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Conspiracy or not?

SPECIAL ISSUE

Iran slams West's hypocrisy on freedom of expression

TEHRAN — In an indirect reference to the republication of cartoons insulting the Holy Prophet of Islam (PBUH) by the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Wednesday slammed "institutionalized hypocrisy" under the pretext of the freedom of expression.

"Freedom of Expression? Or Institutionalized Hypocrisy?" **→2**

Steel ingot output increases 7% in 5 months yr/yr

TEHRAN — Production of steel ingot in Iran increased seven 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, over 9.238 million tons of steel ingot was produced during the five-month period of the present year. **→4**

Designs from Iran shortlisted for Dezeen Awards 2020

By Seyyed Mostafa Mousavi Sabet

TEHRAN — Designs of the Nur-e Mobin Primary School and the Kohan Ceram Central Office created by Iranian architects have been shortlisted for the Dezeen Awards 2020 in London. **→8**

By Mahnaz Abdi
Head of Economy Desk

Development of greenhouses to promote Iran's agriculture, economy

While the agriculture sector plays some significant role in the promotion of Iranian economy, drought in recent years has prevented this sector from being developed as expected.

To tackle this condition, the Agriculture Ministry has taken some measures and defined some programs, such as the improvement of irrigation systems.

One of the major programs that the ministry has defined and is seriously pursuing is the development of greenhouses throughout the country.

In late April, the managing director of Iran's Agricultural Parks Company (APC) said that this company planned to create 1,000 hectares of new greenhouses in the country's agricultural parks during the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021).

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

Iran has paid 8.3 trillion rials (about \$197.6 million) of facilities for the development of agricultural parks across the country during the past Iranian year.

The mentioned facilities were paid for the development or construction of various agricultural parks including greenhouses, and those for aquaculture, as well as livestock and poultry breeding.

Offering such facilities and also the other supportive measures have led to the creation of more greenhouses and well as the development of the existing ones in the country.

As recently announced by an official with the Agriculture Ministry, 1,476 hectares of greenhouses and shade houses have been created and developed in the country during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21).

Mohammad-Ali Tahmasbi, the deputy agriculture minister for gardening affairs, said that of the mentioned figure, 761.9 hectares have been the development of the previous greenhouses and shade houses, while 714.1 hectares have been the newly created ones. **→4**

Iran among world's top clusters of science and technology

TEHRAN — Iran ranked 43rd among 100 most vibrant clusters of science and technology (S&T) worldwide for the third consecutive years, according to the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2020 report.

Every year, the Global Innovation Index ranks the innovation performance of more than 130 economies around the world. The GII 2020 with a theme of "Who Will Finance Innovation?" discusses how the state of innovation finance is changing rapidly. This chapter reveals and analyzes the annual GII innovation rankings—by top-performing economies, regions, and innovation components.

The total ranking of Iran is 67 in the GII 2020 report, which was 61 in 2019.

The top 100 clusters are located in 26 countries, 6 of which including Brazil, China, India, Iran, Turkey, and Russia represent middle-income economies. While, the U.S. continues to host the largest number of clusters (25), followed

by China (17), Germany (10), and Japan (5).

Iran also experienced a three-level improvement compared to 2019.

Tehran also ranked 9th among top regions (clusters) of science and technology in middle-income countries, surpassing Berlin, Zurich, Bangalore, Delhi, Lausanne, Vienna, Istanbul, Sao Paulo, Ankara, and Mumbai.

In 2020, Tokyo-Yokohama is the top-performing cluster again due to the excellent performance of this region in patent registration.

The ranking published by the WIPO, which is the global forum for intellectual property services, policy, information, and cooperation. It is a self-funding agency of the United Nations, with 191 member states.

It aims to lead the development of a balanced and effective international intellectual property system that enables innovation and creativity for the benefit of all. **→7**

At least 11 people die, hundreds injured in U.S. protests

At least eleven people died during protests and riots in the United States sparked by the death of an unarmed black man George Floyd, KTLA TV channel reported.

Among the casualties are the citizens of Chicago (Illinois), Detroit (Michigan), Omaha (Nebraska), Davenport (Iowa), Oakland (California) and Louisville (Kentucky). Most of them are African Americans.

In Oakland, a 53-year-old black man Dave Patrick Underwood, the Federal Protective Service officer, was shot dead and another officer was seriously wounded. In Omaha, a 22-year-old black man James Scurlock was killed, when he and a group of his accomplices were beating a white man. That man managed to fire a shot and kill him.

The report says hundreds of people have been injured across the US, but their exact number is yet to be counted.

Mass protests and riots flared up in many US states after the death of African American George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The white police used a knee-to-neck tactic during his detention on May 25. Floyd was suspected of using forged banknotes. The man died in a local hospital shortly afterwards. On May 26, four police were fired and one of them put under arrest and charged with unpremeditated murder.

According to AP, over the past days nearly 4,400 people were detained in the US in protests and riots. They have been charged with looting, violating the curfew and blocking roads. A curfew has been imposed in 40 US cities, including Washington D.C., Los Angeles and New York.

Meanwhile, Top police leaders in New York's third-largest city are retiring en masse amid criticism of the city's handling of the suffocation death of Daniel Prude, the mayor of Rochester said Tuesday.

The future of travel in Iran

By Afshin Majlesi

Ubiquitous face masks, partitions, social distances, customer-service protocols, not-yet-fulfilled refunds, and self-quarantined at home on a mass scale, as well as closed borders, canceled events, and changing policies challenge tourism industry insiders to forecast what the lingering impact of the novel coronavirus could be on the way we travel.

Contrary to what we had already perceived from many other catastrophes, the coronavirus pandemic never stunned us a single shattering

event. Instead, the deadly disease gently snaked its way around the world, affecting the lives of various nations growing into a global crisis.

Since it first surfaced late in 2019, the pandemic has created a greater demand for experiences away from crowds, which is opposite to many traveling pillars. So such preference for solo travel will probably continue till a coronavirus vaccine is ever-present.

In Iran, like any other country, the wound inflicted by the virus on the tourism industry is also so deep, to some extent and it hasn't stopped

bleeding yet! In July, the Islamic Republic decided to extend a ban on inbound group tours as the country was still grappling with the pandemic but letting solo travelers enter under health protocols.

Tourism [industry of Iran] was growing before the corona [outbreak], its revenues reached \$11.7 billion in 2019, which accounted for 2.8% of GDP, near the average share of tourism in the world GDP, which was 3.2 percent, according to Ali-Asghar Mounesan, the minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts. **→6**



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Army to hold war game on Thursday

TEHRAN — Deputy Chief of the Iranian Army for Coordination Affairs Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari announced on Wednesday that the Army is slated to hold a large-scale war game in the Sea of Oman and parts of the Indian Ocean.

Sayyari said forces from the Ground Force, Navy, Air Force and Air Defense will take part in the joint drills, codenamed Zolfaqar-99.

According to the admiral, the drill will last for three days.

"The war game's zone covers an area of 2 million square kilometers in eastern parts of the Strait of Hormuz, Makran Coast, Sea of Oman, and northern parts of the Indian Ocean," said Sayyari, who is the commander of Zolfaqar-99 exercise, Mehr reported. **→3**

World Suicide Prevention Day: bring focus on mental health amid COVID-19

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN — The global pandemic came with the economic downturn, the isolation due to months of social distancing, and the sheer stress of navigating through life while suffering a dangerous virus; all these make the most imperative time to focus on suicide prevention.

World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) is an awareness day observed annually on September 10, in order to provide worldwide commitment and action to prevent suicides, since 2003. The International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP) collaborates with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) to host World Suicide Prevention Day.

According to the WHO, suicide accounts for almost half of all violent deaths in the world, and in the last 45 years, the worldwide suicide rate has increased by 60 percent, while suicide is now among the top three causes of death among people aged 15-44.

Fariborz Dortaj, head of the Iranian Educational Psychology Association, said that suicide prevention is a global challenge. Everyone in society has a key role to play in preventing it.

Everyone can make a difference as a member of the community, a child, a parent, a friend, a co-worker, or as a neighbor. Anyone can raise awareness about this issue, educate themselves and others about the causes of suicide and the warning signs for suicide, and contribute to saving a life, he highlighted. **→7**

'West should fulfil its obligations under nuclear deal'

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Mojtaba Zonnour, the chairman of the Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee who met with French Ambassador to Tehran Philippe Thiebaud on Wednesday, said that the Western countries should fulfil their obligations under the 2015 nuclear



deal, known as the JCPOA.

Violation of the deal to accompany the United States in imposing sanctions on Iran is unacceptable, he added.

Elsewhere, he said that security and stability in the region should be established by the regional countries without any foreign interference.

Thiebaud, for his part, said that France opposes the U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear deal, adding that consultation among the parties can help keep the deal.

Rouhani congratulates North Korean leader on national day

POLITICAL TEHRAN — In a message on Wednesday to North Korea leader Kim Jong-un, President Hassan Rouhani of Iran called for expanding ties between Tehran and Pyongyang.

The president congratulated the East Asian nation on the 72nd anniversary of the country's founding.

Rouhani also expressed hope that the relations between Iran and North Korea would grow in all fields with the willpower of their senior officials and by using the available capacities, Tasnim reported.

North Korea reportedly marked the 72nd anniversary of its founding last week. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea declared its statehood in 1948 and it commemorates its National Day on September 9.

Lawmaker urges French apology for desecration of Holy Prophet

TEHRAN (FNA) — Head of the Iranian Parliament's Human Rights Committee called on Paris to apologize to the world Muslims for the sacrilegious move that has been repeated by a notorious French weekly against Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), underlining serious confrontation against the perpetrators of such moves.



"While condemning the blasphemous moves and apologizing to all Muslims in the world, French government should deal with the perpetrators of blasphemy seriously," Chairman of Iranian Parliament's Human Rights Committee Zohreh Elahian wrote in a letter to the President of European Parliament Human Rights Committee Ms. Maria Arena on Tuesday.

Addressing Maria Arena and High Commissioner of the Human Rights, Elahian lashed out at sacrilegious moves of different magazines in Europe including the French Charlie Hebdo.

"The insulting moves of various magazines in Europe including Charlie Hebdo have hurt the feelings of more than one billion Muslims throughout the world," she said.

The lawmaker added that such blasphemous acts are repeated at a time when all European states, including the French regime, are duty-bound to refrain from any expression of opinion which contradicts public ethics and also fundamental freedoms and rights of others according to the binding obligations of human rights.

"Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms explicitly states that Freedom of expression is not absolute and requires duties and responsibilities and may be subject to punishment at the condition that it endangers public health or reputation and rights of others," she further wrote.

"All western governments especially France are expected to live up to their commitments and avoid double standards," Elahian noted, stressing, "While condemning these blasphemous and derogatory acts and apologizing to all Muslims around the world, French government is requested to deal with the perpetrators of blasphemy effectively and seriously."

Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei in a statement on Tuesday condemned the blasphemous acts against the holy Quran and Great Prophet of Islam (PBUH), warning that they are aimed at derailing attention from the plots hatched by the US and the Zionists against the region.

"This move made at this point in time might also serve another motive; diverting the minds and attention of nations and governments in West Asia away from the evil schemes that the U.S. and the Zionist regime have hatched for the region," Ayatollah Khamenei said on Tuesday.

He described sacrilege of the holy Quran and Great Prophet of Islam (PBUH) as an "unforgivable sin", saying that it showed again the enmity of the western political and cultural bodies against Islam and Muslims.

Ayatollah Khamenei also blasted French President Emanuel Macron and other French politicians for supporting the blasphemous acts, dismissing it as wrong and demagogic.

The statement came after supporters of right-wing Danish politician Rasmus Paludan, who leads the anti-Islamic group, Tight Direction (Stram Kurs), burned a copy of Holy Qur'an in the Southern Swedish city of Malmo during an illegal gathering on August 28.

Also, on September 1, the ill-reputed French Magazine Charlie Hebdo also republished blasphemous cartoons of the Prophet of Islam on the eve of the trial of suspects in a deadly attack on the paper's office five years ago.

Senator Murphy calls Pompeo's remarks on Iran's uranium stockpile funny

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Chris Murphy, the U.S. senator from Connecticut, has called U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's remarks on Iran's uranium stockpile "funny".

"Funny - if the goal was to get Iran to stick to the stockpile limits in the nuclear agreement, one possible path forward - just spittingballing here - would have been to NOT UNILATERALLY END THE AGREEMENT," he tweeted on Tuesday.

Pompeo said in a tweet on Tuesday, "Iran's uranium stockpile is reportedly more than 10 times the limit set by the JCPOA. The E3 and other nations must wake up to the reality that the nuclear deal

Ben Rhodes, former President Barack Obama's adviser, also tweeted, "Pulling out of the Iran Deal has been an unmitigated disaster."



Matt Duss



Ben Rhodes



Gerard Araud



Chris Murphy



Daryl G. Kimball

is history and should join us in imposing strong sanctions. Pressure and comprehensive talks are the only path forward."

Ben Rhodes, former President Barack Obama's adviser, also tweeted, "Pulling out of the Iran Deal has been an unmitigated disaster."

Gerard Araud, a former French ambassador to the U.S., tweeted, "A detail: Iran has been progressively enriched beyond the limit set by the JCPOA because the US has reneged on its signature and has not respected its side of the deal."

Matt Duss, a foreign policy advisor to Senator Bernie Sanders, also said in a tweet, "As always, the beauty of 'maximum pressure' is that it's unfalsifiable. Despite

consistently producing the exact opposite of its intended outcomes, it can never fail. The answer is always more pressure."

Daryl G. Kimball, the executive director at U.S. Arms Control Association, tweeted, "What @SecPompeo does not acknowledge

is that this is all the result of *Trump's Failing Iran Policy* that many of us warned against more than a year ago. The E3 and others need to encourage the U.S. and Iran to come back into compliance w/ the #JCPOA."

Gerard Araud, a former French ambassador to the U.S., tweeted, "A detail: Iran has been progressively enriched beyond the limit set by the JCPOA because the US has reneged on its signature and has not respected its side of the deal."

Zarif plans visit to Europe: NHK

By staff and agency

NHK has learned that Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif is planning to make a visit to Europe.

Diplomatic sources say arrangements are being made for the foreign minister's visit, which will commence as early as next week, NHK reported on Wednesday.

Currently, Zarif plans to visit European countries, such as Britain, France, Germany, Italy and Spain.

The move is likely aimed at dissuading key European powers from agreeing with the United States' efforts to restore UN sanctions on Tehran.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has announced that

all UN sanctions against Iran will be reinstated on September 20 after the U.S. "activated the snapback mechanism".

However, the claim was strongly denounced by other signatories of the nuclear deal including Iran, the EU, Russia, China, and non-permanent members of the UN Security Council.

Niger, the president of the UN Security Council for September, has reaffirmed a rejection of a U.S. complaint against Iran at the Security Council.

In 2018, the U.S. unilaterally withdrew from the 2015 nuclear deal struck between Iran and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council as well as Germany and



resumed its sanctions on Iran.

Through Zarif's visits, Iran is likely aiming to boost ties with European countries, with a goal of blocking the U.S. initiative.

Iran slams West's hypocrisy on freedom of expression

1 → Instigate violence and hatred against 1.8 Billion Muslims by stereotypical defamation and desecration of their Holy Book and Prophet," Zarif tweeted on Wednesday.

However, in an indirect reference to the Holocaust which is not tolerated to be questioned in the West, Zarif said, "Touch party line about events in recent history—repugnant as they are. Enough already."

Mojtaba Zonnour, the chairman of the Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, who met with French Ambassador to Tehran Philippe Thiebaud on Wednesday, slammed Charlie Hebdo's republication of cartoons insulting Prophet Muhammad (S).

"This action, under the pretext of the freedom of expression, has hurt the Muslims' feelings," Zonnour told the French diplomat.

The senior MP predicted that the action will add to complications in the region.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has also condemned the magazine's move, saying the move once again exposed the enmity of the political, cultural centers of the Western world toward Islam.

"The unforgivable sin of a French magazine in insulting the Holy Prophet (PBUH) once again exposed the enmity and the vile spite of the political and cultural centers of the Western world toward Islam and the Muslim community," Ayatollah Khamenei said in a message on Tuesday.

He said freedom of expression is misused by some French politicians to not condemn such great crime. This is "completely wrong and demagogic," the Leader noted.

The deep anti-Islamic policies of the Zionists and arrogant governments are the cause of such hostile moves, said Ayatollah Khamenei.

"This move at this time could also be a measure to distract the nations and governments of West Asia from the sinister plots of the United States and the Zionist regime for the region."

"Muslim nations, especially West Asian nations, should maintain vigilance regarding the issues of this sensitive region and never forget the hostility of Western politicians and rulers towards Islam and Muslims," the Leader concluded.

In a reckless and provocative move, on

September 2 Charlie Hebdo republished the same cartoons about Prophet Muhammad (S) that prompted a deadly attack on the magazine in 2015.

The cartoons were republished so as to mark the start of the terrorism trial of people accused as accomplices in the attack. The magazine posted the cartoons online on September 1 and they appeared in print the next day.

13 men and a woman accused of providing the attackers with weapons and logistics went on trial on charges of terrorism.

Twelve people, including some of France's most famous cartoonists, were killed on January 7, 2015, when two French-born brothers of Algerian descent, Said and Cherif Kouachi, went on a gun rampage at Charlie Hebdo's offices in Paris.

The brothers identified themselves as belonging to the terrorist group al-Qaeda and cited "avenging the prophet" as their reason for the attack. The attack touched off a wave of killings claimed by Daesh (ISIS) terrorist group across Europe.

On January 9, 2015, Said and Cherif's friend, Amedy Coulibaly, took hostages and

killed four people at a kosher supermarket in Paris. Coulibaly and the Kouachi brothers, who were in contact during the attack, were killed in standoffs with the police.

10 months later, in November 2015, a group of Daesh gunmen and suicide bombers killed 130 people and injured more than 400 at multiple sites across Paris, which became the deadliest of the attacks.

Throughout the world, many Muslims see the publication of the cartoons as a renewed provocation by Charlie Hebdo, which has a history of publishing material considered racist and anti-Muslim.

Tehran on September 3 strongly condemned the French magazine, saying any insult against the prophet of Islam and other divine prophets is not acceptable at all.

"The French magazine's offensive move, which has been repeated on the pretext of freedom of speech, has hurt the feelings of the world's monotheists, is a provocative move and an insult to the Islamic values and beliefs of over one billion Muslims in the world," Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said in a statement.

Rouhani urges officials to support investment in stock market

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Pointing to the falls the stock exchange market in recent weeks, President Hassan Rouhani on Wednesday said it is natural that the stock market faces ups and downs but shareholders should have a long-term view of the market.

However, Rouhani asked the stock market officials to guard the people's investment in the capital market.

The president also said protecting the health of the people as the country if fighting the coronavirus pandemic and severe sanctions "is very important".

Rouhani also pointed to the opening of schools on Saturday, saying, "Today's discussion is science, culture, and education of students. An important principle for us is that the health of students is a priority, the second issue is that students get their educations; these are very difficult for students and families. At the same time, there is no compulsion. We do not compel any family or student to" attend the school.

A considerable percentage of the families are worried about sending their children to schools in fear of the coronavirus. On Tuesday, both the education minister and government spokesman said it is not obligatory for students to attend school.

U.S. anti-Iran efforts will come up against brick wall'

Rouhani also said that the path that the United States is pursuing in hostility with Iran is a "dead end," stressing that Washington has no option but to reverse course, Press



TV reported.

He said the U.S. made "a strategic mistake" in 2018, when it unilaterally withdrew from the 2015 nuclear deal and re-imposed economic sanctions against Iran.

He added that the Americans imagined that they could bring down the Iranian nation to its knees through economic pressure and oppressive sanctions, but the people have resisted over the past three and a half years.

"Although the Americans caused difficulties for us, they will not achieve their objective," said Rouhani, adding that they "totally embarrassed themselves at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), in the entire world, and even in the eyes of their own nation."

"They must now be regretting what they did and they will certainly need to reverse [what they have done]. They will definitely return [from that path]. That path is a dead end for the U.S. America has no other way but to reverse course, otherwise it will hit a wall," the president said.

Since leaving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in May 2018, the administration of U.S. President Donald Trump has dialed up efforts to kill the nuclear accord.

In August, Washington proposed a resolution to extend the UN arms embargo on Iran due to expire on October 18 under UNSC Resolution 2231, which endorsed the JCPOA.

