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# Tel Aviv restive nights



**Despite normalization hype, Netanyahu faces wrath of Israelis**

**By Faranak Bakhtiari**  
Tehran Times journalist

## Aging population: a crisis bigger than coronavirus

According to official statistics, Iran will be the oldest country in the world by the next 30 years. This will bring up many individual and social consequences both in national and international arenas even bigger than the coronavirus crisis.

Over the past decade, demographic experts have raised the alarm about the ageing population in the country, but the negligence of the officials has exacerbated the situation.

Now, in the last years of the century, the country is struggling with the challenge of a declining population and a rising ageing population, and the continued lack of planning by officials to resolve the issue over the next 30 years will make Iran the oldest country on Earth.

Official statistics of the country and the forecast of demographic experts indicate that if the trend of decreasing fertility rate, increasing single-child families, and decreasing marriage rate continues for the next 30 years, old age will prevail in the country and one in three people will be over 60-years-old, which will be the beginning of a crisis.

### Population growth policies

Some 14 policies to support child-bearing and the family were announced by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in [the Iranian calendar year] 1389 (March 2014-March 2015) when he stressed that social, cultural and economic development should be done in accordance with these general policies to support families.

The policies address the need to increase the population and the various dimensions of it, including childbearing, facilitating marriage and strengthening the family, reproductive health, promoting the Iranian-Islamic lifestyle, empowering young people, honoring the elderly, and the environment, which can lead to an increase in the quantity and quality of the population if it is timely and continuous implemented.

### Iran: the world's oldest

Mohammad Esmail Akbari, the senior advisor to the minister of health, has said that the world has grown about 5 years older over the past 70 years, but the population of Iran has unfortunately grown 10 years older in the past 60 years. **→7**

## Exports from small industrial units up 16.7% in 6 months on year

**TEHRAN** — The value of exports from Iranian small-sized industrial units has increased 16.7 percent during the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21) from the same period of time in the past year, according to the deputy head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO).

Asghar Mosaheb announced that the mentioned units have exported commodities worth \$1.74 billion during the first half of the current year, while the figure was \$1.49 billion in the first half of the previous year, IRNA reported.

The official said this growth has been achieved despite the coronavirus outbreak and closing of borders during the early months of the pandemic.

He mentioned Pakistan, Iraq, Afghanistan, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Turkey, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and India as the major export destinations of the products in a row, and said foodstuffs, steel and plastic containers, and

chemical products have been the major exported items during the first six months of this year.

He said the exports have been conducted by 430 units. Khorasan Razavi, Tehran, East Azarbaijan, Fars, and Yazd were the provinces accounting for the major part of the exports in the first half, the official added.

On August 12, Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry signed seven memorandums of understanding (MOUs) for cooperation with various organizations and institutions in supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) on the occasion of the National SMEs Day.

The mentioned MOUs were signed with the Vice-Presidency for Science and Technology, Islamic Azad University, Industrial Management Institute, Bank of Industry and Mine, Permanent Export and Investment Center of Iran, Industrial Engineers Basij Organization, and the Association of Iranian Food Industry Machinery Manufacturers.

## U.S. protests: Political protests and rallies fill DC streets

The streets of downtown D.C. echoed with chants Saturday as protesters from across the country set their sights on the nation's capital.

In the morning, the #WalkAway campaign led a march to encourage people to leave the Democratic party, while in the afternoon motorcyclists from across the country gathered at the Capitol for a symbolic show of putting democracy into action, WUSA9 reported.

Both groups had vastly different ways of supporting their message, but both groups wanted to make it clear that they love America.

"There's so many lies and so much misinformation about who Trump supporters are, who the president is," #WalkAway Founder Brandon Straka said. "We want people to see that we are every slice of America -- gay, straight, transgender black, white, brown marching together, loving one another, loving this country,

loving our president. And we want people to see we are not who they say that we are."

Straka said his campaign is a movement of people who are leaving the political left and joining the Republican Party.

"It's time for the silent majority to become un-silent, and basically what we mean when we say that is, because of the silence of those, not on the left, that the left has been allowed to become radicalized," Straka said. "And so what we want is for common sense people, good-hearted, big hearted, kind, loving, compassionate people to start speaking up."

A few hours later and a couple blocks down the street, Bikers for Liberty ended their cross-country journey of delivering founding documents to the U.S. Capitol. The group was created to amplify the message that many bikers see the current administration as a threat to our democratic institution and to democracy itself.

## Book series training children against COVID-19 released by Iranian publisher

**TEHRAN** — A book series recounting educational stories for children on COVID-19 has been published by a Persian publisher.

The collection, which is composed of four books, has been published by Simaye Sharq Publications. One of the books is "A Bride and Groom Wearing Face Masks" written by Zahra Musavi.

Illustrated by Meisam Musavi, the book tells the story of animals that face problems for violating an order to wear a protective face mask during the wedding party of the crow and goose.

Musavi has also collaborated as an illustrator in "Take Care that Your Covij Doesn't Become 19", another book of the collection written by Nastaran Fat'hi.

The story is about Biju and Jibu, two rabbits whose friend should be quarantined as it has tested positive for coronavirus.

Another book of the series is "The Crow Did Not Reach Its House" written by Zahra Musavi is about a crow and its friends, which are deeply troubled for their disregard of health protocols during the COVID-19 pandemic. The book has been illustrated by Fatemeh Zamanero.

With illustrations by Sam Salmasi, "Hand Washing" is the last book of the collection. In a funny way, writer Shahram Rafiei teaches children how to wash their hands as the most effective way to push COVID-19 transmission down during the pandemic.

The collection is appropriate for children above the age of three.

Coronavirus has given some writers in Iran food for thought. **→8**

## Iraq enjoys good ties with Iran, Arab countries: PM Kadhimi

**TEHRAN** — Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhimi has said his country enjoys good relations with both Iran and Arab countries.

"We are not ashamed of our relations with the U.S. or Iran or Saudi Arabia or any relations that benefit the Iraqi nation and drive down our problems to zero," ISNA quoted Kadhimi as saying, citing Baghdad Today.

The Iraqi prime minister further said that Iraq does not intervene in the internal affairs of other countries.

"We have good relations with Arab countries. We also have good relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran and we try to preserve these relations," he said, adding that some countries wish such relations get weakened.

He also said some politicians openly criticize U.S. policies, but in reality, they are obedient to America in dark rooms.

Iraqi soil has faced high tensions between the U.S. and Iran since January. On January 3, U.S. President Donald

Trump ordered airstrikes that martyred Iran's top anti-terror general Qassem Soleimani and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), in Baghdad's international airport.

In the early hours of January 8, the IRGC fired dozens of ballistic missiles at a military airbase hosting U.S. forces in Iraq as part of its promised "tough revenge" for the U.S. terrorist attack. **→2**



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## 'Red pearl' harvest begins in South Khorasan

Farmers in Sivjan village, South Khorasan province, are harvesting jujube, which is known as "red pearl" in the region. The eastern province accounts for 98 percent of the total jujube production of the country. Some seven thousand tons of jujube is predicted to be harvested this year. Jujube has been proven to have calming effects on brain and nervous system. Jujubes are a powerhouse of essential vitamins and antioxidants.



### 3rd Iranian fuel tanker enters Venezuela's waters

**1 →** The previous fuel delivery mission was carried out by five Iranian vessels between May and June. It delivered the equipment that the Latin American country needed to shore up its gasoline industry.

Washington has been pursuing a regime change policy toward Iran and Venezuela. The U.S. has imposed very harsh sanctions on both nations, virtually cutting off their trade ties with the outside world.

Trying to deflect the pressure, Tehran and Caracas have signed agreements in the areas of trade, energy, industrial, defensive, cultural, and educational cooperation.

On Tuesday, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif talked with his Venezuelan counterpart Jorge Arreaza on the phone. During the conversation, Arreaza said his country's "historic" relations with Iran were at their best possible juncture.

The Venezuelan foreign minister said in a tweet that the talks examined "the geopolitical threats" that faced the nations and constituted a menace to peace and multilateralism.

Yahya Rahim-Safavi, a former commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), told reporters last week that Iran has helped "every Muslim and non-Muslim country" that asks for assistance.

He said Iran received gold bars in exchange for the gasoline previously delivered to Venezuela, sent by airplane "so that nothing would happen to it."

Washington has imposed sanctions on state oil company Petroleos de Venezuela (PDVSA) as part of its push to oust President Nicolas Maduro.

In May 2018, the U.S. withdrew from the Iran nuclear deal and imposed what it called "the harshest ever sanctions" on the Islamic Republic. The sanctions have hurt the most vulnerable classes of the Iranian society.

The U.S. also refused to lift the sanctions even after Iran was harshly hit by the coronavirus outbreak.

### Iraq enjoys good ties with Iran, Arab countries: PM Kadhimi

**1 →** In remarks in July, Kadhimi said his country will not allow any threat against Iran from the Iraqi soil. He made the remarks during a joint press conference with President Hassan Rouhani in Tehran.

In August, an Iraqi source said Kadhimi has candidly told Trump that his country will not let the United States to take any actions against Iran or any other neighboring country from the Iraqi soil.

"The Iraqi prime minister was brave and candid in a meeting with Trump and told him that we will not let Iraq be turned into a platform to target Iran, Turkey or any other neighboring countries," the source was quoted as saying by Iraqi media.

Also, Iraqi President Barham Salih said in June 2019 that his country under no circumstances will allow the U.S. to use its bases in Iraq to launch an attack on neighboring Iran.

"We do not want our territory to be a staging post for any hostile action against any of our neighbors, including Iran," Salih said in an interview with CNN's Christiane Amanpour in London.

"This is definitely not part of the agreement between the Iraqi government and the United States."

Meanwhile, Tehran's Ambassador to Baghdad Iraj Masjedi on Saturday reaffirmed Iran's support for stability in Iraq and strengthening economic and social ties between the two neighboring countries.

Masjedi made the remarks in a meeting with Salih, during which the two sides discussed the latest developments in Iraq, the prospects of relations between Tehran and Baghdad and the significance of adherence to negotiations and reinforcing regional peace and security, as well as the importance of reducing tensions in the region.

The two sides also stressed the need to beef up measures to protect diplomatic places and centers in Iraq.

### Iranian MPs visit Nagorno-Karabakh border

**TEHRAN (Tasnim)** — A group of Iranian lawmakers paid a visit to the country's border areas near the Nagorno-Karabakh region, where fighting has broken out between Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan since last week.



Members of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission have traveled to the areas near the common border with the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region, the commission's spokesman told Tasnim.

Abolfazl Amoei said the lawmakers are going to prepare a report on the developments in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and the impact of the disputes between Yerevan and Baku on the border areas of Iran.

On Saturday, Iranian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Saeed Khatibzadeh called on Armenia and Azerbaijan to be careful not to violate Iran's border amid the outbreak of the new round of fighting.

is comments came after officials in Iran's northwestern province of East Azarbaijan reported that mortar shells fired by the warring sides in the latest round of fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan have hit border rural areas in the province.

According to reports, one of the mortars has fallen in a village in Khoda Afrin county, injuring a 6-year-old child.

# Cuba warns against U.S. withdrawal from JCPOA, INF

**POLITICAL**  
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**TEHRAN** — Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez has warned about the consequences of the U.S. government's withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal-JCPOA - and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) with Russia.

In a video message to the UN General Assembly to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on Friday, Rodriguez strongly condemned the U.S. pullout from the two agreements, Press TV reported.

He warned that such unilateral actions will have serious repercussions for stability and security of the world.

Rodriguez also warned about the U.S.'s warmongering which runs counter to international efforts aimed to materialize nuclear disarmament.

He said the U.S. continues to possess the largest number of nuclear weapons available to be used and is the only country in the world that has dropped two atomic bombs.

The Cuban foreign minister explained that 75 years after the criminal bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, there are approximately 13,400 nuclear weapons, of which nearly 1,800 are on operational alert and 3,720 deployed, more than half



of these belonging to the United States.

The UN cannot remain impassive in the face of the U.S. nuclear stance review, he said.

Rodriguez also urged the United States to renew its Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) with Russia.

In May 2018, U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew his country from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly known as the Iran nuclear agreement, which was signed between Iran and six major powers.

