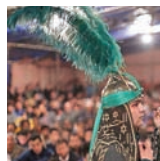


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SPECIAL ISSUE

No difference: Foreign policy will be the same



© Getty Images

By Mahnaz Abdi
Head of Economy Desk

Mining sector's performance in stock market outstanding

While Iran's stock market has been developed noticeably in recent years, especially since the previous Iranian calendar year (March 2019-March 2020), performance of some sectors in this market has been very outstanding.

Minerals and mining industry is one of those sectors.

This sector's performance has been so much good that the head of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), which is the major state-owned holding company active in the mining sector in Iran, has predicted a promising future for the mining companies in the stock market.

As Khodadad Gharibpour has said, 85 industrial and mining companies active in the stock market account for \$65 billion of this market's value.

Shares of mining companies such as Mobarakeh Steel Company, National Iranian Copper Industry Company, GOLGOHAR Mining and Industrial Company, Chadormalu Mining and Industrial Company, Khuzestan Steel Company, and Khorasan Steel Company play some significant and determining role in the stock market.

The most recent report on the performance of mining sector in the stock market shows that the performance of 74 companies has improved 35 percent in the last Iranian calendar month (ended on September 21) compared to its previous month, and 95.3 percent compared to the same month in the last year.

These companies' performance has also improved 50.3 percent in the first half of the current year (March 20-September 21).

While the mining sector's performance in the stock market has been noticeable in the first half, a good performance is also anticipated for the second half.

During a recent meeting on supporting the shareholders and investors in the capital market attended by IMIDRO head, chairman of the parliament's Economic Committee, and the head of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO), **→4**

Saudis and Emiratis may change line of succession in Kuwait

TEHRAN — As the oldest crown prince in the world became emir in Kuwait, the race to choose his successor started, a race that could tempt some regional players to interfere in the process of determining who will lead the oil-rich country in the decades to come.

Kuwait's emir Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmed al-Jaber al-Sabah died at 91 on September 29, leaving the tiny OPEC-member nation at crossroads in terms of choosing the next crown prince. Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah, the former crown prince, took office as emir shortly after Sheikh Sabah passed away. Before becoming emir, he was the oldest crown prince in the world at 83. He took over as emir without any difficulty. Everything went smoothly.

However, the vacancy of the position of the crown prince has sparked a deep, behind-the-scene race to choose the next leader of Kuwait. This race was exacerbated by the fact that the current emir is old and sick, though he is currently in good health

conditions. But sooner or later, he may suffer from serious health problems.

Sheikh Nawaf has not chosen his successor yet but according to the constitution of Kuwait, he has up to one year to choose his crown prince. Former emirs of Kuwait have appointed their crown prince shortly after they ascended to the throne. The late Sheikh Sabah chose his crown prince 22 days after he became emir and Sheikh Jaber chose his crown prince 47 days after his ascension to the throne. So we can expect the new emir to name his successor in the coming months.

The Kuwaiti media outlets have largely avoided discussing the issue of succession to the throne in the country, rather focusing on creating consensus among ruling elites with regard to the transition of power. However, publications and news media outlets outside Kuwait -mainly associated with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates- had raised the issue long before the demise of Sheikh Sabah in September. **→3**

Ulyanov: U.S. Iran policy absolutely unwise and counterproductive

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN — Mikhail Ulyanov, Russia's permanent representative to the Vienna-based international organizations, tells the Tehran Times in an exclusive interview that the United States' policy against Iran is seriously flawed irrational and counterproductive, and this has caused serious problems for the entire world.

"The policy of American administration on Iran is absolutely flawed, not

wise, and absolutely counterproductive, creating serious problems not only for Iran but also for the whole region and international community," Ulyanov said through Skype.

The following is the text of the interview: ■ The International Atomic Energy Agency inspected the second sites in Iran for "alleged" nuclear activities in the past. How can it affect the spirit of cooperation between Iran and the Agency? **→5**

NIDC inks 5 deals for lending drilling rigs to local contractors

TEHRAN — National Iranian Drilling Company (NIDC), a subsidiary of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), signed deals to lend 16 drilling rigs to five domestic companies that are working on development projects of the country's oil-fields, Shana reported.

According to Reza Dehqan, the National Iranian Oil Company's deputy director for development and engineering affairs, the

mentioned deals were signed with Global Petrotech Kish Company, Petro Iran Development Company, Pasargad Energy Development Company, Qeshm Oil and Energy Industries, and Petrotenco Company.

The drilling rigs will be used in the development projects of Zilaei, Mansourabad, Siahmakan, Ahvaz 1, and 4, as well as Maroun 5 and 12 oil fields, Dehqan said. **→4**

Iran's Shiraz applies for World Book Capital 2022

By Manijeh Rezapoor

TEHRAN — Shiraz, the hometown of Persian poets Hafez and Sadi that is Iran's 2020 Book Capital, has applied for the title "World Book Capital" in 2022, Shiraz Mayor Heidar Eskandarpur has announced.

"Shiraz enjoys a lofty literary environment, and it has the potential to shine as

the World Book Capital, and we hope that the city will receive the title," Eskandarpur said in a recent press conference.

Every year, UNESCO convenes delegates from the International Publishers Association and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) to grant the title of the World Book Capital to one city. **→8**

U.S. protests: U.S. police used British anti-riot gear at Black Lives Matter protests

U.S. law enforcement officers used British anti-riot gear to strike protesters during their controversial policing of Black Lives Matter demonstrations, despite assurances from the Conservative government that no UK-made equipment was used to repress peaceful protest.

According to Guardian, officers deployed at demonstrations in Washington DC hit protesters and in one case a journalist using shields made by the British-based firm DMS Plastics. Video and photographs suggest, and a lawsuit alleges, that officers charged at protesters, rather than acting in self-defense. U.S. forces deny the allegations.

Images from late May and June show a number of incidents of law enforcement units holding Scorpion-brand shields made by DMS, including the U.S. park police, the Secret Service and Arlington county police. Footage shows officers using the shields to repel crowds, with instances of people being struck with the shields without any apparent justification.

The findings come as part of a joint investigation tracking British-made weaponry and personal protective equipment around the world by the Guardian, Sky News and the investigative outlet Bellingcat, organised by the media nonprofit organization Lighthouse Reports.

A group of protesters represented by the American Civil Liberties Union is suing U.S. President Donald Trump, attorney general William Barr, defense secretary Mark Esper and the heads of U.S. police and security forces over alleged use of force at a peaceful demonstration near the White House on 1 June.

Officials had "no legitimate basis to destroy the peaceable gathering," they allege, describing the action as a "manifestation of the very despotism against which the first amendment was intended to protect". The lawsuit mentions instances of officers using anti-riot shields as part of an escalation in tactics. "The officers hit, punched, shoved, and otherwise assaulted the demonstrators with their fists, feet, batons, and shields," they added.

Persepolis display in 2020 ACL beyond expectations

TEHRAN — It is so hard to describe in words about Persepolis's performance at the 2020 AFC Champions League after they reached final with victory over Al Nassr of Saudi Arabia.

The Reds entered the competition in Doha with the aim of qualifying from Group C because they were third behind Saudi Arabia's Al Taawoun and Al Sadd of Qatar but they got better after each match.

The Iranian champions have been strength-

ened with new signings and so many thought it takes time for them to adopt the team's mentality but they absolutely incredibly improved in the new system.

Persepolis edged past Al Taawoun twice in the preliminary round and lost to Qatar's Duhail 1-0 however they qualified as the group winners courtesy of a 4-0 win over Emirati side Sharjah.

Persepolis made progress at a more accelerated pace than anyone expected.

They earned two big wins over Al Sadd and Uzbekistan's Pakhtakor ahead of the match against Al Nassr in semifinal.

It was a combination of techniques and tactics which made them difference in the prestigious tournament.

For instance, Al Sadd are benefiting from so many talented players and the Xavi's side play more technically and less physically. On the contrary, Pakhtakor play more physically and less technically. **→3**



© Mehr/ Majid Dehghani Zadeh

Qanat, an ancient invention for water management

For thousands of years, qanat (ancient subterranean aqueduct) systems have supplied water to agricultural and permanent settlements in arid regions of Iran.

The concept of "Persian Qanat" was registered on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2016.

Based on a recent survey, some 37,000 out of a total of 120,000 qanats are still in use in the country.

Iran holds 3% share of world's top scientific articles

TEHRAN — Iran's share of the world's top scientific articles is 3 percent, Gholam Hossein Rahimi She'erbaf, the deputy science minister, has announced.

The country's share in the whole publications worldwide is 2 percent, he noted, highlighting, for the first three consecutive years, Iran has been ranked first in terms of quantity and quality of articles among Islamic countries.

Iranian articles rank 16 and 15 in Web of Science and Scopus, respectively.

■ **1700 knowledge-based companies operating in Iran**

She'erbaf went on to say that currently, there are 43 science and technology parks in the country, in addition to 195 growth centers, in which over 7,000 companies are active, among all, 1,700 are knowledge-based companies.

Sourena Sattari, vice president for the science and technology told the Tehran Times in an exclusive interview that Iran is playing the leading role in the region in the fields of fintech, ICT, stem cell, aerospace, and is unrivaled in artificial intelligence.

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

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

Sattari said that U.S. sanctions caused exports of knowledge-based companies to decline three years ago, however, it has returned to growth and is projected to reach the pre-sanctions level of more than \$1 billion by the end of the current [Iranian calendar] year (March 20, 2021). **→7**

Rouhani hopes ties with Kuwait will expand

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — President Hassan Rouhani has expressed hope that relations between Tehran and Kuwait City would continue to be expanded in all fields.

In a message on Sunday, Rouhani congratulated Kuwait's new emir, Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah, on assuming the position after the former ruler of the Arab country passed away.



"I am certain that in light of Your Excellency's wise leadership, we will, like in the past, witness ever-increasing enhancement of friendly and brotherly relations between the two countries as well as the promotion of stability and security in the region," Rouhani stated.

"I ask God Almighty to bestow health and success upon Your Excellency and grant dignity and prosperity to the Muslim Kuwaiti people," the president added.

Kuwait's former emir Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah passed away last week.

Earlier this year, the 91-year-old ruler underwent a medical surgery after reports emerged that he had been admitted to hospital for a medical check-up.

Last year, Kuwait acknowledged that the Emir had suffered an unspecified medical "setback" that required him to be hospitalized.

Sheikh Sabah had ruled Kuwait, an OPEC oil producer, since 2006 and has steered its foreign policy for more than 50 years. He was known for his mediation efforts among Arab countries.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Sunday traveled to the neighboring country 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.

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.

Iran's reaffirms unquestionable sovereignty over trio islands

TEHRAN (MNA) — Iran has once again reaffirmed its sovereignty over three Persian Gulf islands, dismissing the UAE's "hackneyed" claims about them.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh rejected on Monday the UAE foreign minister's recent "groundless" claims over the Iranian islands of Abu Musa, the Greater Tunb, and the Lesser Tunb and reaffirmed the Islamic Republic's indubitable sovereignty over three Persian Gulf islands.

During his UN speech last week, UAE's Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan claimed his country has legal rights regarding sovereignty over the three Persian Gulf islands.



Sheikh Abdullah also alleged that Iran has "occupied" the islands in violation of the UN Charter.

Khatibzadeh also warned the UAE of the danger of drowning with the Israeli regime, after Abu Dhabi signed a tie normalization agreement with Tel Aviv last month.

The Iranian diplomat urged the Abu Dhabi rulers to make up for such a wrong move before it is too late.

The UAE and Bahrain signed controversial normalization agreements with the Israeli regime at the White House on September 15, amid outrage across Palestine and the Muslim world.

■ Saudis, Zionists not entitled to address JCPOA Khatibzadeh also referred to the recent claims by Saudi Arabia's foreign minister, who had accused Iran of violating its 2015 nuclear deal (JCPOA) commitments, saying, "Saudis and Israelis opposed the nuclear deal from the very beginning, so they hold no right to make any comment about it." The spokesman also pointed to Saudi Arabia's "secret" nuclear activities, calling on the Riyadh regime to act within the frameworks of the NPT.

"We are closely watching the related developments and warn Riyadh to fulfill its commitments and allow the international and legal investigative procedures be carried out over its clandestine nuclear activities."

He also urged the related international bodies to probe into the matter.

Based on reports, Saudi Arabia has built a facility for the extraction of yellowcake from uranium ore near the remote town of al-Ula.

The New York Times said American intelligence agencies had spotted what appeared to be an undeclared nuclear site not too far from the town of al-Uyaynah, located 30 kilometers northwest of the Saudi capital of Riyadh, and its Solar Village.

The agencies, the report said, are scrutinizing attempts by the kingdom to build up the ability to produce nuclear fuel that could potentially lead to the development of nuclear weapons.

Tehran says not fixated on who occupies Oval Office

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh has said it does not matter who will be elected as the president of the United States in the November elections.

"Iran's policy toward the U.S. is precise, calculated and based on different aspects of the international system," Khatibzadeh said at a press conference on Monday, according to Mehr.

He said the U.S. is responsible for the cowardly assassination of Iran's top general Qassem Soleimani in the middle of the night in Iraq, and it should be held accountable.

"We do not recognize an individual named [Donald] Trump. We recognize the president of the U.S., and the U.S. should be held accountable," he asserted.

"At personal level, Trump has shown to the international community and his nation what characteristics he has," the spokesman said. "Decorum does not allow me to mention these characteristics."

On January 3, Trump ordered drone strikes that martyred General Soleimani, chief of the IRGC Quds Force, and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the deputy commander of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU).

In the early hours of January 8, the IRGC attacked Ain al-Assad airbase in western Iraq, where U.S. forces were stationed, as part of its promised "tough revenge" for the U.S. terror attack.

"It is the U.S. that needs to return to the correct path," Khatibzadeh said. "It doesn't matter to us whether the current



or the next administration."

He said Iran will neither forget nor forgive the assassination of General Soleimani. "Our authorities have said that we do not

threaten but take action."

Last month, IRGC Chief Major General Hossein Salami said the Americans should know that Iran will target whoever

"At personal level, Trump has shown to the international community and his nation what characteristics he has... Decorum does not allow me to mention these characteristics," the Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman says.

Zarif: Britain is a 'thief' if it links debt payment to Zaghari-Ratcliffe's release

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has said the British government is a "thief" if it links the payment of Iran's debt to the release of dual British-Iranian national Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe.

"If they continue this path, it would mean before the world's public opinion and even Britain's that England is a thief," Zarif told Kar-va-Kargar newspaper in an interview published on Sunday. "It doesn't mean that Iran is a hostage taker," he added.

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

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

Zarif said for forty years the British haven't paid the money, which belongs to the Iranian people. "Therefore, they do not have the right to set terms and conditions for its repayment."

Zaghari-Ratcliffe, 41, has been detained in Iran for more than four years on charges of trying to orchestrate a soft overthrow of the Islamic Republic.

The prosecutor general of Tehran had stated in October 2017 that she was being held for running "a BBC Persian online journalism course which was aimed at recruiting and training people to spread propaganda



against Iran."

On November 1, 2017, Boris Johnson, who at the time was Britain's foreign secretary, said, "When we look at what Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe was doing, she was simply teaching people journalism, as I understand it, at the very limit."

On June 24, 2019, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman said Zaghari-Ratcliffe will serve out her five-year prison sentence, dismissing a call for her release by a British minister visiting Tehran.

Her husband, Richard Ratcliffe, claimed last month that she is being held as a hostage in Iran. Zarif strongly rejected the claim.

"You need to know that the foreign ministries of Iran and England are currently in a serious, day-and-night

negotiation over the payment of the Iranian nation's assets, especially in such difficult circumstances of sanctions and the coronavirus," the minister said.

At the same time, he continued, there's also a negotiation about an exchange of prisoners between the two countries. "No can mix up these two separate negotiations."

Last month, British Defense Secretary Ben Wallace acknowledged for the first time that he is actively seeking to pay the debt to Iran to secure the release of Zaghari-Ratcliffe.

According to The Guardian, Wallace said the government was exploring every legal avenue to pay the debt, which for the first time he formally acknowledged the British government owes to Iran.

Tehran was quick to deny any connection between the two cases, with Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh saying "the British government has a definite 40-year long debt to Iran and it doesn't matter whether a British official acknowledges this debt or not."

"The paying of Iran's debt by Britain has nothing to do with the release of dual national prisoners," Khatibzadeh said.

Iran's Foreign Ministry has on several occasions stated that the Judiciary is an independent body in Iran.

"You surely know that the Foreign Ministry has no stance in the Judiciary," Zarif said during the interview. "I mean I can't go in my country's court and give my opinion about a convict who is in prison and is of Iranian origin."

"The Judiciary is completely independent in this regard," he added.

Assad lauds Iran, Russia for Syria peace efforts

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has lauded the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation for their role in the Syrian peace negotiations.

Tehran and Moscow have greatly contributed to moving toward the realization of Syria's peace process, Mehr quoted Assad as saying on Monday, citing Russia's Defense Ministry TV channel Zvezda.

The Syrian president said in addition to helping Syria fight terrorism, Russia's military presence in his country is important for ensuring international order.

He said, "The Russian military role in Syria — particularly the role of military bases [on the Syrian soil] — can be viewed from two perspectives: the first is fighting terrorism, which we call international

terrorism."

Terrorism will end "one day or at least it will be weakened as a result of the continuing battles to eliminate it. So, what comes after this terrorism?" he asked.

The Syrian leader added, "The other perspective is related to the role of Russia in the world. Today, we live in an international jungle; we do not live under international law."

Iran, Russia, and Turkey have been leading a peace initiative to bring the Syrian crisis to an end. The initiative is known as the Astana process, because Kazakhstan's capital, Nur-Sultan, formerly called Astana, originally hosted the meetings.

The Astana process has so far resulted in two agreements. The first deal was signed in Nur-Sultan, arranging for the

creation of de-escalation zones across Syria, including in parts of Idlib.

The second deal was signed in the Russian resort city of Sochi, allowing Ankara to bring in a small number of forces to man the observation posts to reinforce de-escalation.

Syria has been gripped by foreign-backed militancy since March 2011. However, the conflict has been winding down as the Syrian government reasserts control over parts formerly held by terrorist groups.

Last month, Iran's mission to the United Nations issued a statement saying Tehran will proudly continue helping the Syrian government against terrorism.

The statement was issued as a response to remarks made by a spokesperson of the U.S. State Department who told Newsweek



that removal of Iranian and Iran-backed forces from Syria is an objective of the U.S.

IRGC seeding clouds by Iranian version of U.S.-made RQ170- Drone

TEHRAN (FNA) — The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) is using the indigenized version of RQ-170 drones - manufactured through the reverse engineering of a similar American pilotless plane that was downed by Iran in 2011 - for seeding clouds over the Iranian territories.

Following the sharp decline in rainfall in Iran in recent years, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps came to work on cloud seeding and started using its flying equipment and manned and unmanned aircraft.

In cloud seeding, manned and unmanned aircraft fly into rain clouds (CB clouds) and shoot bullets containing iodide silver or biofoam nanoparticles into the clouds, causing them to be seeded and rain.

Low costs and high maneuverability of drones have made the device a golden option in cloud seeding, and the



IRGC Aerospace Force has been seeding the clouds using the Iranian version of the RQ-170 drones by 5 groups in

different parts of the country in the past 2 years.

The Iranian version of the RQ-170 drone has been manufactured through the reverse engineering of the U.S. drone which was tracked and downed in Iran late in 2011 and has been equipped by the IRGC with bombing capability in addition to its original surveillance capabilities.

Iran has downed many other U.S. drones as well, and they have always started reproducing them after conducting reverse engineering on them.

Iran announced on December 4, 2011 that its defense forces had downed a U.S. RQ-170 aircraft through a sophisticated cyber attack. The drone was the first such loss by the U.S.

U.S. officials have described the loss of the aircraft in Iran as a setback and a fatal blow to the stealth drone program.