However, it suffered an embarrassing defeat as Russia and China voted against the resolution and the remaining 11 council members, including France, Germany and the UK, abstained.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo then filed an official complaint with UNSC President Dian Triansyah Djani, accusing Iran of violating the JCPOA.

He claimed that Washington was still a participant in the JCPOA and therefore retained the right to activate a 30-day countdown to a return of all UN sanctions that had been imposed on Tehran before the nuclear agreement.

But, the remaining signatories to the JCPOA maintained that since the United States had left the accord, it had no right to act under its provisions and could not trigger the so-called snapback of sanctions.

Ayatollah Amoli urges the West to prevent insult on religions

TEHRAN (MNA) — Iranian Shia Marja, Ayatollah Abdollah Javadi Amoli, has issued a message in reaction to Charlie Hebdo's insulting cartoons, urging the officials of the Western countries to prevent further insult to any religion.

"The only thing that keeps the world is wisdom," he noted in a message on Tuesday. "If this wisdom is in place, then a major sec-

tion of the world's budget will not be spent on killing humans; take a look at arms factories that work 24/7 to create weapons for killing humans."

The point is that human beings are considering themselves as God and don't request help from anywhere, he added.

Those countries that desecrate the Prophet of the Quran should know that they are "sitting

on a branch and cutting the roots," said the Marja, adding that prophets have come to guide the human beings towards wisdom.

The world minus wisdom equals World War I and II or proxy wars, noted Ayatollah Javadi Amoli.

He urged the French government to not allow anyone to insult the Holy Quran and Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). If a third party

aims to sow division between countries with these measures, they cannot achieve success, he said, adding, "And if an ignorant friend has done that, we hope their ignorance will turn into wisdom."

Ayatollah Javadi Amoli also urged the officials of Western countries to solve this problem and not let anybody desecrate any of the holy books and religions.

Trump achieved nothing by pressuring Iran, says professor

Democrats want to return to JCPOA, resume talks with Iran: Nourbakhsh

POLITICAL TEHRAN — An Iranian university professor says U.S. President Donald Trump has achieved nothing by putting pressure on Iran.

In an interview with IRNA published on Tuesday, Mahdi Nourbakhsh said Trump has no foreign policy achievement to present to the American public in the upcoming presidential elections.

Pointing to the U.S. failure in the United Nations to reimpose international sanctions on Iran, Nourbakhsh said the U.S. will need nine votes in favor if it wants to hold a UN Security Council emergency meeting and approve an anti-Iran resolution.

"But, the U.S. does not have those votes, because when it presented the resolution to extend arms embargo on Iran, none of the United Nations Security Council members except for Dominican Republic voted for the resolution," he said.

In May 2018, Trump withdrew his country from the Iran nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and introduced the "toughest ever sanctions" on Iran.

Meanwhile, Washington has accused Tehran of violating the JCPOA and attempted last month to reimpose the UN sanctions on the Islamic Republic.

The U.S. move to trigger what is known as the "snapback" mechanism came a week after its efforts to extend the UN arms embargo on Tehran failed miserably. Only the Dominican Republic joined Washington in voting yes.

The United States argues that it can trigger the sanctions snapback process because the 2015 Security Council resolution still names it as a nuclear deal participant.

However, in a joint letter to the Security Council on Thursday hours after the U.S.



submitted it complaint, Britain, Germany and France said: "Any decisions and actions which would be taken based on this procedure or on its possible outcome would also be devoid of any legal effect."

According to Nourbakhsh, that was the first time in the history of the UN that the United States faced such a defeat and could not get what it wished.

He argued that the U.S.'s unilateral approach is the most important reason behind its defeat.

The U.S. attempt to invoke the snapback clause of the JCPOA will create tension in the Security Council because UNSC members do not support the U.S. approach.

Abdou Abarry, Niger's UN ambassador who chairs the Security Council for September, has said that the U.S. has no authority to start the snapback mechanism.

Iran has also argued that since the U.S. is not a member of the JCPOA anymore, it cannot invoke the so-called snapback mechanism.

"Based on the universally accepted general principle of law, the United States

cannot benefit from the fruits of its unlawful act of withdrawal from the JCPOA by assuming that it has no obligation to submit its notification alongside a description of good-faith efforts," Zarif wrote in a letter to the chairman of the UN Security Council on August 20.

Asked about the future of Iran-U.S. issues if the Democratic presidential candidate defeats Trump in the November elections, Nourbakhsh said Democrats do not want regime change. "They want to return to the JCPOA and prepare the ground for holding talks between Washington and Tehran."

"If Joe Biden becomes the next U.S. president, the way of interaction between the U.S. and Iran will be smoother," the expert stressed.

"All say that the JCPOA is a win-win international agreement that helps ensure global security," he added.

There's good chance Biden would rejoin JCPOA, says American professor
In similar remarks, a professor of political

science at the University of Northern Iowa predicted that if Biden becomes president, there would be a good chance he will rejoin the agreement if the other parties allow.

In an interview with ILNA published on Tuesday, Brian Warby said it isn't clear whether the future of the JCPOA has changed.

"Trump is still adamantly opposed to it, but the other signatories seem to remain committed," he said, emphasizing that Washington does not have the right to activate the process of reimposing sanctions on Iran.

By leaving the JCPOA, the U.S.'s stance that it can trigger the mechanism is effectively null and void, he said.

The professor confirmed that the U.S. was a key member of the JCPOA and by walking out and imposing sweeping sanctions against Iran, it has made it very difficult for the remaining parties to continue as before.

"The remaining allies have not failed to meet their obligations, strictly speaking," he remarked.

On the goal of IAEA Chief Rafael Grossi's recent trip to Iran, he said, "It doesn't appear that Grossi's trip has or will have much effect on tensions."

Warby pointed to U.S. sanctions against Iran, arguing that it is entirely the U.S. actions that have discouraged many European and Asian investors and traders from doing business in Iran. "The Europeans and Asians are doing what they committed to do, so from their perspective, Iran should meet its obligation."

"That isn't comforting to Iran, of course, because they lose business (i.e. money) either way, so from their perspective, the agreement hasn't delivered the promised returns, so it's reasonable for them to complain that treaty hasn't been fair," he concluded.

Tehran denounces bomb attack against Afghan VP

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh has denounced the Wednesday morning terrorist attack against the Afghan vice-president's convoy.

In a statement on Wednesday, Khatibzadeh described the attempted assassination as a move by the enemies of Afghanistan's peace and stability, given the imminence of intra-Afghan negotiations.

A roadside bomb in Kabul targeted Afghan First Vice President Amrullah Saleh on Wednesday morning but he escaped the attack unharmed, according to his spokesman.

"This vicious terrorist attempt has failed and Saleh survived today's bombing in Kabul," Saleh's spokesperson Razwan Murad said.



Officials said at least ten civilians were killed during the attack and at least 15 people were wounded.

The Taliban denied responsibility. In a video posted on Facebook soon after the explosion, Saleh, with bandages on his left hand, said he had been travelling to his office when his convoy was attacked.

"I am fine but some of my guards have been wounded. My son, who was in the car with me, and I are both fine," Saleh said, Al Jazeera reported.

"I have some burns on my face and hand. The blast was strong," he added.

Saleh has survived several assassination attempts, including one on his office last year ahead of presidential elections that killed 20 people.

Army to hold war game on Thursday

Reaction to any aggression against Iran won't be limited to West Asia, says Sayyari

1→ A broad range of vessels, submarines, aircraft and new weapons would be used in the military exercise, including "Fateh" homegrown submarine, he said.

According to the commander the drills will showcase the Iranian Army forces' power and preparedness to counter any threat by the enemy.

Sayyari warned Iran's enemies that any strategic mistake would lead to a strong response by Iran that won't be limited to West Asia.

"Boosting preparedness and operational

power of the Navy, Air Defense and Ground Force during the joint drills and countering any trans-regional threat through exercising operational plans and making sure of their capabilities in decisively countering any possible aggression are among the goals of the drills," he added.

The Army forces will practice offense and defense tactics in the drill, Sayyari said.

He pointed out that a long-range drone, called Simorgh, would carry out patrol and reconnaissance operations and engage in combat against hostile vessels by dropping

smart bombs with pinpoint accuracy.

The commander said the purpose of the exercise is to ensure the security of regional waters and international shipping routes.

Security in West Asia and its vital and strategic waterways should be established through the cooperation of all regional countries and prevention of foreign presence in regional waters, he remarked.

Iran regularly conducts drills to maintain defensive readiness and to incorporate technologically new weapons systems.



Human rights NGO releases first annual report on terrorism in Iran

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Habilian Association, an Iranian Human Rights NGO conducting studies on terror victims in Iran, has released its first annual report on terrorism in Iran.

"The report covers terrorist activities and counter-terrorism measures in Iran between March 2019 and April 2020 (1398 in Persian calendar [year]). The first annual report on terrorism in Iran provides the audience with information on terrorist groups' operations against Iranian targets in chronological order. According to this report, between March

2019 and April 2020, 35 Iranian citizens were assassinated by terrorist groups both within and outside the country," the association said in a statement on Wednesday.

Habilian was founded in 2005 to monitor terrorist groups and their activities in Iran. It describes itself as a "representative of families of the Iranian victims of terrorism."

Mohammad Javad Hasheminejad, the head of the association, is the son of late Ayatollah Hasheminejad, a key political figure and a prominent scholar in Iran in the early 1980s who was assassinated in a suicide operation by a

member of the terrorist Mujahedin e-Khalq organization.

The 39-page report, directed by Reza Alghurabi, provides detailed information about terror victims in Iran and how they were targeted by the terrorist groups across the country.

Citing research results, Habilian also said that since the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, more than 17,000 Iranian citizens were killed by terrorist groups, of which 12,000 were assassinated by the Mojahedin-e Khalq (MeK) terrorist group.

Iran's envoy to Pakistan: U.S. globally humiliated at UNSC

TEHRAN — Iranian Ambassador to Islamabad Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini said the United Nations Security Council's recent rejection of the U.S. request for re-imposition of Iran's arms embargo humiliated and isolated Washington on the global scene.

"The recent story of UNSC that in a very humiliating effort, 90 percent of Security Council members didn't accept U.S. proposal for Extending Arm Embargo on Iran and just the U.S. and one non-permanent member of the council supported the resolution is one of these failures," Hosseini said in a speech at Pakistan's National Defense University (NDU) on Tuesday.

"In the last decades, no region in the world has been as chaotic as Middle East, Persian Gulf and West Asia," he said, adding that

majority of the regional crises have originated from foreign interventions.

"We have learned how to turn the current challenges into now and then opportunities. For us, the best possible situation is the time that other countries in our neighborhood also join hands to reduce the negative side effects of these uninvited interventions," the ambassador noted.

"Countries of the Middle East are coping with different types of misunderstandings," he stressed, adding, "some invisible hands are also trying to flare up the fire and keep the flame of divergence alive for ever in our region."

The Iranian diplomat then referred to some of the regional crises such as Afghanistan, Palestine and Yemen, saying, "It is proved that any insecurity or instability in Afghani-

stan will definitely spill over on neighboring countries -mostly Iran and Pakistan- No country more than Iran and Pakistan has suffered from the burden of Afghan refugees and production of drugs in Afghanistan."

"We are very happy of seeing positive developments in Afghanistan today and have always supported a stable and prosperous Afghanistan and we know that Pakistan also has done its best in this way," Hosseini noted, adding, "If we are in search of enduring peace and durable stability, we have to complement our efforts with each other and increase our connections on Afghanistan and with Afghanistan government."

The Iranian envoy continued, "If we are not able to do so, others will decide about us according to their own priorities and interests."

"For sure, future trilateral cooperation between Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan can make us more close to a prosperous region with sustainable peace in it," he further said.

Elsewhere in his speech, Hosseini said, "Islamic Republic of Iran believes that the Constitution of Afghanistan is the result of a long journey passed by Afghanistan people and international community and preserving it can help to sustain current minimum order that exists in this country. In pursuit of Iran's firm stance in supporting sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries in the region, Iran also believes that any negotiation about future of Afghanistan should be in cooperation and coordination with the official central government of this country." (Source: Fars)

SPORTS

Skocic talks about his footballing dreams

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Dragan Skocic, head coach of the Iran football national team, has talked about his ambitions from the very first days he came to Iran as the coach of the Malavan Bandar Anzali football team.

"Naturally, everyone has dreams, and I dreamed of coaching the big teams. My love for coaching makes me want to pursue my career and my dreams anywhere. From the day I took charge of Malavan, I believed in my football knowledge and spent all my experience to help my teams reach their peak potentials," Skocic said in a lengthy interview with the Iranian football federation's official magazine.



The Croat was named as new head coach of Iran in early February as a replacement for the Belgian coach Marc Wilmots but he has not led the team in a single match for more than seven months.

"If you search, you may see my first interviews in Iran, which I said at that time my goal was to lead the Iranian national team," he added.

Iran national football team will play Uzbekistan on Oct. 8 in a friendly match in Tashkent and four days later they will face Tajikistan in Tehran.

Skocic says that he will try to build a new team with new players in the squad, but he will use the players who were already in the national team as well. "Right now, our focus is mainly on changing the style of the play of the National Team," the Croatian coach said.

He also talked about his experience of working in Iran as a person has lived here for many years.

"Although I'm not an Iranian, I have spent many years in Iran. I know the problems of Iranian football and I believe that the country has very talented players who have football DNA but they need to change their mentality about tactical football. I think Iranian football needs coaches who increase the motivation of the players to fight."

"In my first interview in Iran, I was asked what would happen if we did not get the result? I replied: 'what happens if you get out of here and have a car accident?' I never think about negative points. Rather, I think positively and do not let my mind be preoccupied with problems. I work hard and other people also have to think about doing their best in their jobs and the good things will follow," he concluded.

Bardia Saadat becomes Iran's youngest to play abroad

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Opposite striker Bardia Saadat became the youngest ever Iranian player who has joined a foreigner club.

Saadat, 18, joined Serbian Volleyball Club Niš. He represented Iran at the 2019 FIVB Volleyball Men's U21 World Championship, where the Persians won the title after defeating Italy in the final match in Riffa, Bahrain.

Volleyball club Niš are a professional volleyball team based in Niš, Serbia and play in the Serbian volleyball league.

Niš will participate at the 2020-21 Men's CEV Cup which is the 49th edition of the European CEV Cup volleyball club tournament.

Esteghlal sign two players

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Babak Moradi and Matin Karimzadeh are Esteghlal's new signings.

Moradi has joined Esteghlal from Machine Sazi. The -27-year-old winger has penned a two-year contract with the Iranian top flight football team.

Karimzadeh also penned a three-year contract with Esteghlal. The -21-year-old left-back was a member of Iran at the 2019 AFC U23 Championship.

Esteghlal are one of four Iranian teams who will feature in the AFC Champions League's West Zone restart in Qatar next week.

Esteghlal have collected one point from the two Group A matches in February, with the first of their four remaining fixtures coming against UAE's Al Wahda next Monday.

Five coaches shortlisted for Iran volleyball hotseat

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Technical committee of the Islamic Republic of Iran Volleyball Federation (IRIVF) has chosen five candidates for taking charge of the National Team.

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

The federation's technical committee was headed by IRIVF president Mohammadreza Davarzani.

Davarzani has already said a big foreign coach will be appointed as Iran coach since the Persians want to be among top four teams in the Tokyo Olympic Games.

"The new head coach will be appointed just for the Olympic Games. After the games, the new generation of the Iranian players need a new head coach," Davarzani said.

Due to legal issues, the names of the candidates have not been revealed, the federation released a statement.

Iran are without a coach since parting company with Montenegrin coach Igor Kolakovic in late March.

Iran are pitted against Japan, Poland, Italy, Canada and Venezuela in Pool A at the Olympic Games.

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

Condensate output reaches 650,000 bpd

ECONOMY TEHRAN — The gas condensate production at Iran's giant South Pars gas field (in the Persian Gulf) has reached 650,000 barrels per day (bpd), an official with South Pars Gas Company (SPGC) said.

"The equivalent of 650,000 barrels of gas condensate is produced daily in South Pars, part of which is sent to petrochemical complexes, a large part to the Persian Gulf Star Refinery and some is exported," SPGC Deputy Head Hossein Shamschiri said on Tuesday.

According to Shamschiri, the company is currently operating 12 refineries that process gas produced at the field, including two facilities at phases 11 and 12 which came online a month ago.

"Currently, the offshore section of Phase 14 has been launched in cooperation with Pars Oil and Gas Company (POGC), and the gas produced by its platforms is being used in other phases," he said.

Noting that currently about 75 percent of the country's gas is produced by this complex, the official said: "Currently, the production of sweet gas in the complex is 650 million cubic meters per day."

Iran exported much of its condensate to Asia, with South Korea and Japan being major customers, but U.S. sanctions in 2018 led to a sharp decline in the exports.

With the sudden halt in condensate exports, the Oil Ministry started to follow a new strategy to increase the consumption of condensate inside the country.

Back in May, Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said that his ministry plans to prevent direct gas condensate exports to create products with more value-added.

Zanganeh said the plan is to process the condensate in the country's refineries in order to produce products like naphtha and gasoline and to supply feedstock to local refineries.

"All the gas condensate will be refined in the Persian Gulf Star and Siraf refineries to gasoline and feedstock for petrochemical units," he said.

The giant South Pars gas field, which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf waters, is Iran's main source of gas condensate.

Zanganeh said South Pars and other nearby fields can produce up to 1 million bpd of gas condensate.

In early February, the minister said that about 130,000 bpd of the country's gas condensate is used as feedstock for the country's petrochemical plants and 80,000 bpd go to domestic refineries, apart from Persian Gulf Star.

Iran, Malaysia discuss preferential trade agreement

ECONOMY TEHRAN — The third round of talks for signing a preferential trade agreement between Iran and Malaysia was held through video conference, an official with Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) announced.

According to Anvar Kamrani, in this meeting, which was attended by representatives of relevant executive bodies, including the Vice Presidency for Legal Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the parties discussed the rules of origin, the preparation of the lists of goods, and the date for exchanging the mentioned lists.

"It was decided in the meeting that the lists proposed by the two sides should be prepared and exchanged by October 15, 2020, based on the national tariffs of the other country," TPO portal quoted Kamrani as saying.

The head of the TPO's Asia-Pacific Markets Office continued: "It is expected that by agreeing on the commodity lists, the preferential trade agreement will be signed between the two countries, which will increase trade between the two sides."

Back in May, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and Malaysia's Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin expressed readiness to boost the economic and trade interaction between the two Muslim nations.

In a telephone conversation on May 13, the two officials stressed the need to accelerate the implementation of the financial and trade agreements signed in the past, specifically the deals inked during the previous Malaysian premier's tenure.

Cooperative projects worth over \$724m inaugurated throughout Iran

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Some 383 cooperative projects worth over 30 trillion rials (about \$724.28 million) were inaugurated in several provinces of Iran on Wednesday on the occasion of the Cooperatives Week (September 3-9), IRNA reported.

First Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri, and Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare Minister Mohammad Shariatmadari inaugurated the projects through video conference.

As reported, 281 of the mentioned projects were out in operation in cities and 102 were inaugurated in rural areas.

Isfahan, Khuzestan, Fars, and Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari provinces had the biggest share of the mentioned projects with 69, 58, 26, and 24 projects, respectively.

With the inauguration of the said projects, 26,691 job opportunities will be created, while 33,715 people are also members of the cooperatives which implemented the projects.

Some 13,649 of the mentioned jobs are created in housing cooperatives, 6,762 in production cooperatives, 6,233 in service cooperatives, 3,073 jobs in industry and mining cooperatives and 2,814 job opportunities are created in the agricultural sector.

The most job opportunities that are created with the opening of these projects are in Khuzestan province with 3,892 jobs, Tehran with 2,532 jobs and Fars with 1,992 job opportunities.

There are currently 94,000 cooperatives in the country with 10 million members, of which 1.7 million are employed.

TEDPIX falls 13,684 points on Wednesday

ECONOMY TEHRAN — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 13,684 points to 1.556 million on Wednesday, IRNA reported.

As reported, 8.25 billion securities worth 106.489 trillion rials (about \$2.535 billion) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index dropped 12,142 points and the second market's index fell 19,005 points.

TEDPIX dropped five percent to 1.631 million points at the end of the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

The index 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 TEDPIX 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 four weeks.

Steel ingot output increases 7% in 5 months yr/yr

1 → The output was 1.756 million tons in the fifth month of this year, rising two percent from the figure of the same month in the previous year.

