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A researcher receives an award at the 21st Royan International Twin Congress in Tehran on Wednesday.

By Afshin Majlesi
Tehran Times Journalist

On the occasion of national day against British colonialism

Shahrivar 12th (which falls on Sept. 2 this year) marks the national day against British colonialism in Iran, remembering the martyrdom anniversary of Ra'is Ali Delvari, the great hero of the anti-colonial struggle in southern Iran.

The Iranian independent fighter and anti-British colonialism activist, who organized popular resistance against the British troops, was martyred in 1915 at the age of 33 in a fierce clash with British aggressors in Bushehr.

Though Persia (Iran) declared the state of neutrality in World War I, it became divided into northern and southern spheres of influence under the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1907 as the country was deemed as a great source of interest due to its significant oil reserve and strategic geography.

The treaty, however, was widely viewed by Iranians as having made the nation into nothing more than a British and Russian protectorate, so countless local uprisings occurred against the British and Russian forces from north to the south.

In northern Iran, Jangal movement of Gilan, was the main indigenous resistance against the foreign occupiers, and in southern parts, Tangistani amongst other tribes constituted the main resisting power against the British Empire.

On the eve of World War I, Germany established the Intelligence Bureau for the East for the Central Powers, intending to promote and sustain anti-colonial movements and nationalist agitations in British India, Persia, and Egypt. Wilhelm Wassmuss led the bureau's operations in Persia seeking the goal to free Persia from the Allied Powers' influence and to create a wedge between Russia and the British forces.

That was the time when Delvari with the help of Wassmuss was formulating a general Anti-British uprising in Iran. The Iranian hero was, ultimately, killed by Anglo-Indian forces following months of bloody clashes.

That was a brief story of why Shahrivar 12th has been designated as the national day of combat against British colonialism in Iran.

Years after his death, inheritors of Ra'is Ali Delvari dedicated his home to the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization of Iran (later turned into a ministry). ➔6

'New Middle East is more of narrative than reality'

TEHRAN — In the wake of the normalization deal between the United Arab Emirates and Israel, U.S. officials asserted that the deal marks the emergence of what they call a "new Middle East". However, a West Asia expert tells the Tehran Times that this concept is pure fantasy with no roots in reality.

On August 13, out of the blue, U.S. President Donald Trump announced that he brokered a deal between the UAE and Israel that would lead to full normalization of relations between Abu Dhabi and Tel Aviv, a move that was widely touted as a "historic diplomatic breakthrough."

Under the deal, officially known as the Abraham Accord, Israel and the UAE "have committed to the exchange of embassies and ambassadors, and to begin cooperation in a broad range of fields including education, healthcare, trade, and security," according to a White House statement issued on August 13.

While the normalization deal sparked widespread outrage in the Muslim world and further fuelled anti-normalization sentiments among the Arab public opinion, U.S. officials cast it as a new stage in the history of the region that will bring peace and prosperity to West Asia.

Speaking at the White House about the announcement of the UAE-Israel deal, Brian Hook, the outgoing U.S. special representative for Iran, declared that the deal is part of a "new Middle East."

"What we see today is a new Middle East. The trend lines are very different today, and we see the future is very much in the Gulf and with Israel, and the past is with the Iranian regime," Hook said.

Jared Kushner, Trump's son-in-law and his senior advisor, echoed the same remarks during his latest visit to Israel and the UAE. ➔3

U.S. protests: Portland mayor calls for peace as protests near 100 days

Portland officials are calling for an end to protests that have led to violence, arson, arrests, allegations of police brutality and at least one fatal shooting in the city as demonstrations have stretched on for nearly 100 nights.

Mayor Ted Wheeler in a Facebook post asked Portlanders to join him in "denouncing violence" days after a man was shot and killed Saturday as supporters of President Donald Trump clashed with protesters against police violence and racism in downtown Portland.

"Everyone deserves to feel safe in their community," Wheeler wrote Tuesday night. "But last night saw more senseless violence in Portland."

Protests against racial injustice and police brutality have continued for 96 nights in Portland, with demonstrations often proceeding peacefully during the day before devolving into chaos at night. Buildings have been

damaged, police and protesters have been injured and hundreds have been arrested for a variety of charges.

Wheeler's call comes as both Oregon's governor and state police announced they were taking more steps to ensure that people who commit violence are prosecuted.

Gov. Kate Brown has called on outside agencies to assist in cracking down on the unrest, while Oregon State Police will allow troopers responding to protests to be deputized by the U.S. Marshals Service to make it easier for suspects to be federally prosecuted if necessary.

Wheeler on Tuesday condemned acts that he said have ranged "from stupid, to dangerous, to criminal."

He said Monday night brought the destruction of "another minority-owned, local business," police violence and an attack on the building where he lives.

U.S. can end up losing a lot if it does not review its unfounded position: Russia

By staff and agency

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said on Tuesday that the United States' attempt to trigger snapback mechanism and restore UN sanctions on Iran has no legal ground and it can end up losing a lot if it does not review its "unfounded position".

"We are certain that if the international community and the UN Security Council members will continue to stick to principled positions on this issue, which is what

we are working on, then the situation will emerge when the U.S. will be alone in the UN Security Council with this paradoxical point of view. At least, such a unique development seems rather likely. Therefore, the U.S. can end up losing a lot if it does not review its unfounded position and does not take obvious things into account," he told reporters, according to TASS.

Ryabkov noted that the meeting of the Joint Commission of Iran and five international

mediators (Russia, China, France, Germany and the United Kingdom) in Vienna rejected Washington's initiative to reinstate sanctions against Tehran.

"We are witnessing an important process of consolidation of parties to the JCPOA [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the Iranian nuclear program] against this American venture. We are certain that the results of today's event will help our colleagues in New York continue their work in the right direction," he said. ➔2



Only kneeling on Palestinians' neck has been normalized, Zarif says

TEHRAN — In a rebuke of the United Arab Emirates that has normalized relations with Israel, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Wednesday said that "the only thing that has been normalized" is kneeling on the Palestinians' neck.

Writing on his Twitter account, Zarif asked: "Normalization' with Israel?" by posting a photo which shows an Israeli soldier kneeling on a Palestinian protester's neck. ➔2

The reality of Ashura versus the reality show of America

By Yuram Abdullah Weller

Imam Hussein (AS) was martyred in the year 680 CE near Karbala in present-day Iraq along with a number of his loyal companions in a battle against the forces of darkness and oppression. The Imam's martyrdom was so cataclysmic that a cosmic cry of agony is said to have reverberated throughout the heavens and the earth. The repercussions of his gallant stand are still felt today and are commemorated each year by believing Muslims around the world on the 10th day of the lunar month of Muharram, the day called Ashura.

The fact that the story of this heroic battle on that day on the sands of the desert of Naynawa, Karbala is remembered and retold some 1400 years later attests to the enduring reality of Ashura as well as the significance and the sacredness of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS). Always responding defensively to unprovoked attacks initiated by the forces of the vile and ruthless caliph, Yazid ibn Mu'awiya, Imam Hussein (AS) and his companions went forth and were martyred, one by one. Traditionally, the Imam had 72 companions with him on that day, but some commentators cite a greater number, such as S.V. Mir Ahmed Ali, who lists 105 martyrs on Ashura. Sheikh Abbas al-Qummi lists 29 companions of the Imam as being martyred in the first raid by Yazid's army, which was under the command of Umar ibn Sa'd.

The one-sided conflict, which took place on that day of Ashura, demonstrated the impeccable and unflinching character of the noble Imam and his small band of dedicated companions, whose commitment to fight against tyranny for the sake of Islam against all odds continues to inspire Muslims and non-Muslims alike to this day. ➔5

Iran seeks to resume flights to Ukraine: ambassador

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iran’s ambassador to Ukraine **d e s k** has said that Iran seeks to resume flights to Ukraine which were stopped after the Ukrainian plane crash in early January.



“Unfortunately, the Ukrainian government canceled passenger flights between Iran and Ukraine after the incident,” Manouchehr Moradi told RIA Novosti, IRNA reported on Wednesday.

The Ukrainian airliner was mistakenly shot down shortly after taking off from Tehran’s Imam Khomeini airport on January 8, killing all 167 passengers and 9 crew members.

On January 11, the Armed Forces General Staff released a statement saying the plane was mistakenly downed near the airport.

The incident happened a few hours after Iran fired dozens of ballistic missiles at a U.S. airbase inside Iraq in retaliation for the assassination of top Iranian military commander Qassem Soleimani.

The airplane had been mistaken for an invading missile.

Iran unveils new portable radar

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iran’s Air Defense Force on **d e s k** Wednesday unveiled “Kashef-99” radar, a mobile system capable of detecting small flying objects.

Brigadier General Alireza Sabahifard, the commander of the Air Defense Force, attended the unveiling ceremony.



Kashef-99 can detect 300 targets simultaneously within a range of 12 kilometers, Tasnim reported.

The domestically produced device is a 3D phased-array radar system that is carried on a vehicle, suitable for detecting small aircraft and objects.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on Monday that Iran owes its security to preparedness and vigilance of the Air Defense Force.

“Send my greeting to vigilant staff of the country’s air defense; security of the country owes to preparedness and vigilance of the air defense,” Ayatollah Khamenei said in a message on the occasion of the anniversary of the establishment of the Air Defense Force.

The Leader added, “Our religiously devoted people praise your incessant efforts, be appreciative of this.”

Only kneeling on Palestinians’ neck has been normalized, Zarif says

1 → Without caring about the injustices against the fellow Palestinians, the United Arab Emirates has taken steps to fully normalize ties with Israel.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution, asserted on Tuesday that the 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 virtual meeting with Education Ministry directors.

“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.”

Iran’s Foreign Ministry has called the action a “strategic stupidity” by the UAE and Israel.

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.

U.S. can end up losing a lot if it does not review its unfounded position: Russia

1 → He also emphasized that all the meeting participants again backed preserving the deal. According to him, they took stock of the JCPOA’s current implementation and discussed steps to boost chances of saving it.

Ryabkov also said that the meeting in Vienna discussed Russian President Vladimir Putin’s initiative on organizing a summit on the Persian Gulf security.

“The Russian delegation used the occasion to substantively deliver not only details of this proposal, but also to promote the colleagues’ understanding of the concept of collective security in the Persian Gulf area, which we put forward in an updated form last year,” he noted.

Niger rejects U.S. bid to restore UN sanctions on Iran

1 → Earlier, thirteen of the 15-member UN body rejected what Pompeo called U.S. “notification” to the Council regarding Iran’s compliance with the deal. Most Council’s members said that the U.S. had no legal authority to submit a notification to the UN Security Council and start the snapback process because it withdrew from the nuclear deal on May 8, 2018, and thus it has lost all participants’ rights envisaged in the deal including the right to trigger the return of UN sanctions. However, the U.S. keeps insisting that it has the right to trigger the snapback process, a mechanism built into the 2015 nuclear deal that allows participants to restore international sanctions on Iran in case it breached the deal.

According to the mechanism, if a party to the JCPOA concludes that another party is not complying with its commitments under the agreement, then the complaining party may refer its complaint to the Joint Commission, a body created under the JCPOA to monitor implementation. If a complaint by a non-Iran party is not resolved within 35 days, then the complaining party can notify the Security Council that it believes the complaint constitutes a “significant non-performance”. The Security Council would then have thirty days to adopt a resolution to continue the lifting of sanctions. If such a resolution is not adopted within those thirty days, then the sanctions of all of the pre-JCPOA nuclear-related UN Security Council resolutions would automatically be re-imposed. The U.S. isn’t using this mechanism to re-impose the



UN sanctions. Instead, it planned to trigger the snapback by getting around the Joint Commission and directly notifying the Council of a “significant non-performance” by Iran as defined in the UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

During the 30-day process, if no Security Council member submitted a resolution calling for the continuation of the UN sanctions on Iran within 10 days of receiving a notification – a measure that would certainly be vetoed by the U.S. –, then the responsibility would fall on the president of the Security Council to introduce such a resolution, which also would certainly be shot down by a U.S. veto. In light of this legal impasse, Indonesia

chose to distance itself from the legal battle by refusing to take further action. Facing a similar situation, Niger also followed in Indonesia’s footsteps, saying it will maintain the position expressed by the former president of the Security Council.

