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2020/21 IPL season likely to be postponed **3**



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“Mehran” portrays Yazd people as hospitable in wartime **8**



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Stride toward legal arms trade

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Privatization brings govt. over \$7.8b in 6 months

TEHRAN — Iran's Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dehpasand has said that transferring the shares of state-owned companies to the private sector has brought the government 330 trillion rials (about \$7.85 billion) of income in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21).

According to Dehpasand, some 900 trillion rials (over \$21.4 billion) worth of treasury bonds were also issued in the

mentioned period, the revenues of which would be used to offset the current year's budget deficit.

Pointing to his ministry's efforts for offsetting the budget deficit and funding development projects in the current year, the official said: "There were some concerns over the budget deficit in the first half of the year that could lead to an increase in the taxes or government borrowings from the central bank, **→4**

Iran comprehensively supports Afghan-led peace process: Abdullah

TEHRAN — Abdullah Abdullah, the head of Afghanistan's High Council for National Reconciliation, has said that during his visit to Tehran, he received comprehensive support from Iran for an Afghan-led peace process.

"The leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran considers the success of peace in Afghanistan to be in the interest of the region and the world and they comprehen-

sively support a peace process that is led and managed by Afghanistan," Abdullah was quoted by the Fars news agency as saying on Tuesday.

Heading a high-level delegation, Abdullah arrived in Tehran on Sunday for talks over a variety of issues including the Afghan peace process, intra-Afghan talks in Doha, and issues of mutual interest. **→3**

35 Iranian universities among world's top 2,000 by subject

TEHRAN — The Islamic World Science Citation Database (ISC) published the results of the ISC World University Rankings 2019, according to which 35 Iranian universities were listed among the world's top 2,000 in various subjects.

ISC is the third internationally ac-

credited citation center established in the Islamic Republic of Iran based on a resolution adopted in 2008 by the 4th Meeting of the Islamic Ministers of Higher Education (ICMHESR) in Baku, the capital of the Republic of Azerbaijan, to index, evaluate and publish scientific productions in Islamic countries. **→7**

Leniency toward Covid-19 may prove tragic

By M. M.A. Saki and Garshasbi

Finally, Health Minister Saeed Namaki talked frankly about the lack of enough attention and diligence to contain the rapid spread of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Namaki was expected to issue such warnings and make complaints much earlier.

Namaki who was on a tour of West Azarbaijan province on Tuesday, said it was announced in recent days that anybody who does not wear a face mask will be fined, but asked: "How many people have been fined?"

He added this is true in the case of inter-city traffic, asking "We demanded to close the roads but how many roads were closed?"

The minister warned if this trend continues "we should collect dead bodies from the bottom of rivers."

Warning that Tehran has become a super spreader of the Covid-19, the minister said he had seen that in a bus in Tehran about 40 percent of passengers were not wearing face masks. He asked: "Can the infection be controlled in this way?"

He also criticized the responsible officials and bodies for not adding buses to the Tehran bus fleet, saying despite promises since the calendar month of Ordibehesht (April 20-May 20), not even a single bus has been added to the bus fleet.

This is while the spread of the virus, due to mutations, has increased by about 10 times, the minister regretted.

In the rush hours, buses and metro are crowded, making it impossible for passengers to observe enough space to avoid possible infections.

He added if one asks the most qualified virologists when does Covid-19 dies down or when a medicine is found for the disease, they will say they do not know, but certainly they say, "We know that this virus can be controlled from being spread through social distancing, wearing masks, washing hands, etc."

Unfortunately, the Interior Ministry, police, Transport Ministry, and in general, the government, have been excessively showing leniency toward citizens who do not observe health protocols.

Whenever there is more than a one-day holiday, cars hit the roads and carry the virus from one place to another. **→5**

Copper concentrate production hits record high in H1

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN — Production of copper concentrate in Iran stood at 599,624 tons during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21).

Copper concentrate output in the first half of the present year was one percent higher than that of the previous year's same time span, and also four percent more than the anticipated figure for this year, which was 577,575 tons.

Copper concentrate output in the sixth month of the current year stood at 106,615 tons, which was one percent lower than the figure for the sixth month of the past year. The monthly output of 100,842 tons was predicted for the sixth month, while the realized production was six percent higher than the expected amount.

The National Iranian Copper Industry Company and its subsidiaries, including Sungun Complex, Miduk Complex and Sarcheshmeh Copper

Complex, produced an aggregate of 599,624 tons of copper concentrate during the first half of the current year.

It is worth mentioning that the six-month copper concentrate production in Sarcheshmeh Copper Complex hit the record high of 352,515 tons and the monthly output in Sungun Complex hit the record high of 27,377 tons.

Used as raw materials in copper smelting, copper concentrates have a copper content of about 30 percent by weight. The remainder consists mostly of sulfur and iron. Copper concentrates are made mostly from sulfide ores.

In its outlook plan for the mining sector in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021), Iran plans to produce 1.427 million tons of copper concentrate.

The country had planned to produce 1.198 million tons of copper concentrate in the past year, while the output reached 1.18 million tons. **→4**

U.S. protests: Protesters and law enforcement clash in S. Portland

Protesters gathered at the Immigrations and Customs Enforcement Center in South Portland.

According to reporters on scene, a crowd gathered and initially clashed with law enforcement at the ICE building and were bull rushed away before they returned, KGW reported.

No unlawful assembly had been called at the time. Pepperballs and CS gas were also used to disperse the crowd. According to eyewitness accounts from independent journalists, it was about an hour into a march and demonstration that ICE officials exited the building to clash with and disperse protesters after protesters tied balloons to the fence in front of the ICE building.

At around 10:30 p.m. protesters returned to the building to continue their demonstration. DHS and ICE officials had retreated back into the building.

Officials did emerge once again for crowd dispersal and used tear gas to disperse the crowd.

At around 11 p.m. Portland police began tweeting that they were assisting federal officers (Department of Homeland Security and ICE Agents) by making LRAD announcements warning protesters if they did not comply they might be subject to force. At that time, gas and pepperballs had already been deployed by federal agents.

Portland police also apologized to the South Portland neighborhood surrounding where the clash was occurring for both the noise and the CS gas deployed by federal agents.

It appears a smoke gun was also being used to try and disperse the crowd.

While shooting tear gas canisters, a fire ignited and was put out by protesters, according to eyewitness accounts.

10 wonderful cultural sites in Iran you must see

By Afshin Majlesi

Iran, one of the friendliest countries on Earth, was once the heart of the mighty Persian Empire which almost stretched from Greece all the way to China. And now, what we know as modern Iran is the inheritor of a land full of sites of high cultural values from corner to corner.

Iran is also a jewel in Islam's crown, mingling glorious architecture, fascinating feats of engineering with a warm-hearted welcome from the locals. The Islamic architecture displays a mastery over

geometry and design. It is not only a highlight of Iran's cultural heritage but of humanity's.

Even if you don't plan to visit, you can still marvel at these 10 amazing cultural sites in Iran. Grasp the opportunity to learn more about the ancient land than just what we see on the news!

1. Imam Reza Shrine, Mashhad

One of the holiest sites in Iran, the shrine complex houses the tomb of Imam Reza (AS), the eighth Shia Imam, as well as many other important spiritual figures. Also here are a series of

mosques, a madrasa, and a museum containing priceless historical artifacts.

The shrine is enveloped in a vast series of sacred precincts collectively known as the Haram-e Razavi, or Haram for short. This magical city-within-a-city sprouts dazzling clusters of domes and minarets in blue and pure gold behind fountain-cooled courtyards and magnificent arched arcades. It's one of the marvels of the Islamic world, well worth savoring its moods and glories more than once by visiting at different times of the day. **→6**



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Gandoman Wetland, a top birdwatching spot

Located in the southwestern Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province, Gandoman Wetland is one of the top ten destinations for birdwatching lovers, especially in spring and autumn.

It is one of the most beautiful wetlands in Iran, which has been a seasonal migratory bird sanctuary for years.

Covering an area of 980 hectares, the wetland is surrounded by eight villages.

Swimmers will compete at Asian Beach Games to gain experience: Fakhri

By Farrokh Hesabi

TEHRAN — Iran's Chef de Mission for the 2020 Asian Beach Games, Peyman Fakhri, says that the Iranian athletes have a chance of winning medal in all sports, however the swimmers will take part at the Games to gain experience.

In an exclusive interview with Tehran Times, Fakhri talked about the situation of the teams representing Iran at the rescheduled Asian Beach Games in Sanya, China.

"Due to the outbreak of the coronavirus and the postponement of the competitions, we could not force any federation to start the training camp of their teams. So, it is based on each federation's readiness for starting the training session. Of course, most of our teams and athletes have started their training, but there is not the proper situation for all the federations to make plan for intensive team camps," Fakhri said.

The Asian Beach Games was set to be held in November 2020 but is now due to take place from April 2 to 10, 2021 in the Chinese city, Sanya, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Iran's NOC will send more than 60 athletes across 10 sports to the Games. The nation's delegation to the Asian Beach Games includes football, volleyball, handball, wrestling, athletic, kabaddi, sport climbing, water polo, swimming, and 3x3 basketball.

"So far, 60 athletes have been registered for the competitions. However, the country's National Olympic Committee will consider the athletes' condition and there may be some changes in the final number of the participants," he added. **→3**

Ghalibaf calls for wise measures amid U.S. economic war

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** – Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagheri Ghalibaf on Monday called for wise political decisions, saying Iran is in a full-blown economic war which demands careful decision-making.

The speaker warned against taking rash economic decisions “We should accept that we are in a full-blown economic war, and not every decision can be made in this economic war,” Ghalibaf said, according to Mehr.

“We should beware of our measures,” he said during a meeting with young members of the Iranian Parliament.



Professor Hossein Askari, who teaches international business at the George Washington University, says the United States has called U.S. sanctions on Iran “an act of war”.

“Let me say that the U.S. sanctions on Iran are an act of war. The impact on Iran is as if America was fighting a war but without bombs and bullets,” Askari told the Tehran Times after the U.S. Department of Treasury imposed sanctions on the remaining Iranian banks on October 8.

The parliament speaker also said reaching a common understanding is the first thing to do in order to resolve the country’s problems.

The U.S. imposed an economic war on Iran under the administration of Donald Trump after he unilaterally pulled the United States out of the 2015 nuclear deal. The U.S. says the sanctions it has imposed on Iran is part of its “maximum pressure” campaign against Tehran.

In remarks on Monday, Judiciary Chief Ebrahim Raisi said the country’s problems can be solved by the capable hands of the Iranian nation.

“The solution to resolve economic problems lies in the economic sector and pursuing political solutions to resolve economic problems is wrong,” Raisi noted on Monday.

In July, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said all economic problems can be solved through self-reliance thinking and national confidence.

“If self-reliance thinking and national confidence, especially among the youth, be on the rise and the country’s strong capabilities are tapped, and illusory hopes on outside borders... are weakened, I am quite confident that economic problems are solvable,” the Leader told the parliament via videoconferencing on July 12.

The parliament should prioritize issues, avoid being drawn into marginal issues and also work honestly for the people, Ayatollah Khamenei added.

General says Iran’s defense power is based on deterrence

TEHRAN (MNA) – Commander of Khatam-al Anbiya Central Headquarters said on Tuesday that Iran’s military power is meant to deter the threats.

Speaking on the threshold of large-scale maneuvers, code-named Modafean Aseman Velayat (The Defenders of Velayat Skies), Major General Gholam Ali Rashid said, Iran’s defense power is most in line with the country’s other approaches.

“According to the instructions of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, the country’s overall power is based on defense power, economic stability and cultural strength,” he added.

The commander noted, “The Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran not only play an active role in these three areas, but also have organized and built the defense power with an aggressive deterrence approach.”

“The defense power of our armed forces is most in line with cultural-historical components,” he said.

General Rashid also said that the air defense forces have shown in the military exercises that they will counter all the threatening actions of the enemy.

Every year, the Iranian Air Defense Force stages massive military exercises to display its might and boost its integrity and cohesiveness.

Envoy: U.S. sanctions violating human rights

TEHRAN (FNA) – Iranian Ambassador to Spain Hassan Qashgavi blasted the U.S. for its animosity towards Iran, and said that Washington has violated the basic human rights of the Iranians through its brutal sanctions.



“Despite the U.S. officials’ claims, their severe sanctions under harsh conditions of the coronavirus have targeted humanitarian issues, and recently it is not possible to import medicines to fight the coronavirus as a result of U.S. sanctions,” Qashgavi said in a meeting with President of Spain’s Senate.

Referring to the fifth anniversary of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), he said that, “Global support for the implementation of Resolution 2231 and opposition to the U.S. positions in the UN Security Council showed that American unilateralism will not work.”

The Iranian ambassador, meantime, pointed to the longstanding and good relations between the two countries, and emphasized strengthening bilateral relations between Tehran and Madrid, specially in the parliamentary area.

The President of the Spanish Senate, for her part, stressed the role of parliamentary diplomacy in strengthening mutual cooperation and welcomed the expansion of relations between the two countries.

