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Mission was to make impossible possible: Queiroz 11



The Tehran Times offers condolences on the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Sadiq (AS)

'\$42b annual non-oil export target achievable'

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Zarif says Tehran to host Syria talks within Astana format

TEHRAN — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif announced on Monday that Tehran will soon host a meeting on Syria on the basis of the Astana talks.

During a joint press conference with Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu in Ankara in Ankara, Zarif said leaders of Russia, Iran and Turkey plan to hold a virtual summit in line with the Astana talks.

He also said that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan will visit Iran during which the two countries will sign economic agreements.

The Astana format was launched by Russia, Turkey and Iran in January 2017 in an effort to bring all warring parties in Syria to the negotiating table as a complementary part of the UN-sponsored peace talks in Geneva. →2

UAE finances PKK terrorists in northern Iraq

A report says the United Arab Emirates has allegedly provided financial support to the anti-Turkey PKK militant group in Iraq's northern semi-autonomous Kurdistan region.

A security source at the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) told the London-based al-Araby al-Jadeed newspaper that the authorities had imposed limitations on money

transfers coming from the UAE.

The source said any money transfers exceeding \$1,000 coming from the UAE to the region's foreign exchange companies and banks required a "proof of approval" from security authorities.

The move comes amid reports that the UAE has provided financial support to anti-Turkey Kurdish militants in recent months. →10

British consuls' review of Iran economy in 19th century published

TEHRAN — A book containing the British consuls' review of Iran economy during the 19th century has recently been published.

"The Economy of Iran in Documents from the 19th Century" has been authored by Ahmad Seyf, a course leader and lecturer

in political economy at the New College of the Humanities in London.

Seyf has written the book based on reports prepared by a number of British consuls in various Iranian cities about the country's economy during the 19th century. →12

Dear readers,

The next issue of the Tehran Times will be published on Saturday, June 20.

TENDER INVITATION NO.99-1007

IRAN ALUMINIUM COMPANY (IRALCO) would like to invite eligible suppliers for the supply of **20,000 MT. Calcined Petroleum Coke** on tender basis. Interested companies are allowed to send their competitive offer till 30.jun.2020 based on our required instruction to following address:
NO.49, Mollasadra Ave. , Vanak Square , Postal code: 1991614581 Tehran , Iran .Attention : Mr. Rahimi

Tel: +98 21 88049046-7

Fax: +98 21 88049045

For obtaining tender's documents and more information, please check: www.iralco.ir

Public Relations Department of Iran Aluminum Company



TENDER INVITATION NO.99-1008

IRAN ALUMINIUM COMPANY (IRALCO) would like to invite eligible suppliers for the supply of **5000 MT. Aluminum Flouride** on tender basis. Interested companies are allowed to send their competitive offer till 30.jun.2020 based on our required instruction to following address:

NO.49, Mollasadra Ave. , Vanak Square , Postal code: 1991614581 Tehran , Iran .Attention : Mr. Rahimi

Tel: +98 21 88049046-7

Fax: +98 21 88049045

For obtaining tender's documents and more information, please check: www.iralco.ir

Public Relations Department of Iran Aluminum Company



TENDER INVITATION NO.99-1003

IRAN ALUMINIUM COMPANY (IRALCO) would like to invite eligible suppliers for the supply of **2,000 MT. Silicon Metal** on tender basis. Interested companies are allowed to send their competitive offer till 30.jun.2020 based on our required instruction to following address:

NO.49, Mollasadra Ave. , Vanak Square , Postal code: 1991614581 Tehran , Iran .Attention : Mr. Rahimi

Tel: +98 21 88049046-7

Fax: +98 21 88049045

For obtaining tender's documents and more information, please check: www.iralco.ir

Public Relations Department of Iran Aluminum Company



TENDER INVITATION NO.99-1006

IRAN ALUMINIUM COMPANY (IRALCO) would like to invite eligible suppliers for the supply of **5000 MT Aluminum off grade** on tender basis.

Interested companies are allowed to send their competitive offer till 30.jun.2020 based on our required instruction to following address:

NO.49, Mollasadra Ave. , Vanak Square , Postal code: 1991614581 Tehran , Iran .Attention : Mr. Rahimi

Tel: +98 21 88049046-7

Fax: +98 21 88049045

For obtaining tender's documents and more information, please check: www.iralco.ir

Public Relations Department of Iran Aluminum Company



TENDER INVITATION NO.99-1004

IRAN ALUMINIUM COMPANY (IRALCO) would like to invite eligible suppliers for the supply of **70 MT. Al-Mn 75% or 80% Hardener** on tender basis.

Interested companies are allowed to send their competitive offer till 30.jun.2020 based on our required instruction to following address:

NO.49, Mollasadra Ave. , Vanak Square , Postal code: 1991614581 Tehran , Iran .Attention : Mr. Rahimi

Tel: +98 21 88049046-7

Fax: +98 21 88049045

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Public Relations Department of Iran Aluminum Company



TENDER INVITATION NO.99-1009

IRAN ALUMINIUM COMPANY (IRALCO) would like to invite eligible suppliers for the supply of **1200 Pieces. Bottom Cathode Blockson** tender basis.

Interested companies are allowed to send their competitive offer till 30.jun.2020 based on our required instruction to following address:

NO.49, Mollasadra Ave. , Vanak Square , Postal code: 1991614581 Tehran , Iran .Attention : Mr. Rahimi

Tel: +98 21 88049046-7

Fax: +98 21 88049045

For obtaining tender's documents and more information, please check: www.iralco.ir

Public Relations Department of Iran Aluminum Company



TENDER INVITATION NO.99-1005

IRAN ALUMINIUM COMPANY (IRALCO) would like to invite eligible suppliers for the supply of **5 MT. Aluminum - Nickle Hardener-80%** on tender basis.

Interested companies are allowed to send their competitive offer till 30.jun.2020 based on our required instruction to following address:

NO.49, Mollasadra Ave. , Vanak Square , Postal code: 1991614581 Tehran , Iran .Attention : Mr. Rahimi

Tel: +98 21 88049046-7

Fax: +98 21 88049045

For obtaining tender's documents and more information, please check: www.iralco.ir

Public Relations Department of Iran Aluminum Company



TENDER INVITATION NO.99-1010

IRAN ALUMINIUM COMPANY (IRALCO) would like to invite eligible suppliers for the supply of **5000 Aluminum Scrapon** tender basis.

Interested companies are allowed to send their competitive offer till 30.jun.2020 based on our required instruction to following address:

NO.49, Mollasadra Ave. , Vanak Square , Postal code: 1991614581 Tehran , Iran .Attention : Mr. Rahimi

Tel: +98 21 88049046-7

Fax: +98 21 88049045

For obtaining tender's documents and more information, please check: www.iralco.ir

Public Relations Department of Iran Aluminum Company



Zarif says Tehran to host Syria talks within Astana format

1 → ■ **‘Iran to export natural gas to Turkey’**
Zarif also said that based on the agreements between the two countries, Iran will export natural gas to Turkey.
Elsewhere, he said that the two countries have resumed business flights which were stopped after the coronavirus outbreak.
The foreign minister also said that the two countries will cooperate in fighting the coronavirus.



■ **‘Turkey is against sanctions on Iran’**
Cavusoglu, for his part, said that Turkey is against sanctions on Iran. “Iran’s stability and peace is important for us,” Cavusoglu said. “We oppose unilateral sanctions. In fact, the pandemic has taught us that the world needs greater cooperation and solidarity.”
He said that Iran and Turkey will resume flights on August 1.
Cavusoglu said the coronavirus pandemic taught the world the necessity of unity.
So, Turkey will continue cooperation with Iran, he said.
■ **Zarif describes talks as ‘productive’**
Zarif said in a tweet that he held “productive talks” with senior Turkish officials.
“Productive talks with my friend @MevlutCavusoglu & other senior officials in Istanbul. In-depth exchange & fruitful decisions on bilateral cooperation, and also regional & global issues. Close consultations imperative. Next stop: Moscow. Neighbors always our priority,” he tweeted.

IAEA to continue verification in Iran

By staff and agency
Rafael Grossi, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said on Monday that the agency continues to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material declared by Iran under its Safeguards Agreement.
“The IAEA continues to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material declared by Iran under its Safeguards Agreement, and evaluations regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities for Iran have also continued,” he said, addressing the first virtual meeting of the IAEA’s Board of Governors.
He also claimed that Iran has denied the IAEA access to two locations and that, for almost a year, it has not engaged in substantive discussions to clarify “our questions related to possible undeclared nuclear material and nuclear-related activities.”

Over 21,000 Iranian lawyers condemn U.S. sanctions as violation of human rights

(Press TV) — Thousands of Iranian lawyers have signed a statement in condemnation of the U.S. sanctions and its moves against human rights, calling on international organizations to strongly counter such measures.
The statement, signed by 21,333 lawyers and legal experts, argues that the United States’ sanctions against the Iranian nation are anti-human, as they violate the most basic rights of human beings, especially under the current circumstances where the entire world is gripped by the novel coronavirus outbreak.
“While all other countries have mobilized all their resources to contain the spread of the disease and treat the patients, the Iranian nation is facing the virus on the one hand and the unfair, inhumane, and cruel U.S. sanctions on the other hand,” the statement said.
“Today, American officials admit that their maximum pressure has been designed to target the civilian population and the innocent people with the purpose of sowing public dissatisfaction with the ruling system of Iran,” it added.
The statement said Washington’s inhumane approach to continue anti-Iran sanctions and its preconditions for the sale of medicine and medical equipment to Iran even at the time of the COVID-19 outbreak are in violation of humanitarian issues and must be strongly condemned.
It said the U.S. measures are against the international rules and regulations, as sanctions that prevent nations from accessing medicine and food directly endanger the right to live and the lives of human beings, which are the most basic human rights.
While American officials claim food, medicine and other humanitarian supplies are exempt from the sanctions imposed by Washington, the U.S. measures targeting everything from oil sales to shipping and financial activities have deterred foreign banks from doing business with Iran, including humanitarian deals.
The statement signed by Iranian lawyers further described the U.S. sanctions as a crime against humanity, which must be prosecuted by The Hague.
It also pointed to the U.S. assassination of Iranian commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani in a January drone attack near Baghdad International Airport, and called it a blatant violation of international human rights rules.
“The assassination of General Soleimani is a violation of the Article 2 of the UN Charter, and put at risk the international peace and security,” it added.
“The UN Security Council must acknowledge the U.S. move as a violation of global peace and security, and take appropriate action based on the Article 41, and if deemed necessary, based on the Article 42 of the UN Charter,” the statement went on to say.

Violation of human rights in U.S. is ‘systematic’: intelligence chief

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian Intelligence **d e s k** Minister Mahmoud Alavi said on Monday that violation of the human rights in the United States is “systematic” and has become “institutionalized”.
“The United States violates human rights in areas of racism, terrorism and countries’ sovereignty, and this violation of human rights is systematic and institutionalized,” Alavi said during a meeting of the Coordination Council for Islamic Propagation.
He also said, “They [the U.S. officials] talk about economic relations, but they seek to loot. They talk about human rights, but their behavior runs contrary to this slogan.”
Late last month the Iranian Foreign Ministry said 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.
Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi has also said that Iran hopes Washington will let the American people breathe.
“We have been witnessing cruelty and discrimination



against a part of American society since the time of slavery. They are shouting against oppression and the world is hearing it,” ISNA quoted him as saying on June 9.

Protests have started across the U.S. over brutal killing of an African-American man.
George Floyd died on May 25 after being pinned down by a white officer despite yelling: “I cannot breathe” under the knee of a white U.S. police officer.
Mousavi had earlier said that brutal killing of the African-American man 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,” he tweeted on May 28.
Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on June 3 that the suffocation of the black American shows the nature of the United States.
Such crimes have frequently happened in the past, and the U.S. has done the same things in many countries including Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and other countries, Ayatollah Khamenei pointed out.
Pointing to the slogan of “I cannot breathe,” which the U.S. people have been chanting in recent days, Ayatollah Khamenei said, “This is what the nations that have been the victims of United States’ oppressive usurpation want to say from the bottom of their hearts.”

‘Defaming Iran which has been hosting Afghans for four decades unacceptable’

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — As a country which has been warmly hosting millions of Afghan immigrants for four decades, propaganda campaign against Iran is not acceptable, Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi said on Monday.
“We have always wanted stability and peace in Afghanistan. However, it does not mean the Islamic Republic would close eyes on illegal actions. When border and customs are formed, it means that all must respect, but a number of people deceived by traffickers or for any other reasons enter the country illegally and the Islamic Republic of Iran does not permit it,” he said during a press conference.
He noted, “Iran has good relations with its neighbors and seeks to expand ties at all levels.”
Certain groups have recently attacked the Iranian embassy in Kabul under the pretext that some Afghan migrants were drowned while they were trying to enter Iran illegally.
Iran’s Foreign Ministry on Saturday summoned Afghan Ambassador Abdolghafor Lival over actions of certain anti-Iran groups in Afghanistan.
Certain groups have a record of opposition to the Islamic Republic of Iran and the good neighborliness, the Foreign Ministry said.
Rasoul Mousavi, an assistant to Iran’s foreign minister and the director-general of the Foreign Ministry Department for West Asia, expressed concerns over ef-



fects of these groups’ actions on relations between the two countries.
Afghan media outlets have claimed that about 50 Afghan migrants had been beaten and thrown into a river in the border. Iranian political and border officials have refuted the claim, saying the incident happened on the Afghan side of the Harirud River.
According to some reports, 18 of the migrants, including a 12-year old boy, were drowned in the river.
Iran and Afghanistan have launched an inquiry into the tragedy.
Iran has said it has extensive evidence that the incident has not happened on its borders.
According to Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi, the confirmed

reports received from Iranian border guards show that such an incident has not occurred on the mentioned date and location cited by Afghan media.
He added that due to weather conditions of the region, not a single Afghan citizen entered the Iranian territory on that date.
Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for International and Legal Affairs Mohsen Baharvand has blamed illegal traffic of Afghan migrants for the human tragedy.
Iranian diplomats and border guards have carried out investigations which show the Iranian guards were not involved in the drowning incident, Baharvand added.
“Our investigation does not show that incident in Harirud was caused by interference of the Iranian border guards. However, we considered evidence of the

Afghan side important and gave it to the related bodies,” Baharvand told IRNA in an interview published on June 7.
He said, “Due to Afghan armed forces’ fight against terrorism, Afghanistan has dismantled its border stations and this has caused lack of control over borders by Afghanistan. This issue has led to problems caused by human traffickers.”
Baharvand also said that Iran and Afghanistan will form a joint border committee.
Iranian and Afghan political delegations held their last round of talks on the incident in Kabul on May 26.
Also, on June 3 a number of Afghan migrants were killed in a car accident in Yazd province.
Following the incident, Afghan Ambassador Lival held a meeting with officials of the province. Ambassador said, “We believe that human traffickers and the driver are responsible for the incident.”
According to Lival, the driver has been identified and judicial authorities are striving to arrest him.
■ **‘U.S. presence causes regional insecurity’**
Mousavi also said that Iran is not concerned about the United States’ pullout from Afghanistan and noted that the U.S. presence causes regional insecurity.
“We have never been concerned about the United States’ pullout from Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and other countries in the region. We insist their [U.S. forces] presence cause war in the region,” Mousavi pointed out.

UN position on Saudi oil attacks influenced by U.S.: expert

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian **d e s k** analyst Pir Mohammad Molazehi has said that the United Nations has adopted position on Saudi oil attacks in November 2019 under the influence of the United States.
“It seems that the United States benefits from report of the United Nations Secretary [General Antonio Guterres], because when the secretary general announced that the missile had Iranian origin, it means the United Nations wants to accompany the United States,” Molazehi told IRNA in an interview published on Monday.
He noted that the U.S. seeks to take the case to the UN Security Council to extend arms embargo on Iran.
UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told the Security Council in a report seen by Reuters on Thursday that cruise missiles used in several attacks on oil facilities and an international airport in Saudi Arabia in November 2019 and February 2020 had been of “Iranian origin”.
He also said the “items may have been transferred in a manner inconsistent” with Security Council Resolution 2231, which enshrines the international nuclear deal — officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) — signed between Iran and world powers in 2015.
Guterres said in his report that the United Nations had examined the debris of weapons used in the attacks on an oil facility in Afif in May, the Abha international airport in June and August, and the Aramco oil facilities in Khurais and Abqaiq in September.
The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations has rejected the UN secretary general’s report on the implementation of the Security Council resolution 2231 as flawed and inaccurate.



