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# Healthcare coverage for millions of refugees



**Despite sanctions, Iran provides 3.5m immigrants with testing and treatment services**

The odds are there to be...

**BY ALIA. JENABZADEH**  
Many international political activists remember July 14, 2015, when Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini officially announced that Iran and six other countries - Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia, and the United States - have reached a final nuclear agreement. That day, a joint statement was issued in Vienna in which the transcript started with a bold sentence: "Today, is an historic day".

"We have reached an agreement on the Iranian nuclear issue" the statement continued, calling the agreement something "the world was hoping for" which never could have happen without "courage, political will, mutual respect and leadership".

Today, more than five years after that proud statement was released and those happy faces lined up in front of their respective national flag, the only thing which has come true from those words is "leadership", or better said, America's leadership in destroying everything. Calling this hoped-by-the-whole-world agreement "an awful deal", U.S. President Donald Trump pulled his country out of the agreement. The decision was rejected globally, but thanks to its power and control over almost all European parties to the accord, U.S. rendered the achievement useless. There was no "courage", no "political will", and no such thing as "mutual respect". These notions had all ceased to exist and there was only "leadership" -- a bullying, procrustean, irritating leadership by the U.S. imposing all inhumane measures one can think of.

The very first paragraph of the preface of the nuclear deal or JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) reads: "The E3/EU+3 (China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States, with the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy) and the Islamic Republic of Iran [...] anticipate that full implementation of this JCPOA will positively contribute to regional and international peace and security." In fact, the very first words all parties came to agree upon were about regional and international peace. Now look at what's going on here.

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## Biden likely to fail in resolving America problems in four years

TEHRAN – As Joe Biden prepares to move into the White House in a few weeks, experts highlight the difficulties that he will face once he is inaugurated. An expert on international relations told the Tehran Times that a Biden administration would likely fail to address all issues weighing on the United States foreign policy in the coming years.

The expert, Mohsen Jalilvand, said Biden will address the most urgent issues at home and then address foreign policy issues such as the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"The first duty that every U.S. president should do is to address urgent domestic issues. Right now, Biden is faced with two urgent issues: the coronavirus pandemic and low economic growth," Jalilvand told the Tehran Times, adding that the U.S. economy was doing well under Trump but the coronavirus pandemic dealt a severe blow

to it, a move that led to Trump losing the U.S. presidential election in November.

According to Jalilvand, Biden is likely to address the pandemic and its economic impact and then take on foreign policy issues but these issues are also so complicated that may not be resolved in four years.

"JCPOA will not be a top priority for Biden's foreign policy. His top priority will be the U.S. strategy against China, which is articulated in a 2012 U.S. national security strategy," Jalilvand said.

During his election campaign, Biden vowed that he would rejoin the JCPOA if Iran returns to compliance with the 2015 nuclear deal.

"I will offer Tehran a credible path back to diplomacy. If Iran returns to strict compliance with the nuclear deal, the United States would rejoin the agreement as a starting point for follow-on negotiations.

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## U.S. protests: No justice 6 months since New York police assault

New York City authorities have yet to hold police accountable for the planned assault and mass arrest of peaceful protesters they carried out on June 4, 2020, in the predominantly Black and brown Mott Haven neighborhood of the Bronx, Human Rights Watch said today. Five civil and human rights groups, including Human Rights Watch, wrote to New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio on December 2, calling on him to urgently take action against members of the New York Police Department (NYPD) responsible for abuses.

The crackdown led by Chief of Department Terence Monahan, the NYPD's highest-ranking uniformed officer, was among the most aggressive police responses to protests across the United States following the police killing of George Floyd. Scores of police officers surrounded and trapped the protesters before an 8 p.m. curfew, using a tactic known as "kettling." Then, just after 8 p.m., the police—unprovoked and without warning—moved in on the protesters, wielding batons, beating people from car tops, shoving them to the ground, and firing

pepper spray into their faces, before rounding up more than 250 people for arrest, HRW reported.

"With the abundance of available information about what happened, and the resources the city has at its disposal, it is hard to understand why no action has been taken, six months on," the letter read. "Ensuring timely accountability for past abuses is critical to showing there are consequences for such actions and to deter future abuse."

A 99-page Human Rights Watch report, "Kettling" Protesters in the Bronx and a 12-minute video released on September 30, detail the incident. It is based on interviews and written accounts from more than 80 participants and other witnesses, and an analysis of 155 videos. On October 2, de Blasio stated that an independent investigation of the incident was underway. "If things were done wrong," he said, "anyone who did something wrong should be held accountable in the appropriate way." Yet no findings have been announced or made public.

## The disabled and fresh start for corona-hit tourism

**BY AFSHIN MAJLESI**

Booking services, airports, transport facilities, hotel rooms, restaurants, public places, equipment rentals, and tourist attractions, or dealing with an untrained travel-related staff, all could be tough and time-consuming for people with disabilities who are left behind in many tourism destinations.

Over one billion people are estimated to live with some form of disability, which corresponds to about 15% of the whole population

worldwide. From another point of view, this issue may affect the lives of almost a third of the Earth dwellers as spouses, children, and caregivers of persons with disabilities are taken into account. This figure signifies a gigantic potential for tourism insiders, museums, transport companies, hotels, and other travel businesses, particularly in the post coronavirus era.

Ensuring accessibility for all can be a game-changer for destinations, which are seeking

to bounce back from the impacts of the coronavirus outbreak. This will be offering ample opportunities for those trying to adopt market-oriented strategies as the impact of virus-restrictions are temporary and short-lived.

The majority of travel-related destinations and services are still somewhat unfitting for people with disabilities due to inaccessible facilities and services, as well as their discriminatory policies, practices, and routines.

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## Graffiti art brightens Tehran with images of hope and life

TEHRAN – A young artist who introduces himself with the pseudonym "Khamush" ("Silence") paints the walls of the capital Tehran with graffiti inspiring people to live with peace and hope.

Talking to the Persian service of ISNA on Thursday, the 23-year old artist said that he began painting 13 years ago when he was only a schoolchild. He added that his nickname is derived from his calm personality, which has also influenced his paintings, life and relationships.

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## Iran should become a crucial node in China's BRI project: geopolitical analyst

**BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI**

TEHRAN — Andrew Korybko, an American geopolitical analyst, tells the Tehran Times that whatever the incoming American administration decides regarding the 2015 nuclear deal (JCPOA), Iran should play as key partner in China's Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) project.

Noting that Russia and China became comparatively much more important after the U.S. pulled out of the nuclear deal, the Moscow-based American political analyst says that "Iran should continue its efforts to become a crucial node along with China's Belt & Road Initiative (BRI), in particular by considering the benefits of partnering with its flagship project of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)."

The geopolitical analyst also says all indications point to "Israel" as the chief culprit behind the assassination of Iranian nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhriadeh on November 27. Korybko says the assassination was "intended to provoke Iran into carrying out a high-profile response that might then be exploited as the pretext for Trump to intensify pressure against it in what might be the final days of his presidency."

The following is the text of the interview:  
**How do you assess the assassination of the Iranian nuclear scientist and its repercussions?**

A: It's unclear who was responsible, but all indications point to "Israel", which likely carried it out for several reasons. The first was tactical in the sense of eliminating an important Iranian nuclear energy scientist.

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## Rouhani: Iran entitled to avenge Fakhrizadeh's assassination

**POLITICAL DESK** **TEHRAN** — President Hassan Rouhani has said Iran is entitled to take revenge for the assassination of Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, an Iranian scientist who was killed during a terrorist attack on November 27.

"Iran's government is entitled to take retaliation from the elements behind the assassination of the martyr," Rouhani said on Thursday, according to Mehr.



He said the terrorist attack showed that Iran's enemies are desperate in the face of Iranian scientists' scientific progress. "For us, it is completely clear who has committed this act of terror and what method was adopted to perpetrate this atrocity," he said.

Fakhrizadeh, a senior nuclear and defense scientist, was assassinated in a small city east of Tehran on November 27.

Three days later, he was laid to rest. His assassination could further hamper diplomatic efforts to salvage the 2015 Iran

nuclear deal, which was abandoned by U.S. President Donald Trump in May 2018.

Iran has blamed Israel, which has carried out assassination operations against Iranian nuclear scientists over the past decade. Immediately after the assassination, Foreign Minister Zarif said in a tweet that the attack was carried out with "serious indications of Israeli role".

Over the past years Israel assassinated five other Iranian nuclear scientists. It killed Masoud Alimohammadi, Majid Shahriari, Darioush Rezaeinejad, and Mostafa Ahmadi Roshan. Israel also attempted to assassinate Fereydon Abbassi, Iran's head of the Atomic Agency, but it failed.

Meanwhile, Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to the Vienna-based international organizations has urged the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to clarify its position on the assassination of Iran's top nuclear scientist.

"The IAEA is first expected to pronounce clearly its position in relation with the terrorist act and strongly condemn it in clear terms," Kazem Gharibabadi tweeted on Monday night.

"The Agency has a dire responsibility vis-a-vis a Member who is receiving the highest level of inspections of the Agency and having the most transparent nuclear program through implementing various commitments, but its scientists are assassinated or under threat of assassination, and its nuclear facilities are sabotaged or under threat of sabotage," Gharibabadi added.

## Ghalibaf calls for resistance against Western greed

**POLITICAL DESK** **TEHRAN** — Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf has called for resistance against Western greed, saying Iran cannot do anything if it does not resist against the greed by Western countries.



In a televised interview on Thursday night, Ghalibaf said while Iran observed all of its commitments to the international nuclear deal (JCPOA), its Natanz nuclear facility was sabotaged, and Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani and nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh were assassinated, Iran Press reported.

"If we do not resist against [the West's] greed, we cannot do anything. In this law, we have explicitly stated that at any moment, the parties in the JCPOA fulfill their obligations, we will return to our obligations," Ghalibaf added.

The Parliament on Tuesday passed the outlines of a plan aimed at lifting the anti-Iran sanctions and protecting the rights of the Iranian nation. 251 lawmakers voted in favor of the outlines of the double-urgency plan, which is dubbed "Strategic Action to Lift Sanctions".

The bill, put forward by the lawmakers in early November, is part of a broader strategy that aims to lift the United States sanctions on Iran. It aims to force the United States into lifting sanctions on Iran by doubling down on nuclear activities.

The oversight Guardian Council approved the bill on Wednesday.

## Iran plans to increase underground enrichment machines, IAEA claims

Iran plans to install more advanced uranium-enriching centrifuges at an underground plant, a report by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) claimed on Friday.

Reuters said Iran plans to install several more cascades, or clusters, of advanced IR-2m centrifuges in the underground plant at Natanz, which was apparently built to withstand aerial bombardment.

Iran's nuclear deal with major powers says Tehran can only use first-generation IR-1 centrifuges, which are less efficient, at the underground plant and that those are the only machines with which Iran may accumulate enriched uranium. Iran recently moved one cascade of IR-2m machines underground at Natanz. "In a letter dated 2 December 2020, Iran informed the Agency that the operator of the Fuel Enrichment Plant (FEP) at Natanz 'intends to start installation of three cascades of IR-2m centrifuge machines' at FEP," the IAEA's report to its member states said.

Iran has breached many of the deal's core restrictions on its nuclear activities in response to U.S. President Donald Trump's withdrawal from the agreement and his reimposition of crippling U.S. economic sanctions. Tehran says its breaches can quickly be reversed if Washington's moves are undone.

Biden, who takes office on Jan. 20, has said he will bring the United States back into the deal if Iran resumes full compliance with its nuclear restrictions. That raises the prospect of a standoff over who should move first.

# Tehran censures double standard in dealing with terrorism

**POLITICAL DESK** **TEHRAN** — Tehran has called on the UN and its Human Rights Council to stop their selective approach toward human rights issues and condemn the recent assassination of top Iranian nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh as an act of terrorism.

Inaction over this terrorist and criminal act and failure to highlight it in the relevant UN reports would further question the credibility of the reports and may be considered as giving legitimacy to terrorism, said Ali Bagheri-Kani, head of the Iranian Judiciary's High Council for Human Rights.

He made the remarks in separate letters to the UN secretary general and the UN high commissioner for human rights.

In the letters, he said it would also result in further spread of radicalism and terrorism, entailing international responsibility for the United Nations.

Bagheri Kani also reminded the UN secretary general of the clear stances he adopted against terrorist acts in other countries including Austria and France, calling on Antonio Guterres to stress the necessity of greater cooperation among countries for the administration of justice against terrorists and ultimately draw the attention of the General Assembly and the Security Council of the United Nations to this state-orchestrated assassination and violation of international peace and security in accordance with the implementation of Article 99 of the United Nations Charter.

