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## U.S. pursuing scorched earth policy in Afghanistan, Iran says

TEHRAN — Saeed Khatibzadeh, the spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry, has accused the United States of trying to destroy Afghanistan's legal institutions, calling on the U.S. not to follow the “scorched earth policy” in the country. “Washington is clandestinely trying to destroy Afghanistan's legal institutions with its irresponsible pullout to create room for its return to the country,” the spokesman told the Islamic Republic News

Agency (IRNA). “The U.S. is trying to leave Afghanistan in a way that once again the country gets stuck in armed conflict.” Khatibzadeh added, “What the U.S. has done in Afghanistan is that it invaded Afghanistan, killed its people and now it leaves behind an ominous heritage by destroying its legal institutions upon leaving – hoping that one day it will return to the country.”

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## 9 new power plants to come on stream by Mar. 2021

TEHRAN – Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian said that nine new power plants are going to go operational across the country by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2021).

These power plants will be inaugurated under the framework of a program called “A-B-Iran” based on which several energy projects go operational across the country every week.

The nominal capacity of electricity generation at Iranian power plants has exceeded 86,000 megawatts with the inauguration of several new power plants over the past two years.

Currently, combined cycle power plants account for the biggest share in the country's total power generation capacity followed by gas power plants.

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## Iranian doc warns of poachers smuggling bird species into Arab countries

**BY SEYYED MOSTAFA MOUSAVI SABET**  
TEHRAN – An Iranian documentary warns about the illegitimate hunting of a specific species of birds, which are then smuggled into the Arab states of the Persian Gulf. These birds, the houbara bustards that live in certain regions of Iran, are being killed so that rich men in Arab countries can improve their sex lives. According to a widespread myth, the meat of these birds has aphrodisiac qualities, although this

folk belief is not supported by any valid scientific research.

Speaking to the Persian service of Tasnim on Wednesday, Fathollah Amiri, the co-director of the documentary “Houbara” explained, “The Houbara bustard is the largest bird species living in the deserts of Iran. They are widely smuggled into the Arab countries, and this has almost caused the extinction of these birds.”

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## Basij at forefront of development

**BY FARANAK BAKHTIARI**  
About a year after the victory of the Islamic Revolution, on November 26, 1979, Imam Khomeini called for the formation of Basij force with the aim of preparing the military and defense against threats of enemies.

On April 30, 1980, a bill to form the National Basij Organization was approved. According to the bill, Basij is tasked with preventing and countering any foreign military aggression, political, economic, and cultural threats, as well as natural disasters.

After the Iraqi imposed war (1980-88), this revolutionary entity grew bigger and its activities expanded.

Basij is moving toward eliminating poverty and materializing the goal of resistance economy.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on May 7, 2,000, issued a directive to establish Basij-e Sazandegi, literally meaning the Development Basij, in order to encourage the youth for participating in the development of agriculture and natural resources in villages and deprived areas.

Implementation of this plan resulted in increasing labor productivity, training a skilled workforce, creating and strengthening job opportunities and supporting businesses, enhancing vocational training, developing the agricultural sector, improving the country's executive and administrative system, increasing construction activities, sustainable agricultural development, and protection of renewable natural resources, and saving on administrative costs.

Small groups of volunteers, mainly students called Basijis, spontaneously enter the field of construction and poverty eradication or in case of emergencies. They travel to the most deprived areas of the country in their spare time in spring and summer, and with little facilities but great motivation and determination to solve the problems of these areas.

**Eradication of polio in shortest time**  
In the mid-1370s (1990s), polio haunted the country. Tackling and eradicating the disease required vaccinating more than 9 million children under the age of five, which has been difficult and time consuming to implement by the health care system.

Within 24 hours, 8.5 million children across the country were vaccinated against polio with the participation of Basij forces through a door-to-door vaccination campaign.

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## Volleyball expert says Alekno has a difficult task in Iran

**BY FARROKH HESABI**  
TEHRAN - Iranian Volleyball expert Nasser Shahnazi believes that Vladimir Alekno, new head coach of Iran national volleyball team, has a coaching style which can be challenging for the Iranian national team.

In an exclusive e interview with Tehran Times, the former coach of Saipa club said: “It seems that we always behave differently comparing other countries concerning our sports decisions! While other volleyball national teams started their planning for Olympic Games and other competitions a few months ago, we wasted a lot of time to select the head coach for our national team.”

Alekno was chosen by the technical committee of the Islamic Republic of Iran Volleyball Federation (IRIVF) as the new Iran coach last week.

The Russian coach led his country's national team to a bronze and gold medal in the 2008 and 2012 Olympic Games, respectively.

“It's undeniable that he has a perfect resume and excellent work experience,” Shahnazi said.

“But, in my opinion, Russian coach, and generally Eastern European coaches are not suitable for our country's volleyball. In those countries, the style of play is based on the power and they have a lot of tall players, many of whom are over 200 centimeters tall. The plans for their training and their style of play is completely different from Iran.

“The Iranian players are more technical and fast rather than physical. So, it can be difficult for Alekno to adapt to our players' style. Our volleyball style is more like Brazil and Italy than Russia and Eastern European countries. Alekno has no time to change the tactics of our team. He also cannot change the squad because he does not know the domestic players. As the federation has said, he will be in his country for the next four months and will not be able to select new players from our league,” the Iranian expert added.

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## Yemen stresses right to self-defense as Saudi Arabia resorts to UN over Aramco raid

Yemen says its armed forces reserve the legitimate right to respond to any act of aggression by the Saudi-led military coalition, after Riyadh complained to the UN Security Council over a Yemeni missile attack on an Aramco petroleum products distribution plant in the kingdom's port city of Jeddah.

“The Saudi regime, despite all its appeals for condemnation and attempts to portray itself as a victim, cannot escape the fact that it is an aggressor and abuses the rights of Yemeni people,” Mohammed Abdul-Salam, spokesman of Yemen's Houthi Ansarullah movement, wrote in a Twitter post on Tuesday.

He added, “The whole world knows it was the Saudi regime which launched an aggression and siege [against Yemen], and is pressing ahead with them.”

“As long as the Saudi regime continues such behavior, it should only wait for a response and

legitimate defense unless it puts an end to the aggression and lifts the blockade,” Abdul-Salam said.

Moreover, Ansarullah politburo member Ali al-Qahoum told Lebanon-based al-Mayadeen television news network on Tuesday evening that the Riyadh regime's confusion over the missile strike on the Saudi Aramco plant in Jeddah is proof of growing capabilities of the Yemeni armed forces.

Qahoum noted that the next strikes by Yemeni armed forces will be even more painful.

Saudi UN Ambassador Abdallah al-Mouallimi wrote in a letter to the Security Council late on Monday that Yemeni forces were to blame for the missile attack on the Aramco petroleum plant in Jeddah earlier in the day.

He urged the 15-member body to stop what he described as a “threat” to global energy security, Yemen's political process and regional security.

## China, Russia have interest in improving Iran's economy, military: Texas University professor

**BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI**  
TEHRAN – Describing Iran's relationship with China and Russia as “partnership” rather than “alliance”, an American professor says that both China and Russia share an interest in improving Iran's economic capacities and opposing U.S. policies against Iran.

In an interview with the Tehran Times, Jon R. Taylor, professor of political science and geography at the University of Texas, notes that “China and Russia have an interest in improving

Iran's military capabilities and its economy.”

“The 25-Year Comprehensive Partnership, part of China's Belt and Road Initiative has fostered Chinese investments to upgrade Iran's oil, gas, and petrochemical industries and to improve the country's overland transportation,” Taylor notes. The following is the text of the interview:

Q: What is your analysis of the status of China in global economy?

A: China more than doubled its per capita GDP in less than a decade, moving from \$6 trillion in

2010 to \$14 trillion in 2019. According to the IMF's World Economic Output 2020 released in October, China has now overtaken the U.S. to become the world's largest economy. Measured by this metric for comparing national economies, the IMF report shows that China's economy is about one-sixth larger than the U.S. economy. China will be the only major economy that will record positive growth in 2020. The U.S. won't be able to make that claim.

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## Canoeing training camp starts in Bandar Anzali

Training camp of Iran national canoeing team started in the northern city of Bandar Anzali on Tuesday.

It's the first training camp since the coronavirus pandemic broke out in the country.

The canoers are preparing for the Asian Olympics qualification which is scheduled for March in Pattaya, Thailand.

The training has brought seven men and eight women canoers together in Bandar Anzali.

The Iranian athletes will take part at the 12 events in the competition.

## Cultural-rich Fars province takes step to boost agritourism

TEHRAN – Iran's Fars province, globally renowned for its vibrant cultural, historical, and archaeological gems such as Persepolis and Pasargadae, aims to jump-start agritourism as it is home to vast changing natural landscapes as well.

The provincial tourism department has issued two commercial activity licenses for two separate farms within a month letting those establishing agritourism-related businesses; a move that raises hopes for greater usage of the natural landscapes to develop rural tourism.

One of the licenses was issued to Delaram farm, situated in Kharameh country, some 75 km east of Shiraz, and the other to a farm located in Mohr county some 330 km southward of the capital city, according to the provincial tourism department.

The first farm is regarded as an exemplary place for the breeding of French dairy goats with a capacity of one thousand animals. And the second embraces various agricultural lands and greenhouses including ones for growing colored peppers, which are exported to Russia. Lemons, grapefruit, tangerines, and several flowers are also being produced on the farm.

Agritourism, a relatively new branch of the travel industry in which tourists stay with local people in rural areas abroad, is widely deemed as a means to materialize the national goal of 'Surge in Production'.

Today, agritourism is regarded as a stimulus to the imbalanced economy of agriculture sectors and the tendency for emotional and nostalgic roots of the modern world citizens and due to factors such as visitor participation in farm activities, direct purchase of products, spending a night at a farm, curiosity and learning about the farm and agriculture products has been able to create a wide target population.

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## Leader: Enemies after destroying, nullifying Basij

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has lauded Basij as the nation's great wealth and God-given reserve, saying the enemies have always been seeking to destroy or nullify it.

"Basij is a great and brilliant relic of the late Imam, and a manifestation of national power, and an exhibition of purity, sincerity, insight and struggle," Ayatollah Khamenei said in a message on Wednesday on the anniversary of Basij Day.

"In defending the country and its independence and stability, in providing vital services on a national scale, in leading scientific activities and new technologies, in valued approaches and creating a spiritual atmosphere, it is the name of Basij that comes up and the presence of Basij that draws attention," the Leader wrote.

He called on Basij forces to further concentrate on thwarting the enemy's plots and wished for their success in their endeavors.

In a statement on Sunday, the Army described Basij as one of the effective institutions in foiling the conspiracies of enemies.

"Today, Basij is a driving force for growth, progress, development and achieving sublime goals of the Islamic Republic of Iran, inspiring the sincere and loyal forces of the country and has been turned into a symbol of realizing the slogan of 'We Can'," the Army stated.

"The Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran considers Basij forces as the powerful and strong arm of the establishment who are ready to stand against soft and hard attacks of enemies under the auspices of the headship of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution in line with thwarting all conspiracies of enemies and ill-wishers of the establishment," it added.

## Army chief: We can turn Persian Gulf into 'sea of unity'

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The commander of the Army has issued a statement on Wednesday saying with the involvement of neighbors Iran is able to turn the Persian Gulf into the "sea of unity and power of the Islamic community".



Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi issued the statement on Navy Day.

"The sea is calm for the great Iranian nation in the stormiest condition and in the absence of foreigners we can generalize this maritime security with the participation of neighbors for all nations of the region and turn the Persian Gulf into the sea of unity and power of the Islamic community," General Mousavi stated.

## Iran trades Australian-British woman spying for Israel for 3 Iranians

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — In a prisoner swap Iran has released an Australian-British woman who had been spying for the Zionist regime of Israel, the news agency run by the national TV reported on Wednesday afternoon.

Instead three Iranian citizens — a businessperson and two others - who were held in foreign prisons were freed.

The three Iranian nationals had been detained under false allegations.

The Australian-British woman, named Kylie Moore-Gilbert, was portrayed by foreign media outlets as researcher, Islam expert and university professor. Moore-Gilbert, 31, had been in Iranian captivity since September 2018.

## Parliament speaker: Iran to continue resistance against U.S. sanctions

**TEHRAN (FNA)** — Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf underlined that the Islamic Republic will continue to resist against the U.S. unilateral sanctions and to help to the livelihood of the Iranians.

"Our main strategy to overcome the anti-Iran sanctions is nullifying the sanctions as well as strengthening each and every one of the Iranian people," Ghalibaf said on Wednesday.