In a press release on Friday, the mission said that the UN Secretariat lacks the capacity, expertise, and knowledge to conduct such a sophisticated and sensitive investigation.
Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has rejected claims that Iran was behind attacks on Saudi oil installations as “unfounded”.
“Such claims are unfounded and unfortunately, the United Nations secretariat has shown that it is influenced by the United States’ threats. The region is in critical situation. It is wise for the regional countries to hold talks about future rather than to be imprisoned in the past,” he said during an interview which was held live on Instagram on Saturday.
He also said, “In the first year that I became the foreign minister, I told Saud bin Faisal, the late Saudi foreign minister, if he wanted to complain about the past. I told him be sure that we have more to complain about, however, we can talk about future.”
Zarif also noted that it will be possible to reach a solution and an agreement in the region if the regional countries understand that the U.S. will not stand beside them and just seeks to empty their pockets.

Iran condemns U.S., Israel’s interference in IAEA affairs

TEHRAN (FNA) — Iranian Government Spokesman Ali Rabiyei deplored the U.S. and Israel for meddling in the International Atomic Energy Agency’s affairs, saying that the IAEA should keep its independence.
“We warn that using political criteria in dealing with the tasks and rights of countries in the IAEA will result in nothing but the breakdown of trust and the growth of instability in the global arena,” Rabiyei told reporters in Tehran on Monday.
He also warned the IAEA Board of Governors against falling under Washington and Tel Aviv’s pressure.
Rabiyei criticized politicization of the International Atomic Energy Agency’s reports on Iran’s nuclear activities under the influence of the United States and the Israeli regime, reiterating that the Islamic Republic carries out a peaceful transparent nuclear program.
“We firmly emphasize that we are meeting all our international commitments, as confirmed by the 17 positive reports of IAEA in recent years, and we are carrying out most transparent activities,” he said.
Rabiyei said that the Islamic Republic of Iran has given the highest level of access that a country can give to the IAEA, adding, “We have always been prepared to provide the Agency with the necessary access to (to our facilities) in accordance with previous valid agreements and international regulations.”
He noted that Iran will continue its measures according to the same routine and requirements, calling on the IAEA to set its requests within the framework of the body’s statutes.
Rabiyei lambasted politicization of the international bodies’ reports over Tehran’s nuclear activities, saying, “We expect the members of the IAEA’s Board of Governors to support the independ-



ence of this international body against the U.S.’ bullying.”
In relevant remarks on Friday, Iranian Ambassador and Permanent Representative to Vienna-Based International Organization Kazem Qaribabadi said the U.S. and its allies plan to continue forging obstacles against the country during the upcoming IAEA Board of Governors meeting, slated for June 15 on verification of Nuclear Deal’s Implementation by Tehran.
The United States has always been seeking to undermine the mechanism and methods adopted by various international organizations including the IAEA, Qaribabadi said through an Instagram post.
He added that the IAEA Board of Governors will hold its June 15 meeting online due to conditions caused by coronavirus epidemic.
At the meeting, IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi will give report on verification of implementation of the July 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) by Iran, the envoy reiterated.
He stressed that the U.S. and some Western countries are keen to get an online voting procedure if necessary; although some other member states including Russia are opposed to such a measure.

Guterres' report completely aligned with U.S. plot: Mousavi

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi has criticized the UN secretary general's report claiming that the missiles that hit the Saudi Aramco where of Iranian origin, saying the report was completely aligned with the United States' new plot against Iran.

"This claim is baseless and we regard the accusations leveled [against Iran] as a result of pressure by America and the Saudi regime," Mousavi said on Monday during a press conference.

"The UN secretary general was pressured by certain countries and read a report that was unfounded," he added.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told the Security Council in a report seen by Reuters on Thursday that cruise missiles used in several attacks on oil facilities and an international airport in Saudi Arabia in November 2019 and February 2020 had been of "Iranian origin".

He also said the "items may have been transferred in a manner inconsistent" with Security Council Resolution 2231, which enshrines the international nuclear deal — officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) — signed between Iran and world powers in 2015.



Guterres said in his report that the United Nations had examined the debris of weapons used in the attacks on an oil facility in Afif in May, the Abha international airport in June and August, and the Aramco oil facilities in Khurais and Abqaiq in September.

In his reaction to the report, Mousavi also said the U.S. has taken the UN and other international bodies "hostage".

"This is America's strategy," the Foreign Ministry spokesman pointed out.

On Friday, the Iranian Foreign Ministry officially rejected the accusations and

expressed deep concern over the abuse of the UN Secretariat for political purposes.

"While the Secretariat has treated with utmost tolerance and leniency towards these violations so far, it is now surprisingly engaged with an issue in which it has no authority to point out highly technical and legal findings, and its so-called technical report is in no way in line with the practical arrangements of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 to perform its functions," the statement read.

"Levelling accusations against other states using self-created processes and arbitrary procedures is a dangerous heresy, which is not accepted by the international community," the Foreign Ministry warned.

Iran's ambassador to the United Nations Majid Takht-Ravanchi also condemned the report, saying it has been made under political pressure from the U.S.

Iran rejects allegations in the UN Secretariat report, including the "Iranian origin" of the arms, Takht-Ravanchi said via Twitter on Friday.

"UN Secretariat lacks capacity, expertise & knowledge to conduct investigations," Takht-Ravanchi wrote.

"Seems the US—with its history of Iran-bashing—sits in the driver's seat to shape UN 'assessments'," he added.

Armenia highlights friendly ties with Iran

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Armenian Parliament Speaker Ararat Mirzoyan has highlighted the centuries-old friendly ties between Iran and Armenia, calling for expansion of ties between the two countries.

"Armenia greatly highlights the centuries-old friendly ties and warm relations existing between our countries," Mirzoyan wrote in a letter to his Iranian counterpart, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, to congratulate him on his election as the new head of the Iranian parliament.

"On behalf of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia and personally me, I warmly congratulate you on your election in the high and responsible post of the Speaker of Majlis of the Islamic Republic of Iran and wish you successes in the implementation of your mission," his letter read, according to the Armenian parliament website.

"Today, the general agenda of our countries' relations



involves a wide scope of contacts — from the cultural and inter-religious relations to economic cooperation," he added.

Armenian parliament speaker also pointed to Ghalibaf's achievements, saying that having great contribution in the spheres of defense, security of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as of the government of Tehran, he will surely have prominent achievements in the post of the head of the legislative branch.

"I am convinced that during your tenure the inter-parliamentary cooperation between Armenia and Iran will continue its upward path and will give new impetus to the cooperation existing between the two countries for the benefit of our states and for welfare of the Armenian and Iranian friendly peoples," he remarked.

Late last month, the new Iranian parliamentarians elected Ghalibaf, a former mayor of Tehran, as the new speaker of the parliament. He won the highest number of votes in the Tehran constituency in the Feb. elections.

Iran's 5 countermeasures to an extension of arms embargo

TEHRAN (MNA) — Iran has five options on the table in response to U.S. efforts to extend an arms embargo on Tehran, which will allow the country a chance for "countermeasure" against continued lack of commitment by the Western sides and Washington's plots.

As the time for the removal of the arms embargo on Tehran approaches, Washington is trying to create obstacles and prevent the normalization of Iran's position in the global arms market. However, the fact of the matter is that Iran's hands are not exactly tied in this situation.

Late last year, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who had worked hard to get his country out of the JCPOA and put maximum pressure on Iran, while failing to mention the U.S.'s series of multi-billion-dollar arms deals with Arab countries, referred to a clause in the UN Security Council Resolution 2231, of which the JCPOA is a part, and called the end of Iran's arms embargo a cause of insecurity in West Asia.

Pompeo and the U.S. Special Representative for Iran, Brian Hook, have repeatedly called for an immediate halt to the process of the embargo removal, which is set to take place in October under Resolution 2231.

The Washington Post reported late last month that the U.S. would initially seek a consensus in the Security Council to pass a resolution under which Iran's arms embargo would be extended indefinitely.

The report went on to say that if the United States failed in doing so, it would use Resolution 2231 to declare itself a party to the JCPOA and trigger the dispute mechanism. Doing so would snap back all UN sanctions under Chapter VII, which also includes the arms embargo.

Iran, in response, has cited the unilateral and illegal withdrawal of the United States from the JCPOA, which practically stripped the U.S. of any rights regarding the deal, and stressed that the country would take countermeasures if the U.S. succeeded in re-imposing the arms embargo.

Although countries such as China and Russia have officially stated that the U.S. efforts are illogical as Washington is no longer a party to the nuclear deal, Tehran also has several options on the table that could stop these efforts from bearing fruit.

■ 1. Limiting inspections

Given that Iran is under the strictest inspection, it seems that the country can limit the scope of inspections, the number of inspectors, and the level of access.

In this regard, Behrouz Kamalvandi, the spokesman of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), noted the possibility of limiting inspections in a press conference at

the Fordow enrichment facility on November 9, 2019, saying, "Regarding our steps to reduce commitments to the JCPOA, I should mention that the IAEA's inspections are no longer necessary, and if they still want to continue the inspections, they will just be wasting their time."

Mohammad Ali Pourmokhtar, a member of the Legal and Judicial Committee of the previous parliament, also pointed to lack of commitment by the Western sides, saying, "If the Europeans continue to fail to live up to their commitments and the country's interests are not met, certain restrictions will be imposed on the IAEA's inspections."

Mohammad Javad Jamali Nobandegani, deputy chairman of the National Security Committee of the previous parliament, also said, "Imposing certain restrictions on the International Atomic Energy Agency's inspections of Iran's nuclear facilities could be on the agenda as part of reducing the country's commitments to the JCPOA."

■ 2. Increasing the level of enrichment

Before the signing of the nuclear deal, Iran was enriching uranium at 20 percent, and many saw this as a bargaining chip for the country. Political analysts believe that with enrichment above 5 percent considered as a redline, the country's announcement of a return to the 20 percent could be an effective step against the West's continued lack of commitment.

In his press conference last year in Fordow, Kamalvandi said, "We have the ability to enrich uranium up to 60% and we will do it based on the needs of the country and the directives of our authorities."

Ali Akbar Salehi, head of the Atomic Energy Organization, also told Mehr on the sidelines of reporters' visit to the Shahid Ahmadi Roshan Enrichment Complex (Natanz), "Whenever senior officials order for 20 percent enrichment, we will get it done in four minutes."

In this regard, the deputy chairman of the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee of the previous parliament also said, "One step of reducing Iran's commitments could be the increase in the level of enrichment as much as required in order to force Europeans to fulfill their obligations."

■ 3. Stopping the implementation of Additional Protocol

Iran is implementing the Additional Protocol voluntarily under the JCPOA, and according to the terms of the agreement, the country's parliament must review and ratify the Additional Protocol eight years after the deal was adopted.

However, given that the United States unilaterally withdrew from the JCPOA and

that the three European countries - Britain, Germany, and France - are not fulfilling their commitments under the deal, some officials have noted that Iran could stop the implementation of the Additional Protocol as a countermeasure and a serious warning to the remaining European signatories to the nuclear deal to fulfill their commitments.

Ali Motahari, the former deputy speaker of the parliament, also said, "Now that Iran is under so much pressure and its nuclear facilities are under inspection more than any other country, we can refrain from implementing the Additional Protocol."

The spokesman of the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee of the previous parliament also said in the same vein, suggesting, "When the Additional Protocol is being implemented voluntarily, but the other side does not live up to its commitments, then the Islamic Republic can stop the voluntary implementation of this protocol."

■ 4. Leaving NPT

Iran joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968 and kept its membership in this controversial treaty after the Islamic Revolution. Many experts believe that it is a mistake for Iran to continue its participation in the NPT in the face of repeated failure of the Western sides to fulfill their commitments to the nuclear deal.

Before Trump's decision to withdraw from the JCPOA, Ali Shamkhani, secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, had said, "If the United States withdraws from the nuclear deal known as the JCPOA, one of Iran's options is to withdraw from the NPT." After the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA, Kamalvandi said in a statement that the AEOI had made as many as 15 proposals to reduce Iran's commitments to the nuclear deal, and leaving the NPT was one of them.

According to the secretary of the Supreme National Security Council and the spokesman of the Atomic Energy Organization, it is clear that leaving the NPT is one of the options on Iran's table to counter the U.S. and Europeans' lack of commitments, and the possibility of making this decision in due time is very high.

In addition to Shamkhani and Kamalvandi's remarks, Hamid Baedinejad, Iran's ambassador to London, told British journalists and media outlets, "Some circles in Iran are of the opinion that at the moment, the country is not benefitting from its membership to the NPT. Following the issues surrounding the JCPOA, more and more people are paying attention to what is being said about leaving the NPT."

■ 5. Leaving the JCPOA

One of the most important countermeasures

against the Western sides' continued lack of commitment and the U.S.'s sabotage is to withdraw from the nuclear deal. Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in an interview, "Iran has several options and leaving the JCPOA is one of them. This is definitely one of the dozens of options we have."

He also said in a journalists' roundtable held at the UN office in Tehran that Iran might withdraw from the nuclear deal if the EU's financial mechanism did not work.

In addition to Zarif's remarks, Seyed Abbas Araghchi, deputy foreign minister and a senior member of the nuclear negotiating team, in an interview with a national TV channel on May 7 suggested pullout from the JCPOA as one of options on Iran's table, saying, "We have leaving the JCPOA on our agenda."

In another interview, Araghchi stressed that what was important was Iran's interests, not the preservation of the JCPOA, adding, "If the country's interests demand that we abandon the JCPOA, this will happen."

In a roundtable at the non-proliferation conference in Moscow, he said, "It is clear that when an agreement is not in your best interest, there is no reason for you to stick to your commitments. Everyone knows that the balance of the agreement is completely upset. Any agreement is based on give and take. If Iran is only going to give and not take anything in return, why should it stay in this agreement?"

■ Iran's change of attitude in the nuclear doctrine

At the Moscow meeting, Araghchi, while recalling Iran's nuclear cooperation, in a way threatened the Western sides party to the JCPOA, saying, "If Iran's reward after all this interaction, negotiation and cooperation with the IAEA is to be put once again under Chapter VII [of the UN Charter], this means that our 'nuclear doctrine' has been wrong all along, and we need to reconsider our policy and our nuclear doctrine."

Furthermore, President Hassan Rouhani told a cabinet meeting on May 7 that "the lifting of the arms embargo is an integral part of the JCPOA. If the arms embargo returns one day under any pretext and via any mechanism, our response will be the same as I wrote in the last paragraph of a letter to the P5+1 leaders. They know all too well what our response will be that day, and what severe consequences such a mistake will bring them."

These two issues show that Iran, by adopting a coherent and deterrent strategy, is trying to tell the Europeans that if their passivity in the face of U.S.'s excessive demands is to continue, Iran will give an appropriate response in conformity with national interests.

Death row spy was not a military staffer: Tasnim

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The man sentenced to death for spying for the CIA and Mossad on the whereabouts of martyr Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani had nothing to do with Iranian military, according to Tasnim.

Seyed Mahmoud Mousavi-Majd was neither a military staffer, nor a member of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), nor even a member of the Basij forces who go to Syria voluntarily for the fight against terrorism, according to documents exclusively obtained by Tasnim.

The convict had reportedly left Iran before the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979 when he was a child, and grew up in Syria.

Mousavi-Majd established connections with a number of Iranian military advisers in Syria and began a career as a driver.

Under the guise of a driver, the spy was gathering intelligence for the U.S. and Israel and received a salary of \$5,000 a month from the CIA and Mossad.

Last week, Judiciary spokesman Gholamhossein Esmaili announced that Mousavi-Majd was sentenced to death.

"Recently, a person named Seyed Mahmoud Mousavi-Majd, who had connections with Mossad and CIA and provided them with intelligence on security issues such as the Guards Quds Force and the location of martyr Qassem Soleimani in exchange for U.S. dollars was sentenced to death by the Revolution Court, and the verdict has been confirmed by the Supreme Court and will be implemented soon," Esmaili announced during a press conference on June 9.

The Judiciary then said the case of Mousavi-Majd has nothing to do with the American assassination of General Soleimani in Baghdad in early January.

Mousavi-Majd was arrested months before that incident and the court had issued an initial ruling on his case on August 25, 2019, the Judiciary said, explaining that the convict has never been released from custody since apprehension.

On January 3, U.S. President Donald Trump ordered airstrikes that killed General Soleimani and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), in Baghdad's international airport.

Soleimani was recognized internationally as a legendary commander in the war against terrorist groups, especially Daesh (ISIS).

In the early hours of January 8, the IRGC fired dozens of ballistic missiles at a military airbase hosting U.S. forces in Iraq as part of its promised "tough revenge" for the terrorist attack.