"Within the framework of these thoughts and approaches, the newly-emerged concept of 'state terrorism' is being exploited as an instrument by the powers to advance their



illegitimate and illegal policies which would ultimately threaten and violate peace, security and human rights more than any other time," he added in the letter, Press TV reported.

He also slammed the "politically-motivated" approach taken by Western countries toward the vicious phenomenon of terrorism, and wrote these countries' double standards and decriminalization of terrorism in "terrorism-launders" frameworks have exposed the global community to new challenges in connection with international peace and security.

The Iranian official said the assassination of Fakhrizadeh is a blatant breach of peremptory norms and inviolable international human rights, such as the right to life, as stipulated in Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The international responsibility for this

flagrant violation of peremptory principles is incumbent on the countries, the Western advocates of human rights and international organizations which chose to be silent and take no action, he added.

**Tehran demands condemnation of Fakhrizadeh assassination by IAEA**

Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's ambassador and permanent representative to the Vienna-based international organizations, also wrote a letter to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi.

In the letter, Gharibabadi called for clear and unconditional condemnation of the assassination of Fakhrizadeh, saying the attack came as continuation of the terrorist acts that began a decade ago with the assassination of several Iranian nuclear scientists in 2010, 2011 and 2012.

## Tehran: Every regional terrorist graduated from Saudi-funded Madrassas

**POLITICAL DESK** **TEHRAN** — Tehran has reacted to recent bigoted remarks by Saudi Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Adel al-Jubeir, saying every terrorist group in the region has graduated from Saudi-funded Madrassas. "For decades, Wahabism—nurtured by colonial powers—has been the source of bigotry, hatred & terrorism in our region—and beyond," Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh wrote in a tweet on Thursday.

"Fact: Every terrorist group in our region has graduated from Saudi-funded Madrassas," he said. "No amount of Saudi obfuscation can hide this ugly reality."

It came after al-Jubeir took to Twitter to attack Iran's Foreign Minister Zarif. He said Zarif is "desperate to blame the Kingdom for anything negative that happens in Iran. Will he blame us for the next earthquake or flood?"

"It is not the policy of Saudi Arabia to engage in assassinations; unlike Iran, which has done so since the Khomeini Revolution in 1979," al-Jubeir said. "Ask us, and ask many other countries who have lost many of their citizens due to Iran's criminal and illegal behavior!"

Khatibzade said the Saudi kingdom's atrocities in Yemen, and the infamous case of journalist Jamal Khashoggi are

just some of their other stunts.

"The latest: standing alongside the leading state-sponsor of terrorism against Palestinians," he said, making a reference to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's recent secret visit to Saudi Arabia.

"Saudis must change course. The policy of inflaming tension is no longer tenable," the spokesman added.

The Saudi minister's rant came after Zarif said in an Instagram post on Monday that U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's recent tour of the region, his tripartite meeting with Netanyahu and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman as well as Netanyahu's recent remarks were signs of yet another conspiracy against the Islamic Republic, which unfortunately came to light with Mohsen Fakhrizadeh's assassination.

"A counter-intelligence campaign and purposeful psychological warfare were launched in tandem with this terrorist act, in the delusive hope that the evil plans of Pompeo, Netanyahu and bin Salman to create tensions would materialize," Zarif's post read.

Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, 59, was assassinated in a terrorist attack at a small city east of Tehran on November 27. The



attack involved an explosion and small fire.

In a message after the incident, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei urged all relevant administrators to "investigate this crime and firmly prosecute its perpetrators and its commanders" and "to continue the martyr's scientific and technological efforts in all the sectors where he was active."

## Zarif to West: Either end malign behavior in the region or shut up Iran won't renegotiate nuclear deal, Zarif asserts

**1 →** With the defeat of Trump in the November 3 presidential election, hopes were raised over a possible revival of the JCPOA under President-elect Joe Biden. Zarif stated that Iran's position is that the deal is not open to renegotiation and the U.S. has to observe the agreement and the UN resolution that endorses it.

He said with its bashing of the JCPOA, the Trump administration acted as a "rogue regime".

The United States has "obligations, responsibilities as a UN member, as a Security Council member. And there's a Security Council Resolution 2231, which the U.S. must observe," the chief Iranian diplomat remarked, Press TV reported.

He said if the incoming Biden administration asks Tehran to come and renegotiate the JCPOA, it would be walking in the same "rogue" steps as Trump's team.

Washington has to cease its violation of the international law, Zarif asserted.

According to Zarif, the U.S. and the three European countries in the deal insisted on their continued violation of the JCPOA, Iran would have to act on a pending par-

liamentary measure that would restrict the UN nuclear agency's access to the Islamic Republic's nuclear facilities.

On Iran's circumstance during the coronavirus pandemic, Zarif said Iran has been hit by a third wave of infections, and its medical staff have been putting up with too much for too long.

**'Iran suffering from Coronavirus more than the rest of the world because of economic war'**

The reason that the country has been overwhelmed by the virus to such an extent was that it is suffering from something more than the rest of the world is, and that is an economic war, he said. "This is way beyond restrictions," he added, referring to the U.S. sanctions.

Zarif also said the U.S. has been preventing Iran from gaining access to billions of dollars in its overseas financial resources to buy vaccines.

**Zarif says if Biden asks Tehran to renegotiate the JCPOA, it would be walking in the same 'rogue' steps as Trump's team.**



Iran's Health Ministry and its Central Bank have been trying to tap into the money, but "we haven't had much success," he said, adding that if Washington chose to refute this "they're simply lying."

"And that, in every definition of the word, is a crime against humanity," he lamented.

He also pointed to the Israeli regimes' crimes in the region, saying Israel has been able to keep up its deadly aggressive actions thanks to the Western-sourced impunity.

## House Foreign Affairs Committee chairman says working to join JCPOA

Congressman Greg Meeks, who will be the first Black American to lead the House Foreign Affairs Committee, has said he planned "a new way of doing business," including working to rejoin the Iran nuclear pact and World Health Organization, and seeking to regain Congress' traditional control over the right to declare war.

"Not only will we need to re-engage with a world that has felt the marked absence of U.S. global leadership, but we must also rethink traditional approaches to foreign policy," Meeks said in a statement, according to Reuters.

When the new Congress is seated in January, the 11-term House member will succeed fellow New York Representative Eliot Engel, who lost a Democratic primary this year to a more progressive challenger.

Engel, known as a strong advocate for Israel, was seen



as too hawkish by some members of the Democratic Party's left wing. Engel voted for the 2003 Iraq War and opposed

President Barack Obama's 2015 nuclear deal with Iran.

Meeks supported the nuclear agreement, and voted against the Iraq War.

The caucus vote was 148-78 for Meeks over Representative Joaquin Castro, who had campaigned for the post as a more progressive alternative to Meeks.

Castro, currently vice chairman of the foreign affairs panel, said he looked forward to working with Meeks on common goals such as promoting diversity at the State Department and rejoining the Iran nuclear deal.

Republican President Donald Trump pulled the United States out of the Iran deal in 2018 and restored harsh U.S. economic sanctions designed to force Tehran into a wider negotiation on curbing its nuclear program. Biden, who takes office on Jan. 20, wants Washington to rejoin the accord.



# EU foreign policy chief says Iran can rightly feel cheated

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Josep Borrell, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs, said on Thursday that Iran has the right to feel cheated after one of its top nuclear scientists was assassinated in a terrorist attack on November 27.

Responding to a question on whether dialogue could be derailed by the assassination of Iranian nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhriadeh, Borrell said, "Well, whoever did it certainly didn't do it to facilitate dialogue. Certainly, there are people who have an interest in this agreement not surviving, many people have an interest in this agreement not surviving."

He added, "Europe has been very interested in its survival. I have had to keep it alive, hibernating a little, but it hasn't died. And now we also have to see what the Iranians think because the Iranians can rightly feel cheated. And maybe they are the ones who won't want to play with the same cards again. But we'll have to wait."

Borrell made the remarks in an interview with Euronews.

Also, on Tuesday said the "criminal" assassination of Iranian physicist will not help solve issues pertaining to the country's nuclear program.

"This was a criminal act ... I am sorry to say but this is not the way you are solving problems," Borrell said at an online debate with his predecessors, Federica Mogherini and Javier Solana, dubbed "The EU in a changing world".

In his interview with Euronews, the chief European diplomat also answered a question about the possibility to get the United States of Joe Biden to rejoin the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

He said, "Well, I think I remember in the electoral campaign, the then-candidate and today elected president expressing his intention to resume: to return to the nuclear agreement with Iran."

Biden said in a mid-September op-ed for CNN that he would rejoin the Iran nuclear deal



if Iran returns to compliance with the deal.

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

Biden has recently pointed out that he still stands by his views on the 2015 nuclear deal that were articulated in the mid-September op-ed. In an interview with The New York Times' columnist Thomas Friedman, Biden addressed a variety of domestic and foreign policy issues, including the Iran nuclear deal, which President Donald Trump quit on May 8, 2018.

Asked whether he still stands by his views on the Iran deal that he expressed in the September 13 op-ed for CNN, Biden answered, "It's going to be hard, but yeah."

In his interview with Thomas Friedman, Biden put special emphasis on Iran's nuclear program and how to counter it, saying that he will work with Washington's allies to address the Iran nuclear issue.

"In consultation with our allies and partners, we're going to engage in negotiations and follow-on agreements to tighten and lengthen Iran's nuclear constraints, as well as address the missile program," Biden noted, adding that the U.S. always has the option to snap back sanctions if need be, and Iran knows that.

**Biden says it is 'hard to tell how much' Fakhriadeh assassination would complicate dealings with Tehran**

Biden reiterated this position in a Thursday interview with CNN's Jake Tapper, saying that the U.S. cannot go it alone on Iran. Biden said it was "hard to tell how much" the recent assassination of Fakhriadeh would complicate his dealings with Tehran. "The bottom line is that we can't allow Iran to get

nuclear weapons," Biden said before slamming Trump's dealings with Iran, including his 2018 decision to withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal.

"He has pulled out to get something tougher, and what have they done? They've increased the ability for them to have nuclear material. They're moving closer to the ability to be able to have enough material for a nuclear weapon. And there's the missile issues," Biden said, adding, "All those things, I think, are going to be very difficult. But I know one thing: We cannot do this alone. And that's why we have to be part of a larger group, dealing not only with Iran, but with Russia, with China and a whole range of other issues."

The EU has condemned the assassination of Fakhriadeh. "On 27 November 2020 in Absard, Iran, an Iranian government official and, according to reports, 1 of his bodyguards, were killed in a series of violent attacks. This is a criminal act and runs counter to the principle of respect for human rights the EU stands for," a spokesperson for Borrell said in a statement on November 28.

"The High Representative expresses his condolences to the family members of the individuals who were killed, while wishing a prompt recovery to any other individuals who may have been injured. In these uncertain times, it is more important than ever for all parties to remain calm and exercise maximum restraint in order to avoid escalation which cannot be in anyone's interest," the statement added.

A day after this statement, the EU External Action Service also issued another statement saying that the Joint Commission of the JCPOA will meet in Vienna on December 16. "Participants will discuss ongoing work to preserve the JCPOA and how to ensure the full and effective implementation of the agreement by all sides, including in preparation of exchanges at Ministerial Level," the second statement said.

## Biden likely to fail in resolving America problems in four years

**1→** With our allies, we will work to strengthen and extend the nuclear deal's provisions, while also addressing other issues of concern," then-candidate Biden said in a mid-September op-ed for CNN.

Biden has recently reiterated this position in an interview with The New York Times' Thomas Friedman. He told the columnist that he still stands by his views on the Iran nuclear deal that were articulated in the mid-September op-ed.

But Biden is yet to say how he would rejoin the nuclear deal, Jalilvand remarked, adding that this ambiguity is a question in itself.

"How does Biden want to rejoin the JCPOA?" asked the expert.

Biden himself has said the return of the U.S. to the nuclear deal will not be easy.

When asked by Friedman whether he still stands by his views on the Iran deal that he expressed in the September 13 op-ed for CNN, Biden answered, "It's going to be hard, but yeah."

Biden said in a Thursday interview with CNN that he thinks he will have "very difficult" issues dealing with Iran. "He [Trump] has pulled out to get something tougher, and what have they done? They've increased the ability for them to have nuclear material. They're moving closer to the ability to be able to have enough material for a nuclear weapon. And there's the missile issues," Biden said, adding, "All those things, I think, are going to be very difficult. But I know one thing: We cannot do this alone. And that's why we have to be part of a larger group, dealing not only with Iran, but with Russia, with China and a whole range of other issues."