“We’re staying with this decision... that was stated and announced by the president of the Security Council last month,” said Niger’s UN Ambassador Abdou Abarry, ruling out any move to put forward a draft resolution under the snapback process to extend sanctions relief for Iran, according to a Reuters report.

But Abarry said: “Any other member state of the Security Council can do it. The United

States themselves can do it.”

Niger took over as the UN Security Council president for September while the U.S.-Iran showdown at the UN reached a critical juncture. Iran and the U.S. are making efforts to gain the support of Niger during its presidency.

On Tuesday, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani held a telephone conversation with his Nigerian counterpart Mahamadou Issoufou in a bid to prevent a “misuse” of the UN Security Council.

“I am confident that the Republic of Niger, as a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, will act completely independently and professionally during its presidency of the UN Security Council and prevent the misuse of the position of the United Nations and the Security Council for American extravagance and unilateralism, just as it took a very constructive stance against the illegal resolution to extend the arms embargo on Iran,” Rouhani told Issoufou, according to a statement carried by the presidential website.

Earlier on August 20, Pompeo met with Abarry to get him on board with the U.S. plan to restore the international restrictions on Iran.

“Good to congratulate Ambassador Abdou Abarry on Niger’s upcoming Presidency of the UN Security Council for September. We look forward to working with Niger as UNSC president to ensure the Council carries UNSC Resolution 2231 and holds Iran accountable for its actions,” tweeted Pompeo on August 20.

U.S. cannot initiate process of reinstating UN sanctions: China

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Chinese Mission to UN said in a tweet on Wednesday that the United States cannot initiate process of reinstating UN sanctions on Iran under the 2231 resolution which endorses the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA.

“A fruitful meeting of #JCPOA Joint Commission at a critical juncture. All participants reaffirmed the importance of preserving the agreement and its full implementation. It is the common belief that US cannot initiate the process of reinstating UN sanctions under #UNSCR2231,” said

the tweet.

Chinese Ambassador to Tehran Chang Hua also said in a tweet on Wednesday, “It is the common belief that US cannot initiate the process of reinstating UN sanctions under #UNSCR2231.”

JCPOA Joint Commission convened in Vienna on Tuesday. The meeting was held while the U.S. is being isolated due to its illegal moves to extend arms embargo against Iran or return the UN sanctions against the country. The measures by the Trump administration are intended to

completely destroy the nuclear deal.

Helga Schmid, secretary general of the European External Action Service (EEAS), wrote on Tuesday that the parties to the nuclear deal are “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 after the meeting.

Nuclear deal parties unanimous to counter U.S. illegal moves: Araghchi

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — There is a unanimity among the remaining parties to the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA, to counter illegal moves by the U.S. to return UN sanctions against Iran, says Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi who represented Iran at the JCPOA Joint Commission meeting in Vienna on Tuesday.

Araghchi told Nour News that the Joint Commission meeting was “constructive” and

the participants agreed that they must counter the unlawful acts by the U.S., which quit the JCPOA in May 2018 and imposed the harshest sanctions on Iran.

“This meeting was held in a situation created after the recent developments at the [UN] Security Council and the United States’ illegal action. The focal point of the discussions at the meeting was the necessity of integrity and unity against the United States’ action,”

Araghchi explained.

He added that participants insisted that Washington had quit the JCPOA in 2018 and cannot restore sanctions against Iran through snapback mechanism.

Elsewhere, Araghchi said that the only way to preserve the JCPOA is that Iran benefit from the dividends of the 2015 deal.

Practical steps should be taken in this respect, added Araghchi who acted as one

of the main writers of the nuclear agreement with the 5+1 group and the European Union.

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, China, and non-permanent members of the UN Security Council.

Brazil welcomes expansion of ties with Iran, says envoy

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Brazilian Ambassador to Tehran Azeredo Santos has said that his country attaches great importance to expansion of ties with Iran.

“Expansion of relations with Iran is very important for Brazil and we welcome expansion of communications and collaborations with Iran,” Santos said on Wednesday during a meeting with Hossein Amir Abdollahian, a senior foreign policy advisor to the Iranian Parliament speaker.

Pointing to the commonalities between Brazil and Iran in various fields, he said in order to promote relations between the two countries, there are good potential in various areas, especially parliamentary relations, Mehr reported.



The Brazilian envoy also expressed his country’s readiness to expand relations and cooperation with the Islamic

Republic.

Amir Abdollahian also lauded the historical and friendly relations between Iran and Brazil, emphasizing that such long-term relations can be strengthened at different levels.

Pointing to the formation of the Iran-Brazil Parliamentary Friendship Group in the Iranian parliament, he described the role of parliamentary friendship groups in facilitating relations between the two countries as a key element.

“The Iranian Parliament in the framework of the Iran-Brazil Parliamentary Friendship Group and some specialized committees, welcomes cooperation, exchange of delegations and negotiation with the Brazilian counterparts,” he added.

Why European countries oppose U.S. on Iran nuclear issue

(CHINA.ORG.CN) — The last few months have seen strong opposition from the international community in general to the U.S.’s efforts to extend the arms embargo on Iran. The opposition from major European countries, including France, Germany and Britain, was particularly noticed in the media. The EU countries’ positions in this regard have served to maintain the stable evolution of the Iran nuclear issue.

On August 14 and 21, major European members of the UN Security Council rejected a resolution to extend the arms embargo and a snapback mechanism to sanction Iran.

On August 20, the foreign minister of France, Germany and Britain issued a joint statement expressing their opposition to the extension. Important EU states, together with other major representatives of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), except the U.S., will participate in the meeting of the Joint Commission on the Iran nuclear agreement due to take place on September 1 in Vienna. The Joint Commission will be chaired on behalf of EU High Representative Josep Borrell by Secretary General of the European External Action Service (EEAS) Helga Maria Schmid.

The EU, by its explicit opposition to U.S. policy on the Iran nuclear deal, has expressed its dissatisfaction with the U.S. for its with-

drawal from the JCPOA two years ago and its position to safeguard the nuclear deal as well.

The EU certainly has multiple reasons for holding its above-mentioned positions. First, the EU is dissatisfied as it has not harvested the economic benefits expected from the nuclear deal. The EU countries regard Iran as a major economic partner with a population of over 80 million, which means both business profits and job opportunities for its citizens. Economic slowdown and depression in the last decade have made Iran a crucial market.

But Trump administration’s withdrawal from the JCPOA and restoration of sanctions threatens the EU’s prospect of economic cooperation with Iran. Although the EU created the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges (INSTEX) to solve the payment problem, the instrument has not served to reverse the situation, and EU-Iran economic relations have been reduced to a minimal level.

Second, the EU regards the United States’ withdrawal from the JCPOA as undermining its reputation. The EU has long been a leader in the negotiations among relevant parties for the JCPOA. For about twelve years from 2003 till 2015, EU High Representatives for Security and Foreign Affairs had worked hard to bring parties to the negotiation table.

The EU believes that its normative diplomacy featuring dialogue and negotiation is the right approach for solving problems, including those in the Middle East. Moreover, the JCPOA had been regarded as a typical success story for its normative diplomacy and as a signature achievement in this regard.

By withdrawing from the JCPOA, Trump administration undermined the EU’s efforts in the Iran nuclear issue, spoiled its achievement, and harmed the EU’s reputation as an effective broker of international disputes.

Actually, the EU has previously demonstrated its opposition to the U.S. on this issue, and EU-U.S. division on the Iran nuclear issue has existed for a long time. The EU has frequently, and for several years, expressed its disagreement with the U.S.’s withdrawal from the nuclear deal. In January 2019, EU leaders and foreign ministers of France and Germany boycotted the conference held in Warsaw for the purpose of launching the strategy to confront Iran.

The EU’s opposition to the U.S. policy in this regard will also be significant in maintaining the stable evolution of the Iran nuclear issue. The U.S.’s withdrawal from the nuclear deal and its resumption of unilateral sanctions have destroyed one of the two tracks of the nuclear deal. Iran proclaimed not to implement a significant



part of its commitments in the JCPOA but has refrained from withdrawing from the deal. The reasons lie largely in the EU’s support for the JCPOA in addition to the backing of China and Russia. If Iran announces its withdrawal from the deal, the other track, too, will have stalled.

The EU has reasons for opposing U.S. unilateralism on this issue, and this opposition is critical in maintaining the JCPOA.

Last but not least, the EU’s opposition to the U.S. policy regarding the JCPOA is only one part of its struggle against unilateralism. In fact, the EU is opposed to the U.S. not only on the Iran nuclear issue but also on a variety of issues, including U.S. withdrawal from UNESCO, quitting climate change agreement and quitting WHO. This suggests that even its allies sharing the same values are not satisfied with its unilateralism.

JCPOA participants: U.S. cannot invoke sanctions snapback on Iran

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The participants states of the Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) have asserted that the U.S. cannot invoke the UN sanctions snapback against Iran, emphasizing that full implementation of the agreement by all sides remains crucial.

In a joint statement issued on Tuesday evening, the participants reaffirmed the importance of preserving the JCPOA — commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal — recalling that it is a key element of the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture, as endorsed by United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

The Joint Commission meeting was chaired, on behalf of EU High Representative Josep Borrell, by EEAS Secretary General Helga-Maria Schmid and was attended by representatives of China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and Iran at the level of political directors and deputy foreign ministers.

The meeting was 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.

On the United States' efforts to reinstate the UN sanctions on Iran, the participants reaffirmed that the United States unilaterally announced its cessation of participation in



the JCPOA on 8 May 2018 and that it had not participated in any JCPOA-related activities subsequently.

According to the statement, participants reconfirmed that it therefore could not be considered as a participant state. In this regard, participants also reaffirmed their various statements and communications made previously at the UN Security Council including that of the High Representative of 20 August as the Coordinator of the JCPOA to the effect that the U.S. cannot initiate the process of reinstating UN sanctions under UNSC resolution 2231.

Participants welcomed the joint statement of Iran and the IAEA dated 26 August, the implementation of which has already started, and they recalled the important role of the IAEA as the sole impartial and independent international organization responsible for

the monitoring and verification of nuclear non-proliferation commitments.

They also reiterated the importance of nuclear non-proliferation projects, in particular "the Arak modernization project" and the stable isotope project in Fordow. Taking into account the potential consequences of the U.S. decision in May to end the Arak waiver, participants reiterated their strong support and collective responsibility for the continuation of the project.

Speaking after the meeting, Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said Iran's JCPOA partners do not recognize the U.S. as a participating side and "do not regard this country as entitled to use the mechanisms of the JCPOA or Resolution 2231."

"The convergence among the participants sent an important message to the world about the position of the JCPOA's members,"

Araghchi said, Press TV reported. "This is, of course, the stance of the majority of the international community. The mood at the UN Security Council is also similar."

"All JCPOA members and the majority of the world community are against America's unilateral policies and undermining multilateralism and global institutions in international relations. Everyone is complaining about the measures that the U.S. takes to destroy international bodies," he said.

The Iranian diplomat further said that a number of initiatives have been put forward on ways to safeguard the JCPOA against Washington's unilateralism.

"All signatories are determined not to allow the U.S. to impose its own will [on others] and unilaterally kill a deal that has the support of the international community and the Security Council," he added.

He also said Iran's reduction of its commitments under the JCPOA is in fact a response to the other side's lack of commitment to the deal.

All participants welcomed the recent joint statement of Iran and the IAEA which came after the IAEA director-general's trip to Iran, Araghchi said.

Schmid also said after the meeting that it was "important" that the participants — Iran, France, Britain, Germany, Russia and China — were "united in resolve to preserve" the nuclear deal despite the challenges.

"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," she wrote in a post on her Twitter account.

FM Cassis to visit Tehran to celebrate centenary of Switzerland's diplomatic presence in Iran

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis will visit Tehran next week to celebrate the centenary of Switzerland's diplomatic presence in Iran.