Referring to recent remarks of Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei in the meeting of the Supreme Council of Economic Coordination on Tuesday, the Iranian parliament speaker said, "We have to come up with different ways to deal with the economic issues caused by sanctions.

"It is not a viable solution to simply and optimistically wait for the lifting of sanctions," he added.

Ghalibaf reiterated that Iran's main strategy is to nullify the sanctions, and said, "In order to overcome the sanctions, we must strengthen each and every one of the Iranian people, and as the Leader said, it is by nullifying the sanctions that the lifting of the sanctions can be achieved."

On Tuesday, Iran's Supreme Leader the country's need to rely on its own capabilities and hard work to defuse the U.S. sanctions, after its efforts to work out a negotiated end to the sanctions policy produced no tangible result.

"Curing sanctions is possible through the two ways of defusing and overcoming them as well as removing them. We, of course, tried the option of removing the sanctions once and negotiated for several years, but with no result," Ayatollah Khamenei said, addressing a meeting of the Supreme Council of Economic Coordination in Tehran yesterday.

"If we manage to overcome the sanctions through hard work, initiatives and enduring problems, and the opposite party witnesses sanctions lose effectiveness, [he/she] will give up sanctions gradually," he added.

"We have abundant capacities and capabilities to defuse sanctions provided that we show will, try and confront problems," Ayatollah Khamenei said.

# Iran says won't negotiate terms of nuclear pact

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Presidential

chief of staff Mahmoud Vaezi has said the nuclear agreement, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) which was signed in July 2015, is not open to new rounds of negotiations.

There will be no new negotiations for the JCPOA because negotiations concerning the deal were held in the past and led to the deal, Vaezi told reporters after Wednesday's cabinet meeting.

According to Mehr, Vaezi also said while Iran has welcomed U.S. President Donald Trump's defeat, it is not optimistic about any of the U.S. administrations unless they act differently.

"President Rouhani announced today that if the other JCPOA parties return to January 20, 2017, the day Trump came to power, Iran is ready to step back to the same date as well," the presidential chief of staff said.

Vaezi, who was a high-ranking diplomat in the Rafsanjani administration, said Trump has disturbed the international order and ruined international relations, including those in the Middle East.

"He has put intense pressure on the Iranian people over the past three years," he added.

Tensions soared between Tehran and Washington when Trump unilaterally withdrew the U.S. from the JCPOA on May 8, 2018. The U.S. president not only exited



the deal but has since targeted Iran with a series of harsh economic bans. Trump has called the sanctions his "maximum pressure" campaign aimed at forcing Iran to renegotiate the nuclear deal.

However, Tehran has rejected renegotiating the terms of the deal.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has insisted that "under no circumstances" would Tehran consider renegotiating the

**Former European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton has said there will be resistance to further "asks" of Iran, especially if the U.S. is not offering more in return.**

## Rouhani: Thank God world got rid of Trump

**'We have had two sacred defenses, one against Iraq and the other against the Trumpists'**

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — President Hassan Rouhani

has expressed satisfaction over the defeat of U.S. President Donald Trump in the November 3 presidential election, saying "thank God that the Americans and the world got rid of Trump".

"One of the manifestations of Iran's victory and the enemy's definite defeat in the economic war is the end of the era of Trumpism," Rouhani said at a cabinet meeting on Wednesday morning.

Rouhani added Trump even didn't allow a \$5 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund "to reach Iran to fight the coronavirus".

"I thank the Iranian people for their three-year resistance in the economic war. In Iran we've had two sacred defenses, one against Iraq and the other against the Trumpists," the president said, Fars reported.

He also said if President-elect Joe Biden repeals Trump's anti-Iran decisions, Iran and other sides of the nuclear agreement can go back to the circumstances that existed before January 20, 2017, when Trump became the U.S. president.

Under Trump, the U.S. slapped sanctions on Iran after his administration withdrew from the 2015 Iran nuclear

deal in May 2018. Trump has described the sanctions as his "maximum pressure" campaign aimed at forcing Iran to renegotiate the nuclear deal. However, some analysts and officials believe that the "maximum pressure" strategy was aimed at overthrowing the Islamic Republic establishment.

Earlier this month, Rouhani said his administration will make use of every opportunity in order to lift the U.S. sanctions against Iran.

"Whenever we see that there's a situation for the lifting of sanctions, we will make use of that," Rouhani said at a cabinet meeting on November 11. "Our goal is that cruel sanctions would be lifted."

Rouhani also said the Trump administration that sought the fall of the Iranian establishment has faced a "humiliating" defeat itself.

The Trump administration that dreamed about the collapse of the Iranian establishment has been voted out humiliatingly, the president pointed out.

In remarks on November 8, Rouhani urged the incoming Biden administration to make up for Trump's mistakes and cherish international law and treaties.

"Now, an opportunity has opened up for the next U.S.

**"One of the manifestations of Iran's victory and the enemy's definite defeat in the economic war is the end of the era of Trumpism."**

## Tehran rejects Stockholm's interference in Iran's judicial verdicts

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Tehran

has reacted to Swedish Foreign Minister Ann Linde's tweet about Ahmadreza Jalali's legal case, rejecting any interference in issuing or enforcing judicial verdicts by the Iranian Judiciary as unacceptable.

"As Dr. Zarif, the Iranian foreign minister, explained to Ms. Linde in the conversation, the Judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran is independent, and any interference in the issuing or enforcement of judicial verdicts is rejected and unacceptable," Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said in a statement on Tuesday evening, according to the Foreign Ministry website.

Earlier on Tuesday, Zarif and Linde had a phone conversation, during which the two sides conferred on the latest international



developments, regional issues, JCPOA-related issues, and bilateral and consular

relations between Tehran and Stockholm.

During the phone call, the Iranian foreign minister pointed to the United States' unlawful and unfair sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran, and criticized European countries for their failure to fulfill their commitments under the JCPOA.

He also advised the top Swedish diplomat not to sacrifice their independence and sovereignty for the bullying and cruel policies of the United States.

After the conversation, Linde tweeted

**Khatibzadeh expresses regret that Swedish officials have deficient and incorrect information about the situation of Jalali, who is in jail for security-related crimes.**



administration to make up for the past mistakes and return to abiding by international commitments through respecting international regulations," he said.

The president said the Trump government's destructive policies over the last three years were not only rejected by the people of the world but were also opposed by the American people in the November 3 election.

He added that the Islamic Republic of Iran has always complied with its obligations as long as the other sides have done the same and regard constructive collaboration with the world as its approach.

that she had spoken with Zarif "in light of reports that Iran may have planned to enforce a death penalty" against Jalali, a dual Iranian-Swedish national.

"Sweden condemns the death penalty and works to ensure that the verdict against Jalali is not enforced," she wrote.

Khatibzadeh expressed regret that Swedish officials have deficient and incorrect information about the situation of Jalali, who is in jail for security-related crimes.

Jalali, a medical doctor and lecturer at the Karolinska Institute in the Swedish capital, was arrested in Iran in 2016 and later convicted of espionage.

He was charged with providing information to Israel to help its agents assassinate Iranian nuclear scientists. Iran's Supreme Court in 2017 upheld the death sentence against Jalali.

## Top general: Enemy 'frustrated' over inability to use 'military option' against Iran

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The enemy has become "frus-

trated" due to its failure to physically harm the Islamic Republic of Iran and therefore it does not have the "military option" on the table, says Chief of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Hossein Salami.

"However, in line with its enmity toward the establishment, the enemy has targeted the people's religion, culture, livelihood and health," Major General Salami said on Wednesday.

He made the remarks on the anniversary of Basij Day, which falls on November 25.

The general said Basij members are not afraid of any enemy.

"We are standing till the end, and the end of this resistance is the complete decline of the enemy," Salami said.

In similar remarks in September, the IRGC commander said a military war against Iran is "basically abandoned".

"They [enemies] have opened an economic infiltration and psychological war channel [against Iran]," Salami said on September 29.

He said Iran should strive day and night to thwart the enemies' economic war, arguing that the country's capac-

ities are enough to defeat the enemies.

The senior commander also said the enemy is neither capable nor willing to resolve Iran's issues.

"The path to our welfare never passes through interaction with the enemy," Salami suggested.

"Even if we reconcile with [the U.S.], still it will harm us... and destroy our resolve," he added.

U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the United States from the Iran nuclear deal, officially recognized as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), in May 2018, and imposed the "harshes ever sanctions" on Iran to force it to negotiate a new deal.

Iran has strongly rejected Washington's call for renewed talks, citing the U.S. bashing of the internationally-endorsed JCPOA as a manifestation of its untrustworthiness.

Salami has been an outspoken general with regard to the U.S. acts of hostilities toward Iran.

Last week, he owed to avenge the cold blood killing of Iran's top anti-terror general Qassem Soleimani "in the field".

"We will definitely avenge the blood of martyred Lieutenant General Haj Qassem Soleimani in the field," Salami

said in a meeting with Iraqi Minister of Defense Juma Inad Saadoun in Tehran on November 15.

He said the revenge is not related to Iran's legal proceedings of the killing through international bodies.

"We are certain that the children of the great Iraq will also avenge the blood of their respected general, Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis," he added.

On January 3, U.S. President Donald Trump ordered drone strikes that martyred General Soleimani, chief of the IRGC Quds Force, and al-Muhandis, the deputy commander of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), near the Iraqi capital of Baghdad.

In the early hours of January 8, the IRGC attacked Ain al-Assad airbase in western Iraq, where U.S. forces were stationed, as part of its promised "tough revenge" for the U.S. terror attack. Iran has asserted that taking revenge for the assassination is not over.

According to Salami, the two martyrs played the most significant role in the defeat of Daesh (ISIS) and the defeat of plots hatched by the Zionists and the Americans in the region.



# Iran dismisses prospect of war

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Major General Hossein Salami said on Wednesday that the enemy no longer thinks of military confrontation with Iran, underlining that the enemy has focused on undermining the Islamic establishment's morale instead. "Military war has been excluded from the enemy's options," Salami told reporters on Wednesday, adding that, "It has targeted the inspiring spirit of our establishment, the people, the people's religion, our culture, livelihood, and health."

The top commander also pointed out that the steadfastness of the Iranian people will result in the obliteration of the enemy, which he described as declining like a sunset.

"We will stand firm till the end. The end is the annihilation of the enemy. Basij is also continuing this path to defend the lofty values of the nation under the guidelines of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution," the IRGC commander was quoted by Fars news agency as saying.

Salami's remarks came against a backdrop of heightened tensions between Iran and outgoing Trump who, according to The New York Times, asked his senior advisers in an Oval Office meeting two weeks ago whether he had options to take action against Iran's main nuclear site in the coming weeks. The meeting occurred a day after international inspectors reported a significant increase in the country's stockpile of nuclear material.

Citing four current and former U.S. officials, The New York Times claimed a range of senior advisers dissuaded the president from moving ahead with a military strike, saying the advisers — including Vice President Mike Pence; Secretary of State Mike Pompeo; Christopher C. Miller, the acting defense secretary; and Gen. Mark A. Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff — warned that a strike against Iran's facilities could easily escalate into a broader conflict in the last weeks of Trump's presidency.

Pompeo, who reportedly tried to dissuade Trump from attacking Iran, has recently refused to rule out a military strike against Iran if that is what is required "to



keep Americans safe".

In an interview with The National, Pompeo implied that Trump still retains the right to attack Iran.

Asked whether a strike against Iran was being considered, Pompeo succinctly said: "The President of the United States always retains the right to do what's needed to ensure that Americans are safe. It's been our policy for four years. It'll be our policy, so long as we have the responsibility to keep America protected."

On the other hand, Iran vowed a "crushing" response to any aggression by the U.S. "Any action against the Iranian nation would certainly face a crushing response," Iranian government spokesman Ali Rabiei said in what appeared a response to the report of The New York Times.

Analysts also warned that any U.S. attack on Iran will not go unanswered. And this has seemingly encouraged Trump's advisers to dissuade him from attacking Iran, according to Seyed Hadi Seyed Afghahi, an expert on West Asia.

Seyed Afghahi told the Tehran Times last week that the U.S. president's advisers warned him that any attack on Iran will most likely set the whole region on fire.

According to the expert, these advisers are more aware of the implications of military escalation with Iran than Trump, who may have decided to take revenge from Iran due to its refusal to meet with him and negotiate over a new nuclear deal.

"But if the U.S. strikes, Iran will certainly respond. Iran is fully prepared to respond to any aggression," Afghahi warned.

At the official level, there have been concerted warning in Iran to make the Trump administration realize that Iran is fully capable to thwart and even respond to any "melancholy adventure" from the United States.

