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# Iran, Russia welcome IAEA report



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## Industry Ministry approves \$850m of foreign investment in 5 months

**TEHRAN** — The Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade has approved 49 foreign investment cases valued at about \$850 million in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21), Donya-e-Eqtesad daily reported.

According to the latest data released by the Industry Ministry, in the mentioned five months 60 foreign investment cases

valued at \$1.2 billion were approved in the country, of which 26 percent were attracted by the industry, mining, and trade sectors.

Based on the data, 83.6 percent of the ministry's foreign investment was attracted by the industry sector, followed by trade and mining with 10.2 percent and 6.2 percent, respectively. **→ 4**

## Iran improves in nanotechnology articles citation

**TEHRAN** — Iran's ranking in nanotechnology articles citation in 2019 has significantly improved compared to 2018, as it moved 26 levels higher, according to the StatNano's statistics collected from the WoS database.

Based on a report Nanotechnology Publications report, Iran ranked 38 worldwide for the average times the nano-articles have been cited in the Journal Citation Reports in 2019, while in 2018, it was placed 64.

As a determining indicator for evaluating the quality of articles, the 5-year average citation per article generally shows the share of highly-cited and lowly-cited articles by a researcher, institution, or country. For example, a high value of this indicator means that the proportion of lowly-cited articles is smaller in the distribution of the articles of a given country; in other words, most of the articles are highly-cited or medium-cited articles. **→ 7**

## Iran counters Charlie Hebdo's insult to Prophet Muhammad (S) with Holocaust cartoon exhibit

**By Manijeh Rezapoor**

**TEHRAN** — Iran's Art Bureau plans to organize an international cartoon exhibition on the Holocaust in response to the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo's republication of cartoons insulting Prophet Muhammad (S).

Speaking to the Tehran Times on Saturday, Masud Shojaei-Tabatabaei, the director of the bureau's Visual Arts Office, said, "I believe Charlie Hebdo is totally

in the service of the Zionist regime and actually intends to meet the goals of the Zionists, which is the main reason behind republishing the same cartoons about the Prophet of kindness Muhammad (S)."

Charlie Hebdo on Wednesday republished the cartoons to mark the start of the terrorism trial of the people accused as accomplices in the attack. The magazine posted the cartoons online on Tuesday and they appeared in print on Wednesday. **→ 8**

**By Samaneh Aboutalebi**  
Tehran Times Journalist

## Why studying in Iran

Although the coronavirus pandemic has brought the world into a standstill for more than six months now, the academic year has begun in several countries including Iran.

It's a new beginning of another creative year of the school life for the students who are to resume their most unforgettable journey of life.

Aside from a large number of Iranian students in different educational levels, Iran also hosts hundreds of foreign students who have a passion for Iranian language and culture in their hearts, as studying at Iran's universities is a dream for Persian lovers and the main source for those who are interested in learning this poetic language academically.

Besides being a cradle of the Persian language, Iran also enjoys other advantages as well, which makes it a good choice for a student who is looking for a place to quench their thirst for Iranian culture.

Although mainstream media is not in favor of Iran, introducing Iran as a not-a-safe place to travel to or to choose as an academic destination, real experience of students studying in Iran proves the opposite.

Iran is one of the world's most dynamic and prolific centers when it comes to arts, architecture, and literature. Many Iranian historical buildings show a mixture of Islamic and Persian architectural traditions and arts.

Iran is also home to several tourist attractions, historical sites, and natural sights, which can act as an endless resource to history and culture students and enthusiasts.

Iranians who are famous for their hospitality, are amazingly warm, friendly, and welcoming to foreigners, which makes a safe and peaceful social atmosphere to live and enjoy.

Food is very important to Iranians and as a student away from home, this is the last thing you need to worry about as you have an endless number of choices to enjoy all types of delicious edibles.

Traditional Iranian foods are truly diverse, and they range from various kinds of stews to different types of roasted meat and kebabs to fried dishes to baked dishes to numerous soups and pottages to an assortment of salads, desserts, sweets, and confectionery. **→ 6**

## Oil, petchem downstream industries should target domestic market

**By Ebrahim Fallahi**

**TEHRAN** — As one the world's top hydrocarbon-rich countries, Iran has managed to develop its oil, gas, and petrochemical industries to a significantly high level so that despite all the pressures and limitations created by the external factors like sanctions, the country now stands among West Asia's top producers.

Despite the exceptional advances in the upstream sector, the downstream industries, however, have been neglected to some extent, so that considering the capacities in various areas and the amount of feed available, most of the mentioned industries' output has been exported in the form of raw materials.

However, over the past decade and following several rounds of sanctions and the considerable decline in Iran's exports of oil and oil products, the government has shifted its focus from the sole developing of the upstream sector and is

taking serious measures to pull up the neglected downstream industries to catch up with the upstream sector.

The country has been implementing several macro-scale programs in this regard, and especially in the past few years after the re-imposition of the U.S. sanctions, drastic measures have been taken to boost the domestic production and distance the economy from too much reliance on oil exports.

The Secretary of the Iranian Oil, Gas, and Petrochemical Products Exporters' Union (OPEX) Seyed Hamid Hosseini believes that in exploring the current situation of the country's downstream sectors we should differentiate between the oil and gas downstream sector and the petrochemical industry's downstream sector.

In an interview with the Tehran Times on Saturday, Hosseini said "regarding the oil and gas sector, **→ 4**

## Protests hit U.S. cities as Portland marks 100th day of rallies

*By staff & agencies*

Portland Police made multiple arrests overnight Friday as the Oregon city nears 100 days of demonstrations against racism and police brutality, which have at times turned violent.

"Yes, we have made multiple arrests tonight", a Portland Police spokesman told Reuters in an emailed statement after police had declared a gathering as "unlawful". The statement did not give a specific number.

"Officers will continue to make targeted arrests of those who fail to adhere to this order. The gathering at N Lombard St and N Campbell Ave has been declared an unlawful assembly", police said.

Police shot and killed a self-declared anti-fascist activist in Washington state Thursday night as they moved in to arrest him on suspicion he fatally shot a right-wing counter protester last weekend in Portland, Reuters reported.

Demonstrations against racism and police brutality have swept the United States since the death in May of George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man who died after a Minneapolis police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

Portland, in particular, has seen over three months of daily demonstrations calling for policing and social justice reforms. These have at times turned into clashes between demonstrators and officers, as well as between right- and left-wing groups.

The administration of U.S. President Donald Trump deployed federal forces to Portland in July to crack down on the protests. Trump signed a memo Wednesday that threatens to cut federal funding to "lawless" cities, including Portland.

His Democratic challenger in the Nov. 3 presidential election, Joe Biden, has accused Trump of stoking violence with his rhetoric.

## UAE deal raises questions about manipulation of Jared Kushner by Israel

**TEHRAN** — Jared Kushner, the U.S. president's son-in-law and senior adviser, who was a target of manipulation for many countries, is a "playing" serving Israeli interests in a way that would destabilize the region, according to a former Iranian diplomat.

Over the past few years, Kushner has been busy brokering normalization deals between Israel and a number of Arab countries including the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. After years of private talks, he is now engaged

in intense shuttle diplomacy between Israel and the Arab states. His ultimate goal is to find Arab partners for Israel and thus break its historic isolation in the region.

On August 31, the president's son-in-law led, with great fanfare, an American-Israeli delegation traveling to the UAE from Israel on the first direct flight operated by the Israeli airline El Al. The flight, touted as a "peace" initiative, was hailed as the first commercial flight between Israel and the UAE, although reports in Israeli media suggested

that it wasn't the first flight. According to the Israeli news website, Ynet News, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, secretly visited the UAE in 2018, where he met with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Zayed.

U.S. President Donald Trump announced on August 13 that he had 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 hailed by Kushner as a "giant step forward." **→ 3**



ORNA / Sarehdokht Soltaniyeh

## Schools reopened under strict health protocols

**TEHRAN** — Over 15 million students attended schools nationwide on Saturday for the new school year under strict health protocols to protect teachers, staff, and students against the coronavirus pandemic.

The opening bell of the new academic year was rung symbolically by President Hassan Rouhani at a girls' high school in downtown Tehran.

Each year, Iranian students start the school year on September 23, which marks the first day of autumn on the Iranian calendar, after a three-month summer vacation, while this year, in the light of the pandemic, the school year was started 18 days earlier. **→ 7**

## Lebanese analyst expects Hezbollah to play a constructive role in government formation process

**By Mohammad Mazhari**

**TEHRAN** — Ghassan Javad, a Lebanese analyst, expects Hezbollah to contribute constructively in formation of a new government in Lebanon based on "the resistance's understanding of the Lebanese reality and necessity of Lebanese consensus."

On the role of Hezbollah in the next Lebanese government, French President Emmanuel Macron has said that Hezbollah is a political group that has the right to be in power.

Contrary to all comments that say Hezbollah should be eliminated from the Lebanese decision-making process, the French think that the party has a meaningful social base in Lebanon.

The French push for a systematic involvement of Hezbollah in Lebanese institutions, believing that it will be in the interest of the country and other groups.

The Lebanese analyst tells the Tehran Times that Hezbollah will be a participant in the next government and will help prepare the conditions to form a national unity government.

"Of course, Hezbollah will have a constructive role in the process of forming a new government in Lebanon, based on the resistance's understanding of the Lebanese reality and necessity of Lebanese consensus," Javad points out.

After naming the Lebanese prime minister on August 31, Macron said in Beirut that the Lebanese political groups had pledged to form a new government headed by Mustafa Adib within 15 days. **→ 5**



## UK acknowledges debt owed to Iran

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — British Defense Secretary Ben Wallace has acknowledged for the first time that he is actively seeking to pay a debt to the Iranian government owed over a decades-old arms deal.

The admission came in a letter seen by The Guardian.

The UK is thought to owe as much as £400m to the Iranian government arising from the non-delivery of Chieftain tanks ordered by the late Iranian Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi before the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

An international arbitration in 2008 ruled the UK owed the debt, but in subsequent protracted court battles, lawyers acting for International Military Services, the Ministry of Defense's now-defunct arms sales agency, have questioned not only the debt's size, but at times whether any debt was payable.

In his letter, Wallace writes, "With regard to IMS Ltd and the outstanding legal dispute the government acknowledges there is a debt to be paid and continues to explore every legal avenue for the lawful discharge of that debt."

Wallace, as defense secretary, is the 99% shareholder of IMS and so the lead decision-maker.

As a backbencher and before becoming defense secretary, Wallace had been sharply critical of the delay over the payment of the debt, saying it was a stain on the UK. He adds in his letter: "I have previously stated my personal position and I remain committed to its resolution, but it would not be appropriate for me to comment further at this time."

Iran's Ambassador to London, Hamid Baeidinejad, had criticized Britain's Defense Ministry for its delays in paying Iran's debt.

"The legal counsel of the UK Defense Ministry subsidiary company, resorts to all possible procedural tactics and lawyerism to delay the payment of Iran's debt," he said in a tweet in October 2019.

## Indian defense minister visits Tehran, meets Iranian counterpart

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Indian Defense Minister Rajnath Singh left Moscow for Tehran on Saturday and was scheduled to meet with Iranian Defense Minister Amir Hatami.

"Leaving Moscow for Tehran. I shall be meeting the Defence Minister of Iran, Brigadier General Amir Hatami," Singh tweeted on Saturday. Singh was in Moscow on a three-day visit to Russia to attend a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) defense ministers.

He also urged the Persian Gulf countries to resolve their disputes through dialogue based on mutual respect.

"We are deeply concerned about the situation in the Persian Gulf," Singh said in his address at a meeting of the SCO.

"We call upon countries in the region - all of which are dear and friendly to India, to resolve differences by dialogue based on mutual respect, sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs of each other," he said in his address at the combined meeting of defense ministers of the SCO, Collective Security Treaty Organization and Commonwealth of Independent States member states.

The SCO is a Eurasian political and economic organization that was founded in 2001 in Shanghai by the leaders of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, and India are its main members, and Iran, Mongolia, Afghanistan, and Belarus are observers.

Bakhtiar Hakimov, the Russian president's special representative for the SCO, has reiterated support for Iran's full membership in the bloc, ISNA reported on Friday.

Hakimov reiterated Russia's support for full membership during a meeting with Iranian Ambassador to Moscow Kazem Jalali.

