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Iran leads the way in high-tech industries in region



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Schmid stresses the need to preserve JCPOA

TEHRAN — Helga Schmid, secretary general of the European External Action Service (EEAS), underlined the need to see parties to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal “united in resolve” to preserve the agreement. “Just finished chairing #JCPOA Joint Commission. Important to see

that participants are united in resolve to preserve the #IranDeal and find a way to ensure full implementation of the agreement despite current challenges,” Schmid tweeted on Tuesday moments after a meeting of the JCPOA Joint Commission in Vienna. **→2**

545 idle industrial units revived since late March

TEHRAN — An official with Iran’s industry sector announced on Tuesday that 545 idle industrial units have been revived throughout the country since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20), IRIB reported.

Asghar Mosaheb, the deputy head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) for small industries affairs, also said that reviving the mentioned units has created jobs for 9,800 persons. **→4**

Iranian, Indian scholars discuss Gandhi’s influence on Asian cinema

TEHRAN — A number of Iranian and Indian scholars discussed Gandhi’s influence on Asian cinema during a webinar held on Monday.

The webinar was organized by the Culture Department of the Embassy of India in Tehran, the Indian Council for

Cultural Relations and Mahatma Gandhi International Hindi University in Wardha.

Embassy of India first secretary Abhay Kumar Singh, Professor Kumar Shukla of Mahatma Gandhi International Hindi University, **→8**

By Masoud Hossein
Head of the Sport Desk

FIFA must end its double standard

FIFA Secretary General Fatma Samoura in a letter sent to Iran football federation warned the Member Association that FIFA and AFC strongly oppose any use of legal threats against a person or a group of persons. It’s clear that the international governing body of football concerns over potential government interference in the federation’s affairs.

It’s while the former and current officials of the federation have been accused of wrongdoing in the case about Marc Wilmots. The Iranian federation must pay the Belgian coach more than six million euros as compensation after it failed to meet its financial commitment.

Now, the country’s judiciary system has stepped forward to make clear what happens and it’s absolutely normal since in so many cases the police and the investigators have entered to avoid scandal.

According to FIFA Statutes, the Member Associations are obliged to manage their affairs independently and without undue influence from third parties.

FIFA says any breach of these obligations might lead to potential sanctions as provided for in the FIFA Statutes, including the suspension of the Member Association. Now, the question remains unanswered “who should actually take responsibility in solving such problems?”

Swiss police arrested seven football officials on suspicion of bribery – including high-ranking members of world governing body FIFA – in Zurich in 2015.

In the same year, German police launched raids on the headquarters of the German football association amid a growing scandal surrounding the country’s bid to host the 2006 World Cup.

In 2019, French anti-corruption police arrested former UEFA President Michel Platini in a case related to “Qatargate” — the ongoing investigations into how Qatar was awarded the 2022 World Cup.

FIFA as main organization responsible for football issues should have same criteria for all members, however in this case FIFA treated Iran more harshly than others.

There is no doubt that Iran has not behaved according to FIFA Status in some cases over the past years but in this case the country has the right to find out who is (are) to blame.

FIFA must allow the judicial officers to examine what really happened and this is an effective way to avoid scandal.

Tax exemption on handicrafts remains in force

TEHRAN — The tax exemption on producers of handicrafts and hand-woven carpets which had been planned to be removed is still in place, Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan announced on Monday, CHTN reported.

Eliminating the tax exemption for crafters was on agenda, but with great efforts of the tourism ministry and consultation with members of the parliament, the law remained in force, he added.

Last week, deputy tourism minister Pouya Mahmoudian said that the handicraft industry and related businesses across the country have suffered a loss of 19,000 billion rials (some \$452 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

According to Mahmoudian, Iran globally ranks first in terms of having the topmost number of world cities [and villages] of handicrafts. “Some 295 fields of handicrafts are currently practiced across Iran with more than two million people engaging, majority

of whom are women... Handicrafts also play an important role in the economy in our rural villages.”

The Iranian parliament (Majlis) in January approved a bill to exempt craftspeople and handicraft producers from paying value-added tax (VAT). However, the law was needed to be endorsed by the Guardian Council to take effect.

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

The Islamic Republic exported \$523 million worth of handicrafts during the past calendar year 1398 (ended March 19), of the figure, some \$273 million worth of handicrafts were exported officially through customs, and about \$250 million was earned via suitcase trade through various provinces, according to data compiled by the ministry of tourism. **→6**

U.S. protests: BLM protesters gather at site of police killing of black man

Black Live Matters (BLM) demonstrators in Los Angeles have gathered at a site where a black man was shot and killed by police officers on Monday afternoon.

According to the Sheriff’s Department, deputies were driving in a patrol car when they saw Dijon Kizzee riding a bicycle, and decided to pull him over for a traffic violation. He left the bike and tried to run away.

Police said when the deputies caught up with him, they spotted a handgun among some clothing items that the man had been carrying. It was not immediately clear if he tried to reach for the weapon before the deputies shot him, the department said in a statement to the media.

The cameraman of a clip which shows the victim says: “They shot [him] like 20 times.”

The BLM demonstrators flocked to the site after the police attack, answering a call by local Black Lives Matter organizers. The

protest remained peaceful.

“How many more times do we have to gather out here, mourning the loss of our brothers and sisters,” one protester told CBS LA.

The deadly police shooting came in the midst of anti-racism protesters that have gripped U.S. cities recently. The U.S. anti-racism and police violence protests have become a major headache for President Donald Trump, who is trailing behind his Democratic rival Joe Biden and is grappling with his mishandling of the coronavirus crisis, Press TV reported.

Biden branded Trump “a toxic presence in our nation” since his inauguration, saying that Trump “can’t stop the violence, because for years he has fomented it.”

Trump refused to denounce the violent acts by his supporters during a recent protest in Portland, Oregon. He has described the anti-racism peaceful protesters as rioters, anarchists and thugs.

JCPOA parties hold talks amid diplomatic tensions over snapback mechanism

TEHRAN — Signatories to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal held a session in Vienna on Tuesday to discuss tensions around the deal and weigh in on the U.S. pressures on Iran.

The meeting was held within the framework of the Joint Commission on the nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The participants to the deal gathered to discuss the latest developments surrounding the nuclear agreement in light of highly contested moves by the U.S. to restore

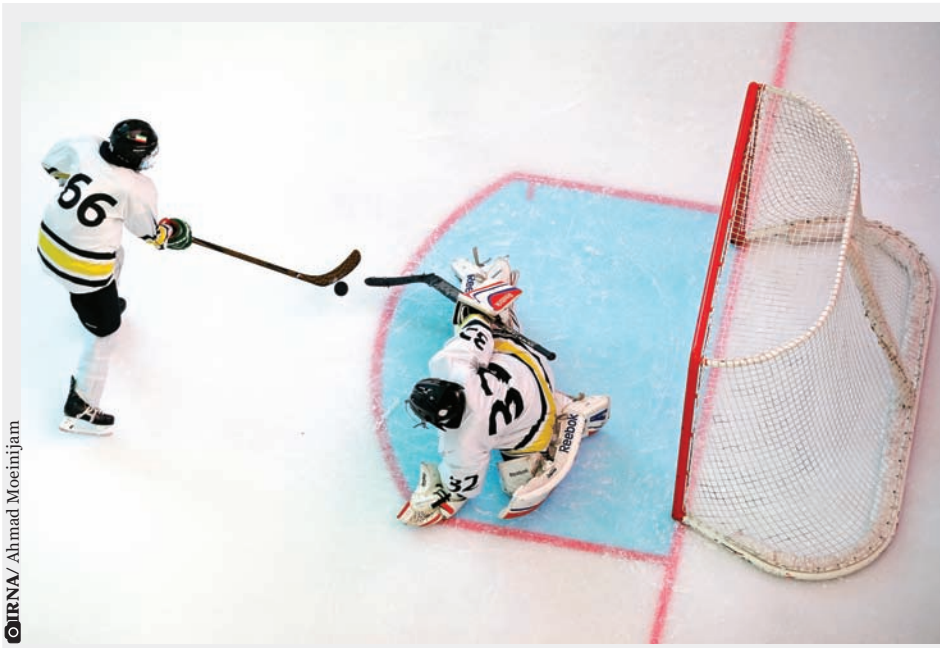
all UN sanctions on Iran.

An expert on international relations tells the Tehran Times that Iran attended the meeting to thwart the U.S. pressure campaign.

The meeting, attended by representatives from the EU, UK, France, Germany, Russia, China, and Iran, comes against a backdrop of heightened tensions between Washington and JCPOA parties over a U.S. bid to trigger a contested mechanism that allows the signatories to the nuclear deal to restore the international

sanctions on Iran in case it didn’t uphold its obligations under the deal.

On Monday, Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Abbas Araghchi arrived in Vienna for bilateral and multilateral talks with several officials including Austrian Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg and IAEA Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi. On Tuesday, he jointly chaired the Joint Commission with Secretary General of the European External Action Service Helga Maria Schmid. **→3**



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Women’s hockey team tuning up for Challenge Cup

TEHRAN — Iran’s women’s ice hockey team started the camp for the IIHF Challenge Cup of Asia.

The event will be held in Manila, Philippines in May 2021.

The training camp got underway in Tehran, capital of Iran on Monday with the participation of 40 players.

The purpose of the IIHF Challenge Cup of Asia is to provide competitive opportunities for Asian teams that are either in the lower divisions of the IIHF World Championships or did not compete in any IIHF World Championships.

The process for naming Mostafa Adib as PM carries great weight: Lebanese analyst

By Mohamad Mazhari

TEHRAN — Faysal Abdelsater, a Lebanese analyst, is of the opinion that the steps for naming Mostafa Adib as a man who will head the Lebanese government carries an important message as “it has the endorsement of considerable majority in the Lebanese parliament.”

On August 31, the Future Movement, Hezbollah, Amal Movement, and the Free Patriotic Movement, as well as Progressive Socialist Party in Lebanon, all agreed to name Mustafa Adib as the next prime minister of Lebanon, succeeding Hassan Diab.

Adib, the former Lebanese ambassador to Germany, holds a doctorate in political science, and he worked as director of the office of former Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati.

Adib, who was tasked on Monday to form a new government, is an unknown figure among the Lebanese, facing an almost impossible task of bringing about political change and making urgent reforms to save the country from an unprecedented crisis.

Abdelsater tells the Tehran Times that even though the prime-minister designate enjoys a strong support by the political factions in the parliament, “we are not going through a structural or fundamental change in Lebanese politics.”

This is the text of the interview:

Q: What are the latest developments regarding the naming of a new prime minister in Lebanon?

A: Of course, the Lebanese were able to conduct binding parliamentary consultations that were held in Baabda Palace (the official residence of the president of Lebanon), **→5**

Schmid stresses the need to preserve JCPOA

1 → The Joint Commission meeting was held at a time when the U.S. is being isolated due to its illegal efforts to extend a UN arms embargo on Iran and restore the UN sanctions against the country. The measures by the Trump administration are intended to completely destroy the nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Britain, France, Germany, China, Russia and the European Union - the remaining parties to the JCPOA - as well as almost all the non-permanent members of the UN Security Council are struggling to save the landmark accord with Iran.

In a boost to Tuesday's talks, the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) last week agreed to allow inspectors of the UN nuclear watchdog to visit two sites which allegedly hosted nuclear activity in the early 2000s.

Iran agreed to inspection of the two places after International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) director Rafael Grossi made a trip to Tehran last week.



Mikhail Ulyanov, Russia's ambassador to international organizations in Vienna, said on Monday on Twitter that "nuclear deal participants have a lot of topics to discuss".

The Tuesday meeting was chaired by Schmid and Abbas Araghchi, Iran's deputy foreign minister. Deputy foreign ministers and political directors from Britain, China, France, Germany, Iran and Russia also attended the meeting.

Mark Fitzpatrick, an associate fellow of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), said last week's agreement on access kept «Iran generally in line with the rest of the world, against an isolated United States».