Jalilvand said that Trump and his foreign policy team are likely to raise a "package of issues" such as Iran's missile program, its regional influence, and human rights.

In his interview with Friedman, Biden said that he will pursue follow-on agreements with Iran on its nuclear and missile issues.

"In consultation with our allies and partners, we're going to engage in negotiations and follow-on agreements to tighten and lengthen Iran's nuclear constraints, as well as address the missile program," Biden said.

However, Biden put more emphasis on the nuclear issue than the missile one. "Look, there's a lot of talk about precision missiles and all range of other things that are destabilizing the region," Biden noted, adding that "the best way to achieve getting some stability in the region" is to deal "with the nuclear program."

If Iran gets a nuclear bomb, Biden claimed, it puts

enormous pressure on the Saudis, Turkey, Egypt and others to get nuclear weapons themselves. "And the last goddamn thing we need in that part of the world is a buildup of nuclear capability."

Europeans also seem to be on the same page with Joe Biden. They also called for follow-on agreements with Iran that would include Iran's missiles and its regional influence in addition to the nuclear issue.

German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas said on Friday that Berlin is looking for an alternative, broader nuclear agreement with Iran in place of the existing agreement which is "no longer enough," according to the Russian Sputnik news agency.

"A form of 'nuclear agreement plus' is needed, which also lies in our interest. We have clear expectations for Iran: no nuclear weapons, but also no ballistic rocket program that threatens the whole region. Iran must also play another role in the region", Maas said in an interview with Der Spiegel, adding that the broader accord is needed as Iran cannot be trusted.

It remains to be seen whether the Europeans would succeed in crafting a strategy that addresses Iran-related issues all at once. Iranian officials have said that they will not renegotiate the JCPOA, let alone expanding it.

Jalilvand believes that Biden will not have enough time and energy to address all Iran-related issues during his tenure, which is widely expected to be one-term president due to his age. Therefore, Biden is highly likely to delay resolving many issues and pass them on to the next president of the U.S.

## The odds are there to be...

**1→** You must be a West Asian to understand how it feels to live in this region. Wherever you look, you'll see chaos in varying degrees. From Palestine to Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Azerbaijan, Armenia, the eastern part of Kashmir, parts of Africa and elsewhere. And Iran is left alone in the middle of this chaos. Despite the unsettled dust in the region and long-lasting smell of gunpowder in the air, regarding the highest standards of "maintaining national security", Iran is at the edge of what's technically possible. There might be

some security breaches time to time, but considering the scenario some countries inside and outside the region are dreaming of, Iran's performance is outstanding.

The idea is simple. In these years of escalating soft war in West Asia, even a failed plan to topple the government in Syria still can have its chances elsewhere. So why not try it on Iran? Here is where "regime change" blooms within that dust. But that plan has gone sideways ever since. Helping Syria to sustain its legitimate government was a game changing strategy successfully

managed by Iran despite all the odds. This strategy kept the civil war far away from Iranian borders. So, despite all the hell that had broken loose in the region and the U.S. had unleashed its regional dogs to embark and operate the symphony of blood and religion, Iran and its allies were strong enough to get the best out of their security mechanisms and power levers.

This is astonishing, and yet horrifying. Astonishing because Iran has managed to survive the full-scale economic war and its ability to make it through the last days

of American supremacy. Diplomatically, Tehran has pushed the ability of this country to its limits. The U.S. is taking the mask off once again and most probably for the last time. Once in the past, the U.S. knew from where to attack and from where to predict the counter-attack. This is not the case anymore. The U.S. might know from where to attack, but it has no idea where the counter-attack would originate. In fact, the U.S. is the horrified side of this equation, not the other side because the odds are there to be...

## Parliament's nuclear law creates big opportunities: senior aide

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, the special aide to the speaker of the Iranian Parliament on international affairs, has said that the nuclear bill passed by Iran's Parliament will create big opportunities for Tehran to lift sanctions.

"Diplomacy knows language of power. Iran's Parliament bill on 'sanctions removal' creates big opportunities. US/E3 have discredited JCPOA not to let Iran sell oil & get revenues. Russian, Chinese will be set for cooperation & acts against US sanctions. Weapon of sanctions must break down," the special aide said in a tweet on Thursday.

Amir-Abdollahian was referring to a recent parliamentary bill that was passed into law on Wednesday after a ratification by the Guardian Council. On Tuesday, 251 lawmakers voted in favor of the outlines of the double-urgency plan, which is dubbed "Strategic Action to Lift Sanctions." The bill, put forward by the lawmakers in early November, is part of a broader strategy that aims to lift the United States sanctions on Iran. It aims to force the United States into lifting

sanctions on Iran by doubling down on nuclear activities. The enactment of the bill came a few days after the assassination of prominent Iranian nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhriadeh.

On November 27 at 14:30, nearly 10 people attacked the convoy of Fakhriadeh on a highway in the small city of Absard in Damavand County, about 40 kilometers east of the capital Tehran. The scientist lost his life during the attack while his bodyguards were severely injured. Iranian officials were quick to point the finger at Israel, which has carried out many assassination operations against Iranian nuclear scientists over the past decade. Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in a tweet on the day of the assassination that the attack was carried out with "serious indications of Israeli role."

Iran has vowed to respond to Israel in due time.

"All think tanks and all enemies of Iran should know well that the Iranian nation and the country's authorities are more courageous and Zealous than to let this

criminal act go unanswered. The relevant authorities will respond to this crime at the proper time," President Hassan Rouhani said.

Meanwhile, Iranian lawmakers accelerated the process of passing the nuclear bill following the assassination of Fakhriadeh and even described the bill as one of Iran's options to respond to Israel by resuming nuclear activities.

Parliament Speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf has said that the bill was a response to the killing of Fakhriadeh.

The nuclear law provides a step by step process for the Iranian government to accelerate nuclear activities such as increasing uranium enrichment level to 20%, installing advanced IR-6 centrifuges, and restricting international inspection access to Iran's nuclear sites. All these measures are conditional and would be taken step by step if the other parties failed to lift the economic sanctions on Iran.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has recently said that Iran will implement the nuclear law if the other parties to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal fail to remove the sanctions.

## SPORTS

### Mousavi is one of the world's best middle blockers: Lorenzo Bernardi

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Piacenza coach Lorenzo Bernardi says that Mohammad Mousavi can help them reach their goals since the Iranian player is one of the best middle blockers in the world.

Mousavi joined the Italian team in late November from Iranian club Saipa.



On Thursday, the Iranian international was introduced in a session which was attended by the club's general manager Hristo Zlatanov and head coach Lorenzo Bernardi, gassales-piacenza.it reported.

"Mousavi is a player who has made history in the volleyball. He is an important part of Iran national volleyball team and has achieved important milestones with the team," Bernardi said.

"Mousavi helped Iran qualify for the Olympic Games and also won the Asian Games title with the team. He is a player with technical characteristics that makes him one of the top middle blockers in the world," he added.

"He is a player who can attack and block as well and is here to help Piacenza reach their important goals," Bernardi concluded.

Mousavi will wear No. 21 in the Italian side.

At the club level, he has collected 11 Iranian championships and eight AVC Club Championships in his career.

The 33-year-old player won a bronze medal with Iran national team at the Grand Championship Cup in Japan as well as three Asian Volleyball Championships and two Asian Games.

### Persepolis in quarantine ahead of 2020 ACL final

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Persepolis football club announced on Friday that they had put their entire team in quarantine to reduce the risk of contracting coronavirus.

The match between Persepolis with Nassaji which was scheduled for Sunday in Ghaemshahr has been canceled by the Iran Football League Organization for this reason.

The Reds will most likely not play Zob Ahan on Dec. 12 since the seven players of the Isfahan based football team have tested positive for COVID-19.

Persepolis will meet the East Zone champions in the 2020 AFC Champions League Final match at the Al Janoub Stadium in Doha, Qatar on Dec. 19.

No Iranian team have won AFC Champions League since its introduction in 2002 and it could be a golden chance for the football-mad country to end the title drought in the Asian football's showpiece tournament.

Iran's Health Ministry on Friday reported 347 coronavirus death cases in the past 24 hours, raising the death toll to 49,695 since the outbreak of the disease in the country on Feb. 19.

The Health Ministry's spokeswoman, Sima Sadat Lari said the number of people tested positive for COVID-19 infection in Iran has risen to 1,16,835 following the detection of 13,341 new cases since Thursday noon.

The spokeswoman added that more than 708,106 coronavirus patients have recovered from the disease and left hospitals.

The number of people infected with COVID-19 across the world has surpassed 65.6 million and the death toll has exceeded 1,500,000.

### Iranian mountaineer found dead in Damavand

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — An Iranian mountaineer was found dead at Mount Damavand on Friday. Farzad Mousaei missed in bad weather during a hike up Damavand on Nov. 22.

He was found dead following the Search and Rescue (SAR) operation after 12 days at Kafar Valley (Kafar Dareh).

At 5,671 meters (18,606 feet), Mount Damavand is the highest peak in Iran and commonly referred to as the "roof of Iran."

The Mount is located northeastern Tehran.

### Cheick Diabate ready for Persepolis match

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Esteghlal striker Cheick Diabate will be ready for Tehran derby against Persepolis but the team's midfielder Masoud Rigi is a doubt for the match.

The Malian forward suffered a strained calf muscle in late November and Esteghlal announced that he would be sidelined for three weeks.

The Tehran derby will be held in Matchweek 8 of the Iran Professional League (IPL) in early January.

Esteghlal, who look to win the IPL title after eight years, announced that the striker will be ready for the match.

Rigi, who suffered a shoulder dislocation in the match against Paykan on Monday, will be a doubt for the match.

He underwent a successful surgery in Tehran's Shafayah-aeian Hospital on Tuesday and will be sidelined at least for three weeks.

His absence is a big blow to Esteghlal.



## TSE’s main index rises 7% in a week

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

The index stood at 1.47 million points at the end of the week. During the past week, the indices of Iran Khodro Group, Iran Telecommunication Company, Social Security Investment Company, National Iranian Copper Industry Company, Tejarat Bank, Esfahan Oil Refining Company, and Abadan Power Generation Company were the most widely followed indices.

TEDPIX had hit the record high of two million points on August 2. A market analyst told IRNA on Wednesday that the index is expected to resume its upward trend and reach 1.6 million points by the end of the current Iranian calendar month (December 20). The TSE index will continue its upward trend until the end of the current year (March 20, 2021) and is expected to reach 1.8 million points by the end of the year, Ahmad Eshtiaqi said.

Referring to the return of the uptrend to the stock market, Eshtiaqi said: “One of the factors affecting the uptrend in the stock market is the sharp correction of the index and stock prices in the market, which has once again motivated investors to re-enter the stock market.”

## 20 Iranian startups to attend GITEX 2020 expo

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** – Some 20 Iranian startups are going to attend the GITEX 2020 exhibition which is due to be held during December 6-10 in Dubai, the portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) announced.

According to the head of ICCIMA’s Information and Communication Technology Committee, a business delegation comprised of the representatives of 29 companies active in the field of information and communication technology is also going to visit this exhibition.

According to Mohammad Talaei, the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology and ICCIMA have made the necessary preparations for dispatching the mentioned delegation to the exhibition.

GITEX is an annual consumer computer and electronics trade show, exhibition, and conference that takes place in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

As the 40th anniversary of the exhibition, this year’s event called GITEX Technology Week is going to be held both online and in-person.

According to the organizers, the exhibition will be held in compliance with all the necessary health and safety protocols.

According to Talaei, over 7,000 exhibitors are going to participate in this year’s exhibition which would be a great opportunity for the Iranian companies and startups to present their products and services and to attract global clientele.

## Exports from Alborz Province rise 75% in 8 months on year

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Commodities worth \$579 million have been exported from Alborz Province, near the capital Tehran, during the first eight months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-November 20), showing a 75-percent rise compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to a provincial official.



Jahangir Shahmoradi, the deputy governor-general of the province for economic coordination, said the province’s performance in terms of exports has been outstanding despite the limitations caused by the coronavirus pandemic, and also the sanctions.

He said over 3,500 production and industrial units are currently active in the province.

As announced by the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of Iran’s non-oil trade during the first eight months of the current Iranian calendar year reached \$44.6 billion.

Mehdi Mirashrafi has said that in the mentioned eight months, Iran imported \$23.1 billion worth of goods, while the exports stood at \$21.5 billion.