Following the report of The New York Times, Alireza Miryousefi, the spokesman for Iran's mission to the United Nations in New York, said Iran's nuclear program is purely for peaceful purposes and civilian use and Trump's policies have not changed that. "However, Iran has proven to be capable of using its legitimate military might to prevent or respond to any melancholy adventure from any aggressor," he told Reuters.

Furthermore, Afghahi said he had information from reliable military circles that some Iranian officials even hope the

U.S. makes a "mistake" so that they can "punish" it.

Military threats from the Trump administration against Iran are nothing new. Trump has regularly threatened Iran with military action over the past two years. Trump's threats were mainly based on the assumption that the U.S. can hit and run. In other words, the Trump administration has implied that it might launch a limited military campaign against Iran in order to achieve its goals. But Tehran has made it clear that whoever starts a war with Iran will not be the one who finishes it and that a limited war with Iran is a pure fantasy.

In an interview with CBS in September 2019, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif famously warned that there would be no limited war with Iran if the U.S. attacked Iran.

"No. No, I'm not confident that we can avoid a war. We-I'm confident that we will not start one but I'm confident that whoever starts one will not be the one who finishes it," Zarif cautioned at the time. "That means that there won't be a limited war."

In September 2020, the chief Iranian diplomat once again warned that any war with Iran would be a "mother of all quagmires." This warning came after a suspected report was published by Politico claiming that Iran was weighing a plot to kill Lana Marks, the U.S. ambassador to South Africa, in revenge for the assassination of IRGC's Quds Force commander Qassem Soleimani, a claim that took many by surprise, including the South African government.

"The habitual liar [Mike Pompeo] bamboozled Donald Trump into assassinating ISIS' enemy #1 by raising a false alarm. Now he's trying to sucker him into mother of all quagmires by leaking a new false alarm," Zarif tweeted.

Zarif's tweet came in response to another tweet by Trump in which the U.S. president threatened to launch "an attack on Iran that will be 1,000 times greater in magnitude!"

Trump never dared launch such an attack and the military option, in general, has since been increasingly eroding in a way that it became obsolete by the day.

## U.S. pursuing scorched earth policy in Afghanistan, Iran says

**1→** The U.S., as an invader, must follow international law and not to follow the 'scorched earth policy' upon leaving."

The U.S. has recently announced that it's planning to cut American troop numbers in Afghanistan and Iraq by mid-January.

"By January 15, our force size in Afghanistan will be 2,500 troops. Our force size in Iraq will also be 2,500 by that same date," Acting Secretary of Defense Chris Miller told reporters in mid-November.

The U.S. is also trying to broker a peace deal between the Afghan government and the Taliban in a bid to pave the way for American withdrawal from Afghanistan but the effort has yet to yield results. During his recent tour of the region, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo met with the peace negotiators of the Taliban and the Afghan government in Doha, Qatar.

"The fact is that Iran believes in real peace talks; all parties and groups in Afghanistan should be able to negotiate in a totally inter-Afghan process," Khatibzadeh said, adding that Iran tries its best for that to happen.

The spokesman made the remarks during an official visit to Kabul. Commenting on the goal of his visit, Khatibzadeh said Afghanistan is a high priority for Iran's foreign policy and the ties between the two countries are based on good neighborliness.

He pointed out that Iranian and Afghan officials pay regular visits to each other's country, adding that a couple of days ago Afghanistan's deputy foreign minister paid a visit to Tehran and discussed the comprehensive document on strategic cooperation between Iran and



Afghanistan. Khatibzadeh noted that he was present in the meeting with the Afghan deputy foreign minister to discuss bilateral issues, expansion of cultural and public diplomacy. He also said that he had a meeting with the head of Afghanistan's High Council for National Reconciliation Abdullah Abdullah and discussed cultural and public diplomacy issues.

According to Khatibzadeh, Iran tries to be effective and contribute to the Afghan peace process.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is the only country that has paid a high price for the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to be respected as a political structure. Today, the White House regime has made its utmost to destroy Afghanistan's future through clandestine deals, but Iran is trying to preserve the current struc-

tures of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the rights of minorities, the rights of religions, and what the Afghan people have achieved painstakingly," Khatibzadeh said, adding that Iran seeks to establish good relations between Tehran and Kabul.

Iran's efforts concerning the Afghan peace process have intensified in recent weeks. Ebrahim Taherian Fard, the special envoy of Iran's foreign minister for Afghanistan, paid a visit to Kabul last week and met with Afghan Foreign Minister Mohammad Hanif Atmar. During the meeting, the 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 surrounding the Afghan peace process.

Earlier in October, Abdullah Abdullah traveled to Iran to seek support for the Afghan peace talks. He met with several high-ranking Iranian officials including the president, foreign minister, Parliament speaker, and secretary of the Supreme National Security Council.

"The leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran consider the success of peace in Afghanistan to be in the interest of the region and the world and they comprehensively support a peace process that is led and managed by Afghanistan," Abdullah was quoted by the Fars news agency as saying during his two-day visit to Tehran.

## Caracas to boost 'strategic ties' with Iran: Venezuelan FM

**POLITICAL d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Jorge Arreaza, the foreign minister of Venezuela, has said that his country is going to boost the strategic relations between Iran and Venezuela.

In an interview with the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), the chief Venezuelan diplomat said that Tehran and Caracas have laid the groundwork for developing and expanding bilateral ties. He added that he is planning to hold a joint bilateral meeting between all ministers of Iran and Venezuela.

"Considering the dimensions of the two countries' development, Iran and Venezuela are two powers that, despite this geographical distance, have more in common than can be imagined," Arreaza stated.

Referring to Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif's recent tour to Venezuela and also the export of Iranian oil to Venezuela, the top Venezuelan diplomat said despite U.S. cruel sanctions and the limitations caused by COVID-19 in the world, exchange of political delegations, trade interactions, and strategic cooperation between two countries have not been affected.

Arreaza added that Iran and Venezuela have common goals and common enemies. Both nations are proud of their anti-imperialism revolution and are now under sanctions and blockade, he said, adding that the two countries decided to be free.

Arreaza hailed Iran's efforts to help Venezuelan people through investment, saying it is believed that Venezuela President Nicolas Maduro and President Hassan Rouhani underline focusing on some specific strategic fields which are affected by U.S. sanctions.

Referring to Zarif's recent visit to Venezuela, he said during the meetings both sides discussed bilateral relations and also various projects with Iran in the energy sector. "I believe that Iran and Venezuela have become a clear example of how we can unite despite all the problems and aggression, and this is what has led to the development of our bilateral relations in recent years and will grow much more," Arreaza pointed out. "Iran's move to send ships and tankers carrying fuel, although seen as a serious challenge to the United States, went beyond that to show Iran's



solidarity with the besieged nation of Venezuela, especially since our people showed their solidarity with the Iranian nation a decade ago under President Hugo Chavez."

He added, "The Venezuelan and Iranian delegations are meeting uninterruptedly, even in the difficult circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic in order to increase cooperation and focus on priority areas, and we are now planning to hold a bilateral commission with all ministers from the two governments. It will be a great stride towards the future."

In early November, the chief Iranian diplomat began a regional tour that included three Latin American countries. In Venezuela, Zarif met with President Maduro, Foreign Minister Arreaza, and

Vice President Delcy Rodríguez.

Maduro hailed the "strategic relations" between Iran and Venezuela following the visit by Iran's top diplomat to Caracas.

"Today 5 November, I had the pleasure of receiving the visit of the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mohammad Javad Zarif. A visit that underlines the unwavering spirit of the strategic relations of cooperation and solidarity between Iran and Venezuela," the Venezuelan president said in a tweet, according to the Iranian Students' News Agency (ISNA).

On the other hand, Iran hailed Venezuela as a partner of Iran.

"Cuba and Venezuela are among the political partners of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Latin American region, which have long had extensive political cooperation in bilateral, regional and international sectors," said Saeed Khatibzadeh, the spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry, adding, "Venezuela is one of our country's main destinations for the export of technical and engineering services, and the Iranian private sector has implemented or is implementing various projects in this country."

## SPORTS

### Volleyball expert says Alekno has a difficult task in Iran

**1→** The Russian coach led his country's national team to a bronze and gold medal in the 2008 and 2012 Olympic Games, respectively.

"It's undeniable that he has a perfect resume and excellent work experience," Shahnazi said.

"But, in my opinion, Russian coach, and generally Eastern European coaches are not suitable for our country's volleyball. In those countries, the style of play is based on the power and they have a lot of tall players, many of whom are over 200 centimeters tall. The plans for their training and their style of play is completely different from Iran.

"The Iranian players are more technical and fast rather than physical. So, it can be difficult for Alekno to adapt to our players' style. Our volleyball style is more like Brazil and Italy than Russia and Eastern European countries. Alekno has no time to change the tactics of our team. He also cannot change the squad because he does not know the domestic players. As the federation has said, he will be in his country for the next four months and will not be able to select new players from our league," the Iranian expert added.

Alekno has succeeded Montenegrin coach Igor Kolakovic, who vacated the position in March. Tomaso Totolo and Dmitry Sosnin will reportedly assist him on Iran National Volleyball Team.

"I think the Italian assistant coach, Totolo, can help Alekno a lot because he is a skilled analyst as well. Finally, I wish Mr. Alekno success, and I hope that Iran will achieve many victories with the new head coach," Shahnazi concluded.

### Esteghlal beat Machine Sazi in IPL

**S P O R T S d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Esteghlal football team defeated Machine Sazi 1-0 thanks to a Hrvoje Milic's stunning free-kick in Iran Professional League (IPL) on Wednesday.

The Blues hosted Machine Sazi in Tehran's Azadi Stadium and earned a 1-0 win to bounce back from the last week's 2-1 defeat against Foolad.



Milic scored the winner in the 57th minute.

The Blues moved up to second place with six points after three weeks.

In Sirjan, Gol Gohar and Foolad shared the points in a 1-1 draw. Godwin Mensha scored for Gol Gohar from the penalty spot in the 8th minute and Mohammad Ghaseminejad equalized the match in the 41st minute.

Saipa defeated Nassaji 1-0 courtesy of Mohsen Mosalman's 65th minute goal.

Newly-promoted teams Aluminum Arak and Mes Rafsanjan played out a goalless draw in Arak.

On Thursday, Naft Masjed Soleyman will host Persepolis, Tractor meet Sepahan in Tabriz, Zob Ahan entertain Paykan and Shahr Khodro play Sanat Naft in Mashhad.

### Iranian-Swedish Asbaghi named Sweden U21 coach

**S P O R T S d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Iranian-Swedish coach Poya Asbaghi has been named as new head coach of Sweden U21 football team.

The Karaj-born coach, who has replaced Roland Nilsson, has penned a contract with U21 team until 2023.

Asbaghi most recently worked as head coach of Swedish Allsvenskan side IFK Göteborg.

The 35-year-old coach started his coaching career in Dalkurd FF in 2016 and was linked to English Championship side Barnsley in 2019.

"It will be very, very fun to change coaching at the club level to the national team level. I am happy since I will work with the most talented players in Sweden," Asbaghi told the Swedish Football Association's website.

### Diego Maradona dead at 60: Football legend passes away

Diego Maradona has reportedly passed away at the age of 60.

The Argentina legend - regarded by many as the greatest footballer of all time - reportedly suffered a cardio-respiratory arrest and was left in a serious condition.

Argentine outlet Clarin then reported later on Wednesday that Maradona had passed away.

Maradona was hospitalised earlier this month after undergoing surgery for a blood clot on the brain.

The surgery was successful but, just weeks later, Maradona has passed away.

The news has been confirmed by ESPN Argentina and TyC Sports.

Journalist Cesar Luis Merlo reports that doctors attempted to revive Maradona.

But it seems that the awful news is sadly true: football has lost one of its most legendary players.

Maradona is most famous for inspiring Argentina to glory at the 1986 World Cup finals in Mexico.

The legendary forward also led unfashionable Napoli to two Serie A titles in 1987 and 1990.

After Maradona retired in 1997, he went into coaching and managed the Argentina national team between 2008-2010.

He was in charge of Gimnasia de La Plata at the time of his untimely and tragic death.

(Source: Givemesport)



## West Azarbaijan exports 1,200 tons of honey per year

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — West Azarbaijan Province, in the northwest of Iran, exports 1,200 tons of honey per year, according to a provincial official.

Hasan Hatami, the managing director of West Azarbaijan Industrial Parks Company, said that the province exports honey to Qatar, Kuwait, Iraq, and some other neighboring countries.

He said 800 persons are directly and indirectly active in the honey industry of the province.



Iran, as one of the leading countries in the honey industry, has a long-established tradition of beekeeping and during recent years could successfully increase its annual production of honey and is now the third-largest honey producer in the world, according to Gerold Boedeker, FAO Representative to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Director of Iranian Agriculture Ministry’s beekeeping development plan said over 112,000 tons of honey was produced in the country during the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19), about 22,000 tons more than the figure for the preceding year.

