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Her sözün bir yeri var

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File photo

Russia's Lavrov rules out possibility of JCPOA revision

TEHRAN — Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has ruled out the possibility of any revision of the Iran nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

In an online interview with IRNA on Saturday, Lavrov blamed the United States for the current situation the world is facing with regard to the JCPOA, and supported Iran's position on the deal.

Russia "does not back those who want

to enter other questions than the nuclear issue," he said.

Lavrov emphasized that "the JCPOA should not be revised."

"There is a consensus that the present situation in the JCPOA is due to the U.S. unilateral withdrawal from the deal and imposition of the sanctions," he said, adding that "Russia believes that the U.S. stance on the JCPOA is unconstructive."

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Iran, India, Uzbekistan to hold online meeting on Chabahar port

TEHRAN - Iran, India, and Uzbekistan are going to hold their first online meeting on cooperation in Iran's Chabahar Port on December 14, the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced.

The trilateral working group meeting will be jointly chaired by deputy ministers of Iran and Uzbekistan and a secretary from India, Hindustan Times reported.

The announcement came a day after Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev

proposed during a summit with Prime Minister Narendra Modi that a trilateral meeting should be held with Iran to promote Chabahar port.

According to the website of the Indian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the country welcomes Uzbekistan's interest in using Chabahar port, in southeastern Iran, as a transit port, which provides economic opportunities for traders in the region.

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"As a Soldier" gives Leader's accounts of first year of Iran-Iraq war

TEHRAN — Iranian filmmaker Mehdi Naqavian has made a documentary named "As a Soldier" that presents Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei's accounts of the first year of the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war.

"The reason I made this film is that there are few documentaries providing information about the war in its beginning year," Naqavian said in a press release on Saturday.

"In addition, the information has been extracted from the Leader's memories of the war, and this makes the documentary unique and more compelling," he added.

"This film is based on the Leader's accounts of the war and it makes the job more sensitive, because the film should not create an improper perception of the event," the filmmaker noted.

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Poem dispute fails to undermine ties built on historical roots

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has recited epic poems that sparked widespread outrage in Iran, with many Iranian officials strongly rejecting any territorial claims against Iran. Some Iranian experts say Erdogan's remarks may undermine Tehran-Ankara relations but is unlikely to strain the strong bonds between Iran and the Republic of Azerbaijan.

A bitter dispute erupted between Iran and Turkey on Thursday after President Erdogan recited highly controversial poems during a parade in the Azerbaijani capital of Baku.

"They separated the Aras River and filled it with rocks and rods. I will not be separated from you. They have separated us forcibly," read the poems.

These few words caused diplomatic tensions between Iran and Turkey due to their symbolic meaning against the territorial integrity of Iran. Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who rarely tweets in Persian, broke his habit of not using the Persian language to publish a blistering tweet against the Turkish president.

"Pres. Erdogan was not informed that what he ill-recited in Baku refers to the forcible separation of areas north of Aras from Iranian motherland. Didn't he realize that he was undermining the sovereignty of the Republic of Azerbaijan? NO ONE can talk about OUR beloved Azerbaijan," the chief Iranian diplomat tweeted.

Zarif also published the same tweet in Persian. The Persian version of the tweet is slightly different from the English one. "They didn't tell Erdogan that the poem that he wrongly recited in Baku is related to the forcible separation of areas north of Aras from Iranian motherland," Zarif said in the Persian tweet.

Aras is a border river between the Republic of Azerbaijan and two ethnic Azeri Turk-populated provinces of Iran, namely Ardabil and East Azerbaijan. The river is said to be a symbol of what some Iranian Azeri separatists call the separation of Iranian Azerbaijan from the Republic of Azerbaijan.

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Iran to start testing 'homegrown' COVID-19 vaccine next week

TEHRAN — Iran will start injecting volunteers with its home-grown coronavirus vaccine next week, IRIB reported on Saturday.

"We will produce the best and safest vaccine in the country," said Mohammad Mokhber, head of the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam, which is implementing a plan to produce a domestically-developed vaccine.

The human trial is tested in three stages: in the first stage, 56 people of different genders and ages are injected, and after 28 days and the results of the study are determined, the second stage begins with the injection in 500 people, and after 28 days, the third phase begins with mass production, he explained.

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 by 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."

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U.S. protests: Multiple people injured after vehicle plows into crowd at New York protest

A vehicle plowed into a crowd of about 50 people at a protest on Friday afternoon in the middle of Manhattan, injuring multiple people, the New York City police department said.

The incident happened after 4pm at the corner of 39th Street and Third Avenue in midtown east, police said, adding that the woman behind the wheel of the BMW sedan who drove into the crowd was detained for questioning by law enforcement.

The New York fire department said six people were taken by ambulance to local hospitals. Police and fire officials said the injuries didn't appear to be life-threatening, Guardian reported.

