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Nearly 12m tons of iron ore concentrate produced in a quarter **4**



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Global support for JCPOA



China, Russia, EU, and Austria back JCPOA on the 5th anniversary

Development projects worth over \$12b inaugurated in 15 weeks

TEHRAN — Some 190 infrastructure and development projects worth over 520 trillion rials (about \$12.38 billion) have been inaugurated in 15 provinces of Iran during 15 weeks since the start of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20), IRNA reported on Tuesday.

As reported, in 13 out of the mentioned 15 weeks, the projects were inaugurated by President Hassan Rouhani via video conference.

These projects, which are in energy, industry, mining, agriculture, housing, and communication sectors, are mainly aimed at materializing the current year's motto of "Surge in Production".

A big number of the projects were inaugurated in the framework of the Energy Ministry's A-B-Iran scheme, based on which every week several energy projects are inaugurated across the country. **→4**

Zarif: China offered own draft for partnership based on Iran's

TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says China presented its draft for partnership with Iran back in the Iranian month of Esfand (February 20 to March 19) based on Iran's draft.

"In the month of Esfand, the Chinese presented their draft based on a draft we had prepared, and we are currently examining and finalizing these two drafts so as to reach an agreement," Zarif told

reporters on Tuesday.

He noted that during his videoconference with his Chinese counterpart 10 days ago, he expressed Iran's readiness for holding talks and finalizing the draft document.

When the two sides reach an agreement and finalize the text of the document, it will be presented to the parliament to be approved legally, he added. **→3**

Art, cultural activities in Tehran shut down again over rise in coronavirus infections

TEHRAN — The activities of all art and cultural centers across Tehran have been shut down for one week due to a sharp rise in the number of coronavirus infections and deaths, the Coronavirus Control Operations Headquarters announced on Tuesday.

The COVID19 death toll raised in Tehran and put the city in an alarming condition.

The shutdown includes all the universi-

ties, schools, seminars, English schools, libraries, movie theaters, museums, mosques, beauty salons and several other entities.

In addition, any cultural and religious ceremonies and seminars are forbidden. According to the Tehran Governor General, Anushirvan Mohseni Bandpey, the decision has been made due to the high death toll among coronavirus patients in order to help decrease the numbers in the coming days. **→12**

Racism, inequality, and conflict: an interview with Prof. Robert Sapolsky

By Mohammad Homaeefar

Earlier this month, I conducted an interview with Dr. Robert Sapolsky, a professor of biological sciences at Stanford University, to discuss different issues such as racism, economic inequality, and partisan polarization. He was very generous with his time and provided us with in-depth analyses of such fundamental issues.

Dr. Robert Sapolsky is John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn Professor of Biological Sciences at Stanford University, Professor of Neurology and Neurosurgery at Stanford's School of Medicine, and a research associate at the Institute of Primate Research of the National Museums of Kenya. He is a recipient of a MacArthur genius fellowship and the author of several books, including *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers: A Guide to Stress-Related Diseases and Coping* (1995) and *Behave: The Biology of Humans at Our Best and Worst* (2017).

Our conversation, edited for length and clarity, is below.

■ Thank you very much for being with me, Dr. Sapolsky. Now, let's start with the recent events in the United States, especially the police killing of George Floyd and the protests that broke out afterward. When something like that happens, what's the first thing that comes into your mind?

A: I think basically racism is the single biggest historical problem in the United States. To use a religious word that I use as someone who is not religious, I think it is the "original sin" of the United States. And it did not end with slavery ending in 1865. It did not end with racial segregation ending in the 1960s. It remains just as much of a problem.

The only difference between the George Floyd case and so many others is that somebody videotaped it this time, not that the police actions are new. This has been happening for more than a hundred years or so. All that is happening is people are being able to document it to prove what is actually occurring. All of that said, we've now had videotapes of numerous African-American men being killed by the police in the last few years, and each time it causes some protests. This is the first time it has caused protests this big, and maybe this is going to cause meaningful changes, but I'm not optimistic about that. People have short memories in this country. **→7**

Newly unearthed workshops may push back history of Isfahan by millennia

TEHRAN — Archaeologists have unearthed the ruins of two workshops, estimated to date from the Parthian era (247 BC – 224 CE), in Isfahan in a significant discovery that may push back the history of the central Iranian city in time by millennia.

"The structures of two Parthian workshops – one, relating to a metal melting kiln and the other to a fruit juice extraction, were discovered in a follow-up survey which is underway at Tepe Ashraf, the sole archaeological hill in Isfahan," IRNA quoted senior archaeologist Alireza Jafari-Zand as saying on Monday.

"The metal melting workshop was reached in the fiftieth trench dug at the archaeological hill. This workshop was made of three interconnected rows of nested pottery and on the base of a carcass stone. And, around the walls of this Parthian structure, severe burns and welding signs exists. Moreover, a Parthian coin was found

in one of the walls of this kiln," Jafari-Zand, who heads the archaeological excavation, explained.

"Most silver coins were minted on the borders or outside the empires, but the copper coins were mostly local. The coin found in the metal melting workshop of the Ashraf hill is a Parthian copper coin with Greek letterings on it."

"The metal smelting workshop is only a part of a large workshop, and 10 meters away from which another Parthian-era workshop producing grape extract was discovered, and these structures brightly show that in Ashraf hill of Isfahan, was part of an urban region belonging to the times of Parthians."

The archaeologist emphasized, "We are not only dealing with a military fortress or an aristocratic house on Ashraf hill, but we are facing an [ancient] urban area in this place, and the workshops obtained in recent days show this well." **→8**

Black Lives Matter protests spread beyond U.S. to create global movement

2020 has forced the global community to recognize its shared experiences more than its differences. It has forced us to recognize that our societies and systems can be as diseased as our bodies and has galvanized the people of the world to fight for the principle that Black Lives Matter – everywhere.

After George Floyd was killed by a white police officer in Minneapolis May 25, protests broke out across the nation in what would become the largest movement in United States history, according to the New York Times. But, though it originated in the U.S., the movement wasn't confined here for long. People around the world, including international UCLA students, are now seeing the effects first-hand in their countries.

One way we can see the work of the Black Lives Matter movement is through the creation of art that supports its message and the

demolition of art that does not.

In Washington D.C., "Black Lives Matter" now shines brightly in yellow paint across from the White House over the newly renamed Black Lives Matter Plaza. The same painting appears on 5th Avenue in Manhattan, New York – right across from Trump Tower.

Cities abroad have also seen their own displays of protest art. For example, the Berlin Wall, once a symbol of division, now dons a graffiti image of George Floyd. And, more than 2,000 miles away in Idlib, Syria, painter Aziz Asmar has embellished the remains of a bombed building with an eight-foot-high mural in solidarity with the American movement.

On the other side of things, there has also been a call to remove art that promotes ideals contrary to those espoused by the Black Lives Matter movement. **→10**

EU ministers urge timely action to 'deter' Israeli annexation bid

A group of European foreign ministers have called on the European Union (EU) — Israel's largest trade partner — to take concrete and timely steps to "deter" the Tel Aviv regime's unlawful plan to annex large parts of the occupied West Bank.

In a letter to the EU foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, last Friday, eleven EU ministers demanded that the bloc quickly formulate a list of possible responses to the Israeli land grab bid, warning that "the window to deter annexation is fast closing."

The letter — a copy of which was obtained by Israeli daily Haaretz and released on Tuesday — was signed by the foreign ministers of France, Italy, Holland, Ireland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Portugal and Malta.

"The possible annexation by Israel of parts of the occupied Palestinian territory remains a matter of grave concern for the EU and its Member States," the ministers wrote.

These ministers first demanded that Borrell formulate responses to the Israeli annexation

plan at an unofficial meeting with him on May 15. In response, he ordered his staff to prepare a list of possible responses.

However, this document, known as an "options paper," still hasn't been completed and shown to the foreign ministers who requested it, the letter complained.

"As you referred to in your statements of February 4, 2020 and May 18, Israel's annexation of parts of the occupied Palestinian territory would be a breach of international law," they wrote. **→10**



Sahand: bride of Iran's mountains with valuable biodiversity

TEHRAN — Sahand, a volcanic peak and mountain range in northwestern Iran with 17 peaks with a height of over 3,700 meters, is known as the bride of mountains in Iran thanks to its abundance of plant species, grasslands, flower gardens, and pastures.

■ Plant species

Some 156 plant species have been identified in Sahand Protected Area, 26 of which are endemic. Types of plant species in the highlands include Astragalus, Acantholimon, Euphorbia are scattered in the northeastern slopes, which is usually used as a winter habitat for wild goats. **→9**

COVID-19 responsible for one-fifth of daily deaths in Iran

TEHRAN — One fifth of the daily deaths in the country are related to coronavirus, which is alarming and worrisome, deputy minister of health has said.

About 1,050 people die every day in the country, more than 200 of whom are among COVID-19 patients, IRNA quoted Iraj Harirchi as saying on Tuesday.

Health Minister Saeed Namaki said on June 22 that about 87 percent of those who have lost their lives due to COVID-19 in Iran had been diagnosed with obesity and underlying illnesses.

Referring to fatalities associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, he said that obesity was one of the pre-existing diseases associated with coronavirus deaths, especially patients younger than 50.

Mohammad Reza Shanehsaz, head of the Food and Drug Administration, said in May that the nation needs to prepare for a 'second and third wave' of coronavirus in October and November until a vaccine is developed.

The number of people diagnosed with coronavirus in Iran reached 262,173 on Tuesday, of whom 13,211 have died and 225,270 recovered so far. Over the past 24 hours, 2,521 new cases of people having the virus have been identified, and 179 died, Health Ministry spokeswoman Sima Sadat Lari said.

Currently, 3,389 patients with coronavirus are in critical condition, she added.

IRGC Quds Force chief: Warship incident is a response to U.S. crimes conducted by American elements

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Commander of Iran's IRGC Quds Force General Esmail Ghaani said on Tuesday that elements of the United States were behind a warship incident in response to the country's crimes.

"What has happened in the United States is the result of the United States' administration's behavior and crimes," Tasnim quoted him as saying.

He added, "It is a fire they have lit."

Ghaani noted that "very difficult days await the U.S. and the Zionist regime of Israel."

Flames raged for hours on Sunday aboard a U.S. warship docked at Naval Base San Diego, sending 21 people to the hospital with minor injuries and prompting a relocation of two other Navy vessels moored nearby, military and local fire officials said, Reuters reported.

Zarif: Continued Yemeni blockade is 'unacceptable'

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Tuesday that the continuation of blockade on Yemen and seizure of the ships carrying food and fuel to Yemen while the country is being hit with the coronavirus pandemic is "unacceptable".



"Despite limitations and impediments, the Islamic Republic of Iran will continue sending humanitarian aid to counter spread of the coronavirus and will also make the most efforts to advance peace talks in Yemen aimed at ending blockade, holding ceasefire and resuming political talks," Zarif said during a meeting with Yemeni Foreign Minister Hisham Sharaf through a video conference.

Zarif also said that Iran believes that the Yemeni crisis can only be settled politically and has had "constructive cooperation" with the Yemeni side in this respect.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is on the belief that the only way to maintain stability in Yemen is protecting its territorial integrity, maintaining unity among the Yemeni groups and holding political talks among the various groups to form a united and inclusive government, because Yemen belongs to all the Yemeni groups," the chief diplomat noted.

For his part, Sharaf praised Iran for supporting the Yemenis.

U.S. has discredited, isolated itself by quitting nuclear deal, Iran says

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Government spokesman Ali Rabiei said on Tuesday that the United States has discredited and isolated itself by quitting the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the JCPOA.

"By quitting the JCPOA, the consequences of which cannot be compared to withdrawal from other international agreements, the United States discredited itself and made itself isolated," Rabiei said during a press conference.

He also said that the U.S. did not let Iran enjoy economic benefits of the nuclear deal.

They has also inflicted "many harms to themselves," he pointed out.

Rabiei added, "In order to gain credit at the international arena, the United States has no way but to return to the table it left."

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

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

Peter Jenkins, a former British ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency, has said that the United States has gained no benefit by withdrawing from the JCPOA.

Jenkins told IRNA that the U.S. lost its soft power after pullout from the international agreement.

Matt Duss, a foreign policy advisor to Bernie Sanders, has said that Donald Trump's Iran policy has isolated the United States.

"Bush's Iraq policy isolated the US, massively boosted our adversaries, and caused enormous human suffering,

Trump's Iran policy has isolated the US, massively boosted our adversaries, and caused enormous human suffering.

Maybe it's time to stop letting neocons write policy," Duss tweeted on Sunday.

Zarif calls nuclear deal last decade's greatest diplomatic achievement

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Tuesday that the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA, is the last decade's greatest diplomatic achievement.

"Today is 5th anniv. of the #JCPOA—last decade's greatest diplomatic achievement—and reminder that US lawless behavior should not be the yardstick by which int'l norms are measured.

US contempt for law & diplomacy places it in global disrepute & threatens global—and US—security," he tweeted.

The nuclear deal was signed in Vienna on July 14, 2015 between Iran, the European Union, European trio – Germany, Britain, France – the U.S., Russia and China. Under the agreement Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear program in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions. It was the result of nearly 12 years of negotiations.

However, Donald Trump rescinded the agreement endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231 and illegally imposed sanctions on Iran.

Global support for JCPOA

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — In separate statements the European Union, China, Russia, and Austria have expressed strong support for the 2015 nuclear deal which Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Tuesday called the last decade's "greatest diplomatic achievement".

The statements were issued on the fifth anniversary of the signing of the nuclear agreement, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The JCPOA was signed on July 14, 2015 in Vienna between the foreign ministers of Iran, the U.S., China, Russia, Germany, Britain, France and the European Union foreign policy chief.

Under the agreement Iran was tasked to put limits on its nuclear program. In exchange the other side was obliged to terminate economic and financial sanctions on Iran. The deal went into force on January 16, 2016.

The JCPOA was the result of nearly two years of intensive negotiations and ten years of sporadic talks.

However in May 2018 Donald Trump withdrew from the agreement endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231 and illegally imposed the harshest ever sanctions in history on Iran. The sanctions were introduced under Trump's "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran.

■ Austria says JCPOA parties should facilitate economic dividends to Iran

The Austrian Foreign Ministry said parties to the nuclear deal should facilitate economic dividends from the JCPOA to Iran.

"Austria regrets any unilateral steps, which undermine the preservation of the deal. We hope all sides will agree and find their way back to full implementation, in order to create conditions to facilitate economic dividends from the JCPOA for Iran," IRNA quoted the Austrian Foreign Ministry as saying.

As the negotiations took place in Vienna, Austria takes a distinct responsibility to actively engage in preserving the JCPOA and stands, without any "ifs" and "buts" united with the other EU member states to save the nuclear deal, the statement said.

The statement added that in this context, Austrian Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg visited Washington and Tehran earlier this year to facilitate dialogue between the two sides.

Vienna and Geneva hosted the nuclear talks.

■ Borrell says he is determined to do everything possible to preserve nuclear deal

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said that he is determined to do everything possible together with the remaining participants to preserve the agreement.

Following is the full text of the statement by Borrell published on the website of the European Union External Action:

Today, on the fifth anniversary of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the preservation of the agreement is more important than ever. The JCPOA was concluded on 14 July 2015 and sub-



"We should not assume that an opportunity will arise again in the future for the international community to address Iran's nuclear program in such a comprehensive manner," Borrell says.

sequently endorsed unanimously by the UN Security Council (Resolution 2231). It is a historic multilateral achievement for global nuclear non-proliferation and is contributing to regional and global security.

The JCPOA remains the only tool to provide the international community with the necessary assurances regarding Iran's nuclear program. It consists of nuclear-related commitments to be implemented by Iran in exchange for sanctions-lifting by the international community with a view to normalizing trade and economic relations with Iran. The agreement also provides for unprecedented monitoring and verification by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and I commend the continuous professional, technical and impartial work of the agency. The full implementation of the JCPOA by all sides remains crucial.

Regrettably the U.S. decided in May 2018 to withdraw from the JCPOA and have not participated in any meeting or activity since. The remaining participants of the JCPOA continue to work collectively to address, within the framework of the agreement, existing concerns regarding nuclear implementation, as well as the wider impacts of the withdrawal of the United States from the JCPOA and its re-imposition of sanctions.

As the Coordinator of the JCPOA Joint Commission, I am determined to do everything possible together with the remaining participants of the JCPOA and the international community to preserve the agreement. We should not assume that an opportunity will arise again in the fu-

ture for the international community to address Iran's nuclear program in such a comprehensive manner.

■ China says will always stand on right side of history

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying expressed her country's firm support for the nuclear deal, saying Beijing will always stand on the right side of history.

The following is the full text of the statement by Hua:

Five years ago, the P5+1 (China, Russia, France, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States), the European Union, and Iran reached the historic JCPOA in Vienna. This important outcome of multilateral diplomacy was then endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231. The JCPOA has become a key element of the international nuclear non-proliferation system, an important positive factor in maintaining regional and global peace and stability, and good practice of resolving regional hotspot issues through multilateral approaches.

Unfortunately, the U.S. has in recent years been upholding unilateralism, renouncing its international obligations, and withdrawing from treaties and organizations. It withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018 and thwarted in every means other parties' implementation of the agreement. Such clear violation of the UNSCR 2231 has led to continued tension over the Iranian nuclear issue. At present, the U.S. attempts to further undermine the JCPOA by pushing for the extension of Security Council arms

The EU foreign policy chief says, "Regrettably the U.S. decided in May 2018 to withdraw from the JCPOA and have not participated in any meeting or activity since."