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

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

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

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

He further noted that over 90 million



tons of iron ore were produced in the country during the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19) of which only seven percent was exported.

The reduction in the exports of iron ore came as the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has urged the government to prevent the exports of

raw minerals in order to be processed in the country for making products with more added value.

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

The ministry believes that the duty is going to encourage the production of more processed minerals such as pellets and concentrate instead of selling the raw minerals.

Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry has announced that production of iron ore concentrate in Iran reached 47.306 million tons in the previous Iranian calendar year, registering a four-percent rise compared to the preceding year.

Iran's export of steel products in the past Iranian calendar year rose 27 percent compared to its preceding year.

As reported, the country's major steel producers managed to export about 7.33 million tons of the products in the previous year.

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

Development of greenhouses to promote Iran's agriculture, economy

1 → Meanwhile, Iran plans to create 2,500 hectares of new greenhouses in the country during the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021), which is named the year of "Surge in Production", according to the operator of the plan for developing greenhouses.

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

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

Iran is anticipated to produce 5,000 tons of fruits and vegetables in the greenhouses throughout the country this year.

As reported, 80 percent of the country's greenhouse fruits and vegetables are exported.

The significance of boosting agricultural export is obvious when taking the country's recent approach to boost non-oil exports into account. The development of greenhouses is a very fruitful measure in this due.

Production of products in the greenhouses is today one of the most profitable methods in the agriculture sectors of the countries, in a way that they have defined it as one

of their major production strategies because while greenhouses provide stable production of high-quality products, developing them is a proper way for tackling drought and for optimal use of water resources.

In Iran, the need for the development of greenhouses is now highly recognized, as the country is seriously following up on two main objectives of strengthening domestic production to achieve self-reliance, and boosting non-oil exports.

While many supportive measure are being taken to this end, Iran should also benefit from the experiences of those countries that enjoy significant achievements and progresses in the field of greenhouses.

Production of copper cathode up 5%

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Production of copper cathode in Iran has risen five percent during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21), from the same period of time in the previous year, IRNA reported.

As reported, 115,701 tons of the product has been produced in the five-month period of this year.

Copper cathode output stood at 24,621 tons in the fifth month of this year, which was 23 percent higher than the figure of the past year's same month.

Production of copper cathode, which stood at 250,000 tons in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), is planned to reach 280,000 tons in the present year.

In early May, four development projects worth 40 trillion rials (about \$952.3 million) were inaugurated in the copper sector of Kerman Province in the southeast of Iran.

President Hassan Rouhani put the projects into operation through video conference.

The projects inaugurated in Khatoon Abad Copper Complex included increasing the capacity of copper smelting in the complex, building a copper concentrate storage, construction of a sulfuric acid production plant, and an oxygen supplying unit.

By putting the first project into operation, the complex's capacity for producing copper



anode rises by 50 percent to 120,000 tons, and the country's copper smelting capacity rose to 400,000 tons. This project creates jobs for 120 persons.

Some 1.11 trillion rials (about \$26.4 million) plus \$118 million have been invested for this project.

The second project, which was the construction of a 60,000-ton storage facility, was implemented at the cost of 158 billion rials (about \$3.7 million) plus three million euros, creating jobs for 250 people.

The third project is valued at 750 billion rials (about \$17.8 million) plus 100 million euros and the fourth one was put into operation at the cost of 192 billion rials (about \$4.5 million) plus 31 million euros.

Iran has seen its copper exports doubled in the past Iranian calendar year despite a series of bitter sanctions imposed by the United States aimed at hampering the Islamic Republic's trade of lucrative metals.

Annual overhaul begins for 100,000MW of Iran's power plants

ECONOMY TEHRAN — The annual overhaul program of Iran's thermal power plants has begun for 100,000 megawatts capacity of the country's power plants, an official with Iran's Thermal Power Plants Holding Company (TPPH) said.

"The 100,000-megawatt annual program for overhauling the country's power plants began to increase the power plants' readiness for the next summer's peak consumption period," IRNA quoted Parisa Narimisa, the director general of Planning, Operation and Electricity Market Office of TPPH as saying.

The official noted that based on the assessments made by the company, the capacity of power plant units that go through the overhaul program this year has increased by 11 percent compared to the previous year.

"This shows the increase in the capability of operators and companies active in this field, which have succeeded in reducing repair times and improved their performance considering the growth of the installed capacity in the country," Narimisa said.

In order to ensure the proper operation of power plants in the peak consumption period, the annual overhaul program starts every year in early September and will continue until late May in the next year, the official said.

Emphasizing that the knowledge for producing 80 percent of the equipment and spare parts of the power plants have been localized by Iranian experts in cooperation with knowledge-based companies and research centers, she continued: "During this period, more than 11,000 personnel constantly work in the unbearable hot weather above 50 degrees Celsius to complete the annual repair program of the country's power plants on time and ensure the stable supply of electricity to customers during peak days."

Summer months constitute Iran's peak demand periods, so most of the power plant overhaul programs are scheduled to take place during autumn, winter, and spring seasons.

Over two-thirds of Iran's thermal power plants are owned and operated by the country's private sector and private owners are currently generating nearly 67 percent of Iran's thermal power.

Currently, a total of 478 thermal power plants are operating throughout Iran which includes both gas power plants and combined cycle plants.

Iran's total power generation capacity currently stands at about 85,000 MW, more than 90 percent of which is supplied by thermal power plants.

Shrimp farming expected to reach 52,000 tons by March 2021

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran's annual shrimp farming is anticipated to reach 52,000 tons in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021), Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO) Head Nabiollah Khoun-Mirzaei told IRNA.

The official also said that 12,000 hectares of land have been used for shrimp farming in the current year.

Through the government's supportive measures and creation of required infrastructures, the country's fishery output has reached 1.282 million tons in the present year, which is a considerable figure, the IFO head further noted.

He went on to say that of the mentioned figure, 526,729 tons was related to aquafarming, and 755,728 tons was the fishing output.

Khoun-Mirzaei said the country's fishery export stood at 146,000 tons worth \$538.9 million in the past Iranian year, while the import was 29,000 tons valued at \$98.9 million, so Iran's

fishery trade balance was \$440 million in the previous year.

He further announced that 233,059 persons are currently working in the country's fishery sector.

The official has previously said that Iran's annual fishery production is anticipated to reach 1.5 million tons in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021).

He put the country's fishery output at 1.28 million tons in the past year.

Khoun-Mirzaei said it is while the planned figure was 1.25 million tons, and underscored that this amount of output was achieved despite the sanctions and related difficulties in the previous year.

The official noted that the output, which was more than the projected amount, was achieved through the help of research sectors as well as the ground laid by the private sector.

Referring to the high quality of Iran's fishery products, the head of IFO said that these products were sold easily in

the export markets.

In mid-January, he had also said that new export destinations have welcomed Iran's high-quality fishery products in the past Iranian calendar year.

"New markets including China, South Korea, and the Eurasian Union nations have opened up for Iranian fishery products in this year", Khoun-Mirzaei said at the time.

"Based on the negotiations and agreements signed between Iran and China by the minister of agriculture, the Chinese fishery market has been opened to Iranian products. The Eurasian nations and South Korean markets have also welcomed Iranian fishery products and have the potential for exports," the official explained.

According to the deputy head of Fishery Organization Hossein Ali Abdolhay, some 12 aquatic species are already bred in Iran and the figure is planned to reach 17 by the end of the Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (March 2021).

Smart business card system to resume operation for 2 months

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry's integrated smart business card system has resumed operation and will provide service to the traders for the next two months, the portal of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) reported.

This system had stopped its activities following the launch of the country's "Comprehensive Trade System" which was supposed to replace the business card system and provide comprehensive services to the businessmen.

However, due to some problems with the new system, the TCCIMA Head Masoud Khansari wrote a letter to the Acting Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Jafar Sarqini and asked for the resumption of the operations of the old system at least until the comprehensive system's problems are resolved.

In his letter to Sarqini, Khansari stated that the numerous disturbances and errors in the process of issuing and renewing commercial ID cards through the comprehensive trade system have caused uncertainty and despair for the businessmen.

"Many traders refer to the Tehran Chamber [of commerce] every day and ask for the resumption of the operations through the former system," Khansari wrote.

Following Khansari's letter, Sarqini issued a decree to the Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), asking that the process of issuing and renewing the business cards be returned to the smart business card system.

Accordingly, the smart business card system will continue to operate for two months in parallel with the comprehensive trading system, and it seems that during this period, measures should be taken to address some technical problems of the comprehensive trading system.

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American dream, global nightmare

By Keith Harmon Snow

For many years I have mistakenly believed that police shootings and killings of blacks and Native Americans in the United States occurred because police officers had made some kind of mistake. The cops were poorly trained, my conscience argued, they made a mistake, but they can be reformed, they can be better trained. I saw it as a lack of training, a phenomenon that occurred due to some accident of circumstances or a moment of confusion. Now I more clearly see that police in the United States—especially white but not only white police—shoot and kill people of color out of hate.

It has always been this way. The modern era of black lives doesn't matter is no aberration. How can we speak of the 'Death of the American Dream' when for millions of people their reality in the land of the free and home of the brave has revolved around the imperatives of struggling to survive in the shadows of predatory capitalism? The violence grew alongside the great European enlightenment, and then the Conquistadors brought conquest and annihilation to the shores of Turtle Island—what the white man calls 'America'—and to the Spice Islands and the Kingdoms of Kongo and everywhere they went, and then came the galleons packed with once free African men and women sold into the brutality of plantation slavery. Life for far too many Americans—north, south, central—has always been more nightmare than dream.

Our own citizens marginalized by our own U.S. government are not special in this regard. If we the conscious and caring people of the world open our hearts, minds and eyes, we bear witness to the most horrible suffering, rampant injustice, unspeakable atrocities, war and plunder being committed against innocent people everywhere. One might have to dig tooth and nail to get beyond the unprecedented censorship, somehow defeat the exclusive algorithms of social media and reject the false fact checkers, but the evidence is irrefutable: The power brokers of the United States of America and its closest corporatized allies—Canada, Europe, Israel, Australia, Japan—constitute a supreme and immediate threat to all life on planet Earth. Of course, to admit this ugly fact one must confront the demons of disbelief and most people will never do that. The fact checkers would reject it as false in any case.

I have met people all over the world whose consciousness was falsely informed by the idea of the 'American Dream', a pure fantasy that has spread and, like a true virus, infected the minds of people free and unfree all over the world. Take the young Congolese soldier who aspire to serve in the U.S. military. What is the source of this Dream? How does it proliferate in far-off places and everywhere infect so many minds and, it appears, hearts?

The cognitive dissonance that everywhere prevails is due to the power, reach and success of the western propaganda system. Hollywood and Netflix films travel the world faster than the speed of light and deepen the shadows that everywhere dim the consciousness of humanity. Life is becoming more machine than man, more man than woman, more disconnected from itself every day. Transhumanism is the new eugenics. Western consciousness is falsified by powerful elite individuals and their institutions of state power, propaganda



and perception management, including the traditional mass media mainstays (e.g. the New York Times, National Public Radio, Observer, Agence France Press, AP, BBC, Washington Post, Newsweek, etc.) but also the antisocial media of the Facebook, Twitter and Google kind. What else could explain the cognitive dissonance whereby so many of the world's people act against their own interests in support of a very real contemporary fascism?

Language has been so utterly perverted to serve the forces that divide and conquer that it is nearly impossible to convey the truth as I see it: people have been deeply conditioned to believe that which is unbelievable and disbelieve the truth even when it hits them right between the eyes. You don't have to be a western news consumer to be sick from eating the corporate propaganda of one flavor or another, and so we have entire populations clamoring to have what we in North America have, but not at all prepared to accept the sacrifices that come with having it, and who—not incidentally—are forced to suffer the indignities that come with not having it, so that we can.

Fascism, for example, is not about jack boots and swastikas, though there is plenty of that variety in the world, and particularly in today's Trumpian dystopia, but rather a matter of the health or illness of the character structure of the individual. Otherwise reasonable and thinking human beings are so quickly lost to a cycle of self-fulfilling hysteria (read: fascism) inculcated in their inner being by the many sociological and psychological operations being conducted against them (read: us) by elite interests, predatory corporations, phantasmagorical 'entertainment' industries, think tanks, the mass media and even the charity complex. The great American Empire does not limit psychological warfare only to the targeting of its enemies, and torture is a useful tool that the Trumps, Bidens, Trudeaus, Clintons and Netanyahu's (sic) will quickly and quietly deploy against anyone who has something important truth to tell or anyone who gets in the way of those who don't want it told.

The example of toxic pharmaceutical injections (so-called 'vaccines') being served on unwitting dark-skinned populations quickly comes to mind, followed immediately by the

clamoring for telecom microchip implants that will fundamentally dehumanize humanity. It's astonishing that more people don't see how easily we have been fooled; that they don't—for example—stand up and tell the elite powers—that-be to stick their toxic injections up their assets. Even if they did, the response is obvious: beat the people up, imprison them, torture them into submission, and stick it to them.

The stellar contemporary example of selling oneself out for the dictates of predatory capitalism is the COVID-19 conspiracy. The world is overcome by a systematically manufactured fear and it has left people everywhere jumping at shadows, even their own. One more example would be the conspiracy of 9-11 that for so many years now has informed and driven the great American hatred of all things Islam and all people Islamic and has provided a convenient cover story to justify the permanent warfare economies of the Zionist Anglo-American Empire, and the wars that they feed on. Alas, Islam has no corner on the market of American hate: with the COVID-19(84) scare the North American public has descended into a hysterical xenophobic fear and hatred of all things Chinese. It doesn't matter that Bill Gates and his satanic conspirators orchestrated their premeditated profiteering by first moving their pharmaceutical interests offshore to some far-off place called Wuhan. Fear is the most valuable currency wielded by the people that pretend to be our 'leaders'.

The disconnect between what is real and what is virtual is nowhere so starkly obvious, and sometimes horrible, and universally beautiful, as it is when you exit technological 'civilization'—the matrix of indoctrination and conditioning that revolves around the bombardment of the senses with constant advertising and infotainment and subliminal seduction—and enter what westerners have been conditioned to see as the 'uncivilized' world comprised of rural Africa, Asia, Latin America or West Asia.

Indeed, the entire juggernaut of capitalism and its 'achievements'—if global dominance, pollution, disease, trafficking in women and children, war crimes and genocide count as achievements, which for the psychopaths in power, they do—and the global onslaught of the multinational

corporation is based on the expropriation of raw materials from all over the earth and the perpetual re-supply and re-stimulation of the 'global' economy for the production of unnecessary and unwanted products peddled by unnecessary and unwanted corporations to justify unnecessary and unwanted ecological destruction.

The pace of our modern world makes it impossible for people to navigate the facts or fictions about events and policies that define our reality. Global surveillance, data collection, and social engineering are no longer the exclusive haunts of the spooks at the CIA, MI-6 or MOSSAD. Now everyone is at risk of becoming the unwitting pushers of propaganda that would be nauseating to a truly awakened consciousness. It seems people are so hopelessly lost that they will without question choose to sacrifice their children to save their own bodies. And so, what do we have? We have an Empire of otherwise good people blindly doing everything wrong and convinced they are the greatest saints in the universe. They follow the pied pipers of propaganda condoning the most egregious crimes committed in the name of the great state's red white and blue, atrocities the likes of which they cannot even imagine and committed by the dirtiest spymasters and covert operatives.

We may indeed be at the end of an era, but this has nothing to do with the monumental fraud of the upcoming U.S. national elections. True, these may cause the great Satanic Empire to pause, but only so much as one white supremacist war-mongering philanderer might be substituted for another. And there is the great hope for so many people of the world, it seems: they believe that all that needs to be done is swap one delusional white savior for another and truth and justice will be restored to the world. Nothing can be further from the truth. There is no such thing as the lesser of two evils. The American dream is not so much dead as it is adrift on a dark and stormy sea.

This does not mean that the end is near, although in global environmental terms I personally believe it is. The corpse may yet be revealed. Who can say for sure? The evidence suggest that positive feedback loops have been set in motion and the climate is spiraling out of control. Thus, it is only a matter of time for all of us. There is a bigger picture, but North Americans and Brits and Israelis are wholly incapable of seeing it.

I often say: "If you are reading the New York Times you are contributing to your own mental illness." This is no joke: I am completely serious. (Substitute any other mainstay of the western corporate-prostituted media and the statement still applies.) My sincerity comes after foolishly dedicating years of my life to researching world events, investigating corruptions of Empire, juxtaposing these with the realities I have seen and experienced, and comparing them to the propaganda produced by our so-called democratic society. These are advertising delivery mechanisms meant to manipulate public opinion and manufacture consent while simultaneously making someone a lot of money. The reaction by consumers of western propaganda to my thesis is generally hysterical. The smarter ones are certain that they are immune to the dirty tricks of the propaganda pundits, and so they reject the thesis outright, and with great disdain, if not laughter, but only after lecturing me about their clairvoyance (and my ignorance). The more intellectual the consumer of this propaganda, the more arrogant their certainty of their immunity to it.

These intellectuals couldn't be more wrong. Miseducated by the best colleges, they are like academics living in their own little worlds, debating amongst themselves, or like the politicians that inhabit the wasteland of private profit and perfidious power we call the U.S. 'Congress'. Do you think they have ever read such great works as the Upanishads? The Abbasids? The Conceptions of Nature and Methods Used for Its Study by the Ikhwan al Safa, al-Biruni, and Ibn Sina? The Koran?

The American dream lives on in many good people, and that is because we hold out a flicker of hope that some day of reckoning might be near, that a deeper consciousness will take hold, that enough people will stand up to the evil—in all its ugly cowardly petty manifestations—and together with good people of all nations and colors and faiths the world over we will usher in a new paradigm that is grounded in wisdom and love.

Keith Harmon Snow is the 2009 Regent's Lecturer in Law & Society at the University of California, Santa Barbara, recognized for over a decade of work on war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. A photojournalist and war correspondent, he is a three time Project Censored award-winner.

US to cut troops in Iraq from 5,200 to 3,000: Pentagon

The United States is reducing its troop presence in Iraq this month from 5,200 to 3,000, the top American commander for the West Asia said Wednesday, as President Donald Trump tries to make good on his campaign promise to get the United States out of "endless wars."



During a visit to Iraq, Marine Gen. Frank McKenzie, the commander of U.S. Central Command, said the reduction in Iraq reflects U.S. confidence in the ability of U.S.-trained Iraqi security forces to handle the militant threat from the ISIL terrorist group, which entered Iraq from Syria in 2014.

Late Tuesday, a senior Trump administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told reporters aboard Air Force One that such an announcement was coming and that an announcement on the withdrawal of additional troops from Afghanistan also could be expected in the coming days, AP reported.

Trump has been trying to make the case that he has fulfilled the promises he made four years ago as he campaigns for a second term. U.S. forces have been in Afghanistan since 2001. They invaded Iraq in 2003 and left in 2011 but returned in 2014 after the ISIL terrorist group overran large parts of Iraq.

"In recognition of the great progress the Iraqi forces have made and in consultation and coordination with the government of Iraq and our coalition partners, the United States has decided to reduce our troop presence in Iraq from about 5,200 to 3,000 troops during the month of September," McKenzie said, according to an excerpt of his remarks provided by his office.

Thousands flee as fire rips through overcrowded Greek refugee camp in Lesbos

Thousands of migrants fled fires early Wednesday that tore through an overcrowded camp under coronavirus lockdown on the Greek island of Lesbos, but there were no reports of any casualties.

A migration ministry official said the Moria camp, which hosts over 12,000 people, was "probably totally destroyed" and that the government was struggling to find alternative shelter for the migrants who were gathered on streets outside the camp, Reuters reported.

The cause of the fires is not yet known but authorities are investigating whether they were deliberately started. Athens put Lesbos under a state of emergency and sent police reinforcements to the island, which lies just off Turkey, to help keep order.

The fire broke out just after midnight and by dawn Wednesday most of the camp was a smoldering mass of burnt containers and tents, with a few people searching through the debris for their possessions.

Yemeni forces pound Saudi Arabia's Abha airport with drones for 4th time in days

Yemeni forces have launched a fourth round of drone strikes against an airport in Saudi Arabia's southwestern region of Asir in less than a week.

The spokesman for Yemeni Armed Forces, Brigadier General Yahya Saree, said in a post published on his Twitter page that a squadron of domestically-manufactured Samad-3 (Invincible-3) combat drones struck with great precision the designated sensitive targets inside Abha International Airport on Wednesday morning.

