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# Iran, Syria sign military and security agreement



## Iran-EAEU trade taskforce holds first meeting online

**TEHRAN** — The first meeting of Iran-Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) trade taskforce, which was set up to expand trade between the two sides after they inked a preferential agreement in October 2019, was held online.

The meeting was participated by the head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), and Iranian ambassador to Russia, as well as some other Iranian and EAEU officials, IRIB reported.

Addressing the meeting, TPO Head Hamid Zadboum said, "We are trying to

remove the barriers existing in the way of bilateral trade through mutual cooperation."

Having the annual trade of over \$800 billion, the EAEU members play some significant role in the global trade, and expansion of trade with these countries is very important for Iran, he added.

Iran-EAEU trade stands at over \$2 billion for the moment, which could be increased to \$5 million in the short-term and to \$10 billion in the long-term period, Zadboum noted. **→4**

## Tehran dismisses rumors surrounding Iran-China partnership plan

**TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi has criticized the disinformation campaign surrounding the Iran-China partnership plan, saying the old trick of spreading lies to gain true information will lead nowhere.

In a tweet on Tuesday, Mousavi lauded the comprehensive cooperation plan, describing it as a clear roadmap and

principled guide for relations between the two major countries in the future world.

He said China, as the world's leading economic power in the near future, and Iran as the great power in West Asia, can counter the pressure of bullies with complementary relationship and ensuring common interests. **→3**

## Tehran gallery to showcase works by self-taught sculptor Mash Esmail

**TEHRAN** — Sculptures by self-taught artist Tavakkol Esmaili known as Mash Esmail will be put on display in an exhibition, which will open at Tehran's Arte Gallery on Friday.

The exhibition named "Iron Myths" will showcase sculptures Mash Esmail made while he was working as an employee at the Academy of Fine Arts at the University of Tehran.

Esmaili was born in Qazvin in 1923. His father was a coppersmith and he spent his childhood in his workshop learning how to form objects.

Later, when he was working in Tehran at the sculpture workshop of the academy, he used to watch works by other sculptors and used to make his own sculptures in his loneliness. **→12**

## Track laying of Chabahar-Zahedan railway begins

**TEHRAN** — The track-laying operations of Chabahar-Zahedan railroad was started on Tuesday in a ceremony attended by Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami and Deputy Transport Minister Kheirollah Khademi.

As reported by IRNA, the project which is aimed to connect Chabahar to Zahedan (the capital city of southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan Province) is planned to be completed by the end of the Iranian calendar year of 1400 (March 2022). Speaking in the ceremony, Khademi noted that the total length of this railroad is 628 kilometers (km), 150 km of which will be laid by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 2021).

Referring to the importance of the Chabahar-Zahedan railway line, the official noted that due to its strategic position, Chabahar port is going to be a gateway for the country's trade and developing this region's infrastructure is a necessity to create more job opportunities and promote economic growth.

Establishing an all-rail corridor in the east of the country, connecting Chabahar as the country's only oceanic port to the national railway network, developing Makran coasts through rail transportation, connecting Central Asia and Afghanistan to open ocean waters, creating a suitable platform for development and economic growth, saving fuel consumption and reducing road accidents, creating sustainable development and security in the region and establishing permanent cooperation with countries in the region and other countries with trade and transit exchanges are reported to be some of the goals of Chabahar-Zahedan railway project.

According to Khademi, transporting 927,000 passengers and 2.8 million tons of cargoes by the Iranian calendar year 1401 (begins in March 2022) is set to be the short-term economic goal of this project.

Connecting the ports to the railway network is an issue seriously emphasized and followed up by Iran over the recent years, as the country is strongly pursuing the objective of boosting exports and transit via its ports.

Chabahar Port in southeast Iran is the most prioritized one for railway connection as the port's exemption from the new round of the U.S. sanctions on the country is an opportunity for the development of export, transit, and also transshipment.

Lying on the coast of the Gulf of Oman in Iran's southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan Province, Chabahar is the country's only oceanic port and given its strategic location in the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) development of the port is of high significance for Iran.

## Iran joins UNWTO online campaign to promote gastronomy tourism

**TEHRAN** — Iran has joined an online campaign launched by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) to promote gastronomy as an essential part of tourism, a senior official with the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Ministry, has said.

The gastronomic project is part of the #TravelTomorrow campaign that seeks to highlight the fundamental and enduring value of tourism, including the culinary heritage of UNWTO member countries.

As part of the project, each country highlights one of its famous national foods, and Iran has produced a short video presenting Qanbar-Polo that is cooked in the southern city of Shiraz. CHTN quoted Mohammad Qassemi as saying on Wednesday.

Each country's food is being promoted through videos, photos and original recipes on the UNWTO's official website.

As the coronavirus pandemic has hit the

tourism sector over the past few months, the UNWTO aims to show how culinary heritage gives people a strong sense of belonging and brings a touch of local flavors to their homes to keep the dream of future travel alive.

Experts say that food is not merely an organic product with biochemical compositions. However, for members of each community, food is defined as a cultural element.

The hashtag #TravelTomorrow encapsulates the message 'By staying home today, we can travel tomorrow', through which the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) calls for shared responsibility among travelers and the tourism sector around the world to deal with the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic.

The Iranian cuisine, usually embellished with fragrant herbs, varies from region to region, however it principally accentuates freshness, deliciousness, and colorfulness. **→8**

## Backing anti-racism protests, renowned intellectuals lament intolerance 'on all sides'

More than 150 world renowned academics, writers and artists signed a letter published on Tuesday expressing support for global anti-racism protests while lamenting an "intolerant climate that has set in on all sides".

American linguist and activist Noam Chomsky, veteran women's rights campaigner Gloria Steinem, authors J.K. Rowling and Salman Rushdie, and journalist Fareed Zakaria were among the signatories.

According to Reuters, the letter on "justice and open debate" was published by Harper's Magazine and will appear in many leading global publications.

It supported ongoing demonstrations against police brutality and racial inequality that have spread from the United States across the world, following outrage over the death of an unarmed Black man, George Floyd, after a police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes while

detaining him in Minneapolis on May 25.

However, the letter also said that the sentiments unleashed have hardened a new set of moral attitudes and political commitments to the detriment of open debate, and allowed ideological conformity to erode tolerance of differences.

"As we applaud the first development, we also raise our voices against the second", the letter said, adding that resistance should not be allowed to "harden" into a brand of "dogma or coercion".

Free exchange of information and ideas are becoming more constricted on a daily basis, the letter warned bit.ly/2025f1J.

It said that censoriousness was spreading widely across the culture through public shaming, a tendency to dissolve complex policy issues in a "blinding moral certainty" and an intolerance of opposing views. **→10**

## \$948m taxi fleet renovation plan on agenda

**TEHRAN** — The administration has put a plan worth \$948 million on the agenda for renovating the old domestic taxi fleet, aimed at replacing 129,000 clunker cars with natural gas vehicles, hybrid, and electric cars.

There are currently around 318,000 taxis playing roads across the country, of which 192,000 should be renovated, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

The situation of clunker taxis in Iran is worrying, making a negative impact on

the country's air quality, Morteza Zamani, director general of urban taxis union said last year.

There are currently 150,000 clunker taxis in the country, which will reach up to 240,000 by the next 2 years, constituting 75 percent of the country's total taxi fleet, he added.

Referring to the renovation scheme of 90,000 clunker taxis over the past three years, he noted that some 186,000 taxis were extremely old,

aged 10 or more, and required to be replaced with newer ones.

Air pollution incurs a financial loss of about 140 million rials (nearly \$3,300) for each family in Iran annually, however, both high-priced vehicles and low-cost fuel are to blame for the air pollution severely haunting big cities of the country, said Behzad Ashjaei, secretary of the technical inspection committee of the Department of Environment. **→9**



## Wildfire sweeping through oak forest in southwest

A wildfire that erupted on Monday has burned so far some 100 hectares area of oak tree plantations in the southwestern Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province.

Approximately 12,000 hectares of forests across the country is wiped out annually, according to the Forests, Range and Watershed Management Organization.

Between 2015 and 2020, approximately 12,000 hectares of forests across the country wiped out annually.

The country's forests are estimated at 14.3 million hectares.

## The United States is losing its influence in the world: Canadian analyst

**TEHRAN** — Edward Corrigan, an international lawyer and analyst from Canada, tells the Tehran Times that the power of the United States is declining in the world, and Europeans are taking steps "to separate themselves from the Americans economically and politically."

Corrigan also says the European countries signatory to the 2015 nuclear deal have only "paid lip service" to the agreement and failed to meet their obligations.

"It is true that the European parties to the JCPOA have only given lip service to the agreement and not fulfilled their obligations," the Canadian lawyer says.

He says has "has not received the economic benefits it was promised" under the nuclear agreement.

Following is the text of the interview:

■ The International Atomic Energy Agency's Board of Governors voted for a resolution drafted by the UK, France, and Germany, which demands Iran to grant access to the IAEA to two locations under the allegation of undeclared nuclear activities there. Why did the E3 draft the resolution?

A: In my opinion, the UK, France, and Germany were responding to pressure from the United States and the Trump Administration. They were throwing a bone to Donald Trump after these countries refused to support the United States' attempt to extend the arms embargo against Iran that is due to expire in October 2020. **→7**



## Diplomat says Iran, France should expand relations

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Bahram Qassemi, the Iranian ambassador to France, has said that Iran and France should expand relations and cooperation in various areas. “Undoubtedly, relations between Iran and France, which have a long history, can be expanded in various areas through joint efforts and bilateral determination,” he tweeted in French on Tuesday.

In his tweet, Qassemi said that he has congratulated appointment of Jean Castex, the new Prime Minister of the French Republic, and formation of the new government in separate letters to the French ministers.

The ambassador said that he attaches great importance to “constructive cooperation” in a situation in which the world is facing consequences of unilateralism and negative effects of the coronavirus pandemic.

## Parliament rejects Tajgardoons credentials

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — In an open session of the parliament on Wednesday, MPs rejected credentials of Gholamreza Tajgardoons, who was elected to the parliament from the Gachsaran constituency in the February elections.



102 lawmakers, out of 251 MPs present in the session, voted for approval of his credentials, 128 voted against, and 21 abstained.

Tajgardoons, who was chairman of the Planning and Budget Committee in the previous parliament, left the session after the voting. It was the third time that he had been elected to the parliament.

Alireza Zakani, an MP from the Qom constituency, told Mehr in an interview that there have been a set of contradictions in his academic certificates and the personal information he provided to the parliament about his family members.

He was also accused of undermining the financial system of the state-run and public companies through favoritism.

## Iran will emerge stronger from U.S. economic warfare: Scholar

**(Press TV)** — Contrary to the effects intended to be imposed by U.S. sanctions, Iran will actually emerge stronger than it would have without that challenge, according to an American author, journalist and radio host.

Kevin Barrett made the remarks in an interview with Press TV on Tuesday while commenting on a statement of Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif who said that the U.S. and Israel have reached the point where they understand that their so-called maximum pressure campaign against Iran has run up against the dead end, and he’s hopeful that this recognition will turn into a change in policy.

Speaking in a meeting of senior officials of Iran’s Foreign Ministry on Monday, Zarif said, “Perhaps, no other country has been under such mounting pressure from certain [world] powers, especially the United States, and the Zionist regime.”

“But, this comes at a moment when Iran’s military has talked about its underground cities overlooking the Persian Gulf in mountains that are quite impregnable. And this has been widely recognized by American strategists when they war-gamed imagining having a war with Iran; they lose in large part because Iran has that strategic ground and controls the Persian Gulf,” Barrett said.

“So that’s why the U.S. has been waging all-out economic warfare, perhaps the most brutal economic war ever waged, escalating pressure against Iran with mixed success. The rest of the world was not impressed by the U.S. administration’s jettisoning of the JCPOA, which was really an act of complete international criminality. And so, the rest of the world has been sympathetic with Tehran’s position as the U.S., and its master in Tel Aviv, have gotten more and more hysterical,” he added.

“And now we’ve heard that the Israelis are sort of half-heartedly, or ambivalently, claiming credit for bombing an installation in Iran’s peaceful nuclear energy program and crowing about it; while Iran is, as usual, behaving responsibly, and any retaliation which will be completely legitimate when it comes will be done responsibly, proportionately, and on Iran’s terms,” he stated.

“So, ultimately what we are facing is a situation in which, Israel—which greatly increased its power over the U.S. after it was the key player in the September 11, 2001, coup d’etat featuring the controlled demolition of the World Trade Center—has realized that its whole plan, which was to radically reshape the region to its own benefit by taking out seven countries in five years, the seventh and most important being Iran, has run up into a dead end. They can’t stop Iran. They can’t get rid of the Islamic Republic. They can’t get their regime change, and they can’t even completely destroy Iran’s economy, because the resistance economy has continued to function under atrocious conditions,” he stated.

“So, Foreign Minister Zarif seems to think that at some point in the not too distant future, the Israelis will lose their project. This is an Israeli project after all. The only reason that the U.S. is hostile to Iran is because Israel sees Iran as a threat. Why is that? Because Iran tells the truth about the genocide of Palestine and supports the Palestinian resistance to that genocide,” he noted.

“And so Israel has captured the United States and dragged the U.S. into hostilities with Iran. At some point, the world is going to say no to this, as U.S. power wanes around the world. It seems that a change is going to come. And whether it comes perhaps after the next U.S. elections (there may be a new administration in office) or perhaps it’ll be another way that the U.S. will break with Israeli anti-Iran policy,” he said.

“But it seems that Iran has largely weathered the storm, and will come out of this stronger than ever thanks to its resistance economy. (Despite) what it has put up with in order to become a fully independent country, when it emerges from this economic war, it will be even stronger than it would have been had it not had such a difficult challenge, and had it simply knuckled under to the Zio-American Empire as other regional countries have,” he concluded.

# Iran, Syria sign military and security agreement

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iran and Syria signed a military and security agreement in Damascus on Wednesday.

The agreement was signed by Chief of Staff of Iran’s Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Bagheri and Syrian Defense Minister Ali Abdullah Ayyoub.

According to the IRIB, the agreement is aimed at boosting military and technical cooperation and coordination to counter increasing challenges and threats.

“Continuation of fighting the Takfiri terrorism which is being supported by certain regional and international powers is one of the objectives of this agreement,” the two sides said in a joint statement.

“The military agreement was signed in line with implementing the two countries’ political and military leaders’ guidelines in order to play more effective role in countering any foreign aggression through promotion of Tehran and Damascus’ defense capabilities,” the statement added.



The Arabic-language al-Mayadeen news website quoted General Bagheri as saying

after inking the agreement that Iran “will strengthen Syria’s air defense systems in

## Iranian diplomat: We are getting used to U.S. stupidity

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The Iranian ambassador to Pakistan has slammed the United States’ withdrawal from the World Health Organization, saying, “We are getting used to their stupidity.”

“US formally notifies #UN of decision to withdraw from @WHO. Blunder after Blunder. We are getting used to their stupidity,” Mohammad Ali Hosseini tweeted on Wednesday.

The Trump administration has notified Congress and the United Nations that the United States is formally withdrawing from the World Health Organization, a move that comes amid a rising number of coronavirus cases throughout the Americas over the past week.

The withdrawal, which goes into effect next July, has drawn



criticism from bipartisan lawmakers, medical associations, advocacy organizations and allies abroad. Presumptive Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden vowed Tuesday to reverse the decision “on (his) first day” if elected.

A State Department official also confirmed that “the United States’ notice of withdrawal, effective July 6, 2021, has been submitted to the UN secretary-general, who is the depository for the WHO.” The spokesperson for Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he had received the notice and “is in the process of verifying with the World Health Organization whether all the conditions for such withdrawal are met.” Those conditions “include giving a one-year notice and fully meeting the payment of assessed financial obligations.”

## Foreign media have launched campaign against Iran-China partnership agreement, Vaezi says

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iranian presidential chief of staff Mahmoud Vaezi said on Wednesday that foreign media outlets have created a commotion over the long-term cooperation agreement between Iran and China.

Vaezi said the 25-year partnership cooperation between Iran and China is a “conventional agreement”.

Officials in Tehran have said the comprehensive cooperation agreement has not yet been finalized between Iran and China. “This document is a conventional document to strengthen relations between the (two) countries,” he told reporters after a cabinet meeting.

He noted that speculation has been spread in social network claiming “something like leasing Kish or Qeshm [islands to China]. This [hype] is being supported from outside. Our executive bodies are making efforts to make everything transparent.”

The secretariat of the Supreme Council of Iran’s Free Trade, Industrial and Special Economic Zones also announced on Wednesday that Iran will not lease any port to China.

