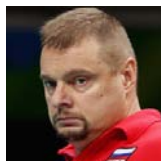


Tehran confirms feeding UF6 gas into IR-2m centrifuges *Page 3*



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Iranian food atlas could help promote gastronomy tourism *Page 6*



IRCS, Austrian Red Cross seek enhanced co-op *Page 7*

High hopes for COVID-19 vaccine in Iran



An Iranian researcher at a laboratory makes the V sign as the country has high hopes for developing a COVID-19 vaccine.

See page 7

Canada politicizing Ukraine plane crash: Iran's Baharvand

BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI
TEHRAN – Mohsen Baharvand, Iran's deputy foreign minister for legal and international affairs, says that Canada's unilateral steps and statements against Iran on the Ukrainian plane crash is hampering Tehran's efforts to clarify the truth.

Describing Canada's behavior against Iran as "strange", Baharvand tells the Tehran Times that the Canadian gov-

ernment has begun to take unilateral actions in order to "politicize" the plane crash incident.

"Strangely, the Canadian government has begun to take unilateral actions, and we see no good reason for that except that Canada intends to politicize the issue," the deputy foreign minister for legal affairs laments.

Continued on page 5

Iran exports 1st cargo from Bid Boland refinery

TEHRAN – Iran's Persian Gulf Bid Boland Gas Refinery, which started operating recently, has exported its first cargo of products, Shana reported on Wednesday. The destination for the 30,000-ton cargo has not been announced.

As the largest gas refinery project in West Asia with an investment of \$3.4 billion, the Persian Gulf Bid Boland project is now underway and will be officially in-

augurated in the near future.

With the project reaching its full capacity in near future, this complex is expected to bring the country \$700 million of revenue every year.

This project was recently nominated for the International Project Management Association (IPMA)'s Global Project Excellence Award at the energy sector.

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Resistance festival releases lineups for animations, shorts, telefilms, music videos

TEHRAN -- The 16th Resistance International Film Festival announced on Wednesday the lineup for animations, short stories, telefilms, and music videos of the official competition section.

The animation lineup includes "Blueet" codirected by Amaury d'Arcangues, Paul Calvier, Léa Rocton and Thomas Ruiz (France), "The March of the Missing" by Marcos Almada Rive-

ro (Mexico) and "The Peculiar Crime of Oddball Mr. Jay" by Bruno Caetano (Portugal).

"Blueet" shows a French soldier who took refuge in an abandoned house during the First World War. But when a plane started bombing the village, he started chasing and rescuing a child who hadn't realized the danger.

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High capacities available to boost technical, engineering services export

BY MAHNAZ ABDI

Iran's policy of increasing non-oil exports as a strong strategy to nullify the U.S. sanctions is not limited just to the products, while the country is also determined to expand the export of technical and engineering services.

The head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) says his organization is focusing on improving the exports of engineering and technical services to the neighboring countries as well as China, and India.

"Currently, the value of services exports in the world is at about \$5.77 trillion and we are trying to increase Iran's share of such exports by removing barriers in this area," Hamid Zadboum has stated.

According to the Association of Iranian Exporters of Technical and Engineering Services, Iran has the potential and capability to export technical and engineering services worth \$25 billion in a year.

Also, during a recent meeting held at the place of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TC-CIMA) for discussing the ways to expand the export of technical and engineering services, the representatives of the private sector in the construction industry said that Iran has the potential and capability to export technical and engineering services worth \$40 billion in a year.

Addressing that meeting, TCCIMA Secretary-General Bahman Eshqi said that in order to increase the export of technical and engineering services, an efficient triangle should be formed among the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Tehran Mass Builders Association, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to strengthen economic diplomacy and open the construction market of other countries to Iranian companies and engineers.

Ahmad Khoram, the head of the country's Construction Engineering Organization, for his part, emphasized his organization's efforts in this regard and said: "If Iran's exports of technical and engineering services are on the path of prosperity, we will see a leap which will consequently lead to the increase in employment in the country."

Continued on page 4

FM Zarif outlines give-and-take approach to revive JCPOA

TEHRAN – Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has introduced a give-and-take approach to help ease tensions over a 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers, conditioning Iran's return to the deal on the U.S. compliance with it.

"The U.S. is definitely in no position to set out conditions for us. As a UN member and a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the U.S. is duty-bound to implement Resolution 2231. If the resolution is implemented, the sanctions will be removed. Iran has announced that in that case, it will resume honoring its commitments under the JCPOA," the chief Iranian diplomat said. "Thus, first, if the U.S. meets its commitments under Resolution 2231, we will fulfill ours under the JCPOA. Second, if the U.S. seeks to join the JCPOA again, we are ready to negotiate the terms and conditions of Washington's membership in the deal."

Zarif made the remarks in an interview with the official Iran newspaper that was published on Wednesday.

He also said that the U.S. has no other option but to return to a nuclear deal that Trump withdrew the U.S. from on May 8, 2018. The deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), put limits on Iran's nuclear program in exchange for termination of sanctions. Following Trump's withdrawal from the JCPOA, Iran initiated a process of gradually reducing its commitments under the nuclear deal in five steps. Now, Iran says if the U.S. returns to the deal, it will also reverse these five steps and resume full compliance with the JCPOA.

"The U.S. has no other option but to return to the JCPOA and fulfill its commitments, as Iranians' resistance doomed the "maximum pressure" campaign to failure.

Continued on page 3

Images claiming to show pro-Trump rally are from 2016 in Cleveland, 2018 in London

Tens of thousands of demonstrators gathered Saturday in Washington, D.C., in support of President Donald Trump and unfounded claims of voter fraud during a "Stop the Steal" rally.

One viral post on Facebook claims to show the "million plus Trump supporters from all over the USA" who showed up at the event. USA TODAY requested comment from this user, and the post was subsequently deleted.

Elsewhere however, Facebook users continue sharing images of crowds claiming to be the rally. "Amazing turnout in Washington DC at the Trump Support Rally! MAGA!" wrote Facebook user Bonnie Carson. Five different aerial-view photos of large crowds gathering accompany Carson's post.

Some photos are from 2016 Cleveland NBA championship parade

A reverse Google search of the image reveals that three of the photos shared in the Facebook

post are from a 2016 parade when the Cleveland Cavaliers won the NBA Championship, the first professional sports championship for the city in 52 years.

One of the widely shared images claiming to show the D.C. rally was actually taken by Associated Press photographer Tom Withers on June 22, 2016. The image is captioned "Cleveland Cavaliers fans gather to watch a parade celebrating the Cavaliers' NBA Championship in downtown Cleveland."

A similar image used in the Facebook claim is also from the championship parade and is visible on the site of the Cleveland Neighborhood Progress.

The team and officials at the Cleveland rally estimated that more than 1 million people attended the city's first championship parade since the Indians won the World Series in 1948, the Associated Press reported.

Golden chance ahead of Persepolis

BY FARROKH HESABI

TEHRAN – The final match of the 2020 Asian Football Confederation (AFC) is a great opportunity for Iranian club, Persepolis, to secure considerable prize money, which will help solve their financial problems.

The Reds will participate in the AFC Champions League 2020 final match on Dec. 19. Their opponents have yet to be determined. The remaining 16 teams from East Asia will compete in Qatar, and the winners will join Persepolis in the final showpiece. Having recently experienced different financial

problems and other controversial issues regarding the management of the club, the prize money of the AFC Champions League tournament is so crucial for the six-time winners of the Iranian Professional League (IPL).

By reaching the final match, Persepolis have already earned about \$800,000. If Persepolis finish as the runners-up, they will get \$2m, and in case of winning the trophy, they will be rewarded with \$4m plus a \$120,000 travel expenses.

Winning the 2020 ACL will make Persepolis the

first Iranian team to win the prestigious Champions League. It will also secure at least \$2.5m more for the Tehran based team as they will represent Asia at the 2020 FIFA Club World Cup in Qatar.

According to news sources, the FIFA Club World Cup's winning team will receive \$6 million prize money and extra bonus money \$4 million. The runners-up will receive their share of \$5 million. Teams who would get eliminated in the early rounds will receive their share of \$2.5 million.

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© ISNA/ Pouria Pakizah

Flocks of migratory birds land at Aq-Gol wetland

Aq-Gol wetland in the west-central city of Malayer is hosting a large number of colorful migratory birds such as flamingos, ducks, herons, geese, cormorant storks, cranes, common shelducks, avocets, and gulls.

The wetland has become one of the wintering grounds for birds due to favorable water resources and nutrition.

Some of them nest in the area and spend the whole winter there, while some others migrate to south after a short period.

Trump will continue political civil war to maintain his relevance: analyst

BY AMIR MOHAMMAD ESMAEILI

TEHRAN - Jim W. Dean, the managing editor of Veterans Today, tells the Tehran Times that Donald Trump is going to continue the American political civil war to maintain his relevance, and also to help protect himself from prosecution.

"There are many, even in U.S. intelligence, who have considered him a national security threat, and who fully expect him to profit from selling U.S. classified material for his personal interest and attempt to rebuild himself after he leaves office as the ideology enforcer of the Republican party, as a big Mafia Don, even those running in primary elections must kneel and kiss the ring of 'Don' Trump," notes Dean, who comes from an old military family going back to the American Revolution.

Here is the full text of the interview:

How do you analyze the U.S. presidential election and its following consequences?

A: It is both a relief and a torment. The thought of four more years of an autocratic Trump regime would have put 79 million Americans into a depression. And not the least of that would be because we have been looking forward to his losing his presidential immunity so the legal cases, including criminal ones, can proceed against him and his family.

Hundreds of retired ex-prosecutors are ready to assist in this process, people who have served both Republican and Democratic administrations. They are joined in the belief that Trump should be made an example of to dissuade any future autocratic new president thinking that he can follow in Trump's shoes.

Continued on page 5

Iran should boost domestic capabilities to change U.S. behavior: Ghalibaf

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf says Iran should improve its domestic capabilities to force the U.S. to change its approach toward the country.

"Rest assured that the U.S.'s approach toward Iran will not change with the changing of that country's president," Ghalibaf said on Wednesday, according to IRNA.



"Therefore, in order to change the U.S. approach, we should improve our domestic capabilities," he said. "Today, there is this capacity in the country, and definitely, without producing power and progressing in the field of economy as the top priority, this change is not possible."

He labeled the U.S. as Iran's main enemy, citing Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei who has said that the only path to resist the U.S. pressure is working hard. "Therefore, we should work hard for the country's progress and development," added Ghalibaf.

The outgoing U.S. President Donald Trump has pursued the "maximum pressure" policy against Iran in order to force Tehran to succumb to its demands. The policy was implemented after Trump unilaterally pulled Washington out of the historic nuclear agreement between Iran and world powers.

Washington then slapped several rounds of harsh sanctions on Iran, claiming it was pursuing to negotiate a better deal with Iran than the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which was clinched under his predecessor Barack Obama.

Meanwhile, U.S. President-elect Joe Biden has voiced support for the JCPOA, saying his administration will rejoin the deal.

In response, the Trump administration has been trying to do whatever it can, after Trump's defeat in the election, to make it more difficult for the Biden administration to return to the JCPOA.

"But a lot of these sanctions are going to actually be similar to things that have already been done, with new names on them. But the underlying sanctions, I think, are not fundamentally going to change," Wendy Sherman, the former U.S. nuclear negotiator with Iran, said in an interview with the PRI published last Wednesday.

"So, a Biden-Harris administration is going to have to look at where we are. The president-elect has said he wants to reenter negotiations and build back better. So this will be a very complicated puzzle," she said.

■ 'Iran not in contact with Biden team'

On Wednesday, presidential chief of staff Mahmoud Vaezi said the Rouhani administration is not in contact with the incoming Biden administration.

"The new U.S. administration will take office in two months," Vaezi told reporters on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting. "We do not have enough communication to evaluate the talks."

"The Foreign Ministry is ready to join negotiations with different scenarios provided that they join negotiations," added Vaezi, who was the second-ranking person in the Foreign Ministry during the Hashemi Rafsanjani administration.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry has also dismissed speculation that it was in contact with the Biden team before or after the U.S. presidential election, saying Iran will not be in contact with anyone outside of issues completely related to the nuclear pact.

Iran awaits the formation of the new administration in the U.S. to see what will happen, Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said on November 9.

"We should see where the measures of the U.S. will lead to," he said. "It is measures that matter not words, analyses, and speculations."

Afghanistan expresses appreciation for Iran's support for peace

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The Acting Foreign Minister of Afghanistan, Mohammad Haneef Atmar, has appreciated Iran's support for the peace process in his country during a meeting with Ebrahim Taherian Fard, the special envoy of Iran's foreign minister for Afghanistan.



During the meeting which was held in Kabul on Tuesday, the Iranian envoy expressed Iran's support for the Afghan peace talks, calling the talks "important."