Saree noted that the retaliatory attacks against the Saudi airport will continue as long as the Riyadh regime presses ahead with its military aggression and siege against its impoverished southern neighbor, Press TV reported.

Earlier in the day, Yemeni soldiers and fighters from Popular Committees had launched a series of strikes against Abha airport, using a squadron of Qasef K2 (Striker 2K) drones.

Resistance News

Palestinian Authority pressed to tone down stance on UAE-Israel deal

INTERNATIONAL TEHRAN— The Palestinian Authority will reportedly put a draft resolution to discussion at an upcoming Arab League session, which will stress the 2002 Arab Initiative on the resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but will tone down criticism of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) over normalizing with Tel Aviv under pressure from Manama and Abu Dhabi.

The Palestinian envoy has reportedly presented a draft resolution to the 22-member regional organization, which does not include a call to condemn, or act against, the Emirates over the U.S.-brokered accord.

The motion, a copy of which was seen by Reuters on Tuesday, said the Israel-US-Emirates announcement "doesn't diminish Arab consensus over the Palestinian cause, the Palestinian cause is the cause of the entire Arab nation."

"The trilateral announcement doesn't change the principal Arab vision based on the fact that the two-state solution on the 1967 borders is the only way to achieve peace in the West Asia (Middle East)," read the resolution, which will be debated by Arab foreign ministers during the meeting in Cairo on Wednesday, Press TV reported.

The draft has a tone different from that of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who had denounced the UAE-Israel deal as "betrayal" and a "stab in the back of the Palestinian cause."

Second Announcement



1399.2993

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY AHVAZ-IRAN TENDER NO. : 08-38-9640015

Items	Material Description	Quantity
01	WIRE LINE, SPOOLED ON IRON REEL, H2S, CO2, CHLORIDE TRIM MATERIAL: SUPA-75 OR SAICRO-26 DIAMETER & LENGTH AS SPECIFIED: REF. "SANDVICK" OR OTHER STANDARD APPROVED EQUIVALENT SIZE 0.108 INCH X 20000 FEET	10 RL

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tender are requested to send their "Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form No.1, available at: www.nisoc.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded.

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 1.340.000.000 RIAL, in favor of NISOC.

Tender documents including the materials thorough technical specifications and Qualitative to Assessment Forms can be accessed via: www.nisoc.ir-material procurement management tab

ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P., NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI IRAN, PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D., SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL NO ADVANCE PAYMENT WILL BE PAID

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex
Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran
E.MAIL: KALA.F.P@nisoc.ir Tel. No.: 061 34 12 34 55 Fax No.: 061 3445 7437
Public Relations www.shana.ir www.nisoc.ir

تهران تایمز: نوبت اول ۹۹/۱۷ نوبت دوم ۹۹/۲۰

Decoration pieces of UNESCO-tagged Ali Qapu being documented, restored

TOURISM TEHRAN — A documentation and restoration project has been commenced on over 40 pieces of decoration used in the 16th-century Ali Qapu Palace, an element of the UNESCO-registered Imam Square in Isfahan, central Iran.



More than 40 years ago, a number of decoration pieces were removed by an Italian institute, which along with other newly removed parts are being studied, documented, and restored, and after the project is carried out completely, the pieces will be installed in their main locations, Fariba Khatabakhsh, director of the World Heritage site, said on Wednesday.

Best known as Naghsh-e Jahan Sq. (literary meaning "Image of the World"), the property is hemmed on four sides by magnificent buildings: to the east, the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque; to the west, the palace of Ali Qapu; to the north, the portico of Qeyssariyeh; and to the south, the eminent the Imam Mosque.

The profusion of tree-lined boulevards, Persian gardens, and important Islamic buildings give Isfahan a highly touristic appeal that is unmatched by many other Iranian cities. In addition, the city is home to many versatile artisans who underpin its reputation as a living museum of traditional culture.

Iranians have long termed Isfahan "Nesf-e Jahan", which literary means "Half of the World".

Pishva traditional, historical bazaar to be restored

TOURISM TEHRAN — The traditional bazaar of the city of Pishva, southeast of Tehran, is scheduled to be revived and restored in the near future.



As one of the historical icons of the city as well as its economic and tourism hub that has witnessed many historical events, the bazaar is planned to be restored in collaboration with its board of trustees and shop owners, IRNA quoted the chairman of the Pishva City Council Ahmad Qomi as saying on Wednesday.

Due to the antiquity of the bazaar's infrastructure, some rehabilitation works are needed to be done, the official added.

Constructed in the Safavid era (1501-1736), the bazaar has hundreds of shops, which connect the main square of the city to the holy shrine of Imamzadeh Jafar. Parts of the bazaar were also restored during the Qajar era (1794-1925).

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

Jaghoor Baghoor, the delicious taste of lamb's pluck, made intangible cultural heritage

HERITAGE TEHRAN — The traditions know-how of cooking Jaghoor Baghoor, the delicious taste of lamb's pluck, has been added to the intangible cultural heritage for local communities in Zanjan province, west central Iran.



The Iranian-style sautéed liver dish is usually made with sheep liver, but beef liver should work too. It is a traditional food long been served in Zanjan.

The secret to get a good taste is to use turmeric spices to mask the liver's strong smell and flavor. The dish is quick to be made but at the same time it is good enough to be served to guests.

Ingredients are one whole sheep's liver; one whole lung; onions; oil, as much as needed for frying; turmeric; water; potatoes; salt and pepper; and pomegranate paste or lime juice.

The future of travel in Iran

→ 1 "Corona has caused damage to many countries around the world, and our country's travel sector has so far suffered a loss of 12 trillion rials (some \$2.85 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials)."

On the other hand, the pandemic has caused passenger demand to collapse, forcing jetliners to park, rather than fly. For instance, it took a huge toll on the civil aviation sector with reports showing that airlines lost hundreds of millions of dollars because of flight cancellations during the busy Noruz (Persian New Year) travel season in late March.

The numbers of foreign travelers to Iran have drastically plunged since the virus made its debut as the country registered only 74 international visits during spring, which is traditionally a high season.

"Iran's [inbound] tourism came to almost zero and the country had 74 foreign tourists in the first three months of this [Iranian calendar] year (started on March 20), due to corona outbreak." For now, however, tourism may look different in several ways. People can expect to explore a world of face masks, physical distancing, closed businesses, and two-week quarantines. But what changes are expected in both the short- and long-term? Here are the views of some experts to help to have predictions on an uncertain future.

Some initial forecasts suggest travel and tourism will grow. In an interview with the Tehran Times back in May, the deputy tourism minister Vali Teymouri assumed that the tourism industry of the Islamic Republic would be getting back on the right track sooner than expected. "I believe that tourism industry of the country will get back on the right track far sooner than generally expected thanks to the measures taken to deal with the spread of coronavirus in tourist destinations, hotels, stopovers, and all



the centers which are affiliated with the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts."

Others predicted that the sector would not be reverting to what it was before, adjusting to new world scales and expect fewer crowds in all tourism-related places. Mohammad Ali Vaeqi, the vice president of the Iranian Tour Operators Association, warned in June that the pandemic might move domestic tours into 'the realm of luxury' as observing health protocols will raise the costs.

Several Iranian experts have explained the kinds of protection that the government could provide to COVID-19-hit people and businesses. "Such amount of bailouts will not compensate for much of the losses as the virus pandemic has brought tourism to a standstill for two months," said Amir-Pouya Rafiei-Shad who presides over Tehran province's Tour and Travel Agencies Association.

Rafiei-Shad added that the Iranian government needs to offer tax exemption

to the tourism industry for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 fiscal years, and provide social welfare support to employees of this sector.

Tour guide Mahdiyeh Jahangir believes that "Nobody assumes the responsibility for the unemployment of tour guides in the face of coronavirus pandemic." According to her, one of the reasons for this situation is the lack of employers for tour guides. She considers the lack of social insurance as one of the most important problems of tour guides during the virus outbreak. "We only have a tour guide ID card and nothing more," she lamented.

In early August, the tourism minister said that it is true that the coronavirus pandemic is a [bitter] reality but it cannot bring traveling to a complete standstill. "Corona is a fact, but can the virus stop tourism? Certainly not. For us, the coronavirus is a new experience in dealing with crises that teaches tourism experts around the world how to deal with such a disaster, and thankfully governments

are turning this into an opportunity for better planning."

He, however, appeared almost surrendered days later, saying "people's health is our first priority." Mounesan said that his ministry is in full coordination with the Ministry of Health for strictly implementing health protocols in travel destinations, hospitably centers, and museums, amongst others, underlining that "people's health is our first priority."

In his latest speech, the minister said that "responsible tourism" is a workable solution for holidaymakers to get assured of safe traveling during the coronavirus pandemic. "The tourism ministry has no authority over [people's plans for] travels and we cannot tell people to travel or not. Many people travel on their own without using the capacity of tours, which can have its own impacts the virus spread but if trips are carried out through tours and in official accommodation centers that follow all health protocols, they would be safer with lower risks."

A collective effort made by both government and people in particular health professionals has saved many lives over the past couple of months. Sadly, the disease has claimed the lives of over 22,000 Iranians so far, according to official data provided by the government.

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. So it will undeniably try its best to achieve a relatively ambitious goal but when that happens the travel industry is likely to look more altered.

Nicaraguan envoy visits National Museum of Iran, urges deepening cultural ties

TOURISM TEHRAN — Nicaraguan Ambassador to Iran Isaac Lenin Bravo Jaen on Wednesday paid a visit to the National Museum of Iran, discussing ways with the museum's director Jebrael Nokandeh to broaden mutual cultural ties.

Nokandeh said that Nicaragua enjoys a high-level standards in the realm of museums and museology, adding that the National Museum of Iran is ready to sign a memorandum of understanding with the National Museum of Nicaragua to boost cooperation, including in joint research projects, reciprocal exhibitions, specialized lectures through laying the groundwork for the development of cultural relations between the two nations.

The ambassador for his part noted: "I will be making efforts to strengthen and expand relations and deepen

friendship between the two countries through [organizing joint] cultural projects."

"I am very interested in getting acquainted with Iran's rich history and civilization and I believe that this great cultural heritage is a source of proud for the human society [worldwide]."

The envoy toured exhibit halls visiting relics, objects, human remains, and mummies belonging to various civilizations in Susa, Achaemenid Persian Empire, and Parthian Empire, amongst others.

The National Museum of Iran is somewhat chockfull of priceless relics that represent various eras of the country's rich history. Its structure was completed in 1928 based on the design by French architect André Godard who was also an archaeologist and historian of French and Middle Eastern Art.



Khuzestan loses tourism peak seasons over flood, coronavirus outbreak

TOURISM TEHRAN — The southwestern province of Khuzestan has lost two main tourism peak seasons over flood and the outbreak of the coronavirus in the country, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

The flood in April 2019, which is a traditional peak season when Noruz, the Iranian new year starts, and the outbreak of the coronavirus during this year's new year holidays, started on March 20, destroyed two golden revenue-generating opportunities for Khuzestan tourism in two consecutive years, CHTN quoted Gholam Shojaei as saying on Wednesday.

Although some other provinces were also flooded, they were able to make up for their losses during the summer due to the good weather, while in Khuzestan because of its hot weather; summertime is not travelers' choice, the official added.

Khuzestan is home to three UNESCO World Heritage sites of Susa, Tchogha Zanbil, and Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System yet it is a region of raw beauty where its visitors could spend weeks exploring. The province is also a cradle for handicrafts and arts whose crafters inherited from their preceding generations.

Shojaei also noted that the province's tourism industry has taken an estimated 2 trillion rials (over \$47 million at the



official rate of 42,000 rials) hit so far.

Pointing that the accommodation centers including eco-lodge units and hotels are affected by the coronavirus outbreak he said, "the cost of accommodation facilities and hotels is high, and when they have no income, they are no longer able to continue their activities."

"Due to the lack of tourists, the province's eco-lodge units are forced to close voluntarily, while travel agencies are also seriously damaged, which is leading to unemployment."

The only way to improve the tourism in the region is to return to the situation before the outbreak of the virus, which unfortunately is out of everyone's control,

he said and added "we just hope that the situation will return to normal and people will resume their travels so that the tourism industry in Khuzestan province will flourish again."

Back in August, tourism minister Ali-Asgar Mounesan said that Iran's travel sector has suffered a loss of 12 trillion rials (some \$2.85 billion) since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

He also noted that the coronavirus pandemic should not bring traveling to a complete standstill. "Corona is a fact, but can the virus stop tourism? Certainly not. For us, the coronavirus is a new experience in dealing with crises that teaches tourism experts around the world how to deal with such a disaster, and thankfully governments are turning this into an opportunity for better planning."

In June, the United Nations World Tourism Organization praised efforts made by Iran's tourism ministry to manage the travel industry during the coronavirus pandemic. UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili said in a letter to Mounesan that the country's measures have truly earned plaudits to mitigate the impact on tourism.

"A series of measures that the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts of Iran has taken, in

accordance with the guidelines and recommendations of UNWTO, has truly earned plaudits as an effective practice to mitigate the impact on tourism," the letter reads.

Some experts believe that the coronavirus pandemic may turn tours and travels into luxury items as observing health protocols will raise the cost of travel in the country. Mohammad Ali Vaeqi, the vice president of the Iranian Tour Operators Association, warned earlier in June that with the continuation of the coronavirus outbreak, tourists may prefer individual travel rather than tours, adding that they may also choose to go on a trip by their vehicles and stay in tents or in nature instead of hotels.

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).

Centuries-old caravanserai to be restored to former glory

TOURISM TEHRAN — The first round of a restoration project will be commenced on the Safavid-era (1501-1736) Shah-Abbasi caravanserai in the ancient city of Qasr-e Shirin, the western province of Kermanshah, IRNA reported.

The caravanserai, which suffered damages during powerful earthquakes that jolted the province in 2017 and 2018, is planned to undergo some rehabilitation works to gain its former glory, the city's governor Morad-Ali Tartar said on Wednesday.

Located 20 kilometers from the Iran-Iraq border, the historical structure is named after Shah Abbas the Great (r. 1588 - 1629), who ordered the construction of such roadside inns across the country.



The caravanserai is built of mud-brick and stones with an area of 3,600 square meters.

A budget of five billion rials (some \$120,000) has been allocated to the first phase of the project, which aims at removing the damaged parts, renovating the outer wall, and repairing the rooftop.

Iran's earliest caravanserais were built during the Achaemenid era (550-330 BC). Centuries later, when Shah Abbas I assumed power from 1588 - to 1629, he ordered the construction of network caravanserais across the country.

For many travelers to Iran, staying in or even visiting a centuries-old caravanserai can be a wide experience as they have an opportunity to feel the past, a time travel back into a forgotten age.

Life of martyr Ayatollah Madani at a glance

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Ayatollah Mir Asadollah Madani Dehkharghani was an Iranian Shia cleric who never stopped fighting against injustice. He was born in 1914 in Azarshahr, northwestern East Azarbaijan province. As a young man, he went to the holy city of Qom with the intention of gaining knowledge and perfection, and despite many personal problems, he studied religious sciences with great perseverance. At Qom seminary, after passing the preliminary studies, he benefited from great professors in jurisprudence, principles, and philosophy. After some time, he migrated to Najaf and started teaching at the seminary, in addition to completing his higher education. His first political and social activity was against the Baha'i faith. During Reza Shah Pahlavi's reign, the groundwork was laid for

Baha'i activities, so that in a short time, Baha'i capitalists took control of some power plants in Azarbaijan, and especially around Tabriz. After being aware of the current situation, with revealing speeches and boycotting the electricity produced by those factories and banning sales with these misguided people, he finally cleaned the religious city of Azarshahr from the colonialists. Then he started another chapter of his struggle to protect the Islamic Revolution. Ayatollah Madani, in various situations, never forgot the simplicity of life and asceticism and always fought aristocratic life. His simple life always thwarted the enemy's conspiracies to destroy his character. He attached great importance to self-purification and piety and believed that victory over the enemies of the time depended on self-improvement. He was assassinated on September 11, 1981.



Painter/ Abbas Ghodarzi

Some 500 tons of narcotics seized in 5 months

SOCIETY TEHRAN — More than 495,000 kilograms of different drugs have been discovered in Iran since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21), the anti-narcotics police chief said, announcing a 36 percent increase in the drug seizure.

"One of the factors that cause the most damage to the country is the production of industrial and traditional narcotics in Afghanistan, as a result of which we are witnessing an increase in the import of narcotics into the country from the eastern borders and neighboring countries," Majid Karimi highlighted.

Meanwhile, Amir Abbas Lotfi, the spokesman for the drug control headquarters, has said that being involved in the production of opium, heroin, and morphine for many years, the new challenge for the countries of the region and the world in the fight against narcotics is the increase in production of methamphetamine in Afghanistan over the past two years.

Brigadier General Eskandar Momeni, Secretary-General of Iran Drug Control Headquarters, said that in 2000, the total production of narcotics in Afghanistan was about 200 tons, which in 2017 reached more than 9,000 tons, an increase of nearly 50 times.

Iran's anti-narcotics measures
Iran seized some 1,000 tons of narcotics in the previous



Iranian calendar year (ended March 20), putting the country in the first place in the world, Momeni said in July.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has praised Iran's efforts to fight against narcotics trafficking on the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

The organization also officially announced that the world's first place in the discovery of opium, heroin, and morphine belongs to Iran.

According to UNODC, Iran remains one of the major transit routes for drug trafficking from Afghanistan to European countries and has had a leading role at the global level in the drug-control campaigns.

UNODC World Drug Report 2020 estimates that in 2018, 91 percent of world opium, 48 percent of the world morphine, and 26 percent of the world heroin were seized by Iran.

Iran's drug control efforts led to the seizure of 266 tons of different types of drugs during the period of April-June 2020, a 20 percent increase compared to the same period in 2019. During the COVID-19 pandemic in Iran, the drug control headquarters provided and distributed Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other sanitary commodities among street users and NGOs working with drug users.

In the end, the anti-narcotic police and law enforcement of Iran held a burning ceremony of 90 tons of different types of drugs in provinces of Sistan-Baluchestan, Kerman, and West Azarbaijan, televised through the internet.

After the Islamic Revolution (in 1979), 3,800 were martyred, 12,000 were wounded and disabled in the fight against drug trafficking, Momeni announced.

Drug use is a complex health and social problem worldwide, with half a million people dying each year as a result of drug abuse, he lamented, adding, drug use has entered a critical condition, and the international community is determined to tackle the global drug problem.

World Suicide Prevention Day: bring focus on mental health amid COVID-19

1 -> Also, the unique insights and experiences of the millions of people who are affected by suicidal behavior each year can be invaluable in raising awareness and influencing the support of people who have committed suicide and those around them who have been harmed, he noted.

He further suggested that involving these people in research, evaluations, and interventions should be part of the programs of any suicide prevention organization.

"Suicide is a universal behavior that knows no boundaries," he said, adding, "Suicide, regardless of age, gender or background, can affect people of all nationalities, cultures, religions, and classes."

"It is often the result of damaged and untreated mental health; thoughts of suicide, while common, should be taken seriously. However, there are two types of suicidal

ideation of passive and active. The idea of passive suicide occurs when a person wishes to be dead or dies, but in fact, has no plans to commit suicide. On the other hand, in active suicide, not only does the person think about suicide, but he also intends it and specifically has a plan to do it," he explained.

The WHO estimates that approximately one million people die each year as a result of suicide, representing a global mortality rate of 16 per 100,000 or one death every 40 seconds, which reaches one person every 20 seconds in 2020.

Pointing out that the global suicide attempt rate is 20 times higher than the number of suicides, he said that "although the suicide rate has traditionally been higher among older men, the suicide rate among young people has risen to such an extent that now

in a third of all countries around the world, this group is more at risk and their suicide rate is on the rise.

He went on to say that worldwide, 55 percent of suicides occurred between the ages of 15-44, and 45 percent between the ages of 45 and older.

Iran's suicide rate relatively low

The latest statistics for 2020 from 183 countries (per 100,000 people) also show that Lithuania in Eastern Europe with a suicide rate of 31.9, Russia in Eastern Europe with a suicide rate of 31, and Guyana in South America with a suicide rate 29.2, ranked first to third.

Iran is also ranked 149th among 183 countries with a suicide rate of 1/4, which is higher among Iranian men at a rate of 5 than women at a rate of 1/3 per 100,000, which generally indicates a relatively low



suicide rate in our country, he noted.

