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Iran's Nasirshelal awarded London 2012 gold medal Page 3

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Health minister expresses gratitude over using hotels for corona patients Page 6



Nuclear expert assassinated, footprints of Israel with incoming U.S. govt backing seen

- Led by the same person who led Project Amad – Dr. Mohsen Fakhrizadeh
- Many of SPND's key personnel worked under him on Project Amad

TEHRAN – A senior Iranian expert specialized in nuclear technology was assassinated in a terrorist attack on Friday afternoon. The assassination against Mohsen Fakhrizadeh took place in the Abe-Sard region of Damavand County, about 40 kilometers northeast of Tehran. The Fars news agency said the expert was assassinated by terrorists in his car. The terrorists blasted a pickup - a Nissan sedan - laden with explosives on the way of the car carrying Fakhrizadeh and then

started shooting at his car and security guards. Some analysts argue that the terrorist attack was carried with a green light by U.S. President-elect Joe Biden. Iran holds Israel responsible for the terrorist act. Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif urged the international community, especially the European Union, to condemn this heinous crime and stop exercising "shameful double standards".

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Oil, gas, petchem projects worth over \$7.14b inaugurated in 3 provinces

BY EBRAHIM FALLAHI
 TEHRAN – President Hassan Rouhani inaugurated three oil industry projects worth over 300 trillion rials (about \$7.15 billion) in Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, Khuzestan, and Boushehr provinces, Shana reported. Inaugurated through video conference in a ceremony held in Tehran on Thursday, the mentioned projects include a petrochemical plant, a crude oil processing unit, and strategic gas condensate storage fa-

ilities in South Pars region. The inauguration of the mentioned projects has created jobs for over 850 people in the mentioned provinces. Since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 19) which has been named the year of "surge in production", every week the government has inaugurated several energy, industrial, mining and development projects across the country.

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Mahak wins UICC's World Cancer Day Spirit Award

TEHRAN – Mahak charity won the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) World Cancer Day (WCD) Spirit Award for raising awareness about the disease. Founded in 1991, Mahak is a Tehran-based non-governmental organization dedicated to treating pediatric cancer in Iran. Mahak joins UICC's WCD annual campaign every February since 2016 in order to contribute toward accomplishing the

third Sustainable Development Goal of the United Nations which targets good health and wellbeing. Accordingly, it has continuously planned to raise awareness regarding cancer, in particular early detection and cancer control, in addition to sharing the needs and concerns of patients with cancer with the society at large.

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European duplicity

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Solar energy to tackle electricity shortage in remote rural areas

BY MAHNAZ ABDI
 The limitation and difficulty in the way of supplying electricity to the remote rural areas which are hard to reach has been always one of the major challenges in sustainable development of villages.

Solar energy, which is accessible and usable almost in every area, provides the best solution to tackle this problem.

In Iran, which enjoys an abundance of solar energy in all of its regions, using this energy as a reliable source for electricity generation in the remote areas is seriously pursued, especially in recent years, when the government has defined rural development as one of its major priorities and has expedited the rural development projects.

Using solar energy for power generation in the deprived areas especially those suffering from drought is an important approach to remove poverty in such areas.

Enjoying about 300 sunny days per year is a valuable status, and the country is planning to benefit from this advantage in its energy sector.

Based on the investigations, the deprived areas in the country are mostly rich in terms of solar energy, therefore the establishment of solar farms in these regions is a big help to develop them.

Over 44 percent of Iran's renewable power plants are solar farms.

While the establishment of solar farms in rural areas, especially the deprived ones, is an outstanding approach, installing rooftop PV stations in these regions is also on the agenda.

A rooftop photovoltaic power station, or rooftop PV system, is a photovoltaic system that has its electricity-generating solar panels mounted on the rooftop of a residential or commercial building or structure.

The establishment of PV stations in the villages with hard access, which has been followed up by the Energy Ministry since some years ago, is lowering the power supply costs significantly.

In fact, when the utility lines are required, but not available in remote areas, solar electric systems can provide the required electricity sources.

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Afghans are cynic about the U.S. policies in their country: analyst

BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI
 TEHRAN – An Afghan analyst says that the United States failed to establish peace and stability in Afghanistan after two decades of devastating war, which made the people "cynic about the U.S. policies in their country."

Noting that the "people of Afghanistan are cynic about the U.S. policies in their country, Qassem Akhzarati tells the Tehran Times that "the pessimism is growing every day, and this has raised doubts about the credibility of the United States in the minds of the people."

Amid the pessimism toward the U.S., Afghanistan also suffers from systematic corruption.

On the first day of the Afghanistan 2020 Conference in Geneva, Afghan First Vice President Amrullah Saleh addressed the country's administrative challenges and the international community's responsibilities, saying that "every time the Afghan government steps in to fight

corruption, it faces pressure from the international community for political compromise."

The following is the text of the interview:

Why did Saleh Amrullah Saleh, the first vice-president of Afghanistan, in his speech at the Afghanistan 2020 Conference in Geneva refer to corruption in Afghanistan? What are the main causes of corruption in the central Asian country?

A: Saleh's remarks can be somewhat accurate, as corruption is institutionalized in Afghanistan for several reasons and factors. These factors have both internal and external dimensions. Although the Afghan government has taken steps to fight corruption and set up a committee in this regard, which can be a positive approach, one of the main causes of corruption in the Afghan system is insecurity, which has been increasing the vulnerability of the Afghan government in the fight against corruption.

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UK secretly deployed British troops to defend Saudi Arabian oil fields

The government deployed British troops to defend oil fields in Saudi Arabia without telling parliament or the public, it can be revealed.

Opposition parties accused the government of lacking a "moral compass" and dodging scrutiny, while campaigners said the episode was "symptomatic of the toxic relationship" between the UK government and the oil-rich autocracy, Independent reported.

The Ministry of Defense says the oil fields are "critical economic infrastructure" and that gunners from the 16th Regiment Royal Artillery were needed to help defend against drone strikes.

Incredibly, the military operation, which was launched February in this year, overlapped with a ban on exporting military hardware to the middle eastern dictatorship.

Until July ministers were blocked by the

Court of Appeal from signing-off military exports because of concerns that Saudi forces were committing war crimes in their conflict with rebels based in neighboring Yemen.

Legal action is ongoing in British courts to reinstate the ban, which ministers discarded in the summer after judging that the 500 alleged war amounted only to "possible" breaches international humanitarian law and "isolated incidents".

A Ministry of Defense spokesperson told The Independent: "Following the attacks on the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's oil production facilities on 14 September 2019, we have worked with the Saudi Ministry of Defense and wider international partners to consider how to strengthen the defense of its critical economic infrastructure from aerial threats."

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Nature therapy with Iran's impressive bird diversity

BY FARANAK BAKHTIARI
 TEHRAN – In addition to its great impact on the human psyche in today's stressful life, looking at birds and nature is like a free psychiatric hospital with organic treatment.

Going to nature and passing through trees and meadows, accompanying the pleasant sound of birds has always been pleasant and soulful, the pleasure of hearing the sound of birds in the morning is indescribable.

Experts have been recommending nature

therapy for several years, and Iran, with its diverse climate and unique plant and animal species, can grow significantly in this area; the development of which can greatly affect the country's economy, and besides, the habitat and consequently the bird species will be protected.

According to statistics from global sources, in 2009 about four million Japanese traveled to different countries for bird watching.

Meanwhile, Iran is host to over 600 species of birds, the number of which is increasing year by year. It is also diverse and rich in plant species; So far, more than 10,000 plant species have been recorded in Iran, which is even higher than that of Europe.

Iran has designated the last Thursday of November as the National Day of Bird Watching to highlight the importance of this pastime in promoting accountable tourism.

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Diego Maradona; a Little Prince on his own planet

BY MASOUD HOSSEIN
 TEHRAN – To say Diego Maradona was just a footballer is not fair. He was a person who lived on his own planet but changed our own planet.

Iranian people know Diego Maradona more than any football player since he created so many good memories in the times that they faced so many challenges and hardships in 80's and 90's.

As a schoolboy, I became acquainted with football through Diego Maradona at the 1986 FIFA World Cup in Mexico and football, since then, has become an integral part of my life to the point where I can't imagine life without it.

Maradona arguably is most controversial character in the history of football and as a journalist I never wrote about a retired football more than him.

The Argentine was my generation's hero and we wanted to be like him, however he was worn down by his fame in the upcoming years and suffered from physical and mental illnesses. That's how his life was.

Maradona dribbled past five of England players to score one of the greatest goals in World Cup history and led Napoli to their first ever title in 1987, scoring 115 goals in 259 matches for the Italian team.

There is no need to talk about what he has done in football.

Maradona didn't comply with the rules and had his own rules but stood up for what he believed it was right. He didn't violate his own rules and it's adorable to be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else.

He was laid to rest after a blessed but troubled life but the son of a factory worker, who inspired so many people to make their dreams come true, will be remembered forever.

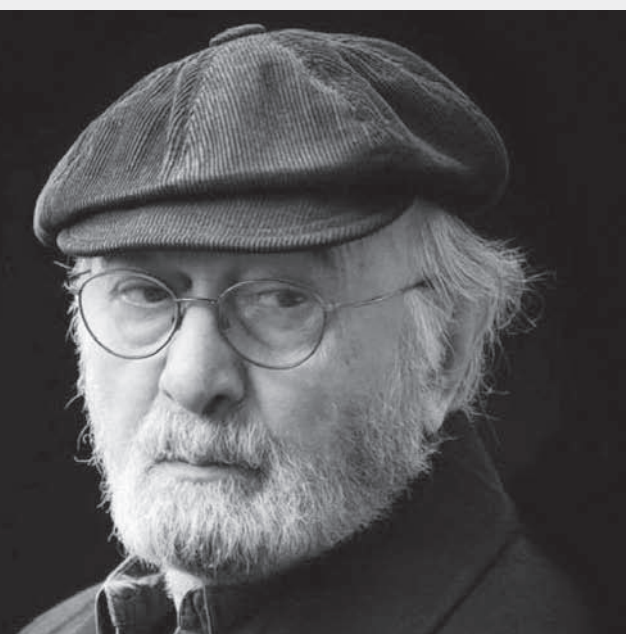
Actor Parviz Purhosseini dies of COVID-19

TEHRAN – Veteran stage and screen actor Parviz Purhosseini died of COVID-19 at the age of 79 at Tehran's Firuzgar Hospital on Friday morning, his son Purang has confirmed.

He tested positive and was admitted to the hospital two weeks ago.

Born in 1941, Purhosseini had played in over 100 films, theatrical productions and TV series in collaboration with famous filmmakers including Bahram Beizai, Masud Kimiai, Davud Mirbaqeri, Ali Hatami and Kamal Tabrizi.

He was a graduate of acting from the University of Tehran. His credits include acting in "Bashu, Little Stranger," by Bahram Beizai, "Kamalolmolk" by Ali Hatami, "Angelica Ship" by Mohammad Bozorognia and "Day of Angel" by Behruz Afkhami.



Iran lambasts Israel's continued aggressions against Syria's sovereignty

"Golan is and will remain a part and parcel of the Syrian territory," says Ambassador Takht-Ravanchi

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iran on Thursday strongly condemned Israel's continued aggressions against Syria's sovereignty, saying the occupation of the Syrian Golan by Israel is unlawful.

"The occupation of the Syrian Golan by Israel is unlawful and the recognition of its annexation to Israel by the U.S. is null and void," said Iranian Ambassador to the UN Majid Takht-Ravanchi.

Addressing a meeting of the UN Security Council on Syria, Takht-Ravanchi said, "The recent provocative visit to the Syrian Golan of the U.S. secretary of state was designed to legitimize the annexation. Golan is and will remain a part and parcel of the Syrian territory."

Takht-Ravanchi said the Syrian people continue to suffer from aggression, foreign occupation and terrorism after almost ten years of conflict.

"Through unlawful occupation, inhumane sanctions, politicizing the return of refugees and IDPs (internally displaced people) and preventing international support for Syria's reconstruction, certain countries are responsible for the prolongation of the conflict as they attempt to impose their own will on the Syrian people," he stated.



Such attempts, the ambassador continued, are unlawful and immoral and doomed to fail.

He argued that the Syrian crisis can only be settled through political means and the right to determine the future of Syria belongs exclusively to Syrians and the international community should assist them to realize this right.

"It means sovereignty, political independence, unity and territorial integrity of Syria must be fully respected by all," Takht-Ravanchi stated.

He added that any separatist agendas, as well as illegitimate self-rule initiatives, must be rejected and all foreign forces whose presence is not permitted by the Syrian government must leave Syria.

"In this context, the full, immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the U.S. forces from Syria is essential," he remarked. "Instead of combatting terrorism, they continue supporting UN-designated terrorist groups such as Al-Nusra Front (Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham) as well as looting the oil and wealth of the Syrian people."

The Iranian envoy also said fighting terrorists in Syria must continue until the full removal of their threats.

"Obviously, this must be done with the utmost care for the lives of civilians," he emphasized, adding, "Terrorists must not be allowed to continue taking a large number of civilians as hostages and to turn places like Idlib into their safe haven."

He said Iran will spare no efforts to uphold the importance of a Syrian-led, Syrian-owned and UN-facilitated political process, noting, "We continue to support the efforts of the United Nations and the SRSG Pedersen for political settlement of the Syrian crisis."

Geir O. Pedersen is the special representative of the UN secretary general for Syria.

"Supporting the Constitutional Committee, which must operate without any external interference or pressure or setting any artificial deadline to conclude its work, we are hopeful that the true interests of the Syrian people will prevail over all interests," he added.

According to Takht-Ravanchi, parallel to political process, international efforts must continue to facilitate Syria's reconstruction and the safe and voluntary return of refugees and IDPs to their original places.