Atmar, in return, expressed appreciation for Iran's "brotherly and sincere" support for the people and government of Afghanistan, according to a statement issued by Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry. The chief Afghan diplomat also briefed the Iranian envoy on the latest developments of the Afghan peace process.

Tehran censures Riyadh for resorting to classic demagoguery methods

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to the Vienna-based international organizations, has responded to Riyadh's anti-Iran rhetoric, saying scapegoating and fearmongering are two common and classic methods used by demagogues.

"If you want to pursue a nuclear weapon program, or you are seeking for an excuse to justify your lack of cooperation with the IAEA or your outdated safeguard system, at least have the courage to admit it and pay the price for it, don't blame your wrongdoings on others by lies," Gharibabadi tweeted on Wednesday.

It came after Saudi Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Adel Al-Jubeir claimed the kingdom reserves the right to arm itself with nuclear weapons if Iran cannot be stopped from making one.

"It's definitely an option," al-Jubeir told the DPA news agency in a recent interview. If Iran becomes a nuclear power, he said, more countries would follow suit.

"And Saudi Arabia has made it very clear, that it will do everything it can to protect its people and to protect its territories."

The Islamic Republic has repeatedly said that it has never sought and will never seek to build nuclear weapons. The decision, Tehran says, is based on a fatwa (religious decree) issued by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The



fatwa bans the production, possession and stockpiling of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

In order to address the commotion created by the United States and its allies over the Islamic Republic's nuclear program, Tehran signed a nuclear deal with six world powers in 2015. Under the deal, Iran agreed to limit its nuclear activities in exchange for a termination of sanctions.

However, President Donald Trump withdrew the U.S. from the deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of

Action (JCPOA), in May 2018 and imposed the harshest sanctions in history against Iran in line with his "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran.

Iran has also signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) — whose aim is to prevent the spread of nuclear arms and weapons technology — in July 1968 and ratified it in February 1970.

"We believe the Iranians have only responded to pressure," claimed al-Jubeir.

Asked what changes he anticipates could come once U.S. President-elect Joe Biden

takes charge in January, he said, "We will have to see."

Biden has signaled that he will reenter the United States into the JCPOA, and criticized Trump for withdrawing from the deal in a unilateral move.

Last week, Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud urged the world to take a "decisive stance" to address Iran's efforts to develop its nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

"The kingdom stresses the dangers of Iran's regional project, its interference in other countries, its fostering of terrorism, its fanning the flames of sectarianism and calls for a decisive stance from the international community against Iran that guarantees a drastic handling of its efforts to obtain weapons of mass destruction and develop its ballistic missiles program," the king said in an annual address to a government advisory body, according to Al Jazeera.

In response, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh slammed Riyadh for "baseless allegations and hate-mongering", urging Saudi Arabia to change course to avoid becoming further isolated.

"As long as Saudi rulers do not change course and fix their wrong approach, there will be no prospects for improvement of Saudi Arabia's isolation even in the Persian Gulf region," Khatibzadeh said at a press conference on Monday.

Biden knows he will need to restart negotiations with Iran: Foreign Affairs

In a commentary published on November 17, Foreign Affairs said it the incoming Joe Biden administration that needed to resume talks with Iran over the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The commentary, written by Jamsheed K. Choksy and Carol E. B. Choksy, says Tehran may be less open than ever to threats or persuasions.

Following is an excerpt of the article titled "China and Russia Have Iran's Back":

Tehran has begun to see the benefits of its strengthened relationships with China and Russia. In late December 2019, Russia included China and Iran in a four-day Naval Security Belt maritime exercise across the Persian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman, and the Indian Ocean—waters hitherto controlled by the U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet. The nautical maneuvers tested Chabahar's capacity to serve as a rival to the U.S. Naval Forces Central Command base in Bahrain. In September 2020, moreover, Iranian forces joined Chinese, Russian, and affiliated troops for joint exercises in the Caucasus.

China and Russia share an interest in resisting U.S. sanctions on Iran, including secondary sanctions, which impose burdens on countries that have not themselves adopted restrictions. China and Russia worked together in August to convince the UN Security Council's other members, including such traditional U.S. allies as France and the United Kingdom, to table the Trump administra-

tion's bid to snap back sanctions on Tehran.

When U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo later announced sanctions against entities in China and Hong Kong for assisting Iranian shipping, Dmitry Polyanskiy, Russia's deputy representative to the UN, defiantly tweeted: "It's not up to U.S. to tell us or others what they can or can't do."

Chinese and Russian officials made clear at a 2019 area studies conference in Beijing, which one of us attended, that their nations share the goal of deposing the United States as global leader. They seek to establish a multipolar system to replace the one that the United States has dominated. Zarif has adopted complementary rhetoric, tweeting that his country, too, has "rejected U.S. unilateralism and U.S. attempts to create [a] unipolar world."

■ Deeds matter most

Joe Biden knows that he will need to restart negotiations with Iran. As a candidate, Biden wrote that if Tehran were to return to strict compliance with the nuclear deal, "I would rejoin the agreement and use our renewed commitment to diplomacy to work with our allies to strengthen and extend it."

The inbound administration recognizes that it cannot elude Iran's importance to the Persian Gulf region.

But the new U.S. administration will have a hard time convincing Tehran's leadership, for which "deeds matter most," that a reinstated or new deal will not be overturned as the original one was. That they would now choose to



restrict their country's weapons capabilities, even as rivals elsewhere in the (Persian) Gulf expand theirs, beggars belief. Biden may wish to entice Tehran away from Beijing and Moscow, but he will have little to offer a country that neither seeks nor desires an alliance with the United States.

China and Russia are the like-minded collaborators that Iran needs as it aspires to be a powerful player within a new world order. With those powerful regimes on his side, Zarif can shuttle between Tehran, Beijing, and Moscow to strengthen the new triple axis and ensure that Iran will remain comfortably at its center.

Tehran says ready to return to full compliance with JCPOA if next U.S. admin honors the deal

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh has voiced Iran's readiness to return to full compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) if the next U.S. administration honors the deal.

"Iran is definitely ready if the other side is ready to get back to full implementation of the JCPOA," Saeed Khatibzadeh said in an interview with Press TV on Tuesday.

He was referring to the nuclear deal Iran signed with six world powers, including the U.S., the UK, France, Russia, China and Germany, in July 2015 which was ditched by U.S. President Donald Trump in 2018 in pursuit of a "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran.

Trump's withdrawal came while Iran was in full compliance with the treaty. All other parties to the deal have repeatedly criticized the Trump administration's policy toward Iran.

Khatibzadeh said the United States' maximum pressure campaign has evolved into a "maximum failure" for that country.

Asked if Iran would "trust" the U.S. if President-elect Joe Biden was to take over the White House, the spokesman said the U.S. had shown everyone that it was not trustworthy.

"The issue is not trust. Actually, the



nuclear agreement was negotiated based on mutual mistrust. So, this matters most. And we're just looking at the behavior of who is going to run the White House," he said, adding that it was too soon to tell what was going to happen in the future.

Khatibzadeh, meanwhile, addressed the lame-duck Trump administration's claim that it was going to build a "wall of sanctions" that, some officials have said,

no U.S. administration would be able to break down to return to the JCPOA and lift the economic restrictions.

"In their own words...there's nothing left to be sanctioned," he said, citing U.S. officials' admissions concerning the extent of Washington's sanctioning spree against Iran.

"These are part of psychological war against Iranians," he said, adding, "There's nothing more they can do other than to continue this psychological warfare against the Iranian nation."

Khatibzadeh said the outgoing U.S. officials were making such claims out of frustration and in order to convince the world that their maximum pressure policy was still alive.

"Everybody knows to what extent they've not been able to reach any goals of their policy."

Biden's victory in the November 3 presidential election raised hopes over the prospects of a re-entry into the JCPOA by

Foreign Ministry spokesman Khatibzadeh says the United States' maximum pressure campaign has evolved into a "maximum failure" for that country.

Tehran confirms feeding UF6 gas into IR2-m centrifuges

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to the Vienna-based international organizations confirmed on Wednesday that Iran has started feeding UF6 gas into the advanced IR-2m uranium-enriching centrifuges.

"The Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) released a half-page report yesterday, announcing that on 14 November 2020, IAEA inspectors have verified that Iran began feeding UF6 into the cascade of 174 IR-2m centrifuges at the Fuel Enrichment Plant (FEP) in Natanz," Kazem Gharibabadi wrote in a tweet on Wednesday.

Earlier, Reuters quoted the IAEA as saying that Iran has begun feeding UF6 into the advanced IR-2m centrifuges

installed at Natanz.

"On 14 November 2020, the Agency verified that Iran began feeding UF6 into the recently installed cascade of 174 IR-2m centrifuges at the Fuel Enrichment Plant (FEP) in Natanz," the IAEA report to member states, dated Tuesday, said, according to Reuters.

Iran signed a nuclear deal, officially known as the JCPOA, with the United States, Britain, Germany, France, the European Union, Russia, and China in July 2015 according to which Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions. The agreement was endorsed by the UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

However, U.S. President Donald Trump abandoned the deal on May 8, 2018, and returned sanctions and imposed new harsh ones.

In remarks on Monday, Gharibabadi said the IAEA should guarantee effective implementation of nuclear-related technical cooperation programs.

He made the remarks during a meeting of the Agency's Cooperation and Technical Assistance Committee, which was held via video conference.

He said the efforts by the IAEA chief to ensure the effective implementation of technical cooperation programs are very important and their realization requires high solidarity and cooperation at all levels in the world.

SPORTS

Golden chance ahead of Persepolis

1→ After sealing their sport in the final, by winning the semi-final match against Saudi Arabia's Al Nassr, Persepolis faced several controversies due to internal disagreement and management problems. The financial issues and the debts have caused so many problems for the Iranian team.

In addition to the dissatisfaction of some of the current team players with the financial situation of their contract, the unpaid salaries of the former coaches and players have put the club in chaos after the AFC Champion League semi-final match.

The prize money for the possible prize of the Asian Champions League can be a special motivating factor for Yahya Golmohammadi and his side to make history in the final match.

The financial reward will help them to ease the financial pressure, and in case of ceding the club to the private sector, it can be used to start a strong new project.

Iran's NPC eyes a better place at Paralympics

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Iran's National Paralympic Committee (NPC) is getting ready for the Tokyo Paralympics, where the Iranian delegation aims to sit in a better place compared to the previous edition.

Iran sent a record number of competitors to Rio 2016, being represented by 110 athletes in 12 sports. The Iranian athletes won eight gold, nine silver and seven bronze medals and finished in 15th place.

Iran's NPC will send nine sports to Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, namely athletics, archery, sitting volleyball, wheelchair basketball, taekwondo, rowing, judo, shooting and powerlifting.

Iran's chef de mission for the 2020 Paralympic Games Hadi Rezaei and NPC Secretary General Mohammad Tabe talked about the Games with the media representatives during a webinar organized by Iran's NPC on Tuesday.

"We hope that in the upcoming edition we can improve our ranking and we will do our best to guarantee a better place. At least we'll be looking to repeat what we did last time," Tabe said.

Many sports activities are shut down in order to reduce spread of COVID-19 from February. It could be a huge blow to the athletes who prepare for the Games. Asked him whether the NPC can hold the camp for the athletes in a centralized training camp, Tabe said, "Our first, second and third priorities are to protect our athletes, since we have a duty of care to protect them. We will try to find the best places with the lowest risk to hold our camps. We continue to advance our mission according to the health protocols."

Hadi Rezaei also said the football 5-a-side, who won a silver medal at the 2016 Paralympic Games, have still a chance to represent Iran in the Games.

Iran's NPC had already announced that it would not send the blind football team to the Paralympics, however the committee later changed its decision but IBSA said the deadline has expired and Thailand will participate in Tokyo instead of Iran.

"We still have a chance if a team decide to withdraw from the Paralympic Games and Iran can replace it. In Rio, Iran football 7-a-side were not supposed to partake at the Games but it participated in the competition as Russia's replacement and won the silver medal. We hope that the football 5-a-side can represent our country in the event," Rezaei said.

Rezaei also stressed that the safety of the athletes will be ensured by reducing the number of the people allowed to attend the Games.

"What's important for IPC is to make sure that all the measures being made to ensure the health and safety of all the athletes are inclusive and accessible for all. So, we will have to narrow the number of companions for the Games," the chef de mission added.

Iran's best performance at the Paralympic Games since they made their debut at Seoul in 1988 was at London 2012 when they finished 11th with a total of 24 medals, including 10 gold.

The Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games are set to be the biggest and best yet with around 4,400 Para athletes from more than 160 countries taking part in 22 sports.

Ehsan Haji Safi lauds Iran new generation

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Iran captain Ehsan Haji Safi says that the National Team have been strengthened by the arrival of new players.