Saudis and Emiratis may change line of succession in Kuwait

1→ “Admission of Kuwait’s emir to hospital revives the issue of succession,” read a headline of the London-based al-Arab newspaper on July 19, 2020. The newspaper is widely known for its close ties with the UAE.

It shed light on a number of powerful figures within the ruling family who are contending for the position of crown prince after the Sheikh Nawaf took office.

Citing Kuwaiti sources, the newspaper said, “The issue of who will succeed Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad is settled in favor of his brother Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad, who is currently the crown prince, but the question is who will be the crown prince of Nawaf Al-Ahmad, who in turn suffers from a rare disease in the blood. This disease forced the Kuwaiti crown prince to receive treatment in the United States over the past years.”

It also discussed three figures who could possibly be nominated as the new crown prince. The Muslim Brotherhood group and Qatar support Sheikh Ahmad al-Fahad, al-Arab said, while the sagas of the ruling family are pushing for the nomination of Sheikh Mohammad al-Sabah, the former foreign minister of Kuwait. Businessmen and some power circles in the ruling family favor former Prime Minister Sheikh Nasser al-Mohammad, who are capable of establishing “balanced ties” with Kuwait’s neighbors, the newspaper said.

On July 27 the newspaper ran another story on the issue of succession in Kuwait, turning the spotlight on a new figure who is currently being touted as the next crown prince. It added Sheikh Mishaal al-Ahmed al-Jaber to the list of contenders.

The newspaper said, “Sheikh Mishaal, who has a strong personality, accom-



Sheikh Mishaal al-Ahmed al-Jaber

panied the emir to the United States, where he was treated at the ‘Mayo Clinic’ hospital, while Sheikh Nasser Al-Sabah and Nasser Al-Mohammad remained in Kuwait.”

According to al-Arab, the Muslim Brotherhood hates Sheikh Mishaal and it has launched a campaign to prevent him from becoming crown prince.

The Arab Weekly, another pro-UAE outlet, also touted Sheikh Mishaal, saying that he leads the race for crown prince.

Citing political sources, the outlet said, “The sources confirmed to The Arab Weekly that Deputy Chief of the National Guard Sheikh Mishaal al-Ahmad al-Jaber al-Sabah, who had accompanied the late emir during his stay in the United States for medical treatment, is considered to have the best chances of becoming the new crown prince.”

It also said that the issue of who will become crown prince is expected to “be solved soon.”

“Diplomatic circles did not rule out a resolution to the situation with Sheikh Mishaal al-Ahmad becoming Crown Prince and Nasser al-Mohammad becoming prime minister. They explain that Sheikh Mishaal is a strong-willed figure and carries a lot of influence inside the al-Sabah family, which makes him very likely to win the race for crown prince. They point out that on his arrival from the United States with the body of the late emir, many members of the family greeted him at the airport in a sign of loyalty,” the Arab Weekly said.

Al-Arab and other Emirati-affiliated news outlets highlight the anti-Muslim Brotherhood inclinations of Sheikh Mishaal, whom the proponents to the

Muslim Brotherhood consider as the “head of hidden government,” according to al-Arab.

“Sheikh Mishaal is now pushing for a speedy settlement of the issue, as he knows that time is not necessarily on his side, particularly with the activity of the Muslim Brotherhood movement seeking to stop him from becoming the next crown prince,” the Arab Weekly asserted, citing diplomatic circles.

Unlike his rivals, Sheikh Mishaal does not have good relations with the Muslim Brotherhood, which, along with his tepid attitude toward Iran, makes him a perfect choice for the Saudis and Emiratis. The Saudi inclination toward Sheikh Mishaal was on full display during a telephone conversation between Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman and Sheikh Mishaal.

The MBS held a telephone conversation with Sheikh Mishaal to express condolences over the demise of the emir. The conversation raised questions over a Saudi plan to help Sheikh Mishaal become the next crown prince of Kuwait.

All contenders for the position of crown prince are old and represent an older generation of the ruling family. Therefore, it’s highly likely that the next crown prince of Kuwait would be the last emir of the older generation, which means that the next crown prince would likely be the one to pass the power to a younger crown prince that could rule for a longer period. This may be the reason why the Saudi and Emirati media outlets are so interested in the process of nominating the next crown prince of Kuwait. If they succeed in touting their choice, the Saudis and Emiratis will be sure of Kuwait being on their side for decades to come.

Iran has prepared initiative to end war in Nagorno-Karabakh

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran has prepared an initiative to help resolve the conflict over the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region, according to Saeed Khatibzadeh, the spokesman for the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

“Iran has prepared a detailed plan, which will be pursued through making consultations with the two sides [of the conflict]. We hope that the two sides end the war, avoid targeting civilians, and know that Iran cannot tolerate clashes on its borders. We have carefully told our friends in both countries that they need to take the necessary care,” Khatibzadeh said in his weekly press conference on Monday, according to the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA).

He said Iran is in contact with all sides and pursues an “important mission.”

The spokesman pointed out, “Iran is one of the few players that enjoys good relations with the two warring sides and other regional players. From now on, Iran will have a special position and an important mission.”

Katibzadeh did not give any details about the Iranian plan but he implied that preventing encroachment on the Iranian territories may be part of this plan.

The spokesman said, “The Islamic Republic of Iran will by no means tolerate any violation against its borders and soil. To this end, Iran has prepared a plan and it hopes to move forward with it through making consultations with the two sides and with the help of other neighboring countries.”

Over the past few days, many rockets and mortar shells landed inside Iran’s territories on the borders with the conflict zone, causing damage to village homes and injuring at least two people. Iran has already warned the warring sides to prevent firing projectiles on Iranian border areas.

“Movements in the border areas of our country are being seriously and sensitively monitored..., and



in this regard, while declaring any attack by any of the warring parties on our country is intolerable, we seriously warn all parties to seriously take care in this regard,” the Iranian Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Saturday after news media reports suggested that Iranian territories were under fire.

In His Monday press briefing, Khatibzadeh added, “We tried to be in mutual and continuous contact with both capitals. Due to our previous correct policies, we have equal access and we are in contact with regional players. We have prepared a plan and we hope that we would be able to end this war as soon as possible.”

According to the spokesman, Iran seeks to end the Nagorno-Karabakh war within the framework of preserving the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, withdrawal of military forces, and starting negotiations.

Clashes erupted between Azerbaijan and Armenia on September 27, killing and injuring dozens of both

sides. The two countries are fighting over a breakaway that is internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan but controlled by local Armenian forces who are backed by Armenia.

The breakaway of Nagorno-Karabakh has long been a source of conflict between Baku and Yerevan since the early years of the 1990s when the two sides fought a years-long war over the disputed region that led to the Armenian forces declaring independence from Azerbaijan and also occupying parts of Azerbaijani territories surrounding the mountainous Nagorno-Karabakh.

Azerbaijan has said the end of war is possible when Armenia retreats from the disputed region and apologizes to the Azerbaijani people. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has said he has been receiving calls asking him what Azerbaijan’s condition is to agree to a ceasefire.

“My condition is the same – to leave our lands, to leave them, to stop the confrontation. Not in word but indeed. Let him say that he [Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan] recognizes the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, as stated in the fundamental principles. Let him say that he will withdraw his troops from the occupied territories, as stated in the fundamental principles. Let him say that he apologizes to the Azerbaijani people and say that Karabakh is not Armenia. The last condition is to give us a schedule for a withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories. Then, of course, we will restore the ceasefire” Aliyev said in an address to his people on Sunday, according to the Trend news agency.

Iran has called on Armenia and Azerbaijan to stop the war and start a dialogue to resolve differences.

“There is no military solution for this decades-long conflict. While respecting the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, we reiterate that a ceasefire must be declared to start massive political talks,” Katibzadeh noted.

Senior MP pays visit to Iran-Azerbaijan borders

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — A senior Iranian lawmaker paid a visit to Iranian border territories near the conflict zone of Nagorno-Karabakh after several projectiles coming from the zone landed inside Iran.

“Since these two countries are neighbors of the Islamic Republic of Iran and there are a lot of contacts between the people of the two countries, the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee [of the Iranian Parliament] is monitoring this issue very closely. To this end, a number of the National Security Committee members have traveled to Azerbaijan’s border terminals on behalf of the Islamic Consultative Assembly,” Abolfazl Amouei, the spokesman for the committee, said on Monday.

Amouei, who was visiting border areas near Iran-Azerbaijan borders, said the committee has held a meeting on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and its impact on the Iranian areas bordering the conflict zone.

“The clashes of the past days [in Nagorno-Karabakh] has impacted our border areas. The people in these areas

are worried. A delegation of the National Security Committee has visited this area,” Amouei was quoted by the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) news agency as saying.

He said the delegation has visited a number of border counties and terminals while hearing the views of lawmakers representing these areas.

“During the visit, the sound of clashes could have been heard. Some rockets have landed inside some of our country’s territories and border towns, causing damage to some homes and farms,” Amouei explained.

He and the accompanying delegation also met with local officials in the north-western province of Ardabil, including the members of the security council of the province.

“Important issues were discussed and it was agreed that the results of this meeting would be discussed in the Parliament’s National Security Committee,” the spokesman said.

The war between Azerbaijan and Armenia broke out on September 27 when the military forces of the two countries began

exchanging fire along the contact line in the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh. The warring countries heavily used rockets and mortar shells to target each other’s positions, while Azerbaijani forces also using combat drones to target Armenian forces.

The two countries are fighting over a region that is internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan but controlled by local Armenian forces who are backed by Armenia. Azerbaijan has said the war will end only after Armenia pulls out its forces from the disputed region or makes a firm and time-framed commitment to withdraw its forces from Nagorno-Karabakh. But Armenia keeps insisting on supporting the local Armenian forces in Nagorno-Karabakh who established a self-declared republic in the 1990s. No countries have recognized the republic.

Iran urged many times both sides of the conflict to declare a ceasefire and start a dialogue to resolve differences.

Earlier this week, Amouei expressed Iran’s readiness to facilitate such a dialogue.

“We, as a mediator, are ready to facilitate talks between the two countries and establish a ceasefire between them,” said Amouei, adding, “The continuation of the killings and clashes not only does not solve the problem but also creates more disputes. This is why in the talks that our country’s officials held with their Azerbaijani and Armenian counterparts the need to stop the clashes and start talks to resolve disputes was reiterated.”

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has also echoed the same position. He has called for an immediate ceasefire in the region while expressing readiness to help Azerbaijan and Armenia settle their dispute.

“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 Zarif on 27 September.

SPORTS

Persepolis display in 2020 ACL beyond expectations

1→ BUT, Yahya Golmohammadi’s side are very strong, both technically and physically. Fighting spirit push them forward as well as they were reduced to 10 men in the match against Al Nassr but never stepped back and beat their strong opponents on penalty shootout.

They have won Iran league for the fourth time in a row and have reached ACL final two times in three years and it shows that the team’s development has started since years ago.

Persepolis can be a role model for the other Iranian teams since they have all fought together in the previous years to earn what they are looking for.

Now, they want to write their name into the history books by winning their first ever title in the AFC Champions League.

The remaining matches in the eastern half of the draw are scheduled to be played in a centralized venue from Nov. 18 to Dec. 13.

Mahmoud Fekri named Esteghlal coach

SPORTS d e s k **TEHRAN** — Mahmoud Fekri was named Esteghlal football team head coach.

The 51-year-old coach replaced interim coach Majid Namjoo Motlagh in the Tehran based football team.



Fekri was named as Nassaji coach in February as Reza Mohajeri’s replacement and helped them avoid relegation at the end of the 2019-20 Iran Professional League season.

Esteghlal had been linked with former Werder Bremen coach Alexander Nouri but they failed to reach an agreement with the German-Iranian coach due to financial problems.

Esteghlal, as one of the Iranian popular teams, have not won a league title since 2013 and they are determined to end their title drought after eight years.

Fekri has already played in Esteghlal for 13 years over two stints.

Official: 2020/21 IPL season to begin on Oct.31

SPORTS d e s k **TEHRAN** — The new edition of Iran Professional League (IPL), also known as Persian Gulf Premier League, will begin on Oct. 31

Iran League Football Organization has announced that Iran’s Super Cup between IPL champions Persepolis and Hazfi Cup winners Tractor will be held on Oct. 26 and IPL new season begin five days later.

Iran’s Azadegan League (First Division) will also kick off on Nov. 2.

It will be IPL’s 20th edition since its foundation in 2001. Persepolis are the most decorated team in the competition with six titles.

St. Pölten officially complete signing of Reza Asadi

SPORTS d e s k **TEHRAN** — Austrian football club St. Pölten have officially completed the signing of Iranian defensive midfielder Reza Asadi on Monday.

Asadi, 24, has joined the Austrian football team on a two-year contract from Tractor.

Sportklub Niederösterreich St. Pölten are an Austrian association football club from Sankt Pölten, capital of the Austrian state of Lower Austria.

St. Pölten play in the Austrian Bundesliga, which is the top tier of the Austrian football league system.

Iran’s Karamian joins RK Bjelovar Handball Team

Tasnim — Iran national handball team player Mohsen Karamian joined Croatian handball team RK Bjelovar.

The 25-year-old pivot has joined RK Bjelovar on a one-year contract for an undisclosed fee.

Karamian has also played for Macedonian team HC Pelister and Al-Rayyan of Qatar.

RK Bjelovar is a team handball club from Bjelovar, Croatia formed in 1955. The club currently competes in the Croatian Second League of Handball (North) and the Croatian Handball Cup.

Abdi’s goal nominated for Goal of the Week

Persepolis forward Mehdi Abdi’s goal has been nominated for Goal of the Week.

Abdi scored a goal in the match against Al-Nassr of Saudi Arabia in the 2020 AFC Champions League semi Saturday night.

He will vie with Moroccan striker of Al-Nassr Abderrazak Hamdallah who found the back of the Persepolis’ net from the penalty spot.

The winner will be chosen by a public votes in a poll conducted by the-afc.com.

(Source: the-afc)

Mining sector's performance in stock market outstanding

1 → Amir Sabagh, the IMIDRO's director for investment and economic affairs, said the major mining companies' capital will reach 890 trillion rials (about \$21.19 billion) in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021), while the figure was 340 trillion rials (about \$8.09 billion) two years ago.



Addressing the same meeting, Ardeshtir Sa'ad Mohammadi, the managing director of National Iranian Copper Industry Company, said this company's investment making will increase to €4.5 billion from €2 billion, which is a considerable amount. He also said, "We will introduce a new copper mine with the deposit of 530 million tons in the current year", adding, "Copper companies' shares will bring high profit for the shareholders, especially the individual investors."

"We have no concern for the sales of copper cathode even under the sanctions condition", he underlined.

Labor ministry, private sector discuss facilitating business environment

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iranian Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare Ministry hosted a meeting with the representatives of the country's private sector to discuss improvement of business environment for the private sector, the portal of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) reported.

The meeting was attended by the Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare Minister Mohammad Shariatmadari, the deputies of the ministry, and the heads and board members of TCCIMA and Iran Chambers of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), as well as the head of the Social Security Organization.

The event was mainly focused on resolving challenges and issues between the private sector companies and the Social Security Organization, and after comprehensive discussions on the matter the labor minister offered solutions to address the mentioned issues.

In the meeting, the two sides also agreed that every month a meeting would be held between the Labor Ministry and the country's Chambers of Commerce to follow up on the issues raised in this meeting.

At the end of the gathering, it was decided that the second round of talks between the mentioned parties would be held in the next Iranian calendar month (begins on October 22) with the aim of addressing specific issues related to the improvement of the country's business environment.

Bushehr Province exports products worth nearly \$2.5b in H1

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The value of commodities exported from Iran's southwestern Bushehr Province stood at over \$2.47 billion during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21), the director-general of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department announced.

Hossein Hosseini put the weight of the exported products at 11 million tons in the six-month period, IRNA reported.

He mentioned China, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Afghanistan, India, South Korea, Qatar, Pakistan, Turkey and Brazil as the main export destinations of the products, and named butane, propane, polyethylene, methanol, urea, styrene, cement, clinker, and polystyrene as the major exported items.

The official further said that about 247,000 tons of goods worth \$508 million were imported to Bushehr Province during the first half.



Auto tires and auto parts, butter, black tea, and rice were the major imported items, and China, the UAE, India, the Philippines, New Zealand, Germany, Sri Lanka, Italy, South Korea and Spain were the top exporters to the province, Hosseini stated.

As reported by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of Iran's non-oil trade during the first six months of the current Iranian calendar has reached \$30.349 billion.

The volume of traded goods was estimated at about 62.842 million tons, of which over 46.318 million tons were related to exports and about 16.524 million tons were imported goods.

Iran's top five non-oil export destinations during this period were China with over \$3.709 billion worth of exports, Iraq with \$2.971 billion, the United Arab Emirates with over \$1.933 billion, and Afghanistan with \$1.103 billion as well as Turkey with \$731 million.

China accounted for over 27 percent of Iran's total exports, followed by Iraq, UAE, Afghanistan, and Turkey with 21.9 percent, 14.2 percent, 8.1 percent, and 45.3 percent respectively.

Polyethylene, natural gas, liquefied propane, and other light oils and products were Iran's major exported items.

More than 70 percent of the imported goods were basic goods and the rest were mainly raw materials, machinery and spare parts for production units.

The top five sources of imports during this period were China with \$4.295 billion, the UAE with \$3.961 billion, Turkey with \$1.814 billion, India with \$1.097 billion, and Germany with \$835 million worth of imports.

China accounted for nearly 26 percent of Iran's total imports, followed by UAE, Turkey, India, and Germany with 23 percent, 10.8 percent, 6.5 percent, and five percent, respectively.

Govt. stands by exporters in sanctions era: industry min.

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Alireza Razm Hosseini said the government is going to support the private sector exporters during the hard times created by the U.S. sanctions, IRNA reported.

Speaking in a meeting with the board members of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) on Sunday evening, Razm Hosseini

called for closer communication and collaboration between the government and the private sector.

Referring to the great potentials of the country's private sector including producers and exporters, the minister added: "According to government policies and considering the great potentials of the private sector a good outlook can be considered for the country's economy."



Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Alireza Razm Hosseini (L) and ICCIMA Head Gholam-Hossein Shafei in a meeting at the ICCIMA place on Sunday evening

In the meeting the private sector representatives also expressed their ideas and concerns about various issues including the re-injection of the export revenues into the NIMA system (local forex management system) and also allocation of foreign currency for the importers.

Iranian parliament (Majlis), on September 29, confirmed Alireza Razm Hosseini as the nominee for minister of industry, mining and trade.

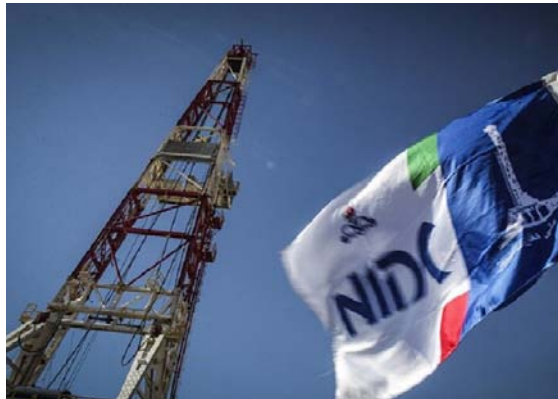
Razm Hosseini, 59, is an economics graduate who has served as governor-general of Kerman and Khorassan Razavi provinces.

NIDC inks 5 deals for lending drilling rigs to local contractors

1 → Back in August, Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC) and the National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) signed 13 deals worth €1.527 billion with domestic companies to add 185,000 barrels per day to the country's oil production capacity.

NISOC is the employer for 11 of the mentioned contracts, which will be implemented in the five provinces of Khuzestan, Fars, Kohgiluyeh-Boyer Ahmad, Bushehr, and Hormozgan, while the other two were signed by IOOC.