No foreign pilgrim will be allowed to visit Iraq for Arbreen

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian Deputy Interior Minister Hossein Zolfaghari said on Tuesday that Iraq will not allow any foreign pilgrims to visit the country for Arbreen due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Talking in a press briefing, Zolfaghari said in his contact with Iranian Ambassador to Baghdad Iraj Masjedi on Monday, the ambassador told him that "the Iraqi officials have said due to the coronavirus their country will not accept foreign pilgrims this year."

The Arbreen pilgrimage, which is one of the largest religious gathering in the world, comes 40 days after Ashura, the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (AS), the third Imam of Shia Muslims and the grandson of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

Each year, a huge crowd of people flock to Karbala, where the holy shrine of Imam Hussein (AS) is located, to perform mourning rituals.

Iranian, Pakistani parliamentary chiefs discuss co-op

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian and Pakistani parliament speakers have underlined the importance of developing political, economic, cultural, trade and parliamentary cooperation between the two countries in regional forums.



Sadiq Sanjrani

Ghalibaf

In a phone conversation on Monday, Chairman of the Senate of Pakistan Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani and Iran's Parliament Speaker Mohammad-Bagher Ghalibaf discussed bilateral relations and issues of mutual interest, according to Mehr.

During the phone conversation, Ghalibaf hailed the friendly relations between the two countries.

He said the Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to its ties with the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. "Development of relations between the two countries is of paramount importance," Ghalibaf stressed.

The parliament speaker highlighted the need for developing ties between parliaments of the two countries, saying, "Fortunately, the Iran-Pakistan Parliamentary Friendship Group has been formed in the 11th Parliament (sitting parliament) which will help deepen ties between the two countries through bilateral consultation and cooperation."

Ghalibaf then pointed to the lengthy and common border between the two countries and called for diverse border cooperation to improve the security of the two countries' borders.

He also expressed the hope for cooperation between the two countries in the fight against the novel coronavirus, COVID-19.

The two countries' healthcare and medical sectors should exchange their experiences regarding the fight against the coronavirus, the Iranian parliament speaker suggested.

Sanjrani, for his part, stressed the continuation of talks and parliamentary consultations between the two neighbors. "Unity and amity among Islamic countries in the international forums will have a very important impact on global arenas," he said.

Sanjrani also said preventive measures and implementation of health guidelines by Iran in the fight against COVID-19 is significant.

Ayatollah Khamenei: UAE has betrayed the Islamic world

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** —

Ali Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution, asserted on Tuesday that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has betrayed the Islamic world by deciding to establish ties with the Zionist regime of Israel.

"The United Arab Emirates betrayed the world of Islam, the Arab nations and the regional countries, and also Palestine," the Leader stated during a meeting with the directors of the Ministry of Education through videoconference.

"Of course," Ayatollah Khamenei predicted, "this situation will not last long, and the stain of shame will remain on the face of those who forgot the occupation of this country (Palestine) and the displacement of the Palestinian nation and allowed the Zionists into the region."

He also said, "We hope the Emiratis will wake up soon and make up for this action."

The UAE and the Zionist regime have reached an agreement to establish full diplomatic ties.

Iran's Foreign Ministry has called the action a "strategic stupidity" by the UAE and Israel.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has called the deal "treacherous" and said it would not affect the Palestinian resistance against Israeli occupation.

All Palestinian factions have censured



the peace deal as a stab in the back of the oppressed nation. The agreement has also drawn angry reactions from Muslim countries and other supporters of the Palestinian cause against the Israeli occupation.

Elsewhere, Ayatollah Khamenei attached

great importance to protecting the status of teachers.

He noted that teachers are guardians of the country's progress.

"The Ministry of Education should support the status of teachers, and Majlis (parlia-

Leader says, "We hope the Emiratis will wake up soon and make up for this action."

Rouhani calls Nigerien president, says abuse of intl. bodies is root cause of current problems

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — In a telephone conversation on Monday with Nigerien President Mahamadou Issoufou whose country takes over the rotating presidency of the UN Security Council for September, President Hassan Rouhani said abuse of international bodies by certain countries is the root cause of current problems in the world.

"I'm very happy that Iran and Niger have the common view that international relations must be based on justice and lofty human values, which are in turn rooted in independence, solidarity and dignity," Rouhani said in the phone call.

Niger along with 12 other non-permanent and permanent members of the UN Security Council voted against extending arms embargo against Iran on August 14. Also a week later, Niger along with the other 12 members wrote separate letters to UN Security Council president denouncing the return of UN sanctions against Iran as requested by the U.S. which left the nuclear deal – JCPOA - more than two years ago.

Only the Dominican Republic sided with the U.S. at the Council to extend arms embargo against Iran.

Rouhani congratulated Niger on rotating presidency over the UN Security Council for the current month and said, "Iran and Niger have always had positive and constructive cooperation in international bodies including the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in the area of independence and neutrality in line with the achievement of these bodies' objectives."

The Iranian president added, "I am sure that the Republic of Niger, as a member state to the Non-Aligned Movement, will act completely independently and professionally during its presidency over the UN Security Council and will prevent the abuse of the status of the United Nations and the Security Council for the United States' excessive demands and unilateralism, just as it took a very constructive stance against the illegal resolution to extend the arms embargo on Iran."

For his part, Issoufou said that Niger has always attached



Mahamadou Issoufou

Hassan Rouhani

importance to human values in international cooperation and will continue this path in its performance at the Security Council.

Issoufou also called for expansion of relations with Iran.

China hopes all parties would safeguard nuclear deal

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said on Monday that China hopes that all parties would safeguard the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA, and faithfully implement the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 that endorsed the agreement.

"Tension around the Iranian nuclear issue has been mounting because of the U.S. unilateral withdrawal from the JCPOA and a series of actions it has taken unilaterally and illegally against the international rejection," Zhao told a press conference, according to the Chinese Foreign Ministry website.

On Tuesday, diplomats from the remaining



signatories to the nuclear deal met in Vienna to discuss the issues surrounding the implementation of the JCPOA. The meeting was within the framework of the JCPOA Joint

Commission.

The meeting was co-chaired by Secretary-General of the European External Action Service Helga Schmid and Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

The meeting was held upon a letter sent in July by Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif to Schmid regarding the non-adherence of European countries to the nuclear deal.

Zhao said, "The JCPOA has come to a crucial juncture. China hopes that all parties will take the Joint Commission meeting as an opportunity to further commit ourselves to firmly safeguarding the JCPOA and faithfully implementing the Security Council Resolution

2231, properly handle differences on JCPOA implementation under the framework of the Joint Commission, coordinate efforts to address the current challenges, and continue to move forward the political settlement process of the Iranian nuclear issue."

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has announced that all UN sanctions against Iran will be reinstated on September 20 after what he claimed the U.S. activation of "the snap-back mechanism".

However, the claim was strongly denounced by other signatories of the nuclear deal including Iran, the European trio of Germany, France and Britain, the EU, Russia and China.

Russia expresses readiness to facilitate 'direct negotiations' between Iran and U.S.

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Tuesday that Moscow is ready to facilitate a direct dialogue between Iran and the U.S. amid heightened tensions between the two countries over the U.S. bid to restore international sanctions on Iran.

"We support direct negotiations between Iran and the U.S. and stand ready to help them begin the negotiations," IRNA quoted Lavrov as saying.

The chief Russian diplomat made the remarks in a speech delivered to an audience of teachers and students of MGIMO University on Tuesday.

He went further to say, "We are ready to hold talks with the two sides in order to pave the way for the direct talks [between Tehran and Washington] if they both are interested [in negotiations]. We think that it's better to directly address differences and issues and get answers."

Lavrov also pointed to the U.S. efforts to restore the UN sanctions on Iran, saying that the U.S. had no legal authority to trigger the snapback process, a mechanism built into the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to allow parties to the deal to snap back all UN sanctions on Iran in case



it didn't uphold its commitments under the nuclear deal.

"Although it has pulled out of the JCPOA, the United States is now trying to use the complex legal mechanism, established under this agreement, which envisages the

possibility of reintroducing UN sanctions against Iran and canceled in 2015 after the conclusion of the JCPOA," Lavrov said, adding that "the United States has lost all of JCPOA rights, because it pulled out of it."

Moscow ratcheted up criticism of Washington over its bid to trigger the snapback process ahead of a JCPOA Joint Commission's meeting in Vienna on Tuesday.

Mikhail Ulyanov, Russia's permanent representative to the Vienna-based international organizations, managed to take a jab at the U.S. moments before the meeting kicks off.

"The meeting of the Joint Commission on JCPOA with participation of all real (not self-proclaimed) participants of the nuclear deal will start in Vienna in a few hours. Consultations in different formats are already under way," tweeted Ulyanov.

JCPOA parties discussed "important issues" at the meeting, according to Saeed Khatibzadeh, the spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry.

"The JCPOA Joint Commission has started in Vienna. Important issues on the agenda of today's meeting," Khatibzadeh tweeted at the start of the meeting.

Pompeo's Iran policy has driven U.S. into blind alleys: Washington Post

In a commentary on Sunday The Washington Post said the Trump administration's failure to extend an expiring UN arms embargo against Iran offers a telling illustration of how U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has driven U.S. policy into blind alleys.

"A good example can be seen in the debates over Iran this month at the UN Security Council. Amid the press of other news, the Trump administration's failure to extend an expiring UN arms embargo against Iran hasn't gotten much attention. But it offers a telling illustration of how Pompeo has driven

U.S. policy into blind alleys," says the article.

On August 21, the U.S. sent a letter to the UN Security Council requesting to initiate the "snapback" mechanism, which allows a participant to the JCPOA to seek reimposition against Iran of UN sanctions lifted under the 2015 nuclear deal.

The U.S. took the move following its failure on August 13 at the UN Security Council to extend arms embargo on Iran which will expire in October in accordance with Resolution 2231.

Thirteen countries out of the 15-member

UN Security Council have expressed their opposition to the U.S. bid to reimpose the UN sanctions on Iran, arguing that Washington's move is void given it is using a process under a nuclear deal that it quit more than two years ago.

The Washington Post said the result of the voting session at the Council was humiliating for the United States.

"A week later, he doubled down, notifying the Security Council that the United States would seek to invoke a provision of the nuclear accord allowing one government

to unilaterally force the reimposition of UN sanctions — even though Washington is no longer a party to the pact," the Post said.

"When a 30-day waiting period expires in late September, the Trump administration may insist that global sanctions on Iran are back in force. If it does, the attempted Fiat probably will be ignored by most of the world, including the leading democracies. The United States will stand visibly isolated. And Mike Pompeo's tenure as history's worst secretary of state will have reached its apotheosis," the newspaper said.

U.S. targeting ‘multilateralism’ via JCPOA-bashing campaign: Araghchi

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Deputy **d e s k** Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi says the United States has targeted “multilateralism” by trying to destroy the historic Iran nuclear agreement.

“The world is watching how the international community is resisting the U.S. unilateral efforts,” Mehr on Tuesday quoted Araghchi as saying.

Araghchi arrived in Vienna on Monday to attend a meeting of the Joint Commission of the nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The meeting was co-chaired by Secretary-General of the European External Action Service Helga Schmid and Araghchi later on Tuesday.

Representatives of France, Germany, Britain, China and Russia attended the meeting, which was held at the level of deputies and political directors of the foreign ministries of Iran and the P4+1 group of countries.

“This is a normal and routine meeting of the JCPOA Joint Commission, which is held every three months according to the procedure in the nuclear agreement,” Araghchi said of the meeting.

However, he said, the meeting is of special importance due to its concurrence



with Washington’s efforts to trigger the reimposition of abolished UN Security Council resolutions and to destroy the JCPOA.

He said the participants of the meeting, namely Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany, have taken very strong positions in New York against the U.S. and rejected the U.S. efforts to trigger the so-called

snapback mechanism.

The top Iranian diplomat also pointed to a recent trip to Iran by IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi, saying it led to a success in resolving a very serious issue between Iran and the IAEA.