In August 2019, Trump also exited

the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) with Russia, which had banned land-based missiles with a range of between 500 to 5,500 kilometers.

Moscow subsequently warned at the time that the U.S. withdrawal would provoke another arms race among world powers.

At the Virtual Meeting of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on Friday, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said the U.S. is developing new nuclear weapons and recklessly lowering the threshold of their deployment.

"75 years after the U.S. dropped atomic bombs on innocent civilians in Hiroshima and Nagasaki—the first and only use of such horrific weapons—this meeting provides a unique opportunity to mobilize the world to liberate humanity from the nuclear nightmare," Zarif remarked.

"25 years after the NPT Review and Extension Conference called for reduced reliance on nuclear weapons and the ICJ ordered good faith efforts towards nuclear disarmament, the U.S. is developing new nuclear weapons and recklessly lowering the threshold of their deployment. It has further caused immense damage to the NPT by unlawfully withdrawing from the INF and the JCPOA," he added.

## Only JCPOA participants are able to initiate 'snapback process': German FM

**POLITICAL**  
d e s k

**TEHRAN** — German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas has rejected the U.S. move to initiate the so-called snapback of sanctions on Iran, saying only participants to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) are able to initiate the process.

"Our position on snapback is very clear: Only JCPOA participants may notify the UN Security Council of significant non-performance of commitments under the JCPOA by Iran," Maas told the New Arab in an interview published on Sunday.

"The U.S. left the agreement in 2018 and therefore no longer has a right to initiate the process called 'snapback'," the German foreign minister said.

He also mentioned the new sanctions imposed by the U.S. on Iran and expressed Germany's view in that regard. "We also decided not to join its 'maximum pressure' campaign."

EU sanctions against Iran remain lifted to the extent required under the JCPOA, the Germany foreign minister said, adding that this also means that the EU arms embargo remains in force until 2023.

In July 2015, Iran signed the JCPOA with China, France,



Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany and the European Union. The deal required Iran to scale back its nuclear program and severely downgrade its uranium reserves in exchange for termination of sanctions, including lifting the arms embargo five years after the deal's adoption.

In May 2018, however, the United States unilaterally

abandoned the JCPOA and implemented hardline policies against Tehran, which Washington has described as the "maximum pressure" policy.

Iran waited an entire year for the other parties to the deal, especially the three European countries, to protect its interests under the historic accord. But after they failed to do so, Tehran began to gradually reduce its commitments under the JCPOA.

On January 5, Iran took a fifth and last step in reducing its commitments and said it would no longer observe any operational limitations on its nuclear industry, whether concerning the capacity and level of uranium enrichment, the volume of stockpiled uranium or research and development. However, Iran has insisted if the Europeans honor their obligations it will immediately reverse its decisions.

During the interview, Maas said Germany, France and the United Kingdom remain committed to preserving and fully implementing the JCPOA.

He also urged Iran to refrain from any further JCPOA violations, saying, "On the contrary, Iran should take concrete practical steps towards full compliance with its nuclear commitments."

## American scholar says Trump administration has done all it can against Iran

**POLITICAL**  
d e s k

**TEHRAN** — The Iran nuclear deal is still alive and it will be available to be renewed if Joe Biden is elected, says an American professor, noting the Trump administration "has do all it can" against Iran.

"[The nuclear deal] is still alive, and if Biden is elected, it will be available to be renewed. Everyone is waiting for the U.S. presidential elections before taking definitive action," William Beeman, who is professor of anthropology at the University of Minnesota, said in an interview with ILNA published on Saturday.

"The United States has done all it can, and has been rebuffed by the international community," Beeman added.

On the possibility of a military conflict, he said there are many things that can lead to war, but not these futile "snapback actions" on the part of the United States.

These have been completely rejected by every other nation, and the UN has ruled that the United States cannot make them incumbent on other nations, because

Trump withdrew the United States from the JCPOA, he said, using the official name of the Iran nuclear deal.

"So the United State has failed in trying to enact these actions. Additionally, the United States had already sanctioned everything possible in Iran, so there was no room for Trump to do more," he pointed out.

Beeman argued that the Europeans would like to fulfill their obligations, but they are hamstrung by the United States because of the dominance of the U.S. dollar in international trade.

"The Europeans tried to create another financial transfer system to bypass the U.S. restrictions, and it was implemented, but it was so minuscule that it had no effect," he said. "Russia and China are also trying to develop alternative transfer systems that would bypass the dollar."

Asked to offer his take over a possible Trump victory, he said if Trump wins, Europeans will have to find some way to deal with him. "Right now the JCPOA is in stasis, and it could stay that way, but

it would be rendered useless."

"What people continually forget is that Iran and all other nations (except Israel, Pakistan, India, North Korea and South Sudan) are bound by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which is a real treaty, not just an 'agreement' like the JCPOA," the American scholar said.

He stressed that Iran is in full compliance with the NPT, and therefore, it cannot proceed to any kind of nuclear weapons development without withdrawing from the NPT.

"This has been talked about in Iran, but I don't see it happening," he added.

The commotion over Iran's nuclear program was made by the U.S. and Israel while Iran has proven it has no intention to develop nuclear weapons. The country is the subject to the most intrusive sanctions by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Based on a fatwa (religious decree) of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, it is illegitimate to produce or use nuclear weapons and it



has no place in Iran's security doctrine. Iran has on numerous occasions repeated such position.

In August, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif pointed to the fatwa, saying, "We've never been after nuclear weapons and will never do so."

He said Iran regards the development of nuclear weapons as a morally wrong act and a wrong strategic move.

## Iranian embassy in Baku deplores civilian deaths in Azeri-Armenian conflict

**POLITICAL**  
d e s k

**TEHRAN** — The Iranian embassy in Baku has issued a statement on Sunday deploring civilian casualties in the clashes between the two neighboring countries of Azerbaijan and Armenia.

"The office of the Republic of Azerbaijan prosecutor general reported that as of the morning of October 3, 19 innocent people have been killed, 63 wounded and 44 civilian places and facilities as well as 181 houses have been destroyed," the statement said on Sunday.

The embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Republic of Azerbaijan emphasized the need for respect for human rights and international humanitarian laws, recalling the international norms, principles and rules of the armed conflict, including the Geneva Conventions (1949) and its Additional Protocols (1977) and in particular the Fourth Geneva Convention on the Protection of Civilian Persons.

"The Iranian embassy strongly condemns any violation of the rights of innocent people and the killing and wounding of civilians, as well as the destruction and damage to civilian premises, facilities and properties, and extends its condolences to the bereaved families," the statement concluded.

Iran has invited the neighboring countries of Azer-



baijan Republic and Armenia to immediately cease war and show self-restraint to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, stressing the need for regional peace.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif called on his Azeri and Armenian counterparts to refrain from military clashes as tensions have risen between the two countries over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region.

During phone conversations with Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan and Azeri Foreign Minister Jeyhoun Bayramov, Zarif voiced concern over the

situation and called on both sides to declare ceasefire and end hostilities.

He called for negotiations according to the international law and expressed Iran's readiness to use all its capacities to help settle disputes.

Clashes in the contested region of Nagorno-Karabakh broke out on September 27, with each side accusing the other of sparking the war.

The conflict first began over three decades ago, in 1988, when radical nationalist sentiments in both Armenia and Azerbaijan unleashed by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika and glasnost reforms prompted authorities in the majority ethnic Armenian Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous region within the Azerbaijani Soviet Republic to try to secede and join Armenia proper.

Baku attempted to prevent this, and in late 1991 abolished the region's autonomous status. Between 1992 and 1994, Armenian and Azeri forces waged a full-scale war for the region, with the conflict killing as many as 42,000 soldiers, militiamen and civilians, and displacing over a million Armenians and Azerbaijanis, both within Nagorno-Karabakh and in other areas of both countries.



# Tel Aviv restive nights

Despite normalization hype, Netanyahu faces wrath of Israelis

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Tens of thousands of Israelis continued their protests on Saturday against the “failed” leadership of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, weeks after he vociferously sought to boost his political standing through hyping two normalization deals with some Arab countries.

Dozens of protesters were arrested by the Israeli security forces while others were attacked by pro-Netanyahu people who are mainly extremist Jews.

In Tel Aviv, the clashes between protesters and the security forces continued throughout the day until evening and nighttime. More than a dozen were arrested at the protest location. The security forces also stopped journalists from covering the protests. Bar Peleg, a reporter for the Israeli publication Haaretz, was fined for not social distancing, despite showing a press pass, which should legally allow him to enter and walk among protesters, according to the Jerusalem Post.

The Black Flag movement, one of the groups leading the protests against Netanyahu, estimated that 130,000 people took part in Saturday’s protests against Netanyahu in cities and towns all across Israel, Haaretz reported.

The anti-Netanyahu protests were held throughout Israel despite the fact that the Israeli Knesset has recently passed a bill stipulating that, due to the coronavirus pandemic and the lockdown, protesters may only demonstrate within a one-kilometer radius of their homes. The bill was widely seen as a ploy from Netanyahu to end weekly protests already going on against him. The Netanyahu government’s insistence to implement this bill has only exacerbated the protesters’ wrath against the prime minister.

The protesters say the Knesset bill was an illegitimate attempt to silence the angry public. The Black Flags said the government was more obsessed with squelching weekly protests against Netanyahu than fighting the coronavirus pandemic.

“They are silencing the public criticism... but we won’t give up our freedom to make our voices heard,” the group was quoted as saying by the Walla news site, according to the Times of Israel.



As the demonstrators poured into the streets in violation of the controversial bill, the security forces managed to disperse protesters by using excessive force. Videos circulating on social media platforms showed the police violently dispersing demonstrators, even those who complied with the Knesset bill by holding protests within one-kilometer distance from their homes while observing coronavirus-related instructions such as wearing face masks and social-distancing rules. One of these videos showed a police officer violently throwing a bucket at a boy. In Jerusalem, hardline ultra-Orthodox extremists also attacked journalists and smashed the glasses of cars parked on the streets.

The Black Flags Movement spokesperson has said Netanyahu is trying to stop protests against him through “arbitrary decisions” such as imposing one-kilometer distance for protests. “There is no logic to the arbitrary decision,” the spokesperson told The Jerusalem Post regarding the one-kilometer decision. “It is only the logic of an accused man who is trying to stop the protests against him. Despite this, we call everyone to go out and protest according to the restrictions.”

The protest leaders accused Netanyahu and his inciters of violently confronting the protesters while the police refused to protect them. The police is itself accused of acting against the protestors or at least stopping short of protecting them from passersby and

Netanyahu proponents.

The protests gained steam on Saturday as protesters challenged the government by taking to the streets to protest Netanyahu’s corruption and the way he handles the coronavirus crisis.

“Before we were just worried about the corruption, now we’re out here to show them that they can’t shut us up,” Haaretz quoted one protester in Tel Aviv as saying.

Another protester in a settlement near the Green Line said, “I have always supported the protest, and once they limited the distance, I decided to join, [because] from my perspective, they’ve crossed every possible line. Each of us has a red line. I define myself as center-right, but this is not a left-right struggle but rather a battle for better leadership. We simply feel that we don’t have a father or mother.”

A third protester, who attends Haifa protests on a weekly basis, also said, “I hear the despair of young people and it worries me.”

Over the past few months, thousands of Israelis have camped before Netanyahu’s official residence in Jerusalem.

The weekly anti-Netanyahu protests continued unabated throughout September, despite the Israeli prime minister’s hype about two U.S.-brokered deals between Israel and Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates to fully normalize diplomatic relations.

In August, U.S. President Donald Trump announced that he had brokered what he

called historic peace deals between Israel and the UAE to normalize their relations. One month later, he announced a similar deal between Israel and Bahrain. Trump and Netanyahu both exaggerated the importance of these deals in an effort to boost their positions in internal politics. They said the normalization deals will change the course of history and mark the dawn of a “new Middle East” (West Asia).

“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 a White House ceremony for signing the deals in mid-September. Netanyahu, and Abdullah bin Zayed and Abdullatif al-Zayani, the foreign ministers of Bahrain and the UAE, attended the ceremony.