"As an important effort in this regard, we welcome the international conference on the return of Syrian refugees, held on 11-12 November in Damascus, which has unfortunately been boycotted by some countries who politicize almost every issue related to ending the conflict, return of refugees and Syria's reconstruction," he said. "The interest of millions of Syrian refugees must not be held hostage for political gains by certain powers."

The ambassador pointed to the challenges faced by the Syrian people, including the conflict and the coronavirus outbreak and said avoiding to assist the return of refugees will only increase and prolong their sufferings, which has already been deteriorated due to the imposition of inhumane unilateral sanctions by the United States.

"The international community should not leave the Syrian people alone in their struggle to overcome the threats of terrorism and foreign occupation as well as economic terrorism resulting from these unlawful sanctions," he concluded.

Defense ministry warns of harsh response to enemies

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iran's Defense Ministry has warned the enemies against any wrong moves, saying any mistake would draw a strong and crushing response from the Iranian naval forces.

In a statement on Friday, the ministry said all of Iran's friends and enemies acknowledge the Islamic Republic's naval power, Tasnim reported.

The Navy's advances in the defense industry and its modern achievements have frightened the enemies and have made them realize that "any mistake will draw a harsh, devastating and regrettable response" from the Iranian Navy, the statement read.

It added that the Defense Ministry will keep supplying the Iranian naval forces in the Army and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps with modern equipment to enable them to carry out missions.

Rouhani terms Israel 'the enemy of entire region'

POLITICAL TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani has voiced concerns over certain regional countries' normalization of ties with Israel, saying the Zionist regime is the enemy of the entire region and Islamic countries.

"Unfortunately, the presence of the Zionist regime in the region will be a cause of insecurity and instability in the region," Rouhani said on Wednesday evening during a phone conversation with Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani.

"It is really a surprise for us that some neighbors consider their security in the shadow of their relations with the criminal Zionist regime, which is the enemy of the entire region and Islamic countries," he said, according to the president website.

"We, the countries of the region, can solve our problems as neighbors and brothers," said the president, adding, "I have no doubt that in the coming months we will see better conditions in regional relations with the help of each other."

Rouhani was referring to the U.S.-brokered normalization agreements between Israel and Iran's two southern neighbors, the UAE and Bahrain, which are hostile against Iran.

Since U.S. President Donald Trump assumed office in January 2017, Israel, Saudi Arabia and certain Arab countries have pushed



for a harsher U.S. foreign policy against Iran.

They supported Trump's withdrawal from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal — which was clinched under Barack Obama — and cheered the U.S. president for his subsequent sanctions on Tehran that caused more than two hundred billions of dollars in losses for Iran.

During the Wednesday phone conversation, President Rouhani described the Tehran-Doha relations as friendly, stressing

that the Islamic Republic is determined to have dialogue, understanding and brotherly relations with other Persian Gulf countries.

He expressed hope that with the new developments in international relations, the hostile policies of some countries in the region would diminish and "we will see a stronger opportunity for dialogue and intra-regional understanding."

Highlighting the development and

Qatar's Emir says "Iran must be a party to the talks" on any agreement to provide "regional security".

deepening of Tehran-Doha ties in all areas of interest, especially economic and trade relations, the president said, "Accelerating the implementation of agreements between Tehran and Doha will be in the interest of both nations and the region."

"We hope to see the implementation of all the agreed projects and the flourishing of relations between the two countries," he remarked.

Rouhani invited to visit Doha

The president also responded to the Emir of Qatar's official invitation to pay an official visit to Doha, expressing hope that the visit would take place at an appropriate time.

The Qatari Emir, for his part, called the relations between Iran and Qatar strategic and stressed that the implementation of the agreements between the two countries is in the interests of the two nations. Qatar will make every effort to implement these agreements, he said.

Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani further referred to regional issues, noting that his country believes that cooperation between Iran and the Persian Gulf countries "should be further developed in all areas, including water security in the region, and in any agreement to provide regional security, Iran must be a party to the talks to reach an agreement."

Judiciary tracking down culprits involved in Gen. Soleimani assassination

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iran's Judiciary says it has formed a committee to track down those who were behind the U.S. assassination of Iran's top anti-terror commander, Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani.

"With the Judiciary chief's order, a committee was tasked with gathering evidence, and a judicial board, led by the prosecutor and I, as the deputy prosecutor and investigator in charge of the case, began the investigation and its procedure," Deputy Prosecutor General Seyyed Ashrafi said, IRNA reported on Friday.

Seyyed Ashrafi said Iran has provided the Interpol with the names of 45 American nationals involved in this killing, but unfortunately the Interpol has refused to issue an international arrest warrant for them because of the current political situation.

He said some of those accused of being involved in the January assassination regularly visit neighboring countries, adding that Iran has also provided judicial representation to six of the countries where American bases are located.

"We were recently informed that the Iraqi government has prepared a response to this representation, and is submitting it through diplomatic channels," Seyyed Ashrafi stated.

He also said Iran is also preparing a judicial representation addressed to the U.S. judicial system so as to test them and see whether they would prosecute the culprits for the charges leveled against them.

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

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

In September, IRGC Chief Major General Hossein Salami said the Americans should know that Iran will target whoever had a role in the cowardly assassination of General Soleimani. "This is a serious message," Salami warned.

"These threats are serious and we're not engaging in a war of words," Salami said, adding, "Rather, we'll leave everything to the field of action."

In June, Tehran said 36 individuals were identified in connection with the Soleimani assassination.

"36 individuals who cooperated, collaborated, and participated in the assassination of Hajj Qassem, including political and military authorities of the U.S. and other countries, have been identified," Tehran Prosecutor General Ali Alqasi-Mehr said.

Alqasi-Mehr named Trump as the key individual at the top of the list, saying his pursuit will continue even after his tenure as U.S. president.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh has also



said Iran will spare no efforts in bringing the culprits to justice.

"Iran, while fully adhering to the applicable provisions of international law, will spare no legal and legitimate effort in order to bring the perpetrators and accomplices of Martyr General Soleimani to justice, so that they suffer legal punishment for their action," Khatibzadeh said on November 10.

He said based on Iran's stance, Trump cannot enjoy presidential impunity after his term and he must be brought to justice for his crime.

"I repeat that we do not believe the perpetrators of this crime, especially Trump as the main perpetrator, can be exempted from legal prosecution, in a way that is in line with international law, by taking refuge behind the wall of immunity," he added.

Nuclear expert assassinated, footprints of Israel with incoming U.S. govt backing seen

I → "Terrorists murdered an eminent Iranian scientist today. This cowardice—shows serious indications of Israeli role—shows desperate warmongering of perpetrators," Zarif tweeted.

"Iran calls on int'l community—and especially EU—to end their shameful double standards & condemn this act of state terror," the foreign minister asserted.

Fars also reported that three to four terrorists were killed in the armed clash.

Fakhrizadeh was the only scientist whose name had been mentioned by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Israeli media had announced that the plan

for the assassination had failed last year. They also claimed that the name of Fakhrizadeh had been released to Israeli spy agency Mossad by the United Nations.

The details of the incident are yet to be clear. Iran's Defense Ministry issued a statement on Friday confirming that Fakhrizadeh lost his life during the assassination attack.

"This Friday afternoon, armed terrorist elements attacked a vehicle carrying Mohsen Fakhrizadeh. During the clashes between his

security team and the terrorists, Mr. Fakhrizadeh was severely injured and then transferred to hospital," the statement said, adding that the physicians' efforts to resuscitate ended in failure.

Chief of Staff of Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Bagheri also issued a statement moments later offering condolences over the assassination of the scientist and vowing "severe revenge".

Judiciary Chief Ebrahim Raisi also issued a statement saying that all related intelligence,

security and judicial bodies are tasked to use all their energy to identify and arrest all "mercenary and criminal elements and try and punish all those involved in this crime", ranging from those who ordered, planned, and implemented the act.

Military chief says "severe revenge awaits" perpetrators of terrorist attack

"The terrorist groups and the perpetrators of this blind act should also know that severe revenge awaits them."

Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf also demanded an immediate identification, arrest and punishment of the elements behind the terrorist attack.

Zarif says "serious indications of Israeli role" seen in terror

Foreign Ministry calls for closer interactions with Afghanistan

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh has expressed satisfaction over his visit to Afghanistan, saying popular and cultural interactions are an integral part of a strategic relationship.

In a tweet on Thursday, Khatibzadeh listed his trip's meetings, saying he met with Head of Afghanistan's High Council for National Reconciliation Abdullah Abdullah, the Afghan minister of information and culture, the Afghan foreign minister's political deputy and a number of current and former officials.

He also said he did interviews with the media, met with intellectuals and paid tribute to the student martyrs of Kabul University.

According to the Foreign Ministry website, Khatibzadeh also met with former Afghan president Hamid Karzai, his counterpart in the Afghan Foreign Ministry, a number of members of the Afghan Parliament, the cultural and media elites, representatives of think tanks, president of Kabul

University, and a number of faculty deans of the university.

He paid a visit to Kabul University and offered his condolences to the Afghan government, people, and families of the students who were martyred in a recent terrorist attack on the university, and laid flowers in remembrance of the martyrs.

The spokesman's trip to Afghanistan was intended to strengthen the strategic cultural relations, arrange for the exchange of media delegations, and invite the Afghan media persons and prominent cultural and scientific figures to visit Iran.

In an interview with IRNA, Khatibzadeh 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," he said. "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. The U.S., as an invader, must follow international law and not follow the 'scorched earth policy' upon leaving."

Back 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 said during his two-day visit to Tehran.

General: Iran's strategic depth extended to distant oceans

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — Iran's naval power has grown so extensively that its strategic depth has gone beyond the regional waters and has reached the faraway oceans, Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Hossein Bagheri said.

In a message released on Friday in commemoration of the Iranian Navy Day, Major General Bagheri said Iran's Navy has gained such a major place that its power has shattered

the global arrogance and the trans-regional powers' dream of dominating the security factors in the region.

Describing Iran as the messenger of peace, friendship, and maritime security, the commander said the Iranian naval forces' capability to carry out major and unique missions have extended the country's strategic depth "from the Persian Gulf coasts, the Sea of Oman and the northern parts of the Indian Ocean to the

distant waters and faraway oceans."

The Iranian naval forces play sensitive roles as "the anchorage of ultra-regional security", he added.

The top general finally emphasized that the potential threats make it necessary for Iran to press on with the naval progress with firm resolve and accelerate and broaden its activities.

Iranian officials have repeatedly underscored that the country will not hesitate to

strengthen its military capabilities, including its missile power, which are entirely meant for defense, and that Iran's defense capabilities will be never subject to negotiations.

In February 2018, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei urged the Iranian Armed Forces to boost their military capabilities and preparedness in such a way that the enemies would not ever dare think of threaten the country.

European duplicity

POLITICAL TEHRAN — European desks parties to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal — France, Germany, and the UK — which have been claiming that they are “tirelessly” trying to preserve the nuclear deal, made new demands of Iran that will only complicate the situation around the nuclear deal and put it in danger rather than saving it.

Over the past two and a half years, the European signatories to the nuclear deal — commonly known as the E3 — have issued countless statements alleging that they had made tremendous efforts to keep the nuclear deal alive following Donald Trump’s withdrawal from it on May 8, 2018.

But these statements have now proved dishonest. Over the past few years, they kept saying all the time that they are committed to preserving the nuclear deal and see no substitute for it.

“We have worked tirelessly to preserve the nuclear agreement and remain committed to do so,” E3 foreign ministers said in a joint statement on September 20, a day after the United States unilaterally initiated the snap-back mechanism which allows a participant to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to seek the re-imposition of the multilateral sanctions against Iran lifted in 2015 in accordance with resolution 2231, adopted by the UN Security Council.

Earlier in August, the U.S. called on the UN Security Council to snap back all UN sanctions on Iran by submitting a “notification” to the 15-member UN body. The U.S. request was rejected by almost all Security Council members, including Washington European allies, which said that the U.S. was no longer a participant to the JCPOA following Trump’s withdrawal from the deal on May 8, 2018, that its notification was incapable of having legal effect.

“France, Germany and the United Kingdom (“the E3”) note that the US ceased to be a participant to the JCPOA following their withdrawal from the deal on 8 May, 2018. Our position regarding the effectiveness of the US notification pursuant to resolution 2231 has consequently been very clearly expressed to the Presidency and all UNSC members. We cannot, therefore, support this action which is incompatible with our current efforts to support the JCPOA,” E3 foreign ministers said in a joint statement in August.

The E3 said in the same statement that they “remain committed to the JCPOA despite the significant challenges caused by U.S. withdrawal,” a position they expressed in many other statements, including in a June statement in which they reiterated that they “remain committed to the JCPOA and, in order to preserve it, urge Iran to reverse all measures inconsistent with the agreement



and return to full compliance without delay.” They added, “We reaffirm our readiness to engage substantively with Iran.”

But recent press reports projecting Democratic candidate Joe Biden to win the November 3rd U.S. presidential election showed that the Europeans are not only not ready to engage substantively with Iran, but they are also not in a rush to push for a swift U.S. return to Iran nuclear deal.

In a complete turnabout, European diplomats told The Wall Street Journal that they don’t want to rush a new U.S. president to re-enter the JCPOA.

Citing senior European diplomats, the American publication said, “European powers are looking to the incoming Biden administration to swiftly reduce nuclear tensions with Tehran but won’t press Washington to re-enter the 2015 nuclear accord with Iran quickly.”