Iran's presence in Latin America nightmare for America, says ex-diplomat

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — A former Iranian ambassador to Germany says Iran's presence in Latin America is essential because it creates nightmares for the United States and safeguards Iran's national interests.

"The first message that the arrival of [Iranian] oil tankers in Venezuela conveys is that a resistance axis has been formed against global bullying, which is spearheaded by America," Alireza Sheikh-Attar said in an interview with Mehr published on Monday.

Five Iranian oil tankers by the names of Petunia, Forest, Faxon, Clavel, and Fortune carried fuel to Venezuela despite the United States' sanctions. The last of them entered Venezuelan waters on June 1.



The tankers carried 1,520,000 barrels of gasoline and diesel fuel to Venezuela. There was also a team of Iranian engineers and specialists from the oil industry on board heading for the country.

According to Sheikh-Attar, the arrival of Iranian tankers in Venezuela was a very important global economic development because Iran showed that it can nullify the U.S. pressures through cooperation with its allies.

He further hailed the measure as a strong move that disrupted the enemies' games.

Venezuela's envoy to the UN Jorge Valero has said that Iran and Venezuela will continue fighting U.S. President Donald Trump's hostile policies.

"The people of Iran and Venezuela are two brotherly nations and will continue their war against Trump's hostile policies," ISNA quoted him as saying last week in an interview with Al Mayadeen TV channel.

Valero also praised Iran's humanitarian aid to Venezuela. Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has praised the crew of the Iranian tankers that shipped fuel to Venezuela.

"You did a great job. Your move was jihadi. You brought glory to the country," the Leader said in a message published last week.

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has said that Russia, China, Iran, and Cuba are real friends of Venezuela as they provide all-round help to Caracas.

"Humanitarian aid is coming from China, Russia, Iran, and Cuba. They are [Venezuela's] true friends," TASS quoted him as saying in a speech broadcast by the state TV on June 7.

Iranian Ambassador to Venezuela Hojat Soltani has also said that the United States' unilateral sanctions have lost their efficiency.

"The United States' unilateral sanctions against Venezuela, Iran and a number of other countries have lost efficiency," IRNA quoted him as saying in an interview with the Al-Alam news network.

He also said that arrival of Iranian oil tankers in the Venezuelan waters was an "international victory".

Monthly red meat output stands at 30,900 tons

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN**— Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) announced that production of red meat in Iran stood at 30,900 tons in the second month of the current Iranian calendar year (April 20-May 20). IRIB reported.

The SCI's report said that beef and veal had the lion's share (55.7 percent) in the country's red meat output during the second month with 17,200 tons, followed by lamb and mutton with 11,000 tons, goat meat with 2,100 tons, and red meat from other livestock with 552 tons.



As previously announced by the SCI, the production of red meat in the country stood at 21,900 tons in the first month of the current year (March 20-April 19), which was two percent higher than the output in the same month of the previous year.

Beef and veal had the lion's share (55.4 percent) in the country's red meat output during the first month with 12,100 tons, followed by lamb and mutton with 7,900 tons, goat meat with 1,420 tons, and red meat from other livestock with 421 tons.

Production of red meat in Iran stood at 94,900 tons in the last quarter of the past Iranian calendar year, indicating 16 percent growth compared to the same quarter in the preceding year.

Iran is among the leading consumers of red meat in the West Asia region with lamb being the most sought after.

However, the consumption per person is around a third of what is normally seen in countries like the U.S. and Australia, mainly due to the prohibition of pork in Islamic law.

The major part of Iran's red meat imports comes from countries like Brazil, where Iranian supervisors directly control culling methods to ensure they comply with religious rules.

TEDPIX goes up to 1.2m points on Monday

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN**— TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 14,699 points to 1.2 million on Monday, IRNA reported.

As reported, 8.228 billion shares worth 132.456 trillion rials (about \$3.153 billion) were traded at the TSE on Monday.

The first market's index increased 10,118 points and the second market's index climbed 32,360 points.

The value of shares in Tehran Stock Exchange, which is the main stock exchange of Iran, has risen 578 percent over the past two years.

TSE's worth of shares stood at 26 trillion rials (about \$619 million) at the end of the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (April 19), which shows 38.5 percent growth from the year start (March 20).

The growth trend in Iran's stock market was outstanding in the past Iranian calendar year 1398 (ended on March 19).

While the prosperity was witnessed in the four major stock exchanges of the country, i.e. Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), and Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX), in the past year, TSE, which is the major one among the mentioned four exchanges, experienced a huge boom.

TEDPIX, the main index of TSE, that had closed at 178,000 points at the end of the year 1397, climbed to 512,000 points at the end of last year, and through surpassing half a million points it registered a new record in the exchange's existence.

Many capital market experts and also those active in this market believe that Tehran Stock Exchange experienced a golden era in the past year, as the volume of trades and the number of shareholders in this market during the previous year was not at all comparable with those of its preceding years.

While the value of trades in TSE jumped 2.6 folds in the past year, return on investment (ROI) reached 180 percent in this market, registering the highest annual growth in the exchange's history.

Different factors contributed to the past year's prominent success in the stock market.

One important factor was the proper ground laid in the stock market and providing a more appropriate condition for traders, for example through setting better regulations and applying some new financial instruments.

People's elevated knowledge about the stock market was another contributing factor in this due.

And the other factor was the status of parallel markets, such as those of foreign currency, gold coin, and housing in the past year that made making investment in the stock market a better and more profitable choice for the investors.

While the past Iranian year was full of success for the TSE, the market is also preserving its successful performance in the current year, and the noticeable point in this due is that the other economic sectors are experiencing some declining trend due to the coronavirus pandemic.

We have been witnessing new record highs continuously posted by the exchange since the year start.

On April 18, TEDPIX registered its highest-ever daily jump, as it gained 23,219 points to stand at 668,981.

It also experienced its highest-ever weekly growth in the week ended on April 24, while the index rose 96,160 points to 741,923.

Iran's stock market also witnessed its largest-ever initial public offering (IPO) on April 15, when Social Security Investment Company (SSIC, also known by its Persian acronym Shasta) offered eight billion shares, which account for 10 percent of its stakes, for sales in Tehran Stock Exchange.

Anticipating that the TSE's trend of growth will be also continued in the current year is endorsed as the government is strongly determined to carry out its privatization plan through offering the shares of some state-owned organizations in the stock market during this year.

'\$42b annual non-oil export target achievable'

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Head of Iran Export Confederation Mohammad Lahouti says achieving the \$42 billion non-oil export target which the country has set for the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021) is possible considering the recent improvements in exports.

"Considering the growth of [non-oil] exports in late 1398 [previous Iranian calendar year ended on March 19] which continued in the current year, the exports are expected to grow significantly in the second half of the year, and hopefully we will achieve the foreseen target," Lahouti told ILNA.

"Of course, we missed the first quarter of this year due to the coronavirus outbreak and the closure of borders; however, since over 80 percent of the border crossings have been reopened, the exports growth will be much higher in [the Iranian calendar month of] Khordad (May 21-June 20)," he added.

He further noted that it could also be possible for the exports to increase in the second half of the year to even exceed the \$42 billion target.



"If there is enough cooperation between exporters and executive bodies, we can hope for more exports," Lahouti said.

Mentioning the preferential trade deal with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the official said Eurasia will be a great export opportunity this year and

we have also the largest markets in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"China and India are also among our target markets; we are trying to increase our exports to China and hopefully our exports to India will return to normal levels as well."

Iran calls on IMF to defy U.S., grant it \$5b loan

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has called on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to defy U.S. resistance and grant the country the \$5 billion loan which Iran requested to relieve the economic pressure caused by the pandemic.

"We're hoping the IMF board won't remain under U.S. pressure and will live up to its commitments to all countries," Rouhani said in a statement shown on state TV.

The president said the U.S. is still blocking Iran's loan application.

Fighting the coronavirus outbreak in the country, in March, Iran asked IMF for an emergency loan to help it contain the pandemic and lessen its economic consequences.

In a letter to IMF in early March, Central Bank of Iran (CBI)'s Governor Abdolnaser Hemmati requested \$5 billion from the Fund's Rapid Financing Initiative (RFI), an emergency program that gives loans to countries facing with sudden shocks such as natural disasters.

Although this was Tehran's first request for an IMF loan in nearly six decades, it raised opposition from the U.S. as the senior officials in the Trump administration said Iran's government has billion-dollar accounts still at its disposal. The United States said it plans to block Iran's request.

The U.S. reaction was seriously blamed by the Iranian officials, saying that the United States has no right to prevent the International Monetary Fund from giving loan to Iran.

Later on April 9, Hemmati wrote on his Instagram page, "We expect the IMF to immediately respond to the request of Iran which itself is a founding member of the fund."

The same day, President Rouhani said that the IMF must fulfill its duties unbiasedly.

Also, government spokesperson Ali Rabiei said in a press conference on April 13, "From the legal point of view, the United States is not in the position to obstruct the legal performance of institutions and international organizations".

Iranian officials are in fact urging the International Monetary Fund to put politics aside and do its professional duties in regard to Iran's requests for financial aid during crises, especially in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

In an interview conducted by Bloomberg and published on April 19, Hemmati said, "We have not asked the United States for help! We have asked the IMF for support: an international, apolitical institution affiliated with the UN, and for which, we were one of the founder members and contributors over the past 75 years. The United States is a member of the IMF as all 190 or so other countries. The last time I checked,



the United States is not running the IMF, and the management and the Board of Governors are those who oversee the work and ensure that the IMF delivers on its mandate. But I would like to repeat that all UN organizations say the IMF or WHO, should stay away from politics and deliver on their institutional mandates."

The U.S. approach toward Iran's request also evoked reactions from other countries, as they strongly blamed this stance.

Steel ingot output rises 4% in 2 months on year

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** —Production of steel ingot in Iran reached 4.697 million tons during the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-May 20), which was four percent higher than the figure of the same period of time in the past year, IRNA reported citing the data released by the country's steel producers.

Steel ingot output had stood at 4.529 million tons in the first two months of the previous year.

The released data also put the steel billet and bloom output at 2.701 million tons in the two-month period of this year, which was two percent lower than that of the same time span in the previous year.

Although, the two-month slab production rose 13 percent to 1.996 million tons.

According to Iran's outlook plan for the mining sector, the production of steel ingot in the country is planned to hit 33 million tons in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021).

The country has produced 20.226 million tons of steel ingots during the past year.

Annual steel ingot production is planned to increase 3.2 million tons in the current year, as announced by the Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and



Renovation Organization (IMIDRO).

IMIDRO has put the value of the projects to boost the steel ingot output in the present year at \$793 million.

Citing the data indicated in the World Steel Association (WSA)'s latest report, IMIDRO has also announced that the production of crude steel in Iran has risen 14.1 percent in March 2020 from March 2019.

The WSA's report, which is on steel production by 64 countries, put Iran's steel output at over 2.8 million tons in March.

WSA has previously announced that Iran's crude steel production climbed 30 percent

in 2019 while the average global growth in this sector stood at 3.5 percent.

According to the global organization, Iran produced 31.9 million tons of crude steel in 2019, while the figure was 24 million tons in 2018.

The data and reports released by Iranian organizations also show that the country's steel sector is still experiencing growth in output and export despite the U.S. sanctions.

In its outlook plan for the Iranian calendar year 1404 (2025-2026) Iran has envisaged production of 55 million tons of steel per annum, and to achieve this target the country

requires to produce 160 million tons of iron ore concentrates.

Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry has announced that production of iron ore concentrate in Iran reached 47.306 million tons in the previous Iranian calendar year, registering a four-percent rise compared to the preceding year.

The country has extracted 64.274 million tons of iron ore during the past year, according to the data released by Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization.

In a bid to prevent the exports of unprocessed minerals, creating more value-added and meeting the requirements of domestic producers for the raw materials, Iran has levied a 25-percent duty on the exports of raw minerals (especially iron ore) since September 23, 2019.

Industry Ministry believes that the duty is going to encourage the production of more processed minerals such as pellets and concentrate instead of selling the raw minerals.

Iran's export of steel products in the past Iranian calendar year rose 27 percent compared to its preceding year.

As reported, the country's major steel producers managed to export about 7.33 million tons of the products in the previous year.

Nearly 27m tons of copper ore extracted in 2 months

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Over 26.926 million tons of copper ore was extracted in Iran during the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-May 20), IRNA reported.

As reported, the two-month copper ore extraction shows a 13-percent fall from the figure of the same period of time in the past year.

Copper ore extraction also fell five percent to 14.888 million tons in the second month of this year from that of the previous year.

Four development projects worth 40 trillion rials (about \$952.3 million) were inaugurated last month in the copper sector of Kerman Province in the southeast of Iran.

President Hassan Rouhani put the projects into operation through video conference.

The projects inaugurated in Khatoun Abad Copper Complex included increasing the capacity of copper smelting in the complex, building a copper concentrate storage, construction of a sulfuric acid production plant, and an oxygen supplying unit.

Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO)'s Managing Director



Khodadad Gharibpour was present in the inaugural ceremony of the projects.

By putting the first project into operation, the complex's capacity for producing copper anode rises by 50 percent to 120,000 tons, and the country's copper smelting capacity rose to 400,000 tons. This project creates jobs for 120 persons.

Some 1.11 trillion rials (about \$26.4 million) plus \$118 million have been invested for this project.

The second project, which was the construction of a 60,000-ton storage facility, was implemented at the cost of 158 billion rials (about \$3.7 million) plus three million euros, creating jobs for 250 people.

The third project is valued at 750 billion rials (about \$17.8 million) plus 100 million euros and the fourth one was put into operation at the cost of 192 billion rials (about \$4.5 million) plus 31 million euros.

In its outlook plan for the mining sector in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021), Iran plans to produce 1.427 million tons of copper concentrate.

The country had planned to produce 1.198 million tons of copper concentrate in the past year, while the output reached 1.18 million tons.

Head of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization Khodadad Gharibpour has announced that the National Iranian Copper Industry Company has defined copper projects worth 100 trillion rials (about \$2.38 billion) to be implemented in the current calendar year.

Petchem industry's development goals to be fully realized by Mar. 2022

E N E R G Y **TEHRAN** — Managing director of Iran's National Petrochemical Company (NPC) says all the goals set, based on the country's Sixth Five-year National Development Plan, for the petrochemical sector will be realized by the end of the Iranian calendar year 1400 (March 20, 2022).

Speaking in a press conference on Monday, Behzad Mohammadi said with the completion of 27 remaining projects of the petrochemical sector's second leap, by the end of 1400 the country's petrochemical production capacity will increase to 100 million tons (mt) from the current 66 mt.

"That is the goal set in the sixth national development plan," Mohammadi said.

According to the official, the petrochemical industry's incomes will also increase by \$10 billion from the current \$15 billion.

The deputy oil minister called the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2020-March 20, 2021) a golden year for the petrochemical industry, saying: "By the end of this year, 16 petrochemical projects will be put into operation."

■ Petchem industry, Iran's top source of non-oil revenue

Elsewhere in his remarks, Mohammadi pointed to the significant role of the petro-



chemical industry in the national economy and specified: "This industry is the top provider of foreign currency for the country."

He further emphasized that the development plan for the country's petrochemical industry should be changed in accordance with global developments.

"It is necessary to move from a one-feed one-product plan toward a one-feed several-products strategy to create sustainable development in this industry," the official said.

"We must protect ourselves against the turbulences in the global market, so the most important solution for the country's petrochemical industry is smart development, which is also on the agenda of the National Petrochemical Company."

■ Exports upward trend to continue

The NPC managing director elsewhere mentioned the stable exports by the country's petrochemical complexes despite all the problems and limitations and said: "Fortu-

nately, exports of petrochemical products are underway smoothly despite all the problems."

Emphasizing on the sustainable production in the industry, the official said: "There were only fluctuations at the beginning of the current year due to the outbreak of the coronavirus, which were gradually stabilized; so that in [the Iranian calendar month of] Ordibehesht (April 20-May 20), the trade of petrochemical products in the country's mercantile exchange increased by 11 percent compared to the last year."

Mohammadi said that last year, the petrochemical industry received 35 million tons of feedstock equivalent to 800,000 barrels of crude oil per day from the oil industry, adding that the figure is going to increase to 1.5 million barrels when the new projects are operational.

According to the official, 23 million tons of petrochemical products worth \$10 billion were exported in the previous year and 8 million tons worth \$5 billion were consumed inside the country.

The total revenue of the country's petrochemical industry in the previous [Iranian calendar] year was \$15 billion, of which about 85 percent was returned to the country's domestic Forex Management Integrated System (locally known as NIMA).

