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# Pompeo pushing Trump toward war with Iran

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**By Faranak Bakhtiari**  
Tehran Times journalist

## Knowledge-based companies in full swing to tackle sanctions

Domestic knowledge-based companies are now flourishing to the extent that 300 Iranian products have replaced the sanctioned foreign ones, helping the country to take steps toward a knowledge-based economy to reduce the impact of sanctions.

Currently, some 5,000 knowledge-based companies are active in the country, manufacturing diverse products to meet the needs of the domestic market while saving large amounts of foreign currency.

Although sanctions have put pressure on the country, it has provided a unique opportunity for business development and the activity of knowledge-based companies in the country.

The fields of aircraft maintenance, steel, pharmaceuticals, and medical equipment, oil and gas are among the sectors that researchers in technology companies have engaged in, leading to import reduction.

In recent years, the vice presidency for science and technology has been supporting knowledge-based companies active in the production of sanctioned items, Ismail Ghaderifar, head of the center for strategic technologies development of the vice presidency of science and technology, said.

"Although we are facing the toughest and most severe sanctions in the field of the aviation industry, the country's air fleet is working well in the field of repair and overhaul of aircraft engines by knowledge-based companies," he stated.

Even these researchers are taking a big step to build turbine systems and air engines, which will be achieved in the next 4-5 years, he added.

### Graphite electrodes save \$60-100m

Ghaderifar went on to note that another area of great importance is the steel industry, where two knowledge-based companies entered and produced the "graphite electrodes" that are a basic need of steel companies.

Regarding the foreign exchange savings that the production of these graphite electrodes has brought, he noted that it is estimated at about \$60-100 million. **→7**

## Arab normalization deals with Israel will not last long

TEHRAN – While the White House portrays the normalization deals between some Arab states and Israel as "the dawn of a new Middle East [West Asia]", an expert on West Asia tells the Tehran Times that the normalization deals are doomed to fail.

On Tuesday afternoon, U.S. President Donald Trump hosted high-ranking American and foreign officials including Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and Abdullah bin Zayed and Abdullatif al-Zayani, the foreign ministers of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, who traveled to Washington to sign the U.S.-brokered normalization deals, officially known as the Abraham Accords.

The deals were signed with great fanfare after Abu Dhabi and Manama took the controversial step of fully normalizing relations with Israel without solving the decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which has been only

exacerbated in recent months as Netanyahu announced his plan to annex large swaths of the West Bank. The UAE has said that Israel has agreed to halt the annexation plan and the Emirati foreign minister has thanked Netanyahu for "halting the annexation of Palestinian territories," during his speech at the signing ceremony of the normalization deals at the White House. However, the Israeli prime minister has boasted on many occasions that he only agreed to "suspend" not halt the annexation plan.

Abdullah bin Zayed said the normalization deal with Israel will enable the UAE to support the Palestinian people. "And as for us in the United Arab Emirates, this accord will enable us to continue to stand by the Palestinian people and realize their hopes for an independent state within a stable and prosperous region," the foreign minister said. **→3**

## Israel bombs Gaza after rocket fire as UAE, Bahrain signed deals

The Israeli military has carried out a series of air raids on the besieged Gaza Strip overnight on Wednesday, causing damage to the Palestinian media.

According to Wafa, the official Palestinian news agency, Israeli warplanes fired missiles at a site in Beit Lahya in the northern strip. They also targeted areas in Deir al-Balah, a city in central Gaza, as well as parts of Khan Younis in southern Gaza. No casualties were reported.

Hamas, the group that governs the Gaza Strip, on Wednesday, warned Israel it "will pay the price for any aggression against our people or resistance sites, and the response will be direct."

"We will increase and expand our response to the extent that the occupation persists in its aggression," it said in a statement.

Without naming specific factions, the Pal-

estinian Islamic Jihad group in Gaza said in response to the Israeli air raids; the "resistance" fired rocket salvos at Israel.

Earlier on Wednesday, the Israeli army in a statement said it carried out ten airstrikes against positions belonging to Hamas in response to rockets being fired into Israel.

On Tuesday evening, at least two rockets were fired from the Gaza Strip, one of which was intercepted by Israel's Iron Dome anti-missile system, while the other struck the coastal Israeli city of Ashdod, wounding two people.

The rockets were fired at the same time as Israel, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain signed agreements at the White House in Washington to establish diplomatic relations.

Palestinians, who seek an independent state that includes the illegally occupied West Bank and Gaza, view the US-brokered deals as a betrayal of their cause. **→5**

## Reviving small mines plays significant role in job creation

**By Mahnaz Abdi**

The plan for reviving small mines in Iran was first launched by Iran Mine House in early 2018 in the framework of some agreements with the mining associations and companies.

Then the plan was officially put into operation in April this year, and the Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry is pursuing it seriously.

The ministry has revived 42 such mines in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21).

Based on the data released by Iran Minerals Production and Supply Company (IMPASCO), during the mentioned period, 510 mines across the country have been identified and prioritized under the framework of the small-scale mines reviving activation and development program.

Holding more than 10 joint technical committee meetings with investors, as well as holding meetings to activate the country's copper mines with the help of the National Iranian Copper Industries Company (NICICO) were reported

as other measures taken in this program during the past five months.

While reviving the small mines is a major step toward materializing "Surge in Production", which is the motto of the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 20), it also plays a significant role in job creation throughout the country.

As reported, reviving the small mines has created 300 job opportunities in the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20). **→4**



A view of Shahriar's room in his house converted into a museum in Tabriz, East Azarbaijan Province.

## Literati to commemorate Shahriar on National Day of Poetry and Literature

TEHRAN – The National Day of Persian Poetry and Literature is observed every year on the death anniversary of contemporary poet Mohammad-Hossein Behjat Tabrizi, Shahriar, which falls on Thursday this year.

As the most prominent figure of contemporary Persian literature, Shahriar was mainly influenced by the poetry of Hafez, a Persian poet writing in the 14th century.

"Heidar Babaya Salam" is Shahriar's most famous Azerbaijani poetry collection, which highlights his birthplace, the village of Heidar Baba.

## Promoting Iranian saffron in global markets a major plan of TPO

**By Mahnaz Abdi**

TEHRAN – Given the importance of saffron as one of the country's major export items, promotion of Iranian saffron status in the global market is one of the main issues followed up by Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO).

In this regard, the organization constantly holds different meetings attended by the representatives of related organizations

on this issue, as it considers expansion of the export markets of Iranian saffron a necessity.

The latest meeting held by the TPO was the meeting of the National Saffron Export Desk on Wednesday.

According to Mahmoud Bazari, the director-general of TPO's Export Coordination Office for agro crops and processing industry products, **→4**

## Rouhani congratulates Iranians on imminent U.S. defeat

TEHRAN – President Hassan Rouhani has congratulated the Iranian people on the imminent defeat of the United States to trigger the so-called snapback sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

"In advance, I congratulate the Iranian nation on the upcoming Saturday and Sunday victory [of Iran] and the U.S. humiliating defeat," Rouhani said during a cabinet session on Wednesday morning. U.S. President Donald Trump quit the

nuclear deal in May 2018 and introduced the harshest ever sanctions in history on Iran as part of his administration's "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran.

The United States has for months insisted that it has the legal right to reimpose the UN sanctions on Iran even though the U.S. has abandoned the nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). **→2**

## Resistance festival announces jury for "Health Defenders" category

TEHRAN – The 16th Resistance International Film Festival has announced the jury members for the documentary films in the "Health Defenders" category.

Abolfazl Jalili, Payam Fazlinejad, Abdolsattar Kakai, Masud Moinifar and Hadi Najji are the jury members for this section.

In appreciation of the medical workers' efforts on the front lines of the campaign against COVID-19, the festival has initiated

a category titled "Health Defenders" in collaboration with the Health Ministry.

Films focusing on the endeavors health workers have made during the pandemic will be competing in this section.

The organizers have also released the names of the jury members for the documentary films in the documentary section.

The jury members are Reza Borji, Asghar Bakhtiari, Mostafa Dalai, Mohammad Sadri and Salim Ghafari. **→8**

## Riyadh pushed Bahrain, UAE to normalize ties with Israel: human right defender

**By Mohammad Mazhari**

TEHRAN – A human rights defender, Yahya Alhadiid, predicts that Saudi Arabia will join the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain to declare a normalization of ties with the Israeli regime, noting that Riyadh had nodded and backed normalization of ties with Israel by the UAE and Bahrain.

Tuesday, Bahrain agreed to sign a diplomatic deal normalizes Tel-Aviv and Manama's relations, further isolating Palestine.

Like the UAE, Bahrain also normalized diplomatic, commercial, security, and other relations with Israel.

Bahrain, along with Saudi Arabia, had already dropped a ban on Israeli flights using its airspace.

But Bahrain's move has sparked a harsh backlash among Arab movements and Palestinian leaders who denounced it as "another treacherous stab to the Palestinian cause." **→5**

**State Printing Office of Iran (SPOI)**  
**Renewed (Second stage)**  
Tender of purchasing 8/5 tons transparent white laser polycarbonate in sheet  
**Tender NO : 2099001065000033**  
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## Pompeo pushing Trump toward war with Iran, Zarif warns

Now the habitual liar trying to sucker Trump into mother of all quagmires

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN — U.S. President Donald Trump is being pushed toward a war with Iran by “the habitual liar”, says Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. “The habitual liar bamboozled @realDonaldTrump into assassinating ISIS’ enemy #1 by raising a false alarm,” Zarif tweeted on Tuesday, pointing to U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. “Now he’s trying to sucker him into mother of all quagmires by leaking a new false alarm,” he said. “Time to wake up.”



It came hours after Trump threatened Iran with a “1,000 times greater” attack in response to a cooked-up Politico report which claimed Iran is planning to assassinate the U.S. ambassador to South Africa.

“According to press reports, Iran may be planning an assassination, or another attack, against the United States in retaliation for the killing of terrorist leader Soleimani, which was carried out for his planning a future attack, murdering U.S. Troops, and the death & suffering caused over so many years,” Trump wrote in his Twitter page, pointing to the U.S. assassination of Iran’s anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani on January 3.

“Any attack by Iran, in any form, against the United States will be met with an attack on Iran that will be 1,000 times greater in magnitude!” Trump added.

The Politico story, which was published on Sunday, claimed that the Iranian government is weighing an assassination attempt against U.S. Ambassador to South Africa Lana Marks to avenge the Trump-ordered assassination of General Soleimani.

Iran has strongly rejected the accusation, calling the report “customer-made, biased and purposeful”.

Noting that Politico has tried to portray its claim as real by referring to the remarks of an “apparent American official”, Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said in a Monday statement that “we advise the United States’ officials to stop resorting to repeated and decayed methods to create anti-Iran commotion at the international arena.”

## Parliament lauds Army’s Zolfaqar-99 war game

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN — Iran’s Parliament has lauded a recent military exercise, dubbed Zolfaqar-99, by the Army as a success for showcasing the Iranian military’s capabilities.

In a statement on Wednesday, the lawmakers said that the military exercise successfully tested a variety of key weapons and equipment, such as submarines, drones and missiles.

The Iranian Army on Saturday concluded a three-day joint military exercise, which kicked off in Iran’s southern waters.

According to the MPs, the exercise was conducted based on the Islamic Republic’s military strategies to evaluate the latest achievements of the defense industry.



“The exercise tested Iran’s offensive capabilities, operational and combat capabilities as well as the strength and speed of movement and transfer of the forces,” the statement read, according to Mehr.

The lawmakers also pointed out that the defense power of the Islamic Republic rests on seeking peace and stability in West Asia and that the message of the Zolfaqar-99 drill was also peace and stability for neighboring countries.

“We, the Iranian representatives, on behalf of the clever people of Iran, appreciate and support the sincere and tireless efforts of the commanders, officers, and soldiers of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in particular the commander of the Army,” the statement added.

The three-day war game showcased some of the latest achievements of the Army’s units, which were produced to counter the threats by Iran’s enemies.

A variety of surface and subsurface submarine units of the Navy, such as destroyers, missile launchers and the Tariq, Ghadir and Fateh-class submarines displayed their strength on Saturday.

On Thursday, F-27 and P3F aircraft as well as reconnaissance drones conducted naval patrols to monitor the drills.

Iran’s F-4 fighter-bombers conducted long-range flights from their bases to attend the war game. They destroyed surface targets using optimized precision strike missiles. The F-4 Phantoms stroke at mobile targets at sea and bombed their designated targets on the coast.

On Friday, the Army successfully fired an anti-ship coast-to-sea cruise missile, dubbed “Qader”, at a mock enemy vessel over 200 kilometers from the coast.

Another anti-ship cruise missile, dubbed “Nasr”, was fired from the Najm missile boat to hit designated target in the southern waters of Iran.

The Army’s first combat drone, named “Kaman-12”, also conducted surveillance operations during the joint military exercise.

Iran has repeatedly stated that its military power is only for deterrence, saying its military power is defensive in nature and does not pose any threats to other countries.