According to Mehr, Cassis is scheduled to visit Tehran on September 5-7 to attend the ceremony.

Cassis has served since November 1, 2017 as head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. He has not traveled to Tehran since then.

This January marked the 40th anniversary of Switzerland taking on a mandate of neutral "protecting power" representing U.S. diplomatic interests in Iran since Washington and Tehran cut ties shortly after the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

In a statement on Tuesday, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs said that Cassis will meet, among other



Iranian leaders, President Hassan Rouhani and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammad Javad Zarif.

"On 6 September, Mr. Cassis will open an exhibi-

tion at the historic Negarestan Garden in Tehran on the history of Swiss-Iranian bilateral relations. He will also visit the Swiss embassy foreign interests section, which represents the interests of the United States in Iran under a protecting power mandate. Finally, Mr. Cassis will meet with representatives of Swiss companies, the scientific community and the health sector," the statement read.

"On 7 September, Mr. Cassis will meet with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani," it added.

It further said that Cassis and his Iranian hosts will also discuss current developments concerning the nuclear deal and the situation in West Asia.

Albanian journalist challenges Maryam Rajavi to open debate

Journalist has argued that Saudi Arabia is funding the MEK

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — A Canadian-Albanian journalist has responded to the threats he has received from the Mojahedin-e Khalgh (MEK) terrorist group's ringleader, Maryam Rajavi, calling for an open debate with her.

"I really want to have an open debate with you," Olsi Jazexhi, who has exposed the criminal activities of the anti-Iran terrorist group, told Rajavi in a video posted on YouTube on Monday.

"I'm very happy that you have come out with the face of your commanders to attack me," Jazexhi said, Press TV reported.

He also said he had made the video after Rajavi dared to verbalize threats against him and Gjergji Thanasi, a similarly out-

spoken Albanian journalist, through two of the group's commanders.

The covert attacks had "caused so many troubles for my life, and destroyed it economically," he said.

Jazexhi also pledged not to keep quiet about the Albanian-based group's activities.

"I want to tell you, Mariam Rajavi, that Albania is a democratic state, and we are a liberal democracy, where we have freedom of speech," he said.

"We're never going to be silenced. We're going to investigate and expose to the international and Albanian community, the crimes and the illegal things that you're doing in my country," the journalist added.

The MEK was established in the 1960s

to express a mixture of Marxism and Islamism. It launched bombing campaigns against the Shah, continuing after the 1979 Islamic Revolution, against the Islamic Republic. Iran accuses the group of being responsible for 17,000 deaths.

Based in Iraq at the time, MEK members were armed by former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein to fight against Iran during a war that lasted for 8 years in the 1980s.

In 2012, the U.S. State Department removed the MEK from its list of designated terrorist organizations under intense lobbying by groups associated with Saudi Arabia and other regimes opposed to Iran.

A few years ago, the MEK operatives

were relocated from their Camp Ashraf in Iraq's Diyala Province to Camp Hurriyet (Camp Liberty), a former U.S. military base in Baghdad, and were later relocated to Albania.

Jazexhi has argued that Saudi Arabia is funding the MEK.

"While the U.S. government and Israel will most probably not spend their money with an ex-terrorist organization, I believe that the only state who can support it should be Saudi Arabia," the Balkans Post quoted Jazexhi as saying back in April.

"Saudis have done such a thing with Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan or Jabhat al-Nusra in Syria and we should not be surprised if they pay the MEK bill as well," he added.

'New Middle East is more of narrative than reality'

1→ Speaking at a joint press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien in Jerusalem, Kushner said, "On August 13, President Trump, Prime Minister Netanyahu, and Crown Prince Mohammad bin Zayed announced a historic peace agreement that would create previously unthinkable economic and security and religious opportunities" between the UAE and Israel.

He went further to say, "From President Trump's very first trip as a president, when he went to Saudi Arabia and addressed the 54 leaders of Arab and Muslim countries and then went to Israel then to Rome, he has been writing the script for a new Middle East."

The U.S. officials' remarks on the concept of the "new Middle East" is indicative of the U.S. ignorance of the region's realities, according to Sabah Zanganeh, a West Asia expert.

"These remarks show that Americans don't know the region's geography, culture, and communities. The word Middle East was first coined by the Westerners because they thought that the West was the center of the world. Words like Near East, Middle East, and Far East are all terms coined by the West. Now, they try to coin new terms such as Greater Middle East, New Middle East, and Broader Middle East for the region in line with their new policies toward it. All these terms have been coined in the past two decades, which show that the Westerners lack a deep understanding of the region," Zanganeh told the Tehran Times.

The expert said the Americans think they can change the region by paying visits to some countries there. However, visits cannot change the region, Zanganeh noted, adding

that Trump's predecessors, namely George H.W. Bush, also was obsessed with the idea of establishing a new world order with no success.

"Bush's New World Order led to wars. The U.S. officials thought at some point that the U.S. became the absolute power of the unipolar world and thus can reshape the world by coining certain terms. They didn't understand that narrative is distinct from reality," Zanganeh pointed out. "The region has its own dynamics and the emergence of the Islamic Republic of Iran has created new realities."

Kushner and Hook put the concept of the New Middle East in the broader context of confronting Iran's influence in the region.

"People like Condoleezza Rice, who were more seasoned than Kushner and Hook, had said the same thing but failed to materialize their goals in the region. Rice thought that the U.S. can create a New Middle East by pushing Israel into a war with Lebanon. More than a decade has passed since the 2006 war and they still make efforts to create the new Middle East," Zanganeh stated.

He also said that in the years after the 2006 war Iran has gained more support in the region which shows the U.S. efforts to confront Iran have backfired.

During the past two decades, the U.S. managed to promote many terms and plans to "transform" the region only to realize that the region is more or less impervious to change. In the run-up to the Iraq war, the Bush administration promoted the spread of democracy in West Asia.

"The world has a clear interest in the spread of democratic values, because stable and free nations do not breed the ideologies of murder. They encourage the peaceful pursuit

of a better life. And there are hopeful signs of a desire for freedom in the Middle East," President George W. Bush said on February 26, 2003, as he sought to mobilize the world for the Iraq war. "A new regime in Iraq would serve as a dramatic and inspiring example of freedom for other nations in the region."

A few months later, Rice called for "transforming the Middle East" and cutting the "freedom deficit" there in an opinion piece published by the Washington Post on August 7, 2003.

"Today America and our friends and allies must commit ourselves to a long-term transformation in another part of the world: the Middle East," wrote the then national security advisor.

In 2006, Rice, who was secretary of state at the time, also called for a "new Middle East" in the midst of the war between Hezbollah and Israel.

"As we deal with the current circumstances, we need always to be cognizant of and looking to what kind of Middle East we are trying to build. It is time for a new Middle East. It is time to say to those who do not want a different kind of Middle East that we will prevail, they will not," she said.

In the ensuing years, the region has become even more unstable and the freedom and prosperity that Rice's boss had promised have never been achieved.

Zanganeh drew parallels between what Rice said and Kushner's New Middle East, saying Kushner's plan for the region will end where Rice's ended.

"What Kushner and Hook do is the creation of a new narrative, not a new reality. And that the New Middle East is more of a narrative than a reality," Zanganeh pointed out.

SPORTS

Shahram Mahmoudi might miss Olympic Games

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran national volleyball team opposite spiker Shahram Mahmoudi will likely miss the Olympic Games due to lack of preparation.

The 32-year-old player has undergone spine surgery and is in the recovery process at the moment.

Mahmoudi has not chosen his new team for the upcoming season of the Iran Volleyball Super League which will start next week.

He was a member of Iran national team in the 2016 Olympic Games, where the Persians finished in fifth place.

Iran national volleyball team have been drawn in Pool A along with Japan, Poland, Italy, Canada and Venezuela.

Pool B consists of Brazil, the U.S., Russia, Argentina, France and Tunisia.

Iran will start the Tokyo 2020 Olympic campaign, now re-planned for 2021, with a match against Poland on July 24.

Iran to meet Uzbekistan on Oct. 8

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran national football team will play Uzbekistan on Oct. 8 in a friendly match.

The match was originally scheduled for Sept. 7 but FIFA replaced the window from 31 Aug. to 8 Sept. in response to the global disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and it meant the 'Persian Leopards' would have to change their fixture.

The friendly match between Iran and Syria scheduled for Sept. 3 had been previously cancelled.

The 2022 World Cup qualifiers scheduled this year were postponed to 2021 due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Iran, who sit third in Group C behind Iraq and Bahrain, have four must-win matches ahead in the competition.

Deagan Skocic's team were due to host Hong Kong and Cambodia on Oct. 8 and 13 in Tehran and Phnom Penh, respectively.

Iran also had two matches against Bahrain and Iraq on Nov. 12 and 17 in Tehran but the games will be held in 2021.

The eight group winners of the World Cup qualification's group stage and four best runners-up will advance to the AFC Asian Cup China 2023 Finals and the final round of qualifying for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

The next best 24 teams from the second round of the joint qualifiers will compete in a separate competition for the remaining 12 slots in the 24-team AFC Asian Cup China 2023.

The FIFA World Cup in Qatar will run from November 21 to December 18, 2022.

Persepolis confirm Ehsan Pahlavan signing

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Persepolis football club have signed one more player to bolster their midfield line for the new Iran Professional League season.

Iran league titleholders completed the signing of Ehsan Pahlavan, who has most recently played for Tractor.

The 27-year-old winger has penned a two-year contract for an undisclosed fee.

Pahlavan is the club's fourth signing for the new season. Persepolis have already completed the signing of goalkeeper Hamed Lak, Sanat Naft forward Issa Alekasir and Sepahan left back Saeid Aghaei, with all three players have joined the Reds on two-year deals.

The players arrive at the club less than two weeks before the AFC Champions League West Zone restart, with Persepolis to meet Saudi Arabia's Al Taawoun in their first centralized match on September 15.

Bahman Salemi dreams of playing in Olympics

From a young age, Iran's Bahman Salemi Injehboroun was captivated by beach volleyball. Today, the sport still pretty much dominates his daily life.

"I have been following beach volleyball on TV since childhood and got interested on it. The two people that influenced me the most were Ebrahim Sansabili and Parviz Farokhi," Salemi said in an interview with asianvolleyball.net.

"Farokhi is one of the beach volleyball veterans. He's 51 years old, still very much active in the local tournaments and usually finishes in the top four. He is very friendly, and many players admire his personality."

Salemi started playing 10 years ago and has since collected several medals in AVC and FIVB tournaments, including an Asian Championship title in 2017.

"I started practicing beach volleyball in 2010 and my first international tournament was an Asian beach volleyball tournament for university students.

"Since then I have achieved a silver medal at the Asian Beach Games Phuket 2014, a gold medal at the Asian Championship in 2017 and a silver the following year. I have also won gold and silver medals in FIVB World Tour 1-star events.

"My favorite victory is the Asian Championship in 2017 because I played hurt with a sprained finger, but we still managed to bring home the title."

He feels there is something missing and he is eager to achieve this feat, like a true champion who is always hungry for bigger achievements.

"I want to take part in the Olympic Games. I have participated in many tournaments, but I still have yet achieved this feat. Participating in the Olympics and getting a good result are things that I wish for myself and future Iranian beach volleyball teams."

While others struggle to find time in balancing their professional and personal lives, Salemi learned to combine time with his family and the sport, making him enjoy his beach volleyball journey better.

"I spent most of my time with my family and I do all my hobbies with them. Sometimes I play volleyball with my friends.

"Beach volleyball has been my life and my family are also into all the stuff I am involved with. They know that my life would be empty without sport and beach volleyball.

"I owe my life to them and I appreciate the way they are patient with me. When I am preparing for a tournament with the national team, my family bears all the troubles and always understands my situation."

(Source: asianvolleyball.net)

‘Iranian ports can become logistic centers in region’

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN**— The ports of Iran can become the logistics centers of the region, an official with Iran’s Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) stated.