Accordingly, two contracts for the development of Zilaei as well as Chalingar and Garangan projects were signed with Global Petrotech Kish Company; Ramin project was awarded to Persia Oil and Gas Industry Development Company, while Mansourabad project was handed over to Petro Iran Development Company, the Siahmakan project to Pasargad Energy Development Company, Maroun 2, 5 and 6 projects to Petrotenco, Maroun 1 and 4 projects to North Drilling Company



(Sina Energy Gostar Holding), Maroun 3 project to the Iranian Offshore Engineering and Construction

Company (IOECC).

Balaroud project was signed jointly with the National Iranian Drilling Company and Jahanpars Engineering and Construction Company, Ahvaz 1, and 4 projects jointly with Qeshm Oil and Energy Industries and Maroun Karan.

The contract for Resalat Project of IOOC was signed jointly with the Iranian Offshore Engineering and Construction Company and the Intelligent Solutions Inc., and the Forouzan project was also signed jointly with Petropars and Mobin Sazeh Gostar.

Since the re-imposition of the U.S. sanctions, the Iranian Oil Ministry has been following a new strategy to encourage the country's private sector to have a stronger role in the development of the country's oil industry.

In this regard, NIOC has awarded several exploration and development projects to capable domestic companies in the past two years.

Iran Oil Show 2020 postponed as Covid-19 raises a red flag

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The 25th edition of Iran International Oil, Gas, Refining, and Petrochemical Exhibition (Iran Oil Show 2020) which was due to be held at Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds during October 12-15, is going to be postponed as the coronavirus outbreak grows once again in the capital Tehran.

According to an Oil Ministry statement published by Shana news agency, due to the special conditions caused by the growth of the Covid-19 cases in the country, this year's exhibition that was going to be held under restrict health and safety protocols will be held at another time which will be announced later.

The organizers of the exhibition had previously announced that only senior managers of the government sector,



managers of the private and cooperative sectors, distinguished professors and students of the country's universities, political officials, and guests of exhibitors and specialized professional associations will be allowed to visit and participate.

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

Saffron exports up 5% in 5 months on year

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran's saffron export has risen five percent during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21), compared to the same period of time in the previous year, according to Gholamreza Miri, the chairman of Iranian Saffron Exporters and Sellers Union.

Based on a multilateral memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed between Iran's Planning and Budget Organization (PBO) and three of the country's banks on Saturday, 10 trillion rials (about \$238.09 million) will be allocated for supporting the saffron industry.

The MOU was signed by PBO's Deputy Head Hamid Pour-Mohammadi and the managing directors of Agriculture Bank, Mellat Bank, and Export Development Bank of Iran.

Speaking in the signing ceremony,



Pour-Mohammadi noted that the mentioned funding will be provided to saffron producers and processors in the form of bank facilities to support the production of saffron and the packing and processing of this product which has been impacted by the outbreak of coronavirus.

According to the official, the interest rate of the mentioned facilities would be 18 percent, of which PBO has agreed to pay three percent.

6m hectares of land to go under wheat cultivation this year

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Nearly six million hectares of land is expected to go under wheat cultivation in the current crop year (late September 2020-mid August 2021), IRNA quoted Esmail Esfandiari-Pour, the head of the Agriculture Ministry's Wheat Program as, saying on Sunday.

The mentioned cultivation is expected to meet the country's wheat needs in the next Iranian calendar year (starts in March 2021), Esfandiari-Pour said.

According to the official, so far 372,000 tons of seeds from different varieties have been prepared by private companies for the current crop year and their distribution has begun in the northwestern and western provinces of the country since late September and will continue until late December.

He further noted that all the wheat seeds distributed in the country are certified seeds of improved varieties, adding: "Over the past six years, about 40 percent of wheat seeds grown in Iran have been cer-



tified and the rest are local varieties consumed by farmers themselves."

Back in May, Esfandiari-Pour had said that the

country's wheat production exceeded 14 million tons in the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 19).

The wheat harvest season in Iran is approximately 4.5 months starting in early April up to mid-August.

Based on the Agriculture Ministry's data, Iranian farmers produced nearly 14.5 million tons of wheat in the previous Iranian calendar year, 1.2 million tons more than the figure for its preceding year.

According to Esfandiari-Pour, who is also the advisor to the Agriculture Minister, Iran's use of improved seed varieties over the past five years has boosted the country's self-sufficiency in wheat by more than 30 percent.

Good precipitation across Iran has also resulted in a prosperous harvest in various agricultural sectors across the country.

Iran's wheat harvest is enough to make the county self-sufficient in the production of this strategic crop for the fifth year in a row, according to the official.

Iranian airports ready for operation of air taxis

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The secretary of Association of Iranian Airlines (AIA) has said that the country's airports are prepared for the operation of air taxis.

Maqsood Asadi Samani also reiterated that the ground is prepared for the private sector's investment making in this due.

Emphasizing the necessity of operating air taxis in the country, the official said, "If we want to develop the aviation industry in the country, operating air taxis is one of the ways to achieve this goal."

"We have some small airports in the country that are idle or operate with very few flights; we can use these airports for operating the air taxis", Asadi Samani further noted.

Last month, the secretary of public aviation committee of Iran Airports and



Air Navigation Company had announced that Iran will make air taxi operational for the first time in the country by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2021).

Ramin Kashaef-Azar said if the required air operator's certificate (AOC) will be received from Iran's Flight Inspection

Services Center within the coming three months, the first air taxi will start operation by the year end.

An air operator's certificate (AOC) is the approval granted by a national aviation authority (NAA) to an aircraft operator to allow it to use aircraft for commercial purposes. This requires the operator to have personnel, assets and system in place to ensure the safety of its employees and the general public.

Iran has also unveiled its first domestically-made mobile air traffic control (ATC) tower this year.

Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami unveiled the ATC tower in a ceremony on July 27.

The unveiling ceremony was attended by senior officials including the transport

minister, the Head of Iran Airports and Air Navigation Company Siavash Amirmokri, as well as Defense Minister Amir Hatami.

As reported, the mentioned tower has been designed and constructed by Iran Electronics Industries (known as SAIRAN), which is a state-owned subsidiary of the Defense Ministry. It is a diversified organization with operations in electronics, optics, electro-optics, communications, computers, and semiconductors.

Speaking in the ceremony, Eslami underlined the significance of this achievement and said: "This is the starting point for utilizing the domestic capacities more widely in all aspects of transportation including roads, rail, sea, and air, and move towards an integrated and intelligent transportation system in the country."

Ulyanov: U.S. Iran policy absolutely unwise and counterproductive

America nowadays doesn't listen to others

➔ The visit was carried out in line with the joint statement issued on 27 August in Tehran by IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi and the vice-president of the Islamic Republic of Iran and head of the AEOL. It was implemented successfully. Both sides fulfilled their commitments. I believe it is a good point which will contribute to further development of cooperation.

■ Trump's administration celebrated the 75th birthday of the UN while intensifying campaign to kill off the JCPOA, which is considered as one of the most significant multilateral agreements of the century. Isn't it such a move a sheer hypocrisy?

I don't want to give such labels to U.S. foreign policy. I prefer to say that policy of American administration on Iran is absolutely flawed, not wise and absolutely counterproductive, creating serious problems not only for Iran but also for the whole region and international community. That is why Americans are isolated on this issue on the international arena and in the UN Security Council as the recent events demonstrated.

■ Key UN powers redoubled support for the nuclear pact. UN secretary-general also rebuffed an appeal from Pompeo to reimpose UN sanctions on Iran. What messages do such positions convey to the U.S.?

The point is that America nowadays doesn't listen to others. They make their own decisions which are often wrong. They think that they can do anything as a mighty power as it has a lot of tools to impose its views on other countries, regions and sometimes on the whole world.

International law should be respected. U.S. idea to expand its extraterritorial sanctions fully contradicts international law. However America is stuck to the policy of imposing more pressure on Iran.

■ In one of your tweets you complained that "as always, the new IAEA Director General's confidential reports on Iran were leaked to the U.S. press immediately upon their circulation among Governors. Shameful." In view of such leakages, how can Iran trust the IAEA?

The point is that leakages of protected information are outrageous and shameful. The problem is that



"Leakages of protected information are outrageous and shameful."

nobody can identify the source of these leaks. The reports are published on protected website only for Governors. The Secretariat is not able to identify how the information is leaked to public and media. Russia repeatedly raised this problem in the IAEA Board of Governors. It is worth to mention that leakages happen only to quarterly reports. Other kinds of information on safeguards implementation are kept strictly confidential by the Secretariat.

■ The START treaty between Russia and the U.S. will expire in 4 months. You have said that so far the Russian proposal to extend the treaty has not received a positive response from the U.S. What will be your country's reaction if Washington refuses to extend the deal? Do you expect a return to a new nuclear arms race or a new cold war?

Not necessarily, but such risks will be much higher. Of course if the New START expires on February 5, it would be the first time in many decades when there is no functioning agreement between the U.S. and Russia in the sphere of strategic weapons. Of course it would not be

helpful, to put it mildly, for international security. On February 6 current limitations, confidence-building measures and verification mechanisms will cease to exist. We believe that there is chance to avoid negative scenarios if U.S. accepts our proposal. The future will show.

■ The U.S. has withdrawn from many international agreements, including JCPOA, by pursuing unilateral policies. Do you think it can be trusted to make a new agreement with?

Do you remember that U.S. President Ronald Reagan once cited a Russian saying "Trust but verify"? Of course the current policy does not provide international credibility to Washington but if a new agreement is achieved we will verify how the U.S. complies with it.

■ Foreign Minister Zarif has said Iran will reverse its decision to limit nuclear activities only if the new U.S. administration is obliged not to ditch the nuclear agreement again and compensate the financial losses caused by the sanctions. What is your comment?

Iran is a sovereign country and makes decisions based on its national interest and national security. I think the Iranian

foreign minister has expressed Iranian position and Iranian intention. Russia never criticized Iran for its reduction steps. We understand Tehran's motives and that these steps were caused by the break of balance between economic and nuclear provisions of the deal which was ruined by illegitimate U.S. extraterritorial sanctions. At the same time the JCPOA in our eyes is extremely important. It needs to be implemented in full and we try to reach the speediest solutions to these problems. In February this year at a meeting of the Joint Commission of the JCPOA we achieved a common decision to address this issue on the basis of a step by step approach and reciprocity. Unfortunately, so far due to the pandemic we have not been able to engage on the issue properly. But this topic remains on the agenda and we are in favor of expedited dialogue. At the same time we should keep in mind that the remaining JCPOA participants, first of all the European states, are not able to compensate the losses caused by detrimental U.S. policies. I spoke to my European colleagues and they say time and again that they cannot issue orders and instructions to their companies, which belong to private sector and (that they) have the right to decide for themselves to maintain economic contacts with Iran. The majority of commercial entities in the West are afraid of economic sanctions, therefore, and for this reason they left the Iranian market. At this stage we should wait for the results of the U.S. elections, and possible changes in the U.S. policy.

■ What is Russia's position and proposal to end the Armenian-Azerbaijani clashes?

The conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh is not in my area of responsibility. I recommend you to read the official statements of the Russian Foreign Ministry as well as joint statement of the leaders of Russia, France and the U.S. In our view the first step which must be undertaken is ceasefire. The sides need to stop fighting and engage in diplomatic negotiations. Russia would be happy to facilitate a peaceful solution, especially in view of the fact that we have good relations with both Azerbaijan and Armenia.

American people facing "choiceless" democracy: Richard Falk

By Amir Muhammad Esmaeili

TEHRAN — Noting that the U.S. elections are not fully democratic, an American academic says that it does not matter for American people who will win as either way, their lives' problems will not be solved.

Richard Falk argues that "electoral turnout has been low in recent years because the perceptions of living in a 'choiceless' democracy give many U.S. citizens the impression that it does not matter who wins as either way, the problems of their lives will not be solved."

Here is the full text of the interview:

■ Why is turnout so low in U.S. elections?

A: Electoral turnout has been low in recent years because the perceptions of living in a 'choiceless' democracy give many U.S. citizens the impression that it does not matter who wins as either way, the problems of their lives will not be solved. Perhaps, more than choiceless, a better existential explanation of this devaluing of the right to vote in the sense of what I would call irrelevant democracy. This means that political outcomes of elections are felt to be irrelevant to conditions of poverty or discrimination, or economic unfairness, an interpretation that gains credibility that it is 'the losers' in American society that make up the bulk of those who fail to vote. It reflects deep alienation in the middle class and underclass America, which has been somewhat lessened at this time due to a fear that Trump's reelection could produce a fascist America. This fear will undoubtedly increase voter turnout in November, but not necessarily in a post-Trump future.

Although it is disadvantaged who disproportionately refrain from voting (and partly also for reasons connected with voter suppression discussed previously), some sophisticated citizens refuse to vote on principle or vote under the banner of 'the lesser of



evils.' Progressive anti-Trumpists are faced with this dilemma in the forthcoming elections.

■ Can the U.S. election be considered a fully democratic election?

A: No, the American elections as currently administered on the national level are not fully democratic for three principal reasons: (1) most obviously, due to various forms of voter suppression and distortion encroaching especially on the rights of persons of color and the impoverished to cast their votes either as a result of difficult registration rules or by making polling sites feel hostile or requiring especially long waits in neighborhoods where minorities and the poor live; (2) by presidential opposition to voting by mail and by alleging fraud and rigging without any evidence imperiling his willing to transfer political power if he loses, undermining confidence in the integrity of elections and causing the great public anxiety; (3) by not acknowledging and challenging 'systemic racism' inherent in American society that produces discrimination against African-Americans, Muslims, and other victimized minorities.

■ What is the difference between Trump and Biden? Could we describe Biden as a pacifist candidate?

A: Biden's record, especially on international issues and the Middle East, is of a consistently war-mongering character that includes strong support for the disastrous 2003 war and subsequent occupation of Iraq and mindless indifference to Israel's criminal disregard of Palestinian rights. Besides, as suggested, Biden seems as readier for a new cold war than Trump. His version of the foreign policy bipartisan consensus is more coherent and deferential to the considered views of the political elite and militarized American bureaucracy, while Trump is an impulsive leader that thinks he can by himself engineer a revival of American preeminence by bullying, bluster, and bluff.

My own reluctant support of Biden is rooted in my greater apprehensions about Trump, which also explains why I equally reluctantly supported Hillary Clinton in 2016 when she opposed Trump. I regard his demagogic style, racist affinities, ultra-nationalism, ecological denialism as a vehicle for a fascist future for the United States, which would mean the total abandonment of democratic procedures of governance, accompanied by repressive policies and practices. Such an abandonment would almost certainly produce harsh exclusionary hostility to immigration except for majority-white countries, the punishment of dissent and protest activity, and an economic and political order even more slanted in favor of the wealthiest. My reluctance about the electoral choice posed by Biden or Trump is also colored by uncertainty in the form of an obscure future. I fear a belligerent future in which Biden's approach leads to interventions and even war, whereas I grant the possibility that a reelected Trump could opt for isolationism, which resulted in more moderation in the Middle East and elsewhere.

employers.

But by all credible accounts, the Chancellor has a mountain to climb before he can confidently claim he has stabilized the economy.

Even the BBC's political editor, Laura Kuenssberg (who is usually supportive of the Chancellor), writes that in view of "stratospheric levels" of public spending, coupled with a lack of details in Sunak's speech, means that the state of the nation's finances are unlikely to return to normal before the next general election in 2024.

Assad: Russian military presence in Syria important to intl. order

Syria says apart from helping it fight terrorism, Russia's military presence in the Arab country is important to ensuring international order.

"The Russian military role in Syria – particularly the role of military bases [on the Syrian soil] – can be viewed from two perspectives; the first is fighting terrorism, which we call international terrorism," President Bashar al-Assad said in an interview with Russia's Zvezda television channel on Sunday, according to a transcript provided by the official Syrian Arab News Agency. "This will end one day or at least it will be weakened as a result of the continuing battles to eliminate it," he noted.

"So, what comes after this terrorism? The other perspective is related to the role of Russia in the world. Today, we live in an international jungle; we do not live under international law," Assad said. The current disorderly global situation, he said, had been caused by a lack of adherence to international law for around a quarter of a century.

Oman becomes first Arab country to reinstate ambassador to Syria

Oman has reinstated its ambassador to Syria, becoming the first Persian Gulf Arab state to do so since militancy erupted in the country about nine years ago.

Syria's Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem accepted the credentials of Oman's Ambassador Turki bin Mahmood al-Busaidy, who was appointed to the post in a royal decree in March, on Sunday.

The Sultan of Oman, Haitham bin Tariq Al Said, pledged when assuming power in January to continue maintaining friendly ties with all nations, Press TV reported.

Some Arab states are seeking reconciliation with Damascus whose forces have gained the upper hand against the foreign-backed terrorists.

In December 2018, the UAE officially reopened its embassy in Damascus, which had been closed soon after militancy began in Syria in 2011. The country has a charge d'affaires there.

Israel under diplomatic fire over arms to Azerbaijan

A major supplier of arms to Azerbaijan, Israel has come under diplomatic fire from Armenia over the struggle between the Caucasus neighbors in disputed Nagorno-Karabakh.

Armenia only opened an embassy in Tel Aviv on September 17, but Yerevan recalled its ambassador barely two weeks later, citing weapons sales to Azerbaijan.

According to AFP, while Israel's president Monday spoke with his Armenian counterpart and attempted to smooth the waters, the Jewish state's weapons exports to Baku will be difficult to give up.

The diplomatic rift came shortly after press reports, based on data from flight tracing site Flight radar 24, cited the takeoff of an Azerbaijani cargo plane from southern Israel.

The site said the aircraft, operated by Azerbaijani carrier Silk Way, took off from Ramon Airport, located near the Ovda military base, on the eve of the outbreak of hostilities.

Beyond this single example, Azerbaijan has a long track record of buying Israeli arms - to the extent that Iran in 2012 summoned the former's ambassador to voice its concerns.

And while the Israeli defense ministry does not publish details of sales by country, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev in 2016 said his country had bought \$4.85 billion in defense equipment from the Jewish state (4.1 billion euros at current prices).

Israeli media say that Israel's Elbit Systems sold Azerbaijan, a Shiite country, armed drones -- weaponry which has shifted the military balance in the decades-old dispute in which Armenian fighters long held the advantage of manning mountain outposts.

'Israel massively interfered in Yemen's internal affairs under Saleh'

The spokesman for Yemeni Armed Forces, Brigadier General Yahya Saree, says Israel constantly intervened in the internal affairs of the Arab country during the reign of slain dictator, Ali Abdullah Saleh.

Speaking at a press conference broadcast live from the capital Sana'a, Saree highlighted that the Yemeni nation is confronting a Saudi-led military aggression, which seeks to accomplish the desired objectives of the Tel Aviv regime.

"Yemen has long been at the main target of U.S.-Israeli plots and the ongoing onslaught clearly proves this. The Armed Forces call upon Yemenis from all walks of life to raise their awareness about the real intentions of foreigners. Our struggle is nothing but a fateful battle for liberation and independence," he said.

According to Press TV, Saree noted that there were secret relations between Saleh's government and Israel, which dated back to the year 2000, stating that there were even mutual visits between officials from both sides.

Resistance News

Sheikh Nawaf reasserts Kuwait's firm support for Palestine

INTERNATIONAL DESK **TEHRAN**— Kuwait's Emir Sheikh Nawaf Al Sabah has reiterated his country's unwavering support for the Palestinian cause in all international gatherings and occasions.

During his meeting on Sunday with Palestinian premier Mohamed Shtayyeh, Sheikh Nawaf asserted that Kuwait would continue to follow in the footsteps of the late Emir and uphold his supportive policy towards Palestine and its people.

Shtayyeh and other senior officials from the Palestinian Authority arrived on Sunday in Kuwait to offer condolences over the passing of late Emir Sheikh Sabah Al Sabah.