# Trump’s war threat against Iran a gross violation of UN Charter: ambassador

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN — Iran’s ambassador to the United Nations has said U.S. President Donald Trump’s threat to use military force against Iran constitutes a gross violation of the United Nations’ Charter.

“I am writing to inform you that, on 14 September 2020, the President of the United States of America, referring to ‘press reports’, made a baseless allegation against the Islamic Republic of Iran and threatened to use force against my country,” Majid Takht-Ravanchi wrote in a letter to UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres. “Such a provocative statement constitutes a gross violation of the very fundamental principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly its Article 2(4) that clearly prohibits the threat or use of force,” Takht-Ravanchi said, according to IRNA.

The letter came in response to Trump’s tweet, in which he threatened Iran with a “1,000 times greater” attack after a fake Politico report claimed that Iran is planning to assassinate the U.S. ambassador to South Africa.

“According to press reports, Iran may be planning an assassination, or another attack, against the United States in retaliation for the killing of terrorist leader Soleimani, which was carried out for his planning a future attack, murdering U.S. Troops, and the death & suffering caused over so many years,” Trump wrote in his Twitter page, referring to the U.S. assassination of Iran’s anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani on January 3.



“Any attack by Iran, in any form, against the United States will be met with an attack on Iran that will be 1,000 times greater in magnitude!” Trump added.

According to Takht-Ravanchi, it was not the first time that the U.S. president has threatened to use force against Iran.

He said after the assassination of Qassem Soleimani on 3 January and in the course of January 3 to 5, Trump threatened on five different occasions to use force against Iran.

“We seriously warn about any further military adventurism against Iran by the United

States who must bear the full responsibility for all consequences,” Takht-Ravanchi maintained.

“The irresponsible policies and unlawful practices of the United States pose a serious threat to international peace and security,” he added.

Therefore, he continued, it is incumbent upon the UN Security Council to demand that the United States put an end to its threats and unfettered policies and hold that country accountable for its wrongful acts.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran will not hesitate to exercise its inherent right to self-defense to protect its people, defend its sovereignty and

territorial integrity and secure its national interests against any aggression,” the ambassador remarked.

“I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council,” he concluded.

The Foreign Ministry has also strongly rejected the Politico report as false.

In a Monday statement, spokesman Khatibzadeh linked the report to the upcoming U.S. presidential election, which could pose a great challenge to Trump’s re-election.

The spokesman also said, “This kind of unfounded and baseless remarks is part of the Trump administration’s disinformation campaign against Iran.”

According to Khatibzadeh, it was predictable that the U.S. administration would resort to lying and leveling accusations against Iran ahead of U.S. presidential election simultaneously with its efforts to misuse the UN Security Council mechanisms in order to increase pressure on the Iranian people.

“This type of measures and headline-making, which is likely to continue in the future, will absolutely yield no results and will be added to the long list of U.S. failures against Iran,” Khatibzadeh asserted. He also accused Politico of selling the Trump administration’s “folly.”

Khatibzadeh also said that Iran “will never forgive or forget” the cowardly assassination of Soleimani and will pursue the case legally.

## Rouhani congratulates Iranians on imminent U.S. defeat

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN — Last month, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo traveled to New York to notify the UN Security Council of Iran’s “significant non-performance” of the nuclear deal as defined in UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

All JCPOA participants, along with 13 members of the 15-member UN Security Council, rejected the U.S. notification. They said that the U.S. had no legal authority to trigger the snapback process because it has withdrawn from the JCPOA.

The U.S., however, says it looks forward to restoring the international sanctions on Iran by September 20, which marks the end of the 30-day period that it activated the process of restoring the UN sanctions on Iran.

“They have come to experience the next defeat,” Rouhani

said. “They wanted to use the snapback mechanism but all the world knows that the snapback mechanism is for those who are members of Barjam (JCPOA).”

This is a one-month process which fortunately the U.S. was not able to trigger it, he explained.

“The U.S. wants to orchestrate a plot against the Iranian nation and it cannot take one step forward,” he added.

The president said members of the UN Security Council, the three European countries (E3) as well as China and Russia have opposed the U.S. move and eventually the U.S. became isolated.

“The lonely, infamous America is seeking to please itself on Saturday and Sunday,” he said. “How can the U.S., which was not able to trigger [the snapback mechanism], claim that it has succeeded?”



Rouhani added that with the exception of the Zionist regime and a few small countries which have clung to the White House, the Americans are all alone in the world.

The U.S. attempt to invoke the snapback of sanctions against Iran 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. Under the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, the arms embargo against the Islamic Republic will end on October 18.

**“The lonely, infamous America is seeking to please itself on Saturday and Sunday,” he said. “How can the U.S., which was not able to trigger [the snapback mechanism], claim that it has succeeded?”**

## Zarif says Iran ready to help Afghanistan restore peace

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has reiterated Iran’s long-held position to help Afghans fully restore peace and stability in their country.

In a phone conversation with Afghan caretaker foreign minister Mohammad Hanif Atmar on Tuesday, Zarif expressed satisfaction with the launch of intra-Afghan talks in Doha, Tasnim reported.

Zarif and Atmar also talked about bilateral issues within the context of the comprehensive document on strategic cooperation.

Talks between Afghanistan and Taliban to end the country’s long-running conflict kicked off in Doha on Saturday. It was the first time the two sides have convened for peace talks since the United States invaded Afghanistan nineteen years ago.

It comes months after a U.S. deal with the Taliban, under which the Donald Trump administration agreed to reduce the U.S. troop presence from 12,000 to 8,600 within a few months and to withdraw all of these forces by mid-2021.

The drawdown is ahead of schedule.

Trump, who is seeking re-election in November without a meaningful foreign policy achievement, has promised to have fewer than five thousand U.S. troops in Afghanistan by Election Day.

In a statement on Saturday, Iran’s Foreign Ministry expressed the hope that the two sides would be able to reach a lasting agreement by preserving the valuable achievements of the Afghan people.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes start of inter-Afghan talks between the Afghan government, political groups and the

Taliban, and hopes that these talks will lead to the desired results for the establishment of lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan and security in the region without foreign intervention and in a comprehensive understanding between Afghans,” the statement read.

It also reiterated Iran’s position that there is no military solution to Afghanistan’s problems, emphasizing that the continued presence of foreign forces in Afghanistan is one of the main reasons behind the continuation of the war in the country.

## Iran to continue cooperation with IAEA: deputy FM

**TEHRAN (Tasnim)** — Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Mohsen Baharvand said the country will move forward with its cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as before.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran continues its cooperation with the Agency, but there is a valid question to be raised: ‘whether the JCPOA and the verification activities in accordance with this deal can resist the pressures exerted by the U.S. creating an extremely difficult situation for its viability?’ the answer to this question could be both yes and no. Everything depends on the international community and remaining participants of the JCPOA,” Baharvand said in a speech before the



IAEA Board of Governors on Verification and Monitoring in the Islamic Republic of Iran in Light of UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

He also said the U.S. is sparing no effort to frustrate this important deal.

“What might be the benefit of U.S. in destroying such a multilateral agreement, or what the U.S. would be able to propose in its absence, is up to them to explain,” Baharvand said.

“My take on that would be the U.S. approach toward Iran is an ideological antagonistic one, no other justification can serve the amount of animosity of the United States toward my country,” he added.

## Iranian scientist rejected FBI’s spying proposal: report

**TEHRAN (Press TV)** — A report says an Iranian scientist, who was wrongfully arrested and accused upon arrival in the U.S. in 2017, had squarely refused an earlier proposal by the U.S.’s investigative authority FBI to spy on Iran in exchange for money.

The report published by The New Yorker magazine on Monday said that in April 2013, the scientist Siros Asgari was asked by two agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation to engage in espionage activities against the Islamic Republic.

The magazine identified the operatives as Special Agents Matthew Olson and Timothy Boggs.

Olson, who had lured Asgari into a café by sticking his business card inside the door of the scientist’s apartment “offered him five thousand dollars—if he would sign a paper, which he could get from another man in the café.” The man with the paper was Boggs,

a counterintelligence officer at the FBI’s Cleveland, Ohio field office, whose focus was Iran, it added.

Asgari is a professor of material sciences at Iran’s Sharif University of Technology, who has studied and attended research projects for long in the U.S., fathered one child in the country, and sent two more to educate there.

“No honorable offer” — “Asgari realized that he’d walked into a trap. Olson was not there to arrest him. He was trying to recruit him as an informant,” the report read.

“Asgari looked at the man with the paper to sign and felt sick. He wouldn’t sign anything, he said, or take a penny from the FBI. Honorable people didn’t entertain such offers,” it noted.

“The FBI had reason to be interested in a man like Asgari. Sharif University was Iran’s premier technical institution, and the instru-

ments and insights of materials science could be used to build missiles and centrifuges...,” The New Yorker wrote.

■ **‘Brutal’ payback** — In 2015, Asgari and his wife applied for U.S. visas to be able to visit their children. Their visas were strangely approved in the spring of 2017 after U.S. President Donald Trump banned visits from Iran.

Upon arrival in the U.S., the FBI placed him under arrest, while his visa was yet to be stamped and his passport returned, something that gave U.S. officials an excuse to detain him for around three years from that date.

Then he was charged with “theft of trade secrets, visa fraud, and eleven counts of wire fraud.”

His indictment claimed that a four-month visit that he had made to Case Western Reserve University in Ohio four years earlier had been “part of a scheme to defraud an

American valve manufacturer of its intellectual property in order to benefit the Iranian government.”

The scientist rejected the charges as “nonsense” because the processes that he had studied at the university were well known to materials scientists and hardly trade secrets.

The FBI warned him during his detention, “We haven’t lost a case,” but was told by him, “This will be your first.”

Asgari returned home this June thanks to diplomatic efforts by Tehran, despite Washington’s attempts at prolonging his detention and exchange him with an Iran-held prisoner.

Since Trump’s 2016 inauguration, the U.S. has either arrested or deported many Iranian scientists and students under various excuses, prompting the Islamic Republic to warn the academics that Washington could lure them to the United States before trying to exploit their presence there.

# Pompeo plot against Iran will absolutely fail, top IRGC general says

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN — General Esmail Kowsari, an advisor to the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps chief, told the Tehran Times that the U.S. administration seeks to cook up stories against Iran ahead of U.S. presidential elections but they will fail. "They absolutely seek to cook up a scenario against Iran, and they will absolutely fail. Because their allegations are unfounded and baseless. And the U.S. does not dare to take actions against Iran in this stage," the general said in response to question from the Tehran Times on allegations that Iran is weighing a plot to kill the American ambassador to South Africa. "This plot will absolutely and certainly be foiled."

The top general added, "As the late Imam Khomeini said the U.S. is the great Satan, and the great Satan always seeks to swindle the people. Trump is one of the great devils. His Administration has pressured countries such as the Emirates and Bahrain into establishing relations with the occupying regime of Israel to question the [cause] of Palestine. He is



doing so to win the presidential election. With respect to this issue [Trump's threat against Iran] Trump is seeking a similar goal," said General Kowsari, adding, "Trump and his

cohorts want to create certain circumstances to boost Trump's reelection chances."

In a tweet on Monday, U.S. President Donald Trump threatened Iran after Politico published a report accusing Iran of weighing a plot to kill Lana Marks, the U.S. ambassador to South Africa, in retaliation for the assassination of IRGC's Quds Force commander Qassem Soleimani.

Referring to press reports about Iran's alleged plot to retaliate for the assassination of General Soleimani, Trump Tweeted, "Any attack by Iran, in any form, against the United States will be met with an attack on Iran that will be 1,000 times greater in magnitude!" Iran firmly rejected the Politico report, calling it "custom-made, ill-intentioned, and purposeful."

"This kind of unfounded and baseless remarks is part of the Trump administration's disinformation campaign against Iran," Saeed Khatibzadeh, the spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry, said in a statement on Tuesday.

## 'Mother of all quagmires' won't be limited

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said that U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is seeking to push his boss into a war with Iran, one that would not be limited. A top general also tells the Tehran Times that Pompeo won't succeed in his efforts against Iran.

In a tweet on late Tuesday, Zarif blamed the assassination of IRGC's Quds Force commander General Qassem Soleimani on Pompeo, whom he described as "habitual liar." The chief diplomat also accused Pompeo of trying to push the U.S. president into a war with Iran. "The habitual liar bamboozled Donald Trump into assassinating ISIS' enemy #1 by raising a false alarm. Now he's trying to sucker him into mother of all quagmires by leaking a new false alarm," Zarif tweeted.

The chief diplomat said Politico, which first broke the news about Iran's alleged plot to assassinate the U.S. ambassador to South Africa in retaliation for the assassination of General Soleimani, quoted unidentified "U.S. officials" in its reports and Trump based his threat against Iran on "press reports" originating from the Politico report.

"Time to wake up," Zarif concluded.

The foreign minister was responding to threatening tweets published by President Trump after the American publication claimed that Iran is weighing a plot to kill Lana Marks, the U.S. ambassador to South Africa.