Elaborating on the supports and facilities offered by the PMO for better and more activity of private sector in the country’s ports, Farhad Montaser Kouhsari, the deputy head of PMO for the ports and economic affairs, said that different activities including those related to the minerals, crude oil, chemical materials, edible oils, and general cargo loading and unloading is being more and more developed in the ports, which has increased the government and private sector’s demand for more investment makings in the ports.

Q1 non-oil GDP growth stands at -1.7%: SCI

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran’s gross domestic product (GDP) excluding oil fell 1.7 percent in the first three month of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20) compared to the same period last year, according to the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI).

The figure including oil fell 3.5 percent, ILNA reported. Based on the SCI data, the country’s non-oil GDP reached 1.445 quadrillion rials (about \$34.4 billion) in the mentioned period, while the figure stood at 1.656 quadrillion rials (about \$39.4 billion) with oil included.

The data indicate that in the spring, the production by the agricultural sector increased by 1.5 percent, the industries and mines by 2.8 percent, and the service group by -4.1 percent compared to the spring of the previous year.

According to SCI, the country’s non-oil GDP fell 0.6 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year 1398 (ended on March 19), while with the oil included, the decline was seven percent.

The oil and gas sector recorded the highest negative growth of 35 percent, while the GDP growth for the mining sector fell 32.8 percent last year, based on the SCI data.

Meanwhile, the industry sector registered a negative growth of 14.7 percent which indicated a more intense shrinkage for this sector compared to the preceding calendar year.

In a report published in early June, the World Bank predicted that Iran’s GDP is going to increase by 2.1 percent in 2021 after experiencing a 5.3 percent fall in the current year due to the negative impacts of the coronavirus outbreak.

“Iran’s GDP is expected to shrink again in 2020, by 5.3 percent, partly reflecting the effects of the large-scale COVID-19 outbreak on domestic consumption and the services sectors (e.g., tourism),” WB said in its latest report on the global economy dubbed “Global Economic Prospects” released on June 6.

Commodities worth over \$5.3b traded at IME in August

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — More than 2.787 million tons of commodities worth over \$5.368 billion were traded at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) in August.

As reported by the IME International Affairs and Public Relations Department, during the last month, the oil and petrochemical trading floor of the IME played host to trading of 1,644,125 tons of commodities worth more than \$2.512 billion.

On this trading floor, more than 470,219 tons of bitumen, 286,506 tons of polymer products and 138,786 tons of chemical products, 532,000 tons of FVB feed stock, 184,000 tons of lube cut oil, 19,095 tons of sulfur, 4,630 tons of insulation, 2,200 tons of slaps waxes, 590 tons of argon as well as 6,099 tons of oil products were traded by customers.

The metal and mineral trading floor witnessed trading over 1,136,602 tons of commodities worth more than \$2.849 billion.

On this trading floor 1,102,886 tons of steel, 11,720 tons of copper, 490 tons of molybdenum concentrates, 51 tons of precious metals concentrates, 2,465 tons of zinc, 18,990 tons of aluminum as well as 70 kg of gold bullion were traded by customers.

Furthermore, in agricultural trading floor of the IME more than 250 kg of saffron was traded by the customers.

The side market of the IME experienced trading of 700 tons of PDA TAR, a total of 1,020 empty barrels, 1,050 tons of tomato paste, 93 tons of used locomotive engine oil, 69 tons of metal scrap, 5,000 tons of phosphate concentrates, 180 tons of normal paraffin, 45 tons of pipe tape as well as a commercial real estate.

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.

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).

Tehraners facing non-stop rising of housing prices

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN — According to a recent report released by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), the housing price in Tehran city has risen 10.5 percent in Mordad, which is the fifth month of the Iranian calendar year (July 22-August 21), from its previous month.

The CBI report also indicates that the housing price in the capital city has risen 77.4 percent in the fifth month of this year, from the same month of the previous year.

The report put the average price of one square meter of a house at 231.1 million rials (about \$5,502) in the capital city.

Meanwhile, the number of real estate deals has fallen 35.4 percent in Tehran in the fifth month of this year compared to the fourth month, while rising 175.8 percent compared to the same month of the past year.

Also, the number of real estate deals in the country has risen 15 percent in the fifth month of the current year, compared to the same month in the previous year, according to the chairman of Real Estate Agencies Union.

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

But what is witnessed in the capital city does not seem acceptable at all. Jumping prices in Tehran’s housing sector is not what the people can afford.

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.”

Oqbaei underlined the lack of balance in supply and demand as the main reason for the upward trend in housing prices and said since there are not enough bank facilities available to homebuyers, more people will stay as tenants and the demand for house rents increases, so consequently rent prices will also rise in areas where there is an imbalance between supply and demand.

In late June, Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dejpasand announced the establishment of the country’s real estate

stock exchange.

The minister had stated that the Economy Ministry was finalizing the issue with the Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO).

In late July, a member of Iran’s Securities and Exchange High Council announced that the country’s real estate stock exchange would be established by the coming four-six months.

The establishment of such exchange is in line with the government’s policy of providing housing units for the underprivileged, and many efforts have been already made to prepare the required infrastructure in this due.

The head of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), which is Iran’s major stock exchange, had previously announced that the real estate stock exchange was due to be established in the middle of the fourth Iranian calendar

Iran’s oil industry attracts over \$10b of investment in 5 months

1 → Once the new plants are inaugurated, the country’s petrochemical output will reach 100 million tons a year which will bring the country some \$25 billion annually.

The government also plans to inaugurate an oil terminal out of the Persian Gulf waters on the Gulf of Oman by March 20, 2021, so that the country will no longer have to use the Strait of Hormuz for the exports of its oil.

The construction project of the new oil terminal in Makran and a pipeline for the transfer of oil from Goureh to Jask was inaugurated on June 26.

Some \$2 billion has been allocated to the project which is expected to create 4,000 new jobs.

Back in August, the head of Iran’s Petroleum Engineering and Development Company (PEDEC) said that considering

progress in Goreh-Jask oil pipeline project, the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) will be able to export its first oil cargo from Jask terminal by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2021).

The pipeline will transfer one million barrels of heavy and light crude oils per day to Jask oil terminal in the southern Hormozgan Province to be exported.

500 fuel-carrying vessels berth at Shahid Rajaei port in 5 months

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — According to a provincial official, 500 vessels carrying fuel berthed at Iran’s Shahid Rajaei port during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21).

Alireza Mohammadi Karajiran, the director-general of Ports and Maritime Department of southern Hormozgan Province, where the port lies, also announced that 498 ships carrying oil products have been loaded and unloaded at the port during the mentioned period, Mehr news agency reported.

Shahid Rajaei is Iran’s largest and best-equipped container port.

Enjoying the most modern container terminals and port equipment, Shahid Rajaei accounts for 85 percent of the total loading and unloading at the Iranian ports.

Given its significant role in the country’s import and export of products as well as transit and transshipment via Iran, development of Shahid Rajaei port has been among the



most important development projects in the country.

The head of Iran’s Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) has announced that the third phase of the development plan of this port is going to go operational by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2021).

“The third phase [of the port] is expected to go operational before the end of the year and it will be able to accept ships with capacities up to 18,400 TEUs,” IRIB has quoted Mohammad Rastad as saying.

Iran planning to diversify petchem output basket by 2025

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Head of Iran’s National Petrochemical Company (NPC) Behzad Mohammadi said the country’s petrochemical products basket is going to be more diversified by the Iranian calendar year of 1404 (starts on March 21, 2025).

Mohammadi made the remarks in a ceremony for introducing the company’s new project director, Shana reported.

The official noted that major development plans were underway for diversifying the country’s petrochemical output considering the wide range of feedstock available.

“The macro development planning that the company is currently making for the petrochemical industry is beyond the second and third leaps of the industry, and we expect the company’s projects directorate to follow up and help achieve these plans,” Mohammadi said.

Noting that implementing 17 petrochemical projects is planned for the current Iranian calendar year (ends in March

20, 2021), the deputy oil minister for petrochemical affairs added: “Medium-term planning shows the determination of the National Petrochemical Company and its commitment to these plans, everyone in NPC is following this trend and the effective role of this company in the development of the country’s petrochemical industry is becoming more prominent.”

As reported, Amir Vakilizadeh replaced Ali-Mohammadi Bosaqzadeh as the NPC’s new project director in the ceremony held at the place of the company.

In late August, Mohammadi said Iran is going to become the top petrochemical producer in the region after the realization of the industry’s third leap in the Iranian calendar year 1404.

In addition to the projects in the second and third leaps of the petrochemical industry, 34 new projects with an investment volume of \$17 billion, and a total capacity of 19 million tons have been defined, with their implementation, Iran’s position will be more privileged, Mohammadi said.

South Khorasan provinces,” he said.

The official noted that another dam will be put into operation in East Azarbaijan province this week, adding: “Two more dams will go operational by the end of [the current Iranian calendar month of] Shahrivar (September 21) in Hamedan and Kerman provinces.”

According to Haj-Rasouliha, the inauguration of seven dams is a significant record in the country’s dam construction industry.

Referring to the good situation of the country’s water storage in dam reservoirs, the official said currently, there is more than

30 billion cubic meters of water in the reservoirs of the country’s dams.

The figure was 31 billion cubic meters in the same period last year, he added.

He further noted that currently, over 60 percent of the capacity of the country’s dams is full.

Back in May, the Energy Ministry’s portal (Paven) had announced that 190 dams, with a total reservoir capacity of 48.488 billion cubic meters, were under study or being constructed across Iran.

As reported, 90 of the mentioned dams with

month (early July).

When established, it will be the country’s fifth major stock exchange. The four other ones are TSE, Iran’s over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX), and Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME).

Deputy Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) says the establishment of the country’s real estate stock exchange is going to promote transparency in this market.

According to Hossein Selahvarzi, establishing this stock exchange is going to be an opportunity for making the transactions in the housing market more competitive and transparent, and will gain people’s trust for participation in mass construction projects.

In early July, speaking in a meeting with the officials from Iran Mercantile Exchange, which is in charge of the establishment of the real estate exchange, Selahvarzi said: “We are studying various aspects of the project.”

The official noted that the Real Estate Exchange Company is going to be established with an initial capital of 50 trillion rials (about \$1.2 billion), of which 50 percent will be offered to people via underwriting, while 25 percent will be shared among government agencies and another 25 percent is given to the private sector companies.

Underlining the great capacities of this exchange, Selahvarzi said the capital market has the ability to define practical tools for financing the real estate market and large construction projects, and it will make people more confident in participating in the implementation of such projects.

Tehran, Pyongyang discuss expansion of banking, trade ties

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Head of Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Hamid Zadboum met with North Korean Ambassador in Tehran Han Sung-o to discuss expansion of banking and trade ties, TPO portal reported on Tuesday.

In this meeting, Zadboum emphasized the need for establishing a suitable environment for the two countries’ private sectors to be able to expand mutual trade activities.

The North Korean ambassador for his part stressed the importance of solidarity between the two countries in the face of the U.S. sanctions and called for the development of economic, trade, and cultural cooperation with Iran.

He also praised the Islamic Republic of Iran’s successful efforts in tackling both the coronavirus pandemic and the U.S. sanctions.

Referring to the long-standing relations between Iran and North Korea, Han called for more collaboration and meetings to develop

the level of economic cooperation between the two countries and suggested that Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization and the North Korean Trade Development Committee establish a Joint Trade Committee.

“This committee will follow up on all trade cooperation requirements, and committee meetings will be held periodically in Tehran and Pyongyang,” the official said.

Zadboum welcomed the constructive comments of the North Korean ambassador and pointed to the formation of a joint trade committee an effective step for the expansion of trade between the two sides.

The establishment of this committee will be studied and pursued by the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he added.

“For the expansion of trade relations, in addition to the capacities of the two countries, the cooperation with third countries can also be considered, Zadboum stressed.

He pointed to the Iranian petrochemical industry’s pioneering projects, saying such projects are the key to the development of the petrochemical industry.

“Along with other pioneering plans, defining new petrochemical projects based on mixed feedstock is a process based on thinking, effort, engineering, and accurate market calculations,” Mohammadi stressed.

According to the official, the NPC’s pioneering projects have been classified into four major categories, namely methanol, propylene, ethylene, and benzene, according to which 20 smart projects have been defined for meeting the domestic demand and diversifying the export basket.