Iran advises PGCC to focus on the need to stop attacks on Yemenis

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi has urged the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC) to focus on stopping the Saudi-led coalition's attacks on Yemenis instead of leveling accusations against Iran.

"We advise the secretary-general of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council [Nayef Falah Mubarak Al-Hajraf] to focus on the necessity of stopping the coalition's attacks on the Yemenis and settling the crisis through Yemeni-Yemeni talks instead of leveling accusations, making unfounded claims against the Islamic Republic of Iran and following destructive role of certain members of this council," Mousavi suggested on Tuesday.

His comments came as response to claims by the PGCC secretary-general that Iran is supplying the Houthis with arms and ammunition and its threat to regional peace.

Mousavi also said, "Certain members of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council have kept silence toward main issues and threats to the world of Islam and the oppressed Palestinian people by the Zionist regime and the United States, and have taken action in bombarding the Yem-



eni people and besieging this country and also prevent sending food and medicine to the country to counter the coronavirus."

Proposed China-Iran deal is bad news for Israel: article

oil in return," it is said in the article.

It added, the document describes the countries as "two ancient Asian countries... with a similar outlook" that "will consider one another strategic partners."

"The agreement fits into China's Belt and Road Initiative to build infrastructure across the world,... It also would bolster China's new digital currency e-RMB as a way to bypass American systems and reduce the power of the dollar – another way in which the deal could hurt Israel if it comes to fruition," it is also said in the article.

It noted, "Plus, China would gain power and influence in Iran, a diplomatic card it can play with respect to the U.S. and garner greater leverage in the [Persian] Gulf."

Elsewhere the article said, "Another part of the deal may be a massive sale of weapons to Iran. A recent Pentagon report said China seeks to sell Iran attack helicopters, fighter jets, tanks and more once the UN arms embargo expires in October."

It also said that a massive influx of Chinese investments in Iran will go a long way toward undoing the U.S. policy of maximum pressure against Iran.

"Another concern is regarding Chinese companies' involvement in infrastructure projects in Israel and Iran. This is already taking place, but the 25-year agreement would deepen those ties," said the article.

"A Jerusalem Post investigation last month found that three of the six

embargo against Iran and threatening to activate the rapid reinstatement of sanctions mechanism.

China believes that preserving and implementing the JCPOA is the right way to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue. Iran's scaling back of compliance is the result of the maximum pressure exerted by the U.S. Parties to the JCPOA should strengthen dialogue and consultation within the framework of the Joint Commission, seek a solution to the compliance dispute in a step-by-step and reciprocal approach, and restore the balance of rights and obligations under the JCPOA. The parties should support strengthened dialogue and cooperation between the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Iran in order to properly resolve the safeguards issue as soon as possible. At the same time, the international community should jointly oppose the U.S. pushing the Security Council to extend or reinstate sanctions against Iran and urge the U.S. to return to the right track of compliance with the JCPOA and UNSCR.

On the Iranian nuclear issue, China's unwavering aim is to maintain the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and peace and stability in the Middle East, and to uphold multilateralism, the authority of the UN, and the international order based on international law. In the process of negotiating the JCPOA, China actively promoted peace talks, put forward China's proposal at a critical moment and made due contributions to reaching the agreement. In the implementation of the agreement, China has conscientiously fulfilled its obligations and led the Arak heavy water reactor conversion with positive progress, which has become a major highlight. No matter how the international situation evolves, China will always stand on the right side of history and work with other parties to the JCPOA to continue advancing the political and diplomatic resolution of the Iranian nuclear issue. At the same time, we will firmly safeguard our legitimate rights and interests.

■ Russia says there is no alternative to JCPOA

The Russian Mission in Vienna said that there is no alternative to JCPOA.

"Today 5 years ago FM's of #China, #France, #Germany, #Iran, #Russia, #UK and #US with participation of #EU High Representative concluded #JCPOA in Palais Coburg in Vienna. It was designed to prevent military options and avert the threat of war. There is no alternative to the JCPOA," the mission said in a tweet on Tuesday.

Former U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said in January that the nuclear deal is the "strongest" and "most transparent" agreement on the planet.

"Britain, China, Russia are all still trying to keep the agreement in place because they recognize it's the strongest, most transparent, most accountable nuclear agreement on the planet," he told CBS News.

Kerry said, "President Trump decided unilaterally to ignore all of our allies and move to get out of the agreement."

He noted that the Saudis make efforts to divert the public opinion through leveling accusations against others.

Saudi Arabia launched a military campaign against Yemen in March 2015 with the aim of eliminating the Yemeni opposition groups who had toppled the government of President Mansour Hadi.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has vowed to restore the toppled president in a matter of weeks.

In a report on its website on March 24, Amnesty International said, "Gross human rights violations, including what could amount to war crimes, are being committed throughout the country. By the end of 2019, it is estimated that over 233,000 Yemenis would have been killed as a result of fighting and the humanitarian crisis."

Meanwhile, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has documented more than 20,000 civilians killed and injured by the fighting since March 2015, the amnesty said.

A man-made humanitarian crisis has spiraled with approximately 16 million people waking up hungry every day, the amnesty regretted.

international groups bidding on the tender to build two lines of the Tel Aviv light rail include Chinese-owned companies that also worked on railway projects in Iran. These state-owned companies include China Railway Engineering Corporation, China Harbour Engineering Company, China Communications Construction Company and its China Railway Construction Corporation."

It also said, "A report by the RAND research institute this year warned that due to China's close ties with Iran, the Chinese government could have companies share insights on Israel with Tehran to gain favor and influence. In addition, China could use the companies operating in Israel and Iran for political leverage on Israel."

CIA-linked spy executed for selling intel on Iran's missiles

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran's Judiciary announced on Tuesday that a retired employee of the Defense Ministry has been executed for providing the CIA with intelligence on Iranian missiles.

Gholamhossein Esmaili said the spy, Reza Askari, has sold information on the production of Iranian missiles to the CIA, and received money in exchange, Tasnim reported.

He said Askari was under intelligence surveillance and was finally put to death last week after his trial.

Iran is serious about its security issues, the spokesman highlighted.

In early June, Esmaili said that another spy linked with foreign intelligence services has also been sentenced to death.

"Recently an individual named Seyyed Mahmoud Mousavi-Majd, who had been connected with Mossad and CIA services and had collected and transmitted intelligence on the location of Martyr General Soleimani, has been given a death sentence by the Islamic Revolution Court."

According to documents exclusively obtained by Tasnim last month, Mousavi-Majd was neither a military staffer, nor a member of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), nor even a member of Basij forces who go to



Syria voluntarily for the fight against terrorism.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Advisor denounces human rights violation in Bahrain

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Hossein Amir Abdollahian, a senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian Parliament speaker, has strongly condemned the systematic violation of human rights in Bahrain.

In a tweet on Tuesday, Amir Abdollahian wrote, "Amid corona crisis, upholding death penalty agnst 2 young Bahrainis shows rift btwn #AlKhalifa & nation is deep. Strongly condemn torture, death sentence & systemic violation of HR in #Bahrain."

"Instead of ties w/Israeli regime, AlKhalifa must reform engagement w/its own people," he added.

Bahrain's supreme court of appeal has upheld death sentences against two anti-regime activists, which human rights groups say were issued based on confessions extracted under torture.

According to Press TV, the Court of Cassation on Monday sentenced the defendants, identified as Mohamed Ramadhan and Hussain Moosa, to death after finding them guilty in the "killing of a police officer and attempt to kill other members of the force in a premeditated ambush using an explosive device on February 14, 2014" in al-Dair village, which lies northeast of the capital, Manama. Ten other people were also handed down jail terms.

Both Amnesty International and the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy (BIRD) rejected the ruling.

Amnesty expressed regret that the last-ditch efforts for seeing some modicum of justice in Bahrain were crushed



when the Court of Cassation reaffirmed the death sentences for the two men, despite evidence that they were tortured during their interrogation.

"Bahrain's judiciary has decided to blatantly ignore court evidence of torture in the case of Mohamed Ramadhan and Hussain Moosa, and this, despite the repeated violations of the men's right to a fair trial since their arrest over six years ago," said Lynn Maalouf, Amnesty International's Middle East Research Director.

"The death penalty is abhorrent in all circumstances and should never be used," she added and called "on the Bahraini authorities to immediately quash these convictions and death sentences."

"Instead of condemning to death the victims of this irreparably flawed trial, they must hold to account those responsible for their torture and guarantee that the defendants receive reparations, rehabilitation, and an ironclad guarantee of non-repetition," she noted.

Official: Iran intent on promoting ties with neighbors

TEHRAN (FNA) — President's Chief of Staff Mahmoud Vaezi has said that boosting of ties with neighbors is a basic principle of Iran's foreign policy, adding that Tehran is ready to expand cooperation with Baku.

In a phone call with Azeri Deputy Prime Minister Shahin Mustafayev late on Monday, Vaezi added that Iran has always deemed it as a regional strategy to safeguard territorial integrity of countries, including Azerbaijan Republic.

He voiced regret over the death of a few soldiers in the conflict on the Azeri borders with Armenia and said, "Iran has always insisted on resolving issues and disputes through negotiations, and we hope that the problem will be resolved without resorting to force."

Mustafayev, for his part, appreciated Iran's sympathy for the incident, saying that Baku has always respected Iran's position on maintaining the territorial integrity of countries, including Azerbaijan.

He underlined the need for more efforts by the two countries to develop mutual cooperation.

In relevant remarks in June, Iranian Economy Minister Farhad Dehpasand said his country is eyeing avenues of enhancing bilateral economic ties with the Republic of Azerbaijan, and expressed hope that the 14th Iran-Azerbaijan Joint Economic Commission will be held in the near future.

Dehpasand made the remarks in a phone call with Deputy Prime Minister of Azerbaijan Shahin Mustafayev.

"I hope through mutual cooperation, we will witness the expansion and ce-



menting of economic relations between Iran and Azerbaijan," he said.

The minister also hoped that through preserving health protocols the two sides can hold the 14th Iran-Azerbaijan Joint Economic Commission in the near future amid coronavirus epidemic.

Dehpasand referred to the construction of a joint industrial park near the two countries' shared border and joint projects of North-South Corridor which is a 7,200-km-long multivalent network of ship, rail, and road routes for transferring of cargos among India, Iran, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Russia, Central Asia and Europe.

The Iranian minister asked Mustafayev to take measures to facilitate Iranian transit drivers' arrival in Azerbaijan in the coronavirus conditions.

Mustafayev, for his part, said Azerbaijan has a comprehensive plan to limit the negative effects of the coronavirus outbreak and vowed to pursue all the points mentioned by the Iranian side and try to finalize the projects through cooperation.

Rouhani felicitates France on National Day

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — President Hassan Rouhani has offered congratulations on the National Day of France to his French counterpart Emmanuel Macron.

In a message on Tuesday, Rouhani hoped for expansion of ties between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the French Republic, Mehr reported.

He said the bilateral political and economic relations should be used to deepen friendship between the two nations.

Rouhani wished Macron health and success and the French people prosperity.

Bastille Day or "la Fête nationale" is the national day of France, which is celebrated on the 14th of July each year. The Bastille is a medieval fortress and prison in Paris. Many people in France associated it with the harsh rule of the Bourbon monarchy in the late 1700s. On July 14, 1789, troops stormed the Bastille.

This was a pivotal event at the beginning of the French Revolution. Fête de la Fédération was held on July 14, 1790.

Zarif: China offered own draft for partnership based on Iran's

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

"This plan proves the 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 plan is based on a win-win approach which "heralds long term cooperation".

"Recognizing cultural commonalities, encouraging multilateralism, supporting equal rights of the nations, and insisting on domestic development are parts of this plan," the government spokesman explained.

The 25-year partnership plan has provoked bitter controversy, especially because of rumors that it entails the Chinese control on Iranian islands or the presence of their military forces in Iran.

Earlier, Zarif denied rumors over the sale of Kish Island to China, saying the enemies are trying to prevent the development of Iran-China relations.

Envoy slams EU troika's decision vis-à-vis Iran nuclear deal

TEHRAN (FNA) — Iran's Ambassador to Moscow Kazzem Jalali has described EU's recent anti-Iran draft resolution as another blow to the process of implementing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.



The JCPOA, for Iran's [peaceful] nuclear activities, was reached on July 14, 2015, after years of tough negotiations between Iran and the P5+1 group, Jalali said, adding that on July 20, 2015, UN Security Council Resolution 2231 was also ratified.

Iran completely fulfilled its obligations under the JCPOA and according to the agreement some parts of the sanctions on Iran's nuclear activity were lifted and the arms embargo were set to be ended by the end of October 2020, he noted.

"However the procedure of this international agreement became intricate by re-imposition of sanctions within 90 and 180 days after the US illegal withdrawal of JCPOA on May 8, 2018", the ambassador added.

According to Jalali, the US has aimed at undermining the technical base of JCPOA by not extending the exemption of Iran's peaceful nuclear programs as well as extending arm embargo on Tehran.

He pointed to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors' recent anti-Iran resolution drafted by UK, Germany, and France, adding, "Although both Russia and China have practically shown their determination for maintaining JCPOA, Europeans have failed to fulfill their obligations."

Elsewhere in his remarks, he wrote, "At the time of inking JCPOA, almost all members acknowledged that this is a win-win agreement, but after five years of repeated blows on it, this [win-win] feature of the document has vanished."

In relevant remarks on July 11, Iranian Ambassador to Islamabad Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini slammed at Westerners' failure to observe their obligations toward the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and added that fulfillment of the JCPOA could make the world different.

"10 years of collective efforts and breathtaking negotiations resulted in JCPOA on July 14, 2015," Hosseini wrote on his Twitter account on Saturday.

"The world could be different if the obligations were fulfilled," he added. "It is much easier to destroy than to build," Iranian diplomat wrote.

Nikki Haley frustrated over impending Iran-China partnership

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Nikki Haley, Donald Trump's former ambassador to the United Nations, has expressed frustration over the impending partnership between Iran and China.

"China partners with Iran ending Iran's global isolation," she tweeted on Tuesday.

"The partnership ... would vastly expand Chinese presence in banking, telecommunications, ports, railways and dozens of other projects," she said.



Haley is notoriously famous for her anti-Iran approach.

Contrary to claims by Haley, Iran is not isolated. On the contrary, it is the United States which has been isolated by Trump's reckless approaches.

If countries refuse to do trade or banking transactions with Iran, it is because the U.S. has introduced secondary sanctions against any foreign company or country that does business with Iran.

Washington's policy of 'maximum pressure' hits brick wall

(Press TV) — U.S. attempts to apply maximum pressure on its adversaries have hit a brick wall. Following decades of efforts to isolate and contain them militarily the U.S. has targeted first Russia and then Iran with increasingly severe economic and diplomatic sanctions. Now it is adding China to its list of countries it considers strategic rivals.

After the end of WW2 Russia, an ally of the U.S. during the war was quickly transformed into its arch enemy. The competition with the Soviet Union, the inheritor of the Russian Empire, was couched in ideological terms as a struggle between "democracy" and "communism." In fact, history has shown that the contention between the two superpowers was more geopolitical than ideological.

The current Russian Federated Republic (RFR) has reversed many of the Soviet Union's shibboleths. While the Soviet Union advocated atheism and a socialist command economy, the RFR is avowedly Orthodox and has a quasi-capitalist economic system. The USSR was a one-party state, while the RFR has a parliamentary form of government. Nonetheless, Russia is viewed by American political elites in the same fashion as the Soviets were, as a threat to U.S. global ambitions.

Truth be told, the RFR is no such thing. It is the U.S. that has been pressuring Russia, forcing it to take defensive measures. Historically Russia has been subject to repeated invasions from the West. From its invasion during Napoleonic Wars to the German offensive during WW1 to the Western intervention during the Russian Civil War to the Nazi invasion during WW2 and the Western attempts to isolate and contain the Soviet Union during the Cold War, Russia has always felt the need to protect its western flank.

Following the end of the Cold War the West continued to pressure the Russians by extending NATO to its borders. The final straw was the U.S. staged color revolution in Ukraine which placed a dagger towards Russia's vulnerable underbelly. The Russian annexation of Crimea was considered a matter of national survival in order to prevent the strategic city of Sevastopol falling into NATO's hands.

It can be seen that the U.S. campaign against Russia is purely geopolitical and in reality has nothing to do with ideology, and Russia's response is purely defensive given its long history of attacks from the West.

Expression of Interest (EOI)

World Health Organization through its country office in Iran in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Medical Education is seeking for services of distribution of medical and laboratory items and equipment around the country (approximately 180 sites in 70 cities) for the duration of September 2020 to 28 February 2021.

We are looking to identify companies that are active and specialized in the field of customs clearance, warehousing and distribution of medical goods.

Interested companies should be able to provide services such as manpower and technical facilities for unloading and loading at their warehouse and final destinations.

The whole contract would be for a period of approximately 8 months for accomplishing the whole task.

Interested companies should send their letter of interest along with their resume, team composition and related experiences through the email address emacoiroaf@who.int by CoB 19 July 2020.

The short listed companies will be invited to submit their proposals based on more detailed information on the project which will be shared with them in later stage.

All communicated documentations must be submitted in English.