"According to press reports, Iran may be planning an assassination, or another attack, against the United States in retaliation for the killing of terrorist leader Soleimani, which was carried out for his planning a future attack, murdering U.S. Troops, and the death & suffering caused over so many years. Any attack by Iran, in any form, against the United States will be met with an attack on Iran that will be 1,000 times greater in magnitude!" Trump thundered in a tweet on Monday.

Trump's tweet came after Iran strongly dismissed the Politico report, calling it "custom-made, ill-intentioned, and purposeful."

"This kind of unfounded and baseless remarks is part of the Trump administration's disinformation campaign against Iran," Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said in a statement on Tuesday, adding that it was predictable that the U.S. administration would resort to lying and leveling accusations against Iran ahead of the U.S. presidential election simultaneously with its efforts to misuse the UN Security Council mechanisms

in order to increase pressure on the Iranian people.

"This type of measures and headline-making, which is likely to continue in the future, will absolutely yield no results and will be added to the long list of U.S. failures against Iran," Khatibzadeh asserted. He also accused Politico of selling the Trump administration's "folly."

Trump, along with his "cohorts", seeks to boost his reelection chances by leveling accusations against Iran and securing normalization deals between some Arab states and Israel, according to General Esmail Kowsari, an advisor to the chief of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps.

"As the late Imam Khomeini said the U.S. is the great Satan, and the great Satan always seeks to swindle the people. Trump is one of the great devils. His administration has pressured countries such as the Emirates and Bahrain into establishing relations with the occupying regime of Israel to question the [cause] of Palestine. He is doing so to win the presidential election. With respect to this issue [Trump's threat against Iran] Trump is seeking a similar goal," Kowsari told the Tehran Times. "Trump and his cohorts want to create certain circumstances to boost Trump's reelection chances."

According to the top general, the Trump administration seeks to cook up stories against Iran to affect the U.S. voters. General Kowsari added that Iran always declares its measures and intentions without any fear of anyone.

"They are absolutely seeking to cook up a scenario against Iran, and they will absolutely fail. Because their allegations are unfounded and baseless. And the U.S. does not dare to take actions against Iran in this stage," the general said. "This plot will absolutely and certainly be foiled."

### ■ No limited war

Iran has warned on many occasions that it would decisively respond to "any strategic mistake" by the U.S. and that a war against Iran will not be limited in time and scope. Government spokesman Ali Rabiei warned on Wednesday that Iran will respond to "any strategic mistake" by the U.S., hours after Trump threatened to attack Iran.

Zarif also previously warned that a war with Iran could set the whole region on fire. In an interview with "Face the Nation" in September 2019, Zarif issued a clear warning.



"No. No, I'm not confident that we can avoid a war. We-I'm confident that we will not start one but I'm confident that whoever starts one will be the one who finishes it," Zarif warned. "That means that there won't be a limited war."

Analysts also echoed the same warning. Seyed Jalal Sadatian, Iran's former ambassador to the UK, told the Tehran Times that any military confrontation with Iran will not be limited and could include the region in its entirety.

"Israel can't confront Iran alone. So, the Americans strengthened their bases in the region to besiege Iran in a way that it would not be able to respond to any aggression. But they will fail because Iran has a strategic depth in the region and the U.S. can't undermine this strategic depth. So if they attack Iran, they will be bogged down in the region. Any attack against Iran could pave the way for the U.S. to be mired in the region," the former ambassador cautioned.

Sadatian noted, "Evidence suggests that the Trump administration is likely to wage a limited war with Iran to boost Donald Trump's reelection chances. And Iran is aware of this scheme and it held the Zolfaqar-99 military exercises to dissuade the Americans from pursuing ill-intentioned plots against Iran ahead of U.S. presidential election."

The former ambassador pointed to the efforts the Trump administration has done to bring Iran to its knees. However, Trump failed to force Iran into signing a new deal with the U.S. or at least giving him a photo op, according to Sadatian.

## Arab normalization deals with Israel will not last long

**I→** It's not clear how the UAE's deal with Israel would help establish an independent state for the Palestinian people while it virtually marginalizing the Palestinians in the normalization negotiations with Israel. The Palestinians have strongly condemned the normalization deals between Bahrain and the UAE and Israel as a stab in the back, further undermining the "peace" between Arab states and Israel.

Analysts and commentators believe that the peace deals may not last long given the strong opposition to them across the region and the lack of historical bonds between Israel and the Arab world. However, Trump seems to be upbeat about what he calls changing "the course of history."

"We're here this afternoon to change the course of history. After decades of division and conflict, we mark the dawn of a new Middle East. Thanks to the great courage of the leaders of these three countries, we take a major stride toward a future in which people of all faiths and backgrounds live together in peace and prosperity," Trump said at the Tuesday ceremony.

Arab normalization deals with Israel were a type of histrionics meant to serve election goals and that they could be reversed in the not-so-distant future, according to Houshang Sheikhhi, a political analyst and expert on West Asia.

"The people behind these deals were so tickled pink that they put on a histrionic display of exaggerating the importance of the normalization deals to achieve election goals. So I think these deals are likely to be reversed. Because deals are usually signed based on a set of interests. There are no great economic opportunities between Israel and Bahrain and the UAE. Considering the characteristics of the economies of Bahrain and the UAE and the economic capabilities of Israel, the two sides cannot build a long-term relationship. Because economic partnership is one of the



things that can strengthen the relationship," Sheikhhi told the Tehran Times. "Neither Israel is a big market for Bahrain and the UAE, nor do Bahrain and the UAE enjoy manufacturing-based economies that can gain a share of the Israeli market."

According to the expert, Bahrain and the UAE already had security contacts with Israel and Israeli operatives and agents have been active in Dubai and Abu Dhabi to oversee operations.

"It's unlikely that the relationship between the UAE and Bahrain and Israel would constitute normal and win-win ties in the long run or even in the short term. Because they have nothing to share. Therefore, the normalization deals have a very little chance to last long," Sheikhhi pointed out.

Aside from the economic aspects, some analysts point to the recent history of ties with Israel in the Arab world, which failed to break Israel's isolation in the region. Prior to Bahrain and the UAE's moves, at least two Arab countries had normalized ties with Israel in the past, but both ended their ties with Israel at later times. These two countries — Qatar and Mauritania

— had no borders with Israel. The first country was Qatar, which established ties with Israel in the 1990s.

The story of Qatar's relations with Israel dates back to 1995 when Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani was in need of foreign support after he staged a coup against his father. As a result, Qatar opened an Israeli trade office on its territory in a controversial move that year. The Emir of Qatar gradually consolidated his power, and as the policy of supporting the Palestinian cause became more prominent in Qatar's foreign policy, the tiny country finally closed the Israeli trade office in 2000, and relations between the two sides officially ended; although this relationship went on informally to this day.

Israel's relationship with Mauritania was both broader and more instructive. About four years after the establishment of trade relations between Qatar and Israel, in 1999, Mauritania also established formal diplomatic relations with Israel. The two sides established embassies and exchanged ambassadors. Security and military cooperation was also established between the two sides. But in 2009, due to the Israeli war on Gaza, Mauritania severed ties with Israel and expelled the Israeli ambassador, and even razed the Israeli embassy in Nouakchott to the ground.

Whether a future war with Gaza would damage the relationship between Israel and the UAE and Bahrain, remains on open questions. But it seems that the Israelis are worried about a possible reversal of ties between them and the Arab countries.

This may be the reason why an Emirati official recently sought to dispel speculations that an Israeli war with Gaza could spell the end of the UAE-Israel diplomatic ties. The official, Ali al-Nueimi, the head of the UAE Defense and Foreign Relations Committee, said the UAE-Israel relations will not be affected if a war takes place in the densely-populated Gaza Strip.

## SPORTS

### Persepolis handed two-window transfer ban

**S P O R T S** TEHRAN — Persepolis football team have been handed a two-window transfer ban by FIFA over non-payment of dues to former coach Branko Ivankovic.

The Iranian club were banned by FIFA's Dispute Resolution Chamber (DRC) after failed to meet their financial commitment.

The club's ban will be lifted once the debt — a total of \$800,000 — is paid off within a month.

Persepolis in a letter to Ivankovic's lawyer had demanded more time to fulfil their financial commitment.

Ivankovic, who inspired the Reds win seven titles during a four-year period, is the most coveted coach in the Iranian club.

Persepolis started the AFC Champions League groups stage on Tuesday with his new players, where the Reds defeated Al Taawoun 1-0 in Doha, Qatar.

Qatar's Al Duhail and the UAE's Sharjah are also in Group C.

### Esteghlal supporters unsatisfied about their team's future

**S P O R T S** TEHRAN — A group of Esteghlal supporters gathered in front of the Iranian football federation's headquarters on Wednesday to voice their concern to the directors of the Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) about Esteghlal's uncertain future and asked the return of Andrea Stramacchioni, the former coach of the Blues.

It was not the first time that the Esteghlal fans express their anger about the issue of not returning the Italian coach to their team.

After Hazfi Cup final, Farhad Majidi resigned from his position because of his disputes with the club directors, and his assistant, Majid Namjoo Motlagh replaced him as interim coach.

Esteghlal managers, in reaction to the fans' anger, promised to re-sign Stramacchioni who managed Esteghlal in Iran Professional League (IPL)'s first half of last season. The Italian coach became very popular because of the good results he got and also the development of the team under his leadership.

However, the Iran Football League Organization announced that Esteghlal, as well as all other Iranian teams, are not allowed to hire any foreign coach.

Further, Stramacchioni, via his Instagram story, said that he had no negotiation with Esteghlal managers regarding his return to the Tehran based club.

"Today I'm very angry. 'Seems' that federation denied permission. I never refused any offer. Because no offer was sent. I feel your love Blue hearts. And I want to let you know that it is totally reciprocated... Forever. Today I'm very sad," he wrote in the social media.

Stramacchioni has become a symbol for Esteghlal fans to protest the club's management and Iran football federation as well. All of these frustrations are exacerbated as the fans feel the club directors were lying from the first day about the negotiation with the Italian coach.

### Iranian players not match fit in 2006 World Cup: Ivankovic

**S P O R T S** TEHRAN — Branko Ivankovic says that Iran had a chance to qualify for the 2006 FIFA World Cup knockout stage but his players' injury prevented it from happening.

Ivankovic was already an established name in Asian football before taking the helm of the Omani national team at the beginning of this year.

Oman are only the second national team he coaches after Iran. Ivankovic has also coached Iranian football giants Persepolis and helped the Reds win seven domestic titles.

"When I coached Iran, we had a strong group of players who got us to Germany 2006, but we had a lot of problems before the start of the tournament when Ali Karimi, Mehdi Mahdavia, Vahid Hashemian and Ferydoon Zandi got injured. They joined us a few days before the finals but they weren't fully match fit," Ivankovic said in an interview with FIFA.com.

"We played well against Mexico, Portugal and Angola, but that wasn't sufficient to help us progress to the knockout stage, although it was a great experience.

"My experience with Croatia at France 1998 helped me with Iran. At the 2004 Asian Cup in China, we put in a great performance and came third. We beat a Korea Republic team who came fourth at the 2002 World Cup. After that, the Iranian national team continued to make progress," he added.

### Persepolis seal a late win over Al Taawoun

**S P O R T S** TEHRAN — Persepolis football team of Iran earned a late win over Saudi Arabia's Al Taawoun on Matchday Three of the 2020 AFC Champions League Group C on Tuesday.

Persepolis defender Shojae Khalilzadeh scored the winner in the 83rd minute following a corner kick.

Persepolis had lost to Al Duhail of Qatar 2-0 in their opening match and were held to a 2-2 draw by Emirati side Sharjah.

Earlier in the day, Al Duhail defeated Sharjah 2-1 in the group. "We went into the match with great motivation after winning the league title," Bashar Resan told the afc.com. "The AFC Champions League is a tough competition and it's been a while since we played such high-level matches.

"We struggled a bit in the first half as there are five new players in our squad. However, our understanding improved in the second half and we managed to get the three points. We have another match in three days against Al-Taawoun and we must play even better in order to fight for a place in the knockout stage."

Despite the defeat, Al Taawoun remain top of Group C thanks to a superior head-to-head record over second-placed Al Duhail SC who had beaten Sharjah FC earlier in the day to reach six points, while Persepolis climb above Sharjah into second place with four points, just two behind the group leaders at the halfway point.

## 670 idle industrial units revived since late March

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — The head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) announced that 670 idle industrial units have been revived throughout the country since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20), IRNA reported.

Making the remarks on the sidelines of visiting an industrial unit in the industrial park of the north-central Semnan city, Mohsen Salehinia reiterated, "Taking the especial condition of the production units into account, the ISIPO's measures are in line with creating necessary infrastructure such as electricity and gas, and removing the lack of liquidity for these units and also creating cooperation with other organizations to this end."

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



"Currently, the share of the country's production and industrial units in receiving bank facilities is about 31 percent and it is necessary to allocate a larger share of banking facilities to the country's production and industry," he added.

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

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

Strengthening domestic production to achieve self-reliance is the most important program that Iran is following up in its industry sector in a bid to nullify the effects of the U.S. sanctions on its economy.

