



Zarif condemns Nice attack, urges sanity

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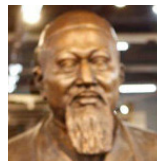
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France playing the new victim of 9/11

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Bust of Kazakh poet Abai Kunanbayev unveiled at Iran's national library

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British professor calls Macron 'juvenile boy' who has just heard of 'free expression'

By Amir Mohammad Esmaili

Rodney Shakespeare, a British professor and co-founder of the Global Justice Movement, tells the Tehran Times that French President Emmanuel Macron is just like "a pimply, juvenile boy" who has heard of the phrase "free expression" and is trying to hide French involvement in "precipitating terrorist attacks".

Shakespeare also says, "The West is

completely contemptuous of Islam and willing to demonize Islam because the West is arrogant, short-sighted, and determined to further Zionism."

The following is the text of the interview:

■ Why has Emmanuel Macron personally supported the reprinting of cartoons considered blasphemous to Islam and Prophet Muhammad? Do you think he intends to set aside domestic challenges by insulting Islam? ➔**5**

Rouhani inaugurates energy projects worth over \$795m in 2 provinces

TEHRAN – Iranian President Hassan Rouhani inaugurated five water and electricity projects worth over 33.4 trillion rials (about \$795.2 million) in two provinces during the 30th week of the Energy Ministry's A-B-Iran program, IRNA reported.

Inaugurated through video conference in a ceremony held in Tehran on Thursday, the mentioned projects including a wa-

ter treatment plant, a water transmission tunnel, a new unit in a combined-cycle power plant, were inaugurated in Tehran and Hormozgan provinces.

The water treatment plant with a capacity of 7,500 liters per day, and a 30-kilometer tunnel for transmitting water from Amirkabir dam to Tehran were some major projects inaugurated in the capital. ➔**4**

Culture ministry calls on artists to represent real image of Prophet Muhammad (S)

TEHRAN – The Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance has invited the artists to introduce the real image of Islam and the Prophet Muhammad (S) with their artworks in the response to French President Emmanuel Macron's defense of the insulting cartoons on the Prophet of Islam (S).

In a statement published on Thursday, the culture ministry wrote, "The ministry

condemns Macron's defense and calls it an improper and an anti-human rights act, and asks all the human rights organizations to react against this anti-cultural action."

The ministry expects the peace-seeking artists to produce a variety of artworks to introduce the real image of Islam and the Prophet Muhammad (S) to take the lead from the ill-wishers and the divisive people. ➔**8**

By Mahnaz Abdi
Head of Economy Desk

Iran planning to boost construction materials export to Africa

Africa with over 50 countries has been experiencing some partial stability over the past years, which has led to elevating the infrastructures and increasing economic activities in this large continent.

As statistics show, Africa has imported commodities worth over one trillion dollars in 2018, and a major part of which has been imported from China.

Although the African market is now offering a wide range of opportunities, Iran has not benefitted from this market so much over the past years.

"The development of trade with the African countries has always been a priority for the Iranian government. However, despite the implementation of various programs and agreements in recent years, we have not yet achieved the desired goals and the development of economic and trade relations with Africa due to numerous problems at different levels," Farzad Piltan, the director-general of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO)'s Office of Arabian and African Countries, has stated.

Therefore, in order to make Iran capable of benefiting from the capacities of African market, TPO re-evaluated different aspects of Iran-Africa trade and defined a new strategy to expand Iran's presence in the markets of African countries.

Among the Iranian products proper for export to Africa, constructional materials and equipment were found as some important ones, because recent development in the African countries has made them an appropriate destination for the exports of such commodities.

China, Spain, Italy, India, France, Turkey, Belgium, and Germany are the major exporters of constructional materials and equipment to Africa.

Of the \$620 million worth of Iran's constructional exports in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), just \$1.5 million has been to Africa.

The issue of boosting the exports of such products to Africa is currently pursuing seriously by the TPO's Office of Arabian and African Countries.

A recent measure taken by this office was holding a meeting of TPO's commodity-region desk on boosting the exports of constructional materials and equipment to Africa on October 12. ➔**4**

Anti-France protests spread globally

By staff & agencies

Anger is growing in Muslim nations against French President Emmanuel Macron - with new protests in Bangladesh, Iran and Pakistan. This comes after Macron promised to crack down on what he calls "radical Islam" and defended the right to mock religion.

Thousands of Muslims, from Pakistan to Lebanon to the Palestinian territories, poured out of prayer services to join anti-France protests on Friday, as the French president's vow to protect the right to caricature the Prophet Muhammad continues to roil the Muslim world.

■ India

By Friday afternoon, Mumbai Police removed the posters from Mohammad Ali road. Videos of people walking, cars driving on the posters have been doing the rounds on social media. Reports said the Raza Academy, a Muslim organization, was behind the protest.

Issuing an official statement condemning the killing

of a French teacher and personal attacks on Macron, the ministry of external affairs said, "We strongly deplore the personal attacks in unacceptable language on President Emmanuel Macron in violation of the most basic standards of international discourse."

"We also condemn the brutal terrorist attack that took the life of a French teacher in a gruesome manner that has shocked the world. There is no justification for terrorism for any reason or under any circumstance," it said.

■ Beirut

Hundreds of demonstrators marched from Beirut's Corniche al-Mazraa toward the French Embassy Friday, protesting cartoons many consider insulting to the Prophet Mohammad.

Protests kicked off just after Friday prayers. Demonstrators threw rocks at security forces, which had blocked the road at Barbir bridge, preventing them from reaching the embassy. Security forces responded by firing tear gas into the crowds. ➔**5**

U.S. protests: Nearly 1,000 instances of police brutality recorded in U.S. anti-racism protests

The United States is currently experiencing one of the longest continued periods of civil unrest in generations, after demonstrations sparked by George Floyd's death expanded to protests against black Americans killed by police and systemic racism in the country.

Retaliation by police against civilians and the press was widely documented in the first wave of protests, but as the protests have continued, so too has the violence. There has not been a single week without an incidence of police brutality against a civilian or a journalist at a protest in the U.S. since the end of May.

According to Guardian, at least 950 instances of police brutality against civilians and journalists during anti-racism protests have occurred in the past five months, according to data collected by Bellingcat and Forensic Architecture and analyzed by the Guardian.

The database shows more than 1,000 vi-

lations, including:

- * more than 500 of instances of police using less-lethal rounds, pepper spray and teargas;
 - * 60 incidents of officers using unlawful assembly to arrest protesters;
 - * 19 incidents of police being permissive to the far right and showing double standards when confronted with white supremacists;
 - * five attacks on medics;
 - * and 11 instances of kettling.
- Originally the data focused on attacks on the media and almost 150 incidents were identified by 2 June, but the collection was expanded to include incidents involving civilians during the protests too. The data is probably an undercount as it only contains documented and verified incidents. More than 200 incidents took place in Portland, where police spent more than \$117,500 on teargas and less-lethal munitions in a six-week period from late May, according to Oregon Live.

World Cities Day: COVID-19 brings communities into sharp focus

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN – The COVID-19 pandemic has further reinforced the key importance of communities in achieving sustainable development goals and for cities' action response, recovery, and beyond.

In a message marking World Cities Day, which is commemorated annually on October 31, UN Secretary-General António Guterres said that COVID-19 has brought into sharp focus the importance of close-knit communities.

World Cities Day is the seventh global cele-

bration since the day was launched in 2014 in Shanghai, China. The 2020 World Cities Day themed 'Valuing our communities and cities' underlines the importance of the local communities who are at the heart of building sustainable cities.

"With the pandemic often overwhelming public health and support services, communities have organized to keep their neighborhoods safe and functioning, engaging with local and national governments to support the official response," Guterres added.

In addition, with forecasts predicting that

around 68 percent of the world's population will be living in urban areas by 2050, up from the current 55 percent, the UN chief highlighted that communities will be all the more important for the rapidly urbanizing world to respond effectively to the pandemic and prepare for future infectious disease outbreaks.

In a separate message, Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director of the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), also called for utilizing communities' knowledge and potential. ➔**7**



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I Love Muhammad

In recent days, with the ugly actions and rude words of the French president in support of the French newspaper's malicious act, a wave of hatred and disgust has arisen against Emmanuel Macron and France in the Islamic world, and some countries have called for sanctions against this country.



Discover Neanderthal footprints at Iran's Do-Ashkaft Cave

TEHRAN – In many ways, Neanderthals are still considered a mystery for many people. Neanderthals existed for about 200,000 years longer than we modern humans (Homo sapiens) have been alive. Evidence of their existence vanished around 28,000 years ago – giving us an estimate for when they may, finally, have died off.

There are relics and fossil evidence from Neanderthals in several parts of the Iranian plateau, including Do-Ashkaft Cave, the subject of this note.

A Middle Paleolithic cave site, Do-Ashkaft Cave is situated north of Kermanshah, near Taq-e Bostan, about 1,600 m above sea level. Its entrance faces south of Meywala Mount, overlooking the national park of Kuhestan.

The main chamber of the cave is 23 meters deep and 15 meters wide. The floor is covered with debris from modern use as a winter campsite by sheep and goat herders. Next to the mouth of the main cave, there is a small spring with a regular flow even in warm, dry summers, which seems to have played a major role in the geomorphological and archaeological history of the site.

The site was first visited in 1996 by Iranian researchers F. Biglari and S. Heydari-Guran and during the following four years, a series of surface surveys were made at one-month intervals, which resulted in a rich collection of Middle Paleolithic lithic artifacts.

Exposed breccia at the entrance and some patches on the walls indicate lateral percolation of water into the cave sediments. In some places, this breccia is about two meters above the present floor. The presence and position of the breccia suggest that a substantial amount of the cave sediments may have been washed away. ➔**6**

It's the U.S. which has no option other than returning to negotiations with Iran: official

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The chief of the Presidential Strategic Research Center has said it is the United States that has no option other than renter the negotiations with Iran.

Hesamodin Ashena made the remarks in response to a commentary by the BBC Persian which said whether Donald Trump or Joe Biden wins the November 3 presidential elections, Iran will have no alternative other than negotiations with the United States.



“You are mistaken. It is America which has no way other than returning to the negotiation table,” Ashena wrote on his Twitter account.

Ashena added, “Now that they have understood that the strategy of ‘maximum pressure’ has failed and Iranians have resisted against inclusive sanctions, Trump or Biden will reach the same conclusion that Obama reached.”

The head of the Presidential Strategic Research Center went on to say that Iran is an actor and not a country that is manipulated.

“Iran is not a plaything, it is an actor,” he concluded.

In its commentary the BBC has claimed that Iran has eyed on the victory of Biden. However Iranian officials have repeatedly said there is no difference between Trump and Biden and only their approaches are different.

Certain analysts and diplomats also say the U.S. approach toward Iran is just a matter of tactics and not policies.

Nader Entessar, a professor from the University of South Alabama, tells the Tehran Times that although a Biden victory most likely will bring a degree of normalcy and predictability to American foreign policy, especially in terms of the strained Trans-Atlantic relations, Iran will not benefit much from the outcome of the 2020 U.S. presidential election.”

Entessar also says, “Biden will strengthen the traditional U.S. alliance system and thus the U.S. under Joe Biden will be able to exert more multilateral and international pressure on Iran than Trump has been able to do.”

Construction party says Jahangiri, Mohsen Hashemi have refused presidential candidacy

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The spokesman for the Servants of Construction Party Hossein Mar'ashi has said both Es'haq Jahangiri and Mohsen Hashemi have so far refused proposals by the party to field candidacy for the 2021 presidential elections.

Jahangir is currently Rouhani's vice president and Hashemi is the chairman of the Tehran City Council.

In an interview with IRNA published on Friday, Mar'ashi said his pro-reform party has an impressive economic plan for the presidential elections as it seeks a “professional” and “functioning” government.

Iran will hold its 2021 presidential election on June 18. Simultaneously, city council elections will be held across the country.

Mar'ashi also said the Construction party has taken steps for an active involvement in the presidential election and has drawn up a manifesto for the purpose.

The party spokesman said the most important characteristics and priorities of the their plan is to resolve the current economic problems, achieving double-digit economic growth and single-digit inflation, adding these are the primary plans of the party for the next government and president.

He said the party is in talks with other personalities in order to find a candidate that would be able to implement these ambitious economic plans.

Both Jahangiri and Hashemi are members of the Servants of Construction Party (Kargozaran Szandegi).

Iran is currently facing the most difficult economic situation since the 1979 Islamic Revolution as the Trump administration has slapped the harshest economic sanctions in history against Iran in violation of international law.

Most analysts believe that principlists will easily win the June 18 presidential polls.

Part of the Iranian society now considers Jahangiri as responsible for the current economic problems which have been exacerbated with the Coronavirus pandemic.

U.S. sells oil seized from Iran to Venezuela for \$40 million

The United States said on Thursday that it had sold Iranian oil seized on its way to Venezuela for more than \$40 million, according to France 24.