Government spokesman Ali Rabiei said on Tuesday that Iran has not signed an agreement to lease land or port to China, noting there is nothing secretive in the 25-year cooperation plan with China.

“There is nothing secretive in this respect. It was discussed in the latest visit by Foreign Minister [Mohammad Javad Zarif] to China and was also discussed in a meeting between Leader of the Islamic Revolution [Ayatollah Ali Khamenei] with President of China [Xi Jinping]. When any agreement is reached, it will be announced,” Rabiei said during a press conference.

He also said, “Division into West and East has no status in our foreign policy. The Islamic Republic does not limit itself and is ready to cooperate with all countries. Our only limitations are the Zionist regime and those who impose sanctions.”

Zarif said on Sunday that there is no



“hidden issue” in the long-term comprehensive partnership agreement between Iran and China.

“The agreement was discussed in the meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Leader of the Islamic Revolution. We announced the issue to the people. In last year’s visit, I took this agreement to China and it was announced. When China responded to our draft, we announced it and when China accepted negotiation with us, the issue was announced,” Zarif told an open session of the parliament.

The foreign minister said the details will be announced when the agreement is “finalized”.

He added, “There is transparency in our behavior, however, the truth is that power in the world is shifting (to the East) and we should know the realities of the international situation and take action in the post-West world.”

Zarif said the revival of the Silk Road is included in the agreement.

Rabiei said on June 23 that Iran and China have drafted a 25-year plan for comprehensive cooperation which proves failure of the plots to isolate the Islamic Republic.

“This plan proves failure of the United States’ policies to isolate Iran, sever Iran’s relations with the international community and also to harm Iran’s will to expand relations with other countries,” Rabiei said during a press conference.

He said that the 25-year plan is based on a win-win approach which “heralds long term cooperation”.

## ‘China, Russia to counter extension of arms embargo on Iran’

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — David Schultz, a professor at Hamline University, has said that Russia and China will counter the United States’ attempt to extend arms embargo on Iran.

The two countries will use their veto right at the UN Security Council to abort the plan, Schultz predicted.

In an interview with ILNA published on Wednesday, he said that U.S. President Donald Trump seeks to weaken Iran.

The professor also predicted that Washington’s policy of pressure on Iran will reach nowhere.

The United States has stepped up calls for an extension of UN arms embargo on Iran since April. The arms embargo on Iran is set to expire in October.

Under the UN Security Council Resolution 2231, which endorsed the 2015 nuclear deal, arms embargo against Iran expires in October.

On June 30, the U.S. was rebuked at the UN Security Council meeting, including by the five European countries on the council.

Russia’s Ambassador to the UN Vassily Nebenzia slammed the U.S. for pursuing a “maximum suffocation” foreign policy against Iran, saying Washington’s goal was to “achieve regime change or create a situation where Iran literally wouldn’t be able to breathe”.

“This is like putting a knee to one’s neck,” said Nebenzia, in a veiled reference to the death of black man George Floyd in Minneapolis after a white police officer knelt on his neck.

China also voiced opposition to the anti-Iran move, urging Washington “to stop its illegal unilateral sanctions” on Iran.

In a statement to the UN Security Council, Zhang Jun, China’s permanent UN representative, said the root cause of the current crisis is the U.S. withdraw-



al from the Iran nuclear deal and the reimposition of unilateral sanctions against Iran, Xinhua reported.

“This has again undermined the joint efforts to preserve the JCPOA [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action],” Zhang said, referring to U.S. efforts to extend the arms embargo.

“We urge the U.S. to stop its illegal unilateral sanctions and long-arm jurisdiction, and return to the right track of observing the JCPOA and Resolution 2231 [of the UNSC],” he said.

Rosemary DiCarlo, undersecretary-general for political and peace-building affairs, also told the Security Council meeting that the nuclear agreement remains crucial to the global non-proliferation architecture and to regional and international security, according to the UN website.

In a letter to the United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres and the Security Council circulated on June 8, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov accused the Trump administration of unleashing a politically motivated campaign against Iran and called for “universal condemnation” of the U.S. attempts.

The Russian foreign minister said the United States withdrew from the 2015 nuclear agreement between Iran and six major powers and now has no legal right to try to use the UN resolution endorsing the deal to indefinitely continue the arms embargo.

## Enemies after internal discord in Iran, president warns

**TEHRAN (Tasnim)** — Iranian President Hassan Rouhani warned that the main objective pursued by the enemies, above all by the U.S. and Israel, is to create rift and division between the Iranian people and establishment.

Addressing a cabinet session on Wednesday, Rouhani said the U.S. and the Zionist regime’s main objective is to mount pressure on Iran, foment disappointment in the country, and create division and rift between the people, the establishment and the branches of power.

Highlighting the need for the three branches of power — the administration, the parliament and the Judiciary — to join hands for the settlement of the country’s problems, the president said, “The administration always favors cordial and brotherly relations with the other power branches within the framework of the Constitution, and will continue this policy.”

It is no good time for disputes amid the widespread pressure of sanctions imposed by the enemies and the outbreak of the coronavirus, Rouhani underlined.



He further lauded the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the symbol of Iran’s political power, saying the ministry has made great achievements over the past seven years, such as the great job of termination of the sanctions imposed on

Iran under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter.

The president also pointed to the new wave of coronavirus in Iran, saying the Health Ministry has been assigned to take action against the problematic and threatening crowded places.

He declared a ban on all wedding and mourning ceremonies in Iran until further notice, saying wearing face masks in the public and indoor places and in all administrative offices remains obligatory.

On Tuesday, the spokesperson for the Iranian administration said new decisions might be made to tighten restrictions in Tehran as the novel coronavirus is taking more lives.

Iran’s Health Ministry on Tuesday reported 200 new deaths from the novel coronavirus, the highest single-day toll since the viral disease broke out in February.

At least 207,000 patients have recovered from the coronavirus infection so far or have been discharged from hospitals across Iran.



# U.S. bases might be shut down in future, ambassador predicts

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The Iranian Ambassador to Baghdad, Iraj Masjedi, has said the U.S. bases in Iraq will be probably shut down in the future.

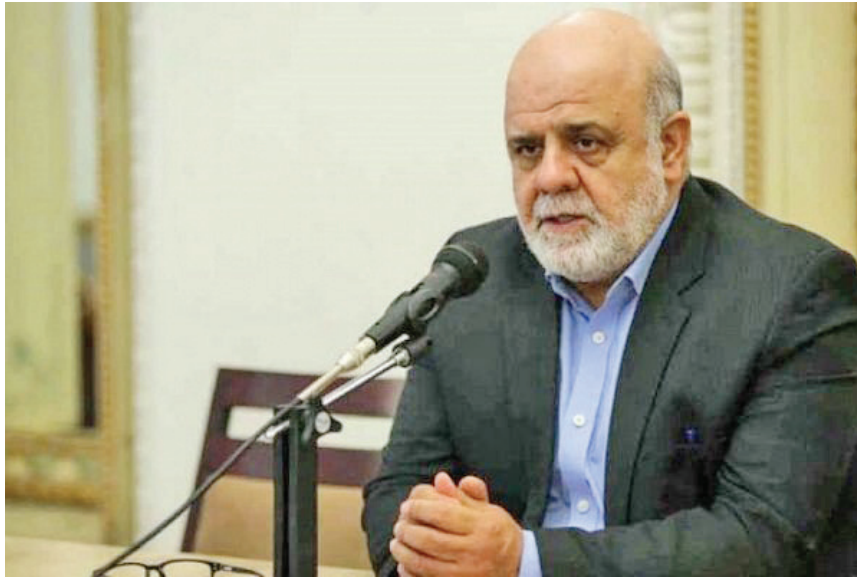
Neither Iran nor the U.S. can be removed from Iraq, but the U.S. bases might be eliminated from the country in the future, Masjedi said, according to Mehr.

He made the remarks on Tuesday at a meeting to review political developments in neighboring Iraq.

“I believe that Iraq has reached a new stage. Occupation, ISIS, and insecurity were the three stages that the country had already gone through, and the Islamic Republic played a key role in tackling all of them which all Iraqi officials admitted,” the ambassador pointed out.

Masjedi said that Iraq is currently seeking a balance between the two main actors, namely Iran and the U.S., and is trying to utilize the capabilities of the two countries.

He went on to say that both Iran and Iraq



believe that the U.S. and the Zionist regime seek hegemonic policies.

Back in April, spokesman for the commander-in-chief of the Iraqi armed forces revealed that Baghdad and Washington will start talks on the exit of U.S. forces from Iraq in June.

In an interview with the Al Sabaah newspaper, Major General Abdul Karim Khalaf said in line with a resolution by the Iraqi parliament to remove U.S. forces from Iraq the two countries will start detailed talks in June on a complete removal of U.S. forces based on a time schedule.

Following the assassination of top Iranian military commander Qassem Soleimani and Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) deputy commander Abu-Mahdi al-Muhandis in a terrorist attack by the U.S. military on June 3 in Baghdad's international airport, the Iraqi parliament voted for a resolution on January 5 tasking the government to order the expulsion of U.S. forces from Iraq.

## Lebanon has an opportunity to buy fuel, petroleum byproducts from Iran: Nasrallah

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah has said Lebanon has an opportunity to buy fuel and petroleum byproducts from “a friend called Iran” in exchange for Lebanese liras.

“I intend to discuss three things; economic situation in Lebanon, Lebanese politics, and regional developments,” Nasrallah said in a speech late on Tuesday.

“Some have said we are trying to turn Lebanon into the Iranian model. We never said this. All we said was that we have an opportunity to buy fuel and petroleum byproducts from a friend called Iran in exchange for Lebanese liras,” he stated.

He added that Iran needs hard currency, such as dollars and euros, “so they’re making a big sacrifice to sell us petroleum for liras.”

“Some have said the U.S. is Lebanon’s oxygen. Fine, inhale this oxygen — we’re not trying to cut it off. We’re saying what will Lebanon do if the U.S. cuts it off?” the Hezbollah chief said.

“Others said the goal of turning Eastward was to change Lebanon’s civilizational face; as if Lebanon isn’t in the Middle East [West Asia] but in South America. Lebanon is in the East,” Nasrallah added.

“We’re not stopping our political opponents from going to their friends to get Lebanon’s needs — we won’t accuse them of imposing their friend’s model on us, if they even have a model,” he highlighted.

“Also, Lebanon doesn’t currently have the components to be transformed into the Iranian model — not that the Iranian model is a bad thing; they have economic, agricultural, fuel, electricity, and medical self-sufficiency and exports, military and space technology,” he highlighted, adding, “So, the Iranian model is a successful one. What are you afraid of? Nonetheless, Lebanon



doesn’t have the components for the Iranian model.”

Of course, he continued, Iran has hardships but it has been steadfast for forty years under the U.S. pressure.

He explained that Iran has a hard currency problem because of the primacy of the dollar, but it’s doing well otherwise.

“Lebanon, under a little economic pressure, is ready to cave. So, we’re not trying to impose the Iranian model or turn Lebanon communist,” he remarked.

“All we mean by turning Eastward is that since France won’t disburse CEDRE funds, U.S. imposes sanctions, and Arab countries won’t help for own reasons, we should accept help from whoever offers,” Nasrallah maintained.

### ■ ‘U.S. ambassador intervention’

Regarding domestic politics, Nasrallah said, “I want to confine myself to one issue — American intervention and behavior in Lebanon, particularly that of the ambas-

sador to Lebanon. We’ve seen since Ambassador Shea came to Lebanon — and we welcome her like all other ambassadors — that rather than adhering to diplomatic customs, she is acting like a governor.”

“What right does an ambassador have to intervene in economic appointments, saying this person is OK and another isn’t? This has happened, and it’s happening openly,” he regretted.

“Go ask Lebanese officials, they’ll tell you the U.S. ambassador told them to appoint specific people and not others as deputy Central Bank governor, otherwise the U.S. would withhold funds. Is this a friendly country, or a colonialist country?” Nasrallah continued.

“The U.S. ambassador is also saying that the Diab government is done and must go. What right does she have? This is a domestic Lebanese issue. More than this, she’s already deciding the makeup of the future Lebanese government,” Hezbollah leader added.

“What right does the U.S. ambassador have to get on national Lebanese TV and insult Hezbollah, a major political and social movement in Lebanon, and call it terrorist, criminal, etc. every day. And the government is silent, and she thinks this is for her to do.”

Nasrallah went on to say, “The U.S. ambassador is also inciting Lebanese parties and officials against Hezbollah and its allies, pushing Lebanon towards internal strife and civil war. The U.S. embassy’s role here has been to starve Lebanon, prevent investment in Lebanon, scare off foreign investment, etc. All of this, they’re doing on Lebanese territory.”

Meanwhile, he added, as the U.S. ambassador is crossing all these red lines, Lebanon is quiet. “A Lebanese judge bravely responded to her. Whether this was legal or not is beside the point. It shows there are independent and brave judges in this country.”

## Tehran dismisses rumors surrounding Iran-China partnership plan

Foreign Ministry spokesman says old trick of spreading lies to gain true info won’t work

**1→** Undoubtedly, Mousavi said, “the strategic relationship” between Iran and China, which meets key mutual interests, has enemies which will use all their energy to undermine the ongoing negotiations and prevent a success of the plan.

“There is no ceding of the Iranian islands, nor the presence of the foreign military forces, nor any other illusions,” the spokesman explained.

He added such claims are so ridiculous that even do not worth denial.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Sunday that there is no “hidden issue” in the long-term comprehensive agreement between Iran and China.

“The agreement was discussed in the meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Leader of the Islamic Rev-

olution [Ayatollah Ali Khamenei]. We announced the issue to the people. In last year’s visit, I took this agreement to China and it was announced. When China responded to our draft, we announced it and when China accepted negotiation with us, the issue was announced,” Zarif told an open session of the parliament.

The foreign minister said the details will be announced when the agreement is “finalized”.

Zarif added, “There is transparency in our behavior, however, the truth is that power in the world is shifting (to the East) and we should know the realities of the international situation and take action in the post-West world.”

Government spokesman Ali Rabiei said on June 23 that Iran and China have drafted a 25-year plan for comprehensive partnership which proves failure of the plots to isolate the Islamic Republic.

**Undoubtedly, Mousavi said, “the strategic relationship” between Iran and China, which meets key mutual interests, has enemies which will use all their energy to undermine the ongoing negotiations and prevent a success of the plan.**

## GC spokesman highlights need to confront U.S. unilateralism

**TEHRAN (FNA)** — Spokesman of Iran’s Guardian Council Abass Ali Kadkhodaei has blasted the U.S. for its bullying approach vis-a-vis the world countries, and underlined the need to counter Washington’s expansionist and unilateral diplomacy.

“Is the international community able to counter the U.S. regime’s expansionist and unilateralism?” Kadkhodaei wrote on his Twitter account.

“The assassination of General Qassem Soleimani, anti-terror commander of the Quds Force of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps by the United States, which was recognized by the UN Special Rapporteur as a violation of international law, was a criminal act that unfortunately was accompanied by the silence of some international forums,” he added.

In an interview with Reuters on Tuesday, UN Special Rapporteur Agnes Kalamar called the U.S. crime of assassinating General Soleimani a violation of international law and called on countries to respond to targeted assassinations with military drones and to establish regulations in this area.

Lieutenant General Soleimani was assassinated in a

U.S. drone strike on Baghdad International Airport in Iraq on January 3.

The airstrike also martyred Deputy Commander of Iraq’s Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis. The two were martyred in an American airstrike that targeted their vehicle on the road to the airport.

Five Iranian and five Iraqi military men were martyred by the missiles fired by the U.S. drone at Baghdad International Airport.

Iran announced in late June that it had issued arrest warrants for 36 officials of the U.S. and other countries who have been involved in the assassination of the martyred General Soleimani.

“36 individuals who have been involved or ordered the assassination of Hajj Qassem, including the political and military officials of the U.S. and other governments, have been identified and arrest warrants have been issued for them by the judiciary officials and red alerts have also been issued for them via the Interpol,” Prosecutor-General of Tehran Ali Alqasi Mehr said.



He said that the prosecuted individuals are accused of murder and terrorist action, adding that U.S. President Donald Trump stands at the top of the list and will be prosecuted as soon as he stands down presidency after his term ends.

## Efforts underway to repatriate abducted border guards from Pakistan, general says

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Chief of Iran’s Border Police has said a series of talks have been held with Pakistani security authorities to secure the release of the Iranian border guards kidnapped at a border post and taken into Pakistan back in 2018.



Brigadier General Ahmadali Goodarzi said negotiations have been held with Pakistan’s internal security agency about two Iranian border guards who have been held hostage by the so-called Jaish-ul-Adl terrorist group since October 2018, Tasnim reported.