## Over \$140m of investment made for greenhouse establishment in Golestan Province

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Over six trillion rials (about \$142.85 million) of investment has been made for the establishment of greenhouses in Iran’s northeastern Golestan Province during the past two years, according to a provincial official.

Navid-Reza Farahani, the deputy head of the province’s agriculture department, said the greenhouses have been set up in 280 hectares of lands, creating 14,000 job opportunities.

The official noted that competition of such projects will flourish agriculture sector of the province.

While the agriculture sector plays a significant role in the promotion of the Iranian economy, drought in recent years has prevented this sector from being developed as expected.

To tackle this condition, the Agriculture Ministry has taken some measures and defined some programs, such as the improvement of irrigation systems.

One of the major programs that the ministry has defined and is seriously pursuing is the development of greenhouses throughout the country.

In late April, the managing director of Iran’s Agricultural Parks Company (APC) said that this company planned to create 1,000 hectares of new greenhouses in the country’s agricultural parks during the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021).

According to Ali-Ashraf Mansouri, the development of the country’s agricultural parks not only is going to create new job opportunities but also increases the country’s non-oil exports and helps preserve the environment and the national water and soil resources.

Iran has paid 8.3 trillion rials (about \$197.6 million) of facilities for the development of agricultural parks across the country during the past Iranian year.

The mentioned facilities were paid for the development or construction of various agricultural parks including greenhouses, and those for aquaculture, as well as livestock and poultry breeding.



Offering such facilities and also the other supportive measures have led to the creation of more greenhouses and well as the development of the existing ones in the country.

As announced by an official with the Agriculture Ministry, 1,476 hectares of greenhouses and shade houses have been created and developed in the country during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21).

Mohammad-Ali Tahmasbi, the deputy agriculture minister for gardening affairs, said that of the mentioned figure, 761.9 hectares have been the development of the previous greenhouses and shade houses, while 714.1 hectares have been the newly created ones.

Meanwhile, Iran plans to create 2,500 hectares of new greenhouses in the country during the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021), which is named the year of “Surge in Production”, according to the operator of the plan for developing greenhouses.

Habib Radfar has said that the new greenhouses being created, the total greenhouse area in the country will reach 4,600 hectares.

He although mentioned that of the 2,500 hectares projected for this year, some 1,200 hectares will be created in the current year, but will be put into operation in the first half of the next year (March 21-September 21, 2021).

Iran is anticipated to produce 5,000 tons of fruits and vegetables in the greenhouses throughout the country this year.

As reported, 80 percent of the country’s greenhouse fruits and vegetables are exported.

The significance of boosting agricultural export is obvious when taking the country’s recent approach to boost non-oil exports into account. The development of greenhouses is a very fruitful measure in this due.

Production of products in the greenhouses is today one of the most profitable methods in the agriculture sectors of the countries, in a way that they have defined it as one of their major production strategies because while greenhouses provide stable production of high-quality products, developing them is a proper way for tackling drought and for optimal use of water resources.

# Anzali Free Zone development necessary to expand trade with EAEU

By Mahnaz Abdi

**TEHRAN** — Located in Gilan Province, north of Iran, Anzali Free Trade-Industrial Zone is the sole free zone in the southern part of the Caspian Sea with an area of 9,400 hectares and 40 kilometers shoreline.

It is one of the country’s seven free trade-industrial zones.

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

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

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

When it comes to Anzali Free Zone, taking development measures is of special impor-



tance, as the zone is a window to Eurasia, and its development can expand Iran’s trade relation with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) member states, which is being seriously followed up by Iran.

Iran and Eurasian Economic Union reached a free trade agreement in May 2018 based on which about 862 commodity items

were subjected to preferential tariffs, the agreement came into force on October 27, 2019.

Iran is a very important market in the region and the development of ties with this country is of high significance for the EAEU members (Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan).

## 9 new power plants to come on stream by Mar. 2021

**I →** Earlier this month, Ardakanian said that his ministry has implemented 128 projects with a total investment of 430 trillion rials (about \$10.2 billion) under the framework of the “A-B-Iran” since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20).

Following “A-B-Iran”, the Energy Ministry plans to inaugurate 250 major water and electricity projects worth 500 trillion rials (about \$11.9 billion) during the current year.

“We hope that until the end of the year, the inauguration of new projects will go on week by week and according to schedule, and we will do our best to fulfill this promise this year just like the previous year,” Ardakanian said in

an interview with the national TV.

Since the beginning of the first phase of the program in the previous Iranian calendar year every week several energy projects went operational across the country.

According to the minister, so far, seven dams, eight irrigation and drainage network projects, four large water treatment plants, seven large wastewater treatment plants, 448 water supply projects to rural areas and seven supply projects to large cities as well as nine thermal power plants, 13 renewable power plants, five small scale power plants and 33 substations and transmission line projects have been implemented under the framework of the mentioned program.



## Iran, Kazakhstan stress expansion of transport ties in online forum

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** – Iran and Kazakhstan have held their second webinar on maritime, port, and road transport cooperation, following the launch of a Ro-Ro vessel line between Iran’s Amirabad Port and Kazakhstan’s Kuryk Port.

In this online event, which was attended by two countries’ shipping, port, and transport officials, the two sides stressed the need to continue cruises by Ro-Ro vessels between the ports of the two countries, and also the allocation of reciprocal facilities to offer port discounts, increasing the volume of cargo exchanges as well as facilitation of visa issuance.

Speaking in this webinar on Tuesday, the Iranian Ambassador to Kazakhstan Majid Saber expressed satisfaction with the current developments in the two countries’ transport and maritime cooperation and called for further expansion of the mentioned ties.

At the end of the event, the two sides agreed



to hold monthly meetings to follow up on the implication of the agreements reached in this meeting.

Iran and Kazakhstan’s first meeting on port, maritime, and transport cooperation was held back in August, in which the two sides had agreed to launch a Ro-Ro vessel between the two countries and to increase ship traffic.

## Inflation rate stands at 29%: SCI

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** —The Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) announced that the inflation rate in the twelve-month period ended on November 20, which marks the end of the eight Iranian calendar month of Aban, stood at 29 percent.

The center has previously put the inflation rate in the twelve-month period ended on October 21, which marks the end of the seventh Iranian calendar month of Mehr, at 27.2.

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

The statement published on the website of the CBI read, “Given the adopted policies and taken measures and also taking the country’s macro-economic factors into



account, the CBI believes that based on the realistic scenarios, the inflation rate in the current year will continue its downward trend.”

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

## South Pars strategic condensate storages to be inaugurated soon

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** – The project for the construction of Iran’s South Pars strategic storage facilities is nearly finished and the storages will be officially inaugurated in near future, Shana reported.

With a nominal capacity of 640,000 cubic meters (four million barrels), the mentioned storage facilities and gas condensate measuring stations have been constructed at Pars 1 site, southern Iran, to store gas condensate produced by South Pars refineries.

Implemented by Pars Oil and Gas Company (POGC), the mentioned project includes eight storages each with a capacity of 80,000 cubic meters equipped with floating roofs and also two fire tanks and fuel tanks, piping network and electrical and instrumentation systems, measuring systems, and condensate transfer boosters and pumps as well as office buildings.

The South Pars storages are able to supply 480,000 barrels of gas condensate to the Persian Gulf Star



Refinery on a daily basis and also are able to send gas condensate to the single-point-mooring (SPM) system No. 1 and 2 via pipelines.

## Daily gas production reaches 900 mcm

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The managing director of the National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) said the country’s natural gas production has reached 900 million cubic meters (equal to five million barrels of oil), Shana reported.

Speaking to the national TV on Tuesday, Hassan Montazer Torbati referred to the balancing of production and consumption in the country in recent years, saying: “Due to effective measures taken in recent years in South Pars, the country’s daily gas production has reached 900 million cubic meters, which is equivalent to five daily million barrels of oil.”

Torbati also pointed to the 30-mcm increase in daily consumption of natural gas during the summer compared to the same period in the previous year and said: “Normally, a number of new cities and villages are connected to the country’s gas network every year and this increase in consumption is partly due to this, but the main reason for this year’s unusual increase was the rise in hot water consumption for sanitary purposes due to the coronavirus pandemic.”

The deputy oil minister for gas affairs stated that most of the country’s cities are now connected to the national gas network, noting that the number of villages

connected to the gas network in the country has increased from 14,000 villages in the (Iranian calendar year) 1392 (ended on March 20, 2014) to about 32,000 villages in the current year, that means an average of 3,000 villages have been supplied with natural gas every year.

According to Torbati, of the country’s total gas production some 25 percent goes to household consumption, 37 percent is supplied to the power plants, 30 percent is used in the industry sector, four percent used as CNG and four percent is for other consumptions.

Over 93.6 percent of Iran’s population enjoys natural gas. Gas is supplied to 97



percent of people in the urban areas and 82 percent of people in the rural regions.



# China, Russia have interest in improving Iran's economy, military: Texas University professor

**1 →** Everyone should understand that the world has changed. After the pandemic is finally defeated and the economic melt-down reversed, China's success in navigating through these twin crises will serve to underscore its role as the pre-eminent player in the global economy.

■ The last four years have been one of the most tumultuous periods in modern China-U.S. relations. Was Trump's impulsiveness responsible for such a situation or was it a strategy shift by Washington?

A: It was actually a combination of both. While much of the shift was the result of Trump's headstrong pursuit of an "America First" policy, the relationship was beginning to show signs of deterioration late in the Obama Administration. However, it's under Trump that we have seen China-U.S. relations deteriorate to their worst level since 1972, before Nixon's visit to China. While many may think that China-U.S. relations will improve under Joe Biden, I would strongly caution against irrational exuberance on this. Some policies, such as student and travel visas, will be a relatively easy fix. However, other issues, such as intellectual property, cybersecurity, economic competition, and Cross-Straits relations, and the South China Sea issue, will remain areas of contention. What will likely change quickly once Biden is sworn in is the confrontational, belligerent tone on the part of the U.S. It helps that China has already sent out signals looking for areas of cooperation and that Biden is naming people to high positions in his administration who have long-term diplomatic experience.

■ Don't you expect China to replace the U.S. in regions like West Asia? Does China have the political and economic capacities to play a key role in the West Asia region?

A: I think that China doesn't necessarily want to replace the U.S. in the Middle East (West Asia) as much as it wants to offer nations in the region an alternative that is less concerned about their internal relations and more focused on areas of mutual cooperation and economic development. China has the ability to engage in bilateral and multilateral relations on a host of issues from energy to agriculture



**“According to the IMF's World Economic Output 2020 released in October, China has now overtaken the U.S. to become the world's largest economy.”**

to high technology to finance that the U.S. has taken for granted, occasionally ignored, or outright opposed. China has political and economic capacities to become a key player in the region. Note that I didn't mention the military. While they have capacities in this area, China has little interest in pursuing a geopolitical strategy in the region that would require the use of military assets.

■ What are the features that make a distinction between the Chinese economy and the U.S. economy? Does China follow a Marxist economy or is it heading towards a free market?

A: That's a great question. Some would say that the Chinese and American economies are looking at each other through a mirror

darkly. Perhaps. While the U.S. prides itself on being a free-market economy, we know that this is not entirely accurate. Conversely, while China states that it's a "High-Level Socialist Market Economy," it has many elements that would be instantly recognizable to the average American. While Marx is often mentioned by the Party and invoked in Chinese economic and political theory, terms such as optimizing macro-economic governance, establishing a modern fiscal, taxation, and financial system, and fostering a high-standard market system are mentioned much more often. In this respect, China leans a bit more toward Keynes than Marx at the moment.

■ What will be the fate of the U.S.-China competition? Compromise or clash?

A: That's one of the most important questions of the early-to-mid 21st Century. One would hope that with the election of Biden that tensions between the two nations might begin to improve. But, with the U.S. as an established superpower and China as a rapidly rising global power, there will be competition. Will it result in actual conflict? Hopefully not. The first step is to understand that the two nations will likely have differences on a host of issues. The second step is to acknowledge that these differences do not have to lead to confrontation and could actually lead to compromise, or barring that, at least a framework for engagement.

■ Do you think that China is going to form a coalition with regional powers such as Russia and Iran?