Iran, under guidance of Dragan Skocic, have defeated Uzbekistan and Bosnia and Herzegovina in October and November friendlies.

The 'Persian Leopards' are preparing for the 2022 World Cup qualifiers, where they sit third behind Iraq and Bahrain in Group C.

"It was a good performance against Uzbekistan since they are a strong team but we beat them 2-1 in their home. We had not enough time to prepare for the match but emerged victorious in Tashkent," Haji Safi said.

Iran also defeated Bosnia and Herzegovina 2-0 in Sarajevo last week and Haji Safi hailed the new players in this match.

"We could have won the match with more than two goals. Iran football team have good young players and I hope they can help our team I the future," he added.

"Bosnia and Herzegovina are a good European team and benefit from good players but we could defeat them. I think Skocic has a good knowledge of our football and can help us in the World Cup qualifiers," Haji Safi concluded.

Vladimir Alekno named Iran volleyball coach

S P O R T S TEHRAN — Vladimir Alekno was named as new head coach of Iran national volleyball team on Wednesday.

Alekno, who led Russia to a bronze and gold medal in the 2008 and 2012 Olympic Games respectively, was chosen by the Islamic Republic of Iran Volleyball Federation (IRIVF)'s technical committee.

Daniel Castellani, Andrea Giani, Ferdinando De Giorgi, Lorenzo Bernardi and Vladimir Alekno were shortlisted to take the helm of Iran and federation reached a joint agreement on the Russian.

Alekno replaced Igor Kolakovic who left Iranian March. The current Zenit Kazan coach will start his work from the 2021 Men's Volleyball Nations League.

In the Olympic Games, Iran have been drawn in Pool A along with Japan, Poland, Italy, Canada and Venezuela.

Pool B consists of Brazil, USA, Russia, Argentina, France and Tunisia.

FM Zarif outlines give-and-take approach to revive JCPOA

1→ Although we have suffered costs in this period, our people told the U.S. that the continuation of such a policy will earn it nothing," Zarif noted.

According to the foreign minister, Trump's policy toward Iran — maximum pressure — has ended in failure. He also pointed out that the U.S. is obliged, under Article 25 of the UN Charter, to return to the JCPOA and lift U.S. sanctions on Iran.

"First, Trump's policy of withdrawal from the JCPOA and "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran resulted in a failure. This does not mean that we benefited from the policy. It implies that Trump failed to achieve the desired result. We faced great pressure as a consequence of such a strategy. Although we defeated the U.S., the domestic economy suffered losses under Trump's sanctions. However, the reality is that the U.S. policy ended in a failure and its continuation will be doomed to more failures," the foreign minister said.

He added, "Second, the U.S. has two positions. It is a member of both the JCPOA and the United Nations. Although Trump pulled the U.S. out of the JCPOA, he did not withdraw the country from the UN. Whether under Biden or Trump, the U.S. must remain committed to Article 25 of the UN Charter, mandating the member states to accept and carry out the decisions of the UN Security Council. Thus, as a UN member and a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the U.S. cannot say the Resolution 2231 — a July 20, 2015 resolution endorsing the JCPOA



on the peaceful nuclear program of Iran — is illegal. By pulling Washington out of the JCPOA, Trump solely failed to benefit from the deal. This was the mistake Trump and his associates made. If Biden seeks to return to the JCPOA, he will have to fulfill U.S. commitments under the deal and lift the sanctions."

Over the past four years, the Trump administration has imposed sweeping sanctions on Iran and sought to build what some pro-Trump experts called a "wall of sanctions," a move that aims to perpetuate sanctions on Iran and prevent a successor administration from lifting the sanctions. To this end, Trump's administration changed the logic of sanctions and, in some cases, reim-

posed previously imposed sanctions under non-nuclear-related authorities, including the U.S.'s counterterrorism sanctions authority.

The Trump administration is preparing a "flood" of sanctions against Iran within the strategy of building the wall of sanctions. Axios news agency, which first reported the news of the flood, quoted Israeli sources as saying that such a "flood" of sanctions will increase pressure on the Iranians and make it harder for the Biden administration to revive the 2015 nuclear deal.

Analysts warned about these sanctions and the "trap" that the Trump administration is seeking to set for the Biden administration.

"These sanctions are not designed to change Iran's behavior or to deter it from

conduct anathema to U.S. interests. Instead, the whole point of the sanctions is to set a trap for the Biden administration," Tyler Cullis, an expert on the practice of U.S. economic sanctions, wrote in an analysis published by the Responsible Statecraft publication.

But Zarif implied that this so-called wall of sanctions is pure fantasy. He said Biden can lift the Trump administration with three executive orders.

Responding to claims that Biden would not be able to lift the sanctions imposed by the Trump administration, Zarif asserted, "If Mr. Biden becomes president of the United States and moves into the White House, he can repeal all of them with three executive orders. It is just a rumor that the next U.S. president will not be able to lift some of the U.S. JCPOA-related sanctions."

He added, "The United States cannot use domestic law to justify its non-fulfillment of its international obligations. No country in the world can use domestic tools to not fulfill its international obligations."

The chief Iranian diplomat also said that Trump's foreign policy has been among the most unsuccessful ones in the history of the U.S., underlining that the U.S. behavior and bullying have forced other countries into acquiescing to its demands.

But under Biden, Zarif noted, the U.S. would adopt less unilateral approaches although Washington has never completely abandoned such policies. Besides, during Biden's term in office, the U.S. and Europe would have a more rational relationship with each other, Zarif remarked.

Iran lambasts Bahrain FM for traveling to Israel

P O L I T I C A L TEHRAN — Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, the special aide to the speaker of the Iranian Parliament on international affairs, has strongly condemned Bahrain for a visit by the country's foreign minister to Tel Aviv, saying the leader of Bahrain "will share destiny with the Zionist pigs."

"The presence of the Bahraini Foreign Minister in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is the follow-up to the circus at the White House's balcony," Amir-Abdollahian said in a tweet on Wednesday.

He was referring to a mid-September signing ceremony held at a White House garden to formalize the normalization of the diplomatic relations between Israel and Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates.

In August and September, Bahrain and the UAE took the controversial step of normalizing relations with Israel, a move that was strongly condemned by Iran as a betrayal



of the Palestinian Cause.

Amir-Abdollahian once again hinted that the normalization deals between the two Arab countries and Israel were a betrayal.

"In this path, Al-Khalifa will share destiny with the Zionist pigs. Traitors to al-Quds & Palestine will have no future," the Iranian diplomat added.

The tweet came after Bahrain announced that its top diplomat arrived in Tel Aviv on Wednesday on an official visit.

Heading a Bahraini delegation, Bahraini Foreign Minister Abdulatif Al Zayani arrived in Tel Aviv on the first visit of its kind to Israel.

"This visit is a courageous step taken by the Kingdom of Bahrain in line with the vision of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa to achieve security, stability and prosperity, with the Kingdom playing its pioneering role to achieve peace in the region and in the world," Al Zayani said in a statement, according to the official Bahrain News Agency.

He called his visit to Israel a strategic start to enhance cooperation between Bahrain and Israel in a way that achieves their shared interests.

Russian, UK diplomats discuss Iran nuclear program

P O L I T I C A L TEHRAN — Russian First Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Titov and visiting Minister for European Neighborhood and the Americas at the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Wendy Morton discussed on Tuesday issues related to Iran, according to the Russian TASS news agency.

Citing a Russian Foreign Ministry statement, the news agency said the two diplomats discussed a variety of issues related to Iran and other regional developments.

"The sides exchanged views on the current international problems and discussed issues of the Ukrainian settlement, stabilization of the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Iranian nuclear program, as well as other topics which the two countries can consolidate their efforts on," TASS quoted the Russian Foreign Ministry as saying on Tuesday.

Contacts between parties to the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers — officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) — have significantly increased after news media projected that Joe Biden won the 2020 United States presidential election.

On Monday, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif held a telephone conversa-

tion with his British counterpart Dominic Raab.

In the phone call, the two sides conferred on bilateral cooperation between Tehran and London within the framework of the JCPOA, according to a statement issued by the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

Iranian officials, including Zarif, have called on Joe Biden in recent days to return to the JCPOA and lift the sanctions the Trump administration has imposed on Iran. Zarif even said that Biden, unlike what pro-Trump pundits say, is capable of lifting the sanctions through issuing a few executive orders.

"If Mr. Biden becomes president of the United States and moves into the White House, he can repeal all of them with three executive orders. It is just a rumor that the next U.S. president will not be able to lift some of the U.S. JCPOA-related sanctions," the chief Iranian diplomat in an interview with the pro-government Iran newspaper that was published on Wednesday.

Biden himself has vowed to return to the JCPOA after moving into the White House.

In an opinion piece published by CNN on September 13 then-candidate Biden said he will reenter the nuclear deal if he wins the U.S. presidential election.

"I will offer Tehran a credible path back to diplomacy. If Iran returns to strict compliance with the nuclear deal, the United States would rejoin the agreement as a starting point for follow-on negotiations. With our allies, we will work to strengthen and extend the nuclear deal's provisions, while also addressing other issues of concern," Biden wrote.

Ever since he was projected to win the November election, Biden kept silent about his potential strategy toward Iran, leaving pundits wondering how he would deal with Iran in the coming years.

But Biden is expected to adopt a policy toward Iran similar to that of President Barack Obama.

In his first comment on what a Biden administration's policy on Iran might look like, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has expected that the United States foreign policy under Joe Biden would be similar to that seen under President Barack Obama, especially on Iran and climate change, according to a Reuters report.

Regardless of what Biden might do to deal with the situation around the JCPOA, it seems that building consensus on Iran, especially between the two sides of the Atlantic Ocean,

would be placed high on Biden's foreign policy agenda. This was on full display during a recent phone conversation between Biden and French President Emmanuel Macron.

During the conversation, Biden told Macron that he would like the U.S. to once again work with its European ally on Iran nuclear policy, according to Newsweek.

Biden "expressed his readiness to work together on global challenges, including security and development in Africa, the conflicts in Ukraine and Syria, and Iran's nuclear program," Biden's transition team said in a press release emailed to Newsweek.

On the other hand, Iran has called on Biden to reconsider Trump's policy toward Iran and compensate Iran for the past mistakes of Donald Trump.

"The new U.S. administration should reconsider its inhumane behaviors toward other countries in the first place in order to repair the country's tarnished image in the international community," Rouhani said last week.

He also said that "now, an opportunity has opened up for the next U.S. administration to make up for the past mistakes and return to abiding by international commitments through respecting international regulations."

75 lawmakers call on Trump administration to ease sanctions on Iran

P O L I T I C A L TEHRAN — Democratic lawmakers have urged the outgoing president of the United States to show leniency and allow coronavirus aid to be sent to Iran as the White House drew up a plan to step up sanctions on Iran in the remaining weeks of Donald Trump's presidency.

In a letter to Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo this week, Rep. Jesus "Chuy" Garcia and Sen. Elizabeth Warren, along with 73 other House and Senate Democrats, called on the Trump administration to issue a worldwide temporary general license that would cover testing kits, respirators, and personal protective equipment needed to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, the Foreign Policy magazine reported.

"The pandemic has laid bare the ways in which our broad application of sanctions is undermining public health systems, imposing sweeping economic penalties that restrict commerce in the material and equipment necessary to respond to the coronavirus and harming ordinary people," the lawmakers wrote. "Blocking or slowing the flow of medical resources neither enables an effective outbreak response around the world nor does it serve our national security interests."

The letter came after news agencies reported that the Trump administration is planning to slap a long string of new sanctions on Iran in the 10 weeks left until Joe Biden's

inauguration on January 20, a policy intended to crater possible efforts by Biden to go soft on Iran.

Citing Israeli sources, Axios reported that the Trump administration believes such a "flood" of sanctions will increase pressure on the Iranians and make it harder for the Biden administration to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

But Trump's efforts to turn up the heat on Iran amid the Coronavirus pandemic stand in contrast to the strategy of Biden, who, according to Foreign Policy, has called on Trump to create licenses to allow goods to flow from pharmaceutical and medical device companies into Iran, and to create dedicated channels for banks and service firms to allow Iranians access to life-saving medical treatment.

"It is bad enough that the Trump administration abandoned the Iran nuclear deal in favor of a 'maximum pressure' strategy that has badly backfired, encouraging Iran to become even more aggressive and restart its nuclear program," Biden wrote in a Medium post in April. "It makes no sense, in a global health crisis, to compound that failure with cruelty by inhibiting access to needed humanitarian assistance."

On Monday, Biden called for the immediate passage of the HEROES Act, a coronavirus stimulus package approved by the House earlier this year that includes \$10 billion in foreign coronavirus assistance. Garcia, the Democratic law-



maker, has also supported the use of International Monetary Fund (IMF) special drawing rights to give financial relief to nations desperate to pay for much-needed medical imports.