Netanyahu was so tickled pink that he caused fury in the UAE right after the announcement of the Israel-UAE deal in mid-August. In a bid to justify their deal with Israel, the Emiratis said that Israel committed to halting its plan to annex large parts of the West Bank in exchange for peace with the UAE. However, the Israeli prime minister rushed to say that he didn’t make any commitment to halt the annexation plan, embarrassing the Emirati leaders before their people, which led to the Emiratis criticizing Netanyahu. Some analysts believe that Netanyahu’s remarks enraged the leaders of the UAE and were the main reason behind Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed’s refusal to participate in the signing ceremony at the White House.

Netanyahu did all these things to improve his political position among the Israelis. But while he was busy bragging about peace for peace with the Arab countries, protesters were chanting slogans against his corruption and mishandling of the coronavirus pandemic. Netanyahu sought to use the normalization deals in his propaganda campaign to cover up the widespread opposition to his government. But continued protests across Israel showed that these deals did nothing to save him.

## U.S. seeking collapse of Iranian economy: vice president

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — First Vice-President Eshaq Jahangiri has denounced the U.S. “unprecedented” pressure on Iran, saying the main goal of the pressure was to bring the Iranian economy to collapse.

“Their goal was to bring about the collapse of Iran’s economy but the government, through planning, did not allow them to achieve their goal. Fortunately, the country’s economy is still kept afloat,” Jahangiri said in a telephone conversation with Grand Ayatollah Safi Golpayegani on Saturday, adding that the Americans have imposed unprecedented sanctions and pressure on the Iranian nation.

The vice president said Iran is currently facing two main problems: U.S. cruel sanctions and problems arising from the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

For his part, the grand ayatollah said high prices and economic pressure are inflicting pain on ordinary people and that the government needs to take measures to decrease the sufferings of the people.

On Saturday, Jahangiri spoke by phone with a number of Maraji (religious leaders) or their representatives. He held telephone conversations with Grand Ayatollah Jafar Sobhani, Ayatollah Alavi Gorgani, and the representative of Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani in Iran, Ayatollah Shahrestani.

The vice president told the representative of Ayatollah



Sistani that the U.S. sanctions have made life difficult for the Iranian people.

“The cruel and cowardly sanctions of the United States have put heavy pressure on the livelihood of the people, and we hope that with double efforts, the participation of the people and the prayers of the Maraji, we can resolve these problems,” Jahangiri said.

U.S. President Donald Trump has unilaterally withdrawn the U.S. from a 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers that had provided Iran with sanctions relief for nearly two years. Calling the Iran nuclear deal “the worst deal in history,” Trump called for making a “better” one with Iran

while imposing sweeping economic sanctions on Iran.

Iranian officials have said the U.S. sanctions on Iran amount to “economic terrorism,” which aims to bring about the collapse of the Iranian economy. In late July, President Hassan Rouhani said the U.S. sanctions were aimed at causing economic collapse in Iran but they failed to do so.

Rouhani recently said the U.S. has imposed an economic war on Iran.

“We have been under sanctions since 1980 but since 2017 an economic war began. Right now, it is not sanctions but an economic war. The U.S., with all its capacities such as dollar, banking ties, and its relations with multinational companies, has waged an economic war against us,” Rouhani said on September 23.

The White House has also bragged about its sanctions on Iran. American officials have said on many occasions that they imposed the strongest sanctions in history on Iran, a move that negatively impacted ordinary Iranians especially those suffering from severe diseases that need expensive medicines and their medicines are imported. The sanctions also caused shortage of medicines because many pharmaceutical firms refrain from doing business with Iran out of fear that they might fall afoul of U.S. sanctions.

## Zarif meets with new Kuwait emir to offer condolences

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has traveled to neighboring Kuwait to offer condolences over the passing of its emir.

“During the visit, Foreign Minister Zarif held meetings with Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah, the new emir of Kuwait, and Foreign Minister Dr. Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah,” the Iranian Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Sunday.

The statement also said Zarif has traveled

to Kuwait on behalf of President Hassan Rouhani to offer sympathy to the Kuwaiti nation and government over the demise of the country’s former emir, Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah.

He also offered congratulations on the new emir’s appointment and underlined the Islamic Republic’s support for the Arab country.

The late Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad, who had been receiving medical treatment in the U.S., passed away on September 29. Earlier this

year, he underwent a medical surgery after reports emerged that he had been admitted to hospital for a medical check-up.

The 91-year-old ruler was known for his mediation efforts among Arab countries. Over the past few years, he made efforts to reconcile Qatar with some of its Arab neighbors who severed their diplomatic ties with it in an effort to compel it to change its foreign policies. These neighbors — Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain — along with Egypt, also planned to invade

Qatar, a plan that was thwarted by Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah, who once publicly said that he succeeded in preventing a military action against Qatar.

But the late emir failed to resolve the crisis between Qatar and the Arab quartet and his death threw the crisis into uncertainty. It remains to be seen whether the new emir of Kuwait would follow the lead of his predecessor. Some analysts believe that the new emir may put more emphasis on internal affairs than foreign policy.

## Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has no military solution, senior MP says

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region cannot be resolved militarily, a senior Iranian lawmaker has said.

“Negotiation and dialogue are the only solutions to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and this conflict cannot be settled militarily,” said Hossein Noushabadi, the head of the Parliament’s International Diplomacy and National Interests faction.

Noushabadi said the conflict is nothing new and Azerbaijan and Armenia have always been locked in the dispute over the mountainous breakaway.

“This conflict is nothing new. The Nagorno-Karabakh region has always been claimed to be part of the two countries. Armenia has seized Nagorno-Karabakh in a war that happened years ago. But Azerbaijan wants to take it back. On the other hand, Armenia also considers the region as part of its territory because this region is very important in the Caucasus,” Noushabadi said in an interview with the Islamic Republic Broadcasting (IRIB) news agency.

According to the lawmaker, Iran’s policy toward the Nagorno-Karabakh region has always been based on

the principle of non-interference in internal affairs. He also said that Iran seeks to calm tensions without siding with any country.

“Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan should not allow others to interfere in the region and should not lay the groundwork for the presence of illegitimate powers in the region,” Noushabadi noted.

Noushabadi is a member of the Parliament’s National Security and Foreign Policy Committee. He said the committee recently held a meeting to discuss the tensions between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

The lawmaker called on the two countries to resolve differences through dialogue, warning about the possible involvement of other countries in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

“Some countries, which are not present in the region, want to secure their interests by entering it. They also want to exploit this crisis to abuse ethnic and racial bigotry to secure their interests. This issue requires the leaders of the two countries to be aware and settle disputes so that other countries fail to exploit the crisis,” Noushabadi pointed out.

The war between Azerbaijan and Armenia broke out on September 27 when the troops of the two countries exchanged fire along the borders in Nagorno-Karabakh. They are fighting over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region, a breakaway internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan but controlled by Armenian forces. The warring sides are using artillery and mortar shells, with Azerbaijan also using advanced combat drones that are capable of targeting Armenian positions without being intercepted.

On Saturday, the war reached a critical point as Armenian forces showered the Azerbaijani city of Ganja with missiles, killing a number of civilians in a city that is located outside the conflict zone.

Iran has called on Azerbaijan and Armenia to end the war and resolve the differences at the negotiating table.

“Iran is closely monitoring the alarming violence in Nagorno-Karabakh. We call for an immediate end to hostilities and urge dialogue to resolve differences. Our neighbors are our priority and we are ready to provide good offices to enable talks. Our region needs peace now,” tweeted Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif shortly after the clashes erupted between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

## SPORTS

### Skocic names Iran team for Uzbekistan, Mali friendlies

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iran national football team coach Dragan Skocic has named his 23-man squad for two friendly matches against Uzbekistan and Mali.



Iran will play two friendly matches against Uzbekistan and Mali as part of preparation for the 2022 World Cup qualifiers.

The ‘Persian Leopards’ will first meet Uzbekistan national football team on Oct. 8 in Tashkent.

They also meet Mali in Antalya, Turkey on Oct. 13.

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

#### Goalkeepers:

Amir Abedzadeh (Maritimo), Payam Niazmand (Sepahan), Rashid Mazaheri (Esteghlal)

#### Defenders:

Majid Hosseini (Trabzonspor), Hossein Kanaanizadegan (Persepolis), Shoja Khalilzadeh (Persepolis), Aref Gholami (Esteghlal), Sadegh Moharami (Dinamo), Milad Mohammadi (Gent), Mojtaba Najarian (Foolad), Siamak Nemati (Persepolis)

#### Midfielders:

Ehsan Haji Safi (Tractor), Ali Karimi (Esteghlal), Ahmad Nourollahi (Persepolis), Omid Noorafkan (Sepahan), Ali Gholizadeh (Charleroi), Saman Ghodods (Brentford), Mehdi Ghaedi (Esteghlal), Vahid Amiri (Persepolis), Mehdi Torabi (?)

#### Forwards:

Sardar Azmoun (Zenit), Mehdi Taremi (Porto), Kaveh Rezaei (Charleroi)

## Esfandiar steals show in debut win for Greenyard

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — VC Greenyard Maaseik player Amirhossein Esfandiar helped the team win their first match at the EuroMillions Volley League.

Greenyard came from a set down to defeat Tectum Achel 25-21, 19-25, 24-26, 21-25.

Iranian international Esfandiar along with Julian Cox scored 24 points each for Maaseik.

Esfandiar was named the Star of the Game and received his award from Achel coach Jan Meertens.

Greenyard will meet Shakhtior Soligorsk of Belarus on Wednesday at the Champions League Volley 2021 Men Round 1.

## Hamed haddadi to join Sichuan Blue Whales

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iranian international center Hamed Haddadi has reached an agreement to join Chinese basketball club Sichuan Blue Whales.

The 35-year-old player has already played in Sichuan for three different stints.

Haddadi first joined the Chinese Basketball Association (CBA) team in 2013 but left them after a year to join Iranian club Mahram.

Haddadi rejoined Sichuan two times more in 2015 and 2016 seasons.

The media reports suggest that he has finalized his contract with Sichuan for the fourth time.

## Golmohammadi dedicates Al Nassr win to Persepolis fans

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Persepolis football team head coach Yahya Golmohammadi thanked the fans after Iran champion defeated Saudi Arabia’s Al-Nassr on penalties to reach the 2020 AFC Champions League final on Saturday.

“Congratulations to my players who fought hard, gave everything and defended the dignity and name of our team,” Golmohammadi told the-afc.com.

“I would like to thank everyone who wanted us to reach the final. Overall, I am very happy with this win and I would like to present it to our fans and the Iranian people who have been going through difficult times and needed something to bring them happiness,” he added.

“It is a matter of believing in ourselves and believing we could qualify for the final. We were playing against a team that played very good football, but we had overcome a lot of problems since before our arrival here and that gave us added motivation to win and be able to bring joy to our fans and the Iranian people,” Golmohammadi added.

This was Persepolis’ third appearance in the AFC Champions League semi-final, having lost to Saudi Arabia’s Al Hilal SFC 6-2 on aggregate in 2017 and beating Qatar’s Al Sadd SC 2-1 on aggregate the following year before losing the final to Kashima Antlers.

## Sayyadmanesh reaches agreement with Zorya Luhansk

**Tasnim** — Iranian forward Allahyar Sayyadmanesh has reportedly reached an agreement with Ukrainian football club Zorya Luhansk.

Allahyar, who played on loan in Istanbulspor for half a season last year, could not score a goal and assisted in four games he played with Fenerbahce.

Sayyadmanesh joined Fenerbahce last year from Esteghlal on a five-year deal but failed to meet expectations.

The 20-year-old forward was a member of Iran football team who qualified for the 2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup quarter-final in India.

He made his Iran national football team debut on June 6, 2019 against Syria and scored a goal.



## Red meat purchasing at guaranteed price highly recommended

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The head of Iran’s Livestock Provision Council called on the government to purchase the red meat at guaranteed prices to support the producers.

Making the remarks in an interview by IRNA on Friday, Mansour Pourian also recommended the exports of livestock to support the producers and also bring foreign revenue for the country.

Saying that the purchase of red meat at guaranteed prices started in the country in the middle of the fourth Iranian calendar month of Tir (early July), Pourian announced that 4,000 tons of red meat have been purchased in this way by the State Livestock Affairs Logistics Company since then.