To this end, the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 20) has been named the year of "Surge in Production", and all governmental bodies as well as the private sector are moving in line with the materialization of this motto.

Regarding its significant role in the realization of the mentioned goal, the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry has already defined its main programs for supporting the domestic production in the current year.

The ministry's seven main axes of the surge in production are going to be pursued under 40 major programs.

In this regard, the development of industrial parks and supporting the units located in these areas is one of the major programs underway by the ministry.

While this program is being seriously pursued, lack of necessary infrastructure in the industrial parks is impeding their development, therefore, the creation of needed infrastructure in the industrial parks has been put on the agenda.

## Iranian, Afghan customs discuss bilateral issues

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) said that Iran and Afghanistan have put facilitating trade and customs relations on the agenda, IRNA reported.



"Facilitating trade, exchanging customs information, solving border problems and developing transit are on the agenda of Iran and Afghanistan," Mehdi Mirashrafi said after a video conference meeting with his Afghan counterpart.

Following his meeting with the Afghan official, Mirashrafi said: "The two sides decided to prepare a comprehensive strategic economic document, considering the determinations of the two countries for strategic cooperation."

Referring to the pilot activation of the Iran-Afghanistan-Uzbekistan Tripartite Transit Corridor and the Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Iran (KTAI) Quadripartite Corridor, he noted: "This trend shows the serious determination of the Iranian Customs to facilitate transit through Afghanistan and connect Central Asian countries to international waters through the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman."

According to Mirashrafi, the Director-General of Afghan Customs has welcomed the idea for the implementation of combined transport and under the framework of the TIR Convention, and it was decided that the Afghan side would seriously pursue the issue.

Pointing to Chabahar Port as one of the major issues discussed in the meeting, he said: "The port of Chabahar is an important and vital port for Afghanistan in the field of transit of goods through Iran, and accordingly, the Afghan side has demanded reducing visa fees and transit fees and reconsidering the penalties for customs violations in the transit route through Iran."

According to Mirashrafi, regarding the electronic exchange of information between the customs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Afghanistan, it was decided to review the necessary technical coordination, while taking into account security considerations between the two countries.

Emphasizing the commonalities between the two countries, Mirashrafi said: "Afghanistan and Iran are two countries with common historical, linguistic, cultural and religious roots, and by preparing a comprehensive strategic document and expanding the interactions between the two nations, we will see growth and prosperity and increase peace and stability in the region."

# Promoting Iranian saffron in global markets a major plan of TPO

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — The mentioned meeting was aimed at investigating the ways for the promotion of saffron exports and releasing the reports on the subject by related organizations including Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), Iran Chamber of Cooperatives (ICC), and National Saffron Council.

During the meeting, TPO Head Hamid Zadboum stressed the significance of boosting Iranian saffron exports and elevating the status of this strategic product in the global markets.

He further underlined the role of producers and exporters of saffron in this due, and released a report on the organization's supportive measures and offered incentives since the Iranian calendar year 1381 (March 2002-March 2003) for promoting the status of Iranian saffron in the global markets and removing the barriers in the way of exports.

TPO has recently set up a special task force on the trade of saffron.

Underlining the significance of saffron in Iran's exports, Zadboum has said that his



organization has had supporting the exports of this product through offering different in-

centives a top agenda of its activities since the Iranian calendar year 1380 (March 2001-

March 2002).

The special task force held its meeting at the place of TPO in the presence of the representatives of Agriculture Ministry, Institute of Standards and Industrial Research of Iran (ISIRI), Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, Health Ministry, Export Development Bank of Iran (EDBI), Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, Iran Chamber of Cooperatives, National Saffron Council, and the Organization for Protection of Consumers and Producers (OPCP).

About 85 percent to 90 percent of Iran's saffron is produced in the northeastern provinces of North Khorasan and Khorasan Razavi and the eastern province of South Khorasan.

Based on the data released by Iranian Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, Iran earns some \$500 million annually by exporting medicinal herbs, of which about \$350 million is related to saffron and the rest is the share of other medicinal herbs.

## Reviving small mines plays significant role in job creation

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Deputy Interior Minister Babak Dinparast announced on Tuesday that reviving all of the idle mines will create over 800,000 direct and indirect jobs.

Meanwhile, Mohamadreza Bahraman, the head of Iran Mine House, announced in late March that preliminary studies have been conducted on 1,800 mines in the country and reviving program has been investigated as well, that in addition to pick-up in production it will lead to creation of direct and indirect jobs for about 425,000 persons.

As announced by the acting minister of industry, mining, and trade, 50 small mines were projected to be revived in 12 provinces in the past Iranian calendar year, while Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) has said that 146

mines were revived.

Jafar Sarqei said that if reviving each mine creates jobs for 15 persons, reviving 50 mines promises job opportunities for 750 persons.

The official has also announced that the plan for reviving small mines will be defined for all the provinces by the next Iranian year.

And as reviving small mines stands among the top priorities of IMIDRO, this plan is hoped to create a noticeable number of jobs throughout the country.

Khodadad Gharibpour, the head of IMIDRO, has mentioned this plan as one of the most significant plans of "Resistance Economy", saying that IMIDRO is strongly determined to carry out it.



## Iran, Brazil to ink 3 MOUs on agriculture co-op

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Alimrad Sarafrazi, the acting-head of public relations and international affairs center of Iran's Agriculture Ministry, met with Brazilian Ambassador to Tehran Rodrigo de Azeredo Santos and agreed on holding three online meetings between the two sides and signing three memorandums of understanding (MOU).

The mentioned documents are going to be in the fields of plant health, animal health, and research cooperation with the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa), ILNA reported.

It was decided in the meeting that the two sides would formally sign these documents in the two countries' second Joint Committee Meeting that will be held in this regard.

The meeting was held in line with the Agriculture Ministry's plans for boosting cooperation and interaction between the two countries in the field of agriculture, and underlined Iran's interest in long-term economic relations through a comprehensive framework and sustainable and balanced cooperation.

Tereza Cristina, for her part, referred to Iran and Brazil as two friends with a long-standing background of cooperation.

of videoconference sessions to discuss cooperation in areas of mutual interest in order to transfer existing experiences and knowledge by Iranian and Brazilian experts in the fields of conventional agriculture, agricultural promotion, and technology transfer of pesticide production.

The officials also discussed Iran's corn imports from Brazil and the relative humidity agreed upon by the two sides in this product.

Back in June, Iranian Ambassador to Brazil Hossein Gharibi and Brazilian Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, and Supply Tereza Cristina explored the ways to expand cooperation in the fields of agriculture and livestock in a meeting via video conference.

During the webinar, Gharibi referred to the status of agricultural products in the trade relations between the two countries and underlined Iran's interest in long-term economic relations through a comprehensive framework and sustainable and balanced cooperation.

Tereza Cristina, for her part, referred to Iran and Brazil as two friends with a long-standing background of cooperation.

## Tehran, Porto stress barter trade to expand economic ties

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) and the Porto Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACP/CCIP) held a webinar on Tuesday to explore ways of expanding trade cooperation between the two sides.

Criticizing the current level of trade between the two nations, the two sides stressed the need for using barter trade and establishing financial channels between the two countries to improve the economic relations, ICCIMA portal reported.

"The use of barter trade is one of the ways to develop trade cooperation, the realization of which, of course, requires the cooperation of the central banks of the two countries and establishing a financial exchange system," ICCIMA Deputy Head for International Affairs Mohammad-Reza Karbasi said in the webinar.

Organized by the ICCIMA in collaboration with the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Lisbon and the Porto Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the mentioned webinar was attended by ICC-

CIMA Deputy Head Mohammad-Reza Karbasi, Iranian Ambassador to Lisbon Morteza Damanpak Jami, some CCIP board members as well as a group of Iranian and Portuguese businessmen.

Following up on the agreements signed previously between the two countries, planning to increase trade between the two sides, and strengthening mutual investment were also among the issues addressed by the webinar speakers.

Speaking in the event, Karbasi mentioned Iran and Portugal's long-lasting relations and said: "Despite the long-standing bilateral relations, the existing opportunities have not been used optimally and therefore trade between the two countries is at a low level."

Under an agreement signed in 2009 between the ICCIMA and the CCIP, the two sides set up a Joint Trade Council. The two sides also stressed that this council should be more active and the Portuguese side should introduce an envoy in Tehran.

Affected by the U.S. sanctions, the trade relations between Iran and Portugal fell to their lowest level last year.

## Fishery production rises noticeably in recent years

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Iran Fisheries Organization (IFO) Head Nabiollah Khoun-Mirzaei said that fishery production has increased noticeably in the country in the recent years, IRIB reported.

Making the remarks on the sidelines of signing a cooperation agreement with the National Nutrition and Food Technology Research Institute, the official put Iran's annual fishery output at 1.28 million tons in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), and said the figure is anticipated to reach 1.37 million tons in this year, and surpass 1.5 million tons in the next year.

Khoun-Mirzaei has announced that 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 has also said that 233,059 persons are currently working in the country's fishery sector.

Putting the country's fishery output at 1.28 million tons in the past year, the official 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.

He 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 pri-

ivate sector.

Referring to the high quality of Iran's fishery products, the head of the 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 IFO Deputy Head 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).

## Annual butter production capacity at over 70,000 tons

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Iranian dairy producers have the capacity to produce 70,000 tons of butter annually, according to the deputy agriculture minister.

"We have the capacity to produce more than 70,000 tons of butter annually and this capacity can be even increased," ILNA quoted Morteza Rezaei as saying on Tuesday.

Speaking on the sidelines of a visit to a dairy production unit in Tehran Province, Rezaei noted that despite the fact that Iran is

one of the biggest producers of milk in West Asia, there has been little work done in the butter production sector, but the situation is getting better in this regard.

"In recent years, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade, we have launched butter production units, and I am proud to announce that shortly domestically produced butter will be on people's tables."

The measures taken by the mentioned ministries, in addition to the development

of the country's dairy industry, will save the country significant amounts of currency outflow, he stressed.

The country is expected to produce 11.5 million tons of raw milk in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 20) and the exports of dairy products are expected to reach more than 900,000 tons, he said.

Back in February, Rezaei had said that regulating the market and meeting the domestic needs is one of the agriculture ministry's top priority and exports are only pursued if

the domestic needs are met.

The official noted that currently, the country has an ideal and favorable condition in all fields of production and supply of livestock products such as milk, poultry, eggs, and red meat.

In late December 2019, the Secretary of Iran Dairy Industries Union Reza Bakeri said over \$700 million worth of dairy products is exported from Iran annually.

Iran is among the top milk-producing countries in the world.

# MEK commanders treat members like serfs: Albanian journalist

By Reza Moshfegh

**TEHRAN** — An Albanian journalist reveals that MEK commanders treat their members as “serfs and as robots”.

Pointing to the brutal behavior of MEK ringleaders with their members in their camp, Gjergji Thanasi tells the Tehran Times this fact is enough to predict how brutally MEK will treat the Iranian people if they ever come to power in Iran.

He believes if the Rajavi cult comes to power they will transform Iran into a Hell on the earth.

This is the text of the interview:

■ You have claimed the presence of 7,200 members in the MEK camp in Albania. How did MEK increase the number of its fighters in the Albanian territory between 2016 and 2019, while it was numbered 3,000 when they first arrived in Albania?

A: Albanian authorities offered no precise official figure of MEK members coming to Albania. The best they made public was “several thousand MEK members came to Albania between 2013 and 2016.” Figure 7,000 I made public was based on the data offered by “Instituti i Statistikave” (The Institute of Statistics). This is a government board whose director is appointed by the prime minister himself. This institute published the figure of 7,000 Iranian residents in Albania. Apart from a handful of Iranian diplomats and a score of Iranian (refugees, illegal migrants) in prison or in the refugee center of Kareci, there are virtually no other Iranians in Albania but for the inmates of Ashraf 3 Camp in Manez (Durrës Municipality), i.e., the MEK personnel.

It is simple math that if there are 7,000 Iranian residents in Albania, almost all of them are MEK members. In order to obtain more precise data, you can consult the photos of the data sheets issued by the fore mentioned institute (Instituti i Statistikave). I cannot speculate how the number of MEK members increased. There is a virtual official blackout covering MEK, its membership, and its activities in Albania. The way they enter Albania (what travel documents they use to enter), the way they leave Albania mainly by plane is never made public by the Albanian authorities. We Albanians learn that the cult leader Maryam Rajavi left Albania only occasionally, as in the case when border police and emigration of Belgium refused her entering the Kingdom of Belgium while she was traveling from Albania to Belgium.

■ Why was Albania chosen as the host country for the MEK?