In a meeting with Jalali in February, Hakimov had also said Russia supports Iran's full membership in the SCO.

Iran applied for full membership in the organization on March 24, 2008. However, because it was under sanctions levied by the United Nations at the time, it was blocked from admission as a new member. The SCO stated that any country under UN sanctions could not be admitted. After the UN sanctions were lifted, Chinese President Xi Jinping announced its support for Iran's full membership in the SCO during a state visit to Iran in January 2016.

## Exclusive: UK picking mysterious agent as new commercial attache in Iran

**TEHRAN (Tasnim)** — The UK government has reportedly decided to assign an Iranian-British woman with a background of involvement in security activities to serve as Britain's commercial attaché in Iran.

Tasnim has found that the British government is going to choose Margot Arthur as its commercial attaché and dispatch her to Tehran.

Ms. Arthur has an Iranian grandmother and has been working for the desk of Iran at British Council since 2016. She is a well-known anti-Iranian figure in the cultural arena, and also a staunch advocate of mounting pressure of sanctions on Iran.

Arthur's background includes cooperation with a number of people convicted of security-related crimes, such as Ms. Aras Amiri. She is therefore deemed to be one of the main elements of the plot for infiltration into Iran.

The first question that comes to mind when hearing speculation about Arthur's appointment is what role a person with such cultural and security background is going to play in her new post as a commercial attaché in Iran.

A merchant involved in business between Iran and the UK says that London has practically suspended all economic interactions with Tehran in recent years in complete obedience to the U.S.' unilateral and illegal sanctions against Iran, and has not provided any support for bilateral trade either. The merchant, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the commercial office in the British embassy is almost closed and the whole contacts that the business people make with the office to address their problems have gone unanswered.

The UK government's economic policies on Iran are absolutely clear, as a number of British companies, such as British Airways, left Iran even before the U.S.' withdrawal from the JCPOA, in spite of the economic benefits of working with Iran.

Is the mysterious British-Iranian figure really going to settle the economic problems between Tehran and London after working in Egypt, Bahrain, and Iraq?

A simple Internet search and the information available in the virtual space about Ms. Arthur reveal that the nature of her activities is based on security activities. It is surprising that she used to work as an English teacher for the British Council in Cairo, but is going to take office as a commercial attaché in Tehran. When she was in Egypt, Arthur tried to improve her Arabic and Persian to prepare herself for new missions to the regional countries.

# Rouhani: Some anti-revolutionaries want Iran to lock down

“No country has been aiding us during the past seven months that Iran is fighting Coronavirus”

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Now that the country is fighting the coronavirus pandemic some anti-revolutionary elements or groups want to bring the country to a halt under different pretexts, warning against entrance exams for universities, holding Ashura rituals, starting new school year or reopening factories, President Hassan Rouhani said on Saturday.

"A number of anti-revolution groups, by using the condition created by the Coronavirus, want to create a division between the bread and lives of people," Rouhani pointed out.

Rouhani made the remarks as the schools opened across the country on Saturday.

Speaking at the meeting of the national taskforce for combatting the coronavirus, Rouhani said anti-revolutionary groups, through their media outlets, created a commotion these days claiming that experts are adamant that schools should remain closed but the education minister in Iran wants to open classes "by force".

Iran held nationwide entrance exams for universities from August 19-22.

"Konkur (a term the French concours) was



held across the country well," Rouhani said.

The president said the Health Ministry reported that over 90 percent of health protocols were observed during the entrance exams.

"Today, the Ministry of Education and university also started their work."

The observation of health issues during

the rituals marking Ashura (the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (AS) by mourners won the praise of the president and interior minister. The Leader of the Islamic Revolution also said this year's Ashura ritual will remain in the history of Iran.

The president said health protocols are

observed about 80 percent in administrative offices and banks and this is about 70 percent in private jobs.

■ **'U.S. heartless and crueler than what is imagined'**

The president went on to say that during the past 7 months that Iran is fighting the Coronavirus pandemic and Iran was under sanctions "nobody helped us."

During the pandemic the U.S. even introduced new sanctions on Iran.

"The United States, which has sanctioned us, is heartless and crueler than what is uttered," Rouhani lamented.

"Even during the Corona time the Americans did not lift sanctions. If they had a sense of humanity, if they had wisdom 'as much as a barely' and wanted to do something for themselves and the history of the U.S. they would have definitely canceled the sanctions. But they did not do that and instead during the past seven month they imposed new sanctions and pressure on us."

He added even friendly countries who had said they would resist the U.S. sanctions because the coronavirus pandemic did not do anything.

## Iran, Russia welcome IAEA report

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The report on Friday by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) about cooperation between Iran and the UN body has won the praise of Tehran and Moscow.

Iran's ambassador to the Vienna-based international organizations says the report by the IAEA envisages a positive, constructive outlook in relations.

"The report is important in two aspects," Kazem Gharibabadi told reporters on Friday. "In terms of shape, the report discusses the developments and progress made in the relation and cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Agency in the last three months."

Gharibabadi said the report shows that a constructive interaction exists between Tehran and the UN nuclear watchdog to reach a mutual understanding and find a solution for the issues raised, IRNA reported.

Such constructive interaction is expected to be welcomed by the overwhelming majority of IAEA member states and the Board of Governors, the ambassador added.

The report referred to a trip by IAEA chief Rafael Grossi to Tehran on August 24 and 25 and his talks with senior Iranian officials, which led to a joint statement aimed at strengthening cooperation and building more confidence, Gharibabadi remarked.

"Based on the report, the Agency has been granted access to one of the two demanded sites and the access to the second site has been planned for this month," he added.

On August 26, at the end of Grossi's visit to Tehran, Iran and the IAEA issued a joint statement on agreements and the results of high-level talks between the two sides.

According to the statement, the IAEA and Iran "agreed to further reinforce their cooperation and enhance mutual trust" to facilitate the full implementation of Iran's

Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (CSA) and the Additional Protocol (AP) thereto, which is provisionally applied by Iran since January 16, 2016.

"After intensive bilateral consultations, Iran and the IAEA reached an agreement on the resolution of the safeguards implementation issues specified by the IAEA, in good faith. In this regard, Iran is voluntarily providing the IAEA with access to the two locations specified by the IAEA and facilitating the IAEA verification activities to resolve these issues," the statement said.

In its quarterly report on Friday, the IAEA announced that Iran has granted the agency's inspectors access to one of the two sites it agreed the previous week for verification purposes.

The report added that the IAEA inspected the sites and took environmental samples there while the agency's inspectors would visit the other site "later in September 2020 on a date already agreed with Iran, to take environmental samples."

■ **'Spirit of cooperation between IAEA and Iran prevails'**

Mikhail Ulyanov, Russia's permanent representative

**Those who hoped to arrange a crisis around this issue must feel themselves very disappointed. The spirit of cooperation between the IAEA and Tehran prevailed," Ulyanov tweeted**

## UAE normalization deal with Israel is 'apostasy': deputy speaker

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Amir-Hussein Ghazizadeh Hashemi, the first deputy speaker of the Iranian Parliament, dismissed on Friday a normalization deal between Tel Aviv and Abu Dhabi as an act of apostasy by the UAE.

"Islam, as a religion, has a number of obligations, rules, and dos and don'ts. One of Islam's obligations is to defend the oppressed and counter oppression. When the UAE officially establishes and declares relations with Israel, this, in fact, amounts to the issuance of a statement declaring the apostasy of this country," Hashemi told Fars news agency on Saturday, referring to the U.S.-brokered normalization deal between the UAE and Israel.

U.S. President Donald Trump announced on August 13 that he brokered a "historic deal" between the UAE and Israel to normalize



their relations, the first such deal between Israel and an Arab country since 1994. The last time an Arab country signed a deal with Israel to normalize relations was on October 26, 1994, when Jordan signed a peace treaty with Israel. U.S. officials hailed the deal as a "historic diplomatic breakthrough."

Under the deal, officially known as the Abraham Accords, 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.

Iran has denounced the deal as a "big mistake", calling it a "betrayal" to the Palestinian people.

"They thought that if they approach the Zionist regime, their security and economy would be ensured, while this is wrong and 100% condemned, and it is a clear betrayal to the Palestinian people, the cause of al-Quds and Muslims," said President Hassan Rouhani, shortly after the deal was announced.

"The rulers of the United Arab Emirates should know that they have gone in the wrong direction if they think that they can buy security for themselves by getting closer to the enemies of Islam and Iran," the president

stated, warning that "unfortunately, the United Arab Emirates has made a big mistake and we hope it would change its wrong tack. We warn them against giving Israel a foothold in the region, then they will be treated differently."

Hashemi said the UAE has had secret political and security contacts with Israel and what happened now is the declaration of these contacts.

According to the deputy speaker, some Muslim groups had doubts about the UAE's contacts with Israel. But now that the UAE has declared the contacts, these groups' doubts have been dispelled.

Citing opinion poll numbers, Hashemi also said that 85 percent of Muslims oppose establishing relations with the Zionist regime and that the Emiratis should expect that the policies of other countries toward the UAE would be changed.

## Defense minister says Iran plans to upgrade range of air-based missiles

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Defense Minister Brigadier General Amir Hatami has announced Iran plans to boost the range of its air-based cruise missiles to over 1,000km.

"We have reached the range of over 1,000 kilometers in anti-surface and marine cruise missiles, the range of nearly 1,000 kilometers in ground-based cruise missiles and the range of 22 kilometers in air-based cruise missiles which will soon increase to over 1,000 kilometers," Hatami said in an interview with the Persian-language Iran newspaper published on Saturday.

The defense minister added that Iran produces over 90% of its Armed Forces' needs to weapons, noting that the remaining 10% does not play a decisive role in the national defense power.

General Hatami said that after the removal of the UN arms embargos against Iran, the country will be an exporter of weapons and military equipment, adding that a number of products that have not been mentioned by the sanctions are being exported now.

Arms embargo against Iran ends on October 18. The U.S. feels unsettled as the expiry date is fast approaching. Iran in August unveiled several home-made defense



equipment, including a long-range ballistic missile and a cruise missile system.

The two missiles, designed and manufactured by Iranian experts, were unveiled on the occasion the National Defense Industry Day in Iran.

The unveiling ceremony was held in the presence of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani via video conference.

Speaking at the event broadcast live on TV, General Hatami said the country had inaugurated a surface-to-sur-

face ballistic missile with a range of 1,400 kilometers named after top anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, who was martyred by the U.S. military in January.

Iran has also developed a cruise missile, named Martyr Abu Mahdi, which has a range of over 1,000 kilometers, he said.

"The country's achievements in the defense industry over the past four decades are not comparable to any other period," General Hatami said, describing the accomplishments as a "basis for military self-reliance and a must for [maintaining] the country's independence".

Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis was also assassinated along with General Soleimani and a number of their comrades in a U.S. drone raid near the Baghdad International Airport on January 3, 2020.

Commenting on the new achievement's features, Iran's Deputy Defense Minister Brigadier General Qassem Taqizadeh said the speed of the Martyr Qassem Soleimani missiles makes their interception impossible.

He added that the cruise missile is capable of flying at a low altitude and getting around the enemy's missile systems.



# Tehran: Swiss FM's visit has nothing to do with Iran-U.S. issues

Iran has serious doubts about U.S. intentions, says Khatibzadeh

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The Foreign Ministry has announced that Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis's visit to Tehran has nothing to do with Iran-U.S. issues.

"This trip has nothing to do with Iran-U.S. issues. This trip has already been planned within the framework of reciprocal ties and regular trips by both countries' foreign ministers," Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said on Friday evening, the Foreign Ministry website reported.

Khatibzadeh touched upon reports on U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's contacts with the top Swiss diplomat, saying, "The U.S. secretary of state's hasty contacts with dignitaries who are going to visit Iran are nothing new."

"Out of desperation, Pompeo seeks to pursue Washington's 'maximum pressure' policy one way or another. So, he tries to dissuade third countries from having normal relations with Iran. Of course, he has failed in his attempts so far. The Americans failed in their efforts, too, during a trip to Iran by director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency Rafael Grossi. This time, too, their pressure will fail to be effective," he said.

According to the spokesman, the Islamic Republic has time and again announced its official stance on the Trump regime's recalcitrance, and Iran's position has not changed.



Cassis is scheduled to discuss bilateral and regional issues with Iranian officials in a two-day visit to Tehran.