Deal worth €125m to recover 82m square feet of flare gas

E N E R G Y **TEHRAN** — Managing director of Iranian Central Oil Fields Company (ICOFC) said the company has inked a €125-million Engineering Procurement, Construction and Financing (EPCF) deal with an Iranian company for implementing a project that would prevent 82 million square feet of gas flaring every day.

The project, called Dehloran gas pressure boosting station, is aimed at collecting flare gases of Dehloran and Danan oil fields to be supplied as the feedstock of an NGL3100 liquid gas plant in the region, IRNA quoted Ramin Hatami as saying on Sunday.

According to Hatami, all stages of the project including financing, equipment preparation, as well as installation and commissioning are going to be carried out by the mentioned company in a 23-month period.

Underlining the significance of the project, the official noted that Dehloran station aims to complete Danan and Dehloran fields' value chain, leading to optimal use of the country's resources for realization of the "surge in production" intended by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Seyed Ali Khamenei.

Protecting the environment, and creating jobs during the construction of the station and also after its commissioning were also emphasized as important goals of the said project.

The official further mentioned some of



the final products of this project including natural gas for injection into Cheshmeh-Khosh oil field and also the country's national gas network, as well as gas condensate which would be used as feedstock for Dehloran petrochemical plant.

Hatami pointed out that the implementation of this project by a capable Iranian company is one of its strong points and said: "Considering that Central Iranian Oil Company is using a new contract form for awarding this project, it is expected that the project implementation would be accelerated."

As reported, the Dehloran gas pressure boosting station is going to be constructed about 35 km southeast of Dehloran County in Ilam Province.

Being developed by West Oil and Gas Production Company (WOGC) which is an ICOFC subsidiary, Dehloran and Danan oil fields are among the fields Iran shares with Iraq in the western borders of the country.

In order to achieve a desirable level of environment protection and sustainable development, the National Iranian Oil Company and the Oil Ministry are implementing

various programs, one of which is promoting the establishment of flare gas recovery units in the country's oil-rich regions.

Back in August 2019, Hamid Chitchian, a former minister who currently advises the government on energy issues, said the country had major projects planned to prevent flare gas waste.

According to Chitchian, at the time about 16 billion cubic meters (over 52 billion cubic feet) of flare gas was burning in the country that could be used for various economic purposes, including power generation.

Later that month, National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) Head Ahmad Mohammadi said that the country's southern oil fields will stop wasting flare gas within three years.

Commercializing flare gas would enable Iran to diversify energy resources for power plants and industrial units while it can also be exported to other countries.

Earlier this month, NIOC Managing Director Masoud Karbasian said the oil industry's flare gas waste in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19) declined by 25 percent compared to the preceding year.

Mentioning the NIOC's programs for environmental protection in the previous year the official said: "One of these measures was the implementation of a project to collect 18 to 20 million cubic meters per day of flare gases by NISOC."

Russia's Sakhalin-2 LNG plant embarks on one-month maintenance work

Russia's Sakhalin-2 liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant has started maintenance work set to last for just over a month at one of the plant's two lines, Reuters reported on Monday, citing the company.

Sakhalin Energy had originally planned for work to be done on both lines at the same time, but logistical difficulties caused by the coronavirus outbreak forced it to postpone some of the maintenance to 2021.

Works at the Lunskeye-A offshore platform, the Onshore Processing Facility (OPF), Booster Station No.2 and the LNG plant would involve around 1,500 people, all of whom have undergone a 14-day period of self-isolation to guard against the spread of the novel coronavirus, the company said.

"Due to current economic downturn and the pandemic challenge, we had to modify the initial turnaround scope," Ole Myklestad, Sakhalin Energy's production director, said in a statement.

"To ensure the safety of our people and reliable production, the company has de-



cided to follow the original timeline, but shut down only one train at the LNG plant. At Lun-A and the OPF, we will be shutting down one train at a time."

The plant is located on the Pacific island of Sakhalin, which has had a relatively low number of coronavirus cases - 330 in total - as of June 14.

LNG production at the Sakhalin-2 plant last year fell to around 11.15 million tons from 11.41 million tons in 2018.

Equity holders in Sakhalin Energy include Gazprom, Royal Dutch Shell, and Japan's Mitsui and Mitsubishi Corp.

Saudi Aramco cuts July crude supplies to at least 5 buyers in Asia

World's largest oil exporter Saudi Aramco has reduced the volume of July-loading crude that it will supply to at least five buyers in Asia, seven sources told Reuters on Monday.

The cuts were mainly for medium and heavy grades and were seen at refineries in countries such as China, the sources with knowledge of the matter said.

Four of the refiners saw smaller July cuts than what they had received in June. The sources declined to be named due to sensitivity of the matter.

The move followed a deal struck by the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its allies including Russia to keep production cuts of 9.7 million barrels per day, or 10 percent of pre-coronavirus world demand, until the end of July.

Saudi Arabia said it will end its deeper, voluntary cuts amid signs of global demand recovering.

Tighter West Asia supplies and im-

proving refinery appetite for crude have prompted Saudi Aramco to hike July official selling prices (OSPs) to Asia more than expected even though refining margins and oil demand have yet to catch up with the rising crude valuation, the sources said.

"Increased OSPs have caught us by surprise and these are not attractive to refiners especially in a market where refining margins are weak," said BPCL's head of refineries R Ramachandran.

This has led at least one major Asian buyer to request for almost a third less of its contract volume for July, one of the sources with direct knowledge of the matter said.

Two other sources said they will increase the purchase of cross-region arbitrage cargoes this month, such as West African crude and U.S. crude that are priced more competitively and reduce the purchase of expensive West Asian oil.

Saudi Aramco did not immediately respond to a request seeking comment outside of business hours.

Small-scale gas power plants' output hit record high of 800MW

E N E R G Y **TEHRAN** — Iran's small-scale gas power plants managed to generate 800 megawatts of electricity, the highest since the establishment of such power plants in the country, the news portal of the Energy Ministry (Paven) reported on Monday.



The electricity generation by the mentioned power plants registered a 21-percent increase compared to the figure for the previous year.

As reported, because small-scale power plants are constructed at the place of consumption (e.g. for factories, etc.) the loss of electricity in the transmission lines is eliminated, and therefore they are of significant importance in this regard.

Reducing the costs of network development, improving the voltage profile, and strengthening the resilience of the network are other important advantages that the use of such power plants is offering to the country's electricity industry.

Iran's electricity consumption has been increasing sharply in the past few weeks as the weather is getting hotter in the country and people are using air conditioners more often.

Earlier on Sunday, Energy Ministry's spokesman for the electricity industry announced that daily electricity consumption in the country reached 55,071 megawatts (55.07 gigawatts) on Saturday to register a new record high.

According to Mostafa Rajabi Mashhadi, the country's electricity consumption increased by 1000 MW compared to the figure for the same date last year.

The rise in electricity consumption comes as last week the energy ministry had warned of the unprecedented increases in power consumption across the country.

"If electricity consumption continues the current upward trend, we will have to impose blackouts," Rajabi Mashhadi regretted.

The nominal capacity of electricity generation at Iranian power plants reached 85,500 megawatts [85.5 gigawatts (GW)] following the completion of the development of Parand thermal power plant in early April.

Iran's total power generation capacity stood at about 83,350 MW at the end of the past Iranian calendar year 1398 (March 19), up from the 80,000 MW of its preceding year.

Currently, combined cycle power plants account for the biggest share in the country's total power generation capacity followed by gas power plants.

China's May refinery output rises 8.2 percent to near peak rates

China's crude oil throughput in May rose 8.2 percent from a year earlier as independent refiners increased their processing to meet the recovery in fuel demand following the easing of coronavirus lockdowns.

According to Reuters, China processed 57.9 million tons of crude oil last month, equivalent to about 13.63 million barrels per day (bpd), data from the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) released on Monday showed. That is the second-highest volume ever on a tons basis, down from 58.51 million in December.

That is compared with 13.1 million bpd in April and is the fourth-highest per barrel rate ever. The record is 13.78 million bpd also in December.

For the first five months, throughput totaled 261.39 million tons, or about 12.55 million bpd, 1 percent below year-ago levels because of large processing cuts in February and March.



China's independent plants, making up roughly one-third of national refinery throughput, were running their plants at 76 percent in May, near the same rates as before the coronavirus outbreak began, according to data from China Sublime Information Group, to take advantage of high margins after the cost of imported crude oil fell.

"The strong growth in May throughput is bolstered by the normalization of the Chinese economy and low oil prices," said Seng Yick Tee, senior director at consultancy SIA Energy.

May processing rates were limited as PetroChina's Dalian Petrochemical Corp and Sinopec Corp's Tianjin Petrochemical Corp were undergoing overhauls. The two plants have a combined processing capacity of 660,000 bpd.

The NBS data also showed China's crude oil output was 16.46 million tons in May, or 3.88 million bpd, up 1.3 percent from the same month a year earlier. Output for the January to May period was 80.9 million tons, 1.9 percent above the year-earlier period.

Natural gas output last month increased 12.7 percent from a year earlier to 15.9 billion cubic meters (bcm), and was 78.8 bcm for the first five months of 2020, but .

The growth in natural gas followed the increased focus by national producers PetroChina and Sinopec to prioritize developing the lower-carbon fuel despite deep cuts in capital expenditures.

Oil spill taints Kremlin plan to sell \$4b of green bonds

Russia's state development bank wants to start turning the world's biggest energy exporter into a hub for green finance days after a 20,000-ton diesel spill in the nation's far north, Bloomberg reported.

VEB.RF, which has been used in the past to help finance President Vladimir Putin's infrastructure projects, plans to set up guidelines for green bonds by the end of the summer. The lender aims to help companies raise about 300 billion rubles (\$4.3 billion) for environmental projects, Deputy Chairman Alexei Miroshnichenko said in an interview from Moscow.

Global green bond issuance grew by nearly 50% to \$271 billion in 2019 and the movement has been embraced by other emerging markets. Russia's bid follows years of foot-dragging from the Kremlin about climate change and a 20,000-ton diesel spill at a power plant owned by MMC Norilsk Nickel PJSC in the Arctic last week.

"In theory, it's a tremendous opportunity for many Russian

issuers to diversify their investor base," said Sergey Dergachev, a money manager at Union Investment Privatfonds GmbH in Frankfurt. "But at the moment, especially for metals and mining companies, potential green bond issuance might be tougher to accomplish."

Green finance should provide a channel for Russia to raise money to help with a much-needed transition away from a heavy dependence on fossil fuels. But the leadership of the world's fifth-biggest greenhouse-gas emitter has shown scant commitment to tackling climate change. A low-carbon development plan published in March envisages a small increase in emissions on current levels.

Investigators said that the unit of Norilsk had broken safety rules, resulting in the fuel spill, which threatens extinction for many fish, birds and mammals unique to Siberia's Taimyr Peninsula.

Nornickel, which has pledged to fully fund a clean-up that

could cost \$146 million, has suggested the catastrophe may have been caused by climate change that led to permafrost melting. President Vladimir Putin publicly scolded management for not upgrading the tank before it leaked and the accident could become a catalyst for pushing through long-stalled environmental regulations.

Russian energy companies Novatek and Gazprom are among companies that have assets in the Arctic that could be vulnerable to melting permafrost, but theirs aren't as old as Norilsk's, according to Ksenia Mishankina, director of emerging-market fixed income at Union Bancaire Privée in London.

The efforts to develop green bonds in Russia, which are also supported by the central bank and government, are part of "international efforts to save the planet, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and restore nature," Miroshnichenko said. It will allow companies to become "more sustainable" he said.

First Announcement

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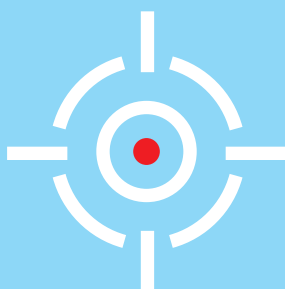
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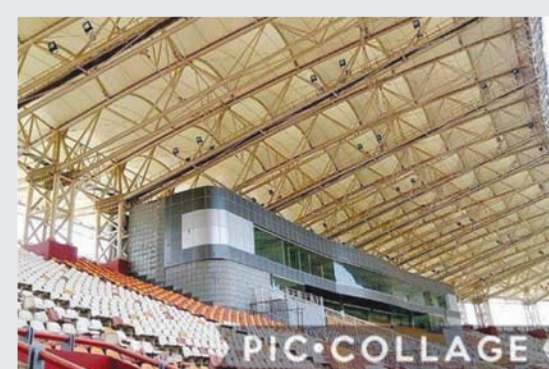
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Protests show ‘American exceptionalism’ is over: political researcher

By Muhammad Mazhari

TEHRAN — Lebanese political researcher Ali Mourad tells the Tehran Times that the anti-racism protests across the United States show that “American Exceptionalism” has come to an end.

Following the suffocation of George Floyd, a black African-American, at the hands of a white policeman on May 25 in Minneapolis, anti-racism protests have engulfed the United States.

Mourad also says, “We are witnessing an apparent ‘conflict of ideologies and identities’ in American society.”

Following is the text of the interview:
■ What are the messages of the recent protests in America against racial discrimination?

Answer: Of what we’ve seen up till now in those protests we can note that the Black struggle against systematic racism in the United States has risen back again, with new means of expression and a broad base of solidarity worldwide, which is more comprehensive than the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. It tells us also that it’s a declaration of the end of the so-called “American Exceptionalism” or what was also named as the “American Melting Pot.” We are witnessing an apparent “Conflict of Ideologies and Identities” in American society.

■ Do you think that the Trump administration bears the responsibility for what happened against George Floyd, who was suffocated under the knee of a white police officer, or should we accuse the political structure in America, which is built based on racism?

A: Since he entered the White House, Trump is indeed responsible for inciting the violent actions against people of color in America, looking forward to tightening the loyalty of the electoral base that delivered him into power in 2016. However, I believe he’s not the only one or his party to blame for the Black community grievances. What the African Americans experienced and still inside the United States dates back to 400 years ago. The so-called “Founding Fathers” of the U.S. who wrote the “Declaration of Independence” were racists and owned slaves. Even the third president (Jefferson) writes: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that their Creator endows them with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.” However, he had 600 slaves. He even started raping his slave “Sally Hemings” when she was 14 years old and had six children from her whom he refused to accept them as his children



“Trump is somehow trying to make use of the protests by showing that it’s a rebellion of the blacks against the system ‘that is owned and run by the white people’.”

officially. It’s always been a racial system that governed in the United States. Right after Abraham Lincoln freed Blacks they were used to reconstruct the country after the civil war ended, later on, the Blacks were enrolled in the U.S. army so they could fight America’s battles in WWI and WWII and other conflicts. Even today, the majority of U.S. prisoners are black, and they are used under forced labor to manufacture the weapons of major U.S. arms companies.

■ Do you think that Trump is trying to militarize response to civil unrest for economic and geopolitical considerations which may enhance the prospects of a civil war in the future?

A: I think Trump wants nothing but re-elected again, so he’s reading from Richard Nixon’s book. The latter used the “Law & Order” speech to win the votes of the white population in the southern states, who were upset with the massive protests of the black community in spring 1968 after

Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated. By then, the Republicans had what they called “The Southern Strategy” that aimed to flip the white conservative political views in the southern states from Democrats to Republicans, by adopting a militarist fear-mongering speech from the black community so they would attract them. It worked for the Republicans, and since the early 1970s, all Republican presidential candidates used the same strategy, and Trump is using it today. So yes, Trump is somehow trying to make use of the protests by showing that it’s a rebellion of the blacks against the system “that is owned and run by the white people.”

■ What is the secret behind some Arab countries’ silence on recent events in the U.S. and the Saudi media attack on all those who support the protests and criticize Trump’s racism?

A: Most of the Arab regimes are very careful when it comes to Trump. They don’t want to upset him because they fear

his reaction. As for Saudi Arabia, you can easily realize how nervous Riyadh was during those protests. In general, Saudi doesn’t believe in the right to protest, what if it was a protest against the protector of MBS? So yes, the Saudi media was doing the job that no U.S. media outlet dares to do, trying to alienate the protests and even accuse the protestors of being run by outsiders! MBS (Muhammad Bin Salman) and some other heads of Arab sheikdoms believe their destiny is linked with Trump’s, that’s why they’re defending him.

■ How do the American protests affect the upcoming presidential elections?

A: It’s still early to evaluate the outcomes of the protests, but I think what matters to the un-politically affiliated “silent majority” is the economy, more than the racial issue. That’s America, and it will always be so. Between 1970 and 2020, African Americans conducted tens of significant protests and uprisings all over America, but little was achieved concerning gaining their full civil and economic rights. Trump is acting in a way that’s clear he doesn’t care if he lost the vote of the little margin the voters of color. He is trying to focus on his “successful” economic performance to gain some points for his polls.

