direct employees are working in various fields of the petrochemical industry.

■ **Technical knowledge should be elevated**

During the Shana interview, Mohammadi also put emphasis on the necessity of elevating technical knowledge in the petrochemical industry, and said, "We should promote technical knowledge in a way to move toward more diversity in production and also producing products with higher value-added."

Strengthening domestic production and indigenizing the knowledge and technology for production of the products and equipment that Iran imports from other

countries has become one of the major programs that the country is pursuing in recent years.

To materialize this objective, knowledge-based companies have played a noticeable part, especially in indigenizing the products and equipment applied in the oil industry, which is the major sector in the country's national economy.

Cooperating with capable domestic knowledge-based companies and startups is one of the very fruitful steps that the oil ministry has taken in its efforts to reach complete independence from the foreign resources for meeting its equipment needs.

To materialize the goal of indigenizing the production of the oil industry's equipment, the country's Petrochemical Research and Technology Company (PRTC) has also played a very significant role in collaborating with the knowledge-based companies for working on innovative research projects for producing various equipment and base-products needed in the industry.

PRTC's Managing Director Ali Pajouhan has recently announced that the National Petrochemical Company, in collaboration with domestic companies, is planning to indigenize the knowledge for producing nine major catalysts used in the petrochemical industries within the next two years.

However, catalysts are very expensive substances and currently, the country is spending millions of dollars every year on importing such products into the country, producing such catalysts inside the country would make a huge difference in the profitability rate of the petrochemical plants.

Iranian petrochemical industry is currently using 40 different types of catalysts which cost the industry \$260 million annually.

"Currently, the knowledge for producing 16 of the mentioned 40 types has been indigenized which would save the country \$105 million every year," Ali Pajouhan said, adding that "We plan to produce over \$100m worth of petrochemical catalysts annually, by the end of the Iranian calendar year of 1400 (March 20, 2022)."

## The coming recession is the best reason to step up the pace of renewables investment

By Frank Jotzo

The Covid-19 recession will bring fiscal stimulus on a massive scale. There are high hopes that the recovery will be green but it could be an uphill struggle. A big opportunity for Australia's governments is to keep the renewable energy revolution going.

There will be pressure to invest in anything that quickly brings back jobs and prosperity, never mind long term, social or environmental goals. A return to the world as it was in 2019 will seem a marvelous goal for the many people whose jobs have gone or whose businesses have faltered. In order to improve the economy relative to pre-Covid, to build back better, will need governments to lead.

The forces pushing the other way are strong. Fossil fuel interests see Covid as a chance to push their barrel, all too evident in the push under way in Australia to increase gas production, regardless of the fact that it would raise greenhouse gas emissions for a long time to come. In the United States, longstanding environmental protection rules have been suspended under the cover of Covid, and Brazil's government plans to change the rules on the Amazon while attention is on the pandemic. In China, the buzzword is "new infrastructure" but early indications are that new government spending on projects such as rail and telecoms is still overshadowed by building of coal power plants.

Thankfully renewable energy is now by far the cheapest way to produce electricity from any newly built plants. We've seen a huge boom in solar and wind and power. Even the government's new discussion paper towards its technology roadmap acknowledges that the future is renewables rather than coal, though it also gives a nod to gas.

But the recession could thwart investor appetite in new electricity generation plants. In the east coast electricity market, average wholesale prices are now less than half of what they were a year ago – as a result of lower gas prices,



more renewables on the grid, and lower electricity demand. While that is great news for consumers including energy-intensive industry, it dampens the case for new renewables investment. It also puts extra pressure on old coal-fired power plants.

Regardless of the dynamics in the electricity market, it is a sure bet in Australia to rapidly expand solar and wind power, new transmission lines and energy storage. It is what will replace the coal power fleet, power electric cars, and provide the foundation for the energy-intensive export industries of the future.

Governments should now step up and accelerate renewables investment. Large renewable energy zones have been mapped out, and New South Wales already has a plan to deliver three of them. The coming recession is the best possible reason to step up the pace.

Renewable energy projects can be built quickly and they can be scaled up over time. Governments can fund and own renewables generators, or provide long-term fixed-price contracts to companies that build and operate them.

And we urgently need new power lines. The usual way would be a lengthy process to plan, contract and build

transmission lines and for private companies to build wind and solar projects. With the recovery stimulus imperative, governments can and should make it happen more quickly.

In parallel, governments need to be ready to support the regions where coal-fired plants will inevitably close down. It will not do to wait until the next power plants in the Hunter and Latrobe valley announce closures on commercial grounds. Building alternative infrastructure and supporting new areas of business should start right now.

The fundamental criteria for economic stimulus that stands the test of time are simple: projects need to be able to start soon, use a lot of local inputs, result in something useful for the long run, and be compatible with a net-zero emissions trajectory.

Expanding renewable energy and the power grid scores high on those criteria. Many other infrastructure projects are attractive, including public transport, retrofitting buildings for energy efficiency, and land restoration.

And we have the chance to lay the foundation for clean export industries of the future, such as renewables-based hydrogen and steel. The obvious way to get started on these is a large public investment program in R&D and pilot plants. The government's technology roadmap can identify priority investments. This should then quickly be followed by cash.

Governments will take out big loans to get the economy out of the Covid recession. We must be sure to spend it in a way that benefits our society in the future. That means creating better social fabric, more education and infrastructure. And it means helping build up industries that have a strong prospect in a world economy that acts on climate change.

Today's younger people will be paying the debt back through higher taxes. They should be able to look back at Covid-19 as a time when useful public investments were made that helped protect their future.

• *Frank Jotzo is the director of the Centre for Climate Economics and Policy at the Australian National University*

## OPEC delivers three quarters of record oil cut in May: survey

OPEC oil output hit the lowest in two decades in May as Saudi Arabia and other members started to deliver a record supply cut, a Reuters survey found, although Nigeria and Iraq are laggards in making their share of the reduction.

On average, the 13-member Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries pumped 24.77 million barrels per day (bpd) this month, the survey found, down 5.91 million bpd from April's revised figure.

OPEC and its allies last month agreed to an output cut to offset a slump in demand and prices caused by the coronavirus crisis. An easing of government lockdowns and lower supply have helped oil prices more than double compared with a 21-year low below \$16 a barrel in April.

"OPEC has made a strong start in May with its latest production cut, lowering supply by 5 million bpd versus April," Daniel Gerber, chief executive of Petro-Logistics, which assesses OPEC supply by tracking tanker shipments, told Reuters.

"However, compliance is far from perfect. With less than four weeks between the adoption and the start of the agreement, many countries had already committed volumes to buyers and have not managed to reduce supply to the agreed levels."

OPEC and its allies, known as OPEC+, agreed to cut supply by a record 9.7 million bpd from May 1. OPEC's share, to be made by 10 members from their October 2018 output in most cases, is 6.084 million bpd.

So far in May, they delivered 4.48 million bpd of the pledged reduction, equal to 74 percent compliance, the survey found.

■ **Lowest since 2002**

May's output would be the lowest by OPEC since 2002, excluding membership changes since then, Reuters survey records show. PRODN-TOTAL

The biggest drop in supply came from Saudi Arabia, which pumped a record 11.7 million bpd in April. Saudi supply is expected to drop even further in June.

The United Arab Emirates and Kuwait also cut back sharply, sources in the survey said. Both had also pumped at record rates in April.

Iraq, a laggard in making cuts in 2019, curbed output according to the survey following reduced exports from the south of the country, although at 38 percent its compliance was much lower than that of the Persian Gulf OPEC members.

Another laggard, Nigeria, made only 19 percent of its promised reduction, the survey found.

Venezuela and Iran reduced output in May, while Libyan supply was steady. All three were exempt from voluntary cuts because of U.S. sanctions or internal issues limiting production.

Venezuela, contending with both U.S. sanctions and a long-term decline in output, posted another drop in exports.

Oil output in Libya has plunged since Jan. 18 due to a blockade of ports and fields by groups loyal to eastern-based commander Khalifa Haftar. Production averaged 100,000 bpd in May, the survey found.

The Reuters survey aims to track supply to the market and is based on shipping data provided by external sources, Refinitiv Eikon flows data, information from tanker-trackers such as Petro-Logistics and Kpler, and information provided by sources at oil companies, OPEC and consultants.

## Market anxiety weighs on June LNG forward prices

With liquefied natural gas (LNG) feed gas volumes sinking to fresh lows and overall demand still lagging amid the coronavirus pandemic, June natural gas forward prices softened for the May 21-27 period, according to NGI's Forward Look.

However, forward prices for July and beyond posted small gains over the five-day trading period on a projected bump in demand as the nation begins to reopen and on expectations for a hot summer, Forward Look data show.

As per Naturalgasintel.com, after large erratic moves over the past several weeks, the May 21-27 period culminated with prices along the forward curve not far removed from where they started. The small moves were similar to those seen in Nymex futures, where the Henry Hub June contract expired Wednesday at \$1.722 and the July contract settled at \$1.886, though July continued to fall on Thursday before bouncing a bit to close out the week.

Though week/week changes were small, EBW Analytics Group LLC noted that the June contract rolled off the board 22.0 cents lower than when it assumed the front-month position. The July-October contracts fell even more over the past month, according to the firm, with the August contract leading the way with a 28.0-cent decline.

"This highlights emerging shifts in the shape of the forward curve," EBW said. From a fundamental perspective, tumbling gas export expectations and "greater recognition" that weakness in the industrial and power sectors may take longer to recover were primary bearish drivers.

More than 30 U.S. gas export cargoes have been canceled for June, and international prices are signaling that oversupply conditions may linger. Much of that is from the mild winter that left global storage inventories brimming with supplies, but Covid-19 added insult to injury as it sapped industrial demand.

"How much gas in total are we likely to flow to Europe this summer? Seems like it should be zero," said a market observer on The Desk's online energy platform Enelyst.

For now, feed gas deliveries to U.S. terminals have recovered somewhat since falling to a fresh low of around 5.5 Bcf/d on Sunday. Volumes were at about 6.4 Bcf/d on Friday, though the increase appeared to be more of a blip on the radar rather than sustained momentum given that estimates for July cargo cancellations were coming in higher than June.

EBW pointed out that June cargo cancellations outpaced those in May. In addition, Covid-19 is ravaging South America and likely slashing anticipated heating demand during the southern hemispheric winter. Furthermore, the Asian rebound in demand remains tepid.

"With LNG feed gas demand nearly 1.0 Bcf/d off recent lows, chances for a further sustained rebound appear bleak," EBW said. The dismal outlook, coupled with the slow pace of increased demand from the industrial sector, has proven to be too much for the market to overcome, even with a "startling" decline in production.

EQT Corp. in early May curtailed 1.4 Bcf/d to wait out higher prices. From the get-go, the Appalachia producer indicated that the duration was "subject to commodity price movements, relationships and resulting economics" and on Tuesday, management said the cuts could extend through June.

Nevertheless, with weather demand starting to build, Bespoke Weather Services said that unlike the last several weeks when it was difficult to build any "true" bullish case at the front of the curve, things are less certain now with demand coming back as the economy reopens.





Iranian Offshore Oil Company (P.J.S)

INVITATION TO PUBLIC TENDER (Pre-Qualification)

TENDER NO.: 112/97/OT/T1

Chartering of One ASD VESSEL to Provide Services in Operating Fields of IOOC

1399.932

Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC) intends to open Pre-Qualification for above tender with the following conditions:

**Scope of Work:**

Chartering of One ASD VESSEL to Provide Services in Operating Fields of IOOC

**Location:**

IOOC Oil Fields in Persian Gulf

**Performance Period:**

2 years

**Other items shall be considered:**

- 1: Ability of submission Bid Bond as in the amount of Iranian Rial 13,322,187,660 for Iranian Bidders and EURO 78,738.00 for Foreign Bidders
- 2: Ability of submission 10% of total Contract Price value as performance guarantee in case of winning according to Company's procedure
- 3: Proposals should be submitted with no condition, incomplete, ambiguous or adverse of Package specification in deadline.
- 4: Company shall reserve the right to accept or reject any or all of proposals or part(s) thereof according to Tender Law.
- 5: The validity of the submitted proposals shall be 3 months from the opening of financial envelopes date and extendable for one further period.
- 6: For invitation to above tender, it is necessary to achieve the determinate minimum score in the Pre-qualification.