Chancellor Rishi Sunak hints at post-Covid austerity measures

As the UK struggles to contain a second wave of the coronavirus pandemic, the prospects for the country's economy is looking increasingly gloomy.

Addressing the Tory party annual conference, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, vowed to "always balance the books", despite massive public spending to contain the economic fallout of the pandemic.

Underscoring deeply-seated Conservative Party values, Sunak proclaimed the Tories have a "sacred duty" to "leave the public finances strong".

In an effort to whip up Tory solidarity in the midst of profound financial uncertainty, the Chancellor said he will deploy the "overwhelming might of the British state" to help people find new employment.

But crucially, Sunak said that debt and spending needed to be controlled "over the medium term".

Addressing leading Conservative Party members virtually (due to coronavirus-related restrictions), Sunak said the Tories cannot argue there is "no limit on what we can spend" nor that "we can

simply borrow our way out of any hole".

The Chancellor's thinly-disguised hint at future austerity comes in the wake of unprecedented government borrowing to the tune of £35.9 billion in August, the highest amount since records began in 1993.

In fact government borrowing between April and August soared to £173.7 billion as the Chancellor splashed vast sums of money on coronavirus-related schemes to save the economy.

The most important of these is the furlough scheme which is designed to protect jobs by directly supporting

Museum dedicated to Tazieh being set up in Ardebil

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – A museum dedicated to Tazieh **d e s k** -- Iranian passion play on religious events especially on the day of Ashura – is being prepared to be launched in the city of Ardebil, northwest Iran.

The museum, which will be the largest of its kind in north-western part of the country, is projected to be inaugurated by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2021), Ardebil's tourism chief Nader Fallahi said on Monday.



Registered on UNESCO's List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in November 2010, Tazieh recounts religious events, historical and mythical stories, and folk tales. Each performance has the four components of poetry, music, song and motion. Performers are always male, and female roles are played by men.

Tazieh is a kind of drama that depicts the event of Ashura and is performed in Mahur, Chargah, and Shur Baghdad radifs of Iranian music.

It is based on Ashura culture and the brave war and martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS). It is a religious play dated back to 9th-century daylamites and Buyids. However, Tazieh performance began during the Safavid era (1501-1736) and flourished during the Qajar era.

From labyrinthine bazaars to nomadic landscapes: Feel Iran on walking tours

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — To offer tourists with new experiences and fresh points of view, a number of tour operators have developed a range of creative “off-the-beaten-track” tours and activities in Iran, in order to explore new tastes of the ancient land, ISNA reported in a recent article.

Many international travelers to the country say that traversing Iran equals an endless charm, as it embraces so many diverse cultures and landscapes.

Iran has so much to offer if you thoroughly visit every nook and cranny. Forget the VIP cars and become an adept at slow travel by discovering Iran through walking tours. There are many stunning mosques and pristine deserts!

One of the most popular ways to visit a city is to experience it on foot. Whatever their size, most historical cities, towns and villages in Iran are best appreciated by walking, as their century-old city centers were first conceived to wander around.

Below is an edited excerpt of the article:
Take Isfahan, for instance: a masterpiece of Safavid-era architecture popularly known as “half of the world”. Numerous craftspeople are boasting skills in the mazing bazaars, producing beautiful handicrafts with copper, woods, ceramics, and wool.

A walking tour in its narrow alleys yields a unique opportunity to listen to the stories behind this Iranian heritage. While in Shiraz, local guides help to revive the traditions by showing visitors the old and forgotten jobs of the bazaar.

Here, a woman is sewing “Givah”, the oldest type of hand-woven Iranian shoes; over there, a man is repairing old books in its antics shops, while his neighbor quietly prepares nuts with saffron and salt all day long. Crossing the threshold of their old shops with a walking tour would be a priceless opportunity to meet with the last representative of these ancient jobs, before they become part of the past.

From another point of view, bazaars are also synonyms of foods, with their unmissable colorful stalls of vegetables, herbs, and spices. Yet, most of these ingredients might be mysterious to a foreign eye.

It is possible to pierce the mystery of Persian cookery, and getting familiar with the concept of hot and cold natures in food, through joining a walking tour in the bazaars of Tehran, Shiraz, Yazd, or Isfahan. Not only it's an opportunity to discover dozens of unique local ingredients, but it's also a chance to taste the Iranian street foods and delicacies, in some traditional bakery known only by locals and shopkeepers.

People watching and even mingling with them in the bazaars is one of the best ways to take the pulse of the country. Bazaars have traditionally been major economic and social centers in any Iranian city.

But for those who wish to have insights into the authentic Persian culture, adding a cooking workshop to a walking tour seems to be a must. Some believe that Persian cuisine is the soul of the country and meals are a cheerful moment beloved by every Iranian family.

From Tehran to Shiraz, participating in a cooking class gives the opportunity to discover local cuisine far from the usual restaurants. For instance, in town of Taft, near Yazd, there is an eco-lodge managed by a Zoroastrian couple, which aims to share their traditions with tourists, through cooking workshops performed in a pomegranate field.

You can also skip cities to be connected with another aspect of Iran. Yes, some of the most memorable walking experiences in Iran could take place beyond the city walls. Iran has an incredible nature, offering trekking experiences in the green peaks of the northern Gilan province, climbing Asia's second highest volcano Mount Damavand, or experiencing both snow-capped mountains and sand dunes in two days, nearby Shirkoo, in central Iran.

Yet, the most authentic and moving walking adventures in Iran is without a doubt sharing the lives of nomads. For centuries, Iranian tribes have walked between their summer pastures and winter quarters in the mountainous areas, taking with them all their belongings.

Accompanying nomads during their migration, even for a day or two, may be a lifetime experience. It will undoubtedly produce a rare insight into the culture of these ethnic groups.

No matter you visit a Shahsavan or a Qashqai tribe, the point is that in the twenty first century, you will leave behind you all technologies and modern life, to feel a nomadic life and their herds and a taste of the most authentic Iran.

Experts trying to recover relics from Iron Age tombs before being submerged in dam waters

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – A team of **d e s k** archaeologists and cultural heritage experts have so far discovered 25 tombs at an Iron Age cemetery in Mersin, north-central Semnan province, trying to retrieve relics before the ancient cemetery sinks into the waters of a dam nearby.

“The number of ancient graves discovered at the site of the construction of Fenesk dam and the Mersin Cemetery has reached 25,” CHTN quoted senior archaeologist Mehrdad Malekzadeh as saying on Monday.

“Ten graves have been discovered recently and 15 ones during the previous season(s) of excavation,” said Malekzadeh who leads the project.

Noting that this season of excavation will be continuing till the end of the Iranian calendar month Mehr (October 21), he said “Construction operation of the dam is still in the early stage so that we must continue the excavation during the next year as well.”

The cemetery bears corps and relics from Medes, a branch of Indo-European people, who entered northeastern Iran probably as early as the 17th century BC and settled in the plateau land that came to be known as Media. And it was also used during the Achaemenid era (c. 550-330 BC), according to Malekzadeh who will lead the salvage operation.



Photo depicts historical objects unearthed from an Iron Age cemetery in Mersin in Iran's Semnan province.

A number of potteries and personal ornaments have so far been discovered from the cemetery which bears over 2,000 tomb chambers, the archaeologist said, according to the provincial tourism and cultural heritage department.

The cemetery at Mersin is located along

the southern slopes of the Alborz mountain range, east of the village of Talajim, near the Sefidrud River. The site was discovered during a rescue archaeological survey in the Fenisk Dam basin area. Based on surface materials, the cemetery was dated to the late Iron Age III and early Iron Age IV (c. 600–400 BC).

To corroborate this dating, a radiocarbon date was obtained from human collagen from several graves.

As the Iron Age culture in Semnan province has not been well recognized, in August 2014 the Iranian Centre for Archaeological Research organized regular excavations at the site under the direction of Malekzadeh. Three trenches were excavated, covering a total of 235 square meters. Within trench 3 (10×5m) fifteen human graves were found, distributed in a regular pattern. Some burials were disturbed, but common features were easy to recognize, including the rectangular shape of the grave and the presence of a single body buried in each grave, being interred in an extended position on the back. Most graves had large stones delimiting the burial place and all contained grave goods except grave 4 that was, however, disturbed.

The graves can be divided into two general categories, being either covered by large flat slabs and wood (like graves 5 and 10) or covered only by soil. There is no uniform orientation of the body within the burial. Grave goods were variable and there were, among others, pottery vessels of different types, such as single-handled pitchers, bridge spout bowls, pots with spouts and handles, small jars, pedestal bowls, and twin joined small jars.

Iran's tourism achieves growth despite sanctions: minister

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – Iran's tourism sector achieved **d e s k** a growth [of almost ten percent year on year] in the previous Iranian calendar year 1398 (March 2019-March 2020) despite the adverse effects of the U.S. sanctions, Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan said on Saturday.

“I am glad to inform you that the tourism sector of the country tried to minimize effects of the sanctions. Despite the fact that we faced the coronavirus crisis in the last two months of the past year, [arrivals of] some 8,800,000 tourists were registered...,” he said in an interview with the Mehr news agency.

“Last year, in addition to the sanctions, many other events happened in the country, including floods at the beginning of the year, the martyrdom of Lt. Gen. Soleimani and the tragic accident of the Ukrainian plane, each of which could have dealt a fatal blow to the tourism industry. But fortunately, as statistics show, we had a growth in this sector last year despite all the events.”

Mounesan also attached great importance to the country's initiative of diversifying tourism services, saying: “Therefore, tourism is one of the important economic sectors. One of the important things we did in this area was to diversify tourism services. Previously, most of our foreign tourists



Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan (L) talks to a correspondent during his visit to the Mehr news agency on October 3, 2020.

were interested in cultural and historical fields. Now, due to the efforts made, the health tourism, ecotourism, and nature tourism sectors have greatly improved. Recently, sectors such as agricultural tourism and mining tourism have been added to this area.”

Lisbon seminar, exhibit to mark 500 years of Iran-Portugal ties

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – A two-day **d e s k** seminar and exhibition of historical documents will start on October 8th in Lisbon to mark 500 years of Iran-Portugal (diplomatic) ties and relations.

“Liga e Amizade ...” (which literary translates to “Unity and Friendship”) has been selected as the motto of the event jointly organized by the Iranian Embassy in Lisbon, the Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS) - a Tehran-based foreign policy think tank affiliated to Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Portugal's National Archive of Torre do Tombo (Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo), and the Diplomatic Institute of Portugal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Iranian mission in Lisbon announced on October 2.

Tehran's ambassador to Lisbon Morteza Damanpak Jami has said that his “main objective” is to develop the “already friendly” relations between the two countries.

There have been, however, plenty of ups and downs in the common history of the two nations; one of the highlights, which also well documented, is the Persian–Portuguese conflict took place from



1507 to 1622: involved the Portuguese Empire and the Kingdom of Ormus, its armed vessels, on one side, and the Safavid Empire of Persia on the other.

Iran annually celebrates the Persian Gulf National Day, which marks the anniversary of the expulsion of colonial and foreign forces from the strategic water body in 1622, on the 10th day of Ordibehesht, the second month on the Iranian calendar, which fell on April 29 this year.

Darvazeh Quran and good wishes for the passersby

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – Standing **d e s k** at an entrance to Shiraz, Darvazeh Quran, a semi-historical gate, salutes travelers to the southern Iranian ancient city.

The gate is believed to bless people who pass beneath it before they undertake journeys by means of a copy of the Holy Quran being embedded at a small room atop.

The rectangular-based monument was initially built in the 18th century during Zand dynasty. However, it succumbed to several multiple quakes, which stroke the city during Qajar era (1785 to 1925).

Over its history, the monument has underwent several restoration and renewal projects, last of which was carried out recently for renovating its façade and bolstering its foundation.

The gate is adjacent to the upscale Shiraz Hotel and Khajou Kermani Park, a popular hangout for the locals and domestic travelers. Their peaceful atmosphere attracts



A view of Darvazeh Quran, a semi-historical gate that leads to the ancient city of Shiraz, southern Iran.

foreign nationals as well who mainly come for observing locals and their interactions.

Shiraz is home to dozens of magnificent buildings, historical sites and scenic landscapes. It was literally the capital of Persia during the Zand dynasty from 1751 to 1794.

■ Under tourists' eyes

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

■ 'Friendly locals, good view of Shiraz at night'

Qur'an Gate is a structure built on the fringe of Shiraz city, said to bless the people who passed beneath it. On the side of the gate is a park where you could have a bird's eye view of the glittering city at night. (Wei T. from Singapore)

■ 'Not worthy a detour'

If you are in the neighborhood and have a lot of spare time make a quick stop, otherwise scratch it from your list to see other sites. (Wim Antwerp from Brasschaat, Belgium)

■ 'Great place to visit'

We enjoyed visiting this site and were able to take many photos both of the gate, the large Iranian flag, and the surround-

ing hills. A local guide told us that a large copy of the Quran was once kept on top, and people would walk under the gate as a “blessing”.

The Quran is now kept in a nearby museum. We also walked to the top of 1 of the surrounding hills for amazing photos looking out over the city. (Randall K. from Canberra, Australia)

■ 'Wonderful in the early evening'

This was a lovely cool spot to visit in the early evening to watch the sunset and see the view of the city of Shiraz.

The gardens and waterfall were picturesque and peaceful and it was a great place for people watching. (Jennifer R. from Sydney, Australia)

■ Nice place to stroll

Nice place to stroll, you can see lots of Iranian come here with the family, picnic around the Quran gate. Should go in the evening. (Chee K. from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)

COVID-19 at record high, Tehran in 'extremely severe' condition

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Iran registered unprecedented 3,902 new cases of coronavirus and 235 deaths on Monday as the capital city Tehran is experiencing 'extremely severe' condition.

The total number of infections rose to 475,674, Health Ministry spokesperson Sima-Sadat Lari said.

She added that 392,293 patients have so far recovered, but 4,167 remain in critical conditions of the disease.

During the past 24 hours, 235 patients have lost their lives, bringing the total number of deaths to 27,192, she added.

Lari noted that so far 4,151,445 COVID-19 tests have been conducted across the country.

She said the high-risk "red" zones include provinces of Tehran, Isfahan, Qom, East Azarbaijan, South Khorasan, Semnan, Qazvin, Lorestan, Ardebil, 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. The provinces of Kordestan, Hormoz-



gan, Fars, and Golestan are also on alert.

■ Tehran in extremely severe condition

The situation in Tehran is extremely severe, Masoud Mardani, member of the National Headquarters for Coronavirus

Control, has said, adding, "If the upcoming holiday trips start, we will probably have to set up field hospitals."

The transmission of the disease in Tehran is beyond acute and worrisome, and the process of dealing with the virus

is very bad, he lamented.

The number of hospitalized patients in the capital has increased dramatically, and hospitals are overcrowded with no room for new patients - ICU beds are also overcrowded, and the number of deaths is rising, he said.

■ Face masks mandatory outdoor

Next week, the use of face masks will be mandatory in Tehran province and the implementation of this law will be closely monitored, Anoushirvan Mohseni Bandpey, Tehran governor general stated.

Accordingly, restrictions were imposed on educational classes, recreational places, sports halls, gardens, museums, and gatherings that increase the chain of transmission, as well as Friday prayers, he noted.

"We offered telecommuting as well as shifts in Tehran, which has been submitted to the Ministry of Interior, which is awaiting approval," he explained.

The subway system carries more than one million passengers daily, and the municipality of Tehran must monitor social distancing and the use of masks in the subway stations, he highlighted.

Mother of Iranian astronomy: in commemoration of Alenoush Terian

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The 100th birth anniversary of the late professor Alenoush Terian, the mother of Iranian astronomy, will be celebrated on October 29.

Concurrent with World Science Day for Peace and Development, the ceremony will take place in Tehran.

Setting up the first solar physics observatory, launching the first solar telescope, Offering solar physics and astrophysics courses for the first time in the country, and dedicating her house to students are some of the most notable contributions of Terian to the growth of astronomy in Iran.

According to the Iranian Physics Association, the book "New Iranian Theater and the Terian Family" will be unveiled at the ceremony.

Born in a Christian family in 1920 in Tehran, Terian graduated from the University of Tehran in 1947. She began her career in the physics laboratories at the same university and was elected chief of laboratory operations



Alenoush Terian attends a ceremony at the Ararat Club in Tehran on November 9, 2010 to celebrate her 90th birthday. She died on March 6, 2011.

in the same year.

She graduated in 1956 in atmospheric physics from Sorbonne University. She returned to Iran where she became an assistant professor in thermodynamics physics at the University of Tehran.

She studied at the solar physics observatory for 4 months through a scholarship from the German government and finally became the first female professor of physics in Iran in 1964.

In 1966, she became a member of the geophysics committee of the University Tehran. In 1969, she was finally elected as the chief of the solar physics studies at the university. She began working in the solar observatory of which she was one of the founders. Terian retired in 1979.

In 2003, a film was made about her life entitled "Towards the Sun", in which the life of this first lady professor of stellar physics at the University of Tehran is portrayed.

She died on March 6, 2011, and her body was then laid to rest at the cemetery for Iranian Christians in Tehran.

Amazon near tipping point of switching from rainforest to savannah – study

Much of the Amazon could be on the verge of losing its distinct nature and switching from a closed canopy rainforest to an open savannah with far fewer trees as a result of the climate crisis, researchers have warned.

Rainforests are highly sensitive to changes in rainfall and moisture levels, and fires and prolonged droughts can result in areas losing trees and shifting to a savannah-like mix of woodland and grassland. In the Amazon, such changes were known to be possible but thought to be many decades away.

New research shows that this tipping point could be much closer than previously thought. As much as 40% of the existing Amazon rainforest is now at a point where it could exist as a savannah instead of as rainforest, according to a study published in the journal Nature Communications.

Any shift from rainforest to savannah would still take decades to take full effect, but once under way the process is hard to reverse. Rainforests support a vastly greater range of species than savannah and play a much greater role in absorbing

carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Parts of the Amazon are receiving much less rain than they used to because of the changing climate. Rainfall in about 40% of the forest is now at a level where the rainforest could be expected to exist as savannah instead, according to the study, led by the Stockholm Resilience Centre, based on computer models and data analysis.

Last year, Brazil's president, Jair Bolsonaro, was warned that the continued destruction of the Amazon by fire and loggers would bring the region closer to a tipping point where rainforest could turn to savannah. This year's fires in the Amazon are the worst in a decade, with a 60% increase in fire hotspots compared with last year.

Arie Staal, lead author of the study, said the ecology of rainforests meant that although they effectively produce their own self-sustaining rainfall in the right climate, they are also prone to drying out in the wrong conditions.

"As forests grow and spread across a region, this affects rainfall," he explained. "Forests create their own rain because



leaves give off water vapour and this falls as rain further downwind. Rainfall means fewer fires leading to even more forests."

But if large areas of rainforest are lost, rainfall levels in the region decline accordingly. This reduced level of "atmospheric moisture recycling" was simulated in the computer models used in the study, the Guardian reported.

"Drier conditions make it harder for the forest to recover and increase the flammability of the ecosystem," Staal told the Guardian. Once rainforest has crossed the threshold and converted to an open savannah-type mix of wood and grassland, it is unlikely to revert naturally

to its former state.

"It is harder to return from the 'trap' caused by the feedback mechanism in which the open, grassy ecosystem is more flammable, and the fires, in turn, keep the ecosystem open," he said.

The team of researchers ran computer simulations of where forests might be expected to exist across the earth's tropical regions, given certain climatic conditions, and looked at the minimum and maximum areas of likely forest cover.

They also looked at what was likely to happen if greenhouse gas emissions kept rising, and found that the ability of forests to grow back once trees were lost would be much reduced.

Ingo Fetzer of the Stockholm Resilience Centre, co-author of the paper, said: "We understand now that rainforests on all continents are very sensitive to global change and can rapidly lose their ability to adapt. Once gone, their recovery will take many decades to return to their original state. And given that rainforests host the majority of all global species, all this will be forever lost."