Washington announced in August that it had confiscated 1.1 million barrels of petroleum from four tankers en route between the two countries, which are both under U.S. sanctions.

“We estimate that in excess of \$40 million will be recouped by the United States related to the sale of petroleum from those four vessels,” Michael Sherwin, the acting U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia, told reporters by telephone.

The U.S. move has been described as an act of piracy.

Top officials were briefed on active threat against Pentagon leaders in potential retaliation for General Soleimani assassination: five officials

Reporters traveling with Defense Secretary Esper were not allowed to report visits to Bahrain and Israel until he left

U.S. military, intelligence and law enforcement officials were briefed late last month on a threat against the Pentagon's most senior leaders while they are on American soil, not just traveling overseas, according to five senior U.S. officials with direct knowledge of the matter.

Some officials said the briefings suggested the threat, which remains active, may be potential retaliation for the U.S. military's assassination of Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani in January, although the information provided did not draw a definitive link.

The briefings have included information that suggests the targets of the threat are U.S. military leaders who were involved in the decision and operation to assassinate Soleimani, officials said. The briefings have also included information about a list, compiled by adversaries, of the names of military leaders who are to be targeted, according to two senior U.S. officials.

Notably, Defense Secretary Mark Esper has been traveling in the Middle East and South Asia this week, but the trip was shrouded in even more secrecy than usual, suggesting a possible security concern. Reporters traveling with Esper were not allowed to report his visits to Bahrain or Israel until after he left each country, even though he spent two



nights in Bahrain.

The briefings of FBI, CIA and military officials on the threat took place after an incident on the evening of Sept. 22 involving a senior leader at the Defense Department, officials said.

The Defense Department leader left the Pentagon that evening in a government-owned black SUV driven by a member of his security detail, when an unknown vehicle immediately began to follow them, officials said.

The driver, identified as an Iranian national, was in a vehicle with Virginia license plates and trailed closely behind the official SUV for five to seven miles, at times driving aggressively, according to officials who described a report on the incident that was created by the Pentagon.

The Pentagon and the FBI disagree about whether it was a serious attempt to target a senior Defense Department leader, officials said, with the Pentagon raising more

concern. The FBI investigated the incident and determined it was not part of any larger threat to senior military leaders or connected directly back to Iran, officials said.

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U.S. officials could not account for the disparity between the Pentagon's view of the matter and the FBI's.

NBC News is withholding the name of the senior leader at the request of the Defense Department, which cited security concerns. Three officials briefed on the incident named the leader, while others declined to do so.

One senior administration official said the incident was “concerning.”

The security detail for the Defense Department leader who was followed last month when leaving the Pentagon eventually lost the trailing vehicle and changed routes, officials said. The Pentagon subsequently issued a Be on the Lookout alert, called a BOLO, and shared the information with federal law enforcement, officials said.

They said the alert included photos of the driver and the vehicle, as well as the vehicle's license plate. Briefings that officials received on the incident included information about the driver's Facebook and Instagram accounts, showing that he has friends in Iran and Afghanistan, two officials said.

Army official inspects northern borders, assures people of no imminent threat

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The chief of the Army Ground Forces warned on Thursday that enemies would be given no breathing space near Iran's borders.

Kioumars Heidari also said there was no immediate threat to border areas amid the ongoing war between the Republic of Azerbaijan and neighboring Armenia over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The brigadier general made the remarks as he inspected East Azarbaijan Province's Khoda-Afarin County in northern Iran that has played an unwilling host to some stray bullets from flare-up between the two former Soviet republics.

“The enemy must know that we will give [it] no breathing room near Iran's borders,” Heidari told reporters, according to Press TV.

Prior to the visit by General Heidari, the commander of the IRGC Force and Army chief Abdolrahim Mousavi had visited the border areas near the conflict zone.

Despite shuttle diplomacy, Iran has warned that it would not tolerate even accidental violation of its border security.

Despite the war between the two former Soviet Republics and sporadic security problems in Iran's northwestern and southeastern borders, Heydari assured that national borders were not under any threat.

“The people of Iran enjoy complete security thanks to the alertness of the Armed Forces.”

Iran has started a shuttle diplomacy to bring the bloody war between Azerbaijan and Armenia to an end.

“We had very intensive and fruitful talks in Baku and Moscow, and we are going to hold talks with the Armenian authorities all about finding a solution for peace,” Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Political Affairs Abbas Araghchi said.

“Now is a very sensitive time, and a decision must be made as soon as possible to establish peace and a path to peace must be opened,” Araqchi insisted.



He added, “The death toll is rising and this is regrettable. Attacks on civilians are not acceptable at all. We believe that the path should be opened for peace as soon as possible, and the initiative of the Islamic Republic of Iran can open this path.”

‘Yemen belongs to all Yemenis’: Iran

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian new ambassador to Sanaa Hossein Irlou, who is an ethical and career diplomat, will open a “new chapter in constructive relations” between Iran and Yemen, says the foreign policy advisor to the parliament speaker.

In a commentary on his Twitter page on October 28, Hossein Amirabdollahian also

said, “Yemen belongs to all Yemenis.”

He added, “Yemen is not the playing field of aggressors.” The Saudi-led coalition waging war in Yemen systematically targeted bridges, considered key for the survival of civilian populations, according to a report published on Oct. 28 by the Yemeni Archive.

Although the Saudi-led coalition claims that it adheres to international law with re-

gards to its military operations in Yemen, data suggest otherwise, according to DW.

More than 130 bridges have been hit by airstrikes between 2015 and 2019, according to data provided by the Yemeni Archive. In several of those cases, the bridges were “double-tapped,” a term used to describe a target struck once and then again hours later. It generally denotes deliberate destruction.

Democrats and Republicans just differ in strategy, says former Iranian diplomat

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Hossein Mousavian, a former Iranian nuclear negotiator and a Princeton University research scholar, says the Democrats and Republicans are unanimous in advancing their country's interests but they differ greatly in strategies.

Mousavian says this is also true in case of Iran, noting there is no difference between principlists and reformists in protecting national interest.

“Many in Washington think that principlists are different from reformists and moderates in Iran. I believe that Democrats and Republicans in American and the two political factions in Iran have common ground in guarding their countries' national interests but they have great differences in strategy and tactics for realizing the interests of their countries,” Mousavian said in interview with the Etemad newspaper just a few days before the Americans will decide whether to reelect Donald Trump or his Democratic rival Joe Biden.

Mousavian also believes that if Trump remains in the White House, his hawkish associates will try their best to wage a war between the United States and Iran.

On whether a Democratic or Republican president will be better for Iran, Mousavian said this question has been raised in Iran every four years since the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution of Iran, and, of course, this time around, the nature of that question has become different.

Trump illegally and unilaterally withdrew from the 2015 nuclear agreement and slapped the harshest sanctions in history against Iran. This happened despite that fact that the nuclear pact, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), was endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

Mousavian, who has been present in Iran's political arena in the past decades and is familiar with the details of the nuclear dossier, says today the two rival political factions in Iran agree that the United States “have entered a full-fledged political, economic and security war with Iran.”

Professor Hossein Askari, who teaches international business at the George Washington University, 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 highlights of the comments by Mousavian, who served as Iran's nuclear negotiator from 2003-2005, are as follows:

During the first tenure of [President] Barack Obama, international sanctions were imposed on Iran by consensus for the first time. Iran refused to implement a resolution of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on the suspension of uranium enrichment, which resulted in Iran's nuclear case being sent to the UN Security Council, which issued a resolution against Iran.

Again, Iran refused to implement the UN Security Coun-

cil resolution, and the council issued yet another resolution, and this trend continued until the end of the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

At that time, resolutions were adopted against Iran at the UN Security Council not by the United States alone, but by Russia, China and Europe as well.

Moreover, Barack Obama was not as strict as Donald Trump when it came to the enforcement of sanctions abroad.

The toughest sanctions in Iran-U.S. relations were imposed during the Trump era.

The designation of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps as a terror group and putting sanctions on Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was among the unprecedented vicious moves by Trump in relations between the two countries.

Third, people who come to power in the two political factions of Iran and the U.S. are important and influential. Among U.S. Republicans are individuals such as John Bolton, who seeks to launch a military attack against Iran to make the country collapse. There are also people like Senator Rand Paul, who supports the JCPOA and engagement with Iran. It is important what type of personality and with what team will assume presidency in the U.S.

Of course, the same thing applies to Iran, but it is not as important as the U.S. because president is the number one official in the United States, but in Iran the head of state is the Leader.

During the first tenure of President Obama, Secretary of State Hilary Clinton and the special Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross were on the UN Security Council and they were very close to Zionists. In Tehran, too, then President Mahmoud

“The cult of personality that Trump has, coupled with his unpredictability on the one hand, and the power that his son-in-law Jared Kushner has at the White House with regard to adopting Washington's Middle East policies and anti-Iran positions on the other, are among the major dangers of Trump's continued presidency. If this situation continues [and Trump remains president], it could lead to a military confrontation.”

Ahmadinejad was very radical during his first tenure. Under those circumstances, chances of reaching an agreement diminished. However, during the second term of Obama's presidency, John Kerry was the secretary of state, and Robert Malley served at the U.S. National Security Council. They both had a more moderate position on Iran and the issue of Palestine. In Iran, Hassan Rouhani was the president, and Mohammad Javad Zarif was the foreign minister. So, ground was more prepared for reaching a deal.

The cult of personality that Trump has, coupled with his unpredictability on the one hand, and the power that his son-in-law Jared Kushner has at the White House with regard to adopting Washington's Middle East policies and anti-Iran positions on the other, are among the major dangers of Trump's continued presidency. If this situation continues [and Trump remains president], it could lead to a military confrontation.

Today, both political factions in Iran and the international community accept that the U.S. has got engaged in a full-fledged political, economic and security war with Iran. The U.S. military attack on the car carrying General Soleimani, Iran's [retaliatory] military attack on the U.S. base [in Iraq] and Iran's downing of a U.S. drone are among the practical signs of temporary clashes between the two countries, which have been unprecedented in the forty years of their relations.

Trump favors a deal, not war; however, the lobby comprising U.S. neoconservatives, Zionists and Takfiri Arabs will keep pressuring Trump to drag him into the trap of war.

Their minimum achievement would be they will both ratchet up maximum pressure and at the same time block the conclusion of a possible deal with Iran.

Donald Trump has imposed sanctions on Iran that make a return to the JCPOA by Biden impossible. In view of this fact and the reality of political situation inside the U.S. coupled with the power that evangelicals and Zionists have taken in the U.S. if Biden really returns to the JCPOA without any preconditions, it will be a big deal.

Even if Biden becomes president, one should bear in mind that Israel's interests have been the central plank of the United States' West Asia policy over the past few decades, and this policy will remain in place for now, whether Democrats are at the helm or Republicans.

Another point which will not change whether Trump or Biden becomes president is that the U.S. seeks to change the ruling system in Iran while Iran seeks to expel the U.S. from the region.

It should be seen whether Trump will change or keep his evangelical-Zionist team. This cult is more catholic than pope and more extremist than Zionists who have taken the lead in the management of the U.S. in the Trump era. Personalities like Mike Pence, the vice president, and Mike Pompeo, the secretary of state, follow this ideology.

Naturally, negotiations with Trump as the murderer of General Soleimani and application of the cruelest sanctions against Iran will be much harder.

Hypocrisy par excellence

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — As French President Emanuel Macron intensifies his politically motivated efforts to stigmatize Muslims, especially the French Muslim population, analysts turn the spotlight on the West's duplicity in its dealings with the idea of freedom of expression.

This duplicity was on full display Friday when Instagram chose to side with Macron's Islamophobic campaign by blocking and then unblocking the page of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran who simply posed a question to the French youth on the French president's double standards over freedom of speech, with which he sought to justify and even support the blasphemous cartoon of the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo.

The blasphemy drama resurfaced in recent weeks after the satirical newspaper republished sacrilegious cartoon insulting the Prophet Mohamad (PBUH) simultaneously with Macron's renewed attack on French Muslims, whom he accused of "separatism." Macron went further to describe Islam as "a religion that is experiencing a crisis across the world."

The French president's anti-Muslim push took a dangerous turn in early October when Macron gave a speech to counter what he described as the ways radical Islamism infiltrates French society. He also expressed his willingness to "build an Islam in France that can be an Islam of Enlightenment." To this end, Macron introduced a plan that included training imams in France rather than continuing to import them from Algeria, Morocco, and Turkey in a bid to reduce foreign influence on French Islamic institutions.

Meanwhile, Charlie Hebdo, in a highly provocative move, republished a cartoon that helped inspire two French-born men to mount a deadly January 2015 attack on the magazine newsroom. The move



once again prompted a teenager hailing from Russia's Muslim-majority Chechnya region in the North Caucasus to kill a French history teacher in a Paris suburb. The teacher, Samuel Paty, who fell victim to the anger and hatred instigated by Charlie Hebdo, had displayed the blasphemous cartoon in his classroom.