A: Time will tell. I think that partnership might be a better word to use here rather than a coalition. Both China and Russia share an interest in opposing U.S. sanctions on Iran. The partnership is as much economic as it is political or military. Both China and Russia have an interest in improving Iran's military capabilities and its economy. For example, the 25-Year Comprehensive Partnership, part of China's Belt and Road Initiative, has fostered Chinese investments to upgrade Iran's oil, gas, and petrochemical industries and to improve the country's overland transportation. China is also financing upgrades to Iran's ports. This partnership has served all three nations well and has made Iran far less susceptible than it once was to U.S. pressure on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. One result of this partnership that should be watched closely once Biden is in office: Will pressure from China and Russia compel the U.S. to comply with the JCPOA and remove all the sanctions that it imposed since 2018? Given their success at the UN Security Council earlier this year, will this encourage the U.S. to assure businesses and banks that they can receive sanctions relief and reengage with Iran without fear of U.S. sanctions?

## Implications of the U.S. election on U.S.-China relations

By Chris Ogden

The last four years has been one of the most tumultuous periods in modern China-U.S. relations. U.S. President Donald Trump has been the critical catalyst of this upheaval as he has oscillated between presenting China as a valued partner in international affairs, to it being a pariah that needs to be evermore constrained. Such fluctuations have mounted in intensity as the Trump presidency has progressed. They have left observers uncertain as to whether or not this is a purposeful strategy of the leader of the world's most powerful country, or an indication of an untethered, badly conceived and even short-sighted policy.

Such a wild approach has been no clearer than in their economic relationship. Here, the U.S. has strived to re-balance its trade relations with China, in particular to reduce Beijing's long-standing trade surplus with Washington. The surplus has been argued by U.S. elites to have led to an unequal relationship, which a rising China exploits to challenge the U.S.'s economic supremacy. This divide has increasingly taken on a symbolic quality with it becoming representative of a rising China that is soon to surmount the U.S. in global affairs, and which U.S. elites now regard as the most pressing strategic threat to its global position.

In an attempt to pressure China into some kind of re-alignment, the U.S. President initiated a trade war in 2018 and ratcheted up tariffs on Chinese imports to the American market. By early 2020, these amounted to over \$400 billion in tariffs, with China imposing its own retaliatory tariffs of \$138 billion on its U.S. imports. Such steps have taken place amidst ongoing trade talks between the two sides and have been viewed as a negotiating tactic that has ultimately been detrimental to both countries' economies. In late 2020, the WTO said that U.S. tariffs violated international trade rules, undercutting their legitimacy, as well as U.S. claims that China is undermining the U.S.-led "rules based" international order.

Elsewhere, the two sides have also come into friction concerning China's territorial claims in the South China Sea, with the U.S. carrying out regular freedom of navigation operations in the area. The U.S. now also sends warships and military aircraft through the Taiwan Straits on a monthly basis (something innovated under President Trump), so as to deter China's historical claims on the island. In turn, Washington has urged its allies - Australia, Canada, France and the United Kingdom - to act similarly, which has raised concerns in China of the country being strategically constrained in the region. Such a constraint could prevent Beijing from pursuing its foreign policy goal



of claiming hegemony in East Asia.

Concerning the coronavirus pandemic, narratives emanating from the U.S. along with its Western allies have targeted China as being culpable for the outbreak. In a recent speech at the United Nations, President Trump openly claimed that China had knowingly unleashed the Covid-19 "plague" on the world, which prompted a terse response from Beijing's officials that it is a cooperative not confrontational country that firmly has "no intention to fight either a cold war or a hot one with any country".

Such criticism has been increasingly mainstreamed in the last few months in the West with it acting as a stimulus for discussions on how to deal with China's rise. More critically, an October 2020 Pew survey showed that unfavourable opinions about China were at their highest ever level across the populations of Western Europe, the U.S., Canada, Australia and South Korea.

All of these aspects of U.S.-China relations will present particular challenges regardless of the outcome of the U.S. election, in particular concerning growing global concerns over China's international ambitions. In this regard, Beijing will certainly need to re-double its diplomatic efforts to present the country as a reasonable and benign international actor, through which others can benefit - in primarily - economic terms. That, by most accounts, China has the coronavirus largely under control means that it has been able to restart its economic activity, which gives Beijing the ability to kickstart and lead an international recovery. That most Western countries are still overwhelmed by the pandemic reinforces this capability and gives China the further chance to gain greater leverage and influence.

It also appears that it is now the U.S. that faces the greatest challenges to its international legitimacy, the consequences of which may have profound implications for its own global standing. This relates to the U.S. president's handling of

the pandemic, which has to date led to its world-leading status of 210,000 deaths (which is set to double by the end of the year) and over 7.5 million infections. That the U.S. president himself has now become infected points to a leader but also a wider political system around him (including senior military leaders, senators and most of his election campaign staff) that had a nonchalant, under-prepared and irresponsible attitude to the major global health challenge of our time.

President Trump's infection also marks a major national security threat for the U.S. and the world. Given his age, obesity and unhealthy diet, it is feasible that the leader of the world's most powerful country may become incapacitated from leading the U.S. in the next weeks. Crucially here, it has been widely reported that Trump will be unwilling to accept any negative outcome in the forthcoming election. Apart from suggesting that he would not leave office, he may try to rally supporters - potentially even violently - to protect his position. Crucially here, some of the medication he is taking to help him recover from Covid-19 has the potential to debilitate his mental capacities and overall judgement. This could impact upon his ability to recognise when he is incapable of leadership, but also spark irrational tweets and behaviour that may destabilise the U.S. and even the world.

If the U.S. president were to die - either during or in the months after the election - in all likelihood the country would be thrown into a truly unprecedented constitutional crisis. With widely circulated claims among Republicans and Trump supporters that the election is rigged, if the Democrats were to win, we can expect lengthy legal battles as well as a heightened potential for major civil unrest across the U.S. Either of these outcomes would consume the U.S.'s domestic and international capabilities to act beyond its borders. They would also signal a sense of the U.S. political system (and democracy) as being illegitimate.

Such crises will only be to Beijing's advantage (among other U.S. competitors), especially given that China is in many ways returning - if not returned to - its pre-coronavirus economic activity. If U.S.-China relations do signify a contest for supremacy between the world's two foremost countries, Washington's handling of the coronavirus pandemic and its impact upon the U.S. presidential election could very well indicate the U.S.'s decline on the international stage, and essentially speed up China's path to global pre-eminence.

Chris Ogden is Senior Lecturer / Associate Professor in Asian Security at the School of International Relations, University of St Andrews. His latest book is *Great Power Attributes: A Compendium of Historical Data*.

## Pakistan gives UN a dossier on India, New Delhi dubs it 'lies'

Pakistan gave UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres a dossier accusing India of stoking "terrorism" in Pakistan, a day after India provided a dossier to some UN Security Council (UNSC) members accusing fighters from Pakistan of attempting an attack in the disputed Kashmir region.

The tit-for-tat moves come ahead of India joining the 15-member council for a two-year term starting January 1, 2021.

Pakistan's UN Ambassador Munir Akram accused India of violating international law, the UN Charter and Security Council resolutions, by sponsoring "terrorism", al Jazeera reported.

He said Pakistan called on Guterres and the international community "to take note of Indian terrorism and subversion against Pakistan and to prevail on India to desist from these illegal and aggressive activities."

Earlier this month, Pakistan's foreign minister and military spokesperson released details of what they termed "India's state sponsorship of terrorism", alleging the Indian government and intelligence agencies were funding the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan and ethnic Baloch armed separatist groups that conducted attacks on Pakistani soil.

## Turkey, Russia discuss involving other countries in Nagorno-Karabakh ceasefire efforts

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan said on Wednesday he and Russian President Vladimir Putin had discussed the possibility of involving other countries in efforts to maintain a ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Azerbaijan and Armenia signed a Russia-brokered ceasefire on Nov. 10 that halted six weeks of clashes in the mountain enclave, which is internationally recognized as part of Azerbaijan but is mainly populated by ethnic Armenians, Reuters reported.

Russian peacekeepers have been deployed in the enclave under the ceasefire deal, which locked in Azeri advances. Turkey has no peacekeepers there but has signed an agreement with Russia to set up a joint center to monitor the ceasefire.

"We have the opportunity to develop and expand this more. We discussed these development and expansion efforts with Putin too," Erdogan said.

He said the process of maintaining the ceasefire could be taken "to a different level" if other countries in the region were involved but did not name any in his public comments.

Turkey and Russia have been holding talks on the parameters of the monitoring center, but a Turkish source told Reuters the two were at odds over Ankara's wish to set up an independent military observation post on Azeri territory.

## Syrian media report fresh Israeli aggression near Damascus, Syria's south

Syrian media say Israel has launched fresh airstrikes on several positions in southern Syria and outside the capital, Damascus, the second such attack in a week.

Syrian state news agency SANA reported early on Wednesday two separate "aggressions" from the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights on the Arab country's south and outskirts of Damascus.

The airstrikes were near a village in the southern province of Quneitra, and in Jabal al Mane area near the town of Kiswa in Damascus province, according to SANA.

The Syrian state news agency said the attacks caused only material damage.

SANA earlier said Syria's air defenses had responded to incoming missiles, providing no further details.

Last week, Israeli warplanes targeted military sites belonging to resistance groups in the capital Damascus, killing several military personnel.

Israel frequently targets military positions inside Syria, especially those of the resistance movement Hezbollah which has played a key role in helping the Syrian army in its fight against foreign-backed terrorists.

The Arab country has been gripped by foreign-backed militancy since March 2011. The Syrian government says the Israeli regime and its Western and regional allies are aiding Takfiri terrorist groups that are wreaking havoc in the country.

Israel mostly keeps quiet about the attacks on Syrian territories which many view as knee-jerk reaction to Syrian government's increasing success in confronting terrorism in country.

## Resistance News

## Hamas: Israeli bombing of Quneitra act of barbaric aggression

**INTERNATIONAL DESK** TEHRAN— Hazem Qassem, Hamas's spokesman, said that the Israeli bombing of Quneitra in the Syrian Golan Heights is "barbaric aggression" and an Israeli rampage affecting the entire region.

Qassem stated in a press statement on Wednesday morning that this repeated aggression against Syria reflects the occupation's persistent crimes against the Palestinian people and all the peoples of the Arab region.

He pointed out that this aggression comes a few days after the U.S. Secretary of State's visit to the occupied Golan Heights, stressing that this represents actual American participation in the aggression.

The escalation of the Israeli aggression comes at a time when some countries in the region hasten to normalize with the occupation, which encourages Israel to continue and escalate its aggression, Qassem added.

He stressed that the continuation of the Israeli aggression against the nation requires uniting efforts and stances to confront the "Zionist project".

The official Syrian News Agency, SANA, reported that the Israeli occupation army launched aerial attacks on Tuesday night, on Jabal Al-Manea, south of Quneitra, in the Golan Heights.

## Azerbaijani army enters Kalbajar, region returned by Armenia

The Azerbaijani army has entered the Kalbajar region, one more territory ceded by Armenian forces in a peace agreement that ended deadly fighting over the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan's defense ministry said on Wednesday.

The deal, brokered by Russia two weeks ago, stipulated that Armenia hand over control to Azerbaijan of some areas its holds.

The first one, Agdam, was turned over last week.

Kalbajar was expected to be handed over

on November 15, but Azerbaijan agreed to delay the takeover after a request from Armenia. Azerbaijani officials said worsening weather conditions made the withdrawal of Armenian forces and civilians difficult along the single road through mountainous territory that connects the region with Armenia.

Footage on Wednesday showed Azerbaijani troops slowly moving through snowy terrain, looking for mines.

"Engineering work has been completed

to ensure the movement of our units in this direction, the difficult mountain roads along the route of the troops' movement are being cleared of mines and prepared for use," the Azerbaijani defense ministry said.

Nagorno-Karabakh lies within Azerbaijan but has been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia since a war there halted with a ceasefire in 1994. That war left not only Nagorno-Karabakh itself but substantial surrounding territory in Armenian hands.





## Ancient Germi looks to attract more eco-travelers, archaeology buffs

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** – The ancient town of Germi hopes to position itself as a top-tier tourist destination in a bid to attract more domestic and international visitors by renewing tourism infrastructure.

A budget of 15 billion rials (\$357,000 at the official rate of 42,000 rials) has been allocated to enhance tourism infrastructure in Germi, which is located in northwestern Ardebil province, Germi tourism chief Ali Hosseinzadeh said on Wednesday.



The development program is expected to bring more economic prosperity to the region, the official said.

The culturally-rich Germi and its surrounding lands have long been destinations for avid archaeology buffs and eco-travelers. Over the past couple of years, some seasons of excavation have been carried out in Germi and other villages nearby.

In November 2018, Iranian researchers discovered an Iron Age tomb in Germi, dating back to a time between 2500 to 3000 years ago, belonging to a child who was between 5 and 7 years old. It was unearthed in a survey aimed to probe the history of settlements in Yel Suyi, a ruined site majority of which is associated with the early Islamic era.