On Monday, Araghchi met Austria’s Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg,

who described the JCPOA as the “most effective” diplomatic accord.

During the meeting, Schallenberg called for multilateral efforts to save the deal, which has been abandoned and attacked by the U.S. after President Donald Trump assumed office in January 2017.

The top Austrian diplomat called on the remaining parties to the accord to live up to their obligations under the deal.

He stressed that Vienna will continue its partnership to the JCPOA to rebuild trust in the region.

Araghchi is also expected to hold separate talks with heads of a number of delegations attending the Joint Commission meeting.

The meeting is being held upon a letter sent in July by Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif to Schmid regarding the non-adherence of European countries to the nuclear deal.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has announced that all UN sanctions against Iran will be reinstated on September 20 after the U.S. “activated the snapback mechanism”.

However, the claim was strongly denounced by other signatories of the nuclear deal including Iran, the EU, Russia and China.

Iran says UNSC’s indecisiveness undermines world peace

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Majid Takht-Ravanchi, **d e s k** Iran’s ambassador to the United Nations, has strongly criticized the UN Security Council, saying the Council’s “indecisiveness, indecision and ineffectiveness” have undermined regional and international peace and security.

Delivering a speech to the meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations on Monday, Takht-Ravanchi enumerated the ways the Security Council has failed to uphold international peace and security.

“Last year, parallel to the Israeli regime’s unlawful construction and expansion of settlements, its inhumane blockade of Gaza and its other criminal measures towards the Palestinians, the Council’s historic inaction and utter silence towards this crisis has also continued,” he said.

“Moreover, last year, meddling and destabilizing activities of the U.S. in the Middle East continued, including through the occupation of parts of Syria, looting its oil and imposing unilateral sanctions against that country amid the COVID-19 pandemic,” he added.

Takh-Ravanchi pointed to the Donald Trump-ordered assassination of Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, Iran’s top anti-terror general, saying the U.S. act was called by many international lawyers and scholars as a clear violation of the UN Charter and international law but the Council was utterly silent.



“The U.S. policy regarding Resolution 2231 and the JCPOA challenges the relevance and accountability of the Council,” Takht-Ravanchi maintained.

According to the diplomat, the U.S. has threatened UN members to defy Resolution 2231 or face punishment. “In pursuance of this destructive policy, the U.S. now has placed the UN under maximum pressure to ultimately kill the JCPOA.”

Pointing to Washington’s recent efforts to extend an arms embargo on Iran and trigger the reimposition of international sanctions on the country, Takht-Ravanchi said, “Having failed to convince the Council members through deceptive justifications, pseudo-legal arguments and arbitrary interpretation of Resolution 2231 as well as political pressure and intimidation, now, the U.S. stubbornly argues that the sanctions will return on September 20.”

“The U.S. policy regarding Resolution 2231 and the JCPOA challenges the relevance and accountability of the Council,” he maintained.

Therefore, he continued, in fulfilling its obligation under Charter’s Article 15(1), the Assembly must pay due attention to the principle of accountability of the Council and its members.

Takht-Ravanchi concluded his remarks by saying that in order to enable the Assembly to have a clear account of the overall situation of international peace and security while considering the Council’s report, it is recommended that the introduction of the report be more analytical.

Reminiscent of a bull in a china shop, Lavrov lambasts Washington’s policy on Iran

MOSCOW (TASS) — The United States’ policies towards Iran and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action for the Iranian nuclear program are reminiscent of a bull in a china shop, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told an audience of teachers and students of MGIMO University on Tuesday.

“Although it has pulled out of the JCPOA, the United States is now trying to use the complex legal mechanism, established un-

der this agreement, which envisages the possibility of reintroducing UN sanctions against Iran and canceled in 2015 after the conclusion of the JCPOA,” he said. “This is unbelievable. Firstly, there are no reasons for reintroducing the sanctions, because Iran has complied with all of its obligations. Secondly, the United States has lost all of JCPOA rights, because it pulled out of it. I do remember that the mascot of the Republican Party is an elephant, but the

world is not a porcelain shop.”

Lavrov recalled that the United States, when it already abandoned the JCPOA, tried to push through a decision that would prolong the weapons embargo on Iran, scheduled to expire in October.

“The U.S. argued that by selling arms Iran would destabilize the region. The resolution was supported only by two votes. All others were either against or abstained. Now the U.S. is trying to

achieve the restoration of UN Security Council’s sanctions,” Lavrov said.

The future of the nuclear deal was put in danger after the United States’ unilateral pullout on May 8, 2018 and Washington’s introduction of oil export sanctions on Tehran. Iran argues that all other participants, in the first place, Europeans, have defaulted on some of their obligations under the economic part of the deal, so for this reason the agreement in its current form is senseless.

JCPOA parties hold talks amid diplomatic tensions over snapback mechanism

1→ “The meeting is being held simultaneously with the U.S. efforts to restore [the provisions] of previous UN Security Council resolutions on Iran and thus destroy the JCPOA. These issues make the meeting special,” Araghchi told the IIRIB news agency in Vienna. “The U.S. efforts will be a serious point of discussion at the JCPOA Joint Commission’s meeting.”

On August 20, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo submitted a “notification” to the UN Security Council calling for the restoration of all UN sanctions on Iran, a move that was rejected by almost all members of the Council, with thirteen of the 15-member body questioning the legality of the U.S. measure. They asserted that the U.S. lost its legal authority to trigger the snapback process after it withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal on May 8, 2018. However, the U.S. claims it still has the right to initiate the process because it is mentioned as “JCPOA participant state” in UN Security Council Resolution 2231, which endorsed the JCPOA. The U.S. complaint came after the Security Council rejected a U.S.-drafted resolution pushing for the extension of a UN arms embargo on Iran that is due to expire on October 18.

“If any member of the UN Security Council introduces a resolution to continue sanctions relief, the U.S. will oppose it. If no resolution is introduced, the sanctions on Iran will still return on September 20. That’s how UNSCR 2231 works,” tweeted Pompeo on August 27, five days before the JCPOA Joint Commission holds the meeting in Vienna in the midst of diplomatic tensions over the snapback process.

The Joint Commission seems to be aiming at closer coordination among JCPOA parties to take unified positions on the U.S. efforts to reinstate the UN sanctions on Iran.

“We hope that the Joint Commission will be able to reach a common position on the issue [of the snapback process] and will be able to make decisions regarding the continuation of the path and the efforts that the United States has made to destroy the JCPOA,” Araghchi said.

In what appeared to be a bid to address some of the JCPOA parties’ concerns over “serious differences” between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency

(IAEA), Tehran has recently reached an agreement with the UN nuclear watchdog to give IAEA inspectors access to two sites allegedly hosted nuclear activities in the past two decades. In Vienna, Araghchi also met with Grossi to further follow up on the agreement.

“We hope that these meetings would lead to a better understanding of the current situation and countering the attack that the U.S. has launched on the international community and multilateralism,” the deputy minister pointed out.

France, Germany, and the UK (E3) submitted a draft resolution to the IAEA Board of Governors in July calling out Iran for its denial of access to the two sites that Grossi has been digging his heels in on inspecting them over the past few months. Iran agreed to give the IAEA access to the sites during Grossi’s visit to Iran on August 26, a move that was hailed as a “win-win” deal by Behrouz Kamalvandi, the spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI).

Iran seeks to thwart the U.S. plan to restore the UN sanctions through various means including the Joint Commission and the nuclear deal’s Dispute Resolution Mechanism (DRM), according to Mohsen Jalilvand, an expert on international relations.

“Iran has already triggered the DRM in the Joint Commission and it aims to discuss the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA and its pressures at the meeting of the Joint Commission. Iran has triggered the DRM in a bid to preserve the nuclear deal and thwart U.S. pressures. Given that the U.S. has moved from the JCPOA to Resolution 2231 in its efforts to reinstate the United Nations sanctions, Iran seeks to return the whole issue to the JCPOA to foil the U.S. plan regarding the snapback process,” Jalilvand told the Tehran Times,

The success of Iran’s efforts depend on what the president of the Security Council would do, he argued.

Iran stepped up its efforts to prevent the collapse of the JCPOA and ensure that other countries, especially those on the UN Security Council, won’t support the U.S. bid to

SPORTS

Mehdi Taremi joins FC Porto

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — FC Porto, champions of the **d e s k** Portuguese soccer league, have officially signed Iranian international striker Mehdi Taremi.

The 28-year-old striker, who arrived in Portugal last Sunday, heads for the national championships after a season at Rio Ave, where he scored 21 goals in 37 games in different competitions.

Taremi is the fourth reinforcement for Sergio Conceicao, after Carraça, Claudio Ramos and Zaidou.

Before, he had represented Shahin Bushehr, Iranjavan and Persepolis from Iran, as well as Al-Gharafa from Qatar.

“I always had the dream of playing in the Champions League and in a big club. I am very happy about this situation. Being the first Iranian player at FC Porto, a club from Portugal that are one of the greatest in the world, I am very happy for all this”, he shared with the club’s media.



Iran chosen to host VNL Week 4

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran has been chosen to host the 2021 **d e s k** FIVB Volleyball Nations League (VNL) fourth week.

The 2021 VNL is set to start on May 11 for the women and May 14 for the men, retaining the format of previous seasons.

The 16 teams per gender will meet in four-team pools over five weeks, to determine the top six that will then fight it out for the titles.

The venues for the final rounds remain to be confirmed, with the Women’s Finals set to be held in China and the Men’s Finals in Italy, both from June 23 to 27. That will bring the season to a climax ahead of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, now scheduled for July 23 to August 8.

Men’s defending champions Russia, aiming for their third title in as many editions of the event since its introduction in 2018, will begin their quest at Jiangmen alongside hosts China, Iran and Japan over the first week of competition from May 14 to 16.

Tehran will host the prestigious competition in Week 4, where the Persians will meet Brazil, Australia and Slovenia.

The 2021 VNL will be the third edition of the event, after the cancellation of the 2020 competition due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Al Arabi complete signing of Mehrdad Mohammadi

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Qatari football club Al Arabi **d e s k** have completed the signing of Iranian winger Mehrdad Mohammadi on Monday.

The 27-year-old player has joined Al Arabi on a three-year contract for an undisclosed fee.

Mohammadi, who was a member of Portuguese team Aves last season, had been linked with a move to French top flight football team Saint-Etienne and Scottish Celtic but opted to join the Qatari team.

He has replaced his compatriot Morteza Pouraliganji in Al Arabi. Mohammadi joined Aves from Sepahan in July 2019 and scored eight goals and delivered five assists in 28 appearances in the Portuguese team.

Persepolis complete signing of three players

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Persepolis football club have **d e s k** signed three players for new season of Iran Professional League (IPL) on Tuesday.

The titleholders completed the signing of Saeid Aghaei on a two-year contract. Aghaei, 25, will replace Mohammad Ansari who has been sidelined until December due to knee surgery.

The Reds have signed Machine Sazi goalkeeper Hamed Lak as Alireza Beiranvand’s replacement. Beiranvand joined Belgian team Antwerp in the summer.

Lak, 29, had always shown interest in joining Persepolis and his dream has come true.

Persepolis have also completed the signing of Sanat Naft striker Issa Alekasir.

Alekasir, 30, scored 12 goals in the last season. The financial details of the players’ contracts have not been revealed. Persepolis have reached an agreement with Zob Ahan midfielder Ehsan Pahlavan.

They want to sign him instead of Mehdi Torabi who canceled his contract with Persepolis to join a Qatari football club.

Rahmati takes charge at Shahr Khodro

Former Iranian international goalkeeper Mehdi Rahmati has been confirmed as the new head coach of Shahr Khodro FC.

The 37-year-old – who made 76 appearances for IR Iran from 2004 to 2012 – will juggle playing and coaching roles for the club, which finished sixth in the 2019-20 league campaign.

Rahmati replaces Sohrab Bakhtiarzadeh, who himself had only held the position since July.