Sensing an opportunity to boost his political standing, Macron chose to pour gasoline on the fire of hatred and Islamophobic sentiments, instead of extinguishing it. Speaking at a televised memorial service for Paty, Macron told viewers that France "will not give up our cartoons."

These remarks sparked a wave of anger among Muslims all over the world, including in France whose Muslims are facing the double whammy of the low standard of living and state-sponsored hatred against them.

"He was killed precisely because he incarnated the Republic," Macron said of Paty, adding, "He was killed because the Islamists want our future. They know that with quiet heroes like him, they will never have it."

Macron's support for the displaying of

the blasphemous cartoon, which really hurts Muslims to the core, is being justified as a move to protect freedom of speech. Earlier in September, Macron himself sought to justify the insults to Islamic sanctities by supporting the "right to blasphemy."

Freedom in France, Macron said, includes: "The freedom to believe or not to believe. But this is inseparable from the freedom of expression up to the right to blasphemy."

But critics point to France's double standards in its dealings with Islam. Regarding Islam, they say, France even supports what Macron called the right to blasphemy. But when it comes to sensitive issues such as the Holocaust, France, and the West in general, severely restrict freedom of expression.

The Instagram decision to temporarily block the page of Iran's Leader was a case in point, according to Bangkok-based geopolitical researcher Anthony Cartalucci.

"Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei's message perfectly illustrates Western hypocrisy where the West and the West alone gets to decide what is 'free speech' and what is illegal to say. Of course, if religious tolerance is a

serious issue for France, then laws protecting religion and preventing sectarian strife should be evenly applied to protect all groups," Cartalucci told Mehr news agency.

The researcher added, "Every society has 'red lines' that cannot be crossed in terms of 'free speech' - the Holocaust is a perfect example of a topic in the West that is off-limits from 'free speech.' However, the West enjoys crossing the red lines of other nations and groups of people when it suits them - and this hypocrisy was highlighted perfectly by the Iranian Leader's letter to the French youth."

Following Macron's staunch support for the insults to the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, has sent a short message to the French youth, in which he posed important questions about the status of freedom of expression in France.

Directly addressing the young people of France, the Leader said, "Ask your President why he supports insulting God's Messenger in the name of freedom of expression. Does freedom of expression mean insulting, especially a sacred personage? Isn't this stupid act an insult to the reason of the people who elected him?"

The Leader added, "The next question to ask is: why is it a crime to raise doubts about the Holocaust? Why should anyone who writes about such doubts be imprisoned while insulting the Prophet (PBUH) is permissible?"

Instagram moved to block the Leader's French-language page shortly after the message was posted on it. However, Instagram unblocked the page after facing a backlash from users across the globe. The incident was yet another example of how the West pursues a double standard over freedom of expression. Some believe that it selectively uses freedom of expression to advance its interests.

Azerbaijani president's assistant hails Tehran-Baku 'strong' ties

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Following a visit by a senior Iranian diplomat to Baku, a senior Azerbaijani official praised the "strong" relations between Iran and Azerbaijan.

Seyed Abbas Araghchi, the deputy foreign minister of Iran for political affairs, arrived in Baku on Tuesday night, at the start of a regional tour that included Azerbaijan, Russia, Armenia, and Turkey. Visiting Azerbaijan as the special envoy of the Iranian president, Araghchi pointed out that his trip to neighboring Azerbaijan was aimed at presenting an Iranian initiative to help end the war in the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Hikmet Hajiyev, an assistant to the Azerbaijani president who met with Araghchi, said the Iranian diplomat held a "very fruitful" talks with the Azerbaijani officials.

"Araghchi, indeed [held] very fruitful meeting. Azerbaijan and Iran have strong ties of friendship and good neighborly relations. Thanks for your condolences to Azerbaijani martyrs who liberate our lands from occupation and civilians who become target of Armenia's War Crimes," Hajiyev said in a



tweet after Araghchi left Baku for Moscow.

Araghchi himself noted that he has presented the Iranian initiative during a "positive and constructive" meeting with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev.

"Introduced Iran's Regional Initiative to Help in Ending the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict to H. E. Ilham Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan, in a positive and constructive long meeting," the deputy foreign minister said in a tweet.

The war in the volatile region of Nagorno-Karabakh began on September 27, when the military forces of Azerbaijan and local Armenians started to exchange fires along the contact lines of the borders. Since then, at least three ceasefires brokered by world powers were announced but none were implemented as the two sides continued to accuse each other of violating the ceasefires. Azerbaijan says it is fighting to "liberate" its "occupied" territories. On the other hand, Armenia asserts that Azerbaijan is launching a military campaign to occupy lands that belong to ethnic Armenians.

Iran has called on both sides to immediately put an end to violence and resolve their differences through dialogue. Iran also expressed readiness to facilitate such a dialogue.

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

Iran's peace initiative aims to establish ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh, Araghchi says

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Seyed Abbas Araghchi, the deputy foreign minister of Iran for political affairs, said on Friday that Iran is seeking to establish a ceasefire between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Araghchi, who was on a regional tour of many countries involved in the Nagorno-Karabakh war, arrived in Yerevan on Thursday night to present an Iranian initiative to help end the deadly Azerbaijan-Armenia war. The deputy foreign minister met with Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan on Friday.

Upon his arrival in Yerevan, Araghchi said attacking civilians is unacceptable and that "the path to peace should be opened" as soon as possible. He also noted that Iran's initiative is intended to pave the way for peace in Nagorno-Karabakh.

"We had very intensive and fruitful talks in Baku and Moscow, and we are going to hold talks with the Armenian authorities all about finding a solution for peace," Araghchi said. "Now is a very sensitive time, and a decision must be made as soon as possible to establish peace and a path to peace must be opened."

He added, "The death toll is rising and this is regrettable. Attacks on civilians are not acceptable at all. We believe that the path should be opened for peace as soon as possible, and the initiative of the Islamic Republic of Iran can open this path."

The deputy foreign minister went further to say, "Iran is in the neighborhood of both the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia. And both countries have their nationals living in Iran in peace alongside their Iranian compatriots. And our position has always been balanced."

During his meeting with Mnatsakanyan, the Iranian President's special envoy presented the Islamic Republic's initiative to the Armenian foreign minister to overcome the situation and establish a ceasefire in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and stressed that the Islamic Republic of Iran has the necessary capacity for cooperation, according to the Islamic

Zarif condemns Nice attack, urges sanity

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif denounced the Thursday terrorist attack in the French city of Nice that killed at least three citizens, saying this "vicious cycle" which is result of hate speech "must be replaced by reason and sanity"

"We strongly condemn today's terrorist attack in Nice," tweeted the foreign minister.

On Thursday morning, a 21-year-old Tunisian man, who arrived in Paris in early October through Italy, walked into the Notre-Dame basilica in the coastal city of Nice carrying three knives. He attacked people who have just arrived at the church to pray.

The attack was the second one attributed to Muslim attackers in a fortnight. The first attack happened nearly two weeks ago when a teenager hailing from Russia's Muslim-majority Chechnya region in the North Caucasus killed a French teacher in a Paris suburb after the teacher displayed a blasphemous cartoon disparaging the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

The cartoon, which sent shock waves throughout the Muslim world, was recently republished by the French satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo. French President Emanuel Macron has further exacerbated the anger among Muslims by supporting the cartoon and insisting on displaying it in public places, a move that was widely denounced in the Muslim world as promoting hatred against Muslims and creating fissures between Muslims and Christians.

During a memorial service for the murdered teacher, Macron expressed support for Charlie Hebdo, saying France "will not give up our cartoons." These remarks sparked a wave of outrage across the Muslim world, prompting the people of some Muslim countries to launch a campaign aiming to boycott French products. Besides, Muslim leaders said the freedom of speech should not be used to provoke Muslims by insulting a prophet who is deeply revered by about 2 billion people across the world.

Zarif said what is going on in France is a "vicious cycle" that is created by hate speech in the first place.

"This escalating vicious cycle—hate speech, provocations & violence—must be replaced by reason & sanity," noted the chief Iranian diplomat. "We should recognize that radicalism only breeds more radicalism, and peace cannot be achieved with ugly provocations."

Zarif also published a photo of a Quran verse praising the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

"And we have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds," the verse quotes God as telling the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

The foreign minister has previously pointed out that insulting nearly 2 billion Muslims for crimes committed by extremists is an abuse of freedom of speech.

"Muslims are the primary victims of the 'cult of hatred'—empowered by colonial regimes & exported by their own clients. Insulting 1.9B Muslims—and their sanctities—for the abhorrent crimes of such extremists is an opportunistic abuse of freedom of speech. It only fuels extremism," Zarif said in a tweet on October 26, after Macron supported the teacher's displaying of cartoons insulting the Prophet in his class.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has also taken a jab at the French leadership for instigating hate speech and violating ethics.

"The Westerners should know that the great prophet of Islam is loved by all Muslims and freedom-seekers of the world. Insulting the Prophet is a violation of ethics and an insult to all Muslims, prophets of God, and human values," Rouhani was quoted by the official website of the president as saying at a cabinet session last week.

The president added, "Surprisingly, those who claim to have culture and democracy encourage others to commit violence and bloodshed, though unwittingly."

Other leaders from around the Muslim world also called on France to placate its Muslim population by stopping all kinds of provocations against Islamic sanctities. Some Muslim religious and political leaders even accused Macron of instigating anti-Muslim sentiments for partisan and political gains.

SPORTS

Persepolis transfer ban lifted

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — FIFA has lifted the transfer ban of Iranian football club Persepolis.

Persepolis had been handed the transfer ban by FIFA's Dispute Resolution Chamber (DRC) in September over non-payment of dues to former coach Branko Ivankovic.



In a letter sent to the club, the world football governing body has confirmed that the Iranian team are eligible to sign player.

Persepolis have qualified for the 2020 AFC Champions League final, where the Reds will meet the East champions on Dec. 19 in Doha, Qatar.

Paykan officially part way with Veisi

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian football club Paykan have officially ended cooperation with Abdollah Veisi on Friday.

Paykan prepare to meet Sanat Naft on Nov. 7 in Abadan in their opening match of the 2020/21 Iran Professional League (IPL).

Veisi was named as Paykan coach in early February as Hossein Faraki's replacement and saved the team from relegation.

Paykan announced that Veisi is no longer the head coach in the club and they will appoint a new head coach as soon as possible.

Veisi, 49, led Esteghlal Khuzestan to IPL title in 2016 and has also worked at Sepahan, Naft Masjed Soleyman, Foolad and Saba.

Jafar Samiei named Persepolis General Manager

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — Jafar Samiei was appointed as Persepolis football club General Manager.

He replaced Mehdi Rasoul-Panah who was working as the club acting general manager from March.

Rasoul-Panah was forced to retire after a video of him insulting Persepolis player and coach went viral on social media.

Under his management, Persepolis club paid former coach Branko Ivankovic's debt and the team won Iran Professional League title for the fourth time in a row.

Persepolis also booked their spot in the 2020 AFC Champions League final.

However, Persepolis defenders Shoja Khalilzadeh and Mohammad Naderi left the team ahead of the Iran league and ACL final and it left the fans furious.

Samiei most recently served as Director of Security of Iran's Sports Ministry. He appointed former Persepolis defender Ebrahim Shakouri as the club's executive director.

Shakouri has most recently worked as Iran football federation secretary general.

Esteghlal victorious in friendly

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — Esteghlal football team beat First Division Chooka Talesh in a friendly match on Friday as part of preparation for the new season of Iran Professional League (IPL).

In the match held in Tehran's Azadi Stadium, Mahmoud Fekri's team defeated Chooka Talesh 3-0 thanks to goals from Siavash Yazdani, Farshid Esmaili and Arash Rezavand.

Esteghlal had tied with First Division side Shahrdari Astara 1-1 on Tuesday.

Sepahan, in another match, were held to a goalless draw by newly-promoted Aluminum Arak.

The match was held in Isfahan's Naghsh-e Jahan Stadium. The new edition of the Iran Professional League will kick off on Nov. 6.

Esteghlal, who became runners-up last season, will host newly-promoted Mes Rafsanjan in Tehran on Nov. 7.

Alireza Jahanbakhsh absent against Tottenham

Albion head coach Graham Potter has given an injury update on Davy Propper, Alireza Jahanbakhsh and the rest of his squad ahead of their trip to Spurs on Sunday.

Alireza Jahanbakhsh missed the 1-1 draw with West Brom at the Amex on Monday, due to a hamstring injury.

There was no place in the squad for Davy Propper, who has only just recovered from an achilles problem, which has led to him missing all of Albion's Premier League action so far this season.

But Potter is expecting to have a similar group available to one that played against West Brom.

He said: "Yes everybody is fit that we expect. "We had good numbers training this morning.

"We still have a couple more training sessions to go. "But I'm expecting the same group as the game against West Brom."

He then admitted that Propper could feature against Spurs, but it is too early for Jahanbakhsh.

He said: "Good he (Davy) is getting better and better, closer and closer.