According to these diplomats, the E3 believe that a full return to the nuclear deal might not be achievable or even desirable before Iran’s presidential elections in June. Laurence Norman, the reporter who prepared the report for The Wall Street Journal, said in a tweet that some European diplomats even support U.S. sanctions on Iran because they think that these sanctions can be used as leverage to expand the JCPOA.

“Some European diplomats believe U.S. sanctions & other leverage can be better deployed over time to move Iran — and their allies — towards expanded deal. Others worry it may mean never reaching a full deal. But everyone agrees, Iran Deal remains reference point for diplomacy,” tweeted Norman.

He added, “Detailed Iran talks with Joe Biden team not happened yet, say European diplomats. No one’s under any illusion that Europeans won’t ultimately follow Biden’s lead on all this. But it’s not May 2018. Europeans won’t jumping up and down to have

Biden turn back clock.”

The Europeans have further complicated the situation around the nuclear accord by demanding new concessions from Iran concerning other issues such as Iran’s ballistic missile program and its regional influence that were not included in the JCPOA.

The E3 have long called for new negotiations over Iran’s missiles and its regional influence but they have never been able to extract concessions from Iran in the missile and regional issues. However, they seem to be seeing that the time is ripe now for new, broader negotiations with Iran that would include the missile program and regional activities.

The E3 foreign ministers recently held a meeting in Germany to discuss issues related to Iran, including the missile program. The meeting came after the French presidency openly called for negotiations on Iran’s missile program and its regional activities.

Nearly two weeks ago, the French presidency called for broader negotiation with Iran that includes Iran’s regional role and its missiles, according to an Asharq Al-Aawsat report. According to the report, a French official pointed out in a press briefing that the Iranian nuclear program has reached a dangerous stage, and that would not be the case if Iran continued to respect its obligations stipulated in the 2015 nuclear agreement. The official also said any subsequent negotiations with Tehran should expand to include the ballistic missile program, regional policy, and what he called “interference in the affairs of other countries.”

The European calls for missile negotiations have drawn strong reactions from Iranian officials, including the Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei. During his latest meeting with the heads of the three branches of the govern-

ment, the Leader took a jab at the European countries that are party to the 2015 nuclear deal — France, Germany, and the UK —, urging the Europeans to stop demanding negotiations on Iran’s ballistic missiles and its influence in the region.

“The Europeans are constantly taking stances against Iran. While they are making the most improper interferences in the region’s issues, they tell us not to interfere in the region. And while France and Britain possess destructive nuclear missiles and Germany is moving in this direction, they tell us not to possess missiles,” the Leader pointed out.

Directly addressing the Europeans, Ayatollah Khamenei added, “What business is it of yours. Correct yourself first and then make remarks.”

Other Iranian officials, including senior lawmakers, have echoed the same remarks, saying that the E3 should not demand negotiations on the missile program, especially after they failed to honor their commitments under the JCPOA, the very same deal they now try to expand to include other issues such as the ballistic missile and regional activities of Iran.

“Iran’s missile and defense capability are not negotiable at all,” Mahmoud Abbaszadeh Meshkini, a member of the Parliament’s National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said last week.

Sohrab Gilani, another Iranian lawmaker, also ruled out prospects of missile negotiations.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran has fulfilled its obligations under the JCPOA, while the Europeans and the Americans did not fulfill their obligations, so no new negotiations are going to take place. Rather, the Westerners must implement their obligations,” Gilani told the Islamic Consultative Assembly News Agency (ICANA).

Gilani even warned the Iranian Foreign Ministry against talking with the U.S., saying the ministry is not authorized to hold negotiations over the JCPOA.

In a latest Iranian criticism of Europe’s duplicity and double standards, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif urged the European Union on Friday evening to condemn the assassination of the Iranian nuclear scientist, Mohsen Fakhri-zadeh.

“Terrorists murdered an eminent Iranian scientist today. This cowardice—with serious indications of Israeli role—shows desperate warmongering of perpetrators,” Zarif tweeted.

“Iran calls on international community—and especially EU—to end their shameful double standards & condemn this act of state terror,” Zarif asserted.

Iran calls for immediate U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan

Foreign says “The Doha peace talks are dubious and the current peace process is a White House project”

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Saeed Khatibzadeh, the spokesman for Iran’s Foreign Ministry, has called for an immediate withdrawal of the United States troops from Afghanistan.

“The U.S. regime and the U.S. army should leave the region as soon as possible. This region doesn’t need U.S. troops to maintain its security. The people of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan are able to run their country on their own,” Khatibzadeh told the Afghan Ariana News.

The spokesman, who has just finished his official visit to neighboring Afghanistan, accused the U.S. of trying to destroy Afghanistan’s political institutions while withdrawing



its forces from the country.

Khatibzadeh said Afghanistan is under American occupation and the Afghan people seek to get rid of the occupation. He added that Iran calls for immediate U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan.

“While the United States and many other countries are weakening Afghanistan’s central government, Iran may be the only country that is doing its best to support the achievements of this government,” Khatibzadeh said.

The spokesman also said that Iran is not satisfied with the Doha peace talks.

“The Doha peace talks are dubious and the current peace process is a White House project,” the spokesman pointed out.

U.S. not going to abandon sanctions tool: senior MP

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Abolfazl Amouei, the spokesman for the Iranian Parliament’s National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said on Friday that the United States won’t abandon the sanctions tool as long as the U.S. sees that this tool is working.

“We should nullify sanctions instead of removing them,” Amouei said, according to a Tasnim report.

The lawmaker’s remarks were made in reaction to the latest remarks by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran regarding the necessary strategy that Iran should adopt to lessen the economic impact of the U.S. sanctions on the country.

Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, last week suggested plans to counteract the sanctions through boosting internal economic capabilities while also ruling out any prospect of broader negotiations with the West.

The Leader addressed in detail the economic sanctions of the U.S. on Iran and their impact, calling these sanctions “a crime against the Iranian people that has been intensified in the past three years.” He said the economy is the main issue of the country right now and the livelihood of people has really been under pressure.

Ayatollah Khamenei called the sanctions “a bitter reality and a crime by America and its European partners against the Iranian nation.”

In an effort to introduce a strategy to mitigate the economic impact of the sanctions, the Leader said there are two ways to

deal with sanctions: removing sanctions and nullifying or overcoming them.

The Leader pointed out that Iran has used the first way — i.e. lifting sanctions — but to no avail.

“There are two ways to tackle sanctions: 1) removing sanctions 2) nullifying and overcoming them. We tried the first option, removing sanctions, by negotiating for a few years, but to no use. The second option may have difficulties in the beginning but will have a favorable end,” the Leader pointed out. “If succeed, through hard work and innovation, in overcoming the sanctions and the other side witnesses how sanctions were nullified, it will abandon sanctions gradually.”

MP Amouei said these remarks had many facets one of which is that the country’s economy should not be tied to international developments.

“Sanctions impacts are the most important tool of the enemy against us that must be nullified,” Amouei said, adding that Iran should act on the premise that there would be no opening in relations with foreign countries.

“If we approach the enemy this way, it will also come to the conclusion that the sanctions have no effect and will not follow it, but if we seek to negotiate at any time, the enemy will turn the sanctions into a strategic commodity,” noted the lawmaker. “The enemy is by no means willing to abandon the sanctions and will use them as long as he feels that the sanctions tool has been effective.”

Amouei pointed to Iran’s experience in

nullifying the U.S. sanctions on gasoline imports to Iran, saying Iran was an importer of gasoline but when the U.S. imposed sanctions on the fuel imports to Iran, the country moved to produce gasoline domestically. According to Amouei, Iran not only boosted gasoline production capacity but also became an exporter of the fuel, a clear example of how Iran can nullify the U.S. sanctions.

“During the meeting with the Leader, it was reiterated that we should nullify the sanctions instead of removing them through negotiations,” Amouei said.

The lawmaker also pointed to Europe’s position on the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, saying the Europeans demonstrated a “strategic weakness” in the face of the nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Actions (JCPOA).

[French President Emmanuel] Macron said in an interview that Europe’s economy is so dependent on the U.S. none of Europe’s political decisions are implementable. The Europeans made 11 commitments to the Islamic Republic none of which was implemented by the Europeans and they even failed to operationalize the INSTEX mechanism,” Amouei pointed out.

He added, “With the win of Biden, who was the candidate supported by European countries, a kind of optimism emerged in them to rebuild their anti-Iran coalition. In this context, we had a statement from three European countries that, instead of fulfilling their commitments, emphasized that the Islamic Republic should not pursue its demands and plans.”

SPORTS

Iran’s Nasirshelal awarded London 2012 gold medal

SPORTS TEHRAN — The International Olympic Committee has confirmed that Iranian weightlifter Navab Nasirshelal will receive 2012 Olympic Games gold medal following disqualification of Oleksiy Torokhtiy.

Re-analysis of Torokhtiy’s samples from London 2012 resulted in a positive test for the prohibited substances Dehydrochloromethyltestosterone.



In the men’s 105kg weightlifting event, the first- and fourth-placed athletes have been disqualified, so the gold medal is reallocated to Nasirshelal of Iran, IOC confirmed in a consultative meeting held by videoconference.

The silver medal went to Bartłomiej Wojciech Bonk of Poland and the bronze to Ivan Eftremov of Uzbekistan, and the subsequent ranking until eighth place has been adapted.

Ex-Iran captains react to death of Diego Maradona

SPORTS TEHRAN — Three Iranian football legends shared their reactions to the death of Argentina football star Diego Maradona.

Maradona, who captained Argentina to victory in the 1986 World Cup in Mexico, passed away at the age of 60 due to a heart attack at his home on Wednesday.

The former captains of Iran national football team reacted on Instagram to the death of the Argentine football legend.

“Maradona was a football phenomenon on the field,” Al Daei, who holds the record of the all-time men’s international top goalscorer, wrote on his Instagram account.

Ali Karimi, known as the “Maradona of Asia” for his dribbling skills, paid his respects to the football legendary, posting a message on his Instagram.

“There will be no other player like you,” Karimi wrote. Ex-Iran legendary goalkeeper Ahmadreza Abedzadeh, dubbed the Eagle of Asia, also posted a message on Instagram, writing: “World star Diego Maradona died.”

Persepolis held by Naft Masjed Soleyman

SPORTS TEHRAN — Persepolis football team played out a goalless draw with Naft Masjed Soleyman in Iran Professional League (IPL) on Thursday.

Lackluster Persepolis were held to a goalless draw for the second time in three weeks on a rainy day in Masjed Soleyman’s Behnam Mahmoudi Stadium.

Siamak Nemati failed to convert his penalty for Persepolis in the 40th minute.

In Isfahan, Zob Ahan drew 1-1 with Paykan. Ebrahim Salehi scored for visiting Paykan in the 33rd minute and Miald Jahani equalized the match two minutes later.

Sanat Naft earned a late 1-1 draw against Shahr Khodro in Mashhad. Meraj Pourtaghi scored for Shahr Khodro in the 82nd minute and Taleb Reykani leveled the score from the penalty spot in the dying moments of the match.

On Friday, Sepahan defeated Tractor in Tabriz. Mohammad Nezhadmahdi scored a goal in the 28th minute at the Yadegar-e Emam Stadium.

Gol Gohar lead the table with seven points from three weeks, followed by Esteghlal and Sepahan.

Iran one of best defensive Asian team in FIBA qualifiers

SPORTS TEHRAN — Iran national basketball team are among the best defensive teams in the Asia Cup Qualifiers, FIBA basketball wrote.

Iran are scheduled to face Saudi Arabia and Syria on November 28 and 30, respectively in Doha, Qatar at the Window 2 of FIBA Asia Cup 2021 Qualifiers.

Last but not least, there should be no surprise that Olympics-bound Iran also have an unblemished record so far in the Qualifiers.

The Asia Cup 2017 runners-up have had no mercy on their opponents, beating them by an average of 44.5 points per contest. They are among one of the best defensive teams in the Asia Cup Qualifiers, locking their foes to only 50.0 points per game.

Iran’s undefeated record will go to the test against Saudi Arabia (November 28) and Syria (November 30).

Iran unchanged in FIFA ranking

SPORTS TEHRAN — Iran national football team remained unchanged in 29th place in FIFA World Ranking released on Friday.

Iran defeated Bosnia and Herzegovina 2-0 during the international break.

Japan maintained their position as the Continent’s top team. South Korea (38th) and Australia (41st) are third and fourth Asian teams in the ranking.

While the podium remains unchanged, Belgium have widened the gap on their immediate pursuers France. Third-placed Brazil are closing in on Les Bleus after extending their perfect start in South American qualifying for Qatar 2022.

The next FIFA World Ranking will be published on 10 December 2020.

Solar energy to tackle electricity shortage in remote rural areas

➔ One of the plans that the Energy Ministry has started regarding PV stations is providing 25,000 nomadic households across the country with portable photovoltaic systems so that they could use electricity during migration.

According to the program's Executive Director Ali Chehel-Amirani, the plan is set to be completed by the Iranian calendar year of 1400 (starts in March 2021).

While the implementation of solar energy projects is a big step toward sustainable electricity supply in the villages, and rural development as the result, it will also prevent rural-urban migration.

TSE's main index experiences weekly growth of 22,000 points

ECONOMY TEHRAN — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 22,000 points, or 1.6 percent, in the previous Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

The index stood at 1.345 million points at the end of the week.



During the past week, the indices of Iran Khodro Group, Saipa Group, Social Security Investment Company, National Iranian Copper Industry Company, Tejarat Bank, and Esfahan Oil Refining Company were the most widely followed indices.

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

Housing price in Tehran rises 1.8% in a month

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Housing price in Tehran city has risen 1.8 percent in the eighth Iranian calendar month (October 22-November 20), from its previous month, according to the latest report released by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI).