According to statistical studies conducted by mental health centers around the world, men are four times more likely to commit suicide than women. However, women are more prone to commit suicide. Suicide attempt rates are 2 to 3 times higher in women than in men, and women are more likely to experience suicidal ideation, he explained.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Martyr Soleimani made efforts to bypass U.S. medicine sanctions: health minister

Over the past year, martyr Qassem Soleimani supported and made efforts to bypass the sanctions imposed by the U.S. so that people do not feel lack of medicine and medical equipment, Health Minister Saeed Namaki said on Monday.

After the U.S. government imposed new sanctions on Iran, despite their lies about not sanctioning medicine, food and medical equipment, they put the highest pressure on us to procure medicine and medical equipment, he lamented.

"I wrote two letters to the World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom to inform him of the American crime against humanity.

However, General Soleimani was the one who helped greatly to import medicine in different ways," he explained.

وزیر بهداشت: شهید سلیمانی برای شکستن تحریم‌های دارویی تلاش کرد

سعید نمکی وزیر بهداشت گفت: شهید قاسم سلیمانی در یک سال اخیر بسیار ما را همراهی و حمایت کرد تا توانستیم از مسیرهای مختلف حلقه تحریم‌ها را بشکنیم تا مردم در خصوص دارو و تجهیزات پزشکی با مشکل زیادی روبه‌رو نشوند.

نمکی در گفت‌وگو با ایسنا، افزود: بعد از اینکه آمریکایی‌ها تحریم‌های جدیدی را به ما تحمیل کردند و علیرغم دروغ‌های مبنی بر تحریم نبودن دارو، غذا و تجهیزات پزشکی، اما بیشترین فشار را به ما در زمینه تهیه دارو و تجهیزات پزشکی آوردند. "در همین زمینه نیز من دو نامه به آقای تدروس - دبیرکل سازمان جهانی بهداشت نوشتم که این کار آمریکایی‌ها جنایت علیه بشریت است. شهید قاسم سلیمانی یکی از افرادی بود که به شدت کمک می‌کرد که این حلقه تحریم را بشکنیم و از هر راهی که می‌توانیم برای مردم دارو تهیه کنیم."

Iran among world's top clusters of science and technology

1 -> Iranian scientific journals among highly cited worldwide

Journal of Nanostructure in Chemistry (JNSC) affiliated to Islamic Azad University was ranked forty-fifth among 103 top nanotechnology journals in Journal Citation Reports 2020 published by Clarivate Analytics.

Some 12 specialized journals in the field of nanotechnology are published in English in the country.

The JCR 2019 ranking report includes 42 journals from Iran, including the Journal of Nanostructure in Chemistry with an impact factor of 4.077.

Iranian scientific journals such as the Journal of Nanostructures (affiliated to Kashan University), Nanomedicine Journal (Mashhad University of Medical Sciences), Journal of Nanoanalysis (Tehran University of Medical Sciences) were listed in the ESCI index of WOS database.

Moreover, the Journal of Water and Environmental Nanotechnology, Nanomedicine Research Journal, and International Nanoscience and Nanotechnology were also listed in the Scopus Index.

Climate crisis could displace 1.2bn people by 2050, report warns

More than 1 billion people face being displaced within 30 years as the climate crisis and rapid population growth drive an increase in migration with "huge impacts" for both the developing and developed worlds, according to an analysis.

The Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), a thinktank that produces annual global terrorism and peace indexes, said 1.2 billion people lived in 31 countries that are not sufficiently resilient to withstand ecological threats.

Nineteen countries facing the highest number of threats, including water and food shortages and greater exposure to natural disasters, are also among the world's 40 least peaceful countries, the IEP's first ecological threat register found.

Many of the countries most at risk from ecological threats, including Nigeria, Angola, Burkina Faso and Uganda, are also predicted to experience significant population increases, the report noted, further driving mass displacements.

"This will have huge social and political impacts, not just in the developing world, but also in the developed, as mass displacement will lead to larger refugee flows to the most developed countries," Steve Killelea, the institute's founder, said.

"Ecological threats pose serious challenges to global peace. Over the next 30 years, lack of access to food and water will only increase without urgent global cooperation. In the absence of action, civil unrest, riots and conflict will most likely increase."

The study uses United Nations and other data to assess 157 countries' exposure to eight ecological threats, then assesses their capacity to withstand them. It found that 141 countries faced at least one ecological threat by 2050, with sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa the regions facing the largest number.

Some countries, such as India and China, are most threatened by water scarcity, it concluded, while others such as Pakistan, Iran, Kenya, Mozambique and Madagascar face a combination of threats and a growing incapacity to deal with them.

"Lack of resilience will lead to worsening food insecurity and competition over resources, increasing civil unrest and mass displacement," the report said.

It judged Pakistan to be the country with the largest number of people at risk of mass migration, followed by Ethiopia and Iran, adding that in such countries "even small ecological threats and natural disasters could result in mass population displacement".

Wealthier, more developed regions in Europe and North America face fewer ecological threats and would be better able to cope with them, but most "will not be immune from wider impacts". The report said 16 countries, Sweden, Norway, Ireland, and Iceland, faced no threat.

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 21) (Source: saadifoundation.ir)

Vocabulary	
man; gentleman; Mr; sir	/ā'qā/ آقا
there	/ān'jā/ آنجا
room	/o'tāq/ اتاق
he; she	/u/ او
here	/in'jā/ اینجا
bad	/bad/ بد
	/panj/ پنج
unit, piece	/tā/ تا
place	/jā/ جا
how many; several	/cand/ چند
	/cā'hār/ چهار
woman; lady; Miss; Mrs	/xā'nom/ خانم
good; well	adj, adv /xub/ خوب
very	/xeyli/ خیلی
	/šēs/ شش
where	/ko'jā/ کجا
conversation	/mokāl'eme/ مکالمه
and	/va, o/ و
	/haft/ هفت
or	/yā/ یا

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Extremism is like going down in a swamp, and keeping company with abject and corrupt ones will bring evil and misery for you.
Imam Hussein (AS)

Works by Iranian photographers on view at European Art Exchanges exhibit

A R T TEHRAN — Works by Iranian photographers Jamal Arabzadeh and Majid Hojati are on display in an exhibition that opened Tuesday at the Apollonia — European Art Exchanges in the French city of Strasbourg. The exhibit entitled “Photosynthesis” also is showcasing photos by Almagul Menlibayeva, Syrlybek Bekbotaev and Said Atabekov from Kazakhstan, Patrick Bogner, Stéphane Spach and Fernande Petitdemange from France, and Frantisek Zvardon from Czech. The exhibit is a new approach to art with photos developed on pieces of recycled paper with the help of non-harmful ink with a unique technique. Since its creation in 1998, the Apollonia has deployed a perpetual energy to encourage and serve the implementation of artistic exchange programs.

Designs of Iranian school, office shortlisted for Dezeen Awards 2020

→1 The Nur-e Mobin Primary School has been nominated for civic building of the year, the organizers have announced.

It was designed by FEA Studio as an “educational neighborhood” for children and built in the desert near the town of Bastaam in Semnan Province.

“The vision of the Nur-e Mobin pedagogical plan is to bring up fully-fledged human beings as responsible citizens: people who have high self-esteem with a constructive mentality for their surrounding environment,” the organizers wrote about the construction.

“The space is no longer enclosed; distances mean something new; and borders are defined by children themselves — alleys are for building up friendships and playing games.”

Earlier in November 2018, the project won first prize in the Asia Public category at the 2A Continental Architectural Award for Asia and Europe in Barcelona, Spain.



An aerial picture of the Nur-e Mobin Primary School in Bastam, Semnan Province, Iran. (Dezeen Awards)

The Kohan Ceram Central Office designed by the Hooba Design Group has been shortlisted for business building of the year.

The office is the headquarters for a brick manufacturer in Tehran, which is made from bricks with glass inserts.

The office composed of a showroom, sales office and a guest unit is situated along a highway in Tehran.

“This project marks the boundary between the residential neighborhood and the freeway in the urban fabric,” the Dezeen Awards wrote about the building.

“The main criterion was to remain neutral on the urban scale, while creating a tangible entity on the local scale.

“The brick module not only forms the facade, but also forms the entirety of the project, both on the interior and the exterior.”

Dezeen Awards winners will be ratified by a master jury, and winners will be announced at the end of October.

Tehran academic center picks “Les Misérables” for book reading contest



A copy of the Persian translation of “Les Misérables” published by AmirKabir Publications in two volumes.

A R T TEHRAN — The Academic Center for Education, Culture and Research in Tehran

has selected French writer Victor Hugo’s celebrated novel “Les Misérables” for the Hasht Behesht Book Reading Contest. Interested students from Tehran and Alborz provinces are invited to participate in the contest, which the center organizes monthly.

The contest that will be held online on September 18 is based the Persian translation of the book by Hossein Qoli Mostaan, which has been published by AmirKabir Publications in two volumes.

There are over ten Persian translations of “Les Misérables”, the first of which made about 100 years ago based on an Arabic version of the book by Etesam al-Molk Ashtiani, father of prominent Iranian poet Pavin Etesami.

The second translation was provided by Mostaan during the 1920s. Iranian filmmaker and literary figure Ebrahim Golestan has called this version the most correct and valuable Persian translation of the book ever.

The latest Persian translation has been made jointly by

Nasrin Tulai and Nahid Malakuti, which was published by Negah publishing house in Tehran in 2014.

Hugo’s tale of injustice, heroism and love follows the fortunes of Jean Valjean, an escaped convict determined to put his criminal past behind him.

But his attempts to become a respected member of the community are constantly put under threat by his own conscience, when, owing to a case of mistaken identity, another man is arrested in his place, and by the relentless investigations of the dogged policeman Javert.

It is not simply for himself that Valjean must stay free, however, for he has sworn to protect the baby daughter of Fantine.

A compelling and compassionate view of the victims of early nineteenth-century French society, “Les Misérables” is a novel on an epic scale, moving inexorably from the eve of the battle of Waterloo to the July Revolution of 1830.

French distributor Damned Films purchases Iranian film “Careless Crime”

A R T TEHRAN — French distributor Damned Films has signed a deal with Dreamlab Films for Iranian director Shahram Mokri’s drama “Careless Crime”.

The company will distribute the film in France, overseas territories administered by France, Monaco and Andorra, Variety announced on Monday.

The film had its world premiere on Tuesday at the 77th Venice Film Festival’s Orizzonti section, dedicated to films that represent the latest aesthetic and expressive trends in international cinema.

“Careless Crime” goes back forty years ago, during the uprising to overthrow the Shah’s regime in Iran, when protestors set fire to movie theaters as a way of showing opposition to Western culture. Many cinemas were burned down. In one tragic case, a theater was set on fire with

four hundred people inside, most of whom were burned alive. Forty years have passed and, in contemporary Iran, four individuals also decide to burn down a cinema. Their intended target is a theater showing a film about an unearthed, unexploded missile.

Damned Films is a regular customer of Mokri’s films. His “Fish and Cat” and “Invasion” were acquired earlier by the distributor.

Dreamlab Films, the France-based international distributor under Iranian film expert Nasrin Mirshab, is handling the international sales of “Careless Crime”.

“We are thrilled to have this deal sealed especially at a time where physically going to a cinema theater encounters a feeling of danger and uneasiness,” said Mirshab.

“It is important, however, and has become nowadays an act of strong faith in film culture. It echoes with the scenes in ‘Careless Crime,’ which embraces the



Abolfazl Kahani acts in a scene from Shahram Mokri’s drama “Careless Crime”.

real experience of what cinema is about,” she added.

Negar Eskanadarfar of the Karnameh Institute of Arts and Culture is the producer of the film starring Babak Karimi, Razieh Mansouri and Abolfazl Kahani.

London festival picks three movies from Iran

By Manijeh Rezapoor

TEHRAN — The Iranian movies “180° Rule”, “Witness” and “Asho” will go on screen at the BFI London Film Festival running from October 7 to 18.

“180° Rule” by Farnush Samadi will be screened in the Debate Section. The movie features a tragedy, which strikes at the heart of a wedding in the mountains overlooking Tehran.

In “180° Rule”, a teacher from Tehran makes a choice that changes her family’s structure and puts her on a painful path to atonement.

Actress Sahar Dowlatshahi gives an extraordinary performance emphasizing the violence of the patriarchal strictures



A scene from “Witness” by Ali Asgari.

endured by mothers. Her silence speaks volumes and its impact is devastating.

The film’s title is a cinematic principle for maintaining spatial balance between

two characters on the screen.

The short film “Witness” by Ali Asgari is an entry to the Secrets and Lies Section. It shows a mother who goes to a shopping mall and leaves her young daughter waiting in her car. Helping an elderly woman, she sets a chain of events in motion.

“Asho” by Jafar Najafi will be screened in the This Is the Rhythm of My Life Section.

The film is a heart-warming short focusing on Asho, a cheerful young shepherd who loves films, dreams of being an actor and one day marrying Jodie Foster.

The BFI London Film Festival will feature over 50 virtual premieres, free online events and cinema screenings across the land.

David Thomson’s “The Big Sleep” comes to Iranian bookstores

CULTURE TEHRAN — A Persian translation of U.S.-based British film critic and historian David Thomson’s book “The Big Sleep” has been published by Elmifarahangi, a major Iranian publishing house in Tehran.

The book has been rendered into Persian by Nika Khamsi. This is the first book-length consideration of the classic 1946 movie “The Big Sleep” and the first published book to compare it to the 1945 cut of the movie, which has been restored and released.

Thomson discusses the making of the film as well as the careers and romance of its stars, Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall, in this book. He also looks into the psyches of its director and screenwriters. Thomson beautifully describes a classic in progress, tracking “the way in which fantasizing, power plays and maneuver affected the making of the film.”

Along the way, Thomson meditates about why “The Big Sleep” has attained its mythic status and why it continues to move him so powerfully.

“The Big Sleep” has signaled a change in the nature of Hollywood cinema, as the director Howard Hawks shot extra scenes, “fun” scenes, to replace the ones in which the murders are explained, and in so doing left the plot unresolved.

Thomson, renowned as one of the greatest living authorities on the movies, is the author of “The New Biographical Dictionary of Film”, now in its fifth edition.

He is also the author of more than twenty-five books, including biographies of Orson Welles and David O. Selznick, and the pioneering novel “Suspects”, which borrowed its characters from film.

Visual Stories from Ashura

What great men lived those days.

The days that Zaynab (SAA) had companions.

There were supporters. There were Abbas ibn Ali (AS) and Ali Akbar (AS).

There was someone to keep the hope of the thirsty children up.

Since Imam Hussain entered Karbala till the time he left his family, nine days passed. The battle itself was half of a day. This event is deeply blessed in our history and is still inspiring till today.
Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

Post 9/11 America: Islam and Muslims still suspect

By Yuram Abdullah Weiler

Nineteen years have passed by since a rogue band of extremists hijacked four passenger airplanes and executed a multi-pronged attack on the symbols of American hegemony. Muslims were immediately eyed with great suspicion and these fears were amplified by U.S. politicians in a misguided attempt to capitalize on the public's shock and outrage. Over the interceding years Americans' negative attitudes toward and perceptions of Islam and Muslims has only worsened.

On the morning of September 11, 2001, at least according to the official narrative, nineteen extremists, fifteen of whom were Saudi nationals, while none were from Iraq or Iran, took over four passenger jetliners and flew two of them into the New York World Trade Center Twin Towers and a third into the Pentagon. The fourth aircraft, assumed to have been intended to strike the U.S. Congress or the White House, crashed into a field near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. During one of the alleged cell phone calls from one of the hijacked planes, the caller claimed that he had looked closely at one of the hijackers, and "He had an Islamic look."

Americans remain largely ignorant of Islam and its basic tenets, yet disturbingly enough, hold on tenaciously to negative stereotypes of Muslims. Despite the fact that nearly every Islamic organization strongly condemned the 9/11 attacks, as they have done after other violent acts perpetrated by extremists in the name of Islam, Americans stubbornly continue to conflate Muslims with terrorism. Moreover, many U.S. politicians are obsessed with the idea that Islamist extremists are actively recruiting and operating in mosques across the U.S., and hence, are categorically suspicious of Muslims and perceive an urgent need for strict surveillance of them.

Following the September 11 attacks, the USA PATRIOT Act was quickly passed by Congress with very little debate over the bill's nefarious provisions. Some members of Congress later admitted that, in the rush to pass the draconian legislation and avoid any loss of political capital by appearing weak on terrorism, they had not even bothered to read the draft copies that had been circulated. The bill, whose name is an acronym standing for Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism, besides broadening the definition of "domestic terrorism" also provides for warrantless searches without the need to show probable cause. At least 1,200 people were detained by U.S. law enforcement agencies under the provisions of this noxious legislation, some of whom were subject to physical and verbal abuse bordering on torture.

Most of these detainees were eventually released or deported from the U.S., but virtually no charges of terrorism were filed as a result of the law. An additional 5,000 immigrants from Muslim-majority countries were interrogated by FBI agents, who had been ordered to do so by then



attorney general John Ashcroft, despite a lack of evidence or other legal basis to authorize the questioning. Anonymous tips were used to justify the surveillance of Muslims, mosques, Islamic schools and private homes. This federally-mandated inquisition heightened the atmosphere of Islamophobia, which was already proliferating following the 9/11 attacks, resulting in a sharp increase in hate crimes against Muslims.

In what appears to have been a carefully scripted appearance to show the world that the United States was NOT at war with Islam, Sheikh Hamza Yusuf was invited to a White House dinner on September 20, a short nine days after the 9/11 attacks. Unbeknownst to him, at that very same moment, FBI agents some 2,000 miles away were pounding on the door of Sheikh Hamza's home in California, ostensibly to warn his wife that she and her husband, as well as other high-profile Muslims, may be targets of violence perpetrated by Americans in retaliation for the September 11 attacks. The White House dinner effectively politicized and marginalized Sheikh Hamza, who had been an outspoken critic of U.S. foreign policy, and transformed him into what is termed a "moderate Muslim." Yusuf conceded that since the attacks he has toned down his rhetoric and edited criticism of the U.S. out of his lectures. He has even advised Muslim women in America not to wear hijab so as to avoid inciting harassment by intolerant Americans.

On the same day that Bush was hosting Sheikh Hamza at the White House, he addressed a joint session of Congress. "Al Qaeda is to terror what the Mafia is to crime," Bush explained. "The terrorists practice a fringe form of Islamic extremism that has been rejected by Muslim scholars," he continued, "There are thousands of these terrorists in more than 60 countries." In essence, the U.S. president had defined Islam in terms of loyalty to the United States, but what he did not mention was that the U.S. had helped create Al Qaeda as a result of

matching Saudi Arabia dollar-for-dollar to finance those "terrorists" in Afghanistan during the 1980s in their jihad to topple the Soviet-backed government in Kabul.

Likewise, the bellicose rhetoric emerging from Washington did little to calm Muslims' fears that the U.S. was intending to launch a crusade against Islam. For his part, then U.S. president George W. Bush threatened, "We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them." Bush began his global war on terrorism with Afghanistan, and other Muslim-majority nations were put on notice to either cooperate with Washington or risk being bombed back to the Stone Age. Bush stepped up the propaganda campaign for his war on the home front, and soon had 70 percent of Americans believing Iraqi dictator Saddam had been involved in the September 11 terrorist attacks.

It is ironic that Bush pushed through the so-called Patriot Act restricting the civil rights of Americans and then went on to invade Iraq. On October 11, 2000 during a televised debate with Democratic opponent Al Gore, he had expressed opposition to toppling Saddam, and concern over violating the civil rights of Muslims by the practice of racial profiling and the use of secret evidence. "The incarceration and deportation of legal residents and others on the basis of secret evidence is a practice reserved for totalitarian countries, not the United States," then candidate Bush had pontificated.

The 9/11 attacks have dramatically impacted and transformed the lives of Muslims in America. While still striving for economic prosperity, Muslims in the U.S. have rejected mainstream American life by placing top priority on their Islamic faith and identity, and seeking solace within their own Islamic communities. This trend seems to be especially true for second-generation Muslims, who frequently embrace their Islamic faith more strongly than their parents that immigrated to America. After the September 11 attacks the younger gen-

eration of American Muslims frequently found themselves in the position of having to explain and defend their religion in what had become an increasingly hostile environment. Meanwhile, FBI agents were busy searching mosques and private homes, while non-Muslim Americans became ever more suspicious that Muslims were terrorists and Islam was a religion of violence. Like the coronavirus today, a pandemic of Islamophobia gradually spread across the U.S. and infected wide swaths of the American populace.