Bidders who have ability and are willing to participate in the Pre-qualification are requested to submit a written request to Contract Department, within One Week from Second Announcement by representative and collect the Pre-Qualification Forms.

Closing Date for submission of the Pre-Qualification documents shall be up to 14 days after the deadline of collecting Pre-Qualification documents. Place and time of submission and opening of proposals will be stated in Tender Documents.

Address for willing to participate and submission Pre-Qualification Documents:

5<sup>th</sup> Floor, #12, Touraj St., Khakzad St., Vali-e Asr Ave., after Balal Mosque, before Modarres Crossroad, Tehran, Iran, Tel: +98 21-23942510

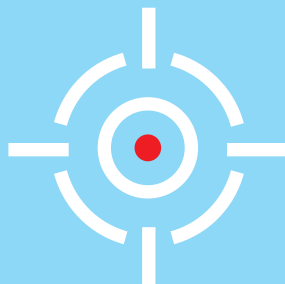
Note: Additional information is available at IOC website address: [www.iooc.co.ir](http://www.iooc.co.ir) on the day of Second Announcement.

Iranian Offshore Oil Company Public Relations

TEHRAN TIMES

Iran's Leading  
International Daily

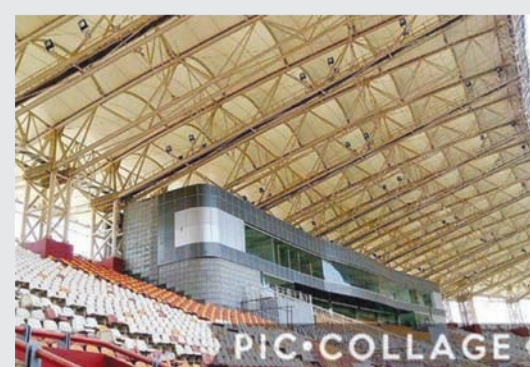
Advertising Dept



Tel:

021 - 430 51 430

# Modern Stadium of Martyrs of Khuzestan Football Club (KSC)



Advertising Dept:  
[times1979@gmail.com](mailto:times1979@gmail.com)



TEHRANTIMES +9821 430 51 430

Catch up with the latest news in Iran and beyond with



Mehr News English



English page of Mehr News provides you  
with great opportunity to advertise.

Get in touch  
[www.mehrnews.com](http://www.mehrnews.com)



[en.mehrnews.com](http://en.mehrnews.com)  
[@Mehrnewscom](https://twitter.com/Mehrnewscom)



# Saudi propaganda is demonizing Islam and the Palestinian cause

BY Ahmad Rashed Said

A recent report by the Saudi 24 news channel suggested that the Muslim Brotherhood was backing southern separatists in the Yemeni city of Aden - a vicious falsehood, as it is common knowledge that the separatists are supported by the UAE, a state hostile towards the Brotherhood.

In Palestine, Hamas is described as a terrorist organization in Saudi media, accused of taking the people of Gaza hostage to fulfill its agenda.

These are just a couple of ways in which Saudi state media disseminates absurd propaganda, as the government embarks on a widespread campaign to refurbish its image and control the narrative about its policies, both domestically and abroad. The hypocritical campaign stems from a desire to mislead, control and distort reality, in an effort to protect Saudi interests.

## Strict censorship

There is no such thing as free speech in Saudi Arabia. The internet is heavily controlled and monitored, with strict censorship of books, newspapers, magazines, films, television and social media. The mass media serves as a propaganda mouthpiece for the establishment.

What makes things worse is the official stance that any type of criticism of the government is seen as a potentially destabilizing and dangerous "sin". The crackdown on Saudi independent voices is fierce, even if opinions are expressed vaguely and without any clear reference to Saudi authorities.

Dozens of prominent clerics and intellectuals have been arrested in what Human Rights Watch has called "a coordinated crackdown on dissent".

Saudi Arabia is ranked 170th out of 180 countries in the 2020 World Press Freedom Index. In this climate of repression, professional media outlets are replaced by propaganda that serves the regime, promotes its worldview and demonizes its rivals at the domestic, regional and international levels.

Only one narrative of events is promoted and circulated, but because Saudi policies these days tend to be unpredictable, loyalist



propaganda can end up contradicting itself. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan was once touted as a reliable ally; now, he is a new Ottoman caliph, "terrorizing" the region into submission.

## Saudi trolls

Social media platforms have not escaped the Saudi crackdown on freedom of information. The potential for social media to facilitate political communication in the kingdom has been devastated by persistent interference and surveillance by the government.

Twitter, in particular, is considered a threat to be tamed, policed, and used to control dissent. While Twitter periodically culls accounts tied to this disinformation network, the Saudi "troll army" is still going strong, manipulating "likes" and retweets to spread propaganda and give a false impression of the popularity of Saudi policies.

And yet, these actions do not serve the state's interests. Instead, they obscure a key means by which to track and trace public opinion. In Saudi Arabia, there is virtually no "civil society", no genuine structural representation of the public, and no outlet by which to influence the decision-making process.

Driving Saudi propaganda is the notion that the Muslim Brotherhood and so-called

"political Islam" are the kingdom's main strategic enemies. This is why Saudi Arabia backed the bloody 2013 coup in Egypt, which overthrew the country's first democratically elected government. It is also why the state is hostile towards Qatar, which sided with the Egyptian democracy and the Arab Spring in general; and Turkey, which took a similar stance.

## Islamophobia thriving

Saudi authorities appear to have become obsessed with Islam itself, with the state-owned al-Arabiya channel agitating against mosques and other Islamic institutions in the West, claiming that they are dangerous, linked to the Muslim Brotherhood, and funded by Qatar or Turkey. From Swiss museums to French high schools, organizations are discredited for being "connected to Qatar-backed Muslim communities".

The whole Muslim presence in Europe is essentially painted by Al Arabiya as having "terrorist" affiliations. Islamophobia is thriving in the corridors of power in Saudi Arabia, even more than in the far-right movements of Berlin or Paris.

Saudi Arabia needs its propaganda network now more than ever, as it remains locked in a bitter struggle with Iran for regional dominance, turning to Israel for support under the notion of

"your enemy's enemy is your friend" (or perhaps the Saudi government merely capitalized on that threat to get cozy with Israel). But this move could end up backfiring on Saudi Arabia.

The dismal, short-sighted approach of the Saudi regime has led to another disastrous policy: turning against the Palestinian cause, in favor of U.S. President Donald's Trump's "deal of the century". Saudi Arabia has also embarked on a crackdown against scores of Palestinian Hamas supporters inside the country.

## Impossible mission

Saudi propaganda revolves around one central theme: inciting ultra-nationalist sentiments among the youth. Slogans such as "Saudi Arabia for Saudis", "Great Saudi Arabia" and "Saudi Arabia First" have contributed to a new narrative, described by analyst Madawi al-Rasheed as "not simply a spontaneous grassroots movement but a state-led initiative under the auspices of the crown prince".

The new sense of nationalism advocates a break not only from past religious conservatism, but also from any commitment to Arab and Muslim causes - particularly, the Palestinian issue, including the status of the holy city of Jerusalem.

Saudi propaganda tactics range from disinformation and outright lies, to demonization, name-calling and scapegoating.

Supported by the Saudi troll army, commentators and activists have pushed hashtags on Twitter aiming to delegitimize the Palestinian cause, with slogans such as "Palestine is not my cause". Dehumanizing Palestinians goes hand-in-hand with showing Israel in a favorable light - an impossible mission, but the Saudi regime continues to shoot itself in the foot.

Saudi Arabia's war on the Arab Spring and the Muslim Brotherhood has destroyed its legitimacy, both politically and morally. The situation is sad and absurd.

Ahmad Rashed Said is a Saudi political analyst and commentator with expertise in mass media and communications.

(Source: Middle East Eye)

## Biden speaks of racial 'open wound,' contrasting with Trump

Joe Biden lamented the "open wound" of the nation's systemic racism Friday as he responded to the police killing of a black man in Minnesota. He drew an implicit contrast with President Donald Trump, who has suggested authorities could respond with violence to the protests that followed George Floyd's death.

"The original sin of this country still stains our nation today," Biden, the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, said in remarks broadcast from his home in Wilmington, Delaware. "It's time for us to take a hard look at uncomfortable truths."

Biden announced his bid for the presidency last year arguing he's uniquely positioned to unite a deeply divided country. He pointed to Trump's response to a white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, as unworthy of America's people and values, AP reported.

As the country endures another spasm of racial unrest, the central premise of Biden's campaign is being tested. Biden is responding by positioning himself as an empathetic counter to Trump, who often struggles to convey emotion or connect on a personal level during moments of crisis.

Biden said he spoke with Floyd's family and demanded justice for his death while calling for "real police reform that holds all cops up to the high standards that so many of them actually meet." The president later said that he, too, had spoken with Floyd's family and called them "terrific people."

Trump initially condemned police actions in Floyd's death but later agitated the unrest by tweeting that protesters could be met with violent police resistance. He threatened to take action to bring Minneapolis "under control," called violent protesters outraged by the killing "thugs" and revived a civil-rights-era phrase fraught with racist overtones.

"When the looting starts, the shooting starts," Trump wrote in a tweet that was flagged by Twitter as violating rules against "glorifying violence." The White House said the president "did not glorify violence. He clearly condemned it."

By Friday afternoon, Trump sought to



acknowledge the shocking circumstances of Floyd's death while commending law enforcement.

"He was in tremendous pain, obviously, and couldn't breathe," the president said of Floyd. "It was a very, very sad thing for me to see it. We also know that most policemen, you see the great job they do."

Biden, without mentioning Trump by name, made clear he would approach the presidency differently.

"This is no time for incendiary tweets. This is no time to encourage violence," Biden said. "This is a national crisis, and we need real leadership right now. Leadership that will bring everyone to the table so we can take measures to root out systemic racism."

Later appearing on PBS, Biden pointed more openly at Trump: "I think this president has stoked racism."

Rep. Val Demings, a Florida Democrat considered a potential Biden running mate, criticized Trump's response.

"America is on fire," she said in an interview Friday. "And this president is standing

there with gasoline. He is dangerous. He's destructive, he's dangerous and he can't even rise to this occasion."

Amid the outrage, Biden tried to make the rest of the country feel what it was like to be African American in modern US society.

"Every day, African Americans go about their lives with constant anxiety and trauma, wondering who will be next," he said, adding, "the anger and the frustration and the exhaustion - it's undeniable."

Biden must go beyond establishing himself as a calming alternative to the president and demonstrate that he will take action that spurs the unity he's promised. It's a feat he may have to accomplish in a hurry if he wants to inspire African Americans to turn out for him in November.

The task is especially critical after Biden suggested last week that African American voters who were still undecided between him and Trump "ain't black," a comment that some black leaders said were interpreted as taking their votes for granted. Biden quickly said he regretted the comment.

NAACP President Derrick Johnson said he believes the nation is in chaos because of a lack of leadership in the White House. But he said change will only come by putting people in positions of power who will be willing to boldly address the needs of affected communities.

"I think the real question is, what are people going to do about it and how are those who are in positions of authority, and those who are seeking positions of authority, how are they going to lay out a plan moving forward?" Johnson said. "It's about what is the collective will of this society to address the systemic deficits that we all know so well but lack the political will to address."

Moments of acute racial tension have afforded platforms for leadership from presidential candidates in the past. Robert F. Kennedy was seeking the White House in April 1968 and arriving in Indianapolis when he learned that Martin Luther King Jr. had been shot and killed. Kennedy stood on a flatbed truck and spoke about the country having to move past the terrible moments of racial strife - comments later credited with preventing unrest.