She, meantime, emphasized the need for global consultation and interaction in dealing with problems and disasters such as coronavirus outbreak and welcomed the expansion of interaction and consultation with Iranian officials.

Iran’s correct policy of not exiting JCPOA has borne fruit, says government

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** – Iran’s correct policy of not exiting the nuclear agreement has borne fruit, says government spokesman Ali Rabiei.

“In recent days, we experienced one of the administration’s achievements in the international arena,” Rabiei said at a press conference on Tuesday, pointing to the lifting of a 10-year arms embargo on Iran under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

“This achievement, which was reached based on the rightfulness of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the resistance of the Iranian people, was the lifting of the arms embargo on Iran,” he added, according to Mehr.

Under the historic 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the UN Security Council’s ban on trade in conventional weapons against the Islamic Republic ended on Sunday.

“As of today [October 18, 2020], all restrictions on the transfer of arms, related activities and financial services to and from the Islamic Republic of Iran, and all prohibitions regarding the entry into or transit through territories of the United Nations Member States previously imposed on a number of Iranian citizens and military officials, are all



automatically terminated,” Iran’s Foreign Ministry declared in a statement on Sunday.

The ban was terminated under the terms of the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 that blessed the JCPOA between the Islamic

Republic and six world powers.

The U.S. government, under President Donald Trump, suffered a humiliating defeat on August 14 as it failed to renew the arms embargo through a resolution at the UN

Security Council. Russia and China voted against the motion and the remaining 11 council members, including France, Germany and the UK, abstained.

Rabiei stated that the embargo was lifted despite the political pressure and opposition by the U.S., Israel and their regional allies.

“The international community, in the last month, showed independence and non-compliance against the Americans’ bullying, which was a new development in the international arena,” he remarked.

The spokesman also maintained that Iranians do not love weapons, but rather they love peace and stability and co-existence and regional cooperation for sustainable development.

In remarks on Sunday, Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Amir Hatami said that Iran will sell more weapons than it will purchase following the expiration of the UN embargo.

“Since a year ago, many countries came to us and we had discussions with them,” Hatami said, Tasnim reported. “The ground for selling and buying weapons is prepared for the Islamic Republic of Iran, but of course, the sales will be more.”

Tehran, Kiev hold second round of talks on downed Ukrainian plane

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** – Iran and Ukraine on Monday held the second round of negotiations about the Ukrainian passenger plane which was accidentally shot down on January 8 near the capital Tehran.

The meeting was co-chaired by Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohsen Baharvand and Ukrainian Deputy Foreign Minister Yevheniy Yenin, according to the Foreign Ministry website.

During the meeting, Baharvand, as the head of the Iranian delegation, expressed sympathy with the families of victims of the incident, saying the plane was shot down due to human error.

“Iran’s stance is based upon transparency, as it has nothing to hide about this incident and is ready to genuinely inform the Ukrainian people and delegation about details of the incident,” he stated.

The Ukrainian airliner was shot down shortly after taking off from Tehran’s Imam Khomeini airport on January 8, killing all 167 passengers and 9 crew members.

On January 11, the Armed Forces General Staff released a statement saying the plane was mistakenly downed near the airport.

The incident happened a few hours after Iran fired dozens of ballistic missiles at a U.S. airbase inside Iraq in retaliation for the assassination of top Iranian military commander Qassem Soleimani.

The airplane had been mistaken for an invading missile. Iran sent the black box of the passenger plane to France for decoding in July.

According to Baharvand, Iran and Ukraine are two friends that have sadly experienced such incident. He said the two countries should now reach an agreement at the negotiating table.

Baharvand also reaffirmed Iran’s determination to punish those at fault, ensure justice, and pay compensation to the families of victims.

For his part, the Ukrainian deputy foreign minister commended the Islamic Republic of Iran for its warm welcome despite the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

He hailed as positive the first round of negotiations in Kiev, and praised the Islamic Republic for its cooperation and efforts to ensure justice.

Another meeting was also held on Monday between the Ukrainian side and the Iranian side, headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

During the meeting, Yenin and Araghchi discussed a range of issues of mutual interest between Iran and Ukraine, reviewed the latest developments in bilateral ties in political, economic, cultural, educational and consular fields, and weighed plans for the promotion of relations.

Participants in the meeting also expressed the two countries’ stances on major regional and international issues such as the developments surrounding the Iran nuclear deal, the illegal and unilateral sanctions imposed by the U.S. on Iran, the developments in the region, the national and international consequences of the outbreak of COVID-19, and the ways to tackle the pandemic.

The third round of Iran-Ukraine political negotiations is set to be held in Kiev.



Also on Monday, Yenin met separately with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif.

During the meeting, the two diplomats discussed the process of talks on the Ukrainian plane crash.

Zarif voiced his regret over the tragic incident. The foreign minister also hailed as positive and constructive the first round of negotiations on the aerial incident, and expressed hope that the negotiations would immediately produce the appropriate and desired results through cooperation and interaction between the two countries.

The two diplomats also talked about Iran-Ukraine relations and ways to broaden cooperation in various fields.

Moscow blasts Washington over Iran-related sanctions on Chinese firms

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** – Russia has blasted the United States for trying to substitute the UN Security Council with regard to Iran, urging the U.S. to stop humiliating itself in such pointless endeavor.

“Wrong approach again...US playing a ‘world policeman’, substituting UN Security Council is an unwelcome role,” Deputy Russian Ambassador to the UN Dmitry Polyanskiy tweeted on Monday.

“We are doing and will be doing business with #Iran and it’s not up to US to tell us or others what they can or can’t do. Stop humiliating US in this pointless endeavor!” he added.

The tweet came after Washington blacklisted two Chinese men and six Chinese entities for having dealt with the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL) Group and, in some cases, helping it evade U.S. sanctions.

“Today, we are sanctioning mainland-China and Hong Kong entities and individuals for conduct related to the sanctioned proliferator the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines,” U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo wrote in a tweet on Monday.

“Our warning is clear: If you do business



with #IRISL or its subsidiaries, you risk U.S. sanctions,” Pompeo warned.

The U.S. State Department also announced that Reach Holding Group (Shanghai) Company Ltd.; Reach Shipping Lines; Delight Shipping Co., Ltd.; Gracious Shipping Co. Ltd.; Noble Shipping Co. Ltd.; and Supreme Shipping Co. Ltd had “knowingly sold, supplied, or transferred to Iran significant goods or services used in connection with the shipping sector of Iran.”

It accused Reach Holding Group and its Reach Shipping Lines unit of helping IRISL and its subsidiaries, E-Sail Shipping Company Ltd. and Hafez Darya Arya Shipping Company

(HDASCO), evade U.S. sanctions.

The new U.S. sanctions are in line with the “maximum pressure” campaign that the U.S. imposed on Iran in 2018 after it withdrew from the historic Iran nuclear agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The JCPOA, endorsed by the UN Security Council Resolution 2231, was signed between Iran, the United States, Britain, Germany, France, the European Union, Russia, and China on July 14, 2018. However, U.S. President Donald Trump abandoned the deal on May 8, 2018, and returned sanctions and imposed new harsh ones.

Professor Hossein Askari, who teaches international business at the George Washington University, says the U.S. has fallen into moral abyss.

“After WWII, America was generally admired around the world. America helped rebuild a ravaged Europe and assisted other countries around the world. But slowly America started to go down a different road, namely, empire-building and support of dictators to do its bidding. There is an ex-

cellent book by Daniel Immerwahr, How to Hide an Empire that lays out how America has built this hidden empire. My own book Collaborative Colonialism argues how the United States has become a colonial power by supporting dictators around the world. Yes, America says that it wants democratic governance throughout the world but it has dozens of bases around the world and uses illegal covert operations and military might to bully most countries into submission. Its use of force is made more potent by its collaboration with oppressive dictators to get what it wants—just look at Saudi Arabia and Egypt to name just a couple. People who suffer and have little freedom see America’s support for their oppressive rulers and are not big fans of the United States. Can you blame them? America has historically helped people around the world when they face natural catastrophes such as storms and earthquakes but today America is causing misery by its inhumane economic sanctions in countries such as Iran where the supply of food and medicine is threatened,” Professor Askari tells the Tehran Times.

Tehran congratulates Luis Arce on Bolivian presidential election victory

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** – Iran has congratulated the new president of Bolivia on election victory, expressing the Islamic Republic’s full support for the elected government of Luis Arce.

In a statement on Tuesday, Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh felicitated Bolivia on successfully holding its presidential election and praised a calm atmosphere that prevailed the election process with a remarkable voter turnout. Khatibzadeh expressed satisfaction over the restoration of democracy and power to the real representatives of the Bolivian people after a year of tension.

He also voiced Iran’s readiness to revive cooperation and strengthen relations with Bolivia.

An unofficial count indicated on Monday that Luis Arce, who hails from the Movement for Socialism Party, bagged more than 50% of the vote making him the new president after 11 months of political turmoil.

Arce’s victory ruled out earlier opinion polls that had predicted the election would go to a run-off. The new president is expected to take office next month.

He was running against former centrist president Carlos



Mesa, who gained second place with some 31.5% of the vote.

In a tweet, Arce expressed appreciation for the public support, saying his country had recovered democracy.

Arce is the heir to former leader Evo Morales. Morales said Arce’s win brings back stability, peace, progress, and

freedom to Bolivians.

According to the Guardian, Arce vowed to end the uncertainty that has plagued his bitterly divided nation since October 2019, when hotly disputed claims of vote rigging against his party resulted in mass street protests, the presidential election being scrapped and Morales being forced from the country by security forces in what his supporters call a racist, rightwing coup.

Morales, despite living in exile in Argentina, hailed “a resounding victory” for his party. “Sisters and brothers: the will of the people has prevailed,” tweeted Bolivia’s first indigenous president, a key member of Latin America’s left-wing pink tide who governed from 2006 until his dramatic downfall last year.

Leading members of the Latin American left, who hope Arce’s triumph may help revive their fortunes, celebrated the result. “Viva the Bolivian people! Viva democracy!” tweeted Gleisi Hoffmann, the president of the Brazilian Workers’ party (PT).

Observers say the successful Bolivian election was a defeat for the hegemonic aspirations of the United States.

Stride toward legal arms trade

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — After more than a decade of international restrictions on arms trade, Iran broke free from a UN arms embargo that has long hampered its defense cooperation with countries around the world.

The 13-year old UN arms embargo on Iran expired on October 18 in accordance with the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 2231 which was unanimously adopted by the Security Council in 2015 to endorse a landmark nuclear deal with Iran. According to the deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the UN arms embargo was scheduled to automatically expire in five years after the Adoption Day of the JCPOA on October 17, 2015. The planned lifting of the UN arms embargo took place a few days go. Despite the firm opposition of the U.S., on October 18, 2020, Iran officially announced the lifting of the UN Arms embargo.

“As of today, all restrictions on the transfer of arms, related activities and financial services to and from the Islamic Republic of Iran, and all prohibitions regarding the entry into or transit through territories of the United Nations Member States previously imposed on a number of Iranian citizens and military officials, are all automatically terminated,” the Iranian Foreign Ministry said in a statement on October 18, calling the lifting of the arms embargo a “momentous day for the international community, which in defiance of the U.S. regime's efforts, has protected UN Security Council Resolution 2231” and the JCPOA.

The arms embargo was one of the most complicated issues that turned the nuclear negotiations with Iran into a shouting match, according to Seyed Abbas Araghchi, the deputy foreign minister of Iran for political affairs. Araghchi, who played a crucial role in the nuclear negotiations, has recently said the Western nuclear negotiators refused to discuss the arms embargo by saying that the arms sanctions have nothing to do with the nuclear sanctions, but Iran insisted on the lifting of the arms embargo during the negotiations.

“This issue was ongoing from the early days of the negotiations until the last moments,” Araghchi said of the UN arms embargo, adding that during the nuclear talks, two foreign ministers were insisting that the arms restrictions should be removed in ten years, not five years but Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif held a “stormy meeting” with them that led to the foreign ministers agreeing to a five-year timeframe.

In an opinion piece published by the Khorasan daily, Araghchi said, “Due to Dr. Zarif's furious tone of voice and his shouts, Ms. Sherman asked her colleagues to leave the room and leave the foreign ministers



alone. The report of that meeting is one of the memorable documents in the history of Iran's diplomacy.”

Iran's insistence on the lifting of the UN arms embargo derives from a belief that it has a great potential in terms of engaging in legal arms Trade. Iran has much to offer. Of course, Iran could sell and buy some arms even before the expiration of the arms embargo but now that the embargo has officially come to an end, it can engage in legal arms trade with countries around the world without fearing the wrath of the international community.

Now the question is that who will sell arms to Iran and will Iran itself sell its own arms? Until now, there are no official arms deals with Iran but it seems that Iran is busy hammering out such deals with its allies, especially Russia and China.

Following the expiration of the arms embargo, Kazem Jalali, Iran's ambassador to Russia, said on Saturday that Iran and Russia have devised a plan to boost their military cooperation.