The CBI's report put the average price for one square meter of a residential unit at 271.9 million rials (about \$6,473) in the capital city in the eighth month of this year, up 118.2 percent from the figure for the same month in the past year.

Meanwhile, the number of real estate deals has fallen 48.4 percent in Tehran in the eighth month of this year compared to the seventh month, while rising 9.9 percent compared to the same month of the past year.

In September, a member of the Iranian Parliament (Majlis) Civil Committee said that the drastic and unprecedented rise in housing prices in recent months is going to lead the housing market to a recession in the coming months.



"With the dramatic and unprecedented rise in housing prices, the market is expected to enter a recession for at least three to four years in the coming months, but naturally, as the recession intensifies, housing prices will fall by about 10 to 20 percent", Mojtaba Yousefi stated.

Unfortunately, housing prices have risen by about 200 percent in recent months, and this has created many problems for real house buyers, he lamented.

"The main problem is that in such a market real buyers cannot afford to buy houses and instead the market has become a playground for brokers and speculators."

According to the official, the housing market trend in Iran has been sinusoidal, meaning that housing prices have risen over a period of time and then the market has entered a recession, however, in the last two years the trend has become contrary to the previous years and the housing prices have been constantly increasing.

In late October, President Hassan Rouhani launched and inaugurated the projects for the construction of nearly 11,000 residential units throughout the country via video conference.

The executive operation for the construction of 8,896 units under the National Housing Action Plan was started in some provinces, while 1,959 units under the Mehr Housing Plan were inaugurated in the southern Fars province, in an online ceremony attended also by Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami.

Back in August 2019, Rouhani had officially launched the government's National Housing Action Plan, by inaugurating a project for constructing 110,000 affordable housing units across the country.

The National Housing Action Plan aims to construct 400,000 small and medium-size apartments (70-100 square meters in size) across the country and particularly in Tehran, where housing prices have risen most sharply.

Oil, gas, petchem projects worth over \$7.14b inaugurated in 3 provinces

➔ The industry and energy ministries each are following their own programs in this regard, the Energy Ministry's program is called "A-B-Iran" and the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry is implementing a program dubbed "Persistent Production-Effective Employment-Sustainable Exports".

The Oil Ministry has also implemented numerous projects during the 34 weeks that the mentioned programs have been started.

Earlier in August, Rouhani inaugurated three major projects valued at €4.7 billion via video conference on the occasion of the Government Week (August 23-29).

The said projects included Phase 1 of Bushehr Petrochemical Plant, lines 9 and 6 of the national gas network, and the West



Karoun Oil Cluster power plant.

Also in June, the president inaugurated three energy projects worth \$2.14 billion in three provinces via video conference.

Miandoab Petrochemical Plant, with an annual production capacity of 140,000 tons of heavy polyethylene, was one of the inaugurated projects.

This project, which was put into operation in the northwestern province of West Azarbaijan, plays a significant role in materializing Iran's second petrochemical leap.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said that 17 petrochemical projects were planned to come on stream this year which would boost the petrochemical production capacity of the country by 25 million tons.

Khaf-Herat railway to be officially inaugurated in 2 weeks

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Transport and Urban Development Deputy Minister Abbas Khatibi said the Khaf-Herat railway project has been completed and will be officially inaugurated through video conference on December 10.

The official announced that the inauguration ceremony will be attended by the presidents of the two countries as well as the two sides' transport ministers.

The 193-kilometers-long Khaf-Herat is part of the Iran-Afghanistan rail corridor. The project started in the fiscal year of 2007-2008, connects Iran's eastern city of Khaf to Afghanistan's western city of Ghoryan.

Iran was in charge of completing three of the mentioned four parts which are in the Iranian territory and the fourth part is the responsibility of the Afghan side.

The first two parts of the railway (77 km) were completed two years ago and the third part has been recently completed.

In a meeting with Afghanistan's Acting Foreign Affairs Minister Mohammad Hanef Atmar in Tehran on June 22, Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian said that the third section of the Khaf-Herat railway project will be completed in the third quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (September 22-December 20).

In early July, Iranian and Afghan officials held a committee meeting to investigate the ways to complete Khaf-Herat railway.

Afghan official with Herat Governor's Office Jilani Farhad said that the joint committee was set up following the emphasis of the Afghan president to accelerate construction and completion of the project considering its significance to improve transit between Iran and Afghanistan.

Khaf-Herat line is part of the much bigger East-West Railway Corridor project which extends from China to Europe through Iran and Afghanistan.



Iran and Afghanistan have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with five other countries which are in the way of the East-West corridor and further negotiations are still ongoing in this regard.

Production by major automakers exceeds 566,000 in 8 months

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Three major Iranian carmakers, namely Iran Khodro Company (IKCO), SAIPA Group, and Pars Khodro, manufactured 566,844 vehicles during the first eight months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-November 20), the data released by Codal website showed.

According to the data, during the mentioned period IKCO manufactured 291,234 vehicles, of which 40,904 were produced in the eighth Iranian calendar month of Aban (October 22-November 20).

SAIPA and Pars Khodro also manufactured 209,534 and 66,076 vehicles in the mentioned period, respectively.

Meanwhile, SAIPA managed to export 321,000 Completely Built Up (CBU) vehicles in the said eight months.

Iranian carmakers had exported about 1,300 vehicles weighing 1,573 tons to nine countries, including Hong Kong, Taiwan, Syria, UAE, Spain, China, Iraq, and Turkey during the previous Iranian calendar year.

Based on the data released by the Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry, 468,699 vehicles were manufactured in Iran during the first half of the current year (March 20-September 21), which has been 23.4 percent higher than the figure for the same period of time in the past year.

During this period, 425,925 passenger cars were manufactured in the country, registering a growth of 21.9 percent



compared to the first six months of the previous year. The production of trucks also reached 39,519 units in the said time span, which has increased by 40.4 percent compared to the last year's same period.

Considering the mentioned data, while the growth in output has been realized in the first half, car manufacturing is also planned to rise in the second half.

Mohsen Salehinia, the new head of the Industrial Development and Renovation Organization of Iran (IDRO), has recently mentioned planning for increasing car manufacturing in the second half, and said, "We are investigating and finalizing the issues in this due".

Deputy Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Saeed Zarandi had said earlier this year that 1.2 million vehicles were planned to be manufactured in the present year, which seems a realistic figure given the surge in production policies of this year.

Pistachio exports up 131% in 8 months yr/yr

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran exported 110,000 tons of pistachio during the first eight months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-November 20), registering a 131-percent increase year on year, the spokesman of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) said.

Ruhollah Latifi put the value of the pistachio exports in the mentioned period at \$676 million, 82.5 percent more than the figure for the previous year's same time span.

According to the IRICA data, 47,000 tons of pistachios worth \$371 million were exported from Iran in the first eight months of the previous year (March 21-November 21, 2019).

A total of 97 million tons of goods worth more than \$44 billion have been traded between Iran and other countries in the said eight months, of which more than 75 million tons worth \$21.5 billion were exported goods.

Iranian exports in the mentioned period have decreased by 14 percent in terms of weight, and 19 percent in terms of value compared to the same period of the previous year.

Earlier in August, Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) held a pistachio export desk meeting to investigate the challenges and barriers in the way of the country's pistachio exports.

Addressing the meeting, TPO Head Hamid Zadboum put emphasis on the



significant status of pistachio in Iran's export basket as the top agricultural export item and said that a national view toward removing the pistachio export barriers should be adopted.

As announced by Iran's Pistachio Association, the country has exported 35,000 tons of pistachio during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-July 21).

In early September, the Chairman of Iran Dried Fruit Exporters Association (IDFEA) said the country's pistachio production is expected to increase by up to 55,000 tons in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2021) compared to the previous year.

"This year's production is going to be better than last year and the output is expected to reach at least 200,000 to 230,000 tons from the last year's 175,000 tons," Mohammad-Hassan Shams Fard said.

IIF sees a growth of 4.4% for Iranian economy if sanctions lifted

ECONOMY TEHRAN — The Institute of International Finance (IIF) said Iran's economy could grow 4.4 percent next year despite the negative impacts of the pandemic if the sanctions are lifted.

If the sanctions are lifted by the end of 2021, Iran's economy could expand 4.4 percent next year after an expected 6.1 percent contraction in 2020, the IIF, a trade body for the global financial industry, said in a report.

IIF also sees a growth of 6.9 percent in 2022 and six percent in 2023 for the Iranian economy, noting



that if oil exports increase, Iran could see its foreign reserves rise to \$109.4 billion by the end of 2023.

Garbis Iradian, IIF's chief economist for the MENA region, told Reuters that the foreign direct investment inflows would increase progressively from this year's \$890 million to over \$6.4 billion in 2025.

Assuming most sanctions could be lifted by late next year, FDI is likely to remain below \$2 billion in 2021, with most of the money coming from China, Iradian said, adding: "Moreover, the coronavirus pandemic will limit FDI inflows in 2021."

Annual apple production predicted to rise 3%

ECONOMY TEHRAN — The annual production of apple in Iran is predicted to rise three percent to 4.12 million tons in the current Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20, 2021), according to an official with the Agriculture Ministry.

Darab Hasani, the director-general of the ministry's office of cold and dry regions fruits, said that the annual export of apples is estimated to hit 1.3 million tons in this year, which is three percent more than the figure of the previous year, which was

740,000 tons. The export of apple has had a proper status in the recent years.

As previously announced by the head of the Central Organization for Rural Cooperatives of Iran, apples have been exported to Russia and Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU)'s member countries in the past year.

Ali Tahmasbi said that 50 percent of the exported apples were produced in the northwestern West Azarbaijan province.

Iran's agricultural production stood at 125 million tons in the past year, according

to the Agriculture Minister Kazem Khavazi. The minister has said that agricultural production is expected to reach 130 million tons in the current year.

"This year, the government is paying special attention to the agricultural sector for achieving self-sufficiency in most agricultural and strategic products," the official said.

He noted that apart from increasing production, the Agriculture Ministry also seeks to increase productivity by developing processing industries in this sector.



Maradona had legendary status like Muhammad Ali: senior scholar

Professor Arshin Adib-Moghaddam says “Maradona never pretended to be something that he was not”

By Javad Heirannia

TEHRAN — Professor Arshin Adib-Moghaddam, chair of the Centre for Iranian Studies at the London Middle East Institute, says Diego Maradona “had something that one rarely finds in any human being.”

Maradona, who captained Argentina to victory in the 1986 World Cup in Mexico, passed away at the age of 60 due to a heart attack at his home on Wednesday. He was a boy from the poor outskirts of Buenos Aires.

“A unique, mesmerising combination of integrity, authenticity and charisma. This is what made him a larger than life personality,” Adib-Moghaddam tells the Tehran Times.

He says Maradona and Muhammad Ali are “giants in the truest meaning of the word.”

“When the name of presidents, so-called tech-giants and others will be forgotten in the annals of human history, giants such as Maradona and Muhammad Ali will stand ten feet taller than the rest. They are giants in the truest meaning of the word,” says Adib-Moghaddam, also an expert in global thought and comparative philosophies.

Here is the full text of the interview.

Q: Maradona, the world football legend, has died. This news was a big shock. I even saw on Twitter that researchers and academics sadly announced his death. Why was he considered a legend?

A: Allow me to start by expressing my sincere condolences to Maradona’s family, Argentina as a country and indeed the world of football. On a personal level, I was very saddened by his death, even beyond my own expectations. It was a true shock for everyone I have talked to.

Maradona had something that one rarely finds in any human being. A unique, mesmerising combination of integrity, authenticity and charisma. This is what made him a larger than life personality, or a legend in your words. Legends don’t really die exactly because of that almost metaphysical aura that they carry with them. The only person I can compare him with would be Muhammad Ali, who had a similarly legendary status because he combined all the attributes that made Maradona so special, as well. These giants of human history leave such indelible marks on the lives of people, that heaves this repository of common sentiments beyond time and space. This is why Maradona had a universal appeal, because his life connected with the sentiments of people all over the world on an immediate human and individual level. Again, it was the same with Muhammad Ali.

Q: Maradona was unique in terms of technical ability. The peak of his football career was at the 1986 World Cup. His two goals against England



are remembered. One is “God’s hand” and the other is dribbling half of the English players. The victory came as Britain and Argentina were at war over the Malvinas Islands, and Argentina was defeated and their national pride tarnished. It seems that Maradona’s goals were a symbol of revenge for that war. What is your opinion?

A: He said so. Maradona was quite explicit about the political charge of the game for Argentina. This is not to say that he ever lost his human touch as a sportsman. Gary Lineker, one of the stars of English football, has had nothing but praise for Maradona exactly because he never mixed sports with politics in a crude and vulgar way. The game was more about the feeling of subjugation, David winning against Goliath – These were themes that Maradona identified with throughout his life which is why he is the people’s champion. Maradona felt for the people, and for the struggle of the oppressed because he worked himself up from poverty to success against all odds. The victory against England was a part of this narrative. Apart from that his goals showed the genius of the man, each in their own way. Unforgettable, even decades later. One of those flashpoints in history that will always be there as evidence for unique human ability.

Q: Maradona had given up all his popularity in the 1980s to the thoughts of Che Guevara and Castro, and this intensified the issuance of the Bolivarian Revolution and the Sierra Maestra Revolution. It was enough for Maradona to make a mistake; all the Western media covered

it. Why did Maradona become an example of confrontation between two discourses and political currents in the international system, battle between left and right?