The purchase of red meat at guaranteed prices is already done in 15 provinces, including Khorasan Razavi, North Khorasan, Gilan, Alborz, Yazd, Isfahan, Fars, Sistan-Baluchestan, Khuzestan, East Azarbaijan, and Semnan, he said, adding that it will be then conducted in the other provinces as well.

The Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) has announced that the production of red meat in the country stood at 37,100 tons in the fifth month of the current Iranian calendar year (July 22-August 21), showing 41 percent growth compared to the same month in the past year.

The SCI’s report said that beef and veal had the lion’s share in the country’s red meat output during the fifth month with 21,400 tons, followed by lamb and mutton with 12,300 tons, and red meat from other livestock with 669 tons.



Iran’s deputy agriculture minister, Morteza Rezaei, has recently said that the total production of red and chicken meat is expected to reach 3.5 million tons by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2021).

He said red meat production will reach 880,000 tons, while chicken meat output is expected to reach 2.7 million tons.

“Considering the measures taken, the egg production will reach 1,650,000 tons, the honey output will reach 113,000 tons, and the production of fresh silk cocoons will reach 1,650,000 tons”, the official added.

Pointing to the per capita consumption of protein products in the country, Rezaei said: “Currently the per capita consumption of red meat is 12.5 kilograms, chicken meat 31.25 kilograms, raw milk 124 kilograms, eggs 11.72 kilograms and honey 1.35 kilograms.”

Iran is among the leading consumers of red meat in the West Asia region with lamb being the most sought after.

However, the consumption per person is around a third of what is normally seen in countries like the U.S. and Australia, mainly due to the prohibition of pork in Islamic law.

The major part of Iran’s red meat imports comes from countries like Brazil, where Iranian supervisors directly control culling methods to ensure they comply with religious rules.

## Over 3.5m tons of commodities traded at IME in Sep.

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — More than 3.585 million tons of commodities worth over \$1.56 billion were traded at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) in September.

As reported by the IME’s International Affairs and Public Relations Department, during the last month, the oil and petrochemical trading floor of the IME played host to trading of 1.883 million tons of commodities worth more than \$606 million.

On this trading floor, more than 557,434 tons of bitumen, 364,399 tons of polymer products and 203,688 tons of chemical products, 530,700 tons of VB feed stock, 153,990 tons of lube cut oil, 54,650 tons of sulfur, 7,615 tons of insulation, 300 tons of slaps waxes, 590 tons of argon as well as 10,560 tons of oil products were traded by customers.

The metal and mineral trading floor witnessed trading over 1.675 million tons of commodities worth more than \$944 million.

On this trading floor 1,573,982 tons of steel, 28,615 tons of copper, 600 tons of molybdenum concentrates, 60 tons of precious metals concentrates, 26,900 tons of zinc, 33,850 tons of aluminum, 5,000 tons of iron ore concentrates, 6,500 tons of coke as well as 40 kg of gold bullion were traded by customers.

Furthermore, in agricultural trading floor of the IME more than 2,090 kg of saffron worth over \$869,000 was traded by the customers.

The side market of the IME experienced trading of 3,625 tons of PDA TAR, a total of 300 empty barrels, 18,389 tons of tomato paste, 28 tons of used locomotive engine oil, 786 tons of metal scrap, 200 tons of ferrosilicon, 700 tons of steel scrap, 2,500 tons of phosphate concentrates as well as a commercial property in Bandar Abbas.

Meanwhile, the value of trades at Iran Mercantile Exchange has risen 44 percent during the past Iranian calendar month (August 22-September 21) from its previous month.

As reported, 3.152 million tons of products worth \$303 trillion rials (about \$7.214 billion) were traded at the IME in the past month, showing a 17-percent growth in terms of weight on a monthly basis.

IME is one of the four major stock markets of Iran, the other three markets are Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), Iran’s over-the-counter (OTC) market known also as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), and Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX).

On April 21, IME Managing Director Hamed Soltani-Nejad unveiled the market’s new outlook plan, which depicts IME’s development roadmap until the Iranian calendar year of 1404 (March 20205-March 2026). Materializing the slogan of this Iranian year, which is “Surge in Production” is seriously considered in the mentioned plan and it is, in fact, the strategic approach of the outlook plan.

# ‘Oil refineries more than enough, focus on gas, petro-refineries’

**1 →** He told the Tehran Times that one of the major issues that should be taken into consideration regarding the mentioned subject is the financial and funding aspects of the matter.

“Managing the financial resources is the backbone of the economy and monetary issues should be one of the major factors when considering the development of any sector,” he said.

According to Hosseini, constructing a refinery with a capacity for processing 300,000 barrels of oil per day, requires at least \$10 billion, and considering the country’s current economic situation and the limitations of the financial resources, constructing new oil refineries is not economically justified.

Many of the country’s refineries are currently producing products that are not very competitive and even have limited markets; constructing refineries with the same output is not going to help the country’s economy in any way, Hosseini stressed.

He said the Oil Ministry is now providing subsidized feedstock to many of the oil refineries and if this support is cut, the production from many of the refineries will not be profitable.

“Following the completion of the third phase of the Persian Gulf Star Refinery (PGSR) Iran has not only become self-sufficient in gasoline production but also become an exporter



of the product, so we don’t even need more refineries considering the gasoline sector.”

“We need to focus on the gas industry instead; we have great gas resources and should benefit from them by constructing gas refineries or developing the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) industry.”

Petro-refineries are yet another sector that has come under the spotlight in the world’s energy industry, and Iran like many other developing nations have stepped up its efforts for keeping up with the world’s latest developments.

The official noted that so far the country’s

refineries have been mostly focused on supplying fuel needs including gasoline, gas oil and etc., however, future planning should be more focused on developing petro-refineries.

According to Hosseini, the Internal Rate of Return (IRR) of petro-refiners, depending on their configuration, varies from 16 percent to 20 percent, which is 3-4 times more profitable compared to the old refineries and petrochemical complexes.

Back in June 2019, the Research Center of Iran’s parliament said in a report that petro-refineries are two times more profitable than refineries and suggested that the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC)’s new refinery projects be defined as petro-refineries.

The report dubbed “Petro-refineries, their role in completing the oil value chain and the status in Iran’s oil industry” stated that constructing petro-refineries is one of the most important ways to alleviate the severe economic impacts of price fluctuations and achieve a much higher margin of profit.

“Of course, very positive measures have been taken in this regard, for instance, the government is leaning toward the private sector for the development of the oil and gas industry’s downstream sector,” Hosseini said.

“Oil Ministry has authorized several domestic companies for the construction of petro-refineries across the country and this is the first step in a very good direction.”

## Gasoline exports hit over \$1b in five months

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran exported over \$1 billion worth of gasoline in the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21), following a decrease of consumption and increase of production in the country.

Despite the sanctions, industry data indicates that Iran has not only managed to continue exporting some volumes but actually boosted exports almost three-fold in the mentioned period compared to the previous year.

The significant increase in the country’s gasoline production and exports comes despite the fact that nearly 15 years ago Iran was importing over 10 billion liters of gasoline every year.

Iran became a net gasoline exporter in February 2019, after the inauguration of the third phase of the Persian Gulf Star Refinery (PGS) project which added 120,000 barrels to the country’s daily gasoline production.

Gasoline consumption has also decreased by about 35 percent in the country following the implementation of the rationing program by the government and the decline in the trips and travels due to the outbreak of the coronavirus.

According to the Secretary of Iranian Oil, Gas, and Petrochemical Products Exporters Union (OPEX) Hamid Hosseini, the gasoline rationing scheme has made it possible for the country to export 25-30 million liters of gasoline every day.

Back in November 2019, the deputy finance and economic affairs minister said the fuel rationing plan would make the country able to export 3.65 billion liters of gasoline every year and earn about 14 trillion rials (about \$3.3 billion) from the exports.

The daily processing capacity of Iranian refineries has reached 2.3 million barrels, according to Alireza Sadeq-Abadi, the managing director of National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC).

There are currently 10 refineries operating in the country, nine of which are processing crude oil, and one is specially designed for refining gas condensate.

## Tehran, Russia’s Samara explore ways of expanding trade ties

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) hosted an online business forum with the private sector representatives of the Russian Samara region to explore ways of expanding trade between the two sides.

The event has been organized by TCCIMA in collaboration with Russia Export Center (REC), the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Samara Region, and the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, TCCIMA portal announced.

The business forum is the first event held following the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between TCCIMA and REC for the expansion of trade relations between the two countries.

The event was attended by officials from the two sides including Hesamedin Hallaj, TCCIMA deputy head for the international affairs, and the head of the Russian Embassy’s Trade Representation in Iran Rustam Ziganshin.

Speaking in the meeting, Hallaj underlined the huge economic capacities of the

TCCIMA, saying that the members of the TCCIMA account for about 45 percent of the country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

TCCIMA is interested in networking through specialized associations of the two sides, he added.

“There are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that also have sufficient international experience, but due to the problems caused by the U.S. sanctions in recent years, have not been able to enjoy the benefits of establishing normal business relations with their foreign partners, and it is the responsibility of the two sides’ chambers to use their support services to remove these barriers and facilitate international communication between their members,” he stressed.

In the meeting, Iranian traders and businessmen active in the fields of telecommunications, IT, training and technology transfer, oil and gas, agricultural machinery and products, medical equipment and services, and metals also held B2B talks with representatives of 20 companies from the Samara region.

## TEDPIX falls 23,000 points on Sunday

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 23,209 points on Sunday, IRNA reported.

As reported, over 14.07 billion securities worth 136.92 trillion rials (about \$3.26 billion) were traded at the TSE on Sunday.

The first market’s index fell 15,441 points and the second market’s index lost 53,043 points.

Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dejpasand said on Saturday that the government is going to continue implementing development programs to help flourishing the capital market.

“The stock market situation is not measured only by the fluctuations of its index. The Iranian stock exchange is in the process of becoming a modern stock market,” Dejpasand said.

The Tehran Stock Exchange’s main index has dropped nearly 600,000 points in less than two months and the shares of some companies have faced a loss of up to 70 percent.

Factors like the increase in the number

of members, the growth of the value of transactions, and the expansion of instruments are also indicators of a deepening and growing trend in the market and the index should not be the only factor for evaluating a market, the minister said.

Dejpasand pointed to his ministry’s efforts for offsetting the budget deficit and funding development projects in the current year and said the shares of government-owned companies worth 330 trillion rials (about \$7.85 billion), as well as 900 trillion rials (over \$21.4 billion) worth of treasury bonds, were issued in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21).

Raising funds through the debt market is seen as critical for the government saddled with deep budget holes that have become bigger due to the coronavirus pandemic, collapsing oil prices, U.S. sanctions, and loss of oil export revenue.

Dejpasand had previously said the government may not be able to realize 1.4 quadrillion rials (\$33.3 billion) of its projected revenue in the current fiscal budget.

## Azar field produces 30m barrels of oil in early production phase

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The cumulative production of Iran’s Azar oil field, which is still in its early production phase, has reached over 30 million barrels, Keyvan Yarahmadi, operator of the field development project announced.

As reported by ILNA, with over 97 percent of physical progress, the field’s development project is expected to complete in the near future and the field will be fully operational, according to Yarahmadi.

The official noted that the agreement for the development of the mentioned field was signed back in July 2017, between Russia’s Gazprom and Iran’s Oil Industries’ Engineering and Construction Company (OIEC), and in December 2017, the two companies submitted their joint plan to the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) to develop the field.

In the early production phase, nine wells have been drilled and 129 kilometers of pipelines have been constructed, Yarah-



madi added.

According to the official, over 75 percent of the equipment used in the said project is domestically-made and 55 percent of the workforce were also locals.

With the first phase of the development project completed, the field’s output capacity will reach 65,000 barrels per day, Shana reported.

As there is still no processing installation at the place of this filed, its output is going to be sent to the processing facilities of Dehloran oil field through a 120-km pipeline.

The field is developed jointly by OIEC and Oil Industry Pension Fund Investment Company (OPIC) under the supervision of Iran’s Petroleum Engineering and Development Company (PEDEC).

With 2.5 billion barrels of oil reserve, Azar field is located in Iran’s western region of Mehran along the border with Iraq.

## South Pars phase 12 output at 14bcm in H1

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Phase 12 of Iran’s South Pars gas field has produced 14 billion cubic meters of gas during the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21), the phase’s operator told IRNA.