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

a total reservoir capacity of 29.724 billion cubic meters were under study, and another 100 dams with a total reservoir capacity of 18.7672 billion cubic meters under construction.

Out of a total of 183 currently operational dams across Iran, 52 are related to the Caspian Sea catchment area, 12 are based in Urumieh basin, 68 dams are located in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman watersheds, 34 dams are in the Central Plateau, 11 dams are in Sarakhs catchment basin, and another six dams are located across the eastern boundary basin (Hamoun).

The reality of Ashura versus the reality show of America

“Every day is Ashura, and every land is Karbala.”

— Imam Jafar Sadiq (AS)

1→ Opposing the Imam and his small group was a huge assemblage of Yazid’s armed troops, including foot soldiers, cavalry, and archers. According to Abu Makhnaf, who chronicled the lopsided battle—if indeed it could be called a battle—the massive army sent to slaughter the Imam for his refusal to swear loyalty to the cursed, cruel, and corrupt Yazid, numbered one hundred forty thousand.

To conceive of such courage, bravery, and conviction as was demonstrated by Imam Hussein (AS) and the men and women who accompanied him on that fateful day of Ashura is almost impossible nowadays. In today’s secular world in which actions are dictated by profit maximization, opinion polls, and cost-benefit trade-offs, the Imam’s stalwart stance and his followers against an army a thousand times larger would be deemed sheer lunacy by most. Who among us would be prepared to give their lives for the cause of Islam and the defense of Ahlul Bayt?

Such loftiness of moral character certainly lacks among America’s political leaders, particularly the current U.S. president and the members of his inner circle. Not only has Donald Trump been impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives, but also Mark Galli, the editor of Christianity Today, a magazine founded by the late Christian Evangelist Billy Graham, broke with tradition and denounced him in an editorial. Noting that coercing a foreign leader to harass a political opponent is not only illegal but also is “profoundly immoral,” Galli pointed to Trump’s hiring a number of people who are now convicted criminals as well as his admission of “immoral actions in business and his relationship with women, about which he remains proud.” Galli warned of “the moral and political danger we face under a leader of such grossly immoral character.” Other writers have concurred, accusing the U.S. president of being “erratic, impulsive, narcissistic, vindictive, cruel, mendacious and devoid of empathy.”

What did those misguided Americans who voted for him expect from a former con man and reality TV show star? Under



Trump’s America is experiencing over 3 times as many new cases as Mexico, 8 times as many as Germany, 21 times as many as Japan and over 31 times as many as Cuba. Even the Islamic Republic of Iran, despite suffering under the crippling sanctions of Trump’s “maximum pressure” campaign, is doing over 4 times better than America.

his self-absorbed, bombastic leadership, Trump has made America into a reality TV show, casting himself in the star-savior role. By his own hubris, Trump failed to defer to experts on epidemiology by refusing to order a nationwide quarantine and mandatory mask usage by pushing to reopen the U.S. economy far too quickly to make himself look good and thereby improve his chances for reelection. The result has been twofold: a U.S. economy in shambles and a pandemic running amok, infecting and killing Americans in record numbers. “They are dying, that’s true,” acknowledged Trump, the pathetic potentate, while insisting, “It’s under control as much as you can control it.”

Back in March of this year, when the coronavirus pandemic’s gravity was just beginning to be realized, one former White House official predicted, “This fool will bring the death of thousands

needlessly.” The statistics of deaths due to COVID-19 have proved the prediction’s veracity: As of this writing, the mortality statistic is rapidly approaching two hundred thousand out of over six million confirmed cases of infection. The New York Times reported in July that, based on the Centers for Disease Control Data, excess deaths in the U.S. directly linked to coronavirus had already exceeded two hundred thousand.

In Donald Trump’s reality show America, it’s all about the autocrat in the Oval Office and winning the upcoming presidential election by denying scientific facts and marginalizing anyone who dares to challenge his narrative on the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, the reality is this: based on a 7-day rolling average of new, confirmed coronavirus cases, Trump’s America is experiencing over three times as many

new cases as Mexico, eight times as many as Germany, 21 times as many as Japan, and over 31 times as many as Cuba.

Even the Islamic Republic of Iran, despite suffering under the crippling sanctions of Trump’s “maximum pressure” campaign, is doing over four times better than America. In fact, only the Israeli entity is doing slightly worse with about one- and one-half times the number of new U.S. cases. Of course, the U.S. leads the entire world in cumulative infection cases and deaths due to COVID-19.

It would be interesting to know what the demagogue in the White House would have to say about Ashura. Perhaps he would read the story of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS) at the hands of Yazid’s army and declare, “You had some very bad people in that group, but you also had people that were very fine people, on both sides,” just as he did concerning the white supremacists and neo-Nazis who ran over and killed a counter-protestor in Charlottesville, Virginia in August of 2017. Perhaps he would remark, “You can’t resist the caliph like that,” in the same way that he defended the police officer that shot an unarmed black man, Rayshard Brooks, in Atlanta, Georgia. Or perhaps he would laud the killers of the holy Imam, Shmr bin Thal Joushan, Umar ibn Sa’d, and their ilk, and claim their actions were in self-defense, just as he did for the shooter that killed two people and injured a third in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

Such is America’s reality show, with the tyrannical Trump who is the embodiment of self-absorption, material greed, and indifference towards all of the human-kind except for a few favored members of his family and inner circle of corrupt charlatans. And such is the reality of Ashura, with the being of Imam Hussein (AS), the pinnacle of moral principle, the perfection of human character, the sublimity of patience, and luminosity of leadership. How would Trump characterize the sharp contrast between his reality show of America and the noble Imam’s reality of Ashura?

Perhaps the pathological POTUS would reach into his metaphysical reserves and recycle the tautology he used for the carnage wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic: “It is what it is.”

Turkish economist predicts increase in economic cooperation between Tehran and Ankara

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN — Hakan Topkurulu, a Turkish economic expert, believes that there are a lot of countries with different political views in Eurasia, but all of them, including Iran and Turkey, share common interests that push them toward strengthening their cooperation.

Despite the sporadic tensions between Turkey and Iran over the the conflict in Syria, the two countries have remarkably succeeded in reducing tensions through multilateral dialogue and dispute management platforms in the past few years.

Iran fiercely opposed the attempted military coup in Turkey in 2016. However, the UAE was among the strong supporter of the failed coup.

Several factors have contributed to rapprochement between the two countries. They both are suspicious of the presence of U.S. forces in Syria; they also face growing danger by the PKK and its branches in the region; the two neighbors also oppose the blockade of Qatar by the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. Tehran and Ankara also are fiercely against Israel’s apartheid regime.

Predicting an improvement of economic relationship between Iran and Turkey in the coming years, Turkish economist Topkurulu says «Turkey has started to take its place in Eurasia after 2014.»

This is the text of the interview:

■ According to reports and figures, the volume of Iran-Turkey trade ties has seen a great increase since the AKP came to power while the two countries mostly have different approaches toward political issues. How can it be explained?

A: The borders between Turkey and Iran settled in the seventeenth century. Both countries have been living in peace for centuries.

Turkey has started to take its place in Eurasia since 2014. Ankara has changed some of its policies after it crushed the U.S.-backed coup in 2015.

At Eurasia, there are a lot of countries that have different political views, but all Eurasian countries have mutual interests. You will see in future years that the relationship between Iran and Turkey will improve and the economic cooperation will increase.

■ Given the U.S. sanctions against Iran, do you think that the Iran-Turkey roadmap to increase trade ties to \$30 billion is achievable?

A: The U.S. dollar reign is going to collapse. Now the important step for our countries is to strengthen mutual relationship and not allow the U.S. to undermine our ties. We can take advantage of U.S. weakness to economically improve the cooperation between our countries.

We both have a huge and young population, and both countries have a big consumer market. Iran has been under U.S. sanctions for long years. Iran is a big energy source, while Turkey needs energy.



Any problem with neighboring countries is an opportunity for imperialism.

Only this item is enough to promote trade between us. We had already reached 21.886.381.000. dollars in trade ties in 2012. This volume is under U.S. sanctions. If there had been no international obstacles, you could have imagined where the trade volume would have gone.

I am also experienced in trade with Iranian merchants. Both sides can understand each other easily and trust each other.

■ What does Turkey’s natural gas discovery mean for its foreign policy? Would it affect its relationship with Iran, given that Iran is among the main suppliers of gas for Turkey?

A: Natural gas discovery is very important for Turkey. One of our main economic problems is our foreign exchange deficit; this deficit is mostly due to our energy importation.

It makes us vulnerable to foreign attempts to undermine our economy. We have experienced the last economic pressure in August 2018.

The trade between Iran and Turkey in the short term will not be affected by the recent discovery of gas because the volume of natural gas discovered at the Black Sea is not enough for Turkey.

The U.S. dollar reign is going to collapse

Even if Turkey had discovered a bigger source of natural gas and didn’t need to import gas anymore, from my point of view, it could not affect the good relations between Turkey and Iran as well as with other neighbors.

However, the foreign exchange deficit is very dangerous for our sovereignty. The Atlantic powers are very uncomfortable because of our natural gas discovery.

Turkey’s natural gas discovery has empowered the region.

■ Given its geopolitical ties with these countries, how does Turkey definite its economic relations with neighbors, including Iran and Cyprus?

A: You mean the Greek part of Cyprus. From my point of view, North Cyprus (which is under the rule of Turkey) and the Greek side of Cyprus must unite with Turkey and Greece. Since 1974, both sides are living separately. Any problem with neighboring countries is an opportunity for imperialism.

Turkey has a foreign policy under the motto of «Peace at Home, Peace in the World» since Mustafa Kemal Atatürk took the helm in the country.

So Turkey’s main roadmap for foreign relations is not to interfere with internal affairs. As the West Asian countries, including Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Azerbaijan, and Lebanon, we must develop economic relations with each other.

■ Once Turkey raised the slogan of «zero problems with neighbors» while today observers talk about «nothing but problems.» What is your comment?

A: «Zero problems with neighbors» policy was an American policy that pushed Turkey toward a hostile approach toward neighbors. This policy was applied by Ahmet Davutoğlu, the former Prime Minister of Turkey. Infact, America lost its man in Ankara.

As I mentioned in my answer to the first question, Turkey started to take its place in Eurasia since 2014. In 2016, Ahmet Davutoğlu quitted the government. This is one of the most important steps of the Turkish state forward.

■ How much has the COVID-19 spread affected the Turkish economy?

A: The wrong economic policies that started to be implemented since 1980 by Turgut Özal has brought Turkey to a problematic structural economy.

The last economic crisis in Turkey, which we name «Priest Bronson Crisis», occurred in August 2018. So the economic crisis started with the COVID-19 in early 2020, while Turkey was already in an economic crisis.

Announced growth figures last week for the second quarter show that the Turkish economy has narrowed %9,9. Is this good? No. But compared to the U.S., which its economy has narrowed %31,7, and the Euro region with %15, this shows Turkey is more resistant to this crisis.

Mostly industrial and service sectors have been affected by COVID-19 in Turkey.

Macron says ISIL, foreign interference among Iraq’s top challenges

By staff & agencies

French President Emmanuel Macron pledged support for Iraq on Wednesday and said the main challenges facing the country are Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as ISIS) terrorist group fighters and foreign interference in its affairs.

“We are here for and we will continue to support Iraq,” Macron said at a news conference in Baghdad with his Iraqi counterpart Barham Salih.

Macron is the first head of state to visit the Iraqi capital since Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi, Iraq’s former intelligence chief, formed a new government in May, becoming the third head of government in a chaotic 10-week period that followed months of deadly protests in a country exhausted by decades of sanctions, war, corruption and economic challenges.

Macron had earlier said he was heading to Baghdad “to launch an initiative alongside the United Nations to support a process of sovereignty”.



Saudi Arabia, UAE used cluster bombs in military offensives against Yemen: UN

A United Nations official says Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the key members of a coalition waging war on Yemen, have deployed cluster bombs against a residential neighborhood in the country’s coastal western province of Hudaydah.