Richard Falk, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Palestinian human rights, writes, "In a world of inequalities and global warming, there has arisen a frightening receptivity to blaming the stranger or the other for the unfairness being experienced in the forms of inequality, economic displacement, and erosions of national identity." For Muslims in post 9/11 America this frightening receptivity has materialized in the form of overt, state-sanctioned Islamophobia, now more than ever before with Donald Trump in the White House.

The word "Muslim" had been used to vilify former President Barack Hussein Obama during his campaign in 2008, but was seized upon with vigor in 2011 by Trump. Attacking the legitimacy of the Obama presidency, the former reality show star accused Obama of not being an American by birth and snidely suggested that the birth certificate might list his religion as "Muslim." On April 27, 2011, Obama did release his birth certificate, which documented his place of birth as Honolulu, Hawaii, but did not state a religion, allowing Trump to maintain his vulgar vilification.

Once in office, Trump continued his vituperation of Islam and Muslims by signing a series of executive orders, which first banned immigration from seven Muslim-majority countries, namely Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Somalia, Syria and Yemen. The second version rescinded the ban on Iraq; the third version, which by then had become known as Muslim Ban 3.0, added North Korea and Venezuela to blur the overt Islamophobia. Predictably, the right-leaning U.S. Supreme Court upheld the ban in a partisan 5-4 ruling, making life that much more anguished and difficult for American Muslims with spouses, children or other loved ones living in one of the six countries unable to obtain visas for a family visit.

In Donald Trump's fascist and Islamophobic version of America, Muslims have become legitimate targets to be demonized. Chants of "send them back" directed toward Muslims and other minorities at rallies has become a staple of Trump's re-election campaign. Some Muslims are justifiably worried about the long term emotional and psychological damage caused by Trump's anti-Muslim chauvinism on individuals, particularly on children. Presidential challenger Joe Biden claims that he will rescind Trump's Muslim Ban on day one, if elected. Meanwhile, Islam and Muslims still remain under suspicion in post-9/11 America.

9/11 nineteen years later: U.S. 'endless' wars continue unabated

TEHRAN — The September 11 attacks on the U.S. marked a turning point in the U.S. foreign policy toward Central and West Asia and opened the way for neo-conservatives in Washington to wage "endless" wars against countries in the region, according to a West Asia expert.

As the U.S. prepares to commemorate the 9/11 anniversary, experts and analysts weigh in on the attacks' role in pushing the U.S. into waging wars in Central and West Asia, which killed and maimed hundreds of thousands of people over the past 19 years.

On September 11, 2001, 19 members of the terrorist al-Qaeda group hijacked four airplanes and carried out suicide attacks against many civil and military targets in the U.S. Two of the planes crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, a third plane hit the Pentagon just outside Washington, D.C., and the fourth plane crashed in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Almost 3,000 people, many of them foreign citizens, were killed during the attacks.

Then-President George W. Bush, who was in Florida at the time of the attacks, immediately returned to the White House to deliver a televised address from the Oval Office.

"We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them," Bush said in his address, which was delivered on September 11 at 9 pm. He was referring to the eventual U.S. military response to the attacks. It was clear that the U.S. was preparing for a military response against Afghanistan.

Less than a month later, on October 7, the U.S. led an international coalition to topple the Taliban regime in Afghanistan,

which was accused of harboring Osama bin Laden's terrorist network. The U.S.-led war, codenamed Operation Enduring Freedom, effectively removed the Taliban from operational power but failed to uproot the Taliban insurgency in parts of Afghanistan. As the U.S. continued its war in Afghanistan, the Taliban managed to reorganize its forces and fight an open-ended war of attrition against the American forces. The U.S. neither defeated the Taliban nor was it able to kill Osama bin Laden, the mastermind behind the September 11th attacks, in Afghanistan. He remained at large until May 2, 2011, when he was finally killed by U.S. forces in Pakistan.

"The Bush administration exploited the September 11 attacks to launch a new type of war, which targeted the conventional armies of some countries in the region," Ja'afar Ghannadhashi, a West Asia expert, told the Tehran Times, adding that the Americans used the 9/11 attacks as a casus belli to wage wars in the region.

According to the expert, in the wake of the September 11 attacks, the U.S. initially announced that it would be fighting terrorism, but ultimately it ended up fighting conventional armies and waging proxy wars in the region to weaken those opposing U.S. policies.

The U.S. Congress paved the way for these wars by passing a special law allowing President Bush to punish the people who had aided or abetted the 9/11 attackers. The law, which was passed on September 18, 2001, - only a week after the 9/11 attacks - stipulates "that the President is authorized to use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist

attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons, in order to prevent any future acts of international terrorism against the United States by such nations, organizations or persons."

It was widely seen as a carte blanche meant to pave the way for the U.S. president to wage wars without going through legal processes. The law played a major role in expanding the span of U.S. wars, according to Alex Emmons, the national security reporter of The Intercept.

"In the days after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, when Congress voted to authorize military force against the people who 'planned, authorized, committed, or aided' the hijackings, few Americans could have imagined the resulting manhunt would span from West Africa all the way to the Philippines and would outlast two two-term presidents," wrote Emmons in a report published by The Intercept on September 11, 2016. "Today, U.S. military engagement in the Middle East looks increasingly permanent. Despite the White House having formally ended the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, thousands of U.S. troops and contractors remain in both countries. The U.S. is dropping bombs on Iraq and Syria faster than it can make them."

U.S. post-9/11 wars in the region were so widespread that even Donald Trump, who campaigned on ending "endless wars" in 2016 was unable to end them.

In an attempt to show that he was a different kind of president than Democrats and Republicans like Barack Obama and Bush, then-Republican presidential front-runner Trump used an invitation-only event in Washington to argue that presidents of

both parties had gotten the U.S. ensnared in too many costly foreign wars, according to a VOX report. During the meeting, Trump promised he would change this policy once he elected as president.

"I will never send our finest into battle unless necessary, and I mean absolutely necessary, and will only do so if we have a plan for victory with a capital V," he said. "The world must know that we do not go abroad in search of enemies."

After he won the 2016 presidential election, he echoed the same promise, saying on many occasions that he would be "ending the era of endless wars," because it is not the job of the U.S. army "to solve ancient conflicts in faraway lands that many people have not even heard of."

Trump also said that the U.S. spent more than \$7 trillion on conflicts in the region while his administration had difficulty building infrastructures inside the U.S.

"As of a couple of months ago, we have spent \$7 trillion in the Middle East [West Asia]. Seven trillion dollars. What a mistake. But it is what is. We're trying to build roads and bridges and fix bridges that are falling down, and we have a hard time getting the money. It's crazy. Think about it: As of a couple of months ago, \$7 trillion in the Middle East and the Middle East is far worse now than it was 17 years ago when they went in and not so intelligently. I have to say, went in. I'm being nice. So, it is a very sad thing," Trump said in 2018.

The Trump administration has sought to get rid of the post-9/11 wars by withdrawing U.S. forces from the region, only to realize that these wars are deeply rooted in a bipartisan policy adopted in the years after the 9/11 attacks.

9/11 and death of the American dream

BY Kevin Barrett

Sometimes comedians can get a laugh just by telling the truth. George Carlin was good at that. One of his most famous quotes is: "That's why they call it the American Dream, because you have to be asleep to believe it."

Sigmund Freud famously analyzed dreams as wish fulfillment fantasies. In that kind of dream, the dreamer attempts to satisfy a desire that has been frustrated in waking life. The American dream was a bit like that. We had a huge, relatively empty continent with abundant resources. And we had a new political philosophy, liberal secular-materialist progressivism, the basis of our democratic republic. This philosophy held that everything would keep getting better: If we worked hard we would succeed and get rich, and then our children would get even richer, and theirs richer still. Meanwhile we would keep fine-tuning our political system and social mores so that the individual "pursuit of happiness"—which is what the Declaration of Independence holds up as the ultimate purpose of life—would grow ever-more successful. People would just get happier and happier.

This wish fulfillment fantasy was obviously not true. Though there was certainly incremental material progress—living standards in the USA continued to improve at least through the 1960s—it did not make people noticeably happier. Nor were they living in a genuine liberal democracy. That was just window-dressing covering up the political reality, oligarchy.



Then in the 1960s, the decade during which the common man in America achieved what should have been his highest-ever level of security and prosperity, things started to unravel. A new sword of Damocles, nuclear terror, cast its shadow over the land and killed all philosophies of optimism. The invention of the birth control pill, coupled with a propaganda onslaught from the Rockefeller Foundation and other oligarchical forces, normalized "recreational" sex and injected a slow-acting poison into the traditional family. Simultaneously, the symbolic national father figure—the president—was ritually murdered on November 22nd, 1963 by elements of the National Security State in collaboration with Israel and its organized crime assets. Most Americans felt their comfortable sleep vaguely disturbed by the live broadcast of mobster Jack Rubenstein, whose boss was Israel's number one fundraiser Mickey Cohen, murdering JFK's alleged lone assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, in the middle of a crowd of policemen.

After the 1960s the traditional family came under ever-more-furious assault. The "patriarchy"—that is, families with fathers—came under attack by Rockefeller Foundation propagandists, Zionist-dominated media, and cultural Marxist academia. As the percentage of American children born out of wedlock and/or raised in single-parent or broken homes grew from a small minority to a large majority, the oligarchs grabbed more and more of the national wealth, causing ordinary people's living standards to stagnate. Poverty, broken homes, welfare dependency, crime, drug abuse, suicide, venereal diseases, and other negative social indicators increased dramatically. Simultaneously, the oligarchs pumped foundation money into identity politics in order to distract the left from economic issues.

By September 11, 2001, the stage had long since been set. The American republic had been abolished, replaced by a covert oligarchy, with the founding of the so-called Federal Reserve in 1913. That oligarchy had emerged from the shadows on November 22, 1963. It had then begun destroying the traditional family and hollowing out the middle class.

September 11, 2001, represented the coup de grace, the final death blow, for the American democratic republic and the American dream. They blew up the World Trade Center on live television. Even though the vast majority of journalists correctly reported what they saw with their own eyes—the buildings had been destroyed by explosions—the oligarchs terrorized the media into changing the story and telling the world that the buildings had somehow fallen down due to minor office fires fueled by a negligible amount of kerosene (jet fuel).

Even more than the live footage of Jack Rubenstein murdering Lee Harvey Oswald, the live footage of the explosive demolition of the World Trade Center, followed by a tidal wave of ridiculous official lies, forcibly imposed a state of extreme cognitive dissonance on the American people. Since then they have been living in the shadow of a wall of fear. The truth is on the other side of the wall, but they are afraid to look. A new era of rule by fear, rather than hope, has prevailed. The made-in-a-lab coronavirus coup, which has transferred trillions of dollars from ordinary people to billionaires, is simply the latest oligarchical assault designed to terrorize Americans into submission.

The American dream started dying a long time ago. It succumbed to a series of assaults by the most vicious oligarchy in all of human history. September 11 was just the final blow.

Will Americans ever wake up from their ever-more-nightmarish dream? Will they identify and overthrow the oligarchs who have dispossessed them? Allahu 'alim. (Only God knows.)

Kevin Barrett, Ph.D., is an Arabist-Islamologist scholar and one of America's best-known critics of the 9/11 and the War on Terror.

The American dream started dying a long time ago. It succumbed to a series of assaults by the most vicious oligarchy in all of human history. September 11 was just the final blow.

David Ray Griffin says 9/11 attacks were engineered by Cheney and Rumsfeld

By Amir Mohammad Esmaeili

TEHRAN — David Ray Griffin, an American professor of philosophy of religion and theology, sees Vice-President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld as the architects of the September 11 attacks.

"The attacks were engineered by non-Muslim terrorists, especially Vice-President Richard Cheney and his buddy Donald Rumsfeld, who had become the secretary of defense," Griffin tells the Tehran Times.

Following is the text of the interview:



■ Your books about 9/11 have gained a great attraction worldwide. What was your motivation for writing these books?

A: First, I came to reject the official account of the 9/11 attacks, after at first not having seen good evidence that the attacks were an inside job. But after I finally saw good evidence that the official account of 9/11 was a lie, I realized that this fact was extremely important. At that time, there were already some good books about 9/11, but none of these were by Americans, and few Americans were reading them. So I decided to write a book about it, which became *The New Pearl Harbor* (2004). The later books were written to answer questions and claims raised by defenders of the official account.

■ Could you please tell us about the reactions to your works (among mainstream media, academics, officials and so on)?

A: The mainstream media and most of the academy have either ignored my work or attacked it as a conspiracy theory unsupported by evidence (even though in one week in 2008 the highly respected *Publishers Weekly* named my 2008 book, *The New Pearl Harbor Revisited*, the "Pick of the Week"). There was also not much support by academics until after Peter Dale Scott and I edited a volume in 2006 entitled *9/11 and the American Empire: Intellectuals Speak Out*. Academic support was further increased after architect Richard Gage, having studied my work, started *Architects and Engineers for 9/11 Truth*, which now has over 3,000 architects and engineers who call the official account of the destruction of the World Trade Center false.

■ Do you think 9/11 was a terrorist attack? Please kindly give us your reasons?

A: Quite often this question means, "Were the 9/11 attacks engineered by Muslim hijackers?" The answer to this question is No. But the attacks were engineered by non-Muslim terrorists, especially Vice-President Richard Cheney and his buddy Donald Rumsfeld, who had become the secretary of defense.

■ What was the role of neoconservatives and the CIA in 9/11?

A: I discussed this issue in a 2007 essay entitled "Neocon Imperialism, 9/11, and the Attacks on Afghanistan and Iraq." The 9/11 attacks allowed the agenda developed in the 1990s by neoconservatives to be implemented. This agenda was that the United States should use its military supremacy to establish an empire that includes the whole world—a global Pax Americana. The means for fulfilling this agenda was to be a "transformation of military affairs," which was likely to take a long time, unless there occurred some "catastrophic and catalyzing event—like a new Pearl Harbor."

■ How do you see the relationship between 9/11 and the Greater Middle East plan?

A: Afghanistan and Iraq were to be the first two of seven countries in which regime change was to be carried out. The Obama administration tried to finish the plan in Syria and Libya, and the Trump administration has continued the effort in Syria.

■ Nearly two decades have passed since 9/11, and many questions remain unanswered. In your view, why is the U.S. delaying in finding out the truth about what happened on September 11, 2001?

A: The U.S. has not given up the idea of controlling the planet; the truth about 9/11 has not been publicly revealed; and revealing the truth would undermine the hope to recover the global domination project.

No evidence suggests 9/11 was a conspiracy

By Stephen Zunes

I have seen absolutely no credible evidence to suggest that the 11 September 2001 attacks were a result of any kind of conspiracy by the U.S. governments or anyone outside of the Al-Qaeda network. It was indeed a terrorist attack planned and carried out exclusively by Al-Qaeda.

There were major intelligence failures by the Bush administration that they have tried to cover up. There were also disingenuous efforts to try to blame the attacks on Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq and other efforts to take advantage of the tragedy to advance Washington's imperialist agenda in the Middle East. The insistence on portraying the efforts to counter the threat from Al-Qaeda as a U.S.-led "war" rather than an international anti-crime effort allowed the U.S. government to dramatically increase military spending at the expense of needed domestic programs and dramatically extend the U.S. military presence in the greater Middle East.

Al-Qaeda was largely driven out of Afghanistan by the end of 2001, but U.S. troops remain in that country to this day. The administration took advantage of the fear from the 2001 attacks to build up support for the 2003 invasion of Iraq, despite the fact that Iraq had nothing to do with it, that Saddam was a strong opponent of Al-Qaeda, and the U.S. invasion and occupation not only took attention away from fighting Al-Qaeda but created conditions for a dramatic growth of Salafist extremism in Iraq and elsewhere. Furthermore, the United States maintains close ties to Saudi Arabia despite the regime's support for Salafist extremists, again underscoring the United States' lack of seriousness in challenging such dangerous tendencies in the region.

9/11: The mother of all Big Lies

By Stephen Lendman

They're a longstanding U.S. tradition, dating from the 19th century.

They enabled annexation of Texas. Half of Mexico followed.

The U.S. became Cuba's colonial power. Controlling the Philippines, Guam, Samoa, Hawaii, Puerto Rico and other territories came next.

In 1917, Woodrow Wilson manipulated public sentiment with Big Lies. They turned most Americans into raging German haters, giving Wilson got the war he wanted.

Franklin Roosevelt manipulated Japan to attack Pearl Harbor, convincing a pacifist Congress and public to support what became WW II.

Washington and Seoul conspired against Pyongyang. Numerous 1949/1950 cross-border incursions provoked its June response. Harry Truman got the war he wanted.

Preemptive U.S. war on North Vietnam followed the August 1964 Gulf of Tonkin false flag. Congress authorized war without declaring it.

Ronald Reagan's 1983 Grenada invasion had nothing to do with rescuing U.S. medical students.

It was all about replacing leftist New Jewel Movement governance with subservient pro-Western rule.

In December 1989, manufactured incidents precipitated America's Panama invasion.

Former U.S. ally Manuel Noriega was deposed for forgetting who's boss.

In August 1990, Washington colluded with Kuwait's al-Sabah monarchy. Saddam Hussein was entrapped to invade.

In January 1991, the Persian Gulf War followed. Decades of wars, occupation, and destruction of the "cradle of civilization" followed.

The 9/11 mother of all Big Lies was planned, orchestrated and launched as a pretext for endless U.S. wars that followed.

One country after another in West Asia, Central Asia, and North Africa was ravaged, destroyed, colonized, and exploited.

Homeland wars target Muslims, people of color, Latino immigrants and working Americans.

Award-winning author David Ray Griffin researched 9/11 exhaustively, earlier discussing what he called "9/11: The Myth and the Reality," saying: "It would seem, for many reasons, that the official story of 9/11, which has served as a religious myth in the intervening years (and still does), is a myth in the pejorative sense of



a story that does not correspond to reality."

Later Griffin discussed 21 reasons to question the 9/11 Big Lie.

The FBI admitted it "had no hard evidence connecting" 9/11 to bin Laden or other Arabs.

So-called alleged devout Muslim hijackers drank heavily, frequented strip clubs and paid for sex.

Technology in 2001 made cell phone calls above 30,000 feet impossible.

The FBI falsely claimed Mohamed Atta's luggage left behind contained "decisive evidence" about Al Qaeda's responsibility for the attacks.

Passports allegedly found at United 93's crash site were fake.

Alleged hijackers weren't aboard the four fateful flights.

U.S. standard operating intercept procedures weren't followed.

Then Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta said Dick Cheney "apparently confirmed a stand-down order" prior to an alleged plane striking the Pentagon.

The 9/11 whitewash commission deleted Mineta's comment from its official report.

Secret Service agents let GW Bush remain at a Sarasota, FL school for 30 minutes after learning about the second twin tower strike.

Standard procedure calls for securing the U.S. president's safety immediately in case of potential danger.

Jet fuel doesn't heat high enough to melt or cause rigid steel columns to collapse.

It's "scientifically impossible."

Controlled demolitions destroyed both towers. Building 7 fell the same way later in the day.

The BBC reported Building 7's collapse 30 minutes before it came down — clearly having advance word on what was coming to be on the scene to report it.

Griffin explained that numerous highly qualified "physicists, chemists, architects, engineers, pilots, former military officers, and former intelligence officials reject the 9/11 myth."

Former NATO commander U.S. General Wesley Clark said with no public debate or

David Ray Griffin explained that numerous highly qualified "physicists, chemists, architects, engineers, pilots, former military officers, and former intelligence officials reject the 9/11 myth."

Bin Laden had more connections to Saudi Arabia than Afghanistan or Iraq, say Russian think tank director

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN — The executive director of the Moscow-based CIS-Europe Monitoring Organization says "if one is not satisfied with the idea of non-state terrorist actors and wants to put the blame for the 9/11 (attacks) on one particular country, Saudi Arabia is much more proper choice than Afghanistan or Iraq."

In an interview with the Tehran Times, Stanislav Byshok, says "I'm in no way defending the principle of collective responsibility, though. I'm just reminding that bin Laden's plot had more connections to that country, not others."

Bin Laden, the mastermind of al-Qaeda who engineered the September 11 attacks on the U.S. World Trade Center and Pentagon, was raised in Saudi Arabia. Even 15 of the 19 September 11 hijackers were Saudi nationals.