The Foreign Ministry and the Border Police are engaged in consultations with Pakistan to bring the border guards back to home, he reiterated.

Pakistani-based terrorists kidnapped 14 Iranian forces at a border post in the Mirjaveh region in Iran’s southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan in October 2018.

The Iranian military forces along the southeastern border areas are frequently attacked by terrorist groups coming from Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Tehran has frequently asked the two neighbors to step up security at the common border to prevent terrorist attacks on Iranian forces.

## Ambassador submits credentials to Slovak FM

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Iran’s new accredited ambassador to Slovakia, Abbas Bagherpour Ardakani, has presented a copy of his credentials to Slovakian Foreign Minister Ingrid Brocková.

During a meeting, the two sides reviewed bilateral cooperation in various fields and agreed to deepen friendly and traditional relations in order to advance the common goals of Iran and Slovakia, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

Bagherpour Ardakani, also Iran’s new ambassador to Austria, submitted his credentials to the Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen in a ceremony held at the Austrian Presidential Palace last week.

He conveyed the friendship message of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to the Austrian president and Iran’s readiness to develop relations with Austria in all political, economic, cultural fields based on historical and long-standing relations.

The Austrian president also extended his greetings to his Iranian counterpart and voiced his readiness for the expansion of bilateral relations.

Bagherpour is currently the accredited ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Slovakia.

## Ruhollah Zam appeals against death sentence

**TEHRAN (MNA)** — Ruhollah Zam, the administrator of the Amad News counterrevolutionary website and Telegram channel, has appealed against a death sentence recently issued by the court.

Zam’s lawyer announced on Wednesday that his client has appealed against the death sentence, asking for a review on the court’s verdict.



Zam was sentenced to death in late June after being convicted of Efsad-e Fel-Arz (spreading corruption on earth).

The Judiciary said back then that the verdict was not final and could be appealed.

In October 2019, the IRGC announced that Zam had been arrested during a complicated intelligence operation.

Zam launched Amad News in 2015. The channel frequently posted fake news stories and called for violence with the aim of overthrowing the Islamic Republic system.

During the protest rallies in December 2018, he urged the people to take arms against the government.

In its statement, the IRGC said it lured Zam into Iran using “clever, multidimensional and innovative tricks”, which even deceived foreign intelligence agencies.

The IRGC also said the French intelligence service was behind Zam’s activities, which were also backed by the U.S. and the Zionist regime’s spy services.

The IRGC posted the news of his arrest on Zam’s Telegram channel with a following of over a million users, effectively taking over the administration of the popular channel.

Back in December 2017, Telegram blocked Amad News for encouraging violence after a request by the Iranian Minister of Communications and Information Technology.

However, Zam resumed his activities by launching a new channel called Seday-e Mardom, which is translated as “voice of the people”.



## Iran-EAEU trade taskforce holds first meeting online

**1 →** As announced last week by Ruhollah Latifi, the spokesman of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of trade between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union reached \$2.418 billion after the implementation of the preferential trade agreement in October 2019.



The official said that over 6.873 tons of commodities have been traded between the two sides since then.

Saying that the basic commodities account for the major part of Iran's imports from the EAEU member states, the official announced that Iran's imports from those countries constitute 72 percent of the total trade between the two sides.

He put Iran's imports from the EAEU countries based on the preferential tariffs at over 5.207 million tons valued at \$1.737 billion, and the county's exports from the block at 655,614 tons worth \$681 million.

The IRICA spokesman mentioned Russia and Armenia as the major exporters of goods to Iran, while Russia and Kazakhstan were the top importers of commodities from Iran.

In mid-May, the TPO head had announced that the export of the commodities subjected to preferential tariffs from Iran to the Eurasian Economic Union's member states had risen 85 percent since the implementation of the agreement between the two sides.

Hamid Zadboum also said that 13 percent of Iran's imports from the EAEU are subjected to the preferential tariffs, while 49 percent of the country's exports to the block is subjected to those tariffs.

The official said that Iran's exports to the EAEU member countries are more variable compared to its imports from those states, adding exports can be even more expanded.

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

The interim agreement enabling the formation of a free trade area between Iran and the EAEU was signed on May 17, 2018, and officially came into force on October 27, 2019.

Iran is a very important market in the region and the development of ties with this country is of high significance for the EAEU members (Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan).

The free trade agreement between Iran and this union has laid the ground for the expansion of trade ties between the two sides.

The agreement with the bloc has increased Iran's exports to the EAEU member states significantly, which is a turning point for the Islamic Republic plans for boosting non-oil exports during the U.S. sanctions.

## Monthly car manufacturing up 31% yr/yr

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Car manufacturing in Iran rose 31 percent during the third month of the current Iranian calendar year (May 21-June 20), from the same month in the past year, IRNA reported.

Iranian carmakers have manufactured 90,306 vehicles during the third month of this year.



As previously reported, the carmakers manufactured 203,146 vehicles during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20).

Of the mentioned figure, 96,490 vehicles were manufactured by Iran Khodro Company (IKCO), 79,520 by SAIPA Group, and 27,136 by Pars Khodro.

Three major Iranian carmakers, namely Iran Khodro Company (IKCO), SAIPA Group, and Pars Khodro, manufactured 863,263 vehicles during the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19).

During the previous year, IKCO manufactured 393,812 vehicles, of which 35,953 were produced in the last month Esfand (February 20-March 19).

Production by SAIPA stood at 363,379, of which 23,696 vehicles were manufactured during the last month.

Pars Khodro manufactured 106,072 cars during the past year. Production in Esfand reached 9,300 vehicles.

Iran has been following a program for supporting domestic manufacturing of auto parts since due to the U.S. sanctions the country's automakers have been facing some problems in supplying their needed parts and equipment.

# Aircraft engine repair center to be set up at Payam Airport

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The managing director of Iran's Payam International Airport has said that an aircraft engine repair center is going to be established in this airport, IRNA reported.

According to Nader Sanagou Motlaq, as the country's biggest aircraft overhaul center, the unit will be established in cooperation with Mapna Group.

The official made the remarks in a meeting with Mapna Group's Head Abbas Aliabadi, saying that establishing this center is going to neutralize the negative impacts of the U.S. sanctions in this sector.

Located in Alborz Province, Payam is the closest special economic zone to Iran's capital city Tehran, which has attracted a multitude of companies with significant investments in a wide range of areas, including ICT, pharmaceuticals, health, oil and gas.

Payam International Airport, located at the heart of this zone, is owned by Iran's Information and Communication Technology Ministry.

The airport was established in 1997 as a cargo-only airport.

Payam Special Economic Zone's fourth development phase was launched in April on an area of 165 hectares.

According to Sanagou Motlaq, it was



its biggest development phase as the three previous development phases covered an

area of 114 hectares.

The new phase will see the development of

the zone's information and communication technology sector.

## Steel ingot output rises 8% in a quarter on year

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Production of steel ingot in Iran increased eight percent during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20) compared to the same period of time in the past year, IRNA reported.

As reported, over 5.702 million tons of steel ingot was produced during the first quarter of this year.

Production of steel ingot in Iran is expected to surpass 30 million tons in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021), Deputy Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Darioush Esmaili has announced.

Saying that Iran is currently the world's 10th biggest steel producer, the official underscored that the country is planning to rise to 8th place by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (starts in March 2025).

He said the Industry Ministry has it on the agenda to increase the country's steel ingot production to 55 million tons by 2025, for which 160 million tons of iron ore is required annually.

"Given the country's 2.8-billion-ton iron ore reserves, we need new explorations in this field, because when the annual steel ingot production capacity reaches 55 million tons, the current production levels of iron ore can only supply the industry for 12 to 13 years," the official stated.

He further noted that over 90 million tons of iron ore were produced in the country during the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19) of which only seven percent was exported.

The reduction in the exports of iron ore comes as the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has



urged the government to prevent the exports of raw minerals in order to be processed in the country for making products with more added value.

Following the leader's remarks, the government levied a 25-percent duty on the exports of raw minerals (especially iron ore) as from September 23, 2019.

The 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.

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.

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.

According to Esmaili, 10 years ago Iran exported more than 20 million tons of unprocessed iron ore and the figure fell to a maximum of six million tons last year.

## South Korea to release part of Iran's frozen money

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — South Korea has agreed to unblock part of Iran's frozen money which is kept by Seoul due to the U.S. sanctions, the chairman of Iran-South Korea joint chamber of commerce has said.

"Based on the agreement with the Korean side the money is not going to be returned in cash but in the form of medical and pharmaceutical items," ILNA quoted Hossein Tanhaei as saying on Tuesday.

"In this regard, the Health Ministry will announce these items in coordination with the Central Bank of Iran (CBI)," he added.

There have been no talks on the return of the money in cash, however, it is possible that after the first part is released, we will gradually move towards the imports of food and livestock feed, he explained.

Asked about the volume of transactions, the official said "It depends on our efforts, and I hope that with the coordination made by the Ministry of Health and the Central



Bank we will be able to return a large portion of the money."

On June 12, Tanhaei announced Iran's frozen assets in South Korea were between \$6.5 billion and \$9 billion, Iran Daily reported at the time.

Trade relations between Iran and South Korea have

sharply declined under the U.S. pressures.

Back in June, CBI Governor Abdolnasser Hemmati said that Iran will take back its dollars from South Korea through legal and international methods.

The official expressed hope that the South Korean government would abide by its commitments and not block access to those funds under the pretext of the U.S. sanctions.

Earlier, President Hassan Rouhani had reacted to Seoul's blocking of Iranian assets, saying: "South Korea's ban on Iran's use of its central bank resources to buy basic goods, medicine, and humanitarian items is by no means acceptable, and we expect Seoul to lift this restriction as soon as possible."

Also in May, Iranian Foreign Ministry had said that preliminary steps were taken to set up a channel to allow Iran to use its funds in South Korea to buy humanitarian goods. Weeks later South Korea's Foreign Ministry said Seoul was sending \$500,000 worth of medicine to Iran.

## Iran expected to become home appliance exporter next year

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran is expected to become an exporter of some home appliance items as of the next Iranian calendar year (starts in March 2021), Hamidreza Ghaznavi, the spokesman of Home Appliances Manufacturers Union, said.

"If the currency problems are solved and steel sheets and some petrochemical products are provided for this industry, we will become exporter of some household appliances by the next year," Ghaznavi said.

According to the official, until recently and before the exit of two major South Korean companies (LG and Samsung) from Iran's

market, over 60 percent of the market was held by these companies while nearly 15 percent belonged to luxury brands and only about 25 percent of people used domestic products.

"After the two companies withdrew from the Iranian market under the U.S. sanctions, many of the consumers of their products were inclined toward domestic products," he said.

So domestic companies must be supported to be able to meet the growing demand and even become exporters of such products, he added.

In recent years, the Iranian government has been following a new strategy for supporting domestic production to neutralize the

impacts of the U.S. sanctions while reducing the reliance of the economy on oil revenues.

The home appliances sector has not been an exemption and like many other areas, the production of home appliances has witnessed a significant rise in the past two years so that in the previous calendar year 1398 (ended on March 19) this industry's production capacity increased by 10 percent compared to the preceding year.

In late June, Acting Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Hossein Modares Khiabani said the country's home appliance manufacturers currently can produce 20 million units every year.

According to Khiabani, the knowledge for manufacturing up to 70 percent of the home appliances in Iran has been indigenized by local companies.

Based on Industry Ministry data, in the previous year, 1,168,700 refrigerators and freezers were produced in the country, an increase of 7.8 percent compared to the preceding year 1397 (ended on March 20, 2019), while domestic companies produced 732,200 washing machines, to register a 32-percent increase year on year.

Also, the production of water air conditioners increased by 6.3 percent to 904,900 units during the said period.



# NISOC indigenizes knowledge of key gas turbine parts

**E N E R G Y** **TEHRAN** — National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) has managed to successfully indigenize the knowledge for manufacturing intricate parts used in gas turbines in line with support for local manufacturing and knowledge-based companies, Shana reported.

According to NISOC Director of Logistics and Commodity Affairs Saeid Aminizadeh, the company has manufactured the 15 discs inside air compressors in the turbines together with the main body that holds and directs hot gases into the turbines.

The parts were made of heat-resistant, high-precision super-alloys which were developed by local manufacturers, Aminizadeh said.

He added that the components are a type of turbines used widely in oil-rich regions that provide power to process pumps and gas injection compressors with a capacity of more than 14 MW.

Aminizadeh further noted that the total cost of localized discs is less than a third of the same foreign samples.

Operating a big part of the country's oilfields in the southern oil-rich regions, NISOC has been taking serious measures for supporting domestic producers in the oil industry to indigenize oil equipment and machinery in order to reduce the dependence of foreign companies.

Back in February, NISOC Managing Director Ahmad Mohammadi, said his company



had successfully indigenized the knowledge for the production of over 1,000 oil equipment items.

According to the official, this success is an indication of the country's determination for neutralizing the negative impacts of the

U.S. sanctions on the country's oil industry as much as possible.

Back in December 2019, the company released a list of 7500 equipment items needed in the country's oil industry, to be manufactured by domestic producers.

The list was unveiled at the opening ceremony of the 11th Khuzestan Specialized Exhibition of Domestic Manufacturing of Petroleum and the 17th Drilling Industry Equipment Exhibition in the southwest-ern province.

## Plans under way for sending synthetic oil to Abadan refinery

**TEHRAN (Shana)** — The deputy director of production at the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) said plans were under way to send synthetic oil to Abadan refinery besides the facilities operating in Northern provinces.

Farrokh Alikhani told Shana that sending synthetic oil of South Pars to refineries is an initiative that has been developed with the aim of making optimal use of excess gas condensate and has reached fruition with constructive cooperation between the Deputy of Production of National Iranian Oil Company and the affiliate companies of the National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC).

Receiving gas condensate from South Pars gas field through Behregan operational district which is operated by the Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC), sending



it to Maroon 2 exploitation unit and then transferring it to the northern refineries, have taken place for the first time with the aim of optimizing gas condensate consumption in the country's oil industry.

All these measures took place in less than a month, Alikhani said, adding South Pars gas condensate is distributed among domestic refineries especially Isfahan Refinery and petrochemical plants, but given the volume of their production, the surplus condensate should have been managed.

To this end, during the past month, meetings were held between the NIOC and the National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC), and the composition of the type of oil that was to be fed to the refineries was determined.

## Oil producers will fight for market share as consumption growth slows

By John Kemp

Petroleum consumption growth has been slowing for decades and the industry shows increasing signs of maturity, which will have profound implications for the business strategies of oil-producing companies and countries.

Slower growth will intensify intra-company and intra-company competition for market share putting downward pressure on prices, revenues, investment and employment over the next two decades.

Petroleum has always been a deeply cyclical business and there is no reason to expect any lessening of cyclical volatility ("Oil prices, or how I learned to stop worrying and embrace the cycle", Reuters, April 25, 2018).

But consumption growth has been progressively slowing since the early 1970s and that underlying trend looks set to continue through the 2020s and 2030s.

Over the last five decades, the global economy has continued expanding but consumers have become efficient in their use of oil or substituted cheaper fuels such as natural gas.

Oil consumption has grown much more slowly than GDP and the relationship between the two has become increasingly weak.

There is every reason to expect that slowdown to continue and intensify if there is a widespread displacement of petroleum by electric vehicles.

### ■ A series of shocks

For the last 20 years, the oil market's increasing maturity has been masked by China's rapid industrialization and by the disruption of a number of a number of previously significant sources of production.

Venezuela, Iran, Nigeria and Libya, all once significant producers within the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), have seen their output slashed by sanctions, war, unrest and mismanagement.

Over the next two decades, however, it is not certain India or other emerging markets can replicate China's enormous boost to consumption or that other major producers will be disrupted.

Market maturity, coupled with the shale revolution after 2008, led to over-production and the market-share war fought between 2014 and 2016, which erupted again in 2020.

The next two decades are likely to see recurrent volume wars unless the major producers can agree on a way to share out a slow-growing or stagnant market.

Market maturity was also the principal reason why the major oil companies were forced to cut their long-term price assump-



tions recently.

Importantly, there have been increasing signs of maturity even before widespread electrification of transportation — which still remains a future rather than a current competitor to petroleum.

### ■ Decelerating growth

Before the oil shocks of the 1970s, global petroleum consumption had been growing at average rates of around 8 percent per year.

Growth at this rate was unsustainably fast and incompatible with the low oil prices prevailing in the 1950s and 1960s, directly creating the conditions for the oil embargoes and nationalizations of the 1970s.

Following the oil price shocks of 1973/74 and 1979/80, global consumption growth slowed to an average rate of less than 2 percent.