In an interview with the Russian Interfax news agency, the ambassador said, “We will certainly cooperate with interested countries in the fields of technical-military cooperation and the procurement of the necessary equipment. We will have no restrictions and we will take advantage of this issue prudently.”

Jalali was responding to a question on whether Iran would buy arms after the expiration of the UN arms embargo.

According to Jalali, Tehran and Moscow have prepared a plan concerning military cooperation.

“With respect to the military cooperation, I should say that we have devised a plan in this regard, and, God willing, these plans will be implemented over time,” the ambassador pointed out.

Iran's Defense Minister Brigadier Gen-

eral Amir Hatami has also echoed Tehran's willingness to strengthen defense cooperation with Russia and China.

“The end of the arms restrictions gives us the opportunity to import necessary weapons and export our own weapons,” the defense minister said in an interview with Aljazeera.

China and Russia are expected to be the main partners of Iran in case it moves forward with its plans to update its defense capabilities. Over the past decades, Iran has made great strides in strengthening some of its defense capabilities, especially its missile and drone arsenal.

However, Iran may still need to update its air force. Due to the decades-long arms sanctions, Iran has been unable to buy fighter jets and combat helicopters as well as other military equipment. So, now that the UN arms embargo has been lifted, Iran may move to buy fighter jets from Russia and/or China. At the official level, Iran has not given any details about its possible deals to buy fighter jets but the defense minister has implied that Iran may have already reached deals with China and Russia in this regard.

Hatami noted that Tehran has reached “important deals” with Moscow and Beijing to develop its air force but he did not disclose what these deals include.

“We have important deals with Russia and China aimed at developing our air force systems in the post-arms embargo period,” Hatami stated.

On the other hand, Russia and China expressed willingness to deepen their defense cooperation with Iran.

Following the expiration of the arms embargo, Russia said it will move forward with military cooperation with Iran, and China announced that UNSCR 2231 Resolution, which highlights the lifting of the UN arms embargo, should be “faithfully

implemented”.

Sergey Ryabkov, the deputy foreign minister of Russia, has recently said Moscow is not afraid of the U.S. restrictions on Iran and will continue the military cooperation with it.

“Russia is not afraid of U.S. sanctions because it is accustomed to them,” the Russian TASS news agency quoted Ryabkov as saying on Sunday.

He added, “Russia is developing multi-aspect cooperation with Iran and cooperation in the military-technical sphere will proceed depending on needs of the parties and mutual readiness to [move forward with] such cooperation in a calm fashion.”

Similarly, China also underlined the need to implement UNSCR 2231, which means that China is committed to the lifting of the UN arms embargo.

“Security Council Resolution 2231 has clear stipulation of lifting the restrictive measures like the arms embargo against Iran, which should be faithfully implemented,” China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said in response to a question on whether China is willing to sell arms to Iran.

Speaking at a press conference on October 19, the spokesperson noted, “Following our policy on the export of military articles and our international obligations, China will continue handling arms trade in a prudent manner.”

Zhao also said the U.S. threat to impose sanctions on anyone selling arms to Iran “makes no sense,” adding, “China opposes unilateral sanctions imposed by the U.S.”

Resolution 2231 makes clear arrangements for lifting the arms embargo against Iran and other restrictive measures, which should be implemented accurately, according to Zhao.

Aside from the Chinese and Russian weapons that may be sold to Iran, arms trade after the expiration of the arms embargo may expand beyond selling arms to Iran because Iran itself is now able to sell its own arms. Hatami said Iran will sell more weapons than it will purchase.

“Since a year ago, many countries came to us and we had discussions with them,” the defense minister noted. Tasnim reported. “The ground for selling and buying weapons is prepared for the Islamic Republic of Iran, but of course, the sales will be more.”

Iran has a long list of weapons, especially missiles, many countries seek to purchase. Analysts believe that some Iranian missiles and drones enjoy higher quality than the American ones and are also less expensive. Therefore, buyers may find the Iranian arms more affordable.

In addition, Western countries may also buy certain weapons from Iran directly or indirectly to analyze them in a bid to gauge the progress Iran made in developing domestically-made arms.

SPORTS

Swimmers will compete at Asian Beach Games to gain experience: Fakhri

1→ Fakhri believes that except swimming, Iran has a chance to win medal in all other nine sports at the competitions.

“The athletes will be selected through the examination of their conditions for obtaining medals. Iranian athletes have a chance to win medal in all sports in the Asian Beach Games except swimming, which is a sport that we want to support it for the future and we do not expect to win medal in this event for now,” he concluded.

Since the event first took place in Bali in Indonesia 12 years ago, Iran has racked up 56 medals - the sixth highest in the medal rankings - with 31 of those coming in Thailand 2014.

2020/21 IPL season likely to be postponed

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — The Sports Medicine Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (SMFIRI) has asked Iran's Football League Organization to postpone the league for six days.

The sports medicine federation has requested the postponement in order to cut chain of coronavirus' spread.

The new edition of Iran Professional League (IPL), also known as Persian Gulf Premier League, has been scheduled to begin on Oct. 31 but SMFIRI has asked the league organization to start the competition on Nov. 6.

It will be IPL's 20th edition since its foundation in 2001.

Persepolis are the most decorated team in the competition with six titles.

Iran on Monday announced 337 deaths from the novel coronavirus, a record high for a single day in the West Asian country hardest hit by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The previous record death toll for a day was 279 announced last Wednesday.

Iran said the total number of infections in the country reached 534,631 on Monday, with 4,251 people testing positive in the past 24 hours.

Qatar chosen as centralized venue for 2021 FIBA Asia Cup qualification

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Qatar has been chosen to host remaining Group E matches of the 2021 FIBA Asia Cup qualification.

Iran was scheduled to meet Saudi Arabia, Syria and Qatar in November and February but FIBA, the International Basketball Federation, has announced that Doha will be the centralized venue for remaining Group E matches at the 2021 FIBA Asia Cup qualification.

Iran will meet Saudi Arabia and Syria on Nov. 28 and 30, respectively.

Iran sit top of the group with four points, followed by Syria (three points), Saudi Arabia (three points) and Qatar (two points).

From the 24 teams participating in the Asia Cup Qualifiers, only 16 will advance to play in the Asia Cup in 2021. The top two teams in the standings from each group at the end of the three windows of the Qualifiers will earn direct qualification to the Asia Cup, resulting in 12 of the 18 teams.

The final four teams to qualify will come from a separate tournament of six teams which are the third-placed teams in each respective group. The fourth-placed team in each group are therefore eliminated from contention.

Marouf one of reasons of Iran's volleyball success

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Since representing Iran national volleyball team in 2005, Saïd Marouf has won many accolades with the team during a 15-year period.

Marouf has been one of the main reasons for Iran's volleyball success over the years. He's a great talent in Iran volleyball and an incredibly smart setter with a great technique. He's a leader as well.

He turned 35 on Tuesday.

Marouf is among the top four setters in the world at the moment and the fans can't wait to see his performance. He was forced to part company with Chinese club Beijing BAIC Motor after the Chinese Volleyball League's officials decided to play next 2020/2021 season without foreign players.

The volleyball player will most likely play at his last Olympics in 2020 Tokyo but will certainly remain as role model for the young talents who are at the beginning of their journey.

Along with Mohammad Mousavi, Amir Ghafour, Shahram Mahmoudi, and Farhad Ghaemi, Marouf is considered among the Iran's golden generation who has made the Iranian people proud and happy over the past 10 years.

Marouf, like an orchestra conductor, will represent Iran at the 2020 FIVB Volleyball Men's Nations League in May.

Marouf, nicknamed “Golden Claw”, will play a big role in Tokyo, where Iran look forward to win their first ever medal.

Reza Salehi Amiri tests positive for COVID-19

Tasnim — President of National Olympic Committee (NOC) of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Reza Salehi Amiri, tested positive for COVID-19.

NOC's secretary general Keykavous Saeidi said Salehi Amiri is in good physical condition and is spending two-week in quarantine.

Iran on Monday announced 337 deaths from the novel coronavirus, a record high for a single day in the Middle East country hardest hit by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Iran said the total number of infections in the country reached 534,631, with 4,251 people testing positive in the past 24 hours.

Parliament drops plan to impeach Rouhani

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — After days of a political tug-of-war between proponents and opponents of the plan to impeach President Hassan Rouhani, the Iranian Parliament has announced that it will not proceed with the plan.

The impeachment plan had gained steam in recent days after a group of conservative lawmakers gathered signatures from their colleagues in the Parliament calling for ousting Rouhani for his failure to manage the country's economy in a proper way.

The plan was met with firm opposition from many factions across the political spectrum, which said impeaching the president does not serve the country's interests as Rouhani's second term in office is going to end in eight months and the impeachment process will take a longer time than expected.

In light of these facts, Ahmad Amirabadi Farahani, a member of the Parliament's presiding board,



said in a televised interview that the Parliament has dropped the impeachment plan.

“The fact is that if we impeach the president right now, the process will take nearly two months and we

will reach the tenth month of [the Iranian calendar] year. Thereafter, the first vice president will be the head of government for three months, and then we will have the holidays of Eid [Nowrouz]. Soon after, the government's term will end. Had the impeachment yielded results, we would have done it. Therefore, we in the Parliament have concluded that the impeachment [plan] should be dropped,” the Fars news agency quoted Farahani as saying in an interview with the channel 5 of the national TV.

On Saturday, a senior conservative lawmaker denied that the impeachment plan was put on the shelf. The lawmaker, Mojtaba Zolnouri, who serves as the head of the Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said that 44 lawmakers have signed a bill calling for ousting President Rouhani. But Zolnouri also announced that eleven lawmakers have withdrawn their support for impeaching the president.



Abdullah tweeted, “Pleased to meet HE Hassan Rouhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran. We exchanged views on Afghan peace process, talks in Doha & bilateral relations. I thanked HE, & I. R. of Iran for their principled & continued support to AFG & the peace process.”

During the meeting, Rouhani expressed hope that lasting peace and security will be established in Afghanistan and that the people of this country will live in peace, according to the Iranian president's website.

The president noted, “It is important that the people of Afghanistan achieve a real peace after years of war and conflict to maintain their achievements, and the

Afghanistan amounts to peace & stability in the region and beyond,” Abdullah said in a tweet on Sunday.

For his part, Zarif assured Abdullah of Iran's continued support for the peace process, underlining that the process should be managed by Afghanistan and lead to stability and an inclusive outcome.

Also on Sunday, Abdullah held another meeting with Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, the Iranian Parliament's speaker. Abdullah described the meeting as “constructive.”

“Had a constructive meeting with HE Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, Speaker of the Parliament of I.R. of Iran. We discussed the Afghan peace process, & developments in Doha talks. HE Ghalibaf assured us of Majlis's support for a lasting peace in Afghanistan,” tweeted Abdullah.

For his part, the Speaker said ensuring Iran's share of the Hirmand River's waters and launching joint markets in border areas were two priorities that he discussed with Abdullah.

On Monday, Abdullah held a meeting with President Hassan Rouhani and discussed the peace process in his country.

Iran comprehensively supports Afghan-led peace process: Abdullah

1→ During his two-day visit, the chief Afghan peace negotiator held meetings with several Iranian officials including the president, foreign minister, Parliament speaker, energy minister, and secretary of Supreme National Security Council.

Abdullah appreciated Iran's support for the Afghan peace process and the continuation of cooperation between Tehran and Kabul. He said Iran and Afghanistan enjoy good relations, adding that Tehran's support for the Afghan-led peace process is important.

The chairman of the High Council for National Reconciliation pointed out that Iran's emphasis on the success of an Afghan-led peace process was outstanding.

After his meeting with Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, Abdullah said he exchanged views on the Afghan peace process, intra-Afghan talks in Doha, and bilateral issues of interest.

“Stressing brotherly bonds between our two countries, I thanked the government of Iran for the invitation, its continued principled position on Afghan peace efforts & reiterated that peace & stability in

Copper concentrate production hits record high in H1

1 → Iran has seen its copper exports doubled in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19) despite a series of bitter sanctions imposed by the United States aimed at hampering the Islamic Republic's trade of lucrative metals.

A senior official at Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), Iran's largest metals and mining holding, has said that the value of exports for main copper products reached more than \$1 billion over the past year.



Mohammad Aqajanlou said that total sales of the National Iranian Copper Industry Company (NICICO) topped 220 trillion rials (about \$5.2 billion), a milestone in the 48-year-history of the company.

Aqajanlou added that total turnover for the Iranian copper industry exceeded \$4.5 billion over the past year and the NICICO posted a return on investment of 143 percent.

Maku free zone exports commodities, services worth \$34m

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Maku Free Trade and Industrial Zone in northwest Iran has exported commodities and services valued at \$34 million during the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21), according to a local official.

Ebrahim Jalili, the deputy head of Maku Zone Organization for investment and economic affairs, named Germany, Turkey, Azerbaijan and Iraq as the export destinations of the mentioned products and services.

Infrastructures have been developed in Maku Free Trade and Industrial Zone in a bid to increase the country's trade with its neighbors, Managing Director of Maku Zone Organization Mohammadreza Abdolrahimi said in mid-August.