■ The U.S. is using methods of violence against domestic protests, a practice it has repeatedly used in its imperial adventures abroad. How does it show the brutality of capitalism against suppressed people?

A: There is news that some major U.S. arms companies are about to sell police departments and law enforcement military tools and weapons, so that be used against U.S. citizens. Trump is pushing forward, so this happens when he says, “I’ll support and fund the law enforcement.” I think it’s a moment where we realize the deep quagmire America is facing: Washington is not capable anymore of starting a new war that they guarantee a victory in it after their defeat in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, etc. And since arms companies need to sell their products, it seems Washington has no problem to pour those weapons inside the country. With the U.S. 2nd amendment being guarded by white supremacy and arms companies’ lobbyists, America would be heading towards a second civil war in the future so that the capitalist corporate industrial complex gains more money. They did it to the oppressed people all over the world; now, they might be doing it against the minorities or even themselves inside America. That’s what you call: “Greed Capitalist Ideology.”

Sanctions on ICC is because U.S. record in Afghanistan is not ‘clean’: ex-CIA officer

Philip Giraldi says “Washington and Tel Aviv are out to destroy the ICC

By M.A Saki

TEHRAN — Philip Giraldi, a former CIA intelligence officer, says Donald Trump’s sanctions against the International Criminal Court (ICC) is because the U.S. does not have a “clean” record in Afghanistan.

“The killing of Afghan men using drones based on a profile, i.e. any man on the ground carrying a gun, which is fairly normal in parts of Afghanistan, is itself a war crime,” Giraldi tells the Tehran Times in an exclusive interview.

This is the text of the interview:

■ Why is Washington afraid of an investigation by the ICC into possible war crimes by U.S. troops in Afghanistan and has introduced sanctions against the court?

A: The United States has in fact committed numerous war crimes in Afghanistan, to include killing civilians and prisoners. Washington is using sanctions as a means to make more difficult for investigators to proceed in learning the details of American actions. To do so, they would have to travel to the United States and interview individual soldiers with knowledge of the incidents. Now they will be unable to do that.

■ If the U.S. has really a clean record in Afghanistan, why should it resort to such a policy?

A: See above. The record is not clean. The killing of Afghan men using drones based on a profile, i.e. any man on the ground carrying a gun, which is fairly normal in parts of Afghanistan, is itself a war crime.

■ What sense does this measure by the Trump administration send to the world?

A: The message is that the U.S. will punish anyone who tries to investigate either the U.S. or Israel.

■ Actually, a country that claims it is a defender of human rights and accuses other countries, sometimes correctly, of committing war crimes, why should itself feel unsettled by investigation into its performance in Afghanistan?

A: Because the investigation would demonstrate that the U.S. record is not “clean.” It would be very bad publicity for the government in an election year.

■ Pompeo has called the ICC a “kangaroo court”. Isn’t such a description an insult against the world body that would consequently undermine its performance in the world?

A: No one takes what Pompeo says seriously. Everyone in the international community understands that Washington and Tel Aviv are out to destroy the ICC.

■ What messages such actions and descriptions send to U.S. allies and friends around the world if there is still any real friend except Netanyahu and some others? →10



‘Many already consider the U.S. to be a pariah state’

“The Trump Administration does not believe in international agreements.”

It would not take long for racist Trump to show his true colors

By Shahzad Ramezani Bayani

Tuesday, January 20, 2009 the world watched as the first African American took the oath of the highest office in the country. To most of the world it seemed like the ultimate fairy tale ending. A country that had been so overtly ravaged by racism for so long, had finally overcome hate and prejudice. To the naïve bystander, to most of us, who truly have no understanding of the underlying depths of racism, to a world where too often we are ignorant of own racist ways, the cycle of discrimination had broken.

In hindsight, in a country where there seems to be a double standard when it comes to matters of race, it shouldn’t have seemed so easy. In fact, it appears like instead of racing to shed the legacy of slavery, in America it is embraced. Why else are Nazi flags and images of swastikas openly frowned upon, while confederate flags and monuments still harbored as a sign of strength?

Martin Luther King once said “Riots are the language of the unheard”, and when, names like Eric Garner, Alton Sterling and Philando Castile appeared on the news, a reminder of the fact that what was thought to be eradicated still lingered, we did not hear. Even though movements like the original “I can’t breathe” ensued and riots broke out, in this region of the world, we, still, did not hear. Perhaps, because it seemed unfathomable that racism could still exist in a country where the president, himself, is a man of colour.

With the 2020 elections, and the rise of Donald Trump, the initial thought was that someone so obviously xenophobic and racist could never succeed. How could someone like him become the president of the self-proclaimed leader of the free world? The first African American president could not be replaced by such a candidate, not



when the main opponents were the would-be first female president and the all liberal Bernie Sanders. During his campaign, the then candidate, Donald Trump proudly proclaimed his Muslim ban, while his fans cheered, he called Mexicans criminals and rapists and his supporters applauded. But why did it seem like such a leap if one of the main propagators of the central park five injustice, would not stop at alienating Muslims and Mexicans? Yet, much to the dismay of the people in this part of the world, Donald Trump did become president. Once again, voices of the oppressed went unheard.

It would not take long for Donald Trump to show his true colors. Just a year into his presidency, he showed his prejudice extended to his own people. The moment the sitting U.S. president said “there were fine people on both sides” in response to the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, he opened the door. No longer did racists feel like they had to hide their true selves. In fact, they were emboldened. African Americans were added to the long list

alienated by the administration, which already included Mexicans and Muslims. White supremacists, now had a presidential pardon to walk through the streets with their racism held out as a badge of honor, instead of covering themselves up with white sheets.

Now, as Black Lives Matters’ protests are being held all over the United States, this part of the world is finally sitting up and taking notice. Whether it is because we, ourselves, have fallen victim to Trump’s xenophobic and racist ways, or perhaps the time for refusing to hear the plight of others has finally come to an end. Either way, to truly honor the movement we must express our support, while simultaneously taking a look at our own ways. It is imperative that we acknowledge, when it comes to the question of race, we all need to be more cognizant. We must recognize the question is not only, how do I combat racism in others, but also how have I subconsciously been guilty of racism and how can I do and be better? Perhaps then we can all be heard.

Second Announcement



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Iran likely to resume flights to Turkey on June 20 after 3-month suspension

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** – Flights to Turkey will likely be resumed on June 20 after nearly three months of suspension over the COVID-19 pandemic, a senior Iranian aviation official was quoted as saying by Press TV on Sunday.

Secretary of the Association of Iranian Airlines (AIA) said on Sunday that Iranian airlines could resume flights to Turkey if reports about a pending decision by Ankara on reopening its air borders with Iran were true.



“We have received some unofficial report about this (issue) that the air border of this neighboring country will reopen next Saturday (June 20) so that passenger flights could resume,” Maqsood As’adi-Samani was quoted as saying.

The pandemic has taken a huge toll on Iran’s civil aviation sector with reports showing that airlines lost hundreds of millions of dollars because of flight cancellations during the busy New Year travel season in late March.

Some 1.37 million Iranian tourists visited Turkey during the first eight months of 2019, accounting for 4.4% of all international arrivals in the country.

Iran to try building homegrown capsule hotels

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** – Iran will be trying to domestically make sophisticated capsule hotels to promote cheap and basic overnight accommodation for travelers.

“Services offered at a capsule hotel is on a par with ones in a four-star hotel though there are limitations in terms of space, the facilities are very good..... and we are also planning to produce capsule hotels through a combination of indigenized technology and reverse engineering,” director of the Touring & Automobile Club of the Islamic Republic of Iran said on Sunday.



“Currently, 80 locations in the country have been identified for capsule hotels to be installed, and more places will be located in the next phases... they can be used in eco-camps alongside passenger and tourist terminals in harmony with the environment,” Hossein Arbabi noted.

Highlighting the importance of localizing the process of building and producing this model of new accommodation, he said “We expect their usage to be welcomed in the country.”

“Capsule hotels are disinfected using a state-of-the-art system and are ready to host and accommodate future travelers within three minutes... and this model of capsule hotels is intended as cheap accommodation, a short stay, and a temporary rest for tourists.”

On Saturday, Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan unveiled a sample of such bed-sized rooms during a ceremony held at the headquarters of the ministry in Tehran.

Capsule or ‘pod’ hotels were initially developed in Japan as a way for budget travelers to have somewhere safe and affordable to sleep. Over the years capsule hotels have remained popular but the experience of staying in one has dramatically changed, with pod hoteliers competing to provide guests with the most stylish and luxurious experience.

Kordestan exports about \$600,000 of handicrafts in year

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** – Handicrafts exports from the western province of Kordestan reached some \$592,000 during the previous Iranian calendar year 1398 (ended March 20), CHTN reported.

Some nine high-quality works by artisans in the province were also awarded the National Seal of Excellence during the last year, provincial tourism chief Esmaeil Marivani said on Monday.



Some 258,000 people are currently working in various fields of handicrafts in the province, of which 70 percent are women, he added. The name Kordestan refers to the region’s principal inhabitants. After the Turkish invasion of Iran in the 11th century CE (Seljuk period), the name Kurdistan was applied to the region comprising the northwestern Zagros Mountains. It was during the reign of Abbas I the Great of Iran’s Safavid dynasty (1501–1736) that the Kurds rose to prominence, having been enlisted by Abbas I to help stem the attacks of the marauding Uzbeks from the east in the early 17th century.

Iran exported \$523 million worth of handicrafts during the past calendar year 1398. Of the figure, some \$273 million worth of handicrafts were exported officially through customs, and about \$250 million was earned via suitcase trade (allowed for customs-free and tax-free transfer) through various provinces.

Centuries-old subterranean shelter found during well drilling

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** – A relatively-vast underground shelter which is estimated to date back to 250 years ago was accidentally found during a well drilling process at the premises of a private house in a village in Gonabad county, northeast Iran.

“An underground shelter was discovered at a depth of five meters below the surface while a well was being dug in a residential house in Razaviyeh village of Gonabad’s Kakhk district,” Gonabad’s cultural heritage department announced on Sunday.

“Initial investigations by cultural heritage experts have so far revealed more than 90 meters of subterranean corridors along with three interconnected chambers which are estimated to date back to 250 years ago,” said Alireza Shenasaee who presides over the department.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the official ruled out rumors saying the discovery is an underground “city”.

“Although some people mistakenly refer to it as an underground city, this is wrong according to experts, and what has been discovered in this village is an underground shelter.”

Highlighting the specs of an underground shelter, he said “An underground shelter is a phenomenon that occurs naturally or humanly at a depth of five to 20 meters. These shelters are connected from inside the houses and sometimes lead to the village castle, and the way out is from the tower



of the village.”

“However, these shelters seem to be mostly defensive in areas that were under attack by enemies or bandits, and some

used them to store and hide food.”

“Given the location of Gonabad, the establishment of underground shelters in the past, especially in the foothills, has

been considered as a defensive structure, and similar examples of these shelters have already been discovered in the villages of Kalat and Disfan,” he concluded.

Hadish Palace being restored



The city’s immense terrace was begun about 518 BC by Darius the Great, the Achaemenid Empire’s king. On this terrace, successive kings erected a series of architecturally stunning palatial buildings, among them the massive Apadana palace and the Throne Hall (“Hundred-Column Hall”).

This 13-ha ensemble of majestic approach-

es, monumental stairways, throne rooms (Apadana), reception rooms, and dependencies is classified among the world’s greatest archaeological sites.

The terrace is a grandiose architectural creation, with its double flight of access stairs, walls covered by sculpted friezes at various levels, contingent Assyrianesque propylaea

(monumental gateway), gigantic sculpted winged bulls, and remains of large halls.

By carefully engineering lighter roofs and using wooden lintels, the Achaemenid architects were able to use a minimal number of astonishingly slender columns to support open area roofs. Columns were topped with elaborate capitals; typical was the double-bull capital where, resting on double volutes, the forequarters of two kneeling bulls, placed back-to-back, extend their coupled necks and their twin heads directly under the intersections of the beams of the ceiling.

Persepolis was the seat of the government of the Achaemenid Empire, though it was designed primarily to be a showplace and spectacular center for the receptions and festivals of the kings and their empire.

The terrace of Persepolis continues to be, as its founder Darius would have wished, the image of the Achaemenid monarchy itself, the summit where likenesses of the king reappear unceasingly, here as the conqueror of a monster, there carried on his throne by the downtrodden enemy, and where lengthy cohorts of sculpted warriors and guards, dignitaries, and tribute bearers parade endlessly.

Some \$50,000 allocated to restore 15th-century bazaar

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** – A budget of 2 billion rials (some \$50,000) has been allocated to the restoration project of Qeisarieh Bazaar in the city of Lar, southern province of Fars.

The project includes covering and strengthening rooftop using cob material as well as repairing walls and gutters, CHTN quoted provincial tourism chief Abdolreza Nasiri as saying on Monday.

Built in the 15th century and before the Safavid-era (1501–1736), Qeisarieh Bazaar with stone walls and brick domes is considered the oldest bazaar in the country. It has been renovated and restored in different historical eras.

The ancient region of Fars, also spelled Pars, or Persis, was the heart of the Achaemenian Empire (550–330 BC), which was founded by Cyrus the Great and had its capital at Pasargadae. Darius I the Great moved the capital to nearby



Persepolis in the late 6th or early 5th century BC.

The capital city of Shiraz is home to some of the country’s most magnificent buildings and sights including Hafezieh (mausoleum of Hafez), the UNESCO-registered Persepolis, and Sadi mausoleum. Increasingly, it draws more and more foreign and domestic sightseers flocking into this provincial capital which was the literary capital of Persia during the Zand dynasty from 1751 to 1794.

New handicrafts school opens in Tehran

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** – The third handicrafts school in Tehran was inaugurated on Monday at Sarv Cultural Center.

The academy was established in collaboration with the Art and Cultural Organization of the Tehran Municipality. Tehran province’s tourism chief Parham Janfeshan said on Monday, ISNA reported.

These schools are launched in order to improve the quantitative and qualitative level of handicrafts products as well as promote entrepreneurship and support innovation and creativity, he added.

The courses cover both theoretical classes and practical workshops with no age limit for learners, he explained.

Dozens of Iranian handicrafts have gained the UNESCO Seal of Excellence during the past couple of years.

The Islamic Republic exported \$427 million worth of handicrafts during the



first eleven months of the past calendar year 1398 (ended March 19). Of the figure, some \$190 million was earned via suitcase trade (allowed for customs-free and tax-free transfer) through 20 provinces, according to deputy tourism minister Pouya Mahmoudian.

“Some 295 fields of handicrafts are currently practiced across Iran with more than two million people engaging, majority of whom are women... Handicrafts also play an important role in the economy in our rural villages,” she said.

Human skeletons dug up at subway construction site in northwest Iran

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** – Skeletons of an individual, estimated to be laid to rest centuries ago at a once Islamic cemetery, have recently been unearthed at a subway construction site in the city of Tabriz, the capital of northwestern East Azarbaijan province.

“Some human skeletons were accidentally unearthed while workers were conducting grading and site preparation at a subway station in Qonqa neighborhood of Tabriz,” ILNA reported on Monday.

“The construction project, however, was ordered to come to a halt until further notice when initial archaeological surveys are completed.”

“So far bones belonging to an individual have been found at a site, which was once an Islamic cemetery.... Samples [form the bones] have been taken for further examination,” provincial tourism chief Ahmad Hamzehzadeh said.

The official also explained that the graves will not yield afterlife objects, which were very common to be placed in tombs during pre-Islamic times.



“Funeral services were held at the Gajil Cemetery from middle Islamic ages to the early Qajar era. But the point is that according to Islamic tradition no objects are buried with the deceased so that no objects are expected to be

found within the tomb chambers.”

Elaborating on the fate of the construction project, he said “If archaeologists find a historical structure during their investigation, the metro project will certainly be halted to complete the survey. If we do not find such structures, the archaeologists will also be present at the site and the construction project will be continuing under their supervision.”

Soaked in history and culture for millennia, Tabriz embraces several historical and religious sites, including Jameh Mosque of Tabriz and Arg of Tabriz, and UNESCO-registered Tabriz Historic Bazaar Complex to name a few.

It became the capital of the Mongol Il-Khan Mahmud Gazan (1295–1304) and his successor. Timur (Tamerlane), a Turkic conqueror, took it in 1392. Some decades later the Kara Koyunlu Turkmen made it their capital, it was when the famous Blue Mosque was built in Tabriz.

The ancient city retained its administrative status under the Safavid dynasty until 1548 when Shah Tahmasp I relocated his capital westward to Qazvin.