Since the global financial crisis in 2008/09, global consumption has slowed even further to well under 1.5 percent per year.

Progressively slower growth in consumption has been apparent through the ups and downs of the business and oil price cycles.

The slowdown was evident in 2019, even before the coronavirus pandemic plunged the oil industry into the worst crisis in its history.

### ■ Growth after China

Since 1995, consumption in the advanced economies of the OECD has been flat; growth has come entirely from the fast-growing economies of the non-OECD, especially China.

China, as a large, fast-growing and increasingly prosperous economy, has accounted for around 40 percent of all the growth in oil consumption over the last quarter of a century, rising to 50 percent since 2007.

China's consumption has increased at an

average annual rate of over 5 percent since 2007 compared with just 0.6 percent in the rest of the world.

China's reintegration into the global economy since the 1980s, after two centuries of backwardness, is an exceptional economic development that may not be replicated in the next 25 years.

India is probably the only single country large enough that it might replicate China's extraordinary growth in oil consumption over the next quarter century.

Beyond that, the big consumption growth is most likely to come from groups of countries in South and Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America.

But none are yet showing the extraordinary surge in oil consumption China has experienced since 1995.

### ■ Long-term scarring

Each of the three major shocks to the oil market (1973/74, 1979/80 and 2008/09) resulted in "scarring" — consumption never returned to its pre-shock trend. Some of the lost consumption proved permanent.

Scarring has been especially significant in the advanced economies, with few or no signs in China and other fast-growing non-OECD economies, reinforcing the shift in consumption growth to emerging markets.

The coronavirus pandemic is also likely to result in permanent scarring with consumption throughout the 2020s remaining lower than it would have been in the absence of the pandemic.

Even if oil consumption rebounds to its pre-pandemic level by 2022, as many analysts anticipate, it will still be lower in 2025

and 2030 than it would have been without coronavirus.

The lower consumption trajectory implies lower prices, other things being equal, which is why oil companies have begun to revise down the forecast prices they used for investment appraisal and planning.

The industry is likely to remain cyclical, with alternating periods of boom and bust, but prices are likely to be lower on average over the cycle ("Oil prices likely to average less than \$60 over next cycle", Reuters, June 17, 2020).

### ■ Producer challenges

In a rapidly growing market, all major producers can boost their output simultaneously, but a slow growing market will be closer to a zero-sum game.

Rapid market growth can accommodate a broad range of higher and lower cost producers; slower growth will make business conditions much tougher for producers with a high cost base.

In a mature market, all producers will have to prioritize operational efficiency and cost control rather than output growth.

For major international oil companies, the focus will shift to delivering projects that break even at lower average prices to ensure they produce acceptable returns to shareholders.

For OPEC countries, the focus will be adapting their government budgets to lower oil prices and export earnings, intensifying the pressure to diversify their economies and find alternative non-oil sources of income.

For U.S. shale producers, the focus will shift from rapid output expansion and the expectation of higher future prices towards profitable operation at more modest prices through the cycle.

Petroleum is a depleting industry. Output naturally declines unless capital is invested to sustain output and replace produced reserves. Some estimates put the worldwide depletion rate at 6-9 percent or 6-9 million barrels per year.

So even if consumption growth slows, and eventually peaks, hundreds of billions of dollars of capital will still need to be invested to sustain output levels and counter natural declines, likely for many decades.

Prices and profits will need to remain high enough to attract and retain sufficient capital within the industry to maintain production.

But the industry appears to be shifting from expansion towards a more mature state, implying a set of very different business dynamics in the next 20 years compared with the last 20.

## Nouri petchem plant to export heavy aromatics

**TEHRAN (Shana)** — The Managing Director of Nouri Petrochemical Company said the plant is prepared to export heavy aromatics.

Addressing the company's general assembly on Tuesday, July 7, 2020, Taghi Sanei said the plant supplied 4.338 million tons of petrochemicals over the course of the previous Iranian calendar year of 1398 which ended on March 19, adding the company operated at 97 percent of its nameplate capacity during the year.



He also added that the plant's output was 106 percent of its planned production during the year, saying the company's main output was para-xylene, benzene and ortho-xylene.

Noori Petrochemical Plant produced 685,000 tons of para-xylene last year which was a new record in the item's output. Benzene output of the plant was also 417,000 tons during the year, Sanei added.

## OPEC+ cuts deeper in June on pressure to boost oil market recovery

OPEC slashed its crude output in June to a three-decade low, according to an S&P Global Platts survey, as the bloc and its allies, including Russia, continued their campaign to tighten the oil market in its emergence from the depths of the coronavirus crisis.

OPEC's 13 members pumped 22.31 million bpd, the organization's lowest collective output since September 1990, when the launch of the first Persian Gulf War nearly wiped out crude oil production in Iraq and Kuwait, the survey found.



Including its 10 partners in a historic supply accord, the alliance known as OPEC+ delivered 106% of its committed production cuts, according to Platts calculations, a rise from May's 85%. The combined output of the 20 OPEC and non-OPEC countries with quotas under the deal was 10.32 million bpd below their late 2018 reference levels, meaning the coalition took more than 10% of pre-pandemic oil supply off the market.

The drastic cuts demonstrate how urgently OPEC+ members, who depend greatly on oil revenues to fund their budgets, are striving to prevent another collapse in prices.

But as the global economy takes tentative steps to recovering from the coronavirus pandemic, driving increases in oil demand, some delegates have said they are expecting an easing of the quotas in August as scheduled.

The 9.7 million bpd production cut accord runs through July, after which the cuts roll back to 7.7 million bpd. A nine-country Joint Ministerial Monitoring Committee co-chaired by Saudi Arabia and Russia, the coalition's two biggest members, is scheduled to meet online July 15 to review market conditions.

### ■ Pressure to perform

OPEC's core Persian Gulf members led the way on compliance in June, making additional voluntary cuts, while Iraq and Nigeria made significant progress toward complying with their quotas, the survey found.

Saudi Arabia took its production down to 7.58 million bpd, according to the survey, its lowest since June 2002, as the OPEC kingpin mostly made good on its pledge to hold output to 1 million bpd below its 8.49 million bpd quota in June. The kingdom and its Persian Gulf allies the UAE and Kuwait are not expected to maintain those extra cuts in July.

Russia, which has an identical 8.49 million bpd quota, pumped just above that, at 8.50 million bpd, the survey found.

Iraq, which has been the target of ire by its OPEC+ counterparts for its historic non-compliance, made a big reduction in its output to 3.70 million bpd, a nearly five-year low. While that remains above its quota of 3.59 million bpd, the country has pledged to make up for its overproduction later this summer with extra cuts.

Nigeria has made the same pledge, with its June production averaging 1.58 million bpd, above its cap of 1.41 million bpd, according to the survey.

Several other African countries also breached their quotas and likely will face pressure at the JMMC meeting to improve their performance.

### ■ Venezuela plunges

The deal exempts Iran, Venezuela and Libya from the cuts. Venezuela, under stringent U.S. sanctions, saw its production collapse to 280,000 bpd, just over half of its May output, as its operations with international joint venture partners nearly ground to a halt.

Libya saw a slight uptick to 100,000 bpd, the survey found, but remains extremely volatile because of civil conflict.

Platts is one of six secondary sources used by the OPEC+ coalition to track output. Platts has compiled OPEC member production data since 1988 and has now begun to survey production by the other participants in the OPEC+ agreement.

The Platts figures are compiled by surveying oil industry officials, traders, and analysts, as well as reviewing proprietary shipping, satellite and inventory data.



First Announcement


**Brief Notice of International  
Tender No.9803197**
**Industrial hoses- include 42 items**

Esfahan Steel Co. intends to purchase through international tender purchasing 42 **Items hoses** Prospective bidders specialized and experienced in the said area may visit Esfahan Steel Co.'s Website at [www.esfahansteel.ir](http://www.esfahansteel.ir) to get the tender documents no later than 06/July/2020 and deliver their bids to the following address no later than official closing time (i.e.14.00 pm) on 20/July/2020

For further information, prospective bidders may contact us via the following email address: [mousavi-sh@esfahansteel.ir](mailto:mousavi-sh@esfahansteel.ir)

**Public Relation of Esfahan Steel Co.**

First Announcement


**Brief Notice of International  
Tender No.9900849**

Esfahan Steel Co. intends to purchase 2 Items Refractory Mortar for Steel Ladle's Slide Gate (Type CS60). Prospective bidders specialized and experienced in the said area may visit Esfahan Steel Co.'s Website at [www.esfahansteel.ir](http://www.esfahansteel.ir) to get the Tender documents no later than 21.07.2020, and deliver their bids to the following address no later than official closing time (i.e.01:00 p.m.) on 02.09.2020.

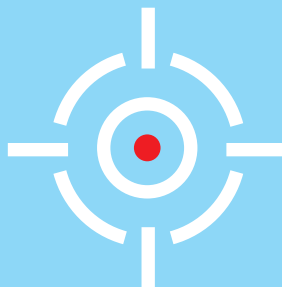
Confidential Secretariat of ESCo.'s Security Department, at the main entrance gate next to Melli Bank, Esfahan Steel Company, 45th km of Zobahan- Shahrekord highway, Esfahan, Iran, telephone No. 0098-31-5257-2197.

**Public Relation of Esfahan Steel Co.**

TEHRAN TIMES

 Iran's Leading  
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# Modern Stadium of Martyrs of Khuzestan Football Club (KSC)



First Announcement



IN THE NAME OF GOD

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

**INTERNATIONAL TENDER No: 99/103-24/03**

Tender Holder:

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Tender :

Broadcasting the TV networks of English iFilm, Press TV and IRIB World Service Radio 6 on Intelsat 20 for three years in accordance with the technical specification and other terms and conditions mentioned in the tender documents.

Deadline and how to receive the tender documents:

From Saturday 11 July 2020 (1399/04/21) until Tuesday 14 July 2020 (1399/04/24) by 04:00 p.m with presentation of introductory letter by company or its representative and the receipt of paying the documents fee.

Place of receiving the tender document:

Interested participants may refer to purchasing (KALA) Dept. ,4th Floor of IRIB Administration Complex ,Hotel Esteghlal St. Vali –Assr Ave,Tehran, Iran

The fee of the tender documents and how to deposit it:

Submission of payment receipt for the amount of 1,000,000 Rials to account 4101029171204273 with BIC No.IR 310100004101029171204273 IRAN Central Bank in the name of IRIB.

Type and amount of guarantee for participation to tender:

The amount of deposit for participant in tender is USD 53000 fixed or its equivalent in Rials 10600000000 which should be in the form of Bank Guarantee.

Time and place of delivering Bidding Envelopes:

The sealed (A,B&C) packages/envelopes and the qualification evaluation packages/envelopes separately packed, should be submitted no later than 09:00 a.m. on Saturday 15 of Aug 2020 (1399/05/25) and at the address mentioned in 4th clause.

Time and place of opening Qualification Evaluation envelopes:

The date of opening the Qualification Evaluation envelopes on Saturday 15 of Aug 2020 (1399/05/25) at 10:00 a.m in the office of International Purchasing Dept.

Time and place of opening Envelopes:

The envelopes A of those eligible participants who meet the qualification criterion and approval of Technical and Commercial committee will be opened on Sunday 16 Aug 2020 at 03:00 p.m (1399/05/26) in the office of Financial Vice President .In case of complete content in the envelopes A the envelopes of B and C of eligible participants will be opened at the same time and place.

The participant must be qualified by the competent authorities.

Fore more information please see :

[www.iriboffice.ir/tenders](http://www.iriboffice.ir/tenders) and <http://iets.mporg.ir/> Tel: 00982122167053

Purchasing (Kala) Dept.,IRIB

First Announcement



IN THE NAME OF GOD

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

**INTERNATIONAL TENDER No: 99/103-25/03**

Tender Holder:

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Tender :

Broadcasting the TV network of Hispan TV on Intelsat 21 (Latin America) for three years in accordance with the technical specification and other terms and conditions mentioned in the tender documents.

Deadline and how to receive the tender documents:

From Saturday 11 July 2020 (1399/04/21) until Tuesday 14 July 2020 (1399/04/24) by 04:00 p.m with presentation of introductory letter by company or its representative and the receipt of paying the documents fee.

Place of receiving the tender document:

Interested participants may refer to purchasing (KALA) Dept. ,4th Floor of IRIB Administration Complex ,Hotel Esteghlal St. Vali –Assr Ave,Tehran, Iran

The fee of the tender documents and how to deposit it:

Submission of payment receipt for the amount of 1,000,000 Rials to account 4101029171204273 with BIC No.IR 310100004101029171204273 IRAN Central Bank in the name of IRIB.

Type and amount of guarantee for participation to tender:

The amount of deposit for participant in tender is USD 31070 fixed or its equivalent in Rials 6214000000 which should be in the form of Bank Guarantee.

Time and place of delivering Bidding Envelopes:

The sealed (A,B&C) packages/envelopes and the qualification evaluation packages/envelopes separately packed, should be submitted no later than 09:00 a.m. on Saturday 15 of Aug 2020 (1399/05/25) and at the address mentioned in 4th clause.

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Purchasing (Kala) Dept.,IRIB



# The United States is losing its influence in the world: Canadian analyst

“Trump’s ‘America First’ policy is destabilizing to the world”

**1 →** The United States failed spectacularly at the United Nations Security Council, with none of the Security Council members supporting the United States and its bogus interpretation of the JCPOA. They all rejected the argument that the United States was still a participant in the agreement after withdrawing from it in May 2018 and despite the U.S. reimposing sanctions on Iran. Germany also opposed the American attempt.

Iran also did not want to set a precedent that the United States, or Israel, could make unsubstantiated allegations and send the IAEA chasing after alleged violations. Israel, which provided the “intelligence” on Iran’s alleged violations, is well known for fabricating intelligence to accomplish its own political goals.

■ The United States urged the United Nations Security Council to extend an arms embargo against Iran due to expire in October, but it faced resistance from China, Russia, and even European allies. How do you assess this?

A: The United States failed spectacularly in its attempt to extend the arms embargo against Iran. Russia and China strongly opposed the extension. Even American allies like Britain, France, and Germany also did not support the extension under the JCPOA Agreement. All agreed that the United States was no longer a party to the agreement. The U.S.’s argument that not extending the arms embargo against Iran would trigger an arms race in West Asia is laughable. The United States is already selling billions in military equipment to its Arab Allies.

The other consideration is that the United States is losing its influence in the world. Donald Trump’s erratic behavior and terrible policies have greatly undermined his chances of re-election. Its allies and enemies know that he probably will not be re-elected in November 2020. The world community and even his close allies are biding their time until he leaves office. However, they are all aware that Trump can still do a lot of damage between now and the time he leaves the presidency in early 2021.

■ European countries have never seriously stood up to the U.S., and Iranian officials argue that Europeans have done nothing to salvage the JCPOA. What do you think?

**“Trump’s tactics are those of a bully who likes to throw his weight around.”**



**The U.S.’s argument that not extending the arms embargo against Iran would trigger an arms race in West Asia is laughable. The United States is already selling billions in military equipment to its Arab Allies. The United States is already selling billions in military equipment to its Arab Allies.**

A: It is true that the European parties to the JCPOA have only given lip service to the agreement and not fulfilled their obligations. Iran has not received the economic benefits it was promised. The Europeans are afraid of the United States’ economic power and control of the world’s financial system. Trump also scares them because his tactics are those of a bully who likes to throw his weight around.

■ Experts argue that if the Islamic Republic allowed inspection of the sites named by the Israeli sources, it would set a wrong precedent that would be against the interests of all countries. What is your opinion?

A: It is not a good precedent for an enemy of a country to provide so-called “intelligence” against its enemies and start wild goose chases after alleged violations. There must be credible proof from objective sources. The Israelis are long known for fabricating false information and “creating facts” to support

their political objectives and to hurt and discredit their perceived enemies.

■ Tehran labels the IAEA’s inspection demand as a political game and a proof of the nuclear watchdog’s lack of impartiality when it comes to Iran. Therefore, Iranian officials have refused to allow IAEA access to alleged nuclear sites. In your view, what will be possible consequences for Iran?

A: I do not believe that the consequences will be severe. There have been at least 12 reports from the IAEA that Iran has fully complied with the imposed restrictions on its nuclear program. Iran is correct to question spurious allegations based on alleged Israeli intelligence. Other similar allegations have all been proven false.

Iran could allow the IAEA inspectors to visit the two sites or deny the IAEA access without strong proof of alleged Iranian violations. Iran could also withdraw from the

JCPOA due to the other parties’ noncompliance. Iran also has the option of withdrawing from the Nuclear Arms Non-Proliferation Treaty. Israel is not a signatory, and it has between 90 and 400 nuclear weapons.