The goalkeeper’s promotion to head coach marks the latest development in what has been a long and successful career, with Rahmati becoming a household name during three spells at Esteghlal, and two at Sepahan.

He won two Iran Pro League titles at each of those clubs, also claiming a total of three Hazfi Cups, a WAFF Championship and an Asian Games gold medal over the course of his two-decade career.

Rahmati was Team Melli’s first-choice goalkeeper at the 2011 AFC Asian Cup. He also earned selection for the 2004 and 2007 editions of the tournament, but did not feature on the pitch.

Appearing in the group stage for the first time in club history, Shahr Khodro face an uphill battle to rescue their 2020 AFC Champions League campaign, with the club suffering defeats against both Al Hilal and Pakhtakor before the tournament was suspended in February.

The Mashad club will resume their campaign against Shabab Al Ahli of the United Arab Emirates on September 14.

(Source: the-afc)

TV sets production rises 30% in 5 months yr/yr

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Production of TV sets in Iran has risen over 30 percent during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21), compared to the same period of time in the past year, the secretary of Association of Audio-Video Appliances Manufacturers told IRNA.

Mohammadreza Shahidi announced that over 400,000 TV sets have been manufactured during the five-month period of this year, while the figure was about 300,000 in the same time span of the previous year.



He said that there is no problem in terms of TV sets manufacturing in the current year, adding that supply of the required foreign raw materials needs \$300 million in this year.

The spokesman of Iran's Home Appliances Manufacturers Union has said that one of the country's major manufacturers is going to produce 1.5 million of various affordable home appliances and distribute them in the market by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2021).

According to Hamidreza Ghaznavi, the mentioned appliances include refrigerator, stove, washing machines, 32 and 43-inch TV sets and vacuum cleaners.

These devices are meant to be distributed among the low-income classes and will be sold in two packages, Ghaznavi said, adding that they will be of good quality and the manufacturer is not going to make any profit from selling them.

Based on the official data published by the Ministry of Industry, Mining, and Trade, in the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20), domestic companies produced 210,200 TV sets, registering a 49.4-percent growth compared to the same period last year.

Also, the production of refrigerators and freezers increased by 7.9 percent to reach 328,500 units and the production of washing machines registered a 115.1-percent rise to reach 207,400 units in the mentioned period.

In early July, Ghaznavi had said that Iran is expected to become an exporter of some home appliance items as of the next Iranian calendar year (starts in March 2021).

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

In recent years, the Iranian government has been following a new strategy for supporting domestic production to neutralize the impacts of the U.S. sanctions while reducing the reliance of the economy on oil revenues.

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

TSE's main index climbs 615% in a year

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), which is Iran's major stock exchange, has risen 615 percent in a one-year period from the end of the fifth month in the past Iranian calendar year (August 20) until the beginning of the fifth month in this year, according to the data released by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs.

The ministry's data show that the index, which had stood at 266,127 points at the end of the fifth month of the past year, closed at 1.904 million points in the beginning of this year's fifth month, Tasnim news agency reported.



TEDPIX surpassed two million points on August 2, and through gaining 45,672 points it stood at 2.007 million, notching up another outstanding record in the current year.

The index had hit the record high of 1.5 million points on June 30, and then it climbed half a million points in just one month to hit the record high of two million.

Iranian capital market has experienced an unprecedented trend of growth in the current year.

Many factors have brought such prosperity for the capital market in the recent months, one of them is that this market is now more profitable compared to some other markets such as the markets of gold coin, foreign currency, and housing.

Such contributing factors have even brought the capital market to the frontline of success and flourishing during the coronavirus pandemic which have made damage to all economic sectors.

Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dejjpasand has announced that the value of trades in Iran's stock market has risen 625 percent during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-July 21), compared to the same period of time in the past year.

He said, "We try to save the liquidity attracted by the capital market and lead it toward production and development."

545 idle industrial units revived since late March

1 → Saying that out of the 45,000 small and medium industrial units in Iran's industrial parks, 9,500 units are currently inactive, the official announced that ISIPO plans to revive 1,500 units in the current Iranian year.

As the result of the 545 units coming back to the production cycle, the ISIPO's plan for reviving the small and medium industries in this year has come true by 36 percent, Mosaheb noted, adding that the organization plans to create 27,000 jobs through reviving such units in the current year, and by reviving the above-mentioned units, its plan in this due has been realized by 36 percent as well.

As previously announced by Mosaheb, ISIPO managed to revive 1,185 idle production units across the country during the past

Iranian calendar year.

According to the official, the mentioned units returning to operation created direct jobs for 21,618 persons.

The ISIPO head has recently said that 21 percent of the country's idle production units have been revived by the Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry.

Mohsen Salehnia said that providing liquidity is the main issue for many of the country's production units, so based on the arrangements made, these units can receive part of their needed liquidity through bank facilities.

"Currently, the share of the country's production and industrial units in receiving bank facilities is about 31 percent and it is necessary



to allocate a larger share of banking facilities to the country's production and industry," he added.

Given the position of production in the country's economy and employment, and the fact that production units are facing lack of liquidity to supply raw materials and equipment, it is necessary to increase their share of bank facilities up to at least 40 percent,

the official stressed.

The ISIPO head further said: "Despite all the limitations, we are currently witnessing an increase in production in some units active in the field of home appliances; also, according to the plans made and by solving the problems in the way of the production and industrial units, we will realize the motto of "Surge in Production" by the end of this year."

Iran to operate air taxi for 1st time by next March

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran will make air taxi operational for the first time in the country by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2021), the secretary of public aviation committee of Iran Airports and Air Navigation Company told IRIB.

Ramin Kashef-Azar said if the required air operator's certificate (AOC) will be received from Iran's Flight Inspection Services Center within the coming three months, the first air taxi will start operation by the yearend.

An air operator's certificate (AOC) is the approval granted by a national aviation authority (NAA) to an aircraft operator to allow it to use aircraft for commercial purposes. This requires the operator to have personnel, assets and system in place to ensure the safety of its employees and the general public.

Iran has also unveiled its first domestically-made mobile air traffic control (ATC) tower recently.



Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami unveiled the ATC tower in a ceremony

Weekly worth of trades increases 32% at IME

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The value of trades at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) increased 32 percent in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

As reported by the IME International Affairs and Public Relations Department, more than 886,179 tons of commodities worth over 69 trillion rials (about \$1.642 billion) were traded at the exchange in the past week, indicating also a 25-percent growth in the weight of traded commodities.

IME is one of the four major stock markets of Iran, the other three markets are Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market known



also as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), and Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX).

On April 21, IME Managing Director Hamed Soltani-Nejad unveiled the market's new outlook plan, which depicts

IME's development roadmap until the Iranian calendar year of 1404 (March 20205-March 2026). Materializing the slogan of this Iranian year, which is "Surge in Production" is seriously considered in the mentioned plan and it is, in fact, the strategic approach of the outlook plan.

As previously reported, commercial property was offered at the IME for the first time on August 19.

The side market of the IME hosted the offering at the base price of 10.639 billion rials (about \$253.3 million).

Also on August 21, the IME director of economic studies announced, "The exchange will start preselling trades of residential units via standard parallel salaf

bonds by the next month."

Javad Fallah said, "IME is seeking attraction of liquidity by the capital market to provide financing for the construction of houses; so, we are intending to offer salaf bonds to achieve this goal".

The official said that the IME has received the salaf bonds from Housing Investment Company, which is affiliated to Bank Maskan (Housing Bank).

These bonds enable the people to pre-purchase the residential units based on the amount of their money.

A standard parallel salaf is an Islamic contract similar to futures, with the difference being that the contract's total price must be paid in advance.

EAEU agreement, a test for trade with world: TPO head

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran's preferential trade agreement with the members of Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) is a test to evaluate the country's infrastructure for trade with the world, the head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) told IRNA.

"As the result of this agreement we recognized the infrastructure required for the [foreign] trade and plan to remove the problems in this field", Hamid Zadboum noted.

Mentioning logistics as one of the issues with some problems in Iran's trade activities, the official said, "We should pay attention to logistics because we cannot boost trade using the old logistic system."

Iran's agreement with the EAEU is a temporary one, including a number of items subjected to preferential trade, but getting close to the end of the first year, talks on the free trade agreement, which includes more items, will begin, the TPO head stated.

During a conference on promotion of trade with EAEU in Tehran on August 21, Zadboum had said that along with the implementation of the preferential trade agreement with the members of the Eurasian Economic Union, Iran is considering ways for removing the non-tariff barriers (NTBs) in trade with the union.

"Apart from the [preferential trade] agreement and the commodity items that we agree on, what should be considered as a side benefit of this agreement for both sides is the removal of non-tariff barriers to trade between the parties," he noted.

Zadboum further underlined some of the problems in the way of trade between Iran and EAEU, including banking and money transfer problems, the lack of Iranian banking branches in some member countries, transportation problems and high transit costs, delays in issuing visas in some member countries, as well as customs problems, and expressed hope that they will be removed following the implementation of the preferential trade agreement.



The TPO head mentioned a working group established for monitoring the implementation of the preferential trade agreement between Iran and EAEU, and said: "We held the first meeting of the joint working group in the form of a video conference with the Eurasian Economic Union last month."

Emphasizing the positive outcomes of the mentioned meeting, the official said that all the agreements reached in the working group meeting were signed by both parties in the form of a protocol and were turned into a document that was exchanged between the two sides.

"In this document, we agreed to hold preliminary talks three weeks before the start of the main negotiations, and to follow up on the side issues of the agreement, including standards, plant quarantine, transport and transit, and banking, each of which could have a working group," he explained.

According to the official, the Central Bank of Iran (CBI)

pursues the joint banking working group, Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) will be in charge of the joint customs working group, while Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) follows up on the joint working group on rules of origin and the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development is in charge of the joint transportation and transit working group.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Number of real estate deals up 15% in a month on year

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The number of real estate deals in Iran has risen 15 percent in the fifth month of the current Iranian calendar year, Mordad (ended on August 21), compared to the same month in the past year, the chairman of Real Estate Agencies Union told Tasnim news agency.

Mostafa Qoli Khosravi said. "The housing market is now passing an acceptable trend, and we are seeing growth in the number of deals."

In early May, the deputy head of Tehran Real Estate Association had said, "The housing market is experiencing inflation and rise in prices, both in terms of rentals

and sales, but the rise in prices is not going to be like the last year's sudden surge."

Hesam Oqbaei said, "Last year, when house prices experienced a 100-percent growth, rent prices rose by as much as 30 percent. Of course, this year we anticipate that rent growth will not reach inflation and will stay below the inflation rate."



News

Macron: Hezbollah is part of Lebanese nation

By staff & agencies

Hezbollah is part of the Lebanese nation, said French President Emmanuel Macron, who was in Lebanon on Tuesday, Al Mayadeen reported.

There is a partnership today between Hezbollah and other parties in Lebanon, and Hezbollah has been chosen by the nation, Macron added.

Macron was visiting the Lebanese capital for the second time since the deadly explosion in Beirut's port.

Macron says he's making a "risky bet" by working to avoid a political collapse in Lebanon, but is limited in what he can achieve.

"It's the last chance for this system," the French president told POLITICO in an interview while en route from Paris to Beirut Monday evening.

"It's a risky bet I'm making, I am aware of it ... I am putting the only thing I have on the table: my political capital."

After weeks of French pressure to nominate a so-called credible figure to the premiership, political parties agreed to put forward diplomat Mustapha Adib as the new prime minister on Monday — just hours before Macron's arrival.

Macron warned the next three months will be "fundamental" for real change to happen, and if it doesn't, he will switch tack, taking punitive measures that range from withholding a vital international financial bailout to imposing sanctions against the ruling class.

Maduro pardons more than 100 opposition lawmakers

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro pardoned more than 100 lawmakers and associates of opposition leader Juan Guaido "in the interests of promoting national reconciliation," the government said.

Guaido's assistant Roberto Marrero and lawmakers Gilber Caro and Renzo Prieto were amongst the names read out by Communications Minister Jorge Rodriguez live on state television.