The total volume of traded goods was estimated at about 97.7 million tons, of which over 75 million tons were related to exports and about 21.8 million tons were imported goods.

According to Mirashrafi, the imports in the said period declined one percent and 18 percent in terms of weight and value, respectively.

The exports also experienced a fall of 14 percent and 19 percent in terms of weight and value, respectively.

Noting the downward trend of the country’s foreign trade is ending and the trade is getting back to normal, the official said: “As we announced in previous months, fortunately, the downward trend of our country’s exports is approaching normal conditions month by month, and we hope to have better conditions in terms of exports by the end of the year.”

Iran’s top five non-oil export destinations during this period were Iraq with over \$5.3 billion worth of exports, China with the same amount, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with over \$2.7 billion, and Turkey with \$1.6 billion as well as Afghanistan with \$1.5 billion.

According to the IRICA head, the top five sources of imports during this period were China with \$6 billion, the UAE with \$5.4 billion, Turkey with \$2.6 billion, India with \$1.4 billion, and Germany with \$1.1 billion worth of imports.

Most of the imported goods into the country in the mentioned time span were basic goods or raw materials, Mirashrafi stressed.

# Transport Ministry to get over \$3.3b to accelerate development

By Ebrahim Fallahi

**TEHRAN** — In the past two decades, Iran’s transportation infrastructure has gone through a major transformation, and every year the country is advancing more in this area.

Currently, more than 80 percent of the country’s roads are paved and the government is also hugely planning on expanding and developing the country’s railway network especially in border areas since the country has numerous neighbors with which it has close trade ties.

In this regard, the budget allocated to the Transport and Urban Development Ministry is increased every year to support the development of the mentioned sector at a fast pace.

In the government administration’s draft of the national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year 1400, which starts on March 21, 2021, 140 trillion rials (over \$3.3 billion) has been proposed to be allocated to the Transport and Urban Development Ministry and its affiliated organizations and companies, about 12 percent more than the allocation in the current year.

The budget allocated to the Transport Ministry in the current fiscal year was 123 trillion rials (about \$2.93 billion), 25 percent more than the budget allocation for the preceding year of 1398 (ended on March 19).

Among the transport ministry’s affiliated bodies, the Construction and Development of Transportation Infrastructures Company (CDTIC) has the largest share from the mentioned budget, with about 78 trillion rials (about \$1.85 billion), followed by Iran



Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization with 24.04 trillion rials (about \$572.3 million).

Also, the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways, known as RAI, is going to receive about 21.28 trillion rials (about \$506 million), and after that, the Transport Ministry’s Central Headquarters is in fourth place with more than 14.33 trillion rials (about \$341 million).

A look at the proposed budget allocation of the ministry under review indicates that the budget for all the ministry’s subsidiaries has increased except for Iran Airports Company whose proposed budget for next year has been reduced by 16.67 percent compared to this year.

Based on the mentioned allocations, it is clear that the government is going to

be more focused on the priority projects in the roads and railway sector, while the aviation, maritime and maintenance come in second place.

The mentioned approach was not unexpected, since as mentioned earlier, the development of the main roads to link the country’s strategic economic areas as well as the expansion of the railway network have been two of the Transport Ministry’s major goals in the past few years.

Because, nowadays, expanded transportation via railway is one of the major pillars of sustainable development for all countries and the governments usually allocate noticeable funds and resources to the development of the railway.

Iran’s Sixth Five-Year National Devel-

## Electricity projects worth over \$1.4b inaugurated in 3 provinces

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

Under the framework of the A-B-Program, the Energy Ministry inaugurated over 128 projects with a total investment of 430 trillion rials (about \$10.2 billion) since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20) up to mid-November.

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

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

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



## Zanganeh praises OPEC+ decision, calling it wise

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — OPEC+ agrees to ease its oil-output cuts from 7.7 million barrels per day (bpd) to 7.2 million bpd in January 2021, down 500,000 bpd, Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh said, adding it was a wise decision.

Zanganeh made the remarks after the 12th meeting of the oil and energy ministers of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and non-OPEC members (known as OPEC+) held on Thursday, adding OPEC+ meetings need to be held monthly to decide on the curbs for other months.



If further easing was needed, it should not be more than 500,000 barrels per day, he said, emphasizing the decision for future

months would depend on crude oil supply and demand in the market.

Due to the uncertainty in the market, monthly meetings could help to maintain market stability and support OPEC and non-OPEC’s objective to create a fair price in the market.

I do not think the decision will have an influential effect on the market in terms of decreasing the prices as producing 500,000 barrels is not a big amount.

“The current decision has been made only for one month and further changes and decisions will be made in the upcoming months,”

Zanganeh said.

OPEC+ was discussing a proposal to gradually ease its oil-output cuts next year, seeking to resolve divisions that emerged at the core of the cartel over several days of fractious negotiations.

The meeting was due to be held on Thursday December 1 in Vienna but it was postponed to Thursday.

“What is important is that we negotiate and have the patience to reach a conclusion,” Zanganeh said on November 30.

The OPEC meeting on Monday November 30 evening lasted more than four hours.

## Iran’s foreign currency reserves to exceed \$65b by end of 2020: Economist

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The Economist’s Intelligence Unit has estimated Iran’s total foreign currency reserves to reach \$65.919 billion by the end of 2020, while the country’s assets in foreign banks are estimated to be about \$19 billion at the end of June 2020.

According to Tasnim news agency, the Economist’s Intelligence Unit, in its latest report, has also assessed the country risk level for Iran to be CCC, with no changes compared to the institute’s previous report.

The Economist risk index for each country is comprised



of two factors namely credit risk and operational risk.

The Economist’s Intelligence Unit analyses and forecasts credit risk posed by countries, including a regularly-reviewed country risk rating. In addition to the currency, sovereign debt and banking sector risks posed by a country, the service also looks at political, economic policy and economic structure risks. Includes short- and medium-term economic and political forecasts for the country, while the Operational Risk, looks at issues from politics and security to finance and infrastructure.

## 41 idle industrial units revived in Ardebil Province since late March

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — The governor-general of Iran’s northwestern Ardebil Province said that 41 idle industrial units have been revived in the province since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20).

Akbar Behnamjoo said reviving these units has created jobs for 390 persons, adding that the planned number for the current year is 78 idle units to be revived.

As the acting head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) has announced, 819 idle industrial units have been revived in the country during the first seven months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-October 21).

Asghar Mosaheb said that reviving the mentioned units has created jobs for 14,458 persons.

The official also announced that ISIPO plans to revive 2,000 idle industrial units throughout the country by the end of the current Iranian year (March 19, 2021).

He said the targeted figure for the mentioned seven-month period was 1,500 units, but the figure was increased in line with the

objectives of “Surge in Production”, which is the motto of this year.

Preventing the inactive status of the industrial units is another major plan of ISIPO, the official reiterated and mentioned lack of liquidity, problems in terms of supplying raw materials and machinery, and absence of market as the main reasons making the units inactive.

ISIPO’s Previous Head Mohsen Salehinia has said that providing liquidity is the main issue for many of the country’s production units, so based on the arrangements made, these units can receive part of their needed liquidity through bank facilities.

“Currently, the share of the country’s production and industrial units in receiving bank facilities is about 31 percent and it is necessary to allocate a larger share of banking facilities to the country’s production and industry,” he added.

Given the position of production in the country’s economy and employment, and the fact that production units are facing lack of liquidity to supply raw materials and equipment, it is necessary to increase their share



of bank facilities up to at least 40 percent, Salehinia stressed.

He further said: “Despite all the limitations, we are currently witnessing an increase in production in some units, for example those active in the field of home appliances; also, according to the plans made and by solving the problems in the way of the production and industrial units, we will realize the motto of “Surge in Production” by the end of this year.”

Strengthening domestic production to achieve self-reliance is the most important

program that Iran is following up in its industry sector in a bid to nullify the effects of the U.S. sanctions on its economy.

To this end, the current Iranian calendar year has been named the year of “Surge in Production”, and all governmental bodies, as well as the private sector, are moving in line with the materialization of this motto.

Regarding its significant role in the realization of the mentioned goal, the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry has already defined its main programs for supporting domestic production in the current year.

The ministry’s seven main axes of the surge in production are going to be pursued under 40 major programs.

In this regard, the development of industrial parks and supporting the units located in these areas is one of the major programs underway by the ministry.

While this program is being seriously pursued, the lack of necessary infrastructure in the industrial parks is impeding their development, therefore, the creation of needed infrastructure in the industrial parks has been put on the agenda.



# Very clear Israel ordered the assassination of Fakhrizadeh: Fitzpatrick

By Zahra Mirzafarjouyan

**TEHRAN**— Former acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Non-Proliferation for U.S. Foreign Service believes that Mike Pompeo almost certainly discussed the assassination of Fakhrizadeh when he met with Netanyahu in Tel Aviv on 19 November.

On Friday, Iran's Defense Ministry confirmed that top scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh head of the Organization of Defensive Innovation and Research (SPND), was targeted in a multi-pronged attack involving at least one explosion and small fire by a number of assailants in Absard city of Damavand County, Tehran province.

In a clash between the scientist's body-guard team and the assassins, Fakhrizadeh was seriously wounded and transferred to the hospital immediately after the attack but was martyred due to the wounds he had sustained in the terrorist assault.

Fakhrizadeh was reportedly the only Iranian scientist that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had cited in a program. The Zionist regime's media say several assassination attempts to kill him had failed in the past years.

Following his assassination, US President Donald Trump retweeted prominent Zionist journalist Yossi Melman, who wrote, "Mohsen Fakhrizadeh assassinated in Damavand, east of Tehran according to reports in Iran. He was head of Iran's secret military program and wanted for many years by Mossad. His death is a major psychological and professional blow for Iran."

By retweeting, the U.S. President implicitly confirmed the Zionist regime's involvement in the assassination of Iran's nuclear scientist.

To shed light on the issue, we reached out to Mark Fitzpatrick, Associate Fellow and former Executive Director of the Americas office of the International Institute for



Strategic Studies (IISS). He also served as acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Non-Proliferation for U.S. Foreign Service. Here is the full text of the interview:

■ Many say the Israeli regime was behind the assassination of Iranian scientist Fakhrizadeh. What do you think of this?

It seems very clear that Israel ordered the assassination. As I wrote in a commentary for the International Institute for Strategic Studies (<https://www.iiss.org/blogs/survival-blog/2020/11/assassinating-a-scientist-to-kill-the-iran-deal>), Israel had no doubt been tracking Fakhrizadeh for years; in April 2018, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu identified the scientist as the head of the program that conducted weapons work at the beginning of the century. Fakhrizadeh's assassination would have taken months to plan, starting well before Biden's election. Yet many plans are hatched without being implemented. Pulling the trigger on this

one was not just a matter of actionable intelligence, with the hit team finally having a bead on the man. Killing him was a political decision, heavily affected by the U.S. election and the time left in Trump's term.

■ Can such an act be committed by Israeli regime without any coordination with Donald Trump?

A: An unnamed senior U.S. official has said that the United States had nothing to do with it. Just two weeks earlier, however, Trump had made clear his desire to attack Iran and, when talked out of airstrikes, he asked for other options. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo almost certainly discussed such options when he met with Netanyahu in Israel on 19 November. The day after the attack, Trump retweeted a tweet by a well-placed Israeli journalist that the killing was a 'blow for Iran'. Whether or not Trump gave Israel a green light, he certainly was not unhappy about the as-

sassination.

■ What can be the real goals behind this act at this critical time? And what can be the consequences?

The assassination of Iranian nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh was not meant to stop Iran's nuclear program. The real target was Joe Biden's foreign policy and his aspiration to restore the Iran nuclear deal.

Fakhrizadeh was not removed in order to head off an imminent Iranian nuclear program. The assassination was not an act of pre-emption, even in the loosest construct of that concept. Nor was it an effective act of strategic prevention. However important his leadership role, Fakhrizadeh was not irreplaceable; over the past two decades, he has mentored dozens of scientists who share his knowledge and mission. No doubt it would take Iran longer to produce weapons without him, but produce them it could.

Killing Fakhrizadeh will make it more difficult for both the U.S. and Iran to restore the nuclear accord and the hope for comity that it fostered. Although Biden pledged in September to return to the JCPOA if Iran did so, he is facing demands even from within his own party to impose additional conditions. Influential Delaware Senator Chris Coons said he could not support returning to the deal unless there was also a path to limiting Iran's missile program and support for regional proxies. Even among many experts who deplored Trump's new sanctions on Iran, there is a view that the leverage supposedly derived from them should be used to extract a better deal from Iran or at least to extend the deadlines.