The Head of the UN Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA) in Yemen, Lieutenant General Abhijit Guha, said in a statement on Tuesday that he is concerned about repeated Saudi-UAE airstrikes in the al-Arj area of the province between August 16 and 23, the Yemeni al-Mahrah Post website reported.

Guha noted that the heavy fighting that broke out around the city of Hudaydah on August 27 in addition to “reports of the use of cluster weapons during one of these airstrikes” are of “special concern.”

The senior UN official then called on parties to the Yemen conflict to “desist from any measures that harm the implementation of Hudaydah agreement.”

Delegates from the Houthi Ansarullah movement and representatives loyal to former Yemeni president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi held a round of peace negotiations in Rimbo, north of the Swedish capital city of Stockholm, in December 2018.

According to press TV, the talks resulted in the announcement of an agreement, which included a ceasefire along the Hudaydah front and the redeployment of armed forces out of the city and its port. The deal also mandated the UN to oversee the truce.

Guha further urged all warring parties in Yemen to “refrain from any other activities that put the lives of civilians in Hudaydah province in danger.”

Afghan negotiators set to fly to Doha as prisoner release resumes

Afghan government negotiators will fly to Qatar’s capital on Thursday to prepare for long-delayed peace talks with the Taliban, as Kabul’s administration resumed releasing Taliban prisoners, an official has said.

“Tomorrow the team is leaving for Doha,” Fraidoun Khawzoon, the spokesman for Abdullah Abdullah who is the head of the High Council for National Reconciliation (HCNR), which has been tasked to hold talks with the armed group, told Reuters.

The Taliban had demanded a final group of 320 prisoners be released before they would participate in the talks, which were envisaged as part an agreement signed between the group and the United States in February.

Kabul had balked at the release of the final 400 Taliban inmates who President Ashraf Ghani said were “a danger to the world”. Some Western governments, including France, also objected to the release of Taliban inmates.

Saudi Arabia to allow UAE-Israel flights through its airspace

Flights between Israel and the United Arab Emirates will be able to fly over Saudi Arabia after the kingdom Wednesday said all services to and from the UAE can cross its airspace.

Saudi Arabia mostly bans flights to and from Israel from using its airspace, though since 2018 it has permitted Air India to fly over the country to Tel Aviv, Reuters reported.

The decision, which the kingdom’s aviation authority said came at the request of the UAE, follows a historic agreement last month between Abu Dhabi and Israel to normalize ties.

Resistance News

Three siblings die in Gaza in house fire caused by candles

INTERNATIONAL DESK **TEHRAN**— Three Palestinian siblings died after a fire broke out in their house in Nuseirat camp in the besieged Gaza Strip on Tuesday.

The PIC reporter said: The children Muhammad, Mahmoud and Youssef, aged between 4 and 6 years, died after a fire broke out in their family home due to a candle that was lit to compensate for the lack of electricity. The charred bodies of the three children were taken to Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in central Gaza Strip.

The father of the three children had lighted a candle because of the power outage.

The Gaza Strip which is besieged for 14 years suffers from a cumulative and growing electricity crisis. The periods of power outages reach more than 16 continuous hours. Hence Palestinian families in Gaza resort to alternative sources of lighting including candles.

Millennia-old relics recovered in Zanjan

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Iranian police have recently confiscated some historical relics, estimated to date back from 1st millennium BC to the Islamic era, a senior police official in charge of protecting cultural heritage has said. The relics, which include a clay cow rhyton, a clay mouflon rhyton, a double-sided silver spoon and fork, and a glass jar were seized while they were being sold illegally, said Abolfazl Moradi, IRNA reported on Wednesday.



Three fake gold-colored pins with bird motifs, and a fake metal human face mask, were also among the objects, which were submitted to the province's cultural heritage department to be studied by the cultural heritage experts, the official added.

He also noted that the culprits were detained and handed over to judiciary officials for further investigation.

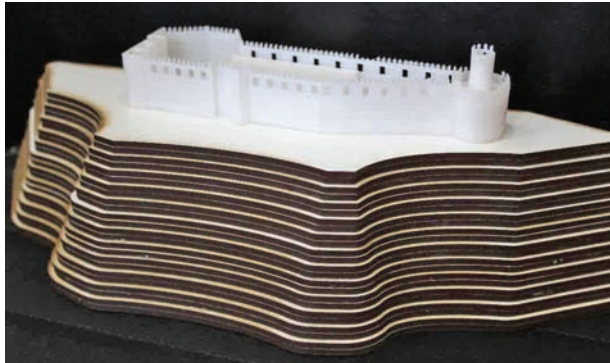
Zanjan is one of the cities founded by Sassanid King Ardashir I (180-242 CE). The province makes a base for wider explorations with the architectural wonder of Soltaniyeh, the subterranean delights of the Katala-Khor caves, colorful mountains, and the UNESCO-registered Takht-e Soleiman ruins are nearby.

The first well-documented evidence of human habitation on the Iranian plateau is found from deposits from several excavated cave and rock-shelter sites in the Zagros Mountains, which dates back to Middle Paleolithic or Mousterian times (c. 100,000 BC).

Lar historical monuments reconstructed in 3D models

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Some elite students in the city of Lar, southern province of Fars, have created three-dimensional models of a number of the historical monuments of the ancient city.

The models have been designed based on aerial photographs taken from the city in 1956 and before the earthquake and the destruction of the city's historical structures in 1960, IRNA reported on Wednesday.



The 3D models include the 15th-century Qeisariyeh Bazaar, the oldest bazaar in the country, the Sassanid era (224 CE–651) mud-brick fortress of Ezhdhapeikar and Safavid-era (1501–1736) New Caravanserai.

The ancient region of Fars, also spelled Pars, or Persis, was the heart of the Achaemenian Empire (550–330 BC), which was founded by Cyrus the Great and had its capital at Pasargadae. Darius I the Great moved the capital to nearby Persepolis in the late 6th or early 5th century BC.

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

Protective measures planned for Neolithic site in west-central Iran

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — Tepe Sarab, a Neolithic-era human settlement in west-central Iran, will be provided with some protective measures based on a periodic maintenance schedule.

"The operations of reorganizing and restoring this historical mount include loading and transporting of construction debris and cleaning the area, creating a fence and building a wall with carcass stone, preparing and installing a sign describing the site.....," ILNA quoted a local tourism official as saying on Tuesday.



Situated near Shahr-e Kord, the capital of Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province, Tepe Sarab dates back to the Neolithic era and it was made a national heritage site in 2010 under the registration number of 29708, the report added.

Neolithic, also called the New Stone Age, the final stage of cultural evolution or technological development among prehistoric humans. It was characterized by stone tools shaped by polishing or grinding, dependence on domesticated plants or animals, settlement in permanent villages, and the appearance of such crafts as pottery and weaving. The Neolithic followed the Paleolithic Period, or the age of chipped-stone tools, and preceded the Bronze Age, or the early period of metal tools.

On the occasion of national day against British colonialism

➔ Located forty-five kilometers from Bushehr, the building, which is also registered as a national heritage of Iran, is promoted to being Ra'is Ali Delvari Museum displaying his personal belongings, weapons... to be a symbol of resistance for future generations.

Responsible tourism a workable solution for coronavirus era: minister

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Iran's tourism minister has said that responsible tourism is a workable solution for holidaymakers to get assured of safe traveling during the coronavirus pandemic.

"One of the topics to consider during the corona outbreak is planning for smart travel," Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan said on Tuesday, addressing a meeting on the pandemic and its impact on the tourism industry.

"Definitely, people's health is our top priority and we are in full coordination with the Ministry of Health, which is now at the forefront of the fight against coronavirus and we should be treated in such a way that the disease does not spread [more]."

"Therefore, one of the solutions that can help us in the time of coronavirus is adopting smart travels or responsible travels," the minister explained.

"The tourism ministry has no authority over [people's plans for] travels and we cannot tell people to travel or not. Many people travel on their own without using the capacity of tours, which can have its own impacts the virus spread but if trips are carried out through tours and in official accommodation centers that follow all health protocols, they would definitely be safer with lower risks."

Elsewhere in his remarks, Mounesan backed travel centers which are under the supervision of his ministry noting,



Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan delivers speech in an undated photo.

"Tourism centers and facilities under the supervision of this ministry fully comply with health protocols. What worries the Ministry of Health is unplanned trips that do not follow health protocols."

Talking about ups and downs in the realm of foreign arrivals, he said, "The process of attracting foreign tourists and visa waiver programs with China and Oman was a positive trend and a good experience."

"Presently, some countries have started

attracting foreign tourists and [letting] foreign trips being made. We can also start attracting foreign tourists again by considering the instructions from the Ministry of Health and observing the health procedures."

Last month, Mounesan proclaimed: "If the second wave of the coronavirus pandemic is contained, all the tourism businesses across the country will have the capacity to fully resume their activities both in domestic and foreign markets."

Foreign arrivals in Isfahan rise sevenfold in 7 years

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Some 450,000 foreign nationals visited the central Iranian province of Isfahan during the previous Iranian calendar year 1398 (ended March 20), a sevenfold rise compared to around 64,000 visits during the Iranian calendar year 1391 (March 2012-March 2013).

Despite the issues and obstacles that the tourism sector was facing during the last Iranian calendar year, including flooding in the spring, protests [over petrol prices] in November, and the fatal Ukraine International Airlines plane crash in January, the number of foreign visits increased, IRNA quoted provincial tourism chief Fereydoon Allahyari as saying on Wednesday.

The provincial capital of Isfahan, an ancient city filled with many architectural wonders such as unmatched Islamic buildings, bazaars, museums, Persian gardens, and tree-lined boulevards and the oasis city of Kashan with an atmospheric covered bazaar and a UNESCO-recognized garden are top destinations for the domestic and foreign tourists.

However, Allahyari said that the province's tourism sector has made a great effort to promote tourism in all 24 cities of the province and it seems it was successful to some extent.

Some 110 trillion rials (over \$2 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials) have been invested in the province's tourism sector, parts of which as tourism-related projects, will come on stream in the near future, the official added.

He also noted that eco-lodge tourism is now promoted more properly in the province, and the number of eco-lodge units has increased from 30 to 450 units over the past seven years.

Soaked in a rich history and culture, Isfahan was once a crossroads of international trade and diplomacy in Iran. The city has long been nicknamed as Nesf-e-Jahan which is translated into "half the world"; meaning seeing it is relevant to see the whole world. In its heyday, it was also one of the largest cities in the region with a population of nearly one million.

Isfahan is renowned not only for the abundance of great historical bridges but also for its 'life-giving river', the Zayandeh-Rood, which has long bestowed the city an original beauty and fertility. The cool blue tiles of Isfahan's Islamic buildings, and the city's majestic bridges, contrast perfectly with the encircling hot, dry Iranian countryside.

The huge Imam Square, best known as Naghsh-e Jahan Sq. (literary meaning "Image of the World"), is one of the largest in the world (500m by 160m), and a majestic



example of town planning. Built in the early 17th century, the UNESCO-registered square is punctuated with the most interesting sights in Isfahan.

Modern Isfahan is now home to some heavy industry, including steel factories and a nuclear facility on its outskirts, however, its inner core wants to be preserved as a priceless gem.

Center to preserve historical water structures established in Pasargadae

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — A center for preserving and monitoring the historical water structures of the UNESCO-tagged Pasargadae has been established near the ancient Bostankhani Dam in Fars province, southern Iran.

Situated in about 50 km north of Persepolis, Pasargadae embraces outstanding examples of the first phase of royal Achaemenid art and architecture and exceptional testimonies of Persian civilization.

Cyrus was the founder of the Achaemenid Empire (c. 550 – 330 BC) which at its greatest extent stretched from the Balkans to the Indus Valley, spanning 5.5 million square kilometers. The Persian king declared the world's first charter of human rights, also known as the Cyrus Cylinder.

The newly established center aims at protecting the water structures of the UNESCO-tagged site, which are always threatened by unauthorized agricultural and civil activities as well as illegal



excavations, the official website of the site announced on Wednesday.