The presidential decree "comes into force from its publication" after which the courts "must implement immediate measures to liberate the persons mentioned," said Rodriguez.

According to AFP, amongst those featuring on the list of 110 people was opposition lawmaker Freddy Guevara, who fled to the Chilean embassy the capital Caracas in 2017 after leading anti-government protests that left 125 people dead.

The Supreme Court — which has been accused of pandering to the regime — then ordered that he be denied the freedom to leave the country.

France, Germany want constructive dialogue with Turkey over Mediterranean

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian and his German counterpart Heiko Maas expressed their countries' desire to have constructive dialogue with Turkey over the Eastern Mediterranean hydrocarbon drillings, Anadolu reported yesterday.

During a meeting in Paris, Le Drian claimed that Turkey is violating the territorial waters of two EU member states; Greece and Cyprus, adding that this is "completely unacceptable".

"The EU is ready for dialogue. If strong condemnation and sanctions are necessary, the EU would use them... The EU mobilized all diplomatic efforts to prepare for a constructive dialogue with Ankara. Germany and France have agreement on this issue," he continued.

For his part, Heiko Maas claimed that Turkey "destabilizes" the regions in Libya and the Eastern Mediterranean, stressing that the EU insists on protecting the sovereignty of Greece and Cyprus.

"We cannot exit from this embarrassing situation except through dialogue."

Saudi king sacks top military officials

The Saudi king has sacked several military officials, including two senior royals, over what is claimed to be graft charges, sparking speculation of a stepped-up push to consolidate Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's hold on power.

In a royal decree on Tuesday, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud removed Prince Fahad bin Turki of his role as commander of joint forces in the Saudi-led coalition waging war against Yemen.

His son, Abdulaziz bin Fahad, was also relieved of his post as deputy governor of al-Jouf region.

According to the decree, the officials, along with four others, face an investigation into "suspicious financial dealings" at the defense ministry.

The decree said the crown prince — who also serves as the defense minister — designated Lieutenant Gen. Mutlaq bin Salem bin Mutlaq al-Azima to replace Prince Fahad.

The decree was based on bin Salman's missive to the so-called Anti-Corruption Committee.

Prince Fahd was commander of the Royal Saudi Ground Forces, paratrooper units and special forces before becoming commander of joint forces in the Saudi-led coalition, according to Saudi daily Arab News.

Since rising to power on the back of a palace coup in 2017, bin Salman, who is considered Saudi Arabia's de-facto ruler, has spearheaded a campaign against alleged corruption in the government.

Resistance News

Hamas agrees to Qatar-brokered ceasefire with Israel

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The Palestinian Hamas resistance movement says it has agreed to a Qatar-brokered ceasefire, which will put an end to nearly a month of Israeli aerial and ground attacks against the blockaded Gaza Strip.

In a statement released on Monday, the office of Hamas leader in Gaza, Yahya Sinwar, announced the ceasefire, under which the Tel Aviv regime would stop airstrikes and the resistance group would halt launching of incendiary balloons.

After talks with Qatari envoy Mohammed al-Emadi, "an understanding was reached to rein in the latest escalation and end [Israeli] aggression against our people," it said.

The understanding, it added, would ease the way for implementation of projects "that will serve the people of Gaza, and alleviate the suffering amid the coronavirus wave."

Shortly after Hamas' statement, Israel's liaison agency to the Palestinian territories said it would reopen the Gaza crossing, including to fuel deliveries, as well as the fishing zone to the full 15-nautical-mile limit, Press TV reported.

The decisions were "subject to the continuation of the calm and the security stability," said the so-called Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territory (COGAT), adding that if Hamas failed to deliver, Israel would "act accordingly."

The process for naming Mostafa Adib as PM carries great weight: Lebanese analyst

I → and the legislators from rival blocs proposed the name of the person they wanted to head the upcoming Lebanese government in order to send it to President Michel Aoun.

Therefore, the prime minister-designate, Ambassador Dr. Mustafa Adib, won ninety votes out of 128 votes in the Parliament, while just a few voices went to the former Lebanese ambassador to the United Nations, Nawaf Salam, who was named by the Lebanese Forces bloc headed by Samir Geagea.

In any case, this result carry important implications as it has the endorsement of a considerable majority in the Lebanese Parliament. According to the prime minister-designate, what is important now is that things should be translated into action and not remain just as promises.

The Lebanese are eager to get out of the problems that they are facing at all levels, especially in the economic and financial ones.

■ Do you see a strong consensus between Lebanon's main political currents on naming the next head of government?

A: Of course, this consensus would not have been possible, and the result would not have emerged today if there were not proactive consultations and initiatives undertaken by French President Emmanuel Macron.

According to some reports, Macron established a series of contacts, perhaps with certain countries in the European Union and even Iran. So, this designation did not come out of anywhere but rather was the result of France's open consultations and collaborations with the Lebanese parties.

■ Don't you think that the next government will be like the Hassan Diab government, who resigned after the Beirut blast on August 4?

A: No. The situation seems different because the former Prime Minister Hassan Diab did not enjoy Sunni support for his government, as Lebanese Sunni leaders such as Saad Hariri and the rest of the other



figures who have the popular weight in the Sunni community did not support Hassan Diab.

Therefore, the matter is different here because the size of the consensus that Ambassador Dr. Mustafa Adib could gain must be translated into the cooperation and support of all parties. They should not be satisfied with naming the prime minister without addressing his chances of forming the government as soon as possible. The government must be consistent and able to provide the required solutions to contain the harsh conditions the Lebanese people are experiencing.

■ Could you talk more about the French role in naming Mustafa Adib?

A: According to my information, France had a pivotal role in naming Adib, and it was the one who chose this name and recommended it to the Lebanese parties to be studied in Parliament. This is the joint cooperation that took place as a result of the French initiative after President Macron's visit to Lebanon following the August 4 explosion in Beirut port.

■ Is it acceptable for another country to

get involved in naming the prime minister of Lebanon?

A: Unfortunately, our experiences have shown that small countries like Lebanon are forming their governments, and choosing their prime ministers are subject to well-known foreign interference. Throughout the Syrian presence in Lebanon, Syria had the final say. Before that, Egypt had a role in this regard, then Saudi Arabia began to intervene in Lebanon, and also Iran is a key player in the Lebanese political scene.

Altogether, the issue is not about who moves and takes the initiative, and perhaps this matter is not acceptable to some countries, but people have become accustomed to it in Lebanon. I do not think that it makes a problem as long as the issue remains in a Lebanese framework.

■ What are the repercussions and implications of the Beirut blast for Lebanon's political future?

A: The Beirut port explosion on August 4 may have been a disaster that no one expected in Lebanon, and until now, investigations have not produced anything

about this issue.

The constant propaganda by some Lebanese and Arab media outlets still wants to convey this idea that this explosion would not have happened if there were no missiles and weapons of Hezbollah inside the port, and this is what the Secretary-General of Hezbollah, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, has repeatedly denied. But, some mercenaries in the media insist on such lies.

Of course, the great disaster that occurred in Beirut port requires concerted efforts at all levels to restore the confidence and vitality of the country, and this also needs international and regional support from all countries that want to stand by Lebanon.

So far, we have only seen food aid and some medical aid, but this is not enough to change the catastrophic reality in Lebanon. What is required is transparent international support at financial level and reconstruction in the affected areas.

The most important demands are to stop the U.S. sanctions that have been harmful to many sectors inside Lebanon. This process affects the nature of economic trends at the political level in Lebanon; therefore, this is completely unacceptable.

■ Do you expect fundamental changes in Lebanon's political structure?

A: I do not think that this is the time when we talk about such a matter, especially since the people have been greatly affected by the Coronavirus pandemic, and there are great disputes that prevented forming a consensus of visions in Lebanon, but there are still attempts to have some reforms if they are suggested through the framework of the constitution. Disseminating slogans and making speeches may not be helpful at this time.

Therefore, we are not going through a structural or fundamental change in Lebanese politics. Rather, we are facing a different scene and perhaps certain changes, but there will be no essential change in the foreseeable future.

Lebanese researcher says UAE wants to open economic route with the West through Israeli gate

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN — Khalil Nasrallah, a Lebanese analyst, believes that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia are planning to establish an economic route to expand trade ties with the West through "the Israeli gate".

On August 13, the Emirates and the Zionist regime reached an accord that will lead to the full normalization of diplomatic relations between the two sides.

The deal came after a phone call between United States President Donald Trump, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the crown prince of Abu Dhabi.

Under the agreement, which is called the Abraham accord, Israel is supposed to suspend the annexation of parts of the occupied West Bank. However, just hours after the announcement, Benjamin Netanyahu stated that he is still committed to the annexation plan.

The move sparked a bitter row in Arab countries as well as the Islamic world, where some Arab figures criticized it harshly.

"With this decision, the Emirates is not just betraying the Palestinian people, but all Arabs, and even their own people," says Iyad Naser, secretary-general of the Fatah movement in the southern Gaza Strip.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei on Tuesday described the UAE move as a "betrayal" to the Muslim world and regional nations, saying the treason would not last long while such shame will taint the UAE forever.

"The Emirates and Saudi Arabia want to open an economic route for exchange of goods and expand trade with the West through the Israeli gate," Nasrallah tells the Tehran Times.

"The normalization of ties between the UAE and the Zionist regime is not surprising. It was all a matter of tim-



ing," according to Nasrallah.

He adds, "It should be noted that the U.S. announced the normalization as a victory for Donald Trump. This matter is supposed to serve Trump and Benjamin Netanyahu as well."

The analyst underlines that Israel has deep-rooted relations with some leaders in Arab countries which came to power through American-Israeli support.

"In certain Arab countries in which generals have taken the helm with Netanyahu's help or those who have allied with him are trying to score a victory on this point," he notes.

Pointing to the statement of Ayatollah Khamenei, who said on Tuesday that "the treason would not last long, but the taint of shame will remain with the UAE," Nasrallah says, "In the long run, it will affect the region."

Regarding the importance of the Palestinian cause among Arab leaders, the Lebanese researcher says, "Most (Persian) Gulf Arab states, despite their statements, have

set the Palestinian issue aside and therefore they want to establish an economic and political opening with the Zionist regime."

According to Nasrallah, the normalization will lead to very dangerous consequences, and the Emiratis will not benefit from it.

"Also, the normalization will neither serve the Saudis' interests nor the Bahrainis'. On the contrary, it will complicate matters in the region," Nasrallah predicts.

Turning to what is going on in Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq, he points to attempts to create a greater type of blockade against these three countries.

"Therefore, we can talk about other dimensions of the issue," he says. "In fact, the normalization is a betrayal of the Palestinian cause. It shows that these countries were not serious about the Palestine issue. They were just looking for their own narrow interests."

Regarding the United Arab Emirates' approaches towards problems in West Asia, the Lebanese analyst believes that Abu Dhabi is spearheading the move to open the horizon to the Israelis.

Regarding attempt by Sudan to normalize ties with Israel, Nasrallah thinks that the Emirates is behind the change of Sudanese position.

"It came due to efforts by the Emiratis. They also have an obvious role in developments in south Yemen," according to Nasrallah. "Consequently, they took upon themselves the mission of normalizing ties with the Zionist regime."

"In the end, the resistance front and the countries that will not accept the sale of the Palestinian cause will remain as guarantors of resistance in the region," he underlines.

Nasrallah adds that the Palestinians' position is very important. "As they stick to their cause, no one has the right to act on this issue more than the Palestinians themselves and resistance forces."

Trump's move in UNSC just for domestic election-related goals, expert says

By Payman Yazdani

TEHRAN — Sahil Shah believes that Trump's attempt to trigger the 'snapback' of UN sanctions against Iran was nothing more than an attention-seeking move for domestic, election-related purposes to look tough on Iran.

The U.S. aims to activate a "snapback" mechanism in the 2015 Iran nuclear deal that would restore international sanctions on Iran. The move escalates a dispute between the U.S. and other members of the UN security council.