“Fortunately, all units of phase 12 are operating in favorable conditions, and in the first six months of this year, this phase has succeeded in producing about 14 billion cubic meters of gas,” Mohammad-Mehdi Hashemi said.

“This refinery has also produced more than 47,200 tons of sulfur in the first six months of this year,” the official said.

According to Hashemi, the annual overhaul operations of the ninth refinery of the phase have been completed despite the complications created by the outbreak of the coronavirus, and the refinery is ready to operate at full capacity during the cold season.

In late September, the director of the refinery No. 12 of the mentioned phase had said that the mentioned refinery is receiving

over 46 million cubic meters (mcm) of gas from the platforms of phases 22-24 on a daily basis and produces over 40 mcm of sweet gas.

According to Mehdi Gerami Shirazi, the refinery is also producing other by-products on schedule and according to the plans.

South Pars is divided into 24 standard phases of development in the first stage. Most of the phases are fully operational at the moment.

A total of 14 gas refineries are currently

processing the gas extracted from this giant field which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf.

South Pars covers an area of 9,700 square kilometers, 3,700 square kilometers of which are in Iran’s territorial waters. The remaining 6,000 square kilometers, called North Dome, are situated in Qatar’s territorial waters.

The field is estimated to contain a significant amount of natural gas, accounting for about eight percent of the world’s reserves, and approximately 18 billion barrels of condensate.



## News

## Israelis defy protest ban to call for Netanyahu's resignation

Defying a new controversial law that limits demonstrations during lockdown, tens of thousands of Israelis have protested against prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has refused to step down despite being on trial for graft and his mishandling of the coronavirus crisis.

The protests took place in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem al-Quds, Haifa and Pardes Hannah and Oranit on Saturday.

One of the groups organizing the demonstrations, the Black Flags movement, said its "conservative" data from its ground operatives indicated that more than 100,000 people rallied in the occupied territories.

The figure makes Saturday's demonstrations collectively the largest yet held against Netanyahu over his serial corruption indictments and mismanagement of Israel's COVID-19-ravaged economy.

The protests came a few days after the Israeli parliament (Knesset) approved emergency regulations that bar individuals from protesting more than one kilometer from their homes.

Under the new restrictions, demonstrators must maintain a distance of two meters from one another at all times, and may only demonstrate in groups of up to 20 people at a time.

## Pilgrims flood Iraq's Karbala for Arbreen

Tens of thousands of worshipers have been flooding into Iraq's holy city of Karbala despite the Covid-19 pandemic for the Shia Muslim pilgrimage of Arbreen, one of the world's biggest religious gatherings.

Iraq's borders opened for Arbreen but with restrictions on Arbreen arrivals, in a bid to stem the spread of coronavirus, AFP reported.

The virus has hit Iraq hard, with more than 375,000 people infected and almost 9,500 deaths.

In 2019, an estimated 14 million Shiite pilgrims flooded Iraq to attend Arbreen, including about two million from neighboring Iran.

## Resistance News

## Shrugging off global outcry, Israel moves to build 4,500 settler units

**INTERNATIONAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Despite international outcry against the Tel Aviv regime's policies of land grab and illegal settlement expansion, Israel will build yet another 4,500 settler units in the occupied West Bank.

The Israeli Haaretz daily newspaper reported on Sunday that formal sessions on the construction of the units will commence as of October 12, and at the behest of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Earlier, the Israeli Hebrew-language Israel Hayom daily newspaper reported that more than 2,000 housing units within the construction plans would be built in the Beitar Illit settlement, about 10 kilometers south of Jerusalem al-Quds, 629 in the Elieh settlement and 560 others in the Gilo settlement in southwestern al-Quds.

## A Biden win doesn't mean unconditional return to nuclear deal: academic

“Even the traditional Republican foreign policy elite, view the Trump administration's foreign policy as idiotic, incoherent, incompetent, and dangerous”

By Mohammad Mazhari

**TEHRAN** — An American academic is of the view that a Joe Biden victory in the upcoming presidential elections doesn't mean that the United States will return to the 2015 nuclear deal unconditionally.

However, Professor Edward Rhodes tells the Tehran Times that a Biden win will pave the way “to return to the bargaining table to address the legitimate grievances that both the United States and Iran have against each other.”

Rhodes, a professor of government and international affairs, also says “If Biden wins in November's election, we will nearly certainly see a rapid and quite dramatic shift in U.S. foreign policy.”

Following is the text of the interview:

■ Is there a possibility of rapid change in U.S. foreign policy if Joe Biden wins the November elections? Will the U.S. return to the nuclear deal without preconditions?

A: If Biden wins in November's election, we will nearly certainly see a rapid and quite dramatic shift in U.S. foreign policy after inauguration day (January 20, 2021), including a less confrontational approach to U.S.-Iranian relations.

This does not, however, imply a return to the nuclear deal without preconditions. What it does imply is a willingness to return to the bargaining table to address the legitimate grievances that both the United States and Iran have against each other. Unlike the Trump administration, which prefers a hostile stalemate in U.S.-Iranian relations to the mutual compromises that would be necessary to move these relations back to a more normal footing, a Biden administration would nearly certainly prefer a negotiated outcome. Like the Trump administration, however, a Biden administration will seek not only changes in Iran's nuclear policy but reductions in Iran's support for various transnational actors.

■ What do Americans think of Trump's foreign policy?

A: To understand American attitudes toward President Trump's foreign policies, it is necessary to distinguish between the foreign policy elite — that is, diplomats, opinion leaders, corporate and labor leaders, academics, and the ordinary public. In general, members of the foreign policy elite, even the traditional Republican foreign policy elite, view the Trump administration's foreign policy as idiotic, incoherent, incompetent, and dangerous. Members of the foreign policy elite who agree on absolutely nothing else agree that the past four years have been a disaster for U.S. foreign policy and that another four years of the same would be a disaster both for the United States and the world.

The American public, by contrast, generally does not think about foreign policy at all. American society's sheer size and self-contained nature mean that typical Americans never need to form clear or consistent views on foreign policy. The issues on which they base their votes are nearly always domestic ones, not foreign policy ones, and this will again be the case in 2020.

To the degree that average Americans think about the world outside their national borders, their thinking is shaped by a few basic assumptions or images.

For example, one of America's divides today is between those Americans who view the outside world as essentially hostile and dangerous and those who believe that international and transnational ties are healthy and desirable.

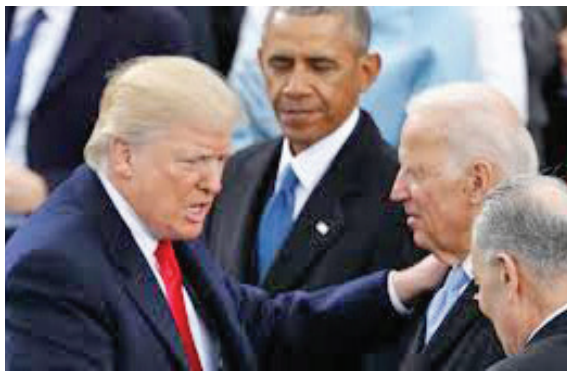
This particular divide is important because it mirrors and reinforces the divide between those Americans who have not prospered in the last half-century and those who have, and between those who see American culture and values as being eroded quickly and those who see American culture and values evolving in positive and healthy directions.

However, broadly shared by most Americans is a highly negative image of Iran. This image is rooted in the events of 1979 and 1980 when American diplomats were held hostage in Iran. This episode had a searing impact on Americans. For most Americans, this episode defines Iran. As a consequence, American public attitudes toward Iran and everything Iranian is at best highly suspicious and are, more typically, highly hostile.

This historically rooted, knee-jerk anti-Iranian attitude of the bulk of the American public is a political reality that the foreign policy elite and any American president needs to be sensitive to and must maneuver around. Any agreement or any negotiation that might be made to appear to the American public as representing an “unconditional” or unilateral concession to Iran will be politically impossible.

Public opinion of this sort imposes a variety of constraints on any administration, even one committed to negotiations with Iran. Particularly if the Republican Party retains control over the Senate (which it probably will) and even if the Republican Party simply has 41 seats in the Senate (which it certainly will), the Senate will be in a position to block any breakthrough in U.S.-Iranian relations and will do so if this appears to be what the American public wants.

■ How do you assess the stance of European countries on U.S. sanctions against Iran? Despite all promises by



European capitals, U.S. sanctions came into effect and Europeans are not willing to cooperate with Iran.

A: I think there are two important points to make here.

The first is that the Trump administration regards European attitudes and European opinions as irrelevant. Indeed, at times it appears the President Trump may view European opposition as strong evidence that he is doing the right thing.

The second is that the divide between the United States and most of its European allies is less than it might appear. True, most of America's European allies find the Trump administration's unilateral and confrontational approach to Iran as wrong-headed and unhelpful. Largely, however, the disagreement between America and Europe is over tactics, not over goals — and in some cases, the disagreement is more about the Trump administration's dismissive attitude toward Europe than it is about the Trump administration's policy toward Iran.

European opposition to the Trump administration's policies should not be taken to indicate European support for Iran's actions or demands. The expectation on both sides of the Atlantic is that a Biden administration would be able to work with European leaders to forge a united European-American position in any negotiations with Iran.

■ What is your assessment of the chances of Joe Biden in the election based on opinion polls? Is it possible that the 2016 Clinton-Trump scenario to be repeated and Trump win again?

A: If the presidential election were held today, Mr. Biden would receive a clear majority in the popular vote. The American system selects the president indirectly, of course, through an electoral college system that reflects the preferences of Americans on a state-by-state basis. This makes outcomes a bit harder to predict, as we saw in

**“The disagreement between America and Europe (regarding Iran) is over tactics, not over goals — and in some cases, the disagreement is more about the Trump administration's dismissive attitude toward Europe than it is about the Trump administration's policy toward Iran.”**

2016 when the popular vote predictions were right, but predictions of the vote on a state-by-state basis were off sufficiently to lead to an incorrect prediction by pollsters.

Even taking this into account, it seems very likely that Mr. Biden would win a clear majority in the electoral college — again if the election were held today.

The election, of course, is not today, and while the substantial majority of Americans have already definitively decided to vote for Mr. Trump or for Mr. Biden, there are enough voters who might conceivably change their preferences to make the outcome in November still quite uncertain. The key issues that might swing voters one way or the other have nothing at all to do with Iran, or even with foreign policy more broadly. The issues that appear likely to swing the election are: how the coronavirus pandemic is affecting the American economy and everyday life; how the racial issues and current civil unrest in American cities are best addressed; and whether the continued release of documents and memoirs suggesting disrespect by President Trump for American institutions and American military veterans undermines support for the President in his base.

■ Don't you expect Trump resort to a military adventure to provoke national sentiment in his favor to increase his election chances?

A: It is impossible to predict what this president might do. Certainly, however, if an international incident resulted in the loss of American lives or that appeared to be an attack on American honor or prestige, the likelihood is high that the president would respond with military force and that this reaction would garner his political support.

Perhaps equally important, was there a serious incident in Iranian-American relations between now and

shorter timetable.

Al-Kadhimi, meanwhile, addressed Washington's threat of closing down its embassy in Baghdad in response to rocket attacks that sporadically target the diplomatic mission's compound and its vicinity, Press TV reported.

He said Baghdad realized Washington's unease with the situation, but added that threatening to isolate Iraq would directly impact its economy, most of whose overseas deposits are held in the United States.

## 2,500 U.S. troops out of Iraq as part of full withdrawal plan: Al-Kadhimi

The Iraqi prime minister says as many as 2,500 U.S. troops have left the country as part of agreements reached with Washington to enable a full withdrawal of American troops.

Mustafa al-Kadhimi made the announcement on Saturday in an interview with the state al-Iraqiya television.

He called the development a great success that had come by as a result of strategic talks with the United States.

Al-Kadhimi traveled to Washington at the head of a ranking delegation on

August 20 to hold talks with American officials.

U.S. President Donald Trump announced back then that the two sides had agreed that American forces would leave Iraq over a three-year period.

Al-Kadhimi said, before going on the trip, he had met with all of Iraq's political officials and that some of them had urged him to negotiate an eight-year withdrawal plan.