ENGLISH IN USE

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Bill on children's rights to be brought before Majlis: MP

After months of discussions the bill on rights of children will be brought before Majlis [Iranian parliament], MP Mohammad Reza Badamchi has said.

"Finally after days of putting in considerable effort in legislative group of Majlis we have managed to bring the bill on children's right before the parliament," Badamchi wrote in Persian on his twitter account on Thursday.

"We keep on following up on the subject to stop violation against children's rights and child abuse, most importantly sexual abuse," the MP added.

لایحه حقوق کودک در مجلس از کمیسیون قضایی به صحن آمد

محمدرضا بادامچی نماینده مردم تهران، ری و شمیرانات در مجلس شورای اسلامی گفت: پس از ماه ها تلاش، در روزهای گذشته، لایحه حمایت از حقوق کودکان از کمیسیون قضایی به صحن آمد. به گزارش خبرآنلاین، بادامچی روز پنجشنبه در صفحه شخصی توئیتر خود در خصوص لایحه حمایت از حقوق کودکان نوشت: بالاخره با پیگیری‌ها و تلاش‌های بسیار، در روزهای گذشته، لایحه حمایت از حقوق کودکان، از کمیسیون قضایی به صحن آمد. پیگیری‌ها را ادامه می‌دهیم تا این لایحه، هر چه زودتر در دستور کار جلسه علنی قرار گیرد. امیدوارم با تصویب آن، از تضییع حقوق کودکان و آزار آنان و مهم تر از همه آزار جنسی کم شود.

Iran holds 3% share of world's top scientific articles

➔ Mehdi Kashmiri, director for technology and planning at the science ministry, said in July that about 450 knowledge-based companies were active in the country for manufacturing protective equipment and treatment products to fight the coronavirus.

Production of more than one million face masks per day, production of more than 1.5 liters of disinfectants per day, diagnostic kits, non-contact thermometers, protective clothing, ventilator are among the produces manufactured by these companies, he added.

Iranian-made innovative products in the field of diagnosis, screening, and fighting coronavirus were also unveiled to combat the disease, namely, ozone generator, nanotechnology face shields, disinfection gate, and molecular COVID-19 diagnostic kits.

■ Iranian scientific journals among highly cited worldwide

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

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

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

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

Greenland on course to lose more ice this century than in any other in past 12,000 years

The decline of Greenland's vast ice sheet is accelerating so quickly it is likely to dwarf the losses of any other century over the past 12,000 years, according to a study.

The melting of the ice will have grave consequences for sea level rise and ocean salination, which affects critical ocean currents, unless human societies "sharply curb emissions of greenhouse gases," scientists warned.

The Greenland ice sheet alone holds enough water to raise the planet's sea level by 7.4 metres, according to Nasa, and the impacts of climate breakdown are being acutely felt in the Arctic, where temperatures are rising faster than anywhere else in the world.

The team of US scientists used detailed new reconstructions of ancient climate patterns to drive computer models showing how the ice behaves in various circumstances, and compared it with real-world measurements of the sheet's contemporary and ancient size.

The new model indicates the loss of ice from Greenland by the end of this century is likely to contribute to sea level rises of between 2cm and 10cm, the Independent reported.

The findings highlight "just how extreme and unusual projected losses for the 21st century could be", the researchers said.

"Basically, we've altered our planet so much that the rates of ice sheet melt this century are on pace to be greater than anything we've seen under natural variability of the ice sheet over the past 12,000 years," said Jason Briner, professor of geology in the University at Buffalo College of Arts and Sciences, who led the study.

"We'll blow that out of the water if we don't make severe reductions to greenhouse gas emissions," he added.

The research team compared different climate scenarios which assume varying levels of greenhouse gas emissions, called representative concentration pathways (RCPs), to model what the human impact could be on the ice sheet.

These include RCP 2.6, which assumes radiative forcing due to greenhouse gases will peak in the mid-21st Century and then decline as emissions sharply drop off, and the "worst case scenario" RCP 8.5, which assumes rapid and unrestricted economic growth along with the rampant burning of fossil fuels.

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 30)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

Writing

نگارش ← کتاب کار

● Exercise 1. Answer in complete sentences:

- اسم فامیل یانگ جو چیست؟
- او اهل کدام کشور است؟
- پدر او کجا زندگی می‌کند؟
- یانگ جو چند خواهر دارد؟
- او در کجا درس می‌خواند؟
- برادر او در کدام شهر است؟

- سلام خانم، حال شما خوب است؟ سلام استاد، متشکرم.
- شما اهل کدام کشور هستید؟ من اهل کره هستم.
- اهل کدام شهر؟ شهر پوسان.
- خانواده‌ی شما اینجا زندگی می‌کنند؟ برادر و خواهر دارید؟
- نه، آنها اینجا نیستند؛ در پوسان زندگی می‌کنند. فقط یک برادر دارم. او دانشجو نیست؛ درس نمی‌خواند.
- این کلاس چند نفر دانشجو دارد؟ چند نفر حاضر هستند؟
- این کلاس هشت نفر دانشجو دارد. هفت نفر حاضر هستند.
- شما زیاد درس می‌خوانید؟ نه، زیاد نمی‌خوانم.
- درس شما خیلی خوب است. متشکرم. بفرماید.

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■ Managing Director: Mohammad Shojaeian
■ Editor-in-Chief: Ali A.Jenabzadeh

» Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895
editor@tehrantimes.com
» Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
» Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051430
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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Avoid doing things that would make you apologize;
since a believer won't commit a wrong action that would
make him/her sorry.

Imam Hussein (AS)

Coronavirus should not shut down cinematic events: DEFC director

A R T **TEHRAN** — The Documentary and Experimental Film Center (DEFC) director Mohammad Hamidi-Moqaddam has said that film events should not be shut down due to the coronavirus.

"We cannot close the annual and biannual festivals, which have a long history, because of coronavirus since it is not clear how long the world will be dealing with the disease and its aftermath, therefore we need to find new ways to deal with it and help cinema not to be closed," he stated.



DEFC director Mohammad Hamidi-Moqaddam in an undated photo.

The DEFC is the main organizer of the Cinema Vérité, Iran's major international festival for documentary films, that is going entirely online during December.

Pointing to the effect of the coronavirus on the quality of the festivals, he said, "We cannot expect too much from the festivals in this situation because we are experiencing such a condition for the first time. But as long as there is a will to hold the festival and keep it alive, it should be respected and honored."

"Of course, the cineastes have the power to choose but we should know that festivals like the Resistance Film Festival and the Cinema Vérité require good collaboration between the cineastes and the organizers," he remarked.

He added that there is always the fear of piracy in the online film screenings and everybody knows that this cannot be fully controlled.

"We all know that documentary cinema is limited compared to fiction, and it might not face serious threats. One can even say copying can help promote the documentary cinema as well," he remarked.

"Cinema is promoted when it leans on festivals and the same is true about the documentary cinema. Festivals are a place where young talent is discovered and introduced, and I must say that the Resistance Film Festival is a good venue to introduce young talent, while it also helps broadcast the films on TV channels."

He added that there are good relations between the Cinema Vérité and the Resistance festivals, and hoped that the good relations can lead to the elevation of the Iranian cinema.

The 14th edition of the Cinema Vérité will be organized entirely online during December due to a spike in coronavirus cases in the country over the past month.

A plan to dedicate a special section to screening documentaries on the pandemic and COVID-19 has also been advanced.

The organizers plan to design platforms to guarantee the festival entries against piracy.

There are also plans to pay tribute to celebrated filmmaker Khosro Sinai who died of coronavirus on August 1.

"Be Yourself" by Iranian vocalist Ahmadreza Nuri opens Urban Economy Forum 2020

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — Iranian vocalist Ahmadreza Nuri performed "Be Yourself" during the opening ceremony of the 2nd Urban Economy Forum (UEF) in Canada on October 5.

Nuri is also the composer of the song featuring verses of a poem by Hafez, a Persian poet writing in the 14th century.

Nuri is also an art scholar who curated "Dreams and Fantasies", an exhibition that showcased works by the Petgar artistic family at Salam Gallery in Tehran during May and June 2018.

The two-day Urban Economy Forum was organized virtually from Toronto to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of United Nations and World Habitat Day.

The Urban Economy Forum brought together expertise from a number of leading partners to shed light on key principles and strategies for the most innovative, sustainable urban development solutions.

A poster for Iranian vocalist Ahmadreza Nuri's performance of "Be Yourself" during the Urban Economy Forum 2020.

"Walnut Tree", "Sun Children" among names in frame for Iran's submission to Oscars

By Seyyed Mostafa Mousavi Sabet

TEHRAN — War drama "Walnut Tree" and the child labor movie "Sun Children" along with "Yalda: A Night for Forgiveness" and "Careless Crime" are among the movies competing to represent Iran during the 93rd Academy Awards in the best foreign-language film category.

Starring world-renowned actor Payman Maadi, "Walnut Tree" was made based on the true story of the profound tragedy of Iraq's chemical attack on the Iranian town of Sardasht in 1987.

It tells the story of Qader Mulanpur, a man who was away when his family was affected by the chemical attack in a village near Sardasht. His effort to save his pregnant wife and their three children are in vain and they die one by one from the fatal wounds sustained as a result of the chemical attack.

Maadi, the star of the Oscar-winning movie "A Separation", portrays Qader Mulanpur in the film, which brought the Crystal Simorgh for best actor at the 38th edition of the Fajr Film Festival in Tehran.

The festival also picked Mohammad-Hossein Mahdavian as best director for the movie.

Oscar-nominated director Majid Majidi's "Sun Children" had its world premiere during the 77th Venice Film Festival in September.

The film's star, Ruhollah Zamani, was named the best young actor of the Italian festival by winning the Marcello Mastroianni Award.



Payman Maadi (2nd L) and several other cast members in a scene from "Walnut Tree".

Celluloid Dreams, a major French film production and distribution company, is handling international sales for the film, which won the Crystal Simorghs for best film and best screenplay at the Fajr festival.

The film tells the story of 12-year-old Ali and his three friends. Together, they work hard to survive and support their families, doing small jobs in a garage and committing petty crimes to make fast money. Everything changes, however, when Ali is entrusted to find a hidden treasure underground but must

first enroll at the Sun (Khorshid) School, a charitable institution that tries to educate street kids and child laborers.

Directed by Masud Bakhshi, "Yalda: A Night for Forgiveness" is co-production between Iran and Norway. It is about Maryam, a young woman who has been sentenced to death for murdering her husband, Nasser. Iranian law allows the victim's family to forgive her and spare her life, so Maryam's fate will be decided by Nasser's daughter, Mona, on the country's most popular televised reality

show. In front of millions of viewers during Yalda, the winter solstice celebration, Maryam and Mona discover that forgiveness can be difficult as they relive the past.

"Careless Crime" directed by Shahram Mokri was screened in the Orizzonti section of the 77th Venice Film Festival, which is dedicated to films that represent the latest aesthetic and expressive trends in international cinema.

The movie goes back to forty years ago, during the uprising to overthrow the Shah's regime in Iran, when protestors set fire to movie theaters as a way of showing opposition to Western culture. Many cinemas were burned down. In one tragic case, a theater was set on fire with four hundred people inside, most of whom were burned alive. Forty years have passed and, in contemporary Iran, four individuals also decide to burn down a cinema. Their intended target is a theater showing a film about an unearthed, unexploded missile.

A committee assigned by the Farabi Cinema Foundation has selected Iran's submission to the Academy Awards for Best Foreign-Language Film since 1992.

Majid Majidi's "Children of Heaven" received a nomination in the category in 1996 and Asghar Farhadi's "A Separation" and "The Salesman" won Iran two Oscars in 2012 and 2017.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences announced in June that the 93rd Academy Awards telecast has been postponed by two months to April 25, 2021.

Iran's Shiraz applies for World Book Capital 2022



Mausoleum of Hafez in Shiraz.

→1 The Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur was named World Book Capital for the year 2020, and the Georgian capital Tbilisi was confirmed as World Book Capital 2021.

Eskandarpur also said that the people of Shiraz have a long history in the culture of peace and friendship rooted in their cultural thinking.

These days in which the world is dealing with war and turmoil, the peaceful position and attitudes of the people of Shiraz enjoy a higher status.

He also noted that a bill with 26 plans promoting books and book reading has been prepared for establishing new potentials for Shiraz.

196 countries are competing for the 2022 title. Shiraz will also remain Iran's Book Capital for 2021. To promote reading, the Ministry of Culture and Islamic

Guidance in collaboration with several cultural organizations, including the Iranian National Commission for UNESCO, selects an Iranian city as book capital every year.

Iran's 2020 Book Capital is Shiraz, the hometown of Hafez and Sadi that also houses the tombs of the great Persian classical poets.

In addition, ten villages across the country are selected as Book Loving Villages of the Year.

Iran's 2020 Book Loving Villages are Zavarom in North Khorasan Province, Vadeqan in Isfahan Province, Seyyedabad in West Azarbaijan, Bonegazi in Bushehr Province, Alavieh in Fars Province, Kheirabad in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, Khorshid in Mazandaran Province, Isin in Hormozgan Province, Seyyedshahab in Hamedan Province and Gerdkuh in Yazd Province.

Films from Iran line up for Barcelona Asian Film Festival

A R T **TEHRAN** — Twelve movies from Iranian filmmakers will be competing in the various sections of the Asian Film Festival Barcelona.

"African Violet" by Mona Zandi-Haqiqi, "My Second Year in College" by Rasul Sadrameli and "Repression" by Reza Guran have been selected to be screened in the Official Section of the festival, which will take place in the Spanish city from October 28 to November 8.

In the Discoveries Section, "Castle of Dreams" by Reza Mirkarimi, "Diapason" by Hamed Tehrani and "That Night's Train" by Hamidreza Qotbi will go on screen.



"Dance with Me" by Soroush Sehat's drama will be screened in the Special Section of the Asian Film Festival Barcelona.

"Castle of Dreams" has been screened at numerous international events across

the world and won several honors. The movie won Mirkarimi the award for best director at the 56th edition of the Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival while its star, Hamed Behdad, was picked as best actor at the Turkish event in November 2019.

Director Soroush Sehat's drama "Dance with Me" will be screened in the Special Section. The movie is about a group of friends who gather to celebrate Jahangir's birthday, where he announces he is terminally ill. What begins as a celebration soon turns into a confrontation between the past and the present. At death's door, Jahangir begins the journey towards reconciliation and forgiveness.

The Official Panorama Section will feature "Gholamreza Takhti" by Bahram Tavakkoli, "Labyrinth" by Amir-Hossein Torabi and "We Are All Together" by Kamal Tabrizi.

"Gholamreza Takhti" is the highlight of this section. In 1939, Gholamreza Takhti was living a life of poverty. In order to survive, he decided to devote himself to professional wrestling and soon after that he became an Olympic champion and the pride of the Iranians. However, his life took a sudden turn and made him hope for his own death.

"Sly" by Kamal Tabrizi and "Tsunami" by Milad Sadrameli will compete in the NETPAC Section.

Isfahan festival unveils lineup for short competition

A R T **TEHRAN** — A lineup of 32 short films and animations will be competing in the Iranian competition section of the 33rd edition of the International Film Festival for Children and Youth, the organizers announced on Monday.

The lineup includes 18 animations and 14 short films. The 33rd edition of the festival will be held online from October 18 to 23 this year due to a spike in coronavirus cases in the country.

The animations are "Room 21" by Peyman Dehqani, "Rain of Tears" by Esmail Abbasi, "Yes" by Mahin Javaherian, "Echo" by Barzan Rostami and "Portrait" by Atila Ashuri. "Sun of Sky, Sun of Tile" by Ziba Arjang, "Zak and Zik" by Esmaeil Jabbari, "My Voice, Your Voice" by Aida Hafezi and "The Eleven Step" by Maryam Kashkulinia are also included in the animations.

The short films include "Cold Water" by Hadi Kiani, "Antivirus" by Majidreza Dehqani, "I Compensate" by Jamal Ahmadi "Rainbow" by Mohammad Khalili and "Chaufer" by Reza Nejati.

"City of Honey" by Mohammad-Moin Ruholamini, "Quarantine" by Kaveh Moinfar, "Truck" by Fatemeh Fereidun



A poster for the 33rd edition of the International Film Festival for Children and Youth.

and "Buffalo" by Ebrahim Ashrafpur are also included.

This edition of the festival will be held in two sections, national and international, and the Farabi Cinema Foundation, Cinema Organization of Iran and the Isfahan Municipality are the main organizers of the event.

According to the director of the festival, Alireza Tabesh, the

variety of national and international films is extremely high.

"The only point is about several feature films in the national and international sections, which we guess might be pirated, but for sure the screenings will be coordinated under the supervision of the producers and the filmmakers," he had said.

The organizers have also called on Iranian young adults living outside the country to take part in the fourth edition of the Youth Film Making Olympiad of Iran.

Interested youths aged 12 to 17 can take part in the program, and submit their 5-minute short films to the festival.

The wishes of the youth about the future of the country, city or family, their experiences about famous books and famous films, their experiences of the coronavirus pandemic, and coronavirus as a threat or an opportunity are among the main topics for the short films.

Youth are asked to submit their films to the organizers before October 1.

The Olympiad is part of a program arranged every year on the sidelines of the International Film Festival for Children and Youth.

David Grann's "Killers of the Flower Moon" comes into Iranian bookstores

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — "Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI" by American writer David Grann has been published in Persian by Tadaei Publications.

The book has been translated into Persian by Mohammad Alavi.

"In the 1920s, the richest people per capita in the world were members of the Osage Nation in Oklahoma," the book says.

After oil was discovered beneath their land, the Osage rode in chauffeured automobiles, built mansions and sent their children to study in Europe.

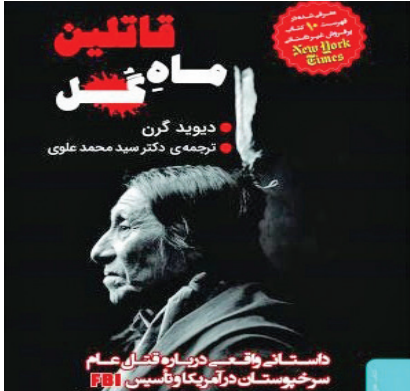
Then, one by one, the Osage began to be killed off. The family of an Osage woman, Mollie Burkhart, became a prime target. One of her relatives was shot. Another was poisoned. And it was just the beginning, as

more and more Osage were dying under mysterious circumstances, and many of those who dared to investigate the killings were themselves murdered.

As the death toll rose, the newly created FBI took up the case, and the young director, J. Edgar Hoover, turned to a former Texas Ranger named Tom White to try to unravel the mystery. White put together an undercover team, including a Native American agent who infiltrated the region, and together with the Osage began to expose one of the most chilling conspiracies in American history.

David Grann is a New York Times bestselling author and an award-winning staff writer at the New Yorker magazine.

"Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI" documented



Front cover of the Persian translation of American writer David Grann's "Killers of the Flower Moon".

one of the most sinister crimes and racial injustices in American history.

Described by Dave Eggers in the New York Times Book Review as a "riveting" work that will "sear your soul," "Killers of the Flower Moon" was a finalist for the National Book Award and a winner of the Edgar Allan Poe Award for best true crime book, a Spur Award for best work of historical nonfiction, and an Indies Choice Award for best adult nonfiction book of the year.

A New York Times bestseller, "Killers of the Flower Moon" was named one of the best books of the year by the Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, Time, Entertainment Weekly and other publications. Amazon named "Killers of the Flower Moon" the single best book of the year.

Biden and Trump are two sides of the same coin

TEHRAN – While Donald Trump and Joe Biden bitterly call into question each other's Iran policy, a U.S. expert tells the Tehran Times that, in essence, there are no differences between the two candidates' policies toward Iran.