In December of the same year, several relics, dating back to Seljuk (1037–1194) and Il-Khanid (1256–1335/1353) eras, were unearthed in the vicinity of Alajouq fortress in Germi county.

Ardebil province is believed to be as old as the Achaemenid era (ca. 550–330 BC). Sources say that due to its proximity to the Caucasus, Ardabil was always vulnerable to invasions and attacks by the mountain peoples of the Caucasus as well as by the steppe dwellers of South Russia past the mountains.

During the Islamic conquest of Iran, Ardabil was the largest city in north-western Iran, ahead of Derbent, and remained so until the Mongol invasion period.

## Arts of Namad-mali to be sponsored in northwestern Iran

**HERITAGE d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Namad-mali (literally meaning felt beating) will be revived and preserved across Ardebil province, provincial tourism chief announced on Wednesday.

Namad-mali workshops and its-linked crafters will be assisted to revive this ancient tradition, Nader Fallahi said.

One of our strategies is to supply wool at a reasonable price to the existing workshops, the official said.

Namad-mali, which the art of making traditional rug, out of woolen fabrics by rolling and pressing, was one of the main professions of Iranians in the time of yore; fallen into oblivion nowadays.

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

Back in May, deputy tourism minister Pouya Mahmoudian noted that due to the outbreak of coronavirus, suitcase exports of handicrafts were completely stopped since the month of Esfand (the last month of the year), and official exports of handicrafts experienced a steep decline.

“Some 295 fields of handicrafts are currently practiced across Iran with more than two million people engaging, majority of whom are women... Handicrafts also play an important role in the economy in our rural villages,” she said.

Sprawling on a high, windswept plateau, Ardebil is well-known for having lush natural beauties, hospitable people, and its silk and carpet trade tradition. It is also home to the UNESCO-registered Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble.

The province is very cold in winter and mild in summer, attracting thousands every year. The capital city of Ardebil is usually recorded as one of the coldest cities in the country in winter.

## Persian cuisine: Ghalieh Mahi

**HERITAGE d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The local and traditional foods of southern regions have a crucial position in Iranian food culture and many of these foods constitute the routine meal of them.



There are many different foods relevant to the warm and humid conditions in the southern regions of Iran. Living in the unbearable warm and highly humid areas need particular healthy meals to compensate for the harmful consequences of the weather in which fish is a highly beneficial foodstuff.

The warm water in the south is a good source of providing fresh fishes for cooking delicious foods. Ghalieh Mahi is one of the most famous traditional yummy and highly nutrient food the which is greatly popular in the South; It is cooked by the same method anywhere in Iran.

Ghalieh Mahi is a kind of spicy Khoresh in which fish has an important role. To prepare a good Ghalieh, we can use mackerel or any other fishes in the southern region of Iran with little bones like Thorny cheek, Tigertooth croaker, Stripped piggy, Threadfin, Black Pomfret, and even sometimes shrimp along with vegetables such as coriander and fenugreek, onion, pepper, turmeric, garlic, oil and tomato paste.

Tamarind is also added to make a sour taste. Ghalieh Mahi is usually served with rice; however, you can eat with some bread. The Ghalieh Mahi delicious taste, aromatic smell, and good appearance arise from the vegetable and garlic.

# Culturally-rich Fars province takes step to boost agritourism

**➔ 1** Farm/ranch recreation refers to activities conducted on private agricultural lands, which might include fee-hunting and fishing, overnight stays, educational activities, etc. This category of tourism is a subset of a larger industry known as agritourism. Agritourism is “a commercial enterprise at a working farm, ranch, or agricultural plant conducted for the enjoyment of visitors that generates supplemental income for the owner.”

Agritourism and nature-tourism enterprises might include Outdoor recreation (fishing, hunting, wildlife study, horseback riding), educational experiences (cannery tours, cooking classes, or tea or coffee tasting), entertainment (harvest festivals or barn dances), hospitality services (farm stays, guided tours, or outfitter services), and on-farm direct sales (u-pick operations or roadside stands).

Agritourism is a subset of a larger industry called rural tourism that includes resorts, off-site farmers' markets, non-profit agricultural tours, and other



leisure and hospitality businesses that attract visitors to the countryside.

Rural Tourism, however, differs from

agritourism in two ways. First, rural tourism enterprises do not necessarily occur on a farm or ranch, or at an agricultural

## Masuleh seeks to improve landscape, its bizarre Lego-shaped houses

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** – A safeguarding, landscaping project will soon be commenced on the northern Iranian village of Masuleh, which is a top candidate for being a UNESCO World Heritage. The scenic, mountainside village is famed for its Lego-shaped earthen houses built on another's rooftop.

A landscaping project is planned to be implemented on Masuleh by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts in close collaboration with the Natural Resources and Watershed Management Department, the provincial tourism chief announced on Wednesday.

Sceneries and properties dotted across the route to this unique tourist attraction are also on agenda to be re-organized and documented, Masoud Hallajpour said. Masuleh is estimated to date for a millennium, as the existence of numerous graveyards inner and outside of the village proves its old age.

The combination of such architecture with natural landscapes can be a national and international touristy center and the only way of the inhabitants' living. As all people could directly see the main facade of houses, the local artists and artisans did their best in this part of the building.

According to the Lonely Planet, local and foreign tourists swarm like ants across the village's rooftops and through its narrow passageways during summer.

**■ Iran, home to several stepped villages**

Iran is home to several magnificent stepped villages, of which the most popular ones are Masouleh, Uraman, and Kang, which could be included on the World Heritage list.

Kang in the northeastern province of Khorasan Razavi, which has been recently inscribed on the national heritage list, with an antiquity of more than 3,000 years, is situated at a distance of some 30 km from Mashhad, the provincial capital.

The village, located on the highlands of Mount Binalud, is also adjacent to Nishapur, known for its turquoise handicrafts and mines.

Uraman in the west of the country is also another stepped village, which is considered a cradle of Kurdish art and culture from the days of yore.

Stretched on a steep slope in Uraman Takht rural district of Sarvabad County, the village is home to dense and step-like rows of houses in a way that the roof of each house forms the yard of the upper one, a feature that adds to its charm and attractiveness.

Iran submitted the UN body a dossier for the Uraman



cultural landscape in 2019. Some eighty experts in various fields compiled and developed the dossier in terms of anthropology, archeology and history, natural sciences, architecture, historical documents, and other related fields.

Having an opulent tourist circuit with 24 UNESCO World Heritage sites, Iran seeks to acquire a greater share of the global tourism industry by 2025.

## Museum of Qasr Prison offers virtual voyages in history and arts

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** – With many arts institutions closed around Iran, the Museum of the Qasr Prison is another cultural institute that re-starts offering virtual tours using tour guides.

The live tours can be reached every day on the Instagram account of the Museum, starting at 11 a.m. local time, the museum announced on its website.

Many cultural heritage museums and historical sites across the country have gone online once again amid the third wave of COVID-19 in Iran.

Located in the heart of Tehran, the museum was once a palace complex in the Qajar era (1789–1925), which was repurposed into a prison during the Pahlavi epoch (1925-1979). Several political and non-political figures were imprisoned there.



It became a museum in 2011.

The Iranian authorities have imposed a two-week lockdown in the capital and some 150 Iranian cities from November 12 as the country is battling a third wave of the virus. According to the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control, the sites' staff must be present at work during

this period, but the sites and museums are closed to the public to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

The cultural heritage museums and historical sites have so far been closed and reopened for times from the pandemic's early days onward in a preventive measure to curb the disease.

Due to a sharp rise in the number of coronavirus infections and deaths, all historical sites as well as all art and cultural centers, universities, schools, seminaries, English schools, libraries, movie theaters, mosques, beauty salons, and several other entities have been shut down once again.

**■ Museums at forefront of closures**

Early November Mohammadreza Kargar, the director of museums and historical properties at the tourism ministry announced that Iranian museums have

taken 1.7 trillion rials (some \$42 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) hit from the coronavirus outbreak over the previous months.

If the country was in normal condition, the museums would host over 25 million visitors, but now they have faced a huge loss as there is almost no visitor to the museums, he noted.

In October Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan warned that Iran's cultural heritage and tourism will be in a critical situation if the crises caused by the outbreak of the coronavirus continue.

With the outbreak of the coronavirus, museums were at the forefront of closures and for several months now, they have not had any revenue from the sale of tickets, Mounesan explained.

## New study tells tale of shipwreck found in northern Iran

**TOURISM d e s k** **TEHRAN** – A fresh scientific study has shed a new light on the fate of a centuries-old shipwreck, which was found in 2005 in northern Iran.

A team of researchers from the Iranian National Institute for Oceanography and Atmospheric Science (INIOAS) and the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage and Tourism (RICHT), in collaboration with researchers from France and Malta, has recently published the results of their research on the Qoroq historical shipwreck in a prestigious international journal. The research was supported by the Ports and Maritime Organization of Iran.

The Qoroq historical shipwreck is located 5 km east of Talesh in Gilan province, near the Qoroq village at the southwest corner of the Caspian Sea. The wreckage was reported by locals in 2005.

In the following years, non-scientific attempts were conducted to displace the wreckage for public exhibition, without any tangible results. Currently, this historic ship is being destroyed due to natural processes such as wave action as well as by the reckless visitors.

To preserve this maritime cultural heritage, the General Directorate of Ports and Maritime of Gilan Province in collaboration with the INIOAS, the RICHT have conducted this project to shed light on the identity of the wreckage and reviewing the methods for its conservation.

Dr. Majid Naderi from INIOAS mentioned that the historical shipwreck is an eighteenth-century vessel, according to radiocarbon dating on a piece of wood belonging to the ship's hull.

This ship was probably built in the late Safavid dynasty or the Afsharid period ruling on Iran. The results of the



xylological study show that Scot Pine is the wood type that is used in the construction of this vessel.

Caucasus Mountains was considered as a timber supply area. He concluded that based on the construction age and historical documents, the shipyard was most probably in Russian territory such as Astrakhan rather than Iran.

Dr. Hossein Tofighian from RICHT who led the archeological excavations pointed that the shipwreck was broken down to half along its longitudinal axis. However, different parts of the vessel are identifiable, including 42 transverse beams, 8 and 10 longitudinal beams, stem installation site, nose, cover boards, and

metal joints such as long iron spikes. The results of geophysical studies showed that the missing half of the ship is covered by coastal sediments.

The research team outlined several possible scenarios for the grounding of the ship on Qoroq coast; due to a large hole in the northern hull of the vessel, complete damage of the southern half of the ship and according to some historical accounts, possibly the ship was hit by artillery shells during the Iran-Russia wars in the early nineteenth century.

Another possible scenario for the ship's abandonment could be related to the 1904 law which stated that in Russia wooden ships were to be replaced by steamships. However, the most probable scenario is that the ship sunk due to sea storms.

According to historical reports, coastal sailing routes were preferred by the sailors until the end of the 19th century. Therefore, the ship may have been caught in a storm and stranded on the shore. In addition to sea storms, one of the main reasons for the sinking of vessels off the coast could be attributed to rapid Caspian Sea level falls during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Since the mid 19th century, the sea experienced a sharp decline in its level. As a result, sailors may have erred in their estimates of the depths of the sea, especially on the flat coastal areas of the Talesh region.

Conservation and restoration studies of the research show that the Qoroq wreckage has decayed and packed in some parts due to microbial and fungal activity as well as changes in the pH of the environment. The researchers realized that this vessel is being degraded under the waves and hydrodynamic action and it is necessary to take protective and restoration measures.



# 'Sport for all' to be promoted among the disabled, elderly

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed between the Ministry of Sports and Youth and the Welfare Organization on Wednesday to promote sports among persons with disabilities and the elderly.

Vahid Ghobadi Dana, head of the Welfare Organization, said that under the MOU, local, provincial and national festivals will be held jointly, as well as clubs that can provide quality services to the welfare target community.

He noted that currently, about 150,000 people suffering from physical disabilities are active in more than 50 different sports, and so far they have won about 1,000 medals in world competitions, over 70 medals in Asian Para Games, and 200 medals in Paralympic competitions.

The population of senior citizens currently exceeds 8 million in Iran and the annual growth rate of the country's aging population is about 3.8 percent, head of the secretariat national council of the elderly Hassan Salmannejad said in December 2018.

The 2011 census observed a significant demographic change in the elderly population



of Iran (the percentage of the elderly population increased from 7.27 to 8.20 percent from 2006 to 2011, and to 8.65 percent in 2016). The aging population is predicted to rise to 10.5 percent in 2025 and to 21.7 percent in 2050.