The United States demands the United Nations Security Council to activate the "snapback" mechanism of the JCPOA to reimpose all sanctions against Iran, while other parties to the deal believe that the U.S. is not allowed to resort to this mechanism because it is not a party to the JCPOA anymore since the country left it in May 2018.

Donald Trump is doing his best to activate the mechanism just a couple of days after his failure in the UNSC to extend Iran's arms

embargo.

To shed more light on the issue, we discussed it via an interview with Sahil Shah, a Policy Fellow at European Leadership Network (ELN).

Here is the text of the interview with him:

■ How do you assess the U.S. move to activate the snapback mechanism in JCPOA to reimpose Iran's sanctions despite opposition from other UNSC members and considering the fact the U.S. has already left the JCPOA?

A: The U.S. attempt to trigger the 'snapback' of UN sanctions against Iran was nothing more than an attention-seeking move for domestic, election-related purposes to look tough on Iran. The Trump administration's actions in the Council were both politically and legally inconsistent with established norms, such as not getting to benefit from deals you have left, and basic common sense. This was proven by the fact that an overwhelming majority of Security Council members immediately stated that they did not recognize the U.S. notification as having any effect. The U.S.

cannot cherry-pick when they are a participant to the JCPOA, and it very clearly ceased being a party to the deal when it stated it was leaving the agreement, re-applied U.S. sanctions, and halted its activity in the JCPOA Joint Commission.

■ Can such unilateral moves weaken the UNSC's role in maintaining peace in the world?

A: On the one hand, the U.S.'s behavior is damaging to the UNSC because it is playing games with something quite serious. On the other hand, the U.S.'s behavior has also shown the UN system's strength in effectively blocking such unilateral moves. After all, the U.S. and other world powers created the UN for the very reason of promoting diplomacy to avert crises. At the end of the day, unilateral moves by the United States of this nature weaken its own credibility in the Council, as it would be hypocritical for the U.S. to insist that all UN members should respect other binding Council decisions if it does not do the same.

■ Many thinkers like Richard Hoss believe that President Trump's foreign policy has



isolated the U.S. What do you think of this?

A: The Trump administration has wholly dismissed diplomacy, including with its allies, in favor of an "America first" approach. Unfortunately, this has really boiled down to an "America alone" approach, as the U.S. has retreated from a wide range of multilateral organizational frameworks and deals. These various fora and agreements are what create the global institutional scaffolding needed to solve world problems in a meaningful way.

International Craft Awards to focus on COVID-19 crisis: deputy minister

HERITAGE TEHRAN – The 4th International Craft Awards is slated to be held this year focusing on the impact of the coronavirus crisis on the handicraft industry, Iran's deputy tourism minister has said.

"This event was launched in 2017 to identify masters, artists, designers, individuals, or organizations from around the world, thanks to their brilliant contribution to the sustainable and comprehensive development of handicrafts," CHTN quoted Pouya Mahmoudian as saying on Tuesday.



"In the past three editions, over 1,000 craftspeople from more than 60 countries participated in the event, which recognized a total of 53 winners."

The event is organized by the Craft Village, a social organization (and a member of World Craft Council-APR, Res-Artis, Netherlands, and Residency Unlimited, New York) based out of New Delhi, working for the training and promotion of handicrafts.

Winners will be announced in December, she said.

Earlier this week, Mahmoudian announced that the handicraft industry and related businesses across the Islamic Republic have suffered a loss of 19,000 billion rials (some \$452 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

According to Mahmoudian, Iran globally ranks first in terms of having the topmost number of world cities [and villages] of handicrafts. "Some 295 fields of handicrafts are currently practiced across Iran with more than two million people engaging, majority of whom are women... Handicrafts also play an important role in the economy in our rural villages."

The Islamic Republic exported \$523 million worth of handicrafts during the past calendar year 1398 (ended March 19), of the figure, some \$273 million worth of handicrafts were exported officially through customs, and about \$250 million was earned via suitcase trade through various provinces, according to data compiled by the ministry of tourism.

Tourism complex under construction in northwestern Iran

TOURISM TEHRAN – A tourism complex is being built in Aznav tourist area in Khalkhal city, the northwestern province of Ardebil.

With a budget of 10 billion rials (about \$240,000 at the official rate of 42,000 rials), the project is one of the six such complexes, which are to be built in the near future, a provincial tourism chief Adel Khalili announced on Tuesday.

In collaboration with the private sector, several tourism-related projects are being implemented in the region that is well-known for its mountains, springs, and gardens.

Back in July, the province's tourism officials announced that the world's longest suspension bridge with a length of 500 meters is being constructed in Aznav, which will come on stream in June 2021.

Earlier in April tourism authorities of the province announced that they have developed extensive plans to draw more tourists during the winter season to the province and make it the winter tourism hub of the country.

In December 2019, provincial tourism chief Nader Fallahi announced that seventeen tourism projects, worth 1,500 billion rials (some \$35 million) would be inaugurated in the province in the near future.

Ha said that the objective to launch tourism projects in the province is to provide tourists from all over the world and domestic tourists as well with the opportunity to use these facilities and select Ardebil as their prime destination.



Sprawling on a high, windswept plateau, Ardebil is well-known for having lush natural beauties, hospitable people, and its silk and carpet trade tradition. It is also home to the UNESCO-registered Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble.

The province is very cold in winter and mild in summer, attracting thousands every year. The capital city of Ardebil is usually recorded as one of the coldest cities in the country in winter.

Tax exemption on handicrafts remains in force

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

Mapping survey discovers ancient sites in southern Iran

TOURISM TEHRAN – Tens of centuries-old relics and sites have recently been discovered during a mapping survey, which is underway across the Marvdasht plain, which is an archaeologically-rich area once the seat of power for the Achaemenid Persian Empire (c. 550 – 330 BC) in southern Iran.

The survey, supervised by Iranian archaeologist Vahid Barani, is also aimed demarcate the third boundary layer over the UNESCO-tagged Persepolis and Marvdasht country. It also tries to shed new light on the chronology of ancient settlements, amassing data on so-far unearthed relics (potteries, stone tools.

"So far, 150 ancient relics, dating from the Neolithic era to the Islamic epoch have been discovered during the third season of mapping survey being conducted across the Marvdasht plain," Barani said on Monday.

Barani explained that one of the most important goals of this archeological season is to discover the chronological sequence, prepare a comprehensive archaeological map for Marvdasht plain and collect archaeological data and develop the database of the



UNESCO World Heritage site of Persepolis.

"Due to the dispersion of ancient sites in the Marvdasht plain, by preparing GIS (Geographic Information System) maps

and attaching these maps to each other, a coherent archaeological map can be prepared to better understand settlement patterns in this area."

Turkish Airlines reneges on resuming flights to Iran

TOURISM TEHRAN – Turkey's flag carrier Turkish Airlines has extended the suspension of its flights to Iran until October 1, reneging on its previous announcement for resuming flights to Tehran and four other cities of Tabriz, Shiraz, Mashhad, and Isfahan as of September 1.

Although Turkey has resumed flights to many countries in June and July after few months of suspension over the COVID-19 pandemic, it still keeps its common borders with Iran closed, ISNA reported on Tuesday.

According to the schedule, 21 flights per week were to be carried out to Tehran, four flights per week Tabriz, and four per week to Shiraz as of September 1. And two flights per week were to be made to the cities of Mashhad and Isfahan in a two-times-a-week agenda.



However, repeated delays in the reopening Iran-Turkey borders have damaged the tourism ties between the two

countries. As Turkey is a country through which many trips of Iranians living abroad and foreign nationals to Iran are made, many passengers are left confused.

Not announcing a reliable flight schedule, has prevented several businessmen and students from continuing their activities and even left patients who want to go abroad for further treatment helpless.

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

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

Wooden pulpit of Ilkhanid mosque being restored

HERITAGE TEHRAN – A restoration project has been commenced on a minbar (pulpit) of a mosque in Semnan province, which dates back to the Ilkhanid era (1256–1353).

The wooden pulpit is a piece of furniture at the Imam Hussein Mosque that stands tall at Jovin village of Sorkheh county, Sorkheh tourism chief Bahman Akhlaqi announced on Tuesday.

A minbar is where the imam stands to deliver sermons in a mosque or in the Hus-



sainia where the speaker sits and lectures the congregation.

"The pulpit has no steps due to its small size, and the type of connections in this pulpit is of the tongue-and-groove type... and despite the simplicity of construction, it has significant symmetry, order, beauty, and visual balance," Semnan province's tourism department quoted Akhlaqi as saying on Tuesday.

In the middle of the minbar the date of its construction is inscribed, showing the year 727 AH, and in its beneath the name of the designer is engraved, the official added.

Parts of 'world's oldest' protected area ceded to tourism ministry

TOURISM TEHRAN – The ownership of 18 hectares area of the Ghamishloo National Park, which is said to be the oldest national park in the world, in the central province of Isfahan has been handed over to the tourism ministry as there is a Qajar-era (1789–1925) castle inside the park.

The tourism ministry obtained a title deed for 18 hectares of Ghamishloo National Park, of which 12 hectares are located in the protected area, while Isfahan's department of environment has held the ownership for over 20 years, Iraj Heshmati the di-

rector of the provincial department of environment said on Tuesday.

The grandma of all national parks in the world, Ghamishloo National Park, lies near Isfahan and is about 83,000 hectares. Mostly cold-dry climate with high lands and pasture lands. Iranian gazelle and urial sheep herds could be seen in the area.

Unfortunately, the water supply is only dependent on rainfall which is not that enough that the local species can grow a lot in numbers. But they are tough enough to survive for now.



Exterior view of a Qajar-era castle within the Ghamishloo National Park, Isfahan province.

Muharram mourning rituals: Nakhlgardani in Shahroud

By Seyed Hossein Hosseinseddig
(Part 2/2)

The work of dressing the Nakhl lasted until around noon, and during the call to prayer, servants, residents of Bid-Abad neighborhood and other mourners gather for mourning and lunch in the Tekiyehs and mosques of the district. In the afternoon, around 3:00 PM, the mourning crowd of the city will come to the Pay-e Nakhl place to hold this magnificent ceremony. One of the guest delegations in holding the Nakhlgardani ceremony is the mourners of Bagh-Zendan neighborhood. From the distant past, due to the weight and size of the Nakhl, the mourning committee of this neighborhood is invited to hold this ceremony every year. After arriving in front of the Nakhl and greeting the symbolic coffin of the third Shiite Imam, the guest mourners enter the Bazaar and after a few minutes of mourning return to the Nakhl place. It is worth mentioning that Bagh-Zendan neighborhood was a village in the past, which was later considered as one of its neighborhoods with the development of the city.

To pay their respects, two Nakhl sticks are always given to the mourners of the Bagh-Zendan district. Before moving the Nakhl, a small cradle attributed to Holiness or Hazrat Ali Asghar (AS), the six-month-old son of Imam Hussein, is installed inside the Nakhl and the needy people tie their fabrics in it with the intention of consecration.



A blessed cloth to the holy shrine of Imam Hussein (AS) is another pendant in the middle of the Nakhl. Putting apples on top of the swords attached to the Nakhl and placing a large metal bell in the middle of the Nakhl are other related tasks. Because the mourners move the Nakhl when the bell rings. This is done by one of the old servants on top of the Nakhl. With the presence of the mourning crowd around 4 pm, signs such as the flagpole, Hodah or palanquin and cradle of Hazrat Ali Asghar (AS), which are carried by religious delegations, are brought to the place where the Nakhl is placed and greet the Nakhl by lowering the head or blade of the flagpole.

Amari is a small tent similar to Hodah or palanquin of Holiness Zainab or the address of the wedding night room of Hazrat Qasim (AS). The flagpole is also carried as a sign of the flag of the owner of the flag of Karbala event. Several Zul-Jannah (the name of the

horse that Imam Hussein rode in Karbala) decorated with colorful cloths and shields are moved in front of or around the Nakhl.