The historical water structures include seven Achaemenid dams and water supply networks with a length of nearly eighty kilometers, which are scattered in the plains in the area.

The UNESCO World Heritage site is also home to a complex water supply system for the time that comprises cisterns,

tunnels, underground canals, and ducts, which are locally known as qanats.

It is believed that the development of qanats began about 2,500 or 3,000 years ago in Persia (Iran), and the technology spread eastward to Afghanistan and westward to Egypt. Although new qanats are seldom built today, many old qanats are still used in Iran and Afghanistan, chiefly for irrigation.

The concept of "Persian Qanat" was registered on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2016, representing eleven aqueducts across Iran. According to the UN cultural body, the qanat provides exceptional testimony to cultural traditions and civilizations in desert areas with an arid climate.

Each qanat normally comprises an almost horizontal tunnel for collecting water from an underground water source, usually an alluvial fan, into which a mother well is sunk to the appropriate level of the aquifer.

Some 120,000 qanats - ancient sub-surface water supply systems – are doc-

umented across Iran, and nearly 37,000 of which are still in use in the country, according to data provided by Iran's cultural heritage body in 2018.

The Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System and the ancient water ducts of the UNESCO-tagged Persepolis in southern Iran are also the other examples for the unique and flawless engineering, architecture, urban planning, construction technology, and art of the Achaemenid era.

Inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2009 as a 'masterpiece of creative genius', the Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System is a destination for history buffs, nature lovers, and travelers who eyewitness how the prehistoric yet homogeneous hydraulic system works.

"The Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System testifies to the heritage and the synthesis of earlier Elamite and Mesopotamian knowhow; it was probably influenced by the Petra dam and tunnel and by Roman civil engineering," UNESCO says.

French archaeologist Geneviève Dollfus, famed for extensive Iranian studies, dies at 82

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — French archaeologist Geneviève Dollfus, who conducted extensive excavations in southwest Iran, has died aged 82.

Died on August 29 in Lyons la Forêt, northwestern France, Dollfus is most famed for conducting archaeological excavations at Tepe Djafarabad, Tepe Djowi, and Bandebal (Khuzestan), according to the National Museum of Iran.

Jebrael Nokandeh, the director of the National Museum of Iran, has offered condolences over the death of the late archaeologist and excavator, saying: "The National Museum of Iran extends sincerest condolences to her family, friends, former students, and colleagues."

During the early 1940s, after joining the French National Center for Scientific Research, Dollfus began field archeological research in Syria and Levant. Later she joined the Susa Archaeological Expedition in Iran as Jean-Perrot's deputy.

In addition to her numerous field projects in West



Asia, Dollfus played an important role in the publication of fifteen volumes of Reports of the French Archaeological Delegation in Iran (DAFI) and was also the editor

of the Paléorient journal for a decade.

She came to Iran in the early 1980s to attend the annual conference on Iranian archaeology, where she met a new generation of Iranian archaeologists and later in 2005 to participate in the International Seminar on the Halil Rud civilization in Jiroft, according to the National Museum.

She always praised the enthusiasm of the young generation of Iranian archaeologists. Although she continued her archeological fieldwork in Jordan over the 1980s, she still remembered Iran and her Iranian friends and was always generously ready to help Iranian students and archaeologists.

In recent years, unfortunately, she went through very difficult days due to illness and related physical problems that prevented her to communicate with her colleagues and friends all over the world. Her funerals are organized by her family on the 7th of September in Lyons la Forêt (Normandy).

Royan hosting world's top stem cell researchers

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – Tehran is hosting the 21st Royan International Twin Congress on Reproductive Biomedicine, which opened on Wednesday and will wrap up on Friday. Organized by Royan Research Institute, the event will also host the 16th Congress on Stem Cell Biology and Technology on September 5-6. Some 24 senior international researchers from 13 countries and 50 top Iranian researchers will give lectures on the topics of the meeting during the 5-day event.

This year, the congress received 170 papers, 150 of which have been approved. On the second day, Royan International Research Award winners will award 4 researchers with a certificate, the symbol of the Royan Award. So far, some one thousand individuals have applied to attend the congress. Royan Congress intended to hold the 21st Twin Congress online while celebrating twenty years of experience as the COVID-19 pandemic has challenged the model of face-to-face meetings all around the world. This year, the event's main objective



is to preserve and enhance the connections of researchers and practitioners from all over the world despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over 670,000 illegal foreign nationals expelled annually

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – Some 672,000 foreign nationals illegally residing in Iran are expelled annually from the country in the interest of national security, Hossein Zolfaghari, deputy minister of interior for security and law enforcement, has announced.

“Regarding foreign nationals, especially Afghans inside the country, we have been thinking of arrangements for several years so that anyone should enter Iran legally and then returns after a legal period, he noted, adding, in fact, this action put an end to the illegal presence of these people.

In this regard, we have taken several measures, one of which is to reduce the costs of legal entry into the country, because a number of people enter the country through smuggling and across borders. In this regard, 800 vehicles carrying illegal foreign nationals are confiscated every year,” he explained.

“Another step we have taken is to increase the visa issuance, and the third step is to increase the stay period from three months to up to a year so that the foreign nationals can enter the country with a visa and have legal residence,” he added.

“We agreed with the Government of Afghanistan on the issue of identification and issuance of e-passports so that nationals who are students or have a family are among our priorities to organize.”

Zolfaghari further said that “Our annual average of expelling illegal foreign nationals from the country is 672,000, and we keep the people who enter the country repeatedly for an additional period of time in the camp.”

“We provide various services to foreign nationals in the country, especially in the field of healthcare and medical services, skills training, employment, livelihood, and unexpected events,” he stated.

He went on to highlight that about 850,000 of them are allowed to reside in Iran as displaced, however, the



average annual international aid is \$30 million, which is less than 10 percent of the expenses of this number of people.

There are 40,000 Afghan students in the country, according to the official report, 17,000 of them are graduated, while the unofficial report of 26,000 indicates that we have not yet received the new report from the Ministry of Science, he explained.

He added that 47,000 people were trained and 10 percent of legal refugees were covered by insurance with the help of the UNHCR, and other foreign nationals can pay for health insurance like Iranians.

The issue of granting citizenship to children born to foreign men was also approved as a law so that so far 1,290 children of Iranian women who married foreign men have received Iranian citizenship, he emphasized.

Some 2,852 foreign nationals were infected with COVID-19, of which 294 died and the rest recovered, which was far less than the Iranian population, he concluded.

■ Situation of foreign nationals

Iran is host to one of the largest and most protracted urban refugee situations in the world and has provided

asylum to refugees for four decades.

The latest official government statistics in 2014, there are 951,142 Afghan refugees and 28,268 Iraqi refugees living in Iran. Many of the refugees living in Iran are the second and third generation, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

About 97 percent of refugees live in urban and semi-urban areas, while 3 percent are residing in 20 refugee resorts run by the UNHCR's main government counterpart.

In addition to Afghan refugees, there are about 2.5 million Afghans living in Iran, including those having a passport and undocumented Afghans. 450,000 Afghan who did not have identity cards or birth certificates have received Iranian visas that allow them to live, work or study in the country.

Iran ramped up its production of essential medical equipment, and independent entrepreneurs – refugees included – have redirected their efforts towards contributing to the national COVID-19 response.

Undocumented Afghans who have access to free primary health services and similarly free COVID-19 related testing, treatment, and hospitalization, just like nationals.

In Iran, UNHCR is seeking \$16.2 million for its COVID-19 emergency, while requires an additional \$98.7 million to support Iran in maintaining and sustaining its commendable inclusive refugee policies, under the umbrella of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR).

Shahnam Arshi, deputy director for the infectious diseases management department of the Ministry of Health said in late August that all foreign nationals infected with coronavirus receive medical treatment free of charge in Iran.

So far, at least 4 trillion rials (nearly \$95 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) have been spent only for the treatment of registered foreign nationals, he stated.

Hay'ats free 330 prisoners of unintentional crimes

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – Hay'ats, religious bases which hold mourning ceremonies for Imam Hussein (AS) during the month of Muharram, have released some 330 inmates of involuntary crimes since the beginning of the month (August 29 this year), Asadollah Joolaei, head of Blood Money Organization, has said. A campaign called “each Hay'at, a released prisoner” is underway till Arbaeen, 40 days after Ashura, the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (AS) (falling on October 7).

Appreciating the support of the mourners of Imam Hussein (AS) in releasing the inmates, he said that given the special circumstances caused by the coronavirus pandemic, the release of unintentional crimes prisoners continued

in the form of humanitarian movements in Ramadan and Muharram.

Not only have we had a steady increase in donations, but according to statistics, we have an increase in contributions compared to the same period last year, he highlighted.

As an annual tradition, benefactors come together in a ceremony to raise funds for releasing prisoners of unintentional crimes concurrent with the holy month of Ramadan, which started on April 27 this year.

This year, heads of the three branches of the government and the private sector have donated 6.5 billion rials (nearly \$150,000 at the official rate of 42,000 rials) to release prisoners who had committed involuntary crimes.

President Hassan Rouhani, Parli-

ament Speaker Ali Larijani, and Judiciary Chief Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raeisi made a total of 3.9 billion rials (around \$92,000) in contributions to free prisoners of unintentional crimes.

Moreover, the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, and the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, representing the private sector, and also Imam Khomeini Relief Committee, participated in the event by donating 2.6 billion rials (about \$62,000).

According to the Blood Money Organization's report, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has donated 4.5 billion rials (about \$110,000) this year, and more than 25 billion rials (about \$600,000) over



the past ten years, helping release over 700 prisoners of unintentional crimes in the country.

Last year, some 8,599 inmates of unintentional crimes were released from prison with the help of charities.

Water donation campaign to help ease drought in four provinces

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) will launch a campaign for the third time to solicit public donations to ease water stress in four provinces of the country.

The long-standing 20-year-old drought in the region is forcing many to have to provide their water from tank trucks delivering water to the areas.

It has three main aspects, including livelihood support, medical services (with the focus on coronavirus), and dealing with water stress are implemented in the form of tanker installation, water treatment, and plumbing for people to have access to safe freshwater.



The campaign, called Nazr-e Ab (literally meaning water donation), was launched 2 years ago, following the drought crisis in the southern and southeastern provinces of the country, with the aim of supplying fresh water to deprived areas with the help of the people and the IRCS.

From September 6 to October 6 in drought-ridden provinces of Sistan-Baluchestan, South Khorasan, Kerman, and Hormozgan, it aims at soliciting water donations for the regions suffering severe water scarcity and people can participate with donating bottled water, water tanks or cash, nationwide.

The campaign was first held in August 2018, in the southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan which went into trouble after the Hamoun wetland drained and the rainless sky left many in dire need of drinking water.

Based on the latest data published by National Drought Warning and Monitoring Center affiliated to Iran's Meteorological Organization, since the current crop year (September 23, 2018), South Khorasan has received 154.6 millimeters rainfall while the long-term averages are 109.7 millimeters which indicate above normal averages. Last year during the same period, 138.5 millimeters of precipitation reported.

Precipitation in Sistan-Baluchestan province increased to 190.5 millimeters from 130.3 millimeters in the previous water year, demonstrating a 46.2 percent rise. The amount also rose in comparison to the long-term average of 113.6 mm, showing an increase of 67.6 percent.

Hormozgan province also experienced increased rainfall during this crop year, receiving 426.7 millimeters of rain while it reported raining 244.5 millimeters in the previous water year, showing a 74.5 percent rise, while it also increased in comparison to the long-term mean by 141.2 percent.

Kerman also experienced increased precipitation compared to both the long term average and last year. However, all four provinces are still suffering from water shortage.