President Trump, who is working his butt off to defeat his Democrat rival Biden, has said many times that if he loses the November presidential election, countries such as Iran and China would "own America."

"If Iran needed aid on this [the coronavirus pandemic], I would be willing to do something, if they wanted it, if they asked for it, I would be certainly [willing to help]. They were hit very hard. Obviously, those numbers weren't correct numbers that they reported, but if they needed help, if they needed aid, if they needed ventilators - we have thousands of ventilators currently on hand and ventilators under construction- we would be certainly willing to help," Trump said in a press briefing at the White House in April 2020.

He added, "What they should do is be smart and make a deal. It's only because of, you know, you look at what happened, it's John Kerry I guess just doesn't want them to make a deal and they probably figuring they can wait and maybe it will be Biden and they'll own America if Biden gets [elected] and they know with me doesn't work that way, it doesn't work that way. If Joe Biden got in, they'd own America between them China, Japan, Mexico, Canada. They'd own America. You wouldn't have a country left if he got in."

Trump reiterated these remarks on many occasions, further creating the perception that Iran, along with countries such as China, prefers a Biden victory over him. This is all while Iran has made it crystal clear many times that it does not attach importance to the victory of a certain candidate in the U.S. election. In fact, Iranian officials have stated that it does not matter for them who will win the November election.

However, some analysts and commentators have claimed that Iran prefers the election of Biden, the former U.S. vice president, because he would reenter the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers if he is elected. These analysts, who are mainly Trump supporters, argue that a Biden election means that Trump's maximum pressure campaign against Iran would come to an end and that Iran would be welcoming Trump's defeat because Biden has already said that he would rejoin the Iran nuclear deal if he moved into the White House.

The U.S. intelligence community also strengthened the narrative of Iran preferring a Biden victory. In a statement on August 7,



William Evanina, the chief of the National Counter-Intelligence and Security Center, alleged that Iran seeks to undermine President Trump.

"We assess that Iran seeks to undermine U.S. democratic institutions, President Trump, and to divide the country in advance of the 2020 elections. Iran's efforts along these lines probably will focus on on-line influence, such as spreading disinformation on social media and recirculating anti-U.S. content," Evanina said. "Tehran's motivation to conduct such activities is, in part, driven by a perception that President Trump's reelection would result in a continuation of U.S. pressure on Iran in an effort to foment regime change."

It seems that these assessments are behind Trump's repetitive remarks claiming that Iran and China want him to lose the election to Biden. He also said Iran is waiting him out. This is while some Iranian officials have said the Democrats are not better than the Republicans.

"Wasn't [President Barack] Obama a Democrat? What Obama did wasn't better than Trump. The only [difference] is that he [President Obama] worked quietly while Trump works vociferously. These sanctions have been imposed by the Democrats especially under Obama," Ali Akbar Velayati, a senior advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution on international affairs, told the Tasnim news agency on September 19.

Other Iranian officials have echoed similar remarks. While some analysts make claims about Iran's favorite candidates in the upcoming U.S. presidential election, others say there is no difference between the two candidates. The two candidates seek to topple the

political system in Iran, according to Fowad Izadi, a professor of American studies at the University of Tehran.

"There is no difference between Donald Trump and his Democrat rival Joe Biden because both of them seek to topple the government of Iran. They pursue a similar goal, which is to overthrow the Iranian government, but their tactics to achieve this goal are different," Izadi told the Tehran Times.

The professor said regardless of who will win the election, the U.S. could change tack after the November election.

He added, "But Biden could change the U.S. 'maximum pressure' policy against Iran if he wins the election because this policy has failed. Of course, Trump also could change this policy due to its failure," Izadi predicted.

However, the professor alluded to a possibility that is rarely being discussed in the media. He said the reelection of Trump would hasten the decline of the U.S., which will benefit Iran.

The regime change policy is nothing new in the U.S. foreign policy. The U.S. has pursued this policy against many countries in the Western Asia region and beyond. It launched military campaigns to overthrow the regimes of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya. The September 11, 2001 attacks on civilian and military targets in the U.S. have only speeded up the White House efforts in this regard. In addition to overt military campaigns, the U.S. has also launched covert operations to topple political systems in Iran, Venezuela, and Syria, most notably the government of Mohammad Mosaddeq, the first democratically-elected prime minister of Iran whom the CIA and MI6 staged a coup against. The

prime minister was toppled in 1953 in a CIA- and MI6-orchestrated coup.

The U.S. helped Mohammad Reza Shah consolidate his power by removing the government of Mosaddegh. In the years after the 1953 coup, the U.S. threw its weight behind the Shah. And when the Iranian people poured into the streets in 1979 to topple the corrupt regime of the shah, the U.S. supported the shah and encouraged him to suppress the people, but the Islamic Revolution led by Imam Khomeini ultimately succeeded in overthrowing the Shah regime. During and after the revolution, the U.S. sought to topple the newly established Islamic Republic. The policy of regime change in Iran once again gained steam in Washington's foreign policy circles after it became clear that the U.S. has forever lost its grip on Iran. It supported Saddam Hussein, the former dictator of Iraq, in his eight-year war on Iran. The U.S. also imposed sanctions on Iran, which still remain in place. Trump has increased the sanctions pressure on Iran to an unprecedented level, a move widely seen as a way to overthrow the government of Iran through fomenting social unrest across the country.

Recently, President Hassan Rouhani said the Trump administration seeks regime change in Iran.

Speaking in a cabinet meeting in September, Rouhani said, "When Saddam [Hussein] attacked Iran, he told reporters that, within few days, he will be making an interview with them in Ahwaz. In 2018, the Americans, while imposing an economic war [on Iran], also said they would be entering Tehran in few months and that these guys will not be able to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the victory of the Revolution."

"The U.S. asked the Europeans to give it only a three-month time span. Two European leaders told me that the U.S. told them that 'if you refrain from helping them [Iran], the job will be done in three months given the economic pressures we have put on them,'" he said, according to the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) news agency, adding, "Saddam's goal was to topple the establishment, hurt the country or at least rip an agreement. The Americans wanted the same thing. They wanted to overthrow the establishment, create unrest, or destroy an agreement. But they failed to achieve their goals and their calculations were wrong."

As the U.S. November election nears, some analysts raise the possibility that Biden could change the policy of pursuing regime change in Iran if he wins the election.

But Izadi said there is no difference between Biden and Trump in terms of seeking to overthrow the political establishment in Iran.

Trump v. Biden: The evil of two lessers

By Stephen Lendman

Earlier I discussed the shame of the nation in America, a bipartisan conspiracy against peace, equity, justice and the rule of law. I noted Benjamin Franklin's warning to the nation's founders on the uncertainty of whether the newly created republic would last into "remote futurity." Asked if a republic or monarchy was formed, he responded: "A republic if you can keep it."

A modern-day Diogenes would search in vain for the likes of him, I said in my article, a figure with the wisdom of the ages, an observer in Philadelphia, not a delegate.

The notion espoused long ago and now that "all men (and women) are created equal" is a meaningless figure of speech, belying how things are in a nation governed of, by, and for the privileged few at the expense of most others — how it's been from inception in America.

Inoted that the republic was flawed from birth, that today we'd call the founders a Wall Street crowd. African-Americans were considered property, not people until the 14th Amendment (1868) granted citizenship to everyone "born or naturalized in the United States," including former slaves — everyone granted "equal protection under the laws" in name only. The 15th Amendment granted all citizens of voting age the right to exercise their franchise — with no exception "on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

Women were excluded until the 19th Amendment in 1920. So have been countless numbers of disenfranchised citizens from the nation's inception to now — for invented reasons, not legitimate ones. The right to vote is at the discretion of individuals who run the country — overriding the law of the land.

Throughout U.S. history, there were brief moments of fairness during the progressive movement of late 19th/early 20th century, the New Deal, Fair Deal and Great Society.

Trilateralism countered what dark forces running things called a "crisis of democracy" — meaning too much of it they wanted replaced with dirty business as usual that's been de facto reality for most of the last half century, notably since the neoliberal 90s, especially in the new millennium.

America is more police state than democracy, its inner-city streets battlegrounds, Blacks, other people of color, and the poor of all races, creeds and colors treated like fifth column threats.

The federal income tax was all about having the public pay interest to bankers on America's debt. As long as private interests control the nation's money, debt entrapment will continue — along with booms, busts, inflation, deflation, instability and crises. The 1913 Federal Reserve Act empowering bankers to control the nation's money was the most destructive legislation in U.S. history — an issue I discussed in my book titled: "How Wall Street Fleeces America: Privatized Banking, Government Collusion and Class War."

The road to hell was especially from the Clintons to Bush/Cheney, to Obama, and now Trump seeking a second time around has been paved with pure evil intentions.

I wrote about the denouement of freedom in police state America post-9/11, the mother of all state-sponsored false flags. It was exceeded this year by manufactured pandemic and economic collapse that's been all about transferring unprecedented amounts of wealth from ordinary people to privileged interests, letting corporate favorites gain greater power by eliminating competition, and convincing most Americans to sacrifice their civil liberties by accepting voluntary house arrest, falsely promoting it as a way to protect public health.

Both right wings of the one-party state are responsible for growing tyranny in the nation's fantasy democracy — conditions today more dismal and disturbing than ever before.

Plutocrats, oligarchs, and kleptocrats never had things better. Protracted main street depression conditions affect most others at a time when the remnants of social justice are on the chopping block for elimination altogether no matter which wing of one-party state rule runs things.

For young people, it's the wrong time to be growing up in America. Days earlier, the Wall Street Journal said "MBAs are usually swimming in job offers by now. Not this year." Likely not next year or the one after, perhaps not for years to come. The Journal noted that "(t)raditional recruiters of business school graduates are nowhere to be found this fall." The job market for new grads in the U.S. is more dismal than any time in decades.

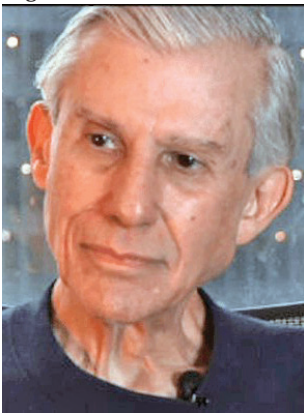
In mid-September, the South China Morning Post asked if Beijing favors Trump or Biden in November. Will one "make a difference" over the other? Is one candidate the "lesser of two evils" or is it "too late to reset relations?" The notion believed by some that a Biden presidency offers a "return to normalcy" after four tumultuous years of Sino-U.S. relations under Trump is unrealistic wishful thinking.

On major domestic and geopolitical issues, both figures are flip sides of each other. They'll continue policies written in stone by dark forces running things, the nation's power elites that assure continuity following all elections.

There may or may not be what geopolitical analyst Pang Zhongying called "a fleeting window of opportunity for both sides to climb down from the cold war-like confrontation, whoever wins the White House." Trump once hailed what he called "tremendous progress in (U.S.) relation(s)" with China — shifting from "my good friend" Xi Jinping to a reinvented "yellow peril." Both wings of the U.S. one-party state consider China public enemy number one.

Whether Trump or Biden wins in November, U.S. policy toward China and all other nations free from its control is highly likely to remain at least largely unchanged. Along with China, it's notably true about U.S. policy toward Russia and Iran. These three sovereign nations are more able to challenge U.S. rage for controlling planet earth, its resources and populations than any others. Hegemons don't change spots when batons are passed from one leader to another. All sovereign independent nations are on Washington's target list for regime change whether Republicans or Dems are in charge.

When presidential and/or congressional elections are held, dirty business as usual continuity is assured every time. My advice to Americans is vote independent to make a statement or stay home.



Stephen Lendman is an author, political analyst and radio host. He was awarded the Mexican Press Club's International Investigative Journalism Award in 2011 in an awards ceremony televised throughout Latin America. His books include "How Wall Street Fleeces America" and "Banker Occupation".

“On major domestic and geopolitical issues, both figures are flip sides of each other.”

American voters only have the illusion of choice: geopolitical analyst

By Amir Mohammad Esmaeili

TEHRAN — Randi Nord, an American geopolitical analyst and content strategist, says elections in the U.S. are "all theatrics" and voters don't have a real choice.

"Our elections themselves are all theatrics. Lobbying groups with massive spending power propel politicians into office to make decisions and write laws on their behalf," Nord tells the Tehran Times.

"Corporations and wealthy groups have the power to control who makes it into office," noted Nord, who is owner and editor of Geopolitics Alert.

She adds, "People in the United States are fed up with the bogus electoral process. Most people who actually vote admittedly don't like the candidates and know it's a sham. Some feel like it's still their duty to vote as countrymen. Others are duped into believing they're preventing a more evil candidate from assuming office."

The following is the text of the interview:

■ Can elections in the U.S. be considered democratic?
A: It's hard to even call what we have in the United States "elections" and they're certainly not democratic. The voting masses have little to say no in the matter nor are elected officials accountable to the needs and will of the people.

The officials "elected" to represent us have all attended elite universities, come from super-wealthy backgrounds, and were groomed to become career politicians since their teenage years. That's why we have so many political dynasties in the United States like The Clintons and The Bushs.

Our elections themselves are all theatrics. Lobbying groups with massive spending power propel politicians into office to make decisions and write laws on their behalf. On one hand, the ruling class certainly does have a democracy -- but not for the people. Corporations and wealthy groups have the power to control who makes it into office. And the politicians in charge have everything the American people need but don't have: \$175,000 a year salary (over three-times more than the median household income), half of the year off with a month-long vacation, top-quality health insurance, and of course the usual perks from lobbying groups.

Many people outside the U.S. don't realize that working Americans are generally very poor. Most Americans don't have even \$400 in savings to cover an emergency car repair. They live paycheck-to-paycheck and carry thousands in credit card debt to fill gaps. Millions of Americans, myself included, do not have health insurance and cannot afford to see a doctor.

People like Joe Biden and Donald Trump could never represent the people because they're from a totally different world. Plus, there's no money available in writing laws to benefit the people.

■ How do money, power, and media affect the presidential election?

A: Corruption in the United States doesn't happen behind closed doors. Plenty of legal channels exist to control our government with finances in broad daylight -- as long as they complete the proper paperwork.

In the United States, we have massive lobbying groups for every topic you can imagine: pharmaceuticals, privatized health insurance, alcohol, technology, coal, etc. These organizations donate unfathomable amounts of money to both political parties. No matter which party is in charge, these super-wealthy elites ensure their interests are covered. This is why, fundamentally, both the Democrat and Republican parties end up writing policies with the exact same goals: pro-corporations, pro-banks, pro-imperialism, and nothing for the people. Voters only have the illusion of choice. The media plays into the theatre to keep up the illusion of choice.

■ What role does AIPAC play in U.S. elections?
A: As I mentioned, lobbying organizations play a heavy role in propelling politicians into office. One such organization is AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) who spent over \$22 million during the 2018 elections.

However, it's worth mentioning that AIPAC isn't the one donating to specific candidates. Instead, its individual members donate directly to campaigns and AIPAC partners with or forms other lobbying groups, such as J-Street, who do donate directly to politicians. AIPAC also sponsors politicians in other ways that don't involve direct campaign donations. In fact, we have a huge lobbying sector strictly for foreign organizations. Israel, South Korea, and the Arab Kingdoms are some of the largest foreign donors to both presidential candidates and rank and file politicians.

AIPAC's allies, and several others like them, target politicians to sponsor bills in Israel's favor and smash anti-Zionist legislation. This is why the United States will always remain friendly with Saudi Arabia and the UAE as well. The heavy financial influence from Japan and South Korea plays a huge role in U.S. aggression towards the DPRK. We've also seen MEK terrorists latch themselves to U.S. politicians and provide financial support, such as John Bolton, to promote aggression against Iran. In an essence, these foreign lobbying

“We’ve also seen MEK terrorists latch themselves to US politicians and provide financial support, such as John Bolton, to promote aggression against Iran.”

groups hold almost as much power over U.S. politicians as tech companies like Amazon or the pharmaceutical industry.

■ Why do minor political parties make little success in U.S. election campaigns?

A: Our electoral system is designed to create an illusion of choice, not represent the people. A third party, even a benign party that barely threatens the current establishment like the Libertarian Party, is still too much uncertainty for the ruling class to bear.

This is one reason most establishment Republicans and Democrats despise Trump so much. He's an outsider and loose cannon. He pulls back the curtain on our sham electoral process. Prior to Trump, U.S. leaders had to be cunning and maintain a facade. Trump exposes that by putting Washington's true chauvinism and nefarious goals on full display.

Bernie Sanders's campaigns also put the two-party system to the test, proving that we don't have two parties but one neoliberal establishment.

Despite being the Democratic party's most popular candidate in decades, the establishment Democrats slandered Sanders to no end and rigged the primaries against him twice. The changes Bernie Sanders represents are so mild in comparison to what the American people need. Even in the so-called "most important election of our lives," the Democrats are willing to risk running unpopular Biden against populist Trump to avoid giving any ground to the ideas Bernie's campaign represents. The Democrats would rather lose and remain an opposition party than represent the people and push for meaningful change. They'll still have their cushy jobs, what do they care?

This just goes to show that any dissenting political force will be smashed by any means necessary. The ruling class is very united in this and, again, it's why they despise the Trump and Bernie campaigns equally.

■ Why is turnout so low in U.S. elections?

A: People in the United States are fed up with the bogus electoral process. Most people who actually vote admittedly don't like the candidates and know it's a sham. Some feel like it's still their duty to vote as countrymen. Others are duped into believing they're preventing a more evil candidate from assuming office. (That's the Democrat's strategy running Biden.)

Personally, I believe voting dignifies the electoral process and only encourages its false legitimacy. Only a tiny fraction of Americans are enthusiastic about the current state of our electoral process. These people are generally well-off financially and don't have to worry about how politics affect their lives.

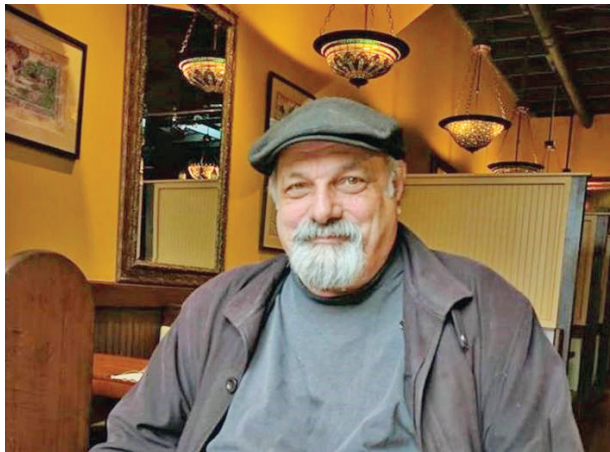
I'm expecting voter turnout to reach record lows during the 2020 presidential election. Biden will lose and the Democrats will blame Trump for restricting mail-in voting. Trump will blame the Democrats for instigating COVID fear and lockdown measures.

The U.S. presidential election has never been a fully democratic process

By Dennis Etler

The U.S. presidential election has never been a fully democratic process. Historically the right to vote was severely restricted to white, property-owning males. This was a small portion of the population and represented the young country's ruling elite.

It took over 130 years for women to gain the franchise and over 180 years for minorities to effectively gain the right to vote. Even after so-called universal suffrage was established many obstacles have been employed to restrict the expression of the will of the voters. These include the Electoral College which over represents states with small populations in the selection of the president, leading to two recent elections in which the candidate with a smaller vote total was installed, and Gerrymandering which skews Congressional districts to disenfranchise minority communities. Many people in the U.S. have lost faith in electoral politics and only slightly more than 55% actually voted in the last presidential election.



Dennis Etler is an American political analyst who has a decades-long interest in international affairs. He's a former professor of Anthropology at Cabrillo College in Aptos, California. He has a PhD in anthropology from the University of California in Berkeley.