Red meat output rises 39% in a month on year

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) announced that production of red meat in Iran stood at 30,400 tons in the third month of the current Iranian calendar year (May 21-June 20), showing 39 percent growth compared to the same month in the past year, IRNA reported.



The SCI's report said that beef and veal had the lion's share (56.4 percent) in the country's red meat output during the third month with 17,200 tons, followed by lamb and mutton with 10,500 tons, goat meat with 2,100 tons, and red meat from other livestock with 623 tons.

As previously announced by the SCI, production of red meat in Iran stood at 30,900 tons in the second month of the current Iranian calendar year (April 20-May 20).

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

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

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

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

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

Tehran Province's annual greenhouse products output to hit 820,000 tons

ECONOMY TEHRAN — The annual production of fruits and vegetables in Tehran Province's greenhouses is planned to reach 820,000 tons in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021), the head of the province's Agriculture Department announced.

Karim Zolfagari put the province's annual greenhouse fruit, vegetable output at 750,000 tons in the past year, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

The official also said that 323 hectares of new greenhouses were created in the province during the previous year, putting Tehran on top of the list of provinces in this regard.

Iran plans to create 2,500 hectares of new greenhouses in the country during the current Iranian calendar year, which is named the year of "Surge in Production", according to the operator of the plan for developing greenhouses.

As reported by the Agriculture Ministry, Habib Radfar has said that the new greenhouses being created, the total greenhouse area in the country will reach 4,600 hectares.

He further mentioned that of the 2,500 hectares projected for this year, some 1,200 hectares will be created in the current year, but will be put into operation in the first half of the next year (March 21-September 21, 2021).

As previously announced by the managing director of Ferdows Pars Agricultural and Livestock Holding, Iran is anticipated to produce 5,000 tons of fruits and vegetables in the greenhouses throughout the country in the current Iranian calendar year.

Azim Rajaei said that 80 percent of Iran's greenhouse fruits and vegetables are exported.

Also as announced by the managing director of Iran's Agricultural Parks Company (APC), over 7,250 hectares of land have been allocated to be developed as agricultural parks.

Some 1,500 hectares of fishery parks and 600 hectares of livestock, poultry, and aquaculture parks are also planned to be inaugurated this year, Ali Ashraf Mansouri said.

He further noted that APC has registered a request for 40 trillion rials (about \$952 million) of bank facilities for implementing development projects.

The parks will be awarded to capable companies without any specific limitations, and facilities will also be provided for development in three areas of the greenhouse, aquaculture, as well as livestock and poultry.

Development of the country's agricultural parks not only is going to create new job opportunities but also increases the country's non-oil exports and helps to preserve the environment and the national water and soil resources.

Back in March, Mansouri had announced that 8.3 trillion rials (about \$197.6 million) of facilities were paid for the development of agricultural parks across the country since the beginning of the past calendar year (March 21, 2019) up to March 11.

According to the official, the mentioned facilities were paid for development or construction of various agricultural parks including greenhouses, fisheries, and aquaculture, as well as livestock and poultry.

Iran has exported over \$5.8 billion worth of agricultural and foodstuff products in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), as announced by Head of Agriculture Ministry's Planning and Economic Affairs Department Shahrokh Shajari.

According to the official, about 7.104 million tons of such products worth \$5.821 billion were exported to foreign destinations last year.

In the mentioned period, over 6.941 million tons of agricultural and foodstuff products worth \$6.392 billion were also imported into the country, Shajari added.

Watermelons, apples, tomatoes, potatoes, onions, and shallots were the top five exported products in the previous year in terms of weight, while in terms of value, pistachios, apples, tomatoes, pistachio kernels, and watermelons were the five major export products.

Shajari further pointed to the major imported items in terms of weight, saying: corn, barley, soybean meal, soybean, and untreated sugar were the top five imported items, while in terms of value livestock corn, rice, barley, and soybeans were the top imported products.

Development projects worth over \$12b inaugurated in 15 weeks

ECONOMY TEHRAN — A-B-Iran scheme [the acronyms A and B stand for water, electricity in Persian] was initiated in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), during which Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian made 31 trips to various provinces for inaugurating over 220 major projects with a total investment of 335.6 trillion rials (about \$7.99 billion).

Earlier this year, Ardakanian said in the second phase of the program the ministry is going to inaugurate 250 major energy projects worth 500 trillion rials (about \$11.9

billion) during the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021).

Some other projects were put into operation in the framework of a similar program named "Persistent Production-Effective Employment-Sustainable Exports" launched by the Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry.

Based on this program, the ministry plans to inaugurate 200 industrial, mining, and trade projects across the country by the Iranian calendar year of 1400 (begins on March 21, 2021).

4m new trading accounts opened in stock market since late March



ECONOMY TEHRAN — Some four million new trading accounts have been opened in Iran's stock market since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20), the managing director of Central Securities Depository of Iran (CSDI) announced.

Underlining that the stock market is being more and more welcomed in the present year, Hossein Fahimi said that the figure is really noticeable compared to the figures of the previous years, IRNA reported.

In a press conference on June 20, Hassan Qalibaf-Asl, the head of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO), had announced that the number of trading accounts opened in the stock market in the past year was 820,000.

It should be noted that in late February, SEO set new regulations for the opening of trading accounts for the new shareholders in the country's stock market.

Based on an announcement by the SEO, the new applicants can conduct trade one month after opening their trading accounts and they are required to pass an exam given by Securities and Exchange Brokers Association (SEBA) or SEO during the one-month time, while they are also committed to avoiding signal selling and some other actions, and if they do so, their accounts will be blocked.

As decided by SEBA, the applicants are required to take the mentioned exam in person or virtually, and it is in line with elevating the knowledge of shareholders.

While the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19) was full of success for

the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), which is Iran's major stock market, the market is also preserving its successful performance in the current year, and the noticeable point in this due is that the other economic sectors are experiencing some declining trend due to the coronavirus pandemic.

We have been witnessing new record highs continuously posted by the exchange's main index, TEDPIX, since the year start, and climbing to the peak of one million points, something almost unbelievable just some time ago, came true in early May.

The index also hit the record high of 1.5 million points on June 30.

Erfan Hoodi, a capital market expert, told IRNA on Monday that taking the recent trend of trades at the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), the exchange's main index, TEDPIX, is expected to surpass two million points in the next Iranian calendar week (July 18-July 24).

The SEO head has announced that the amount of liquidity absorbed by the capital market has reached 500 trillion rials (about \$12 billion) during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20).

Qalibaf-Asl also said, "It is while the total amount of liquidity entered into this market stood at 300 trillion rials (about \$7.14 billion) during the past year."

The official further noted that the high amount of liquidity that is entering the capital market has provided some good opportunity for this market, as it's being developed and flourished, for the enterprises, as they're securing their required funds, and also for the government.

Nearly 12m tons of iron ore concentrate produced in a quarter

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran produced 11.913 million tons of iron ore concentrate during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20), which was two percent lower than the figure of the same period of time in the past year, IRNA reported.

Also, the monthly iron ore concentrate output during the third month of this year has fallen four percent to 3.955 million tons on an annual basis.

Iran's iron ore concentrate production capacity has increased by five million tons to reach 62 million tons following the inauguration of the country's biggest concentrate unit in northeastern Khorasan Razavi Province on June 11.

The mentioned production unit was inaugurated by President Hassan Rouhani via video conference.

Speaking in the inaugural ceremony of the mentioned unit, Acting Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Hossein Modares Khiabani said the project will be completed in two phases, each of which will add 2.5 million tons to the country's iron ore concentrate production capacity.

As announced by the ministry, Iran produced 47.306 million tons of iron ore concentrate in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), registering a four-percent rise compared to



its preceding year.

The country extracted 64.274 million tons of iron ore during the past calendar year.

In its outlook plan for the Iranian calendar year 1404 (2025-2026) Iran has envisaged production of 55 million tons of steel per annum, and to achieve this target the country requires to extract 160 million tons of iron ore concentrate.

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

The duty is aimed at encouraging the production of more processed minerals such as pellets and concentrate instead of selling the raw minerals.



As reported, a total of 1.69 quadrillion rials (about \$40.23 billion) has been invested in these projects that are going to create job opportunities for 41,000 people.

The mentioned program has been defined

by the Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry in line with the government's new strategies for developing the country's infrastructure in order to realize the "Surge in Production" motto.

Steel ingots offered in IME stands at 810,000 tons in 3 months



ECONOMY TEHRAN — Some 810,000 tons of steel ingots were offered in Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20), IRNA reported.

As reported, the offered amount is less than one fifth of the total steel ingots produced during the mentioned three-month period.

Production of steel ingot in Iran has increased eight percent during the first quarter of this year compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Over 5.702 million tons of steel ingot was produced during the first quarter of the present year.

Production of steel ingot in Iran is expected to surpass 30 million tons in the current 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.

'Connecting production, cargo hubs to railway network a major plan of government'

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Connecting the production centers and cargo hubs to the national railway network is one of the main programs of the government, Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami stated.

The minister further mentioned the government's efforts for the expansion of railway network and said, "We have currently 14,000 kilometers of railway throughout the country, 14,000 kilometers are under study and construction, and it is expected that the length of the national railway network will reach 28,000 kilometers by the next five years."

As previously reported, the transit of basic goods to the ports via railway network in the first Iranian calendar month of Farvardin (March 20-April 19) was tripled (up 200 percent) compared to the figure for the same month last year, according to the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (known as RAI).

Meanwhile, Director General of Business Services Coordination at Government Trading Corporation of Iran (GTC) Hassan Fallahnejad has said the direct transportation of goods from the vessels to the freight wagons has saved the country 40 billion rials (about \$900,000) in the first Iranian calendar month of Farvardin.



In this new method, cargo shipping operations in ports will be carried out directly by the freight wagons of the rail transportation system, which will significantly reduce the costs of transportation," Fallahnejad told IRNA.

Connecting the ports to the railway network has been highly emphasized by the Transport Ministry over recent years.

Given the development projects underway in the ports, roads capacity is not enough for transportation of goods from and to the ports; also if railway does not develop in the ports, the high number of containers trucks and trailers in these places will cause many problems such as traffic, pollution, and some other infrastructural problems.

So, the rail-port approach is a necessity and the share of railway transportation should increase in the ports.

Iran's gas network enjoys modern measuring equipment

E N E R G Y TEHRAN — The director for coordinating operation of the National Iranian Gas Transmission Company (NIGTC) says the national gas transmission network enjoys the most modern and update measuring instruments and equipment, Shana reported.

Describing the activities of his department at the NIGTC, Majid Mosadeqi also underlined the significance of the projects for elevating the precision of the measuring systems in order to prevent gas losses.

Operating a gas network of about 37,500 kilometers equipped with 317 turbo compressors in 86 pressure boosting stations, which transmits 800 million cubic meters of gas per day, NIGTC is among the largest companies of its kind in the world.

After the re-imposition of sanctions on Iran, the Iranian National Gas Company (NIGC) and its subsidiaries have been putting indigenizing knowledge of producing their required parts and equipment atop agenda.

Last year, the head of NIGTC announced that Iranian experts have achieved the know-how for producing vibration monitoring and protection systems for gas transmission lines.



According to Saeed Tavakoli, the domestically-made systems would be 20 more cost-efficient than foreign samples. "So far, such vibration monitoring and

protection systems were only manufactured by few renowned companies around the world, such as Bentley Nevada, Vibro Meter, and Metrix." Tavakoli said at the time.

The official noted that with this control panels being manufactured inside the country, the requirements for such systems will be completely met and there would be no need to import them anymore.

According to the official, the Iranian panel has been installed on an NP turbine and has been successfully tested parallel to a similar sample made by Bentley Nevada.

The vibration monitoring and protection systems will constantly monitor critical asset parameters such as vibration, temperature, speed, and numerous other condition indicators in gas facilities in order to anticipate and prevent mechanical failures.

Since the re-imposition of sanctions on Iran, most of the foreign companies and manufacturers of industrial equipment which were collaborating with Iran, cut their ties threatened by the consequences of having economic ties with Tehran.

In this regard, the country has been taking all necessary measures to push through the situation and withstand the pressures imposed by the sanction.

Therefore, moving toward domestic production and constructing all the necessary equipment inside the country has become a top priority for the Iranian government.

Extending production cuts would be 'suicidal' for OPEC

By Nick Cunningham

OPEC+ will hold a committee meeting this week to assess the status of the oil market and decide on its next steps. For now, the group appears ready to begin unwinding the extraordinary production cuts, which could test the recent price rally. The historic cuts of 9.7 million barrels per day (mb/d) that OPEC+ implemented after the pandemic-related crash was always intended to be temporary. Initially, the cuts were set to expire at the end of June and begin tapering at the start of July; the group agreed to extend that first phase by a month.

As of now, the cuts are slated to expire at the end of July, reducing the cuts from 9.7 mb/d to 7.7 mb/d. Various press reports have suggested that the group is ready to let those cuts taper as scheduled, rather than push for another extension.

Russia intends to ratchet up production in August, and OPEC+ delegates are "leaning towards" relaxing the cuts, according to a report from Bloomberg. The Wall Street Journal reported a similar angle, adding that OPEC+ producers are reluctant to continue to shoulder the burden of propping up prices while non-OPEC producers around the world bring their own production back online. "If OPEC clings to restraining production to keep up prices, I think it's suicidal," a source familiar with Saudi strategy told the WSJ. "There's going to be a scramble for market share, and the trick is how the low-cost producers assert themselves without crashing the oil price."

Keeping 9.7 mb/d off of the market helped engineer a price rally to \$40 per barrel and create an atmosphere of stability. The big question now is how the market will react to an easing of those cuts. "It has been all but a bumpy ride for oil during the last months and the

OPEC+ deal on supply has been a pillar for the market," Louise Dickson, oil market analyst at Rystad Energy, said in a statement. "The upcoming OPEC+ meeting this week is now expected, as planned, to make this pillar a bit weaker."

Dickson added that it is "not necessarily a bad thing" for OPEC+ to increase production since "supply would have to grow as demand recovers." Demand has sharply rebounded, although remains below pre-pandemic levels.

The problem is that it remains incredibly difficult to calibrate supply additions to match the trajectory of demand recovery. The delicate balancing act is even trickier because demand may slow again due to the spread of the coronavirus. "[W]hat OPEC+ may have not accurately forecasted is the speed of the recovery, thus a premature partial lift of oil production restrictions can have a depressing effect for prices," Dickson concluded.

Other analysts are less concerned about OPEC+ bringing supply back. "Our balances show hefty deficits in the third and fourth quarters, even with a tapering," Bob McNally, founder of consultant Rapidan Energy Group, told Bloomberg. "I think the market will handle it pretty well."

If demand continues to increase, the "call on OPEC" will "surge massively" in the second half of the year, Commerzbank said in a note on Monday. "The oil market is thus heading for a clear supply deficit, which is why OPEC+ is likely on Wednesday to decide to gradually withdraw the record-high production cuts by 2 million barrels per day — as planned — from August," the investment bank said.

Meanwhile, the news from Libya is murky. The National Oil Corp. recently lifted force majeure on oil exports and said that it would begin to add supply



back onto the market. However, over the weekend, the Libyan National Army said that the blockade would continue. In response, the NOC once again declared force majeure on Sunday, accusing the UAE of backing the blockade. The return of Libyan oil, should it occur, will likely be gradual. As such, it may not add too much to global supply.

Another source of additional supply — U.S. shale — may not be as large as feared. In the past, any tightening up of the oil market simply created more room for aggressive shale drilling. But the rig count remains at historic lows, despite the increase in crude prices back to \$40, and financial stress could keep drilling subdued. As steep decline rates take hold, it appears unlikely that U.S. production will come back in any significant way this year or next.

This creates more room for OPEC+ to unwind their cuts, although the coronavirus remains an enormous uncertainty.

The wave of big oil write-downs is far from over

By Irina Slav

BP was first. The supermajor said last month that it could book asset write-downs of up to \$17.5 billion as a result of the industry crisis. Then it was Shell. The Anglo-Dutch company said earlier this week that it, too, would book sizeable write-downs on its assets, to the tune of \$22 billion. It may be just the beginning. Besides write-downs on assets that will be reflected in the companies' second-quarter reports as one-off affairs, both BP and Shell have revised down their long-term price forecast—BP to \$55 per barrel of Brent crude, and Shell to \$60. This revision will likely render more assets worthless, adding them to the stranded asset count. In other words, these billions in write-downs may be just the beginning.

"BP and Shell are just two of the companies that have announced recent changes. Cutting long-term price assumptions will generally result in a lower valuation for certain assets to below the accounting value held on the balance sheet. That's what will trigger an impairment charge," said Wood Mackenzie upstream research team director Angus Rodger in a recent update. "This process has further to run, and we expect further large impairments to occur across the sector."

Interestingly enough, the first significant asset write-down announcement was not BP's. Chevron said that it would write down as much as \$10-11 billion in assets last December. The company said at the time that most of the write-downs would come from deep water Gulf of Mexico projects and shale gas operations that were turning uneconomical near the end of 2019 when WTI was close to \$60 a barrel and Brent was over \$60 a barrel. That's about \$20 a barrel higher than what Brent and WTI



are trading at now.

At the time, some analysts saw Chevron's announcement as a harbinger for bad news for the whole industry. It made perfect sense: if Chevron could not turn in a profit from deep water oil and shale gas at those oil prices, how likely would its peers be profitable in that environment? That question never got an answer because just three months later, the Saudi-Russian price war led to an implosion in oil prices, and then the coronavirus pandemic added its own rather hefty weight to push them further down. More assets suddenly became uneconomical.