With the presence of the mourners of Bagh-Zendan neighborhood delegations and the people belonging to the tribes of the founders of Nakhl under this sign of mourning, as well as the standing of two elders of Tekiyeh Bazaar and Bid-Abad who are responsible for guiding the Nakhl from a height with a stick in their hands. In a glorious moment, with the shout of Hussein and the ringing of the bell, the mourners lift the Nakhl and move in front of the Pay-e Nakhl Mosque towards the old cemetery of the city.

The distance between Pay-e Nakhl Mosque and the old cemetery of the city is about 300 meters, and the mourners of Nakhl will reach this destination in a few minutes. After placing the Nakhl on the ground and placing the flagpole and other signs around it, the religious groups and delegations each mourn in front of the Nakhl for a few minutes, respectively. At this time, lamentation about five members of the Prophet's Household (The five members of Al-Aba refer to the Prophet of Islam himself and his beloved daughter Holiness Fatima and his son-in-law Imam Ali and his grandchildren Imam Hassan and Imam Hussein) was recited by one of the eulogist or praisers of the Bagh-Zendan's delegation, and all those present began to beat their chests.

It is worth mentioning that reciting this lament has a long history and is recited every

year by one of the survivors of the late Haj Ebrahim Ameriyan on this day. Singing the lamentations of five members of the Prophet's Household is a priority, followed by lamentation. In the meantime, the blessed cloths and apples at the top of the Nakhl swords are distributed among the attendees, and many wish for the healing of their patients at this time. After reciting the lament and giving a speech by one of the preachers and an hour after the beginning of the ceremony, the Nakhl is moved among the shouts O Hussein mourners and returned to its original place. This ceremony often lasts until the moments before the sunset call for pray.

It is narrated that the lament of five people based on the hadith of Kisa and in connection with the five members of Al-Abba was arranged by a poet named Delkhoo and its performance by the late Haj Ebrahim Ameriyan has been common for some time during the palm-carrying ceremony on the eleventh day. This poem is compiled in 26 verses and the mourners repeat the last hemistich of each verse.

It should be noted that the Bagh-Zendan neighborhood of Shahroud city also has its own Nakhl. The mourners of this neighborhood, with the participation of other mourners of Imam Hussein, carry the black-clad Nakhl to their neighborhood on the morning of Ashura day.

(The author is a faculty member at the Islamic Azad University)

We lead the way in high-tech industries

Iran is pioneer in the region in biotechnology, ICT, aerospace, and artificial intelligence: VP Sourena Sattari says

By Ali A. Jenabzadeh & Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN — Iran is playing the leading role in the region in the fields of fintech, ICT, stem cell, aerospace, and is unrivaled in artificial intelligence, Sourena Sattari, the vice president for science and technology, told the Tehran Times in an exclusive interview on Saturday.

He went on to say that in terms of biotechnology Iran is at the forefront by producing 24 biomedicines.

U.S. sanctions caused exports of knowledge-based companies to decline three years ago, however, it has returned to growth and is projected to reach the pre-sanctions level of more than \$1 billion by the end of the current [Iranian calendar] year (March 20, 2021), he emphasized.

Production of COVID-19 test kits

Referring to the domestic production of COVID-19 test kits, he highlighted that some of the knowledge-based companies reached a production capacity of more than 200-300 thousand diagnostic kits per day.

Currently, 6 companies have been approved to produce these kits, and a newly-approved company recently was tasked with the production of 1.5 million kits, he added.

Pointing out that multiplying the production of COVID-19 equipment led to a significant foreign currency saving for the country, he said “it also helped us cope with problems and not to run out of equipment because no matter how much money we gave, no country had the equipment to sell.

“In such a condition, we were not only able to quickly adapt and produce all needed equipment, but to produce some manufacturing machines, and considerably reduce imports.”

He went on to emphasize that the country not only can fully meet its need for diagnostic kits, but there is a great export potential.

Export-oriented firms supported

“We have so far sent medical and self-protective equipment to many countries for fighting COVID-19,” he said, adding, there are 30 centers in other countries to follow up on export confirmation, as some knowledge-based products take up to 10 years to receive export approval.

“So far, over six medicines have received export confirmation in Russia and are being exported, he noted, stating that, due to the complexities of exporting knowledge-based products, we have prepared plans to support export-oriented startups.

To support exporters, we pay up to 90 percent of the cost of obtaining standards and patent registration, the cost of registering products in foreign countries, as well as provision of significant financial assistance for participation in foreign exhibitions, in addition to granting them low-interest loans, and most importantly, we analyze export opportunities for the companies and help them find the proper export market. In other words, we provide them with comprehensive information,” he explained.



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Last year, knowledge-based companies achieved a record sale of 1.2 quadrillion rials (nearly \$28.5 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials), which is expected to increase by 40 percent this year.

Students abroad highly supported to return

Unfortunately, there is not a large number of Iranian students abroad, only a total of 50,000 students, which is over 1 percent of our total student population, and this number is not satisfactory, but the quality of students abroad is good and that is why we have been working hard on policies to bring them back since the past four years, he stated.

He went on to note that so far, more than 1,800 students have returned from the top 100 universities in the world, nearly 400 of whom have been graduated from the world's top 20 universities. “Our supports are in the form of a different package of features, and we provide all the communications for them before they return.”

The return trend has intensified after the pandemic, previously 1.5 people returned to the country per day, but now it has reached more than 2 people, he highlighted.

There is another issue, for example, some students decide to return for a short period and hold various workshops and courses in universities and research centers, for whom we also provide financial support, Sattari noted.

Record sale of \$28.5 billion

Knowledge-based companies promoted a new culture in the country that do not have the physical assets but generate millions of dollars through producing knowledge.

Fortunately, last year, companies achieved a record sale of 1.2 quadrillion rials (nearly \$28.5 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials), which is expected to increase by 40 percent this year.

To date, 42 knowledge-based companies with a total value of 2.8 quadrillion rials (nearly \$66.6 billion) have been listed on the stock exchange and they will soon turn into the biggest businesses in the county, he said.

Potential to produce eco-friendly cars

Car manufacturing has been a monopolized system and breaking it was not that easy, since the beginning, the country's car manufacturing was more of a factory or assembly system so that it has not been moving toward an innovative approach.

“But the most important thing in automobile production is a strong research and development department, and we are taking measures to help them produce some auto parts that have been previously imported, yet there would be no reform in the country's

To date, 42 knowledge-based companies with a total value of 2.8 quadrillion rials (nearly \$66.6 billion) have been listed on the stock exchange, which will soon turn into the biggest businesses in the county.

car manufacturing industry.”

“We are working on smart and electric cars and two active sections are conducting research and development in this field, and we are seriously pursuing it.

Knowledge-based companies have the potential to produce eco-friendly cars, but it takes time to make changes in the industry.”

Dealing with environmental issues

Pointing to the activities taken to counter environmental problems, he stated that the firms have so far been developing advanced technologies to address different environmental issues, such as wastewater treatment, water purification, fighting sand and dust storms, alternative cultivation patterns, etc.

Hi-tech tackling environmental issues highly depend on environmental economics which is a sub-category of economics concerned with environmental issues. Particular issues include the costs and benefits of alternative environmental policies to deal with air pollution, water quality, toxic substances, solid waste, and global warming, he suggested.

Environmental economics emphasizes on strong sustainability and rejects the proposition that human-made (physical) capital can substitute for natural capital, he added.

“We can never have an environment-based economy if we do not price environmental problems, and the government must enter to tackle any issues, but when there is an economic solution, people will engage and the issue is solved sustainably.

For example, to control a sand and dust storm hotspot, if the government enters, it can solve the problem by mulching for a while, but if businesses enter, an economic aspect will be formed and they can generate revenue and counter the environmental problems.”

Knowledge-based economy is key to success

Referring to the vision for the next ten years, he said that “we are changing the orientation and attitude of universities, and they have changed dramatically in the last five years. The orientation of universities must be solving people's daily problems while earning a significant portion of their revenue from selling technological advances to industries.

“We win when the knowledge-based economy becomes the first economy of the country. If this happens, universities will also find their place in the society. The difference between a creative and educated person and an ordinary one gets more clear. In a knowledge-based economy, the foundation of change is human, not underground resources,” he highlighted.

He went on to emphasize that “we are vigorously developing technology centers and expanding all knowledge-based elements, concluding. We have made a serious change in science and technology, but in the next ten years, these changes must be evident in people's daily lives, more importantly, moving towards smart cities.”

Iran urges FAO to promote food systems, digital technologies in agriculture

SOCIETY TEHRAN — In an address to the 35th session of the Regional Conference for Asia and the

Pacific of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Iran underscored the need to increase investment in food systems and promote the use of digital technologies as the two key factors to boost both productivity and sustainability of agricultural activities.

The Iranian delegation shared its concerns regarding the increasing challenges the agriculture sector faces at both regional and global scales, particularly highlighting the adverse effects of climate change, the lack of knowledge-loaded agricultural practices, low-skilled workforce, the prevalence of poverty in rural communities and youth emigrations.



The 4-day conference, which started on Tuesday, is focused on, among other things, the impact of COVID-19 on food and agriculture; setting regional priorities to manage water for agriculture under conditions of water scarcity; building sustainable and resilient food systems; harnessing innovation and digital agriculture and implementing FAO's Hand-in-Hand Initiative – as an evidence-based, country-led and country-owned program forged to accelerate the agricultural transformation and sustainable rural development to eradicate poverty, and end hunger and all forms of malnutrition across the region, according to a press release published by FAO Representation in Iran.

The event provides an inclusive platform to examine ways forward to strengthen the resilience of agro-food systems and livelihoods and mitigate the effects of COVID-19 and climate change on agricultural sectors.

Along with its 46 member nations, the private sector, and civil society organizations in the region, FAO convened the conference.

Home to more than half a billion of the world's undernourished people, Asia and the Pacific region due to COVID-19-linked lockdowns is experiencing an economic slowdown, widespread job losses, collapsing incomes, and falling remittances that further threatened the food security and increased the acute hunger in the region.

These circumstances require collective efforts and FAO and its national counterparts call on all stakeholders and interested groups to link the arms to tackle these converging challenges in Asia and the Pacific.

Semnan University to host intl. symposium on COVID-19

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Semnan University and the Iranian

Biological Society are scheduled to hold an online international symposium on biological, medical, and basic science approaches toward COVID-19 in light of the global crisis.

The conference will be held on September 10-11 within the framework of the 21st National Congress and the 9th International Congress of Biology.

In this symposium, national and international scientists and researchers will share their knowledge on the concepts of biology, medicine, and basic sciences to the pandemic.

COVID-19 pandemic in the world and in Iran, genetics of SARS-cov-2 virus, virus in growth medium and vaccine production, mechanisms of coronavirus activity, coronavirus identification, virus neutralization are among the topics to be discussed in this symposium.

Molecular treatment of COVID-19, chemical and herbal drugs against the virus, and theoretical and simulation approaches to the disease are other topics that will be discussed.

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 14)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

اسم	شکل	صدا	اسم	شکل	صدا
آلف	ا	ā, a, e, o	صاد	ص	s
ب	ب	b	ضاد	ض	z
پ	پ	p	طا	ط	t
ت	ت	t	ظا	ظ	z
ث	ث	s	عین	ع	?
جیم	ج	j	غین	غ	q
چ	چ	č	ف	ف	f
ح	ح	h	قاف	ق	q
خ	خ	x	کاف	ک	k
دال	د	d	گاف	گ	g
ذال	ذ	z	لام	ل	l
ر	ر	r	میم	م	m
ز	ز	z	نون	ن	n
ژ	ژ	ž	واو	و	u, v, o, ow
سین	س	s	ه	ه	h, e, a
شین	ش	š	ی	ی	y, i, ey

Iranian researcher selected member of IUCN Species Survival Commission

SOCIETY TEHRAN — An Iranian researcher was selected as a key member of the Species Survival Commission (SSC) of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The researcher, Rahim Abdolkarimi, is an employee of the department of environment at Bukan city located in West Azarbaijan province, who had previously been selected as a key member in the development of the eastern great bustard's conservation project.