Saudi Arabia and the United States supported religious fanatics, who were fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan in the 1980s. These fanatics who emerged under the name of al-Qaeda were inspired by the Salafist ideology propagated in Saudi Arabia.

The following is the text of the interview with: Byshok:

■ What are the most significant effects of September 11 on U.S. foreign policy?

A: Three effects come to mind instantly. First, the realization that even in a multipolar world wherein you're the hegemonic power, it's possible to have enemies that embitter your prosperous life. Second, the understanding that there are significant non-state actors at play along with states. Third, the lack of ability to precisely distinguish between the two leads to the fourth effect: the global war on terror based on the "axis of evil" idea.

■ A few weeks after the September 11 attacks, the U.S. launched war on Afghanistan under the pretext of fighting terrorism. In March 2003, the U.S. also invaded Iraq. What have been the consequences of these two long wars for the U.S. and the region?

A: The U.S. occupies a uniquely comfortable position for launching military actions abroad. Having a huge defense budget and many allies and military bases overseas, the U.S. can carry out military operations of almost any scale without fear of any meaningful retaliation. America's enemies—both real and imaginary—are by definition weaker, and America's territory is safely protected by the mighty fleets controlling the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

It's impossible to seriously defend the idea that the U.S. managed to bring about peace and prosperity to Afghanistan or Iraq. At the same time, it's also dubious that its failures in these countries in any considerable way hurt Washington. Sure, the image of the U.S. was, to a certain extent, damaged, especially in the Muslim world, but given the economic, military, technological, political, and—one should never forget—cultural might America enjoys, this damage doesn't really matter. No matter what, one would prefer to be a friend and partner to the U.S. That's an advantage of being America—you can get away with murder.

Some call today's Greater Middle East (West Asia) the arc of instability, invoking the theory of controlled chaos. This concept implies that there was an initial masterplan that indicated the (programmed) failure of the U.S. operations in all its military

interventions in the region. I'm not sure this theory is worth understanding the dynamics of the Greater Middle East. However, what is true is an abject lack of expertise in Washington when it comes to cultural and political peculiarities, to complicated sectarian and tribal relations in the regions the U.S. wants to get involved.

■ Why do Americans, who chanted the slogan of fighting al-Qaeda and the Taliban, are now sitting at the negotiating table with the Taliban after two decades?

A: Even a lousy pupil can graduate from school at 20 or 30 or 40. Security hawks give way to international doves, and later the role exchange repeats, and then repeats again. One should not forget that in the 1980s, long before the U.S. proclaimed the war on terror, none other than President Ronald Reagan had friendly meetings with the Taliban, whom he greeted as freedom fighters and even "moral equivalents" to America's founding fathers. Today, the latter praise is absent, but the negotiating table is still there.

■ What have been the consequences of the 9/11 for U.S. internal security, especially when the freedoms were restricted under the pretext of fighting terrorism?

A: The dichotomy of personal freedoms vs. security exists only in democracies wherein people are sure their rights are inalienable and can be restricted by the government only if the citizens consent to that. On the contrary, in non-democratic states, the extent of personal freedoms and security measures is decided by the government alone.

After the initial 9/11 shock, the general American public was all for more security-related restrictions, believing that these measures would save the ordinary folk from further terrorist attacks. Virtually nobody was against newly introduced metal detectors at public places, including in airports, or several new CCTV cameras. However, later some began to question whether these anti-terrorist measures lead to the creation of the surveillance state. The considerations of security clashed with the idea of privacy.

As of today, we see certain somewhat contradictory trends in Democratic party-controlled states of the U.S.

On the one hand, the police are obliged to have body cameras which are believed to prevent them from using excessive force against alleged criminals; on the other hand, the police are denied using certain A.I. programs on these very cameras related to facial recognition of criminal suspects—because that may violate the privacy of the latter. Go figure!

To sum up, the world, in general, is getting more transparent than it's ever been. The trend has both positive and negative consequences. The transparent nation cuts both ways, i.e., it's not only the governments who surveil over people but also people get to know more about their governments' proceedings (take WikiLeaks). The transparency trend seems to be unstoppable anyway, with the 9/11 tragedy being an event which facilitated—not created—what was already underway.

■ What happened to the American Dream after the 9/11?

A: I think the American Dream, whatever that means, is still alive. At the end of the day, the First Amendment guaranteeing freedom of speech is still intact, so it's safer for Americans to

acknowledgement, hardliners in Washington usurped power pre-and-post-9/11.

Days after the 9/11 attacks, Clark learned from Pentagon commanders of U.S. plans to attack and "destroy the governments in seven countries."

In October 2001, Afghanistan and Yemen came first, followed by Iraq, Syria and Libya.

Other countries on the U.S. regional target list include Iran, Lebanon, Somalia and Sudan.

Weeks after the Soviet Union's December 1991 dissolution, the so-called Wolfowitz doctrine shaped U.S. geopolitics, stating: "Our first objective is to prevent the re-emergence of a new rival, either on the territory of the former Soviet Union or elsewhere, that poses a threat on the order of that posed formerly by the Soviet Union." "This is a dominant consideration underlying the new regional defense strategy and requires that we endeavor to prevent any hostile power from dominating a region whose resources would, under consolidated control, be sufficient to generate global power."

His doctrine was a declaration of endless wars against all sovereign independent countries not controlled by the U.S.

All nations attacked by the U.S. post-WW II were nonbelligerent states threatening no one. They and others on the U.S. target list for regime change are targeted for not subordinating their sovereign rights to U.S. interests.

The October 2001 Afghan war had nothing to do with capturing or killing Osama bin Laden who was ill, slowly dying in a Pakistani hospital, and had nothing to do with 9/11. He died in December 2001, reported by Western media at time. Obama didn't kill him in May 2011 as falsely reported.

US endless wars have nothing to do with waging war on terrorism policymakers in Washington support, using ISIS, al Qaeda and likeminded jihadists as proxy forces against designated enemy states.

US wars are all about advancing its imperium, aiming to colonize and control planet earth, its resources and populations.

Today is the most perilous time in world history because of U.S. rage for unchallenged global dominance.

The good news is that the U.S. is a nation in decline like all other empires in world history. It's because of its imperial arrogance, endless wars against invented enemies, and an unwillingness to change.

"One should not forget that in the 1980s, long before the U.S. proclaimed the war on terror, none other than President Ronald Reagan had friendly meetings with the Taliban, whom he greeted as freedom fighters and even "moral equivalents" to America's founding fathers."

publicly criticize America and its president than for a citizen of a non-democratic country to castigate his or her state and its government. As the political scientist John Mearsheimer rightly mentions, the U.S. is still very much liberal democracy inside, no matter what questionable things it does outside its borders.

In this regard, what's important is that the ideas of personal freedom, the rule of law, human rights, government accountability, fair elections, etc. today do not necessarily associate positively or negatively or any attitude towards the U.S.

Now, these concepts tend to be more or less autonomous entities shared by more educated people regardless of their country of origin, ethnicity, or their parents' religion. If America's military actions positively contributed to these ideas spreading is unlikely. But America's cultural and technological attractiveness is unquestionable—iPhones and Netflix/HBO series are equally admired in all corners of the world.

■ What happened to the defendants found guilty of the 9/11 attacks? Why is the U.S. still silent despite irrefutable evidence that some Arab citizens were involved in 9/11?

A: These essential questions have been asked by many, even by President Donald Trump. Moreover, now it's pretty much clear that if one is not satisfied with the idea of non-state terrorist actors and wants to put the blame for the 9/11 on one particular country, Saudi Arabia is much more proper choice than Afghanistan or Iraq. I'm in no way defending the principle of collective responsibility, though. I'm just reminding that bin Laden's plot had more connections to that country, not others.

As for America's "partial blindness" concerning international terrorism and certain other issues, it's necessary to keep in mind the power of lobbyism in American politics. Some lobbies, like Saudi or Israeli, seem to be much more influential than others. Nay, it's safe to say that there are no Afghan or Iraqi lobbies in Washington, D.C., at all. Hence the results.

■ What is your view of this theory that the 9/11 attacks were orchestrated to spread Islamophobia in the West, especially as we see instances of anti-Muslim sentiments in the West.

A: I guess certain Muslims, including some migrants from Muslim-majority countries, did contribute generously to the spread, in the West, of negative attitudes towards Islam and those associated with this religion. One doesn't need to be a conspiracy theorist or an Islamophobe to see that some previously safe areas of Paris, Brussels, Stockholm, and some other European cities have turned into no-go zones. It's not related to the memory of the tragedy which happened 19 years ago in New York; it's what happens today.

Tolerance is a great thing as long as it works both ways. No doubt, there are certain personal prejudices against Muslims and a variety of other minority-groups, but these practices are by no means state-initiated. Moreover, as we know, many leading Western states have global programs encouraging multiculturalism and tolerance and eliminating different forms of discrimination—racial, gender, ethnic, etc.

As for some anti-Muslim plot, I'll say that it is not that difficult a task to find evidence proving the existence of this or that conspiracy.

However, a much harder case is finding evidence that there's no conspiracy—or, more precisely, that the world is such a complicated place that all global conspiracies are doomed to fail since there are many counter-conspiracies, (un)lucky coincidences, and unintended consequences. And what's essential—we're all humans; hence we're prone to being wrong and making mistakes. Some mistakes cost the lives of hundreds of thousands. To sugar the pillow, it's important to mention that we also tend to learn from our mistakes. That's why we're still here, no matter what.

Wars U.S. launched after 9/11 attacks only brought tragedies: Turkish academic

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN — The wars that the U.S. started after the September 11, 2001 attacks against Afghanistan and Iraq brought nothing except destruction, tragedy, displacement, and failed states, says Mustafa Caner, a Turkish academic.

"After two decades, the region is witnessing 'failed states, devastated countries, countless deaths, millions of displaced people, human sufferings,'" Caner, the research assistant in the Middle East Institute at Sakarya University, tells the Tehran Times.

The following is the text of the interview:
■ How did the September 11 attacks affect the U.S. foreign policy? Can the attacks be seen as a transition from soft power to solid power?

A: The September 11 terrorist attacks was a milestone for both U.S. foreign policy -especially for its Middle East (West Asia) policy- and the way it perceives Islam and the Muslim world. During the Cold War, the motto of "fighting communism" had been instrumentalized to pursue its foreign policy goals. After the Soviet Union's collapse, "fighting communism" lost its meaning because there was no communist threat anymore.

Then 9/11 happened, and the new guiding principle of U.S. foreign policy came out: "fighting terrorism". At its extreme but not rare interpretation, the notions of Islam and terror have come together. This notion shift created a new era for the region. It gave every justification to the U.S. to invade Afghanistan and Iraq. The consequences of 9/11 have been somehow comparable to Sykes Picot's. They both shook the ethnic and religious balances in the region and prevented nations from building solid and prosperous political structures.

Apart from that, I don't see any transition from soft power to hard power in U.S. foreign policy. These concepts always function together. While America invades countries or meddles with their internal affairs, it also offers its values such as pragmatism, consumption culture, free-market economies, the American way of life, etc.

■ Why does the U.S. prefers to remain silent about the involvement of nationals from certain Arab countries in the 9/11 attacks?

A: Maybe it would be open to discussion if we claim some Arab countries support terrorist ideas. However, there are some undeniable facts. Fifteen of the hijackers in the 9/11 attacks were citizens of Saudi Arabia. Two of them were citizens of the UAE. Saudi Arabia and the UAE were the countries that recognized the Taliban in Afghanistan as a legitimate political actor



"As long as they (Saudi Arabi and the UAE whose nationals were involved in the 9/11 attacks) act in line with the U.S. and Israel's policies, their connection with terrorism is ignored."

in the early 2000s. But this fact has never been a problem for the U.S. These realities could not prevent the U.S. from striking billions of dollars arms deals with them. One of the last examples of these countries' brutalities was Jamal Khashoggi's murder. We have been witnessing these same countries' destabilizing acts in the region for quite some time. We have seen them in the 2013 Egyptian coup d'état, in Yemen, and in the Eastern Mediterranean. And now they are normalizing their relations with Israel. As long as they act in line with the U.S. and Israel's policies, their connection with terrorism is ignored.

■ Don't you think that the U.S. misused the 9/11 attacks to spread hatred against Muslims around the globe?

A: I do not think that it is a deliberate process. However, it is a consequence of the post 9/11 policies of Washington. In Agamben's words, the U.S. declared "the state of exception" and suspended most of the law and human rights' fundamental basics after 9/11. People were subjected to prosecution just because of their religion, skin color, race, ethnic background, etc. In an ordinary American mind, the image of Muslims and "terrorist" overlapped. This fueled public support for invasions in the Middle East (West Asia). In this way, to a degree, it was a useful phenomenon for politicians who were willing to wage wars in the Middle East (West Asia). However, it also spread

Islamophobia among the Western people, and that created numerous new problems. Who could deny that some extremist, radical so-called Islamic groups have not exploited discriminated groups in the West and taken advantage of their resentment and bitterness? Studies have shown that foreign fighters who came from Europe to Syria or Iraq were the ones who had been discriminated at their homelands.

■ The United States claims it has contributed to the growth of democracy in the region through the wars it waged under the pretext of fighting terrorism. What is your comment?

A: Unfortunately, not at all. Democracy can't come with bombs, tanks, soldiers, invasions, coups, or any other hard power tools. These are not useful ways of promoting democracies. They can only bring a humanitarian crisis. What have we got after two decades? Failed states, devastated countries, countless deaths, millions of displaced people, human sufferings. American people also suffered. They also died in meaningless wars. These policies are not only harmful to the people in the region; they damaged American people too. External powers, in general, are always a threat to democracy in the region. Countries in the region must find their own solutions to the problems. As long as they invite external actors, it can only serve to complicate the situation.

■ After two decades, what was the U.S. achievement in the so-called "fight against terrorism"?

A: Since the Taliban harbored al-Qaeda and Bin Laden, the U.S. invaded Afghanistan in 2001. After 19 years, they made an agreement with the Taliban. This shows two things: First, the U.S. couldn't restore order for the last two decades in Afghanistan. It is obvious. Therefore, the Afghanistan policy of Washington has been a total failure. That is why it had to settle with once "a terror supporter". Second, the U.S. recognized the Taliban as a legitimate political actor. Thus, nothing has changed after two decades in Afghanistan except for thousands of deaths and a ruined country. Plus, the Taliban consolidated its position.

■ Today, two decades after 9/11, how is America viewed among the Turkish people?

A: Turkey and the U.S. have been allies since the Cold War. They have cooperated on many issues thus far. But there has also been some crisis too. Especially over the last couple of years, there have been some issues disrupting relations. FETO (Fetullah Terrorist Organization) ringleader Fetullah Gulen, who was the mastermind of the failed coup attempt in 2016, lives in the U.S. Although Turkey has demanded his extradition countless times, U.S. authorities have not taken any concrete steps. The U.S. also supports and sends weapons to YPG/PKK terrorists in Syria. These two major issues are significant problems waiting to be solved between Turkey and the U.S. Having said that people of Turkey respect American people. There should always be a distinction between people and politicians. I do not have any scientific data that shows Turkish people's approach to the U.S.; however, I do not also think U.S. support for FETO and PKK terrorism contributes to its positive image among Turkish people.

■ Some observers say that 9/11 theorized and institutionalized the idea of a "hypothetical enemy" in the subconscious of the Americans and even Western citizens. Do you agree with such an idea?

A: States need "the other" to define their identity. It is partly a political construction. Some aspects of it include political engineering. Unfortunately, after 9/11, "the other" of the U.S. was defined as Islam. In 2001, George W. Bush hailed "war on terror" as a "crusade." This lapsus clearly showed Bush's and his war mongers' subconscious and how they perceived the so-called "war on terror." Bush was very prone to apply theological references. In 2002, he announced an "axis of evil." These references were not random. They were all part of a greater political agenda, which was creating a hypothetical world order divided between good and evil.

"Bush was very prone to apply theological references. In 2002, he announced an "axis of evil." These references were not random. They were all part of a greater political agenda, which was creating a hypothetical world order divided between good and evil."

"The consequences of 9/11 have been somehow comparable to Sykes Picot's. They both shook the ethnic and religious balances in the region and prevented nations from building solid and prosperous political structures."

9/11 attacks shattered the Americans' sense of security: Shireen Hunter

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN — Shireen Hunter, a professor of political science at Georgetown University, is of the opinion that the September 11 attacks "shattered the Americans' sense of security" and led to "a far more directly interventionist American foreign policy."

The September 11 attacks mark a turning point in the history of the United States. Nearly 3,000 Americans were killed on that sunny morning when two hijacked airplanes crashed into the World Trade Center towers in New York City and another plowed into the Pentagon.

Noting that the 9/11 attacks were the first attack on mainland America since the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, Shireen Hunter tells the Tehran Times that the event convinced many Americans that in order to prevent similar attacks in future "the U.S. must target sources of potential future attacks where they are."

On October 7, 2001, the U.S. launched attacks on Afghanistan to topple the Taliban that was ruling the country at time and provided sanctuary for al-Qaeda, a group blamed for the 9/11 attacks. Two years later, on March 19, 2003, the U.S. invaded Iraq as well.

The U.S. and Britain invaded Iraq despite the fact that the Saddam Hussein regime was against terrorist groups.

Responding to a question about the consequences of these wars, Hunter says the "hardline conservative elements" in the U.S., especially the neo-conservatives, exploited the people's "trauma" resulting from the 9/11 attacks to "advance other agendas, including regime change in some states."

"They used the war against terror in the pursuit of other goals. In the process, the war on terror generated more terrorism and spun more terrorist groups, such as, for instance, new branches of al-Qaeda and Daesh,"

"In Afghanistan, the Taliban (today) are the most powerful military and political force."



Hunter notes.

The wars only caused hundreds of thousands of deaths and left Iraq and Afghanistan in ruins.

"After 17 years, the U.S. and, especially the American people, are tired of so-called endless wars," Hunter notes. "They want the U.S. to wrap up these military involvements and bring the troops home. In Afghanistan, the Taliban are the most powerful military and political force."

According to political observers, in order to leave Afghanistan, the U.S. must come to terms with the Taliban. Hunter says that the U.S. wants the Taliban to block Iran's influence in Afghanistan.

The university professor says although Taliban occasionally hold talks with Iran they are anti-Shia. "Taliban are basically anti-Shia and anti-Iran, although occasionally for expediency, they talk to the Iranians."

Regarding the repercussions of 9/11 on U.S. internal security, the American professor says a major consequence of 9/11 has been "intrusions in aspects of Americans' privacy."

"But other aspects of Civil Liberties have not been much affected. Because of 9/11, today, the U.S. is more of a security state than before this event," according to Hunter.

9/11 revealed a new face of America as a country, which

was once a dream for everyone around the world.

While the "American Dream mostly refers to every American's expectation of having upward mobility and achieving economic success and security," after the 9/11 attacks, this notion was strongly challenged, she says.

"It (American Dream) also implies feeling secure in his/her private life," Hunter points out. "These are both challenged today, especially in terms of expectations of upward mobility and economic success. Large expenditures for wars have contributed to the eroding Americans' expectations of a good life."

Although most of the 9/11 attackers were Saudi nationals, the U.S. administration preferred to keep silence towards some Arab countries which their citizens were directly involved in the attacks.

"That was due to the close relations between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, the U.S. government has been unwilling to push Riyadh to compensate the victims of 9/11," Hunter elaborates. "Unequivocally admitting to Saudi Arabia's guilt would be politically embarrassing to both Washington and Riyadh and could cause friction between the two capitals. Hence the U.S. silence and inaction."

15 of the 9/11 hijackers were Saudi citizens. Two were UAE nationals.

Responding to the hypotheses that the 9/11 attacks were plotted to spread Islamophobia in the West, the American academic says "conspiratorial theories about 9/11 are not valid".

"I certainly do not believe in them. It is inconceivable that the U.S. could have been responsible for this event, just in order to spread Islamophobia," she argues.

Hunter claims that some Muslim groups' actions, especially those resorting to violence, have been creating enough excuse for those who want to generate discord between Muslims and the Western states and peoples.

"The U.S. government has been unwilling to push Riyadh to compensate the victims of 9/11"

U.S. exploited 9/11 attacks to occupy Iraq and Afghanistan: Iraqi expert

By Saeed Mavedat

TEHRAN — The U.S. plans to invade Iraq and Afghanistan gained steam immediately after the September 11, 2001 attacks on civilian and military targets in the United States. An Iraqi expert tells the Tehran Times that the Americans "exploited" the attacks to occupy Iraq and Afghanistan.