U.S. politics has long been dominated by the "two-party system." Both parties support the fundamental structure of the U.S. economic and political system and the overall character of U.S. foreign policy. The differences between the two parties are based on their appeal to different core constituencies. For the last half century Republicans have appealed to mostly rural social and religious conservatives, while Democrats have appealed to urban secularists and minorities. This is how the term "culture wars" originated.

While the two parties fight over cultural issues, the basic nature of the capitalist economic system and the corporate controlled political system at home, and a foreign policy of interventionism and hegemony abroad are shared by both parties. Although they may differ tactically, their strategic interests are the same. Given their duopoly of power, both parties, their corporate sponsors and media mouthpieces conspire to marginalize any attempts to create third parties which offer different political perspectives that challenge the status quo.

Many Americans have lost faith in the political process. Politicians at the national and state levels make bold promises but seldom follow through on them. Recent polls show that only 30% of the American electorate have faith in their government, one of the lowest percentages in the developed world. Why is this? A Princeton University study based on data from nearly 2,000 public-opinion surveys compared what people wanted from their government to what it actually delivered. What they found was that the opinions of the bottom 90% of income earners in America have essentially no impact on legislation that is passed. The study concluded that, "The preferences of the average American appear to have only a minuscule, near-zero, statistically non-significant impact upon public policy." The reason for this is that corporate and monied interests have a stranglehold on the U.S. political system, leading many to characterize it as an oligarchy rather than a democracy. This has led to voter cynicism and apathy which is reflected in the low election turnout.

AIPAC is a very strong lobbying organization in the U.S. which promotes the interests of the Zionist Israeli state. The Jewish population of the U.S., although relatively small, has disproportionate influence in entertainment, media and financial circles. But it is a mistake to say AIPAC controls the U.S. government. Prior to WW2 the U.S. had very little influence in West Asia. Both the British and French had mandates throughout the region and divided up the colonial spoils between themselves. After the war the U.S. began to replace the European colonial powers and sought to impose its hegemony. Using Israel as its proxy the U.S. policy was to keep West Asia in a state of disarray so it could fish in troubled waters and influence events to its liking. The U.S. overthrew the democratically elected government of Iran, installed the Pahlavi regime as its vassal, and sought an alliance with Saudi Arabia.

Simultaneously, the U.S. used Israel as its agent in West Asia to advance its hegemonic interests and policies. The resistance of the Palestinian people, together with the victory of the Iranian Revolution put a damper on U.S. efforts to run roughshod over the people of West Asia. As with all imperial powers the U.S. seeks to divide and rule. Israel serves as a cat's paw of U.S. imperialism in West Asia and as a magnet for forces that want to disrupt the unity of Muslims against European neo-colonialism and U.S. imperialism. AIPAC serves as a propaganda wing of U.S. imperialism devoted to protecting U.S. interests in West Asia by advocating and promoting Zionism among the American people.

"Although they (Republicans and Democrats) may differ tactically, their strategic interests are the same. Given their duopoly of power, both parties, their corporate sponsors and media mouthpieces conspire to marginalize any attempts to create third parties which offer different political perspectives that challenge the status quo."

OPPOSITION
VOICE

By Charles Ortel

During 2020, there is heightened potential for interference many ways, but at core Americans across the political spectrum are free to register and to vote in secret, meaning the outcome, once tallied should reflect the will of a broad swath of eligible voters.

Concerning the presidential contest, voters have a clear choice between an independent businessperson who has delivered remarkable results in face of determined opposition, versus an old and tired politician who can fairly boast of little.

In 2016, Donald Trump had no political experience but he beat Hillary Clinton whose political resume dated back decades. I think she lost because she ran a horrible campaign, insulting undecided, and opting not to visit key swing states in final days. Joe Biden so far has managed to run his campaign, such as it may be, worse than Hillary Clinton did. I believe today that you may see a Trump landslide on and after 3 November 2020.

Voters have come to believe that politicians can only hope to be effective if they ally with either the Democrat or Republican parties. This could easily change in consequence of the 2020 election. One might find a new hard left Progressive Party form, but I doubt it would attract more than a 15 to 20% share nationwide.



Charles Ortel is an investor and writer interested in economics, geo-politics, history, travel and just, lasting peace.

Though extreme left-leaning views resonate in academia and in mainstream media they fail to convince the overwhelming majority of Americans who do try to engage on hard facts.

Though you might think otherwise reading and watching the news, America is the

most prosperous nation on earth, and offers a wide array of opportunities to all who wish to abide by our laws, nurture their talents and then offer goods or services to the market, or work in the public sector.

Perhaps many potential voters are not much interested in politics or in voting.

Election 2020: Stakes never higher for Dis-United States

(‘Stand back, stand by’: Trump prepares to declare victory)

By Ian Greenhalgh

The United States has not been so dis-united since the end of the Civil War a century and a half ago. The reason for the great divide that has opened up in U.S. society is clear and it is the presidency of Donald Trump. It is not by accident, but rather by design that the U.S. has been fractured and broken; for the reason, we merely need to recall the principle of 'divide and conquer'.

Writer Suzy Kassem perhaps expressed the principle most succinctly: "When two brothers are busy fighting, an evil man can easily attack and rob their poor mother." In this case, the mother is the United States herself and the brothers are her people.

Novelist Oliver Markus Malloy wrote a clear and accurate explanation of the current state of the Dis-United States in his book "How to Defeat the Trump Cult: Want to Save Democracy?": "The rich ruling class has used tribalism, a primitive caveman instinct, to their advantage since the beginning of time. They use it to divide and conquer us. They drive wedges between us peasants and make us fight each other, so we won't rise up against our rulers and fight them."

You can observe the same old trick everywhere in America today: Red states and blue states are fighting. Christians and Muslims are fighting. Men and women are fighting. Baby Boomers and Millennials are fighting. Black people and white people are fighting. That doesn't just happen all by itself. There are always voices instigating these fights."

That is the situation the U.S. finds itself in today, but how has this sorry state of affairs come to pass? Can the finger of blame be pointed solely at Donald Trump, the man who has presided over the fall of the nation into near-anarchy amidst economic collapse, social unrest and a sweeping pandemic seemingly out of control?

No, Donald Trump is nothing more than a frontman, a reality TV 'star' playing the role of President, the public face of an extremely dangerous, intrinsically evil and utterly inhuman cabal that created the Trump presidency in order to complete the destruction of the United States after spending decades weakening and exploiting the once great nation.

This cabal has no name, no public face, it is very old indeed, perhaps as old as human civilisation itself and it is the enemy of every human being on planet Earth today. We see its hand behind countless acts of evil – the September 11th, 2001 attacks in the U.S., the creation of the ISIS-Daesh project to destroy the Middle East, they murdered Gen. Soleimani for opposing them, they bombed Syria, Yemen and Beirut with nuclear weapons; the list of their crimes is endless and stretches back deep into the mists of history.

They created the Muslim Brotherhood to destroy any Arab states that threatened to become strong and independent, they use Freemasonry as a cloak to hide behind, they rule in Saudi Arabia and Israel, in Europe they are the Black Nobility that still rules, most obviously in my own country of Great Britain, in the U.S. they are the real 'Deep State' and one thing above all else defines them and their world view: they are the personification of evil and they draw their power from the worship of the old gods - Baal, Bathomet, Moloch etc, what has been incorrectly summarised as 'Satan' or 'The Devil'.

Their core belief is that they can obtain great power and immortality by worshipping and serving these 'gods', that their actions in this life on Earth have no moral consequences as it is just a temporary plane of existence they must pass through before becoming initiated into an eternal, immortal afterlife by their 'gods'. They seek to literally 'sell their souls to the Devil' to use an inaccurate but ultimately correct age-old narrative from Western culture, in hope of becoming immortal beings, blessed of eternal life beyond this limited, Earth-bound plane.

According to experts such as Father Malachi Martin, who was The Vatican's chief exorcist for decades, the cabal communes with 'The Devil' through Satanic rituals involving the abuse and murder of children. This is where Donald Trump and various of his closest 'friends' re-enter the picture, for Trump has been deeply involved in elite level paedophile rings that kidnap and abuse children and supply the cabal with child victims for their rituals.

Trump was mentored by the notorious Roy Cohn, one of



Ian Greenhalgh is a British political analyst and historian with a particular interest in military history and the real causes of conflicts. His studies in history and background in the media industry have given him a keen insight into the use of mass media as a creator of conflict in the modern world.

"Trump has been talking about a rigged election for quite some time, suggesting that the Biden campaign will seek to commit voting fraud via postal balloting. This is a cynical, calculated lie that the Trump camp created in preparation for a refusal to accept defeat and an attempt to declare victory, regardless of how the ballots actually tally."

the most disgusting and inhuman creatures to ever pollute U.S. politics. Cohn was a Jew who hated Jews, a homosexual who hated gays, he was also a Mossad agent who ran an elite paedophile operation in Washington, DC and NYC which was used to entrap countless key figures in the U.S. political and governmental spheres. It was through Cohn's entrapment operation that The Mossad and Israel gained control of the United States – they had the ultimate blackmail material in the form of video and photographic evidence of the rape and murder of children. Trump is one of those that they hold such blackmail material on, therefore he will never dare to disobey them.

Cohn died in the late 80s, but that didn't mean an end to the paedophile operations he ran, the Mossad simply replaced him with Ghislaine Maxwell, daughter of notorious British 'press baron' and Mossad agent Robert Maxwell. Ghislaine used Jeffrey Epstein as the frontman who moved in the highest social circles as a pretend billionaire and who lured hundreds of key figures in U.S. political and governmental spheres to 'parties' at exclusive locations where they were entrapped by participating in the abuse and sometimes murder of children and the necessary video and photo evidence gathered. One of the key helpers in this operation was Donald Trump, who frequently lent his Mar-A-Lago resort and other properties to host these evil, inhuman events.

Control of the United States is key to the Satanic cabal's nefarious agenda, the U.S. is the largest economy, the strongest military, the sole superpower, it is the big stick that they can use to beat down any and all opposition and it is the fatted calf that they can bleed dry to fund their operations. Cabalist Benjamin Netanyahu once boasted over drinks in the notorious Fink's Bar in Jerusalem: "America is a golden calf; and we will suck it dry, chop it up, and sell it off piece by piece until there is nothing left but the world's biggest welfare state that we will create and control. Why? Because

it is the will of God, and America is big enough to take the hit; so, we can do it again and again and again."

The cabal's influence over the U.S. didn't begin with the election of Trump in 2016, it goes back decades – they were ultimately responsible for the murder of JFK in 1963, they most likely controlled the Nixon administration; we know for certain that the Reagan and Bush administrations were under their control. Without doubt, since the events of Sept. 11th, 2001, they have held sway, hence the destruction of the Middle East; first by the War on Terror, later by ISIS-Daesh. They have infiltrated the U.S. military, judicial system, Republican Party, Senate, and thanks to Trump, the White House.

This is the background to the 2020 U.S. election, one quite unlike any other previously seen, one where the stakes are perhaps higher than they have ever been, where the fate of not only the United States but possibly the whole world is at stake. A Trump victory would be a disaster of global proportions, it would enable the next steps in the cabal's nefarious agenda and whatever those steps may be, they will be to the great detriment of all mankind.

Which brings us to the election itself, or rather, to what I consider to be a fake ballot that has an already determined outcome – the 're-election' of Donald Trump. Trump has been talking about a rigged election for quite some time, suggesting that the Biden campaign will seek to commit voting fraud via postal balloting. This is a cynical, calculated lie that the Trump camp created in preparation for a refusal to accept defeat and an attempt to declare victory, regardless of how the ballots actually tally. It is known that a majority of Biden voters will use postal ballots rather than going to a polling station, for this reason, Trump has taken a number of actions intended to disrupt the postal system and create the necessary conditions for the fraud to take place. Over 40,000 mailboxes have been removed from U.S. streets and hundreds of mail sorting machines have been taken off-line, which has thrown the U.S. Postal Service into utter disarray so that the mail has been taking weeks instead of days to deliver and making it possible to 'lose' countless ballot papers sent via the mail, thus robbing Biden of untold numbers of votes.

The second and more disturbing aspect of the planned disruption of the election process comes in the form of the far right militia groups comprised of heavily armed white supremacists. We have already seen these militias appear on the streets of many U.S. cities in recent months in reaction to the protests against police brutality that have sprung up due to events such as the murder of George Floyd. To a man, these militias are staunch Trump supporters and they are prepared and very eager to commit violence in order to protect Trump from what they see as a threat to the future of the United States but in reality is a popular movement that has sprung up in response to the ever increasing brutality and violence inflicted on the people, particularly the black and other non-white portions of the population by what is rapidly becoming a fascist police state.

Trump could easily ignite these militias into violent action at any moment by nothing more complex than a single post via his Twitter account, we saw a chilling example of this possibility during the first Trump vs Biden debate this week when Trump name checked the 'Proud Boys' far-right white supremacist militia and told them to "stand back and stand by", which immediately brought an enthusiastic response via social media from Proud Boys members who took the 'stand by' phrase to mean 'get ready to attack my (Trump's) opponents'.

Therefore I foresee a situation come November whereby Trump simply declares victory, regardless of how the voting goes and should anyone try to stop him, he will unleash the militias in an orgy of violence. If the vote goes against him, Trump will simply declare fraud on the part of the Biden campaign and his heavily armed supporters are ready and waiting to use violence to ensure a continuation of the Trump regime.

Scary, disturbing times that we are living in, but I leave the dear reader with the wise words of Suzy Kassem: "Mankind should always stay united, standing shoulder to shoulder so evil can never cheat and divide them."

A Biden administration will try to weaken Iran's defense system: political scientist

“Biden's conditions are first and foremost designed to weaken Iran's defense system and make Tehran more vulnerable to outside attacks.”

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN — If Joe Biden wins the November presidential elections he will set a number of conditions to join the nuclear deal (JCPOA), including “significant limit” on Iran's defensive missiles program, an American political scientist says.

“Even though Biden has expressed his willingness to return to the JCPOA, he has stipulated a number of conditions for America's return to the Iran nuclear deal, especially significant limits on Iran's chief deterrent option, namely the country's missile system,” Nader Entessar, a professor from the University of South Alabama, tells the Tehran Times.

The following is the text of the interview:

■ Javad Zarif, the Iranian foreign minister, has said that Iran will reverse its decision to limit its nuclear activities under certain conditions, suggesting the new U.S. administration must make commitments that it will not repeal the treaty and “to compensate the financial losses caused by the sanctions.” What is your comment?

A: On the face of it, these are legitimate demands, given the violation of the JCPOA by the United States before the ink was dried on the nuclear agreement and the Trump administration's contemptuous disregard of Washington's obligations under the 5+1 nuclear agreement. However, given the existing realities of American politics, it is highly unlikely that the next American president, be it Biden or Trump, will acquiesce to Foreign Minister Zarif's stated conditions. Also, we have to remember that almost all international agreements contain provisions that allow a signatory state to terminate its obligations and no U.S. president will be able to guarantee that the United States would not withdraw from a bilateral or multilateral agreement. There is a long list of international agreements and treaties from which the United States has withdrawn in recent years, and some of these withdrawals pre-date the advent of the Trump administration, such as the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

■ Does it make a difference for Iran who will win the American presidential elections? Don't you think that a Democrat president



may impose more pressure or set conditions through forming an alliance against Iran?

A: Although a Biden victory most likely will bring a degree of normalcy and predictability to American foreign policy, especially in terms of the strained Trans-Atlantic relations, Iran will not benefit much from the outcome of the 2020 U.S. presidential election. Biden will strengthen the traditional U.S. alliance system and thus the U.S. under Joe Biden will be able to exert more multilateral and international pressure on Iran than Trump has been able to do. Even though Biden has expressed his willingness to return to the JCPOA, he has stipulated a number of conditions for America's return to the Iran nuclear deal, especially significant limits on Iran's chief deterrent option, namely the country's missile system. Biden's conditions are first and foremost designed to weaken Iran's defense system and make Tehran more vulnerable to outside attacks.

■ New York Times reporters have obtained decades of tax information that Trump has

hidden from public view. Do you think it can affect the results of the elections?

A: The impact of these revelations on the outcome of the November election will be minimal to none. The battle lines have already been drawn. Given the extent of polarization in today's America, Trump's supporters will continue to support him no matter what type of scandal Trump has been accused or involved in. In fact, many of Trump's supporters have praised him for paying minimal taxes and they view Trump's tax dodging as part of his strength that has allowed him to take advantage of the existing tax laws to benefit himself and his family.

■ Donald Trump has nominated Amy Coney Barrett to become an associate justice of the Supreme Court. In case of discord about the results of the elections, doesn't the pick tip the balance in favor of him?

A: This serendipitous nomination was a brilliant move if we look at it from Trump's perspective. First, Trump has revitalized his right-wing evangelical base and has put

himself in a position to garner conservative Catholic votes in key swing states like Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin with their large Catholic population base. Secondly, in case of challenges to the results of the upcoming presidential election, the 6-3 conservative majority in the Supreme Court will act in Trump's favor if the Court becomes the arbiter of the election results.

■ Can Trump resort to the Insurrection Act to send active-duty troops onto American streets to quell possible protests over the results of elections?

A: The Insurrection Act of 1807 empowers the U.S. president to deploy the U.S. military and federalized National Guard inside the country to suppress civil rebellion, insurrection, and disorder. There are certain restrictions on the U.S. president's power in this respect, but in general, the president can send troops at the request of a state legislature, or governors, if the legislature cannot be convened to deal with “insurrection” against the state, or if conditions in a particular state are such that make it impossible or impractical for state authorities to enforce the law. There are differing opinions among legal scholars and practitioners as to how and when the president of the United States can invoke the Insurrection Act, but there is no question that if Trump resorts to the Insurrection Act, he will be crossing into a dangerous terra incognita with unimaginable consequences that will push the United States closer to a second civil war.

■ Regardless of who will be in the White House, do you expect a meaningful change in U.S. policies, including endless wars and interventions in other countries' domestic affairs?

A: The short answer to your question is no. We will certainly see shifts in U.S. domestic politics and policies if Biden is elected as America's next president, but I don't foresee meaningful changes in U.S. foreign policy away from militarism and interventionism. Biden's rhetoric will certainly be different from Trump's, but the contours of U.S. policies in terms of militarism and interventionism have long been cemented and are not easily changeable with periodic changes in the principal White House occupants.

“There is no question that if Trump resorts to the Insurrection Act, he will be crossing into a dangerous terra incognita with unimaginable consequences that will push the United States closer to a second civil war.”

Historian says Trump won't start a limited war with Iran

“In the American system, anything that happens in an election year will be related to the election”

By M.A. Saki

TEHRAN — Kurk Dorsey, a professor of history at New Hampshire University, is of the opinion that Trump will not embark on a limited war with Iran to promote his chances in the November election.

“I do not think President Trump will start a limited war with Iran, although he might respond to an Iranian action by escalating a crisis,” Dorsey tells the Tehran Times.

Dorsey, who specializes in modern American history, World War II, and U.S. foreign policy, also says, “Trump's most fervent backers see Iran as a threat to U.S. interests in the Middle East (West Asia), and they are very happy that he got out of JCPOA (the nuclear deal) and has tried to renew sanctions on Iran.”

The following is the text of the interview:

■ Do you agree with this that the United States is isolated because of its foreign policy? Don't you think Trump is willing to escalate tensions to increase his chances of reelection?

A: I would not say that the United States is isolated, although it is clear that relations with some long-time allies have been strained under the Trump Administration. U.S. relations with Canada and other NATO countries are as low as they have been in decades. Many nations that have looked to the United States for leadership in global affairs, for instance, have been very disappointed with a lack of U.S. leadership and cooperation in the United Nations.

Trump has generally chosen not to use U.S. ground forces to get what he wants; he would prefer to use a few drones or special forces to make a point. So, I think he, like most incumbent presidents, is looking for ways to communicate to voters that he is presidential and that he can manage a crisis, but not risk a war. Given that, it would not surprise me if he did something dramatic in terms of foreign policy, but the foreign policy has not been his focus in the campaign.