In March the Iranian government asked the IMF for \$5 billion in emergency loans to help it combat the coronavirus and mitigate its economic impact. But the U.S. blocked Iran's request.

Iran exports 1st cargo from Bid Boland refinery

1 → This project was recently nominated for the International Project Management Association (IPMA)'s Global Project Excellence Award at the energy sector.

Bid Boland Refinery, which was also awarded as the country's top mega project by the Ninth National Project Management Award, has been announced as one of the four final nominees for the IPMA's 2020 Global Project Excellence Award in the energy sector.



Located in Behbahan County in southwestern Khuzestan Province, Bid Boland will have an annual production capacity of 10.4 million tons of methane, 1.5 million tons of ethane, one million tons of propane, 600,000 tons of gas condensates, and 500,000 tons of butane.

With the complete implementation of the mentioned project, the production capacity of sweet and other gases will increase, which will be used to feed petrochemical plants in Mahshahr and supply urban areas in the region.

TEDPIX climbs 48,000 points on Wednesday

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), increased 48,389 points to 1.345 million on Wednesday.

Over 7.516 billion securities worth 91.751 trillion rials (about \$2.184 billion) were traded at the TSE on Wednesday.

The first market's index gained 39,608 points, and the second market's index rose 81,993 points.

TEDPIX had dropped 5.5 percent in the previous Iranian calendar week (ended on November 13).

Over \$1.225b of loans paid to production units in 7 months

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran's Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade's data show that 51.48 trillion rials (over \$1.225 billion) has been paid to production units as part of a program for supporting domestic production during the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-October 21).

The mentioned payments were made to 1,907 production units.

As reported, under the framework of this program dubbed "facilities for production and employment", during the eight-month period started from February 20, over 69.703 trillion rials of facilities (about \$1.659 billion) have been paid to 1,232 production units.



Based on the mentioned program 201.299 trillion rials of facilities (about \$4.79 billion) are going to be paid to production units to support domestic production and maintain or create job opportunities.

Following a major program for developing the country's production under the frameworks of the resilient economy, the government has defined several projects that are going to create 1,032,962 job opportunities.

In this regard, the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has defined supporting production as its major plan in the previous Iranian calendar year, which was named the Year of Pickup in Production.

CBI Governor Abdolnaser Hemmati has constantly stressed that supporting production units to flourish production is the priority of the country's banking system.

Industry Ministry had previously announced that over 335.77 trillion rials (nearly \$7.99 billion) was paid to SMEs and semi-finished industrial projects during the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19).

The mentioned payments were made in the form of 20,930 bank loans to various projects and production units.

Over 706,000 tons of copper concentrate produced in 7 months

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Production of copper concentrate in Iran stood at 706,816 tons during the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-October 21), which was two percent more than the output in the same period of time in the past year.

Copper concentrate output in the seventh month of the current year stood at 107,192 tons, which was five percent higher than the figure for the seventh month of the past year.

In the first seven months of this year, 102.916 million tons of copper ore were extracted from the relevant mines, which shows a three-percent increase compared to the forecast for this year.

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

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

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

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

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

157 idle small-scale mines revived since March 20

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The head of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) announced that 157 idle small-scale mines have been revived throughout the country since the beginning of current Iranian calendar year (March 20).

Saying that the mentioned mines have been reactivated as part of a comprehensive program for reviving idle small mines across the country, Khodadad Gharibpour also announced that 200 mines are planned to be put back into operation by the end of the year.

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

According to Gharibpour, since the



beginning of the program in March 2019 up to date 303 mines have been revived.

The mentioned program, which

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

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

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

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

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

High capacities available to boost technical, engineering services export

1 → In another meeting on the expansion of export of technical and engineering services held in mid-September, the TPO's deputy head for exports of goods and services said that Iran's export capacity of technical and engineering services is more than \$20 billion.

"Presence in the international projects can bring prosperity to the enterprises and promote the knowledge of experts", Farhad Nouri reiterated.

Considering Iran's huge potential in this field, boosting such exports would be an advantage for expanding the country's foreign trade especially with the neighbors.

Some Iranian companies including Mapna Group have already had a fruitful presence in the completion of infrastructure projects in several countries including Iraq and Oman and if such contribution will be expanded it will be a good source of export revenues

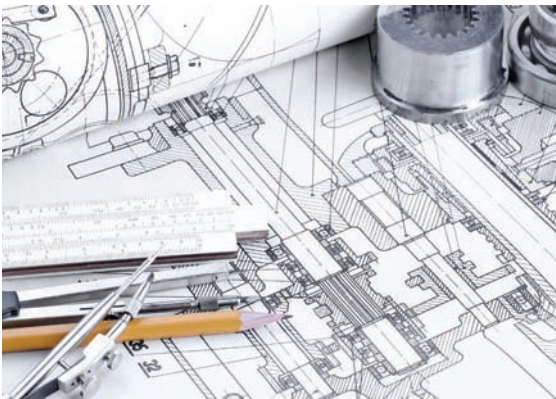
while job creation.

Although it should be noted that while there is high potential and capability in Iran for the expansion of technical-engineering services export, there are also limitations in this regard.

As Nouri has said the sanctions and banking problems have created obstacles to the development of the exports of technical and engineering services.

According to the official, realization of direct exports requires direct investment in the target markets which would guarantee the support of the projects in these markets.

To support the export of engineering services, this section should be excluded from some of the country's export bans so that meaningful steps could be taken to develop the export of the services, Nouri has stressed.



TCCIMA calls for easing forex policies to support exports

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The board of Representatives of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) in their 17th meeting on Tuesday stressed the need for easing the country's forex policies to support the exporters and boost foreign trade.

In the meeting, which was held through video conference, the participants discussed the Central Bank of Iran (CBI)'s foreign exchange policies and their impact on foreign trade, and also the recent developments regarding China's "One Belt One Road" initiative which is aimed at reviving the Silk Road and expand trade in the region.

As reported by the TCCIMA portal, speaking in the event, the Deputy In-

dustry, Mining and Trade Minister for Industry Affairs Mehdi Sadeqi Niaraki pointed to recent changes in the CBI's policies regarding the return of export revenues and stressed that the CBI has considered easier ways for the re-injection of the mentioned revenues which will encourage exporters and lead to the development of foreign trade.

"The Industry Ministry, in collaboration with the central bank, has also taken immediate action to facilitate the allocation and provision of foreign exchange for the clearance of the raw materials and machinery for production units that were suspended in the country's customs, and finally new instruction in this regard has been approved by the government and will be effective

soon," he added.

The TCCIMA Head Masoud Khansari for his part mentioned the recent condition in the U.S. and said: "We should use this opportunity to improve our relations with other countries and while conducting an economic reform inside the country."

He further pointed to the government's export policy packages in the current year and said: "In the past two years, the Tehran and Iran Chambers of Commerce have raised and followed many discussions in this regard and we hope to reach positive results soon."

Central Bank of Iran offers the country's exporters and importers foreign currency with official rates and expects them to return the equal of the currency

that they have received into the country's economic cycle.

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

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

PBO considering \$40 oil for next year's budget bill

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The head of Iran's Planning and Budget Organization (PBO) has said his organization is considering \$40 oil for preparing the national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year (starts on March 21, 2021).

"We have not yet determined the oil price based on which the budget will be set, but the initial estimation is around \$40 a barrel," Mohammad-Baqer Nobakht said.

Addressing the press after a cabinet meeting on Wednesday, Nobakht announced the approval of the budget for the next Iranian calendar year 1400 by the government and added: the budget bill will be submitted to the parliament within the legal deadline and before December 5.

The bill will be prepared based on the U.S. dollar exchange rate at 110,000-115,000 rials, he said.

The budget resources for the next year will be supplied from oil, taxation, and issuance of government bonds, Nobakht explained.

"Regarding the oil revenues, the ceiling will be set considering the amounts that we will be able to export in optimal circumstances and also considering the amount



of exports we have had in the current year," he said.

According to the official, any surplus revenues earned in this area will not be spent on current expenses but will be used for development projects, urban trans-

portation, e-government development, strengthening knowledge-based companies, and strengthening the health transformation plan.

He further noted that the country's tax capacity allows the government to move toward tax incomes instead of relying on oil revenues in the budget.

President Hassan Rouhani has said that the main goal of the national budget bill for the next year is to downsize the government and cut the direct dependence on oil incomes.

Speaking in a session of the Resistance Economy Headquarters last week, the president said that the next year's budget bill will be drafted within the framework of the general program of reforming the budget structure and general policies of the resistance economy, Shana reported.

"The main goal of the 1400 budget is to reduce costs, increase revenues, downsize the government, develop e-government, cut the direct budget dependence on oil, pick up and surge in production, and the implementation of the general policies of the resistance economy", Rouhani further noted.

Annual sugar beet output to increase 50%

an official with the Agriculture Ministry.

Peyman Hesadi, the operator of the sugar beet plan of the ministry, announced a significant increase in the area under the sugar beet cultivation in the current crop year, according to which, the amount of sugar beet production will increase by at least 50 percent, compared to the previous crop year.

In September, the Advisor to the Agriculture Minister Saeed Saadat had said that the Agriculture Ministry was going to implement the first phase of a program called "Cultivation Pattern" to improve the country's agricultural output in the new crop year in the

country.

With the implementation of this program, an important part of the farmers' and producers' problems, including unplanned and excess cultivation will be eliminated, Saadat stated.

Referring to the importance of food security in the country, he said: "Ensuring 90 percent of the country's food security is the responsibility of the Agriculture Ministry."

Pointing out that about 125 million tons of agricultural products were produced in the country last year, Saadat said 80 percent of the country's food is produced in the agricultural sector.

Noting that due to the limited water resources and the dryness of most parts of the country, the efficiency in the agricultural sector should be increased, the official explained, "The efficiency in the agricultural sector has increased from 920 grams per cubic meter to 1,450 grams per cubic meter since [the Iranian calendar year] 1392 (March 2013-March 2014). Also, during this period, irrigation efficiency has increased from 39 percent to 45 percent."

Emphasizing that increasing the quality of food should be a priority, Saadat said: "The quality of the country's products is currently desirable."



ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The annual production of sugar beet anticipated to rise 50 percent in the current crop year (late September 2020-mid-August 2021), according to

Canada politicizing Ukraine plane crash: Iran's Baharvand

1 → Iran's air defense mistook the Ukrainian passenger plane with an invading missile after the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps fired ballistic missiles at a U.S. airbase in western Iraq on January 8 in retaliation for the U.S. assassination of IRGC Quds Force chief Qassem Soleimani in a drone attack near Baghdad's international airport. The airliner was shot down shortly after taking off from Tehran's Imam Khomeini airport, killing all 167 passengers and 9 crew members. The victims included 82 Iranians, 63 Iranian-Canadians, 11 Ukrainians, 10 Swedes, four Afghans, three Germans, and three British nationals.

According to Baharvand, Iran is cooperating with the Ukrainian side and "there is no obstacle to investigating the incident in accordance with international conventions."

The following is the text of the interview: **■ The Canadian Foreign Ministry** has claimed that Iran is not cooperating on the Ukrainian plane crash incident. What exactly is the Canadian government looking for?

A: We do not understand Canada's behavior in the case of the Ukrainian plane crash. In meetings between the foreign ministers of two countries we have explained what cooperation Iran had done and their representatives visited the area where the plane crashed.

They participated in reading of the black box of the plane in Paris and any other cooperation. Iran has provided any necessary cooperation with Canada and other parties.

One of our problems with Ottawa is that the Canadian government does not respect international law and tries to take unilateral action that is not really necessary.

I think Canada is addressing this issue based on political prejudice. According to the Chicago Convention and the Annex 13, the country where the incident occurred is responsible for investigation process.

Iran is also investigating the Ukrainian plane crash incident and has given international parties the necessary access, and there are still about two months left until the report is due. Although the one-year deadline to respond and submit an incident report can be extended, the Iranian investigation team makes every effort to complete the report within the deadline.



Mr. Zarif met with his Canadian counterpart, and I was also in contact with the Canadian deputy foreign minister, and we provided everything that was needed for the Canadian side, and we responded to their demands as much as possible and within the framework of Iranian law to help in getting a better understanding of the circumstances of the incident.

Strangely, the Canadian government has begun to take unilateral actions, and we see no good reason for that except that Canada intends to politicize the issue.

I believe that everything and all parties must follow international protocols and rules.

Iran has repeatedly stated its readiness to cooperate and does not see any obstacles to investigate the incident in accordance with international conventions, and we are currently cooperating with the Ukrainian side.

■ What is the level of cooperation between Iran and the parties involved in the plane crash?

A: Regarding the Ukrainian passenger plane crash, we declared repeatedly our readiness to work with any country that is willing to negotiate on the basis of good intention and recognized air rights, such as the Chicago Convention. We accepted to compensate the families of the victims of the Ukrainian passenger plane shot down

near Tehran on January 8.