The attacks, carried out by al-Qaeda, killed almost 3,000 American and foreign citizens and sent shockwaves across the world. In the wake of the attacks, the U.S. administration sought to pave the way for a military response to al-Qaeda and those allegedly supporting it.

Addressing the American people on the same day at 9 pm, then-President George W. Bush said, "We will make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them."

Only a week after the 9/11 attacks, Congress passed a special law allowing President Bush to punish the people who had aided or abetted the 9/11 attackers. The law, which was passed on September 18, 2001, stipulates "that the President is authorized to use all necessary and appropriate force against those nations, organizations, or persons he determines planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored such organizations or persons, in order to prevent any future acts of international terrorism against the United States by such nations, organizations or persons."

A few weeks later, the U.S. led a coalition to overthrow the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, and two years later, the U.S. invaded Iraq under the pretext of countering terrorism. Nearly two decades after the 9/11 attacks, the U.S. is still bogged down in "endless wars" in the region, which yielded no results in terms of combating terrorism, according to Reza Alghurabi, an Iraqi expert who closely monitors the situation in Iraq and Iran.

In order to assess one of the U.S. post-9/11 wars in the region, the Tehran Times interviewed Alghurabi. He weighed in on the situation in Iraq in the aftermath of the U.S. invasion of the country. He also touched on the U.S.-Iran relations in Iraq since 2003.

The following is the full text of the interview:

■ In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, the issue of "counterterrorism" became prominent in the U.S. foreign policy and eventually, it became one of the reasons for the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. Do you think the United States really wanted to fight terrorism in Iraq? And if so, how successful was it? How do you assess the U.S. presence in Iraq in terms of the fight against terrorism since 2003?

A: In addition to leading to the emergence of the U.S. counterterrorism agenda and the introduction of new concepts in the field of terrorism and international law, the 9/11 attacks led to one of the largest U.S. military campaigns and military interventions in recent decades in the ever sensitive region of West Asia.

Regardless of any assessment of the truth of 9/11, Washington's subsequent exploitation of it shows that the Americans behaved in a completely political and abusive manner that led to the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq.

It was clear at the time that the terrorists were mostly Saudi nationals, and that if the United States was to be honest in its counterterrorism plan, it would have had to deal with the source of religious extremism in the region, which is the Saudi regime and some other countries whose religious muftis kept playing role in the death of thousands of people and the spread of extremism and violence by issuing hundreds of fatwas [religious decrees] and sending financial aid through charities after the occupation of Iraq.

Despite spending billions of dollars on the counterterrorism project since 2001, Washington has failed to fight terrorism, and the growing spread of extremism, violence, and terrorism in recent years in areas where the Americans themselves have been present was not only a sign of Washington's failure to fight terrorism, but it also raised serious doubts about its direct role in the spread of terrorism and violence.

Iraq is clearly still grappling with terrorism 17 years after [the American occupation], and from 2003 to 2011, when U.S. troops were officially present in Iraq, violence was widespread in the country and the United States failed to contain it.

■ How many human rights violations did the United States commit in the years following the occupation of Iraq? In terms of human rights violations, can Abu Ghraib prison be compared to Guantanamo?

A: While the U.S. was present in Iraq as an occupying force, numerous reports were published by Western and American think tanks on individual and organized ill-treatment of prisoners. Some of the initial information was released by U.S. troops themselves. Various forms of torture of prisoners, such as waterboarding in the United States itself, sparked controversy in the U.S. Congress.

U.S. human rights abuses were not limited to detainees. There were also numerous reports of civilians being harassed during house searches or checkpoints and street raids by soldiers and mercenaries of private security companies such as Blackwater. In this respect, there was no difference between Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo. Perhaps Abu Ghraib can be considered a worse case than Guantanamo because in this prison even young Iraqi girls were sexually tortured by the American military.

■ How do you assess Iran-U.S. relations in Iraq after 2003? It is said that Iran had reached understandings with the United States during the occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, but why did the United States turn these understandings into hostility and include Iran in the «axis of evil»?

A: Iran-U.S. relations have always been tense for the last four decades. After 9/11, the Americans took a more hostile stance against the Iranians. The use of the term «axis of evil» in reference to Iran by George W. Bush in 2002 indicated the adoption of an escalatory strategy against Iran. With the occupation of Iraq by the U.S., this country became the scene of confrontation between Tehran and Washington. Iran was concerned and dissatisfied with the full U.S. military presence in Iraq and the repeated threats by White House officials about the need for regime change in Iran. The Americans in Iraq were also reluctant to vacate the battlefield for Tehran. Therefore, Iraq has since become the scene of confrontation between the two axes.

The U.S. is a longtime enemy of Iran and the prospect of its troops being deployed along Iran's borders as well as [U.S.] provocative actions were a source of potential and tense hostility that threatened any possible understanding.

The 9/11 lie and how it benefited U.S.

By Mehdi Azizi

Much has been written about the 9/11 attacks since 2001. Although it was not easy to point out the fabricated nature of these attacks in the first few months of its occurrence, over time it caught the attention of the analysts who began to wonder whether it would be reasonable to accept that such an incident with this magnitude could happen right in the center of New York, and in the most important commercial towers in America despite the U.S. superior security and surveillance.



Little by little, many questions were raised and many ambiguities were pointed out, and also many documents were obtained that showed that this whole incident had been orchestrated.

The analysis of the experts who came to this conclusion by tracing different elements and connecting the dots lent further weight to this theory.

I remember that the first book to be published on this subject was the "9/11: The Big Lie", written by French author Thierry Meyssan.

I met with him in Tehran and an arrangement was made for his book to be translated and published in Iran. Meyssan believed at the time he was under intense pressure for writing the book. Of course, other people who wrote about 9/11 were also pressured by the United States and its security agencies.

Today, almost everyone has come to believe that what happened on September 11 was a planned and fabricated incident aimed at pursuing certain important objectives.

Winning the support of the American and European public opinion for the U.S. political structure, especially the decision of then U.S. President George W. Bush to invade West Asia and lay the groundwork for U.S. military influence in the region, was one of the most important objectives of the 9/11.

That is why George W. Bush did not react much when he was informed of the attacks; it seems that everything was planned in advance. More interestingly, a few days before the 9/11, Ahmad Shah Massoud, the beloved leader of the Afghans, was assassinated by U.S. security forces. He could have been an Afghan-agreed leader to take Afghanistan's affairs into his own hands in the new era if the U.S. had not taken him out.

At that time, the United States needed the support of European and American public opinion to justify its military presence in the region, which started in Afghanistan and extended to Iraq, Syria and other countries with no end in sight. The U.S. needed the support especially because it had to spend a significant amount of its military budget on military operations in Afghanistan and later in Iraq.

On the one hand, the 9/11 attacks became a good excuse for spreading Islamophobic sentiments across the U.S. and Europe, to the point that many Muslims and Islamic groups were oppressed at that time.

On the other hand, the criminal behavior of George W. Bush and his administration in Afghanistan was also justified by inciting public emotions in Europe and at home.

The U.S. also needed this incident to increase the dividends of its arms factories. In general, 9/11 was the gateway for the Americans to enter West Asia. It was a logical justification, albeit completely fabricated.

But today, the American public has realized the fabricated nature of the 9/11 attacks and no longer needs documents to accept it. The behavior of post-George W. Bush presidents also confirmed that they were seeking to exert influence in West Asia.

Meanwhile, the Taliban, al-Qaeda, and ISIL each had missions at one time or another that they carried out. Of course, these missions are not over yet and will continue. The names of these groups will change, but their mission and approach will remain the same.

The most important mission of these terrorist groups after 9/11 was to cause internal conflicts in the region in order to take over Islamic capacities and commonalities, to create security for the Israeli regime and the U.S., and to plunder the region's oil reserves.

Undoubtedly, propagating Islamophobic sentiments and presenting a violent image of Islam became the most important mission of the Americans in the region with the emergence of terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda, the Taliban and later ISIL. The U.S. sought to introduce an extremist face of Islam to the West to justify the killing of Muslims and any military attacks on West Asia, and also to cause the followers and lovers of Islam to start questioning the basis and principle of this religion.

Beside, presenting a violent image of Islam and, according to their media, an extremist Islam, the Americans also tried to promote a "secular" and "moderate" version of Islam in order to overshadow the basis of Islamic teachings between these two versions.

Today, every American citizen should understand that he is a victim of the interests of the Zionist lobby and politicians and owners of arms factories in the United States. They should know that the U.S. does not even have mercy on its own people, be it the warmonger George W. Bush, or the seemingly upright Obama, or the crazy Trump or maybe even Joe Biden?

Finally, it should be noted that the number and content of U.S.-affiliated media to justify Washington's policies also increased after 9/11, and the main policy of these networks was to create religious strife, as well as to highlight and control internal disputes and consequently, to justify the U.S. occupation of West Asia.

Mehdi Azizi is the chief editor of the international service of Mehr News agency

9/11 attacks hastened decline of American dream

TEHRAN — The September 11, 2001, attacks on civilian and military targets in the U.S. delivered a major blow to the idea of the American dream in terms of inciting hate crimes against immigrants across the country, according to U.S. experts.

In a blow to the American dream, many Muslims and even non-Muslim immigrants were murdered or attacked in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks. The murder of a Sikh immigrant from India in Arizona was one of the first deadly hate crimes in the U.S. that turned the American dream into a nightmare for those immigrated to the U.S. in a quest for achieving the American dream.

The immigrant, Balbir Singh Sodhi, who was in pursuit of the American dream of middle-class success, was murdered in a hate crime on September 15, 2001, only two weeks after the 9/11 attacks. Sodhi, who had a beard and wore a turban in accordance with his Sikh faith, was killed only because he looked like a Muslim. His killer, Frank Silva Roque, a Boeing aircraft mechanic at a local repair facility who held a criminal record for an attempted robbery in California, mistook him for a Muslim. Roque complained to friends in a bar about immigrants and the September 11 attacks and expressed a desire for retaliation. When arrested, he proclaimed, "I am a patriot" and told authorities that he wanted "to kill a Muslim."

Sodhi had sensed danger immediately after the 9/11 attacks. So he called his brother to find a solution to the dangers posed to the Sikhs.

"All Sikhs will be in trouble soon," Sodhi's brother recalled him saying. Referring to Osama bin Laden, the mastermind of the September 11 attacks, he said, "The man they suspect, the one they show on television, has a similar face to us, and people don't understand the difference."

In an attempt to express Sikh solidarity with fellow Americans and distinguish Sikhs from those behind the attacks, Sodhi helped organize a press conference for Sunday, September 16. However, he was shot dead on September 15 in a hate crime.

"Instead of obtaining the American dream of middle-class success, Sodhi experienced the American nightmare of hate and violence. Sodhi's death is just one of many examples of growing anti-immigrant rhetoric and violence in the United States," wrote Peter Liebhold in a report published by the National Museum of American History in 2019.

Analysts believe that the September 11 attacks played a major role in propagating Islamophobia across the U.S.

"Mosques have been attacked in the



years since the September 11 attacks," Ja'afar Ghannadbashi, a West Asia expert, told the Tehran Times, adding that Islamophobia took hold following the September attacks.

According to Ghannadbashi, U.S. President Donald Trump has exacerbated the hatred toward Muslims by imposing a travel ban on Muslim majority countries.

Responding to a question on the American dream in the post-9/11 era, the expert also said that Trump has made efforts to replace the American dream with nationalism with no success.

In 2015, President Trump declared the American dream dead as he announced that he was running for president. Trump said, "Sadly, the American dream is dead. But if I get elected president I will bring it back bigger and better and stronger than ever before, and we will make America great again."

One year later, Trump took office. Nearly four years into his administration, however, Trump apparently failed to bring back the American dream. In an echo of the 2016 presidential election — when the American dream was "dead" according to Trump — the U.S. president once again made the promise of making America great again a pillar of his 2020 election campaign, a tacit acknowledgment of his failure to bring back the American dream.

The American dream has incurred damage in the years after the September 11 attacks, according to Amirali Abolfath, a U.S. expert.

"American dream is a multidimensional concept. One dimension is germane to

security and the citizens' and residents' feeling of being secure in American society. Economic welfare is another dimension. The American dream used to mean that if you work hard you will achieve economic welfare. American dream also has a cultural dimension, which means that the U.S. is a diverse country whose people enjoy the freedom of expression, worship, and belief. If one of these dimensions is damaged, the whole idea of the American dream will be negatively affected," Abolfath told the Tehran Times.

He added, "The 9/11 attacks didn't wreak direct havoc on the economic dimension of the American dream, although they had economic implications. However, the September attacks damaged the security dimension. They showed that American society wasn't immune from foreign attacks. The 9/11 attacks shattered the perception of U.S. being secure and stable. According to the official narrative of the U.S., the September attacks marked the first time that the U.S. was attacked in recent history."

According to Abolfath, the September 11 attacks also negatively affected the lives of immigrants and minority groups in the U.S. by restricting their freedom of belief.

"In the post-9/11 era, the lives of Muslims and non-Muslims immigrants in the U.S. became increasingly difficult. American citizens felt threatened by them. They were ill-treated and even faced the prospect of being isolated," the U.S. expert said.

He pointed out, "The idea that anyone immigrating to the U.S. would be able to live his American dream and enjoy the

freedom of belief and worship has been shattered, at least for a certain groups of U.S. citizens and residents who immigrated from Muslim and non-Muslim countries."

Abolfath believes that the September 11 attacks were also a turning point in propagating Islamophobia, though the anti-Islamic sentiments subsided in later times.

Since 1931, the idea of the American dream has been a source of inspiration for a lot of authors, filmmakers, politicians, and public figures as well as ordinary people from all walks of life in the U.S., who sought to make their dreams come true in a country that once was famous for its upward social mobility possibilities.

The term American dream first emerged in 1931, when American historian James Truslow Adams coined it in his bestseller book entitled "The Epic of America."

Adams stated, "The American Dream is that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement". He further said the American dream was not "a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position."

The definition of the American dream has witnessed many changes over the past century. It has morphed from the right to create a better life to the strong desire to achieve material goals such as buying a house or starting a business. The American dream is now defined as the following: If you work hard, your material dreams come true.

However, as the American dream became more associated with making progress in achieving economic goals, the income inequality gap in the U.S. worsened in recent years. "The income inequality gap has never been wider. The country's uneven wealth distribution is illustrated by the fact that the bottom 50% of Americans have just 1% of the nation's wealth, while the top 10% holds 70%," CNN reported on July 3, citing data released by the Pew Research Center.

Wealth and income inequality as well as the hardness of social mobility stand in stark contrast to the American dream. This fact was reflected in the World Economic Forum's Global Social Mobility report which was published on January 19, 2020. The U.S. was not among the top 10 countries. It was ranked 27th in this report.

9/11 made the world skeptical of the U.S. official narrative: American analyst

By Amir Mohammad Esmaeili

TEHRAN — Andrew Korybko, an American analyst based in Moscow, believes that 9/11 and its aftermath affected people's perceptions of the American government and its narrative on everything.

"What is most important to pay attention to, however, is the impact that 9/11 had on people's perceptions of the American government," Korybko, a member of the expert council for the Institute of Strategic Studies and Predictions at the People's Friendship University of Russia, tells the Tehran Times.

Korybko also says though the U.S. exploited the 9/11 attacks to invade Afghanistan and Iraq and advance "its Greater Middle East plan... the grand strategy failed to be implemented in full and even backfired in some respects."

The text of the interview with Korybko is as follows:
■ Some experts have cited reasons to question the official 9/11 narrative. They believe that for many reasons the official story is a myth that does not correspond to reality. What is your view?

A: The undisputed fact is that members of the U.S. intelligence community were aware that Al Qaeda was planning these attacks, though what's debatable is whether they put the separate pieces together in time in order to have a chance at taking preventive action to stop what ultimately happened. Another point of controversy is the collapse of World Trade Center 7, which wasn't hit by either of the two aircraft yet was destroyed in what some suspect was a controlled demolition. The same can be said for the way in which the other two main towers collapsed as well, according to popular interpretations of the available footage.

It's therefore difficult to determine exactly what happened, but in my opinion, it really doesn't matter anymore in the grand sense. Everyone is already familiar with both narratives — the official one alleging that the U.S. intelligence community was such an uncoordinated mess that it wasn't able to take preventive action in time to stop the terrorist attacks, and the alternative one speculating that the authorities allowed the attacks to happen and might have even facilitated their outcome by secretly planting explosives in the two targeted buildings and World Trade Center 7.

This means that everyone's interpretation of what happened is a personal one since they have more than enough information available to reach their own conclusions. Those who ascribe to the official narrative are more trusting of the U.S. government than those who support the alternative one, the latter of whom suspect that members of the "deep state" (permanent military, intelligence, and diplomatic bureaucracies) and some of the political elite



(high-level members of the Bush Administration and a few folks in influential think tanks such as the "Project for a New American Century") committed treason through their alleged involvement in 9/11.

Each side's mind is therefore already made up and isn't likely to change. All that's important is that both narratives are equally well known, which is already the case. They're as irreconcilable as Trump and Antifa are, and each interpretation will continue to influence subsequent generations, who will only become more polarized as time goes on. That's the only real significance of debating the origins of 9/11 nowadays, to influence the younger generation into accepting one or the other viewpoint. Those who already hold such beliefs probably won't change their mind nearly two decades after that incident happened.

■ How do you see the relationship between 9/11 and the Greater Middle East plan?

A: 9/11, regardless of its origins, was exploited as the pretext for executing the Greater Middle East plan. The obvious cause and effect, especially considering the fact that the Greater Middle East plan precedes that event, partially explains the popularity of the alternative narrative.

■ In your view, has the U.S. succeeded in that respect?

A: Yes, insofar as the 9/11 was successfully exploited as the pretext for invading Afghanistan and Iraq, which in turn enabled the U.S. to make progress in advancing its Greater Middle East plan, though that grand strategy failed to be implemented in full and even backfired in some respects. The region hasn't (yet?) been formally "Balkanized", and the weaponization of chaos theory there created outcomes disadvantageous to U.S. interests such as opening up opportunities for other countries to challenge American influence there. Iran, Russia, China, and Turkey -- though not necessarily in full coordination with one another or sharing the same outlook -- have expanded

their influence in the "Greater Middle East" following the U.S.' invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, though that didn't of course happen right away but took some time to occur.

■ Some scholars argue that 9/11 was the death of the "American Dream". What's your take on this?

A: The "American Dream" is difficult to define and varies depending on each individual, but it's generally understood to refer to the socio-economic and political opportunities that people are expected to have in the U.S., which are portrayed as being better there than anywhere else. 9/11 set into motion a chain of events that indirectly led to socio-economic difficulties for Americans, but it's unclear whether they'd have experienced such challenges even if that event didn't transpire. What's most important to pay attention to, however, is the impact that 9/11 had on people's perceptions of the American government.

The alternative narrative claims that members of the "deep state" and political elite conspired to commit treason by the very least "passively facilitating" (if not outright actively participating in) those attacks, while the official one acknowledges the bureaucratic inefficiency of the U.S. intelligence community, though cynics suspect it's just a distraction from what they truly believe was an inside-job to some extent. Nevertheless, the very fact that the official narrative claimed (or as cynics might phrase it, felt compelled to claim for "face-saving" reasons) that this branch of the "deep state" couldn't do its job properly shows that the U.S. is imperfect.

That in and of itself discredited the notion of "American Exceptionalism" (which implies perfection) and directly contributed to fueling the alternative narrative. It's not difficult for many to believe that the U.S. government staged a so-called "limited hangout" by revealing an "open secret" ("deep state" divisions and inefficiency) in order to cover up for a more devious one. In any case, the prior trust that many Americans had in their government was lost, albeit to varying extents depending on which narrative they believe. This in turn led to each person questioning their interpretation of the "American Dream" that they previously took for granted.

All told, 9/11 was an epochal moment not just for historical and geopolitical reasons, but also in terms of global perceptions of the American government. Its most stalwart supporters at home and abroad might never have previously acknowledged the U.S. imperfections (to put it mildly), yet even they were now forced to at least recognize the official narrative claiming that its intelligence community didn't function like it was supposed to. After 9/11, a lot of people began to question the U.S. official narratives, which ultimately led to the deterioration of its soft power to the point where most folks now treat all of its statements with skepticism.