During his visit, he is slated to meet with several high-ranking Iranian officials including President Hassan Rouhani, Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani and Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif.

Switzerland has represented U.S. interests in Iran since 1980 and has acted as a go-between to deescalate tensions between Tehran and Washington. It has also played

a key role in paving the way for prisoner swap deals between the two countries.

Cassis's visit comes amid heightened tensions between Tehran and Washington, with the latter having recently resorted to a political ploy to reimpose the UN sanctions on Iran under the 2015 nuclear agreement it ditched in May 2018.

The U.S. move, which comes under a mechanism commonly known as "snapback", has been rejected vehemently by other parties to the deal, including Iran on the one side and Russia, China, France, Britain and

Germany on the other.

On September 2, Cassis discussed his upcoming visit to Iran with Pompeo via telephone.

"In view of my trip to Iran, we discussed the Swiss financial channel for humanitarian goods," he wrote in a tweet after a telephone conversation with his American counterpart.

**Iran has serious doubts about U.S. intentions, says Khatibzadeh**

In his Friday remarks, Khatibzadeh said two transactions have taken place so far via the Swiss financial channel.

"The first one was conducted in February 2020 on a trial basis," he said. "And back in June, the first official transaction was conducted through this channel. Both transactions included the transfer of medications using Iranian financial resources in Switzerland."

He also slammed U.S. destructive moves with regard to the financial channel, saying, "We have serious doubts about the United States' intentions."

"Of course, it is clear that everything conducted so far through this financial channel has been done with Iranian assets in Switzerland," the spokesman said.

"We welcome any move that would see this channel get rid of the U.S. pressure and ease the shipment of commodities and medicines by using Iran's assets in other countries," he added.

## UAE deal raises questions about manipulation of Jared Kushner by Israel

**1→** Under the deal, officially known as the Abraham Accords, 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.

The deal once again revived debate over whether Kushner is being manipulated by Israel and the UAE given the past efforts by Tel Aviv and Abu Dhabi to exploit Kushner's "naivety and inexperience".

According to a 2018 Washington Post report, the UAE, Israel, China, and Mexico "privately discussed ways they can manipulate Jared Kushner" to their advantage.

Citing U.S. officials, the Washington Post wrote, "Kushner's contacts with certain foreign government officials have raised concerns inside the White House and are a reason he has been unable to obtain a permanent security clearance."

"Within the White House, Kushner's lack of government experience and his business debt were seen from the beginning of his tenure as potential points of leverage that foreign governments could use to influence him," the Washington Post added.

The AP also reported that special counsel Robert Mueller investigated Kushner's foreign contacts. A former U.S. official told the AP that Kushner's contacts with foreign officials have been a part of Mueller's investigation. During its interviews for what came to be known as the Russia probe, Muller's team has asked people about the protocols Kushner used when he held conversations with foreign leaders.

Kushner is widely known to have a close relationship with many leaders in the region, especially Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman who made use of his rapport with the president's son-in-law to mitigate the U.S. response to the killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul in 2018.

Joshua, the younger brother of Jared, also quietly managed to build a business relationship with Saudi Arabia. According to a New York Times report, Joshua traveled to Saudi Arabia in October 2017 to discuss possible



business deals with the Saudis in the technology sector, three days before his older brother Jared paid a visit to Saudi Arabia. He is the founder and managing partner of the investment firm Thrive Capital. During his visit to Saudi Arabia, Jared attended an economic conference in the kingdom, during which Mohammad bin Salman declared that the country was going to invest billions of dollars in technological projects.

A spokesman for the firm said at the time that Joshua's trip to Saudi Arabia wasn't aimed at making investments. However, a year after the founder visited Saudi Arabia, the firm earned one billion dollar worth of investments, which raised some concerns over a possible conflict between Jared's private and public interests, as he transferred parts of his investments to Thrive Capital, which is managed by his younger brother, Joshua.

Joshua is also a co-founder of Oscar Health, a firm founded in 2012 to provide health services. The New York Times reported that Joshua has been fervently talking to the Saudis about Oscar Health. The firm received \$165 million in financing five months after the co-founder's visit to Saudi Arabia.

This maybe was the reason why U.S. officials voiced concerns over possible manipulation of Jared Kushner by Israel and some Arab countries as he was tasked with devising a plan for "peace" in the region.

Analysts and former diplomats believe that Kushner could have been manipulated by the Israelis to pursue foreign

policy goals that could set the region on fire.

"Kushner's measures would touch off violence in Palestine sooner or later, because he is driving the Palestinians to despair," Nosratollah Tajik, the former Iranian ambassador to Jordan, told the Tehran Times. He said the president's son-in-law took measures that further incited the public opinion in the region against Israel.

"Kushner is a plaything that seeks to accomplish Zionist goals in the region but he will fail," Tajik added.

According to the former ambassador, Kushner's push for the normalization of ties between Israel and Arab states as well as Israeli policies toward the Palestinian territories, especially the Israeli plan to annex large swaths of the West Bank, could create a sense of frustration among the Palestinians and push them into violently resisting Israel's expansionism. Tajik also alluded to the recent meeting between various Palestinian groups in Beirut, saying the meeting was a step toward creating unity among the Palestinian.

The former diplomat touched on Mohammad bin Zayed's ambitious goals in strengthening the bond among the UAE, Kushner, and Israel, saying that the MBZ seeks to become the president of the UAE by dominating other emirates constituting the UAE.

The possible manipulation of Kushner by Israel doesn't seem to make a difference in terms of making efforts to achieve unjust peace between Israel and Palestine. Kushner seems to be dedicated to moving forward with his plan to further alienate the Palestinians with the efforts to make a just, genuine peace. He clearly says that he, "as the grandson of two Holocaust survivors", is very happy to serve Israel's interests while chipping away at the Palestinians' hope for achieving statehood.

"To have played a role in its creation, and I say this as the grandson of two Holocaust survivors, it means more to me and to my family that I can ever express," Kushner said during a joint press conference with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. National Security Advisor Robert O'Brian in Jerusalem last week. He was referring to the UAE-Israel normalization deal.

## Iran, Russia underscore nuclear co-op amid U.S. pressure

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Ambassador to Moscow Kazem Jalali and Deputy Head of Russia's Rosatom Company for International Affairs Nikolai Spassky have met to discuss Iran-Russia nuclear cooperation in the face of U.S. pressure.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed the developments in bilateral cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities and the obstacles faced by Iran and Russia, Mehr reported on Saturday.

Jalali and Spassky emphasized the need to continue bilateral collaboration in the face of U.S. attempts to destroy the Iran nuclear agreement, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The JCPOA was struck between Iran and six world powers, including the U.S., China, Russia, France, Britain and Germany in 2015. After the deal was signed, Iran and Russia started to build the second and third blocks of the Bushehr nuclear power plant.

In 2018, the U.S. unilaterally pulled out of the deal and pursued a policy of "maximum pressure" against Iran to force it to negotiate a new deal.

Russia and China have strongly opposed Washington's anti-Iran measures, which included targeting top Iranian officials with sanctions and assassinating Iran's top anti-terror general Qassem Soleimani.

Since the U.S. quit the nuclear deal and imposed sanctions on Iran, the

three European countries to the pact have failed to fulfill their commitments to the agreement.

The participant states of the Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) gathered in Vienna on Tuesday to address Iran's complaint and also discuss Washington's latest move to invoke the UN sanctions snapback against Iran.

In a statement, they 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.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has announced that all UN sanctions against Iran

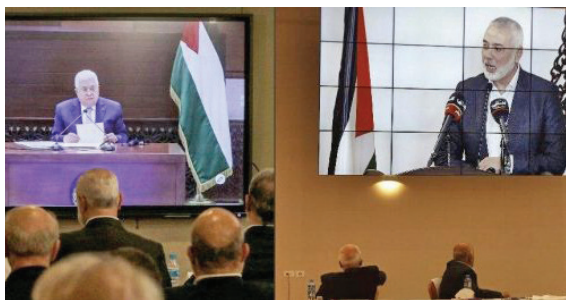


Spassky

Jalali

will be reinstated on September 20 after the U.S. "activated the snapback mechanism". However, the claim was strongly denounced by other signatories of the nuclear deal including Iran, the EU, Russia and China.

## Iran welcomes meeting of Palestinian groups



**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — The Iranian Foreign Ministry has welcomed a recent meeting of the

leaders of Palestinian groups, stressing that the only way to secure the liberation of the occupied Palestine and the holy Quds is that all Palestinian and resistance groups to remain united against the criminal and occupying regime of Israel.

In a statement on Saturday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said the meeting indicates the tactfulness of Palestinian leaders in countering the Israeli regime as well as its supporters and accomplices, the Foreign Ministry website reported.

"The resistant Palestinian nation has proved over the past decades that it will not give up its determination to stand up to those who have usurped Palestine despite years of occupation, killing and crackdown by the occupying Israeli regime against Palestinian people as well as compromise

plans put forward by some treacherous Arab governments," Khatibzadeh said.

He added that governments as well as freedom-seeking and resistant nations across the world will stand with Palestinians on the path to achieving their demands.

On Thursday, leaders of all Palestinian factions and groups in Ramallah and Beirut held a meeting to discuss a "unified strategy" to counter Israeli-U.S. plots, including their land grab agenda, following a controversial Washington-brokered normalization accord between Israel and the UAE.

The meeting was attended by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, Hamas political chief Ismail Haniya, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad leader Ziyad al-Nakhalah, among others.

## SPORTS

### Iranian swimmer Asghari sets new Guinness record

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iranian female swimmer Elham Sadat Asghari swam 10km in the Oman Sea wearing hijab to set a new Guinness World Record.



She swam with one hand for four hours and 59 minutes to register a new record.

Asghari had also registered Guinness World Record Certificate after registering her 5,488 meters swimming both in the Caspian Sea and a swimming pool in Tehran in 2019. It's the farthest swim whilst wearing handcuffs.

Back in 2017, the 37-year-old Iranian sportswoman completed the challenge of swimming handcuffed for more than three hours non-stop in the Persian Gulf waters off the coast of the southwestern port city of Bushehr, located 1,050 kilometers (652 miles) south of the capital Tehran.

### Rahman Rezaei takes charge of Zob Ahan

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Zob Ahan football club hired Rahman Rezaei as new head coach on Friday, hoping their former defender can turn around the fortunes of the ailing club.

Rezaei had served as technical director of the Isfahan based football team last season.

Rezaei, who played for Zob Ahan five years from 1996 to 2001, has been appointed as Zob Ahan coach on a one-year contract.

He has played in Serie A football team Perugia, Messina and Livorno from 2001 to 2008.

Rezaei replaced Croatian coach Luka Bonacic who parted company with Zob Ahan after avoiding relegation last season in Iran Professional League.

### Persepolis sign Milad Sarlak

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iranian football team Persepolis have completed the transfer of Milad Sarlak from Shahr Khodro.

The 25-year-old defensive midfielder has joined Persepolis on a two-year contract for an undisclosed fee.

Sarlak will likely replace Mohsen Rabikhah in Persepolis.

He is Persepolis's fifth signing for the new season.

Persepolis have previously completed the signing of goalkeeper Hamed Lak, Sanat Naft forward Issa Alekasir, Sepahan left back Saeid Aghaei and Zob Ahan winger Ehsan Pahlavan, with all four players have joined the Reds on two-year deals.

### A top foreign coach to lead Iran at Olympics

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Technical committee of the Islamic Republic of Iran Volleyball Federation (IRIVF) on Saturday approved the federation will appoint a top foreigner for the National Team.

The new head coach will be appointed within the next two weeks, the Committee confirmed.

The first session on choosing the new head coach was held in the federation's headquarters with the participation of the committee members and experts.

IRIVF president Mohammadreza Davarzani has already said Iran aim to finish among top four teams in the Tokyo Games, that's why the appointment is taking so long.

The Committee emphasized that the new head coach should have experienced the Olympic Games.

It was also decided the Iranian coaches should be appointed as assistants in the National Team.

The second session will be held on Wednesday.

### Mehdi Taremi increases Porto followers

In just 24 hours, FC Porto's Instagram account gained over 30 thousand new followers.

The hiring of striker Mehdi Taremi from Rio Ave, who signed until 2024 with a termination clause of 60 million euros, is the reason of the matter. In an analysis made by the newspaper O Jogo, the Portuguese champion has 57,200 Colombian followers and 97,000 Mexicans. That is, in just one day, FC Porto attracted more than a third of the total followers.