The United States and Israel want to perpetuate the view that Iran is hiding nuclear research of a military nature. This ploy also to distract both the American and Israeli electorate from domestic political problems and scandals.

■ In your view, why are the United States and its European allies taking such actions?

A: The Americans are trying to distract their voting population from the many scandals of the Trump administration, its mismanagement of the economy and the botched handling of the COVID-19 epidemic. Europe is still afraid of Trump, and the economic power the United States still controls. However, they recognize that the United States is a declining economic and military power. They are taking steps to separate themselves from the Americans economically and politically. I also think the Europeans are afraid of Trump’s erratic and sometimes crazy behavior. They are biding their time until Trump leaves office or is kicked out.

■ Russia and China have been expressing dismay over the U.S. brutal policies against Iran. For example, recently China submitted a statement to the IAEA, saying “the root causes of this situation lie in the unilateral and bullying practices of the U.S.” How do you assess China and Russia’s stances?

A: Russia and China are strongly opposed to United States unilateral sanctions against Iran and also other countries like Venezuela, Syria, and even North Korea. China called this behavior bullying. Russia compared the United States’ actions to put a foot on the neck of Iran, making an analogy to the brutal murder of George Floyd, caught on video, and the Black Lives matter campaign against racial discrimination against blacks in the United States.

Trump’s “America First” policy is destabilizing to the world, undermines diplomacy, and also does not work. Unilateralism and bullying are not going to win friends for the United States or for Donald Trump.

**“Israeli is well known for fabricating intelligence to accomplish its own political goals.”**

## U.S. assassination of Gen. Soleimani an act of state-sponsored terrorism

By Stephen Lendman

The Trump regime’s assassination of Iran’s Lieutenant General Qasem Soleimani and Iraqi Popular Mobilization Unit commander Mahdi al-Muhandis in Baghdad was a flagrant breach of international and U.S. constitutional law under its Supremacy Clause.

Claiming jus ad Bellum justification, the notion of conditions under which it’s permissible to attack another country is a nonstarter, a Big Lie fooling no one.

Neither Iran, Iraq, or other nations anywhere threaten U.S. national security.

Claims otherwise by its officials are backed by no corroborating evidence because none exists.

Iran, Iraq, and most other nations are at peace with other states.

The U.S., NATO, and Israel are waging endless wars on humanity regionally and globally.

The killings of Soleimani and Muhandis by drone or any other means was a U.S. act of aggression against both countries.

At the time, a U.S. war department statement said the following:

“At the direction of the president (Trump), the U.S. military has taken decisive defensive action to protect U.S. personnel abroad (sic) by killing Qasem Soleimani, the head of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Quds Force, a U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization (sic),” adding:

“This strike was aimed at deterring future Iranian attack plans (sic).”

“The United States will continue to take all necessary action to protect our people and our interests wherever they are around the world (sic).”



The war department statement falsely blamed Soleimani for high crimes in the region — committed by the U.S. and its imperial partners, not the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said his assassination “doubled the determination of the great nation of Iran and other free nations to stand against and resist the excessive demands of the U.S. and to defend the Islamic values,” adding:

“There is no doubt that this cowardly and evil move is another sign of U.S. desperation, inability, and failure in the region, and the hatred felt by the regional nations toward this criminal regime.”

“The great nation of Iran and other free nations of the region will take revenge for this heinous crime against the criminal U.S.”

Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif denounced U.S. “rogue

adventurism.”

The Trump regime “bears responsibility for all consequences of its” actions, he stressed.

Separately he tweeted: “The U.S. act of international terrorism, targeting & assassinating General Soleimani—the most effective force fighting Daesh (ISIS), Al Nusrah, Al Qaeda, et al.—is extremely dangerous & a foolish escalation.”

Tehran University Professor Mohammad Marandi said Soleimani’s involvement in combating (U.S.-supported) ISIS made him a “national hero (and) martyr” domestically and in other regional countries, adding:

“If it weren’t for people like him, this region would have seen black flags flying across the” Middle East (West Asia).

A report issued by UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions Agnes Callamard was damning in its condemnation of the U.S. assassination of Soleimani and Muhandis, saying:

“Absent an actual imminent threat to life, the course of action taken by the U.S. was unlawful,” a flagrant UN Charter breach, adding:

“The world is at a critical time, and possible tipping point, when it comes to the use of drones...”

“The Security Council is missing in action; the international community, willingly or not, stands largely silent.”

The U.S. and its imperial allies are responsible for endless preemptive wars and other criminal actions by hot and other means against nations unwilling to subordinate their sovereign rights to its interests.

The rage by both right wings of its war party to control planet earth, its resources, and populations poses an unparalleled threat to everyone everywhere.



presumptive Democratic opponent, is virtually certain to stop it and stay in the WHO if he wins the November election.

Democratic Senator Bob Menendez said on Tuesday that Trump’s decision to withdraw

from the World Health Organization (WHO) will “leave Americans sick and America alone.”

A spokesman for Guterres and the global health body itself confirmed that the United States, a key founding WHO member, gave its notice.

In a speech earlier Wednesday, WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said of COVID-19, “National unity and global solidarity are more important than ever to defeat a common enemy.”

In line with conditions set when the WHO was set up in 1948, the United States can leave within one year but must meet its remaining assessed financial obligations, the UN spokesman said.

(Source: Agencies)

## Why Trump is right and wrong about America

By Marwan Bishara

Trump thought fulfilling campaign promises and peddling populism were enough for re-election. He thought wrong.

Donald Trump is right to be mad.

Americans, who voted for him in 2016, are abandoning him in droves. Instead of rewarding him for fulfilling his campaign pledges, many are punishing him for it.

But he is wrong about the reasons why.

No, he is not a “victim” of a conspiracy by the Democrats, the treachery of the “deep state,” or a witch-hunt by the liberal media, though he did fall out with all three.

Nor is he the victim of the coronavirus. Republican strategists had warned of the impact of Trump toxicity on the future of the Republican Party well before the pandemic.

Rather, he is the casualty of simple and not so simple misunderstandings.

■ **Faithful Trump**

Unlike many of his predecessors, Trump has done or tried to do all he promised.

He lowered taxes, relaxed regulations, limited immigration, built a wall along the border with Mexico, renegotiated trade agreements, and even recognized Jerusalem as Israel’s capital and moved the U.S. embassy there, among other campaign pledges.

He has also increased the Pentagon’s budget, shrunk U.S. military commitments abroad, and bullied U.S. allies into spending more on defense.

And he withdrew from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and the Iran nuclear deal and pulled out of UNESCO and the World Health Organization.

Trump boasted that these steps have helped “make America great again,” powerful, protected, and prosperous.

He took the credit as the economy boomed, the stock market skyrocketed and unemployment nose-dived, until the “Chinese pandemic” was let loose on America and the “radical left” exploited the police killing of George Floyd to foment civil strife.

All of this begs the question: at least in Trump’s mind, why on earth are Americans not uniting behind him to beat the presumptive Democratic candidate Joe Biden and defeat the leftist “fascists” besieging America?

Surely, he is not to blame for every “Chinese virus” and every police transgression!

This being an election year, Trump is not surprised that the Democrats, who tried and failed to indict him on collusion with Russia and abuse of power in dealing with Ukraine, blame him for the high rate of coronavirus infections and deaths and for fomenting racial hatred that encourages police brutality.

But why are “seniors and suburban voters, two longtime pillars of the Republican coalition,” defecting to Biden? Why are Republicans organizing political action committees (PACs) against him? And why are the swing states swinging towards the Democrats?

In short, why are more Americans rejecting the messenger and his message after embracing him in 2016?

Why, why, why?

Some of the answers may be found in Trump’s misinterpretation of his mandate

■ **The president of some**

Trump has failed the basic test of politics: to create the broadest voter base possible.

He has been so laser-focused on appealing his core right-wing and evangelical base, attacking journalists, bureaucrats and even generals and war heroes, that he has alienated mainstream Americans, who cherish their democratic institutions, independent media, and liberal values.

Americans may have tolerated his bullying, name-calling and outright viciousness during the campaign, but despite him winning and becoming the president of all Americans, he continues to lead like he campaigned, alienating everyone outside his hardcore followers.

His populist, racist, authoritarian tendencies have disaffected many traditional conservatives who believe in Republican values.

Trump’s populism may still appeal to certain Americans, who want to have their cake and eat it too, but even they do not necessarily want to listen to populist precepts amplified from the White House and UN podiums.

White conservatives may want to maintain their privilege at home, and American domination abroad, but they want it done benevolently and cost-free. They are even OK with war, as long as no American soldiers die and no foreign civilians perish on live TV.

They may prefer limiting Muslim or Latino immigration, but they would like it done subtly and gently, not boastfully and maliciously, because it undermines their noble image of themselves.

Even hypocrites do not appreciate their president reminding them of their hypocrisy in every other tweet.

But Trump tweets too much, talks too much, boasts too much, and humiliates and degrades others too much.

And the more he does that, the more he and his administration become isolated and the role of the presidency, others - in his misunderstanding of America.

■ **Checkmate**

In politics, like in chess, losing too many assets without strategy or compensation spells defeat.

And Trump has lost more than a few liberal and mainstream Republicans without winning over Democrats, Neocons or Independents.

He has also lost the swing states and the swing voters - the 10 percent of the electorate that makes the difference between winning and losing.

His populist strategy also failed when tested by the coronavirus pandemic that required less deception and more leadership.

His “I am the outsider” routine may have been appealing during his 2016 campaign, but his failure to transform the system as president - the ultimate insider - made his populism unsustainable in liberal America.

The country has witnessed and experienced Trump’s greatness and changed its mind.

Americans may have grown accustomed to the lies and exaggerations, but more of them have become hostile to Trump’s illiberal, cynical, and divisive vision for the country.

They looked in the mirror and did not like what they saw; they felt ashamed and insecure at home and abroad.

The king-president has been checkmated. It remains to be seen if he folds or tries to delay the inevitable, hoping for a major Biden blunder that paves the way for a repeat of the 2016 upset.

(Source: Aljazeera)

## China says U.S. plan to quit WHO will have grave implications for developing countries

China says a plan by the United States to withdraw from the World Health Organization (WHO) will have grave implications for developing countries.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told reporters during a daily briefing on Wednesday that Beijing was urging the international community to step up support for the UN health agency.

The United States will leave the WHO on July 6, 2021 after receiving notification of the decision by President Donald Trump, who has accused the agency of becoming a puppet for China during the coronavirus pandemic.

Trump on Tuesday formally started the withdrawal of the US from the World Health Organization, making good on threats to de-

prive the UN body of its top funding source over its response to the coronavirus.

Public health advocates and Trump’s political opponents voiced outrage at the departure from the Geneva-based body, which leads the global fight on maladies from polio to measles to mental health – as well as COVID-19, at a time when cases have again been rising around the world.

After threatening to suspend the \$400 million in annual US contributions and then announcing a withdrawal, the Trump administration has formally sent a notice to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, a State Department spokesperson said.

The withdrawal is effective in one year – July 6, 2021 – and Joe Biden, Trump’s



## Iran joins UNWTO online campaign to promote gastronomy tourism

➔1 The dishes are usually not overpowered with spices though kitchens are embraced with ranges of subtle and yet contrasting flavors such as a combination of sweet and sour or mild.



Amongst the dishes are dizi (a lamb, chickpea and potato stew made to a centuries-old recipe), fesenjoon (chicken poached in an earthy sweet-and-sour sauce of ground walnuts and pomegranates).

Gastronomy, as the essence of culture and a major element of intangible heritage worldwide, is a growing driver for tourists that remains often untapped by destinations, according to United Nations World Tourism Organization.

“The interrelation between gastronomy and tourism provide a vehicle for the transmission of culture which in turn, if properly managed, enhances local economic development, sustainable practices and food experiences.”

## Restoration project starts on Bronze-Age objects found in northeast Iran

**TOURISM DESK** TEHRAN — A restoration and rehabilitation project has been commenced on 20 Bronze-Age relics which have recently been excavated by a team of Iranian and German archaeologists at Tepe Rivi, an ancient hill in northeastern North Khorasan province.



“The relics date back to the late Bronze Age some 3,500 years ago,” CHTN quoted Ali Mostofian, the deputy provincial tourism chief, as saying on Tuesday.

“This [restoration] operation is aimed at protecting and safeguarding cultural and historical heritage, which is one of the important missions of museums,” the official said.

Teams of Iranian and German archaeologists have recently completed seven archaeological seasons across the site. Archaeological research works in Rivi started in 2012.

Since then archaeologists accessed remains of settlements from the Bronze and Iron Age, the Achaemenid, the Parthian, the Sassanid dynasties, and the early Islamic period.

The evidence, according to Mohammad-Javad Jafari who headed of the fifth season of archaeological excavation at Rivi site, indicates the sequence of settlement in the area in the aftermath of the Achaemenid era, according to the Archaeology News Network.

Evidence suggests that residents of this area sealed the urns that were loaded with particular goods then tied them with ropes, the archaeologist said.

## Ancient relics of Iran: Proto-Elamite tablet with seal mark

(Part: 2/2)  
**(Louvre museum)** — The mythological scene is carved in bas-relief on the side of the stone. A god, wearing a short loincloth and a horned headdress, presents a monumental nail before a crouching lion. The god is on his knees, in an attitude expressive of the effort involved in driving in a nail, and is protected by the Lama standing behind him. This minor goddess, characteristic of the Sumerian renaissance that followed the fall of the Akkadian Empire (2350-2150 BC), is a beneficent power. Generally nameless, she has a protective role. Here she stands behind the god who performs the foundation ritual. She is depicted in an attitude of intercession that is found unchanged until the Neo-Babylonian Period (626-539 BC): standing, with forearms raised to the level of her face. The wild beast embodies either the evil forces which the god must ward off or, conversely, a guard animal defending the entrance to the sanctuary. Despite Puzur-Inshushak's battle for independence, the iconography still displays a strong Mesopotamian influence. The coiled snake on the upper part of the stone was a popular motif in Iran, here wound around the central perforation.

■ Two different writing systems  
The stone has an Elamite inscription in a new script, linear Elamite, which is however incomplete. The new script was meant to express the language of the mountain-dwellers of Northern Iran, symbolizing the rebirth of Elam as a center of political power. The second fragment has a fragmentary text in Akkadian, in a cuneiform script of Sumerian origin. The presence of both Akkadian and Elamite inscriptions is characteristic of the official monuments of the reign of Puzur-Inshushinak, who reconstructed a state that included the land of Susa, which spoke a Semitic language, and the Iranian plateau, which spoke Elamite. The Akkadian inscription on the back of the lion would have consisted of two columns.

# Gonbad-e Qabus to undergo restoration

**TOURISM DESK** TEHRAN – The dome of UNESCO-registered Gonbad-e Qabus in the northern province of Golestan is to be restored, CHTN reported on Wednesday.

A special committee for the country's UNESCO-registered properties has approved the restoration project to be conducted on Gonbad-e Qabus, said Farhad Azizi, the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Ministry's director for world heritage affairs.

Monitoring periodically, using up-to-date knowledge, and conducting comprehensive studies on the materials used in the structure are need to be considered in the restoration project, the official added.

The one-millennium-old brick tower is of high architectural importance as an exemplar and innovative design of the early-Islamic-era architecture.

Also called Gonbad-e Kavus, the brick tower is located in a city of the same name.

The UNESCO comments that tower bears testimony to the cultural exchange between Central Asian nomads and the ancient civilization of Iran.

The long-lasting structure capped by an eye-catching conical roof boasts intricate geometric principles and patterns which embellish parts of its load-bearing brickwork.

Narratives say the tower has influenced various subsequent designers of tomb towers and other cylindrical commemorative structures both in the region and beyond.



Two encircling inscriptions in Kufic calligraphy date the tower to 1006-7 CE while commemorating Qabus Ibn Voshmgir, Ziyarid ruler, and literati (reigned 978–1012).

The UNESCO also credits Gonbad-e Qabus as “an outstanding and technologically

innovative example of Islamic architecture that influenced sacral building in Iran, Anatolia, and Central Asia.”

## Tourism ministry to support women-headed households

**TOURISM DESK** TEHRAN – The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts plans to support women-headed households who are active in the field of handicrafts through giving them grants, deputy minister Pouya Mahmoudian said on Tuesday.

Due to the coronavirus crisis, crafters have faced several problems, and supporting them, especially breadwinner women, is on the ministry's agenda, the official added, CHTN reported.

In Iran, there are 3 million women-headed households, out of a total of 22 million families, and most of them can be found in less developed areas of the country.