The IUCN is an international organization working in the field of nature conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. It is involved in data gathering and analysis, research, field projects, advocacy, and education. IUCN's mission is to “influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable”. Established in 1948, the IUCN has a membership of over



1,400 governmental and non-governmental organizations with 16,000 volunteer scientists and experts. Its headquarters are in Gland, Switzerland.

The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) is a science-based network of more than 9,000 volunteer experts from almost every country of the world, aiming to achieve the vision of, “A just world that values and conserves nature through positive action to reduce the loss of diversity of life on earth”.

Working in close association with IUCN's Global Species Program, SSC's major role is to provide information to IUCN on biodiversity conservation, the inherent value of species, their role in ecosystem health and functioning, the provision of ecosystem services, and their support to human livelihoods. This information is fed into The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

SSC members also provide scientific advice to conservation organizations, government agencies, and other IUCN members, and support the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements.

ENGLISH IN USE

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Wildfire extinguished in northern forests

Wildfire, erupted in northern forests of Gilan province over the past 2 days, has been fully extinguished, commander of the protection unit of natural resources and watershed management organization of Gilan has stated. According to the latest statistics, approximately 130 hectares of forests in Gilan province have been burnt in recent days, IRNA quoted Mohammad Qorbani as saying on Sunday.

He went on to say that 99 percent of fires in 13 cities of Gilan province have caused no serious damage to the trees.

In spite of the complete containment of fire, the protection unit is on full alert, he further noted.

Appreciating all the forces who made efforts to control the wildfire, he concluded that fire broke out in various cities, including Rezvanshahr, Talesh, Roudbar, Siahkal and some others.

آتش سوزی جنگل های گیلان مهار شد

فرمانده یگان حفاظت اداره کل منابع طبیعی و آبخیزداری گیلان گفت: آتش سوزی جنگل های استان گیلان پس از ۷۲ ساعت تلاش ، کاملاً مهار شد.

سرهنگ محمد قربانی لرد عصر روز شنبه در گفت و گوی اختصاصی با خبرنگار ایرنا اظهار داشت: بر اساس آخرین آمارها به صورت تقریبی حدود «۱۳۰ هکتار» از اراضی جنگلی استان گیلان در چند روز اخیر دچار آتش سوزی شدند.

وی افزود: ۹۹ درصد از آتش سوزی جنگل های ۱۳ شهرستان استان گیلان سطحی بوده و خسارت جدی به درختان وارد نشده است.

فرمانده یگان حفاظت اداره کل منابع طبیعی و آبخیزداری گیلان خاطر نشان کرد: به رغم مهار کامل آتش در جنگل های استان ، نیروهای یگان حفاظت اداره کل منابع طبیعی و آبخیزداری در آماده باش کامل هستند.

وی ضمن قدردانی از تمامی نیروها در مهار آتش در جنگل های استان گیلان اضافه کرد: آتش سوزی در سطح شهرستان های مختلف استان از جمله رضوانشهر، تالش، رودبار، سیاهکل و غیره روی داده.

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www.tehrantimes.com■ Managing Director: Mohammad Shojaeian
■ Editor-in-Chief: Ali A.Jenabzadeh» Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895
editor@tehrantimes.com

» Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000

» Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051430

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SPIRITUAL AWAKENINGDeath with dignity is better than a life of
abasement.

Imam Hussein (AS)

Oldenburg Intl. Film Festival picks “Untimely”

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director Puya Eshtehardi's drama “Untimely” will be screened at the 27th Oldenburg International Film Festival in Germany.

The film will be competing in the independent category of the event, which will take place in the northwestern German city of Oldenburg from September 16 to 20.

“Untimely” tells the story of Hamin, a young private who is doing his military service in a watchtower on the borderline of Iran and Pakistan. Impatient for a day off to attend his sister's wedding ceremony, he gets into a fight with his commander. Up in the watchtower, Hamin reviews the past years and the things that happened to him and his sister since their childhood.

The film has been screened in several international events and won awards, including the Best World Cinema Feature Award at the Kansas City FilmFest International in April.

“Alamdard” to go on stage in Tehran to raise funds for poor

A R T TEHRAN — The symphonic poem “Alamdard” will be performed at Tehran's Vahdat Hall next week to raise funds for the poor across the country.

Iranian musical prodigy Puria Khadem is the composer of “Alamdard” (“The Standard-Bearer”), which is about Hazrat Abbas (AS), the brother of Imam Hussein (AS) and the standard-bearer of the Imam's group in the Ashura battle in 680, during which the Imam and his companions were martyred.

Veteran actor Parviz Parastui is the

producer of the performance, which will be conducted by Bardia Kiaras, the conductor of the Tehran Symphony Orchestra.

Hossein Mosafer Astaneh or Hossein Parsai will direct the dramatic parts of the symphonic poem, which will be performed by a group of celebrated actors.

The performance will be staged in a collaboration between the Rudaki Foundation and the Khademin Ali ibn Abi Talib (AS) Charity Organization, which is being handled by Olympic gold medalist wrestler Rasul Khadem who is Puria's father.

More details about the performance



Maestro Ali Rahbari (R) introduces young composer Puria Khadem to the audience after conducting a performance of his “Alamdard” with the Tehran Symphonic Orchestra at Vahdat Hall in Tehran on November 26, 2015. (Honaronline/Farzan Qasemi)

and the exact date will be announced in the upcoming days.

Earlier in November 2015, the Tehran Symphonic Orchestra performed “Alamdard” under the baton of Ali Rahbari at Vahdat Hall. “I believe this 16-year-old boy is a

champion of music composition,” Rahbari said after the performance.

The composition was also performed the same year by the Azerbaijan State Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Rauf Abdullayev in Baku.

Persian translator Mahumd Gudarzi picks Gothic fictions “Dracula”, “Gulliver’s Travels”

The term Gothic fiction refers to a style of writing that is characterized by elements of fear, horror, death, and gloom, as well as romantic elements, such as nature, individuality and very high emotion. The literary genre originated in England in the second half of the 18th century.

“Dracula” is considered to be one of the best examples of Gothic literature, which makes these types of books different from other genres. A girl in danger, a hero, a protagonist, a dark room, old buildings and a deep feeling like love, fear or anger are usually observed in these types of novels,” Gudarzi told the Persian service of Honaronline on Tuesday.

He added that he chose “Dracula” for translation because of its importance in the history of Western literature, and its attraction for readers.

He also added that he chose Swift’s “Gulliver’s Travels” because Swift was a secretary for a great politician of his time and had good knowledge about political issues, and had made use of his knowledge in writing political articles.

He also noted that the two books have been previously translated and published, however, he decided to offer new translations of the books, especially for the youth.



Translator Mahumd Gudarzi in an undated photo.

CULTURE TEHRAN — Persian translator d e s k Mahumd Gudarzi is rendering “Dracula” and “Gulliver’s Travels”, two stories from Gothic literature by the Irish authors Bram Stoker and Jonathan Swift.

The Persian translations of the books will be published by Borj Publications in Tehran.

Iranian shorts to compete in Ukraine festival

By Manijeh Rezapoor

TEHRAN — Three Iranian short films, “The Cycling Wind”, “Don’t Worry” and “I Am Not Alice but Here Is Wonderland”, will be competing in the DYTATKO International Children’s Media Festival in Ukraine.

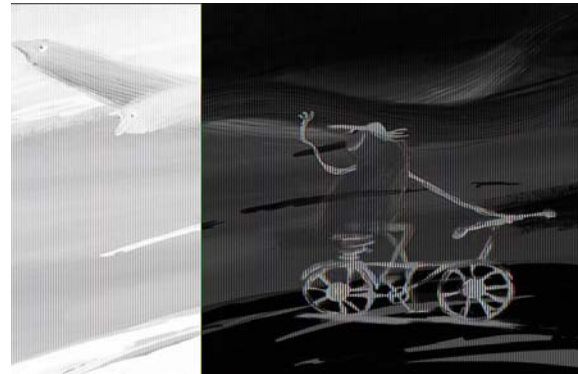
“The Cycling Wind” by Nazanin Sobhan-Sarbandi has been produced by the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA).

The film tells the story of a young wind that comes into possession of a bike, which helps the wind to blow even faster without expending much energy and to truly enjoy its time.

“Don’t Worry” by Mana Pakseresh shows how a teenage girl spends her birthday alone at home because of the coronavirus pandemic, however, her mother, who is a nurse, has a surprise for her from the hospital.

“I Am Not Alice but Here Is Wonderland” by Mahdieh Sadat Ahmadi Soleimani is about Alice who lives with her family happily and she has friends such as the tree and the birds to which she is drawn. She has a happy family.

The festival will take place in the northeastern Ukrainian



A scene from “The Cycling Wind” by Nazanin Sobhan-Sarbandi.

city of Kharkiv from September 2 to 5.

Iranian stage director and film critic Hamed Soleimanzadeh was selected for a jury of the 10th Dytatko International Children’s Television Festival in 2018.

Mexican writer Hugo Salcedo’s “Crossing” on immigration to go on stage in Tehran

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director Behruz Sarv-Alishahi will stage Mexican playwright Hugo Salcedo’s “El Viaje de Los Cantores”, which roughly translates to “The Crossing” in English, at Tehran’s Molavi Hall on Sunday next week.

The play is based on a true story that occurred in 1987 when 19 Mexican men were suffocated while attempting illegal immigration to the U.S.

The play focuses on six of the immigrants who pay \$100 each to smugglers to be spirited across the border in a filthy railroad boxcar. The sealed boxcar stops on a sidetrack because of trouble with the train’s engine and then tragedy strikes.

Speaking to the Persian service of

Honaronline on Tuesday, Sarv-Alishahi said that the idea of staging this play came to his mind when he was studying at the University of Avignon in France.

“Fleeing the homeland and immigration has always been a serious human issue throughout history, and at times, these immigrations have caused catastrophes like drownings in seas and oceans,” he stated.

“Since the play is based on a true story and immigration is a serious issue at the present time, I decided to translate and stage it,” he added.

“The theme of the play is immigration, which is currently a big issue in the world. Many people are thinking about fleeing their native countries and then they

have to think of returning shortly after immigrating,” he noted.

According to Sarv-Alishahi, the play has been translated into Persian for the first time and he will be the first Iranian director to stage it.

His cast composed of 13 actors, including Babak Qaderi, Taha Hamed, Melika Shahab and Elham Parvizi, has been rehearsing the play in Tehran over the past month in which the city is facing a spike in coronavirus cases.

“Theater is not our hobby; rather it is our job and stricter health protocols are observed at Molavi Hall to prevent the spread of the virus. We have to continue our activities, because coronavirus exists in parallel with our lives,” Sarv-Alishahi said.

Iranian, Indian scholars discuss Gandhi’s influence on Asian cinema

→1 Bollywood actor Behrouz Chahel, and the director of Iran’s Farabi Cinema Foundation’s International Department, Raed Faridzadeh, attended the webinar.

Speaking at the webinar, Faridzadeh pointed to the cultural affinities between Iran and India, and elaborated on the specific character of Gandhi as one of the most influential figures in the world.

He said, “Gandhi’s words are heard in Iranian cinema and TV productions, because he used to talk about peace and a world without violence.”

He added that Gandhi can open windows to the world of

dialogue and help promote a world without racism.

Faridzadeh also said that joint film productions can help promote the cultural values of the two countries and praised Gandhi for his humane treatment of people.

Chahel also talked about the major characteristics of Gandhi, such as seeking a peaceful life, following truth and public welfare, and later discussed his influence on Iranian cinema.

The other attendees also talked about Iranian cinema, and stressed the need for joint productions on Gandhi’s philosophy of life.

Only for God

He could not manage to be present at a religious ceremony held in the village. In the car, he called a maddah (Shiite eulogist) and said: “If you have time, recite the prayer that you recited yesterday.”

Seconds later, he was slowly shedding tears while hearing the prayer.