A: Albania was chosen as a host country for MEK personnel as it was considered as a sui generis “Ersatz”. Virtually no country accepted MEK personnel on their soil. Even Vanuatu refused to accept a dozen of them. In 2013 we accepted little more than 200 MEK members in Albania. Mr. Berisha, the then premier of Albania during the official ceremony of the arrival of the new Iranian ambassador in Tirana, Mr. Gholamhossein Mohammadian, told the ambassador that we have an understanding with UNCHR and our American partners that a limited number of members of that organization (MEK) will settle in Albania, while the rest will settle in other NATO, and, or EU countries such as Romania and Bulgaria. Premier Berisha



**Even with the pandemic outbreak, the local authorities and even our health ministry representatives were not allowed to enter into the gated compound of MEK in Manez near Durrës city.**

also inquired whether the Iranian Embassy was ready to issue travel documents to any of MEK members who wished to return to Iran. The ambassador's answer was that his embassy staff would not deprive any Iranian consular service. Then in 2016, after the then Secretary of State Kerry visited Albania, hundreds and hundreds of MEK members began arriving in Albania by plane accompanied by officials of UNHCR. I feel very sorry, yet my personal impression was that only the Albanian government in the whole world volunteered to Mr. State Secretary Kerry to serve as refuge for that “human trash,” i.e., those MEK members arriving and settling in Albania.

■ Does the Albanian government or the United Nations oversee events inside the MEK camp?

A: There is nothing official! Neither the United Nations nor the Albanian government has ever made public that they oversee or that they do not oversee what happens inside the gated compound called Ashraf 3 Camp in Manez (Durrës Municipality). In 2018 a classified document of the General Directorate of the State Police was leaked to the press. This document contained data and facts which prove that our police force tried to keep an eye on the MEK members and their activities. Yet the information contained in this leaked document was generally vague, with a few details or hard facts. Officially no government employee of Albania (police, army, secret service, inner revenue inspectors, health inspectors, municipal police of Durrës Municipality, water inspectors, even firefighters) can enter the camp without the express permission of the MEK commanders. When they receive permission to enter the camp, their vehicles (even official police cars with police marking and police plates) are thoroughly searched, even using telescopic mirrors. Then they are ordered to park their vehicles in a designated area, and they proceed on

foot. Sometimes even distinguished guests invited by the commanders of the camp (I mean written invitations) are body searched using metal detectors.

When the Municipality of Durrës informed MEK that they offered personnel and equipment to disinfect the camp in order to prevent any outbreak of Covid-19 in the camp, they were profusely thanked, and they were very politely declined permission to enter Ashraf 3 Camp.

Even in case of a pandemic outbreak, the local authorities and even our health ministry representatives were not allowed to enter into the gated compound of MEK in Manez near Durrës city. One can imagine how little Albanian authorities can oversee events inside the MEK compound. To properly explain to Iranian public opinion, I shall draw this comparison: It was easier for an Iranian Arab to enter and inspect his land estate during Soviet occupation, let us say in 1942, than for an Albanian official to enter and inspect Ashraf 3 Camp of MEK in Albania let us say in 2020.

■ What is the role of the United States in supporting the Rajavi cult in Albania?

A: There is a lot of hearsay about the Americans' role in supporting the “Animal Farm” of Maryam Rajavi in Albania.

Apart from State Secretary Kerry's visit in 2016, there is nothing, absolutely nothing, in written form to prove American hand or at least U.S. finger in the Ashraf 3 “pie.”

Even the accord between the Albanian government and UNHCR is a closely guarded secret. There is a lot of transparency about, let us say, the investment of 50 million USD by NATO (U.S.) in upgrading the military Airport of Kucova, yet an Albanian or foreign journalist can have no info about that accord, the rights and the obligation of Rajavi cult followers residing in Ashraf 3 Camp!

Yet the way MEK members physically enter the offices of our Ministry of Interior (they have special passes), the way their vehicles

traveled during the curfew time (Covid-19 pandemics), without being stopped by police or Albanian Army checkpoints and roadblocks means that their patron was an entity powerful enough to change the Albanian officials and civil servants into obedient Quislings of MEK.

However, no Albanian journalists have seen even a scrap of official paper issued by the U.S. embassy in Albania or any other department of U.S. administration regarding MEK presence in Albania.

Let me give you a personal example. In August 2019, I sued defendant Behzad Safarin a MEK commander, for libel as he had published articles accusing me of being an infamous spy of Iranian MOIS.

In one year, the first judge of my case resigned not only of my case but also from the justice system to pursue a private-sector career. The judge replacing the former one was arrested some four days ago on corruption charges. The hearing of my case was postponed five times on different grounds. There were seven hearing sessions, yet there is no progress beyond the introduction and identification by the judge of the parties and their lawyers taking part in this legal case! I invite the readers to try to imagine what is that mysterious and powerful entity which pushes Albanian judges to string puppets or ruin their career and sometimes even their personal liberty.

■ Is the Rajavi cult a pro-democracy group?

A: They treat their members as serfs and as robots. I believe this fact is enough to understand how they will treat the Iranian people if they ever come to power in Tehran.

I have visited Iran, and I can assure anybody that present-day Iran is not Paradise on earth, yet the Rajavi cult seizing power means transforming Iran into “hell” on the earth. To speak of this sect as a pro-democracy group is to tell a tall lie and to be proud of telling such a lie!

■ What a threat can the MEK pose to Albania's national security?

A: Our national army is only 6,000 strong (with 5,000 others theoretically in reserve). Imagine for a moment there are 450,000 Albanians with military experience or military trained to live in gated compounds in Iran. Do you feel secure in Iran with foreign “guests” outnumbering your Army? Now imagine some of these foreign “guests” have blood on their hands (Iranians' blood, Iraqi Shiites' blood, Kurds' blood, and even some Americans' blood); how do an average Iranian in the street feel?

We have very tough money laundering enforcement laws in Albania. As an Albanian, I am not allowed to transfer even 3,000 Euros to my daughter studying in Germany without filling a lot of forms to declare the origin of the money I am sending to my daughter. A conservative figure of the land and the facilities in Ashraf 3 Camp is 100 million pounds. I defy the MEK cult to make public bank documents for the transfer to Albania of even a fraction of 100 million pounds. How did they transfer that immense sum of money (at least in Albania, it is considered immense) without using bank channels? Why money laundering law enforcement vanishes in the thin air when MEK money is in question? Why the rule of law fails to work for these “guest” on the Albanian soil?

In 2014 with the U.S. embassy's aid, the Albanian Parliament drafted and passed a law to severely punish anyone inciting people to wage war against another country. The “inhabitants” of The Animal Farm of the Rajavi cult in Albania 24 hours a day, seven days a week spread propaganda and incite people to wage war against Tehran! I ask the question: Is Iran a country or maybe Iran is some alien spacecraft, so is it the duty of the human race to wage war against such aliens? We Albanians have no cause to go to war against Iran, yet nobody tries to uphold the Albanian law passed in 2014 with the U.S. embassy's aid and funding in Tirana (USAID funding). Why should my country be transformed into an outpost to wage war against the Tehran? As far as I know, Iran has not occupied even an inch of Albanian lands. The last time Iranian fought against the Albanians was some 25 centuries ago when the Persian Army of Xerxes the Great fought against the Greeks, and some Illyrian tribes allied with the Greek city-states (Illyrian are our ancient forefathers).

I fail to see the Albanian national interest at the Albanian administration's conniving at the fact that this Rajavi cult infringes the 2014 law while inciting war against Tehran. If MEK wants to wage war against Tehran, it can go somewhere else and wage war against their homeland just as they did during “Mirsad Operation.” I strongly believe that Albania's security is threatened if my Albania is used as a place to recruit army against Iran, a heavily armed country like Iran!

■ What is the view of the Albanian people towards MEK and their presence in their country?

A: I cannot speak on behalf of the Albanian people!

## Riyadh pushed Bahrain, UAE to normalize ties with Israel: human right defender

1 → Alhadid, who now lives in Australia, says most of the Arab media believe Bahrain and the UAE's deals with the Tel Aviv regime would not have happened “without regional backing”.

Al-Hadid says the Persian Gulf Arab states, including Saudi Arabia, have had uninterrupted secret relationship with Israel.

Yahya Alhadid predicts, the chairman of the Gulf Institute for Democracy and Human Rights, stresses that normalization of ties with Israel is not surprising because secret ties, including the one between Manama and Tel Aviv, had existed before.

“Normalization of ties between the (Persian) Gulf regimes and Israel started a long time ago but was hidden and under the table,” he says. “Therefore, it is not surprising when these regimes' rudeness reaches the point of announcing the normalization of relations with a usurping regime.”

Al-Hadid says Trump is seeking his own campaign agenda by accelerating his efforts to normalize ties between the Persian Gulf states and Israel.

“Trump seeks to score any alleged victory to increase his chances in the upcoming presidential election after his failure in many domestic policies,” he notes.

“Trump only has foreign files to record empty victories. The (Persian) Gulf regimes gave him a golden opportunity to fulfill his wishes.”

Responding to a question about America and Israel's emphasis on strengthening ties with dictators, the human rights defender explains that these despotic regimes have lost their legitimacy and “they share with Israel a black record in committing of all kinds of violations against citizens.”

According to al-Hadid, Israel is seeking to strengthen its relations with these dictators with the hope of extending its influence on Arab governments' decisions.

“Israel tries to force them to submit to its plans regarding the occupied Palestinian territories and the Palestinian people's right to return to their lands,” the human rights activist explains.

Al-Hadid emphasizes that Israel does not respect the agreements and does not fulfill its obligations with the other parties. “There is no hope that Israel will abide by the normalization agreements.”

However, he rules out the possibility that Tel-Aviv can manipulate the region “because the Arab peoples, regardless of government decisions, do not give up the Palestinian people's right to restore their entire lands.”

Al-Hadid divides the Arab countries' positions into two parts: “On one hand we have countries that consider Israel an enemy,” while there are others who “submit to the American will and implement the Americans' desires in the region.”

He added, “(Persian) Gulf states stand on the side of Israel and pressure to proceed with the normalization of relations with Israel under the pretext of achieving peace in the region.”

## Venezuela says it has downed yet another U.S. drug plane

Venezuela's army has shot down a U.S.-registered aircraft carrying drugs, Interior Minister Nestor Reverol says.

The Tuesday announcement was reminiscent of one in July when the Strategic Command Operations of the Bolivarian National Armed Forces (CEOFANB) made a similar statement.

“Disrupted drug trafficking aircraft with U.S. registration, which illegally entered Venezuelan airspace through the state of Zulia,” Reverol said on Twitter. “After detecting the illegal air unit with the radars of the Comprehensive Aerospace Defense Command (#Codai), the #Fanb officials activated all the protocols established in the Control Law for the Comprehensive Defense of Airspace.”

He was referring to a law authorizing the destruction of any suspected cartel plane operating in country's airspace.

“We remain on permanent alert, monitoring our airspace to prevent it from being used for illicit drug trafficking from Colombia, which is the largest producer of cocaine in the world,” the interior minister added.

Another plane with a U.S. registration number was destroyed by fighter jets while intruding into Venezuelan airspace on July 8.

In 2013, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro signed a law to shoot down any plane belonging to the narco-mafia that illegally crosses the country's airspace.

Over the past years, the U.S. has imposed harsh economic sanctions on the oil-rich country to pressure Maduro to step down, forcing millions of Venezuelans to abandon their homeland due to a lack of basic food and necessities.

## India coronavirus cases cross 5 million in ‘worse-than-sci-fi’ pandemic

Coronavirus infections in India soared past five million on Wednesday, as a WHO envoy warned the pandemic was “still at the beginning.”

Global cases are rapidly approaching 30 million, with more than 930,000 known Covid-19 deaths, the global economy devastated and nations struggling to contain outbreaks.

India, home to 1.3 billion people, has reported some of the highest daily case jumps in the world recently, as a World Health Organization special envoy described the global pandemic situation as “horrible” and “grotesque.”

(Source: France 24)

## Resistance News

### Israel bombs Gaza after rocket fire as UAE, Bahrain signed deals

1 → Gaza's latest rocket fire came after a month of armed groups in the strip stepping up incendiary balloon attacks against Israel, which responded with nighttime air raids against Hamas.

Since 2008, Israel has waged three wars on the Gaza Strip. Israel has long said it holds Hamas responsible for all violence from Gaza, while Hamas says Israel is responsible for the state of anger and pressure inflicted on Gaza's residents due to the continued siege.

## State Printing Office of Iran (SPOI) Renewed (Second stage)

Tender of purchasing 8/5 tons transparent white laser polycarbonate in sheet

Tender NO : 2099001065000033

State printing office of Iran intends to purchase the aforementioned polycarbonates through a public tender. Therefore, participants in the tender should first receive their tender documents from Sep. 15-2020 to 12:00 hours on Sep.21-2020 in the Governmental portal address at : [www.setadiran.ir](http://www.setadiran.ir) and after register needed documents in mentioned address, physically submit envelopes A,B and C to the secretariat of the company before the end of administrative hour (12:00 PM) on Oct.03-2020. Tender documents presented after the stated deadline will not be accepted.

The guaranteed amount for participating in the tender is 2/750/000/000 Rials( 11/000 Euro) and should be presented in the form of a bank guarantee in envelope A.

All stages of bid, including receiving tender documents, submitting price proposal of tenders and opening the envelopes, will be done through the portal of Government's electronic procurement system at the following address : [www.setadiran.ir](http://www.setadiran.ir).