Kennedy was assassinated two months later.

Black Lives Matter co-founder Alicia Garza said Biden needs to use this moment to connect further with black people and create a more robust black agenda that specifically tackles the need for policing reform and more.

"Black people cannot wait for an agenda that speaks to how it is that our lives will change under a new administration," Garza said. "We currently have a president who is inciting violence against black communities and yet, on the other hand, we have somebody who wants to lead this country that needs to go further in their plans, proposals and their vision for how to make sure that we deal with the state of emergency that black communities are facing."

"It is not enough to engage in politics as usual," Garza added, "and expect results, as usual."

## U.S. Asians, harassed over coronavirus, push back on streets, social media

A spike in harassment of Asian-Americans since the coronavirus pandemic began has led community activists in the United States to fight back - forming street patrols, rallying on social media, and supporting each other online.

Asians of varying national backgrounds have suffered a surge of attacks this year, which activists linked to the pandemic's emergence in China. Some said they feared harassment could worsen in a U.S. election year, with U.S.-China tensions ratcheting up over trade, Hong Kong and the coronavirus.

"When China is made the enemy, people who look like Chinese are the enemy. The economy is tanking, people are dying. They're angry and fearful and want to take it out on Asian Americans even more," said Russell Jeung, professor of Asian-American studies at San Francisco State University.



Since March 19, over 1,800 cases of harassment related to the coronavirus pandemic have been reported to Stop AAPI Hate, a website Jeung created with two advocacy groups.

Nine out of 10 victims were targeted because of their race, with 37% of incidents taking place in public areas, the organization said. Verbal harassment and shunning occurred in over 90% of the cases. Victims were physically assaulted, or coughed or spat on, in some 15% of cases.

Some of the harassment has taken place inside of stores, Jeung said, adding that Stop AAPI Hate is working with retailers to figure out how to ensure safe access for customers.

The New York City Commission on Human Rights this week launched a multilingual campaign to combat COVID-19-related discrimination after it received over 350 such complaints from Feb. 1 to May 15. Of these, 133, or 37%, targeted Asians. That compared with just 11 complaints of discrimination targeted at Asians during the same period in 2019.

The FBI has warned of a rise in hate crimes against Asian-Americans since the coronavirus pandemic began, according to media reports citing internal documents.

## Solidarity on streets

In some Chinatowns, volunteer patrols are forming to protect residents and confront harassers. The Guardian Angels, with patrols in over 130 cities worldwide, are recruiting in U.S. Asian communities for the first time in 41 years. Members include seniors and women, who are often targets of abuse.

"It's boring at home. I might as well do something," said laid-off dental assistant Sara Chin. The 46-year-old also patrols with New York's Chinatown Block Watch.

"Our mission is to observe, record and report," said Leanna Louie, a San Francisco businesswoman who started patrol group United Peace Corp. In eight weeks, it has filed 24 reports, including medical response incidents, auto burglaries, theft and shoplifting, leading to three arrests, she noted.

"We can break the old habits, old patterns and outdated stereotypes," Louie said. "We have assisted in aiding the community to step out of the shadows and feel more empowered."

The San Francisco Police Department has expanded its presence on foot and in cars around the city to act as a deterrent against such crimes, it said in a statement.

In New York, flyers and posters emblazoned with the words 'Don't be cruel' were created by Shirley Ng and her friends for display on Chinatown storefronts, with pointers on how to report a crime.

"I don't have to wait for support. It's my community," said Ng, an events assistant at the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund.

## Starkly similar

The campaigns recall the Pan-Asian U.S. civil rights movement in 1982, when Japan was blamed for the Detroit auto industry's downturn, said Helen Zia, a journalist-activist at the forefront of that wave.

Vincent Chin, a 27-year-old draftsman celebrating his upcoming wedding, was brutally beaten that year by two disgruntled autoworkers and died. The court sentence of a \$3,000 fine and three years' probation, with no jail time, sparked outrage in the community and beyond.

"When he was attacked and killed it was very clear it was because of what he looked like. Japan was labeled as the enemy. We're so starkly similar today," Zia said.

Tech-savvy millennials are leading today's social media response.

"My generation has no problem being loud," digital entrepreneur Bing Chen, 32, said at a virtual rally by non-profit Act To Change on May 18, Vincent Chin's birthday.

Hashtags like #RacismIsAVirus and #UnapologeticallyAsian are being shared and printed on T-shirts. #HATEISAVIRUS, created in late March by three millennial who connected via Instagram, is now a non-profit organization. It raised \$16,000 in a virtual rally last week for small businesses hurt by the pandemic, said co-founder Tammy Cho, 25.

The hashtags "try to capture the rising Asian-American pride that has bubbled to the surface during COVID-19," said Filipino-American Jeremiah Abraham, who heads Tremendous Communications, a marketing company focused on Asian-American entertainment.

Broadway actor Diane Phelan cited the #MeToo worldwide campaign against sexual harassment as an inspiration.

"We want to harness the power of social media as the #MeToo movement has, especially when we can't march and rally," she said.

(Source: Reuters)

## Afghan head of peace talks says ready for dialogue with Taliban

A top Afghan official appointed to lead the much-awaited peace talks with the Taliban said Saturday his team was ready to start "at any moment" with the insurgents.

Abdullah Abdullah, who heads a council to represent the government in negotiations, said an ongoing lull in violence triggered by a surprise ceasefire offered by the insurgents had set the tone for launching the peace talks.

"The announcement of the ceasefire, a reduction in violence and the exchange of prisoners have all paved the way for a good beginning," Abdullah said at his first press conference since taking on the role, AFP reported.

"The negotiating team is ready to begin the talks at

any moment," he said.

However, he added that there must be a fresh ceasefire during the talks.

The Taliban offered a rare three-day ceasefire that ended on Tuesday night to mark the Eid al-Fitr festival.

Officials have blamed the Taliban for carrying out some deadly attacks against security forces since the ceasefire ended, but also acknowledged that the temporary truce has led to an overall fall in violence across much of the country.

The government responded to the ceasefire by accelerating the release of hundreds of Taliban prisoners.

The peace talks between the government and Taliban

were scheduled to begin before March 10.

The United States has pushed the two sides to begin negotiating with an aim to end the nearly two-decades old war in the impoverished country.

Washington has signed a separate deal with the Taliban, which stipulates that all foreign forces will be withdrawn from the country by May next year.

Abdullah was appointed to lead the peace talks after he ended his bitter political feud with President Ashraf Ghani earlier this month.

Abdullah had announced himself as a rival president after he rejected the result of the September election which was won by incumbent Ghani.



## New survey to shed light on troglodytic architecture in central Iran

➔ 1 The handmade troglodytic architecture is a distinctive kind of architecture, which does not require major construction materials and consequently very low environmental load since its creation is majorly by extraction of space rather than the addition of mass. The Architecture by subtraction rather than addition provides many opportunities that call for comprehensive research and analysis.



As there is no obligatory method in making spaces rather than material cohesion, there is no priority in constructing a troglodytic structure, either from the roof or from the floor. Dealing with stone blocks, rocks, and piles of earth requires a variety of tools as an ax, hammer, chisel, and sledgehammer to shape the interior space.

In Iran, many magnificent cases of this architecture have taken place in different regions due to its various climates. This unique architecture is at odds with the conventional settlement patterns and construction methods and is always can take advantage of the mountains and valleys on the floor or wall, which is a good way to control climate fluctuation in different regions.

## Falak-ol-Aflak’s façade restored

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** – The Sassanid-era Falak-ol-Aflak Fortress in Khorramabad, western province of Lorestan, which was damaged by an earthquake earlier this month, has undergone urgent rehabilitation works.

The restoration work has completed on the fortress’s façade and outer cracks on the walls, provincial tourism chief Seyyed Amin Qassemi said on Friday, ISNA reported.

The rest of the project and restoration of the internal damages will be done in the next two weeks, he added.

He also noted that a budget of 3.5 billion rials (about \$85,000) has been allocated to the restoration project.



The centuries-old fortress was hit by an earthquake of magnitude 5.1. The quake was at a depth of 7 km and took place near the city of Firouzabad on May 6.

No serious damage was inflicted on the fortress, except for some cracks on the roof and walls, according to a group of assessors dispatched by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts.

Also known as Falak-ol-Aflak Castle, the unmissable eight-towered monument dominates the city as one of the most visited travel destinations in the region for both domestic and foreign sightseers.

In the past couple of years, the historic castle was faced with lots of problems that resolved in close cooperation of provincial officials by the means of both essential and urgent repair projects.

The fortress dates from the Sassanid era (224–651). It seems particularly imposing and dramatic when floodlit at night, offering picturesque views of its encircling crenellated battlements.

The Sassanid era (224 CE–651) is of very high importance in the Iranian history, under which Persian art and architecture experienced a general renaissance.

## Suitcase trade exports of handicrafts fetches Golestan province \$308,000 in year

**HERITAGE d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Iran’s northern Golestan province earned some \$308,000 from exporting handicrafts via suitcase trade (allowed for customs-free and tax-free transfer) mostly to the U.S. and Europe during the past Iranian calendar year (ended March 19).

Hand-woven kilim carpets, Turkmen handicrafts, wicker works, handmade felt products mosaic and precious and semi-precious stones constituted the majority of the province’s exports of handicrafts, provincial tourism chief Maryam Hajiebrahimi said, CHTN reported on Saturday.

Germany, Sweden, Canada, Iraq, China, Japan, Turkmenistan, Qatar, Afghanistan, Australia, France, the UK and the U.S. were the main importers during the period, she added.

She also noted that due to the existence of different ethnicities in the province, the fields and products of handicrafts in this province have a high diversity, which helps the crafters to reach global markets.

Establishment of an export institute as well as a specialized export terminal for handicrafts, identifying targeted markets, upgrading products packaging and helping craftspeople to take part in international and national exhibitions, are among the programs of the province’s Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department in the current Iranian calendar year, she concluded.

Handicrafts exports from Iran reached some \$146 million during the first nine months of the past Iranian calendar year, while exports amounted to \$289 million in the year 1397 (March 2018–March 2019), according to data announced by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.

Dozens of Iranian handicrafts have gained the UNESCO Seal of Excellence during the past couple of years. Some 75 percent of Iranian handicrafts are produced by females, Masoumeh Ebtekar, the vice president for women’s and family affairs, said in April 2018.

# Mining tourism to make debut in Iran

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Iran has started to promote mining tourism by launching the first project in northwestern Zanjan province, IRNA reported.

Anguran lead and zinc mine, located 130 kilometers west of the provincial capital of Zanjan, will be hosting tourists and sightseers in the near future, Amir Arjmand, the tourism director of the province said on Saturday.

Mining tourism is a new category in the tourism industry, which involves tours of both abandoned and active mines, and it is expected to have a great impact on the economy in the region as well as tourism develop and job creation, he added.

Methods of exploration and extraction, underground tunnels, travertine mines, machines used for mining and observing the ways of extracting minerals and rocks, especially precious stones can be engaging for the tourists, he stated.

He also noted that there will be some residential units for tours and individual travelers inside the complex.

Anguran mine, which is considered to be the largest lead and zinc mine in the West Asia, is one of the few active mines in the country.

About 500 miners work in different sections of Anguran mine, which dates back to 1922.

In recent years, Iran has developed new programs for tourism development in different branches of the industry including agritourism.

Agritourism is a subset of a larger industry called rural tourism that includes resorts, off-site farmers’ markets, non-profit agricultural tours, and other leisure and hospitality businesses that attract visitors to the countryside.

Zanjan is one of the cities founded by Sassanid King Ardashir I (180-242 CE). The province makes a base for wider explorations with the architectural wonder of Soltaniyeh, the subterranean delights of the Katala-Khor caves, colorful mountains, and the UNESCO-registered Takht-e Soleyman ruins are nearby.



In late January, Zanjan was designated as a “world city of filigree” by the World Crafts Council after the WCC assessors visited various craft workshops, stores, exhibits, and

bazaars of a city in a two-day itinerary in last December.