The arrival of Casillas, for example, had a huge media impact worldwide, but it was not reflected significantly on social networks.

Iran is a country where Portuguese coaches Carlos Queiroz, Nelo Vingada and Manuel José have worked there.

Three Iranian players namely, Taremi, Amir Abedzadeh (Marítimo) and Mohammadi (Aves) are currently playing in Primeira Liga. (Source: O Jogo)

### Mazaheri leaves Tractor

**Tasnim**— Tractor goalkeeper Rashid Mazaheri canceled his contract with the team on Saturday.

He had been left out of the Tabriz-based football team starting lineup in recent weeks.

Mazaheri was absent in the Hazfi Cup final against Esteghlal, where Tractor won the title for the second time.

He has been linked with Tehran-based football teams Esteghlal and Persepolis.



## Iran Oil Show 2020 to open on Oct. 12 only for experts

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** —The 25th edition of Iran International Oil, Gas, Refining, and Petrochemical Exhibition (Iran Oil Show 2020) will be held at Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds during October 12-15, however it is not going to be open to the public like the previous years.

According to Shana news agency, due to the special conditions caused by the pandemic, in this year's exhibition only senior managers of the government sector, managers of the private and cooperative sectors, distinguished professors and students of the country's universities, political officials, and guests of exhibitors and specialized professional associations will be allowed to visit and participate.

The exhibition, however, will be held following restrict health-care and safety protocols and standards.

Iran Oil Show is among the most significant oil and gas events in the world in terms of the number of participants and its diversity.

## TCCIMA to hold online Iran-Russia business forum in late-Sep.

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) is going to hold an Iran-Russia business forum via video conference on September 21, the portal of TCCIMA announced.

The virtual event is going to be attended by officials and businessmen from the two sides.

In this meeting, Iranian traders and businessmen active in the fields of telecommunications, IT, training and technology transfer, oil and gas, agricultural machinery and products, medical equipment and services, and metals, are also due to hold B2B talks with representatives of 20 Russian companies from Russia's Samara region.

## Trade between Iran, Iraq rising via Chazabeh border

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Despite high customs duties enforced by Iraq, trade between Iran and Iraq is rising via Chazabeh border, an Iranian provincial official told IRNA on Friday.

Saeed Mousavi, a director in the Chamber of Commerce of Ahvaz (center of Iran's southwestern Khuzestan province), said commodities are transported to Iraq via this border on Sunday and Wednesday every week.

He said 320 trucks carrying Iranian products passed through Chazabeh border on last Wednesday.

Mousavi further underlined that rising trade via this border is happening while Iraq is enforcing high customs duties on some products such as tile, ceramic, marble, tomato paste, and plastic products.



He announced that Iran has exported products worth \$700 million to Iraq via Chazabeh border in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), and mentioned constructional materials, dairy products, and home appliances as the major exported items.

The economic and political relations between Iran and Iraq has increased significantly in the past few years and the two neighbors are seeking ways to facilitate financial transactions and boost their trade ties.

The two countries have it on the agenda to increase the value of their bilateral trade to \$20 billion by 2021.

Heading a high-ranking politico-economic delegation, Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi visited Tehran in late July.

During his two-day visit, al-Kadhimi discussed how to strengthen ties between Iran and Iraq as well as their cooperation in a number of fields.

Several senior Iraqi officials including Minister of Finance and Prime Minister Assistant for Economic and Energy Affairs Ali Abdul Amir Allawi, Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein, Petroleum Minister Ehsan Abdul Jabar, Health Minister Hassan Mohammad al-Tamimi, Minister of Planning Khaled Battal, Defense Minister Joma Enad, Electricity Minister Majed Hantoush, National Security Advisor Qassem al-Araji and Head of Trade Bank of Iraq Faisal al-Haimus accompanied the prime minister on his first visit to a foreign country since taking office.

## Passenger car manufacturing up 20%

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Manufacturing of passenger cars in Iran has increased 20 percent during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21) compared to the same period of time in the past year, IRNA reported.

As reported, among the major Iranian carmakers, namely Iran Khodro Company (IKCO), SAIPA Group, and Pars Khodro, Iran Khodro accounted for the lion's share of the production, while the company's five-month output rose 39 percent year on year.

Three major carmakers manufactured 863,263 vehicles during the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19).

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

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

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

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

# Oil, petchem downstream industries should target domestic market

**1 →** the development of the downstream industries has been quite good and we are currently one of the major oil product exporters in the region."

"With the recent improvements in the South Pars gas field development project and the increase in the output of the field we currently have the capacity to export 500,000 to 600,000 barrels of various products like gasoline or gas oil to the neighboring countries," he said.

Hosseini, however, noted that Iran should not take the advances in the neighboring countries' downstream sectors for granted, since "in a not very long time, Iraq or even Afghanistan will have their own modern refineries and Iran won't be able to export as much products anymore."

So the government should start putting more importance on the capacities of the domestic market and industries because "soon it will be needing it."

Asked about the petrochemical industry, Hosseini said the same pattern is also true about the petrochemical industries.

"Unfortunately, we have not been following long-term plans in the development of our petrochemical industries as well, and our projects have been defined without the considerations for the demand in the global market."

For instance, 80 percent of the methanol that we are currently producing should



be exported since the domestic industries (not being properly developed) only have the capacity to absorb 20 percent of the output, he said.

"It is also true about urea and ammoniac, we are producing 7.5-8 million tons of such products while the domestic demand is only 1.5 million, the rest should be exported and considering big rivals like the U.S., Saudi Arabia, Russia and China, and considering the current

sanctions, that is not going to happen."

He further mentioned other problems that the development of the downstream sectors is currently faced with, saying: "oil, gas, and petrochemical industries are all very high-tech and very expensive industries, we need technology, we need investment and without these two, development is not happening."

Asked about the solution for the above-mentioned problems in the cur-

## Industry Ministry approves \$850m of foreign investment in 5 months

**1 →** The largest volume of foreign investment in the mentioned period was attracted by the groups of manufacturing chemical products (\$405 million of investment), basic metals (\$45 million), food products and beverages (\$32 million), and equipment and machinery (\$26 million).

Accordingly, the first four countries in terms of the value of investment were Germany, United Arab Emirates (UAE), China, and Turkey, with \$341 million, \$54 million, \$32 million, and \$30 million of investments, respectively.

The largest number of investments were made by Afghanistan with 17 cases, followed by China, Turkey,

and India.

Also, Sistan-Baluchestan, Khuzestan, Tehran, and East Azarbaijan provinces were the top four provinces in terms of the volume of approved foreign investment.

Back in July, the Industry Ministry published the foreign investment data for the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20), based on which the figure stood at nearly \$800 million.

As previously reported by the Industry Ministry, Iran expects a 10-fold increase of foreign investment in industry and mining sectors by the end of the Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2021).



## Aluminum ingot output rise 70% in 5 months on year

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Production of the aluminum ingot in Iran rose 70 percent during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21) compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to the data released by Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO).

The IMIDRO's data put the country's aluminum ingot output at 175,000 tons during the five-month period, IRNA reported.

Production of this product had also risen 49 percent during the first four months of the year (March 20-July 21) and 63 percent during the first quarter (March 20-June 20), compared to the same time spans of



the previous year.

Production of the aluminum ingot in the country is planned to increase 63 percent by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2021).

Iran's major aluminum producers produced 275,716 tons of aluminum ingots in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), according to the data released by the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry.

The country's aluminum ingot production in the past year fell eight percent in comparison to the figure for its preceding year.

The data show that among the country's top producers, Iranian Aluminum Company (IRALCO) had the best performance registering a four-percent rise during the mentioned period.

On April 23, during the inauguration ceremony of Iran's biggest aluminum production complex (in the central Fars province), the former industry minister said the country's

aluminum production is expected to be doubled with that unit going operational.

The official put the value of the Iranian mining industry's production at about \$22 billion, saying that the country is relatively self-sufficient in minerals and a great deal is also exported every year.

He went on underlying, "The country's capacities in the sector, saying that Iran is ranked 18th among the world's top aluminum producers, and with this new plant going operational the country will climb four places to stand at 14th place."

Iran plans to reach the annual production of 1.5 million tons of aluminum ingot by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025-March 2026).

## Raw materials account for 84% of Iranian imports

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Hamid Zadboum said that most of the country's current imports are limited to the raw materials or basic goods.

"Over 84 percent of the imported items include raw materials, basic goods or intermediaries that are necessary for the production and operation of domestic units," TPO portal quoted Zadboum as saying.

Referring to the restriction of order registration for goods that have similar productions inside the country, the official said: "Last year, the imports of 1,600 items with an eight-digit HS code was banned. The number, however, has reached 2,400 items this [Iranian calendar] year (started on March 19)."

He further put the value of imports in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-July 21) at \$11 billion saying: "We are trying to reduce the registration of orders for goods that are already produced inside the country by weekly monitoring of imported goods and gradually in the near future, we will completely ban the import of all such products in order to boost domestic production."



According to the official, Iran's imports during the first quarter of this Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20) exceeded \$7.6 billion, which compared to the \$10.4 billion in the same period last year, experienced a decrease of 26.8 percent, and yet in terms

of weight, the figure was 8.9 million tons, which is 0.8 percent less than the figure for the same period last year.

Since the re-imposition of the U.S. sanctions, Iran has been focusing on the promotion of domestic production and limiting the imports in order to move the economy toward self-sufficiency and resilience.

In early April, Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry outlined its major programs for supporting the domestic production in the current Iranian year that is named the year of "Surge in Production" by the Leader of Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei.

Developing technology and promoting knowledge-based industries, development of domestic production in line with the Leader's stresses on surge in production, managing imports and development of non-oil exports, improving the business environment, development of financing and investment, and finally development of logistics were reported to be the seven major axes of the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry's works in the current year.

## TEDPIX gains 10,000 points on Saturday

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), which is Iran's major stock exchange, climbed 10,096 points to 1.642 million on Saturday, which is the first day of the Iranian calendar week, IRNA reported.

As reported, 10.202 billion securities worth 119.328 trillion rials (about \$2.841 billion) were traded at the TSE on Saturday.

The first market's index rose 16,019 points while the second market's index fell 14,511 points.

TEDPIX dropped five percent to 1.631 million points at the end of the past week.

As reported, most of the trades were conducted through the indices of the National Iranian Copper Industry Company, Ghadir Investment Company, Bank Saderat, Mobarakeh Steel Company, and Bandar Abbas Oil Refining Company.

TEDPIX had also experienced a two-percent fall in the week ended on August 28, an 11.3-percent drop in the week ended on August 21, and a two-percent fall in the week ended on August 14.

It should be mentioned that the index had hit the record high of two million points on August 2, and while it had been experiencing an unprecedented trend of rising over the recent months, it witnessed several days of drop in the past three weeks.

While Iran's stock market has not received any external shocks such as those form the foreign currency exchange rate, inflation, parallel markets, and international issues, some internal factors have caused the recent drops in this market.





# The hypothetical compromise: The end of 10 years of war in West Asia

By Abir Bassam

On my way back from the south to Beirut two months ago, Elea crossroad in Saida was closed. As I took the long [S] turn to be able to reach Beirut road again, I came across the Lebanese Army. I stopped the car next to one of the officers and asked him: "What is going on? They are not more than 20 young men and women! How could they? Why don't you send them back home? The officer said: "It is better to let them steam off!" He added: "It is the Turkish intelligence! They are sending millions of American dollars to start eruption and chaos in Lebanon."

The Lebanese Army confirmed the information a while after the incident. On the 4th of July, Lebanese Interior Minister Mohammad Fahmi announced that four citizens, including two Syrians, were arrested as they were trying to smuggle \$4 million. He said that the money was meant to finance "violent street movements". He added that instructions were given via WhatsApp to promote violence against the government.

The Turkish role in the Arab countries has been escalating since the war on Syria in 2011. It is not a secret anymore that tens of thousands of terrorist fighters entered Syria through Turkey and were protected by Recep Tayyip Erdogan's regime. Unfortunately, the Arab region is not only facing a new Ottoman dream but also a new wave of colonialism led by the Americans and their puppets.