Iran's next moves will be crucial to the survivability of the deal. Any retaliation that results in Israeli or American deaths will usher in an escalation, which would be relished by American war hawks.

## Iran should become a crucial node in China's BRI project: geopolitical analyst

1 → The second was strategic in terms of the timing, which was intended to provoke Iran into carrying out a high-profile response that might then be exploited as the pretext for Trump to intensify pressure against it in what might be the final days of his presidency. Lastly, there was the soft power element of showing that "Israel" could assassinate an Iranian scientist inside Iran, which might improve domestic support for Netanyahu during his on-going political crisis.

■ Regarding the assassination, it seems it was a collusion orchestrated by Pompeo, Netanyahu, and Mohammed bin-Salman in view of the fact that they met a couple of days before Fakhrizadeh was assassinated. What is your take?

A: The U.S. - "Israeli" - Saudi alliance predates their recent meeting and has been a staple of Mideast (West Asia) geopolitics for at least the past decade, if not several. The strategic coordination between those three can be referred to as "Cerberus", after the three-headed hound of hell from Greek mythology. As for their reported meeting, it probably saw them putting the finishing touches on that plot and discussing their possible joint reaction in the event that Iran responds in a high-profile way shortly after the assassination. They likely also talked about ways those pro-Trump anti-Iran elements in the U.S. permanent military, intelligence, and diplomatic bureaucracies ("deep state") could sabotage any possible American-Iranian rapprochement under a Biden Administration.

■ Some American figures, including former CIA chief John Brennan, asked Iran not to respond and wait until the new administration comes to power. Do you think the suggestion is reasonable?

A: Brennan is a political hack who opposes the Trump Administration at every turn. Nothing that he says should be taken seriously since it's all motivated by partisanship. His role in this affair, whether intended or not, is to act as the "good cop" to Trump's "bad cop". It would be a serious mistake for any country, let alone one such as Iran which has been targeted by the U.S. for decades, to blindly follow the advice of a former CIA director. That's not to say that there isn't wisdom in waiting to respond if that's what Iran decides to do, but just that this shouldn't

be done solely at the former CIA director's behest but after an independent consideration of the strategic situation and thorough review of the pros and cons to every possible course of action.

■ Why does nobody directly condemn Israel for its assassination operations all around the world? Suppose another country in West Asia was responsible for the assassination, what would be the reaction of Western media?

A: "Israel" is held to different standards than any other country by most of the world, largely due to that entity's extensive influence network and intense information warfare. As regards Western states, "Israel" directs the bulk of its soft power messaging towards ensuring that they never forget about the Holocaust, which enables Tel Aviv to imply that anyone who doesn't support its policy of regional aggression is "anti-Semitic". Despite sounding ridiculous to non-Western observers, this narrative strategy is actually quite influential among the West because of the guilt that they've made to feel for not stopping the Holocaust. This in turn allows "Israel" to act with impunity as few dare to even condemn it for anything since those who do are then tarred and feathered in the media as "anti-Semites" even if they objectively aren't anti-Semitic at all.

■ How can Iran trust the U.S. while the White House pulled out of the nuclear deal and its ally Israel has been assassinating Iranian scientists?

A: **Trust is relative in International Relations and very difficult to restore once it has been broken, as has been the case with American-Iranian relations for decades. Tehran therefore cannot trust Washington in the contemporary context, but what it can do is rationally assess the strategic situation when considering future courses of action.** There might be times where pragmatic cooperation is necessary to advance Iranian interests, which was reportedly the case in the early days of the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, but even those instances don't represent sincere trust between the two but just a short-term convergence of interests. After all, that's happened in bilateral relations over the past four years, it might very well be the case that trusts between the two won't be restored for the indefinite future.



■ In view of the fact that the West failed to observe its obligations under the JCPOA, don't you think that Iran should focus more on Eastern powers like China and Russia even if the U.S. rejoins the JCPOA.

A: Phrasing the choice as an either-or one is inaccurate because it's possible to pursue a multi-vectored foreign policy "balancing" between both sides. Even in the halcyon days of the JCPOA, Iran still retained strategic relations with China and Russia, but it's just that they became comparatively much more important after the U.S. withdrew from the deal and the remaining Western countries practically abandoned it afterward under American pressure. Whatever a possible Biden Administration ends up doing regarding the JCPOA, Iran should continue its efforts to become a crucial node along with China's Belt & Road Initiative (BRI), in particular by considering the benefits of partnering with its flagship project of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The economic geography is such that CPEC could be expanded in the western direction through the W-CPEC+ proposal for transforming Iran into China's gateway to the larger West Asian marketplace so long as Tehran plays its cards right. Regardless of whatever else happens, Iran should prioritize its strategic partnership with China by doing its utmost to see to it that the W-CPEC+ vision succeeds.

## Iranian officials are too savvy to fall victim to Zionist trap

By Stephen Lendman

Based on what's known so far, Israeli dirty hands were all over the assassination of top Iranian nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh.

Perhaps the CIA was complicit with Mossad for what happened.

U.S. intelligence was clearly aware of the plot in advance. Fakhrizadeh was long on the Zionist regime's hit list for elimination.

His assassination was all about wanting Iran to retaliate in a way that would draw the Trump regime into attacking the country militarily.

It was also a plot to try preventing Biden/Harris from rejoining the JCPOA when they take over next year.

It was unrelated to Iran's nuclear program. U.S. and Israeli intelligence, IAEA monitors, and establishment media know Iranian nuclear activities have no military component.

They never did and no evidence suggests an Iranian intention to go another way.

What's clear is that if its ruling authorities wanted a nuclear weapons capability, it would have been developed long ago.

It never happened and most likely won't happen ahead by a nation abhorrent of these WMDs, wanting them eliminated everywhere before they eliminate us.

According to an unnamed senior Israeli official, the world should thank Israel for assassinating Fakhrizadeh, the New York Times reported.

At the same time, he lied adding that Israel will continue to counter "Iran's aspirations to nuclear weapons (sic)."

None exist. U.S. and Israeli officials know it. So do the Times and other establishment media.

Yet they consistently fail to set the record straight on this issue and countless others — reporting fake news instead of the real thing.

A separate Times propaganda piece falsely accused Fakhrizadeh of "leading Iran's pursuit of a nuclear weapon for the past two decades (sic)."

No such pursuit exists, not earlier or now.

The Times willfully and maliciously lied — while ignoring nuclear armed and dangerous Israel, the only regional entity with these weapons and intention to use them if necessary.

Citing unnamed U.S. intelligence officials, the Times said "there is little doubt that Israel was behind the killing."

"It had all the hallmarks of a precisely timed operation by Mossad."

The Netanyahu regime "did nothing to dispel that view."

Time and again, he lied about an alleged secret Iranian nuclear weapons program he knows doesn't exist.

The Times lied calling Fakhrizadeh "a shadowy figure (sic) (considered) the Iranian equivalent of J. Robert Oppenheimer... who oversaw the Manhattan Project (sic)."

On Friday, former State Department official Mark Fitzpatrick tweeted:

"The reason for assassinating Fakhrizadeh wasn't to impede Iran's war potential. It was to impede diplomacy."

Left unexplained was that Iran hasn't

attacked another nation in centuries.

It threatens none now except in self-defense if attacked — its legitimate UN Charter right.

Iran hasn't fully settled the score with the U.S. for assassinating its Quds Force commander General Qassem Soleimani last January.

Israeli killing of Mohsen Fakhrizadeh adds more pressure on its authorities to retaliate.

Doing nothing or not enough encourages more of the same by the U.S. and Israel.

Between now and January when Biden/Harris replace Trump, the Netanyahu regime may have more hostile actions in mind to unleash against Iran.

A response is likely coming in retaliation for what happened so far.

Iranian officials are too savvy to fall victim to a Zionist trap.

They'll act in their own way at a time of their choosing, perhaps how, where and when not expected.

(Source: Press TV)

## Erdogan hopes France will get rid of 'burden' of Macron soon

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has expressed hope that France will soon get rid of Emmanuel Macron, describing his counterpart as a "burden".

"Macron and France are going through a very dangerous period actually. My hope is that France gets rid of the Macron trouble as soon as possible", Erdogan said speaking to reporters in Istanbul.

Over the years Turkey and France have disagreed on a number of geopolitical issues, however, the discord turned into a bitter feud following Erdogan's harsh statement about his counterpart, in which he advised Macron to get "mental checks".

"What is the problem of this person called Macron with Islam and Muslims?", Erdogan said at the end of October during a meeting with his Justice and Development party. "What else can be said to a head of state who does not understand freedom of belief and who behaves in this way to millions of people living in his country who are members of a different faith? Macron needs treatment on a mental level", said Erdogan.

## UN General Assembly adopts five anti-Israeli resolutions

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) has approved five anti-Israeli resolutions, which are part of a package of 20 pro-Palestinian texts that the 193-member body adopts on an annual basis.

One of the documents, passed on Wednesday, condemned Israeli sovereignty over the occupied Golan Heights — a territory the Tel Aviv regime seized from Syria in the 1967 Six Day War and annexed four years later — in a move that was never recognized by the world community.

Endorsed by 88-9 votes with 62 abstentions, the resolution urges Israel to withdraw from the "occupied Syrian Golan to the line of 4 June 1967 in implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions."

It also affirmed that Israel's unilateral annexation of the Syrian territory in 1981 "constitutes a stumbling block in the way of achieving a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region."

According to Press TV, over the past decades, Israel has built dozens of settlements in the Golan Heights in defiance of international calls for the regime to stop its construction activities on the occupied land.

Damascus has repeatedly reaffirmed its sovereignty over the Golan Heights, saying the area must be completely restored to its control.

In a major pro-Israel policy shift, US President Donald Trump signed an executive order in 2019 recognizing Israel's control over occupied Golan in a blatant violation of international law.

## Almost half of Yemen's population experiencing high levels of food insecurity: UN

The United Nations has warned that malnutrition in conflict-hit Yemen has reached record levels, saying almost half of the population is experiencing high levels of food insecurity, as time is running out to prevent mass starvation.

The World Food Programme (WFP) warned on Thursday that the number of people facing the second highest level of food insecurity in Yemen is set to increase from 3.6 million people to 5 million in the first half of 2021.

"Pockets of famine-like conditions have already returned for the first time in two years," WFP said in a statement, adding, "The number of people experiencing this degree of catastrophic food insecurity could nearly triple from 16,500 currently to 47,000 people between January and June 2021."

According to the UN's Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis, around 45% of Yemen's population is facing high levels of acute food insecurity.

It noted that within this number, 33% of the Yemeni population are in crisis, while 12% are in emergency.

Moreover, 16,500 people are in a catastrophic and famine-like situation, and the figure is the worst level of the IPC classifications.

## Qatar FM: There has been movement on resolving Persian Gulf crisis

Qatar's foreign minister has said there has been movement on resolving the diplomatic dispute that has pitted the Persian Gulf neighbors against each other but he could not predict whether a breakthrough was imminent or would fully resolve the matter.

Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt imposed a diplomatic, trade and travel boycott on Qatar in June 2017, accusing Doha of supporting terrorism and having ties with Iran that were deemed too close.

## Resistance News

## Abu Zuhri: Bahrain's position on settlement products violates intl law

**INTERNATIONAL DESK** **TEHRAN** — Sami Abu Zuhri, a spokesman for the Hamas, said that the Bahraini Trade Minister's statements that his country will deal with Israeli settlement products are a violation of international law.

Abu Zuhri also confirmed in a statement on Thursday that these statements are an indication of the state of full alignment with the Israeli occupation against Palestine.

He called on the Bahraini people to put pressure on their government to reverse these humiliating and hostile positions against the Palestinian people.

Zayed bin Rashid Alzayani, Minister of Industry, Commerce and Tourism said that Bahrain will not distinguish between imports from Israel and those from settlements in the occupied West Bank and will deal with all these products as Israeli, according to the political analyst of the Walla website, Barack Rafid.

Alzayani added, during a briefing to Israeli journalists during his visit to Israel on Thursday, that Bahrain wants Israeli companies to invest in it and to sign deals with Bahraini companies, stressing that there will be no restrictions on that.



## Discover puzzling royal bas-relief in southern Iran

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** — Sarab-e Qandil (literary meaning "Ice-cold Spring"), is one of many reliefs, which may still bear untold stories.