We will definitely cooperate within the framework of Iranian law. We have clearly acknowledged that this mistake was made by Iran's air defense and that Tehran has not hidden anything.

Instead of hampering Iran's effort to clarify the truth, if Canada enters into negotiations with Iran with good intention and in accordance with international conventions, the investigation will be carried out smoothly as Iran is negotiating with Ukraine. But if the Canadian government thinks that it can put pressure on Iran with propaganda and unrealistic statements, it will not work.

■ Let's talk about other issues involving Canada. Why has Canada become a safe haven for Iranian fraudsters?

A: We have no extradition treaty with Canada, but according to the general principles of law, Canada must extradite the offender rather than harboring and concealing them.

According to international law all countries are responsible regarding the fight against crime and financial corruption.

I spoke with executive director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and I said that we have requested Canada to extradite some of Iranian offenders, but unfortunately it has not done so far.

However, in a meeting I had with the executive director of the United Nations Office in Vienna, I raised the same issue so that we might be able to ask Canada to help prosecute criminals and fraudsters, although Canada may not cooperate.

We do not have blocked assets in Canada, but the Iranian government had some money in the embassy and other some diplomatic centers, mostly related to the Iranian Cultural Counsel, which Canada illegally confiscated them in the wake of the U.S. lawsuit against Iran. Of course, we do not forgo our right and Canada must repay this money.

■ Canada also sells weapons to Saudi Arabia, which is committing war crimes in Yemen, while accusing other countries of human rights violation. How can this contradiction be justified?

A: This is a contradictory behavior. On the one hand, they consider themselves human rights defenders, but when it comes to economic interests, they turn a blind eye to war crimes committed by some states and sell illegal weapons to tyrannical regimes, while they are fully aware that most of these bombs and weapons are used against civilians.

For example in Yemen, Saudi Arabia bombs defenseless people, and this contradiction is not justifiable.

This shows that Canadians are exploiting human rights issues. It is quite clear that civilians, including women and children, cultural centers, mosques and infrastructure in Yemen are the target of weapons and bombs that have been sent to West Asia by Western countries including Canada, and it is not acceptable to declare ignorance (that these weapons are used against civilians). In fact, some countries prefer to sacrifice human rights for their short-term economic interests and narrow-minded political views.

■ Has Iran prosecuted Canada for selling the property of its diplomatic missions?

A: We neither have a diplomatic relationship with Canada nor an extradition treaty, so Canadians have never cooperated. However, we demand the property sold and we consider it our right and we will file lawsuit against Canadian government in international bodies.

Trump will continue political civil war to maintain his relevance: analyst

1 → There are many, even in U.S. intelligence, who have considered him a national security threat, and who fully expect him to profit from selling U.S. classified material for his personal profit and attempt to rebuild himself after he leaves office as the ideology enforcer of the Republican party, as a big Mafia Don, even those running in primary elections must kneel and kiss the ring of 'Don' Trump.

■ How do you see the current chaotic situation in the U.S.?

A: The chaos in the election count is subsiding. The Washington Post, three months prior to the election had revealed the White House plan to contest the election due to Trump being so behind in the polls. It has turned in to a circus that will stain the Republican party for years.

Their original plan was focused on challenging a close election, but Rudy Giuliani is now viewed as taking a wrecking ball to that strategy. He chose to flood the courts with scores of election fraud claims, many of them based on Twitter social media platform reports alone.

That, combined with Trump's tweeting about "The Steal", blew up the original plan with almost all of the early challenge cases being thrown out for lack of evidence. Some judges hinted that the attorneys presenting them might have their law licenses taken away. Pro-Trump law firms have begun backing off filing any more cases, including in Pennsylvania.

The political strategy now seems to be focused on challenging the vote count with nitpicks as a way to operate a fundraising scam that will fund a Trump supporter PAC called Save America. Trump is thinking of revenge and needs to be able to control his base to intimidate the Republican leadership and to be a critic of the Biden presidency.

The man wants to continue hogging the media spotlight with his endless false claims to keep his base riled up, the biggest of which will be that the election was stolen from him, and them.

■ How do you assess the reaction of the U.S. political and security apparatus to the political unrest?

A: There had been months of preparation for election unrest, both for street protests and rioting. But there was also contingency planning for the possibility that an angry Trump might do some crazy things, including starting a conflict somewhere.

This planning even involved a high alert being put out for any possible false flag attack being planned which could justify a Trump "retaliatory" strike. The scenarios included a possible nuclear event where Trump could call a national emergency.

On the political end, we know from White House leaks via the Washington Post, that Trump asked his staff to consider the nuclear option of demanding the Republican State legislatures take the step of casting their respective state Electoral College votes for Trump, under a Constitutional pathway that has never been used.

The consensus, so far, is that the Republican Party going forward would not want that on their record. The Supreme Court has already hinted it does not want to get involved in an election court case, and is letting some items on its docket just run out of time. It does not want its reputation besmirched by a desperate Trump.

■ Will U.S. foreign policy towards West Asia change in Biden's presidency?

A: Biden has sent some early signals, such as the unipolar Trump foreign policy mania seems to be history. The EU will be the first benefactor for renewing better relations. This triggers some early responses inside the EU that it is time to take responsibility for its own defense, which will be popular with American taxpayers.

Biden has indicated the U.S. rejoining the JCPOA, but then later attached some conditions to it, which could doom that move.

Expect Biden to be a hawk with Russia, China and North Korea, but trying to bring a coalition along with him so he does not follow the Trump lead of talking one game and then doing another.

Resistance News

Hamas condemns PA announcement on restoration of ties with Israel

INTERNATIONAL DESK TEHRAN—The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has strongly condemned the decision of the Palestinian Authority (PA) to resume its relations with the "criminal Zionist occupation".

Hamas said in a statement on Tuesday evening that the PA is flouting all the national values and principles and the outcomes of the historic meeting of the Secretaries-General of the Palestinian factions.

The Movement added that this decision represents a betrayal of the national efforts towards building a national partnership and a struggle strategy to confront the occupation, annexation, normalization and the deal of the century. It highlighted that this decision was made after the announcement of thousands of Israeli housing units in Occupied Jerusalem.

The PA by this decision justifies the Arab normalization with Israel which it has consistently condemned and rejected, Hamas noted.

It demanded the PA to immediately reverse its decision. "A real national unity based on a comprehensive national program that stems from the strategy of confrontation with the criminal occupation will only liberate the land, protect rights and expel the occupation", Hamas stressed.

Iraq, Saudi reopen border crossing after 30 years

Iraq and Saudi Arabia on Wednesday reopened their Arar desert crossing, a long-awaited sign of closer trade ties after 30 years of sealed land borders between the two countries.

Top officials including Iraq's interior minister and the head of its border commission travelled from Baghdad to formally open Arar, where a line of cargo trucks stood waiting.

Saudi interrogators forced jailed women's rights activists to perform sex acts, hung them from ceilings and 'tortured' them with electric shocks, report claims

Women's rights activists are being forced to kiss and perform sex acts on their interrogators in jails in Saudi Arabia, according to a shock new report.

Inmates were also made to watch pornography, threatened with rape, hung from the ceiling, beaten and suffered electric shocks during treatment which 'amounted to torture'.

According to Daily Mail, in a 40-page report, human rights lawyer Baroness Helena Kennedy called on nations to boycott this weekend's G20 summit hosted by Saudi Arabia unless the women are set free.

Among a litany of abuse meted out to the prisoners, she included:


«Forcing the Women's Rights Activists to perform sexual acts on the interrogators, and other forms of sexual harassment such as forcing them to watch pornography.

Pentagon to pull 2,500 U.S. troops from Afghanistan, Iraq before Trump leaves

The U.S. Defense Department has reportedly been ordered to cut the number of troops in Afghanistan from 4,500 to 2,500 and the number of forces in Iraq from 3,000 to 2,500 by January 15, days before outgoing President Donald Trump leaves office.

"I am formally announcing that we will implement President Trump's orders to continue our repositioning of forces" from Afghanistan and Iraq, the president's newly appointed acting Defense Secretary Christopher Miller told reporters at the Pentagon announced Tuesday.

He further asserted that Trump's decision "is based on continuous engagement with his national security Cabinet for the past several months, including ongoing discussions with me and my colleagues across the United States government."



AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES COMPANY

55/99/20257

19/11/2020

جهاد کشاورزی

Ministry of Jihad-e-Agriculture

AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES COMPANY

Agricultural Support Services Company, hereinafter will be referred as ASSC, affiliated to Ministry of Agriculture-Jahad of I.R of Iran, is considering the purchase of the below 24 items of formulated pesticides, through one step international tender.

ITEM	Name	Formulation	Quantity (MT)
1	2,4-d+ MCPA	67.5% SL	100
2	Bromoxynil octanoate+ MCPA	40%EC	40
3	Bromoxynil+ 2,4-d	56% EC	20
4	Clodinafop propargyl	8% EC	200
5	Pinoxaden+safener	5% EC	60
6	Pinoxaden+clodinafop propargyl	5% EC	100
7	Mesosulfuron+iodosulfuron+safener	1.2% OD	100
8	iodosulfuron-methyl-sodium+Mesosulfuron-methyl+diflufenican+safener	8.25% OD	50
9	Setoxidim	12.5% OEC	20
10	Clopyralid	30% SL	60
11	Propiconazole	25% EC	400
12	Tebuconazole	25% EW	200
13	Epoxiconazole+Tiophanate-methyl	49.7% SC	90
14	Cyproconazole+Propiconazole	33% EC	40
15	Malathion	57% EC	500
16	Deltamethrin	2.5% EC	600
17	Tebuconazole	2% DS	300
18	Tebuconazole	6% FS	200
19	Tebuconazole+Prothioconazole	40% FS	10
20	difenoconazole	3% DS	150
21	difenoconazole	3% FS	100
22	Carbendazim	50% WP	40
23	Carboxin+thiram	75% WP	100
24	Carboxin+thiram	40% FS	80

All of the qualified and interested companies are invited to receive tender documents from Saturday dated 21/11/2020 until Wednesday dated 25/11/2020 (5 working days) from our purchasing committee (located at the 9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi st., Tehran, Iran).

The bidders are requested to submit their letters of introduction, along with remittance bill of I.Rials 1,200,000 to ASSC's account no. 4001039704005791 with SHEBA no. IR250100004001039704005791 at the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran through payment order of SATNA or PAYA with the 30 character identification code of 35803978226350065000000000000000.

The bidders are requested to submit their sealed and stamped envelopes containing their offer, latest at 10:00 A.M. on Saturday dated 26/12/2020 (during official working hours) to our security office located on the 8th floor. Meanwhile the meeting for the opening of the envelopes will be held on Saturday dated 26/12/2020 at 14:00 PM with the presence of bidder's representatives at the purchasing committee hall (9th floor, no. 1, Fourth Alley, Gandhi st., Tehran, Iran).

We would like to emphasize that the bid bond amount should be in bank guarantee as follows:

1- € 16416 for 2,4-d + MCPA 67.5% SL equivalent to Iranian Rials 5192760000

2- € 14521 for Bromoxynil octanoate+MCPA 40%EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 4593168128

3- € 9299 for Bromoxynil+2,4-d 56% EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 2941456800

4- € 40688 or Clodinafop propargyl 8% EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 12870406800

5- € 45688 for Pinoxaden + safener 5% EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 14451920640

6- € 48136 for Pinoxaden + clodinafop propargyl 5% EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 15226272000

7- € 42616 for Mesosulfuron+iodosulfuron+safener 1.2% OD equivalent to Iranian Rials 13480185600

8- € 20829 for Iodosulfuron-methyl-sodium + Mesosulfuron-methyl+diflufenican+safener 8.25% OD equivalent to Iranian Rials 6588705600

9- € 8353 for Setoxidim 12.5% OEC equivalent to Iranian Rials 2642325000

10- € 18749 for Clopyralid 30% SL equivalent to Iranian Rials 5930616960

11- € 62153 for Propiconazole 25% EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 19660281600

12- € 47623 for Tebuconazole 25% EW equivalent to Iranian Rials 15064089600

13- € 91616 for Epoxiconazole + Tiophanate-methyl 49.7% SC equivalent to Iranian Rials 28980000000

14- € 48856 for Cyproconazole + Propiconazole 33% EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 15454022400

15- € 57395 for Malathion 57% EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 18155112000

16- € 51986 for Deltamethrin 2.5% EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 16444296000

17- € 22193 for Tebuconazole 2% DS equivalent to Iranian Rials 7020000000

18- € 25987 for Tebuconazole 6% FS equivalent to Iranian Rials 8220000000

19- € 12000 for Tebuconazole + Prothioconazole 40% FS equivalent to Iranian Rials 3795840000

20- € 19234 for difenoconazole 3% DS equivalent to Iranian Rials 6084000000

21- € 17868 for difenoconazole 3% FS equivalent to Iranian Rials 5652000000

22- € 11348 for Carbendazim 50% WP equivalent to Iranian Rials 3589574400

23- € 34699 for Carboxin+thiram 75% WP equivalent to Iranian Rials 10975963200

- The bid bond value should be in Euro or in equal value of any other foreign currencies, except US dollars, based on Telegraphic Transfer rate in Sana rate website, www.sanarate.ir on 15/11/2020 for each item.