She also mentioned that if the National Headquarters for Combating Coronavirus gives permission, the ministry is ready to organize this year's edition of the National Crafts Exhibition, which is held annually at Tehran Permanent International Fairground.

Crafters and artisans from every corner of Iran can promote skills in the exhibit, which features arrays of personal ornamentation, woodwork, illuminated manuscript, miniature, textile printing,



enamel, leatherwork, handwoven textile, calligraphy, traditional musical instrument, metalwork, and marquetry to name a few.

Mahmoudian also said that Iran exported \$527 million worth of handicrafts

during the past calendar year 1398 (ended March 19).

Of the figure, some \$273 million worth of handicrafts were exported officially through customs, and \$254 million was earned via suitcase trade (allowed for customs-free and

tax-free transfer) through various provinces, she added.

Back in May, Mahmoudian noted that due to the outbreak of coronavirus, suitcase exports of handicrafts were completely stopped since the month of Esfand (the last month of the year), and official exports of handicrafts experienced a steep decline.

Talking on the significance of handicrafts in the country, she noted, “Iran globally ranks first in terms of having the topmost number of world cities [and villages] of handicrafts.”

“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.

Iran's handicrafts exports reached \$289 million in the year 1397, showing three percent growth year on year, based on data released by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts. Traditional ceramics, pottery vessels, handwoven cloths as well as personal ornamentations with precious and semi-precious gemstones were exported to Iraq, Afghanistan, Germany, the U.S., the UK, and other countries.

## Centuries-old petroglyph, architectural remains discovered in western Iran

**TOURISM DESK** TEHRAN – Centuries-old petroglyph and architectural remains have recently been found in Iran's western Lorestan province, provincial tourism chief has announced.

Four bridges, a paved road, a mill, the remains of a castle, and most importantly a petroglyph, which are estimated to date back to Safavid-era (1501–1736), have been discovered in the city of Aligudarz, ISNA quoted Seyyed Amin Qasemi as saying on Wednesday.

The petroglyph is engraved on a mountain at the end of the paved road in Persian, which explains about the road construction project and has a date of 1680.



## 17th-century masterpiece of Persian architecture undergoes urgent restoration

**HERITAGE DESK** TEHRAN – Segments of Si-o-Se-Pol, the 17th-century bridge widely known as a masterpiece of Persian architecture, has undergone urgent restoration in Isfahan, central Iran.

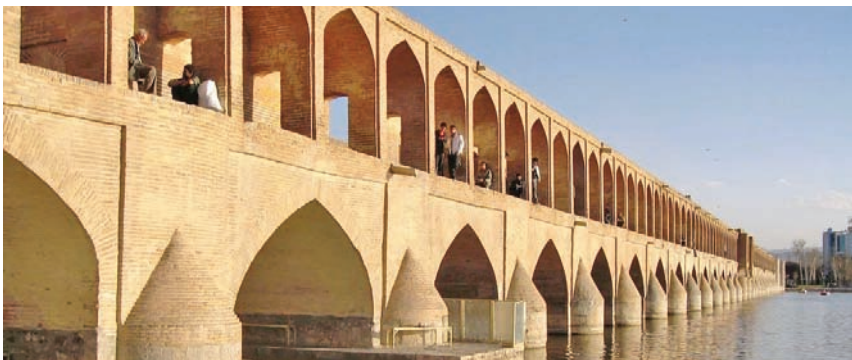
“During their routine inspection of cultural heritage sites, experts noticed damage to three arches of this historical bridge inflicted by erosion and natural and human causes,” Isfahan province tourism chief Fereydoun Allahyari said on Tuesday, IRIB reported.

“Parts of the worn bricks were amended and braced within three arches during

a single day by top masters of restoration who are affiliated with the provincial cultural heritage department,” the official noted.

Si-o-Se-Pol, also known as Allahverdi Khan, was completed in the very early 17th century. It is one of a small number of Safavid-era bridges that span the Zayanderud River.

The 298m-long monument has been served as both bridge and dam. It is a popular meeting place when the locals and travelers gather to watch the sunset and catch the moment alongside the arches.



## Prehistorical relics seized from smuggler in western Iran

**HERITAGE DESK** TEHRAN — Iranian authorities have recently confiscated 167 relics from a smuggler in western Kermanshah province. The objects date back to the first and second centuries BC and middle Islamic eras as well.

“Cups, bronze bowls, scent-bottles, axes, arrowheads, bracelets, locking pins, decorative pendants, earrings, rings,

animal figurines, cylindrical seals, etc. were amongst the seized objects,” said Amir Rahmatollahi, a senior police official in charge of protecting cultural heritage, ILNA reported.

The police discovered clues to identify the smuggler following days of thorough investigation and constant efforts under close collaboration with judicial authorities, the official explained.





# Iran ranks 5th worldwide in traditional medicine citation

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Iran ranked fifth among all participating countries for publication of articles in the field of indigenous pharmacology, traditional medicine and medicinal plants in 2011-2018, according to the analytical report of the Journal of Ethnopharmacology.

The report, entitled 'The ethnopharmacological literature: An analysis of the scientific landscape', was conducted by an international team of researchers from China, Britain, Portugal, Bulgaria, Germany, Poland, and Austria, the information was obtained from the Web of Science (ISI).

With 2,439 articles and 6.3 percent of articles published in this period, Iran ranked fifth worldwide in terms of traditional medicine publications.

According to the report, four of the top 10 most cited articles in the world in the field of clinical trials of traditional medicine and medicinal plants are related to Iranian researchers.

Tehran University of Medical Sciences and Islamic Azad University are among the top five educational and research institutes in the world in terms of the number of articles published in traditional medicine and medicinal plants and herbal products in this period.

The contribution of the Faculty of Iranian Medicine of Tehran University of Medical Sciences in gaining the fifth place for knowl-



edge production in traditional medicine and medicinal plants has played a significant role.

The Journal of Ethnopharmacology is a peer-reviewed medical journal covering the traditional medicinal use of plants and other substances. It is the official journal of the International Society for Ethnopharmacology. The journal is included in the Index Medicus (MEDLINE).

Mohammad Reza Shams-Ardakani, director of the department of Iranian traditional medicine at Ministry of Health, has said that the establishment of traditional health centers, enhanced cooperation to promote a healthy lifestyle based on the traditional medicine, and flourishing of health tourism for Iranian traditional medicine are on the agenda.

In July 2019, Javad Mirarab an official with the Ministry of Agriculture, said that medicinal plants are cultivated on some 188,000 hectares of lands in Iran.

He also said that exports of the aforesaid medicinal plants brought \$450 million for Iran last year, and saffron with a value of \$325 million constituted the largest share of exports.

Meanwhile, head of the natural products department at Food and Drug Administration Mahnaz Khanavi said that natural and herbal medicines constitute 4 percent of the total amount of medicines used in the country.

## 450 knowledge-based companies producing anti-corona equipment

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — About 450 knowledge-based companies are active in the country for manufacturing protective equipment and treatment products to fight the coronavirus, Mehdi Kashmiri, director for technology and planning at the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, said.

"Production of more than one million face masks per day, production of more than 1.5 liters of disinfectants per day, diagnostic kits, non-contact thermometers, protective clothing, ventilator are among the produces manufactured by these companies," he stated.

He added that 150 companies are active in the field of hospital equipment production.

Besides, manufacturers have multiplied their production capacity and researchers have achieved the technology to produce three kinds of COVID-19 diagnostic kits that hit the market for the past two weeks.

Two types of diagnostic kits are now mass-produced by knowledge-based companies, first one is the RT-PCR tests, 8 million of which are being produced per month; while



the other is serology-based tests that a total of 400,000 are being manufactured monthly and is expected to reach up to 2 million.

At present, 40 advanced ventilators are manufactured daily in the medical equipment sector.

Iranian-made innovative products in the field of diagnosis, screening, and fighting coronavirus were also unveiled to combat the disease, namely, ozone generator, nano face shields, disinfection gate, and molecular COVID-19 diagnostic kits.

Over the past 24 hours, 2,691 new cases of COVID-19 were identified in the country, of which 1,625 were hospitalized, the total number of patients in the country reached 248,379, Health Ministry spokeswoman Sima Sadat Lari said on Wednesday.

The number of daily COVID-19 mortalities in the country reported 153 on Wednesday and the total number of deaths reached 12,084.

Officials warn of an alarming situation in the days ahead. Currently, 3,309 patients with coronavirus are in critical condition.

So far, 209,463 patients have recovered or been discharged from hospitals.

## \$948m taxi fleet renovation plan on agenda

**1 →** According to the World Health Organization, seven million people die from air pollution every year, making it the greatest environmental threat to health today. Urban air pollution, in particular, is increasing by 8 percent every five years, and 95 percent of cities worldwide do not meet the World Health Organization's guidelines.

According to statistics, some 4,000 to 5,000 Tehran citizens die each year from direct exposure to particulate matter (PM) emissions, and air pollution brings Iran a loss of over \$2.6 billion per year, or about \$2,000 a day.

The Municipality of Tehran has prepared a comprehensive plan to mitigate air pollution in the metropolis, based on which a total



budget of 174 trillion rials (nearly \$4 billion) is required over the course of four years.

The plan focuses on reducing particulate matter and the concentration of PM 2.5, so it reduces primary PM sources and secondary precursors like nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

It was envisaged that primary PM sources will be reduced by 55 percent and secondary precursors by 45 percent.

The plan claims that the main reasons behind air pollution intensification in the capital are lack of clean and cheap public transport, overcrowded transport fleet, poor quality vehicles, extremely old public transportation fleet, and poor urban development policies.

### ENGLISH IN USE

#### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → E

### 'Pharmaceutical industry unfazed by U.S. withdrawal of nuclear deal'

Given Iran's low volume of imports in pharmaceutical and medical equipment industry, the U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear deal won't affect the industry, the Ministry of Health spokesman said on Wednesday.

"Due to the technical know-how we possess we do not depend on import and we are capable of manufacturing many pharmaceutical products domestically," ISNA quoted Harirchi as saying.

Harirchi further highlighted that the country has enough foreign exchange reserves and ensured the public that the current conditions won't raise any problems for the pharmaceutical industry.

### سخنگوی وزارت بهداشت: خروج آمریکا از برجام تاثیری در دارو ندارد

سخنگوی وزارت بهداشت تاکید کرد: خروج آمریکا از برجام تاثیری بر بازار دارو و تجهیزات پزشکی نخواهد گذاشت؛ چراکه وابستگی مان به دارو و تجهیزات وارداتی بسیار اندک است.

دکتر ایرج حریرچی در گفت‌وگو با ایسنا گفت: با تکیه بر توان دانشمندان خودمان و تولیدات مان، وابستگی دارویی مان به محصولات خارجی بسیار اندک است و میزان قابل توجهی از داروها را خودمان تولید می‌کنیم.

وی تاکید کرد: با توجه به توانی که دولت در حوزه ارز و منابعی که برای این حوزه دارد، مردم مطمئن باشند که مشکلی در این زمینه نخواهیم داشت.

#### PREFIX/SUFFIX

##### "fore-"

■ **Meaning:** before or in front

■ **For example:** Can dreams *foretell* the future?

#### PHRASAL VERB

##### Go about something

■ **Meaning:** to start to do something;

■ **For example:** I want to learn German but I don't know the best way to go about it.

#### IDIOM

##### Bright-eyed and bushy-tailed

■ **Explanation:** a person who is very enthusiastic and full of energy

■ **For example:** Gary was fantastic. He arrived bright-eyed and bushy-tailed at 7am and worked with us all day.

### Mass of rotting reindeer carcasses taught scientists

In August 2016, a park ranger stumbled upon 323 dead wild tundra reindeer in Norway's remote Hardangervidda plateau. They had been killed in a freak lightning event. But instead of removing the carcasses, the park decided to leave them where they were, allowing nature to take its course – and scientists to study this island of decomposition and how it might change the arctic tundra ecosystem.



Over the years scientists observed the bloated, fly-infested bodies turn into dry skeletons. The latest paper, published by the Royal Society in June, looked at the creation of a "landscape of fear", as top predators such as wolverines, golden eagles and arctic foxes took advantage of the carrion.

"The landscape of fear framework has provided a better understanding of animal decisions in relation to food and safety trade-offs, predator-prey relationships and how communities are structured across trophic levels," it concluded.

With laws in place in Europe meaning carcasses have to be removed in most instances, most people will never see this kind of death and decay, the Independent reported.

"When we were first there it was a little bit solemn," lead researcher Shane Frank from the University of South-Eastern Norway in Bø says of the Hardangervidda plateau. "It was sad to see that much life snuffed out so quickly."

Scientists set up camera traps, recorded faeces and observed the wildlife flocking to the carcasses on the plateau, which is 1,220 metres above sea level and a three-hour hike from the nearest town of Liseith in Hardanger. "Over time, as the reindeer decomposed we gained some distance from that 'death' feeling. We were also learning so much, in a way giving meaning to it, and it felt like that was an offsetting factor to that solemnity ... It's silly to deny death as part of life," says Frank.

Scavenger birds such as ravens, crows and eagles visited the highest density of carcasses in 2017 and then were nearly absent in 2018. The reverse was true of rodents (such as root vole, lemming, bank vole and field vole), which were absent from the site in 2017 and then were everywhere in 2018. Scientists believe rodents were too fearful to go to the site while these larger birds were around. Carcasses are interaction hotspots, but not all interactions are positive: "It's kind of like, here's a buffet, you've got a lot of hungry folks coming in to eat, and maybe they don't like one another very much," says Frank.

Another discovery was that non-scavenger birds such as the meadow pipit, northern wheatear, common reed bunting, blue-throat and lapland bunting all fed on the "bloom" of arthropods, such as blowfly, that developed on the carrion. Meadow pipit were the most common, with up to 80 individuals feeding on the site at once. "The fact that passerines forage on insects at animal carcasses is not a unique phenomenon, but only a few examples exist in literature," scientists wrote in another paper on the reindeer carcasses published in Ornis Norvegia in December. Further study of how these non-scavenging birds could benefit from carcasses could help conservation efforts.

## WORDS IN THE NEWS

### Spanish general election

(March 15, 2004)

The opposition Socialist party has won the general election in Spain. Voters appeared to turn against the governing Popular Party for the way it reacted to last week's bomb attacks. This report from Chris Morris:

A week ago no-one would have predicted it - a **triumph** for the Socialists, a disaster for the Popular Party. The bomb attacks in Madrid did more than **shock this country to the core**; they proved to be **the decisive factor** in the general election. The Socialist party leader, Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, said **his first priority** as prime minister would be to tackle terrorism in all its forms. But he's likely to do it in a very different way than **the outgoing government**. He was a **vocal opponent** of Spain supporting the US-led war in Iraq and in power he may seek to withdraw Spanish troops who are serving in Iraq now. The **late swing** to the Socialists also raises one **disturbing** thought. If al-Qaeda was responsible for Thursday's attacks, it appears to have had **significant influence** in changing the government of a leading western democracy.

#### Words

**a triumph:** a great success

**shock this country to the core:** disturb and upset the people of this country

**the decisive factor:** something that, more than anything else, influences the outcome of an issue

**his first priority:** the thing he must do first

**the outgoing government:** the government who have been voted out

**a vocal opponent:** someone who is against something and criticises it publicly

**seek to:** try to

**late swing:** a change in voting towards the end of an election

**disturbing:** worrying, upsetting

**significant influence:** the power to affect the outcome of something

(Source: BBC)



Without water, everything withers



## Russia to propose UNSC resolution on Syria aid delivery after veto

Moscow says it will propose a draft resolution at the UN Security Council to seek a six-month extension of a cross-border aid delivery mechanism for Syria through one checkpoint, after Russia and China vetoed a relevant resolution drafted based on an “outdated” format.



“The time has come to phase out this mechanism in order to replace it with humanitarian supplies that will be implemented in accordance with the principles outlined in UN General Assembly resolution 46/182,” Russia’s Permanent Representative to the UN Vassily Nebenzia said in a statement on Tuesday.

He added, “However, we are aware of the need to meet the humanitarian needs of all Syrians. We will present our draft resolution, which implies a six-month extension of the mechanism, while limiting the number of existing checkpoints to one at the Bab al-Hawa checkpoint on the Turkish border.”

Earlier in the day, Russia and China vetoed a UN Security Council resolution drafted by Germany and Belgium that would maintain two border crossing points from Turkey — namely Bab al-Salam and Bab al-Hawa — to deliver humanitarian aid to Syria for a year.

Moscow had said earlier that it expected the UN and Damascus to work out alternative routes for aid delivery at the request and with the permission of the recipient state, while respecting Syria’s territorial integrity.