"There is an outside chance of him being involved at the weekend. "It will come too soon for him (Alireza)."

(Source: Argus)

Iran planning to boost construction materials export to Africa

1 → The mentioned meeting was participated by a number of Iranian governmental officials as well as Iranian ambassadors to some African countries including Kenya, Ghana, and Democratic Republic of Congo.



Representatives of Iranian private companies, that are producers and exporters of the mentioned products, and representatives of transportation companies, as well as representatives from Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), and those from related unions and associations were also present in the meeting.

African countries' imports of constructional materials and equipment, the problems in the way of exporting these commodities to those countries, return of money, regular and competitive transportation, unknown African markets, difficulty of making connections to the African sides, and the high risk of presence in the African countries were among the issues discussed in the meeting.

Holding such meetings to explore and discuss the ways for the expansion of constructional exports to the African countries, and also close cooperation with the Iranian embassies in those countries, Trade Promotion Organization of Iran hopes to lay the ground for the country to benefit from the large market of Africa in this field.

TEDPIX loses 124,000 points in a week

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN**— TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), fell 124,000 points, or 9.5 percent, in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday). The index closed at 1.288 million points at the end of the previous week.

The indices of Abadan Power Generation Company, Iran Khodro Group, National Iranian Copper Industry Company, Mobarakeh Steel Company, Bandar-Abbas Oil Refinery, and Tamin Cement Investment Company were the most traded indices during the past week.

Since the week ended on August 14, the TSE, which is Iran's major stock exchange, witnessed drop of its main index every week, except for the week ended on September 18.

TEDPIX had hit the record high of two million points on August 2, and while it had been experiencing an unprecedented trend of rising for some months, it witnessed several weekly drops since mid-August.

Exports from Gilan Province rises 39% in H1

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN**— The value of exports from Iran's northern Gilan Province increased 39 percent during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21), according to a provincial official.



Farhad Dalqopush, the head of Gilan Province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department, mentioned herbal products, minerals, weaving and plastic products as the major exported commodities and named Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Afghanistan, and Iraq as the main export destinations of the products during the six-month period.

He said the exports also show a 28-percent growth in terms of weight. The official further announced that imports to the province has increased four percent in terms of value and 58 percent in terms of weight during the first half.

He named grains and beans, cardboard, pulp, chemical products, and industrial machinery as the main imported products and Russia, Kazakhstan, China, Azerbaijan, United Arab Emirates, Ukraine, and Turkey as the major exporters of goods to the province in the mentioned time span.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Rouhani inaugurates energy projects worth over \$795m in 2 provinces

1 → The second Gas Unit of Qeshm combined-cycle power plant with a capacity of 175 megawatts (MW) was also a major project put into operation in Hormozgan province, south of the country.

Under the framework of the A-B-Program, the Energy Ministry has inaugurated over 117 water and electricity projects worth 1.31 quadrillion rials (about \$31.1 billion) since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 19).

Based on the mentioned program, another 500 trillion rials (over \$11.9 billion) worth of energy projects are to be inaugurated and put into operation by the end of the year (March 20, 2021).



A-B-Iran program (the acronyms A and B stand for water and electricity in Persian) was initiated in the previous Iranian calendar year, during which the minister made 31 trips to various provinces for inaugurating over 220 major projects with a total investment of 335.6 trillion rials (about \$7.99 billion).

Since the beginning of the second phase of the scheme in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 20), every week several energy projects have gone operational across the country.

Back in August, Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian said that in the second phase of the A-B-Iran scheme 250 projects are going to be inaugurated by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2021).

Iran on verge of regaining its oil market share: Bloomberg

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — As one of the world's major oil producers Iran is expected to regain its market share, lost to rivals due to the U.S. sanctions, in case Joe Biden, who is leading in most polls, replaces Trump as the U.S.'s next president, Bloomberg reported.

Biden has signaled that under his presidency the U.S. is going to return to the 2015 nuclear accord Washington brokered when he was vice president under Barack Obama, the report said.

That means the economic sanctions that Trump has imposed on Iran could eventually be eased, opening the way for over two million barrels a day of Iranian crude exports.

Wall Street banks including Goldman Sachs Group Inc., JPMorgan Chase & Co. and RBC Capital Markets LLC see one million barrels per day (bpd) or more of Iranian crude supplied to the market next year, if Biden wins.

Iran has maintained its oil production levels despite the U.S. sanctions and according to the Iranian Oil Minister Bijan

Namdar Zanganeh, the country is fully ready to increase its exports to the pre-sanctions levels in a short time span.

Back in May, Zanganeh had said that even the coronavirus outbreak has not halted oil production in the country.

Oil Ministry's measures have been taken in four phases of prevention, readiness, confrontation and returning to normal condition, the official said.

"Within a few months after a Biden election, we expect some Iranian oil will be coming to market," Bloomberg quoted Iman Nasser, the London-based managing director for the West Asia at consulting firm FGE, as saying.

The latest reports on Iran's oil exports indicate that despite the U.S. sanctions the country has already risen its oil exports in recent months.

Data from TankerTrackers and two other firms indicated exports rose in September, although the figures fall into a wide range of between 400,000 bpd and 1.5 million bpd, Reuters has reported.



Pandemic negatively affects Sweden-Iran trade: envoy

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Swedish Ambassador to Tehran Mattias Lentz has blamed the coronavirus pandemic as the main reason for the decline in the trade between Iran and Sweden expressing hope that with the outbreak easing the two countries would resume trade at normal levels.

Lentz made the remarks in a meeting of the Iran-Sweden Joint Chamber of Commerce in Tehran on Thursday, the portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) reported.

The meeting was attended by officials and businessmen from the two sides including Lentz, and the Head of Iran-Sweden Joint Chamber of Commerce Abdolreza Rezaei.

Speaking in this event, Rezaei stressed the need to develop trade cooperation between the two countries, saying: "facilitating the issuance of business visas by the two sides will be a good step for developing the trade relations between the two countries."

"The Swedish embassy should be able to accelerate this process and support the

businessmen by providing better facilities for members of the Iran-Sweden Joint Chamber of Commerce," he stressed.

Lentz for his part noted that the Swedish embassy has always made every effort to facilitate the promotion of trade and the development of economic relations between Iran and Sweden.

"But the current problem is the closure of the embassy's visa section due to the outbreak of the coronavirus since March," he regretted.

"We hope that the coronavirus outbreak can be controlled as soon as possible so that trips to the European Union can be made; In that case, we will do our best to issue visas for businessmen; unfortunately, this is not possible until 2021," he said.

Sweden was one of Iran's top trading partners in Europe, which had reached a good level of trade relations after the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was signed between Iran and world powers, however, with the re-imposition of U.S. sanctions, the restrictions led to a significant decline in the two sides' trades.

Iran's cigarette exports nearly double in 6 months

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry's data indicates that despite a five percent fall in the production of cigarettes in the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21), the exports of the commodity increased by 97.2 percent.

Iran exported 71 million cigarettes in the first six months of this year compared to the 36 million in the same period last year, ISNA reported.

As reported, some 25.1 billion cigarettes were produced in the mentioned six months, which is a five percent decrease compared to the 26.4 billion cigarettes produced in the first six months of the previous year.

The decrease in production and the amount of consumption in the mentioned period which is estimated at 32.5 billion cigarettes indicate that smuggling also increased by 22.3 percent in the H1.

Smuggling of cigarettes is estimated to have increased from 6.9 billion cigarettes in the first six months of the previous year to 7.45 billion in the same period this year.

According to the Association of Manufacturers, Importers, and Exporters of Tobacco Products, 70 percent



of tobacco products are supplied through imports.

According to the mentioned association, 50,000 people are directly employed in this industry, while 100,000 to 150,000 are engaged indirectly in distribution, agriculture, and transportation.

Iran has an annual import demand of €300 million for tobacco products. On the other hand, this industry has an annual tax revenue of 40 trillion rials (about

Point-to-point inflation rate stands at 41.2% in Tehran Province

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Point-to-point inflation rate stood at 41.2 percent in Tehran Province during the seventh Iranian calendar month (September 22-October 21), according to the data released by the province's Management and Planning Organization.

It means that the families in Tehran Province have paid an average of 41.2 percent more for purchasing the same package of commodities and services in the seventh month of this year, compared to the same month of the previous year.

The point-to-point inflation rate stood at 41.4 percent in the country during the seventh month.

As announced by the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI), the inflation rate in the twelve-month period ended on October 21, which marks the end of the seventh Iranian calendar month, stood at 27.2 percent in the country.

The inflation rate has risen 1.2 percent in the mentioned time span from the twelve-month period ended in the

last day of the sixth month.

The SCI put the inflation rate at 41.3 percent in the urban areas and at 42.2 percent in the rural regions during the mentioned time span, and announced that the figure shows a 6.8-percent rise in the urban areas and an 8.1-percent growth in the rural regions.

Central Bank of Iran (CBI) in a statement in April announced that the annual inflation rate for the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021) is set to be 22 percent.

The statement published on the website of the CBI read, "Given the adopted policies and taken measures and also taking the country's macro-economic factors into account, the CBI believes that based on the realistic scenarios, the inflation rate in the current year will continue its downward trend."

Last year, CBI Governor Abdolnaser Hemmati had said, "Our goal is curbing inflation rate and no estimation shows an inflation rate of over 20 percent for the next year".

\$952 million).

Based on the Industry Ministry data, a total of 54.8 billion cigarettes were produced in the last fiscal year (ended on March 19), indicating a 13.7 percent growth compared with the year before.

Some 154 million cigarettes were exported in the mentioned year, registering a 2.7 percent increase compared to the preceding year.

Notably, Jordan and Austria were added to the list of Iran's cigarette export destinations for the first time in the year ending March 2020, according to Ataollah Maroufkhani, the head of Industries, Mining, and Trade Ministry's affiliate, the Iranian Tobacco Planning, and Supervision Center.

Iran has currently banned the imports of cigarettes into the country.

The decision to halt imports doesn't mean that no foreign cigarettes entered Iran; the Industries Ministry estimates that 10.03 billion cigarettes were smuggled into the country in the last fiscal year, as 65 billion cigarettes were smoked in the country during the period, which registered a year-on-year decline of 39.2 percent.

Govt. supplies over \$1.4b for imports of edible oil, oilseeds in 7 months

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Over \$1.4 billion has been supplied for the imports of unrefined vegetable oil and oilseeds in the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-October 21), an official with the Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry said.

According to Sadif Beikzadeh, this year, the government plans to allocate \$1.5 billion for the imports of crude edible oil, in which 1.9 million tons of oil must be imported in order to regulate the domestic market for this product, IRNA reported.

Noting that part of the country's oil demand is supplied from imported and domestically produced oilseeds, the official



specified: "out of about three million tons of imported oilseeds, 18 percent will be converted into crude oil, which can meet part of the country's needs."

Iran produced 810,000 tons of vegeta-

ble oil during the first half of the current Iranian year (March 20-September 21), registering a 15-percent decline compared with the similar period of last year, according to the secretary of Iran's Vegetable Oil Industries Guild Union.

"Over the same period and due to the economic sanctions imposed against the country, which has caused complications in the way of money transfer as well as forex allocation problems, oilseed imports saw a 51 percent fall year-on-year," Amir Houshang Birashk was also quoted as saying by IRIB News.

The official noted that, at present, 85 percent of the raw material for the production of edible vegetable oil is imported.

Most of the domestic demand for vegetable oil derived from colza, olives, and corn is supplied locally.

The ministry plans to achieve 70 percent self-sufficiency in the production of oilseeds in a 10-year program to curb the import of oilseeds and vegetable oil.

Alireza Mohajer, director of Agriculture Ministry's "National Oilseed Project", told Mehr News Agency that the plan kicked off in late 2015.

Per capita vegetable oil consumption in Iran is about 18-19 kilograms a year while the global average is 12 kilograms.

Iran's demand for unrefined vegetable oils stands at around 1.6 million tons per year.

France playing the new victim of 9/11

By Abir Bassam

The course of events has taken a violent and strange path in France. The caricatures of Prophet Muhammad were not published and republished in vain.

It seems that certain parties, whether for electoral or long-term strategic reasons, are trying to deepen the split between Muslims and France, and eventually with Europe.

Raising hate against Muslims is not new; it is a methodology that Europe has utilized during the Crusades. Even the similarities between the Crusade's main goals and what is currently happening in France and the West can be trapped in today's attacks on Islam and the Prophet. Its main aim was to turn the streets rides towards a new enemy and to win its support.

Mainly, this is what French President Emmanuel Macron is pushing towards.

According to many observers in Paris, Macron is unlikely to win the coming elections in October 2022. Though the date is still far away, there is significant competition with the rightist wing candidate Marine Le Pen. The economic strategies applied in France under his ruling have turned into a real catastrophe. During his presidency, the social security system and the health care system have dramatically retreated. France, like the rest of the European Communities, has witnessed the Yellow Jackets demonstrations' phase, but the French witnessed organized campaigns against minorities, especially the French of Nigerian, and Northern Arab African origins, chiefly the Muslims.