The official said that Maku Free Trade and Industrial Zone was established in order to ease trade exchange with the neighboring states.

The infrastructure of the free trade zone has undergone major development to boost capacity for economic development, foreign investment and increasing public income, creating jobs, regulating labor and commodity markets, active presence in the global and regional markets, offering public services, and setting up manufacturing units to produce industrial and technology-based products.



"With effective engagement and benefitting from technology and knowledge, we can achieve great success in boosting trade relations with the neighboring states and investment in the manufacturing sector", the official noted.

Maku Free Zone in the northwestern province of West Azarbaijan has 140 kilometers of border with Azerbaijan Republic and 130 kilometers border with Turkey.

As previously announced by Maku Zone Organization's managing director, the value of exports from this Zone hit \$60 million in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19).

Abdolrahimi referred to the target of boosting the exports from the free zones by ten percent and said Maku Free Zone has increased the exports by eight percent.

Saying that there are many capacities for production and exports in this zone, the official reiterated that boosting investment making in Maku will expand the exports, especially to the neighboring countries.

As Maku is among the most newly-established and also the largest free zones of the country, there is a high need for the creation of infrastructures in this zone, he has previously stressed.

Maku is one of the seven major free zones of Iran.

Establishment of free trade zones in Iran dates back to the Iranian calendar year 1368 (March 1989- March 1990) following the fall in the country's oil income in the preceding year which prompted the government to promote the non-oil exports.

The first two free trade zones of Iran were established in the south of the country. The first one was Kish Free Trade Zone established in 1368 on Kish Island in the Persian Gulf and the second one was Qeshm Free Trade Zone established the year after on Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz.

Some five other free trade zones have been also established in the country since then, including Chabahar in southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan Province, Arvand in southwestern Khuzestan Province, Anzali in northern Gilan Province, Aras in East-Azarbaijan Province and Maku in West-Azarbaijan Province, both in the northwest of the country.

Considering the important role that the free trade zones play in promoting the country's export and employment, Iran is seriously pursuing the development of its existing zones and establishment of new zones as well.

More development measures in this field have been taking since the U.S. re-imposition of sanctions on the Iranian economy in November 2018, as Iran is reducing its dependence on the oil income while elevating its domestic production and non-oil exports.

Although the sanctions have disrupted Iran's economic activities, they could not impede the development of Iranian free zones; in fact, the development of these zones has been even accelerated.

Many strides made for increasing activities in the free zones have played a significant part in boosting the country's non-oil exports and brought prosperity in the other economic sectors.

Privatization brings govt. over \$7.8b in 6 months

1 → however, with the measures taken, we were able to offset the shortage from oil revenues by selling bonds and offering the shares of companies and government assets."

The implementation of the privatization plan which is aimed at more productivity, investment making, job creation, and promotion of trade balance, more competition in domestic economy, as well as reducing financial and management burden on the government has been under the spotlight over the past decade.

The executive regulations of the budget plan of the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 20) regarding the privatization of state-owned enterprises were referred to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs for implementation in late April.

The decision in this regard, however, was made during a cabinet meeting on April 5, in which the Finance and Economic Affairs



Ministry was authorized to offer the shares of some government-owned companies and enterprises in the current year.

In its planned budget for the previous Iranian year, the government had expected to earn some 106 trillion rials (about \$2.5 billion)

of income from divesting shares of state-run companies to the private sector. The plan was set to continue in the current calendar year to offset some of the budget deficit.

In early March, Dejpasand said offering the shares of state-owned companies, which are planned to be privatized, would be sped up.

He further highlighted that Iran's stock market is reaching its real status, adding, "People are gradually getting acquainted with the capital market's potential and welcoming it."

Dejpasand had previously said that the government should amend its policies and methods of setting the prices and transferring the shares in the process of privatization.

The law on the implementation of the general policies of Article 44 of Iran's Constitution on privatizing state-owned companies was declared in 2006 in a bid to downsize the government and promote the private sector's role in the national economy.

Govt., private sector discuss solutions for export revenue re-injection

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The 99th dialogue council of the government and the private sector was held in Tehran on Monday, in which issues pertaining to the re-injection of export revenues into the country's forex management system (known as NIMA) was discussed.

In the meeting, the representatives of the private sector mentioned some of the problems that the exporters are currently facing in fulfilling their obligations regarding the re-injection of their foreign currency earnings into the country's economy and offered 10 solutions for these problems, the portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) reported.

It was also decided that the proposals made by the ICCIMA should be considered in the Article 2 Committee, whose members are the Ministers of Economy, Industry, and Oil, in addition to the Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), and the Head of the Planning and Budget Organization (PBO).

As reported, the ICCIMA Head Gholam-Hossein Shafeie was also scheduled to attend the committee as a representative of the private sector.

According to Shafeie, limitation of the ways for returning the export revenues to NIMA and SANA systems, limitation of the import foreign currency allocations to the approval of the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade, the short deadline for fulfilling obligations (exporters are obliged to return their earning within four months), and imposing heavy taxes on exports were the major challenges that the country's exporters and importers are currently facing.

Extending the dues for returning the export incomes, amending the methods for calculation of basic export prices, considering alternative ways for returning the export revenues in addition to the injection into the NIMA system, and categorizing the country's export companies for determining their shares of foreign currency allocation, and modifying the ceiling of the obligations by 20 percent were among the

most important solutions offered by the ICCIMA to facilitate the non-oil exports and the return of export incomes.

Central Bank of Iran offers the country's exporters and importers foreign currency with an official rates and expects them to return the equal of the currency that they have received into the country's economic cycle.

Based on the CBI regulations for the returning of the export revenues, exporters with annual exports of three to ten million euros are obliged to offer 70 percent and those with exports of above 10 million euros per annum must offer 90 percent of the received foreign exchange at NIMA within a four-month period following their exports.

Representatives of the private sector, however, have repeatedly criticized CBI's strict policies in this regard, calling them counterproductive and the CBI on the other hand claims that the private sector is not fulfilling its commitments regarding the return of foreign currency earnings into the country's economy.

Number of inaugurated mining units in H1 raises 7.7% yr/yr

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** – Some 309 mining units were inaugurated across Iran during the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21), registering a 7.7 percent increase compared to the figure for the previous year's same period.

Based on Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry data, over 472 mineral exploration licenses were issued in the mentioned six months, eight percent more compared to the same period last year, IRNA reported.

Official statistics show that there are currently 5,600 mines active in the country, from which 410 million tons of minerals were extracted in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19).

As reported, up to 65 percent of the total extracted minerals were construction materials.

According to the Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry's estimations, the country's available mineral reserves are expected to increase by 20 to 25 percent in the coming years.

Previous statistics put the country's estimated reserves at 57 billion tons, of which about 37 billion tons are definite and the rest are potential reserves.

Iran's minerals extraction is also expected to increase by 30 percent in the current calendar year (ends on March 21,



2021) to exceed 500 million tons.

The country's mining industries produced 25.344 million tons of steel ingots, 252,700 tons of copper cathode, 285,800 tons of aluminum ingots, and 1.522 million tons of coal concentrate, while production of ceramic tiles exceeded 400.386 million square meters.

The mining sector has become one of the major areas of focus in the Iranian economy in recent years, since the country is one of the world's top 10 mineral-rich countries where 68 types of minerals have been identified so far, including the world's largest deposits of copper, zinc, and iron.

Expansion and exploitation of these huge sources of income have become a top priority for the government in recent years, and various programs have been defined for the improvement of this industry.

147 idle small-scale mines revived since March 20

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** – Deputy head of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) said on Monday that 147 idle small-scale mines have been put back into operation since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20).

According to Abbas Naiemi, during the mentioned period, 64 mines have been reactivated and developed directly and 83 mines have been revived by providing the necessary infrastructure for them, IRNA reported.

The said mines have been reactivated as part of comprehensive program for reviving idle small mines across the country.

As reported, under the framework of the mentioned program, 672 idle mines have been identified and prioritized in the current Iranian calendar year, and diagnostic procedures have been performed on 194 mines to determine the reasons for the halt in their production.

According to the official, since the beginning of the program in March 2019 up to date a total of 2800 such mines have been identified and 293 of them have been revived.

The mentioned program, which has been at the forefront of IMIDRO's missions over the past two years, is being pursued in several provinces.

Khodadad Gharibpour, the head of IMIDRO, has mentioned this plan as one of the most



significant plans of "Resistance Economy", saying that IMIDRO is strongly determined to carry out it.

Reviving the small mines not only is a major step toward materializing "Surge in Production", which is the motto of the current Iranian calendar year, it also plays a significant role in job creation throughout the country, Gharibpour said back in June.

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

Following this program, so far various small-scale mines including chromite, manganese, hematite and dolomite, iron ore, copper, and construction stone mines have been surveyed by monitoring and diagnosing the problems of the mines and providing solutions for resolving their issues.

Over \$2.8b invested in agricultural mechanization in 7 years

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Head of Iran's Agricultural Mechanization Development Center (AMDC) announced that 120 trillion rials (about \$2.857 billion) of investment has been made for agricultural mechanization in the country since the Iranian calendar year of 1392 (started on March 21, 2013).

Kambiz Abbasi also said that 14.6 trillion rials (about \$347.6 million) of facilities have been paid from the eighth credit line opened in this due, during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21).

According to the official, the agriculture ministry has

been allocating a separate credit line for the mechanization of the agriculture sector every year, so that since the Iranian calendar year of 1392 so far, eight credit lines have been opened for this sector.

Statistics show that there is an annual demand for 25 trillion rials (about \$595 million) of facilities for the development and modernization of agricultural machinery.

According to Abbasi since over 95 percent of the technology and knowledge in this area is domestic, despite the U.S. sanctions most of the goals in the mechanization of various agriculture sectors will be achieved without any problems.



He explained that the overhaul of South Pars gas platforms is carried out in the first half of the year due to the reduction in natural gas demand across the country, adding: "Overhaul planning is made in a way that there will be no interruptions due to breakdowns and other technical

problems during the cold period of the year."

The official noted that the Oil Ministry expects the South Pars Gas Complex to supply 650 to 670 million cubic meters per day of gas to the national network during the winter, which will be easily realized.

Mentioning the impact of the coronavirus outbreak on the field's overhaul operations, Ebadi said although due to the outbreak of the coronavirus in the country this year's overhaul program began with a month delay, the program went on smoothly and all the platform went through overhaul operations on schedule.

He further noted that so far no cases of Covid-19 have been detected among the POGC employees who are working on the South Pars

platforms.

"In order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, we have isolated all platforms as much as possible. In the sense that unimportant missions are canceled and unnecessarily visits to the platforms are restricted, and anyone who enters the platform in case of necessity, will be thoroughly monitored according to international safety and health standards," he explained.

South Pars Gas field, which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf, is currently divided into 24 standard phases in the Iranian side and is estimated to contain a significant amount of natural gas, accounting for about eight percent of the world's reserves, and approximately 18 billion barrels of condensate.

Lifting sanctions is essential part of JCPOA: EU's Stano

“The EU considers extraterritorial application of unilateral restrictive measures unlawful and contrary to international law”

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN — European Commission spokesperson for foreign affairs issues Peter Stano says that the removal of sanctions is an “essential part” of the 2015 nuclear agreement.

«The lifting of sanctions is an essential part of the JCPOA agreement,» Stano tells the Tehran Times in an exclusive interview.

Stano points to EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell's remarks in a debate in the European parliament on 7 October in which he said, «Iran had legitimate expectations that the 'nuclear deal' would result in more concrete economic benefits.»

The following is the text of the interview:

■ What is the EU's position on U.S. extraterritorial sanctions and unilateral restrictive measures against Iran? What are the implications of U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear deal for the world?

A: The EU considers the extraterritorial application of unilateral restrictive measures unlawful and contrary to international law. We have said many times that we regret the unilateral withdrawal of the U.S. from the JCPOA and the subsequent re-imposition of previously lifted U.S. sanctions. The EU remains fully committed to the full and effective implementation of the JCPOA by all participants.

The lifting of sanctions is an essential part of the JCPOA agreement. In this regard, the EU fulfilled its commitments and lifted all its economic and financial sanctions in connection with the Iranian nuclear program. Furthermore, the EU member states sitting in the UN Security Council prevented the U.S. efforts to use the so-called «snapback» and re-introduce UN sanctions that were lifted as a result of the JCPOA.

■ Is it enough to just issue statements against U.S. moves against Iran? Officials in Tehran say that Iran needs trade relations on the ground, not just condemnation on the paper.

The High Representative of the EU for Foreign Policy Josep Borrell, who acts as the coordinator of the JCPOA, said in the debate of the European parliament last week (on 7 October) that Iran had legitimate expectations that the «nuclear deal» would result in more concrete economic benefits.

The EU has taken a series of concrete actions to continue enabling legitimate trade with Iran. The EU updated its Blocking Statute in August 2018 to provide legal protection to European companies that are interested in doing legitimate business with Iran. The EU has also supported the setting up of INSTEX (Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges) and helped to make it operational. As part of the EU's ongoing efforts, the European Commission just launched two online platforms to support European economic operators,



particularly Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), to engage in legitimate trade with Iran. This underscores the continued EU commitment to the full and effective implementation of the JCPOA.