It is necessary that tenders, if not taken membership previously, should carry out the registration stages in the mentioned website and receive the signed and sealed electronic certificate for participating in the tender. For more information, please contact the governmental portal phone numbers at 41934, registration office Tel: 88969737 and 85193768. Envelopes opening date is on Sunday Oct.04-2020 at 10:00 AM in Transactions Commission Room of State Printing Office of Iran.

Meanwhile, the cost for publishing the advertisement shall be borne by the tender winner.

Address : State Printing Office of Iran, No: 29, Next to Khayyam Park, Iqbal Lahouri St., Imam Husein Square, Tehran, Iran, Postal code : 1714744153, Tel : 02133349079

## World Heritage tag for Uraman, key to tourism development in region: MP

**TOURISM** TEHRAN — The possible inscription of the Uraman cultural landscape on the UNESCO World Heritage list can play a key role in the tourism development of the region, a member of parliament has said.

Located in the western province of Kordestan, Uraman rural landscape is a candidate for becoming a World Heritage site in 2021.



Stretched on a steep slope in Uraman Takht rural district of Sarvabad County, the village is home to dense and step-like rows of houses in a way that the roof of each house forms the yard of the upper one, a feature that adds to its charm and attractiveness.

The rich culture of the region along with the pristine nature and its warm-hearted people have always been famous and special, so that the region hosts many domestic and foreign tourists annually, Shiva Qasempur, who represents Marivan and Sarvabad cities in the parliament, said on Wednesday, IRNA reported.

Earlier this month, Pouya Talebnia, the director of the cultural landscape, announced that a UNESCO assessor will travel to Kordestan by Sept. 21 in order to review the status of Uraman rural landscape for the World Heritage list.

"That will be the last [field] step for the global registration of Uraman, and the UNESCO evaluator [will probably] recommend us to solve issues within six months, and next year, on such days, a voting session will be held for the registration of Uraman on UNESCO list."

Iran submitted the UN body a dossier for the Uraman cultural landscape in 2019. Some eighty experts in various fields compiled and developed the dossier in terms of anthropology, archeology and history, natural sciences, architecture, historical documents, and other related fields.

Uraman is considered a cradle of Kurdish art and culture from the days of yore. Pirshalyar, which is named after a legendary local figure, is amongst time-honored celebrations and rituals that are practiced annually across the region.

## Meet Khalil Oghab: "The father of Iranian circus"

**HERITAGE** TEHRAN — Older people well know "Khalil Oghab" who found fame from Zurkhaneh, then became renowned across Iran and worldwide. He says: "I'm the father of the Iranian circus," and surely he is.

Born Khalil Tariqat Peyma in 1924, the athlete acted as a stuntman in different world countries and set a record which is far to be broken, ISNA reported on Monday.



Oghab was famous for bending heavy metal beams, scrolling, support feats and getting ran over by cars. In his best performing days in Iran, he was able to attract a crowd of as much as 50,000 people in a single event in the 1960s.

After long journey of about 20 years, Khalil Oghab settled down in Italy where he founded a circus called "Iran and Italy". He has performed athletic performances in more than 37 countries. Oghab came back to Iran in 1991 after being invited by the Iranian government, along with sixty performers working for him in a circus.

In 1971, his name was put on the list of Guinness World Records when he carried 450 kg in teeth. He says he is proud of his work because it made Iran glorified once again.

As he said, he was in England when lifted a 1.4-ton elephant. English newspapers called Khalil Oghab (Khalil the Eagle) an Iranian prodigy.

Speaking about his childhood, Khalil Oghab said his family did not hope he would remain alive because he has been thin and weak at his early age.

He went on to say that he traveled to Europe at the invitation of a reputable circus there when he was about 50.

For two decades, he visited over 37 world countries and worked as a stuntman to show his art and power in different global circuses.

As he announced, he has also acted in many movies.

About three decades ago, he decided to come back home to launch the first ever Iranian circus under the global criteria and standards.

Since then up to three years ago, he along with his son-Ebrahim- and members of his family has been performing on stage.

He said a documentary about him, his life and his achievements will be screened in next months.

Pahlevan Oghab, 96, says he is living with his wife and in good conditions in southern Iranian city of Shiraz.

The names of Pahlevans and other famous people who have done a lot to keep their country's dignity may sometimes be forgotten; but we as journalists have duty to keep them famous.

# Masuleh, a scenic village where roofs and yards become one

By Afshin Majlesi

**TEHRAN** — With at least a millennium of history, Masuleh is one of the most famous and spectacular villages in Iran.

On a lush green hillside, a few kilometers away from the southern coasts of the Caspian Sea, the remarkable village boasts earth-colored houses stacked photogenic alleys on top of one another like giant Lego blocks.

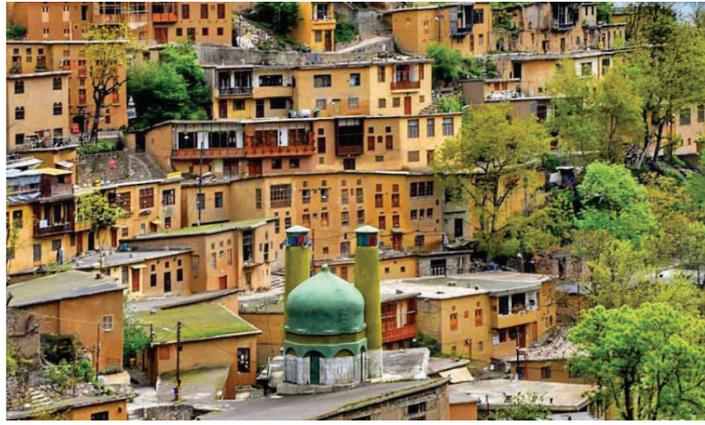
The unique ochre-brown structures of Masuleh follow the slope of the mountain that the village nestles on—or rather, grows from—giving the village its most bizarre quality: the roofs of many of the houses connect directly to, or even form a part of, pathways and yards serving the houses above.

Here, the relatively-intact landscape, architecture, and the local community flourish together. This is a village built not by trained architects, but by the inhabitants themselves. Like all vernacular architecture, it is clever in its sensitivity towards the environment, climate, materials, and local needs and traditions.

Houses built out of a combination of brick, timber, adobe, and stone stand resolutely on a 60-degree incline. With natural rock at the foundation and a sturdy "koh divar" or "mountain wall" supported by the mountain slope at the back of each structure, the stepped village is expected to be earthquake resistant.

Most extraordinary of all, however, is Masuleh's ingenious use of public space: with no marked boundaries, all rooftops double as courtyards, gardens, and public thoroughfares for the inhabitants on the level above. Meandering stairways, narrow alleys, and paths link one terrace to the other, and the village rises as one massive interconnected, multi-levelled public space shared by the whole community.

Each narrow staircase in the village is equipped with a ramp as well, but only to accommodate the wheelbarrows that the locals use for transporting goods; due to its unique spatial layout, Masuleh is the only settlement in Iran where automobiles are strictly prohibited and pedestrians



**Most extraordinary of all, however, is Masuleh's ingenious use of public space: with no marked boundaries, all rooftops double as courtyards, gardens, and public thoroughfares for the inhabitants on the level above.**

room freely.

While the village staggers with an ever-increasing influx of tourists every year, the application to make the thousand-year-old Masuleh a UNESCO World Heritage Site is underway.

Stepped villages are quite common to find around Iran, especially in Kurdistan and Khorasan regions of Iran. Basically, they have been built on a hill so steep that the roof of one house is the pathway for the next.

### Where to stay

You can find both expensive hotels and budget guesthouses. To find a homestay, you just need to walk around town and someone will approach you.

### When to visit

Spring, summer and autumn would be the ideal months. In winter, the area is covered by snow.

### A heaven for trekkers

Surrounded by green valleys and misty forests, Masuleh is one of top trekking destinations in the country, offering several trails that include both day treks and multi-day treks.

Along the way, you are likely to find quite a few Iranian shepherds who actually live there, perhaps not in winter, but they have fully equipped shacks and you are likely to be invited to have some chai (back tea).

### Under tourists' eyes

Here is a select of comments that visitors to the village have posted to TripAdvisor, one of the most popular travel websites in the world:

### "Unusual"

This is a most unusual village being built on such a steep hillside. The houses are a beautiful honey color and the late

afternoon is a perfect time to go for photos. There are gorgeous wooden balconies and the roof of one house acts as the courtyard for the house above. (Sus1952 from New Zealand; Date of experience May 2019)

"Long drive to get there. A collection of souvenir vendors...."

It's northwest from Tehran, quite a long drive and if you go during the weekend or bank holiday, it can take some serious time to get there.

The original village is nice and you can take some super pictures. The "streets" are narrow and difficult to pass as on both sides there are shops and restaurants.

For us it felt more like a hype; you have to have your selfie taken here...!

We feel it lost his original charm....., it's called economic prosperity.... (Harry C. from the Netherlands; Date of experience April 2018)

"The setting is everything, now overhyped & one long traffic jam"

It is in an amazingly scenic setting, the drive from Ardabil was beautiful, unfortunately, the tourists have already ruined it, and (Well you have to actually have to pay to see it!)... The village closes up is pretty drab and scruffy anyway. (Sylvia D. from Australia; Date of experience May 2018)

### "Gorgeous village"

This was the first place we stayed overnight after leaving the bustling city of Tehran. We arrived in the early afternoon and the place was already packed with mainly Iranian tourists.

A beautiful drive as you get closer, and then you see the terraces of the buildings down the mountain slope. So picturesque to wander around the village and enjoy the views and the friendly locals. Nearby was a small waterfall, and we sat there for nearly an hour just observing the Iranians as they splashed and played in the waterfall - such pure joy for them. Our accommodation was extremely basic, but we didn't care as we enjoyed local food from the veranda of our room looking over the village and down into the valley and surrounding mountains. (Randall K. from Australia; Date of experience September 2017)

## Tehran, Bern discuss ways to deepen ties in museology

**HERITAGE** TEHRAN — Iranian deputy tourism minister Mohammad-Hassan Talebian and Swiss Ambassador to Tehran Markus Leitner met on Tuesday discussing the ways to deepen ties in the realm of museology and holding bilateral exhibitions.

Holding joint exhibitions and tours as well as supporting the intellectual property of traditional Iranian arts were also discussed during the meeting.

Referring to the bilateral exhibitions Iran held with France, Spain, Germany, and Italy before the outbreak of the coronavirus and the virtual tours and online visits launched by several Iranian museums during quarantine, Talebian said that Iran could cooperate with Switzerland in holding museum exhibitions and launching museums. Leitner, for his part, announced his country's readiness

for holding joint exhibitions in the fields of traditional arts and handicrafts.

Praising Iran's historical and cultural attractions, he said that the Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis is eager to expand tourism ties between the two countries.

In early September, Swiss FM paid a visit to the tourist attractions of the two Iranian cities of Tehran and Isfahan during his three-day visit, to mark the 100th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Iran and Switzerland.

Visiting the UNESCO-registered Naqsh-e Jahan Square and some other historical sites of Isfahan, he called the ancient city 'a pearl in the Middle East'.

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



In Tehran, he paid a visit to the Niavaran Cultural-Historical Complex, emphasizing the need to deepen and strengthen cultural relations between the two countries.

## Restoration of 22 exquisite historical carpets completed

**HERITAGE** TEHRAN — The project of restoration, protection, washing, and organizing 22 exquisite and unique historical carpets was implemented in the Carpet Museum of Iran.

Carried out by Hossein Seif, a senior expert in the field of hand-woven carpets, the project aimed at dusting, washing, and repairing damaged carpets, as well as replacing the metal connections, the museum's director Parisa Beyzaei said on



Wednesday, ILNA reported.

One of the most important carpets restored in this project was the 19th-century Toodeshk carpet, which was woven in the central city of Na'in, Isfahan province, she added.

Na'in carpets are known globally and are famous for the delicate wool used in them as well as their excellent quality, color stability, strength, durability and accuracy and precision in the design.

Persian carpets are sought after

internationally for their delicate designs and good quality. Over 5,397,000 tons of Iranian carpets, worth \$424.451 million, were exported to over 70 countries with the U.S. standing on top of the importers' list, during the Iranian calendar year 1397 (ended March 20, 2019). Germany, the UK, Italy, France, Spain, Switzerland, Austria, Russia, Portugal, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway as well as Hungary, Romania, Poland, and Ireland are major importers of Iranian carpet.

## A peek into ancient Iraj military fortress in Tehran

**TOURISM** TEHRAN — The historical Iraj fortress, one of the largest military fortresses of the ancient times, is located in the heart of a wide plain near Asgarabad village, in Pishva, southeast of Tehran

The natural scenery and old texture of the village and the soaring bricks of the fortress as well as its close distance to the Iranian capital city makes the fortress a luring tourist destination.

However, over the centuries, from its 34 towers on the north side, 42 towers on the south side, and 36 towers on the east and west sides, there are only two towers remaining in the fortress.

Some estimate that the crumbling fortress dates from the Sassanid era (224–651), however, there are experts who believe that it belongs to the Kayanian dynasty era, a semi-mythological dynasty, which is mentioned in the Persian poet Ferdowsi's magnum opus, the Shahnameh.