The real competition to win the right-wing has already started between Le Pen and Macron. Unfortunately, the slogan Macron is using under the pretense of the freedom of speech is raising controversy among the Muslim leaders and people. It looks like it has more to it than it reveals. It seems that Macron has a plan that includes justification for involving France in the conflict in the Arab region



and particularly in Syria and Libya, after his failure in Lebanon. It is clear after the U.S. offer to rebuild the area around the blasted harbor, it had succeeded in forcing its candidate Sa'ad Al-Hariri to head the government and re-launching the talks to the maritime delineation between Lebanon and "Israel."

The principle is to substitute the agent and bring back the authenticator; hence, the United States is back in the forefront again in Lebanon. So far, the electoral propaganda Macron has been counting on in his role in Lebanon has been in vain. Therefore, Macron must be convinced that France should be back in the game again. This can only be accomplished by military intervention in Syria, where he can claim a share in the pie. Therefore, if he continues his escalation on Islam, after the brutal Thursday attack at a church in Nice, describing terrorism as Islamic, instead of a radical terrorist, it is most likely to witness the French military intervention.

It is the easy ticket for the falling French President to present himself as

the French Christians' defender in the rising dilemma against the attacks on the faithful prayers in the holy churches or even the defender of secularism. Accordingly, another desperate president after the incident in Nice, in which one woman was slaughtered, and two others were stabbed. Donald Trump expressed fears that the U.S. might be facing such a kind of attack on its church prayers.

Unfortunately, the disturbances in France today represent a play in the lost time until the end of the American presidential elections. Actually, Macron needs to pay attention because he is being manipulated and weakened by the Americans who are busy today with the elections.

The tragic incident in Nice came after two main occasions: firstly, it came as the Muslims were celebrating the birthday of Prophet Mohammad. It is presenting the Muslims as bloody people who cannot celebrate joyful occasions in peace and harmony. And secondly, it came two hours after the United Nations declaration that journalists should be aware and stop insulting religious figures and icons.

The UN declaration came as a response to Macron's declarations on Islam after defending the press freedom to publish offending cartoons of Prophet Mohammad and the slaughtering of the French history teacher.

The timing raises speculation about further campaign intentions by Macron. It is not innocent for sure. It comes at a time the Arab countries are rushing to sign normalization agreements. It comes at a time in which the Palestinians are trying to save their rights in their own country. Macron's declarations draw the attention towards the wrong enemy of the Arab and Islamic nations, which are the Zionists in Palestine.

The campaign is clearly directed towards his present enemy and competitor in the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The two presidents are playing a dangerous game by recruiting the people as Muslims and anti-Muslims. Both of them are using the cartoon as a crane in their election's campaigns.

Finally, it is possible that Macron, especially after the Nice tragedy, is trying to establish that he was right, and the enemy is Islam. However, this enemy, in his case, is Turkey. The incident might become the French "9/11". It will provide France's justifications to spread its troops overseas, just like what the Americans have done after 9/11. Nonetheless, Macrons' destination will be Syria, where he can claim to be facing Erdogan and stop the flow of "Islamic" terrorists to France.

Consequently, this may grant Macron a piece in the Syrian pie by reestablishing TOTAL again as one of the main investors in the Syrian oil and gas fields. This might qualify him to win the coming French elections. In addition, he might be preparing the French ground to accept war announcement on Turkey. We have said before that the West not only is aiming to expel Turkey from NATO, its main aim is to divide Turkey into Islamic and non-Islamic European states to weaken it furthermore. Anyway, let's wait and see!

British professor calls Macron a 'juvenile boy' who has just heard of 'free expression'

1 → Q: Why has Emanuel Macron personally supported the reprinting of cartoons considered blasphemous to Islam and Prophet Muhammad? Do you think he intends to set aside domestic challenges by insulting Islam?

There are three reasons why Macron supports the deliberate causing of offense, including the printing of offensive cartoons.

Firstly, he is like a pimply, juvenile boy who has heard of the phrase "free expression" and thinks it means that he can now insult his parents, his teachers, the local mayor, and poor people in general as well as deface buildings with slogans in red paint. For fun, this pimply adolescent, when seated in a cinema, then shouts "Fire!!" and when in the ensuing panic people are killed proudly says that he was exercising his right to free expression.

Secondly, Macron will do anything to hide the fact that France, like the USA, UK, and Israel, is deeply involved in precipitating terrorist attacks because it welcomes and supports the philosophical and financial source of Wahhabi/Takfiri/ISIL/Daesh terrorism, which is Saudi Arabia to which the West sells arms.

Thirdly, the West supports the hideous autocratic Takfiri-encouraging West Asia regimes like that of Saudi Arabia because these regimes suppress Arabic democratic expression, which is particularly angry about the occupation and annexation of other people's lands in the West Bank and Golan Heights.

In short, the West is completely contemptuous of Islam and willing to demonize Islam because the West is arrogant, short-sighted, and determined to further Zionism.

■ Could the adoption of such an offensive policy be defended as freedom of expression?

All decent people know that you cannot slander other people; you cannot libel other people and that, in particular circumstances, almost anything can cause grave offense. However, the West, including France, is completely hypocritical and, on the one hand, chooses to suppress reasonable, true comment whilst, on the other hand, allowing vicious untruths. An example



of the former is to say that people who protest against Israel's expansionism are anti-Semitic (when in fact they are anti-Zionist, which is completely different), and an example of the latter is to deliberately accuse Shia Iran of attacks and beheadings, etc. when, in reality, it is Sunni Saudi takfiri Wahhabism (aided by the West) which is responsible.

■ How do you assess the West's double standards in the face of freedom of expression?

The West allows no fair comment on annexation, occupation, and the creeping genocide, Gaza, but it allows unfair comments (and provocative cartoons) to demonize Islam. The contradiction happens because of the West's commitment to an expanding Israel and its commitment to supporting cruel, anti-democratic autocratic West Asia regimes.

■ Why is Islamophobia increasing in Western countries? What relation is there between this offensive remarks and Islamophobia?

Islamophobia is now increasing because the West is on the verge of a huge economic and social collapse (whose causes started long before the arrival of the Covid19 virus), and there is now an urgent need to find a scapegoat, i.e., somebody to blame. The main cause of the collapse is the nature of the global financial system, but that system is so fundamental to Western society

that the governments, in a combination of arrogance and necessity, will never admit that the failings of the financial system are central to the coming disaster. Instead, they are preparing to blame Islam, and, for that, they actually want more and more horrifyingly violent (beheading, etc.) attacks.

■ What is the role of Zionists in such policy announcement?

Zionists control most mainstream Western media outlets, and so they greatly influence, even usually control, Western policy. In the coming collapse, the Zionists will double their efforts to blame Islam, including efforts to instigate Iran's major attack. Trump of America is deeply involved in the anti-Iran activity because Iran upholds the rights of the Palestinians. Biden and Harris will be the same. And, remember, there are at least sixty million Christian Zionists in America committed to Israeli expansionism.

■ Analysts blame mainstream Western media for giving wrong information about terrorism and its causes whilst ignoring the vast majority of Muslims who are trying to teach people about true Islam. What do you think?

It is time for Muslims to stop thinking defensively about Islam and, in a peaceful, immensely positive, and constructive way, point out that, nestling within Islam, there is a New Paradigm capable of bringing about progress and harmony in the world, including major progress towards environmental, housing and poverty issues, etc.

■ In your view, what are the appropriate responses to this offensive act?

New Islamic paradigm thinking actually implements the thinking of Imam Khomeini, who said that justice (in all its forms) must be exported, but that does NOT mean military aggression or the occupation of other people's lands. Rather it means identifying the false assumptions which underlie Western politics and economies (there are fifty-nine of them) and then starting to consider their opposites whereon a truly original and constructive Islamic worldview will appear.

Anti-France protests spread globally

1 → Buses full of protesters from Tripoli also arrived in Beirut shortly after demonstrations began. Crowds chanted slogans and carried Islamic flags, condemning France and President Emmanuel Macron and rejecting insults toward the prophet and Islam. Many demonstrators carried Hizb ut-Tahrir flags.

Friday's protests come after a knife-wielding man killed three people at a church in Nice Thursday, slitting the throat of at least one of them. The attack comes on the heels of another beheading of a middle school teacher earlier in October, by a man of Chechen origin. The attacker had said he wanted to punish the teacher for showing students cartoons of the Prophet Mohammad.

■ Pakistan

Demonstrations in Pakistan's capital Islamabad turned violent as some 2,000 people who tried to march toward the French Embassy were pushed back by police firing tear gas and beating protesters with batons. Crowds of Islamist activists hanged an effigy of French President Emmanuel Macron from a highway overpass after pounding it furiously with their shoes. Several demonstrators were wounded in clashes with police and authorities deployed more security forces to protect the embassy.

In Pakistan's eastern city of Lahore, thousands of worshippers celebrating the Mawlid, the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad, took to the streets, chanting anti-France slogans, raising banners and clogging major roads en route to a Sufi shrine. In Multan, a city in Pakistan's eastern Punjab province, thousands more burned an effigy of Macron and demanded that Pakistan sever ties with France and boycott French goods.

■ Bangladesh

A huge crowd of some 50,000 noisily chanting protesters also rallied in Bangladesh's capital of Dhaka, burning effigies of Macron and holding signs that read, "Say no to Islamophobia," "Stop racism," and "Boycott French products." Authorities deployed hundreds of riot police and used barbed wire to cordon off the country's main mosque.

■ Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, members of the Islamist party Hezb-i-Islami set the French flag ablaze. Its leader, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, warned Macron that if he doesn't "control the situation, we are going to a third world war and Europe will be responsible."

Deadly earthquake hits western Turkey, Greece

A strong earthquake struck the Aegean Sea on Friday and inflicted damage in both Greece and Turkey, where buildings collapsed, killing at least four people with many others trapped under the rubble.

According to Aljazeera, Turkey's health minister Fahrettin Koca said at least 120 were people injured in Izmir's coastal province.

People flooded onto the streets in the Turkish city of Izmir after the magnitude 7.0 earthquake hit, witnesses said. The wreckage of multiple-story buildings in the city's center could be seen with people climbing out to escape. Smoke rose into the sky in several areas.



Images on social media showed water rushing through the streets of Izmir from an apparent sea surge.

Izmir Mayor Tunc Soyer told CNN Turk about 20 buildings collapsed. The city is the third-largest in Turkey with about 4.5 million residents. Turkey's interior minister tweeted six buildings in Izmir were destroyed.

Ilke Cide, a doctoral student who was in Izmir's Guzelbahce region at the time of the earthquake, said he went inland after waters rose after the earthquake.

"I am very used to earthquakes ... so I didn't take it very seriously at first, but this time, it was really scary," he said, adding the earthquake lasted for at least 25 seconds.

The earthquake triggered a small-scale tsunami in Seferihisar district, Huseyin Alan, head of Turkey's Chamber of Geological Engineers, told state news agency TRT, warning people to stay away from buildings.

Resistance News

Israeli court rejects transfer of Palestinian hunger striker to West Bank hospital

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN**—An Israeli court has turned down a request filed by lawyers of hunger-striking Palestinian prisoner Maher al-Akhras for his transfer to a hospital in the occupied West Bank.

On Thursday, Israel's higher court of justice ruled that al-Akhras had no right to be transferred to a Palestinian hospital in the occupied West Bank, Palestinian Information Center reported.

Reacting to the ruling, the resistance group Islamic Jihad's Muhjat al-Quds Foundation for Prisoners accused Israeli authorities of endangering the lives of the prisoners and described the verdict as a slow death sentence against al-Akhras, who is now in his fourth month of hunger strike in Israeli custody.

Several international organizations have demanded the Israeli regime release Akhras, who entered the 95th consecutive day of his open-ended hunger strike on Thursday in protest against his administrative detention.

The United Nations recently urged Israel to put an end to the practice of administrative detention and immediately release Akhras.

Michael Lynk, UN special rapporteur on human rights in the Palestinian territories, called on Tel Aviv to end administrative detention, in which Israel keeps detainees for up to six months, a period which can be extended an infinite number of times, sometimes for years.

U.S. moves forward with sale of 50 F-35 jets to UAE

The U.S. State Department has notified Congress its approval of the sale of 50 F-35 fighter jets to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in a deal that could be worth \$10 billion, despite a declared congressional effort to secure the Israeli regime's alleged military advantage in the Middle East region, sources have said.

The sources said on Thursday that the Trump administration aims to send formal notifications for the deal in the coming days to Congress which can choose to pass legislation to block the sale.

Reuters reported last month that Washington and Abu Dhabi hope to have an initial deal on the F-35s by UAE National Day

celebrated on December 2.

The U.S. Senate Foreign Relations and House of Representatives Foreign Affairs committees have the right to review, and block, weapons sales under an informal review process.

The Trump administration has been working to advance Abu Dhabi's long-

standing request to buy F-35s after the UAE and Israel signed a normalization agreement at the White House in August.