■ In case Joe Biden wins the presidential polls, would his administration undertake a fundamental foreign policy shift, given that many countries consider the United States as a domineering state?

A: A Biden victory will most likely mean that the United States returns to policies that it pursued from 2009-2017



when Barack Obama was president. That would mean that the U.S. would try to be more cooperative with its traditional allies, would take a tougher line with Russia, would try to restart negotiations with Iran about its nuclear program, would seek a new relationship with China that emphasizes stability, and generally take more of a moderate leadership position in global institutions. Certainly, some nations see the U.S. as domineering and intervening, but others miss American leadership because the alternatives have not always worked out well. I am certain that many governments around the world want a powerful, moderate United States rather than what we have had the last four years, which has been mercurial and abrasive more often than not.

■ Don't you think Trump would start a limited war against Iran to gain votes in the November election?

A: No, I do not think President Trump will start a limited war with Iran, although he might respond to an Iranian action by escalating a crisis. Trump's most fervent backers see Iran as a threat to U.S. interests in the Middle East (West Asia), and they are very happy that he got out of JCPOA (the nuclear deal) and has tried to renew sanctions on Iran. But those people will vote for Trump no matter what. A war with Iran of any sort will only scare away moderate voters who might be thinking of voting for Trump, and he seems to be aiming for those people in his campaign. Trump has broken with the Republican Party's past in particular by criticizing the use of force in the Middle East (West Asia)

that has led to what he calls “endless wars.” Having said all of that, Trump is very unpredictable, so it would be wise for Iran not to give him an excuse to respond with force. If Iran were to make him look weak, he would feel compelled to use force to placate his base voters.

■ Do American citizens care who will be in the White House for another four years?

A: Yes, most American voters have very strong feelings about this election. About 25% of likely voters support Trump pretty passionately; about 15% really care about domestic issues that they think Trump will support; about 40% think Trump is a menace to the republic, and 20% are just tired of him and his use of Twitter and his response to COVID. The problem is that about 40% of adults will not vote for various reasons and are not in that breakdown above. If Trump or Biden can tap them, he will win the election in a landslide, but it is more likely to be a reasonably close election, say 55-45% for Biden. But this election campaign has the attention of more Americans than any recent one, except possibly 2008.

■ Do you agree with this view that the recent normalization of relations between certain Arab countries with Israel was related to the U.S. elections, especially with such a high speed? Can the agreements signed under the Trump presidency be considered reliable?

A: In the American system, anything that happens in an election year will be related to the election. It is obvious here that Trump's supporters are using the deals with Bahrain and the UAE to show that he can bring peace to the Middle East (West Asia), and they certainly use them to make him look more presidential.

Having said that, I do not think that these were speedy deals. Israel has been working quietly with both states for a long time, and the U.S. has been looking for ways to improve Israel's relations with its neighbors since 1948. If anything, the deals tell me that the UAE and Bahrain worry about Iran's influence in the region so much that they are willing to make deals with Israel because they see Israel as less dangerous than Iran, which is remarkable for any Arab state. So, the agreements will survive no matter who wins the 2020 U.S. elections.

Ties with Iran will remain adversarial even if U.S. rejoins JCPOA with a Democratic president and Congress: ex-White House official

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN — Even if the U.S. rejoins the 2015 nuclear deal with a “Democratic president and Congress” the relationship between Washington and Tehran will remain “difficult and adversarial”, a former White House official predicts.

In an interview with the Tehran Times, Professor Frank N. von Hippel also says “Iran has its own good historical reasons to distrust the U.S.”

Frank N. von Hippel, a former assistant director for national security in the White House Office of Science and Technology, cites the 1953 overthrow of the Mossadegh government and the backing of Saddam Hussein during his 1980-88 war against Iran as examples for distrust.

This is the text of the interview:

■ What is the difference between Democratic and Conservative policies towards Iran?

A: I believe a Democratic administration would be more independent of the views of the leaderships of Israel, Saudi Arabia, and UAE. But, if Iran sets politically impossible conditions for rejoining the JCPOA, then sanctions will continue, and France, Germany, and the UK would indeed become more supportive of the U.S. position.

■ Iran has said it will reverse its decision in reducing JCPOA commitments provided that the new U.S. administration make undertakings that it will not pull out of the nuclear deal and that it would “compensate the financial losses caused by the sanctions.” What is your assessment?

A: I am afraid the second condition would be politically impossible.

I understand the argument that the Trump administration gratuitously did great economic damage to Iran and that Iran should be compensated for that damage. However, despite the U.S. rejoining the JCPOA agreement and even with a Democratic president and Congress, the relationship between the U.S. and Iran will remain difficult and adversarial.

Iran has its own good historical reasons to distrust the U.S. (including the 1953 overthrow of the Mossadegh government and the backing of Saddam Hussein during his 1980-88 war against Iran).

But the U.S. — whether led by Democrats or Republicans — has concerns about Iran. Even if the U.S. reduces its military presence in the Persian Gulf, and even if there is disillusionment with Israel over its treatment of the Palestinians, there will remain a commitment to the security of Israel and a concern about Iran's support of Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Hamas in the Gaza Strip as threats to Israel.

In that context, the idea of restitution of \$100-200 billion for the Trump Administration's economic damages to Iran would be politically impossible. If that made it impossible to reestablish the JCPOA, the confrontation over Iran's nuclear program would continue, and it would be impossible to proceed to try to develop a broader détente between Iran and the U.S.

■ A New York Times report has revealed that Trump paid no income tax in 10 of the last 15 years. How can it affect his reelection bid?

A: There will probably be a marginal effect. The people who already oppose Trump will have one more reason. On the other side, the people who support Trump because they are against abortion, or gun control, or government regulations, or are hoping to keep non-white people from political power have already come to terms with and accepted Trump's corruption. But marginal effects may be important in this election.

■ Donald Trump has nominated Amy Coney Barrett to become an associate justice of the Supreme Court. In case of disagreement over the result of the elections, can the choice change the balance in his favor?

A: The polls show Trump likely to lose a fair election. Therefore, he is trying to raise doubts about the fairness of the election to justify his own measures to make it unfair by suppressing the vote in areas where Black and Latinos live and disqualify as many as possible of the mail-in ballots, which Democrats tend to use more than Republicans. Such measures are resulting in legal challenges, some of which might reach the Supreme Court, which, in 2000, decided a contested vote-counting situation in Florida in favor of the Republican candidate, George W. Bush. The Democrats hope that the margin against Trump will be so large that such a decision would not be credible.

■ Can Trump resort to the Insurrection Act to send active-duty troops onto American streets to quell possible protests over the election results?

A: Trump has threatened to do so, but, after Trump's political use of non-military forces to suppress a peaceful demonstration near the White House on 1 June, the military has become more resistant to being used for political purposes.

■ Regardless of who will be in the White House, do you expect a meaningful change in U.S. policies, including endless wars and intervening in other countries' domestic issues?

A: The interventions and endless wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were triggered by the Al Qaeda attacks in New York and Washington on 11 September 2001. Fear of terrorism continues to be used to justify relatively small U.S. deployments in many countries in Africa and elsewhere.

Concerns about potential Iranian hegemony in the Persian Gulf region and control of its oil — or even just disruption of tanker traffic through the Straits of Hormuz — have justified continued U.S. deployments there.

My own view and probably that of a majority in the U.S. is that the U.S. has overemphasized the use of its military and underemphasized the use of diplomacy in international relations — especially under the Trump Administration. I would hope that a Democrat president and Congress would reflect that perception. Also, we need to reduce our military budget so that we can deal with our domestic problems of inequality, decaying infrastructure, and the need to shift away from fossil fuels.

Many Americans believe their votes do not make a difference

By Marvin Zonis

Money has become the decisive issue in U.S. elections — to buy ads, especially on TV. But what has happened this year is that both major parties have been able to raise significant funds to advertise their candidates.

The evil part of all this is that candidates “owe” the donors who have supported their campaigns so that wealthy donors have inordinate influence on legislation. Public financing of elections would be a crucial step

to greater democracy in the U.S.

The two major parties have firm control over the election mechanisms and can effectively shut out smaller parties — so the U.S. is effectively run by a “DUOPOLY OF POWER: — The Democratic and Republican parties.

Many American voters believe their votes do not make a difference or otherwise are satisfied with the way things are in the U.S. and figure they will just continue as they have been — a very dangerous attitude.

An organization that has lost immense

influence in the United States as the American Jewish community has split over Israeli policy towards the Palestinians and withdrawn their support for AIPAC — new organizations have arisen — such as J Street — which represents a more enlightened view of Israel.

I believe upcoming election is likely to be a more democratic election than previous U.S. elections because voter interest is so high and minorities, especially, are demanding and receiving the right to vote — in person or by mail ballot.



Marvin Zonis is professor emeritus at the Booth School of Business at the University of Chicago

America's quasi-democratic election

The U.S. is not a direct democracy

By Andrew Korybko

As the theoretically pure form of democracy exists in any major country given their size, we cannot say the U.S. election is a fully democratic election.

It would be impractical for every person aspiring for the highest office of the land to have equal media coverage and voters forced to choose from a potentially countless number of candidates in presidential elections. Equally inefficient would be for people to vote on every single issue of significance from local ones all the way up to national decisions. The U.S. is not a direct democracy but a representative one with republican characteristics (in the sense of the political system not political party), as are many countries across the world, both Western and non-Western ones.



Andrew Korybko is a political analyst, journalist and a regular contributor to several online journals, as well as a member of the expert council for the Institute of Strategic Studies and Predictions at the People's Friendship University of Russia. He specializes in Russian affairs and geopolitics, specifically the U.S. strategy in Eurasia.

Direct democracy, when taken to its extreme, becomes a mobocracy, or rule by the mob (which may or may not represent the majority of the population). That's actually the path that the country is moving along if the Democrats win. This is evidenced by the immense pressure and intimidation tactics that their de-facto political militias of Antifa and Black Lives Matter are imposing upon everyone else. Those who disagree with them are "canceled", or in the worst-case scenario, even physically attacked. In the contemporary American context, direct democracy is therefore fascist in form because of how totalitarian its vanguard elements are (who are exploited as puppets of the Democrat Party, whether knowingly or not).

The physical and demographic enormity of the U.S. means that the only candidates which stand any credible chance of winning either of the two main parties' primaries are those with the money to purchase the media support for popularizing their platform among the masses. Without money, which in turn leads to media exposure, candidates have serious difficulty connecting with the masses and winning their support during the primaries.

As for power, this might precede media support but is always present afterwards once a candidate rises in the polls and has a chance at becoming the party's front-runner. The situation is the same with third parties, except they're outside of the two-party power structure and therefore have less of an opportunity to raise funds, purchase media support, and become a relevant force in the elections.

The U.S. is too big of a country geographically and demographically to accept a multitude of equally powerful parties running in major elections. That would accelerate the political fragmentation of the country along partisan lines and potentially make it ungovernable at the representative level (remembering that the U.S. isn't a direct democracy). Many gripe about the legitimate shortcomings of America's two-party system but usually fail to countenance how much worse the alternative of a multiparty one might be. That's not to endorse or condemn either but just to analyze each scenario from a strategic perspective.

It's impossible for any candidate or party to completely align with the majority of the population's views on every single issue. None will ever be perfect because it's simply unrealistic for that to happen. Everyone must accept that their preferred candidate or party won't always support every single thing that they do, which is normal. Those who support third parties are generally motivated by an issue that's very important to them personally. They find a candidate or party that feels the same way as they do about it and subsequently decide to support them. That's their choice, but many often-times overlook how difficult it would be for that said candidate or party to implement their platform in the contemporary conditions of the U.S. political system.

It's every American's choice whether or not to vote in any given election, be it local, state, or federal. Many people are either apathetic or disinterested, either feeling that their vote won't change anything or they don't even care about the issues at hand. Both parties want to improve turnout, especially among key demographics, in order to raise their chances of electoral success. Sometimes this works when they promise their target audience something that they can credibly implement upon winning whereas other times this inadvertently succeeds when their opponent says or does something which inflames their rival's base. Nevertheless, turnout shouldn't be used to determine an election's legitimacy since everyone could vote if they truly want to. Sitting out the election doesn't mean that a person has the right to not recognize its results.

The U.S. elections: The first round of political chaos

(Trump-Biden debate: Verbal strangles and disarray from the societal reality)

By Mohamad Kleit

The first debate was a rage-fest of two old men ranting about useless matters while failing to tackle any serious matter in local or foreign U.S. affairs. It was mainly 90 minutes of criticism, accusations, and personal verbal attacks.

Nevertheless, that's what we've seen in the previous election as well, where Trump was able to turn the entire political occurrence into a form of "show-business", that was evident in his comment the very next day at a campaign rally where he said "the debate had the highest ratings," which shows how little he cares about tackling serious matters like presidential candidates do, such as healthcare, Covid-19 pandemic, economic problems, foreign relations, global warming, government spending, and others.

The same thing goes to his Democratic opponent, Joe Biden, that went down to Trump's level and ended up just replying to Trump's accusations without giving a proper debate.

The debate reflected the political mess the U.S. is suffering from which the arch rivalry between Democrats and Republicans that they have become disconnected societal reality and the problems people are facing.

Money and media can tip the balance towards one nominee, like when Trump lost the popular vote yet won the Electoral College. It was because of his lack of knowledge in actual politics and foreign affairs, which makes him an easily molded target for major companies and banks – those who actually control the U.S. Probably the most notable example is his huge support for the NRA and his extreme opposition of banning gun ownerships or even placing restrictions on that. This comes after NRA supported



Mohamad Kleit is a Beirut-based journalist, photographer, and political activist. He is the deputy editor of the U-News Agency.

Trump's campaign in 2016.

As for support from political powers, Israel strikes a prominent example, where it used its influence through AIPAC to support Trump, who has praised Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu and vice versa, especially that the latter had some tensions with the Democratic party and the U.S. president back then, Barack Obama, which has led him to support the Republican

nominee, Donald Trump, through the pro-Israeli Jewish communities, organizations, and businesses. Nowadays, the Israeli PM considers Trump as "Israel's best friend."

Such matters jeopardize the basic foundations of democracy, where companies and foreign parties lobby to get their preferred candidate to office and in turn get the latter to do their dirty work.

“Minor political parties don’t have the financial influence to conduct major campaign rallies like those done by the Republicans and Democrats.”

There is nothing democratic about America today

By Rodney Shakespeare

The original idea of the Founders was for all Americans to have Life, Liberty and Property (NB 'Property'). But the Founders then changed their minds because ensuring land and wealth for Native Americans and imported African slaves was certainly not what they meant to happen.

So it became Life, Liberty and Pursuit of Happiness -- a vacuous abstract noun (happiness) had replaced a valuable practical reality (property). Martin Luther King was assassinated because he wanted the widespread ownership of property.

Today, real middle class incomes have been going backwards for twenty five years, the country is awash in debt and true unemployment before the virus was 23%. And don't forget the myriad ways in which people (particularly black Americans) are prevented from voting.

There is nothing democratic about America today and it is now ruled by a swaggering, vainglorious bully who intends rejecting the results of the forthcoming presidential election and, from then on, ruling as a dictator.

The vote is only a tiny power, exercised infrequently and, even if your side wins, the system itself does not change. And that is why often a majority of Americans decide that it is pointless to cast a vote. The so-called 'democratic' political vote in America does NOT give true democracy which is eco-

omic democracy i.e. something which gives people control over their lives every day. 'Economic democracy' does not mean complete equality -- it means a reasonable standard of living and not endless humiliations and insecurity.

In America, minor political parties cannot compete against huge sums of money and the endless propaganda coming out of the mainstream media.

All the time, billionaires and corporations in various ways (including the endless activities of so-called non-profit think tanks) spend millions of dollars on advertising and articles etc. They fund professorships and the universities themselves. In particular, American politicians are simply bribed by the fixers and manipulators.

To all that, add the immense influence of the Zionist-controlled media and the existence of rich groupings which are openly established to serve the interests of non-Americans (e.g., AIPAC).

The existence of the American Israel Public Affairs Com-

“AIPAC is a hugely powerful anti-democratic force operating against the true interests of the American people.”



Rodney Shakespeare taught in UK schools and colleges for thirteen years. For ten years he was Visiting Professor of Binary Economics at Trisakti University, Jakarta. He is also a co-founder of the Global Justice Movement.

mittee sums up everything -- big money, bribery of politicians, control of the mainstream media, American national interests subordinated to those of a foreign entity. AIPAC is a hugely powerful anti-democratic force operating against the true interests of the American people.

Professor predicts Trump will refuse presidential election results if he loses

“Donald Trump’s only interest is benefiting himself and his family”

By M. A. Saki

TEHRAN – A professor of political science and international studies says Donald Trump has signaled that he will refuse to accept the results of the November presidential elections if he loses.

Describing the November presidential elections as the most important election in the history of the U.S. since 1860, William Lucas tells the Tehran Times that "Donald Trump has signaled that, besides trying to suppress the vote, he will not accept an outcome in which he loses."

On the contrary, Lucas says, if Democrat nominee "Joe Biden loses in the Electoral College, he will accept the outcome."

The following is the text of the interview:
■ Does it matter to Americans who win the election?

A: As in any election, many Americans will be keen to see their preferred candidates win for the Presidency, Congress, and state and local offices.

But this election is significant because - amid Coronavirus, the effect on the economy, marches for social justices, and now a Supreme Court vacancy - it is the most important since 1860.

■ Is election fraud possible in the U.S.? Do you expect the loser not to accept the results?



A: Contrary to the disinformation put out by Donald Trump, fraud in mail-in voting is extremely rare, with less than 1,300 fraudulent votes in the past 40 years.

If Democratic nominee Joe Biden loses in the Electoral College, he will accept the outcome.

Donald Trump has signaled that, besides trying to suppress the vote, he will not accept an outcome in which he loses.

Professor William Lucas says “maximum pressure (against Iran) has isolated the U.S. in the international community.”

The question is how far he and his inner circle will go in their refusal to leave the White House.

■ Don't you think Trump would resort to a military action against Iran to mobilize voters in his favor?

A: While there is talk of an "October Surprise" with U.S. military action against Iran, I am skeptical. As we have seen amid tensions of the past year, most American people are wary of any clash that signals a significant American forces' commitment in the Middle East (West Asia) and the Persian Gulf.

Unless Iranian forces strike U.S. targets, for example, on Iraqi bases or in the Persian Gulf, thus justifying the Trump Administration's retaliation - I don't foresee any October Surprise.

■ What is your analysis of Trump's rush to broker peace deals between Israel and Arab countries before the election?

A: The accords between Israel, the UAE, and Bahrain have far more to do with relations among those countries than with Donald Trump. Contacts for economic, cultural, and even military links have been

developing in private for many years - even if the public timing may be in part to give Trump a boost in his campaign.

In other words, Israel, UAE, and Bahrain (and Saudi Arabia behind them) baked the cake. Donald Trump only put his name on it.

■ How do you assess the U.S. pressure policy on Iran? Has it been successful?

A: The Trump administration's comprehensive sanctions have had a significant effect on Iran. In combination with long-term issues inside the Islamic Republic, they have fed an economic crisis.

But beyond the immediate economic effect of the sanctions, "maximum pressure" has isolated the U.S. in the international community. The refusal in the UN by other countries, including long-standing American allies, of "snapback" sanctions is the latest sign. The Trump Administration stands alone in ripping up the 2015 nuclear deal.

In other words, the U.S. and Iran leaders - each saying they are protecting their countries - have only succeeded in damaging them in this confrontation.

■ Could the U.S. administration expand its soft power under Trump's presidency?

A: No. Soft power depends on the appearance, if not the reality, of mutual benefit for the U.S. and for others. Donald Trump's only interest is benefiting himself and his family.