Based on the relics found in the fortress, the experts believe that the mudbrick structure was repaired and restored during the Sassanid era, on the other hand, the architectural form of the ruined fortress is not similar to Islamic buildings at all, which shows that it should be much older.

Measuring about 3,000 square meters in area, the fortress had walls between 17 and 22 meters wide and 25



meters height, but due to erosion over the centuries only lengthy and tall clay ramparts have been left.

Form another point of view, the fortress seems to be on the verge of total elimination due to years of neglect though it was registered on the National Cultural Heritage List 2003.

Iraj fortress has four gates, of which the northern gate is located in front of Mount Damavand, which offers an extraordinary view. In recent years, the gates and walls on the east side of the building have been restored.

Based on evidence from excavations in 2008, archaeologists believe that the Iraj fortress was likely abandoned shortly after construction.

It seems that people who constructed the Sassanid fortress may have received bad news or were informed of a forthcoming invasion, therefore they leave the site.

The findings also indicated that the structure had been built to house 5,000 people, while the pottery dishes discovered at the site were adequate for only 500 people, so the experts cannot determine the purpose of the structure precisely.

From a very early history to modern times, defensive walls have often been necessary for cities to survive in an ever-changing world of invasion and conquest.

Fortifications in antiquity were designed primarily to defeat attempts at escalate, and to the defense of territories in warfare, and were also used to solidify rule in a region during peacetime.

Uruk in ancient Sumer (Mesopotamia) is one of the world's oldest known walled cities. The Ancient Egyptians also built fortresses on the frontiers of the Nile Valley to protect against invaders from neighboring territories.

Many of the fortifications of the ancient world were built with mud brick, often leaving them no more than mounds of dirt for today's archaeologists.

# UNDP, Tehran Municipality to enhance waste management co-op

**SOCIETY** TEHRAN — Tehran Municipality inked a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to enhance cooperation on waste management.

The MOU was signed between Sadr-o-din Alipour, head of Waste Management Organization of Tehran Municipality, and Claudio Providas, UNDP Resident Representative in Iran, during a meeting on Wednesday in Tehran.

International organizations should pay attention to Iran's special circumstances due to sanctions and pressures that often cause great harm to the people, Alipour said, adding that international law, even in times of war, addresses environmental issues, including air pollution and soil and water resources, separately from all other issues and without all restrictions.

"Despite all the pressures, we have defined projects that require the economic capacity, technology, and experience of other countries to implement," he stated.

Providas, for his part, said that UNDP is one of the executive arms of the United Nations and can prevent wasting time and money by collaborating on urban projects.

"We have provided Oceania and Asia with rules on how to transport hazardous and contaminated waste and plastic. The outbreak of the coronavirus also brought up many challenges and opportunities in the field of waste, which we took action on," he noted.

UNDP's office can best share global ex-



periences with Tehran Municipality and in cooperation with UNICEF and the World Health Organization, all of behavior change patterns can be shared, he stated, adding, collaborations can even expand in the field of electronic waste management.

Tehran has very good capacities in the field of waste management and these potentials can be used for creativity and innovation. In this regard, it is a pleasure to be able to transfer our experiences and knowledge to

Iran, he concluded.

## Waste management in Iran

Poor waste management brings the country an annual loss of 440 trillion rials (about \$10.5 billion), Hassan Pasandideh, head of waste management affairs at the Department of Environment (DOE), has said.

Meanwhile, over 3,000 tons of plastic waste is generated per day in the country, which reaches 1 million tons in a year.

Ali Moridi, head of soil and water office

at the DOE, said in October 2018 that while reduction of waste generation and separation of waste at source are the two major processes in waste management, in Iran the focus is mainly on the last phase of waste management which is waste disposal, which will slow down the path to waste minimization and waste sorting at source.

Although proper waste management could solve the country's environmental problems, the budget requested by the DOE for waste management has not been approved by the Majlis [Iranian parliament], he lamented.

According to a report published by United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in October 2016, waste generation per capita in Iran's urban areas is about 658 grams per day while Iranian waste generation per capita in rural areas is about 220-340 grams per day. Average Iranian waste generation per capita amounts to some 240 kilograms per year.

In Tehran alone waste generation per capita is estimated at 750-800 grams per day and each Tehrani citizen generates about 270-450 kilograms of waste per year.

The report continues that unfortunately only 7 percent of the waste is separated at the source, 13 percent is recycled and only 2.5 percent of them end up in formal or sanitary landfills, and some 77.5 percent of the waste will be burnt or buried in informal landfills located in the countryside or deserts near cities.

## UN ready to boost support for Iran in fight against drug trafficking

**SOCIETY** TEHRAN — Ghada Wali, director general of the United Nations Office in Vienna and executive director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has said that the international body is ready to boost support for Iran in the fight against drug trafficking.

She made the remarks in a meeting in Vienna with the Iranian deputy foreign minister Mohsen Baharvand.

Iran is an important country for the UNODC and has taken extensive measures in the field of counternarcotic and related crimes, Wali stated.

She also noted that the rate of drug seizure by Iran is commendable, saying that restitution of property caused by corruption is an important issue for the Office, and there is a legal basis for cooperation in this area in the Anti-Corruption Convention, and the UNODC is ready to cooperate with interested countries in this regard.

Baharvand also criticized the illegal and unilateral sanctions, and their impact on counter-narcotics capacities and stressed that while efforts are needed to lift such oppressive sanctions, measures must be taken simultaneously to provide the necessary equipment to deal with drugs and human trafficking to countries in need.

He suggested that a joint tripartite effort be made be-

tween Iran, Afghanistan, and the UNODC to strengthen checkpoints and border police.

Referring to Iran's financial and human losses in the fight against narcotics, called for more serious attention of the international community and the UNODC to strengthen the capacity and support resources of countries such as Iran.

## Iran fighting against narcotics

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, Brigadier General Eskandar Momeni, Secretary-General of Iran Drug Control Headquarters said in July.

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-Baluchistan, 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.

## Knowledge-based companies in full swing to tackle sanctions

### 1 -> No need to import anti-corona items

Ghaderifar added that under sanctions in the most difficult conditions, Iran combated the pandemic and knowledge-based companies could make the country independent. Moreover, they managed to produce pharmaceutical items required by the country's health system.

"Also, the production of medical equipment such as ventilators is one of the honors of knowledge-based companies, which is a vital and important item for ICU patients, which have even reached the export stage," he said.

Electrospinning is another product made by knowledge-based companies, which can apply a nano-layer on the fibers. Europe which was the only producer of the product refused to transfer the production line to Iran due to sanctions, and the price of each production line was one million euros, he highlighted.

Sourena Sattari, the vice president for science and technology, told the Tehran Times that some of the knowledge-based companies reached a production capacity of more than 200-300 thousand diagnostic kits per day, which surpassed the country's need for diagnostic kits, and there is a great export potential.

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

### Production of cancer medicine

"Doxorubicin, Sina Doxosome in Iran, is a drug based on indigenous knowledge that was previously monopolized by the United States, Canada, and India.

It is a chemotherapy medication used to treat cancer. This includes breast cancer, bladder cancer, Kaposi's sarcoma, lymphoma, and acute lymphocytic leukemia. It is often used together with other chemotherapy agents.

The knowledge-based company that produced this drug has succeeded in selling it to the countries of the region over the past two years," Ghaderifar stated.

### Technology in water and wastewater industry

These firms also produced items related to the water and wastewater treatment industry, some of which are used in the field of heavy metal removal, nitrification, wastewater turbidity removal, desalination, industrial wastewater treatment, that cut the country's

need for import, Ghaderifar explained. "These products have been successfully implemented to reduce the amount of arsenic hazardous metal in drinking water of Ardebil, Kerman, West Azarbaijan, East Azarbaijan, and Kordestan provinces and in desalination of seawater in 15 provinces.

Also, in another project, Tehran Water and Wastewater Company succeeded in reducing water nitrate by 15 times using his product," he also said.

### Helping car industry nullify sanctions

One sector in which the part played by these companies is under the spotlight is the auto industry.

Knowledge-based companies' role in indigenizing the manufacturing of auto parts is one of the major plans that the Industry Ministry is following up in the current condition.

In February, Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Reza Rahmani announced that indigenizing the manufacturing of auto parts, which used to be imported previously, has so far saved over \$2 billion for the country while creating jobs for 40,000 people, something achieved through befitting from the capabilities of the knowledge-based companies.

The new cars unveiled in February were 90 percent domestically made and just a few



of their parts are imported, which is planned to be indigenized as well in the coming years.

### Exports to reach \$1b within few months

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

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

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

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → C

## Iran urges Afghanistan to resume talks on Hamoun wetlands

Iran and Afghanistan should resume negotiations on the water rights of Hamoun wetlands, YJC quoted Masoud Tajrishi, deputy chief of the Department of Environment, as saying on Friday. Commenting on Afghanistan's injudicious dam construction on its tributaries Tajrishi also noted that low precipitation levels in the region has added insult to the injury.

"Iran and Afghanistan should reopen talks over the remaining water in Helmand River and discuss the water rights of the wetlands in Iran."

## افغانستان برای دادن حقایق هامون باید به میز مذاکره بازگردد

به گزارش روز جمعه باشگاه خبرنگاران جوان مسعود تجریشی معاون محیط زیست انسانی سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست گفت: ایران و افغانستان برای دادن حقایق هامون باید به میز مذاکره بازگردند. تجریشی با اشاره به سیاست های مسئولان افغانستان برای سد سازی در بالادست تالاب اظهار کرد: متأسفانه وضعیت بارش ها در منطقه در شرایط مطلوبی نبود و به همین علت شرایط وخیم تر شده است. ایران و افغانستان برای حل مشکل آب باید به میز مذاکره بازگردند تا برای آب باقی مانده در رود هیرمند مذاکره کنند.

## First wildlife breeding center in North Khorasan to be set up

**ENVIRONMENT** TEHRAN — The first wildlife breeding center in North Khorasan province will be established by a private-sector investor, Mehdi Allahpour, head of the provincial department of the environment, has stated.

"The Maral (red deer) will be transferred from Pardisan Park in Bojnourd city to this breeding center in Jajarm city.

In addition to the breeding site, a natural recreation center will be set up in the province.

A private-sector investor has also announced readiness to establish the urial breeding site in Bojnourd, he explained.

"We welcome the activities of private sector investors who are qualified to protect vulnerable species as well as wildlife breeding projects."

Maral, the Iranian red deer, is one of the largest deer types that unfortunately their population has declined in the country. However, the red deer occur literally from the shores of the Caspian Sea to the high alpine meadows of the Alborz Mountains.

In North Khorasan, there are 65 mammals out of 197 species in the country and 141 species of birds out of 532 species, 68 reptiles out of 228 species, four species of amphibians out of 20, and eight species of fish and aquatic species out of 160 species, some of which, such as cheetahs, saker falcon, bustards, Caspian snowcock and Egyptian vulture, which are in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in critical and endangered categories.

### Sustainable exploitation of biodiversity a must

Today, all governments have come to the conclusion that all aspects of human life, as well as growth and development, depend on biodiversity.

All three pillars of biodiversity namely, variation at the genetic, species, and ecosystem levels are important and must be considered to ensure biodiversity preserve; any damage to any of these three pillars will damage the entire biodiversity and pose a serious threat to human life.

"Indeed, Iran is not one of the megadiverse countries, like Brazil, India, and Malaysia, but it has habitats with the richest biodiversity.

However, various factors such as sustainable exploitation of biodiversity should come to the center of attention to better protect the country's biodiversity, to do so, help local communities earn income, and biodiversity can also benefit from local communities' protection," Shahaboddin Montazemi, director of the wildlife's conservation office at the DOE told the Tehran Times in June.

He went on to say that "the DOE has taken extensive measures in various areas such as habitat, species, and genetics; as animal species in the country include 37 species of mammals, 78 bird species, 22 species of reptiles, 6 species of bivalves, and 25 species of fish of inland waters.

The organization's gene bank is also a major step toward the genetic protection of species."

## Iranian physician wins TTS recognition award 2020

**SOCIETY** TEHRAN — Iranian physician, Seyed Ali Malek Hosseini, won the 2020 recognition award of The Transplantation Society (TTS).

TTS awarded Malek Hosseini, the father of Iran's liver transplant, to appreciate the outstanding achievements of the Iranian physician. The 28th International Congress of the Transplant Association was held virtually on September 14-16.

Each year, the International Congress awards the Recognition Awards to individuals who have had the greatest impact on organ transplants around the world.

The congress bringing a large number of world-renowned scientists together virtually to share their expertise, remarkable achievements, and most recent findings.

Malek Hosseini, fellowship in liver transplantation from the University of Pittsburgh, is one of the world's leading professors and a prominent transplant physician who runs the world's largest organ transplant center in Shiraz city.

Shiraz Abu Ali Sina Transplant Center is the largest organ transplant center in the world in terms of the number of transplants done per year and scientific capacity.

The center also set a new world record in 2017 with 638 liver transplants, 93 percent of which were brain dead donors.