Israel initially tried to stop the prospective sale but last week ended its opposition after getting so-called U.S. guarantees that Israeli military superiority would be preserved.

Macron 'a puppet in hands of Zionists': Houthi

The leader of Yemen's Houthi Ansarullah movement has strongly condemned Emmanuel Macron after he publicly defended publication of derogatory cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), saying the French presi-

dent is "a puppet in the hands of Zionists."

"Emmanuel Macron is just a puppet in the hands of Zionists. They pushed the French president into insulting Islam and the Messenger of God," Abdul-Malik al-Houthi said at

a televised speech broadcast live from the Yemeni capital of Sana'a on Thursday evening as thousands of people were celebrating the birth anniversary of the prophet across the country.

Online handicrafts expo to start on Nov. 3

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** – The 34th national handicrafts exhibition of Iran will be held virtually starting November 3, Pouya Mahmoudian, the deputy cultural heritage, handicrafts, and tourism minister, said.



It's the first time that the annual expo will be held online due to the outbreak of coronavirus, she noted.

Iran ranks first globally in the number cities and villages registered by the World Crafts Council (WCC), Mahmoudian said earlier this year.

China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next, she added.

In late January, cities of Shiraz, Malayer, and Zanjan and village of Qassemabad were designated by the WCC- Asia Pacific Region, putting Iran's number of world crafts cities and villages from ten to 14.

Shiraz was named a "world city of [diverse] handicrafts". Malayer was made a global hub for woodcarving and carved-wood furniture. Zanjan gained the title of a "world city of filigree". And Qassemabad village, which is nationally known for its traditional costumes, was also promoted to a world hub of handicrafts. Chador Shab, a kind of homemade outer-garment for women, was, however, the main subject for the WCC assessment for the village.

Iran exported \$523 million worth of handicrafts during the past calendar year 1398 (ended March 19). Of the figure, some \$273 million worth of handicrafts were exported officially through customs, and about \$250 million was earned via suitcase trade (allowed for customs-free and tax-free transfer) through various provinces, according to data provided by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.

Ceramics, pottery vessels, handwoven cloths as well as personal ornamentations with precious and semi-precious gemstones are traditionally exported to Iraq, Afghanistan, Germany, the U.S., the UK, and other countries.

Millennia-old coins recovered from grave robber in Tehran

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** – Iranian authorities have recently discovered 141 historical coins, which have been estimated to date from the 4th century AH (913 CE – 1009 CE) in Tehran.



The coins were confiscated from a grave robber, who with his accomplice, discovered the coins in the ancient Ebn-e Babveyh cemetery, in the city of Rey, south of Tehran during preparing a grave for a funeral, deputy provincial tourism chief Morteza Adibzadeh announced on Thursday.

These two, then halved the coins together, and therefore 141 other coins should be in the hands of the other grave robber, who is currently on the run, the official added.

He also noted that the objects, which seem to belong to the Buyid dynasty (945–1055) and Seljuk dynasty (1037–1194), were submitted to the province's cultural heritage department to be studied by the cultural heritage experts.

The culprit was also surrendered to the judicial system for further investigation, he noted.

Travel destinations: Mausoleum of Sheikh Shahab al-din Ahari

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — Sheikh Shahab al-din Mahmood Ahari was a famous mystic scholar of the 7th and 8th centuries

In existing sources, the construction of his mausoleum is attributed to the Safavid monarch Shah Abbas I, and the construction of the raw brick enclosure around it to Amir-Taymur Gurkan.

This building was restored near the end of the twelfth century by Mostafa Qoil Khan, the governor of the region. The author of Asar-e-Bastani-e Azerbaijan introduced Sheikh Shahab al-din as a descendant of Sheikh Shahab al-din Sohrevardi, whose ancestry traces bac to Abu Bakr.

He adds that Sheikh Shahab-ed-Din was the spiritual master of Seyed Jamal al-din Tabrizi. The present building of the mausoleum is attributed to the Safavid period, and some experts believes that parts of it such as the stone enclosure of the tomb and the eastern entrance of the building were built in pre-Safavid times.

The main ivan is flanked by a pair of massive minarets not taller than the Eivan itself. It is possible that the construction of the minarets was left unfinished, or that their top ends were demolished at a later date.

Discover Neanderthal footprints at Iran's Do-Ashkaft Cave

➔ 1 The breccia at the entrance is rich in fragmentary animal bones, charcoal, and flint artifacts. Some Middle Palaeolithic artifacts, including a few side-scrapers and a Mousterian point, have been recovered from this breccia.

Animal bones are extremely fragmentary and some are burned, suggesting human involvement in their accumulation during the Mousterian occupation. They include a fragment of the right mandible of an adult specimen and an upper third right molar of a sub-adult ruminant, both allocated to wild Caprine (sheep or goat).

Thousands of pieces of flint have been collected from the entrance area and the talus slope. Since there is no sign of later industries, except a few bladelets and an end-scraper, the surface collection seems to be unmixed and to represent atypical Zagros Mousterian industry.

Primary observations indicate that lithic artifacts were predominantly made from raw material procured near the site, a fine glossy opaque red and green material which seems to be jasper. Survey located outcrops of this material and its two other variants along the southern slope of Maiwaleh Mountain.

The lithic assemblage at Do-Ashkaft comprises tools, flakes, trimming flakes, shatters, and cores. An emphasis on heavily retouched pieces characterizes the assemblage. Such heavy reduction and utilization are typical of



the Zagros Mousterian assemblages. Single and convergent scraper (including Mousterian points) constitutes the largest percentage of the tools, followed by other scraper types, retouched pieces, notches/denticulates, burins, and miscellaneous artifacts.

To gather information about the distribution of other possible Palaeolithic sites in the vicinity. An area of about seven by one km was surveyed in 1999 and a total of 14 caves and rock-shelters with Upper Palaeolithic and

late lithic assemblages were recorded. The only probable Middle Palaeolithic artifacts found include a convergent scraper from an abandoned limestone quarry and a few artifacts including a Mousterian point in a geological section. This section and another one near Tang-e Kenesht were recorded and sampled by S. Heydari. His study provides a paleoenvironmental sequence for the region with a late Middle Pleistocene to Holocene age.

A study, published in the Journal of

Human Evolution in 2019, suggests that Neanderthals were roaming at the Iranian Zagros Mountain sometimes between 40 to 70 thousand years ago, it also refers to a human tooth discovered in 1999 in a cave called Wezmeh near Kermanshah, noting the tooth that previously thought to be modern human belongs to a Neanderthal child.

Until the late 20th century, Neanderthals were regarded as genetically, morphologically, and behaviorally distinct from living humans. However, more recent discoveries about this well-preserved fossil Eurasian population have revealed an overlap between living and archaic humans.

Neanderthals lived before and during the last ice age of the Pleistocene in some of the most unforgiving environments ever inhabited by humans. They developed a successful culture, with a complex stone tool technology, that was based on hunting, with some scavenging and local plant collection. Their survival during tens of thousands of years of the last glaciation is a remarkable testament to human adaptation.

In taxonomy, Homo sapiens is the only extant human species. The name is Latin for "wise man" and was introduced in 1758 by Carl Linnaeus (who is himself also the type specimen). Neanderthals are an extinct species or subspecies of archaic humans in the genus Homo, who lived within Eurasia from circa 400,000 until 40,000 years ago.

Remnants of Achaemenid fortress unearthed in northeast Iran

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** – Iranian archaeologists have discovered remnants of an ancient fortress, believed to date back to the Achaemenid era (c. 550-330 BC), during a survey held across Tepe Rivi in the northeastern province of North Khorasan.

"In a part of the urban structure in Rivi, we came across the remains of a fortress whose architectural plan is quite clear and good findings have been obtained from this building, and we believe that this complex was flourishing until the Parthian period (247 BC – 224 CE)," Mohammad-Javad Jafari, who heads the archaeological excavation, said on Thursday.

Archaeological research works at Rivi started in 2012. Since then archaeologists accessed remains of settlements from the Bronze and Iron Age, the Achaemenid, the Parthian, the Sassanid dynasties, and the early Islamic period.

Earlier this year, a number of historical clay stamps, estimated to date from the Achaemenid and Parthian eras,

were discovered in the ancient site. "The seals were found alongside clay urns in a large hall and the seals are imprinted in a variety of geometric patterns [depicting] plants, animals, and human figures. Studying the findings can yield valuable information on the economy, culture, and arts of the ancient societies," Jafari said.

"These stamps represent the widespread and complicated economic relations that people of the time had with other communities in such a way that made them bring together and store goods." Evidence suggests that residents of this area sealed the urns that were loaded with particular goods then tied them with ropes, the archaeologist said.

The Achaemenid Empire (550–330 BC) was the largest and most durable empire of its time, stretching from Ethiopia, through Egypt, to Greece, to Anatolia (modern Turkey), Central Asia, and to India.

The Parthian Empire (247 BC – 224 CE), also known as the Arsacid Empire, was a major Iranian political and



cultural power in ancient Iran. The Parthians largely adopted the art, architecture, religious beliefs, and royal insignia of their culturally heterogeneous empire, which encompassed Persian, Hellenistic, and regional cultures. At its height, the Parthian Empire stretched from the northern reaches of the Euphrates, in what is now central-eastern Turkey, to eastern Iran.

Historical ice storage in central Iran undergoes restoration

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** – A Qajar-era (1789–1925) conical mud-brick adobe traditional Yakhchal (ice storage) has undergone some rehabilitation works in the village of Hek, near the ancient town of Abarkooh, Yazd province, central Iran.

The restoration project involved covering and strengthening walls using cob material as well as replacing worn-out construction materials. Abarkooh tourism chief Hamid Moshtaqian announced on Friday, CHTN reported.

When there was no electricity, no refriger-



erators, and no appliances, people kept a huge amount of water next to the high walls

of Yakhchal, which cast a shadow that kept the water cool.

Water turned into ice during the wintertime. Then people cut the ice into many portable parts and put them in the ice house and covered the surface of the ice with special local grass.

This structure is built high to minimize the contact of warm air with the ice surface as the warm air floats upwards. The feature of the ice storage was essential to its functioning.

There were also wells behind the ice storages with a connective canal at the bottom of

the ice storage to the wells with a slight slope.

When people piled up the ice, a little amount of water remained under the heap of ice. If the water was not removed it would make the rest of the ice melt. By channeling the water into the well, not only did they prevent the ice stored in the ice house from melting, but also they had cold and tasty water during summer months when the weather went up to 40 degrees Celsius.

The historical structure added to the National Heritage list in 2002.

Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque to be restored once again

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** – Parts of the creamy dome of the 17th-century Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, a masterpiece of Iranian architecture in Isfahan, are scheduled to be restored once again as the low-quality rehabilitation works last year caused a lot of criticism by experts and authorities.

As the dome is not in a good condition now and there are some new cracks on it, it is decided to be restored once again using the expertise of top traditional restorers and academic achievements in order to salvage the monument without any damage to its glory. IRNA quoted provincial tourism chief Fereydoon Allahyari as saying on Friday.

While pictures were taken on a snowy day in Isfahan showed all parts of the dome but one covered in snow last winter, the media and experts blamed the flawed restoration work, which used modern waterproof materials that had damaged the dome's integrity.

Restoration and preservation experts criticized local authorities for not caring enough for the architectural masterpiece which was built 400 years ago during the Safavid Empire.

Authorities at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts admitted that there should have been a fault with the restoration. Experts said the repair workers could have used hydrated construction materials that contained polymer substances. Others said cracks on the dome that have been caused by previous restoration work

could be to blame.

The story, however, turned to larger fear, casting doubt over the fate of the majestic mosque and warnings over the danger of the whole collapse.

A budget of 30 billion rials (over \$700,000) will be needed for the new round of the restoration project, Allahyari added.

The official announced last June that some two-eighths of delicately floral tiles, which for centuries adorned the creamy dome of Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, had been restored and are ready to be reinstalled.

"This phase of the restoration project entails two-eighths of the dome's surface (the dome has been divided into eight portions), and its associated glazed tiles have been fully restored and are ready to be reinstalled."

In comparison to many mosques scattered across the country, Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque appears to be relatively unusual, having neither a minaret nor a courtyard probably because the mosque was never intended for public use, but rather served as a worship place for women.

Built between 1603 and 1619 during the reign of Shah Abbas I, the mosque was dedicated to the ruler's father-in-law, Sheikh Lotfollah, a revered Lebanese scholar of Islam who was invited to Isfahan to oversee the king's mosque (now the Imam Mosque).

The exterior panels boast collections of arabesques and floral designs that have become a signature motif of the



masterpiece. The portal itself contains some stalactite-type stone carving used to decorate doorways and window recesses with rich concentrations of blue and yellow motifs.

Inside the sanctuary, there are thousands of mosaics that adorn the walls and its extraordinarily gorgeous ceiling that features a series of shrinking, yellow motifs, itself a masterpiece of design. Photography is allowed but using a flash is not.