Not everyone is ready to admit that things are not going as well for the oil industry.

Exxon, for instance, does not believe it needs to book any write-downs on its assets, at least not yet. The Wall Street

Journal reported earlier this week that a group of accountants had filed a complaint against the company with the Securities and Exchange Commission claiming Exxon must write down the value of its subsidiary XTO Energy, which is focused on shale oil. According to the supermajor, the value of XTO Energy is in line with accounting regulations.

Exxon did take a write-down in its first-quarter 2020 report. That was worth \$3 billion and was a result of the oil price plunge, the company said at the time.

Since then, this supermajor has been relatively silent. It has not updated its long-term oil price projections, either. But if analysts are right, Exxon will have to join the mainstream sooner or later. Because while many predict an improvement in oil prices, equally many are doubtful oil demand—and hence prices—would recover

to pre-crisis levels anytime soon.

But the write-downs are just one side of the new coin that some Big Oil majors are minting for themselves. The other side is their climate change commitment. BP, Shell, and Total all have plans to become net-zero energy companies by 2050. This will require massive investments in things other than oil. Over the long term, this strategy could undermine the value of more oil and gas assets, especially if the more pessimistic global economy projections materialize and it takes longer for oil demand to recover, if it recovers fully at all.

Of course, this is not the only scenario. Exxon may be right in biding its time before it starts booking write-downs. The latest economic data from Europe and the United States suggests that economic activity is recovering—slowly, but it is recovering. Maybe OPEC+ will extend its deep production cuts for another month, and this could lead to a strong price rebound. Yet the latest on prices suggests this is unlikely.

A recent Reuters survey revealed OPEC oil output had fallen to the lowest in 20 years. Prices did not rise. Perhaps they need a stronger motivator to rise. Or perhaps the pessimists—and Chevron, BP, and Shell—are right, and it's better to cut your losses early on.

Big Oil's stranded assets bill is likely to swell over the near term, then. By just how much it could swell is anyone's guess. But it may continue to swell over the medium and long term as well if the pivot to renewables materializes. On the other hand, at some point in the medium term, oil supply and demand should rebalance, driven by the combination of OPEC+ cuts and a lot lower exploration investments across the board. This should put a cap on stranded assets, for a while at least.

Developers want to build an energy park on edge of Edinburgh

Developers want to build a 38-hectare renewable energy development comprising solar panels, battery storage, flexible gas generation and associated infrastructure next to an existing electricity substation by Old Burdiehouse Road at Kaimes, very close to the A720 city bypass.

As reported by news.stv.tv, The proposed park would function to provide "resilience to the power network and some baseload electricity".

The developers, a consortium going by the name Kaimes Renewable Energy Park, have no connection to the existing Kaimes electrical substation and its owners Scottish Power.

Agents representing the consortium refused to identify the company behind the project when contacted on Monday.



A majority of the proposed energy park will be taken up by solar panels capable of producing up to 12 megawatts of electricity.

The panels will be organized in lines, with each line being mounted onto aluminum frames.

Panels will be tilted to face south towards the sun and are expected to be no higher than 2.2m.

Next to the proposed solar farm and adjacent to the existing Kaimes electricity substation will be around 15 battery storage units.

The units, which would be similar in size and appearance to a standard shipping container, are capable of providing up to 30 megawatts of power and will allow the solar panels to generate power which can be stored and exported to the National Grid.

Proposals for the park also include approximately 12 gas generators, capable of producing 20 megawatts.

The gas generators would be connected directly to the battery storage units and would provide an additional rapid response to supplement and occasionally recharge the batteries.

Kaimes Renewable Energy Park said that gas-fired generation is currently necessary because "batteries do not yet provide a viable economic return on their own".

However, the generators "will comply with all relevant noise and emissions legislation".

Due to the coronavirus crisis no physical public consultation process relating to the proposals can take place.

However, Kaimes Renewable Energy Park will host a four-hour digital Q&A event at an as-yet undetermined time and date.

A project specific website will also be created and will include details of any other upcoming virtual public consultation events.

Investment in renewable energy capacity grows 5%: BNEF

Investment in new renewable energy capacity (excluding large hydro-electric dams of more than 50MW) rose 5 percent to \$132.4 billion in the first half of 2020 from a revised \$125.8 billion in the same period of 2019, the latest figures from research company BloombergNEF (BNEF) show.

Offshore wind financings rose 319 percent to \$35 billion in H1. The first half of this year saw investment decisions made on 28 sea-based wind farms, including the largest ever, the 1.5GW Vattenfall Hollandse Zuid array off the coast of the Netherlands, costing an estimated \$3.9 billion, the Greentech Lead reported.

Other major offshore deals included 1.1GW SSE Seagreen project off U.K., at an estimated \$3.8 billion; the 600MW CIP Changfang Xidao array off Taiwan, at an estimated \$3.6 billion; and Fecamp and Saint-Brieuc projects in French waters, together totaling 993MW and \$5.4 billion.

There were no fewer than 17 Chinese installations financed, led by the Guangdong Yudean Yangjiang Yangxi Shapaat 600MW and \$1.8 billion.

"We expected to see Covid-19 affecting renewable energy investment in the first half, via delays in the financing process and to some auction programs. There are signs of that in both solar and onshore wind, but the overall global figure has proved amazingly resilient — thanks to offshore wind," Albert Cheung, head of analysis at BNEF, said.

Offshore wind is benefitting from the 67 percent reduction in leveled costs achieved since 2012, and to the performance of the latest, giant turbines.

"But the first half of this year also owed a lot to a rush in China to finance and build, in order to take advantage of a feed-in tariff before it expires at the end of 2021. I expect a slowdown in offshore wind investment globally in the second half, with potentially a new spike early next year," Tom Harries, head of wind analysis at BNEF, said.

Onshore wind investment slipped 21 percent to \$37.5 billion, while that for solar fell 12 percent to \$54.7 billion.

Investment in new biomass and waste-to-energy plants fell 34 percent to \$3.7 billion, while that in geothermal rose 594 percent to \$676 million.

Small hydro projects of less than 50MW attracted an estimated \$576 million, down 14 percent, and biofuel production plants \$250 million, down 82 percent.

China was the largest renewable energy market, receiving investment of \$41.6 billion in H1 2020, up 42 percent compared to the same period in 2019 thanks to its offshore wind boom.

Europe secured \$36.5 billion, up 50 percent, investment in new renewable energy capacity.

U.S. slipped 30 percent to \$17.8 billion in terms of investment in new renewable energy capacity.

Japan saw financings in Investment in new renewable energy capacity increasing 14 percent to an estimated \$10.8 billion.

India's investment in new renewable energy capacity fell 49 percent to \$2.7 billion.


Brazil's investment in new renewable energy capacity was down 26 percent at \$2.5 billion in H1 2020.

Investment in new renewable energy capacity in the Netherlands were up 231 percent at \$6.9 billion.

Investment in new renewable energy capacity in France was up 306 percent at \$6.2 billion.


Investment in new renewable energy capacity in U.K. 265 percent higher at \$5.7 billion.

Investment in new renewable energy capacity in Spain fell 11 percent at \$3.7 billion.



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Second Announcement
Call for public tender (First/Second publish)
One Stages tender



National Iranian Drilling Company

Subject of Tender:	
Tender No.	Description
FP/05-98/01	P.F. GSD DLY A MUD LOGGING UNIT
FP/05-98/02	P.F. LANZHOU DRAWWORKS
FP/05-98/137	VALVE GATE TYPE TJS HAND OPERATED REGULAR TRIM
FP/05-98/151	CAMERON CLAMP AND RUBS CONNECTION
FP/05-98/186	PARTS FOR NATIONAL SWIVEL
FP/05-98/185	PARTS FOR "BH" POWER TOP DRIVE
FP/05-98/030	P.F. SICHUAN HONGYU "HYD. POWER UNIT MOD-ZY06

The Tender holder	Registration No. through national electronic tendering system	Tender No. / Indent No.	Estimated value (Rial)
National Iranian Drilling Company	5.744.831	Tender No. FP/05-98/001 Indent No. 08-22-9745694	27,780,000,000
	5.744.095	Tender No. FP/05-98/021 Indent No. 08-22-9745108	3,708,540,000
	3.234.284	Tender No. FP/05-98/137 Indent No. 08-22-9845038	4,000,000,000
	3.241.833	Tender No. FP/05-98/151 Indent No. 08-22-9845042	6,600,000,000
	5.743.090	Tender No. FP/05-98/186 Indent No. 08-22-9845143	6,000,000,000
	5.743.377	Tender No. FP/05-98/185 Indent No. 08-22-9845143	3,500,000,000
	3.234.286	Tender No. FP/05-98/030 Indent No. 08-22-9845160	5,000,000,000
	3.234.278	Tender No. FP/05-98/029 Indent No. 08-22-9845165	10,800,000,000

FP/05-98/029 P.F. SICHUAN HONGYU "HYD. POWER UNIT MOD-ZY06

Method
Qualification process will be done in plain mode in offers opening session according to presentation of valid practice certificate / legal documents (Certificate of corporation/ supply announcement up to latest changes) which should be related to tender subject.

Tender descriptions:
Qualitative evaluation of tenders:

Tender Document Distribution by Company
This distribution of the documents will be started one day after the publishing of second advertisement and ended on the following tenth day thereof.

Distribution Place	Submitting Method	Closing date	Address
Hall No. 113, 1 st floor, Foreign Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport Square, Ahwaz, IRAN 061-34148559	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt in the amount of 190,000 Iranian Rials under account number 400111400402040 (Shaba No. IR 520100004001114004020491) in name of "NIDC Income Centralized Fund" issued by I.R. of Iran Central Bank. Submitting formal Request for the purpose of receiving Tender Documents. 	35 days after the last time of purchasing.	Hall No. 102, 4 th floor, Tender Committee, Operation building, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport Square, Ahwaz, IRAN, Tel: +98-61-34148559

Purchasing & Submitting

Value of guarantee	Type of guarantee	Duration of credit quotation
1,389,000,000Rial / 1,389 Euro Regarding Tender No FP/05-98/001	Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt under account number 400111400402040 (Shaba No. IR 520100004001114004020491) in name of "NIDC Income Centralized Fund" issued by I.R. of Iran Central Bank.	Tender Guarantee and quotation should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum for one time in initial validity duration.
186,000,000 Rial / 1,326 Euro Regarding Tender No FP/05-98/021		
200,000,000Rial / 1,687 Euro Regarding Tender No FP/05-98/137		
330,000,000Rial / 2,760 Euro Regarding Tender No FP/05-98/151		
300,000,000Rial / 2,269 Euro Regarding Tender No FP/05-98/186		
176,000,000Rial / 1,329 Euro Regarding Tender No FP/05-98/185		
250,000,000Rial / 3,237 Euro Regarding Tender No FP/05-98/030		
540,000,000Rial / 3,664 Euro Regarding Tender No FP/05-98/029		

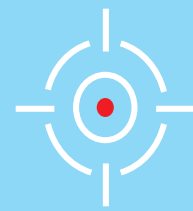
Tender Guarantee
Tender Guarantee and quotation should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum for one time in initial validity duration.

(Foreign Procurement Dept.)
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Racism, inequality, and conflict: an interview with Prof. Robert Sapolsky

➡ So, do you regard racism as a cultural issue, or is it an innate characteristic of human beings?

A: Well, in so far as I think the science shows, race is not a particularly strong innate category in our heads, and racism can be changed as an unconscious category surprisingly easily. We are not looking at biology here. It's cultural, but it is very deeply cultural.

In some ways, the most depressing version of it was a study in the 1950s by a husband-and-wife pair of psychologists that horrified anyone who thought about it. It was this famous first study where they took black kids and gave them a choice of playing with a white doll or a black doll and asked them which one they wanted to play with and why. It showed that black kids in America, even at age seven, were already saying the white doll "is prettier", the white doll "is nicer", and the white doll "isn't scary". Seven-year-old black kids have already been taught to think about themselves that way!

When there was this famous case in the 1950s in the Supreme Court, where they finally ruled that you cannot have racial segregation, that you cannot be like South Africa, and that you cannot have separate schools for black kids and schools for white kids, that study was one of the most cited reasons behind the court's decision.

Researchers are STILL finding the exact same thing. Your average black kid today still prefers to play with white dolls, because they're "nicer" and they're "less likely to hurt you". So, racism is such a deep, deep phenomenon here, and few things say that more clearly than when people have been conditioned to have negative, racist feelings about themselves.

■ As a neurobiologist, what do you regard as viable solutions to the issue of racism?

A: Well, there are slight hints of things to be optimistic about from the standpoint of neurobiology. For instance, if you put a white American in a brain scanner, and you quickly flash up a series of pictures of faces on a screen, and you flash up the face of an African-American person, in approximately seventy-five percent of white people, there's an activation of the amygdala, which is a part of the brain that has to do with fear and anxiety and aggression. Oh, my god! This is fascinating and so depressing at the same time.

Also, the part of the brain that processes "faces" (called the fusiform cortex) does not activate as much in those seventy-five percent of white people looking at a black face, because it doesn't count as "a face" as much. It's not as much of a person. So, oh my God, this is so depressing and so horrible!

But wait a second, what about the twenty-five percent of the people where that does not happen? The answer is those are white people who grew up with close friends who are African-American. Those are people who had a romantic relationship with an African-American somewhere along the way. In another word, it is not inevitable but some of the best solutions for that start when you're two years old.

However, in many parts of the United States in the big cities, the level of racial segregation – the extent to which if you're black you are likely to be going to a public school, where 95 percent of the other kids are black, and if you're white, the same thing in that direction – is as bad as it was in the 1950s. It's not because of laws, but because of economics and cultural factors.

So, it is the massive issues that need to be changed starting early in life. Although it is possible to take an adult who was a racist – even on the most implicit, unconscious level – and change him or her, but it's hard work and it's a lot harder than preventing a three-year-old from becoming a racist in the first place. But the other issue is just such enormous economic inequality in this country by race. It's so deeply structured in the economic and educational system here that all it does is find ways to become stronger each generation.

■ You mentioned economic inequality and how being poor or rich leads to some kind of economic segregation. Now, I want to know what the findings show about being poor, especially with regard to children who are born into poverty.

A: I spent years studying what stress and stress hormones and poverty can do to the hippocampus – the part of the brain relevant to memory and learning. That's so important and so interesting. However, I now think I spent thirty years of my life wasted because I was thinking the wrong part of the brain. Much more interesting is studying that a stressor such as poverty not only makes you have less of a memory, but it also makes you more prone to depression. Even more importantly, it makes you more prone to fear and anxiety. Even more importantly, it makes you prone to making bad decisions when you have to make them quickly. And what I'm now starting to think is the most important one, it makes you less empathic toward other people.

Everyone focused on how poverty makes people less healthy. Poverty also makes for a more violent world, and it makes for a less kind and less humane world. That last part I think is the most important one. Even today, we know a little bit about what's going on in the brain, in a world in which people are stressed and their brains have changed in response to stress from the time they were a fetus because stress hormone levels in pregnant women vary as a function of poverty levels. In other words, higher stress hormone levels in pregnant women are already affecting the brain of the fetus. Even at that stage, you are already changing aspects of the brain that could be for your entire life, that are going to make for people who make a society that is less kind and less safe and less healthy and less intelligent in every possible way that could go wrong. That's just enormously depressing.



■ You have spoken and written extensively about how economic inequality affects an individual and a society. Could you explain how that works?

A: When you look at poverty, you see that it is a predictor of poor health, more violence, less kindness, and all of those things. But even more important than poverty is inequality, which is not so much about being poor, rather, it's about being reminded every day of what you don't have and what others have. It's the comparison.

Researchers have spent a lot of time showing that when inequality increases, the health of the poor gets worse, their crime rates go up and all of those bad things happen. But something that is even more interesting in some ways is that when inequality goes up, the health of the WEALTHY gets worse too. Of course, not as much as the poor, but it gets worse for them as well.

It's not that if you are in the right part of society you can selfishly say that it's their problem, because even if you're wealthy and you don't care about anyone else, living in an unequal society is even bad for *your* health, because it stresses you. For example, you have to spend more of your income on your house alarm system. You have to spend more of your income sending your children to private schools because the public schools are "too dangerous".

It's very stressful to try to construct a world in which nothing stressful can happen to you. In other words, it's every level of society that pays for it and I think we see that in the United States. That's why most of the wealthy vote for Donald Trump. Because they suffer too.

The voting patterns show that the wealthy in the cities are more in the direction of supporting the

Current racial segregation in schools in the U.S. is not because of laws, but because of economic inequality and cultural factors, the professor remarks.

Democrats and are a little more liberal, in contrast to the wealthy in the suburbs and in rural areas. If you're wealthy in a city, for example, if you're going to the opera and you're paying a crazy amount of money for it and you're wearing a tuxedo and your life is wonderful, even just getting out of your limousine and going to the opera, you're gonna have to step over somebody who is sleeping on the sidewalk because he is homeless. Even on the level of selfishness, you would say, "We have to do something about the homeless because it's really very uncomfortable to go to the opera and have to see homeless people."

But if you live in the rural areas and you're a billionaire and you go to a rodeo of cowboys steer roping, if that's your idea of fun, you're *not* gonna have to step over homeless people – it's a different world than that. But even the wealthy here pay a price for inequality.