In his speech on the 10th of Muharam, Ashura, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah several times repeated that Syria has won the war. Nasrallah's description of Syria's situation is shared with several observers, who perceive that Syria awaits the international political solution. Nonetheless, whether it is going to be a compromise, or it is going to coincide with Syrian political demands, we need to wait and see.

It is practical to understand the complications in West Asia. The region has been on a hot tin roof since the burst of the Arab eruptions in 2011. The Americans titled the eruptions as "the Arab Spring" are now recognized as the "Arab Drought."

The area has been going through an endless chain of wars with terrorism and occupation forces, which exhausted it and awaiting compromises. Complicated and interrelated files, such as the war on Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, Egypt, and Libya, need to be solved. However, there are two factors that delay the solution. The first is Turkey, which seems to have its own agenda. And the second is the so-called Deal of the Century.

Today, the struggle has been fueled among the allies, who started the war on Libya, Syria, and Yemen. According to several resources, the powers that have led the wars are now accelerating the steps towards proper solutions. And each one of them is trying to save face and withdraw with minimum losses.

Ten exhausting years have passed on West



**"The main force behind the current events in West Asia was the U.S. plan to create what they call" the New Middle East". The plan was supposed to be applied by force in 2003, starting with the war on Iraq, but it failed."**

Asia (the Middle East). It witnessed the discovery of gas fields in the Eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea. Countries and their major companies are rushing to ensure shares in the new gas fields' investments. Amongst them is Turkey, which is demanding a place in the eastern Mediterranean shores.

Accordingly, through the "Muslim Brotherhood" parties, Turkey has found a way to be part of the struggle in West Asia. It seems that Turkish President Erdogan is trying to undo the Ottoman's defeat in the First World War. He is leading constant wars against Arab countries. For most of the Arabs in the region, these wars are manipulating the Islamic world and leading to the destruction of their countries. It distorts the attention from the true enemy, which is "Israel," and leads to the rise of Islamic "radicalism" and terrorism.

Turkey has accelerated the struggle with Arab countries in Libya. Add to that, the current military exercises by Greece and Turkey over the rights of natural gas fields and the legal rights in the marine economic zones. The exercises have escalated the EU awareness towards Turkish intentions. Subsequently, it led to further tension with the EU.

The main force behind the current events in West Asia was the U.S. plan to create what they call" the New Middle East". The plan was supposed to be applied by force in 2003, starting with the war on Iraq, but it failed. Combined regional forces resisted Iraq's di-

vision, and the resistance was able to force the final withdrawal of the Americans in 2011. Ironically, in the same year, the Arab eruptions started in different Arab countries.

Nonetheless, ten years of a brutal war on Syria revealed the following aims:

1- The war mainly aimed to secure the safety of Israel. The Americans set in mind that controlling Syrian territories will eventually lead to controlling the flow of arms to Hezbollah.

2- Controlling the gas and petrol pipes running through Syria to Turkey and Europe. By doing so, Iran, Russia, and eventually China fuel trade will be monitored and controlled.

3- Changing the Arab regimes to pro-Turkish or Islamic Brotherhood's governments and Saudi controlled ones to control the Arab decision in the Arab League and eventually dissolve it.

4- Making way for the (Persian) Arab Gulf countries to sign peace treaties with Israel, this has already started with Abraham Accord.

5- Giving Israel full control over gas and oil production and distribution through the Mediterranean Sea to Europe.

Not all of the goals set were achieved! The power of Turkey was controlled in Tunisia, Egypt, Sudan, and Libya. Furthermore, Europe now considers Turkey as a greater danger to the peace and security of West Asia, Northern Africa, and Greece. In addition, Europe was flooded by waves of migrants

that crossed to the continent through Turkey, whom it used as a pressure card to manipulate Europe for greater benefits.

This has provoked different European countries that saw their interests were threatened, not only by Turkey but also by the United States. The latter has taken the world into economic chaos after the election of Donald Trump, who canceled all trade agreements and the nuclear agreement with Iran. Trump prohibited European trade with Iran and China and issued sanctions that disabled Europe.

Therefore, Iran's successive diplomatic and legal victories at the UN Security Council in August were the first step towards a solution and a serious step towards peace in the region. They represent the first political triumph of the axis of resistance. The sequence of events is directing now towards another series of steps that should be perceived soon.

Soon the Syrian forces and its allies are heading towards implementing the Astana Accord by force. As soon as the Syrian Army is in control of Jessor al-Shogor and the Zawiah Mountain again, it will take control of the Syrian territories from Latakia to the Syrian-Iraqi borders, east of the Euphrates included.

Once the Syrian accomplishment is reached in Jessor al-Shogor, the Americans are not only leaving Iraq but Syria as well. In addition, the Iranians are leading now negotiations with Western powers through the German mediator concerning the nuclear agreements. However, an informed person revealed that the talks are including terms to end the American presence in Syria. This means that all foreign forces, including Turkish ones, are leaving, through force or voluntarily. However, the Turks are negotiating with the Russians the possibility of keeping a couple of cities, but the Syrians refused it.

After the big blast in Beirut's harbor on the 4th of August, the Turkish foreign minister offered to rebuild the harbor when he visited Beirut. This must have provoked the French again. Erdogan's new attempts to be involved in Lebanese affairs has raised doubts over his intentions for the European Union [EU], especially France. Paris tries not to allow Turkey to approach Beirut's harbor. This would leave Turkey as the biggest loser in the region again.

The upheaval Turkey created with Greece is leading it again to a conflict with Europe. Although Germany is leading serious negotiations with all sides of the dispute, it seems that there are not any foreseen solutions in the near future. Europeans now identify Erdogan as the supporter of radical militant groups fighting in different Arab countries. These actions are of great concern to Europe. Rumor has it; Turkey now needs to be controlled. Western powers are planning to divide it again into two states, Western Turkey and Islamic Turkey. Of course, that is left for time to tell.

*The opinions expressed in this article are those of the writer.*

## Lebanese analyst expects Hezbollah to play a constructive role in government formation process

**1 →** He warned about the consequences of a failure by the Lebanese parties to fulfill what they had pledged by the end of October.

Javad underlines that it was clear that there was a great French effort to form a national unity government or national consensus government.

"This government is a salvation government, and its mission is to unify the Lebanese to contain the economic, social, financial, and political crises that we are living in," Javad remarks.

Macron added in a press conference that he had contacted his Iranian counterpart Hassan Rouhani, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and international leaders to discuss ways of helping Lebanon, explaining that he felt these leaders had a will to allow Lebanon to follow its path.

In fact, Macron's domain of activities have been very wide, starting from Iran, which was flexible in response to efforts to form a new government, and Hezbollah, which responded positively to what the French president has proposed and its willingness to cooperate based on a set of considerations.

On the other hand, some Lebanese observers believe



that the French try to exploit the shock caused by the Beirut blast and take the initiative when the Americans are busy with their elections.

Javad confirms that there was a French pressure on the Lebanese factions to form a government of national unity, or at the very least, a government supported by a

vast majority of political groups.

According to Lebanese media outlets, there was a meeting between the Lebanese political blocs to reach a consensus about the next prime minister, and this matter was evident during the visit of the French leader to Lebanon.

"In his meetings with the Lebanese politicians and officials, Macron insisted on French interests and concerns in Lebanon, pointing to French-Iranian and French-American convergence there," the Lebanese analyst says.

Javad notes that "apparently there is no objection by the United States and regional countries to the French role on the basis of consensus at this difficult historical phase."

Responding to a question about the possibility of a fundamental change in Lebanon's political structure, the Lebanese analyst believes that "we need a completely new political structure, but there will be a transitional phase and preparation for the parliamentary elections."

"Afterwards, it is possible to talk about a move towards a new political system and a new political formula. Currently, we are in a transitional phase, and of course, Lebanon needs an internal and external consensus in order to move towards political stability," according to Javad.

## 'UAE to open embassy in Israel within 3-5 months'

A senior Emirati official says his country will open an embassy in the occupied territories within three to five months in the wake of a deal between the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Israel to establish full diplomatic relations.

Israel Hayom newspaper quoted the unnamed UAE Foreign Ministry official as saying that the Israelis could get a visa to travel to the Persian Gulf Arab state after the opening of the diplomatic mission.

"I think the Israelis will be able to obtain travel visa to the UAE from an embassy that will open in Israel after three to five months from now," he said, adding that Abu Dhabi is also considering opening "a consulate in Haifa or Nazareth that works alongside the embassy".

"We aspire to a peace agreement with Israel, but peace is in reality with all Israelis, and it is very important for us to be available to the Arab population of Israel, whom we consider an important partner for warm peace," he further claimed.

## India, China defense ministers meet amid rising border tensions

Defense ministers of India and China have met in the Russian capital as the two Asian nuclear powers try to resolve rising tensions along their disputed border in the eastern Ladakh region.

Neither side gave details of the meeting on Friday between India's Rajnath Singh and China's General Wei Fenghe - the first high-level contact between the two sides since the standoff erupted months ago in the Himalayan region, where a clash in June killed 20 Indian soldiers.

The ministers met on the sidelines of a gathering of the defense chiefs of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which comprises China, India, Pakistan, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, al Jazeera reported.

## Gas pipeline blast kills 11 praying at Bangladesh mosque

An underground gas pipeline near a mosque exploded during evening prayers outside the capital of Bangladesh, leaving at least 11 Muslim worshippers dead and dozens injured with critical burns, officials said Saturday.

According to AP, the blast occurred Friday night as people were finishing their prayers at Baitus Salat Jame Mosque at Narayanganj, local police chief Zayedul Alam said.

By Saturday morning, a young boy and 10 others succumbed to their injuries as doctors at a burn unit of a state-run hospital were treating at least 37 people with up to 90 percent of burns on their bodies, said Samanta Lal Sen, a coordinator of the unit.

## India coronavirus caseload crosses 4M, stretching resources

India's coronavirus cases crossed 4 million Saturday, leading the world in new infections and deepening misery in the country's vast hinterlands where surges have crippled the underfunded health care system.

Initially, the virus ravaged India's sprawling and densely populated cities. It has since stretched to almost every state, spreading through villages and smaller towns, AP reported.

With a population of nearly 1.4 billion people, India's massive caseload isn't surprising experts. The country's delayed response to the virus forced the government to implement a harsh lockdown in late March. For more than two months, the economy remained shuttered, buying time for health workers to prepare for the worst.

But with the cost of the restrictions also rising, authorities saw no choice but to reopen businesses and everyday activities.

Most of India's cases are in western Maharashtra state and the four southern states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka. But new surges are popping up elsewhere.

## Taliban return to Doha setting stage for Afghan peace talks

Taliban officials say a senior delegation returned early Saturday to Qatar, paving the way for the start of peace talks with the Afghan government that are expected to take place in the Persian Gulf Arab state.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak to the media.

The negotiations are the second, critical part to a peace deal the US signed with the Taliban in February in Doha.

## Resistance News

## Serbia embassy move makes Palestine victim of Trump's electoral ambitions: PLO

**INTERNATIONAL DESK** **TEHRAN—** The secretary general of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) says U.S. President Donald Trump has made Palestine a "victim" of his electoral ambitions as Serbia moves its embassy to Jerusalem al-Quds following a Washington-brokered deal.

On Friday, the American president announced that the U.S. had brokered an agreement between Serbia and Kosovo, two Balkan archrivals, two decades after they went through a bloody war.

From the deal, however, came out two unexpected decisions too. Serbia said that it would relocate its embassy from Tel Aviv to the occupied Jerusalem al-Quds, some three years after Washington, in a highly provocative move, recognized the city as Israel's "capital."

Majority-Muslim Kosovo, for its part, vowed that it would recognize the occupying regime, adding that it would also set up its diplomatic mission in Jerusalem al-Quds after earning Israel's recognition.

"Palestine has become a victim of the electoral ambitions of President Trump, whose team would take any action, no matter how destructive for peace... to achieve his re-election" in November, Saeb Erekat tweeted on Friday.

**TEHRAN —** Deniz Caner, a Turkish analyst, believes that Europe, which accepts human rights and is very sensitive about anti-Semitism, cannot prevent the ugly attacks against Muslims and Islam.

During an illegal gathering on August 28, supporters of right-wing Danish politician Rasmus Paludan, who leads the anti-Islamic group Tight Direction (Stram Kurs), burned a copy of the Holy Qur'an in the southern Swedish city of Malmö.