A: Maradona was not a political man, in the sense that he was not interested in power. This is another unique facet about him. He instinctively positioned himself on the opposite side of power, and used his status to support causes that he considered to be people’s focused. This is why he supported the Palestinians and why he was critical of U.S. invasions in West Asia. His fascination with Castro and later on Hugo Chavez was exactly due to this romanticism. He saw these leaders as embodiments of the struggles of the poor, or the wretched of the earth to use Frantz Fanon’s famous words. In this way Maradona was an anti-imperialist – He opposed subjugation and oppression. His infatuation with the events on Cuba and Venezuela was largely driven by this romantic feeling in support of the people.

Q: Some believe that his addiction to drugs may also be the work of Western and American security services. Only then could they destroy him. But this never failed to dispel his vigour. If you agree with this view, what is the reason? Why did Maradona remain a myth despite his drug addiction?

A: Maradona never pretended to be something that he wasn’t. Yes, the impingements on his life by organised crime cartels, even governments is well known. But it is exactly these instances of human error that make him

“Maradona had a universal appeal, because his life connected with the sentiments of people all over the world on an immediate human and individual level.”

Afghans are cynic about the U.S. policies in their country: analyst

1 → Insecurity has exacerbated corruption and undermined the rule of law. Another factor is that much of the international community’s aid in the last two decades has not reached the Afghan government directly and has been given to nongovernmental institutions and NGOs.

This factor has led to intensifying corruption through the increasing institutions funded by the international community. Accordingly, internal and external factors are important.

The aid of different countries has not been transparent and there has been corruption in delivering aid; and also inside Afghanistan, opportunists have taken advantage of the chaos and fueled the current corruption.

In a word, the most important cause of corruption in Afghanistan is the spread of insecurity, which has weakened the rule of law. The second issue is the fault of the international community when it decided not to give the aid directly to the government.

Q: How do you assess the U.S.-Taliban peace talks? Why did the U.S. start a devastating war if it could negotiate with the Taliban?

A: That is the question of the Afghan people. They ask if the United States was to negotiate with the Taliban, why it did not do so from the beginning.

The people of Afghanistan are cynical about the U.S. policies in their countries, and this pessimism is growing every day, and this has raised doubts about the credibility of the United States in the minds of the people.

Washington was not honest when it called for the fight against terrorism and combatting drug trafficking in Afghanistan, and after nearly 20 years of futile war terrorism is on the rise and the Taliban are gaining more and more influence. These are the questions the Afghan people are asking the U.S. administration.

What we see on the ground is more damage to Afghanistan. The agreement between the U.S. and Taliban has neither been helpful to inter-Afghan talks nor has it paved the way for practical action to bring stability and security to Afghanistan. These talks in Doha continue without any progress or achievements, and that is why the view of the Afghan people towards these talks is negative.

The United States could have done better in Afghanistan to avoid such a predicament, but today we see that the Americans were not honest in their dealings with the Afghan government. President Donald Trump proved that America has no permanent friends or enemies, only interests. Americans sat down at the negotiating table today with the Taliban, while they sowed a deep hostility toward them for a long time. Nevertheless, we hope that this process, which is going on in Doha, will come to fruition, despite the pessimism and the negative view.

Therefore, some insecurity in Afghanistan has internal and regional roots, and some neighboring countries are somehow



accused of increasing instability in Afghanistan.

Here the role of Pakistan and its record in supporting the Taliban is very clear. We hope that Afghanistan’s neighbors will show goodwill and contribute to lasting peace and security in the country so that the U.S. presence in the Middle East (West Asia) is not justified. The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan is in everyone’s interest. At the end of the day, U.S. honesty has been called into question by everyone, while Washington’s intervention in Afghanistan has not had tangible results for peace, even in fighting drug trafficking.

Q: What are the results of international conferences on Afghanistan? How can Afghanistan reach a final solution for peace?

A: Undoubtedly, Afghanistan is a country that has been at war for more than four decades where violence is taking lives every day while the support by the international community can be vital for Afghanistan. Despite some criticisms over these conferences, they have been fruitful, especially its support for Afghanistan’s reconstruction, the rule of law, democracy, and the establishment of government institutions.

Inter-Afghan dialogue is a basic principle, but to continue the process of talks, the notion of a republic can be a comprehensive and encompassing factor. Unfortunately, various countries, including some Afghanistan’s neighbors, consider an important position for the Taliban, known as a terrorist group among the Afghan people. Even Russia, Arab countries, and the United States have played a role in shaping this attitude.

In an inter-Afghan dialogue, one side cannot be the Afghan government and the other the Taliban. The Taliban are a small, destructive and criminal group that has been mercenaries for other countries; they are not independent and are backed by foreign intelligence services, especially Pakistan, which has traditionally supported and helped the Taliban for years.

That is why the Taliban cannot claim achievement when we see the amount of killing and destruction they have caused

in Afghanistan. We expect the international community and the countries involved in peace talks in Afghanistan to help integrate the Taliban into the Afghan political system under the rule of a democratic system. If the Taliban is truly independent, they can engage in the policy-making process, compete in the political scene, and come to power through elections.

A democratic system gives the Taliban this opportunity and paves the way to play a political role. But it is not acceptable for the Taliban to apply foreign plots to destroy Afghanistan and to be a gathering place that attracts terrorists from other countries. The issue of security in Afghanistan has a multi-dimensional complexity, and all countries need to help and show goodwill if they are really seeking peace and stability in Afghanistan. Therefore, at the first step, the pressure of the international community should be focused on Pakistan to stop supporting the Taliban and help the Afghan government.

Besides, the wrong policies of the United States contributed to destabilizing Afghanistan.

Q: Who are the main supporters of the Taliban and ISIS in Afghanistan?

Afghanistan has been very vulnerable in terms of security in recent years. Increased insecurity has led to numerous terrorist groups to enter the Afghan territory and make every effort to kill people and destroy Afghanistan. People in Afghanistan point the accusation finger at Pakistan for supporting the Taliban. International bodies in the region and all around the world know well that Pakistan has provided logistical, training, and military support to the Taliban and that Pakistani mullahs and Taliban religious centers and schools are mostly located in Pakistan.

But why U.S. policy has changed and how it sits at the negotiating table with a terrorist group could indicate that Americans even enter into dialogue and agreement with terrorists to secure their interests.

Financially, it was some Arab regimes that backed the Taliban, including Qatar and Saudi Arabia, and provided significant aid for extremist groups in Afghanistan.

But ISIS is not an Afghan phenomenon. It is just in line with the policies of the Pakistani intelligence service.

Q: Why has Afghanistan become a scene for competition between other countries?

The competition of different countries in Afghanistan is clear to everyone; Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, India, and Iran. Overall, various countries and international mafias are benefiting from the war in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, war is beneficial for some countries, especially for the mafias; Afghanistan has turned into a good opportunity for crime groups and mafias both in terms of drug trafficking and because of its mines and mineral infrastructure.

The views expressed by the interviewee don’t necessarily represent those of the Tehran Times

so loved. He was not a manicured, Instagram, PR product of capitalism. He remained true to his background and principles, and confident enough to take everything on the chin that came with that persona. One of the things that mitigates my personal sadness about his death is the fact that he lived life to the full. He was what the Germans aptly call a “Lebemann” and the French a “bon vivant”. Those vices come with the territory and it is only in seeing them in another person that we can mirror our own fallibility as humans. Don’t forget that a fascist mentality is all about strict rules and adherence to laws and regulations. Maradona was the opposite. He was free.

Q: After saying goodbye to football, Maradona did not show interest to official football institutions, including FIFA. His goal with the hand, although it was a non-football and immoral act, is popular. Why didn’t he coalesce with official institutions, both on and off the football field?

A: I think if Maradona wanted to reinvent himself as a functionary, he would have done so. Judging from his interviews, style of living and coaching projects, however, I don’t think he was interested in pursuing a career such as Beckenbauer or Pele who were involved at the margins of sports politics. I genuinely think he disliked these types of institutional power and found all forms of governance suspect. His barrio was the football pitch, and his people were those who were marginalised like he was as a child. There was this “class consciousness” that was important to his life and that explains some of the decisions he took, from moving to Napoli as the biggest sports superstar at the time, to playing in Seville and then coaching teams such as Dorados de Sinaloa in Mexico and Gimnasia de la Plata.

Q: Maradona remains a myth in the 21st century as we witness demythologization. Why?

A: I think it goes back to that unique combination of authenticity, charisma and integrity. Maradona never pretended to be something that he wasn’t and he never betrayed whatever principle he believed in. This is the metaphysical effect that we started this interview with. It chimes with what we associate with heroes such as Hercules or Rostam. Those mythical champions are deeply embedded in our subliminal human DNA – individuals such as Maradona appeal to those sentiments which is why they defy the determinations of time, even space. They become literally “larger than life”. When the name of presidents, so-called tech-giants and others will be forgotten in the annals of human history, giants such as Maradona and Muhammad Ali will stand ten feet taller than the rest. They are giants in the truest meaning of the word.

Celebrating Thanksgiving 2020

BY Tehran Times correspondent from Washington

On November 26th, many millions of American families tried to maintain a semblance of normalcy and tradition by observing the holiday commonly known as Thanksgiving. Various versions of the “first Thanksgiving” story continue to be taught in popular culture all over the U.S., with varying degrees of accuracy—mostly very little. British colonials arrived in the New World very ill prepared for the challenges. Without help from the Indigenous people who had lived there for several thousand years, the first winter would have been the end of the European settlers (remember that Christopher Columbus never set foot on what would become the United States of America, but he enslaved the natives of South America to gain his goals). Both groups of indigenous people gave generously to the invading Europeans and when that wasn’t enough, both groups of settlers stole and pillaged the rest. After one such pillage, the authorities of the Massachusetts colony decided to call for an official day of Thanksgiving to celebrate that victory, and more than a century later, during the administration of Abraham Lincoln, one such day was finally set aside to remember the relationship between America’s Native People and the European invaders.

Modern day Americans will observe the traditional holiday with a family meal of roasted turkey with all the trimmings plus numerous desserts. For the people who don’t usually spend much time preparing an elaborate meal such as this one, there are recipes and helpful suggestions in newspapers, magazines, and online blogs. Like all the rest of the humans on planet earth who are tired of dealing with the Covid19 pandemic, Americans want to travel for a holiday visit with friends and family, and many hundreds of thousands of them have filled the airports to do just that, despite warnings from Dr. Anthony Fauci and others to stay home and avoid crowds.

How much “thanks” will come from households that continue to struggle from losing their jobs due to pandemic shutdowns? How many traditional feasts can be found on the tables of America’s working poor? How many “woke” progressives will take action to support the minorities whose lands were occupied in the cause of Manifest Destiny, making the continental United States a reality?

Four hundred years after the various tribes of New England dealt with British settlers, six Native American representatives were voted into Congress in the November 2020 elections—a record number, however that has not repaired the hundreds of treaties that the American government has broken in its dealings with tribes from the east coast to the west coast of North America.

Turkey rejects EU sanctions threat

Turkey rejected a call by the European Parliament for sanctions against Ankara over President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s recent visit to the breakaway Turkish Cypriot state in north Cyprus, calling the demand “disconnected from the realities”.

On Thursday, the European Parliament agreed on a non-binding resolution in support of EU member Cyprus urging EU leaders to “take action and impose tough sanctions” against Turkey, a move likely to bolster support for France’s push for sanctions on Ankara at a summit next month.

Turkey is at odds with EU members Greece and Cyprus over hydrocarbon exploration in disputed east Mediterranean waters, al Jazeera reported.

Erdogan incensed Cyprus, whose territory covers the southern half of the partitioned Mediterranean island, on November 15 by visiting Varosha, a resort on the island that has been fenced-off and abandoned in no-man’s land since 1974.

Ankara supported the partial reopening of Varosha last month in a move criticized by the United States, Greece and Greek Cypriots.

■ ‘Prejudiced and disconnected’

Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman Hami Aksoy denounced the resolution and accused the European Parliament of being “prejudiced and disconnected from the realities” on Cyprus.

“If this approach and mentality are maintained, it would not be possible for EU bodies to make a constructive contribution to the settlement of the Cyprus issue,” Aksoy said.

Cyprus has been divided since a 1974 Turkish invasion after a brief Greek-inspired coup.

Only Ankara recognizes Northern Cyprus as an independent state, but not the internationally recognized Greek Cypriot government to the south.

France has not yet drawn up sanctions against Turkey, but diplomats say any measures would probably target areas of Turkey’s economy linked to natural gas exploration in seas off the coast of Cyprus.

UK secretly deployed British troops to defend Saudi Arabian oil fields

1 → The spokesperson confirmed that the deployment had included an advanced military radar system to help detect drone strikes, but would not be drawn on «exact timescales or the numbers of personnel involved due to operational security».

No response was provided to questions about why no announcement had been made in parliament or elsewhere about the deployment of British troops.

Defense minister James Heappey confirmed in separate written correspondence that «UK defense personnel have accompanied the deployment of Giraffe radars to Riyadh [the Saudi Arabian capital]».

Resistance News

After months of hunger strike, IOA releases prisoner Maher al-Akhras

INTERNATIONAL DESK TEHRAN — The Israeli occupation authority (IOA) on Thursday morning released Palestinian prisoner Maher al-Akhras, who had gone on hunger strike for 104 days in protest at his detention administratively, with no indictment or trial.

“The Palestinian people should defend themselves and not wait for the world to remove the injustice being inflicted on them,” al-Akhras said following his release.

“After 104 days of hunger strike, I regained my freedom with dignity and without humiliation,” he added.

Following his release, Akhras was transferred to al-Najah Hospital in Nablus for medical care.

The ex-detainee announced on November 6 his decision to suspend his hunger strike after he received an Israeli pledge not to extend his administrative detention.

Martyr Soleimani selected as theme for art competition

TOURISM TEHRAN – Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, who was martyred in a U.S. terrorist attack in January, has been selected as the theme for an art competition in which crafters of various fields could enter.