Naybandan Wildlife Refuge: meet Iran's largest remarkable sanctuary

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN — Naybandan Wildlife Refuge located in the eastern province of South Khorasan, with an area of 1,516,994 hectares, is the largest wildlife sanctuary to safeguard the habitats native animals need to survive and thrive in Iran; known as the most important habitat of the Asiatic cheetah.

To preserve the existing biodiversity over the wide geographic expanse of Iran, four types of areas have been designated for preservation and protection, including, national parks, wildlife refuges, protected areas, and natural national monuments. In 1997, the Department of the Environment (DOE) held supervision over 7,563,983 hectares of such areas. By the year 2003, the size of the DOE supervised areas reached 11,791,788.225 hectares.

The national park is a designated part of Iran's environment - including forests, rangelands, woodlands, prairies, water, or mountains - that is an outstanding representation of Iranian nature. As such, it is brought under protection in order to permanently preserve its natural ecology and to create a suitable environment for the flourishing of wildlife and the growth of flora under natural conditions. The national parks currently cover 1,649,771 hectares of the country's area.

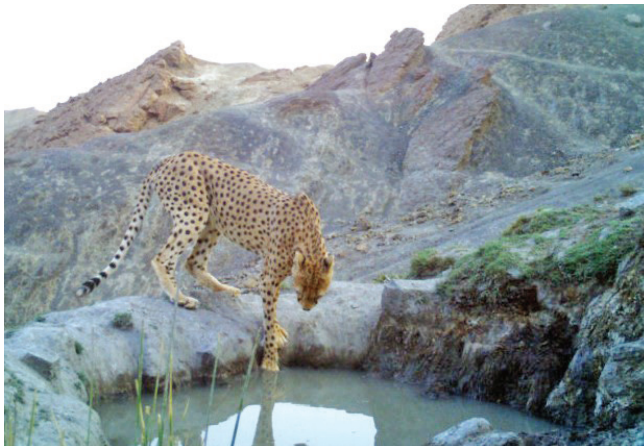
Protected areas also are significantly important natural resources due to its impact on wildlife breeding, preservation of plant life, or its natural state. The total area of regions protected is 6,600,601 hectares.

A Wildlife refuge has natural habitats and special climate qualifications, which brought under protection in order to revive wild animals and is stretching to 3,524,181 hectares.

Held the highest population of Asiatic cheetahs, since 2006, Naybandan Wildlife Refuge was estimated to hold a share of at least 15 cheetahs.

The sanctuary has been under protection since [the Iranian calendar year] 1373 (March 1994– March 1995) but was designated as wildlife refuge 7 years later.

The sanctuary has various topographic areas like mountains, plains, sand plains, hilly desert plains, and water with different tastes



from the saltiest water to the freshest water.

The dense forest of Tagh is one of the unique features of the area, in addition, due to its location on the Silk Road, many historical caravanserais have remained in this area since ancient times.

The height of this refuge is varying from 680.0 to 3,009.0 m from sea level, the climate variety is from the hottest part in the southeastern point of Nayband Mountain (Dig-e-Rustam) the coldest part in the north-eastern part of Nayband Mountain (Aliabad).

Its average annual temperature is between 14 and 19 degrees Celsius and its average annual rainfall is between 50 and

150 mm, which has caused a high temperature, dry, and hot climate.

Naybandan Sanctuary is one of the most pristine and least conflicting habitats in the country in terms of the domestic industries and livestock.

More than 200 plant species have been discovered in the area, some of which include wild almond, bitter almonds, figs, tamarisk, haloxylon, Atraphaxis, mugwort, zygothylum, ferula, and bitter apple.

Mammals like Asiatic cheetahs, Persian leopard, caracal, wild goat, jebeer gazelle, wild sheep, mouflon, ibex, Blanford's fox, Rüppell's fox are found in the sanctuary.

It is home to exotic and valuable birds like bustard, cuckoo, Pleske's ground jay, and other birds such as partridge, crao, hoopoe, lark, horned lark, different types of owls, eagles, and vultures.

Reptilians inhabiting in the area include the Jafari snake, viper, camel snake, asp, horned asp, gecko, and lizard. Rodents include rats and porcupines. Insect-eaters include the hedgehog and bat.

Jangal, a 12-year-old cheetah known as the world's oldest cheetah, lived in this area. The carcass of a Jangal was discovered in 2011 near the Aliabad at the Naybandan Sanctuary, which was dead due to old age.

National anti-smuggling plan implemented

SOCIETY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The first phase of the national anti-smuggling plan has been implemented with the priority of customs, tobacco, and transit goods. Jalal Amini, a police chief, said that as a result of the

first phase of the plan, 6,296,665 items of smuggled goods, along with 458,678 liters of fuel and smuggled oil derivatives worth more than 700 billion rials (nearly \$16.6 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials), were

seized in 48 hours.

In this regard, 400 vehicles were confiscated and 994 detainees handed over to the judicial authorities, IRNA reported on Monday.

Kindergartens reopen after 4 months of lockdown



SOCIETY d e s k **TEHRAN** — After four-months of lockdown due to the coronavirus outbreak, kindergartens across the country began their activities observing social distancing rules and health protocols, Mehr reported.

Following President Hassan Rouhani's order, the kindergartens started working in compliance with the protocols of the Ministry of Health.

Each child and trainer should be tested for fever as soon as they arrive, parents are not allowed to enter the children's space, and even the entry and exit of children should be on a schedule that does not lead to congestion.

The number of people diagnosed with coronavirus in Iran reached 189,876 on Monday, of whom 8,950 have died and 150,590 recovered so far. Over the past 24 hours, 2,449 new cases of people having the virus have been identified, and 113 died, Health Ministry spokeswoman Sima Sadat Lari said.



ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → B

Tehran short of 12,000 classrooms

Considering the current population of students educating in Tehran, there is a shortage of 12,000 classrooms which will increase to 18,000 over the next few years, director of the organization for renovation of Tehran schools has stated.

Currently, 8,500 classrooms are beyond repair and must be reconstructed, while 14,500 others need retrofitting, ISNA quoted Ali Shahri as saying on Wednesday.

There is also a high density of students in the capital, and despite the average capacity of classrooms accommodating 24 students, the number of students in some areas is twice the average, he lamented. Referring to the current construction projects, he said that there are 110 projects under construction, half of which will be completed by the new school year (September 23).

کمبود ۱۲ هزار کلاس درس در پایتخت

مدیرکل نوسازی مدارس استان تهران اظهار کرد: با توجه به جمعیت فعلی دانش آموزی به ۱۲ هزار کلاس درس جدید نیاز داریم که البته با احتساب رشد جمعیت به ۱۸ هزار کلاس طی چندسال آینده می‌رسد.

علی شهری در گفت‌وگو با ایسنا، گفت: ۸۵۰۰ کلاس درس در تهران باید مورد تخریب و بازسازی قرار گرفته و ۱۴ هزار و ۵۰۰ کلاس درس مقاوم سازی شوند. همچنین با تراکم بالای جمعیت دانش‌آموزی در استان روبرویم و علیرغم آنکه تراکم میانگین در مدارس کشور ۲۴ نفر است، شاهد دوبرابر این میزان تراکم در برخی مناطق هستیم.

مدیرکل نوسازی مدارس استان تهران تاکید کرد که در حال حاضر ۱۱۰ پروژه نیمه تمام دیگر داریم که امیدواریم نیمی از آنها را تا مهر ماه به مرحله بهره‌برداری برسانیم.

PREFIX/SUFFIX

“im-, in-”

■ **Meaning:** into

■ **For example:** Claudia *inserted* her key in the lock.

PHRASAL VERB

Pep something up

■ **Meaning:** to make something or someone more active or interesting

■ **For example:** The team needs a few new players to pep it up.

IDIOM

Not cut out for something

■ **Explanation:** If you are not cut out for something, you are not the sort of person to succeed or be happy in a particular activity

■ **For example:** I started studying medicine but I knew immediately that I wasn't cut out for it.

As rare animals disappear, scientist faces ‘ecological grief’

Five years before the novel coronavirus ran rampant around the world, saiga antelopes from the steppes of Eurasia experienced their own epidemic.

Millions of these grazing animals — easily recognizable by their oversized snouts — once migrated across what is today Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Georgia and more.

But then, over the span of three weeks in 2015, nearly 200,000, or two-thirds of their existing population, sickened and died from a bacterial infection. Today, the a little more than 100,000 saiga are hanging onto survival in a few pockets of Eurasia, according to the Science Daily website.

The decline, and uncertain fate, of the saiga is a story that resonates with Joanna Lambert. She's a conservation biologist at the University of Colorado Boulder and a coauthor of a paper published this week in the journal *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution*. The study explores the current state of ungulates, or hoofed animals like the saiga, in the western U.S. and around the world.

Lambert, who has studied ecological communities in both North America and Equatorial Africa, explained that many of these creatures aren't well-known outside of their home regions. But when these animals disappear, entire ecosystems can reshuffle, occasionally beyond recognition.

“We're losing these animals without people ever knowing they were there in the first place,” said Lambert, a professor in the Program of Environmental Studies at CU Boulder.

For the researcher, the study's publication marks an opportunity to reflect on how she stays hopeful even amid tremendous losses — and how to talk about the natural world during a period of unprecedented social upheaval.

“I tell my students, ‘I have to give you the facts. This is the world you're growing up in, but don't let that paralyze you,’” Lambert said.

■ Unsung species

The new research was led by Joel Berger of Colorado State University and also included scientists from Bhutan, Argentina and Chile.

The team decided to look at ungulates because — with a few exceptions like rhinos and elephants — they don't usually pop up in brochures for conservation organizations. But, Lambart said, they're still in trouble: Huemel, for example, once roamed across the Patagonia region of South America. Today, a little more than 1,000 of these fluffy deer still live in the wild. The tamaraw, a pint-sized buffalo from the Philippines, is down to just a few hundred individuals.

“The whole world knows the stories of pandas and mountain gorillas, but there are untold numbers of unsung species that come and go without the world's attention,” she said.

Their cases also show just how complicated conservation can be.

Lambert has spent years trekking the grasslands and forests of Yellowstone National Park to study wildlife. After federal officials killed all the park's wolves in the 1940s, elk herds there began to multiply — big time. Head counts for these herbivores surged from a few thousand individuals to tens of thousands, and they devoured once-abundant plants like cottonwood and willow trees.

“When you pull one species out of its community, or if you add a new one in, the entire assembly changes,” Lambert said. “That has been the history of what humans have done on the planet.”

When the park brought wolves back in the 1990s, and elk numbers dropped back down, something unexpected happened: beavers, which had also disappeared from Yellowstone, began reappearing, too. The furry swimmers, it turns out, depend on those same tree species to build their dams.

“In many cases, we don't know what rules these ecosystems followed in the past,” she said. “Even when we do know, it doesn't matter because we now have this added element of human tinkering.”

■ Ecological grief

Lambert has also struggled to keep going as a conservation biologist as the wilds around her field sites in Africa and North America dwindled, then vanished entirely.

“As I returned each year from the field, it was taking me longer and longer to recover from a sort of existential depression,” she said. “I realized that I have been profoundly impacted by the losses I've seen.”

Many of Lambert's students feel similarly hopeless, a phenomenon that psychologists call “ecological grief.” She tells them to focus on the success stories, however rare they are. Protected areas like Yellowstone have saved countless animals from extinction and have given others like wolves new chances at survival. Lambert is also providing scientific guidance around proposals to return wolves to Colorado.

WORDS IN THE NEWS

Putin and the Russian Duma

(December 29, 2003)

Vladimir Putin, Russia's President addresses the newly elected lower house of the Russian parliament, the Duma in Moscow. This report by Steve Rosenberg:

It seems like only yesterday that the Russian Duma looked more like a **battering ram** for the Kremlin's opponents than a parliament. In the 1990s it was too busy trying to **impeach** former president, Boris Yeltsin, to concern itself with passing laws. But not this Duma. After December's parliamentary election it's dominated by **deputies** loyal to the Kremlin. So it was **fitting** that one of this new Duma's first visitors was President Putin.

In a speech at the parliament's opening session Mr Putin congratulated **deputies** on their election, referring to those often **stormy** parliamentary sessions during the days of Boris Yeltsin. Russia's current leader noted that the country had changed since the first Russian Duma appeared ten years ago. In that time, the President said, parliament had moved away from political **confrontation** to **constructive legislative work**. The Duma's priority now, said Mr Putin, should be to improve the lives of ordinary Russians, especially in the areas of education, health and by helping to develop a system of mortgages. Russia's leader said the **deputies** should never forget that state power comes from the people. At the end he received a **standing ovation**; it was perhaps to be expected, after all before the Duma elections earlier this month, the Kremlin had poured huge resources into making sure that the new parliament would be both supportive of the President and **compliant**.

■ Words

it seems like only yesterday: it feels as if it was recently
battering ram: a long heavy piece of wood used to break down doors
impeach: to charge a politician with committing a serious crime connected with their job
deputies: members of the Russian parliament
it was fitting: it was suitable
stormy: angry and argumentative
confrontation: arguments and disputes
constructive legislative work: passing laws
a standing ovation: when an audience stands and applauds (claps) the speaker or performer
compliant: willing and agreeable

(Source: BBC)

UAE finances PKK terrorists in northern Iraq

➔ **1** The source, who asked not to be named, said the new measure will be applied to all exchange companies in Erbil, Duhok and Sulaymaniyah.

The PKK, designated as a terrorist group by Turkey, the United States and European Union, took up arms against the Turkish state in 1984. More than 40,000 people have been killed in the conflict, focused in southeast Turkey.

On Sunday, Turkey's Defense Ministry announced the country's fighter jets had bombed the positions of Kurdish militants in northern Iraq.

Relations between Turkey and the UAE have been strained since Ankara sided with Qatar after Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt severed diplomatic ties with Doha in June 2017 and imposed a series of economic sanctions against the tiny sheikdom, accusing it of sponsoring terrorism and destabilizing the region.

Qatar has rejected the claims while maintaining that it is paying the price for its independent foreign policy.

ACCORDING TO Press TV, Ankara and Abu Dhabi are also at odds over the situation in Libya, where the two countries support opposing sides of the conflict.

In 2017, Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu meant the United Arab Emirates when he hinted at a Muslim country that had spent billions to topple the Turkish government in a coup in July 2016.

Virus impact could kill over 50,000 children in MENA: UN agencies

UN agencies warned Monday that the coronavirus pandemic could lead to the deaths of an additional 51,000 under-fives in the West Asia and North Africa by the end of the year.

The World Health Organization and United Nations children's agency UNICEF said the disruption of essential health and nutrition services risked "reversing progress (on) child survival in the region by nearly two decades".

"While we do not have many cases of COVID-19 among children in the region, it is evident that the pandemic is affecting children's health firsthand," the agencies warned.

Sanctions on ICC is because U.S. record in Afghanistan is not 'clean': ex-CIA officer

➔ **7** A: The United States under Donald Trump is not trusted by anyone, not even by the Israelis. Pompeo and Trump gave Netanyahu a green light to annex the West Bank and now they are telling him to delay the process even though he has already announced that it would start next month.

■ Don't you think that such a measure would embolden certain countries to commit war crimes without facing consequences?

A: Not necessarily. If they are signatories to the ICC, which the U.S. is not, they would be required to appear in court if they are being charged with possible crimes.

■ The new U.S. decision comes after Washington has withdrawn from a string of international agreements including the Paris climate accord and the Iran nuclear deal. It has also ended cooperation with the WHO and pulled out of the UN Human Rights Council. Don't you think that the current rulers at the White House don't care about anything other than their own self-centered interests?

A: The Trump Administration does not believe in international agreements. It believes that only activities that directly support American interests are acceptable. This is why the rest of the world thinks Trump is a joke and why no one trusts him.

■ Some analysts and politicians argue that such unilateral steps are pushing the U.S. toward a pariah state that would finally diminish the U.S. leadership in the world. What is your view?

A: Many already consider the U.S. to be a pariah state. If it continues with four more years of Trump, it is likely that the entire world will think so. By pariah it means breaking all the rules to suit oneself, which is precisely what is happening.

Resistance News

Israeli forces raid Palestinian prisoners' cells in Ramon and Gilboa

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN** — Israeli prison forces carried out raids on cells and brutalized Palestinian prisoners in the jails of Ramon and Gilboa, according to the Palestinian Commission of Detainees' and Ex-Detainees' Affairs on Sunday.

In a statement, the Commission said that Israeli jailers and special forces from the Yamas unit stormed section 5 of the Ramon prison and then embarked on ransacking its cells after transferring all the prisoners from there to section 1.