Nebenzia urged “partners in the Council and other UN member states not to politicize the humanitarian dossier, and to support instead our draft resolution, which will continue to provide humanitarian assistance to the people of Idlib,” a northwestern Syrian province, which is currently the last major militant stronghold in the Arab country.

According to Press TV, the mechanism for cross-border assistance was established in July 2014, when the Security Council started to authorize cross-border humanitarian aid for Syria with periodic extensions. The latest extension will expire on Friday.

Nebenzia further argued in the statement that the aid mechanism is outdated and needs to be replaced with a new one given the fast-changing developments on the ground in Syria.

Over the past six years, “the territory beyond the control of the Syrian government has been significantly reduced,” said the statement, referring to the Syrian army’s success in reversing the militant groups’ territorial gains across the Arab country thanks to Russian and Iranian assistance.

China’s UN Ambassador Zhang Jun also defended the veto, blaming the unilateral sanctions imposed by the U.S. and the European Union against Syria for the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the war-torn country.

Zhang expressed hope that “we will find a way out and narrow our differences.”

Moreover, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said cross-border operations in northwest Syria “continued at record levels in response to the catastrophic deterioration of the humanitarian situation that occurred when almost 1 million civilians were displaced between December 2019 and March 2020.”

## Resistance News

### 5-year-old kid struck by Israeli army jeep in al-Khalil

**INTERNATIONAL d e s k** TEHRAN— A Palestinian child was injured on Tuesday afternoon after she was run over by an Israeli army jeep in al-Khalil City.

Local sources said that a Palestinian girl aged five suffered injuries after she was hit by an Israeli army jeep in al-Khalil and was rushed to a hospital for treatment.

Al-Khalil City over the years has witnessed the largest number of hit-and-run incidents by Israeli settlers and soldiers in the West Bank.

Dozens of Palestinians, mostly children, have died in these attacks, and the perpetrators were rarely prosecuted by Israeli authorities.

There are over 50 settler neighborhoods and outposts in al-Khalil City inhabited by nearly 30,000 Jewish settlers who work gradually to tighten their grip on the city and force its Palestinian residents out.

### Israel to seize 300 dunums of Palestinian land in Jericho

**INTERNATIONAL d e s k** TEHRAN— Israeli occupation authorities on Tuesday handed Palestinian citizens in Arab al-Mleiha community, northwest of Jericho, notices to seize 300 dunums of privately-owned land.

Palestinian residents of Arab al-Mleiha said that they were handed the confiscation notices by an Israeli settler from Mevo’ot Yeriho settlement, which is built illegally on Palestinian land.

They noted that Mevo’ot Yeriho settlers in early June attempted to raze the targeted lands to expand their settlement, but hundreds of Palestinians staged a protest and prevented settler bulldozers from implementing the plan.

The Palestinian residents of Arab al-Mleiha are harassed and threatened with displacement almost every day by Israeli authorities and settlers, but they refuse to leave their homes and lands despite the pressure and regular land seizure and home demolition campaigns.

# Report finds UK enabled ‘unlawful’ Saudi-led naval blockade of Yemen

The United Kingdom has been providing naval training to members of the Saudi-led coalition fighting in Yemen, skills which may have been used to impose a widely condemned embargo on the war-torn country, according to a new report.

The Royal Navy is instructing naval personnel from Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Declassified UK has uncovered, even as the Persian Gulf Arab states continue to impose a devastating sea blockade on Yemen, resulting in millions of civilians living on the brink of starvation.

In September 2015, a UAE naval officer attended a four-week training course in southern England — just months after the Saudi-led coalition began its embargo on Yemen and bombed the port of Hodeidah, destroying warehouses, cranes and other infrastructure used to unload and store badly needed humanitarian supplies. The British program included instruction in ‘counter-smuggling’ and ‘board and search’.

Six months later, according to Declassified UK, Royal Navy officers spent a week in Saudi Arabia drilling 15 sailors on how to “board and search” vessels in “international waters or territorial seas.” The Saudi personnel were taught “high-risk search techniques” as well as detention procedures. Between September 2016 and March 2017, the UK also provided Saudi and UAE forces with instruction on protecting an Exclusive



Economic Zone — the area off the coast of a country containing its exclusive fishing and other resource-gathering rights. The course was followed by training exercises with the Saudi Navy.

According to RT, the relationship between the Royal Navy and the Saudi-led coalition continued even as the situation in Yemen rapidly deteriorated, the investigative report revealed. In 2019, the UAE navy received

instruction on how to “board and search” vessels. The same year, nine Saudis, as well as personnel from Bahrain and the UAE, attended the Royal Navy’s officer academy at Dartmouth. Meanwhile, a number of commandos from the UAE were given instruction in amphibious operations during a 60-week Royal Marines course.

The training reportedly continues to the present day. According to the UK military

watchdog, the Royal Navy has five sailors, including a lieutenant commander, on loan to the Saudi Navy. Three of the individuals are listed as instructors, suggesting that they could possibly be providing regular training to Saudi personnel. Some instruction coming from the UK has been provided by the private sector; BAE Systems, Britain’s largest arms firm, has a contract to train the Saudi navy.

The Saudi-led blockade, part of the coalition’s campaign against the Houthi rebels in Yemen, has been denounced by the international community as illegal. The UN’s special rapporteur on human rights and sanctions, Idriss Jazairy, warned that the embargo was “paralyzing a nation” and amounted to an “unlawful unilateral coercive measure under international law.” Millions of Yemenis now face starvation due in part to the sea blockade.

The humanitarian catastrophe has not deterred London from increasing its involvement in the conflict. On Tuesday, International Trade Secretary Liz Truss confirmed that the UK will resume arms sales to Saudi Arabia. The UK temporarily halted weapons deliveries to Riyadh after a court ruling in June 2019 found that the practice was unlawful. The British government now claims that, although there is cause for concern, “possible” war crimes carried out by the Saudi-led forces are only “isolated incidents.”

## Trump says he is open to another summit with N.K. leader

U.S. President Donald Trump has said that he is open to holding another summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, despite Pyongyang’s repeated claims that it has no intention to hold talks with the U.S., according to news reports.

“I understand they want to meet and we would certainly do that,” Trump said in an interview with Gray Television’s Greta Van Susteren on Tuesday (Washington time), according to Voice of America and other news reports.

“I would do it if I thought it was going to be helpful,” Trump was quoted as saying.

Asked if he thinks such a meeting would be helpful, Trump said, “Probably. I have a very good relationship with him, (so it) probably would be.”

Trump and Kim have met three times since their first summit in June 2018 where they agreed to work toward denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in exchange for security guarantees, Yonhap reported.

Their subsequent meetings, however, failed to produce further progress as they remained far apart over the scope of North Korea’s denuclearization and sanctions



relief from the U.S.

Trump mentioned the possibility of another summit with Kim after North Korea recently strongly rejected any chance of dialogue with the U.S.

On Saturday, North Korea’s First Vice Foreign Minister

## China imposes visa restrictions on U.S. officials over Tibet

China said Wednesday it will impose visa restrictions on U.S. personnel with egregious behavior on Tibet.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said the move would target “U.S. individuals with egregious conduct related to Tibet issues” but gave no specifics, AP reported.

“We urge the U.S. to stop interfering in China’s internal affairs with Tibet-related issues ... so as to avoid further damage to China-U.S. relations,” Zhao told reporters

at a daily news briefing.

While China encourages travel to the Himalayan region, it has adopted “certain management and protection measures for foreigners visiting Tibet in accordance with law and regulations,” along with consideration for Tibet’s “special geographical and climatic conditions,” Zhao said.

The Trump administration announced its new travel ban on Tuesday, hitting an unspecified number of Chinese officials with visa restrictions, limiting or entirely eliminating

their ability to travel to the United States.

In announcing the restrictions, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo accused China of systematically obstructing the travel of foreign diplomats, journalists and tourists to Tibet while Chinese visitors “enjoy far greater access to the United States.”

The statement did not name any of those targeted nor did it give a number of those affected but said it the ban would be applied to Chinese government and Communist Party officials who are found to be “substantially

involved in the formulation or execution of policies related to access for foreigners to Tibetan areas.”

The latest U.S. move comes as it wages concurrent battles over Beijing’s policies in Hong Kong, human rights in western Xinjiang province, global trade practices and conflicts in the South China Sea.

China says Tibet has been part of its territory for centuries, although U.S. claims the land was essentially an independent country for most of that time.

## Myanmar military committing war crimes

### Myanmar air raids ‘that killed children amount to war crimes’

Myanmar’s military has killed civilians, including children, in indiscriminate air attacks amid worsening conflict in the country’s western Rakhine and Chin states, a prominent rights group has said, urging the United Nations Security Council to launch a war crimes investigation.

In a report on Wednesday, Amnesty International said it collected new evidence showing Myanmar’s military - also known as the Tatmadaw - bombed several villages in Chin state in March and April, killing more than a dozen people, al Jazeera reported.

One witness who was interviewed remotely told the group that an air raid in Paletwa Township on March 14 and 15 killed his uncle, his brother and his brother’s 16-year-old friend.

Two people from another family in the same village cluster said nine people, including a seven-year-old boy, were also killed in the bombardment.

“Our family is destroyed,” the boy’s father told Amnesty.

The indiscriminate attacks, which Amnesty said amounted to war crimes due to civilian deaths, came amid a surge in fighting between the Tatmadaw and the Arakan Army (AA), an armed group seeking greater autonomy for the Buddhist Rakhine people who make up most of the state’s population. Rakhine is also home to



the mostly Muslim Rohingya, and borders Chin state, whose people are mostly Christian.

The conflict escalated in January last year following an AA attack on police posts and worsened in March after Myanmar’s government officially labelled the group a terrorist organization. The AA posed “a danger to law and order, peace and stability of the country and public peace,” it said.

#### ■ Call for international investigation

Tens of thousands of people have been forced from their

homes in the unrest, and much of the fighting is taking place in communities where the internet has been cut off for more than a year, and against the backdrop of the new coronavirus pandemic.

“While Myanmar authorities were urging people to stay at home to help stop COVID-19, in Rakhine and Chin states its military was burning down homes and killing civilians in indiscriminate attacks that amount to war crimes,” said Nicholas Bequelin, Amnesty International’s Asia-Pacific Regional Director.

He called on the UN Security Council to refer the situation in Myanmar to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for prosecution.

“The reliance on air strikes and internet blackouts may be new, but one constant is the military’s remorseless neglect for civilian life,” Bequelin said, adding: “This relentless pattern of violations is clearly a matter for the ICC. The Security Council must act.”

Zaw Htay, spokesman for Aung San Suu Kyi’s government, did not immediately respond to calls for comment.

Media access to Rakhine is heavily restricted, and pre-arranged visits with government minders are the only way foreign journalists can report from the area.

## UN warns Yemen on brink of famine again

War-torn Yemen is once again on the brink of famine as donor funds that averted catastrophe just 18 months ago have dried up, the country’s UN humanitarian coordinator told AFP.

With much of the country dependent on aid, a coronavirus pandemic raging unchecked, and countless children already facing starvation, Lise Grande said that millions of vulnerable families could quickly move from “being able to hold on to being in free fall.”

The United Nations raised only around

half the required \$2.41 billion in aid for Yemen at a June donor conference co-hosted by Saudi Arabia, which leads a military coalition backing the internationally recognized government against Huthi rebels who control much of the north, AFP reported.

Yemen is already gripped by what the UN calls the world’s worst humanitarian crisis, with tens of thousands killed, an estimated four million people displaced by war and 80 percent of the country’s 29 million people dependent on aid for their survival.



# Iran's NOC president asks UWW to accelerate Ghasemi's medal reallocation

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — President of National Olympic Committee (NOC) of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Reza Salehi Amiri, has asked President of United World Wrestling (UWW) Nenad Lalovic to facilitate the medal reallocation process of Komeil Ghasemi.

Ghasemi has been awarded the 2012 gold medal following doping violation of Artur Taymazov. The Uzbek wrestler was stripped of his gold last year after his reanalyzed samples tested positive for banned steroids.

The other finalist, Davit Modzmanashvili, a Georgian representative, was also disqualified after the IOC found a banned substance in his samples, announced in January 2019.

Taymazov, who defeated Ghasemi in the men's freestyle 120 kg semifinals, had his results vacated for the second time in his career after being previously stripped of his 2008 gold medal at 120 kg following a retesting of his samples in April 2017.

The silver medal went to Bilyal Makhov from Russia and American Tervel Dlagnev and Kazakhstan's Daulet Shabanbay claimed the bronze medal.

"Following medal reallocation approval from the International Olympic Committee (IOC), I kindly request you to facilitate the process of Ghasemi's medal reallocation. Given the fact that wrestling is the Iran's first sport, the nation waits for your quick response on this matter," Salehi Amiri wrote in a letter.

"I would like to inform you that with respect to the positive sample results, it has been a long time since we have started the series of correspondences for updating the official results of the



Games It is highly appreciated if you could accelerate the process to make the new ranking for the Games and change Mr. Komeil Ghasemi's medal to Gold in the medal tally of the 2012 London Olympic Games Due to high expectations of public opinion and great sport

community from Wrestling as the first and most important sport in Iran, we are looking forward to hearing your kind positive response at your earliest convenience," he added.

The International Olympic Committee Executive Board approved the

reallocations of medals and rankings from the Olympic Games editions of London 2012, Sochi 2014 and Rio 2016, as well as the Youth Olympic Games Buenos Aires 2018, following decisions made by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS).

## Bakhtiarizadeh on Verge of Appointing New U-19 Team Coach



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Sohrab Bakhtiarizadeh is on the verge of naming as new head coach of Iran's U-19 football team.

He is in waiting room to be confirmed by board of directors of Iran Football Federation.

Ex-Esteghlal coach Alireza Mansourian was also among the candidates but he didn't reach an agree-

ment with the football federation.

Iran U-19 football team is without a coach since Sirous Pourmousav stepped down from his role in early June.

Iran will participate at the 2020 AFC U-19 Championship in Uzbekistan in October.

The top four teams of the tournament will qualify for the 2021 FIFA U-20 World Cup in Indonesia.

## Late Siamand Rahman honored through painting festival



**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — To honor the memory of Paralympic legend Siamand Rahman, Iran's National Paralympic Committee (NPC) held a painting festival with young artists from schools around the country.

The top five works were selected by a jury and awarded a prize.

The two-time Paralympic powerlifting champion died from a heart attack aged 31 in March 1.

The Iranian clinched gold at London 2012 and Rio 2016, breaking the men's over 107 kilograms category world record with a lift of 310kg at the latter Games.

He also topped the podium at the last three Asian Para Games in Guangzhou, Incheon and Jakarta.

Rahman had been preparing to earn his third consecutive Paralympic gold medal at Tokyo 2020, having been part of a visual campaign promoting the Games last year.

## Iran's football league hit hard by pandemic

After a four-month interruption, Iran's football league resumed to be hit by the coronavirus pandemic, with around 22 players from two top clubs testing positive for the virus.

Eleven players and a staff member of Esteghlal, one of the oldest and biggest football clubs in Iran, have contracted the virus, according to team sources.

Esteghlal, eight-time Iran Professional League (IPL) champions and twice Asian champions, are positioned at the sixth spot in the football league 2020 that resumed on June 25.

The other football club hit by the virus in the middle of the season is Foolad, a team from southwestern Khuzestan province that competes in Iran's marquee football league.

The club officials revealed that 16 members of the club, including 11 players, had contracted the disease.

Interestingly, the league resumed on June 25 with a game between Esteghlal and Foolad, in which Foolad defeated



Esteghlal 2-1.

The match, originally slated in March, was delayed following the outbreak of COVID-19 in Iran late February. The league resumed after 118 days, with empty stands.

Following the infections, the Esteghlal team, which was scheduled to face Pars Jonoubi team in their next game of the league in southern city of Jam, refused to travel at the last minute.

Iran's national football federation, however, made it mandatory in a statement for the team to travel to Jam for the game as scheduled.

Esteghlal and Foolad, beside other clubs, had strongly opposed the resumption of the league at a time when the pandemic was seeing a new surge in the country.

One of the hardest-hit country in the Middle East region, Iran's coronavirus cases have reached over 248,379 and 12,084 deaths.

(Source: Anadolu)

## "The golden era of Iran in LaLiga": The huge impact of Nekounam and Masoud

After six seasons without Persian footballers in the Osasuna squad, the Rojillo club continues to be very present in Iran. Proof of this is the enormous impact of the publication this week of an article entitled "The Golden Age of Iran in LaLiga, starring Javad Nekounam and Masoud Shojaei", narrated the trajectory of both footballers in the Navarrese entity.