Q: What happened to INSTEX? The Iranian Foreign Ministry says that Europeans have not been able to fulfill even their smallest obligations within the JCPOA. It says that a simple and trivial issue like INSTEX was implemented at a worthless level after working on it for more than two years.

A: The EU remains fully committed to the full and effective implementation of the JCPOA, and the European participants deliver on their obligations. That is why INSTEX was created - it aims at facilitating legitimate trade with Iran to support the needs of the Iranian population. And it shows the commitment to make the JCPOA work. First transactions under INSTEX are being processed, and if you noted, the number of participants of INSTEX is not shrinking; quite to the contrary, there are more European countries joining, with more to follow.

■ What are the latest developments of Brexit? Can Britain exit from EU successfully?

A: We certainly hope so. The UK has already left the EU. The Withdrawal Agreement set out the conditions for the UK's withdrawal from the EU, and this Agreement and its Protocols must be fully and timely implemented. The EU and the UK are currently negotiating a future partnership. A negotiating round took place in Brussels on 2 October. One day later, the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen spoke to the British Prime Minister B. Johnson. The leaders of the EU Member States discussed the latest developments in this regard on Thursday, 15 October, and confirmed that the transition period will end on 31 December 2020. The EU notes with concern that progress on the key issues of interest to the Union is

still not sufficient for an agreement to be reached with the UK. The EU calls on the UK to make the necessary moves to make an agreement possible. At the same time, the EU is stepping up preparations at all levels and for all outcomes, including that of no agreement.

■ What is your comment on the Turkish president's policies in the Mediterranean and disputes between Turkey and Greece?

A: The tensions in Eastern Mediterranean and continued escalation are a source of concern and continued discussions among the ministers of foreign affairs of the EU member states and at the highest level among the top leaders of all the EU member states. It was the case also this Friday, 16 October at their meeting in Brussels. The EU stated full solidarity with Greece and Cyprus, whose sovereignty and sovereign rights must be respected.

The EU has a strategic interest in a stable and secure environment in the Eastern Mediterranean and in the development of a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship with Turkey.

All differences must be resolved through peaceful dialogue and in accordance with international law. The EU repeatedly called on Turkey to abstain from unilateral actions that are increasing tensions and are in breach of international law. The EU leaders recently deplored renewed unilateral and provocative actions by Turkey in the Eastern Mediterranean, including recent exploratory activities.

In case of continuous unilateral actions or provocations in breach of international law, the EU will use all the instruments and the options at its disposal in order to defend its interests and those of its Member States. The EU will continue to monitor developments closely and make appropriate decisions at the latest at its December meeting.

■ In Iran, people and observers say that EU has failed to follow an independent policy

in the face of the U.S. due to economic and security ties. How would you respond to this impression?

A: I am not sure where these «observers» and people take their information, but this is totally wrong. The EU has its own successful policies that bring benefits to the EU people and are independent of any third country. Our policies are determined by and depend only on all the 27 EU member states» decisions and on the principles of multilateralism. Just see some examples: the global fight against coronavirus – the EU is advocating a multilateral approach with full support for the WHO. The EU has not left the WHO. The EU did not leave a single UN body or its organization; the EU remains committed to the JCPOA, strongly supports the International Criminal Court, sticks to the climate targets under (the) Paris Agreement. These are areas where the U.S. follows its own policy, which is different from the EU policies. And if there are still doubts about how independent our policies are – just look at your own country: the U.S. has no dialogue with Iran and re-imposes sanctions, while the EU engages with Iran actively, is not reintroducing sanctions, and is looking for ways how to advance trade and provide humanitarian assistance even under these circumstances.

■ What is EU's stance about the Saudi war in Yemen? Why doesn't the EU impose an arms embargo against Saudi Arabia because of the war crimes it is committing in Yemen?

A: The EU is in principle against any armed conflict and advocates solving disputes through engagement, dialogue, and negotiations, not through military confrontation. We are supporting the efforts of the UN special envoy to end the conflict in Yemen. We also continue to engage with all sides of the conflict and with regional actors in order to reach a nationwide ceasefire, adopting a set of economic and confidence-building measures and resuming political negotiations.

The EU expects the parties to endorse, as a matter of urgency, the UN special envoy's Joint Declaration, which paves the way for an inclusive political process. Meanwhile, the EU is assisting Yemenis, both in the north and south, through the funding of developmental projects and humanitarian aid delivery.

The decision to impose an EU arms embargo on a third country is for the EU member states to make unanimous. If there is no EU arms embargo in force, the decision whether to authorize or to deny an export or transit to a country remains with the EU member states» authorities. Over the last few weeks and months, we have seen examples of EU member states who are reviewing their weapons exports to Saudi Arabia. This is a national competence for each country.

European legislators want downgrade of EU presence at G20 Saudi-hosted summit

Dozens of lawmakers of the European Parliament have called on the European Union (EU) to downgrade its presence at the next month's G20 summit in Saudi Arabia's capital of Riyadh over human rights concerns, a document says.

Sixty-five European legislators, in a joint letter, asked Brussels on Monday to downgrade its attendance in the 2020 G20 Riyadh summit, which is set for November 21 and 22 and will be held virtually due to fears over the spreading coronavirus, a joint letter by the lawmakers seen by AFP said.

According to Press TV, the letter came after a wide-ranging resolution passed earlier this month that also called for the downgrade to “avoid legitimizing impunity for human rights violations” in Saudi Arabia, which assumed the G20 Presidency late last year.

“We should not legitimize a government committing egregious human rights violations as host of one of the most important summit meetings in the world,” said the letter.

The letter called on Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and the president of the European Council, Charles Michel, not to participate in the virtual summit.

“We ask you to re-evaluate your participation in this year's G20 summit and consider not attending, but instead downgrading the level of the European Union participation to a senior official level.”

U.S. president not to leave office gracefully if he loses 2020 election: Bolton

U.S. President Donald Trump will not leave office “graciously” if he loses the 2020 presidential election against Democratic nominee Joe Biden, says his former national security adviser John Bolton.

Bolton, who was fired by Trump and turned against him, made the comments in a CNN interview..

“I think it's very troubling [Trump] has said, ‘I can't lose unless there's fraud,’” Bolton said. “Of course he can lose in an honest election.”

The Republican nominee resisted pressure to acknowledge a peaceful transfer of power if he loses on November 3.

He further warned that “Let's be clear: Trump will not leave gracefully if he loses. He will not leave gracefully. Whether he carries it to the extreme, I don't think we know.”

Despite being officially nominated by the GOP, Bolton asserted that Trump is not a conservative or a Republican.

‘Shameful’: Palestinians slam UAE delegation visit to Israel

The arrival of a United Arab Emirates delegation in Israel has been slammed as “shameful” by Palestinian officials.

The delegation – UAE's first official visit to Israel – was welcomed by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi and Finance Minister Israel Katz at Ben Gurion Airport on Tuesday, al Jazeera reported.

The five-hour visit would be restricted to the airport near Tel Aviv, due to coronavirus concerns, Israeli organisers said, and it comes after the two countries signed an agreement at the White House to normalise ties last month.

U.S., Western intelligence services behind creation of terrorist groups: Houthi

The leader of Yemen's Houthi Ansarullah movement has held the United States and Western intelligence services responsible for the creation of Takfiri terrorist groups, saying France's external intelligence agency plays a significant role in this regard.

“Takfiris are supported by the U.S., France and Western countries. They are the parties that have stood by Takfiris to target Muslims as they massacre them. The United States and its allies in Syria, Yemen, and other countries are supporting Takfiris, because they are using the extremists to tarnish the image of Islam. Western intelligence agencies, including the one in France, are involved in monitoring and supporting them,” Abdul-Malik al-Houthi said at a televised speech broadcast live from the Yemeni capital of Sana'a on Monday evening.

Houthi also warned that distortion and misinterpretation of Islamic teachings have created a deep rift among Muslims and posed serious problems to them.

Resistance News

Haneyya, Mladenov meet online, talk about Palestinian unity efforts

INTERNATIONAL DESK **TEHRAN**— Head of Hamas's political bureau Ismail Haneyya on Monday held a virtual meeting with special coordinator for the Middle East Peace process Nikolay Mladenov and discussed with him the efforts underway to achieve the Palestinian national unity.

According to the Hamas Movement's website, Haneyya highlighted the inter-Palestinian reconciliation as a strategic option and his Movement's determination to achieve it.

The Hamas political chief also briefed Mladenov on the current talks between the Palestinian factions in this regard and affirmed that there are promising prospects to reach a comprehensive national agreement that protects the Palestinian cause and achieves the political and national partnership.

He pointed to the presence of pressures by external parties to thwart the inter-Palestinian efforts to achieve the national unity, expressing his confidence that such attempts would never be successful.

Mladenov, for his part, expressed the UN's support for all the steps that would contribute to achieving the reconciliation and building the Palestinian political system on democratic foundations.

The UN official stressed the importance of maintaining the positive atmosphere within the inter-Palestinian dialog to achieve a successful national agreement.

Leniency toward Covid-19 may prove tragic

I → Dr. Alireza Zali, who heads the committee in the national task force to combat the coronavirus in Tehran, said on Monday that according to four research studies after holidays of more than one day there is usually an increase in the number of coronavirus patients in Tehran. He said in the first stage there is an increase in the number of outpatients, then inpatients, and after three to four weeks the number of deaths increases.

A lenient approach in dealing with a serious infectious disease like coronavirus, which has so far killed about 1 million people across the world, may prove tragic in Iran, especially as Iran is under the harshest ever sanctions in history, which has made it very difficult for the government to buy medicine to cope with the disease.

Observation of health protocols must be obligatory. Just earnestly requesting people to wear masks, avoid gatherings, or postpone visits to places which are potential hotspots of coronavirus will not work at all.

Most countries, especially developed countries, have introduced harsh penalties for breaking health protocols. However, after eight months the national task force to combat the coronavirus has declared fines for those ignoring the health protocols. Still, the sum announced is so little that it can hardly prove effective. It is just about two dollars.

We ourselves have noticed that some people shrug off recommendations by people as they refuse to wear masks or observe social distancing in buses or metro.

These persons, who either do not believe in the infectious disease or do not care about the health of other citizens, are in fact violating the rights of others and they should face the consequences of their social behavior.

It should also be acknowledged that the medical staff, physicians, and nurses, are tired. They have been fighting the virus for over eight months and an increase in the number of Covid-19 patients will put more burden on them and make them more vulnerable to the deadly virus.

It is regrettable that due to the carelessness of some irresponsible persons a number of highly competent physicians like Dr. Mohammad Zar'e Joshaghani, the head of Tehran's Labbafinejad Hospital; Dr. Mohammad Pedram, a prominent pediatric oncologist at Ahvaz Medical Sciences University; and Dr. Mahmoud Noorian, a renowned neurosurgeon at Ayatollah Kashani hospital of Isfahan, as well as several proficient nurses who were at the forefront of the battle against the virus have lost their lives.

 Call for public tender (First/Second publish) One Stages tender N.I.O.C 1399.3914				Subject of Tender: P/F CATERPILLAR EQUIPMENT National Iranian Drilling Company	
Tender descriptions:					
The Tender holder	Registration No. through national electronic tendering system	Tender No. /Indent No.	Estimated value (Rial)		
National Iranian Drilling Company	488/573/22	Tender No.: FP/11-99/082 Indent No.: 01-27-9747004	52,460,500,000		
Qualitative evaluation of tenderers					
Method	Qualification process will be done in plain mode in offers opening session according to presentation of valid practice certificate / legal documents (certificate of corporation/ supply announcement up to latest changes) which should be related to tender subject.				
Purchasing & Submitting					
Tender Document Distribution by Company	Distribution Place	Hall No.:113, 1 st floor, Foreign Procurement Dept., National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN 06134148601			
	Submitting Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt in the amount of 190,000 Iranian Rials under account number 4001114004020491 (Shaba No. IR 520100004001114004020491) in name of "NIDC Incomes Centralized Fund" issued by I.R. of Iran Central Bank. ■ Submitting format Request for the purpose of receiving Tender Documents. 			
Documents Receiving Method	Closing date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 35Days after the last time of Purchasing. ■ The envelopes will be opened 			
	Address	Hall No. 107, 1 st floor, Tender Committee, Operation building, National Iranian Drilling Company, Airport square, Ahwaz, IRAN. Tel: +98-61-34148580 +98-61-34148569			
Tender Guarantee					
Value of guarantee	2/624/000/000 Rial 9/400 Euro				
Type of guarantee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Bank guarantees or guarantees issued by non-bank institutions that obtain activity license from the central bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran. ✓ Submitting one original Bank Fund Receipt under account number 4001114006376636 (Shaba No. IR 350100004001114006376636) in name of "NIDC saving account" by the central bank of Islamic Republic of Iran. 				
Duration of credit & quotation	Tender Guarantee and quotation should be valid for 90 days and extendable maximum for one time in initial validity duration.				
* According to the meeting-minutes No: 138/665/98 dated: 1398-04-03 of deputy of research and technology dept. of oil ministry all the companies and participations should register and in " setadiran.ir " for all.					
(Foreign Procurement Dept.)					
More of this & other tenders are accessible by click on: www.nidc.ir http://sapp.ir/nidc_pr تهران تایمز نوبت دوم ۹۹/۷/۳۰					

Qajar-era Jameh Mosque of Namin demarcated

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – The Qajar-era (1789–1925) Jameh Mosque of Namin in the northwestern Ardebil province has been demarcated in a bid to preserve the historical monument.