**Over 1.3m persons with disabilities live in Iran**

Pirouz Hanachi, the mayor of Tehran, said in December 2019 that over 1.3 million people suffering from disabilities live in the country and the figure rises by 50,000 every year.

Majlis [the Iranian parliament] approved both general outlines and details of a bill on the rights of persons with disabilities in January 2018. Development of disability-friendly cities, free transportation, health insurance, free education, job creation, housing loans, and fewer working hours are some of the articles of the law.

Since the approval of the law, education for students with disabilities have been provided in Azad universities, subsidies for patients with spinal cord injury as well as disability care centers have been increased, he stated, adding, 1,057 residential units will be provided to families having members with disabilities within next week.

**Disability prevalence worldwide**

About 15 percent of the world's population lives with some form of disability, of whom 2-4 percent experience significant difficulties in functioning.

The global disability prevalence is higher than previous WHO estimates, which date from the 1970s and suggested a figure of around 10 percent. This global estimate for disability is on the rise due to population aging and the rapid spread of chronic diseases, as well as improvements in the methodologies used to measure disability.

## Basij at forefront of development

7.3 on the Richter scale hit Sarpol-e Zahab in the western province of Kermanshah. Some 90,000 houses were partly or completely damaged by the tremor. Sadly, the quake took over 660 lives and left more than 10,000 injured.

Some 1900 villages have been damaged by the earthquake and the work of repairing and rebuilding houses has been entrusted to the IRGC and Basij.

In the early days when people needed shelters, young Jihadi groups, in addition to collecting public donations and distributing essential items to the people, set up shelters in the area to speed up their work and reduce the cost of building shelters.

The next step was to build houses for the earthquake victims. Houses needed to be strong against possible future earthquakes not to be damaged.

This time, the young Basij students, using their science and knowledge, chose a method to build the houses, which in addition to being cheap and fast, has good resistance against quakes.

**By people's side**

Heavy rainfall, beginning on March 19 led to flooding in 28 out of 31 provinces of Iran affecting 42,269,129 inhabitants in 253 cities and causing widespread damage to municipal facilities, including health centers and hospitals.

In the first hours, 2,350 Jihadi groups went to Khuzestan, 1,495 groups went to the northern provinces of the country and 2,000 forces also sent to Lorestan province.

With the Basij forces along with the armed forces, relief work started and the cleaning of houses, distribution of food and essential items began.

After the water recedes in the flooded areas, it was time to build and retrofit the houses damaged by the flood. The Jihadis tirelessly start repairing houses and building hundreds of houses for flood-affected people, of which the construction of only 140 housing units in Lorestan province is an example of these services.

struction of only 140 housing units in Lorestan province is an example of these services.

**COVID-19 crisis**

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Iran was shocked, in addition to facing a shortage of masks and disinfectants, which caused the price of these items to multiply. Coronavirus restrictions also shut down many businesses and made people's lives difficult.

The Basij, which has twice come to the aid of the country's health network, entered the field and in its first action started the production of disinfectants and masks.

Also, millions of liters of disinfectant produced by the Basijis and distributed free of charge among the people in order to meet the needs of the country.

Disinfection of streets and public places, assistance to nurses and medical staff, assistance in the burial of the dead are other manifestations of the Basijis' actions against coronavirus.

But most importantly, once a nationwide screening plan was in place, accurate statistics on the number of people with COVID-19 needed to be obtained.

So, the Ministry of Health asked for help from the Basij, and the Basijis screened 80 million Iranians within a few months, which was a unique action of its kind.

Mohammad Zahraei, head of the Basij-e Sazandegi organization, announced in his press conference on the occasion of Basij week that "Today, the capacity of mask production is more than 17 million daily. In two phases of aid, a total of more than 10 million food packages and 21 million warm foods were distributed nationwide."

In the current Iranian calendar year (March 2020-March 2021), 10,000 projects on poverty eradication are underway, including 1,000 housing units for the underprivileged people of Chababhar in Sistan-Baluchestan province.



**1 →** The joint action by the Ministry of Health and the Basij was so effective that the then UNICEF executive director Carol Bellamy wrote a letter to the then president Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani in 1995 and praised the action, saying that the one-day effort to vaccinate 8.5 million children against polio in Iran was unique.

During the two days that this project was implemented throughout the country, about 500,000 Basij forces formed 175,000 relief teams, nearly 16,000 relief bases, 32 regional headquarters, and 500 executive headquarters under the supervision of 100,000 health experts, the National Basij operation eradicated polio.

For more than two decades now, no child in Iran has been infected with polio and the country has become immune to this disease.

**12,000 Jihadi groups active**

With the formation of Basij, the field of work becomes wider, so that at the beginning, only about 100 teams were operating in the country, while it has now reached more than 12,000 groups, which is still expanding.

**House building in quake-hit areas**

On November 12, 2017, a destructive earthquake measuring

## Climate crisis shifting infectious animal diseases, study suggests

Climate change is likely to increase the risk of animals – and potentially humans – catching infectious diseases in parts of the world where they have until now been unable to thrive, scientists have warned.

A university-led study linked global warming to a shift in infectious disease away from the equator and towards temperate regions of the planet.

It could mean that diseases in animals once considered tropical become endemic in cooler parts of the world, such as Europe.

This is the result of pathogens which are kept under control in colder locations but which are able to spread and infect more as temperatures warm up.

Scientists from three universities in the

United States studied 7,000 animal-parasite systems across all seven continents.

They found that pathogens in warm parts of the world posed the greatest risk during cool weather, while pathogens found at cool locations thrived in warm temperatures.

Their findings are supported by the "thermal mismatch hypothesis" – a theory which suggests that the risk of infection for animals adapted to cold climates increases as temperatures rise. The same is said to be true for species living in warm parts of the world that suddenly experience a drop in temperatures.

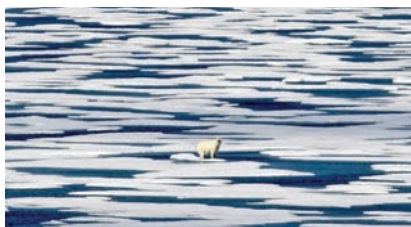
Previous studies have identified new diseases in polar bear populations, thought to be linked to rising temperatures in the Arctic.

And amphibians from warm climates experience greater levels of infection by a type of deadly fungus than hosts from cool regions when temperatures drop.

The scientists in the latest study said the risk posed to animals meant diseases could also spread to humans.

"Understanding how the spread, severity and distribution of animal infectious diseases could change in the future has reached a new level of importance as a result of the global pandemic caused by Sars-CoV-2, a pathogen which appears to have originated from wildlife," said Jason Rohr, co-author of the paper.

"When each pathogen species was given equal weight, the predicted increases in infectious disease at cooler locations outweighed the decreases at warmer locations, potentially suggesting a net increase in animal infectious diseases with climate change."



The study, conducted by scientists at the University of Notre Dame, University of South Florida and University of Wisconsin-Madison, was published in the journal, Science.

The team plans to investigate whether similar patterns exist for human and plant diseases.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ج

## 'Playing to learn' scheme piloted in elementary schools

A plan dubbed "playing to learn" aiming at using educational games toward deeper learning was implemented for first time in elementary schools across the capital, with the Education Minister in attendance, Fars reported on Saturday.

Through the first phase of the scheme, 1,000 schools from 10 provinces nationwide will implement the playing to learn scheme, including Tehran, Khorasan Razavi, Fars, Hamedan, Mazandaran, Kordestan, Kerman, West Azarbaijan, Qazvin, and Sistan-Baluchestan.

According to the report, schools regarding their proper environment and conditions volunteered and chose to hold game-based classes and assess the results, currently in each province 50 girls' schools and 50 boys' schools among state-run and private schools have piloted the scheme; 20 percent of which are private schools.

## آغاز اجرای آزمایشی طرح «بازی و یادگیری» در مدارس ابتدایی تهران

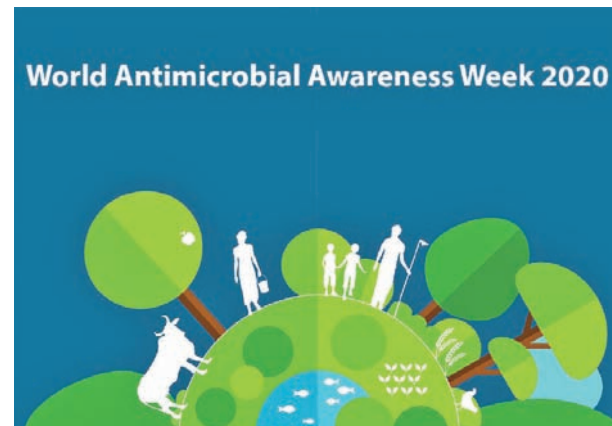
به گزارش روز شنبه خبرگزاری فارس اجرای آزمایشی طرح «بازی و یادگیری» به منظور آموزش عمیق مفاهیم کتب درسی توسط بازی با حضور وزیر آموزش و پرورش در تعدادی از مدارس ابتدایی شهر تهران آغاز شد.

قرار است این طرح در ۱۰۰۰ مدرسه ۱۰ استان کشور اجرا شود در فاز اول اجرای طرح، استان‌های خراسان رضوی، شهر تهران، فارس، مازندران، کردستان، کرمان، آذربایجان غربی، قزوین و سیستان و بلوچستان قرار دارند.

ملاک‌های انتخاب مدارس اجرای پروژه بازی و یادگیری شامل اعلام آمادگی داوطلبانه مدارس با توجه به امکان سنجی محیط و شرایط مدرسه است که تعداد ۵۰ مدرسه دخترانه و ۵۰ مدرسه پسرانه انتخاب شدند و این مدارس از بین مدارس دولتی و مدارس غیردولتی انتخاب شده‌اند؛ همچنین در این فاز اجرا، حداکثر ۲۰ درصد مدارس غیردولتی شامل اجرای پروژه می‌شوند.

## FAO, WHO warn on the risks of Antimicrobial Resistance, urge countries to prioritise infection prevention

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) is not only responsible for the death of 700 000 people per annum across the world, but also compromises food safety, contaminates soil and water and reduces the effectiveness of medicines and treatment options, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) warn.



AMR is a natural phenomenon where microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses, parasites and fungi lose sensitivity to the effects of antimicrobial medicines, like antibiotics, that were previously effective in treating infections. As a result, infections and diseases become difficult, lengthy and costly to be treated. Antimicrobial resistance also leads to increased health care costs, hospital admissions, treatment failure, severe illness and death.

However, the emergence and spread of AMR is expedited and exacerbated by excessive and inappropriate use of antimicrobials. Given the anticipated intensification of agricultural production in response to growing demands of an expanding population, FAO and WHO urge Member Countries to implement more sustainable agricultural practices that prioritise infection prevention for healthier animals and crops and a reduced need for antimicrobials.

It is recommended for countries to adopt regulatory mechanisms to ensure responsible use of antimicrobials in animal and crop production or in medical practice, discouraging the use of poor quality and falsified antimicrobial products—or using the wrong antimicrobials to treat particular causes of diseases.

Furthermore, FAO and WHO also warn that AMR organisms and antimicrobial residues are present in wastes from agricultural production, pharmaceutical manufacturing, and human sewage. Inadequate treatment and improper disposal of wastes can spread antimicrobial residues and AMR microorganisms through the environment in soils and in waterways.

Antimicrobial resistance is making many infections harder to treat worldwide. WHO's latest reporting shows that the world is running out of effective treatments for several common infections.

FAO and WHO support Member States in adopting the "One Health" approach in the fight against AMR, and bring together human health, animal health and environment health as one.

Robust monitoring, integrated surveillance, increasing capacities for antimicrobial stewardship across all sectors are needed together with raising public awareness among the public and professionals.

## LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 67)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

south	/ʃoˈnub/ جنوب	
crossroad	/ʃeˈrāh/ چهارراه	
Wednesday	/ʃeˈrānʒe, ʃam/ چهارشنبه	
not crowded	/xalˈvat/ خلوت	
to see	/bin/ دیدن	
to reach	/res/ رسیدن	
traffic	/raʃtəˈmad/ رفت و آمد	
to come and go, traffic	/raʃtəˈmad/ رفت و آمد کردن	
to get on, to mount	/saˈvār/ سوار شدن	
سه شنبه	/seˈʃanʒe, ʃam/ سه شنبه	
crowded	/ʃoˈluq/ شلوغ	
north	/ʃoˈmāl/ شمال	
Saturday	/ʃanʒe, ʃam/ شنبه	
means; means of transport	/vaʃile/ وسیله	
week	/haʃte/ هفته	

ساختار

Adverb

قید

Adverbs qualify verbs, adjectives or other adverbs:

**True Adverbs** اغلب، حالا، فقط، خیلی، گاهی، اینجا، آنجا، مثلاً

**Nouns as Adverbs** شب، روز، صبح، امروز، فردا

**Adjectives as Adverbs** درست، غلط، خوب، بد



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GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Be not like the hypocrite who, when he talks, tells lies; when he gives a promise, he breaks it; and when he is trusted, he proves dishonest.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

## “Hadith of Life” featuring quotes of Prophet Muhammad (S), Imams published

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — “Hadith of Life”, a book featuring quotes of the Prophet Muhammad (S) and Imams of the Shia about the discipline of life has recently been published in English and Arabic versions.