Locating near modern Kazerun in southern Fars province, the relief is contained in a quadrangular frame, carved on an isolated rock beside the bed of a river, without having been much eroded or damaged by the water. Its isolation from frequented roads might explain its excellent state of conservation: it was not accessible for vandals.



The Sassanid-era (224-651 CE) piece of art, depicts a queen offering a lotus flower to her husband [widely believed to be the Iranian king Bahram II (r.276-293)]. The two characters look at each other, while a prince (probably their son, the future king Bahram III) holds a ring of power.

The carving is well-executed. Special attention has been paid to the clothes, which show beautiful and fine details, giving an impression of lightness, of aerial movement. The king appears to wear his winged crown and jewels. His left hand is on the top of his sword. His right hand is open, waiting for the gift. The composition shows the royal figure at the center of the panel, the queen being on his right, the prince being on his left/back.

Although this relief is generally attributed to Bahram II, the lack of an inscription makes that experts couldn't be completely certain. The main arguments for identification with Bahram II lay in the fact that he is the only Sasanian king who showed his queen on coins, and that the female figure might appear to be dressed more like a queen and not a goddess. Scholars like Vanden Berghe and Aerinck, therefore, think that the relief can be attributed to Bahram II. However, Lewitt-Tawill maintains that the relief represents Ardashir I and the goddess, the prince being Shapur I.

Soon after Bahram II, the son and successor of Bahram I, was enthroned, he was forced to defend his position against a brother, Hormizd, viceroy of the eastern provinces.

The Sassanid era is of very high importance in the history of Iran. Under Sassanids, Persian art and architecture experienced a general renaissance. Architecture often took grandiose proportions such as palaces at Ctesiphon, Firuzabad, and Sarvestan that are amongst highlights of the ensemble.

## UNESCO sites in South Khorasan to receive superior maintenance

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** — UNESCO sites will be receiving additional care and maintenance in South Khorasan province, deputy provincial tourism said on Thursday.

Separate restoration projects have been formulated for Baladeh qanats of Ferdows and Akbarieh Garden of Birjand, which would bring more care to the World Heritage sites, Ali Shariatimanesh said.

Talking about the expenditures, he noted a budget of 8.4 billion rials (\$2 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) is allocated to channel through the restoration projects.

Baladeh qanats of Ferdows is one of the eleven qanats registered on the UNESCO's World Heritage List in 2016. The historical importance and complex system of qanat as well as their benefits for the ecosystem were the main reasons for their registration.

Throughout the arid regions of Iran, agricultural and permanent settlements are supported by the ancient qanat system of tapping alluvial aquifers at the heads of valleys and conducting the water along underground tunnels by gravity, often over many kilometers.



Qanat is a gently sloping underground channel with a series of vertical access shafts, used to transport water from an aquifer under a hill. Qanats create a reliable supply of water for human settlements and irrigation in hot, arid, and semi-arid climates.

The registered qanats are located in different provinces, of which Baladeh qanats of Ferdows was chosen for its complex water distribution method.

Akbarieh Garden is one of the nine gardens registered on UNESCO's World Heritage List under the title of Persian garden in 2011.

The Persian garden profile also includes the gardens of Pasargad and Eram in Fars Province, Pahlevanpur and Dowlatabad in Yazd Province, Fin and Chehel Sotun in Isfahan Province, Abbasabad in Mazandaran Province, and Shahzadeh Mahan (also known as Shazdeh) in Kerman Province.

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

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

# The disabled and fresh start for corona-hit tourism

➔ **1** Iran, along with many other countries, tries a firm commitment to inclusive tourism for making destinations more accessible for people with disabilities. Tehran's Si-e Tir St., a historical thoroughfare surrounded by various museums, travel destinations, and historical monuments, is the country's benchmark for doing so.

On the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, which was marked on Thursday, UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili said: "Tourism environments and services are often designed without considering the different access requirements that visitors and locals may have. The tourism sector must prioritize accessibility. This can be a real game-changer for destinations and businesses, helping them recover from the crisis and grow back in a more inclusive and resilient way."

Last year, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) attached great importance to the creation of the international "Accessible Tourism Destination", aimed to make sure that a destination can



be enjoyed by any tourist, regardless of their physical, sensory or cognitive abilities.

The global disability prevalence is higher than previous WHO estimates, which date from the 1970s and suggested a figure of

around 10 percent. This global estimate for disability is on the rise due to population aging and the rapid spread of chronic diseases, as well as improvements in the methodologies used to measure disability.

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

Apart from the disabled, accessibility is of very high importance as well when it comes to the rights of the world's aging population. As we grow older, the chance of facing a permanent or temporary disability is vividly increased. Accessibility is a key element of any responsible and sustainable development policy which does not only benefit persons with disabilities but is beneficial to the whole society.

Each year, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities reminds us that all citizens on Earth, particularly those with visual, hearing, mobility, or cognitive impairments, have the right to access leisure and sight-seeing services on an equal basis; a matter not being materialized so far despite immense developments and cutting-edge technologies.

## Coronavirus causes \$24m damage to Semnan's tourism

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** — The north-central Semnan province has suffered one trillion rials (about \$24 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) in earnings from tourism over the past couple of months by a virus epidemic, the provincial tourism chief on Thursday.

In this situation, tourism businesses that are struggling with the impact of the coronavirus pandemic need more support, Mehdi Jamal said.

Currently, a government-provided supportive package, which includes low-interest loans, is being injected into the battered sector to assist tourism-jobs and businesses, the official added.

He also noted that unauthorized tours are prevented strictly to protect the rights of tourism activists.

### Government's support package

In late October, deputy tourism chief Vali Teymouri announced that a new support package to pay loans to businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic has been approved.

Depending on the type and activity of the businesses, they could benefit from at least 160 million rials (\$3,800 at the official rate of 42,000 rials) to nine billion rials (\$214,000) of bank loans with a 12-percent interest rate, he said.

The loans will be allocated to tourist guides, travel agencies, tourism transport companies, tourism educational institutions, eco-lodges and traditional accommodations, hotels, apartment hotels, motels, and guesthouses as well as traditional accommodation centers, tourism complexes, and recreational centers, the official explained.

In September, Teymouri pointed to the 1.3 million tourism

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

Back in August, Teymouri announced that the tourism ministry has approved a total budget of 4,920 billion rials (over \$117 million) to support corona-affected tourism businesses, covering as much as 36,000 people working in the tourism sector.

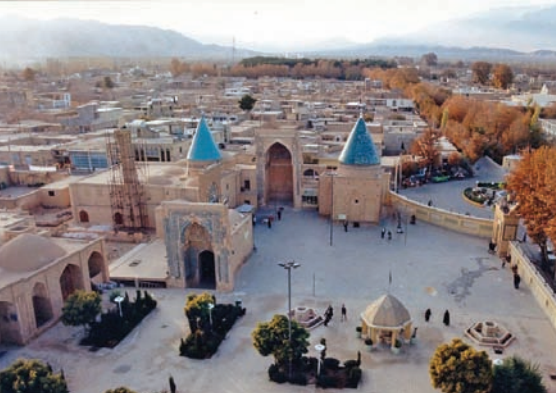
### Tourism industry's critical situation

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

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

He also noted that the coronavirus pandemic should not bring traveling to a complete standstill. "Corona is a fact, but can the virus stop tourism? Certainly not. For us, the coronavirus is a new experience in dealing with crises that teaches tourism experts around the world how to deal with such a disaster, and thankfully governments are turning this into an opportunity for better planning."

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



rescue package for tourism businesses.

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

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

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

## Omar Khayyam's mausoleum undergoes restoration work

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** — A rehabilitation project has recently been commenced on the mausoleum of Omar Khayyam (1048-1131), who was a legendary Persian mathematician, astronomer, and poet.

A budget of four billion rials (about \$95,000 at the official rate of 42,000 rials) has been allocated to the project, Neyshabur's tourism chief Mohammad-Esmail Etemadi Moqaddam said on Thursday.

The project aims at repairing the stones and the foundation of the mausoleum, which are worn and cracked due to the time passing, temperature, and climate change, the official added.

Located in the northeastern city of Neyshabur, the mausoleum was built in 1962 by the prominent Iranian architect Hushang Seyhun. It was made a National Cultural Heritage in 1975.

The 12th-century Persian mathematician, astronomer, and



poet Omar Khayyam Neyshaburi received a good education in the sciences and philosophy in his homeland Neyshabur before traveling to Samarkand (now in Uzbekistan), where

## North Khorasan museums on final stages of treasure troves documentation

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** — More than 90 percent of the historical objects, being kept at the museums across the northeastern province of North Khorasan, have been documented so far.

A total of 6,500 historical relics of the province have been submitted so far to the comprehensive databank of historical and cultural movable properties of the county, provincial tourism chief Habib Yazdanpanah announced on Wednesday.

Noting that documenting and submitting the objects on the databank could help to identify and track them, and to monitor all



their transfers more properly, he added that this project could also give accurate statistics of the relics to the cultural heritage officials.

Within the next two years, all the his-

torical objects being kept in the province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department as well as the objects of the province's museums are planned to be documented and submitted to the databank, the official added.

According to the province's Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department, 1200 historical structures have been identified, of which 655 properties have been inscribed on the National Heritage list so far.

Though North Khorasan province may not be the first choice of regular travelers, its tourism is getting momentum. Most for-

eign tourists pass straight through North Khorasan in transit between Mashhad and Gorgan according to Lonely Planet, but if you have time to explore, it's worth diverting south from the capital, Bojnord, towards Esfarayen, famed for its wrestling tournaments, the remarkable citadel of Belqays and the partly preserved stepped village of Roein some 20km north. Although a lot of new building spoils the effect in parts of the village, Roein is considered Khorasan's answer to the well-known Masuleh and is a possible starting point for hikes to little-visited mountain villages.



The Cyrus Cylinder

generals from among the Medes.

Following the conquest of Lydia and the Greek cities of Ionia in the west of modern-day Turkey, the Persian administration was split up into provinces. Later, Babylonia and the other conquered areas were also converted into provinces, ruled by satraps, or governors, a system later completed under Darius I.

## History's first superpower sprang from ancient Iran

Part (4/5)  
Cyrus intuitively grasped that respect toward the diversity of religious customs in the huge territories under his command was a key ingredient of imperial stability. This policy only consolidated his power. The Cyrus Cylinder tells how Marduk sought an "upright king . . . [and] he took the hand of Cyrus . . . and called him by his name, proclaiming him aloud for the kingship over all of everything." The cylinder describes the Babylonians' reception of Cyrus as a liberator in the fall of 539 BC.

The priests of Marduk were not the only ones to celebrate Cyrus's conquest of Babylon. Many Jews had been living in captivity in Babylon since Nebuchadnezzar II had

brought them there following his conquest of Jerusalem in 586 BC.

The arrival of Cyrus forms the backdrop to the stories of Daniel in the biblical book Apocrypha. The emperor's decision to repatriate the Jews to Jerusalem is yet another example of Cyrus's embrace of multiculturalism, earning him a eulogy in the Bible itself: "Thus says the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have grasped," wrote the Prophet Isaiah, one of the Jewish exiles in Babylon, "to subdue nations before him and ungird the loins of kings, to open doors before him that gates may not be closed."

Cyrus had reached the pinnacle of his power. He did indeed seem, as the Cyrus Cylinder

claims, to have become "King of the World." Following this victory, kings from across Asia scrambled to pay homage to him, the leader who had created the largest empire the world had ever seen. Written in cuneiform, the Cyrus Cylinder recounts how sovereigns from the Upper Sea (the Mediterranean) to the Lower Sea (the Persian Gulf) came to offer tribute to Cyrus in Babylon and kiss his feet.

### Policy of tolerance

Cyrus's spectacular conquests forced him to create an administration fit for an empire. Inspired by the sophisticated model of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, Cyrus created a network of public administration and tax collection while recruiting the best military



# Healthcare coverage for millions of refugees

**SOCIETY** TEHRAN — Health

Minister Saeed Namaki has said that the country has implemented testing and treatment coverage programs for 3.5 million legal and illegal Afghan immigrants despite all restrictions due to unlawful and unilateral sanctions.

"The Government, despite all restrictions due to unlawful and unilateral sanctions, has provided special financial packages for the poor and marginalized population; has done economic support measures especially for small businesses; and implemented testing and treatment coverage programs for 3.5 million legal and illegal Afghan immigrants.

We have taken additional environmental health measures at our borders with neighboring countries according to IHR-2005, which requires substantial support by Member States to maintain normal trade," Namaki explained in an address to the high-level special session of the United Nations General Assembly, Response to COVID-19 Pandemic, held in New York December 3-4, 2020.