The premier then expressed delight that he had been able to negotiate a



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## Coronavirus: All Iran-Iraq flights called off until further notice

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** – Head of Iran's Civil Aviation Organization (CAO) has said that all flights of Iranian airlines and Iraqi Airways were canceled until further notice from Iran to Iraq and vice versa due to the spread of COVID-19.



"All flights of Iranian airline companies and Iraq's flag carrier Iraqi Airways from Iran to the neighboring country and vice versa were abolished until further notice due to the outbreak of the second wave of coronavirus pandemic, COVID-19, as well as observing health guidelines as instructed by the Coronavirus Combat and Prevention Headquarters, Touraj Dehghan Zanganeh told Mehr news agency on Saturday.

Before this order, a limited number of flights were scheduled to be operated by Iraqi Airlines to return Iraqi citizens present in Iran, he added.

## IranAir launches first Germany flight after six months

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** – Iran's flag carrier, IranAir, has resumed flights to Germany after more than six months of hiatus due to the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. According to the Iranian Embassy in Berlin, the airline operated its first direct flight to Germany on Saturday, after the route was closed in mid-February, Mehr reported.



IranAir currently operates flights to England, the Netherlands, Italy, Sweden, Spain, Austria, and the UAE.

Many flights to Europe were postponed after the start of the coronavirus pandemic.

## Sarab-e Qandil: what ambiguous bas-relief hint at Sassanid monarchy?

Reliefs bear significant testimony to fragments of the history of mankind as well as the art history, itself. Reliefs can be found more or less in each corner of Iran, and even the globe. Who knows, maybe some of them are still having untold stories.

Sarab-e Qandil (literary meaning "ice cold spring"), which dates back to Sassanid-era (224-651 CE), is among Iran's puzzling bas-reliefs, locating near modern Kazerun in southern Fars province.

Like almost Iranian rock reliefs, this one is located near a source of water. The relief is contained in a quadrangular frame, carved on an isolated rock beside the bed of a river, without having been much eroded or damaged by the water. Its isolation from frequented roads might explain its excellent state of conservation: it was not accessible for vandals.

It depicts a queen offering a lotus flower to her husband [widely believed to be the Iranian king Bahram II (r.276-293)]. The two characters look at each other, while a prince (probably their son, the future king Bahram III) holds a ring of power.

The carving is well-executed. Special attention has been paid to the clothes, which show beautiful and fine details, giving an impression of lightness, of aerial movement. The king appears to wear his winged crown and jewels. His left hand is on the top of his sword. His right hand is open, waiting for the gift. The composition shows the royal figure at the center of the panel, the queen being on his right, the prince being on his left/back.

Both attitudes of the king and the queen express love and respect, according to livius.org, which is a website on ancient history written and maintained since 1996 by the Dutch historian Jona Lendering. "Such representations of love are very rare in Sasanian iconography, which generally consists of audience, victory, or inauguration scenes. An equivalent image of love was carved at Barm-e Dilak, where it is the king who offers the flower to the queen."

Although this relief is generally attributed to Bahram II, the lack of an inscription makes that experts couldn't be completely certain. The main arguments for an identification with Bahram II lay in the fact that he is the only Sassanid king who showed his queen on coins, and that the female figure might appear to be dressed more like a queen and not a goddess. Scholars like Vanden Berghe and Aerinck, therefore, think that the relief can be attributed to Bahram II. However, Lewitt-Tawill maintains that the relief represents Ardashir I and the goddess, the prince being Shapur I.

Soon after Bahram II, the son and successor of Bahram I, was enthroned, he was forced to defend his position against a brother, Hormizd, viceroy of the eastern provinces.

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, in 283, exploiting Bahram's preoccupations, the Roman emperor Carus invaded Mesopotamia unopposed and entered Ctesiphon, the Sasanian capital. Carus' sudden death, however, forced the Romans to withdraw, and soon thereafter the overthrow of Hormizd made Bahram secure. Numerous southern Persian rock sculptures depict Bahram wearing his winged crown, and several include his queen. Because female portraits are rare in Sasanian art, she is thought to have been a major dynastic personage.

The Sassanid era is of very high importance in the history of Iran. Under Sassanids, Persian art and architecture experienced a general renaissance. Architecture often took grandiose proportions such as palaces at Ctesiphon, Firuzabad, and Sarvestan that are amongst highlights of the ensemble.

Crafts such as metalwork and gem-engraving grew highly sophisticated, yet scholarship was encouraged by the state. In those years, works from both the East and West were translated into Pahlavi, the language of the Sassanians. Rock-carved sculptures and bas-reliefs on abrupt limestone cliffs are widely deemed as characteristics and striking relics of the Sassanian art, top examples of which can be traced at Bishapur, Naqsh-e Rostam and Naqsh-e Rostam in southern Iran.

# Iran sets sights on tourism rebound if coronavirus wanes, minister says

→ **1** "We have selected a number of states as target countries, such as ones located in our region, Russia and China, the latter due to having a huge rate of [out-bound] travelers which hits 150 million people [per annum].

To facilitate travelers, we, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, have so far waived visas for passport holders from China and Oman."

Mounesan underlined that for visa waiver with Russia, Iran preferred its implication to be paused by delay to have time to conduct special assessments on kinds of potential Russian travelers, its demographic characteristics amongst others.

The main reason behind this is that we intend to improve the travel balance between Tehran and Moscow, he underlined.

"As for the cancellation of visas for certain travel groups from Iran and Russia, this issue has been raised for more than two years. But we preferred to postpone that visa waiver program because to have time to meet the needs of typical Russian travelers who are interested in culture, nature, and sightseeing travels," Mounesan explained.

"Over the past two years, with learning from our previous experience of visa waivers for Oman and China, we have monitored the Russian market, and God willing, this visa cancellation will happen soon and we hope to have a good share of [inbound] travelers from Russia."

"By monitoring the Russian tourism market, we came to the conclusion that the share of tourists interested in cultural and historical sites as well as the number of Muslims living in Russia, is significant."

Responding to a question about Iran's trump's cards for drawing travelers, the minister said: "Iran is chock-full of cultural and historical sites, monuments and relics, and it offers significant opportunities for ecotourism and nature tourism as well."

"Regarding the development of our tourism infrastructure, it can be reminded that our eco-tourism resorts now exist and are operational in almost all parts of



Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan (R) and his deputy for tourism Vali Teymouri are seen during their visits to the Tehran Times in downtown Tehran, October 3, 2020.

the country."

"Our desert hiking tours are professionally developed and offer quality services.... For the time being, we have professional nature and ecotourism tours that foreign travelers, and in particular Russian tourists can enjoy."

Talking on China, as one of the major travel markets for the Islamic Republic, Mounesan said: "We have started measures for the Chinese market.... One of our

biggest issues is the lack of adequate Chinese-speaking tour leaders..."

"To solve the problem, we have had several meetings with the Chinese ambassador [to Iran Chang Hua] so far and we have received good promises from him .... The ambassador had even announced his readiness to dispatch about 10-15 people to China for training."

"Regarding the accommodation, very good tourist complexes have been con-

**"Iran is chock-full of cultural and historical sites, monuments and relics, and it offers significant opportunities for ecotourism and nature tourism as well... Our desert hiking tours are professionally developed and offer quality services.... For the time being, we have professional nature and ecotourism tours that foreign travelers, and in particular Russian tourists can enjoy."**

## Islamic-era engraved potteries unearthed in Iran

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** – A number of centuries-old engraved potteries and fragments, many of which unglazed, have recently been unearthed during a restoration project at an ancient site in western Kermanshah province.

Unglazed potteries bearing etched patterns, estimated to date back to the 4th to 6th centuries AH, have been unearthed during the restoration of an ancient house, named Zeij Manije Anzal in Sarpol-e Zahab county, ILNA quoted Iranian archaeologist Farzad Mafi, who leads the project, as saying on Saturday.

The potteries were discovered in trenches carved to examine the foundation, plan and architectural features of the structure in detail, he added.

"The monument is significant in terms of architecture and though it has technical similarities with monuments constructed in the Sassanid era (224–651) it, most likely,



dates back to the early Islamic centuries."

The term Islamic art not only describes the art created

specifically in the service of the Muslim faith (for example, a mosque and its furnishings) but also characterizes the art and architecture historically produced in the lands ruled by Muslims, produced for Muslim patrons, or created by Muslim artists. As it is not only a religion but a way of life, Islam fostered the development of a distinctive culture with its own unique artistic language that is reflected in art and architecture throughout the Muslim world.

The lands newly conquered by the Muslims had their own preexisting artistic traditions and, initially at least, those artists who had worked under Byzantine or Sasanian patronage continued to work in their own indigenous styles but for Muslim patrons. The first examples of Islamic art therefore rely on earlier techniques, styles, and forms reflecting this blending of classical and Iranian decorative themes and motifs.

## Iran-Turkey flights suspended once again

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** – The newly-reestablished Iran-Turkey flights operated by Turkish Airlines has been suspended once again due to coronavirus fears.

Last week, and following months of ups and downs, the flag carrier resumed its flights to Tehran after six months of halt under strict

health protocols, Maqsood As'adi-Samani, secretary of the Association of Iranian Airlines (AIA) announced on Saturday.

Outbound passengers were required to hold a health certificate with a negative coronavirus PCR test result, otherwise, the boarding pass won't be issued for them, he noted.

For the time being the fate of the service is on the air, he said, adding: "The reason for these policies by the Turkish authorities is not clear and we do not know why they change their minds and decisions so quickly."

The pandemic has taken a huge toll on Iran's civil aviation sector with reports show-

ing that airlines lost hundreds of millions of dollars because of flight cancellations during the busy New Year travel season in late March.

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

## Turkmen horse festival held to promote tourism in Golestan

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** – Some 100 Turkmen purebred horses on Thursday competed in a purebred horse festival which was held in Aliabad-e Katul to promote tourism in northern Golestan province.

Breeders, owners, and trainers, who came from the provinces of Golestan, Tehran, North Khorasan, and Khorasan Razavi, showed off their horses in the festival, with an eye to promote agritourism and travel across Golestan.

The Turkmen horse is noted for endurance, bravery, smartness, and slender body. Many locals believe that

breeding of such horses is actually one of the toughest jobs in the world.

Golestan is reportedly embracing some 2,500 historical and natural sites, with UNESCO-registered Gonbad-e Qabus – a one-millennium-old brick tower – amongst its most famous. Narratives say the tower has influenced various subsequent designers of tomb towers and other cylindrical commemorative structures both in the region and beyond. The UNESCO comments that the tower bears testimony to the cultural exchange between Central Asian nomads and the ancient civilization of Iran.



## Shaking minarets, enigmatic destination worth visiting once!

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** – For centuries Menar Jonban ("shaking minarets"), which is located in Isfahan, central Iran, has been a source of charm for Iranians and even foreign visitors because its dual minarets are really prone to vibrate!

The minarets are almost 17 meters in height from the ground level, and in a distance of about 10 meters.

The popular destination is in fact a burial monument surmounted by two brick towers that can be swung with little pressure; when one is shaken by the human force, the other starts to vibrate automatically.

It was originally built some 700 years ago as a mausoleum for "Amu Abdullah" who was



a mystic figure in the Ilkhanid era (1256-1353 CE). Archeological studies suggest that the dual minarets were later added to the mausoleum during the Safavid era (1501–1736).

The unique characteristic of the shaking of the minarets, and the entire building, have been repeatedly studied. The findings of most of such researches indicate that the specific dimensions and proportions of the building and minarets and even the material forming the bricks used for the building contributes to the vibrations.

Following physical experiments, it was suggested that this phenomenon is similar to the mirror image vibrations observed when connecting two vertical identical pieces of string to a connecting horizontal one. Should the two vertical strings be of different lengths or weights the same results would not be achieved.

However, such a theory also has its skeptics and is dismissed as a mere coincidence under the guise that most buildings also have such vibrations (although on a smaller scale) and it's only the height of the minarets that make it so visible in this particular case.

The city's historical relics are standing almost close to each other but the "shaking minarets" are located on the outskirts.

Used to be one of capitals of the mighty Safavid Empire, Isfahan is a top tourist destination for good reasons. Unlimited visual appeals such as tree-lined boulevards, Persian gardens and majestic Islamic buildings have named the city a living museum of traditional culture.