The book has been translated into English by a number of Islamic science scholars working for Islamplus, an English website initiated by Aemat ol-Hoda, an Iranian international publisher, to spread the pure message of Islam derived from the Holy Quran, the Hadiths of Prophet Muhammad (S) and his household.



Posters for English and Arabic versions of “Hadith of Life”.

Each hadith has been published with an interpretation by Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

The book has been published with contributions from the Seraj Cyberspace Organization, a major Iranian center for cyber activities and content production on social media and interactive platforms.

Each copy of the book, whether English or Arabic, is offered with an audio version in English, Arabic and Persian, which is also an enclosed application.

## “The Night” wins awards at Molins Horror Film Festival

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — “The Night” by Iranian director Kurosh Ahari has won three awards at the Molins Horror Film Festival in Spain.

The film brought the best director award for Ahari, while Shahab Hosseini won the award for best actor. The award for best script also went to this film co-written by Milad Jarmuz and Ahari.



Shahab Hosseini acts in a scene from “The Night” by Kurosh Ahari.

Starring and produced by Hosseini, “The Night” was screened in the official competition of the 38th Fajr Film Festival, which took place in Tehran in February.

The film portrays an Iranian couple living in the U.S. who become trapped inside a hotel when insidious events force them to face the secrets that have come between them, in a night that never ends.

Hosseini is mostly famous for his role in Asghar Farhadi’s “The Salesman”, which brought him the Palme d’Or for best actor at the Cannes Film Festival in 2016.

He also received France’s Chevalier of the Legion of Honor (Chevalier de la Légion d’honneur) medal in February.

The medal awarded by the French government is one of the most coveted trophies in the world of art and culture.

“La Ilorona” by Jayro Bustamante from Guatemala won the best film award at the Molins Horror Film Festival. The award for best actress went to Sarah Poulson for her role in “Run” by Aneesh Chaganty from the U.S.

# Iranian doc warns of poachers smuggling bird species into Arab countries

→1 “This documentary that I have made along with Nima Askari and producer Mohammad Ala shows how the bird and its eggs are sent to the Arab countries and the endeavors Iranian park rangers make to stop this problem, but we need people’s help in this matter,” he added.

The film crew spent nine years making the 67-minute documentary, which is scheduled to be screened in the 14th edition of Cinéma Vérité, Iran’s major international festival for documentary films.

In some scenes, the film shows the crew visiting Qatar, one of the major markets of the region for the bird.

“With this film, we have striven to draw attention to this bird species that is on the verge of extinction, although attention has mostly been focused on the extinction of the large mammals over the past few years,” said Amiri who has several other documentaries on the extinction of animals in Iran.

■ **Amiri, endangered animal species**  
His documentary “The Extinction Vortex” on Asian cheetahs was screened at UN Headquarters in New York in March as one of the finalists of the World Wildlife Day film showcase.



Fathollah Amiri and Nima Askari, co-directors of “Houbara”, in an undated photo.

He has also focused on the extinction of Asian cheetahs in his 2017 documentary “In the Whirlpool of Extinction”.

He made “Tanhavash” in 2016. The film traces the Iranian cheetah, the sole survivor of the extinct species of the Asian Cheetah

that still remains in the country.

Amir is also the director of “In the Realm of the Spider-Tailed Viper” about the spider-tailed viper that lives in the western Iranian province of Ilam.

The documentary won the audience award at the 12th Cinéma Vérité festival in 2018.

The film also brought Iranian farmer Mahmud Mansuri the Icon Films Emerging Talent Award at the Wildscreen Festival in Bristol in southwestern England in October 2018.

He received the honor for his collaboration with Amiri and his crew in the project made at the Wildlife Pictures Institute, a Tehran-based center producing films on wildlife.

“This revealing documentary explains the discovery of a rare and unique snake called the Spider-Tailed Horned Viper and the amazing man who made it happen,” the institute wrote in a statement.

“On the journey to discover this snake, our production team met up with a farmer named Mahmud, and sought his help to find the rare viper. During the making of this documentary, some strange things happened, and the destiny of Mahmoud has been changed,” it added.

## Nominees for best review at Jalal literary awards unveiled



A poster for the 13th edition of the Jalal Al-e Ahmad Literary Awards.

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — Five books are competing in the best review category of the 13th edition of the Jalal Al-e Ahmad Literary Awards, Iran’s most lucrative literary prize, as the organizers announced nominees for this section on Wednesday.

“Mythology of Love in Iranian Culture” that studies how much love stories have influenced human relations in Iran is one of the nominees. Bahman Namvar-Motlaq is the author of the book published by Sokhan Publications.

Another nominee is “History of the Body in Literature” by Seyyed Mehdi Zargani. In this book published by Sokhan, Zargani writes, “It is impossible to find any other phenomenon that can occupy inside and outside of the life of man as much as the body; the body is present everywhere from the most complex divine matters to the simplest ordinary issues.”

“Epic of Musayyebnameh”, a book about Musayyeb ibn Qaqa Khazai, a companion of Imam Ali (AS) and his sons Imam Hassan and Imam Hussein (AS), is competing in this section.

The book written by Mohammad-Baqai Vars Bukhari and Abu Taher Tarsusi has been translated and corrected by Milad Jafarpur. The Mahmud Afshar Foundation is the publisher of the book.

The book won the Golden Pen in the Review and Research section of the 18th edition of the Golden Pen Awards in July.

Author Parastu Mohebbi’s “Narratology of Drama” published by Jam-e Zarrin has also received a nomination.

The book gives a review of the Iranian dramas published over the past three decades, and provides new insights into the psychological concepts and narrative elements in the dramas.

Another nominee is Ahamd Shakeri’s “Philosophy of the Story of Story” that explores the history of studies on narrative arts in Iran.

Earlier last week, the organizers announced that they have received 1879 titles of books.

Ebrahim Mohammad Hassanbeigi, Hamid Hessam, Mohammadreza Sharafi-Khabushan, Mostafa Jamshidi, Ali Changizi, Abolfazl Horri, Morteza Sarhang, Maryam Moshref and Mohammadreza Bayrami are the members of the selecting committee for the prize.

Ebrahim Mohammad Hassanbeigi will also be collaborating as the academic secretary.

This year, books written on the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, which is known as the Sacred Defense in Iran, will be reviewed to honor the top works of the past four decades.

## Jaipur festival picks “The Inheritance”, “That Night’s Train” from Iran

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Iranian films “The Inheritance” by Sadeq Sadeq-Daqiqi and “That Night’s Train” by Hamidreza Qotbi will be competing in the 13th Jaipur International Film Festival, which will take place in the Indian city from January 15 to 19, 2021.

Iranian stage director and film critic Hamed Soleimanzadeh has also been invited by JIFF Founder Hanu Roj for a place on the jury of the festival, Iran’s Farabi Cinema Foundation has announced.

“The Inheritance” is a comedy drama which portrays a man who finds out his friend has been in relationship with a girl much younger than himself and that they have nothing in common.

“That Night’s Train” is about a writer



Scene from “That Night’s Train” by Iranian director Hamidreza Qotbi.

who also works as a teacher. She narrates the story of an orphan girl to her students. Each student continues the story with her own imagination and this gives the teacher

material for her new story.

The film was crowned best at the 49th Roshd International Film Festival in Tehran in November 2019.

Soleimanzadeh has been selected for the jury of several international festivals, including the Dytiatko International Children’s Television Festival in 2018 and the Zero Plus festival in 2019.

“My Arms Flew” directed by Hossein Nuri from Iran won an honorable mention at the 11th Jaipur International Film Festival in 2019.

The film narrates the story of Hossein Nuri who creates his paintings with his mouth. Nuri suffers a spinal cord injury due to the torture he was subjected to by SAVAK, the Shah’s intelligence services.

Also in 2017, three Iranian films were

honored in various sections of the 9th Jaipur festival.

“Inversion” won the best feature film award as well as the best screenwriter award for director/writer Behnam Behzadi.

“Inversion” is about three siblings, and masterfully features Tehran’s air pollution.

“Arvand” by Puria Azarbaijani won the best war and peace film award.

The film is about the 175 Iranian divers, most of whom are believed to have been buried alive in scattered mass graves in Iraq during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war.

The award for best short film went to “Kech” by Mehrdad Hassani.

“Kech”, which means daughter in Kurdish, tells the story of a nurse who sacrifices herself to save a child from a warzone.

## World’s top filmmakers, critics to hold workshops at Cinéma Vérité

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — A number of top Iranian and international documentarians and critics will be holding online workshops and panel discussions during the 14th edition of Cinéma Vérité, Iran’s major international festival for documentary films.

The international figures include Betsy A. McLane, Bill Nichols and James Bertrand Longley in addition to famous Iranian documentarians Mehrdad Oskul and Farhad Varahram. Betsy A. McLane is the director emerita of the International Documentary Association. She has taught courses on film and documentary at Loyola Marymount University, the University of Vermont, Emerson College, the University of Southern California and California State University, San Bernardino and Palm Desert Campus.

She is a past president of the University Film and Video Association, and most recently served as the project director for the American Documentary Showcase, a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

Bill Nichols is an American film critic and theoretician best



A poster for the 14th Cinéma Vérité.

known for his pioneering work as founder of the contemporary study of documentary film. His 1991 book, “Representing Reality, Issues and Concepts in Documentary”, applied modern film theory to the study of documentary film for the first time.

Nichols has lectured in numerous countries, served

on film festival juries on different continents, consults regularly on a variety of filmmaking projects, and has published over 100 articles.

Documentary filmmaker, producer, James Bertrand Longley is also an American filmmaker, whose acclaimed documentary “Gaza Strip” was released in 2002. His “Iraq in Fragments”, which presents a view of Iraq and Iraqis during the first two years of the war in Iraq, was awarded three jury awards at the 2006 Sundance Film Festival. His short film “Sari’s Mother” premiered at the 2006 Toronto International Film Festival.

Mehrdad Oskui is most famous for his international award-winning documentaries “Sunless Shadows” and “Starless Dreams”.

“Wedding of Zinat’s Son” and “Afro Iranians” are among Varahram’s credits.

The Documentary and Experimental Film Center (DEFC) as the main organizer of the Cinéma Vérité festival has selected a variety of top documentaries to be screened during the event, which will be held totally online from December 8 to 15 due to a spike in the COVID-19 cases in the country.

## “Language and Woman’s Place” published in Persian

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — A Persian translation of Robin Tolmach Lakoff’s “Language and Woman’s Place” has recently been published by Negah Publications.

The book has been translated into Persian by Maryam Khodadadi and Yasser Puresmaeil. The 1975 publication of Lakoff’s “Language and Woman’s Place”, is widely recognized as having inaugurated feminist research on the relationship between language and gender, touching off a remarkable response among language scholars, feminists and general readers. For the past thirty years, scholars of language and gender have been debating and developing Lakoff’s initial observations.

Arguing that language is fundamental to gender inequality, Lakoff pointed to two

areas in which inequalities can be found: Language used about women, such as the asymmetries between seemingly parallel terms like master and mistress, and language used by women, which places women in a double bind between being appropriately feminine and being fully human. Lakoff’s central argument that “women’s language” expresses powerlessness triggered a controversy that continues to this day.

The revised and expanded edition presents the full text of the original first edition, along with an introduction and annotations by Lakoff in which she reflects on the text a quarter century later and expands on some of the most widely discussed issues it raises.

The volume also brings together commentaries from twenty-six leading scholars of language and gender within

linguistics, anthropology, modern languages, education, information sciences and other disciplines.

The commentaries discuss the book’s contribution to feminist research on language and explore its ongoing relevance for scholarship in the field.

This new edition of “Language and Woman’s Place” not only makes available once again the pioneering text of feminist linguistics; just as important, it places the text in the context of contemporary feminist and gender theory for a new generation of readers.

Lakoff is a professor of linguistics at the University of California, Berkeley. Widely regarded as the founder of language and gender studies, she writes extensively about gender and power, and is the author or co-author of seven books and nearly one hundred articles.



Front cover of the Persian translation of Robin Tolmach Lakoff’s “Language and Woman’s Place”.