The mosque, which is one of the oldest in the region, was built by the order of a benevolent lady, Farkhondeh Khanoom.



The mosque, which was inscribed on the National Heritage list in 2002, has a rectangular plan surrounded by a U-shaped shabestan for women and two rectangular shabestans for men. Shabestan is an underground space that can be usually found in Iran's traditional mosques, houses, and schools.

The mosque also has a tall brick minaret, which is decorated with bricks.

Five more historical properties across the province including Qajar-era Sarem al-Saltaneh Mansion and Safavid era (1501–1736) Se-Cheshmeh Bridge were also demarcated.

Parthian-era (247 BC – 224 CE) Ultan Fortress, Ultan Cemetery, and Ultan Hill were also demarcated.

Sprawling on a high, windswept plateau, whose altitude averages 3,000 meters above sea level, Ardebil is well-known for having lush natural beauties, hospitable people, and its silk and carpet trade tradition, it is also home to the UNESCO-registered Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble.

Food street being created in Kermanshah

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – A food street is scheduled to come on stream in the near future in the western city of Kermanshah, aiming to promote local food culture and tourism in the region, the provincial tourism chief has announced.

The project, which will be inaugurated by the end of autumn, is one of the priorities of the cultural heritage department of the province, Omid Qaderi announced on Tuesday.



The project is carried out in close collaboration with the private sector, he said, adding that some 30 billion rials (about \$715,000 at the official rate of 42,000 rials) is expected to be invested in the project.

Some 34 food stalls will provide a variety of food and beverages in this street, while other cultural and recreational programs are planned to be implemented as well, the official added.

He also noted that the project also includes a seven-dimensional cinema, free internet, ATMs, children's playground, computer games, a modern lighting system, water fountains and fireplaces, and green space.

A food street is a pedestrianized area that has been designated for restaurants and cafes. Such areas are mostly found in metropolitan cities lined with food stalls, restaurants, and other food shops.

Considered as a tourist attraction nowadays, different Iranian cities also have food streets, of which Tehran's Si-e Tir historical stone-paved street is the most popular.

Experts say that food is not merely an organic product with biochemical compositions. However, for members of each community, food is defined as a cultural element.

Apart from its rich history and culture, Iran has long been a fabulous destination when it comes to gastronomy tourism, featuring wide-ranging stews, rice dishes, kebabs, and desserts to name a few.

Iranian cuisine, usually dominated by fragrant herbs, varies from region to region. It principally accentuates freshness, deliciousness, and colorfulness.

New properties in northeastern Iran added to National Heritage List

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – Six historical sites in the northeastern Khorasan Razavi province have recently been inscribed on the National Heritage List.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts announced the inscription on Tuesday in a letter to the governor general of the province.



Mashhad Cotton Mill, Qiasi brick kiln, and Neqab railway station were added to the National Heritage List.

The list also includes Abedzadeh school and hos-seinih- a place for seasonal religious rituals- and Jafari Mansion.

Provincial tourism chief Abolfazl Mokarramifar has previously announced that 119 historical sites are planned to be inscribed on the National Heritage list, while amongst over 100,000 historical sites identified across the province, only 1,500 properties have been inscribed on the list so far.

Govt. supports corona-affected tourism, handicraft sectors in Khorasan Razavi

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – The Iranian government has paid 570 billion rials (about \$13.5 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) in loans to support people and businesses active in tourism and handicrafts sectors affected by the coronavirus outbreak in Khorasan Razavi province.

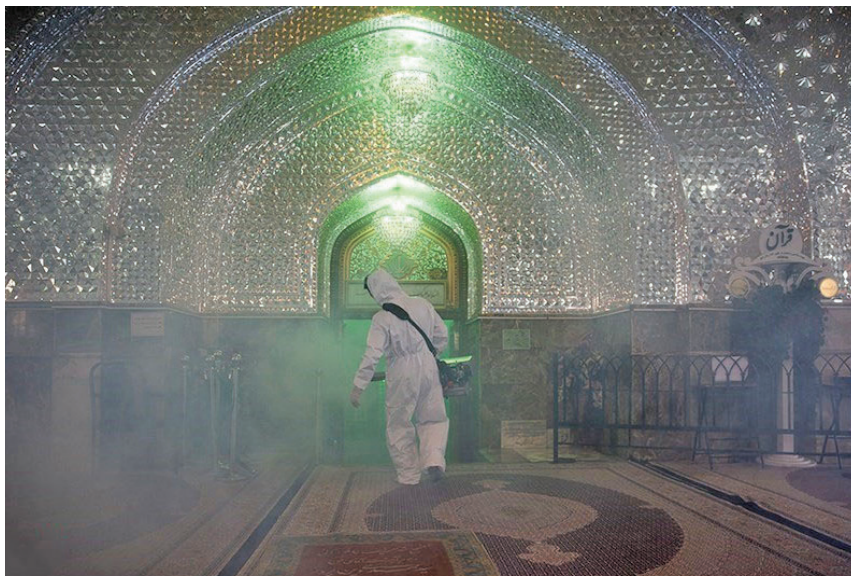
The province's tourism, mainly accommodation centers, has taken 25 trillion rials (\$595 million) hit from the coronavirus so far, deputy provincial tourism chief Ahmad Dinari said on Tuesday.

The financial facilities has been granted to 508 operating units, leading to the preservation of 3,800 jobs, while almost 18,000 people in the tourism sector have lost their jobs due to the pandemic, the official added.

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

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

In September, deputy tourism minister



Vali Teymouri pointed to the 1.3 million tourism workers in the country, who are facing several issues due to the coronavirus crisis and said "This number, in addition to their households, includes a significant population that makes a living through tourism, who are needed to be considered in ministry's decisions."

In August, tourism minister Ali-Asghar

Mounesan said that Iran's tourism has suffered a loss of 12 trillion rials (some \$2.85 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials) since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

He also noted that the coronavirus pandemic should not bring traveling to a complete standstill. "Corona is a fact, but can the virus stop tourism? Certainly not.

For us, the coronavirus is a new experience in dealing with crises that teaches tourism experts around the world how to deal with such a disaster, and thankfully governments are turning this into an opportunity for better planning."

In June, the United Nations World Tourism Organization praised efforts made by Iran's tourism ministry to manage the travel industry during the coronavirus pandemic. UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili said in a letter to Mounesan that the country's measures have truly earned plaudits to mitigate the impact on tourism. "A series of measures that the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts of Iran has taken, in accordance with the guidelines and recommendations of UNWTO, has truly earned plaudits as an effective practice to mitigate the impact on tourism," the letter reads.

Optimistic forecasts, however, expect Iran to achieve a tourism boom after coronavirus contained, believing its impact would be temporary and short-lived for a country that ranked the third fastest-growing tourism destination in 2019.

The latest available data show eight million tourists visited the Islamic Republic during the first ten months of the past Iranian calendar year (started March 21, 2019).

10 wonderful cultural sites in Iran you must see

➔ **1** In August 2020, the pilgrimage to the shrine complex of Imam Reza (AS) was inscribed on the National Intangible Cultural Heritage under the number 2015 upon a proposal offered by the tourism department of Khorasan Razavi province.

■ 2. Persepolis, Shiraz

Situated to the northeast of Shiraz is the ancient capital of the Achaemenid Empire. Persepolis ("the city of Persians" in Greek) would have been known as Parsa to the ancient Persians and is one of the most prominent cultural sites in Iran.

Persepolis was the seat of the government of the Achaemenid Empire, though it was designed primarily to be a showplace and spectacular center for the receptions and festivals of the kings and their empire. It ranks among the archaeological sites which have no equivalent, considering its unique architecture, urban planning, construction technology, and art.

The ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire was (according to narratives) burnt by Alexander the Great in 330 BC apparently as a revenge to the Persians because it seems the Persian King Xerxes had burnt the Greek City of Athens around 150 years earlier.

The city's immense terrace was begun about 518 BC by Darius the Great, the Achaemenid Empire's king. On this terrace, successive kings erected a series of architecturally stunning palatial buildings, among them the massive Apadana palace and the Throne Hall ("Hundred-Column Hall").

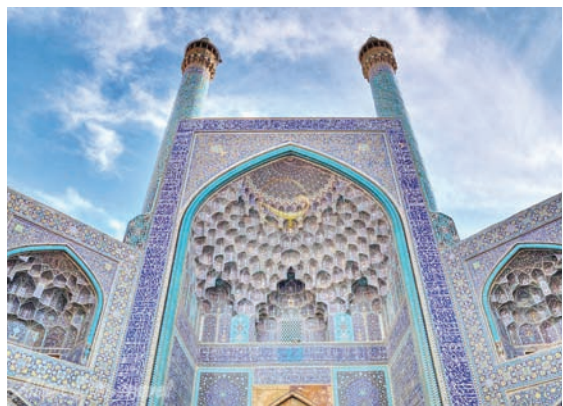
■ 3. Tomb of Daniel, Susa

The traditional burial place of the Biblical prophet Daniel, this tomb is known for its distinctive pine-cone-shaped dome. It earliest mentioned comes from Benjamin of Tudela who visited the area in the 12th century and it still remains a popular pilgrimage site. The traditional burial place of the Biblical prophet Daniel, which is located in the town Shush (Susa), is known for its distinctive conical dome.

The mausoleum cannot be missed while traversing southwest Iran, though its architecture is of no great antiquity. It contains two courtyards, each encircled by adjoining chambers and porches. The pilgrimage also offers some accommodations to visitors willing for an overnight stay.

■ 4. Imam Mosque, Isfahan

At the southern end of Isfahan's Naghsh-e Jahan Sq., the second biggest in the world after Tiananmen Sq. in China stands the big, grand and impressive Imam Mosque (formerly



known as the Shah Mosque or the Royal Mosque), which is not only impressive because of its sheer size and incredible decorations but also helps to get a good impression of the needs and challenges of always on-going restoration works.

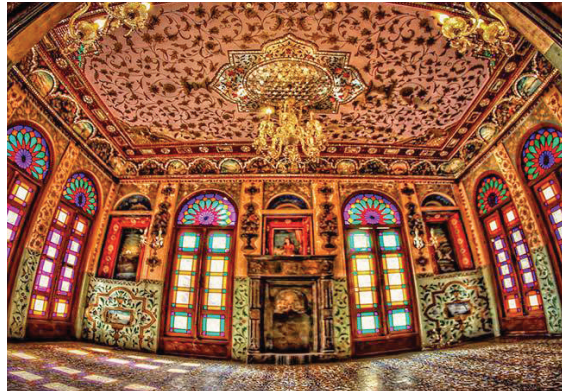
Also known as the Royal Mosque, or the Imam Mosque, this is one of the most recognizable sights which its beauty comes from its seven-color mosaic tiles and calligraphic inscriptions. The Shah Mosque is one of the masterpieces of Islamic architecture in Iran.

Visitors could easily be stunned by the awesome views of the main dome and its glorious profusion of turquoise-shaded tiles, iconic blue-tiled mosaics covering everywhere.

■ 5. Golestan Palace, Tehran

The Golestan Palace was the former royal residents of the Qajar monarchs during the 19th century. It is filled with gardens and various royal buildings that were once contained within the "arg" or fortified walls of the "Old Tehran".

The UNESCO World Heritage site was also a center for Qajari arts and architecture; successful integration of earlier Persian crafts and architecture with Western influences. It is now an exemplar source of inspiration for Iranian artists and architects.



■ 6. Shah Cheragh, Shiraz

Being a pilgrimage site since the 14th century, Shah Cheragh (literally meaning the "King of Light") may look like an unsuspecting monument from the outside. But its glittering interior, where glass tiles bounce the light in every direction, welcomes visitors to a new world of architecture. Inside is home to intricate geometric designs that create a stunning otherworldly light show.

There is also a modest museum in the northwestern corner of the courtyard, next to the shrine, which showcases shrine-related objects, including some highly prized old Qurans and an exquisite door embellished with silver and gold.

■ 7. Tower and Fort of Bam, Kerman

The ancient landscape of Bam and its adobe citadel is a UNESCO World Heritage Site located in the Kerman province. Dating back 2,000 years to the Parthian Empire, the citadel, locally called the Arg-e Bam, is reportedly the largest adobe building in the world. While it was abandoned after the Afghan invasions of 1722, the city is slowly being inhabited once more.

The fortress was almost completely brought down to earth due to a devastating earthquake on December 26, 2003. Most of what visitors now see at the site is restored



and replicas of the original structure being restored from 2004 onwards.