Our strong PHC Network was not only the core of three rounds of screening through Electronic Health Records, but we managed to sustain Essential Health Services to ensure maternal and child care, immunization, Tuberculosis and HIV case management are provided, and, as a pioneer in NCDs management, to continue health services for chronic patients and mitigating risk factors.

He also said that the COVID-19 pandemic swept the world severely, providing many lessons to be learned nationally, regionally and globally, which demonstrated unpreparedness of the global community to deal with a Pandemic. Global preparedness and emergency response must be at the forefront of the agenda of



governments and international agencies for decades to come.

"Leadership, solidarity, inter-sectoral collaboration, evidence-based interventions and coordination between countries are the tools needed to manage COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, we need to strengthen the IT infrastructure to provide more reliable data, tele-medicine and tele-education in the new era."

"I would like to emphasize the vital importance of global solidarity and international cooperation, with full support to the WHO, as the unique platform for global health activities, to overcome this pandemic. Timely, cost-effective and equitable access of all nations to diagnostic, medical equipment, medicines and vaccines are crucial, with no discrimination, sanction or unjustifiable prioritization."

Namaki added: "The unilateral coercive

measures imposed by the government of United States have negatively affected the process of combating the pandemic in my country. Unilateral illegal measures, hampers easy access of the people to basic medical items and requirements and thus endangers health of the Iranian citizens. Medicines supply and health commodities have been targeted through tight restrictions of foreign exchange resources even for these humanitarian issues."

"This pandemic reminds us how much we need integrity, solidarity and collaboration, at local, regional, and global levels. While we are committed to the UNGA resolutions and political declarations on UHC, NCDs and communicable diseases such as TB, there is a need to re-visit the targets, financing and approaches as a response to the pandemic, which hit the health infra-structures, health

work force and the economies."

"I call upon international financial organizations to provide substantial financial supports to Member States regardless political impediments," he concluded.

**Free medical services for foreign nationals**

In August, Deputy Health Minister Shahnam Arshi said all foreign nationals infected with coronavirus receive medical treatment free of charge in Iran.

So far, at least 4 trillion rials (nearly \$95 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) have been spent only for the treatment of registered foreign nationals, Arshi stated.

He went on to say that all health care services for refugees in Iran are free of charge and are also covered by the UN-HCR.

Iran is host to one of the largest and most protracted urban refugee situations in the world and has provided asylum to refugees for four decades.

The latest official government statistics in 2014, there are 951,142 Afghan refugees and 28,268 Iraqi refugees living in Iran. Many of the refugees living in Iran are the second and third generation, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

About 97 percent of refugees live in urban and semi-urban areas, while 3 percent are residing in 20 refugee resorts run by the UNHCR's main government counterpart.

In addition to Afghan refugees, there are about 2.5 million Afghans living in Iran, including those having a passport and undocumented Afghans. 450,000 Afghan who did not have identity cards or birth certificates have received Iranian visas that allow them to live, work or study in the country.

## WHO urged not to remain silent against Fakhrizadeh assassination

**SOCIETY**

TEHRAN — Iran has urged the World Health Organization not to remain silent and inactive against the assassination of Mohsen Fakhrizadeh, an Iranian scientist whose valuable efforts were noteworthy for the production of the first coronavirus diagnostic kits and vaccine in the country.

In a letter to the World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus on Friday, Iran's permanent representative to the United Nations Headquarters in Geneva, Esmail Baghaei-Hamaneh, highlighted the valuable services of this prominent researcher in the field of health, mainly in the production of the first coronavirus diagnostic kits and vaccine in Iran.

He described the brutal assassination as a continuation of the policy of imposing maximum pressure on the Iranian nation, stressing that remaining silent and inactive against this crime is not accepted at all, as it may seem normal and to be repeated all over the world.

Baghaei-Hamaneh referred to the assassination of Fakhrizadeh as a clear example of "belligerent state terrorism" that has no value or credibility for moral and human values and international rules and regulations.

Fakhrizadeh, a senior expert specialized in nuclear technology, was assassinated in a terrorist attack on November 27 in the city of Absard, northeast of the capital Tehran.

**Iranian vaccination by Sept. 2021**

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

Emphasizing that no Iranian vaccine has been yet allowed to enter the human phase so far, he said that "progress is made when the Food and Drug Administration issues a vaccine clinical work permit."

All vaccines are in the pre-clinical stage and it is hoped that at least 4 vaccines to start phase 3 of the human



trial in September 2021, he highlighted.

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

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

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

**Homegrown detection kits**

Iran is one of the top five manufacturers of coronavirus antigen-based rapid detection kits in the world; as homegrown antibody rapid test, which can detect coronavirus in 15 to 20 minutes, was unveiled in Tehran on November 17.

Sourena Sattari, vice president for science and tech-

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

Pointing out that multiplying the production of COVID-19 equipment led to significant measures that led to foreign currency saving for the country, he said "it also helped us cope with problems and not to run out of equipment because no matter how much money we gave, no country had the equipment to sell."

He also announced that two types of diagnostic kits are now mass-produced by knowledge-based companies, first one is the RT-PCR tests, 8 million of which are being produced per month; while the other is serology-based tests that a total of 400,000 are being manufactured monthly and is expected to reach up to 2 million.

At present, 40 advanced ventilators are manufactured daily in the medical equipment sector, he explained.

Knowledge-based companies can produce any medicine effective in countering coronavirus or approved by the scientific committee within a week to 10 days, he noted.

Mehdi Kashmiri, director for technology and planning at the science ministry, said in July that about 450 knowledge-based companies were active in the country for manufacturing protective equipment and treatment products to fight the coronavirus.

Production of more than one million face masks per day, production of more than 1.5 liters of disinfectants per day, diagnostic kits, non-contact thermometers, protective clothing, ventilator are among the produces manufactured by these companies, he added.

Iranian-made innovative products in the field of diagnosis, screening, and fighting coronavirus were also unveiled to combat the disease, namely, ozone generator, nanotechnology face shields, disinfection gate, and molecular COVID-19 diagnostic kits.

### ENGLISH IN USE

#### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

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## Iran to hold first national online project Olympiad

The first round of online project Olympiad will be held in Iran in the next Iranian calendar year (starting on March 21), Fatemeh Mohajerani, an official with the Ministry of Education has said.

The project Olympiad will focus on special subjects and is very much like Khwarizmi International Award the only difference is that the Olympiad will be carried out online, IRNA news agency quoted Mohajerani as saying on Sunday. The participants can submit their projects online via a website and a jury will evaluate them, she added.

## اولین المپیاد مجازی برگزار می شود

فاطمه مهاجرانی رئیس مرکز ملی پرورش استعدادهای درخشان و دانش‌پژوهان جوان گفت: سال آینده اولین المپیاد مجازی با عنوان «المپیاد پروژه ای» برگزار می شود.

فاطمه مهاجرانی روز یکشنبه در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایرنا اظهار داشت: این المپیاد یک موضوع خاص را به عنوان یک مساله تعریف کرده و به آن می پردازد و در واقع شبیه جشنواره خوارزمی است با این تفاوت که نیازی به حضور افراد نیست بلکه به صورت مجازی برگزار می شود.

وی افزود: شرکت کنندگان و نخبگان از طریق یک پورتال، طرح ها و موضوعات خود را ارسال می کنند تا مورد داوری قرار گیرد.

## Royan among world's top 10 for assisted reproductive techniques

**SOCIETY**

TEHRAN — Royan Research Institute ranked among the world's top 10 centers based on the total number of publications investigating male infertility and assisted reproductive techniques (ART) during 2000 to 2019, based on the results of a study published in the international journal Andrologia.



The article by researchers from eight American, African, Asian and European countries, evaluates the total number of publications in the field of male infertility and ART from 2000 to 2019.

ART is considered as one of the main options in treatment and Royan Research Institute one of the world leaders in this field, according to the study.

The results are obtained from the analysis of twenty years of work by researchers around the world evaluating the number of articles, authors, type of citation, subject area, international collaborations, and year of publication.

The research shows that Iranian researchers have had good collaborations with others in the international arena, and this is an important issue in the future of the research process.

Also, in the analysis of knowledge measurement, it has been shown that the trend of this type of research in the last twenty years has always been constant and azoospermia (obstructive / non-obstructive) has been the most field of clinical studies (more than 60 percent).

Moreover, using assisted reproductive techniques has reported over 47 percent success.

According to the research, assisted reproductive technologies currently play a special role in the treatment of men's infertility.

Royan is a public non-profit organization that is affiliated with the academic center for education, culture, and research. Established in 1991, Royan is a research institute for reproductive biomedicine and infertility treatments; and a world's leading one in both research and treatment of this field.

The institute also acts as a leader in stem cell research and is one of the best clinics for infertility treatment. It has 46 scientific members and 186 lab technicians.

**Infertility treatment in Iran**

Abdolhossein Shahverdi, head of Royan, said in October that foreign couples from neighboring and even European countries highly welcome infertility treatment in Iran because of the favorable cost and successful test results compared to other countries.

Infertility is the inability to become pregnant after one year of intercourse without contraception involving a male and female partner. There are many causes of infertility, including some that medical intervention can treat.

Infertility occurs in 10 to 15 percent of couples. Causes of infertility can be female or male or both. Male infertility is responsible for 40 percent of infertility cases, while 40 percent are due to female infertility, and 10 percent are due to combined problems in both parts. In 10 percent of cases, no cause is found. In other words, in these couples, both people do not have a problem according to the available tests, but they do not have children for unknown reasons.

In the last two decades, great strides have been made in the diagnosis and treatment of infertility, and about 65 percent of infertile couples have had children using new methods.

Studies conducted worldwide and in Iran, about 10 to 15 percent of couples are infertile, Shahverdi said.

Until the 1970s, these couples went to European countries for treatment, but we entered into this issue in time, and established more than 70 infertility centers, so great success achieved in the field of education, research, and specialized services, he highlighted.

The cost of infertility treatment in Iran is about 50 percent lower than in European and American countries. And the success rate in the best centers is between 30 and 40 percent, he also said.

## LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 74)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

use n	/estefā'de/ استفاده	
to use	/estefā'de kar'dan/ (آز) استفاده کردن	
alphabet	/alef'bā/ الفبا	
hello?	/a'low/ آلو؟	تلفن
to excuse, to forgive	بخشیدن - بخشش	
post	/post/ پُست	
postal	/pos'ti/ پُستی	
date; history	/tā'rix/ تاریخ	
to telephone, to phone	/tele'fon/ تلفن زدن	سیک
birth	/taval'lod/ تولد	
letter (of the alphabet); talk	/harf/ حرف	
pertaining to the family	adj خانواده‌گی	کارت دانشجویی
pertaining to students	adj دانشجویی	
to dial	/somā're gereftan/ شماره گرفتن	
sound; voice	/se'dā/ صدا	گوشی
public	/omu'mi/ عمومی	
necessary	/lā'zem/ لازم	
	/ma'hal/ محل	
	نام fml /nām/ اسم	
address	/ne'sā'ni/ نشانی	نامه



# TV series on nuclear scientist Majid Shahriari under production at IRIB

➔1 “Before I decided to make a TV series about martyr Shahriari, I used to think he might be a politician, having had his own goals, but when I entered his life and got to know more about him, and studied his academic and personal life, I questioned why such a personality had to be assassinated,” he added.

“Martyr Shahriari was a highly educated man who was able to solve difficult atomic issues,” he noted.

Tabrizi said that the story begins with the assassination and later goes into the life story of the martyr and the strenuous efforts made by the security guards to neutralize several assassination attempts.

The series also intends to highlight the ethical, epistemological and academic aspects of the martyr.

“We also try to put the spotlight on the major characteristic of nuclear science in daily life. Some people only think of bombs and nuclear war when they hear the word atom, while many things in our lives such as medical technologies are made by atoms.

“Films and TV series can give us an opportunity to display other characteristics



Kaveh Khodashenas portrays the Iranian nuclear scientist Majid Shahriari in the TV series “Heritage of Majid”.

of the personality. The assassination of the nuclear scientists may halt the projects for a short while, but we have many more scientists who will continue on their paths,” he added.

He also explained that actor Kaveh Khodashenas is playing the role of Shahriari because of his facial features and mild manner, he could better display the personality of the martyr.

Shahriari was born in Zanjan in 1966. He finished school in Zanjan and continued his studies in Tehran.

He graduated with a Ph.D. in nuclear engineering from the University of Amirkabir in Tehran. He was a professor at Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran.