■ So, inequality is generally another category to divide the world into Us-es and Them-s, which in turn would lead to more public anxiety.

A: Absolutely. And as a measure of how fast that could happen, you do studies where university students play an economic game, and then you introduce inequality to the game. For instance, half of the subjects start the game with ten units of money, and the other half start with a hundred units. Two minutes ago, the students were economically roughly equal and they were from the same dormitory. But now, even within minutes of artificially introducing inequality to the game, you already begin to see some of those behaviors.

It is so fast and it is so strong. To see one of the reasons why kindness and empathy go down, suppose you have a world where everybody gets one of two different incomes: Fifty percent of people get ten units of money a year, and fifty percent get a hundred units a year. That's so unequal! But even with that, at any given point, half of the people in your world at least have the same income that you do. At least economically they are somewhat equal to you.

But if instead, only one percent of people in the country are getting the same income you're getting, the inequality spreads out enormously. There will be fewer people who are your peers. A greater percentage of the people around you are either poorer or richer than you. If they're poorer

than you, you are afraid of them, or you want to keep them away, or you're disgusted by them. And if they're richer than you, you resent them and you envy them. So, you don't have equals. The more inequality there is, the more of a hierarchy there is, and the more of a hierarchy, the fewer peers you have whom you are more likely to be kind to, and who are more likely to be kind to you. It makes for a more awful world by definition.

■ Like the U.S., my own country, Iran, has turned into a very divided nation in recent years. However, when I follow the U.S. news, I feel that the level of polarization in the United States is perhaps much worse than that of Iran. What are the roots of such polarization? And what do you think is the solution?

A: Well, to begin with, Donald Trump is not the cause of it. Donald Trump is a symptom of it. He is the complete logical outcome of what the issues are here. I think basically what has happened is inequality has gone up, employment has gotten worse, and poverty levels have gotten worse, because so many jobs have been sent to poorer countries by the corporations here that don't care or because so many more jobs are being automated.

And what happens as people get more stressed and more angry and more worried is, whether you are a rat or a baboon or a human, the basic neurobiology is to turn on somebody else and to have a very hard time realizing that it's the fault of the people up on top, instead of the person who's standing right next to you hoping for the same job.

The people in power are brilliant at making you turn on the person standing next to you instead of on them. And all it does is make things worse. If you are in the most dangerous part of the population in the United States, which is if you are an older white guy who never got much education and has now spent thirty years getting less proportionate income each year, and thirty years watching more and more people competing for your job, especially people who do not look like you, and seeing more and more of the teachers at your children's schools not looking like you, and the people on television not looking like you, and the people getting elected not looking like you, and all of that is unconsciously telling you over and over that it is not your culture anymore, that you do not rule this place anymore.

■ So, in this context, the idea of bringing people of different backgrounds together doesn't resolve that issue, right?

A: No, because you have to do it the right way. People used to say "Ooh, if you could take people from two different groups who don't like each other, if you could bring individuals together and let them spend time together, they will learn to see each other as individuals and they will learn that there are more similarities than differences and it would be wonderful, etc." However, sixty years' worth of research on contact theory has shown that most of the time it does not work, because it has not been done in the correct way. And if you do it the really wrong way, you will make things worse.

It takes a lot for it to work correctly. You can't do it for a weekend or even a week. It takes contact lasting for months. It has to be on equal grounds. It has to be in settings where you are not seeing the other group's symbols, which are a constant reminder to you.

This past summer, my family and I went to Northern Ireland, where Catholics and Protestants have been killing each other forever, and in the 1990s, they amazingly worked out a treaty and it has become much more peaceful. Nevertheless, the capital, Belfast, is still a completely divided city. There's a Catholic half and a Protestant half, and there's a wall in-between. We took a tour where, for the first half of the day a seventy-five-year-old man who used to be a fighter for the Catholic groups takes you on a tour through the Catholic area, and then around twelve o'clock, you go to the gate and he hands you off to a protestant guy, who was a gunman for the Protestant group for years when he was a young man but now runs the tour of his side. Both of those men had been in jail. Both of those men killed people.

Now, you go to one side, and it has nothing but Irish flags on every single house, and the other side has nothing but British flags on every house and pictures of Queen Elizabeth, and how wonderful she is, and so on. The point is, you know, you can't do it where you are being reminded every minute what they [pointing to the right] did to your ancestors 200 years ago, or what they [pointing to the left] did to your ancestors in the seventh century.

So, it takes a lot of work to do it right. One of the areas where it has been most studied is in summer camp programs for Palestinian and Israeli teenag-

ers, where you bring them together and you try to do it right. You get them in a neutral setting, and you give them something they all have as a shared goal. For instance, they're brought to a place where they have no symbols – they cannot have flags or anything like that – then you show them this field full of boulders and rocks and weeds, and you say, "Okay, if you guys wanna work together like crazy for the next week to turn this into a football field, go for it. There you go. That's the only way you're gonna have a football field." And then they work like crazy, and they work in teams together, which is the sort of thing that actually helps, and you show that when they leave at the end of these two weeks, some of them have had a change in their attitudes.

They've been doing that for twenty years, and despite that occasional good news, what the studies have also shown is that no person who ever went to one of those groups on either side has become a leader of a peace group; next to no person on either side has stayed in touch with the person they became friends with; no person has caused other people to change their opinions. What you get instead is that the researchers come back to them one year later to ask them about the other side, and they say, "Oh, those people? They're terrible! They've stolen our land," or "They're terrorists. They're terrible, rotten people." But then they say, "Oh, I knew this one guy though... He was a good guy. You know, they're not all that way. You know, but there was this guy... I should email him to see how he's doing," and then they never do that. But the overall prejudice does not go away, and whatever changes there have been in your attitudes, you do not spread them to anybody else. So, it takes so much work. It takes years.

■ And goodwill on both sides.

A: And goodwill! You have to want the change to occur. You have to actually accept that the current situation is not good. People here often say, "Oh, what's the cause of Islamic rage against the West? It's history. They used to be the Ottoman Empire. They used to be the Moorish Empire. They used to be amazing and now look at them. They're just upset at what they lost in history." So, what's Donald Trump about? "Make America great AGAIN!" AGAIN! And what does that mean? As a secret sign to the people who support him, make it a country again where, if you are a man, you rule your home. If you are white, you rule your country. If you are Christian, you are in charge of the religious culture in your country. It's "Make America great AGAIN!" And you are saying, "I am part of the people who feel like history has left me behind, and this used to be my place to rule, and it's no longer like that, and we need to go back." It's the same historicism.

■ Now, I also want to talk about your book, "Behave: The Biology of Humans at Our Best and Worst". In your book, you argue that "knowing a

According to Dr. Sapolsky, when there's rampant economic inequality in a society, even the wealthy are negatively impacted by it.

judge's opinions about Plato, Nietzsche, Rawls," and other philosophers "gives you less predictive power about her judicial decisions than knowing if she's hungry." Could you elaborate what that means?

A: Yeah, it's wonderful! I love that finding – that finding and the finding that if you put someone in a room that smells bad, people become more politically conservative about social issues. I tell those findings to an audience and you could hear people say, "Whoa!" Or whenever I'm speaking to law students and I tell that one about judges, you can just hear people laughing a little bit in the audience and saying, "Oh, my God! What is wrong with us?"

■ So, would you explain what happens in the study?

A: Okay. In this study, the researchers looked at parole boards. A parole board is a panel of people who decide whether a prisoner has behaved well enough that they should be released early. So, it was a study looking at parole board judges' decisions, and it showed that the single biggest predictor of whether a prisoner was paroled or sent back to jail was how many hours it has been since the parole board judges had a MEAL. If you appeared before a judge right after they had a meal, you had a sixty-percent chance of being paroled. By three hours later, it was down to a zero-percent chance.

And then you ask the judge afterward, "Wow! That's interesting! You let this guy [pointing to the right] free two hours ago, but now you sent this guy [pointing to the left] back to jail. How come?" And they will talk to you about Aristotle and Plato. They're not gonna say because I'm hungry. But the biology of it shows that that's the case. When their blood sugar levels are low, people become less generous, they become less empathic, and they become likely to cheat when they're playing an economic game. And why is this? Because the parts of your brain that have to make you do the harder thing when it is the right thing to do have a higher metabolic rate than other parts of your brain. In other words, they demand more energy.

It takes energy to think twice about someone instead of just saying, "They're rotten! Throw them back to jail." Stopping and saying, "Well, let's see. They grew up in a world that I never experienced. What was the world like for them? What is..." That takes more work! And that takes more brainpower in a very literal way. The frontal cortex, which is

central for making you do the harder thing when the harder thing is the more difficult thing, needs more energy. Literally, your brain needs more energy to think about somebody else's perspective on the world than thinking about your own.

After the study was published, everybody came up with what they thought was a confound, saying, "Here's why they did the statistics wrong." However, it has completely held up as a finding.

■ That's really interesting. You said that the finding has held up against criticisms. So, has it been replicated?

A: I do not know if it's been replicated. But there were a number of responses to it. For instance, the critics said those who conducted the study had brought the prisoners from the less dangerous prisons early in the day and brought the more dangerous prisoners later in the day, and that's why later in the day you're more likely to send them back to jail. However, they controlled for that, and they showed a whole bunch of possible controls that ruled that out. Basically, all of the confounds that people have pointed out were found not to be real problems.

Also, another version of this same idea is one I just mentioned, which is you put someone in an economic game, and if they're hungry, they cheat more, they're less generous, and they're less kind to other players. Now, showing what it's all about, you either give them a drink of fruit juice that is full of sugar, or as an experimental control, a drink which is full of artificial sugar, which does not do anything to brain metabolism. So, give somebody actual sugar afterward and they will now become more generous. It's the biology [laughing]. It's not because of having a great meal. It's literally the biology of it. And we're biological machines. Big surprise!

■ Let's also talk about the roots of conservatism and liberalism and the studies with regard to this subject, which I believe are crucial in understanding the roots of conservatism and liberalism.

A: Sure. If you're trying to understand why someone becomes a liberal or a conservative, or what their attitudes are about economic systems, causes of poverty, causes of violence, etc., I think there are two critical factors that no political scientist thinks of. The first thing is to find out how easily disgusted someone is. Because if they have a low threshold for feeling disgusted, they're going to more easily be disgusted by people who need their help, instead of feeling empathy for them. The second thing is do they feel excited or scared by something that is new or uncertain to them? If it's exciting, you're likely to be a liberal. New people, new ideas, new facial appearances, new foods, new beliefs, etc. are exciting to liberals. But if those things are scary to you and cause you to have an anxiety response, you're gonna be a conservative. Because it's always gonna be the case that the past is more comfortable for you than the future.

Look at somebody's heart rate in a circumstance like that and that is a predictor of what their attitudes are going to be about issues that split conservatives and liberals. Show people pictures of something like a wound that is infected and full of flies, and see how much their stomach lurches – and people whose stomachs lurch a lot are more likely to be social conservatives.

Take a five-year-old child and their mother in a room where there are some new toys to play with. The kid is excited to be playing with them, but after a certain amount of time the mother leaves the room and you measure how much time it takes for the kid to look around and see that mom is not there anymore and to begin to cry, versus continuing to play with the toys. How easily five-year-olds have an anxiety response to novelty is predictive of their voting patterns twenty years later.

This has been shown in different studies by now. Five-year-olds do not sit there and think, "Well, is a Marxist model or a free market model better for solving inequality?" Five-year-olds sit there and feel whether the world is a scary place or is it an exciting place. And that's the most fundamental difference in terms of the novelty-anxiety connection.

Back to the finding about conservatives and liberals tending to differ on their thresholds for disgust – on average, conservatives have more different kinds of soap in their bathrooms. They have more cleaning products! If you are a conservative, the world is a place where you need to spend more time and money on cleaning than if you are a liberal. These findings tell you that political differences are about unconscious emotional issues, rather than you thinking about whether you can trust Vladimir Putin or not.

■ I suppose people also move to the extremes on both sides based on the circumstances. What do you think about that?

A: Well, that's certainly the polarization that has gone on in the United States. Traditionally, liberals and progressives are more tolerant of other opinions than conservatives are. They are more in favor of the freedom of the press. They're more in favor of pluralistic societies. So, by definition, they are more open to other viewpoints. That's always been the case. But even liberals have become less open over the last four years. Now, they're now spending more time attacking other liberals for not being quite as perfect of liberals as they are. When the left – at least in a place like the United States – turns ugly, what they do is they write terrible, mean essays about other people on the left. When the right turns ugly, they kill black people, or gay people, or Jews, or immigrants. But when liberals become really scared, what they're mostly good at is deciding that other liberals are not as good of liberals as they are!

As another example, when somebody asks people, "Would you be upset if your child married someone from the opposite end of the political spectrum?" even liberals are now more upset than they were four years ago at the prospects of that. Of course, they're less upset than a conservative would be. But even *they* have become less tolerant. So, yeah, people move to the extremes.

■ Dr. Sapolsky, this was such a fascinating conversation, and it was great to hear your thoughts on these issues. Thank you very much for your time.

A: Well, thanks. It was good to talk to you.

Glass and Ceramic Museum’s historical relics to be restored

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** – A total of 30 historical relics, being kept in the Glass and Ceramic Museum of Iran in downtown Tehran, are up for restoration by teams of cultural heritage experts and restorers.

Cleansing, rehabilitation, analysis, strengthening, photography, identification, and classification of the pieces are parts of the project. ILNA quoted the museum’s director Hamid Vakilbashi as saying on Tuesday.



Also known as Abgineh Museum, the museum offers visitors a wide range of glasswork, brickwork, plasterwork, mirrorwork as well as inlaid artworks that date from the 2nd millennium BC to the present day, all housed within an elegant Qajar-era (1789 to 1925) edifice.

The two-story octagonal structure itself retains a lot of charm as seamlessly blends genuine Iranian architecture with the 19th-century European motifs.

It was originally constructed upon the orders of the 20th-century politician Ahmad Qavam better known as Qavam-ol-Saltaneh for his personal lodging. It is situated a short walk northward of the National Museum of Iran on Si-e Tir St.

Golestan Palace to set up photography studio

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** – The photography studio (Akkas Khaneh) of the UNESCO-registered Golestan Palace in Tehran will come on stream in the near future, CHTN reported on Monday.

Akkas Khaneh, also known as Howz Khaneh, is a hall located in Badgir Mansion of the palace. Currently, the hall is a permanent exhibition of collections of Qajar era photos as well as the photography equipment of the time.



The photography studio, which is planned to be auctioned off to eligible applicants, will treasure tourists’ memories of the UNESCO-tagged site, the report added.

A destination for domestic and international travelers, Golestan Palace is located in the heart and historic core of Tehran. The palace complex is one of the oldest in the Iranian capital, originally built during the Safavid dynasty (1501–1736) in the historic walled city.

Following extensions and additions, it received its most characteristic features in the 19th century, when the palace complex was selected as the royal residence and seat of power by the Qajar ruling family (1789-1925). At present, the Golestan Palace complex consists of eight key palace structures mostly used as museums and the eponymous gardens, a green shared center of the complex, surrounded by an outer wall with gates.

UNESCO has it that the complex exemplifies architectural and artistic achievements of the Qajar era including the introduction of European motifs and styles into Persian arts.

Some \$170,000 spent to restore Semnan historic bazaar

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** – A budget of seven billion rials (some \$170,000) has spent on the restoration of the historic bazaar of Semnan in north-central Iran over the past six years, a provincial tourism chief has said.

Preserving and restoring the bazaar requires everyone’s participation and close collaboration of the shop owners, as well as bazaar’s board of trustees, is needed in this regard, ILNA quoted Mostafa Yaghmaeian as saying on Monday.

Strengthening and repairing bazaar’s rooftop, paved road, gutters, and walls have been done so far, the official added.



In the Iranian culture, bazaars have been traditional public spaces in the Iranian cities with great contributions to commercial activities in the urban life meanwhile their extended activates can be traced to social, cultural, political, and religious roles.

The Qajar-era (1789–1925) Semnan bazaar was inscribed on the National Heritage list in 1996.

The main population centers of Semnan province lie along the ancient Silk Road (and modern-day Imam Reza Expressway), linking Rey (Tehran) with Khorasan (Mashhad). While few visitors spend much time in the area, driving through you can easily seek out several well-preserved caravanserais (notably Dehnamak and Ahowan), cisterns (the Cafe Abenbar in Garmsar is a special treat) and ruined mud citadels (Padeh is lumpy but fascinating). The large, bustling cities of Semnan, Damghan, and Shahrud (Bastam) all have a small selection of historic buildings.

Newly unearthed workshops may push back history of Isfahan by millennia

→ 1 Last month, Jafari-Zand and his team discovered an ancient giant jar-tombs (the second of its kind in the same place) inside the hill that the cement an idea that the history of Isfahan may be rooted deeper in the history. Isfahan is mostly recognized as a jewel of Islamic architecture of the 16th and 17th centuries.

“The discovery of the second giant jar-tomb in the sole historical hill of Isfahan – (‘Tepe Ashraf’ or ‘Tappeh Ashraf’) -- has proved a previous hypothesis suggesting the existence of a Parthian-era cemetery on the east of the hill. Now, Tepe Ashraf is the second place after the Tepe Sialk (in Isfahan province) that has yielded the discovery of such jar tombs that offers valuable clues to uncover the obscure history of pre-Islamic Isfahan,” Jafari-Zand explained.