The Cultural Heritage, Tourism, And Handicrafts Department of Ardebil province is organizing the art contest in the fields of toretics, miniature, woodcarving, pottery, and leather engraving, deputy provincial tourism chief Nasser Mahmudi announced on Thursday.



Interested artisans and crafters are asked to submit their artworks before December 24, the official noted.

Selected artworks will be put on show in one of the province's cultural heritage museums, he 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.

General Soleimani, the former commander of the Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, was assassinated in a U.S.-drone strike near Baghdad International Airport. The attack — that also killed Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the second-in-command of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) anti-terror group, along with several others — came while General Soleimani was on an official visit to the Iraqi capital.

Zahhak castle more reachable as stone walkway completed

HERITAGE TEHRAN – Zahhak castle has now become more reachable to modern visitors as a stone pedestrian walkway has been finalized to the once unconquerable monument.



Built around 2000 BC, Zahhak castle is one of the lesser-known tourism attractions of the East Azarbaijan province. It was used as a government building and later as a fire temple in the times of the Parthians (247 BC – 224 CE).

Construction of a stone pedestrian walkway has been finalized as part of a restoration and landscaping project on the ancient Zahhak castle and its surrounding that commenced last year, provincial tourism chief Ahmad Hamzehzadeh announced on Wednesday.

Perched on top of a hill near Hashtrud, northwest Iran, the castle contains depictions of animals and symbols that show what life was like for the royalty in ancient Iran. It includes a square-shaped hall made of bricks built during the Parthia period. During this time, Zoroastrianism was the religion of the ruling kings, who likely used part of the castle for a fire temple.

The castle is named after a Persian legend, Zahhak is the name of an Arab king who conquered and ruled over ancient Iran. The story is recounted in the Shahnameh, or Book of Kings, written by Ferdowsi. Kawa is the hero in this particular story, who rescues his Kurdish people in Iran from Zahhak's control.

Zahhak castle also served as a military defense during the Parthian era given its position close to the Iranian border with other nations in the northwest, including Turkey and Armenia.

Restoration comes to end on Zanjan mosque

HERITAGE TEHRAN – The second phase of a new restoration project has been completed on Zanjan's Chehel Sotoun Mosque, provincial tourism chief has said.

Columns, walls, ceiling insulation materials, arches, gutters, worn-out materials, and lightening roofs were amongst parts amended in this phase, Amir Arjmand explained.



The Qajar-era (1789–1925) mosque is located in the historic bazaar of Zanjan. It is the second most prestigious seminary school in Zanjan after Jameh Mosque. The main prayer hall of the mosque is built in Chehel Sotoun (forty columns) style, which is mostly compared to the 17th-century Chehel Sotoun palace in Isfahan.

Zanjan is one of the cities founded by Sassanid King Ardashir I (180-242 CE). The province makes a base for wider explorations with the architectural wonder of Soltaniyeh, the subterranean delights of the Katala-Khor caves, colorful mountains, and the UNESCO-registered Takht-e Soleiman ruins are nearby.

Health minister thanks arranging hotels for corona patients

TOURISM TEHRAN – Iranian Health Minister Saeed Namaki has expressed his gratitude to the tourism minister and colleagues for being ready to turn hotels into shelters for coronavirus patients.

The state of readiness for turning (certain) hotels into shelters for the recovering coronavirus patients and healthcare professionals is highly appreciated, Namaki noted on Wednesday in a letter to the Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan.

It is hoped that this empathy and collaboration would be continuing until the pandemic is completely controlled, he concluded.

Earlier this month, Mounesan publicized that his ministry is ready to help turn some hotels into shelters for coronavirus patients based on a plan proposed by the health ministry, however, it won't a mandatory plan for hoteliers and other tourist facilities.

The scheme has so far been welcomed by some hoteliers in various provinces including Yazd and Qazvin announcing their willingness to house patients with mild symptoms.

In the health system, there are two sections of hoteling and treatment...



Iranian Health Minister Saeed Namaki in an undated photo

so that hotels, if being well equipped in terms of medical needs and instruments, can also house both for patients and health care staff, Yazd hoteliers association's president Seyyed Amir Nasser Tabatabai said last week.

The scheme, however, needs prerequisites such as hotels being properly

equipped in collaboration with Iran University of Medical Sciences, he added.

Back in August, the tourism minister said that his ministry is in full coordination with the Ministry of Health for strictly implementing health protocols in travel destinations, hospitably centers, and museums, amongst others,

underlining that "people's health is our priority."

"Protocols outlined by the [both] Ministry of Health, and National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control are being strictly implemented," he said, adding "People's health is first on the list and we will implement what the Ministry of Health decides in full coordination."

Some experts say such quarantine hotels could help those who are battling the coronavirus but live in crowded conditions and want to isolate, and for health care workers who do not want to infect their families.

The hotel space allows patients to recover from the virus and self-isolate appropriately, minimizing the risk of transmission to others without compromising the quality of patient care.

Head of Iranian Hoteliers Association Jamsheed Hamzehzadeh announced in June that the outbreak of the new coronavirus inflicted a loss of 60,000 billion rials (about \$1.4 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials) on the Iranian hospitality industry in four months.

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

Heavy rain exposes ancient objects southeastern Iran

TOURISM TEHRAN – A torrential rain has unearthed some ancient relics on the outskirts of a historical site in Kerman province, southeast Iran, a senior police official in charge of protecting cultural heritage has said.

Security guards have recently discovered seven historical objects during their routine patrols in Qalehganj county, CHTN quoted Seyyed Ali Hosseini as saying on Thursday.

The objects, which were unearthed due to the recent heavy rains in the region, were handed over to the province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department for further studies by the archeologists and cultural heritage experts, the official added.

He also noted that the objects include clay and stone utensils, daggers, and iron objects.

Qalehganj (also spelled Qale Ganj) has so far yielded tens of prehistorical sites and relics including a variety of ancient hills, archaeological sites, cemeteries, subterranean aqueducts, shrines, lithographs, kilns, caravanserais, and castles, many of which so far been identified and documented.

Big and sprawling Kerman province is something of a cultural melting pot, blending various regional cultures over time. It is also home to rich tourist spots and historical sites including bazaars, mosques, caravanserais, and ruins of ancient urban areas.

Kerman province is bounded by the provinces of Fars on the west, Yazd on the north, South Khorasan on the northeast, Sistan-Baluchestan on the east, and Hormozgan on the south. It includes the southern part of the central Iranian desert, the Dasht-e Lut.

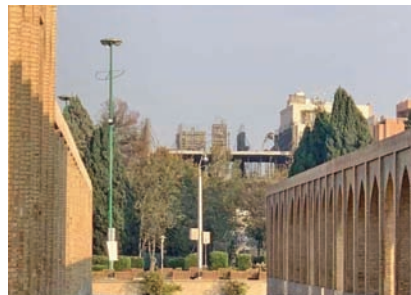


Court rules to stop construction opposite centuries-old bridge

HERITAGE TEHRAN – An Iranian court has ruled that the construction of a multi-story building should be stopped opposite the 17th-century Khaju Bridge in Isfahan.

The construction work of a building, which is deemed to alter the visual landscape of Pol-e Khaju, has been stopped by a judicial order, IRNA quoted provincial tourism chief Freydoun Allahyari as saying on Thursday.

The height of the multi-story buildings, which are located inside the defined boundaries of the historical sites across [Isfahan] province shouldn't be more than 12 meters, however, it seems this new building frame



has broken the law, Iranian architect and scholar Ramin Madani said last week.

The existing rules and guidelines are not

good enough and efficient to preserve and protect cultural heritage, while they need to be followed by whoever is responsible for permitting such construction works, he added.

Measuring 133 meters long and 12 meters wide, Pol-e Khaju is equipped with several sluice gates under its lower archways that doubles it as a dam. The monument was completed around 1650 under the patronage of Shah Abbas II, the seventh Safavid king who ruled the country from 1642 to 1666.

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

to pedestrians. It used to be a temporary hangout for the king and the royal family of the time and later turned into a place for public meetings where locals, domestic and foreign travelers come to revel in a cozy atmosphere and take the air.

Narratives say that the bridge was replaced by the ruins of an older one, which dated to the time of Tamerlane, the Turco-Mongol conqueror who reigned from 1370 to 1405. Abundant Persian gardens, gorgeous Islamic buildings, historic bazaars, and picturesque bridges along with ubiquitous tree-lined boulevards give the city a significant visual appeal.

Guard accidentally finds Achaemenid pottery fragment southern Iran

HERITAGE TEHRAN – A cultural heritage guard has recently discovered a prehistorical pottery fragment while patrolling the prehistorical site of Tall-e Ajori near Persepolis in southern Iran.

"A guard has discovered an engraved pottery piece while patrolling Tall-e Ajori" police official Mohammadreza Bahmaninejad announced on Thursday.

"He then delivered the object to a local police unit which is in charge of protecting cultural heritage, he said, adding: "The discovered pottery fragment was later handed over to the UNESCO-registered Persepolis."

Initial assessments suggest that the object date back to the early Achaemenid era (c. 550-330 BC).

Persepolis, also known as Takht-e Jamshid, whose magnificent ruins rest at the foot of Kuh-e Rahmat (Mountain of Mercy), was the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire. It is situated 60 kilometers



northeast of the city of Shiraz in Fars province.

Persepolis was set on fire upon the order of Alexander the Great in 330 BC apparently in a revenge for Persian King Xerxes who had burnt the Greek City of Athens around 150 years earlier.

It was the seat of the government of the Achaemenid Empire, though it was designed primarily to be a showplace and spectacular center for the receptions and festivals of the kings and their empire. This 13-ha ensemble of majestic approaches, monumental stairways, throne rooms (Apadana), reception rooms, and dependencies is classified among the world's greatest archaeological sites.

The Achaemenid Empire was founded by Cyrus the Great. At its greatest extent from the Balkans to the Indus Valley, it was one of the largest empires in history, spanning 5.5 million square kilometers, and was larger than any previous empire in history.

Discover an original style of pottery in Kalpurgan

HERITAGE TEHRAN – Archaeological surveys suggest the village of Kalpurgan in southeast Iran has long been a hub for potters.

The potteries of the village, which is located in Sistan-Baluchestan province, are very similar to the discoveries of archaeological excavations that trace back to the 3rd millennium BC, according to Visit Iran.

The unique characteristic of potteries in this region is that the technique of their production has not changed since thousands of years ago and the artist potters who are mostly tasteful women of this region, make the potteries with no use of machinery and only by their hands. The motifs of these potteries also have



roots in thousand years ago and are generally geometric and abstract. Kalpurgan

potteries lack glaze and are made using a kind of soil that men gather from a region called "Mash Takuk" located two kilometers away from the village.

This soil turns red after firing which is another trait of the potteries of Kalpurgan. After the clay utensils are created, they are exposed to sunlight to dry completely. Then they are painted with reddish-brown colors that turn black after firing. This color is a kind of mineral pigment that is produced from a stone called Tituk.

This stone is excavated from "Tapeh Achar" in one of the counties of Zabol. To make the pigments, the stone has grinded on a bigger rock and the powder is mixed with a bit of water to make a slurry. Then they are decorated with ancient motifs

of potteries by use of thin branches of palm tree as brushes.

Finally, the potteries are fired inside traditional kilns made as pits in the ground. The potteries are bowls, jars, chalices, jugs, and glasses. In 2017 the village of Kalpurgan was registered as the living museum of pottery, and the World Council of Handicrafts chose this village to be the first global village of the pottery.

Kalpurgan is located near the Pakistan border some three hundred and ninety kilometers far from Zahedan, the provincial capital. Villages of Kuhmitag and Hulanchgan are amongst the most important centers of pottery in the scenic province.

Ominous shadow of hunting on Iran's birdwatching paradise

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN — Miankaleh International Wetland is known as the birdwatching paradise of Iran, but for several years now, uncontrolled hunting has caused serious damage to the region's environment.

According to estimates by the Department of Environment (DOE), about 1,800 tons of lead from hunters' bullets have entered Miankaleh Wetland over the past 30 years.

Annually, about 5,600 kg of lead flows in Gorgan Bay and Miankaleh wetland, which has very dangerous effects on the inhabitants of the water basin.

Lead is a very dangerous chemical that can cause deadly damage to animals, plants, and humans throughout the food chain. Young children are particularly vulnerable to the toxic effects of lead and can suffer profound and permanent adverse health effects, particularly affecting the development of the brain and nervous system.

Lead also causes long-term harm in adults, including increased risk of high blood pressure and kidney damage. Exposure of pregnant women to high levels of lead can cause miscarriage, stillbirth, premature



According to estimates by the Department of Environment, about 1,800 tons of lead from hunters' bullets have entered Miankaleh Wetland over the past 30 years.

birth, and low birth weight.

Miankaleh a long and narrow peninsula is 48 kilometers long, and between 1.3 and 3.2 kilometers wide, which sets apart the Gorgan Bay from the Caspian Sea. Four villages namely Ashuradeh, Qezel-e shomali, Qezel-Mehdi, and Qavasatl are situated on the peninsula.

The peninsula was designated a Ramsar site in 1975 and called Iran's bird-watching paradise. Major habitats include wetlands, inter-tidal mud with sandy shores, shallow marine waters, forests, peatlands, and agricultural areas. It is home to many unique Caspian birds and reptile species native to this region. It's also a very important internationally-recognized refuge for migratory birds.

Water deficit, mismanagement, unsustainable agricultural practices, and severe depletion of the wells and groundwater resources have exacerbated Miankaleh peninsula's condition.

Overgrazing, illegal hunting, fishing, deforestation, and the unplanned spread of villages are some of the challenges posing threat to the region's environment.