On Tuesday (September 1), French Magazine Charlie Hebdo republished offensive cartoons of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon Him) on the eve of suspects' trial in a deadly attack on the paper's office five years ago. In January 2015, two terrorists attacked

the magazine's offices in Paris, killing 12 people, many of whom worked for the publication. The attack, condemned by Muslims across the world, was allegedly a response to the magazine's offensive cartoon of the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) a few years earlier.

Anti-Muslim moves have been on the rise across Europe in recent years. Muslim leaders in Europe and around the world have reiterated their unequivocal condemnation of the anti-Muslim acts.

Moreover, the rise of far-right ideology and the propagation of anti-immigration policies have exacerbated religious minorities' status in Europe, particularly Muslims.

To shed light on the issue, we reached out to Turkish researcher and expert



Deniz Caner.

"Although the Swedish authorities did not allow the demonstration of provocation against the Quran and imposed an entry ban on the so-called politician, on

August 28, far-right street painter Dan Park and Danish racist politician Rasmus Paludan had been in Malmö for two weeks and also made many attempts to provoke Muslims," Caner said.

"For two weeks, it seemed that these provocateurs were expected to burn the Qur'an in a completely helpless manner by the Swedish police," she added.

Commenting on the European leader's double standards regarding human rights, the Turkish expert highlighted, "While Europe, which accepts human rights and the rule of law as its basic principle, is very sensitive about anti-Semitism, it is still not able to prevent these ugly attacks against Muslims and Islam."



## Investment in Qazvin’s tourism sector rises by 287%

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** – Some 6.3 trillion rials (\$150 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) have been invested in the tourism sector of the northwestern province of Qazvin over the past seven years, which shows a 287 percent increase, the provincial tourism chief has said.



With these investments, several tourism-related projects such as hotels, eco-lodge units, traditional restaurants, tourist complexes, and travel agencies are being implemented in the province, IRNA quoted Alireza Khazaeli as saying on Saturday.

The mentioned investment is in addition to the expenses incurred for the restoration of historical monuments and structures scattered across the province, the official added.

Qazvin was once the capital of the mighty Persian Empire, under Safavids, from 1548 to 98. It is a major tourist destination with a wonderfully restored caravanserai-turned-arts precinct, some quirky museums, and a handful of decent eating options. For most travelers, Qazvin is also primarily the staging point for excursions to the famous Castles of the Assassins and trekking in the sensational Alamut Valley.

Also known as the castle of the Assassins, the 12th-century Alamut castle is on top of a peak. It was once a shelter for the followers of Hasan-e Sabbah (1070–1124) who was a spiritual leader of an Islamic sect. In the early 1930s, British-Italian explorer and travel writer Freya Stark described her exploration of the place in her book “The Valleys of the Assassins”.

Qazvin is also home to one of the biggest roofed caravanserais of the country, Sa’d-al Saltaneh caravanserai. Dating back to the Qajar era, it’s a place for discovering tens of Højreh or shops, cafes, yards, and a stunning mosque. It’s a place for visitors who want to experience the culture, culinary, and hospitality of Iran.

## IranAir resumes weekly flights to Madrid

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** – Iran’s flag carrier Homa, known internationally as IranAir resumed flights to the Spanish city of Madrid on Wednesday, after 17 years.

The round flights are scheduled once a week on Wednesdays from Tehran’s Imam Khomeini International Airport by closely observing healthcare protocols, according to the airport’s official website.



Back in August, the Iranian embassy in Spain announced that the license of IranAir service for the Tehran-Madrid route has been received as per coordination made by the Iranian embassy, the Civil Aviation Organization, and IranAir with Spanish domestic institutions.

The Iranian mission in Madrid has made a great deal of effort on the resumption of the service, which had been suspended since the beginning of 2001, and hopes that this important step in bilateral relations can strengthen the ties between the two nations.

Back in January, Tehran’s envoy to Madrid Hassan Qashqavi drew public attention to Iran’s tourism capacities in a meeting held on the sidelines of a ceremony for the 40th FITUR tourism trade fair. Referring to a 50 percent growth in the number of Spanish tourists to Iran over the past year, Qashqavi said that Iran is among the top ten countries in terms of tourist attractions diversity. The envoy pointed to the remarkable capacities of the two countries for widening cooperation in the fields of tourism, cultural heritage, and handicrafts, voicing Iran’s readiness for promoting collaboration in those spheres.

In December 2019, Spanish Charge d’Affaires to Tehran, Jose Luis Solano, said, “I believe that there are very good tourism relations between the two countries as we have many requests each year from Iranians for [obtaining] visas and traveling to Spain.” Iran is a country that is highly important in terms of culture and it embraces all the necessary attractions for Spanish tourists who like to travel to the country, he added. “Every year we see an increase in the number of Spanish visitors to Iran, and this is constant growth.”

## Why studying in Iran

➔ 1 And last but not least, Iran has a high-quality and up-to-date educational system. As a Muslim country, it is also an alluring education destination for many Muslim students who come from Arab and neighboring countries.



The University of Tehran, Amirkabir University of Technology, and the Ferdowsi University of Mashhad have the highest admission rates for foreign students who are mostly from Afghanistan, Iraq, Turkey, Japan, China, Syria, Moldavia, Hungary, Ukraine, Pakistan, amongst many others.

# Makran coast holds potential to gain UNESCO tag

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** – The natural and historical attractions of the Makran coastal strip in southern Iran hold the potential to be registered on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Being home to some unique attractions such as Darak village, Martian Mountains, pristine beaches of Chabahar and sacred fig trees makes Makran coast a top tourist destination for domestic and foreign travelers, said Seyyed Hadi Ahmadi Ruzini the director of the ministry’s office for preservation and restoration of historic buildings, textures and sites, IRNA reported on Saturday.

Inviting tourists to travel to the region and enjoy its noteworthy attractions, he also noted that Makran coast is unique not only in the country but also in the world, however, its tourism infrastructure needs to be provided to attract more travelers.

To get to that point, historical buildings in the region are to be restored, and some of them will be ceded to the private sector for better maintenance and preservation, he added.

Located in the southern part of the Sistan-Baluchestan province, Makran is a semi-desert coastal strip along the coast of the Gulf of Oman.

The narrow coastal plain rises rapidly into several mountain ranges. Of the



1,000 kilometers coastline, around 750 kilometers is in Pakistan. Makran is very sparsely inhabited, with much of the population concentrated in a string of small ports including Chabahar, Gwatar, Jiwni, Jask, Sirik, Gwadar, Pasni, Ormara, and many smaller fishing villages.

Shahid Beheshti Port, which is Iran’s only oceanic port, is the main port of the

country on the Makran coast.

Darak village and Martian Mountains, commonly known as Miniature Mountains, which are located on the Makran coast, are also among the top tourist destinations in the region that eye to gain a UNESCO tag as well.

Located between the two important port cities of Chabahar and Bandar Ab-

## Hotels offering discounts instead of raising prices

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** – While the hospitality industry has taken a severe hit from the coronavirus pandemic on both national and international levels, hotels are offering discounts to attract travelers.

Although the prices of Iranian hotels increase in late September every year, this year due to the outbreak of the coronavirus hotels are offering up to 60 percent discounts instead of raising their fares, the president of the Iranian Hoteliers Association said on Saturday.

However, with these amounts of discounts, the occupancy rate of hotels is less than five to seven percent, Jamshid Hamzehzadeh announced on Saturday.

Considering the number of tourists and travelers, which has decreased drastically, increasing hotel fares does not make sense and will not increase the income of hoteliers, he added.

He also noted that if the hotel fare increases, it will be up to 20 percent, but most hotel owners are not interested in increasing it due to lack of passengers.

Back in June, the official announced that the outbreak of the new coronavirus has inflicted a loss of 60,000 billion rials (about \$1.4 billion at the official dollar rate of 42,000 rials) on the Iranian hospitality industry in four months.

“Hoteliers in different provinces of the country have suffered 60,000 billion rials in damage over the past

four months following the outbreak of coronavirus [which put a pause on the travel industry to help curb the disease].”

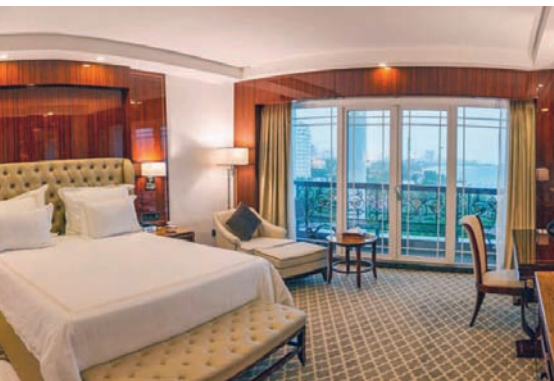
He said that the country’s tourism industry suffered some 100 percent losses from the pandemic, adding “Part of this loss and damage must be compensated by the government.”

Back in April, the Iranian government announced it will bail out those which are grappling with fiscal problems by offering loans with a 12-percent interest rate. The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts also suggested a rescue package for tourism businesses.

The government has also allocated a 750-trillion-rial (about \$18 billion) package to help low-income households and small- and medium-sized enterprises suffered by the coronavirus concerns.

However, earlier last week, the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan announced that over 2,400 tourism-related projects, including the construction of 500 hotels, are currently being implemented across the country with a total estimated cost of 1,370 trillion rials (around \$32 billion).

He also noted that responsible tourism is a workable solution for holidaymakers to get assured of safe traveling during the coronavirus pandemic.



Iran expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 24 being inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, it aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025. The latest available data show eight million tourists visited the Islamic Republic during the first ten months of the past Iranian calendar year (started March 21, 2019).

## Isfahan ‘a pearl in the Middle East’: Swiss FM

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** – Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis called the ancient Iranian city of Isfahan ‘a pearl in the Middle East’ on his official Twitter account after his one-day trip to the city on Saturday.

“Visit to the city of Isfahan - a pearl in the Middle East. Knowing the culture and people of a country: a prerequisite for good diplomatic relations,” the tweet reads.

Cassis paid a visit to the UNESCO-registered Naqsh-e Jahan Square and some other historical sites of the ancient city.

He also met with Bishop Sepian Kashchian, the Bishop of the Armenians of Isfahan and southern Iran, at the centuries-old Vank Cathedral.

Cassis will then continue his travel to Tehran today to mark the centenary of Swiss-Iranian diplomatic relations.

Soaked in a rich history and culture, Isfa-



han was once a crossroads of international trade and diplomacy in Iran. Now, it is one of Iran’s top tourist destinations for good reasons. The ancient city is filled with many architectural wonders such as unmatched Islamic buildings, bazaars, museums, Persian gardens, and tree-lined boulevards. It’s a

city for walking, getting lost in its mazing bazaars, dozing in beautiful gardens, and meeting people.

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 majes-

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

The Vank Cathedral (locally called Kelisa-ye Vank) is widely referred to as an everlasting masterpiece of architecture.

Located in the New Jolfa district of Isfahan, central Iran, the Cathedral harmoniously blends Islamic motifs and elements with those of Armenians. Vank means “monastery” or “convent” in the Armenian language.

Constructed in the first half of the 17th century during the Safavid rulers, Kelisa-ye Vank is a historic focal point of the Armenian Church in Iran.

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.

## Most popular Iranian breads

### ■ Nan-e taftoon

Nan-e taftoon is an Iranian flatbread that is almost always prepared with whole wheat flour, milk, eggs, and yogurt. The dough is similar to pizza dough, resulting in a chewy, stringy texture. Traditionally, the dough is baked on the walls of a tandoor oven for about a minute, and is then removed from the walls with a metal skewer.

Nan-e taftoon is often flavored with cardamom or saffron, while some cooks like to sprinkle it with poppy seeds on top. The bread is mostly eaten with kebabs, but it can be consumed with virtually anything on the side, such as cottage cheese, tomatoes, and bell peppers.

### ■ Nan-e shirmal

Sheermal is a traditional Iranian flatbread made with maida flour, milk, saffron, and yeast. It is characterized by its strong saffron flavor and yellow color. The bread is traditionally baked in a tandoor oven and served warm, preferably with soups or meat dishes such as kebabs and curries.

The name sheermal means milk bread, referring to one of its key ingredients, imparting a slightly sweet flavor to the flatbread. For additional sweetness, some cooks like to add dried fruit into the dough. It is believed that sheermal has Persian roots, when numerous



Persians traveled to India and Pakistan and learned the secrets of bread-making.