Filigree consists of curling, twisting, or plaiting fine, pliable metal threads and soldering them at their points of contact with each other with a metal groundwork.

## Ancient watermill in central Iran restored for tourism

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** – An underground ancient watermill, which is said to be the biggest of its kind in Iran, has been restored by the private sector after decades of abandonment as a new destination for sightseers and history buffs.

The thousand-year-old watermill, locally known as “Asiab-e Khan” is located in the entrance to the oasis city of Zavareh on the edge of the central desert of Iran in Isfahan province. Zavareh is named after the brother of Rostam (the Iranian legendary and mythical hero).

“It is now a destination for domestic and foreign tourists who can visit Iran’s largest watermill in the historic city of Zavareh,” ISNA quoted a local official as saying on May 27.

“This mill with a special architecture is becoming a hangout for domestic and foreign tourists at the entrance of Zavareh. Visitors may also visit other unique historical monuments nearby and enjoy the pleasant and clean air of the city as well.”

One of the most essential features of the mill is that it is built underground with almost no similar match to it worldwide. The watermill is situated on the confluence of the qanats (subterranean aqueducts) so that it is important from a hydraulic point of view.

Watermills were typically constructed by the then design requirements for instance they featured dome-shaped roofs with high-enough vestibules to allow camels or other livestock



to move back and forth with ease to convey grains or flour.

There are lots of attractions in this small city (formerly a prosperous one). The first and oldest four iwan mosque in Iran is the old Zavareh Jame Mosque going back to the Seljuk period, around 900 years old. Zavareh Sangbast Castle is the second largest castle in Iran after Alamut Castle. It is made up of mud and brick dating back to the 11th century.

Another predominant historical attraction, 33 kilometers from Zavareh, is Sarhangabad Palace built during the reign of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar (r. 1848-1896).

This palace with twenty stone columns looks like Chehel Sotoun Palace in Isfahan, decorated with peculiar plasterwork,

## Shahrud, the land of five climates

By Seyed Hossein HosseiniSeddiq

(Part 1/3)

Shahrud is the city of my ancestors and the summer city, where most of my childhood and adolescence summers were spent. A city where forests, mountains, and deserts meet. This feature has given the city a special tourist status, called the “small continent”. In this article, I will introduce some of the tourist attractions of this small continent.

### ■ Historical background

The historical settlement of the Shahrud region dates back to a thousand years before the birth of Christ, according to archaeologists and excavations. Based on the available historical evidence, the formation of the primary core of Shahrud city was built on the slopes of the northern and western mountains of Shahrud due to the defense of the invaders on the low hills and gradually grew and developed along with security at the site.

Based on some historical references in the texts and some archaeological and architectural evidence inside and outside the current city, caravans of the Silk Road passed through Shahrud as it was a main passage of caravans. At the same time, the presence of an ancient post office or Chaparkhaneh and a caravanserai in the city made it one of the most important monogamous centers in the region.

### ■ Geographical features

Shahrud city, as one of the largest cities in Iran in terms of area, 400 km northeast of Tehran, and different geographical climates, has the largest wildlife havens and protected areas. And including the no-hunting zones, it is famous for its small continent and the land of the five climates.

One of the important advantages of this city is the diversity of climate. The southern part, which is located near the desert, has a



A view of the Abr (“Cloud”) Forest near Shahrud

relatively warm and dry climate, the central part and the eastern parts of Shahrud have a temperate climate, and the northern parts are mountainous with a relatively cold and dry climate.

This climatic diversity is so obvious that the shortest distance from the desert to the forest is in this city. With a short distance of about 45 km from Shahrud to the north, you can visit the world’s oldest forest - the Hyrcanian cloud (Abr) forest with the most beautiful view.

And through this distance to the south, we reach the desert and the beauties of Chah Jam region and finally to Toroud village and its palm groves where the people of that region are engaged in keeping camels.

This diversity of climate along with different ethnic and linguistic ethnic groups has determined the characteristics and capabilities of tourism development in this city.

Shahrud is one of the centers of ecotourism in Iran, being

located between the Tehran-Mashhad routes and adjacent to the central and northern provinces of the country. The city has unique capabilities in various aspects of tourism, including historical, mystical and natural tourism.

There are winding forest transportation routes from Shahrud to different cities of Golestan province, each of which has its beauty:

1. Asphalt road from Shahrud - Tash village - Tuskastan forest and then Gorgan, the capital of Golestan province.
2. International road from Shahrud - Khosh Yeylaq ghaut - Nodeh forest and then Azadshahr city.
3. Rural road from Shahrud, Abar village to Zarrin Gol forest, and then Aliabad Katoul city.
4. Rural road from Shahrud - Olang forest and then Ramyan city.

The passage of millions of Imam Reza pilgrims from Shahrud city, the existence of an active airport, the center of the Northeastern railway, and the passenger terminal in this city are among the tools of tourism development.

### ■ Handicrafts

Felting of Abarsej village, weaving kilim, Glich and Choqa (a kind of woolen fabrics) in Mojen city, wood carving, making traditional instruments, curving semi-precious stones, ceramic art, pottery, wall carpet, mosaic tile, woodturning, and traditional embroidery are known as active fields in Shahrud and its other rural areas.

Other handicrafts of the city include traditional handicrafts of Kalateh Khij city, very colorful and illustrated Jajim of Kalpoosh region, women’s sweeping of Toroud village, and black embroidery of women of Tash village and needlework of Khartouran desert region.

*Dr. Seyed Hossein HosseiniSeddiq is a faculty member at the Islamic Azad Universit*

## Newly-hatched baby turtles make their ways to the Persian Gulf



**TOURISM d e s k** Photos depict newly-hatched babies of hawksbill sea turtles making its ways from the coastline of Iran’s southern Qeshm Island into the warm waters of the Persian Gulf, May 26, 2020.

The hawksbill sea turtles are endangered worldwide. Their appearance is similar to that of other marine turtles. In general, it has a flattened body shape, a protective carapace, and flipper-like limbs, adapted for swimming in the open ocean.

The island is a heaven for eco-tourists as it embraces wide-ranging attractions such as the Hara marine forests and about 60 villages dotted mostly across its rocky coastlines.





# Govt. earmarks \$3.5m to extinguish wildfire in southwest

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — The Planning and Budget Organization approved 150 billion rials (nearly \$3.5 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) for the provision of equipment and flight services to extinguish wildfire in southwestern provinces.

Wildfire broke out on Thursday evening in several protected areas in the provinces of Khuzestan, Bushehr, Lorestan, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, including Khaeez protected area. The stretch, measuring 28,000 hectares, is one the main habitats for wild goats.

Being impassable has made any fire-fighting operation almost impossible and only helicopters could reach the area.

Fierce winds, high latitude, high vegetation, and the lack of equipment and manpower have made firefighting operations much more difficult.

Ranging wildfire also swept through Ilam and Kordestan provinces, which have damaged old oak trees and part of the region's vegetation.

Following fire ignition in different parts of Gachsaran county, three planes of Masjed-e-Soleiman Air Force have been sent to the area to extinguish the wildfire burning forests and rangelands.

Daryoush Moradi, head of the rescue team dispatched by the Army told IRNA that two helicopters have made six flights to heights of Khaeez Mountain where the forest fire continues.

He said that over 30 rescue workers have been taken to put out the fire, and some 175 residents have been evacuated.

Some 300 hectares of forests and rangelands in Gachsaran county turned into



**Wildfire broke out on Thursday evening in several protected areas in the provinces of Khuzestan, Bushehr, Lorestan, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, including Khaeez protected area. The stretch, measuring 28,000 hectares, is one the main habitats for wild goats.**

ashes, as well as 200 hectares of forests in Kohgiluyeh, IRNA news agency reported.

The firefighting operation in the protected areas of Khaeez has left 6 injured so far.

The Ministry of Agriculture has obliged the Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization to cooperate with the Ministry of Defense to extinguish fires.

## New challenges of disaster management in Iran

**1 →** Based on the field surveys and assessments, the maximum intensities and most of the destructions were reported in the cities of Sarpol-e Zahab and Qasr-e Shirin in Kermanshah Province (Fig. 2).

With respect to the high seismicity and experience of destructive large-magnitude earthquakes, it reminds that several cities, such as Tehran, Tabriz and Mashhad are exposed to high seismic hazards and risks, such as the one that occurred on 12 November 2017 in Sarpol-e Zahab, with Mw7.3. Considering active tectonic setting of these important cities, more efforts for data provisions, seismic hazard investigations and risk assessments are necessary in order to reduce life and property losses.

With regard to increasing growth of population in urban areas, risk of natural hazards has become a matter of concern in earthquake-prone cities of Iran. The vulnerability of populated areas to natural disasters

is partly a consequence of decades of spatial planning policies that have failed to take into account earthquake hazards and risks in land use development decisions. Therefore, it is critically important to implement and incorporate an earthquake and natural disaster reduction spatial planning. The communication and incorporating knowledge, technology in disaster management decision making strategies is a must in actual Iran.

We are focused on "more resilient cities" as our local and regional task force for Iran to be conducted in governmental and NGO frameworks. Based on our annual plan for developing the risk communication and education in Iran, we apply the generic framework for risk reduction in order to ensure the effective practices and tools in Iran.

In this framework we aim to communicate and connect mayors, governors, councilors and other

local government leaders in order to improve their knowledge and to put their effort and ordinary executive activities in a scientific national network.

There are now organized monthly workshops and educational seminars and short courses in major cities in Iran for this purpose. Where recently the "Instagram live" virtual webinars are used gradually, especially after the Coronavirus pandemic confinement and social distancing since the end of February 2020. In these new platforms, we are trying to discuss more easily with people even living in large distances and train how to build disaster resilience city and benefits, what kind of strategies and actions are required, and how to achieve these tasks.

*Mehdi Zare is professor of engineering seismology, International Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Seismology (IIEES), and associate member of academy of sciences of Iran.*

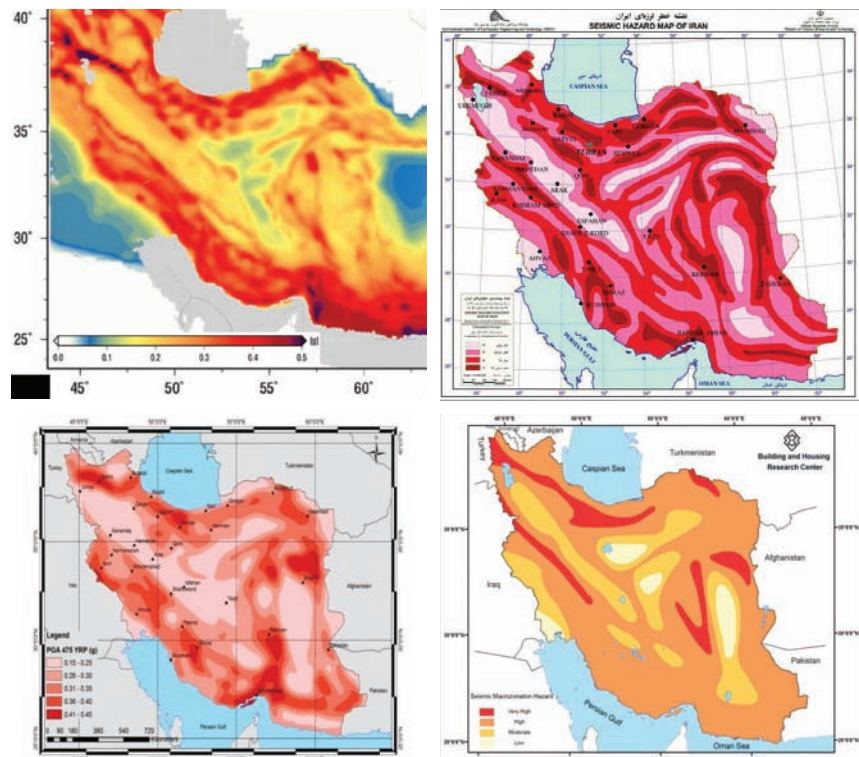


Fig 1: Seismic hazard zoning map of Iran in terms of Earthquake Acceleration by (a): Iranian seismic building code (code number 2800), 2018; (b): IIEES Zoning Map 1999; (c): Mehdi Zare, EMME Model 2018; (d): Mehdi Zare, 2015.