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 15)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

Vocabulary

it, that	/ān/ آن	
interrogative particle	/āyā/ آیا	
this	/in/ این	
loud; aloud	adj, adv /bo'land/ بُلند	
yes	/bale/ بَله	استاد
what	/čē, čī/ چه، چی	
at, in; door	prep, n /dar/ دَر	
lesson	/dars/ دَرس	
	/do/ دُو	دانشجو
again	/dobā're/ دُوباره	
hello	/sa'lām/ سَلام	
	/se/ سه	
you pl	/so'mā/ شُما	دفتر
class	/ke'lās/ کِلās	
classroom	/ke'lāse dars/ کِلās دَرس	
we	/mā/ ما	کتاب
thank you	/motešak'keram/ مَتيشاکَرَم	
I	/man/ مَن	
no	/na/ نَه	
	/yek/ یک	مداد
a, an, one		

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → چ

Shiraz University, Chinese Academy of Sciences sign MOU

Shiraz University and Chinese Research Center for Eco-Environmental Sciences (RCEES) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to expand cooperation in scientific and research projects, IRNA news agency reported on Tuesday.

Joint research activities through the Silk Road Research Program, joint publication of articles and books, study opportunities for faculty and doctoral students, use of laboratory facilities, experience exchange workshops especially in the field of natural disasters, droughts, floods, medicinal plants, biodiversity, land degradation and international joint research projects were among the mutually agreed programs.

The MOU provides the opportunity of extensive scientific and research cooperation in a wide range of areas of interest to both natural and agricultural resources.

دانشگاه شیراز و موسسه تحقیقات منابع طبیعی چین تفاهم نامه امضا کردند

دانشکده کشاورزی به نمایندگی از دانشگاه شیراز با موسسه تحقیقات منابع طبیعی آکادمی علوم چین سند تفاهم نامه همکاری های علمی- پژوهشی مشترک امضا کرد.

به گزارش ایرنا، زمینه بهره برداری عملیاتی از ظرفیت های تفاهم نامه حاضر به ویژه در زمینه فعالیت های پژوهشی مشترک از طریق برنامه پژوهشی راه ابریشم، نشر مشترک مقالات و کتب، فرصت های مطالعاتی اعضای هیات علمی و دانشجویان دکتری، استفاده از امکانات آزمایشگاهی، برگزاری کارگاه های تبادل تجربه به ویژه در حوزه حوادث غیرمترقبه طبیعی، خشکسالی، سیل، گیاهان دارویی، تنوع زیستی، تخریب سرزمین و طرح های پژوهشی مشترک بین المللی در قالب برنامه های مشترک مورد توافق طرفین مورد بحث و بررسی قرار گرفت. این تفاهم نامه مقدمه همکاری های گسترده علمی و پژوهشی را در دامنه وسیعی از حوزه های مورد علاقه طرفین در زمینه منابع طبیعی و کشاورزی فراهم می کند.

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

To me, death for the sake of what is right, is nothing but happiness, and living under tyrants nothing but living in a hell.

Imam Hussein (AS)

Iranian TV series “Kimia” being dubbed into Urdu

→1 The series recounts Kimia’s activities during the 1979 Islamic Revolution, 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, and other events during the present time.



Hassan Purshirazi acts in a scene from “Kimia”. (Photo by Hassan Hendi)

Pragya Jha, an Indian voice actor with a good command of several languages including Urdu, has lent her voice to Kimia in this series, which was aired by Iranian TV from September 2015 to February 2016.

“Kimia” produced by Mohammadreza Shafiei was crowned best series in 2018 during the Jame Jam Television Festival, which is organized annually by Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting to honor its top TV programs and films.

In addition, Afshar was nominated for the title of the Islamic Revolution Artist of the Year for the series in 2016.

Iranian Film Festival in San Francisco announces lineup

ART TEHRAN — The organizers of the 13th Iranian Film Festival in San Francisco has released its lineup featuring 52 films, which will be screened on September 19 and 20.

The lineup includes fiction, documentary, short and animated films from Iran, the U.S., the United Kingdom, Canada, South Africa, France, the Netherlands and Sweden.

“Labyrinth” by Amir-Hossein Torabi, “We Are All Together” by Kamal Tabrizi and “Scenes from a Separation” by Vahid Sedaqat are among the films selected to be screened during the event.

“Labyrinth” shows how everybody is looking for an escape path in life while they don’t know that there is only one way, and that they must reach the middle of the labyrinth to find it.



A scene from “We Are All Together” by Kamal Tabrizi.

“We Are All Together” shows that after some unsuccessful attempts to save a bankrupt airline, the owner needs to gather some suicidal individuals to go along according to her new plan. But due to an incident, everything turns out completely different.

“Scenes from a Separation” is a documentary about the process of making Asghar Farhadi’s Oscar-winning film “A Separation”. From the development until the post-production, Farhadi himself talks through this process. Mike Leigh and Jean-Claud Carrier also talk about Farhadi’s filmmaking method.

Other Iranian films include “Exam” by Sonia Haddad, “Selfie with Democracy” by Ali Atshani, “Asho” by Jafar Najafi and “The Ocean behind the Window”.

“Exam” is about a teenage girl who gets involved in the process of delivering a pack of cocaine to a client, and gets stuck in a weird cycle of occurrences.

“Asho” is about a shepherd boy who is obsessed with Hollywood movies and wants to become an actor.

“Selfie with Democracy” is about the 1980s Iran-Iraq war. It is a sequel to Atshani’s 2010 movie “Democracy in the Daylight”.

“The Ocean behind the Window” by Babak Nabizadeh is about a teenager, Borhan, who lives on a little-known, remote island.

Majidi searching for taker of viral video of lone Muharram mourner

ART TEHRAN — Celebrated Iranian filmmaker Majid Majidi is searching for the person who captured a video clip that shows an old man mourning alone during the Muharram rituals due to the health protocols for the coronavirus era.

Majidi, who is the president of the Mourning at Home Short Film Festival, plans to honor the person during the festival, the organizers announced on Tuesday.

The festival has been launched by the Rahe Iman Charity Organization this year to encourage people to stay at home during Muharram due to the COVID-19 pandemic and

organize the rituals for their family members.

The video going viral on social media shows Ebrahim Kiai Borujeni, the father of a missing-in-action soldier from the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, mourning alone on a sidewalk.

In an announcement published on Tuesday, Majidi called on people to help the festival organizers find the person.

Shia Muslims gather every year to commemorate the anniversary of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS) and his companions with rituals that begin every year from the first day of Muharram.

The rituals reach their climax on



“Abadan 1160” by director Mehrdad Khoshtbakht.

ART TEHRAN — Movie theaters reopened nationwide Wednesday with the screening of two new films, “Local Anesthesia” and “Abadan 1160”, the secretary of the Screening Council of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Morteza Shayesteh, has said.

Movie theaters reopen nationwide with two new films

“Due to the people’s hesitation in going to the cinema during the pandemic, there needs to be a proper program for screening popular movies in order to bring the moviegoers back to the cinemas again,” Shayesteh said.

“There will be a meeting next week in the council to discuss ways to help foster cinema and study the available solutions,” he added.

He also said that there are plans to screen a few good and high-quality films to help keep cinema alive.

Starring Parsa Piruzfar, Soheil Mostajabian, Baran Kowsari, Hassan Majuni and Habib Rezai, “Local Anesthesia” has been written and directed by Hossein Mahkam.

In “Local Anesthesia”, Jalal learns that his sister who suffers from bipolar disorder has married. He leaves the house to visit Bahman, a friend of his who is an underground musician. On the way to Bahman’s house, he meets a taxi driver and the two of them spend the night out instead.

“Abadan 1160” directed by Mehrdad Khoshtbakht is about the people’s fight against Iraqi forces in the south-western Iranian city of Abadan during the early months of the Iran-Iraq war.



Director Majid Majidi attends a press conference at the Rahe Iman Charity Organization in Tehran on August 26, 2020 to brief the media about the Mourning at Home Short Film Festival. (Mehr/Shahabeddin Qayyumi)

Ashura, the 10th day of Muharram, the day upon which Imam Hussein (AS) and his companions were martyred in Karbala as a result of their valiant stand against the injustices of the oppressive Umayyad dynasty in 680 CE.

Due to the pandemic this year, numerous

campaigns were launched before Muharram to encourage people to organize the rituals at home along with their family members.

The Mourning at Home Short Film Festival will put its spotlight on short films covering the mourning rituals Iranian families practiced in their homes this year.

“Normal People” comes to Iranian bookstores

CULTURE TEHRAN — A Persian translation of “Normal People” by Irish author Sally Rooney has been published by Shani Publications in Tehran.

The book has been rendered into Persian by Maryam Nafisiraad.

“Normal People” is the story of mutual fascination, friendship and love. It takes readers from that first conversation to the years beyond, in the company of two people who try to stay apart but find that they can’t.

The story is an exquisite tale of how a person can change another person’s life, a simple yet profound realization that unfolds



Front cover of the Persian translation of Irish author Sally Rooney’s novel “Normal People”.

beautifully over the course of the novel.

The story is about Connell and Marianne who grew up in the same small town, but the similarities end there. At school, Connell is popular and well-liked, while Marianne is a loner. But when the two strike up a conversation, awkward but electrifying, life-changing begins.

A year later, they’re both studying at Trinity College in Dublin. Marianne has found her feet in a new social world while Connell hangs at the sidelines, shy and uncertain. Throughout their years at university, Marianne and Connell circle one another, straying toward other people and possibilities

but always magnetically, irresistibly drawn back together.

And as she veers into self-destruction and he begins to search for meaning elsewhere, each must confront how far they are willing to go to save the other.

Rooney was born in the west of Ireland in 1991. Her work has appeared in the New Yorker, the New York Times, Granta and the London Review of Books. She won the Sunday Times Young Writer of the Year Award in 2017.

She is the author of “Conversations with Friends” and the editor of the Irish literary journal, “The Stinging Fly”.

Kish Island to host Iranian folk music festival in November

CULTURE TEHRAN — Kish Island in the Persian Gulf will be hosting the third music festival, highlighting Iranian regional and folk music in November.

“The festival has been organized to help preserve and promote Iran’s rich regional music and encourage the youth to learn contemporary music, while also reviving the island’s tourism,” secretary of the festival Hamid Hadi has said.

“The festival can also lead to increased empathy and friendship among Iranians of different ethnicities through Iranian regional music,” he said.

“Innovation in ritual music as well as traditional music, songs and melodies are the main topics of the festival,” he said.

The submitted works will be selected by a team of prominent Iranian regional musicians, and the top works will have performances on the island during the festival running from November 9 to 13.

He also said that there are additional facilities for neighboring Persian Gulf countries to participate in the festival.

The organizers have also dedicated a section to honor veteran regional musicians and researchers.

“Interested applicants can submit their works to the secretariat of the festival before October 11,” he concluded.



A poster for the 3rd Kish Music Festival.

Iranian translator Esmaeil Saadat dies at 95

ART TEHRAN — Esmaeil Saadat, an Iranian scholar who translated many fascinating books from the Western literature into Persian, died at his home in Tehran at the age of 95.

He was a senior member of the Academy

of Persian Language and Literature and the Editing High Council of Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting.

He was also the director of the academy’s Department of Literary Research Encyclopedia.

Romain Rolland’s “Life of

Michelangelo”, Sophie Rostopchine’s “Sophie’s Misfortunes” and George Edward Moore’s “Ethics” are among the works translated by Saadat.

He also rendered several books on Islamic studies, including “Islamic Philosophy” by Majid Fakhry.

Anna Claybourne’s “Life Processes” published in Persian

CULTURE TEHRAN — British children’s book writer Anna Claybourne’s “Life Processes” has recently been published in Persian in Tehran.

Kaveh Feizollahi is the translator of the book published by Nashre No Publications.

“Life Processes” explains that how living things function is a big question at the heart of science.

It looks at the seven life processes - movement, respiration, sensitivity, nutrition, excretion, reproduction, and growth - as well as tackling common confusions about the science

and showing how each topic is relevant to the reader.

Claybourne, 51, is the author of numerous books on the natural world for younger readers, including the Usborne Internet-Linked. She started her career at Usborne Publishing in 1993 as a trainee staff writer, and became a self-employed freelance writer and editor three years later.

Her credits also include “Tigers”, “A Colony of Ants”, “Microworlds: Unlocking the Secrets of Atoms and Molecules”, “Humpback Whales”, “Dolphins”, and “100 Most Feared Creatures on the Planet”



Front cover of the Persian version of British author Anna Claybourne’s book “Life Processes”.