### ■ Nan-e sangak

Nan-e sangak is a whole wheat leavened flatbread and the national bread of Iran. Its shape can be either triangular or rectangular, and it comes in two main varieties: plain and special, which is topped with poppy and sesame seeds. The name sangak refers to the old method of baking the bread, meaning little stones, because it is traditionally baked in a dome-shaped oven with a surface full of pebbles and stones.

The bread can be prepared in a way that its length is about two feet, which is enough to feed a whole family.

In the past, sangak was the main bread of the Persian Army, and each soldier carried a bag filled with pebbles, which were used to cook the bread for the whole army.

Today, sangak is often decorated when served, especially at festivities such as weddings and New Year. In Iran, the bread is often consumed with lamb kebabs, and it is a typical accompaniment to kale pache, a dish made with sheep’s head and feet.

### ■ Nan-e barbari

Nan-e barbari is an Iranian wheat-based, leavened flatbread. It is usually formed into a long oval shape that is traditionally brushed with roomal, a flour glaze which gives it a light golden crust, but keeps it light and airy on the inside.

Before it is baked in traditional tandoor ovens, the bread is usually sprinkled with poppy, nigella, or sesame seeds. The name barbari derives from the old disrespectful name used to refer to the Hazaras ethnic group. It is believed they were the ones who originally brought the tradition of preparing nan-e barbari to Tehran and other parts of Iran.

This crispy bread is a breakfast staple in Iran; it is best served freshly prepared and accompanied by creamy spreads, cheese, and a variety of fresh vegetables.

(Source: tasteatlas)



# Iran improves in nanotechnology articles citation

**1 →** According to the report, among the countries that have published the greatest number of nanotechnology articles during the past five years, Singapore, Australia, Saudi Arabia, and Switzerland have had the highest average citation per article indicator in this field.

Despite their notable number of nanotechnology publications, the place of countries such as India and Russia in view of this index is worth pondering.

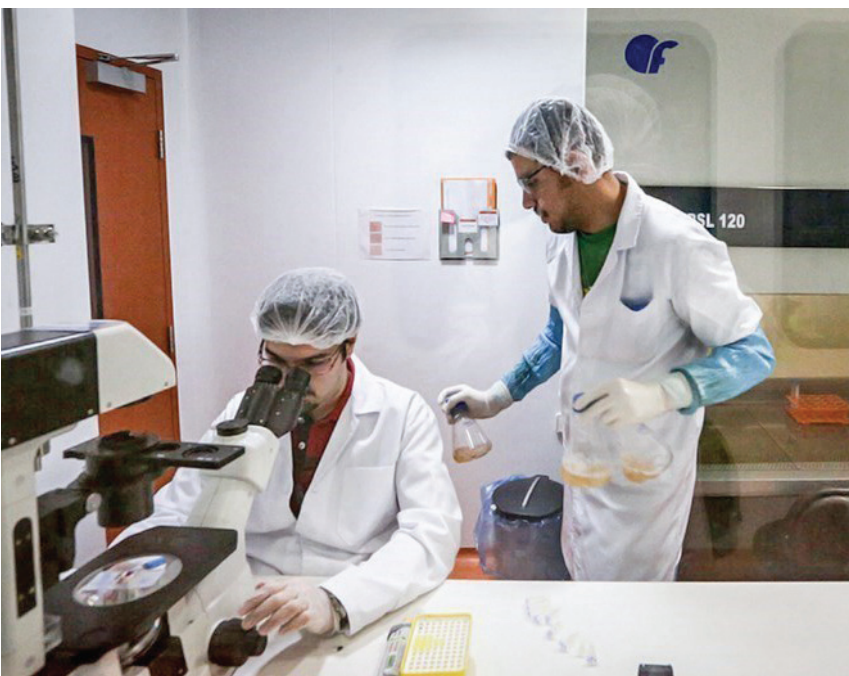
According to StatNano's statistics, Singapore published nearly 12,000 nano-articles

between 2015 and 2019, with an average of 22.6 citations per article during this period. However, Iran's average is 10.36 citations per article.

Iran ranked 4th for the highest number of nano-article publications.

The indicator is 16.6 for the United States and 14.5 for China, the world's leaders in nanoscience publications.

Australia has taken the second place in average citation per nano-article, followed by Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, and the Netherlands holding the third to fifth spots.



## Agriculture minister calls for global capacities to rebound from COVID-19 damage

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — To tackle damages caused by COVID-19 and the ongoing effects of chronic undernourishment, it requires the use of international and regional scientific capacities, Iran's Agriculture Minister Kazem Khavazi said.

He made the remarks in the 35th Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), held on September 1-4.

Innovation, solidarity, coherence, and strong partnership among and within countries of Asia and the Pacific are required for the region to rebound from the damage caused by COVID-19 and the ongoing effects of chronic undernourishment.

That was a call made by more than 40 member countries of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations concluding a four-day regional conference. About 750 participants, including representatives of the private sector and civil society, pledged to work to transform food systems, making them more sustainable, productive, and resilient and to feed a hungry world in a way that is profitable for farmers yet produces healthy food that is accessible to all.

Briefing the participants of the conference on the achievements that Iran has secured in the agriculture sector, Khavazi highlighted that "Iran has followed adaptive strategies such as changing the cultivating season, changing cultivars, using new technologies, transferring cultivation from outdoor to indoor, limiting the cultivation of some crops such as rice in some geographical areas, increasing the volume of annually stored water through watershed management operations, soil erosion control, and also increase of forage production."

"However, tackling these problems requires the use of international and regional scientific capacities. I hope this meeting will take the necessary steps in this direction," the Iranian agriculture minister added.

"To transform food systems for sustainable healthy diets we must have coherence, partnerships, and solidarity



to reduce the costs of production," FAO Director-General QU Dongyu said.

"Big data, a digital economy, and mobile technology will help producers achieve that." Today, mobile technology is leading innovation "and a smartphone in the hands of a smallholder farmer is his new farming tool," Dongyu added.

The Conference also learned more about the establishment of a FAO Office of Innovation and the creation of an International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture.

The Conference heard that agricultural innovation can reduce back-breaking drudgery, and that food chains in the Asia-Pacific region are increasingly benefitting from technological innovation such as drones, satellite imagery, big data, and blockchains.

"Leveraging data, innovation, and technology have shown that, here in Asia and the Pacific, we have brilliant minds, scientists, and an entrepreneurial spirit that will lead us through the challenges presented by COVID-19 and help us conquer malnutrition and poverty," the Director-General said.

A special session also was held dedicated to the application of new technology and innovation in agriculture, which are wooing back young people and empowering women in the sector, according to participants. It was agreed that new

and innovative food and agricultural policies, processes, investment, and learning could get the region back on track to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 2 (ending hunger and promoting sustainable agriculture) by 2030.

**COVID-19 underscores the need to redouble efforts to end hunger and poverty**

The Asia-Pacific region is home to more than half of the world's undernourished people, and with the impacts of COVID-19, the number of hungry people in Southern Asia could rise by nearly a third to 330 million in the next ten years.

The participants heard how FAO's recently launched COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme, would help countries mitigate the immediate impacts of the pandemic while build back better, accelerating global hunger-fighting efforts through a focus on innovation.

The Conference was chaired by the Minister for Agriculture and Forests of Bhutan, Yeshey Penjor, who called for strengthened collaboration: "While great strides had been made to reduce poverty and hunger by so many countries, COVID-19 has upended the momentum. We must prepare for higher risks ahead of us and make sure that there is sustainability in the food supply chain," he said.

"Ironically, the fact that COVID-19 has driven us to meet remotely has, in some ways, helped us to move away from formalities and get closer together," said QU, referring to the fact the Regional Conference was held entirely in virtual mode for the first time in FAO's history. "So while we are separated by some 11 time zones, we have still managed to come together, have thought-provoking discussions and reach consensus on a number of important issues."

There were a number of other firsts and achievements. The private sector joined for the first time a FAO Asia and the Pacific Regional Conference. Civil society organizations also continued to have an important voice. Prior to the conference, which is part of FAO's regional governance structure, national consultations were held in member nations across the region - another first.

## Asphalt roads make city air pollution worse in summer, study finds

Emissions from asphalt are a significant source of air pollutants in cities, especially in hot weather, a study shows.

Researchers found that when asphalt was exposed to hot summer conditions it resulted in a 300% increase in emissions of secondary organic aerosols (SOA), an air pollutant known to have significant impacts on public health.

Researchers from Yale University, Carnegie Mellon University and the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry collected asphalt, found commonly in roads, roofs and driveways, and heated it to between 40C and 200C in a tube furnace.

They observed that asphalt emissions doubled when the temperature increased from 40C to 60C — levels the material often reaches in summer.

"A main finding is that asphalt-related products emit substantial and diverse mixtures of organic compounds into the air,

with a strong dependence on temperature and other environmental conditions," said Peeyush Khare, a PhD candidate at Yale and lead author of the study published in the journal Science Advances.

Paved areas make up approximately 45% of surfaces in US cities, with building roofs making up another 20%, making asphalt a significant part of the urban landscape. The researchers compared their findings with formation of SOA in Los Angeles, a key city for urban air quality case studies.

Previous studies have estimated that a substantial fraction of pollutant compounds in Los Angeles come from sources other than vehicles. While emissions from motor vehicles are likely to decrease over time as the most egregious polluters are phased out, the researchers say asphalt emissions may contribute to air pollution as urban areas expand and climate change drives temperatures higher.



"We found that emissions from asphalt were strongly dependent on both temperature and solar exposure," explained Drew Gentner, an assistant professor of chemical and environmental engineering at Yale and one of the researchers who worked on the study.

"Hotter, sunnier conditions will lead to more emissions. Additionally, in many locations, asphalt is predominantly applied during the warmer months of the year."

Gentner said although the impact of emissions from asphalt on ozone formation was

minimal compared with motor vehicles in urban areas, research into road asphalt is an important part of tackling the climate emergency.

"It's another important non-combustion source of emissions that contributes to SOA production. Volatile chemical products, such as cleaning products or paints, have the largest overall estimated contribution to SOA in Los Angeles. So, one has to consider the full scope of reactive pollutant sources and regional differences when making any decisions related to urban air quality planning," he said.

Dr Gary Fuller, senior lecturer in air quality measurement at Imperial College London, said: "We already know road surfaces are an increasingly important source of air pollution. We have historically thought of traffic pollution as coming from vehicle exhausts. This has been the focus of policy and new vehicles have to be fitted with exhaust clean-up technologies.

### ENGLISH IN USE

#### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → E

## Rainfall increases Lake Urmia level

Recent rainfall has increased the level of Lake Urmia to 1,271 meters, a step closer to its ecological level of 1,274 meters.

The lake is expected to reach its ecological level within 10 years by completing the restoration plans which started four years ago.

Farhad Sarkhosh, head of the Lake Urmia Restoration Program's office in West Azarbaijan province, said that the Lake's level is now 58 cm higher than it was last year.

According to the latest monitoring, the lake's water volume is estimated at more than 3.6 billion cubic meters.

He added that the lake surface area has reached 2,883 square kilometers, adding that the figure is increased by 538 square kilometers compared to the same period last year.

Although the ecological level of the lake is defined as 1,274 meters, the lake will also have favorable conditions at 1,272 meters and more than 95 percent of sand and dust storm hotspots will be eliminated.

## افزایش سطح تراز دریاچه ارومیه بر اثر بارش

بارش های اخیر تراز فعلی دریاچه ارومیه را به یک هزار و ۲۷۱ متر و ۳۸ سانتی متر رسانده است که در حال رسیدن به تراز اکولوژیک یک هزار و ۲۷۴ متر است.

به گزارش ایرنا، فرهاد سرخوش رییس دفتر استانی ستاد احیای دریاچه ارومیه گفت سطح دریاچه ارومیه اکنون ۵۸ سانتی متر بیشتر از زمان مشابه سال گذشته است. طبق آخرین پایش صورت گرفته حجم آب این دریاچه بیش از سه میلیارد و ۶۷۰ میلیون مترمکعب برآورد شده است.

وی با بیان اینکه وسعت دریاچه ارومیه در حال حاضر به بیش از ۲ هزار و ۸۸۳ کیلومتر مربع رسیده، اضافه کرد: وسعت این دریاچه نیز نسبت به سال گذشته ۵۳۸ کیلومتر مربع افزایش دارد.