Fig 2: Damaged newly-built complexes (Maskan Mehr) and collapsed buildings in Sarpol-e Zahab city.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → E

## Plans on agenda to address sand and dust storms in 4 provinces

Studies to combat sand and dust storms are almost completed and next year (starting on March 21) plans will be implemented in four provinces of Khuzestan, Sistan-Baluchestan, Kerman and Hormozgan, director of the national headquarters for combatting sand and dust storms has said. Ali Mohammad Tahmasbi-Birgani explained that the national document to fight sand and dust storms will be hammered out next week and will be implemented once it is approved.

The five-year plan will set strategies and guidelines for developing early warning systems for sand and dust storms and restoration plans for wetlands and also task responsible bodies to tackle the environmental issue, ISNA quoted Tahmasbi-Birgani as saying on Friday.

## ۴ استان جنوبی در اولویت مقابله با گرد و غبار

مدیر ملی ستاد مقابله با پدیده گرد و غبار از تهیه سند ملی مقابله با گرد و غبار و نهایی شدن مطالعات طوفان ماسه و گرد و غبار خبر داد و اظهارکرد: سال بعد استان‌های خوزستان، سیستان و بلوچستان، کرمان و هرمزگان در اولویت مقابله با گرد و غبار قرار می‌گیرند.

علی محمد طهماسبی بیرگانی با اشاره به تهیه سند ملی مقابله با پدیده گرد و غبار اعلام کرد: این سند هفته آینده بررسی خواهد شد و بعد از تصویب اعمال شود.

به گزارش روز جمعه خبرگزاری ایسنا وی ادامه داد: برنامه پنج ساله مقابله با گرد و غبار برنامه‌ها و رهنمودهای کلی را در حوزه سیستم‌های پیش‌بینی هشدار گرد و غبار، عملیات اصلاحی و روش‌های احیایی را شامل می‌شود و وظایف همه دستگاه‌های اجرایی را مشخص می‌کند.

## PREFIX/SUFFIX

### “agro-, agri-, agr-”

■ **Meaning:** soil or field  
■ **For example:** The workshop presents information on sustainable **agricultural** systems.

## PHRASAL VERB

### Hand something down

■ **Meaning:** to give or leave something to people who will live after you  
■ **For example:** The ring was handed down to her from her grandmother.

## IDIOM

### Broad strokes

■ **Explanation:** if something is described or defined with/in broad strokes, it is outlined in a very general way, without any details  
■ **For example:** “In a few broad strokes he summed up the situation.”

## World Milk Day: drink healthy milk, fight coronavirus

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — The Ministry of Health has called on people to join celebrating the World Milk Day 2020 with the slogan “drink healthy milk, fight coronavirus”.

Twenty years ago, World Milk Day was established by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on June 1, to recognize the importance of milk as a global food, and to celebrate the dairy sector. Each year since, the benefits of milk and dairy products have been actively promoted around the world, including how dairy supports the livelihoods of one billion people.

This year, the aim is to break new records in terms of outreach, participation and promotion for the 20th anniversary of World Milk Day.

Last year, more than 60 countries participated in the global celebration and held more than 400 different events on this day.

Over the past decade, by holding campaigns, festivals and education courses for healthy milk consumption, the ministry has always been a pioneer in promoting the culture and nutritional knowledge of the society to increase access to milk and ensure the food security.

This year, it is hoped that the Iranian society, by consuming enough milk and dairy products, will ensure their health by strengthening the body's immune system to prevent and fight the coronavirus.

Consumption of this nutritious product is recommended in all age groups, especially children and adolescents, pregnant and elderly, as well as patients with diabetes, hypertension and cancer.

Unfortunately, per capita milk consumption has declined in recent years for a variety of reasons and has fallen far short of global standards, which can lead to diseases such as high blood pressure, cancer, osteoporosis and even multiple bone fractures.

Also, reducing milk consumption in the society can lead to short stature of the new generation.

Therefore, the ministry, which has always been concerned about improving the consumption pattern, including per capita milk and dairy consumption, invited all Iranians to participate in this public movement.

## Over 126,000 housing units renovated in rural areas nationwide

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Some 126,216 old houses in rural areas have been renovated and retrofitted over the past two years (March 2018- December 2019), Esmail Najjar, head of the Disaster Management Organization has announced.

During the Iranian calendar year 1397 (March 2018- March 2019), 61,269 housing units in rural areas have been renovated and by the end of December 2019, 66,947 houses have been retrofitted in the framework of a special plan to improve rural housing, which indicates that about 33 percent of the annual target (200,000 houses) has been achieved, he explained.

The implementation of the plan to renovate and modernize the houses in the villages, is done with the participation of the people by providing non-repayable loans, low-interest banking facilities and long-term repayment, with the aim of increasing resilience to earthquakes, he stated.

Najjar went on to say that before the implementation of the plan, housing units in villages have been vulnerable to quakes measuring less than 3 on Richter scale, IRNA reported on Saturday.

“We suggested a plan to increase the resilience of rural settlements and accelerate the security of these areas, which renovates 500,000 houses per year,” he concluded.

## WORDS IN THE NEWS

### AIDS in China: ignorance about the disease

(November 12, 2003)

The former American President, Bill Clinton, has urged the Chinese government to do more about AIDS and to do it quickly. A worldwide survey commissioned by the BBC shows that people in China are among the world's most ignorant about AIDS and the HIV virus. This report from Elizabeth Blunt

Perhaps the most **startling** result of the BBC survey was that fourteen percent of the people they talked to in China didn't even know what AIDS was, the worst result in any of the countries included; they couldn't identify it as a disease, or a virus, or something that you might die from. And these weren't **impo-**  
**verished** peasants **cut off** from the **wider world**; they lived in five of China's largest cities, and they were available to be interviewed on the telephone.

Those who did know what AIDS was were asked more questions. Was AIDS one of their main **concerns**, they were asked. **On the whole** it wasn't; most people were more worried about other health problems. And did they know how you could catch the virus? On this point the Chinese **respondents** were quite well informed -- nearly ninety per cent correctly identified the three main routes of infection -- unprotected sexual relationship, **dirty hypodermic needles**, and mother-to-child transmission. But a third thought -- **quite wrongly** -- that you could also catch it from using the same lavatory as an infected person, and nearly as many thought sharing personal items like cups and towels could spread the virus. In China, for Bill Clinton to shake hands with an infected person sent a **powerful message**.

The full result of the survey -- which covered fifteen countries -- will be published next Sunday as part of the BBC's season of special programmes about the AIDS and HIV epidemic.

#### Words

**startling:** unexpected and very surprising  
**impo-**  
**verished:** very poor  
**cut off:** separated from  
**the wider world:** people and ideas outside a person's own living area  
**concerns:** worries  
**On the whole:** true in general, but not in every detail  
**respondents:** people who answer a questionnaire or a request for information of some kind  
**hypodermic needles:** a medical instrument with a hollow needle which is used to give injections  
**quite wrongly:** mistakenly, completely incorrectly  
**a powerful message:** in this context, an action which can have a strong effect on people's feelings and ideas

(Source: BBC)



## Protests spread across U.S. over George Floyd death

Predator drone used for tracking and killing in Middle East is flown over Minneapolis

→ 1 Thousands of chanting protesters filled the streets of New York City's Brooklyn borough near the Barclays Center indoor arena. Police armed with batons and pepper spray made scores of arrests in sometimes violent clashes.

### Protesters lock down White House

The White House was briefly on lockdown Friday amid nearby protesting, according to reports.

Protesters gathered outside the White House, with President Donald Trump inside, and some tried to push through barriers set up by the U.S. Secret Service along Pennsylvania Avenue.

Trump spent Friday walking back his post-midnight "thugs" tweet about Minneapolis protesters that added to outrage over the police killing of a black man.

Trump's later repeated condemnation of the killing and outreach to the man's family was a marked change in tone from his earlier comments that also invoked a civil-rights-era phrase fraught with racist overtones.

### 'HORRIBLE, TERRIBLE THING'

Hennepin County Attorney Mike Freeman, announcing Chauvin's arrest earlier in the day, said a key piece of evidence in the case was the video clip showing Floyd lying face down in the street, with Chauvin kneeling on the back of Floyd's neck. Reuters reported.

"We have evidence, we have the citizen's camera's video, the horrible, horrific, terrible thing we have all seen over and over again," Freeman said. "We have the officer's body-worn camera, we have statements from some witnesses."

Chauvin had his knee on Floyd's neck for nearly 9 minutes, according to an autopsy report. Medical examiners found the combined impact of being restrained by police, underlying health conditions and any potential intoxicants in his system likely contributed to his death.

Floyd, a Houston native who had worked security for a nightclub, was arrested for allegedly using counterfeit money at a store to buy cigarettes on Monday evening. An employee who called police described the suspect as possibly drunk, according to an official transcript of the call.

### Predator drone is flown over Minneapolis

Meanwhile, U.S. Customs and Border Protection have been criticized for flying a predator drone - which is usually used to track and kill terrorists - over Minneapolis as the city entered its fourth day of intense protests over the killing of George Floyd.

Civil right advocates condemned the agency for flying the drone over the city which lies outside the 100-air mile border zone where CBP has jurisdiction.

They branded them a 'rogue agency' that the government 'need to defund' for policing protesters within U.S. borders.

The Predator B drone with the call sign CBP-104 was spotted circling Minneapolis on Friday morning at 20,000 feet, making several flights around the city.

The agency confirmed the flight and said the drone was being used to provide live video on the request of federal law enforcement in Minneapolis.

In a statement it argued that it 'carries out its mission nationwide, not just at the border'.

The confirmation of the drone flight emerged as protests in the city continued over the death of Floyd, a black man who died in police custody on Monday.

Video of the moments before his death showed a police officer pinning Floyd to the ground while he said he couldn't breathe.

Derek Chauvin, the police officer who knelt on Floyd's neck as he begged to be let go, was arrested for his murder on Friday.

The flight was first spotted by investigative reporter Jason Paladino, from the Project on Government Oversight, who reported that the predator drone was circling Minneapolis after taking off from Grand Forks Air Base in North Dakota.

## U.S. committed to long-term defense contracts with Saudi Arabia

The United States remains committed to long-term defence contracts with Saudi Arabia, Pentagon Spokesperson Sean Robertson told Saudi-owned newspaper Ashraq Al-Awsat in a statement.

US forces continue to have "strong capabilities" to deal with regional emergency situations, including those related to Iran, Robertson added.

"In light of the current global crisis, some of its equipment and forces are being rotated to address emerging threats and maintain preparedness," he was quoted in Ashraq Al-Awsat sister publication Arab News as saying in his statement.

Earlier in May, the US pulled two Patriot anti-missile systems from Saudi Arabia, which prompted questions on whether it was cutting down its forces and equipment in the region.

But Robertson told Ashraq Al-Awsat that the Department of Defence "is doing routine work in managing its power around the world."

"In light of the current global crisis, some of its equipment and forces are being rotated to address emerging threats and maintain preparedness."

"We continue to work with the international community and the Saudi armed forces to strengthen regional air defense capabilities," he added.

While the U.S. and oil-rich Saudi Arabia have maintained a historic alliance, with Washington providing critical support for the kingdom's regime and royal family, this relationship has come under international scrutiny as human rights organisations and activists continue to highlight Riyadh's crackdown on dissidents. In particular following the murder of columnist Jamal Khashoggi.

## Merkel declines Trump invite for in-person G7 summit

→ 1 On Friday, the White House said Trump and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson had spoken and "agreed on the importance of convening the G7 in person in the near future".

Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who hosted the 2018 summit, said any in-person gathering would have to prioritise safety, while a French presidential official said President Emmanuel Macron, last year's host, was "willing to go to Camp David if the health conditions allow".

European Council head Charles Michel, meanwhile, said through a spokesman that he would attend "if health conditions allow".

The U.S. is the worst-hit country for coronavirus infections, having registered more than 1,745,000 cases and some 102,000 deaths.

# Trump WHO funding cut prompts criticism as virus spreads

U.S. President Donald Trump's announcement he was cutting U.S. funding for the World Health Organization prompted criticism Saturday, as spiking infection rates in India and elsewhere served as a reminder the global pandemic is far from contained.

Trump Friday charged that the WHO didn't respond adequately to the pandemic, accusing the UN agency of being under China's "total control."

The WHO wouldn't comment on the announcement but South African Health Minister Zweli Mkhize called it an "unfortunate" turn of events.

"Certainly, when faced with a serious pandemic, you want all nations in the world to be particularly focused ... on one common enemy," he told reporters.

The U.S. is the largest source of financial support for the WHO, and its exit is expected to significantly weaken the organization. Trump said the U.S. would be "redirecting" the money to "other worldwide and deserving urgent global public health needs," without providing specifics.

In China, where the virus outbreak began, only four new confirmed cases were reported Saturday, all brought from outside the country, and no new deaths. Just 63 people remained in treatment.

After judging the situation there now safe, a chartered flight carrying 200 German managers back to their jobs landed in Tianjin, a port city just east of Beijing. A flight carrying another 200 was due in Shanghai Thursday.

"I'm really happy that business is starting again," said Karin Wasowski, a Volkswagen employee, before boarding the flight in Frankfurt. "I've been working from a home office but that is, of course, something completely different to being there."

More than 5,200 German companies operate in China, employing more than 1 million people.



Trump's supporters rallying to reopen Philadelphia drove around City Hall (File photo)

"This is an important step to reconnect China's and Germany's economies," said Jens Hildebrandt, executive director of the German Chamber of Commerce in North China, which helped organize the flights. "It is our common interest to contribute in helping the economy return to normalcy and pre-virus levels."

Close to 6 million coronavirus infections have been reported worldwide, with more than 365,000 deaths and almost 2.5 million recoveries, according to a tally kept by Johns Hopkins University. The true dimensions are widely believed to be significantly greater, with experts saying many victims died without ever being tested.

As some countries have effectively lowered the rate of infections, they have been moving ahead with relaxing restrictions but

are keeping a very close eye on developments.

In South Korea, credited with one of the most successful programs to fight the pandemic, there were 39 new cases reported Saturday, most of them in the densely populated Seoul metropolitan area where officials have linked the infections to warehouse workers. Authorities have so far maintained the phased reopening of schools in the hope that the recent transmissions could be contained quickly.

India registered another record single day jump of 7,964 cases and 265 deaths, a day before it was to end its 2-month-old lockdown.

That put the country's total cases at 173,763 with 4,971 deaths and 82,369 recoveries, according to the Health Ministry.

Still, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said

## China says U.S. action on Hong Kong 'doomed to fail'

The mouthpiece of China's ruling Communist Party said US moves to end some trading privileges for Hong Kong "grossly interfere" in China's internal affairs and are "doomed to fail."

Saturday's editorial in the newspaper People's Daily was responding to an announcement from President Donald Trump, after China's ceremonial parliament bypassed Hong Kong's local legislature to advance legislation that could severely curtail free speech and opposition political activities in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.

It was the "firm determination of all Chinese people" to oppose interference in Hong Kong affairs by any external forces, the paper said.

"This hegemonic act of attempting to interfere in Hong Kong affairs and grossly interfere in China's internal affairs will not frighten the Chinese people and is doomed to fail," it said. Attempts at "forcing China to make concessions on core interests including sovereignty and security through blackmailing or coercion ... can only be wishful thinking and day-dreaming!"

China has threatened to retaliate over the US move to cancel trading advantages granted to Hong Kong after its handover from British to Chinese rule in 1997. AP reported.

Tensions over Hong Kong have increased over the past year as China has cracked down on protesters and strengthened its control over the Asian financial hub.

Critics say the vote Thursday at the National People's Congress to impose security legislation on Hong Kong effectively negates Beijing's pledge to maintain the territory's separate civil, legal and economic institutions under the "one country, two systems" framework.



Trump said the administration would begin eliminating the "full range" of agreements that had given Hong Kong a relationship with the US that mainland China lacked, including exemptions from controls on certain exports. "China has replaced its promised formula of one country, two systems, with one country, one system," he said.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo notified Congress Wednesday that Hong Kong is no longer deserving of the preferential trade and commercial status it has enjoyed from the US.

It's not yet clear what impact the decision will have on US companies that operate in Hong Kong, or on the city's position as Asia's major financial hub. Beijing has yet to give details on what specific measures it will take in response, although the People's Daily editorial said China was prepared to make a "resolute counterattack and what awaits you can only be a shameful failure."

## Brazil COVID-19 death toll surpasses Spain

Brazil Saturday reached 27,944 coronavirus deaths, official figures showed, surpassing the toll of hard-hit Spain and making it the country with the fifth-highest number of fatalities.

The epicenter of the South American coronavirus outbreak, Brazil saw 1,124 deaths in 24 hours, the Ministry of Health said.

According to AFP, it also had a record number of new cases — 26,928 in one day — bringing the total number of infections to 465,166.

The United States, Britain, Italy and France lead the world in coronavirus deaths.

As of Friday Spain had recorded 27,121 deaths, with virus fatalities there rapidly

slowing. Brazil could soon surpass France, which has seen 28,714 deaths.

Brazil is second in the number of confirmed cases, though trailing far behind the United States which has 1.7 million infections.

Brazil has seen 131.2 coronavirus deaths per one million people — compared to more than 300 in the United States and 580 in Spain — but the pandemic has yet to peak in the South American country.

"There is no way to foresee" when the outbreak will peak, the Ministry of Health said, and experts say the number of cases in Brazil could be 15 times higher than the confirmed figure because there has been no widespread testing.

## U.S. considering charges against Venezuela's first lady

Four years ago, a minor player in the Venezuelan leadership was arrested in Colombia and extradited to the United States to face drug charges. He proved to be an important catch.

The man, Yazenky Lamas, worked as a bodyguard for the person widely considered the power behind President Nicolas Maduro's throne: First Lady Cilia Flores.

Now, with help from Lamas's testimony, the U.S. is preparing to charge Flores in coming months with crimes that could include drug trafficking and corruption, four people familiar with the investigation of the first lady told the Reuters news agency. If Washington goes ahead with an indictment, these people said, the charges are likely to stem, at least in part, from a thwarted cocaine transaction that has already landed two of Flores's nephews in a Florida jail.

Nicole Navas, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Department



in an open letter that India was on the path to "victory" in its battle against the virus and would "an example in economic revival," while asking his countrymen to show "firm resolve."

Russia recorded nearly 9,000 new cases overnight, around the daily level it has been at over the past two weeks as the virus continues to spread.

The national coronavirus task force said Saturday that 4,555 Russians have died of COVID-19, and 396,575 infections have been recorded. The relatively low mortality rate compared with other countries has prompted skepticism domestically and abroad.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres announced two peacekeepers serving in Mali had died from the virus. There have been 137 confirmed cases of COVID-19 among peacekeepers, the majority in Mali, but these were the first deaths.

The U.S. has been worst hit by the outbreak, with more than 1.7 million cases and almost 103,000 deaths.

Cities and states are under increasing pressure to reopen, however, especially for service industries that had seen customer numbers evaporate. The latest job-loss figures from the U.S. Labor Department brought to 41 million the running total of Americans who have filed for unemployment since shutdowns took hold in mid-March.

But there have been worrying signs that as restrictions are eased, people have not been adhering to social distancing guidelines meant to help prevent the spread of the virus.

On Friday, health officials in Missouri said that they were seeking to "inform mass numbers of unknown people" after a person who attended crowded pool parties over Memorial Day weekend at the state's popular Lake of the Ozarks tested positive for COVID-19.

In Hong Kong Saturday, Secretary for Justice Teresa Cheng said it was "completely false and wrong" to say the territory was losing its autonomy.

China's central authorities have the absolute right to take action on national security regarding Hong Kong, Cheng told reporters.

She also criticized the US, saying "any other state that tries to use coercion or whatever means with a view to interfering with the sovereign right of a state to pass its own national security law is arguably infringing on the principle of non-intervention under public international law, and that is not acceptable."

China passed the Hong Kong national security law after stiff public opposition scuppered a previous attempt by the territory's legislature to pass such legislation in 2003.

Beijing's resolve appeared to have been hardened by months of anti-government protests in Hong Kong that frequently led to violent confrontations between police and the largely youthful demonstrators. China repeatedly accused foreign governments and international organizations of fueling the demonstrations, while showing no direct evidence.

Speculation over Washington's response has included the possibility that those connected with the crackdown, including members of the Hong Kong police force, could face US travel bans or other sanctions.

"It is now clear that Hong Kong is caught in the middle of major China-US tensions," said Tara Joseph, president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong.

Businesses face multiple unanswered questions about the unraveling of the special trading relationship and it "won't be like flipping a switch," Joseph said.

## U.S. warns of Russian bid for Libya stronghold after warplane delivery

The U.S. military believes a Russian introduction of warplanes into Libya may not tip the balance in its stalemated civil war but could further help Moscow eventually secure a geostrategic stronghold in North Africa, a U.S. general said on Friday.

Russian military personnel have delivered 14 MiG 29 and Su-24 fighter jets to the Libyan National Army's Jufra air base, the U.S. military says, despite denials from the LNA and a Russian member of parliament.

U.S. Brigadier General Gregory Hadfield, deputy director of U.S. Africa Command's Intelligence Directorate, told a small group of reporters the Russian aircrafts' flight path originated in Russia and passed through Iran and Syria before reaching

Libya, Reuters reported.

Hadfield said the aircraft had not been used yet but could add new capability for Eastern commander Khalifa Haftar's LNA, which has so far failed in its year-long effort to capture Tripoli, the seat of the internationally recognized Government of National Accord (GNA).

The GNA, in turn, has been receiving critical support from Turkey, including drone strikes. But Hadfield cautioned that Moscow may not require an outright victory for Haftar to advance Russian interests.

"Backing the LNA and backing Field Marshal Haftar, it really isn't about winning the war, it's about developing strongholds," Hadfield said.

of Justice, declined to comment on any possible charges against Flores. Flores and her office at the National Assembly did not respond to questions for this article. Jorge Rodriguez, Venezuela's information minister, told Reuters in a text message that its questions about the possible U.S. indictment of Flores were "nauseating, slanderous and offensive". He did not elaborate.

In a series of interviews with Reuters, the first Lamas has given since his arrest, the former bodyguard said Flores was aware of the cocaine-trafficking racket for which her two nephews were convicted by a U.S. court. Flores also used her privileged position, he said, to reward family members with prominent and well-paid positions in government, a claim of nepotism backed by others interviewed for this article.



# Iranian clubs make excuse to resume the league

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — There is no excuse at all, the Iran Professional League must resume on June 18 but several clubs are reluctant to return to the competition for the illogical reasons.

Four clubs Tractor, Machine Sazi, Shahr Khodro and Nassaji have recently threatened they will withdraw from the competition if the league resumes. The clubs believe that resumption of the competition would increase the risk of virus transmission. So, they plan to cancel the current season in every way possible.

Tractor and Machine Sazi owner Mham-madreza Zenouzi says that they will definitely pull out the competition if the league restart.

“The health of people is more important than everything. We don’t want to endanger our players,” Zenouzi said.

While the social activities in Iran have been thrown open, it remains unclear how exactly the league should be finished without naming the champions.

In recent days, several clubs have announced that their players have been tested positive for COVID-19 and they insist there is no infrastructure to restart the competition.

Esteghlal coach Farhad Majidi says that there’s no guarantee that players won’t get affected. “I think the league must not restart. We have to take care of our players,” he said.