- After approval of ASSC's Financial Manager, the bidders are permitted to use their previous and definite outstanding claims as the bid bond.

For more information, you may refer to our website www.assc.ir, and <http://iets.mporg.ir> or contact us by phone no. 00982188776325.

PR & Intel Affairs Dept. of Agricultural Support Services Company (ASSC)

Iranian food atlas could help promote gastronomy tourism

TOURISM TEHRAN — The atlas of Iranian food, **d e s k** which is being prepared, is a comprehensive resource of a variety of foods and beverages, which could promote gastronomy tourism, a tourism official has said.

The atlas includes the background of foods, beverages, desserts, and bread, their ingredients, methods of their preparation, and their benefits, which are compatible with the vast geography of Iran, ILNA quoted Leila Azhdari as saying on Tuesday.



The atlas could also define food-oriented tourism routes and prepare travel packages focusing on food, for domestic and foreign travelers, however, this branch of tourism is new in the country and the main purpose of the tourists' trip to Iran is visiting historical and cultural sites, not tasting Iranian food, the official added.

She also noted that culinary tourism is a kind of creative tourism, in which the tourist seeks to touch the life and culture of the people, this type of tourism is new in the world, and countries such as Malaysia, Philippines, Indonesia, and Korea are active in this field, and Iran, due to its capabilities in this field, can have many attractions for creative and food tourists.

Earlier this year, Iran joined an online campaign launched by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) to promote gastronomy as an essential part of tourism.

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

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

Setting up museum can reform tourism in ancient Sagz Abad: official

TOURISM TEHRAN — Setting up a museum in Sagz **d e s k** Abad, an ancient site in Buin Zahra county, west-central Qazvin province, can help attract more tourists and lead to a reform in regional tourism.



This is the first time that the private sector is collaborating in such projects in a historical site, which could be used as a model for other historical sites, deputy tourism minister Mohammad-Hassan Talebian said while visiting the site and observing the museum establishment project on Tuesday.

Also known as Tepe Sagz Abad, the historical site is one of the oldest archaeological sites in the whole world. It was mentioned by Venetian explorer and writer Marco Polo in the 13th century; however, it seems the site is much older as several Iron Age relics have been discovered during several excavations in the region.

Once the capital of the Persian Empire under Safavids from 1548-98, Qazvin is currently a major tourist destination with wonderfully restored historical sites, some quirky museums, and a handful of decent eating options.

Armenian airline to resume Tehran service

TOURISM TEHRAN — Aircompany Armenia has **d e s k** announced the resumption of its Tehran-Yerevan service with passengers needed to present a health certificate with a negative coronavirus PCR test result, issued at most



72 hours before the flights, Mehr reported on Wednesday.

Over the past couple of months, many countries, including the Islamic Republic, imposed travel restrictions to help curb the spread of novel coronavirus. In this line, incoming and outgoing flights have been suspended, and road travels restricted to a great extent.

Protective roofs covering ‘city of the mouthless’

HERITAGE TEHRAN — Several **d e s k** protective roofs, supported by steel and concrete columns and bases, are being constructed over the ancient Shahr-e Yeri, an archaeological site and cemetery referred to as the “city of the mouthless”.

Situated near Pirazman village of Meshkin Shahr, northwestern Ardebil province, Shahr-e Yeri is one of the earliest settlements in the country. The site embraces an Iron-Age fortress, three pre-historical temples, and tens of stones on which mouthless faces have been carved across 400 hectares of several small hills.

Construction of the protective roofs is expected to complete by the yearend (March 20, 2021), provincial tourism chief Nader Fallahi announced on Tuesday.

The site, which is inscribed on the National Heritage list, will be turned into an open-air museum.



The museum is also expected to open its door to the public by the end of the year, the official noted.

More than 10,000 ancient petroglyphs and rock-carved arts have been discovered in and near Meshkin Shahr over the past couple of years. Some of the objects bear depictions of human beings in archery, cavalry in rhythmic and magical themes. There are also petroglyphs depicting mountain goats, boat anchors, shooting and scenes of war, and scenes of deer hunting in individual and collective forms.

The rock art can be seen in some mountainous regions across Iran where roaming life and livestock farming are prevalent typically. The rock-carved figures of animals, associated tools are regarded as good clues to help shed light on daily life in the distant past, though some figures might be symbolic.

Traditional crafts of coppersmithing, blacksmithing revived in Arak

HERITAGE TEHRAN— Traditional handicraft fields **d e s k** of coppersmithing and blacksmithing, which were obsolete in Arak, the capital of central Markazi province, have recently been revived, CHTN reported on Wednesday.

These forgotten handicraft fields, which were mostly practiced in rural areas, have been brought back to life with the aim of educating and acquainting the new generation with them, deputy provincial tourism chief Qasem Kazemi said.

Workshops and a permanent market for the revived fields have been established in the historical mansion of Baqeri to help crafters promote their products, the official added.

He also noted that coppersmithing and blacksmithing products are expected to be used in daily lives and shouldn't only have a decorative aspect.

Iron replaced bronze for use in tools and weapons in the late 2nd and the 1st millennium BC, and from then until

the Industrial Revolution, blacksmiths made by hand most of the wrought iron objects used in the world. Smelting iron from its ores came into general use about 1400 BCE in West Asia and during the next 500 years, iron began to displace bronze gradually.

Coppersmithing is also one of the ancient handicrafts in Iran, which was practiced between the 6th and 7th millennium BC, however, the culmination of the art dates back to the Safavid era (1501-1736), when using copper dishes and objects has been popular among people.

With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the number of cities and villages registered by the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next.

The country exported \$523 million worth of handicrafts during the past calendar year 1398 (ended March 19).

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.

Tehran province exports \$40m of handicrafts in H1

HERITAGE TEHRAN — Handi- **d e s k** crafts exports from Tehran province reached \$40 million during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year 1399 (started March 20).

Traditional glassware, mosaic, wood-work, hand-woven textiles, personal ornamentations, and semi-precious stones were amongst the objects exported to some European and neighboring countries, IRNA quoted deputy provincial tourism chief Parvaneh Heydari as saying on Wednesday.



She said that [objects made from] precious metals comprised the lion's share of

the exports during the mentioned period which amounted to some \$31 million.

Tehran province exported \$73 million of handicrafts during the past Iranian calendar year 1398 (March 2019-March 2020) and its handicrafts exports reached \$84.12 million during the Iranian calendar year 1397 (March 2018-March 2019), according to official data compiled by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.

Some 295 fields of handicrafts are currently practiced across Iran with more than

two million people engaging, the majority of whom are women.

Handicrafts also play an important role in the economy of villagers.

There are some three million women-headed households, out of a total of 22 million families, and most of them can be found in less developed areas of the country.

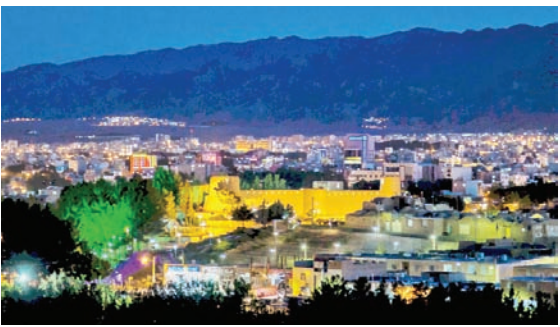
The country exported \$523 million worth of handicrafts during the past calendar year 1398 (ended March 19).

Coronavirus an opportunity to strengthen tourism infrastructure

TOURISM TEHRAN — The outbreak of **d e s k** coronavirus has provided an opportunity to boost tourism infrastructure in the eastern South Khorasan province, the provincial tourism chief has said.

Although the coronavirus pandemic has put tourism to a halt and caused lots of problems, it has provided an opportunity to improve tourism infrastructure, as there are no visitors to the province's historical sites, CHTN quoted Hassan Ramezani as saying on Tuesday.

It is expected that the tourism sites will be in a more favorable condition for travelers and tourists after the current crisis ends, the official added.



He also noted that there are 30 tourism projects underway in accommodation centers, hotels, caravanserais for improving water and electricity networks of the tourist sites.

Creating the tourist village complex of Birjand in collaboration with the private sector is one of the main projects, he mentioned.

South Khorasan province is home to many historical and natural attractions such as Birjand Castle, Dragon Cave, Furg Citadel, and Polond Desert.

It is also known for its famous rugs as well as its saffron and barberry which are produced in almost all parts of the province.

Ancient mummy added to intangible cultural heritage list

HERITAGE TEHRAN — A total of **d e s k** 64 relics and historical objects of high archaeological value, including an ancient mummy, have recently been added to the National Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

The mummy which had been unearthed in Yazd, along with a prehistorical skull, and two stone and timber minbars, was amongst highlights of the newly-added items to the prestigious list, ROKNA reported on Wednesday.

The objects have been found in the

provinces of East Azarbaijan, Kerman, Ilam, Mazandaran, Hamedan, and Tehran, the report said.

In 1977, an Italian archeological group made a great discovery while excavating the UNESCO-registered Burned City (Shahr-e sukhteh). They found a skull dating back to 2800 BC with a triangular surgery scar showing the removal of a piece.

The other remarkable feature of the skull was the dimensions that were significantly big compared to the age of the person it belonged to. Based on the

investigations, the skull belonged to a girl who was approximately 13 years old. A neurologist could immediately and without any diagnostic measures diagnose congenital hydrocephalus in her. The abnormal enlargement of the skull, particularly the parietal regions on both sides is the common view in congenital hydrocephalus. Since surgery can be a method of treatment in case the patient is symptomatic, it is assumed that this ancient surgery was conducted for treating the girl.



Travel destinations: ‘the robe wearing tower’

HERITAGE TEHRAN — This centuries-old brick **d e s k** tower, named Khal'at Pooshan (robe wearing) tower, is located about five kilometers east of Tabriz, northwest Iran.

It was once a royal summer residence during the Qajar era (1789 to 1925). The lofty tower originally dates from the Safavid era (1501-1736), and it, during the Qajar period, was used as a monument in which the robes that were donated from the kings to the governors and servants.

The hexadecimal building has three floors with the third one unroofed.

According to Visit Iran, John Malcolm (1769 – 1833), the Scottish soldier, diplomat, East India Company



administrator, statesman, and historian, wrote: “since the dominated governments of Iran wish to execute the traditional customs in governing, there are many ceremonials in Iran which have been widespread.

For example, if one robe donated to a ruler from the king, they should have come in order to welcome from miles away, then wear the robe gratefully. Each governor has a special place in the suburb named Khal'at Pooshan which is about four miles away from the city”.

Tabriz has long been a place of cultural exchange since antiquity. Its UNESCO-registered bazaar complex gives reference to the city's glorious past when it was a peak commercial center on the Silk Road.

High hopes for COVID-19 vaccine in Iran

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN — The latest achievements of Iranian researchers for developing COVID-19 vaccine platforms were discussed in a meeting on Tuesday in the presence of Health Minister Saeed Namaki and senior representatives of the World Health Organization.

On the sidelines of the meeting, the health minister said Iran will soon be recognized as one of the leading countries in coronavirus vaccine development.

Vaccine platform in several Iranian companies, including in the pharmaceutical department of the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam, has successfully passed the first and second phases and are going through the third phase, he explained.

The procedure of vaccine testing before final approval is divided into five steps: Stage 1, Phase I, II & III, and Stage 2.

"We were all surprised to hear the scientific achievements of Iranian researchers," said Ahmad al-Manzari, the regional director of the World Health Organization.

Various methods are taken to develop the vaccine in several countries around the world, but one of the methods that are being followed in Iran is completely new and unique, and we hope that the researchers, using stem cell and cell therapy, to achieve ultimate success, he added.

"We are pleased with the scientific and pharmaceutical advances in Iran, and the fact is that in Iran all methods and platforms are used to make the vaccine which shows that political restrictions have no effect on scientific development," Christoph Hamelmann, WHO Representative in Iran said.

Widespread vaccination by Sept. 2021

Mostafa Ghane'ei, an official with the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, said that the domestically produced COVID-19 vaccine will probably be injected into the whole population in the [next Iranian calendar year] month of Mehr (starting September 23, 2021).

Emphasizing that no Iranian vaccine has been yet allowed to enter the human phase



so far, he said that "progress is made when the Food and Drug Administration issues a vaccine clinical work permit."