The article, which has been promoted by LaLiga in Iran, has already registered 2.2 million visits to the country's main sports outlet, Varzesh3. Of these, 250,000 users accessed the report through a post on Telegram.

Likewise, the report has also been pub-

lished in two other important sports media such as Medal1 and Top90 and in the generalists Akhbarejadid, Khabarban, Koshmag, and Khabarfarsi. After the great expectation generated, the Osasuna Athletic Club wanted to respond to the Persian fans with a design in which the motto "Iran, always in the heart of Osasuna" can be read in Farsi.

Javad Nekounam was the first Iranian footballer to arrive in Osasuna and he became one of the most important players in a golden stage for the entity from Rojas. His goal against Girondis de Bordeaux in the last minute of extra time is still remembered, which served to qualify the Navarrese team for the quarterfinals of

the UEFA Cup. The Persian midfielder played seven seasons as a Rojillo, divided into two stages (from 2006/07 to 2011/12 and 2014/15), in which he played 171 games and scored 29 goals.

Two seasons later, his compatriot Masoud Shojaei landed in Osasuna. With his enormous talent, he earned the affection of the red fans. In 2009, in a resounding victory at Vicente Calderón against Atlético de Madrid (2-4), he scored one of the most beautiful goals in Osasunista history. He played five seasons in the Navarrese team (from 2008/09 to 2013/14), in which he played 130 games and scored 13 goals.

In 2014/15, the third Iranian in his his-



tory, Karim Ansarifard, arrived in Osasuna, whose journey as a Rojillo was less successful than that of his predecessors. He played 16 games in which he did not manage to open his scoring account.

(Source: Persian Football)

## Mojtaba Sarasiaei quits Shahr Khodro

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — In a shock move on Wednesday, Mojtaba Sarasiaei resigned from his role as the head coach of Shahr Khodro and said goodbye to the players of the Mashhad based football team.

The reason behind his resignation is not yet known, but it seems to have been disagreements between the coach and the club's management.

Sarasiaei replaced Yahya Golmohammadi on the Shahr Khodro bench when the latter left the team for Persepolis in January.

He has also served as sport director and vice president in Shahr Khodro during the previous years.

In two weeks after the restarting of the IPL match – after a four months break over the outbreak of novel coronavirus – Shahr Khodro defeated Zob Ahan and Gol Gohar Sirjan and climbed to the third place of the league table, 12 points behind leaders Persepolis.

Iranian media reports suggest that Italian coach Stefano Cusin, who was Sarasiaei's assistant in Shahr Khodro, will be appointed as interim coach until the end of the season.

## Expert suggests closing IPL, naming Persepolis champions

**MNA** — Bijan Zolfagharnasab, head of Iran Football Coaches Association (IFCA), believes that the Iran Professional League should be closed as some players have contracted the novel coronavirus.

In an interview with Mehr News Agency on Wednesday, he expressed regret over the fact that some Iranian football players have been infected with the COVID-19 after the resumption of the league in the past few weeks.

Two teams of Esteghlal and Foolad have announced that more than 10 members of their teams have contracted the virus. These were the two teams that held the first match of IPL after some four months following the resumption of the event. The matches of the two clubs were canceled in the past week and members of the team were put in quarantine.

With seven matches remaining to the end of this season, Persepolis are leading the table with 53 points, 12 points ahead of its closest rivals Sepahan and Shahr Khodro.

"The two matchdays that have been held after resumption reveals the status of the teams. Persepolis should be announced as the champions and IPL should be closed," Zolfagharnasab, who has coached different teams in Iran, said.

He called on the league managers to hold an extraordinary meeting with clubs and decide on the issue.

The remarks come as the daily COVID-19 death toll in Iran hit a new high record of 200 on Tuesday. Iranian Health Ministry has confirmed a total of 245,688 cases and 11,931 deaths in the country.

## Persepolis need two wins to reach 1,000 points in IPL

**Tasnim** — Persepolis football team will reach 1,000 points in Iran Professional League (IPL) competitions if the team win their next two matches.

Persepolis defeated Shahin Bushehr 1-0 on Saturday, leaving the team just six points shy of 1,000.

The Reds are on the verge of winning IPL title for the fourth time in a row.

Persepolis will have to meet Machine Sazi and Foolad and can be the first Iranian football team that reaches 1,000 points in case of winning their next two matches.

## Two-time world champion snowboarder Alex Pullin dies

Two-time world champion snowboarder Alex 'Chumpy' Pullin has died while spearfishing in his native Australia.

Pullin, 32, was the Australian flag bearer at the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia, and competed in three Olympics in total. He was known as an experienced diver and had previously posted about his passion for spearfishing on social media.

"Paramedics were called to a post-immersion incident off Nineteenth Avenue at Palm Beach just after 10.30am," said the Queensland Ambulance Service in a statement Wednesday. "One patient was treated at the scene."

Pullin was known to frequent the popular swimming spot, reports CNN affiliate 9 News, and had previously gone spearfishing at an artificial reef located around 270 meters from shore.

Another diver found Pullin unconscious without an oxygen mask, Gold Coast Police District Duty Officer Chris Tritton told 9 News. Pullin appeared to be diving alone at the time, he added.

"We understand he was free diving and spearfishing out on the reef," said Tritton.

Pullin was unconscious when he was brought to shore, reports 9 News. Emergency services performed cardiopulmonary resuscitation for 45 minutes but couldn't save his life.

On June 26, Pullin posted a picture of himself spearfishing on his Instagram account.

"Unreal day in the ocean! Whales singing & breaching all around us, hanging with great people, plus bringing home plenty of fish for the week," wrote Pullin.

Tributes have flooded in for the popular two-time boardercross gold medalist at snowboarding world championships.

Snow Australia, the country's organization for competitive skiing and snowboarding, said it was "shocked and saddened" by Pullin's death.

"Our deepest condolences are with Alex's family, as well as his team mates and support staff," said Snow Australia in a statement on Instagram.



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GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

He who is negligent, is deprived of rights, and  
he who listen to a tell-tale, loses a friend.

Imam Ali (AS)

## “Yalda” wins Sofia best screenplay award

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Iranian writer and director Masud Bakhshi's drama “Yalda, a Night for Forgiveness” won the special mention for best screenplay at the 24th Sofia International Film Festival in Bulgaria, the organizers announced on Tuesday.



Presenter steps on the stage to read the award for best screenplay during the closing ceremony of the 24th Sofia International Film Festival in the Bulgarian capital of Sofia on July 6, 2020 as a scene from “Yalda, a Night for Forgiveness” is on screen. (SIFR)

A co-production from Iran, France, Germany, Switzerland and Luxembourg, “Yalda, a Night for Forgiveness” is about Maryam, a young woman who has been sentenced to death for murdering her husband, Nasser. Iranian law allows for the victim's family to forgive her and spare her life, so Maryam's fate will be decided by Nasser's daughter, Mona, on the country's most popular televised reality show.

In front of millions of viewers during Yalda, the winter solstice celebration, Maryam and Mona discover that forgiveness can be difficult as they relive the past.

The film has been screened in several international events and was acclaimed in some. It received the Grand Jury Prize of the World Cinema Dramatic section at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah in February.

The Sofia City of Film Grand Prix for best film went to “Sister”, a co-production between Bulgaria and Qatar by director Svetla Tsotsorkova.

“Nocturnal” by director Nathalie Biancheri from the UK received the special jury award and Eva Cools from Belgium was named best director for her film “Cleo”.

British director Peter Webber, presided over the jury, which was composed of American producer Jim Stark, Bulgarian actress Irmena Chichikova and Mexican producer Nicolás Celis.

“The Cave”, a co-production from Syria, Denmark, Germany, USA and Qatar by Feras Fayyad was picked as best documentary.

## Bratislava animation festival picks “This Side, Other Side”

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Iranian director Lida Fazli's movie “This Side, Other Side” has been selected to be screened at the 15th Biennial of Animation Bratislava, an international festival of animated films for children that will take place in the Slovakian capital from October 5 to 9.



“This Side, Other Side” by Iranian director Lida Fazli.

We are always so afraid of the other side, even though we are all the same. When a war rips their world apart, a little girl and little boy from two sides come together to heal it with their magical crayon. But we all know that's just fantasy. Real wars are not so easy to stop; the damage is not so easy to fix.

The animated movie is a production from Iran's Documentary and Experimental Film Center.

Iranian animators are frequent visitors to the Bratislava festival. In 2018, “Icky” by Iranian director Parastu Kardgar won the UNICEF Award. The film uses original means to tackle the issue of difference and integration and lifts up the unique nature of an individual, echoing UNICEF's work ethos.

# Artists making children's day at Mahak by storytelling

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — A number of artists plan to celebrate the Day of Literature for Children and Young Adults by telling stories to children at the Mahak Charity Society, a Tehran-based major medical center for children with cancer.

In a six-day program that commenced on Wednesday, the stories are being recorded and will be available on the Instagram page of the charity society.

Hassan Majuni, Ezzatollah Alvandi, Azadeh Moayyedifard, Bahar Katuzi and Eleka Hedayat are among the artists.

“The charity society has made its great efforts all these years to create a happy, inspiring atmosphere for children with cancer and help make the process of treatment easier for children and their families,” an official in charge of Mahak's Support Services Department, Behnaz Asangari, said in a press release on Wednesday.

“The story of Mahak is the story of those who have always thought other than of themselves. And now in these days of the coronavirus pandemic that have kept us apart, we thought this is a good opportunity to commemorate the Day of Literature for Children and Young Adults and upload stories for our children narrated by our good artists,” she said.

She added that the idea is derived from Kayhan Z., a Mahak donor who has been recording the stories. He tells stories to his children at home, and uploads them for the Mahak children to bring happiness



A puppeteer performs a show for children at the Mahak Charity Society in an undated photo.

to the little heroes.

“Kayhan lives in Isfahan and has been a good companion of Mahak during the

pandemic. He records a story every night in his studio and we upload it in digital media for our children so that they can tolerate

these hard days much happier, and it is worth mentioning the stories have been warmly received by children,” she said.

## “Pishi Mishi” producer cancels Iranian premiere over escalation in COVID-19 cases



A scene from “Pishi Mishi” by director Hossein Qanaat.

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Producer Ahmad Ahmadi canceled the Iranian premiere of his latest film “Pishi Mishi” after a massive rise in the death toll from coronavirus in the country over the past few days.

“Pishi Mishi” by director Hossein Qanaat was due to hit silver screens this Wednesday along with two more films “Women Are Angels 2” by Arash Moayerian and “There at the Same Time” by director Sirus Alvand.

“All the movie theaters were due to reopen after the coronavirus death toll had decreased, but in the recent days with the rapid spread of the new virus and the closure of some movie theaters, especially in other cities, we have no choice but to cancel the film screening,” Ahmadi said.

“The film has been made without the help of a public loan and is an independent movie, and as a private sector it is hard to screen this film, it will surely lead to

its demise. This is a comedy for children and families, and in these hard days of coronavirus, the health of the audience is much more important,” he added.

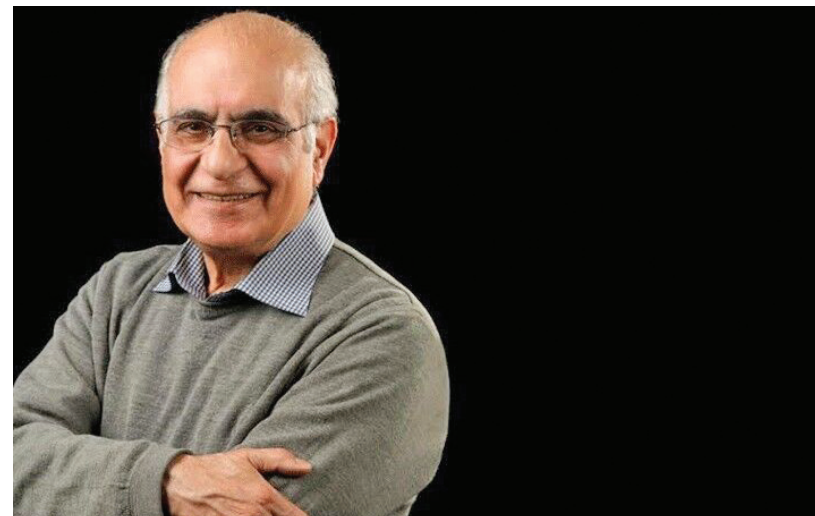
“Pishi Mishi” is a children's comedy about Farhad's love of Maloos.

The movie stars Reza Shafi-Jam, Bahareh Rahnama, Saed Hedayati and Mohammad Shiri.

The secretary of the Screening Council of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Morteza Shayesteh, has said that the two previous onscreen movies of Peyman Qasemkhani's comedy “Good, Bad, Garish 2: The Secret Army” and Mohammad Kart's directorial debut “Butterfly Swimming” will continue their screenings.

Iran's Coronavirus Combat and Prevention Headquarters announced last week that it would examine the imposition of new limits on art and cultural activities as fresh cases of COVID-19 have been reported across the country.

## Writer Moradi Kermani recommends children to read books in pandemic



Iranian children's book writer Hushang Moradi Kermani in an undated photo.

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — Iranian children's book writer Hushang Moradi Kermani has said that reading books is the best thing for children and young adults to do during the days of coronavirus pandemic.

He made the remarks in a press release published to commemorate Iran's National Day of Literature for Children and Young Adults, which marks the death anniversary of the celebrated Iranian children author Mehdi Azar Yazdi and falls on July 8.

Pointing to the books by Iranian authors such as Mohammad-Ebrahim Bastani Parizi, he said, “I have always said that Bastani Parizi could beautifully dramatize history and take history from schools and universities into the houses. The main thing is that he has narrated history in the best and sweetest way.”

He added that he believes writers need to have lived and experienced the social and geographical conditions so that they can

dramatize stories for children and young adults.

He said that he himself also pays due attention to entrainment and happiness in his stories that he writes for children and young adults, and his books “Majid Stories”, “Water Urn” and “Sweet Jam” are among them.

“But in some of my other stories like ‘Kids of the Carpet-Weaving House’, the life story of those children who are forced to work in poor conditions are narrated, and I believe the story is not suitable for children under 15,” he added.

The 75-year-old Moradi Kermani is mostly known as a children's writer, but his works also appeal to adults.

He is the author of numerous bestsellers such as “You're No Stranger Here” and “A Sweet Jam”. Most of his works have been translated into English, German, French, Spanish, Dutch, Arabic, Armenian, Turkish and several other languages.

## Persian translation of “The Diary of Dawid Rubinowicz” by Hosseinizad comes out

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — A Persian translation of “The Diary of Dawid Rubinowicz” by Iranian German literature researcher Mahmud Hosseinizad has recently been published.

Dawid Rubinowicz was a 13-year-old Jewish boy in German-occupied Poland. He kept a diary during the hard days of captivity in the Nazi concentration camps in the country.

Speaking to the Persian service Honaronline on Wednesday, Hosseinizad said that he had translated the book from the German language 40 years ago.

“I had the chance to publish it at that time, but I reached an agreement with the Saless publishing house to publish the book,” he added.

“Dawid wrote the diary until when he was 14... and he disappeared; he probably died in the death camps. After the end of WWII, the diary was discovered in a pile of old junk in a Rubinowicz family house in a village and a Polish company published it,” Hosseinizad said.

Dawid was born on July 27, 1927 in the Polish city of Kielce. The oldest of three children, Dawid and his family were very poor. The Rubinowicz family was one of only a very few Jewish families in his village, but was surrounded by a large extended family that included aunts, uncles, cousins and a grandmother.

When the Germans invaded Poland in 1939, Dawid, like all Jews, was forced to do hard labor. His father was arrested, taken from the home and forced to do hard labor, but was eventually released.

From September 15 to 21, 1942, all the Jews who, like Dawid's family, had been forced to resettle in the Bodzentyn ghetto were forced to march on foot to the nearby town of Suchedniow, where they were loaded onto cattle cars and transported to the death camp of Treblinka. Although nothing specific is known about the fate of Dawid and his family, they were almost certainly murdered in the gas chambers of Treblinka.

## Tehran gallery to showcase works by self-taught sculptor Mash Esmaeil

➔ He made iron sculptures, some resembling Persian mythical characters, and he enjoyed his own methods and styles. He died in 1994.

Veteran sculptor Parviz Tanavoli has once said about Mash Esmaeil, “There are artists in the world who show interest in art based on their

talents and create works which find their ways into the hearts of people, and Mash Esmaeil was one of them.”

The exhibit will be running until July 26 at the gallery located at No. 2880, Vali-e Asr Ave near the Zafaraniyeh neighborhood.