ICRC provides aid to IRCS in fight against COVID-19

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has provided 250,000 Swiss francs to the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) for buying oxygen concentrators for patients with COVID-19.

The ICRC donated 250,000 francs to one of the ongoing programs of the IRCS to provide oxygen equipment to coronavirus patients to strengthen treatment at home.

This will relatively reduce the pressure on hospitals and healthcare workers; in addition to reducing hospitalization and provide beds to new patients in critical conditions.

Barbara Rizzoli, head of the ICRC delegation in Tehran, said that employees and volunteers of the IRCS have been at the forefront of the fight against COVID-19 since the outbreak began in February.

This assistance is a small move to recognize and support the Iranian Red Crescent Society, and we hope it can be useful in the humanitarian efforts of the Society in helping patients, she highlighted.

In April 2020, the International Committee of the Red Cross donated 500,000 Swiss francs to the Iranian Red Crescent Society to provide personal protective equipment for special patients as well as food items for the vulnerable.

"The ICRC is a valuable partner of the Red Crescent Society of Iran and we have a strong and broad partnership in various fields," said Mansoureh Bagheri, IRCS deputy for international affairs and humanitarian law, expressing appreciation for their support in the fight against COVID-19.

In response to the outbreak, the two organizations expanded their collaborations in the distribution of personal protective equipment, hand sanitizers, and educational brochures on COVID-19 disease for migrants on the border provinces of the country.

Earlier in May, Rizzoli has said the actions taken by the Iranian Red Crescent Society to battle the COVID-19 outbreak were very significant in various fields, including prevention and treatment.



Nature therapy with Iran's impressive bird diversity

1 -> The first National Birdwatching Day was celebrated on November 24, 2011, and has been going on ever since. But naming a day and holding a celebration is useless, rather, fundamental work must be done to preserve the environment and its species.

Wildlife trafficking main obstacle to avitourism

Mohammad Ali Yektanik, a wildlife expert, told IRNA that biodiversity in the direction of ecotourism and sustainable use of nature with the aim of protecting it creates a platform on which the world's economy revolves today, except for Iran, despite its high potential.

Of course, there are very limited bird watching groups in the country, however, a major obstacle has not let it grow which is wildlife smuggling and consequently false culture of nature use, he lamented.

Criticizing the false culture of bird watching in the country, he said that bird gardens and zoos are not proper places either for birds or birdwatching and municipalities should not issue a license in this regard.

Birdwatching does not require much equipment or capital and requires only a camera and a book, so it is not expensive and can be used to earn income as it today



attracts millions of passengers worldwide, he noted.

Birdwatching knows no specific age or law; a young child can watch birds like an adult; It is a great way to get out of the closed and stressful urban space, which affects the human soul and psyche, he added.

Also, when people watch birds, they gradually become acquainted with the environment, and this is the real partnership between the people and nature, which comes with the cheapest and the easiest method, he further said.

He also stressed that bird watching should be one of the main programs of the Department of Environment as the only

custodian of wildlife protection, however, it currently is not the priority.

Unique birdwatching sites in Iran

Iran is decorated with impressive wetlands that hold a great share of aquatic and bird species and wildlife; Anzali Wetland, Qeshm Island, Orumieh Lake, and Miankaleh Peninsula are among the most important locations for bird watching in Iran.

Miankaleh International Wetland in Mazandaran, called the birdwatching paradise of Iran, stretches to a total area of 68,000 hectares, which is home to at least 130 species of migratory species with a population of 1.5 million.

Being an impressive bird-watching destination, the wetland displays a variety of bird species such as otters, all kinds of fish-eating ducks (common goldeneye and Mergus), pelicans, flamingos and cormorants, common pheasants, partridges, mute swan, tundra swan, and coots. Ashuradeh was introduced and registered as one of the world's first biosphere zones in 1975.

Gomishan wetland in Golestan province is home to over 20,000 water birds, and more than 20 species of birds, which supports three IUCN Red List vulnerable

species of waterbirds, i.e., Pelecanus crispus, Aythya nyroca, and Vanellus gregarius, as well as the vulnerable mammal Phoca (Pusa) caspica; it is also an important staging area for the fish subspecies Rutilus rutilus caspicas.

Located at the foot of the Zagros mountains in north-western Iran, Zarivar is a freshwater wetland hosting over 74 bird species, which is designated as a Ramsar Site.

The Site provides a suitable breeding and resting place for birds and other wetland animals, and due to the relatively extensive reed beds, it is an important overwintering site for northern migratory birds.

Located in Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari province, Choghakhor Wetland is flowing on 1687 hectares; designated as a hunting restricted area. It supports more than 47 bird species, with breeding populations of migratory birds such as the Northern Pintail (Anas acuta).

It supports more than 1 percent of the population of Gadwall (Anas strepera) and harbors threatened species such as the endangered White-headed Duck (Oxyura leucocephala) and the vulnerable Eastern Imperial Eagle (Aquila heliaca).

ENGLISH IN USE

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بارش‌های کشور در سه ماه پیش رو بیش از نرمال است

رئیس پژوهشکده اقلیم‌شناسی سازمان هواشناسی گفت: پیش‌بینی‌ها نشان می‌دهد میزان بارش در کشور در سه ماهه پیش رو (اسفند ۹۷، فروردین و اردیبهشت ۹۸) در حد نرمال و متمایل به بیش از نرمال خواهد بود. ایمان باباییان روز یکشنبه در گفت‌وگو با خبرنگار ایرنا افزود: مجموع بارش‌ها در سطح کشور نرمال و متمایل به بیشتر از نرمال است اما در نیمه شمالی، بیشتر از نرمال و در نیمه جنوبی در محدوده نرمال تا کمتر از نرمال خواهد بود. وی اظهار داشت: بارش‌ها در اسفندماه ۹۷ در نیمه شمالی و شرقی بیشتر از نرمال است، در فروردین ماه ۹۸ نیز بارش‌ها در محدوده نرمال و برای اردیبهشت بیشتر از نرمال پیش‌بینی شده است.

Precipitation forecast to reach above normal in next 3 months

The country is predicted to receive above normal rainfall over the next three months (February 20-May 21), head of the climatological research institute affiliated to Iran's Meteorological Organization (IMO) has said.

The whole country will meet normal and above normal rainfalls, the northern parts will receive above normal rainfall while southern provinces will receive normal to lower-than-normal rainfall, IRNA quoted Iman Babaeian as saying on Sunday.

This month, northern and eastern provinces will receive rain above normal averages, while in the first month of spring precipitation will be at normal amounts across the country, he noted, adding, during the second month of spring rainfall will reach its peak.

Mahak wins UICC's World Cancer Day Spirit Award

1 -> Among the 1,100 members of UICC, Mahak and four other cancer-centric organizations from Singapore, Kenya, Nigeria, and Cyprus were shortlisted as finalists and their 2020 campaigns were reviewed and evaluated for the WCD Spirit award.

UICC's final judgment ascertains that Mahak's 2020 campaign target to raise awareness toward cancer among different strata of the society throughout the country has been successful and, thus, worthy of receiving the top award granted by this esteemed global association.

The award winner was announced in a virtual meeting attended by UICC members from around the world, followed by a congratulatory message delivered by Dr. Anil D'Cruz, President of the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC).

He stated that "It is very significant and noteworthy that a non-governmental organization from a country which is coping with sanctions while continuing to deliver such high-quality services to its stakeholders has been nominated in two sections (CEO Award and World Cancer Day Spirit Award.)"

Since its inception, Mahak has supported over 35,000 cancer-stricken children initially by providing support services but later through the establishment of Specialized Pediatric Cancer Hospital with one-fifth of the pediatric cancer treatment capacity of the country where comprehensive services are provided under one roof.

Climate crisis making autumn leaves fall earlier, study finds

Global heating appears to be making trees drop their leaves earlier, according to new research, confounding the idea that warmer temperatures delay the onset of autumn.

The finding is important because trees draw huge amounts of carbon dioxide from the air and therefore play a key role in managing the climate, the Guardian reported.

The rising temperatures also mean that spring is arriving earlier and, overall, the growing season for trees in the planet's temperate zones is getting longer. However, the earlier autumns mean that significantly less carbon can be stored in trees than previously thought, providing less of a brake on global heating.

Scientists are still working out how large the effect is likely to be, but it might amount to 1bn tonnes of CO2 a year, which would be more than the annual emissions of Germany.

The new research is based on a huge dataset of observations of European trees, experiments that varied light and CO2 levels, and mathematical models. It showed that as well as temperature and day length, the amount of carbon a tree has absorbed in a season is a key factor in determining when it no longer needs its leaves and sheds them. The scientists liken the effect to a person becoming full after a heavy meal and being unable to eat more food.

Other recent research has shown that trees that grow rapidly have a shorter lifespan and that the climate crisis and the mass felling of trees has overall made their lifespans significantly shorter.

"For decades we've assumed that growing seasons are increasing and that the autumn leaf-off is getting later," said Prof Thomas Crowther at ETH Zurich in Switzerland, who was one of the study team. "However, this research suggests that as tree productivity gets higher, the leaves actually fall earlier."

Earlier models that did not include the amount of carbon a tree absorbs during a season indicated that autumn could be two to three weeks later by the end of the century on current emissions trends. But the scientists' new model indicates autumn may actually come up to six days earlier. "So the increases [in carbon storage] will be nowhere near as great as what we expected," said Crowther.

Christine Rollinson, an ecologist at the Morton Arboretum in Illinois, USA, who was not part of the study team, said the earlier models were known to be simplifications but were the best available.

"The big challenge is that autumn has always been a bit of a mess," she said. "Depending on where you are and which species you're looking at, there's some evidence that leaf fall is happening earlier and some that it's happening later. But understanding how well a tree grows during the season really helps explain that tree-to-tree variation."

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 68) (Source: saadifoundation.ir)

Adverbs do not take a fixed place in Persian sentences; they occur at the beginning or in the middle of the sentence but not after the verb, in the formal language.

تمرین ۱. صفت‌ها و قیدهای هر جمله را بنویسید:

- | قید | صفت |
|--|-----|
| ۱. او معمولاً سوار اتومبیل کوچکی می‌شود. | |
| ۲. چون خیابان‌ها شلوغ بود دیر رسیدند. | |
| ۳. خانه‌ی ما دور است. باید زود برویم. | |
| ۴. فردا ظهر ناهار خوشمزه‌ای می‌خورید. | |
| ۵. گاهی برادر بزرگ مرا می‌بیند. | |
| ۶. چون وسیله ندارم پیاده می‌روم. | |

حرف اضافه‌ی فعل به کتاب کار

Many verbs are preceded by special prepositions:

رفتن (به)، آمدن (از)، صحبت کردن (با)، درس خواندن (در)

تمرین ۲. با حرف اضافه کامل کنید:

- او دوستانش سلام کرد.
- آنها او صبح به خیر گفتند.
- او در باره‌ی درس آنها سؤال کرد.
- ما از خوابگاه کلاس آمدیم و همه صحبت کردیم.
- آنها کتابخانه درس خواندند و سؤال‌ها جواب دادند.
- محمد خواب بیدار شد و بعد خیابان رفت.

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

When you see a person who has been given more than you in money & beauty, then look at those who have been given less.
Prophet Muhammad (S)

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Note: Following art exhibitions are being organized online in order to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Painting



Aneh Mohammad Tatari is displaying his paintings in an exhibition at Etamad Gallery. The exhibition will be held until December 8 on <http://www.gallerietamad.com/index.php/Tehran/page/virtualexhibitions>.



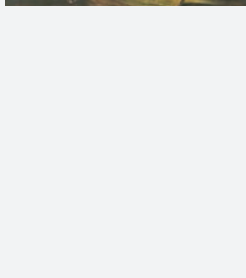
Golestan Gallery is organizing an exhibition of paintings by Arman Yaqubpur. The exhibition will run until December 27 on the gallery's website www.golestangallery.com.



Arthibition Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Savalan Jamaati. The exhibit titled "After Man" will run on <http://arthibition.net/fa/gallery/exhibition/515> until December 14.



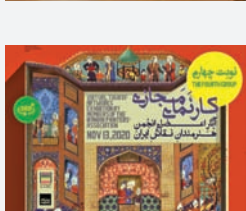
Paintings by Sanam Sayehafkan is currently underway at Bavan Gallery. The exhibition entitled "The Cavity of Memory" will run until December 10 on bavangallery.com/viewing-room/the-cavity-of-memory. Sayehafkan creates an atmosphere full of illusions and dreams. It seems that the elements are placed next to each other to convey a concept, element complements the other in an incredibly way but the more accurate you become, you will not come to any definite meaning. It seems the painter with amazing sharp colors and lines wants the audience to travel deep into her artwork and let them decide the end of this journey.



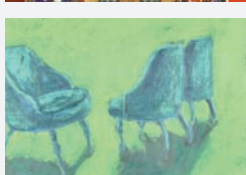
The Imam Ali (AS) Religious Arts Museum is showcasing 30 paintings from its treasure trove in an online exhibition. The exhibition named "A New Look at the Elements and Motifs in the Iranian Visual Arts" will be running until December 20 on aram_art.



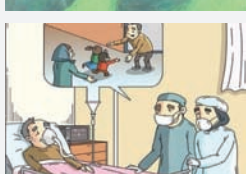
An exhibition displaying works of the members of the Iranian Painters' Association is currently underway in a virtual exhibition on the society's website. The exhibition will run until December 17 on <http://iranpainters.com>.



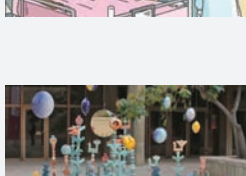
A collection of paintings by Negar Saburi and Nilufar Kanani is on view in an exhibition at Asar Gallery. The exhibit will be running until December 17 <http://asrgallery.com>.