“Martyr of Science” is a book written about Shahriari. Its Arabic translation was published last summer.

The book has been translated by Hassan Matar and published by Tamkin Publications in Iraq.

The Arabic version of the book was distributed in Iraq and Lebanon in collaboration with the Iranian firm, Raheyar Publications.

In the book, relatives, friends, students and colleagues recount memories of Shahriari.

## Graffiti art brightens Tehran with images of hope and life



A graffiti art by Iranian artist Khamush.

➔1 “Before I began the art of graffiti, I was very interested in literature and chose the name ‘silence’ inspired by the Persian mystic and poet Jalal ad-Din Rumi. Having a nickname is something common among graffiti artists, who do not want their real names and personalities to be revealed,” he said.

One of the famous works that he created last winter after the spread of coronavirus across the country showed the image of a nurse holding a placard in his hand bearing the phrase, “Don’t Be Afraid.”

“Coronavirus brought a new season for everybody. It was also the same for me,” he said.

“However, some made jokes about the image on social media, writing ‘Let Us Be Afraid’, instead of ‘Don’t Be Afraid’. Of course, they meant if we were afraid perhaps we would have fewer losses. Still, if I were to draw the graffiti again I

would write ‘Let Us Be Afraid a Little’.”

“However, I tried to say that the nurses who are on the frontline of the battle with the coronavirus are not cowards,” he explained.

“The artists usually show interest in graffiti art while they are very young. I also began when I was very young, but I have kept doing it because of my broad interests. It is very interesting for me and I think it doesn’t lose its attraction. It is a form of art with no limits,” he added.

He also mentioned that he doesn’t like to refer to the topics directly in his artworks and he usually makes use of a word or a phrase with the works to be more influential.

“I used to do my works during the night because of its excitement, but I have chosen to work during the day these days, and people who pass by usually show positive reactions and appreciate my works,” he concluded.

## Persian novel “His Ego” published in Indonesian

CULTURE TEHRAN —

Persian writer Reza Amirkhani’s novel “His Ego” (“Akunya Dia”) has been published in Indonesian.

The love story has been translated into Indonesian by Bastian Zulyeno, an Indonesian expert on the Persian language who has a Ph.D. from the University of Tehran, Iran’s Islamic Culture and Relations Organization that is the published of the book announced on Thursday.

The novel tells the story of Ali Fattah, a man from a well-established family in Tehran who falls in love with Mahtab, the daughter of their family maid. Due to Ali’s belief in a pure love, Mahtab declines to marry him until she becomes



Cover of the Indonesian version of Persian writer Reza Amirkhani’s novel “His Ego”.

sure about her real love for Ali. Mahtab enjoys guidelines from a dervish named Mostafa, who is a key character in her life. In the end, however, Ali and Mahtab die unattached in order to marry each

other in the future life.

Ofoq, a major publisher based in Tehran, released the original book in 1999. This novel is one of Amirkhani’s hugely popular novels, which has been republished 38 times. It has been translated into various languages including Arabic, Russian and Turkish.

Armenia’s Darak Publishing House in Yerevan has purchased the rights for the Armenian translation of “His Ego”.

Amirkhani is a bestselling novelist in his homeland. His book “Salvation”, about the consequences of urban development for a young couple that lives in Tehran, was selected as best novel in 2018 at the 11th Jalal Al-e Ahmad Literary Awards, Iran’s most lucrative literary prize.

“A Half of One-Sixth of Pyongyang”, Amirkhani’s travelogue of North Korea, appeared in Tehran bookstores in March and was warmly received by Iranian readers as they were fighting COVID-19.

Amirkhani visited the North Korean capital of Pyongyang for nine days during June 2018 as a documentarian.

He is also the author of “The Good Smell of Oil”, “Ernia” and several other bestsellers.

In 2019, Amirkhani was nominated for the title of the Islamic Revolution Artist of the Year for his novel “Salvation”. However, he failed to win the title, which is granted by the Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization.

## Jean-Pierre Durand’s “La Sociologie de Marx” comes to Iranian bookstores

CULTURE TEHRAN —

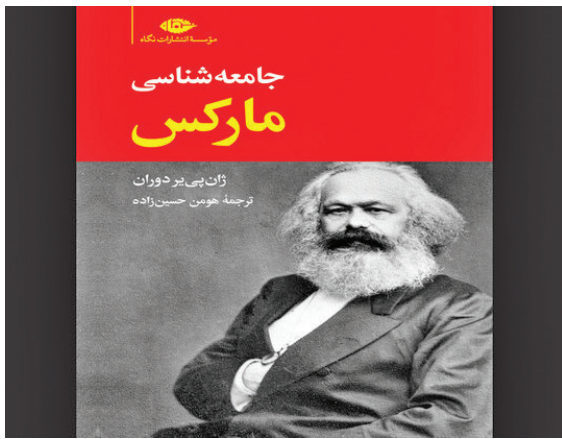
A Persian translation of “La Sociologie de Marx” (“The sociology of Marx”) by Jean-Pierre Durand has recently been published by Negah Publications in Tehran.

The book has been translated into Persian by Hooman Hosseinzadeh.

“Marx was not a sociologist, but there was a sociology in Marx,” wrote Henri Lefebvre in the sixties. This book brings to light in Marx’s work the elements that founded Marxist sociologies and diffusedly influenced 20th-century sociologists.

Marx was both an activist and a scholar. Is it possible to separate the writings of one from the other? What remains of Marx’s critique of capitalism? How can this critique of capitalism be used today in advanced industrial societies, but also in dominated peripheral regions?

To answer these questions, the author presents the theory of exploitation on which the entire conceptual system of Marx is built. It is in the factory that Engels and Marx came closest to sociological practices and, in particular, to what the sociology of work would be like in the second half of the 20th century. But it is the barely sketched theories, that of social class and



Front cover of the Persian translation of Jean-Pierre Durand’s “La Sociologie de Marx”.

that of the state, which have most influenced modern sociology.

Durand is a professor of sociology at the University of Evry

where he founded the Pierre Naville Center. In 2012, with a team of more than twenty-five researchers, he created the Nouvelle Revue du Travail, which develops a critical look at work, employment and vocational training in contemporary capitalism.

Beyond his interest in general sociology, he has worked in the automotive industry. His approaches favor the analysis of productive models and the mobilization regime characteristic of lean management.

He has contributed to several sociology dictionaries and the Dictionary of Psycho-Social Risks (2014), and to numerous journals. Many of his books and articles are translated into English, Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese, Chinese, Arabic, Russian, Greek, Turkish and several others.

Durand was an illustration photographer for a long time and worked for the Atlas Photo, Diaf and Photononstop agencies. He continues these activities by favoring a more aesthetic and less commercial approach.

Today, he participates in the construction of the field of visual and film sociology, which aims to use the resources of cinema and photography to, on the one hand, document and disseminate sociological work and, on the other hand, to make it a means for insightful research.

## “Tony Driver” joins World’s Best at Cinéma Vérité

A R T TEHRAN —

Italian filmmaker Ascanio Petrini’s “Tony Driver” will be screened along with a lineup of acclaimed documentaries in the World’s Best category of Iran’s Cinéma Vérité festival.

The festival is scheduled to be organized totally online from December 15 to 22.

“Tony Driver” is about Pasquale Donatone, an Italian who left his homeland as a child and headed for the United States. He grew up in the country, married, had children and divorced. He got tangled up in some shady business and decided to move to the South, just to stay out of trouble.

But he could not stay out of trouble. Drugs come into play and in order to pay off serious debts he gets involved in another lucrative yet dangerous illegal business: smuggling Mexican citizens over the American border.

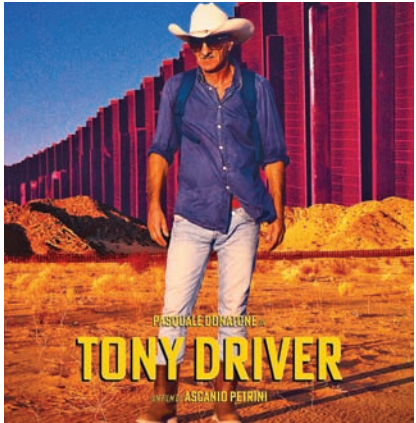
He is good at it and becomes known to his clientele as Tony Driver. One fateful day he gets caught red-handed. And it is also the very same day when he discovers that he does not hold American citizenship. Therefore, he must face a tough choice: go to prison in the U.S. for a very long time or be deported back to Italy, a country he does not know and whose language he does not speak. Exiled in Italy, he

plots to make it back to the U.S. just as any other illegal immigrant.

Czech filmmaker Radovan Sibrť’s “Two Roads” and Romanian filmmaker Radu Ciorniciuc’s “Acasa, My Home” are also among the documentaries selected by the organizers of Cinéma Vérité in the World’s Best section.

This year’s Cinéma Vérité was first scheduled to be held from December 8 to 15. However, it was postponed for one week due to a spike in coronavirus cases.

Over 20 films on COVID-19 by Iranian filmmakers will also be competing in the festival as the organizers intend to attract attention to this disastrous disease by this special category.



A poster for “Tony Driver” by Italian filmmaker Ascanio Petrini.

INTERNATIONAL DAILY

www.tehrantimes.com

■ Managing Director: Mohammad Shojaeian  
■ Editor-in-Chief: Ali A.Jenabzadeh

» Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895  
info@tehrantimes.com  
» Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000  
» Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051430  
» Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807  
» Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603  
» Printed at: Jame Jam Bartar Borna - 44197737

Tehrantimes79 Tehrantimes79 Tehrantimes79

No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran  
P.O. Box: 14155-4843  
Zip Code: 1599814713



GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The one who gets married has completed half of his/her religion.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

## WHAT’S IN ART GALLERIES

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

### Multimedia

■ Mohsen Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of artworks in various media by Sassan Abari from Iran, and Anita Steinwider and Peter Garmusch from Austria. The exhibition named “Quarantarium” will run until December 31 on the gallery’s website

https://mohsen.gallery/exhibitions/quarantarium. Nirvana Parvizi is the curator of the showcase.

In its statement for the exhibition, the gallery wrote, “The word “Quarantarium” is a coined word, consisting of “quarantine” and “aquarium”: containers that are enclosed with extreme care and discipline to preserve things. The former is bound by a rigid membrane and the latter is defined by translucent walls; yet, both are kept away from the community of others.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has forced people to lock themselves inside their houses, reducing all their interactions and socializations to the screens of their smartphones and computers. Even though pandemics are experienced individually and personally, they create a global, collective panic.”

■ A group of artist, including Zohreh Mortazavi, Komeil Fazlipur, Sara Rezai, Parisa Barati, Elahieh Hamidi, Mila Karimzadegan, Azadeh Sehatm and Ainaz Zarei are displaying their artworks in various media at Ehsan Gallery. The exhibit titled “Hoonar” will run on ehsan.artgallery until December 9.

■ Golhayeh Davudi Gallery is showcasing a collection artwork by Hajar Mohammadimanesh in an exhibition named “Rise of a Dream”. The exhibit runs until December 9 on the gallery’s Instagram golhay\_davoudi.

■ An exhibition of artworks in various media by Mahnaz Pesikhani, Mehrdad Mohebali, Ahmad Vakili, Karim Nasr, Behnam Kamrani, Ali Nedai, Rasul Soltani, Hadi Jamali and several other artists is currently underway at Iranshahr Gallery. The exhibition titled “Ghaf” will run until September on https://iranshahrartgallery.com/fa.

### Painting

■ The Ariana Art Hub is hanging paintings by Mehdi Hosseini in an exhibition named “Silent Blue”.

The exhibit runs until January 1, 2021 on https://www.instagram.com/arianaartgroup/?hl=en.

■ Paintings by a group artists, including Mehdi Hassn-nejad, Leila Zeinali, Hamid Hosseini, Fatemeh Dabi, Alireza Momeni and Zahra Tavakkoli, are on view along with paintings by Mehdi Hosseini in an exhibition at Atashzad Gallery.

The exhibit runs until December 8 on https://www.instagram.com/atashzad\_gallery/?hl=en.

### Photo

■ A collection of photos of ordinary people from the Qajar period is currently on view in an exhibition entitled “People’s Stories” at Akhaneh Shahr, Iran’s photo museum in Tehran. The photos, which belong to the museum’s archives, will be on display until December 13 on https://www.instagram.com/akshaneh\_shahr.

### Sculpture

■ An exhibition of sculptures by Mohammad-Hossein Emad is currently underway at the Ariana Gallery. The exhibit runs until December 31 January on https://www.instagram.com/arianaartgroup/?hl=en.