All vaccines are in the pre-clinical stage and it is hoped that at least 4 vaccines to start phase 3 of human trial in September 2021, he highlighted.

Now that coronavirus vaccines have been developed in the world and the third phase of clinical trials has passed, the possible side effects are almost certain, and Iran will be aware of the side effects which speeds up the process, he noted, adding, "vaccines produced in Iran are the same as those produced in China, India, the United States, etc."

Iraj Harirchi, the deputy minister of health, has said that in Iran, 12 groups are making efforts to develop coronavirus vaccine, three of which have passed the animal testing.

Last week, Namaki expressed hope that the country will introduce the home-grown COVID-19 vaccine by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 19, 2021).

Vaccine testing procedure
Before human trials testing the coronavirus, the vaccine began with injection into

mice or monkeys to see how they respond. After animal tests turned out well, researchers enlisted volunteers for a Phase I trial.

Scientists give the vaccine to a small number of people to test safety and dosage as well as to confirm that it stimulates the immune system.

In this phase, the volunteers are kept under observation to watch for negative reactions and to see whether they make antibodies against a pathogen. If Phase I trials go without serious safety problems, a larger group of hundreds of people are registered for Phase II testing.

Scientists give the vaccine to hundreds of people split into two groups, such as children and the elderly, to see if the vaccine acts differently in them.

The goals of Phase II tests are to study the candidate vaccine's safety, immunology, proposed doses, schedule of immunization, and method of delivery.

Successful Phase II candidate vaccines move to larger and longer trials in Phase III, involving thousands of people. Phase III goal is to assess vaccine safety in a large group as certain side effects might not surface in smaller

groups tested in earlier phases. To detect a significant difference for a low-frequency event related to candidates, the trial would have to include 60,000 subjects.

Vaccine efficacy is tested as well as other factors include: 1) Does the candidate vaccine-preventable disease? 2) Does it prevent infection with the pathogen? 3) Does it lead to the production of antibodies or other types of immune responses related to the pathogen?

After successful Phase III trials, the vaccine developer will submit an application for a license for mass production. Then the regulating body will inspect the facilities to review the manufacturer's tests of lots of vaccines for potency.

All participants in the trials must be voluntary and normally receive monetary compensation, but it tends not to be particularly generous. All data from the testing must be made public so government agencies and other scientists can evaluate it.

COVID-19 taking high toll

In a press briefing on Wednesday, Health Ministry spokesperson Sima-Sadat Lari confirmed 13,421 new cases of COVID-19 infection, raising the total number of infections to 801,894. She added that 576,983 patients have so far recovered, but 5,712 still remain in critical conditions of the disease.

During the past 24 hours, coronavirus daily deaths and new cases hit the record high, as 480 patients have lost their lives, bringing the total number of deaths to 42,941, she added.

Lari noted that so far 5,626,631 COVID-19 tests have been conducted across the country. She said the high-risk "red" zones include provinces of Tehran, Isfahan, Qom, East Azarbaijan, South Khorasan, Semnan, Qazvin, Lorestan, Ardebil, Khuzestan, Kermanshah, Kohgiluyeh-Boyer-Ahmad, Gilan, Bushehr, Zanjan, Ilam, Khorasan Razavi, Mazandaran, Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, Alborz, West Azarbaijan, Markazi, Kerman, North Khorasan, Hamedan, Yazd, and Kordestan.

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

IRCS, Austrian Red Cross seek enhanced co-op

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) chief, Karim Hemmati, and the Austrian Red Cross secretary general, Michael Opriesnig, discussed enhanced cooperation between the two national associations in a video conference on Wednesday.

Referring to the coronavirus pressure on all countries of the world, Hemmati said that the situation in Iran is more difficult due to the harsh U.S. sanctions, however, despite the cost of providing medicine and medical items, some are provided.

He went on to highlight that providing some of the medicine and medical equipment needed for the COVID-19 fight is very difficult in Iran.

Despite all the obstacles, the IRCS volunteers have been making great efforts to fight Coronavirus for the past nine months. In the early days of the outbreak, control of the city's exits was handed over to the Red Crescent, and 12,000 young people were able to screen 21 million people, he explained.

In addition, more than 71 million social media users have benefited from IRCS educational content on how to deal with the pandemic, he noted.

The Red Crescent Society, along with donors, youth, and volunteers in the first wave of the outbreak, was able to collect public donations and attract more than 157 international aid shipments in this regard, he stated.

In the second wave of the pandemic, we also provided quality services in the deprived areas of Sistan-Baluchestan, Kermanshah, Khuzestan, and Ilam, he added.

During the two-week lockdowns, and the IRCS has deployed 7,000 bases across the country to monitor the implemen-

tation of new restrictions and regulations, he highlighted.

Emphasizing that imposing sanctions on the Red Cross and Red Crescent societies is contrary to internationally recognized protocols, Opriesnig said that efforts have been made to lift the sanctions of the Red Crescent, but no success achieved.

Through the Austrian government, we tried to help Iran in the COVID-19 fight, he said, expressing hope to solve the problems through the Red Cross.

Our second step would be to coordinate with the Foreign Ministry and the Human Resources Committee to provide non-cash assistance, he noted, adding, Austria was one of the first countries to assist Iran in the coronavirus crisis through the World Health Organization.

The third step is the signing of a memorandum of understanding, which will be very suitable for future cooperation; Iran has provided good services to African countries, and we will use Iran's experience to help these countries, he stated.

He further expressed eagerness to use the IRCS's good experiences in the blood products and ambulances.

How sanctions affected Iran's health sector

Although food and medicine were claimed to be exempted from the U.S. sanctions, financial and banking sanctions have limited the life-saving medicine trade which harshly targeted the patients suffering from rare diseases.

In November 2019, Health Minister Saeed Namaki in separate letters to UN Secretary-General António Guterres, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Executive Director Henrietta H. Fore, and WHO Director-General Tedros



Adhanom, urged the international community to break the silence on inhumane sanctions imposed by the United States against the country.

In September, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif accused the United States of impeding Iran's ability to fight the coronavirus outbreak, saying that U.S. sanctions have prevented the purchase of critical medical supplies.

Zarif said Washington's efforts to stop Tehran from exporting oil have limited the government's ability to respond to the global health crisis and provide relief to the Iranian people.

Iran also has "quite a bit of money stashed in countries abroad," he said, adding that the U.S. has prevented Tehran from gaining access to these funds, even to buy medicine.

ENGLISH IN USE

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\$7b to be allocated to retrofit, rebuild flood-devastated houses

A budget of 290 trillion rials (nearly \$7 billion) will be allotted to reconstruct and repair housing units destroyed by flood in 18 provinces across the country, Mehdi Jamalinejad, deputy interior minister for urban and rural development has announced. Flood has devastated some 169,377 housing units, 68,333 of which are beyond repair and must be reconstructed, he stated. Moreover, household appliances of 109,832 families also have suffered damages, he further regretted. He went on to say that 20,000 housing units, undergone devastation by recent flooding in Aq-Oala county in northern Golestan province, are under construction. Non-repayable loans amounting to 25 trillion rials (nearly \$600 million) will be provided for retrofitting of houses, 7.4 trillion rials (around \$177 million) will also be earmarked to compensate for the infrastructure damages, he explained.

اختصاص بیش از ۲۹ هزار میلیارد تومان برای بازسازی خانه های سیل زده

معاون عمران و توسعه امور شهری و روستایی وزیر کشور گفت: براساس مصوبه اخیر هیات وزیران مبلغ ۲۹ هزار و ۱۳۰ میلیارد ریال برای بازسازی و جبران خسارات ناشی از سیل در بخشهای مختلف ۱۸ استان پرداخت می شود.

بر اساس ارزیابی های انجام شده در ۲۱ استان کشور، بیش از ۱۶۹ هزار و ۳۷۷ واحد مسکونی شهری و روستایی در سیل های اخیر در کشور آسیب دیده اند که باید دوباره احداث شوند.

جمالی نژاد بیان داشت: در اثر سیل به ۱۰۹ هزار و ۸۳۲ واحد مسکونی نیز خسارت معیشتی وارد شده است.

وی اضافه کرد: امروز ساخت ۲۰ هزار دستگاه واحد مسکونی که در سیل آسیب دیده بودند نیز در آق قلا شروع شد.

دبیر کمیته نوسازی و بازسازی قرارگاه بازسازی مناطق سیل زده در ادامه گفت: ۲۵ هزار میلیارد ریال تسهیلات قرض الحسنه و همچنین مبلغ ۷ هزار و ۴۶۰ میلیارد ریال برای مرمت زیرساخت های آسیب دیده از سیل پرداخت خواهد شد.

FAO calls on member countries to take action on Antimicrobial Resistance in food chains

Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) is a major global threat of increasing concern to human and animal health with serious implications for both food safety and food and nutrition security, and the economic wellbeing of millions of farming households, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) warns.



AMR is the capacity of microorganisms – bacteria, fungi, viruses, and parasites – to resist antimicrobial substances, like antibiotics, that were previously effective in treating infections. As a result, medicines that were once effective treatments for disease have become less so – or even useless, leading to a reduced ability to treat infections successfully.

It is a well-established fact that misuse and excessive use of antimicrobial drugs for treatment and prevention of diseases in the livestock sector, aquaculture and crop production are often associated with the potential risk of emergence and spread of antimicrobial-resistant microorganisms.

There is also clear scientific evidence that food can serve as a vehicle of food-borne exposure to antimicrobial-resistant bacteria. This includes, but is not limited to, foods from livestock and poultry, fish, and fruits and vegetables, that were produced either conventionally or organically.

When humans ingest antimicrobial-resistant microorganisms in food, some bacteria may cause illness. These and other species may also serve as a source of AMR genes that other microorganisms in the gastrointestinal tract, including human pathogens, can acquire.

Measures to contain AMR

The most effective approach by far to limit the use of antimicrobials in agriculture is to reduce the need to treat animal and plant diseases.

For terrestrial and aquatic animals, this includes the adoption of good management practices such as biosecurity, vaccination and proper nutrition.

In the plant production, the use of the well-established procedures of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) – a systems approach designed to minimize economic losses for crops, and to minimize risks to people and the environment, can both increase yield and reduce the need for antimicrobial treatments.

At the production level, FAO supports the implementation of good hygiene practices and measures to prevent contamination, and the responsible use of antimicrobial medicines to help reduce food safety risks. This continues beyond the farm gate where adherence to good hygiene and manufacturing practices by all food business operators, enforced through a risk-based inspection system, is equally important.

Effective monitoring and surveillance systems that track the use of antimicrobials and the existence of AMR in humans and in food chains are also necessary. One part of such an effort is existing Veterinary Drug Residue Monitoring Programmes; these are currently in place in some countries only and often need to be strengthened.

FAO, determined in promoting global efforts to ensure food safety, provides governments with support and training on how to set up and operate veterinary drug residue monitoring programmes effectively. Another way the Organization is helping countries is through FAO Assessment Tool for Laboratories and AMR Surveillance Systems (FAO-ATLASS). With support from FAO, countries can assess their national surveillance and laboratory capacities and identify areas to prioritize when allocating investments.

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 61)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

why	چرا / 'cerā
how much(what + amount)	چقدر / 'ceqadr
because; since	چون / 'con
thing	چیز / 'ciz
buying, purchase	خرید / 'xarid
to shop; to go shopping	خرید کردن
خریدن	خریدن / 'xaridan – خر / 'xar ≠ فروختن
to want	خواستن / 'xāstan – خواه / 'xāh
currency of Iran	ریال / 'riyāl
hundred	صد / 'sad
price	قیمت / 'qey'mat
person	کس / 'kas (کسان pl)
people	مردم / 'mar'dom
shop	مغازه / 'maqā'ze
thousand	هزار / 'hezār

پول ایرانی

INTERNATIONAL DAILY
www.tehrantimes.com

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» Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807

» Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603

» Printed at: Jame Jam Barta Borna - 44197737

Tehrantimes79

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P.o. Box: 14155-4843
Zip Code: 1599814713

GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Do you know what is better than charity and fast-
ing and prayer? It is keeping peace and good
relations between people, as quarrels and bad
feelings destroy mankind.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

“Breaking Negative Relationship Patterns” comes to Iranian bookstores

CULTURE TEHRAN — “Breaking Negative Relationship Patterns: A Schema Therapy Self-Help and Support Book” co-written by Bruce A. Stevens and Eckhard Roediger has recently been published in Persian by Arjomand Publications.

The book has been translated into Persian by a team of translators: Adeleh Samimi, Sa’adeh Malekasgar and Maryam Hedayati.

Schema Therapy (ST) was developed to treat patients with complex disorders, especially personality disorders, with a powerful new set of interventions. Personality disorders, as well as more general problems stemming from early experience and addressed by schema therapy, are a key factor in many disturbed relationships, and as a result ST is now increasingly used for couples work.