The huge Imam Square, best known as Naghsh-e Jahan Sq. (literary meaning "Image of the World"), is one of the largest in the world (500m by 160m), and a majestic example of town planning of the time.

Rig-e Jenn, mysterious Iranian desert

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** – For centuries considered a puzzling place within the Iranian Plateau, Rig-e Jenn is where even seasoned caravans and trekkers are reluctant to step in. The Rig-e Jenn is a vast area of sand dunes in the middle of Dasht-e Kavir, Iran's central desert, in the meeting point of the Semnan and Isfahan provinces.

The locals say that it may be a place where

evil spirits or 'jenns' dwell. Even today in the neighboring towns and villages some still hold this belief. Massive sand dunes, vast swamps, and scarcity of water in this so-called tiresome desert challenges even the avid trekkers. The wilderness also is home to dry riverbeds, crystallized salt flowers, salt planes, rare vegetation here and there and a hard and often dried and cracked mud surface.

Sven Hedin, the famous Swedish desert explorer avoided the area during his 1900s travels to Iranian deserts and in the 1930s, Alfons Gabriel only managed to cross the southern 'tail' of the desert on his way from Ashin to Aroosan. The rough terrain and harsh conditions have limited successful passage to only a handful of individuals.

As cited before Rig-e Jenn received its

name from the belief that the area was haunted by spirits and the devil. This belief was strengthened by, and probably originated from the fact that perhaps many had entered the desert and never returned.

Sometimes the notorious winds of Rig-e Jenn howl ominously, sounding like a supernatural wail that triggers even the most rigid skeptics' imagination.

Education ministry, UNICEF ink MOU to enhance co-op

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The Ministry of Education and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to expand cooperation for 2020-2021.

Iran's deputy education minister for international affairs Gholamreza Karimi and UNICEF Representative in Tehran Mandeep O'Brien discussed further cooperation in a meeting held in Tehran on Thursday.

During the meeting, Karimi expressed readiness to cooperate with UNICEF to improve the quality of education in compliance with Iran's Islamic approaches.

He discussed the activities of the Ministry of Education on combatting the pandemic and school reopening and asked UNICEF to provide the ministry with the best global experiences in the field of education.

O'Brien, for her part, also praised Iran's efforts in education coverage, especially 99 percent student enrollment and the elimination of inequality in the education of girls and boys; and announced readiness to cooperate with Iran in intercultural education for refugees and to provide successful global experiences on education.



Supporting the expansion of education for children with special education needs, improving the quality of education, learning in crisis situations (focusing on the COVID-19 crisis), providing technical support for the development and updating of standards and tools for monitoring water

and sanitation, preventing the coronavirus outbreak in schools, developing an action plan to identify and attract drop-out children, and keeping out-of-school children in the national education system in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor are among the most important areas of cooperation

between the Ministry of Education and UNICEF in 2020-2021.

According to the censuses conducted between 1976 and 2016, the Iranian literacy rate of urban areas has increased from 65.5 percent to 99.8 percent. At the same time, the literacy rate in rural areas has increased from 30.5 percent to 78.5 percent.

According to the statistics, about 800,000 who have completed primary education drop out of secondary education each year in the country.

Some 140,000 children are missing out on education across the country, Abdolreza Fooladvand, head of Tehran's Department of Education said in July.

Deputy Education Minister Rezvan Hakimzadeh has said that in the school year 1396-1397 (beginning Sept. 23, 2017), some 142,502 children were missing out on education across the country, while 31,910 of them returned to schools.

While provinces of Sistan-Baluchestan, Tehran, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, and Kerman have the most out of school rates, provinces of Semnan, Zanjan, Ilam, Qazvin, and Yazd have the lowest number of children not receiving education at schools, she added.

Habitat destruction, poaching endanger Asiatic black bear

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — The Asiatic black bear, living in southeastern Iran and known "mam" in the Baluchi language, has biological, aesthetic, scientific, and educational values, but is being pushed towards extinction due to habitat degradation and illegal poaching.

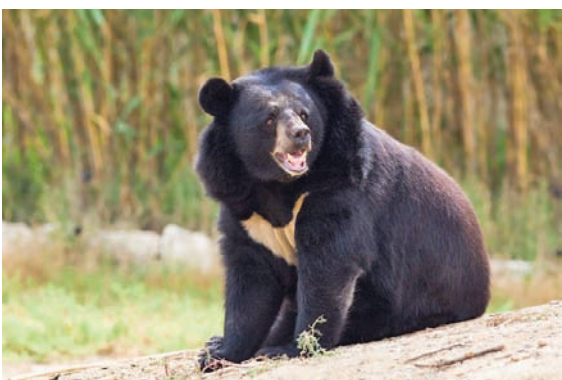
The Asiatic black bear, also known as the Baluchi black bear, lives mainly in forested areas, especially in hilly and mountainous areas at altitudes of 500 meters to 2700 meters and is found in the provinces of Kerman, Hormozgan and Sistan-Baluchestan with very low density.

The Asiatic black bear usually lives alone and is mostly nocturnal. It feeds on herbs, dates, olives, fruits, plant materials, insects and carcasses, and sometimes even hunts animals.

In some areas, it sleeps in caves during the winter and mates in late spring. The cubs are born in the winter and each female bear gives birth to between one and three cubs, and the cubs are milked up to 1.5 months after leaving the nest and stay with the mother for about two to two years. Females are able to reproduce at the age of three.

The Asiatic black bear is black, has a light brown muzzle, and a distinct white patch on the chest, which sometimes has the shape of a V. Its ears are bell-shaped, proportionately longer than those of other bears, and stick out sideways from the head. Its tail is 11 cm (4.3 in) long. Adults measure 70-100 cm (28-39 in) at the shoulder, and 120-190 cm (47-75 in) in length.

Asiatic black bears are similar in general appearance to brown bears but are more lightly built and are slenderer limbed.



ance to brown bears but are more lightly built and are slenderer limbed.

The black bear has adapted to living on a tree, and its sharp claws and limbs are positioned to help it climb the tree. On the tree, the branches are placed below them, and therefore the nest-like profiles are one of the important signs of their presence in any area.

It lives in the Himalayas, in the northern parts of the Indian subcontinent, the Korean Peninsula, north-eastern China, the Russian Far East, the Honshu and Shikoku islands of Japan, and Taiwan. It is classified as vulnerable by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), mostly because of deforestation and hunting for its body parts. Although largely

herbivorous, Asiatic black bears can be very aggressive toward humans, who frequently trap or kill them for traditional medicine.

Sustainable exploitation of biodiversity a must

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

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

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

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

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

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

World Cities Day: COVID-19 brings communities into sharp focus

1 → "We must recognize that communities must be at the center of designing their own, longer-term solutions and we must listen to them as their on-ground experience will help us build resilience and equity in the future", she said.

"Valuing our communities is an important first step towards the transformational change we need to build back better and build back greener", added the head of UN-Habitat.

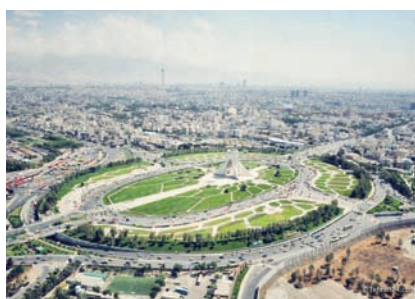
Dense cities more vulnerable to viruses, accidents

Some economists and social scientists believe that should not be returned to the current dense life because large cities are more vulnerable to viruses and accidents.

The analysis of various incidents and crises, such as the outbreak of coronavirus and biological warfare, shows that the most affected areas are densely populated, large and crowded cities, and what mostly remains will be villages and suburbs. Accordingly, experts believe that resilient cities should be developed and prepared for the future.

Resilience is used for cities, villages, and industry; in all three cases, reliance is defined from the perspectives of natural disasters, accidents, health, economic, social, cultural, physical, and ecological characteristics.

Social resilience addresses healthy and constructive relationships between citizens, such as different clubs for different ages, genders, religions, and parties, and cultural



resilience is a situation in which all social classes with different cultures in the city feel safe and secure.

Resilient cities protect human against crises

Resilient cities can produce as few crises as they can and protect humans against humanitarian crises and unexpected events such as virus spreads, environmental pollution, biological warfare, floods, and earthquakes, and minimize human mortality.

We should not forget that if coronavirus was controlled, crises such as air pollution and the environment would not have been controlled yet so that we need to take the opportunity to promote resilient cities.

Today, after gaining great achievements in industrial, scientific and technological life, human beings have suddenly been thrown into a period in which all the achievements and lifestyles that they had organized must be revised.

Water ambulances to join medical emergency fleet

Five water ambulances will be added to the current medical emergency fleet in provinces neighboring the Persian Gulf, southern coast of the country, head of Iran's Emergency Medical Services Organization Pir Hossein Koulivand, said on Wednesday.

Since air emergency fleet have been developed, the Organization is looking forward to develop the marine medical fleet, he said, adding that in recent years, there were only five helicopters in service of the Organization, which have already added to 40.

شناورهای دریایی به اورژانس کشور می پیوندند

رئیس سازمان اورژانس کشور با بیان اینکه در حال توسعه اورژانس دریایی هستیم، گفت: در حال حاضر اضافه کردن پنج فروند شناور دریایی اورژانس به استان های همسایه خلیج فارس در دستور کارمان قرار دارد.

دکتر پیرحسین کولیوند در گفت و گو با ایسنا، گفت: همانطور که ناوگان هوایی اورژانس را توسعه دادیم، در حال حاضر هم به دنبال تکمیل و توسعه ناوگان دریایی اورژانس هستیم. باید توجه کرد که در گذشته فقط پنج بالگرد اورژانس داشتیم، اما در حال حاضر با اقداماتی که انجام شده ۴۰ بالگرد و پایگاه اورژانس هوایی تامین و ایجاد شده که واقعا افتخاری برای کشور است.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ج

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 46)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

حرف اضافه‌ی "تا" = کتاب کار

In addition to being a counting unit, تا p 43, is used as a preposition for time "till", place "as far as, to" and counting "to":

time آنها از صبح تا شب می‌خوانند.
place اینجا از خانه تا دانشگاه می‌خندند.
counting همه از یک تا بیست نوشتیم.

درک = کتاب کار

● Exercise 1. Put in Persian or English. Correct the false ones:

۱. () دانشگاه تهران فقط دو کتابخانه دارد.
۲. () کتابخانه‌ها فقط شب باز هستند.
۳. () دانشجویان در کتابخانه درس می‌خوانند.
۴. () الینا دیروز در کتابخانه کار کرد.
۵. () او، بعد از دستور زبان، انشا نوشت.
۶. () انشای او در باره‌ی دانشجو و خوابگاه بود.

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The faithful are tied in kindness and affection together like members of a body, one's pain and hardship affect the others.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Manuscripts of Hafez embellish world's major collections of rare books

Part 3
In 1501-02, the Timurid prince Faridun b. Hosayn Mirza Bayqara produced a revision of Hafez's Divan. A copy of this recension is in the British Library, London. Khalkhali in his edition notes another in a private collection in Tehran. In the preface the calligrapher, Abd-Allah Morvarid, states that over the course of time and at the hands of ignorant copyists many errors and distortions had entered the text. Over five hundred copies of the Divan were collected on the prince's order; then he, together with a number of learned friends and boon-companions, set about collating and editing the poems, which were compared with anthologies and ghazals written down before the poet's death. Many poems were discovered which had previously been unknown. The resulting divan was given the title lesan al-ghayb, "the language of the unseen". Ahmad Golchin-e Maani, citing this passage (which appears on the margins of the Meykhana), observes, "It is evidently at this point that poems by other poets found their way into the... divan, and later caused trouble for scholars and researchers".

As Morvarid's statement makes clear, there were early copies of the (or a) divan. The earliest to be identified so far is a manuscript in the Biruni Library of the Institute of Oriental Studies, Tashkent, dated 1400-01, copied by Borhan b. Ghiaso Kermani for a certain Majd-al-Dawla wal-Din; Another (Topkapi Saray, Istanbul, Ravan Library, MS 497), dated 1419, was copied by the famous calligrapher Jafar-e Hafez (Jafar Baysonghori), possibly for Baysonghor. Especially well-known is the "Khalkhali manuscript," dated 1423-24, which was published by Abd-al-Rahim Khalkhali in 1927 and was the basis for the Qazvini-Ghani edition; it contains 496 ghazals, 29 qetas, 2 mathnawis, and 42 robais, but no qasidas. A number of anthologies and divans which antedate the revision of 907 were produced at the court of Hosayn Mirza Bayqara. One, dated 1489-90, copied by Soltan-Ali Mashhadi (d. 1520; one of the master calligraphers employed in the atelier of Hosayn Mirza), contains 211 ghazals together with other poems. Another, undated but bearing the autograph of Hosayn Mirza on its end flyleaf, also contains marginal notes by the Mughal rulers Homayun and Jahangir which indicate that it passed to the Mughal court and that it was used for bibliomancy or falgiri (divination); and, indeed, many copies of the Divan appear to have been prepared specifically for this purpose.