Later, the team found a burial place containing the remains of a horse -- estimated to be four years old -- in the hill. The horse skeleton was found near a place where a giant jar-tomb was unearthed.

“The burial of this horse with its head turned towards the animal’s body, shows an official burial which was practiced during the early years of the Parthian era. In this type of burial, the animal’s body was buried next to its owner, who had died,” IRNA quoted Jafari-Zand as saying.

“Evidence came to light from some Parthian cemeteries, being excavated in northern Iran, shows that the deceased’s horse was buried next to him, and this fully shows that we have the same burial [tradition] in Isfahan, the discovery of this type of burial in Ashraf hill is of high importance for the history of Isfahan because no such phenomenon has been reported in central Iran so far.”

Excavations at Tepe Ashraf initially began in 2010 when Jafari-Zand announced his team found evidence at the site suggesting that the Sassanid site had also been used during the Buyid dynasty (945–1055). “We stumbled upon a reconstructed part in the ruins of the castle, which suggests that the structure had been used during the Buyid dynasty.”

“Isfahan is a city, which has never died over the history... and the old Isfahan is beneath the modern city. Thus, normally, archaeological excavation is impossible in the city,” according to Jafari-Zand who believes that the mount keeps a part of the history of Isfahan and Iran in its heart. The mound has seriously been damaged on the northern side by the construction of a street. Besides, unscientific



The ruins of two workshops, estimated to date from the Parthian era (247 BC – 224 CE), have recently been unearthed in Isfahan, central Iran.

excavations carried out by several archaeology interns in 1987 disturbed the historical strata in a part of the site.

Soaked in a rich history, Isfahan was once a crossroads of international trade and diplomacy in Iran during the 16th and 17th centuries, and now it is one of Iran’s top tourist destinations for good reasons.

Isfahan is filled with architectural wonders such

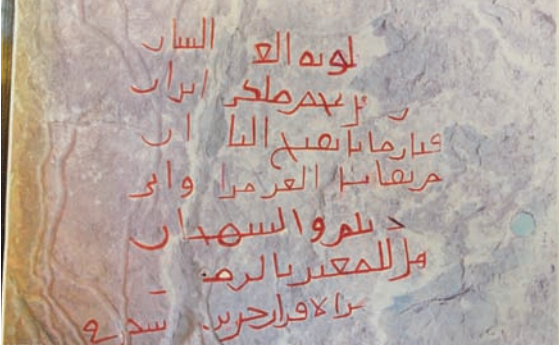
as unmatched Islamic buildings, bazaars, museums, Persian gardens, and tree-lined boulevards. It’s a city for walking, getting lost in its mazing bazaars, dozing in beautiful gardens, and meeting people. It has long been nicknamed as Nesf-e-Jahan which is translated into “half of the world”, suggesting that seeing it is equivalent to seeing half of the world.

The word ‘Iran’ deciphered from Islamic-era petroglyph

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** – The word “Iran” has recently been deciphered from an early Islamic-era petroglyph, which was found last year at an ancient fortress in Semirom county, Isfahan province, central Iran.

Although the word “Iran” can easily be traced in pre-Islamic inscriptions and literary and geographical texts as well as manuscripts dating to the first centuries of the Islamic epoch, this is the first time that researchers and archaeologists have been able to find an inscription from the second half of the third century (after the advent of Islam) in which a name from Iran is given, Mehr reported on Tuesday.

“It is also possible that in some inscriptions the name of ‘Iran’ being presented with other terms, but in the



inscription discovered from Semirom fortress, the name of Iran is clearly and legibly mentioned. For this reason, this inscription is very important and the discovery and reading of this inscription can be considered a great discovery,” the report added.

The territory which is now modern Iran was formerly known as Persia, a term used for centuries and originated from a region of southern Iran formerly known as Persis, alternatively as Pars or Parsa, modern Fars. The use of the name was gradually extended by the ancient Greeks and other peoples to apply to the whole Iranian plateau. The people of that region have traditionally called their country Iran, “Land of the Aryans.” That name was officially adopted in 1935.

New round of restoration to start on 20th-century castle in southwestern Iran

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** – A new round of restoration work is to commence on the historical castle of Samsam al-Saltaneh in Shalamzar city of southwestern Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province, CHTN reported.

The project aims at preserving, protecting, strengthening, and reviving the historical monument, provincial tourism chief Kourosh Babaian said on Tuesday.

A budget of 400 million rials (about \$9,500) has been allocated to the project, however, according to estimates, the budget required for the restoration project is at least 60 billion rials (some \$1.5 million), the official added.

He also noted that the project includes landscaping, flooring, installation of plumbs and wooden doors and windows, and restoration of brick façade.

Located 45 kilometers south of the provincial capital of Shahr-e Kord, the castle was built under Haj Najaf-Qoli Khan

Bakhtiari, known as Samsam al-Saltaneh, Iran’s Chancellor during the Persian Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911).

Measuring about 2,000 square meters in area, the monument was built on two floors, of which the second floor was destroyed completely about 40 years ago.

The first floor has beautiful porches with stone columns, with a view to a nearby mountain.

The historical monument was inscribed on the National Heritage list in 1977.

Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari lies in the southwestern part of the country. Its capital is Shahrekord. The province has various unique traditions and rituals relative to the ‘tribal’ lifestyles. Special forms of music, dance, and clothing are noteworthy. It has considerable potential to become a vibrant tourist attraction because of its changing natural landscape.

Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari is also a hub for making wool



felt products, majorly of which exported abroad. It is home to some 500 crafters, in over 250 workshops, making hand-made felt products.

Visit Jameh Mosque of Ardestan one of earliest Islamic structures in central Iran

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** – The Jameh Mosque of Ardestan, which is named after an ancient oasis town of the same name in central Iran, is of high historical importance as it incorporates successive architectural styles of the Sassanids, Buyids, Seljuks, and Safavids.

The Congregational Mosque of Ardestan is an early Islamic building with many accretions over its long history of use. However, a majority of what visitors to the mosque see dates form the Seljuk era (ca. 1040–1196).

Located in Isfahan province, the two-story hypostyle mosque has a four-portico (iwan) courtyard surrounded by encircling arcades. The place of worship is part of larger premises that also includes other mudbrick structures such as a cistern, a caravanserai, a marketplace, a bathhouse, and a madrasa.

According to ARCHNET, the earliest dated inscription on the building is from the 12th/6th c. AH, but evidence of an earlier mosque remains, suggesting that its original foundation could date to the 10th-11th/4th-5th c. AH or earlier.

The mosque stands on a site once occupied by a Sasanian structure, as evidenced by remains discovered in archaeological excavations. The early mosque was likely a hypostyle type, having a central courtyard surrounded by arcades.

Remains of some of these arcades in



the current mosque show that they were covered with barrel vaults. As it stands today, the mosque occupies an irregular space centered on a rectangular courtyard with four iwans, incorporating pieces of the earlier hypostyle structure.

The iwans on the southwest (qibla) and northeast sides of the courtyard are larger, rising to a greater height and being wider as well. Behind the southwest iwan is a square chamber surmounted by a dome resting



on an octagonal transition zone formed by eight engaged arches.

Between the iwans are vaulted bays of irregular size and shape on two stories. Behind the vaulted bays in the southern quadrant of the mosque, a long corridor leads from two entrances onto the vaulted bays on the southeastern side of the courtyard.

The exterior of the mosque is quite irregular while the facades of the courtyard are harmonious, with the iwans aligned and

roughly the same size, not unlike the situation in the Great Mosque of Isfahan, which also evolved over centuries and went through a major renovation during the Seljuk period. Currently, the mosque has several entrances.

The earliest additions to the mosque that transformed its plan from the original hypostyle type were likely the southwest iwan and dome chamber behind it (dated by inscriptions to 1158/553 AH and 1160/555 AH respectively).

These were inserted into the existing hypostyle prayer hall on the southwestern side of the courtyard. Scholars debate the dates of the remaining three iwans, some believing that they were constructed in the twelfth/sixth century and others arguing for a later date, as an inscription in the northeast iwan dates to 1539/946 AH.

The earliest stucco fragments, found in the western corner of the courtyard, have been dated to the end of the 10th/4th c. AH. The interior of the dome chamber and iwan are extensively covered in plaster. The dome and zone of transition are articulated with simulated brickwork; the iwan vault is uniquely faced with a complex stucco design of interlacing arabesques. The mihrab exemplifies skilled stucco carving and may represent Mongol restoration.

According to Isfahan Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department, the mosque was inscribed on the national heritage list in 1931.

Sahand: bride of Iran's mountains with valuable biodiversity



1 → Extreme cold during the winter and heavy snow in this mountain have prevented the growth of trees and shrubs, but different plant genera, all of which are herbaceous perennials and annuals, are found in abundance in the pastures and meadows of Sahand.

Wildlife species

Significant species of Sahand protected area include Armenian mouflon, caracal, brown bear, leopard, wild cat, weasel, wolf, fox, bats, and various types of rodents.

According to the last census in 1394 (March 2015-March 2016), the population of wild goats in this area is estimated at over 500.

The area is home to many 185 species of native and migratory birds including Golden eagle, Kite, Vulture, common buzzard, Montagu's harrier, kestrel, hobby, and saker falcon.

Hosting numerous mammals and rare species of plants and aquatic animals, the Sahand range has become an important habitat for wildlife and memorable sightseeing for tourists.

Climate characteristic

Sahand mountainous region has a cold climate. The amount of rainfall in this area is between 300 to 600 mm per year. In terms of climatic division, the Sahand region is among the regions with an altitude of more than 2000 meters. Mild summers and cold long winters are the characteristics of these areas.

Due to the existence of the Sahand volcanic mountain, which has created a special type of climate in Azarbaijan, meteorologists have expressed several views on the Sahand climate and its territory.

Wladimir Köppen, an Austrian climatologist, has identified the interior of Azarbaijan within the radius of the Sahand and Sabalan mountains, a rainy, humid, and very cold climate with long, semi-arid winters. There is no forest in this mountain, but it is covered with excellent and rich pastures.

Sahand hunting-prohibited area

Although this area is very important in terms of desirable habitat for species of wildlife and aquatic animals and also having recreational potential, the value and credibility of Sahand is more due to its abundant water resources and the vastness and richness of its rangelands.

Sahand hunting-prohibited area has been under protection since 2000 with the aim of preserving the habitat and important species of Armenian mouflon and wild goats.



Andean condor can fly for 100 miles without flapping wings

A study sheds light on just how efficiently the world's largest soaring bird rides air currents to stay aloft for hours without flapping its wings.

The Andean condor has a 3-metre (10ft) wingspan and weighs up to 15kg (33lbs), making it the world's heaviest soaring bird.

For the first time, a team of scientists strapped recording equipment they called "daily diaries" to eight condors in Patagonia to record each wingbeat over more than 250 hours of flight time, the Guardian reported.

Incredibly, the birds spent just 1% of their time aloft flapping their wings, mostly during takeoff. One bird flew more than five hours, covering more than 100 miles (160km), without flapping its wings.

"Condors are expert pilots but we just had not expected they would be quite so expert," said Prof Emily Shepard, a study co-author and biologist at Swansea University in Wales.

The results were published on Monday in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

"The finding that they basically almost never beat their wings and just soar is mind-blowing," said David Lentink, an expert in bird flight at Stanford University, who was not involved in the research.

To birds, the sky is not empty but a landscape of invisible features: wind gusts, currents of warm rising air and streams of air pushed upward by ground features such as mountains.

Learning to ride air currents allows some to travel long distances while minimising the exertion of beating their wings.

Scientists who study flying animals generally consider two types of flight: flapping flight and soaring flight. The difference can be likened to pedalling a bicycle uphill versus coasting downhill, said Bret Tobalske, a bird flight expert at the University of Montana, who was not involved in the study.

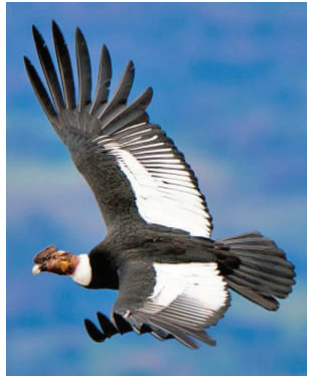
Previous studies have shown that white storks and osprey flap for 17% and 25% of their overland migratory flights, respectively.

The Andean condor's expertise at soaring is essential for its scavenger lifestyle, which requires hours a day of circling high mountains looking for a meal of carrion, said Sergio Lambertucci, a study co-author and biologist at the National University of Comahue in Argentina.

"When you see condors circling, they are taking advantage of those thermal uplifts", or rising gusts of warm air, he said.

The recording devices were programmed to fall off the birds after about a week.

Retrieving them was not so easy. "Sometimes the devices dropped off into nests on huge cliffs in the middle of the Andes mountains, and we needed three days just to get there," Lambertucci said.



'Compelling' evidence air pollution worsens coronavirus – study



There is "compelling" evidence that air pollution significantly increases coronavirus infections, hospital admissions and deaths, according to the most detailed and comprehensive analysis to date.

The research indicates that a small, single-unit increase in people's long-term exposure to pollution particles raises infections and admissions by about 10% and deaths by 15%. The study took into account more than 20 other factors, including average population density, age, household size, occupation and obesity.

There is growing evidence from Europe, the US and China that dirty air makes the impact of Covid-19 worse. But the study of the outbreak in the Netherlands is unique because the worst air pollution there is not in cities but in some rural areas, due to intensive livestock farming.

This allows the "big city effect" to be ruled out, which is the idea that high air pollution simply coincides with urban populations whose density and deprivation may make them more susceptible to the virus.

The scientists are clear they have not proven a causal link between air pollution and worse coronavirus impacts. Conclusive evidence will only come with large amounts of data on individual people, which is not yet available, rather than average data for regions as used in the analysis.

But scientists said it was important to do the best research possible as understanding the link may be important in dealing with further Covid-19 outbreaks and could signal where subsequent waves will hit the hardest.

Many scientists agree that air pollution is likely to be increasing the number and severity of Covid-19 infections, as dirty air is already known to inflame the lungs and cause respiratory and heart disease that make people more vulnerable. But not all agree that the evidence so far is good enough to demonstrate a large impact.

"What I was struck by was this really was a strong relationship," said Prof Matthew Cole, who conducted the research with his colleagues Ceren Ozgen and Eric Strobl at the University of Birmingham, UK. Unlike most studies to date, the paper has been reviewed by independent scientists and accepted for publication in a journal, Environmental and Resource Economics.

The team concluded: "Using detailed data we find compelling evidence of a positive relationship between air pollution, and particularly [fine particle] concentrations, and Covid-19 cases, hospital admissions and deaths. This relationship persists even

after controlling for a wide range of explanatory [factors]."

The most prominent previous study was conducted by Harvard University researchers and found an 8% increase in coronavirus deaths for a single-unit rise in fine particle pollution. Cole said: "We used data at much finer resolution, with the average size of the 355 Dutch municipalities being 95 km² compared to the 3,130 km² for a US county."

"This means we can more precisely capture each region's characteristics, including pollution exposure," he said. The new analysis also uses Covid-19 data up to 5 June 2020, allowing it to capture almost the full wave of the epidemic.

An additional factor considered was the Netherlands carnival gatherings that take place in late February, particularly in the livestock farming regions in the south and east of the country. This is where coronavirus cases were highest and where air pollution is highest, due to the ammonia emitted from livestock farms, which forms particle pollution. Coles' team used statistical methods to estimate the impact of these gatherings. "But it did not knock out the effects of pollution, which I really thought it would," he said.

Among the other factors taken into account were average income, level of education, smoking, share of population receiving incapacity benefits and closeness to international borders.

"As analyses of a possible link between air pollution and Covid-19 progress we are beginning to see much better studies emerge," said Prof Frank Kelly, at Imperial College London, UK. "This new study appears to be the best to date."

He said the work used high quality data and controlled for multiple possible confounding issues. "Further research elsewhere is required to confirm these findings, but we have now reached a point in the pandemic where datasets are robust enough to ask the question," he said.