■ 8. Khaju Bridge, Isfahan

To experience Isfahan, it is more magical to walk across Pol-e Khaju (Khaju Bridge) at sunset when the 17th-century bridge is lit by glorious colors.

Brick arches, decorative motifs and tiles, adjoining arcades, and an octagonal pavilion embedded right in the middle are amongst the main features of the picturesque bridge that spans Zayandeh-Rood, one of the largest rivers in the central Iranian Plateau.

In its heyday, the central passageway on the upper level of the bridge was utilized by horse-riders and carts while the vaulted paths on either side were dedicated to pedestrians.

■ 9. Fin Garden, Kashan

The richly manicured yet historical Fin Garden ("Bagh-e Fin") is situated on the margins of the central Iranian desert in Kashan.

The history of Bagh-e Fin in its current shape dates back to the time of Shah Abbas I who was the 5th Safavid king of Iran and reigned from 1588 to 1629. However, some sources say the original premises date far back in time.

The property together with eight others across the country have been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list under the title of "The Persian Garden", which its genuine concept interweaves natural elements with manmade components to embody an idea of creating a paradise on Earth by the means of artistic, philosophical, figurative, and religious notions.

■ 10. Historical Bazaar, Tabriz

The historical bazaar complex, a labyrinth of interconnected covered passages that adds up to about 5 km, has been a melting pot of cultural exchange since antiquity and once a hot spot on the ancient Silk Road.

The bazaar, which has been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list, embraces countless shops, over 20 caravanserais, and inns, some 20 vast domed halls, bathhouses, and mosques, as well as other brick structures and enclosed spaces for different functions. Most mazes and passages offer certain commodities such as carpets, metalwork, toys, clothing, jewelry, and kitchen appliances, traditional spices, herbal remedies, and natural perfumes.

The history of the Tabriz bazaar dates back to over a millennium ago, however the majority of fine brick vaults that capture most visitor's eyes date from the 15th century.

Alborz holds potential to become hub for ecotourism, health tourism

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – Alborz province holds the potential to become a hub for ecotourism as well as health tourism with the aim of attracting more domestic and foreign tourists, the provincial tourism chief has said.

One of the priorities of the province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department is to boost eco-lodge units as the province has pristine villages near Karaj and Chalus Road, while the capacities of medical services in the province are being improved, Fereydoon Mohammadi said on Tuesday.

However, to achieve this goal, tourism infrastructures need to be improved and the province's tourism facilities and capacities

need to be promoted more properly, the official added.

Iran announced in 2018 that 2,000 eco-lodges would be constructed across the country until 2021. Having a very diverse natural setting, Iran offers varied excursions to nature lovers. Sightseers may live with a nomad or rural family or enjoy an independent stay.

Experts say each eco-lodge unit generates jobs for seven to eight people on average so that the scheme could create 160,000 jobs.

Iranian hospitals admitted nearly 70,000 foreign patients over the Iranian calendar year 1397 (March 2018 – March 2019) and it made an economic contribution of around



\$1.2 billion to the country, according to the medical tourism department at the Ministry of Health.

In April 2018, the rotating presidency of the International Health Tourism Conference of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was handed to Iran for a three-year term.

The country has set its goals to exceed its yearly medical travelers to around 2 million in [calendar year] 1404.

Alborz province is surrounded by Mazandaran, Tehran, Markazi, and Qazvin provinces. Its name is driven by the Alborz Mountains. A significant part of the mountains is located in the north part of the province.

Historical resources and documents as well as archeological studies indicate that Alborz has a rich culture dating back to pre-historic times.

Iranian-made COVID-19 vaccine to enter human trial in early November

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Iran will start testing its home-grown coronavirus vaccine on humans in early November, Health Minister Saeed Namaki said on Tuesday.

Pointing to the numerous researches done on COVID-19 vaccines at the international level, he said that some 5 groups are working on vaccine production, two of which achieved better results.

If the disease and the vaccine do not undergo fundamental changes and transformations, we have developed good methods for making the vaccine and informed the World Health Organization about this, he stated. IRNA reported.

With this trend, we hope to have good news for the Iranian people about the vaccine in the near future, he highlighted.

Referring to the high prevalence of COVID-19 in the community, Namaki said that there are no shortcomings in the Ministry of Health and no patient has faced a lack of hospital facilities.

He stressed that “what has caused the disease viral is non-compliance with health protocols and the lack of strict action against



violators of health instructions.”

If early diagnosis and 14-day quarantine are done properly, we will see good results in disease control in the future, he concluded.

The Iranian health minister announced on Sunday that he had “good news” about a COVID-19 vaccine being developed in the country.

COVID-19 death toll hits 31,000 in Iran

In the press briefing on Tuesday, Health Ministry spokesperson Sima-Sadat Lari confirmed 5,039 new cases of COVID-19 infection, raising the total number of infections to 539,670. She added that 434,676 patients have so far recovered, but 4,810 still remain in critical conditions of the disease.

In the past 24 hours, 322 patients have lost their lives, bringing the total number of deaths to 31,034, she added.

Lari noted that so far 4,570,243 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-Boyerahmad, Gilan, Bushehr, Zanjan, Ilam, Khorasan Razavi, Mazandaran, Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, Alborz, West Azarbaijan, Markazi, Kerman, North Khorasan, Hamedan, Yazd, and Kordestan.

The provinces of Hormozgan, Fars, and Golestan are also on alert.

National festival of Maryam Mirzakhani planned for November

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The 3rd National Festival on Women and Science will kick off in November, commemorating the late Iranian mathematician, Maryam Mirzakhani.

Organized by Shahid Beheshti University of Tehran, the event is to be held to honor exemplary women who are active in scientific and social sections.

According to the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, interested women in three age groups of under 40, 40-65, and over 65 are permitted to attend the festival.

Also in the scientific section, participants compete in 6 groups of humanities, basic sciences, engineering, agriculture, veterinary and environment, medical sciences, art, and architecture.

In the social section of the third festival, women univer-



sity graduates who are currently serving in non-university settings can also compete.

The closing date is December 19.

Mirzakhani won a gold medal in the Hong Kong International Mathematical Olympiad, in 1994, to be the first female Iranian student to have snatched a gold medal.

In the 1995 Toronto International Mathematical Olympiad, she became the first Iranian student to win two gold medals.

She obtained her BSc in mathematics from Sharif University of Technology, Tehran, in 1999. Mirzakhani then moved to the U.S. and finished a Ph.D. from Harvard University in 2004.

In 2017, Mirzakhani, the winner of the Fields Medal, also known as the Nobel Prize of mathematics, succumbed to breast cancer at 40.

35 Iranian universities among world's top 2,000 by subject

1→ In the ISC global ranking, all subjects are divided into 6 main categories and 42 subcategories. The 6 main categories include natural sciences, engineering, and technology, medical and health sciences, agricultural sciences, social sciences, and humanities.

In the ISC Rankings by Subject, the target universities in each subject area are among the top 700 universities in the world in terms of the number of publications; in a three-year period, at least 150 degrees should be published in that subject area, which is registered in the incite database.

The universities announced in the ranking in each subject area will be announced on a global scale and also based on the continent, country, etc. The ranking is based on four general criteria of education, research, international activity, and innovation, which due to its importance, the research criterion is the most important.

In the 2019 ISC ranking, 35 universities of Iran have been ranked in various subjects.

Iranian top universities ranked among the top universities of the world in 6 out of 7 subcategories of natural sciences, including mathematics, computer science and information, physical sciences and astronomy, chemical sciences, earth, and related environmental sciences, life sciences.

The University of Tehran (1401-450) and Tehran University of Medical Sciences (501-600) placed first and second among the Iranian universities in these subcategories, respectively.

Harvard University, Stanford University, University of California Berkeley were the first top universities in the world in the field of natural sciences.

In the field of engineering and technology, there are 11 subcategories, and Iranian universities have participated in

all 11 fields. In this field, the University of Tehran (200) ranked first among the country's universities, Amirkabir University of Technology and Iran University of Technology came after.

In the field of medical and health sciences, Tehran University of Medical Sciences (251-300) ranked first, Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences (401-450) second, Iran University of Medical Sciences and Mashhad University of Medical Sciences (451-500) jointly ranked third.

In the field of agricultural sciences, the University of Tehran (88) and Tarbiat Modares (238) were the first two universities from Iran in this ranking.

In social sciences and also humanities categories, only the University of Tehran achieved rank.

Islamic countries in 2019 ISC ranking by subject

In this ranking, other Islamic countries also performed well.

In the field of natural sciences, there were 34 universities from Islamic countries, the largest number of which is related to Iran (with 11 universities). Malaysia with 6 universities and Turkey with 5 universities have the most presence in this subject area.

The best rank in this field belongs to Saudi Arabia placed 7.

In the field of engineering and technology, 55 universities from Islamic countries were present, the highest number also relates to Iran with 15 universities. Malaysia with 12 and Turkey with 7 universities came after Iran. Saudi Arabia ranked first.

In the field of medical sciences and health, there were 50 universities from Islamic countries, the largest number being in Turkey with 19 universities. Iran with 10 universities and Egypt with 7 universities have been ranked after Turkey. Moreover, the best rank in this field was



obtained by Lebanon.

In the field of agricultural sciences, Islamic countries presented 65 universities, the largest number of which was in Turkey with 21 universities, and Iran with 13 and Pakistan with 8 universities were the countries with the highest share in this field. Also, the best rank belonged to Saudi Arabia.

In the social sciences category, there were 20 universities from Islamic countries, the largest number of which is related to Malaysia with 8 universities. Turkey with 7 and Indonesia with 2 universities got the highest number of participation. Saudi Arabia also got the best rank.

According to the Islamic World Science Citation Database, there were 7 universities from Islamic countries in the field of humanities, the largest share is related to Malaysia with 4 universities. Turkey with two universities and Iran with one university have also been listed in this subject area. And Malaysia also got the best rank.

Iranian universities appear in various rankings in the world

Most recently, forty-three Iranian universities were placed in the Islamic World University Rankings 2019 announced by the ISC.

With a scientific growth rate of 10.4 percent in 2019, Iran ranked second among the top 25 countries in the world, next to China with a growth rate of 12.9 percent,

according to the Web of Science website.

In 2000, Iran's share of scientific productivity was about 0.1 percent, which reached about 2 percent with a 20-fold increase in both Scopus and WoS citation databases.

According to statistics released by the International Web of Science Database, Iran's citation rank has always been on the rise over the last eight years, from 24 in 2012 to 16 in 2019.

Iran ranks first in terms of the number of universities in the region and among Islamic countries, according to Shanghai Ranking's Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) 2020.

Two Iranian universities have been ranked among the top 100 universities in Asia, according to Webometrics Ranking of World Universities for July 2020.

Moreover, 7 Iranian universities have been listed among the best 1000 worldwide; including, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, Sharif University of Technology, Tarbiat Modares University, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Isfahan University of Technology, Iran University of Science and Technology, came in 539th, 656th, 826th, 908th, 915th, 916th places, respectively, according to Webometrics Ranking of World Universities.

In June, THE Asia University Rankings 2020 ranked five Iranian universities among the top 100 universities worldwide.

The Center for Science and Technology Studies Leiden Ranking has placed 36 Iranian universities in the list of over 1,000 major universities worldwide in 2020 compared with 26 universities in 2019.

Also, five Iranian universities have been placed among the world's top 1,000 universities announced by the prestigious Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings 2021.

Online exhibition showcasing COVID-19 achievements

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The first virtual exhibition of “Surge in Production and COVID-19 Achievements” started on Tuesday with 40 knowledge-based companies in attendance.



Held with the support of the Innovation and Prosperity Fund, the exhibition displays the latest achievements of 40 knowledge-based companies in the field of COVID-19, such as surgical instruments, antibiotics, painkillers, vitamins, allergy medication, and advances in the treatment of coronavirus, medical equipment, emergency medicine, first aid, and medical technology.

Clinical equipment, pharmaceuticals, laboratory technology, chemicals, cleaning and disinfectants, and related products, detergents, household, and industrial cleaners are also on display.

In this 10-day exhibition, software, applications, and automation in the field of IT and medicine are presented by knowledge-based companies.

This virtual exhibition, which is designed in three languages (Persian, English, and Arabic), provides an opportunity for foreign and international organizations to get acquainted with the achievements of Iranian knowledge-based companies and their needs in this context.

The exhibition will close on October 29.

Knowledge-based companies in full swing to tackle COVID-19

Ismael Ghaderifar, head of the center for strategic technologies development of the vice presidency of science and technology, has said that under sanctions in the most difficult conditions, Iran combatted the pandemic and knowledge-based companies could make the country independent. Moreover, they managed to produce pharmaceutical items required by the country's health system.

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

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

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

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 products 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.