The Commission added that similar raids on cells took place in Gilboa prison, where the prisoners were transferred from one section to another with no reason.

Scores of Jewish settlers defile Aqsa Mosque under police guard

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN** — Dozens of Jewish settlers escorted by police forces entered the Aqsa Mosque in Occupied Jerusalem and desecrated its courtyards on Monday morning.

According to Jerusalemite sources, hordes of settlers entered the Mosque through al-Maghariba Gaza and toured its courtyards under tight police guard.

Extremist rabbi and former MK Yehuda Glick was seen among a group of settlers giving a lecture about the alleged temple mount.

Meanwhile, the Israeli occupation police detained on the same day four Jerusalemite young men from Wadi al-Joz neighborhood on a charge of fending off rabbi Glick about 10 days ago after he entered the mourning house of martyr Iyad al-Hallaq, an autistic local young man who was shot dead recently by police officers.

Jerusalemite citizens who witnessed the incident accused Glick of seeking to create a "provocation" by going to the Halak family home in the Wadi al-Joz neighborhood, where there were mourners, although he knew that the local residents despise him.

UN to hold debate on racism, police brutality in U.S.

Putin says U.S. coronavirus pandemic and protests reflect 'deep domestic crises'

By staff & agencies

The United Nations's top human rights body will hold an urgent debate on allegations of "systemic racism, police brutality and violence against peaceful protests" in the U.S. on Wednesday, a statement said.

The decision by the UN Human Rights Council followed a request last week by Burkina Faso on behalf of African countries, it said in a statement on Monday.

"The death of George Floyd is unfortunately not an isolated incident," the letter said.

Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin has connected the U.S.'s handling of the coronavirus crisis with the widespread civil unrest and anti-racism protests in the country, according to Russian media reports.

Putin said the Covid-19 pandemic had "shone a spotlight" on issues in the country, adding that the protests for racial equality and against police brutality were the result of an internal crisis. However, he criticized scenes of destruction and looting seen during some protests.

"What has happened (in the U.S.) is the manifestation of some deep domestic crises," Putin said, according to Tass news agency, which covered an interview with the president on state-run TV channel Rossiya-1 TV on Sunday.

Putin reportedly linked the U.S.'s handling of the coronavirus crisis with the protests that were sparked by the death of George Floyd, an unarmed Black man, while in police custody in Minneapolis in May. The U.S. is the worst-hit country in the world by Covid-19, with over 2 million reported cases and nearly 116,000 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University.

"It shows there are problems," Putin said, according to comments from the



interview also reported by the Moscow Times newspaper. "Things connected to the fight with the coronavirus have shone a spotlight on general problems."

■ **Anti-racism protest signs, murals destined for U.S. Smithsonian**

Meanwhile, days into nationwide protests over the killing of George Floyd, demonstrators began to fill a tall fence in front of the White House with posters, flowers, paintings and photos in honor of black men, women and children who have lost their lives at the hands of police.

Placed on the recently renamed Black Lives Matter Plaza, the tributes have created a spontaneous memorial, which are now being collected for a more permanent home

at the Smithsonian Institution.

Graffiti artists and mural painters have designed visuals on the site where many protesters congregate to begin nightly demonstrations in Washington.

Memorials have also popped up in New York where muralists decorated the city's Chelsea neighborhood, as well as cities around the world, including Nairobi, Karachi and Berlin.

Block after block in Washington, office buildings and windows of upscale restaurants that normally cater to lobbyists and business executives have been sheathed in plywood to protect against the short-lived outbursts of arson and vandalism that struck the city's center earlier this month.

Syria to launch new offensive in Idlib as Turkey deadline passes

Syrian government forces have been preparing to launch an offensive against militants in Idlib after Turkey failed to live up to its commitments under a deal with Russia.

A senior Syrian field source said the Syrian army has sent big military reinforcements to contact lines with armed terrorist groups in Idlib countryside after its positions came under frequent attacks by militant groups.

The source told Sputnik Arabic that the movements of the militants have become "completely exposed to the monitoring units of the Syrian army".

Government forces, the source said, had destroyed the militants' armored vehicles and military equipment and foiled their attempts to attack army positions over the past week.

The source said an extended deadline given to Turkey by Russia in order to open the strategic M4 highway in Idlib in a peaceful manner had ended.

"It seems that the Turks are not serious in dealing with this matter, and they could not at least control the armed groups," the source said, adding the Turkish military's aid to the militants still continues.



Syria's government forces, the source said, are currently "putting the finishing touches to the military operation plan", in coordination with their allies.

According to Press TV, the Syrian army's next goal is to regain control over some strategic areas, including Jabal al-Zawiya in Idlib and the rest of al-Ghaab Plain in Hama countryside.

The source declined to reveal the exact date for the start of the operation, but noted that "the Idlib offensive is just around the corner".

Idlib tensions mounted late in February after an airstrike by Syrian forces killed dozens of Turkish soldiers, whom Russia said were "in the battle formations of terrorist groups."

Battle for Sirte disrupt Turkey-Russia talks on Libya

Russia and Turkey postponed talks on Libya due to discord over the Ankara-backed Tripoli government's push to retake the key coastal city of Sirte from Russian-backed eastern forces, a Turkish official said Monday.

With Turkish military support, Libya's internationally recognised Government of National Accord (GNA) has advanced for weeks against Khalifa Haftar's Libyan National Army (LNA), which is backed by Russia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt.

Heavy clashes have emerged as the GNA has laid siege to LNA-held Sirte, close to major energy export terminals on the Mediterranean seaboard, Reuters reported.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov did not make the trip to Istanbul Sunday for a scheduled meeting with his counterpart, Mevlut Cavusoglu, but the Turkish official said background talks were continuing at expert level.

"A result was supposed to come out (of the meetings), but that stage could not be reached. There are issues where the two countries are on opposing sides," the Turkish official said on condition of anonymity.

"One of the main issues for the postponement of the Lavrov visit is the (GNA's)

Levi Robinson, one of the many artists who got the call to design and paint atop the plywood, said he stumbled onto the idea of making his depiction of military medics.

■ **Black Americans disproportionately die in police Taser confrontations**

As police confront protesters across the US, they are turning to rubber bullets, pepper spray, tear gas and other weapons meant to minimize deaths in violent confrontations.

But some are using a weapon that has the potential to kill: The Taser. When those encounters have turned fatal, Black people make up a disproportionate share of those who die, according to a Reuters analysis.

Reuters documented 1,081 cases through the end of 2018 in which people died after being shocked by police with a Taser. At least 32 percent of those who died were Black, and at least 29 percent were white. African Americans make up 14 percent of the US population, and non-Hispanic whites, 60 percent

■ **Brooks shooting declared a homicide**

The Fulton County medical examiner's office has ruled the death of Rayshard Brooks a homicide caused by gunshot wounds to the back.

An autopsy conducted on Sunday showed that the 27-year-old died from blood loss and organ injuries caused by two gunshot wounds, an investigator for the medical examiner said in a statement. The manner of his death was homicide, it added.

Brooks's fatal encounter with police came after an employee of a Wendy's restaurant in Atlanta phoned authorities to say that someone had fallen asleep in his car in the restaurant's drive-through lane.



plan for an operation into Sirte...which has emerged as a target."

The Kremlin did not comment. Russia's foreign ministry said Sunday it was pursuing a "prompt ceasefire" and that Lavrov would reschedule the meeting. Cavusoglu said Monday the postponement was unrelated to any issues on "core principles".

The United Nations said last week the warring sides had begun new ceasefire talks in Libya after GNA forces repelled a protracted LNA assault on the capital Tripoli.

Sirte, about halfway between GNA-held Tripoli and LNA-held Benghazi, is the closest city to Libya's main energy export terminals. Haftar's forces seized the city in January and the conflict's new front line has emerged just to the west.

EU ministers grapple with Pompeo as West's rift widens

EU foreign ministers hold video talks with their US counterpart Mike Pompeo Monday as rifts widen over how to handle relations with Israel, China and international organisations.

The meeting kicks off a crunch week for trans-Atlantic ties, with a virtual meeting of NATO defence ministers starting Wednesday already overshadowed by Washington's controversial plans to slash its troop presence in Germany, AFP reported.

US President Donald Trump's "America First" approach has seen ties with Europe lurch from crisis to crisis in recent years, but EU officials are determined to keep talking to Washington, even if little progress is apparent.

High on the agenda will be the Middle East peace process, as Brussels seeks to persuade Israel to back down from plans to annex parts of the occupied West Bank.

The new Israeli government led once again by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has signalled it intends to annex West Bank settlements and the Jordan Valley, as



proposed by Trump, with initial steps to begin from July 1. A senior EU official said Monday's talks with Pompeo

Israel builds new Jerusalem road that will link settlements as government weighs West Bank annexation

Construction is under way on a major new ring road for Jerusalem that Israeli officials say will benefit all of its residents, but critics of the project say is another obstacle to Palestinian hopes to make East Jerusalem the capital of a future state.

The bypass, called The American Road, will connect Jewish settlements in the occupied

West Bank that are north and south of Jerusalem. The central and southern sections of the road are already being built, and tenders for the northernmost stretch – at a projected cost of \$187 million – will be issued toward the end of the year, a Jerusalem municipality official told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

According to Reuters, in total, the project,

which will run along or near the outer rim of East Jerusalem, is forecast to cost more than a quarter of a billion dollars. Israel annexed East Jerusalem, in a move that has not won international recognition, after capturing the area, along with the West Bank and Gaza Strip, in a 1967 war.

The construction comes as the Israeli

government is set to begin cabinet-level discussions from July 1 about implementing Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's election promise to annex Jewish settlements in the West Bank – a planned step that is sparking growing international criticism. Peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians broke down in 2014.

Mission was to make impossible possible: Queiroz

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Former **d e s k** Iran national football team head coach Carlos Queiroz says that their mission at the 2018 FIFA World Cup was to make the impossible possible.

The “Persians Leopards” were on the verge of making history at the 2018 FIFA World Cup after they edged Morocco 1-0 in their opening match I Group B. Iran lost to Spain 1-0 in their second match and could have advanced to the next stage with a win over Portugal but they were held to a 1-1 draw by the team.

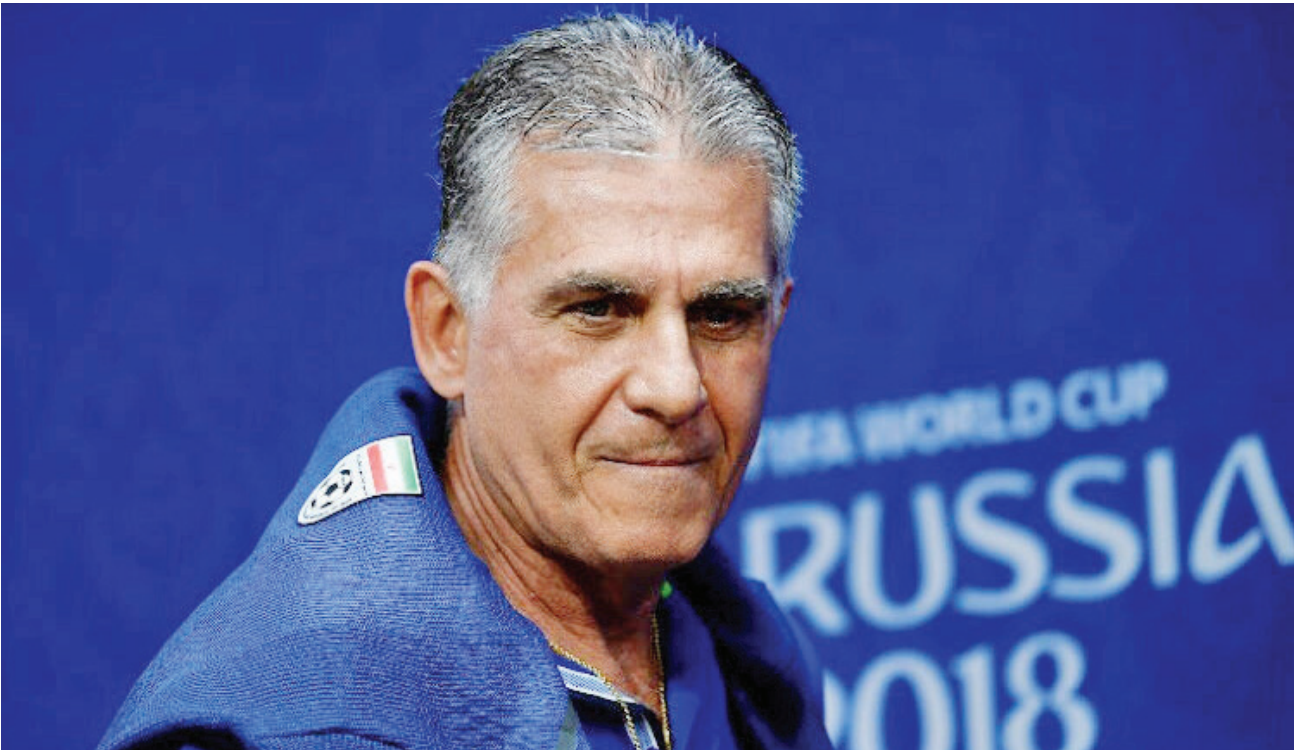
In an interview with Iranian Students News Agency (ISAN), Queiroz says that they have to enjoy the memories of the 2018 World Cup.

“We were very happy after the win against Morocco. And I was so proud of my players for their dedication and efforts,” the Portuguese coach said.

Iran came under heavy pressure in the first minute of the match against Morocco but won the game after substitute Aziz Bouhaddouz scored an own goal in injury time.

“It was normal,” he said. “Our team were ready to fight at the times we needed. We were preparing to enjoy in the 90th minute.”

“We had been drawn with three champions and knew that we have a difficult task ahead. But our mission was clear: to make the impossible possible. We wanted to qualify for the knockout stage in every possible



way,” the Colombia coach added.

Iran drew 1-1 against Portugal but could have won the match. With 95 minutes gone, Mehdi Taremi got the ball in the box, but he put it in the side netting. Portugal survived. Asked him if he felt happiness going into the next stage by eliminating his country, Queiroz said, “I would be happy if we could win the match.”

Iranian football teams warned not to withdraw from league



S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Disciplinary Committee of the Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) warned the teams who have threatened to withdraw from the Iran Professional League (IPL) in case of the resumption of the competition.

In a letter sent to the Iranian football federation on Monday, seven teams have announced that they will withdraw from the league if the competition resumes.

Abolfazl Hassanzadeh Mohammadi, head of the FFIRI’s disciplinary committee, said: “Any provocative interviews as well as making false and untrue statements about the resumption of the Iranian football league will be considered a disciplinary violation according to the disciplinary regulation approved in

2018 and will result in the suspension of the offending person or team.”

“Undoubtedly, the disciplinary committee will investigate and deal with such violations as soon as possible and make the necessary decisions,

“We ask all IPL clubs to have full control over the statements or interviews made by their players or staff in media or social networks,” added the head of the disciplinary committee of the FFIRI.

Tractor, Machine Sazi, Shahr Khodro, Paykan, Naft Masjed Soleyman, Nassaji, and Pars Jonoubi are the teams that have threatened to withdraw from the league.

The Iran Football League Organization announced that IPL, which was halted four months ago, will resume on June 24 with a match between Foolad and Esteghlal.

Casillas ends Spanish football federation presidency bid

Spain’s World Cup-winning captain Iker Casillas announced on Monday he was ending his bid to run for the presidency of the Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) due to the crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

“I would like to inform you that I have decided not to run for the upcoming RFEF elections,” the Porto goalkeeper wrote on social media.

The 39-year-old said he was pulling out of the race for the top job in Spanish football as a result of the “exceptional social, economic and health situation that our country is suffering”.

He said the COVID-19 outbreak which has claimed over 27,000 victims in the country had relegated the election into “second place”.

Casillas, who led Spain to their first

World Cup title in 2010, had announced his intention to stand against current RFEF president Luis Rubiales back in February.

His defection now leaves the way clear for Rubiales to gain a second mandate in the election scheduled for August 17.

Casillas played 167 times for Spain, also winning two Euros in 2008 and 2012, and made more than 700 appearances for Real Madrid, with whom he won five La Liga titles and the Champions League three times, before joining Porto in 2015.

Named in the FIFA FIFPro World XI five years in a row between 2008 and 2012 he suffered a heart attack in May 2019 during training and has not played another competitive match since.

(Source: AFP)

Djokovic breaks down in tears after hosting Belgrade exhibition

An emotional Novak Djokovic could not hold back the tears while hosting a charity event at his tennis complex by the Danube River on Sunday.