The Iranian House of Cartoon is playing host to an exhibition hanging a large collection of artworks by its members. The exhibition named "If We Unite, We Will Never Be Defeated" has been organized to support the campaign #We all wear masks. The showcase will run until December 24 on iranian_cartoon_house.



Over 90 artworks by Iranian ceramists are on display in an online exhibit on <https://www.360cities.net/search?utf8=%E2%9C%93&query=11th+Ceramic+Biennale+Of+Iran>.



The artworks were earlier on view physically during the 11th National Biennial of Contemporary Iranian Ceramic Art at Tehran's Niavaran Cultural Center. However, the COVID-19 shutdown in Tehran forced the organizers to continue the exhibit virtually.

Iran's Ceramic Artists Association is organizing the showcase with contribution from the International Academy of Ceramics.

Iranian movies honored at IDFA

AR T TEHRAN — Iranian d e s k movies "Radiograph of a Family" and "Shadegan" won three awards at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) on Thursday.

"Radiograph of a Family", a coproduction of Norway, Iran, and Switzerland by Firuzeh Khosrovani won the IDFA Award for Best Feature-Length Documentary, in addition to an award for best creative use of archive.

The IDFA Award for Best Children's Documentary also went to Ako Salemi for "Shadegan".

In addition, the IDFA Award for Best Directing went to Vitaly Mansky for "Gorbachev. Heaven", a coproduction of Latvia and the Czech Republic.

"Radiography of a Family is literally an X-ray of a family," reads the synopsis of the film.

"Shadegan" portrays 12-year-old Milad on a golden morning, while sailing out across the Shadegan Wetlands in Khuzestan, a province in southwestern Iran. He skillfully guides his slender boat over vast expanses of water, past untidy villages on the bank and swaying reeds. A



A scene from "Shadegan" by Ako Salemi.

dog ambles along the water's edge, a cock crows in the distance.

"The Snow Calls" by Marjan Khosravi from Iran had its world premiere in the

Student Documentary category, while "Shadegan" had its European premiere in the Kids & Docs category.

IDFA, which opened on November 18, will be running online until December 6.

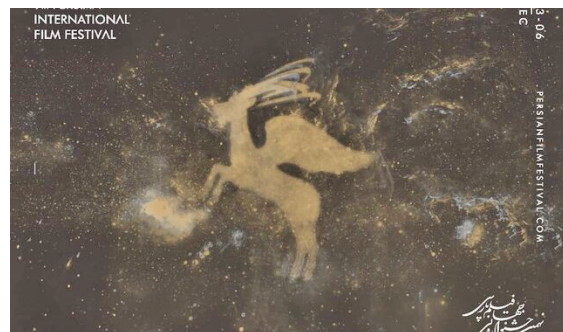
Iranian cinema was praised at the 2019 edition of the IDFA with awards in three categories, including best director for Mehrdad Oskui.

Oskui received the award for his latest feature-length documentary, "Sunless Shadows", in which he builds a remarkable relationship with a group of adolescent girls serving their sentences for the grave crime of murdering their father, their husband or another male family member in an Iranian juvenile detention center.

The award for best mid-length documentary also went also to "Anticlockwise" by Jalal Vafai from Iran. The film is about the life of Vafai's father as a democratic reformist.

In addition, "Asho" by Jafar Najafi from Iran was selected as best children's documentary. It is about a shepherd boy who is obsessed with Hollywood movies and wants to become an actor.

Sydney Persian Film Festival announces jury



A poster for the 9th edition of the Persian International Film Festival.

AR T TEHRAN — A number of Australian d e s k cineastes will announce the 2020 Golden Gazelle Award for Best Feature and Best Short Film at the closing ceremony of the 9th edition of the Persian International Film Festival that will take place in the Australian city of Sydney on December 6.

The festival's Feature and Short Jury is composed of director and producer Pat Fiske, director Peter Andrikidis,

writer Romaine Moreton, and actors Rahel Romahn and Helana Sawires.

A lineup of 16 Iranian movies will go on screen in the official competition of the 9th Persian Film Festival.

"Son-Mother" by Mahnaz Mohammadi, "Pari" by Siamak Etemadi, "The Badger" by Kazem Mollai, "The Slaughterhouse" by Abbas Amini and "A Hairy Tale" by Homayun Ghanizadeh are among the Iranian features.

"Son-Mother" tells the story of Leila, a single mother who lives in the poverty of today's Iran. The factory where she works is facing a crisis and jobs are in danger. Kazem, the factory bus driver, proposes to Leila, but only under certain conditions. When Leila loses her job, she must face a difficult decision — whether to accept Kazem's proposal, which would save her from poverty, but would also force her to abandon her son. In the end, it will be him who will have to decide.

"The Badger" is about Sudeh, a 40-year-old woman who faces a strange incident right before her second marriage. Sudeh and her son Matiar live in an old apartment. One day, she hires a pest control company to solve the termite problems in the apartment. While the pest control company is working, Matiar is recording the procedures, as this is his hobby. The next day, Matiar gets kidnapped after school,

and the kidnapper asks Sudeh to pay 10 Bitcoins for her son. Tremendous pressure is put on Sudeh, but the truth hidden beneath will surprise everyone.

In "A Hairy Tale", Danesh is in love with both cinema and Homa, a well-known actress. Kazem is in love with both the movie "Casablanca" and his barber shop's certificate. Shapur is in love with both canned tuna and politics. The city is full of beggars while an earthquake may happen soon. Every now and then, the body of a dead woman, with head shaved, is found near the sea. As Inspector Kiani says: It's a messy situation!

"The Slaughterhouse" directed by Abbas Amini tells the story of Amir, who has recently been released from jail and finds himself in a difficult situation when his father, who works at a slaughterhouse, calls him to help him cover up a crime that has happened there.

The festival will also screen the documentaries "None of Your Business" by Kamran Heidari and "Sunless Shadows" by Mehrdad Oskui.

The short competition of the festival features "Like a Good Kid" by Arian Vazirdaftari, "The Visit" by Azadeh Musavi, "Red Panda" by Ali Paknia, "Hedyeh" by Sahar Sotudeh, "Dilemma" by Omid Shams, "Each Other" by Sarah Tabibzadeh, "Funfair" by Kaveh Mazaheri and "Exam" by Sonia Haddad.

"Tintin and Sinbad" published in Lebanon

CULTURE TEHRAN — An Arabic d e s k translation of "Tintin and Sinbad", Iranian writer Mohammad Mirkiani's book on the cultural invasion of the West, has recently been published in Lebanon.

The book has been published by the Dar Meem Publishing House.

"Tintin and Sinbad" was written in 1991 for young adults. The book has been republished eleven times since then.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, wrote a commendation for "Tintin and Sinbad" in 2016, 22 years after it was written.

"I have always tried to explain this story, but unfortunately, not many have believed it. Now this is good: witness this



Arabic version of "Tintin and Sinbad" by Iranian writer Mohammad Mirkiani.

book, the narrator of the story has seen the events himself with his own eyes, and has published the story of Tintin and Sinbad,"

the Leader has written.

"Now it has become easier for me. I only need to give a copy of this book to all the children," he added.

In this book, Tintin and his friends appear and experience a new adventure in the East, where they intend to find oriental tales to dominate, but Sinbad with his oriental-themed legends fights against the invaders.

The Muhenna Publishing House in the northwestern Turkish city of Bursa published "Tintin and Sinbad" in Turkish last year.

Berna Karagözoglu, a faculty member of the Persian Language and Literature Department of the Agri Ibrahim Cecen University, was the translator of the book into Turkish.

In addition, a biography of Mirkiani was published in Turkish in 2018.

Turkish scholar Berna Karagözoglu is the author of the book "Muhammed Mirkiyani", which was published by Egitim Yayinevi in the Turkish town of Konya.

Karagözoglu calls Mirkiani a writer who dedicated his life to children. He is the author of "Uncle Rustam", "Tintin and Sinbad", "Uncle Sohrab", "Day of My Loneliness" and dozens of other books.

Karagözoglu teaches at the Persian Language and Literature Department of Agri Ibrahim Cecen University in Eastern Anatolia in Turkey.

"Iran Children and Youth Literature Writers" is among her credits.

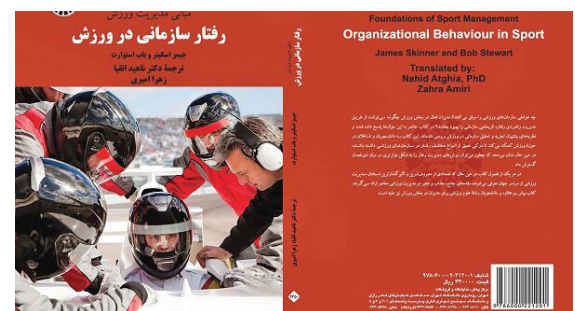
"Organizational Behavior in Sport" comes to Iranian bookstores

CULTURE TEHRAN — A new Persian translation d e s k of "Organizational Behavior in Sport" by James Skinner and Bob Stewart, has recently been published in Persian by SAMT, an Iranian publisher that provides books for university students.

The book has been translated into Persian by Nahid Atqia and Zahra Amiri.

What makes a sport enterprise successful? How can managers working in sports improve organizational effectiveness through strategic behavior management? This comprehensive and accessible textbook addresses these important questions and examines the theories that underpin organizational analysis in sports. Helping both students and practitioners to understand the different types of behavior that occurs within a sports enterprise, it also demonstrates how to develop ways of managing behavior more effectively for the benefit of all stakeholders.

The book explores behavior on individual, interpersonal,



Cover of the book "Organizational Behavior in Sport" by James Skinner and Bob Stewart.

group and whole-organization levels, and presents an evidence-based framework for analysis built around key concepts such as: change and culture, leadership, motivation, rewards

and incentives, power and influence, conflict, disputes and grievances, equity, diversity and inclusion.

With international case studies, learning objectives, review questions and guides to further reading included in every chapter, no other textbook develops critical skills or an awareness of ethical issues in such detail and depth.

"Organizational Behavior in Sport" is essential reading for all students and practitioners working in sports, leisure or recreation management.

James Skinner is the Director of the Institute for Sport Business and Professor of Sport Business at Loughborough University London, UK. His primary research interests are in leadership, culture and change in sports.

Bob Stewart is a Professor of Sport Management in the College of Sport and Exercise Science at Victoria University, Australia. His primary research interests are in the field of sport policy, culture and the regulation of sport.

Sadi's Bustan, ethical guidelines for life

The Bustan (The Orchard) of Sadi, the Persian poet who is widely recognized as one of the greatest masters of the classical literary tradition, is a moralistic and anecdotal verse work consisting of some 4,100 masnavi couplets by Shaikh Mosleh ad-Din Sadi, completed in 1257.

The date is given by Sadi himself in his preamble, and from some indications in two verses it may be surmised that the work was in fact completed between October 13 and December 20 and perhaps more precisely on November 21 of that year. The Bustan, though often rendered as "Garden of Fragrance" or "Pleasure Garden", really has a more concrete meaning, such as "Fragrant Herb Garden". The Bustan is the best-known poem of its general kind in Persian literature and is in many ways unique.

As is indicated in the lengthy (and routinely subdivided) preamble, the work is dedicated to Sadi's patron at the time, the Salghurid atabak of Fars, Ab? Bakr ibn Sad ibn Zangi, but his son Sad and more particularly his grandson

Mohammad ibn Sad are also praised.

It is divided into ten chapters, the titles of which are actually given in the preamble. They provide at least an approximate guide to their respective contents: 1. on justice, good management of affairs, and good judgment; 2. on beneficence (i.e., charitable acts above the call of strict duty); 3. on love, intoxication, and passion; 4. on humility; 5. on acceptance (i.e., of God's will); 6. on contentment (i.e., with limited material possessions); 7. on the world of edification (in effect, about restraint or self-control); 8. on gratitude for being in good estate; 9. on repentance and taking the right course; 10. on close communion (with God).

Sadi himself may have valued the Bustan somewhat above his lighter and more generally popular prose-and-verse Golestan, which he produced a few months later, probably partly from unused material originally considered for the earlier work.

In both works a very high standard of

elegance, fluency, color, and effectiveness is maintained throughout, but the Bustan is undoubtedly of more serious purpose and tone. Although it does contain twenty to thirty significant stories (out of the 160 specifically designated as "tales" in this writer's translation), most of the narratives are short, and many are fairly incidental to the discursive text. The important component is the argument, though the work is generally contemplative, rhapsodic, and exhortatory, rather than closely reasoned in any philosophical sense.

The Bustan may be perceived as inculcating a code of behavior that is a paradoxical combination of the realistic and pragmatic with the mystical and high-minded; taken as a whole and literally, it includes undoubted contradictions. But, especially in the first chapter, it contains passages of particular frankness, even of courage, addressed (albeit usually in partially disguised form) to rulers and other people in authority in the poet's time.

A good deal of the material purports to be drawn from direct personal experience (most notably, perhaps, the famous story of the desecration of the idol in Gujerat). Henri Massé, in his work on the potential correlation of Sadi's life and writings, makes a rather positive judgment on this point.

The majority of Persian critics, however, consider such stories to have been invented by Sadi in order to illustrate his views and therefore consider them hardly to be taken literally for the reconstruction of his life. This is not to suggest that Sadi meant to mislead. If he had, he would—in his small, close-knit world—soon have become a byword for exaggeration and untruth, whereas in fact he was a respected, even revered, figure in his later years. But whatever his personality may have included of learning, wisdom, mystical yearning, and adventurousness, he was first and foremost a literary craftsman and a creative artist.

Courtesy: Encyclopaedia Iranica