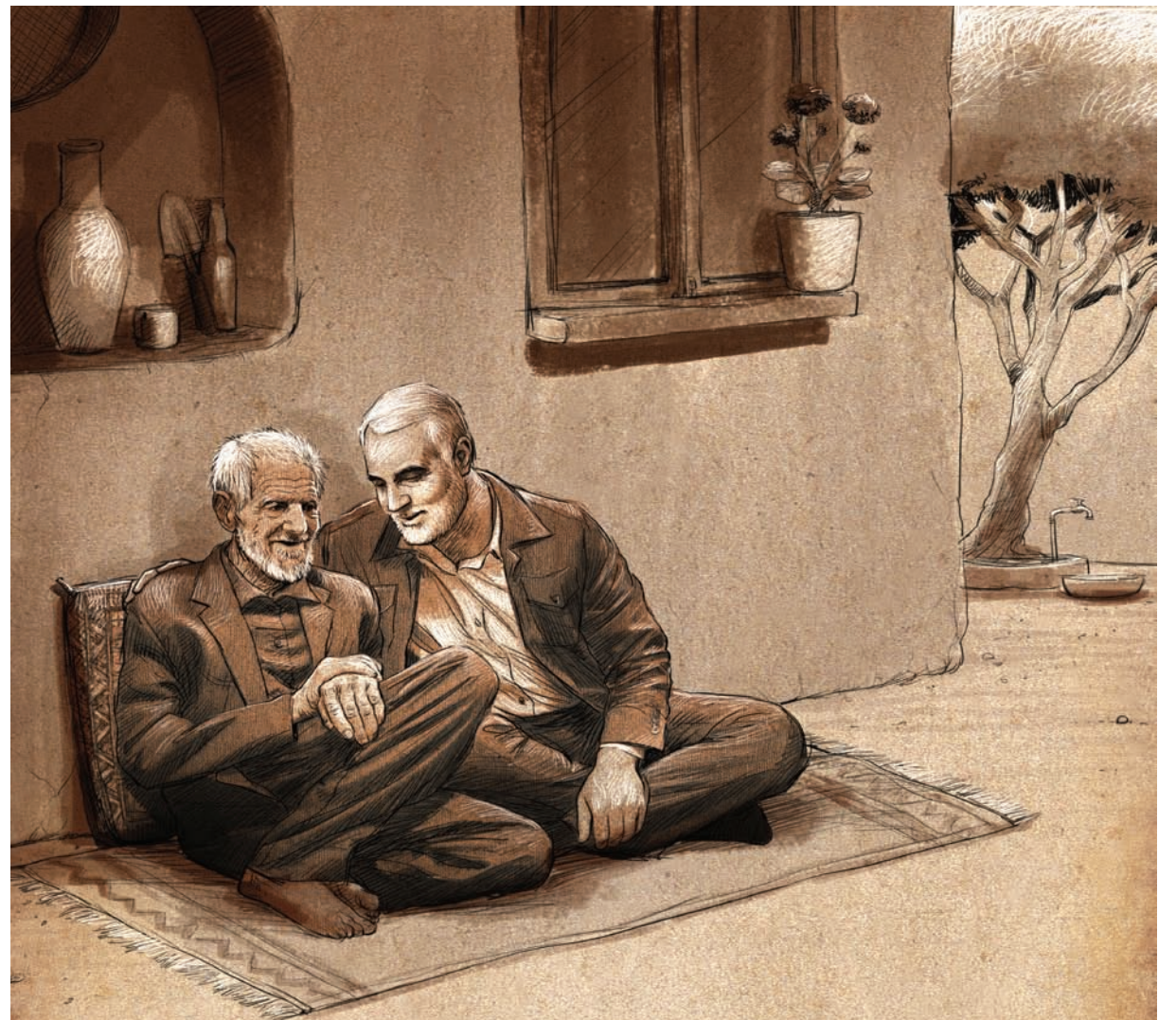
Prof Francesca Dominici, who led the Harvard Study, praised the work as "very good" and agreed that it added to her team's work. She said it was important to examine the relationship between air pollution and Covid-19 outcomes across many countries, as each country's data would have its own strengths and weaknesses and different confounding factors can be at play.

"Air pollution is not yet getting enough attention because of the slow peer-review process [for academic studies]" Dominici said. "But hopefully as this and other studies are published, the topic will get more attention and most importantly will affect policy."

However, Prof Mark Goldberg, at McGill University in Canada, warned that averaging data across a region masked the variations among individuals and could mask other potential explanations for the correlation between dirty air and coronavirus. He is concerned that over-interpreting the correlation distracts from other important factors.

"The issue with severe cases is social and economic deprivation – which correlates with air pollution – and [underlying health] conditions," he said. "I see it in Montreal: the poorest areas with high numbers of people living together, on low incomes and working multiple jobs were hardest hit."

Cole accepts that only individual-level data will conclusively resolve the question of a link. "We can't rule out [some unknown factor] until the data gets better. But it's difficult to know what that would be."



Respectful of parents

He spread out a small carpet at a corner of his father's yard on a sunny day.

He brought his old father out of the bathroom, sit him on the carpet, and dried his hairs. He kissed his hands and forehead and said, "All my happiness in this world is my father."

EU ministers urge timely action to ‘deter’ Israeli annexation bid

→ 1 The signatories said they understood that the options paper “is a sensitive issue and timing is important, but time is also short. We are concerned that the window to deter annexation is fast closing.”

“It is important to have clarity on the legal and political implications of annexation,” they continued. “Therefore we would like to see a paper, drafted in close consultation with the Commission, that provides an overview of the EU-Israel relations, an analysis of the legal consequences of annexation, as well as a list of possible actions in response to it... Such an options paper would also contribute to our efforts to deter annexation.”

“We believe it is important and timely to present the options paper, as it would provide us with a solid basis for further discussions,” they concluded.

Israel’s unlawful annexation push has drawn widespread criticisms from the entire international community, including the regime’s closest allies.

The United Nations, the European Union and key Arab countries have all said the West Bank annexation would violate international law and undermine the prospects of establishing a sovereign Palestinian state on the 1967 boundaries.

The international community views the entire West Bank and the eastern part of the occupied city of Jerusalem al-Quds as lands that could become home to an independent Palestinian state in future.

■ **Israel’s land grab bid threatens regional peace: Jordan** Meanwhile on Monday, Jordan’s King Abdullah II once again warned that any Israeli annexation plan under a U.S.-backed scheme would threaten stability in the Middle East and dash hopes of a solution to the decades-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

according to Press TV, Addressing British defense parliamentary committee members in a virtual meeting on Monday, Abdullah said the only path to a comprehensive and lasting peace in the region was the establishment of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state based on pre-1967 borders with East Jerusalem al-Quds as its capital.

“Any unilateral Israeli measure to annex lands in the West Bank is unacceptable, as it would undermine the prospects of achieving peace and stability in the West Asia,” the monarch was quoted as saying in a palace statement.

The Jordanian king has also in recent months warned that Israeli policies along with Trump’s so-called peace plan would lead to conflict and deal a blow to Israeli-Jordanian relations.

U.S. President Donald Trump has already supported Israeli annexation of occupied Palestinian territories in his self-proclaimed “deal of the century,” which was unveiled in January with the aim of re-drawing the West Asia (Middle East) map.

Black Lives Matter protests spread beyond U.S. to create global movement

→ 1 This has led protestors in Richmond, Virginia to demand the city take down a statue of Confederate army commander Robert E. Lee and protestors in Belgium to deface the statue of King Leopold II, the Belgian ruler responsible for countless human rights atrocities in colonial Congo.

As such, there is no denying that change is happening. But, this also raises the question: why, out of all times, are we now experiencing such a global awakening?

Efrén Pérez, a political science professor specializing in ethnic and racial politics, said the globalization of Black Lives Matter would not have been possible without the coronavirus pandemic and the resulting changes to our daily life.

“Part of what you have in light of the pandemic, both in the U.S. and other parts of the world, is that people were on lockdown and there is not a lot you can do except watch TV, news programming and spend time on social media,” Pérez said. “There was wider exposure and a little more profound ingestion of the visuals, of what was actually happening.”

The Black Lives Matter movement is tied to social media, allowing multiple sources of decentralized activists to work together to provide information to protestors, to share visuals and to spread powerful messages on a massive scale. And, as there have been protests on nearly every continent, the term “massive scale” even seems inadequate.

Pérez said a significant strategy in creating such a global movement has been to reframe the narrative by suggesting that police brutality is a structural issue. He also said that when we begin to think about our societies and the way they are built, we find that we have more in common than we think.

(Source: Daily Bruin)

Resistance News

Sheikh Sabri: IOA has no jurisdiction to close Bab al-Rahma

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN**— Sheikh Ekrima Sabri, head of the d e s k Higher Islamic Council in Occupied Jerusalem, has affirmed that the Islamic Awqaf authorities in the holy city are not bound by the Israeli decision to reclose the Aqsa Mosque’s Bab al-Rahma prayer area.

“We are not bound by such decision. Bab al-Rahma will remain open and we will not allow its closure,” Sheikh Sabri, who is also an Aqsa Mosque preacher, said in press remarks on Monday.

He underlined that the Israeli occupation authority (IOA) has no jurisdiction over the Aqsa Mosque and thus any such decisions are invalid.

The Jerusalemite clerk warned against Israeli attempts to pull the rug out from under the Islamic Awqaf Department, who has an exclusive jurisdiction over the Aqsa Mosque, and to control the affairs of the holy site, recalling a similar attempt in 2017 when the IOA installed security scanner doors outside the Mosque provoking a popular uprising that led to their removal.

He added that the IOA, since the emergence of the coronavirus crisis, had been gradually trying to impose its control over the Aqsa Mosque through arresting and assaulting Muslim worshippers, banishing them from the holy site and allowing Jewish provocative tours in its courtyards.

He pointed out that the IOA banished 250 Jerusalemites from the Aqsa Mosque within one month only with the aim of emptying it of Muslims.

“Pressure begets explosion and the response will come from the Muslim masses in Jerusalem and its environs, so there is a need now to intensify our presence at the Aqsa Mosque for prayers and worship,” Sheikh Sabri said.

China protests as U.S. rejects its South China Sea claims

China on Tuesday described a U.S. rejection of its maritime claims in the South China Sea as completely unjustified and accused the U.S. of attempting to sow discord between China and the Southeast Asian countries with which it has territorial disputes.

The Chinese Embassy in Washington said that a statement issued by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo deliberately distorts the facts and disregards the efforts of China and the others to achieve peace and stability in the South China Sea, AP reported.

“The United States is not a country directly involved in the disputes. However, it has kept interfering in the issue,” the embassy said on its website. “Under the pretext of preserving stability, it is flexing muscles, stirring up tension and inciting confrontation in the region.”

Pompeo, in a statement released Monday, said the U.S. now regards virtually all Chinese maritime claims outside its internationally recognized waters to be illegitimate. The new position does not involve disputes over land features that are above sea level, which are considered to be “territorial” in nature.

Previous U.S. policy had been to insist that maritime disputes between China and its smaller neighbors be resolved peacefully through UN-backed arbitration.

Pompeo’s statement was a major change in South China Sea policy, said Zhu Feng, the director of a South China Sea studies center at Nanjing University. He said other countries challenging China’s claims may take a more aggressive stance because of America’s openly stated support.

“The U.S. didn’t used to comment on the sovereignty issue in the South China Sea, because it itself is not the claimant,” Zhu said. “But this time it has made itself into a judge or arbiter. It will bring new instability



and tension.”

He advised against a strong response from China, saying that current U.S. policy toward the country is being driven in a significant way by President Donald Trump’s reelection considerations.

“Trump’s current China policy is insane,” Zhu said. “He is making the China issue the most important topic for his election to cover his failure in preventing the epidemic and to divert public attention. I have no idea how far he will go in fully utilizing the China issue.”

France scales down Bastille Day parade in concession to virus

France held a scaled-down annual Bastille Day celebration Tuesday, with none of the usual tanks and troops parading down Paris’s Champs Elysees avenue, in a concession to the COVID-19 epidemic still stalking Europe.

Instead, President Emmanuel Macron, standing in the back of a military jeep, reviewed ranks of socially-distanced troops in the Place de la Concorde square after a flypast by military aircraft, AFP reported.

“I wish, with all the French, with the

armies themselves, to pay a vibrant tribute to health workers and those who, in all sectors, have enabled public, social and economic life to continue,” Macron said in message released ahead of the parade.

“The dedication, tenacity, courage, solidarity that emerged strongly everywhere, in our cities as in our countryside, command admiration.”

It is the first time since 1980 that the annual parade has not been held along the Champs Elysees.

Lebanon seeks fuel imports from Kuwait

Lebanon wants to negotiate fuel imports with Kuwait to help Beirut cope with an economic and financial crisis, Lebanon’s internal security chief said in remarks published Tuesday.

Abbas Ibrahim told Kuwaiti newspaper Al Rai he had discussed the matter with Kuwaiti officials during a visit to the oil-exporting Gulf Arab state this week along with other “shared ideas” that could help alleviate Lebanon’s crisis, Daily star reported.

Ansarullah says to unveil new ballistic missile after striking Saudi sites

Just a day after striking sensitive oil installations and military sites inside Saudi Arabia in a retaliatory operation, Yemeni armed forces say they will soon unveil a new type of domestic ballistic missile.

Brigadier Abdullah bin Amer, deputy director of the Department of Moral Guidance for Media Affairs, hailed Yemen’s major military operation that targeted a number of sites deep within the Saudi territory, including King Khalid airbase in the city of Khamis Mushait, an oil facility in Jizan industrial zone as well as military sites at Abha, Jizan and Najran airports and a military camp in Ma’rib Province.

Unlike previous operations that involved launching only one ballistic missile, the recent strike was conducted using a combination of missiles and drones, al-Masirah TV channel quoted bin Amer as saying.

He also explained that the latest attack came in response to the Riyadh regime’s ongoing bloodshed in Yemen, particularly the attack that took place in Hajjah Province in recent days.

The enemy, he added, has tightened its blockade of Yemen and thus the armed forces have a duty to break the siege



through military operations.

The official gave assurances that Yemen’s operations are not blind as they do not target civilians, adding their strategic goal is to put a stop of the Saudi attacks and end the siege.

Eastern-based Libyan parliament asks Egypt to intervene in war

Libya’s eastern-based parliament has called for Egypt to directly intervene in the country’s civil war to counter Turkish support for the internationally recognized Government of National Accord (GNA), based in the capital Tripoli.

In a statement late Monday, the House of Representatives based in the eastern port of Tobruk said Egyptian backing was needed to stave off what it described as a Turkish invasion and occupation.

The statement underscores the growing stakes in Libya, where battle lines solidified earlier this month near the city of Sirte, after the GNA and Turkey drove the eastern-based Libyan National Army (LNA) back from a yearlong assault on

Tripoli, Reuters reported.

Libya has been divided since 2014 between the GNA in Tripoli and a rival eastern administration in Benghazi, where LNA commander Khalifa Haftar has dominated.

Any major new escalation could risk igniting a direct conflict in Libya among the foreign powers that have already poured in weapons and fighters in violation of an arms embargo. The LNA is backed by the United Arab Emirates, Russia and Egypt.

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi has already warned the army might enter Libya if the GNA and its Turkish allies renew an assault on Sirte, a central coastal city seen as the gateway to Libya’s main



oil export terminals.

Control over oil, the main source of state revenue, has emerged as the biggest prize in the conflict, with eastern forces having imposed a blockade on production and exports since January.

Under international agreements, only the National Oil Corp (NOC) based in Tripoli has the right to produce and export oil, while revenues must flow to the Central Bank of Libya, also located in the capital.

On Friday international diplomacy led by the United Nations and the United States appeared to have ended the oil blockade when a first tanker was allowed to dock at Es Sider and load with oil from storage.

However, the LNA on Saturday said it was reimposing the blockade, a decision that the oil company NOC blamed on the United Arab Emirates. The UAE said it wanted a swift resumption of Libya oil exports but only if some conditions were met.

Inside the America

Anti-racism efforts in the American Muslim Community

In light of all the protests, uprisings, demonstrations, petitions and other recent efforts to create more just laws for persons of color and other marginalized communities, millions of people all over the United States are considering their own attitudes and social behaviors for the first time. With the buzzwords “anti racist” filling online discussion groups and fueling the lucrative market for self-improvement books, American Muslim communities are not left out of this national conversation.

As many thousands of Americans remain uncertain of the safety and security of public spaces and masjids remain closed, community efforts are taking place over zoom meetings and via social media webinars. As

White Americans ask themselves “What does ‘White Fragility’ mean and does that apply to me?”, Muslim communities contemplate just how much mainstream

American culture and attitudes they have absorbed. Defining racism in the narrow terms of the Old South KuKluxKlan-style beatings and murders does not reflect all the ways in which Black Americans are kept from finding equal safety under the law, equal opportunity for growth and advancement or equal representation in government.

What has become apparent to many is that it is no longer adequate to declare that there is no racism in Islam, if for no other reason than that Muslims are not always an honest reflection of the perfect teachings of Islam. Muslim migration to the US is often rooted in the desire for social mobility through easy access to quality education and greater employment opportunities. Daily, Muslim families make the decision of how much to conform to what is the “American way of life” in order to get ahead. Do they

absorb the subtle cultural cues of whom to trust or respect in regard to who they hire or rent to, or resist that narrative by discovering trustworthiness on a person-by-person basis? In the name of competition, do they swallow the mainstream media narrative regarding unemployment problems that are supposedly caused by poor and desperate Brown people who come to the US to escape the murderous gangs of their homelands? In their masjid communities, do they welcome White converts while Black Muslims or Muslim immigrants from the Global South are ignored or ostracized?

Racism, like any other disease of the heart, can find its cure in the Quran—IF we are willing to look closely at our own un-Islamic cultural biases and our personal preferences which play out in the form of injustices towards our fellow humans.

Gabriel Calderon ready to negotiate with Persepolis

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Argentinean coach Gabriel Calderon said that he is ready to negotiate with Persepolis football club over his unpaid salaries.

FIFA has recently ordered the Iranian club to pay \$ 580,000 to Calderon.

Persepolis must also pay \$90,000 and \$75,000 to Calderon's assistants Joaquin Gil Arrondo and Inigo Valencia Amadoz, respectively.

Now, the Argentine has said he is ready to negotiate with the club since he has good relationships with members of the club's board of directors.

"My lawyer has told me not to talk about the case, since the case is with him. He has told me if we don't reach an agreement, the process of complaint will take two years. So, the case is with my lawyer," Calderon said in an interview with IRNA.

"But I am ready to solve the problem with Persepolis since I have good relations with some people in the club. I have no problem if everything goes well," he added.