Although the world number one missed out on Sunday’s Adria Tour final, in which Dominic Thiem beat Serbian Filip Krajinovic 4-3 2-4 4-2, the event revived a lot of fond memories for the 17-time Grand Slam champion who staged the exhibition while international tennis remains suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I was very emotional on the court today. Childhood memories started flooding back, including those of growing up on these courts and playing here as a young boy,” the 33-year-old told reporters after being cheered on by a 4,000-strong capacity crowd.

“I was overwhelmed and those were

tears of joy after the match.

“I try to give back to where I come from and be conscious of my childhood and my upbringing. This tennis was an epicentre of people from my childhood days getting together for this tournament, including my former coaches. They were all here.”

Djokovic beat Germany’s Alexander Zverev on Sunday in his last round robin match but failed to secure his place in the final after both players and Krajinovic ended up with 2-1 win-loss records and an identical 5-3 set difference in their section.

Krajinovic, who stunned Djokovic on Saturday, squeezed through on the basis of having the best games differential among the three.

(Source: Reuters)

Aloisi: Nekounam highly rated at Osasuna

John Aloisi may not have shared a dressing room with Javad Nekounam, but he knows plenty about his fellow former Osasuna player.

Former Australia striker Aloisi scored 37 goals in 129 appearances for the club from 2001 to 2005, while Iran’s Nekounam, who joined in 2006, would go on to become a fan favorite over two stints and nearly 200 matches for Los Rojillos.

The duo - alongside another former Iranian Osasuna star, Masoud Shojaei - are both in the running for this week’s Asia’s Greatest Players in Spanish Football poll, and according to Aloisi, Nekounam was a highly respected figure at the club.

“I am very familiar with Nekounam, because he was a really good midfielder at Osasuna,” Aloisi told the-AFC.com from Australia.

“The supporters really liked him, but also the players that I spoke to rated him very highly. He was able to dictate the tempo of the game but also, defensively he was brilliant. He could run all day, and he suited the way that the team and Spanish football was.”

“Usually the Spanish look more to South America for foreigners because it’s an easy transition for the players. They adapt very well, but slowly the Asian market is opening up, because they realize there are technically very good players in Asia who are very tough.

“They can push throughout difficult situations and they don’t give up because they’ve come through a very different background. I think that’s why the Iranian players did well in Spain, especially at Osasuna.”

Asian players in La Liga were few and far between when Aloisi joined Osasuna in 2001, but fast forward nearly two decades and there is a significant and growing Asian presence in the Spanish top flight.

China national team star Wu Lei has shown his quality for Espanyol, scoring in the club’s 2-0 win over Alaves on Saturday, while exciting young prospects like Korea Re-



public’s Lee Kang-in and Japanese duo Takefusa Kubo and Hiroki Abe have all been signed by Spanish superclubs.

Aloisi welcomes the increasing connection between Spanish clubs and Asian players, but, with only Mat Ryan appearing in the league since his own 2006 departure, the former Socceros striker hopes to also see Australian footballers feature in the country.

“The Chinese, Koreans and Japanese – that market has opened up more,” he said. “Wu Lei at Espanyol – he’s done really well.

“Kubo is an amazing talent, plus a lot of these players are starting to go over to Spain at a very young page. Kubo was 15 or 16 or maybe even younger, so it’s a bit different. They’re adjusted, they speak the language well. I’m hoping that in five or 10 years you’ll see that there’s been a lot more Asian players.”

“I’m not sure about Australian players, because that market still hasn’t really kicked on. I was hoping that it would have, but there hasn’t been too many that have gone there and played.

Iran’s Yazdani wins UWW’s Fantasy Wrestling Tournament

MNA — Gaining 53 percent of the 164,000 fans’ votes of the UWW’s Freestyle Fantasy Wrestling Tournament, Iranian wrestler Hassan Yazdani finished the event beating his Azerbaijani rival Haji Aliyev.

“Congratulations to @hasan_yazdani73 for winning UWW’s Freestyle Fantasy Wrestling Tournament,” the United World Wrestling (UWW) wrote on an Instagram post on Monday.

The Iranian Wrestler is to represent Iran in the postponed 2020 Olympic Games.

Yazdani became an Olympic champion in the 74kg category at the 2016 Summer Olympics after defeating Russian wrestler Aniuar Geduev in the final.

The following year he became World Champion at the 2017 World Wrestling Championships in the 86 kg category.

Iran, Iraq discuss expansion of sport ties

MNA — Iran’s Ambassador to Iraq Iraj Msjedi met and held talks with Iraqi Minister of Youth and Sports Adnan Dirjal on the expansion of sport cooperation.

Underlining the importance of sports and the position of federations in developing bilateral ties, Masjedi announced Iran’s interest in sending sports products to Iraq.

He also said that Iran is ready to establish cooperation with Iraq in the field of sports.

Confirming Iran’s sports capacities and facilities, Dirjal, for his part, expressed support for Iranian companies in manufacturing and equipping sports sites in Iraq.

Decisions will soon be made with regard to holding sports events, he added.

Over the past month since the formation of the Al-Kazemi government, Masjedi has met with the new prime minister, interior, defense, transportation, labor and social affairs, finance and higher education ministers to help strengthen political, economic, cultural and social ties between Iran and Iraq.

Saman Ghoddos to leave Amiens: report

Iran international attacking midfielder Saman Ghoddos will reportedly leave Amiens in the summer.

The Swedish-born Iranian international joined the French Ligue 1 Amiens from Ostersunds FK in August 2018. Amiens paid €4 million to sign Ghoddos.

Now, French site le11amienois.fr has reported that the 26-year-old player will leave the team.

In August 2019, Ghoddos was suspended from all games for four months by FIFA for failing to honor an agreement to join Huesca.

(Source: le11amienois.fr)

Seven clubs want to withdraw for Iran Professional League

Tasnim — A total of seven Iranian football clubs have announced that they will withdraw from the Iran Professional League if the competition restarts.

Iran Football League Organization has announced that the competition will resume on June 24 with a match against Foolad and Esteghlal.

Now, the seven Iranian teams have sent a letter to Iran football federation acting president Heydar Baharvand and said they will pull out of the competition due to coronavirus outbreak.

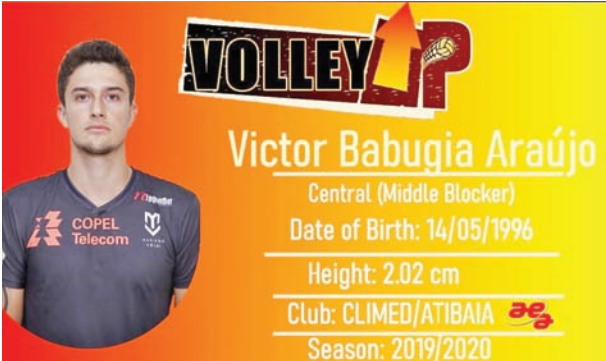
Tractor, Machine Sazi, Shahr Khodro, Paykan, Naft Masjed Soleyman, Nassaji and Pars Jonoubi are the teams who have threatened the football federation to withdraw from the league.

Persepolis sit top of the table with 47 points, 10 points above Sepahan and Tractor.

Brazilian Babu to join Iran volleyball club Shahab Yazd

Tasnim — Brazilian player Victor Babugia Araujo “Babu” has reached an initial agreement to join Shahab Yazd volleyball club.

The 24-year-old middle blocker will join the Iranian team if he passes his medical exam.



Babu will be the first foreign player to join an Iranian team for the new Iran league season.

He started his playing career at Brazilian club São Bernardo Vôlei and has also played at Super Vôlei Santo André, Maringá Vôlei, Climed/Atibaia and Apan Vôlei/Blumenau.

The 2020–21 Iranian Volleyball Super League will be the 33rd season of the Iranian Volleyball Super League, the highest professional volleyball league in Iran.

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Knowledge is the missing goal of a believer, so obtain it event from a man of discord.

Imam Ali (AS)

British consuls' review of Iran economy in 19th century published

→1 The material in the book, published by Cheshmeh in Tehran, is rooted in the information gathered by Seyf from a large number of documents preserved in the archives of the Foreign Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office.



Front cover of Iranian scholar Ahmad Seyf's "The Economy of Iran in Documents from the 19th Century".

Seyf has also said that the archives of Russia also have a similar amount of documents about Iran's economy during the 19th century.

The British consuls worked in Iran's major cities, gathering reports on the economic conditions of the cities during their missions. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office received the reports to deliver them to the Parliament of the United Kingdom.

The book has reports on various Iranian regions, including Gilan, Azarbaijan, Persian Gulf, Kerman and Fars. Seyf is also the writer of "The Economy of Iran under Mr. Ahmadinejad: Aghaye Ahmadinejad Va Eqtasad-e Iran", "Political Economy, Made Simple: Eqtasad-e Siasi Khodemani", "Iran's Contemporary Political Economy" and several other informative books on the Iranian economy.

"Just 6.5" competing in Jeonju Intl. Film Festival

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — Saeid Rustai's acclaimed drama "Just 6.5" will go on screen at the Jeonju International Film Festival, which is currently underway in the South Korean city.

Starring Payman Maadi and Navid Mohammadzadeh, "Just 6.5" is about a police group under the leadership of Samad who has been assigned to arrest Nasser Khakzad, a major drug trafficker in Tehran.

The film will go on screen in the Cinema Fest section of the festival, which is being organized online this year.

"Just 6.5" was a big winner in several festivals including the 32nd Tokyo International Film Festival in November 2019, and received two major honors at the event.

Rustai won the award for best director and Mohammadzadeh was crowned best actor for his portrayal in the movie of Nasser Khakzad, a major drug trafficker in Tehran.

The Jeonju International Film Festival will run until September 20. The event dedicated to alternative and independent films was launched in 2000 as a non-competitive film festival but has adopted partial competition.

The festival discovers talents of promising filmmakers who could be the future leaders of filmmaking, endorses creative experiments and independent spirits, and provides the opportunity to meet and bond with international filmmakers.

German theologian Schleiermacher's "On Religion" translated into Persian

CULTURE d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian scholar Mohammad-Ebrahim Baset has recently completed a translation of the great German Protestant theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher's book, "On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers".

The book is scheduled to be released by Ney Publications in the near future.

This seminal work was first published in 1799 and quickly became a classic apologetic work. This reissue of the Oman translation presents the definitive third edition of the German original and makes this important text available again to students and scholars who wish to gain insight into the development of contemporary Protestant thought.

Schleiermacher wrote "On Religion" while teaching and preaching in Berlin. The Enlightenment had invigorated scientific and historical research, overshadowing theology in the university. In this work, Schleiermacher defends religion against the skepticism of a modern audience.

The book is divided into five major sections: the Defense, the Nature of Religion, the Cultivation of Religion, Association in Religion, and the Religions.

Schleiermacher was a philosopher and biblical scholar known for his attempt to reconcile the criticisms of the Enlightenment with traditional Protestant Christianity.

Blowfish, Hoorakhsh team up to distribute "The Divine Light" worldwide

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — Hoorakhsh Studio, an animation and game studio in Tehran, announced on Monday that it has teamed up with Blowfish Studios, a Sydney-based independent game developer and publisher, to distribute its game "The Last Fiction: The Divine Light" across the world.

Earlier in December 2019, Hoorakhsh published the game produced based on its award-winning animation "The Last Fiction" directed by Ashkan Rahgozar who is also the managing director of the studio.

Blowfish and Hoorakhsh plan to make some modifications to the game to distribute it in early winter around the world.

Hoorakhsh has recently asked the Iranian platforms to remove "The Divine Light" until the studio prepares an update to the game.

Blowfish Studios is an award-winning game developer and publisher, which strives to release original multi-platform games, while also collaborating with developers from around the world. The company provides development services to get the game release ready, porting to all major platforms, platform approval, marketing and promotion worldwide.

Hoorakhsh is collaborating with the companies 7Sky Entertainment in Turkey and Aurora Trade in Russia to distribute its acclaimed animation "The Last Fiction" in various regions of the world.

The studio has also recently signed an agreement with MX Player, a major Indian media streaming service that has users from Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives and



A poster for Hoorakhsh game "The Last Fiction: The Divine Light".

Nepal, to offer the movie.

The movie has been screened in numerous international events, winning

over a dozen awards. It was named best animated film at the 37th Fajr Film Festival in Tehran in February 2019.

It was among the submissions for the 2020 Oscars consideration, but it failed to receive a nomination.

President Rouhani extends condolences over demise of actor Mohammad-Ali Keshavarz

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — President Hassan Rouhani has offered his condolences over the death of the legendary actor Mohammad-Ali Keshavarz who died on Sunday at the age of 90.

"The death of this great, prominent actor, Mohammad-Ali Keshavarz, was a big loss for the art and culture of our country," the president wrote in his message of condolences.

"This outstanding actor performed lasting moments in numerous scenes in cinema, theater and television, and left unforgettable memories in the art of Iran," he added.

In addition, a number of high-ranking officials of the country expressed their condolences in messages published on Monday.

First Vice-President Es'hag Jahanqiri praised the invaluable efforts made by the actor for the art and culture of the country, adding that his everlasting and unforgettable roles would never be forgotten.

Presidential chief of staff Mahmoud Vaezi wrote, "Throughout his artistic career this popular actor played impressive and lasting roles, which will always be remembered in our minds, and will act as a source of inspiration for other artists."

Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Abbas Salehi also in his message of condolences said that he became



An individual lights a candle in memory of actor Mohammad-Ali Keshavarz at his home in Tehran on June 14, 2020. (Mehr/Behnam Tofigi)

sad upon hearing the news of the death of Mohammad-Ali Keshavarz, adding, "People used to watch his unforgettable roles in cinema, theater and television for years and will never forget his name."

"Brief Encounters with the Enemy" appears in Persian



Front cover of the Persian translation of "Brief Encounters with the Enemy" by American writer Said Sayrafiezadeh.

CULTURE d e s k **TEHRAN** — American writer Said Sayrafiezadeh's short story collection "Brief Encounters with the Enemy" has been published by Parseh Publications in Tehran.

Translated by Milad Zakaria, this is the first short story collection from Sayrafiezadeh, a writer who calls to mind such American writers as Denis Johnson, George Saunders and Nathan Englander.

When the New Yorker published a short story by Sayrafiezadeh in 2010, it marked the emergence of a startling new voice in fiction.

In this astonishing book, Sayrafiezadeh conjures up a nameless American city and its unmoored denizens: a call-center employee jealous of the attention lavished on a co-worker newly returned from a foreign war; a history teacher dealing with a classroom of maliciously indifferent students; a grocery store janitor caught up in a relationship with a customer.

These men's struggles and fleeting triumphs with women, with cruel bosses, with the morning commute are transformed into storytelling that is both universally resonant and wonderfully strange.

Sometimes the effect is hilarious, as when a would-be suitor tries to take his sheltered, religious date on a tunnel of a love carnival ride. Other times it's devastating, as in the unforgettable story that gives the book its title: A soldier on his last routine patrol on a deserted mountain path finally encounters "the enemy" he's long sought to get a glimpse of.

Upon giving the author the Whiting Writers' Award for his memoir named "When Skateboards Will Be Free", the judges hailed his writing as "intelligent, funny, utterly unsmug and unpreening."

These fiercely original stories show their author employing his considerable gifts to offer a lens on our collective dreams and anxieties, casting them in a revelatory new light.

Forest fire subject of DEFC animation "Heaven"



A scene from "Heaven" by director Majidreza Eivazi.

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran's Documentary and Experimental Film Center (DEFC) has recently completed the production of a short animation named "Heaven" on forest fires.

The animation tells the story of a fox that catches and eats a crow but several events happen after the fox swallows the crow. A werewolf hunts the fox and sets the forest on fire.

"These days, forest fires have increased and it seems the some are set intentionally," director Majidreza Eivazi said in a press release published on Monday by the DEFC.

"However, the animation shows how someone ignites a fire in the forest but then burns in the fire he has made," he added.

He also said that it took two years to complete the animation and it is ready for screening.

Several forests and protected areas

in different western and southwestern provinces of Khuzestan, Bushehr, Lorestan, Kohkiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad burned to ashes in early June.

The fire also swept through Khaeez protected area, measuring 28,000 hectares, which is one of the main habitats for wild goats in the Zagros forests. The area's inaccessibility had made fire-fighting operations almost impossible, and only helicopters were able to reach the area.

Fierce winds, high altitude, dense vegetation and a lack of equipment and manpower made firefighting operations much more difficult.

Ranging wildfires also hit western Ilam and Kordestan provinces, causing extensive damage to old oak trees and part of the region's vegetation.

Some 300 hectares of forests and rangelands near the town of Gachsaran were turned into ashes, as well as 200 hectares of forests in Kohkiluyeh.