# Tehran to host regional meeting on SDSs

ENVIRONMENT  
d e s k

**TEHRAN** — A meeting will be held in Tehran on Monday with representatives of neighboring countries in attendance to develop a plan for dealing with sand and dust storms (SDSs) in the region.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will host ambassadors of Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, as well as representatives of Tehran-based international organizations, ISNA reported.

In order to advance the goals of controlling and managing dust hotspots in the region, countries that have had successful experiences in this field, such as China, India, etc., have also been invited to attend the meeting.

In addition to developing a regional action plan to combat dust, we seek to establish a center in Iran to deal with sand and dust storms in West Asia.

Since the past few years, southern and western provinces of the country are frequently hit by sand and dust storms, as well as drought and even destructive floods, which is caused by both internal and external hotspots. Major external SDSs sources are Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq.

In fact, Iran has been repeatedly exposed to SDSs due to its presence in the arid and semi-arid part of the world, so that in 2006-2007, the dust storms originating in Iraq and Syria affected Iran, haunting a wide area of the country so that it reached the central areas and southern slopes of Alborz and also included Tehran.

Consumption, changing the pattern of cultivation, and climate change have increased the negative effects of this phenomenon.

The SDSs hotspots in other countries stretch to 330 million hectares, with an average of 150 million tons of dust generation per year, Ali Mohammad Tahmasebi, head of the national working group for SDSs mitigation, said.

Pointing out that over the past three years, the government has spent about \$370 million



from the National Development Fund on fighting sand and dust storms, he noted that therefore, the DOE has gained good experience in managing domestic dust sources and, accordingly, has conducted follow-ups to manage external SDSs hotspots.

He went on to say that important dust sources in the country's provinces estimated at 34.6 million hectares, with an average amount of 4.24 million tons of dust per year, of which 122.7 kilograms of dust per hectare is raised annually.

He also said that 15 to 20 percent of these hotspots are highly active and 25 percent of which are moderately active, about 60 percent of the sources are slightly active, "so we should definitely be alert to SDSs hotspots with low dust generation to prevent them from the intensity."

In response to a question saying that have we been successful in managing the internal dust sources far, he explained that "In my point of view, a dust source can never be

completely eradicated. Therefore, we must take measures to bring the amount of dust to an acceptable level."

Pointing out that during the last three years, we have been successful in managing dust centers in the country, he stated the intensity and frequency of sand and dust storms in Khuzestan province have declined significantly. Currently, the vegetation covers in the southeast of Ahvaz is more than 40 percent in over 200,000 hectares.

"If our actions are only to control dust centers inside the country and leave foreign sources, we will not achieve success," he concluded.

According to the World Meteorological Organization, sand and dust storms usually occur when strong winds lift large amounts of sand and dust from bare, dry soils into the atmosphere. Over the last decade, scientists have come to realize the impacts on climate, human health, the environment, and many socio-economic sectors.

## How to mitigate the effects of SDSs

According to EcoMENA, sand and dust storms cause significant negative impacts on society, economy, and environment at local, regional, and global scales. There are three key factors responsible for the generation of sand and dust storms — strong wind, lack of vegetation, and absence of rainfall. The environmental and health hazards of such storms cannot be reduced permanently, however, its impact can be reduced by taking appropriate measures.

As the dust cloud rises, it reduces horizontal visibility which can impact human life in many ways. The fine suspended particles also contain contaminants, bacteria, pollens, which cause negative health impacts such as allergies and respiratory diseases. Dust also carries airborne pollutants such as toxins, heavy metals, salt, sulfur, pesticides, etc. which cause significant health impacts when people inhale the contaminated dust. Dust can corrode buildings and other built infrastructure as it contains a high level of salts.

The effects of sand and dust storms can be reduced by using a number of health and safety measures and environmental control strategies. Large-scale sand and dust storms are generally natural phenomena and it may not be always practicable to prevent it happening. However, control measures can be taken to reduce their impacts. Localized small-scale dust emission due to human-induced activities can be reduced by using temporary mechanical methods such as concrete barrier, mulching, tree buffer, etc.

Taking appropriate control of dust raising factors such as increasing the vegetation cover where possible can help in the stabilization of the soil, sand dunes, and form windbreaks. Additionally, the use of native plants and trees as the buffer can reduce wind velocity, and sand drifts at the same increase the soil moisture. Designing buildings appropriately and conduct air infiltration testing during building commissioning can also help the adverse effects of sand and dust storm.

## Aging population: a crisis bigger than coronavirus

➔ "Currently, the elderly constitute less than 10 percent of the population and we are considered a young country, but we are getting older every year so that in the next 20 years, we will be one of the oldest countries in the world and the oldest by the next 30 years," he explained.

Statistics show that during the past 20 years, the population ratio of children and adolescents has decreased, and, in contrast, the share of the elderly has increased.

In addition, the average age of the Iranian population has been increasing over the past 40 years, and the population on average is 8.7 years older. Statistics show that this upward trend has had a similar growth rate for men and women.

Although the increase in the number of elderly in any country indicates an increase in life expectancy, an ageing nation also has many individual and social consequences. As the population ages, the number of people who need nursing increases.

However, single-child families are growing and there will be no child to support the parents. With this trend, today's young parents will probably have to spend their old age alone or in nursing homes. These cases are only the individual dimensions of the population movement towards ageing and its social dimensions have more complications.

### Issues to deal with within the next 3 decades

Saleh Ghasemi, a demographer, said that the country's elderly population has doubled since 1978, which shows that by the next 20 years, the old population will triple.

Referring to the consequences of ageing, he stressed that all responsible institutions and organizations should be ready to deal with premature ageing in Iran.

In the face of this crisis, the responsible organizations must think of a solution for the labor force, as some



Western countries have been forced to accept immigrants due to labor shortages, he highlighted.

He went on to note that with the arrival of immigrants in the country, the culture of families and the level of social employment will be affected.

Stating that the elderly need the most services and infrastructure in terms of social, economic, and health services, he said that it also threatens the country's security, and the elderly population growth needs more welfare and social institutions, which affects the policies and capacities of the country.

If the trend continues, a huge amount of fund is needed to provide the population with insurance pension and two related organizations will be bankrupt, he lamented, adding that serious planning is needed to deal with the crisis.

### Population growth should meet needs of the youth

However, population growth requires a capability to address the needs of a young nation which can be fulfilled with various indicators, such as social and economic development, development of recreational and educational facilities, increasing the share of young people in managerial positions and among decision-makers, providing the conditions for the growth and prosperity of the youth.

Two years ago, members of the Majlis (Iranian parliament) passed a law banning the employment of retirees. But how much was it implemented?

Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani-Fazli has said that increasing the youth's share in a managerial position is on the agenda, while the average age of managers in the ministry has decreased by only two to three years.

The statistics mean that a quarter of the country's young population in decision-making positions is quite absent. However, if this young population is not exposed to practical empowerment, they will certainly face challenges in the future and will not be able to use the existing opportunities for growth and lose the opportunity in management and decision making.

### Time to think of solution for unemployment

The unemployment rate for young people ageing 15-24 in Iran stood at 24.5 percent in the spring, according to the latest statistics of the Statistical Center of Iran.

In addition, 16.7 percent of the active population aged 15 to 35 were unemployed during the spring.

Last year's total employed population was at 24.27 million, nearly 430,000 more than the year before.

It might be the time that the officials and policymakers to start taking steps toward supporting the youth to start their own businesses and practice fund provision for small businesses.

## Smart school network plan to start nationwide

**SOCIETY TEHRAN** — Smart school network plan will be officially inaugurated on Monday by connecting over 76,000 schools nationwide.

To achieve communication justice to reduce the educational gap between urban and rural students, the first phase of the smart school network plan will be launched.

According to this plan, the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology is obliged, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, to provide access (hardware-software and content) to textbooks, educational content, tests, and academic counseling, educational computer games, aptitude assessment, technical and social skills free of charge to all students in cities with less than 20,000 people and in villages and suburbs.

All schools will soon be covered by the smart system nationwide.

### Education during COVID-19

All educational centers in Iran were closed in late February due to the coronavirus pandemic, but for students to keep in touch with their studies, the Ministry of Education launched a homegrown mobile application on April 9, called SHAD, providing students with distance learning programs.



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

A month earlier, over 15 million students attended schools nationwide for the new school year under health protocols.

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

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

Meanwhile, Health Minister Saeed Namaki warned that the third wave of the pandemic has just flared up in the country, as the new cases of coronavirus in Iran hit an all-time high.

So, the officials decided to increase the restrictions and stick to e-learning schools.

In Tehran, it was announced that all recreational, educational, and sports centers will be closed for one week from October 4.

### COVID-19 kills over 26,000 in Iran

In the press briefing on Sunday, Health Ministry spokesperson Sima-Sadat Lari confirmed 3,653 new cases of COVID-19 infection, raising the total number of infections to 471,772. She added that 389,966 patients have so far recovered, but 4,154 remain in critical conditions of the disease.

In the past 24 hours, 211 patients have lost their lives, bringing the total number of deaths to 26,957, she added.

Lari noted that so far 4,123,173 COVID-19 tests have been conducted across the country.

She said the high-risk "red" zones include provinces of Tehran, Isfahan, Qom, East Azerbaijan, South Khorasan, Semnan, Qazvin, Lorestan, Ardabil, Khuzestan, Kermanshah, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, Gilan, Bushehr, Zanjan, Ilam, Khorasan Razavi, Mazandaran, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, Alborz, West Azarbaijan, Markazi, Kerman, North Khorasan, Hamedan and Yazd.

## LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 29)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

### Exercise 2. Change into the present indicative:

۱. من کتابِ فارسی ..... (خواندن)
۲. شما به دانشگاه ..... (رفتن)
۳. تو خیلی خوب ..... (درس خواندن)
۴. ما به کدام شهر .....؟ (رفتن)
۵. او در اینجا چکار .....؟ (کردن)
۶. شما در کجا .....؟ (زندگی کردن)

### Positive verbs

I am not going, ...

نمی‌روم / نه

### Exercise 3. Change into the negative present:

۱. مهسا زیاد به کلاس ..... (رفتن)
۲. تو اینجا خوب ..... (زندگی کردن)
۳. ایشان در خانه کم ..... (درس خواندن)
۴. ما در شهر تهران ..... (زندگی کردن)
۵. آنها به دانشگاه .....؟ (رفتن)
۶. شما کتاب .....؟ (خواندن)

### Comprehension

درک کتاب کار

### Exercise 1. Put in ص or غ. Correct the false ones:

۱. ( ) یانگ جو دانشجوِ دانشگاهِ تهران است.
۲. ( ) اسم کوچکِ او کیم است.
۳. ( ) یانگ جو در شهر پوسان درس می‌خواند.
۴. ( ) برادرِ او در ایران درس می‌خواند.
۵. ( ) خواهرِ او در کشورِ کره زندگی می‌کند.
۶. ( ) یانگ جو در ایران چند دوستِ خوب دارد.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ج

## Precipitation forecast to reach above normal in next 3 months

The country is predicted to receive above normal rainfall over the next three months (February 20-May 21), head of the climatological research institute affiliated to Iran's Meteorological Organization (IMO) has said.

The whole country will meet normal and above normal rainfalls, the northern parts will receive above normal rainfall while southern provinces will receive normal to lower-than-normal rainfall, IRNA quoted Iman Babaeian as saying on Sunday.

This month, northern and eastern provinces will receive rain above normal averages, while in the first month of spring precipitation will be at normal amounts across the country, he noted, adding, during the second month of spring rainfall will reach its peak.

## بارش‌های کشور در سه ماه پیش رو بیش از نرمال است

رئیس پژوهشکده اقلیم‌شناسی سازمان هواشناسی گفت: پیش‌بینی‌ها نشان می‌دهد میزان بارش در کشور در سه ماهه پیش رو (اسفند ۹۷، فروردین و اردیبهشت ۹۸) در حد نرمال و متمایل به بیش از نرمال خواهد بود.

ایمان باباییان روز یکشنبه در گفت‌وگو با خبرنگار ایرنا افزود: مجموع بارش‌ها در سطح کشور نرمال و متمایل به بیشتر از نرمال است اما در نیمه شمالی، بیشتر از نرمال و در نیمه جنوبی در محدوده نرمال تا کمتر از نرمال خواهد بود.