Training of transplant surgeons in other countries, the establishment of 12 transplant centers in Iran and other countries, and the publication of hundreds of articles in international journals are other achievements of the center under the management of Dr. Malek Hosseini.

Over the past years, Malek Hosseini's efforts have been recognized with several national and international awards. In January 2020, he was awarded the Honorary Fellowship of the American College of Surgeons.

TTS is the only global transplantation society that encompasses all of the disciplines in the field of transplantation and provides global leadership in the practice of human transplantation. The responsibility of TTS is to establish guidelines of clinical practice, advance programs of education, and to promote ethical standards for clinical care and scientific investigation.

## LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 27)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

■ **The Conjunction و** - 1. /va/ between sentences, phrases and within phrases in the formal style 2. /o/ in speech (occasionally omissible) 3. also /o/ within phrases in the formal style.

● **The Counting Unit تا - تا** "unit, piece" is used as a counting unit following چند and numerals (except یک and یکی). It may refer both to things and people in the spoken language:

● **Written Form**

● **Spoken Form**

- خانم، بفرمایید اینجا کجاست؟
- اینجا کلاس است.
- این مداد است یا خودکار؟
- آن مداد نیست، خودکار است.
- این کلاس میز دارد یا ندارد؟
- این کلاس میز دارد.
- خیلی خوب. دوباره بفرمایید ...

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

I never revolted in vain, as a rebel or as a tyrant; rather, I rose seeking reformation for the nation of Islam.

Imam Hussein (AS)

## “Where the Forest Meets the Stars” published in Persian

**CULTURE TEHRAN** — A Persian translation of “Where the Forest Meets the Stars”, a debut novel by American bird specialist Glendy Vanderah, has been published by Amut Publications in Tehran.

The book has been translated into Persian by Seyyed Reza Hosseini.

In this gorgeously stunning debut novel “Where the Forest Meets the Stars”, a mysterious child teaches two strangers how to love and trust again.

Joanna Teale returns to her graduate research on nesting birds in rural Illinois after the loss of her mother and her own battle with breast cancer. She is determined to prove that her recent hardships have not broken her. She throws herself into her work from dusk to dawn, until her solitary routine is disrupted by the appearance of a mysterious child who shows up at her cabin barefoot and covered in bruises.

The girl calls herself Ursa, and she claims to have been sent from the stars to witness five miracles. With concerns about the child’s home situation, Jo reluctantly agrees to let her stay—just until she learns more about Ursa’s past.

# Iranian Society to celebrate National Day of Persian Poetry and Literature

**CULTURE TEHRAN** — The Iranian Society of Cultural Works and Luminaries will be celebrating Iran’s National Day of Persian Poetry and Literature with an online program today.

The National Day of Persian Poetry and Literature is observed every year on the death anniversary of contemporary poet Mohammad-Hossein Behjat Tabrizi — Shahriar, which falls on Thursday this year.

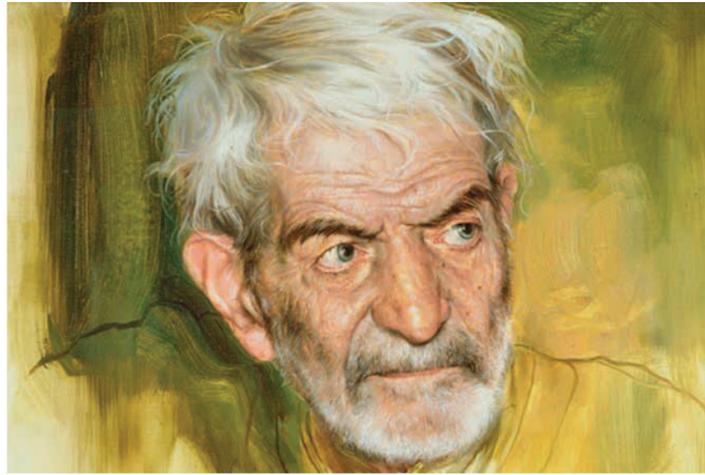
Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Abbas Salehi, and a group of literati including Mahmud

Shalvi, Jalaedini Kazzazi, Asghar Daadbeh and director of the society Hassan Bolkhari will be making speeches in the online program.

The online program will be available on the Instagram of the society.

In addition, a number of literati from several Persian-speaking nations celebrated Iran’s National Day of Persian Poetry and Literature with an online program on Wednesday.

The program, which was organized by the Iran Book and Literature House in Tehran, commenced at 5 pm on Instagram.com/khaneyeketab.



A portrait of Iranian poet Mohammad-Hossein Behjat Tabrizi — Shahriar.

Poets from Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan and India recited poems and delivered lectures. The online meeting was attended by Indian

literati Abid Raza Naushad, Shafi Haider Rizvi, Sajid Rizvi and Syed Zaigham Abbas Naqvi, and Pakistani poets Mir Ali Jafari, Abbas Saqib, Ahmad Shahryar, Qari Afzal Imani and Zainul Abedin Khoy.

In addition, Tehran-based Afghan poet Mohammad-Sarvar Rajai and Tajik poet Shoh Mansoor Shohmirza recited works from some Persian poets.

Mohammad-Ali Bahmani, Ali Davudi, Reza Esmaeili, Seyyed Akbar Mirjafari, Ali-Mohammad Maoddab, Esmail Amini and Gholamreza Tariqi were among attendees.

As the most prominent figure of contemporary Persian literature, Shahriar was mainly influenced by the poetry of Hafez, a Persian poet writing in the 14th century.

Shahriar, who also composed works in Azerbaijani, published his first book of poems in 1929 with prefaces by Persian literature scholars Mohammad-Taqi Bahar, Saied Nafisi and Pejman Bakhtiari.

“Heidar Babaya Salam” is Shahriar’s most famous Azerbaijani poetry collection, which highlights his birthplace, the village of Heidar Baba.

## Resistance festival announces jury for “Health Defenders” category

Over 20 short and feature documentary films will be screened in the documentary section.

The short documentaries include “A Letter from Damascus” by Mehdi Ebrahimkhani, “Imilia” by Ruhollah Akbari, “Lotus” Mohammadreza Vatandoost, “Persian Island” by Mohammad-Ali Sadrinia, “Saru” by Mohammad Abdollahi and “Noah’s Ark” by Sudabeh Babagap.

Among the feature documentaries are “The Last Days of Winter” by Mohammad-Hossein Mahdavian, “Women with Gunpowder Earrings” by Reza Farahmand, “Life on High Altitude” by Azizollah Hamidnejad, “Zemnako” by Mehdi Qorbanpur, “Bridge” by Amir-Hossein Noruzi and “Resurrection” by Mohammad-Ali Farsi.

The organizers have also announced the jury members for the Festival of Festivals section.

Mehdi Sajjadehchi, Manuchehr Shahsavari, Jamal Shurjeh, Javad Shamaqdari, Nasser Shafaq, Mohammad-Ali Najafi and Seyyed Zia Hashemi are the jury members of this section.

The Festival of Festivals section plans to review movies produced over the past 40 years on the Islamic Revolution, resistance and the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, which is known as the Sacred Defense in Iran.

A lineup of 12 films has also been selected to go on screen in the Festival of Festivals category.

The lineup includes “The Glass Agency”, “From Karekheh to the Rhine” and “The Scout” by Ebrahim Hatamikia, “The Survivor” by Seifollah Daad, “Journey to Chazzabeh” by Rasul Mollaqolipour and “Standing in the Dust” by Mohammad-Hossein Mahdavian.

“The Fateful Day” by Shahram Asadi, “Track 143” by Narges Abyar, “Kimia” by Ahmadreza Darvish, “Villa Dwellers” by Monir Qeidi, “Child of the Soil” by Mohammad-Ali Basheh Ahangar and “Hoor on Fire” by Azizollah Hamidnejad are also included.

The festival is organized every year to commemorate the anniversary of the Sacred Defense.

Feature, short and animated films and a number of music videos will be selected to be screened in the Festival of Festivals category.

The 16th edition of the event will go online due to a spike in the coronavirus cases in the country.

The festival is scheduled to be organized in two stages, the first of which will take place during the Sacred Defense Week from September 21 to 28.



A poster for the jury for the “Health Defenders” category of 16th Resistance International Film Festival.

The second part of the festival will be held from November 21 to 27 to celebrate the anniversary of Basij Day, which falls on November 25.

**Visual Stories from Ashura**

Then he asked for Imam Hussain's permission to fight and Imam gave him permission immediately

Ali ibn Hussain got out of his father's tent to get ready for battle.

Imam Hussain (AS) said: "O' God, I am sending someone to the battlefield who is the most similar person to Prophet Muhammad."

When Ali Akbar returned from the battlefield and asked for water Imam said: "your grandfather, Prophet Muhammad will water you."

On his way to Karbala, Imam Hussain (AS) took a short nap on his horse then he shouted "Verily we belong to Allah, and verily to Him do we return" Ali Akbar asked: "what happened?" Imam said: "I dreamed that someone said this caravan is moving toward death." Ali Akbar said: "now that we have stepped on the path of right I am not afraid of death at all,"

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

## Plaque of Iran’s Living Human Treasure handed to calligrapher Amirkhani

**CULTURE TEHRAN** — The celebrated Iranian calligrapher Gholam-Hossein Amirkhani, who was selected Iran’s Living Human Treasure in February 2020, received the plaque and statue of his title during a ceremony held at Tehran’s Sadabad Cultural-Historical Palace on Tuesday.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts selected the 81-year-old calligrapher as a Living Human Treasure. Deputy Culture Minister for Artistic Affairs Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini, Visual Arts Office director Hadi Mozaffari and deputy tourism minister Mohammad-Hassan Talebian took part in the ceremony.

Speaking at the ceremony, director of the Iranian Society of Cultural Works and Luminaries Hassan Bolkhari said, “Humans are the heritage of God on the earth and have the potential to create. I have been collaborating with master Amirkhani for several years at the Academy of Iranian Arts and I have learned much from him.”

Amirkhani also on his part said that he is honored to have had the opportunity to be active in one of the original and historical arts of the country.

Talebian next said that calligraphy has been considered a precious art, adding that Iranian calligraphy is seeking to be registered on the UNESCO List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Amirkhani, who is the director of the Iran Calligraphers Association, was also decorated with the Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters in March 2017.



Calligrapher Gholam-Hossein Amirkhani (2nd R) unveils the statue and plaque of Iran’s Living Human Treasure title he received in February.

He learned the nastaliq style of Persian calligraphy from Seyyed Hossein Mirkhani and his brother Seyyed Hassan, two unparalleled masters of Persian calligraphy.

Amirkhani is one of the few Persian calligraphers who has shown great skill in this style. Numerous calligraphers consider him as the best living calligrapher of this style.

## “How to Travel with a Salmon” at Iranian bookstores

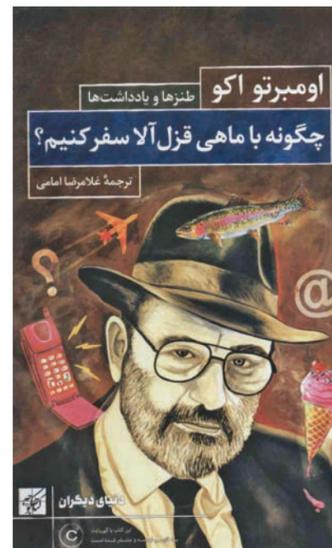
**CULTURE TEHRAN** — Italian writer Umberto Eco’s book “How to Travel with a Salmon & Other Essays” has recently been published in Persian.

Ketabe Kucheh is the publisher of the book translated into Persian by Gholamreza Emami, who has previously rendered other works by Eco, including “The Bomb and the General” and “The Three Astronauts”.

This book is full of wisecrack jokes, defiance, weirdness and wisdom. It carries the series mini articles in this book that are a collection of various miracles of guidance: how to spend a fruitful holiday, how to eat and drink in the air, how to look out the window, how to discuss football and how to deal with taxi drivers.

A Persian translation of his 1995 essay “Ur-Fascism” or “Eternal Fascism” by Emami has also been published in Iran.

In this essay, cultural theorist Eco lists fourteen general properties of fascist ideology. He argues that it is not possible to organize these into a coherent system, but that “it is enough that one of them be present to allow



Front cover of Italian writer Umberto Eco’s book “How to Travel with a Salmon & Other Essays”.

fascism to coagulate around it.” He uses the term “Ur-fascism” as a generic description of different historical forms of fascism.

Emami has also translated Eco’s “Three Stories” (“Tres cuentos”) that was introduced during a special meeting at the 32nd Tehran International Book Fair in 2019.

Tehran-based publisher Daf organized a meeting in February 2016 to pay tribute to Eco following his death at the age of 84.

In addition, Tehran’s Book City Institute also commemorated the philosopher at the same time by organizing a meeting to review his theory of semiotic processes and classification of signs.

Eco was the author “A Theory of Semiotics”, which was published in 1978.

In English, he is best known for his popular 1980 novel “The Name of the Rose”, a historical mystery combining semiotics in fiction with biblical analysis, medieval studies and literary theory, and “Foucault’s Pendulum”, his 1988 novel that touches on similar themes.