هرچند تراز یک هزار و ۲۷۴ متر به عنوان ارتفاع اکولوژیک دریاچه ارومیه اعلام شده ولی این دریاچه در تراز یک هزار و ۲۷۲ متر هم شرایط مطلوب خواهد داشت و بیش از ۹۵ درصد کانون های ریزگرد آن رفع خواهد شد.

## Schools reopened under strict health protocols

**1 →** The back-to-school ceremony is officially inaugurated by the president each year, as he rings the bells in a symbolic gesture at a chosen school.

Mohsen Haji Mirzaei, Education Minister, symbolically attended the virtual festival.

More than 15 million students started the new school year in 116,000 schools across the country, Haji Mirzaei stated.



This year, education is followed in three forms of in-person, virtual, and television-based, but our priority is school attendance, he noted, highlighting, all schools should strictly follow the health regulations so that the students are protected.

Maintaining a shorter duration for classes, the students will sit 35 minutes in each class, he emphasized.

Haji Mirzaei concluded that students have been banned from morning ceremonies and sports activities in schools this year.

All educational centers in Iran were closed from late February and reopened on May 16, after almost three months of closures in the wake of the pandemic after a TV announcement by the education minister. The schools also ran the final year exams in the third week of May.

In order for students to keep in touch with their studies, the Ministry of Education launched a homegrown mobile application on April 9, called SHAD, providing students with distance learning programs. He added that more than 60 percent of students and 94 percent of teachers attended 64 percent of classes through the SHAD app, whose acronym in Persian translates as the Students Education Network.

Moreover, the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) also began to broadcast televised educational programs on a daily basis after school closures.

Finally, Haji Mirzaei, announced that all schools for the new academic year will start September 5. He said urban and rural schools with high population density will be divided into two groups, with attendance diverted into odd-even days. He added that low-density population areas with lower risk will have a normal routine.

### Universities reopened nationwide

At the beginning of the new academic year, all universities started the new semester in the country under health protocols on Saturday.

However, some courses will be held virtually or a combination of face-to-face and virtual.

Service facilities such as dormitories and other services will be provided to fewer students than the total capacity of the university.

## LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 17)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

● Exercise 1. Complete with the verb "to be":

۱. شما دانشجو .....
۲. این مداد .....
۳. من یک استاد .....
۴. آن کتاب .....
۵. ما دو استاد .....
۶. من دانشجو .....

■ Omission of Pronouns – Verbal endings tell who the subject

is. Thus, subject pronouns may be omitted in Persian sentences:

دانشجو هستم. استاد هستید. بلند بفرمایید. دوباره بفرمایید.

● Exercise 2. Fill in with pronouns:

۱. یک استاد هستم. ....
۲. سه دانشجو هستید. ....
۳. دانشجو نیستیم. ....
۴. یک دفتر است. ....
۵. مداد نیست. ....
۶. استاد نیستیم. ....

■ Negation – Negation is expressed by adding the negative

prefix ن to the positive verb. Negative forms of "to be", having undergone historical changes, are: ➡ workbook

I am not	/nistam/	نیستم	هستم
He is not	/nist/	نیست	هست / است
We are not	/nistim/	نیستیم	هستیم
You are not	/nistid/	نیستید	هستید

● Exercise 3. Complete with the negative of "to be":

۱. من دانشجو .....
۲. این کلاس .....
۳. شما دانشجو .....
۴. ما استاد .....
۵. آن مداد .....
۶. ما دانشجو .....



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SPIRITUAL AWAKENINGWhen Allah chooses to favor someone, makes him/  
her the source of satisfying other people's needs.

Imam Hussein (AS)

## “Let Us Go Out into the Starry Night” at Tehran theater

**A R T d e s k** TEHRAN — An Iranian troupe is performing American writer John Patrick Shanley's play “Let Us Go Out into the Starry Night” at Tehran's Mashayekh Theater.

A poster for John Patrick Shanley's play “Let Us Go Out into the Starry Night” on stage at Tehran's Mashayekh Theater.

Amir-Hossein Golshani directed a reading performance of the play at the Samandarian Hall of the Iranian Artists Forum in 2016.

Danial Kamankesh is directing the play translated into Persian by Behrang Rajabi, Asieh Razmi and Sajjad Gudarzi are the members of the cast.

The play deals with a thin woman in a cafe who approaches a ghostly young man who reminds her of Dostoevsky. They have an intensely serious conversation which temporarily transports them to a point of ecstasy among the stars.

The play will remain on stage until September 11.

“Let Us Go Out into the Starry Night” has previously been staged by several other Iranian directors.

# Iran counters Charlie Hebdo's insult to Prophet Muhammad (S) with Holocaust cartoon exhibit

**→1** “I believe they are trying to promote Islamophobia by republishing these cartoons that are against Prophet Muhammad (S),” asserted Shojaei-Tabatabai who is a prominent cartoonist.

“Creating and promoting hatred, and hurting the hearts of millions of Muslims across the world, is a vain action and this is far from logic,” he said.

“I also think the French government does not take any serious actions against the magazine as they say they believe in freedom of speech, and the Zionist regime tries to do fishing in the troubled waters as well,” he said.

Shojaei-Tabatabai said that the previous acts by the magazine were not taken into account when they organized several cartoon exhibits, and this time there are also plans to hold an international cartoon exhibit under the probable title of “The Atonement of the Holocaust”.

“The reason lies behind the fact that they are justifying why the Palestinian nation must pay for the Holocaust. Palestinians have been under oppression for years and they are still paying the price for the Holocaust,” he said.

“And we are trying to find a strong response to this by means of this exhibit,” he concluded.



Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Abbas Salehi (R) meets surrealist painter Iran Darrudi in her house on September 4, 2020.

**A R T d e s k** TEHRAN — Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Abbas Salehi met Iran Darrudi in her house on Friday, wishing the surrealist painter health and happiness on her 84th birthday anniversary.

He also expressed hope that her plan to set up a museum to embrace her works will be accomplished soon, the ministry announced in a press release published on Saturday

## Culture minister meets Iran Darrudi at 84th birthday anniversary

The Tehran Municipality has allocated a large area to establish a museum for the artist in the city.

Darrudi also thanked the minister for the visit and said that she loves Iran and the Iranian people, and enjoys being honored by the love and kindness of people.

“It took 5 years to receive the official certificate of the museum, and I hope that I will be alive to see the opening of the museum,” she added.

Born in the northeastern Iranian city of Mashhad, Darrudi has studied at Ecole Superieur des Beaux-Arts and the École du Louvre in Paris and the Royal Academy of Brussels. She also received education on television direction and production at the RCA Institute in New York City.

A few years ago, she returned to her homeland and the Tehran Municipality promised her to establish a museum in the Yusefabad district to preserve the works she had brought with herself from Paris.

In addition, Iran's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization (CHTHO) honored her with

the first Eternal Tile, which was embedded on the wall of her house in Tehran in May 2017.

The idea to install the tiles on the houses of contemporary artists, literati and religious figures was initiated by the CHTHO Office for Inscription of Properties and Revitalization of Intangible and Natural Heritage.

The tile bearing the name and title of the celebrity is installed on the façade of his/her house. It also carries the year the artist began to live in the house.

“Over my life, I have regularly proved how much I love Iran, its great history and my countrymen; I was born a lover and I have honestly expressed my love of Iran and its great history,” Darrudi had said.

“I'm thankful for my people's affection to me and I want to know that I merit your love; I've been offering service fairly over all these years to acquaint my people with contemporary art,” she added.

She talked about her faith in her Iranian identity and said, “My name is Iran and by selecting this name for me, they have assigned me a great duty.”

## Iranian director criticizes producers for using Turkish actors in native productions

**A R T d e s k** TEHRAN — Iranian director Bahador Asadi has criticized his fellow producers for hiring Turkish actors for playing roles in movies being produced in the country.

He has recently completed his TV series named “Unplanned”, which has been shot on location in Khorasan Razavi Province. The series is currently being broadcast on IRIB Channel 1.

Asadi said, “We produced this series in Mashhad, and I believe that a filmmaker needs to leave the capital and go to other cities for his productions.”

“A number of local actors are acting in this series and I believe we have many fine, talented actors in other cities that we can make use of in our productions,” he added.

“At the present time, many TV and cinema actors have signed

contracts in these hard days of coronavirus, and are working on their projects observing the health protocols,” he noted.

“We have shown our ignorance over the past years and have not trained enough actors, and this is why producers seek Turkish actors to hire in order to turn their productions into box office hits. But this overlooks many good-looking, talented Iranian actors who could become professionals with some additional education and training,” he added.

Iranian filmmakers have begun hiring actors from the countries in the region over the past few years to foster box office receipts.

In the latest case, Lebanese actress Anne-Marie Salameh, famous for her role in the Lebanese TV series “Joujour”, joined Iranian director Ali Atshani's new project, “Shark”, in July.

## “Sun Children” star Ruhollah Zamani misses Venice festival over coronavirus

**A R T d e s k** TEHRAN — Director Majid Majidi announced Friday that Ruhollah Zamani, the star his child labor drama “Sun Children”, has missed the 77th Venice Film Festival due to his positive test for COVID-19.

Zamani's co-star, Shamila Shirzad, Majidi and a number of crew members left Tehran for Venice to promote the film, which is competing in the official section of the festival now underway on the Italian Lido.

Zamani portrays Ali, a 12-year-old boy and his three friends who work hard together to survive and support their families. They do small jobs in a garage and commit petty crimes to make fast money. Everything changes, however, when Ali is entrusted to find a hidden treasure underground but must first enroll at the Sun (Khorshid) School, a charitable institution that tries to educate street kids and child laborers.

Zamani, Shirzad and some other teenage



Ruhollah Zamani, the star of director Majid Majidi's child labor drama “Sun Children”, attends a press conference during the 38th Fajr Film Festival at Mellat Cineplex on February 10, 2020. (Mehr/Majid Asgaripour)

members of the cast were selected through auditions Majidi held among the children making a living from peddling in the Tehran metro.

Celluloid Dreams, a major French film production and distribution company, is

handling international sales. “Sun Children” premiered during February in Tehran at the 38th edition of the Fajr Film Festival, which honored it with the Crystal Simorgh for best film.

Co-written by Majidi and Nima Javidi, the film also won the award for best screenplay.

“I hope people and officials help solve the problem of child labor, and that we would not see child workers anywhere in our cities,” Majidi said after accepting his award during the closing ceremony of the event.

His “Children of Heaven” received a nomination at the Oscars in 1998, but it failed to win an award.

The 77th Venice Film Festival opened last Tuesday and will run until September 12.

Iranian director Shahram Mokri's latest drama “Careless Crime” is also competing in Orizzonti, a section dedicated to films that represent the latest aesthetic and expressive trends in international cinema.

## Kuwaiti publisher Takween releases Arabic translation of Persian novel “Prison for the Criminals”

**A R T d e s k** TEHRAN — Takween, a major Kuwaiti publisher, has recently released an Arabic translation of the Persian novel “Prison for the Criminals” written by Kayhan Khanjani.

The book was originally published by the Persian publishing company Cheshmeh in 2018 and soon became a bestseller.

It has been rendered into Arabic by prominent Arab translator Ahmad Heidari who has translated several other books by Iranian writers including Sadeq Hedayat's “Isfahan, Half of the World” and Bozorg Alavi's “Her Eyes”.

In a press release published last week, Khanjani said that Heidari spent about two years translating his book.

“He was in contact with me and we discussed Persian terms

used in the books, and in the end, it was edited by three editors from different Arab countries to make the novel understandable to all Arabic speakers around the world,” he stated.

“I'm really happy that a prominent translator and a prominent publisher in the Arab world have worked together on my book,” he added.

Khanjani said that despite the global sanctions on Iran, the publisher has acquired the book's rights.

The novel is about a criminal and junky named “Zapata”, who tells stories to the prisoners, and, in exchange, they give him drugs. In this book, he begins to tell the story of a woman who was transferred into the men's prison. In parallel with the story, the stories of 15 other prisoners are also narrated.

## Only for God

A group of people had come from another city to the village of Qanatmalek to discuss their problems with him during the mourning ceremony of Muharram. He listened to their problems and promised to address them. Then he ordered us to greet and respect them.

“Solving the intricate problems of people is the blessing of these religious rituals of Muharram,” he said.