Honestly, FOOTBALL behind the doors can help the people to return to normal life and stay at home.

The European leagues are going to resume



their competitions because they have found out there is no way but to cope with the virus.

“What is the difference between a football player and a normal person in society, like

taxi driver, baker and other people who have returned to their jobs? The experts and those responsible for controlling the pandemic in the country have come to the conclusion

that the games must resume. So, we should follow the rules and back to our business,” Persepolis sporting director Afshin Peyrovani said on Friday.

## FIFA threatens Iran to further action



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — FIFA, in its latest letter to the Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI), has informed the federation about the objections to the draft statutes of the FFIRI and ordered that the objections must be resolved in a short time.

The Iranian football federation sent its updated draft statutes to FIFA in mid-May. FIFA had previously stopped Iran from holding its elections due to concerns over potential government interference in the FFIRI with the amended rules hoping to satisfy the sport’s governing body.

One of the crucial issues about the FFIRI Statutes is whether the Iranian football federation is a “non-governmental public organization” or just a “non-governmental organization” after controversy over exterior interference in the body.

In the first draft statutes sent to FIFA, the FFIRI has been considered as a non-governmental public organization.

However, one of the main objections that FIFA has made to the FFIRI amended statutes is that the federation’s independence is not included in the draft and it should be explicitly stated in the statutes that no external organization -in this case, the government - has the right to interfere in the football affairs.

The latest letter sent to the Iranian federation by FIFA on May 29 made the situation even more difficult for the Iranian officials.

The letter, in addition to expressing surprise at some of the changes made on the statutes that contradict FIFA’s rules, emphasizes that the international governing body of football will take further actions if the FFIRI fail to revise its statutes based on the directive previously set by FIFA.

“We deem that a failure to comply with this directive would result in the matter being brought to the attention of the relevant FIFA bodies for further action,” the letter reads.

## ‘Am I next?’ Tennis star Gauff joins chorus of protest after Minneapolis death

**NEW YORK (Reuters)** — Teenage tennis phenomenon Coco Gauff released a video protesting killings of African-Americans in the United States on Friday, joining a chorus of outrage across the country that followed the death of an unarmed black man in Minneapolis.

Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin was charged on Friday with murder in the death of 46-year-old George Floyd after cellphone footage of the white officer kneeling on Floyd’s neck prompted a wave of protests.

Sixteen-year-old African-American Gauff said on Twitter this week she would “always use my platform to help make the world a better place,” and on Friday called for action from others in a TikTok video posted to her Twitter account.

“This is why I am using my voice to fight against racism,” the caption reads, as the video cuts to images of Floyd and Ahmaud Arbery, an unarmed black man whose shooting in Brunswick, Georgia, was also captured on video. Three white men were charged in his death earlier this month.

Gauff’s video also includes a photo



of Trayvon Martin, a black teenager whose killing helped spark the “Black Lives Matter” movement.

The words, “Am I next?” appear on screen, as Gauff, wearing a black hoodie, faces the camera and raises her hands.

“I am using my voice,” the caption concludes, “Will you use yours?”

Gauff joins numerous other athletes, including basketball stars LeBron James and Lisa Leslie, who have spoken out following Floyd’s death.

Gauff seized the tennis spotlight at last year’s Wimbledon, where she defeated her idol Venus Williams in the first round and made it through to the fourth.

## Federer is the world’s highest-paid athlete, says Forbes

Roger Federer is the world’s highest-paid athlete for 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic knocked soccer’s Lionel Messi off top spot, according to the annual Forbes list released on Friday.

The Swiss tennis great, owner of a men’s record 20 Grand Slam singles titles, earned \$106.3 million in the last 12 months, including \$100 million via endorsements, to move up four places and become the first player from his sport to top the list.

Soccer players Cristiano Ronaldo (\$105 million), Messi (\$104 million) and Neymar (\$95.5 million) and American basketball player LeBron James (\$88.2 million) rounded out the top five.

“The coronavirus pandemic triggered salary cuts for soccer stars Messi and Ronaldo, clearing the way for a tennis player to rank as the world’s highest-paid athlete for the first time,” said Kurt Badenhausen, senior editor at Forbes.

“Roger Federer is the perfect pitchman for companies, resulting in an unparalleled endorsement portfolio of blue-chip brands worth \$100 million a year for the tennis great.”

Japan’s Naomi Osaka (\$37.4 million), who was ranked 29th on the list, surpassed



fellow tennis player Serena Williams (\$36 million) as the world’s highest-earning female athlete.

Osaka and Williams were the only women on the list.

Basketball players led all sports with 35 players among the top 100. American football occupied 31 spots, none higher than six-times Super Bowl champion Tom Brady (\$45 million) who was ranked 25th.

Soccer was the next most represented sport with 14 players, followed by tennis (six), boxing and mixed martial arts (five), golf (four), motor racing (three), and baseball and cricket with one each.

(Source: Reuters)

## Nakagawa: Messi, Salah, Hazard and Sterling inspire me

15 goals plus 10 assists last season. The J.League’s 2019 Most Valuable Player, as well as joint-leading marksman.

The raw statistics illustrate what an effective attacker Teruhito Nakagawa is. Indeed, the Yokohama F. Marinos No23 excelled throughout last year in helping his side seal the domestic title.

All the more notable was how the diminutive 1.61m Nakagawa - often deployed as a right-winger - dazzled spectators through his consistency in front of goal and penetrating forward forays. Surging runs down the right flank right to the goal-line before finding a teammate with an inch-perfect cross were commonplace.

In a sense, Nakagawa’s style of play is reminiscent of similarly short players. And he was quick to reveal what inspiration he has drawn from them.

“I usually watch those great players who play in the same position as me,” the 27-year-old told FIFA.com. “To name a few, players like [Lionel] Messi, [Mo] Salah, [Eden] Hazard and [Raheem] Sterling amaze me. I watch how they play, how they dribble past defenders and how they reach the best positions to shoot.

“And I like David Beckham. He was my idol when I was young. He had the confidence and aplomb to deliver the fatal strike when it mattered most. And he played in such an elegant way.”

### ■ Shooting star

Born in Kanagawa, Nakagawa cut his teeth with Senshu University in 2013, scoring 15 goals in the J.UFA-Kanto Division I League. The same year saw him feature in Japan squad’s at the Summer Universiade Kazan, where they won bronze.

Just as Nakagawa was being hailed as one of the country’s hottest prospects, his career was dealt a severe blow. He suffered a serious knee injury in October 2014 and was forced to miss the remainder of the season.

Despite this setback, Yokohama proceeded to sign the young gun. The next couple of years saw Nakagawa work hard to restore his fitness and form of old.

After spending two lacklustre seasons with Machida Zelvia and Avispa Fukuoka in J2 League, he exploded on the domestic scene when he returned to Yokohama in 2018. It began with their J.League Cup match against FC Tokyo in April that year, where Nakagawa starred in a 2-2 draw.

“It was a turning point for me,” he recalled. “I didn’t have much playing time then but I worked hard and got myself ready. So I seized the opportunity when it finally came.”

From there, he didn’t look back, scoring nine times in 24 league appearances to be a key figure. Notably, Nakagawa scored one of the goals of the season with a

lengthy run and finish against Consadole Sapporo en route to Yokohama ending a 15-year title drought.

### ■ National team call

Nakagawa received his first national team call-up last year, joining Hajime Moriyasu’s squad for the 2019 EAFF E-1 Football Championship. He made appearances against Hong Kong and Korea Republic, but failed to find the back of the net as the Samurai Blue finished runners-up.

“I am not satisfied with my performances with the national team,” he said, reflecting on his international debut. “It was a pity that we lost to Korea Republic. But I have learned a lot, such as how to build momentum and keep up our attacking momentum.”

Japan are currently on the verge of sealing early progression in the Asian Qualifiers for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 and AFC Asian Cup China 2023. With his predatory talents, of course, Nakagawa is hoping to translate his domestic form to the international arena.

“It is one of my goals to play at the World Cup,” he said. “I will work hard to make it to the World Cup qualifying squad, and I want to help my team achieve good results through my goals and assists. I need to make further progress and become a better player.”

(Source: the-afc)

## ACL final in neutral field: report

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Asian Football Confederation (AFC) is reportedly going to hold the final match of the 2020 AFC Champions League in a neutral venue.

Qatari newspaper Al Watan has reported that the representatives of the clubs will attend a session on Wednesday to make the best decision for the competition.

Windsor John, AFC general secretary, had already said the competition would resume in August in single-legged format.

Iran has four teams in the current season.

Persepolis, Esteghlal, Shahr Khodro and Sepahan are the country’s participants in the 2020 edition.

## Morteza Sharifi to leave Bursa

**Tasnim** — Iran international wing spiker Morteza Sharifi is going to leave Bursa Büyükşehir Belediyespor.

The 21-year-old player signed a one-year contract with the Turkish volleyball team last year but is not going to extend it.

Sharifi, who started his playing career in Moghavemat Oroum-iyeh, won a gold medal with Iran in the 2018 Asian Games.

He was part of the team who won the AVC Men’s Tokyo Volleyball Qualification tournament in January in China.

## Sepahan suspends training after four players tested positive

**Tasnim** — Sepahan football team’s training has been halted after the club’s four players are tested positive for coronavirus.

The media reports suggest that the Isfahan-based football club have canceled the training until further notice.

Iran Professional league (IPL) will resume on June 18.

Acting head of Iran Football League Organization Soheil Mahdi has already said if five players of a team are tested positive, the team’s matches will be canceled.

## ACH Volley coach praises Toukhteh

ACH Volley coach Matija Plesko has praised his new signing Amir Hossein Toukhteh.

The 19-year-old Iranian middle blocker has joined the team on a one-year deal for an undisclosed fee.

“Amir Hossein is a young and promising player. Despite his youth, he has already shown a certain quality, especially in the Iranian national team under the leadership of Igor Kolakovic,” ACH Volley coach Pleško said.

ACH Volley are a professional men’s volleyball team, based in Ljubljana. ACH Volley play in the Slovenian League and MEVZA League. They have won the Slovenian league 17 times.

(Source: Siol.net)

## Azadi the greatest Grounds of Central, South Asia

Tehran’s Azadi Stadium was chosen as the greatest Grounds of Central & South Asia.

The Central and South zones are home to some of the most spectacular stadiums in Asia, where they have frequently welcomed the world.

Built as the center-piece of the hosting of the 1974 Asian Games, Azadi Stadium in Tehran is the home venue for the Islamic Republic of Iran national team as well as domestic heavyweights Persepolis and Esteghlal.



The bowl-shaped structure, which helps create a vibrant and often intimidating atmosphere, sits within the Azadi Sports Complex, which also contains an aquatics center and several other sporting venues.

Opened in 1971, the record attendance was set in September 1997 as a crowd of 120,000 attended the 1998 FIFA World Cup qualifier between Iran and Saudi Arabia, which ended in a 1-1 draw.

In April 2015, the meeting between Persepolis and Saudi Arabia’s Al Nassr attracted an AFC Champions League record crowd of 100,000 — beating the previous best set at the same venue as Persepolis entertained Qatar’s Al Gharafa three years earlier.

The stadium also matched those numbers in the two subsequent ties hosted by Persepolis against Uzbek side Bunyodkor and Al Hilal of Saudi Arabia.

The Azadi Stadium has also hosted some of Asian football’s most prestigious matches, including the final of the 1976 AFC Asian Cup, when Ali Parvin scored the only goal of the game to give the home team victory over Kuwait. And in 1999 and 2002, the stadium played host to the final of the Asian Club Championship.

The stadium hosted its first AFC Champions League final in 2018, when Persepolis played Kashima Antlers in the second leg before a packed stadium. The match ended 0-0, with Kashima securing the title with a 2-0 aggregate win.

Azadi was selected as the greatest stadium in the poll with 86 percent of votes.