By dealing effectively with the past, ST offers a unique way to approach and address present difficulties in relationships. Couples who understand their individual patterns of thinking and behavior tend to find that their relationships make much more sense.

“Breaking Negative Relationship Patterns” is a readable, practical resource containing a wealth of self-help exercises that schema therapists can recommend or give to their patients. It is the ideal resource for couples undergoing schema therapy, and can also serve as an accessible self-help guide for those experiencing relationship difficulties. The authors offer a complete ST-based model for understanding complex personal problems, along with couple-specific adaptations of core ST interventions such as limited re-parenting, imagery re-scripting and behavioral pattern breaking.

Bruce Stevens is the professor of ageing and practical theology at Charles Sturt University in Australia. He was previously an associate professor in clinical psychology at the University of Canberra, Australia. He was chair of the Canberra section of the Clinical College of the Australian Psychological Society, and gives APS-sponsored workshops on couple therapy throughout Australia.

Eckhard Roediger is a neurologist, psychiatrist and psychotherapist based in Frankfurt, Germany. He is a former chief physician of the Salus Klinik Hospital, and is currently the director of the Frankfurt Schema Therapy Institute and the president of the ISST.

Iranian actress Golab Adineh to stage musical adaptation of “My Fair Lady”

A R T TEHRAN — Golab Adineh, the star of acclaimed movies such as “The Blue-Veiled”, “Under the Skin of the City” and “Canary Yellow”, will stage a musical adaptation of “My Fair Lady” by American director George Cukor in spring.



Actress Golab Adineh in an undated photo.

The musical will be based on an adaptation by Alan Jay Lerner, the Oscar, Tony and Grammy-award winning playwright and lyricist inspired by the musical adaptation of the play Pygmalion, by George Bernard Shaw (1912).

George Cukor’s 1964 film “My Fair Lady”, starring Rex Harrison and Audrey Hepburn, was adapted from the 1956 Broadway musical by Lerner. “My Fair Lady” opened on Broadway in 1956 and won six Tony Awards, including best musical. The production, ran for 2,717 performances, until September 1962.

The story centers on phonetics expert Henry Higgins who is taking notes on the accents of those around him, (Hepburn). He tells language expert Col. Hugh Pickering that, given enough time, he could teach Eliza to speak English well enough for her to be taken for a duchess.

The following morning Eliza arrives at Higgins’s home, seeking elocution lessons in order to gain employment at a flower shop. Pickering declares that he will pay for such lessons if Higgins can make good on his claim. Higgins agrees to help Eliza, who moves into his home.

Resistance festival releases lineups for animations, shorts, telefilms, music videos

→1 “The Peculiar Crime of Oddball Mr. Jay” shows a city where nature has been forbidden, but a small crime by a simple man triggers a chain of unexpected consequences.

“The March of the Missing” shows an iron city hosting a lavish government parade that brings joy and gifts to the quiet life of its citizens.

The Iranian animations include “This Side, Other Side” by Lida Fazli, “Savior” by Sajjad IsmaEIL-Beigi, “Blaance” by Barzan Rostami, “Feather” by Hadi Amiri and Raha Faraji, “White Stones” by Fatemeh Hassani, “Father” by Mohammad Keivan-Marz, “C-19” by Hasan Dehqanian and “Winter Memories” codirected by Zahra Kababian and Amir Mahdi Safdari.

The foreign short films competing in the festival are “On the Border” by Tynchtyk Abylkasymov (Kyrgyzstan).

The film tells about the life of an elderly man who unwittingly became a prisoner of the border guards of two neighboring countries.

“Prisoner & Jailer” a coproduction of Libya and Qatar by Muhannad Lamin, telling the story of two contrasting Libyans: a key official in the former regime and one of the most prominent figures of the post-revolutionary period in Libya.



“Prisoner and Jailer”, a coproduction of Libya and Qatar by Muhannad Lamin.

Through these two characters, the circumstances surrounding one of the most influential events in modern Libyan history, “The Abu Salim Prison Massacre” is discovered.

“Dreams under the Rubble” by Mohammed Khalil from Iraq depicts the harrowing reality that the paramedics face while trying to save child casualties of the war.

The Iranian shorts include “Silence” by

Ammar Khatti, “Red Card” by Mohammad-Amin Rahbar, “From Leila” by Mojtaba Espani, “Garden of Paradise” by Hassan Najafi, “Brother” by Mahdiah Mohamamdi, “I Am an American” by Omid Mirzai and “I compensate” by Jamal Ahmadi.

“Songs of Wind” by Mohsen Sohani, “Our Are the Guest” by Hamid Bahmani, “Dark Chocolate” by Ruhollah Zarif Hosseinzadeh, “Roots” by Mohammadreza Moeini and “Commander” by Al Atshani are among the telefilms.

“Compassion” by Vignesh Vyas, an Independent filmmaker based in London, “I will Stay beside You Homeland” by Arash Bakhtiar, “Silent Flight” by Amir-Hossein Bozorogzadegan and “We Go Upper and Upper” by Majid Rastegar and Sadeq Lotfizadeh are among the music videos.

The Resistance festival is organized every year to observe the anniversary of the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, which is called the Sacred Defense in Iran.

This year, the festival has been organized in two stages, the first of which took place during the Sacred Defense Week from September 21 to 28, and the second part will be held from November 21 to 27 to celebrate the anniversary of Basij Day, which falls on November 25.

Iranian troupe to perform Neil Simon’s “Plaza Suite” online



A poster for “Plaza Suite”, which will be performed by Iranian director Maryam Baqeri’s troupe live on Instagram.

A R T TEHRAN — An Iranian troupe plans to perform American writer Neil Simon’s comedy play “Plaza Suite” live on Instagram.

The play will be staged on Friday at 8:30 pm directed by Maryam Baqeri who staged Simon’s “The Good Doctor” at

Tehran’s Neauphle-le-Chateau Theater in August.

The play will be performed based on a Persian translation of the play by Shahram Zargar who also directed the play in several performances at Tehran’s Sepand Theater this year in July.

“Plaza Suite” is composed of three acts, each involving different characters but all set in Suite 719 of New York City’s Plaza Hotel.

The first act, “Visitor from Mamaroneck”, introduces the audience to not-so-blissfully wedded couple Sam and Karen Nash, who are revisiting their honeymoon suite in an attempt by Karen to bring the love back into their marriage. Her plan backfires and the two become embroiled in a heated argument about whether or not Sam is having an affair with his secretary. The act ends with Sam leaving (allegedly to attend to urgent business) and Karen sadly reflecting on how much things have changed since they were young.

The second act, “Visitor from Hollywood”, involves a meeting between movie producer Jesse Kiplinger and his old flame, suburban housewife Muriel Tate. Muriel - aware of his reputation as a smooth-talking ladies’ man - has come

for nothing more than a chat between old friends, promising herself she will not stay too long. Jesse, however, has other plans in mind and repeatedly attempts to seduce her.

The third act, “Visitor from Forest Hills”, revolves around married couple Roy and Norma Hubley on their daughter Mimsey’s wedding day. In a rush of nervousness, Mimsey has locked herself in the suite’s bathroom and refuses to leave. This is the most comic of the acts, filled with increasingly outrageous slapstick moments depicting her parents’ frantic attempts to cajole her into attending her wedding while the gathered guests await the trio’s arrival downstairs. The scene ends and they finally get married.

Masih Kazemi, Mohsen Bahrami, Hamidreza Bahram and Mahdiah Soleimani are the members of the cast, and Niaz Esmaeilpur is the producer of the performance.

Several other Iranian directors have staged the play earlier. Sepideh Marvian directed the play at Anushirvan Arjmand Theater in Mashhad in April and May of 2015.

In addition, Afshin Fakuri also directed a reading performance of the play at Tehran’s Sarv Cultural Center in February of 2019.

Book City to launch Iranian model of Goodreads named “Behkhan”

CULTURE TEHRAN — The managing director of the Book City Institute announced on Tuesday the center’s plan to launch a website named “Behkhan”, which will work like Goodreads, an American social cataloging website that allows individuals to search its database of books, annotations, quotes and reviews.

The website will come on stream in late December, Mehdi Firuzan told the Persian service of Honaronline.

“In the beginning, information on about 200,000 titles will be uploaded on Behkhan, and each writer, publisher and book will have its own special box, and like social networks, readers will be able to comment and leave their reviews about each book on the website,” he added.



People visit the 31st Tehran International Book Fair at Imam Khomeini Mosalla on May 8, 2018. (IRNA/Fatemeh Behbudi)

In the second stage, the website will connect the reader to the online bookstores’ networks, he noted.

The Book City has earlier launched shahrekatabonline.com, which is an online shop offering a large number of books in various fields and an extensive collection of other cultural products for the Iranian readers.

Firuzan said that Book City tries to give all Iranian publishers the opportunity to create their own showcase on the institute’s platforms to sell their publications.

He added that the platforms like other examples in the world have their own limitations and flaws, and will never work as perfectly as the physical exhibitions.

The shutdown of bookstores following the spread of COVID-19 across Iran in February has pushed many people into using online stores.

As a result, Iran’s online bookstores have experienced a significant boom in their sales over the past nine months.

FIDIBO, a major online Iranian store for audio and electronic books, said in April that e-book readers have significantly increased in number due to the home quarantine enforced following the pandemic.

FIDIBO Managing Director Neda Baradaran said the number of e-book readers has increased to four times higher than the number registered before the COVID-19 epidemic in the country in February.

The 28th edition of Iran Book Week, which opened on Saturday, is currently being celebrated with a vast array of cultural programs for promoting reading.

Filmmaker Ghasideh Golmakani on jury of Chilean festival Cortos en Grande

A R T TEHRAN — Ghasideh Golmakani, director of the acclaimed Iranian shorts “Violet” and “Horn”, has been selected for the international competition jury of the 3rd Cortos en Grande Short Film Festival in Chile.

The Cortos en Grande 2020 opened on Wednesday and will go online until November 25 due to the COVID-19 pandemic from.

Sigrid Bernardo from the Philippines, Guillermo Fesser from Spain, Tadeuzs Kabicz from Poland and Marina Zeising from Argentina are the other members of the jury of the biennial event, which is organized by the VIART Foundation and Balmaceda Arte Joven to promote young promising filmmakers.

“Slaughter” co-directed by Saman Hosseinpur and Ako Zandkarimi is the sole Iranian film competing at the festival.

The film tells the story about a family that is forced to



Iranian filmmaker Ghasideh Golmakani in an undated photo.

slaughter their lone cow to pass the hard, cold winter days, and “Return” by Shahriar Purseyeyedan about Rahim, a

Persian bookstores offer “A Mind for Numbers”

CULTURE TEHRAN — American systems engineering expert Barbara Oakley’s book “A Mind for Numbers: How to Excel at Math and Science” has recently been published in Persian.

Kamyab Taqizadeh is the translator of the book published by Chatrang in Tehran.

Whether you are a student struggling to fulfill a math or science requirement, or you are embarking on a career change that requires a higher level of math competency, “A Mind for Numbers” offers the tools you need to get a better grasp of that intimidating but inescapable field.

Engineering professor Barbara Oakley knows firsthand how it feels to struggle with math. She flunked her way through high school

math and science courses, before enlisting in the army immediately after graduation.

When she saw how her lack of mathematical and technical savvy severely limited her options — both to rise in the military and to explore other careers — she returned to school with a newfound determination to re-tool her brain to master the very subjects that had given her so much trouble throughout her entire life.

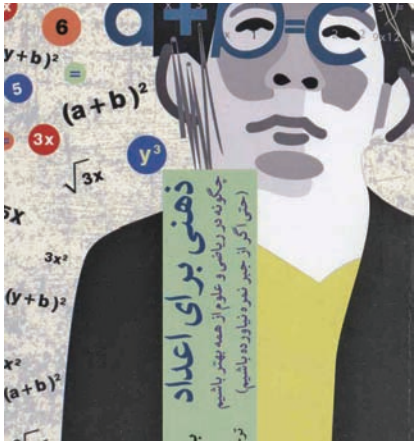
In “A Mind for Numbers”, Oakley lets us in on the secrets to effectively learning math and science — secrets that even dedicated and successful students wish they’d known earlier.

Contrary to popular belief, math requires creative, as well as analytical, thinking. Most

people think that there’s only one way to do a problem, when in actuality, there are often a number of different solutions — you just need the creativity to see them.

For example, there are more than three hundred different known proofs of the Pythagorean Theorem. In short, studying a problem in a laser-focused way until you reach a solution is not an effective way to learn math. Rather, it involves taking the time to step away from a problem and allow the more relaxed and creative part of the brain to take over.

“A Mind for Numbers” shows us that we all have what it takes to excel in math, and learning it is not as painful as some might think!



Front cover of the Persian translation of Barbara Oakley’s book “A Mind for Numbers”.