Calderon parted ways with Persepolis in January after six months in charge and his team are on the verge of winning the title for the fourth time in a row.

"I am very happy for Persepolis because their players deserve to win. It was a difficult task for me to take charge of Persepolis at the beginning of the season since they were champions and as you know, there was high expectation from the team. But we tried to prepare a better team. I wanted to achieve success in league, Hazfi Cup and AFC Champions League but I was forced to leave the club,"



Calderon stated.

"The Persepolis players have shown

that they will win the title with every coach.

They are excellent players and I want to

thanks them for what they did at my time,"

Calderon concluded.

Mehdi Pashazadeh named Shahin Bushehr coach

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Ex-Esteghlal defender Mehdi Pashazadeh is new head coach of struggling team Shahin Bushehr in Iran Professional League (IPL).

Pashazadeh will lead the Bushehr based football team until the end of the season.

Pashazadeh has just six games to save Shahin from

relegation.

He has replaced Croatian coach Miso Krsticevic, who didn't return to Iran due to coronavirus concerns.

Shahin Bushehr, rooted to the bottom of the table, have bagged just 17 points from 24 matches.

They will meet another struggling team Gol Gohar on Friday.



AFC makes COVID-19 test mandatory

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Asian Football Confederation (AFC)'s Medical Committee has approved new decisions for all the AFC competitions in 2020 and the AFC sent them to the member associations, as announced by the Iranian football federation.

According to the federation, the AFC has mandated the coronavirus testing as part of a "pre-match medical assessment" for all players and staff, and the test results must be submitted to the AFC 72 hours before a team leave their country.

For those players and staff who are tested positive for Covid-19 before leaving their country, a safety certificate must be provided by the related team to prove that they have fully recovered. The medical documents must also be approved by the AFC to ensure that the players are ready to compete.

The team members will be tested for coronavirus upon



arrival in the host country per protocols and guidelines provided by the local health authorities or any other restrictions imposed by the national law of that country.

The AFC's National Team and Club competitions as well as the AFC Futsal Championship planned for Turkmenistan have been postponed since February and March due to the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic but, the confederation is determined to finish the competitions this year.

The Asian Champions League will resume in two regional hubs in September and October with a single match deciding the title in early December.

The continent's elite club competition, which was suspended in early March because of the novel coronavirus outbreak, will resume first in West Asia on Sept. 14 and in East Asia on Oct. 16 at centralized venues as yet to be confirmed.

Cycling: Briton Varnish loses employment tribunal appeal



LONDON (Reuters) — Former British cyclist Jess Varnish's employment tribunal appeal against the sport's national governing body has been dismissed, it was announced on Tuesday.

Former European team sprint champion Varnish was dropped from the national squad before the 2016 Rio Olympics, after which she claimed she should have been considered an employee of British Cycling or the funding agency UK Sport.

The initial employment tribunal in January 2019 found against Varnish, although she won the right to appeal.

"The (original) tribunal was entitled to conclude, based on an evaluative judgment taking account of all relevant factors, that the claimant was not an employee or a worker," appeal judge Mr Justice Choudhury ruled.

"The tribunal had not erred in its approach to the assessment of employee status and nor had it reached conclusions that no reasonable tribunal, properly directed, could have reached."

Had the 29-year-old Varnish won her appeal, she would have opened up the possibility of a wrongful dismissal and sexual discrimination case against British Cycling and UK Sport.

Varnish originally said she had been told to "go off and have a baby" by former British Cycling technical director Shane Sutton, who resigned after the allegations.

In a statement British Cycling said it had tried to reach a resolution with Varnish, but emphasized its relationship with athletes was supportive.

"We believe that British Cycling's relationship with riders who represent this country is not one of employer-employee but that of an organization supporting dedicated athletes to fulfil their potential," it said.

"Since Jess raised her concerns about the Great Britain Cycling Team in 2016, we have implemented significant changes to the culture and processes of our high-performance program."

PGA Tour to finish season with no spectators amid COVID-19



The PGA Tour will conduct the rest of its season without fans after the circuit's three playoff events announced on Monday that they will be contested without spectators due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

In three separate statements, The Northern Trust in Norton Massachusetts, BMW Championships in Olympia Fields, Illinois and Tour Championship in Atlanta, Georgia all confirmed the events would be closed to the general public.

The decisions by the three tournaments, which determine the season's champion, follow similar announcements from the other remaining PGA Tour events on the circuit's revamped schedule.

"These decisions are never easy, and we would like to thank the city of Atlanta and PGA Tour headquarters for their extensive collaboration as we arrived at what was the best decision for all involved," said Allison Fillmore, executive director of the Tour Championship.

PGA Tour Chief Tournaments and

Competitions Officer Andy Pazder said in a statement along with the BMW Championship's decision that: "Our No. 1 priority remains the health and safety of everyone in the communities where we are invited."

"We would like to thank the State of Massachusetts and PGA Tour headquarters for their guidance and support as we arrived at what was the best decision for all involved in The Northern Trust," said tournament executive director Julie Tyson.

The PGA Tour's playoffs are scheduled to begin Aug. 20-23 at TPC Boston for The Northern Trust, followed by the Aug. 27-30 BMW Championship at Olympia Fields Country Club and Sept. 4-7 Tour Championship at East Lake Golf Club.

This week's Memorial Tournament in Dublin, Ohio will mark the sixth consecutive PGA Tour event held without spectators since the circuit swung back into action in mid-June after a three-month COVID-19 hiatus.

(Source: Reuters)

Ex-Iran water polo coach Garousi dies

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Former Iran national water polo team head coach Mansour Garousi passed away at the age of 80 on Tuesday.



Garousi, nicknamed 'father of Iran water polo', died of heart attack.

He led Iran national water polo team at the 1976 Summer Olympics in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Garousi also worked as technical director of Iran national teams for many years.

Tehran Times extends deepest sympathy to Garousi's family, loved ones, and friends over his demise.

Pars Jonoubi coach Afazeli resigns

Tasnim — Pars Jonoubi football team coach Hooman Afazeli has announced his resignation in protest of a decision made by Iran League Organization.

Pars Jonoubi were supposed to host Esteghlal last week but the Tehran-based football team didn't travel to Jam since they claimed that more than 25 percent of their players tested positive for COVI-19.

Afazeli said they have understood Esteghlal could have played them because less than 25 percent of their players had tested positive.

According to him, Pars Jonoubi should have been awarded a 3-0 win but the league organization has said the match will be held in the future.

Pars Jonoubi have yet to accept Afazeli's resignation.

Ex-Iran coach Wilmots praises Beiranvand

Former coach of Iran national football team Marc Wilmots has lauded Iran and Persepolis goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand.

The Iranian goalie arrived in Antwerp on Monday to join Royal Antwerp F.C. and now Wilmots has praised his former player.

"Ali is an excellent goalkeeper," Wilmots told Het Nieuwsblad. "He can play excellent football, although he could not show his potential at the World Cup. Carlos Queiroz's team were playing very defensive and this style kept Beiranvand on his line. Under coaching of me in Iran national team, he showed that he has very good feet."

"He can throw the ball very, like Manuel Neuer. He is a charismatic leader and a world-class goalkeeper. Beiranvand is one of the best goalkeepers that I have worked with," the former Red Devils coach added.

(Source: Nieuwsblad)

Wrestler Nouri discharged from hospital after beating COVID19

MNA — Greco Roman wrestler Hossein Nouri has been discharged from Masih Daneshvari Hospital after gaining partial recovery from the COVID-19.

He had been taken to the ICU unit of the hospital as his condition was critical last week. Nouri will continue the treatment and recovery at home.

The 87kg wrestler is the three-time Asian champion and a bronze winner at the 2017 World Championships while being a contestant for winning Tokyo Olympics quota.

Hamid Yari, the head of Alborz province's wrestling board, told Mehr News Agency on Sunday that what happened to Nouri was a warning for all the wrestlers across the country to follow health guidelines more seriously during training sessions.

Asked about the time of Nouri's return to the mat, Yari said that the wrestler's health is the top priority and he should continue the treatment process at home for 21 days.

Iranian Health Ministry confirmed 2,349 new infections and 203 deaths across the country in the past 24 hours. The ministry's spokeswoman Sima Lari said on Monday that the death toll has hit 13,032 in the country while the infections have exceeded 259,000.

IRIVF General Assembly to be held on July 19

Volleyball.ir — Milad Taghavi, Acting Secretary of Iranian Volleyball Federation, said the federation's General Assembly will be held on July 29.

He said that Iran Ministry of Sports has decided on the date of the assembly.

"Due to the outbreak of the second wave of coronavirus, the General Assembly will be held online on July 19," Taghavi said in an interview with the Islamic Republic of Iran Volleyball Federation (IRIVF) website.

The General Assembly will begin at 2:00 PM, Taghavi said.

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

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

Imam Ali (AS)

Nader Ebrahimi's book "Forty Letters to My Wife" translated into German

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — Iranian writer and filmmaker Nader Ebrahimi's book "Forty Letters to My Wife" has been rendered into German.

Translated into German by Maria Gunhild, the book is scheduled to be published by Candle and Fog, the London-based Iranian-British publishing house.



A copy of the Persian version of Nader Ebrahimi's book "Forty Letters to My Wife"

The book contains some materials that Ebrahimi wrote to his wife in practice for Persian calligraphy. The original edition was published in 2011.

"Honey, happiness is not a letter that one day a postman rings the bell to hand it over. Happiness can come from making a little figurine from a piece of soft clay; as simple as that. By God, it's as simple as that. But bear in mind that the quality of the clay should be of love and faith, not from anything else," Ebrahimi wrote in one of his letters.

In 2015, the Novin Audio Book Institute released an audio version of "Forty Letters to My Wife".

Ebrahimi (1936-2008) was the author of many novels, including "Three Looks at the Man Coming From", "A Man in Last Banishment", "On the Blue Red Paths", "Tomorrow Is Not Like Today", "Ibn Mashghaleh", "A Man in Permanent Exile", "Once More, the Town That I Loved" and "Dragon's Tale".

As a filmmaker, he directed the TV series "Fire without Smoke" in the early 1970s based on his novel of the same title. He also made a screen adaptation called "The Sound of the Desert" in 1975. His second and last feature was "The Day When the Air Stopped".

He also directed "Hami and Kami in Long Journeys to Their Homeland", another TV series that was broadcasted by the Iranian state TV before the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

The Seventeenth Street of Tehran's Kargar Avenue, where Ebrahimi lived the last twenty years of his life at a home located on the street, was renamed Nader Ebrahimi after his death.

Locarno festival to screen "Spotted Yellow"

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian director Baran Sarmad's short movie "Spotted Yellow" will be screened at the 73rd Locarno International Film Festival.



Ascene from "Spotted Yellow" by Iranian director Baran Sarmad.

Screenings are scheduled to be organized both online and at theaters in the Swiss city from August 5 to 15, the organizers have announced.

"Spotted Yellow" will be competing with 30 other films at the Pardi di domani competition dedicated to short films.

Other shorts include "1978" by Hamza Bangash from Pakistan, "Digital Funeral: Beta Version" by Sorayos Prapapan from Thailand and "An Act of Affection" by Viet Vu from Portugal and Vietnam.

Also included are "Fish Bowl" by Ngabo Emmanuel from Rwanda, "Here, Here" by Joanne Cesario from the Philippines and "History of Civilization" by Zhannat Alshanova from Kazakhstan.

Davud Rashidi's memorabilia donated to Film Museum of Iran

A R T **TEHRAN** — Davud Rashidi's widow Ehteram Borumand donated a collection of the legendary actor's memorabilia to the Film Museum of Iran on Tuesday on the eve of his birth anniversary.

The collection includes personal handwritings, books, photos and the awards that he won at various festivals, including the Fajr International Theater Festival and the Iranian Cinema Celebration.

The contracts of the films, in which he played roles such as "Kamalolmolk" and "Hezardastan" by director Ali Hatami, as well as the actor's letters to his widow Borumand and daughter Leili are also included.

Rashidi, the star of memorable movies like Kiumars Purahamd's "Bibi Chelcheleh" and Hatami's "Kamalolmolk", died in 2016 at the age of 83.

Due to his father's diplomatic mission, Rashidi finished high school in Paris. He studied at the Conservatoire de Musique de Genève, a music school in Geneva, Switzerland. He also studied music, theater and political science at the University of Geneva.

In 1964, he returned home and was employed at the Theater Office of the Ministry of Culture. Shortly thereafter, he gathered actors Parviz Fannizadeh, Dariush Farhand, Mehdi Hashemi, Fahimeh Rastkar, Siavash Tahmures, Marzieh Borumand and Susan Taslaimi to establish the Emruz Theater Troupe, which performed many plays that were acclaimed by critics.

Rashidi left the Theater Office in 1973 to work as the director of the Theater and Entertainment Department of Iran National Television.

He co-starred with Behruz Vosuqi in his acting debut movie "Escape the Trap" by Jalal Moqaddam in 1971.

After the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, he chose to remain in Iran despite the fact that many of his colleagues left



Actor Davud Rashidi in an undated photo.

the country.

Playing the role of Javad Aqa in Purahamd's drama "Bibi Chelcheleh" developed his reputation.

However, he was previously hired by Ali Hatami to play the role of an inspector, one of the leading roles in the acclaimed TV series "Hezardastan", which was produced

between 1981 and 1986.

For the last time, he made a cameo appearance in "Ekbatan" directed by Mehrshad Karkhani in 2011.

Land art in Tehran park mistaken for talismans

A R T **TEHRAN** — Some land artworks created on the trunks of trees in Tehran's Laleh Park have been mistaken for talismans and magic words.

Some reports published by a number of news agencies have caused the mistake, Fereshteh Aalamshah, the land artist who created the works, told the Persian service of Honaronline on Tuesday.

The land artworks featuring some nonsense words and letters typographically were inscribed on the trunks of plane trees in the park during an environmental art festival in 2011, she said.

"These inscriptions are not readable. I like this mysteriousness in these works, which offer a challenge to visitors to try to read or find familiar words and make a connection with them," she added.

"Despite what was reported by some municipal officials, I have not done any engraving on the trunks, but the inscriptions have been created with a brush and color made from natural red soil from Hormoz Island," Aalamshah stated.



This combination photo shows a number of inscriptions by land artist Fereshteh Aalamshah on trees in Tehran's Laleh Park during an environmental art festival in 2011.

"The red soil contains the substance iron oxide, which causes no harm to the trees and nature," she noted. When Aalamshah was creating the inscriptions on

the trees she supposed that they would gradually fade as a result of rainfall.

"However, nature treated the artworks in a different way. The skin of the trunks absorbed the color and the inscriptions remained intact," she said.

During the land art festival, the organizers set up a board bearing explanations about the inscriptions. The board was removed after the end of the festival.

"And now after nine years, people know nothing about the inscriptions and some comments by current municipal officials have led them to mistake the artworks for talismans or magic words," Aalamshah said.

In 2014, Aalamshah established an eco-lodge namely Almon in the town Hassanabad near Isfahan to promote art residency and the culture of such a place in the region.

She lamented about the lack of official regard for land art and its key role in protecting the environment, and said, "Any minor work by Iranian land artists usually receives a warm welcome at overseas international festivals, but they are ignored in their homeland."

Hafez Awards to go online in pandemic

A R T **TEHRAN** — The Hafez Awards, Iran's first and only private awards in the film industry and TV productions, announced on Tuesday that the 20th edition of the gala will be held online this year due to the pandemic.

"The awards will experience its 20th edition this year where COVID19 has overshadowed many cinematic events in the world leading to the shutdown of movie theaters and festivals, and the Hafez Awards is no exception," the director of the celebration, Omid Moallem, said in a press release.

"However, we decided not to cancel the program and hold it online and announce the nominees and the winners in an online program," he added. "We are planning to experience a new form of

awards and we hope that with the collaboration of people and the cineastes, we will be able to organize an online celebration," he noted.

"We will probably have some changes in the nominations and the awards, which will be announced later. The health of people and cineastes is our main concern while we also care about preserving the excitement and happiness, which have always been felt in this celebration and take it to the virtual world this time," he concluded.

The awards are organized every year by the Persian cinematic monthly Donya-ye Tasvir (Picture World).

"6.5 for One Meter" by Saeid Rustai, about the horrible image of narcotics, was the big winner at the 19th edition of the Hafez Awards last year.



An image of a Hafez Award.



An individual passes by a movie theater in Tehran on July 8, 2020 after theaters resumed activities in the pandemic. (ISNA/Parisa Behzadi)

Art, cultural activities in Tehran shut down again over rise in coronavirus infections

➔ However, in a press release published on Tuesday, the Cinema Organization of Iran (COI) announced that the movie theaters are still actively observing the health protocols.

Iran's Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance canceled all art, cultural and cinematic events across the country in February in an attempt to stem the spread of the coronavirus.

The Association of Iranian Theater Owners asked President Hassan Rouhani to lift the coronavirus restriction on cinemas, calling for reopening of the theaters across the country based on the health protocols during the

pandemic on May 20.

Later, the Cinema Organization of Iran announced that the movie theaters in the so-called "white areas" or regions with no coronavirus hospitalizations in the past two weeks would be allowed to reopen, while, the protocols issued by the Coronavirus Control Operations Headquarters for the theaters must be observed.

The cinemagoers were asked to observe social distancing, while the employees were asked to wear face masks and plastic gloves.

In late June, all movie theaters resumed activities after a four-month-long closure, but are now forced to close once again.