وی اظهار داشت: بارش‌ها در اسفندماه ۹۷ در نیمه شمالی و شرقی بیشتر از نرمال است، در فروردین ماه ۹۸ نیز بارش‌ها در محدوده نرمال و برای اردیبهشت بیشتر از نرمال پیش‌بینی شده است.



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GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

One who reveals your faults to you like a mirror is your true friend, and one who flatters you and covers up your faults is your enemy.

Imam Hussein (AS)

## Book series training children against COVID-19 released by Iranian publisher

→1 Ali-Asghar Seidabadi wrote, “Hannah, Our Hero” that teaches children how to take care of themselves during the coronavirus pandemic. The book was also translated into Croatian, Turkish, English, Italian, French, and German.

Earlier in March, the Institute for Social and Cultural Studies (ISCS) released a book titled “Studies on the Social and Cultural Aspects of Coronavirus in Iran” that contains over ten articles by the scholars of the ISCS.



This photo shows the children’s educational collection Simaye Sharq published on COVID-19.

Seyyed Hesameddin Rayegani has authored “The Blinds’ Age” that features a love story in a society battling coronavirus. Rayegani has blended some facts about medical staff during the COVID-19 era with his imagination to create the novel.

“The story of the book is set in the first two months after the coronavirus hit the country,” Rayegani wrote in an introduction to the book.

He spent days in Masih Daneshvari, Besat, and Baqiyatallah, Tehran’s major hospitals for COVID-19 patients, gathering information to write his novel.

In a preface to the book, the publisher also wrote that it has published the novel to thank the medical staff as coronavirus frontline workers.

## Resistance Theater Festival unveils lineup for children’s section

A R T TEHRAN — Ten children’s plays will be performed during the 17th Resistance Theater Festival in Tehran as the organizers announced the performances for the children’s category.

The performances include “The Generals” written by Amir Mashhadi-Abbas, who is also the director of the play. “Courage or Truth” will be directed by Seyyed Javad Rahimzadeh and “That Man Came” will be staged by Omid Niyaz.



Members of a theater troupe perform “Thief of the Lullabies” by Arash Sharifzadeh.

Also included are “Tear of a Doll”, which will be staged by directors Hajar Jaan-Nejad and Leila Yadollahzadeh, and “Pedal Up Man”, which will be performed by director Hiam Ahmadi’s troupe.

“Over Time” by director Hossein Asadi, “Wish of a Blind Mouse” by Vahid Nafar, “Alley of Brazilians” by Mohammad Esmaeilzadeha, “Where Is Mouse, Where Is Cat” by Farzad Lebasi and “Thief of the Lullabies” by Arash Sharifzadeh are also on the list.

The Association of the Revolution and Sacred Defense Theater organizes the festival every year in collaboration with several other institutions.

This year’s festival is scheduled to be held during November or December.

The 17th edition of the festival has established an award named after Commander Qassem Soleimani.

“Due to the importance of the resistance issue and the need to promote the teachings of the popular figure of Iran’s resistance culture and the leader of the resistance front, Lieutenant-General Qassem Soleimani, we plan to honor a top play with an award named after Hajj Qassem Soleimani this year for the first time,” Hamid Nili, the director of the festival has said.

“The award will be presented in the next editions of the festival to represent its organizers’ committed devotion to the divine commander,” he added.

Soleimani was martyred during a U.S. airstrike in Baghdad on January 3. Thereafter, several other cultural events in Iran have also established awards in memory of the commander of the Quds Force, the overseas arm of Iran’s Revolutionary Guards.

# Tehran shuts down cultural centers again as coronavirus outbreak grows

A R T TEHRAN — The Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance has shut down all art and cultural centers across Tehran again for one week following an increase in the number of people infected with COVID-19.

The lockdown includes all the public and gathering places such as the movie theaters, libraries, and art and music institutes, the Coronavirus Combat and Prevention Headquarters in Tehran announced on Sunday.

The theater halls will also be closed for one week, the Dramatic Arts Center has announced.

The closure will be observed for one week but might be extended if the incidence of new cases does not slow down.

In August, the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Abbas Salehi said that the coronavirus outbreak in Iran has caused an estimated loss of over 10,000 billion rials (about \$45.5 million, based on the free-market rate) in the art and culture sectors by April 19, the end of the first month of the Iranian calendar year.

“For example, the Tehran International Book Fair had an estimated sale of 1200 to 1300 billion rials (about \$5.5 to \$6 million) last year. In the film industry, the sale was about 3 trillion rials (over \$13.6 million),” He said.

However, the book fair was canceled this



An individual looks at the posters of the movies on screen in a movie theater in Tehran on July 8, 2020 after theaters resumed activities in the pandemic. (ISNA/Parisa Behzadi)

year, and Iranian movie theaters have mostly been closed over the past six months due to the pandemic.

Salehi said, “We have also experienced a big loss in visual arts, music and theater, that is, about 120 theater halls have been closed just in Tehran. The same has been true in other cities.”

He added that insurance for the members of the Art Credit Fund, which was 350 billion rials (about \$1.6 million), has been paid, and, based on an enactment approved by the Coronavirus Combat and Prevention Headquarters, those interested applicants can register for a facility.

The culture minister further noted that a

## Cultural centers celebrate Children’s National Week



Mohammadreza Majuni gives a naqqali performance in an undated photo.

A R T TEHRAN — The Children’s Book Council of Iran and the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA) have arranged a variety of programs celebrating Children’s National Week.

Meetings and book reading sessions, local games and entertainments, as well as book introduction sessions are among the programs the council has arranged for the week

that began on Saturday.

The council has also initiated various programs to offer to those children with special needs.

The IIDCYA has also developed a variety of programs to offer including several performances of naqqali, a dramatic style of storytelling.

Storyteller Fahimeh Barutchi performed “The Parrot and the Grocer”, a story from Persian poet Jalal ad-Din Rumi’s masterpiece Masnavi-ye Manavi on Saturday. A video of the performance is available at th.kpf.ir on the web portal of the IIDCYA.

Other performances include “Pir-e Changi” and “Noah’s Ark” by narrator Amir-Hossein Ensafi, “Healing the Blind” by Barutchi and “Tamerlane” by Mohammadreza Majuni.

The institute has also begun screening a lineup of its popular, memorable movies in an online program to celebrate the week.

The lineup includes “A Non-Profit Police Station” by Yadollah Samadi, “The Water Urn” by Ebrahim Foruzesh and “Harmonica” by Amir Naderi.

Also included are “Knockout” by Gholamreza Ramezani, “Inspector 2” by Behruz Gharibpur and “Path of Love” by Bijan Shekarriz.

New York-based Iranian filmmaker Naderi’s “Harmonica”

## “Restless for Balqis” released



Hussein al-Ajami, an advisor at the Lebanese Ministry of Culture, speaks during a meeting held at Tehran’s Radaki Hall on September 22, 2020 to introduce the music video “Restless for Balqis”. (Honaronline/Gata Ziatabari)

from Ahura Iman.

“There has been a close relationship between Iran and Lebanon, and this helps implement the cultural task,” Rudaki Foundation Managing director Mehdi Afzali said during the meeting.

Hussein al-Ajami, an advisor at the Lebanese Ministry of Culture, conductor AlHaj, Iran’s Deputy Culture Minister for Artistic Affairs, Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini and dozens of Iranian cultural figures also attended the meeting.

In a short speech, Al-Ajami praised the collaboration between Iranian and Lebanese

sum of 120 billion rials (about \$5.5 million) will be paid to members of the Art Credit Fund as livelihood assistance, while 2000 billion rials (over \$9 million) will also be paid as loans to the artists and owners of cultural venues.

The ministry canceled all art, cultural and cinematic events across the country in February in an attempt to stem the spread of the coronavirus.

The Association of Iranian Theater Owners asked President Hassan Rouhani to lift the coronavirus restriction on cinemas, calling for reopening of the theaters across the country based on the health protocols during the pandemic on May 20.

Later, the Cinema Organization of Iran announced that the movie theaters in the so-called “white areas” or regions with no coronavirus hospitalizations in the past two weeks would be allowed to reopen, while the protocols issued by the Coronavirus Control Operations Headquarters for the theaters must be observed.

The cinemagoers were asked to observe social distancing, while the employees were asked to wear face masks and plastic gloves.

In late June, all movie theaters resumed activities after a four-month-long closure, but were forced to close once again due to a sharp rise in the number of coronavirus infections and deaths.

is set on the sun-drenched southern coast of Iran. It is about a young boy who receives a musical present from abroad. Fascinated and envious, his friends make him the leader of the pack, as they compete for the privilege of holding the harmonica or even blowing a few notes. No one is more obsessed than Amiru, gentle and heavy-set, who seems willing to do anything to get close to the harmonica and its owner.

Set in a two-room schoolhouse in mid-20th century Iran, “The Water Urn” is a heartwarming story about the daily misadventures and experiences of the village children and their beloved schoolmaster, Mr. Samadi.

It provides an inspiring look at provincial life in a quintessential Iranian village where survival means that all members of a community must learn to work together to achieve a common goal.

“Knock Out” is about a smart student, Mohammad, who is the target of bullying by another student, Bijan. Bijan is supposed to compete with Mohammad’s friend Amir in a Taekwondo match.

Mohammad finds out that Amir is suffering from a very serious disease, so he goes to Bijan and asks him to lose against Amir.

musicians in the project “Restless for Balqis” and noted, “We shout out that Beirut neither burns nor sinks, Beirut stands and conveys the message of peace and friendship to the entire world.”

AlHaj also praised Khalatbari for his compositions and added, “This video is the one project that I will never forget.”

The National Orchestra was founded in 1998 by maestro Farhad Fakhreddini who has attracted a huge number of musicians, including legendary vocalist Mohammadreza Shajarian, to collaborate with the orchestra.

## “American Secession” published in Persian

A R T TEHRAN — American scholar Francis Herbert Buckley’s book “American Secession: The Looming Threat of a National Breakup” has recently been published in Persian.

The Tehran-based company Dideman is the publisher of the book translated into Persian by Ruhollah Abdolmaleki. The author, Francis “Frank” Herbert Buckley, is a Foundation Professor at George Mason University School of Law.

Americans have never been more divided, and they’re ripe for a breakup. The bitter partisan animosities, the legislative gridlock, the growing acceptance of violence in the name of political virtue — it all invites readers to think that Americans would be happier were they two different countries. In all the ways that matter, save for the naked force of law, Americans are already two nations.

There’s another reason why secession beckons, says F.H. Buckley, “We’re too big.”



Front cover of the Persian translation of American scholar Francis Herbert Buckley’s book “American Secession: The Looming Threat of a National Breakup”.

In population and area, the United States is one of the biggest countries in the world, and “American Secession” provides data showing that smaller countries are happier

## Gothic fiction “Dracula” comes to Iranian bookstores

CULTURE TEHRAN — A new Persian translation of “Dracula”, a story from Gothic literature by the Irish author Bram Stoker, has been published in Tehran.

Mahmud Gudarzi is the translator of the book published by the Borj publishing house.

“Dracula” is an 1897 horror novel. Famous for introducing the character of the vampire Count Dracula, the novel tells the story of Dracula’s attempt to move from Transylvania to England so he may find new blood and spread the curse of the undead, and the battle between Dracula and a small group of men and women led by Professor Abraham Van Helsing.

The novel touches on themes such as

the role of women in Victorian culture, immigration, colonialism and post-colonialism. Although Stoker did not invent the vampire, he defined its modern form, and the novel has spawned numerous theatrical, film and television interpretations.

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

“Dracula” is considered to be one of the best examples of Gothic literature, which makes these types of books different from other genres. A girl in danger, a hero, a protagonist, a dark room, old buildings and



Front cover of the Persian translation of “Dracula” by the Irish author Bram Stoker.

a deep feeling like love, fear or anger are usually observed in these types of novels,”

Gudarzi earlier said about the book.

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

Born in Ireland in 1847, Stoker studied mathematics at Dublin’s Trinity College and embarked on his longtime role as an assistant to actor Sir Henry Irving in the 1870s.

He also began carving out a second career as a writer, publishing his first novel, “The Primrose Path”, in 1875. Stoker published his most famous work, “Dracula”, in 1897, though he died before the fictional vampire would achieve widespread popularity through numerous film and literary adaptations in the 20th century.