Bangabandhu National (Dhaka, Bangladesh), Salt Lake (Kolkata, India), Pakhtakor (Tashkent, Uzbekistan) and Central Republican (Dushanbe, Tajikistan) Stadiums were competing with Azadi at the Great Grounds of Central & South Asia poll.

(Source: the-afc)



INTERNATIONAL DAILY  
www.tehrantimes.com  
■ Managing Director: Mohammad Shojaeian  
■ Editor-in-Chief: Ali A.Jenabzadeh

» Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895  
editor@tehrantimes.com  
» Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000  
» Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051430  
» Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807  
» Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603  
» Webmaster: webmaster@tehrantimes.com  
» Printed at: Jame Jam Bartar Borna - 44197737

Tehrantimes79 Tehrantimes79 Tehrantimes79

No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran  
P.O. Box: 14155-4843  
Zip Code: 1599814713

GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Most of those who lose their wisdom, do so because of being dazzled by greed, and shutting their eyes against fact.  
Imam Ali (AS)

Iran, Russia to celebrate Chekhov’s 160th birthday in online program

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — Iran’s Book City Institute in collaboration with Russia’s Russkiy Mir Foundation will be organizing an online program to celebrate the 160th birthday anniversary of Russian writer Anton Chekhov.

A number of Iranian and Russian experts on Chekhov will be attending the weeklong webinar opening on June 21. Book City Institute deputy director Ali-Asghar Mohammadkhani said on Saturday.

Articles as well as the audio and video files are scheduled to be delivered at the webinar.

Mohammadkhani said that Chekhov created a new style in story writing and playwrighting and added, “His letters also enjoy a high value. His works were praised by his fellow writers Leo Tolstoy and Maxim Gorky. He is considered one of the most significant authors of Russia and has relected the daily life of people of his time in his books.”

“Iranian writers and playwrights such as Mohammad-Ali Jamalzadeh, Sadeq Hedayat, Simin Daneshvar, Hushang Golshiri and Akbar Raadi have also been inspired by Chekhov’s books,” he said.

“The program will also help review books by Chekhov and find the secret behind his popularity,” he added.

Chekhov (1860-1904) is the Russian playwright and master of the modern short story. His best plays and short stories lack complex plots and neat solutions.

“The Seagull, “The Cherry Orchard”, “The Duel”, “The Bear”, “Uncle Vanya” and “The Three Sisters” are among his noteworthy credits.

The Russkiy Mir Foundation in Moscow promotes the teaching of the Russian language within Russia and abroad, both to new learners of the language and to those who already know and love Russian and wish to recapture or maintain their fluency.

Graphic designers launch competition on book reading

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — A number of Iranian graphic designers has launched a graphic design competition to help promote book reading.

Entitled “The Book, My Companion in Coronavirus Days”, the competition consists of two sections, “Posters” and “Symbols”.



A poster for “The Book, My Companion in Coronavirus Days”.

Interested applicants are asked to produce their designs exclusively in Persian letters and submit their works to the secretariat of the competition before June 16. Designs with English letters and symbols will not be accepted.

Ebrahim Haqiqi, Jalal Shabahangi, Tahereh Taban, Karim Zinati, Ladan Rezaei and Iraj Mirzakhani are the organizers and the selection board of the competition.

The top 10 works will receive 10 books as awards. There are plans to hold an online exhibit of the selected works.

“Hafez and Goethe”, “Vars” honored at Archaeology Channel Intl. Film Festival

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — The Iranian documentaries “Hafez and Goethe” and “Vars” were honored at the Archaeology Channel International Film Festival in the United States, the organizers have announced.

“Hafez and Goethe” by director Farshad Fereshteh-Hekmat won the award for best music, while it also received two honorable mentions for cinematography and animation and special effects.

“Vars” by Javad Vatani also received an honorable mention for its music composed by Christophe Rezaei.

Produced at Iran’s Documentary and Experimental Film Center (DEFC), “Hafez and Goethe” explores the impacts of Hafez and Goethe, two of the most prominent poets of all time.

It takes a closer look at how Hafez, a Persian poet writing in the 14th century, came to have a strong impact and influence on Goethe, a German poet writing in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Hafez’s influence is best explored through Goethe’s invaluable collection of poems called “West–Eastern Diwan.” This collection can be seen as an early example of the blending of Western

and Eastern cultures in art.

“Vars” is about Veresk Bridge, an over 80-year-old bridge in northern Iran, which played a key role during World War II as it was used by the Allies to deliver aid to the Soviets in their fight against Hitler.

“Neandertal: The Mystery of the Bruniquel Cave” directed by Luc-Henri Fage from France was named the best film of the festival.

“First Horse Warriors”, a co-production between Canada and U.S. by Niobe Thompson won the award for best narration.

The award for best cinematography went to “Versailles Rediscovered: The Sun King’s Vanished Palace” by Marc Jampolsky from France.

Due to complications from the COVID-19 outbreak in Oregon, the festival’s playlist was available from May 13 to help viewers around the world see the films selected for screening.

The festival intended to showcase the wonderful diversity of human cultures past and present in the exploration of our place in history and in our world, as well as to promote the genre and the makers of films and video productions about cultural heritage.



A poster for the Iranian documentary “Hafez and Goethe”.

Coronavirus made artists change attitudes: war photographer Jasem Ghazbanpur

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Iranian war photographer Jasem Ghazbanpur has said that the coronavirus epidemic has made artists change their attitudes.

“Over these days Iranian and world photographers have made many works and I follow their works. Some of them were really great and some were good enough to display for people,” he said.

“Some of the photos were also inspired by the current situation and were considered as fine art reflecting different attitudes of the artists towards coronavirus,” he added.

“During the coronavirus shutdown, I began to do part of the job I had left behind and put my 40-year-old photo archive in order,” he said.

“The big problem was that we had lost our income, while struggling with a feeling of sadness and despair, but little by little we got used to the conditions and the negative feelings changed into a positive one,” he added.

He said that not being able to travel and take photos was the biggest challenge of the coronavirus days for him but little by little he learned to do other things when he saw there is no possibility of traveling.

“The artists and photographers are not separated from other people in the society. As a photographer I am no different from a taxi driver or a salesperson. For example, if any one of us would lose our daily income or get sick, we would not have insurance and could not do any other jobs,” he said.

“I am in the same situation. For example, once I was



Jasem Ghazbanpur poses for a photo holding his book “Life and Nothing More”.

physically injured and had to stay in bed for months and I had no money and no income. But then again I don’t feel myself to be different from others. I just hope we can all get together and manage to get through these difficult days,” he remarked.

Ghazbanpur said that he was due to publish a selection of his photos in two books during March, but publication was halted due to the outbreak of the coronavirus and that he is still waiting for better conditions to publish his books.

“I have a large number of photos that could be

published in several books but it all depends on the current situation,” he said.

In 2016, Ghazbanpur displayed a collection of backstage photos he had taken from the renowned Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami’s film “Life and Nothing More” in an exhibition at Tehran’s Silk Road Gallery.

The 1992 film is a semi-fictional work based on the 1990 earthquake in northern Iran that killed over 30,000 people, and Kiarostami’s search among the survivors for the actors from his previous film, “Where Is the Friend’s Home”.

The book of Ghazbanpur’s collection entitled “Life and Nothing More” was also unveiled on the opening day of the exhibition.

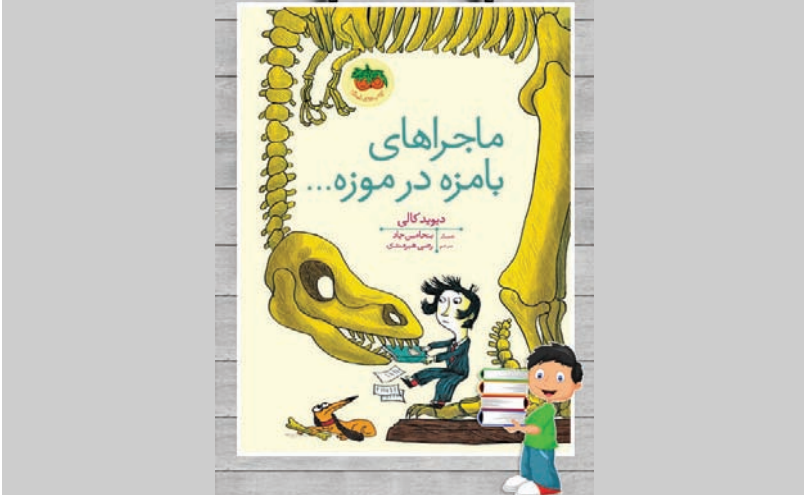
His pictorial record of the religious ritual of Arbaeen, which is the end of the 40-day mourning period following the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS) and his loyal companions on Ashura, was also published in a book in Tehran.

Entitled “The Fortieth”, the book contains photos of the pilgrims flocking to the Iraqi city of Karbala during Arbaeen to visit the shrines of the Imam (AS) and his brother Hazrat Abbas (AS).

The book was published in 2017 by the Shia Art and Culture Institute and contains photos by 14 Iranian photographers who have covered the annual ritual from 2009 to 2016. The photos have been captioned by Mohammad-Taqi Ekhtiari.

Saeid Mahmudi, Mehdi Tirani, Ali Bayat and Masud Zندهruih Kermani are among the photographers whose works have been published in the book.

Italian writer Davide Cali shares stories from museum with Iranian children



A poster for the Persian copy of Italian writer Davide Cali’s “A Funny Thing Happened at the Museum”.

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — Swiss-born Italian writer Davide Cali’s children’s book “A Funny Thing Happened at the Museum” has recently been published in Persian.

Illustrated by French artist Benjamin Chaud, the book is appropriate for children aged between six and nine, publisher Ofoq announced on Saturday.

“This is the wonderfully wacky world of celebrated international author-illustrator team Davide Cali and Benjamin Chaud,” Amazon writes about the book.

“Notoriously (and delightfully) unreliable narrator Henry is late to a museum where his class is spending the day. But he has a plan: He’ll just catch up in one of the exhibits. That’s not possible in these halls! With volcanoes erupting, dinosaurs charging, and

secret stairwells lurking, reuniting with his classmates becomes a quest of outrageous proportions. Young readers will revel in this entertaining book’s over-the-top antics.”

Chronicle Books published the original book in March 2017 and Razi Hirmani is the translator of the story.

Ofoq has previously published Hirmani’s translations of the duo’s “The Truth about My Unbelievable Summer” and “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to School”.

Cali is a writer of picture books and graphic novels, primarily for children and young adults. His work has been published in 25 countries and translated into many languages. He also writes under the pseudonyms Taro Miyazawa and Daikon.

Children’s writer Ekrami narrates “Adventures of Mashti Mamdali’s Car” on Tehran social culture



Front covers of two books from Iranian Children’s writer Jamaledddian Ekrami’s collection “Adventures of Mashti Mamdali’s Car”.

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — Children’s writer Jamaledddian Ekrami, who is best known for his poem collections “The Wooden Horse” and “Hey! Hey! It’s Spring”, has recently completed his latest book “Adventures of Mashti Mamdali’s Car”.

The book, which will be published in ten volumes, delves into historical facts about Tehran’s social culture under the Qajar dynasty until the beginning of the reign of Iran’s last monarch, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

Each volume contains three stories based on historical facts and set in Autol Khan, the dilapidated car of Mashti Mamdali, one of Iran’s first drivers, whose father was the driver of the steam car of the Qajar king, Nasser ad-Din Shah.

In the collection published by Neyestan

Publications, Mashti Mamdali travels in old Tehran’s streets, telling funny stories about various occupations, people in bazaars, street performances, wedding ceremonies, traditional bathhouses and barbers.

The phenomena of photography, conscription and vaccination, and the issuance of birth certificates and the advent of carriages, cars, trains, and bicycles each have their special stories in the collection.

The stories of Iran’s first modern museum, theater and cable car are also narrated in the book, which has been authored based on “Old Tehran”, a comprehensive history of Tehran by the Iranian scholar Jafar Shahri.

The book illustrated by Farhad Jamshidi is appropriate for children above 9 and young adults.