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 41)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

fulfilment	/an'jām/ انجام	
to do, to fulfil	/an'jām dādan/ انجام دادن	
first	adj, adv /av'val/ اوّل	
open	/bāz/ باز	
some	/ba'zi/ بعضی	
assignment	/tak'lif/ تکلیف	
sentence	/jom'le/ جمله	
to answer	/ja'avāb dādan/ جواب دادن	
request, begging	/xā'heš/ خواهش	
to request, to beg	خواهش کردن	
to give (to)	/dah/ ده (به) dādan/ دادن	
about, concerning	/dar bā'reye/ درباره	
grammar	/das'tur/ دستور	
line	/satr/ سطر	
to work	/kār kar'dan/ کار کردن	
کتابخانه: جاي کتاب و کتاب خواندن		
sometimes	/gāhi/ گاهی	
to write	/ne'vis/ نویس - neveshtan/ نوشتن	

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → C

‘Welfare Organization helps 15,000 breadwinning women

to become financially independent annually’

On average, 15,000 female heads of households who have been under Iran Welfare Organization's assistance, become financially independent annually through employment and entrepreneurship programs, Derakhshan-Nia, director general of family and women capacity building office at the Welfare Organization has said.

سالیانه ۱۵ هزار زن سرپرست خانوار از چرخه حمایت بهزیستی خارج می شوند

فریبا درخشان نیا، مدیر کل دفتر توانمندسازی خانواده و زنان سازمان بهزیستی کشور گفت: به طور میانگین سالیانه ۱۵ هزار نفر از زنان سرپرست خانوار تحت پوشش، از طریق اشتغال و کارآفرینی در قالب انفرادی یا گروه های همیار، بازتوان شده و از چرخه حمایت خارج می شوند.

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Kindness elevates human beings, and faithfulness
is the sign of decency.

Imam Hussein (AS)

Iranian photographer Reza Mozaffarimanesh on Theatre Exposed 2021 panel

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — Iranian photographer Reza Mozaffarimanesh has been selected as a member of the jury at the Theatre Exposed 2021, an international theater photography competition that is organized in Ukraine.



Iranian photographer Reza Mozaffarimanesh in an undated photo.

Other members of the jury are Elena Martynyuk from Russia, Ariel Cecilio Lemus from Cuba, Yuri Mechitov from Georgia, Izya Shlosberg from the USA, Sergei Zhdanovich from Belarus, Elena Wilt from Estonia, Makinde Adeniran from Nigeria and Jovan Vidakovic from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

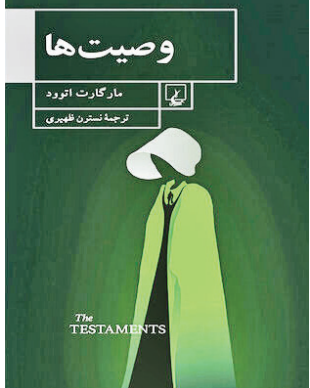
Theatre Exposed is organized annually in collaboration with ASSITEJ – the International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People – to observe World Theatre Day.

Both professional and amateur photographers at any age are allowed to participate in the contest, which is organized in the categories of art photo (scenes from performances, scenery, props, light, etc.), portrait photo (portraits of artists in images and behind the scenes, composers, directors, costume designers, etc.), movement in art (active movement, peak of the moment, street theater, immersive theater), retro photo (film/archival photo - presentation on the competition of the oldest theater photos from family archives, taken before the 80s in the 20th century), and the open category.

Margaret Atwood's "The Testaments" comes into Iranian bookstores

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — A Persian translation of Canadian novelist Margaret Atwood's book "The Testaments", a sequel to "The Handmaid's Tale", has recently been published by Qoqns Publications in Tehran.

The book has been translated into Persian by Nastaran Zahiri.



Front cover of the Persian translation of Canadian writer Margaret Atwood's novel "The Testaments".

"The Testaments" is a modern masterpiece, a powerful novel that can be read on its own or as a companion to Atwood's classic, "The Handmaid's Tale".

More than fifteen years after the events of "The Handmaid's Tale", the theocratic regime of the Republic of Gilead maintains its grip on power, but there are signs it is beginning to rot from within. At this crucial moment, the lives of three radically different women converge, with potentially explosive results.

Two have grown up as part of the first generation to come of age in the new order. The testimonies of these two young women are joined by a third: Aunt Lydia. Her complex past and uncertain future unfold in surprising and pivotal ways.

With "The Testaments", Atwood opens up the innermost workings of Gilead, as each woman is forced to come to terms with who she is, and how far she will go for what she believes.

In Atwood's dystopian future, environmental disasters and declining birthrates have led to a Second American Civil War in her "Handmaid's Tale".

The result is the rise of the Republic of Gilead, a totalitarian regime that enforces rigid social roles and enslaves the few remaining fertile women. Offred is one of these, a Handmaid bound to produce children for one of Gilead's commanders.

Deprived of her husband, her child, her freedom and even her own name, Offred clings to her memories and her will to survive. At once a scathing satire, an ominous warning and a tour de force of narrative suspense, "The Handmaid's Tale" is a modern classic.

Director Roqieh Tavakkoli says "Mehran" portrays Yazd people as hospitable in wartime

A R T **TEHRAN** — Director Roqieh Tavakkoli who has made all her movies in Yazd has said that her latest film "Mehran" presents the people of the central Iranian city as hospitable during the 1980s when many Iranian people took shelter in the city from the Iran-Iraq war.

The film had its Iranian premiere at Tehran's Farhang Cinema during the 33rd edition of the International Film Festival for Children and Youth, which is currently underway in Tehran and Isfahan.

Tavakkoli and a number of her crew members attended an online press conference held after the screening, which was arranged with a limited number of filmgoers due to the coronavirus pandemic.

"I really wished to be with you at the premiere of 'Mehran' but I could not be beside you due to the pandemic," she said.

She noted, "Whether about the war or children, I have always preferred to make my films in Yazd; I only intend to present the city of Yazd."

"It's a fact that Yazd was a safe haven during the war, and as a result, a large number of immigrants from across the country took



"Mehran" by Roqieh Tavakkoli.

shelter in the city at that time, and most of them continued to remain there after the end of the war.

"The people of my city were really

"Sun Children", "The Visit" competing in Rome film festival

By Manijeh Rezapoor

TEHRAN — Iranian films "Sun Children" by Majid Majidi and "The Visit" by Azadeh Musavi will go on screen at the 15th Rome Film Fest currently underway in the Italian capital, the organizers have announced.

The two films will be competing in the Alice in the City (Alice nella città), the independent and parallel sidebar of the festival for the younger generations.

"The Visit" is about a young girl and her mother on their way to visit the father in jail.

The Rome festival will come to an end with the awarding of winners on October 25.

"Sun Children" that is about child labor in Tehran won the Crystal Simorgh for best film at the 38th Fajr Film Festival in Tehran in February.

Ruhollah Zamani, the star of "Sun Children" was named the best young actor at the 77th Venice Film Festival, winning the Marcello Mastroianni Award in September.

Majidi is Iran's first director to receive an Academy Award nomination in the Best Foreign Language Film category for his "Children of Heaven" in 1996.

Majidi worked as an actor before directing short films. His first feature, "Baduk", premiered at the Directors' Fortnight in Cannes, and his second film "Father" secured Majidi's first major prize at the San Sebastian Film Festival.

He also won the Grand Prix des Amériques three times at the Montreal World Film Festival for "Children of Heaven", "The Color of Paradise" and "Baran". His film "The Song of Sparrows" won the Golden Bear for Best Actor at the Berlin International Film Festival.

He has since directed "Muhammad (S), The Messenger of God" and "Beyond the Clouds".

Musavi is an independent Iranian director and producer. Her documentary "Finding Farideh" won numerous awards at international film festivals and was selected Iran's official submission to the Oscars. She directed the short film "The Visit" based on her childhood memories.

Japanese scholar Emiko Okada calls Iran land of poetry, literature

A R T **TEHRAN** — Prominent Japanese Iranologist Emiko Okada has called Iran the land of poetry and literature.

She made the remarks in a webinar held on Sunday by Iran's Cultural Office in Tokyo to commemorate Persian poet Hafez.

Professor Okada, one of the first Japanese scholars to have received a Ph.D. in Persian Literature from the University of Tehran, said, "Iranians are familiar with poetry and remember the poetry of their great masters, especially Hafez, and this is really praiseworthy."

"When I was studying in Iran, the foreigners were not reciting poetry much but when I got to know the Iranians I found out that the elderly recite Persian poetry to



Japanese prominent Iranologist Emiko Okada talks on Persian poet Hafez at a webinar on October 18, 2020.

their children and make use of the poetry by great masters during their special annual ceremonies, and this was a great and a very

good experience for me," she added.

"Reading and memorizing poetry is part of the daily life of Iranian people, something that I have never seen in other parts of the world, and if you travel to this country you will find this and feel it very well," she noted.

"The Persian poetry, including those by Hafez, has profound meanings both in depth and appearance, and topics such as God and monotheism are beautifully illustrated in the poetry of Hafez," she mentioned.

About 150 Japanese scholars interested in Persian poetry and literature also attended the webinar.

Okada has been doing research in Persian Literature and Iranian studies over the past 50 years.

She has done her best in the dissemination of Persian culture, having translated the couplets of Persian poet Omar Khayyam from the original Persian.

She has been devoted to research and teaching students about the Persian language and its classical literature at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. She has also been enthusiastically working to introduce Persian classical literary works to Japan.

Okada was honored with a lifetime achievement award at the Silk Museum in the port city of Yokohama in 2010 during a ceremony held by the Embassy of Iran in Tokyo.

She also donated a large collection of her books about Iranian studies to Iran's Cultural Office in Tokyo.

"Valderama", "Israfil" to go on screen in Cannes

A R T **TEHRAN** — Two Iranian films "Valderama" by Abbas Amini and "Israfil" by Ida Panahandeh will be screened at Espace Miramar, a major performing arts theater in Cannes, France on Thursday.

The screening session will take place in a program named "Zoom Sur Le Cinema Iranien" (Focus on Iranian Cinema), Espace Miramar has announced.

Nasrin Mirshab of Dreamlab Films, the France-based international distributor of the two films, is expected to attend the screenings of the movies.

For many years, Mirshab has been developing very close relationships with Iranian cinema. She knows all about it and has forged links with filmmakers like Abbas Kiarostami and Asghar Farhadi.

Starring Hamed Alipour, Nafiseh Zare and Gity Qasemi, "Valderama" is about a teenage boy who is trying to obtain an ID card he's never had.



A scene from "Israfil" by Ida Panahandeh.

His wild mane resembles that of football star Carlos Valderrama, and the youngster has even adopted his idol's name. He has no documents, no family and no official identity. One day, after a fateful meeting, he is forced to leave town in a hurry. Now he has to fight to survive in the big city, Tehran, where he meets other people who live on the margins of society.

He has to find a way to get money and a passport if he is to do this.

Director Amini was selected as a member of a jury for the Generation section of the 70th edition of the Berlin International Film Festival in February.

Starring Hedyeh Tehrani, Pejman Bazeghi and Hoda Zeinolabedin, "Israfil" tells the story of Behruz, who has returned to Iran after 20 years to sell his properties and meet his fiancée Sara for the first time. But attending the funeral of his friend's son, reminds him of his painful past and lost love.

Persian bookstores promote "The New Cinephilia"

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — A Persian translation of Girish Shambu's latest book "The New Cinephilia (Kino-Agora)" has recently come into the Persian bookstores across Iran.

Lega is the publisher of the Persian version translated by Navid Purmohammadreza.

Cinephilia has recently experienced a powerful resurgence, one enabled by new media technologies of the digital revolution. One strong continuity between today's "new cinephilia" and the classical cinephilia of the 1950s is the robust sociability which these new technologies have facilitated.

Each activity of today's cinephilic practice – viewing, thinking, reading and writing about films – is marked by an unprecedented amount of social interaction facilitated by the Internet.

As with their classical counterparts, the thoughts and writings of today's cinephiles

are born from a vigorous and broad-ranging cinephilic conversation.

Further, by dramatically lowering the economic barriers to publication, the Internet has also made possible new hybrid forms and outlets of cinephilic writing that draw freely from scholarly, journalistic and literary models.

This book both describes and theorizes how and where cinephilia lives and thrives today.

Shambu is a cinephile and Associate Professor of Management at Canisius College in Buffalo, New York. He runs a community-oriented film blog named "girish" at girishshambu.blogspot.com, and co-edits, with Adrian Martin, the online cinema journal LOLA. His writings have appeared in "Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media", Artforum.com, Cineaste and in the collection "Cinephilia in the Age of Digital



Front cover of the Persian version of Girish Shambu's book "The New Cinephilia"

Reproduction, Volume 1: Film, Pleasure and Digital Culture".

In an introduction to cinephilia, Shambu wrote, "As a cinephile, the Internet is where

I find my mediators every day: on blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, magazines, journals and other sites."

"Placing myself in the path of these mediators, these waves of thought and creation and reflection that are swirling around me daily, I am swept up by them.

"Several times a day, they carry me, bounce me, from one image to another, one essay to another, one idea to another, one spark of curiosity to another. But there is more to this experience than simply surfing from one link to another in a state of perpetual motion.

"How does this movement – this daily proliferation of encounters – power one's cinephilia? What special affective charge does this experience hold? In other words, how is the experience of the Internet cinephile effectively different from that of a 'traditional' cinephile who spends little time online?"