The manuscripts mentioned above are only a small sample of the early sources for Hafez's poetry. Over 80 manuscripts from the 15th century, at least 35 of which date from the first half of the century, have so far been identified. The varied nature and wide geographical distribution of these manuscripts gives some indication of the problems surrounding the establishment of a tex-tus receptus. The traditional approach has been to search for manuscripts closest to the poet's own time. But this approach, which is similar to that employed in editing Greek, Latin, and medieval European texts, assumes a "fairly uncontaminated textual tradition," a situation that does not apply in the case of Hafez. A recent effort to address the issue of filiation, also invoking traditional European methodologies, demonstrates the scope of the problem. Asghar Mahdavi, in a study analyzing seventeen early manuscripts, argues that "in producing critical editions of Persian texts... one ought to be able to establish, if possible, the relationship of each manuscript to the others with respect to descent and filiation in other words, to establish if possible a chain of descent for each manuscript," or to determine "whether that manuscript was unique". Mahdavi asks: "Is it possible, by comparing the extant early manuscripts, to arrive at an understanding of the original organization of Hafez's collected poems or not?" He argues that copyists, whatever their individual goals, would surely not have felt free to contradict an original source.

The "seventeen oldest manuscripts" (Mahdavi used only those available to him, most of which are mentioned above;) were painstakingly collated. Mahdavi concluded that the copyists' aim "was not to collect all of Hafez's poems;" what they copied constitutes selections, made for themselves or for someone else, "or perhaps a text compiled on the basis of scattered copies of Hafez's ghazals". Only ten of the manuscripts can be described as "Hafez's Divan," and of these several are defective. The oldest manuscripts (the 807 Dushanbe ms., with 48 ghazals, and the 811 Koprulu ms, with 36 ghazals) are considered the most reliable "from the point of view of age and/or of the persons who copied them"; four others (the 813 Aya Sofya anthology, the 813-14 Eskandar Soltan anthology, the 816 Aya Sofya anthology, and the 817-38 Ebrahim Soltan anthology), which were copied in Shiraz at dates relatively close to Hafez's own time, are said to have "a particular and limited value and reliability" because of their dates and their Shiraz provenance.

(Source: Encyclopedia Iranica)

Culture ministry calls on artists to represent real image of Prophet Muhammad (S)

→1 "We believe that the image of the Prophet Muhammad (S) will never be destroyed by these words and actions, while we know that in his lifetime, the prophet's enemies surrendered to the legitimacy of his words and his good behavior," the report says. Macron supported a French teacher's displaying of cartoons insulting the Prophet of Islam in his class early October. "France will never renounce caricatures," Macron has said, defending the teacher for "promoting freedom." The teacher, Samuel Paty, was killed by an 18-year-old Chechen assailant. Commenting on the attack, Macron described Islam as a religion "in crisis" worldwide, attempting to suggest that the assailant had been motivated to kill the teacher by the faith rather than radicalism. Macron's comments have drawn a wave of condemnation throughout the Muslim world. The Art Bureau of Iran's Islamic Ideology



An Arabic calligraphy featuring the phrases "Muhammad, the Messenger of God" and "Ali Is the Vicegerent of God".

Dissemination Organization has announced a plan to organize another Holocaust denial exhibition of cartoons in response to Macron's defense. "The French president has ignored the over 1.5 billion Muslim population of the world," the director of the bureau's Visual Arts Office, Masud Shojaei-Tabatabai, has said. "It's really obvious that we Muslims face a scenario promoting Islamophobia, hate-mongering and racism," noted Shojaei-Tabatabai who is also a veteran cartoonist. "In an exactly similar form, our program is to publish serious artworks challenging the Holocaust; for one insulting cartoon, we will publish ten cartoons in social media and other virtual spaces. This current will show how much Macron and his friends have tolerance for freedom of speech," he added. "We plan to retaliate through the language of the cartoon," he stressed.

Bust of Kazakh poet Abai Kunanbayev unveiled at Iran's national library

A R T **TEHRAN** — A bust of Kazakh poet and philosopher Abai Kunanbayev (1845-1904) has been unveiled at the National Library and Archives of Iran (NLAI) in Tehran. Kazakh Ambassador Askhat Orazbay and NALI director Ashraf Borujerdi also attended an unveiling ceremony of the bust at the NLAI Museum of Books and Documentary Heritage, the NALI reported on Wednesday. In a short speech, Borujerdi said that cultural communications with neighboring countries, including Kazakhstan, will help learn more about the thoughts of the poetry. "Kazakhstan enjoys great cultural treasures. Abai is one of the prominent figures of the country. He is like Ferdowsi for Iranians and we hope people get to know these poets better," she added. "A great personality like Abai encouraged us to install his bust at the library to reinforce cultural relations between the two countries, because poets play great roles in preserving intellectual heritage," she noted. Orazbay also expressed happiness over setting up the bust



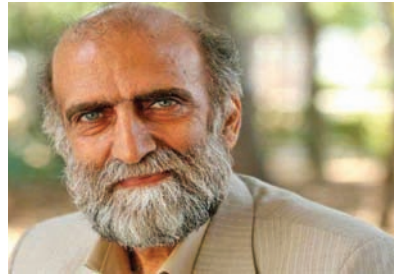
NALI director Ashraf Borujerdi (L) and Kazakh Ambassador Askhat Orazbay pose after unveiling a bust of Kazakh poet Abai Kunanbayev at the National Library and Archives of Iran in Tehran on October 28, 2020. (NALI)

of Abai at the library and called it great respect, because Abai was a great poet for the people of Kazakhstan who always

encouraged his people to learn knowledge. The ambassador added that he welcomes additional cultural collaborations between the national library and Kazakh cultural organizations. He also noted that the Embassy of Kazakhstan will try to provide the library with various books published in Persian, English and Arabic. Abai Kunanbayev was born at the bottom of the Chingiz Mountain in the today's Abai district located in the Eastern Kazakhstan region. He was a well-known Kazakh poet, a great thinker, composer, philosopher, the founder of written Kazakh literature, and its first classic scholar. The heritage he left his nation is rich in songs and poems, translations and prose. His translations of the poetry written by Russian writers and poets such as Pushkin, Lermontov and Krylov became the national patrimony of Kazakhstan. He also translated the works of Schiller, Goethe and Byron into the Kazakh language.

Karim Akbari, actor TV series "Imam Ali (AS)", "Mokhtarnameh", dies of COVID-19

A R T **TEHRAN** — Karim Akbari Mobarakeh, the actor of the acclaimed TV series "Imam Ali (AS)" and "Mokhtarnameh", died of COVID-19 on Thursday. He was 68. Speaking to the Persian service of ISNA, Akbari Mobarakeh's son, Navid, said that his father was infected with COVID-19 when he was working on the TV series project "Beheading Festival". Cast member Laleh Eskadari and a crew member of the project earlier tested positive for coronavirus, he noted. Akbari Mobarakeh began his acting career in 1971 with stage directors such as Ebrahim Sokhansanj and Abollah Akbari with the plays "Akbar, the Champion Dies" by Bahram Beizai, and "Dictation" and "Angle" by Gholamhossein Saedi. Most of his activities were focused on theatrical performances and he was cast in numerous plays by dozens of outstanding directors, including Behzad Farahani and Qotbeddin Sadeq. However, he was mostly renowned for the roles he played in director Davud Mirnaqeri's series "Imam Ali (AS)" and "Mokhtarnameh". "Imam Ali (AS)" was about the Shia leader's fight against ignorance after the



Actor Karim Akbari Mobarakeh in an undated photo.

demise of the Prophet Muhammad (S) and the events that led to his martyrdom by Abd al-Rahman ibn Muljam al-Muradi in the mosque at Kufa, Iraq. Akbari Mobarakeh portrayed Ibn Muljam al-Muradi in the series. He played the role of Ahmad ibn Shomait, a companion of Mokhtar Saqafi, in "Mokhtarnameh", which was about an uprising organized by Mokhtar Saqafi after the events of Ashura, the 10th of Muharram, to take revenge against the killers of Imam Hussein (AS). Akbari Mobarakeh also worked on a number of movie projects, including Bahram Beizai's "Travelers" and "Death of Yazdgerd".

Exground Filmfest to screen movies from Iran

A R T **TEHRAN** — Six Iranian films will be screened at the 33rd Exground Filmfest in Wiesbaden, Germany. "Family Relations" by Nasser Zamiri will compete in the main section of the festival, which will run from November 13 to 22. The documentary depicts a tragicomic family saga, in which all the members of a large Iranian family are against their father, Hajji Baba. Five films will also go on screen in a section dedicated to Iranian shorts. For years now, short films from Iran have been an integral part of the Exground filmfest. "The Visit", "Nightclub", The World's Last House", "Fibula" and "Elders" are the shorts from Iran. "The Visit" by Azadeh Musavi is about a young girl and her mother on their way to visit the father in jail. "Nightclub" by Davud Ranghaneh shows Arman who goes to a nightclub at the invitation of his friends. That night, something is going to happen. "The World's Last House" by Amir



A scene from "The World's Last House" by Amir Gholami. Gholami is a dark comedy about a person living in an isolated village in Sanandaj, Kordestan Province. He wants to solve the problems of the people in the village, however, another person decides to kill him. "Fibula" by Davud Rezai portrays Esmael, an unemployed man who has to provide a living for his mother and brother. How far would he go to get the money? "Elders" co-directed by Parisa Sedai-Azar and Ramin Farzaneh is about an elderly man who tries to escape from a retirement home. But after various vicissitudes, he finds the desire to return to live there.

"Badger", "Gabriel" crowned best at Berkeley Video and Film Festival

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian films "The Badger" and "Gabriel" have won the awards for best film in various sections of the 29th Berkeley Video and Film Festival in the U.S. The movie "The Badger" directed by Kazem Mollai won the grand prize for the best foreign feature at the event, which opens on October 31 and will be running until November 1. The film is about Sudeh, a 40-years-old woman who faces a strange incident right before her second marriage. Sudeh and her son Matiar live in an old apartment. One day, she hires a pest control company to solve the termite problems in the apartment. While the pest control company is working, Matiar is recording the procedures, as this is his hobby. The next day, Matiar gets kidnapped after school, and the kidnapper asks Sudeh to pay 10 Bitcoins for her son. Tremendous pressure is put on Sudeh, but the truth hidden beneath will surprise everyone.



Hassan Majini acts in a scene from "The Badger" by Kazem Mollai.

Directed by Yusef Kargar, "Gabriel" was selected as best foreign narrative short. The film also won the award for best cinematography in this category.

It is about a middle-aged man who lives with his son. His wife has been lost for some time. All the people are suspicious of her. One day news comes to him and he has to choose one: expediency or conscience?! Movies by filmmakers from across the world are being screened at the festival. "In the Strange Pursuit of Laura Durand" by Greek director Dimitris Bavellas was selected as best foreign road movie, while "Don't Know What" by Thomas Renoldner from Austria won the award for best foreign animation. "Final Moments" by American filmmaker Dax Phelan received the grand prize for best PSA and "Brovid 19" by Waylon Bacon was selected as best COVID comedy. "Bedlam" by American filmmaker Ken Rosenberg was named best documentary. The film revolves around the national crisis surrounding the care of people afflicted with serious mental illness through intimate stories of patients, families and medical providers.

Felicia Law's "Buildings and Structures" appears in Persian bookstores

A R T **TEHRAN** — A Persian translation of "Buildings and Structures" from British scholar Felicia Law's Stone Age Science series has recently been published in Persian in Tehran. Ali Khakbazan is the translator of the book published by the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA). "Buildings and Structures" is about Leo, who teaches his cat Pallas all about buildings and structures by applying his knowledge of science to their stone age world. Engaging

illustrations and stories provide a fun introduction to science concepts, including ramps, forces and loads, tension and more. Information boxes accompany each story to explore real applications of buildings and structures in the natural and designed world. The IIDCYA has previously published "Energy and Movement" and "Simple Machines" from Law's Stone Age Science series, which was published with contributions from Gerry Bailey and Mike Phillips. Children's author and international publisher Law is the managing director of Allegra

Publishing, an established and vibrant children's publishing company located in London. She is the author of 175 children's books, which have been published by a range of prestigious publishers worldwide, including Penguin Books, Harper Collins, Octopus, Andre Deutsch, Hodder and Stoughton, Kingfisher, Hamlyn, E.J. Arnold and U.S. based World Book Encyclopedia. Additionally, she has spent over 20 years heading up children's publishing companies and divisions worldwide, having served as an editorial director and publisher in

U.S., European, Arab and Chinese owned companies based both overseas and in the UK. Law is also a qualified teacher who founded a flourishing and highly reputable school in London where she served as the head teacher for 7 years. Subsequently, she established a children's bookstore in London. Her market knowledge and track record in education and in writing, as well as creating and marketing successful educational programs, lies behind the success of Allegra Publishing's dynamic and innovative publishing profile.