Some accounts on social media described a chaotic scene around a stopped car surrounded by protesters, before the vehicle lurched into the crowd, sending some people and bicycles tumbling.

In one video showing the car's movements,

a small group of protesters could be seen gathered around the car as it slowly approached an intersection, with one person seemingly leaning over the front of the vehicle. The car suddenly accelerated, knocking aside the people who were blocking it and people who were in the intersection.

In another video from the opposite side, people are seen fleeing and one person is bowled over as the car barrels through.

A participant in the protest, Sofia Vickerman, of Denver, Colorado, said that when the car hit the crowd it tossed people and a bicycle in the air.

"I hear people screaming in the front, I look behind me, the woman is plowing through," she said. "I see bodies flying."

Vickerman said the march had begun in Times Square and was aimed at drawing attention to an ongoing hunger strike by immigration detainees in New Jersey.

Tehran: U.S. trying to tempt others to sacrifice Palestinian cause

TEHRAN — The U.S. regime tries to tempt other countries to sacrifice the Palestinian cause, Iran's Foreign Ministry tweeted on Friday.

"Whether by removal from phony blacklists, or by fobbing off F-35s, or by recognizing occupation, the U.S. regime tries to tempt others to sacrifice Palestinian cause & shake hands w/ lands thieves," the tweet read.

"It's bullying & bribery, not peace or diplomacy. It won't last long," it added.

It came after U.S. President Donald Trump tweet-

ed on Thursday that "Israel and the Kingdom of Morocco have agreed to full diplomatic relations", claiming that the agreement would be "a massive breakthrough for peace in the Middle East!"

In a statement, the White House said Trump sealed the agreement in a telephone conversation with Morocco's King Mohammed VI. It quoted the Moroccan king as saying that the agreement aimed to resume "diplomatic relations between Morocco and Israel and expand economic and cultural cooperation to advance regional stability."

As part of the agreement, Trump who is due to leave office on January 20 agreed to recognize Morocco's "sovereignty" over the contested Western Sahara region.

Morocco annexed the vast Western Sahara region, a former Spanish colony, in 1975 and has since been in conflict with the Algeria-backed Polisario Front, a movement that seeks to establish an independent state in the territory and end Morocco's presence there.

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QAP

Palestinian protesters clash with Israeli soldiers on expansion of Zionist settlements

Palestinian protesters clash with Israeli soldiers during a protest against the expansion of Zionist settlements in Kufri Qadoom village near the West Bank city of Nablus.

Palestinian WAFA News reported that four Palestinians were shot by the undercover border police officers, three of them in serious condition and evacuated to Ramallah hospital.

Quoting the Palestinian Ministry of Health, WAFA reported that the injured had been shot in the chest, stomach and a third in the main artery in the leg. A fourth was moderately injured in his leg.

Elamite bowl selected symbol of Iran Olympic delegation

TEHRAN — The Iranian delegation for Tokyo 2020 has selected a magnificent Elamite-era bowl as its symbol for the Summer Olympic Games.

"Jaam-e Arjan ("Arjan bowl"), which belongs to the beautiful city of Behbahan, has been selected as the symbol of the Iranian delegation for the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympic Games," CHTN reported on Friday.

The selection was made in a follow-up meeting in southwestern Khuzestan province, which was attended by the Minister of Sport and Youth Masoud Soltanifar, the report added.

Arjan bowl is somewhat overshadowed by its counterpart "Arjan ring of power", which is a royal golden armlet both named after Arjan, an ancient city of the Elamite era, the armlet dates back to the Neo-Elamite period (c. 1100 – 540 BC).

The armlet along with some other relics were discovered in a tomb reportedly belonging to the 2nd millennium BC.

Elam was an ancient pre-Iranian civilization centered in the far west and south-west of what is now modern-day Iran, stretching from the lowlands of what is now Khuzestan and Ilam provinces as well as a small part of southern Iraq. Elam was an ancient pre-Iranian civilization centered in the far west and south-west of what is now modern-day Iran, stretching from the lowlands of what is now Khuzestan and Ilam provinces as well as a small part of southern Iraq.

The Elamite kingdom, founded on the hot alluvial plain of the rivers Dez, Karun, and Marun, has a long history,

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Amad News operator Ruhollah Zam executed

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iran’s Judiciary announced on Saturday that Ruhollah Zam, the operator behind the Amad News website and Telegram channel, was executed earlier in the day.

It comes days after Iran’s Supreme Court upheld Zam’s death sentence.



“The Supreme Court has considered this case and the ruling issued by the Islamic Revolution Court has been approved by the Supreme Court,” Judiciary spokesman Gholamhossein Esmaili said on Tuesday.

Earlier this year, Esmaili announced that Zam was charged with “corruption on the earth”, a term used to describe capital crimes within the Islamic Republic’s judicial system.

Back in October 2019, Iran’s Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) announced that Zam had been arrested during a complicated intelligence operation.

Zam launched Amad News in 2015. The channel frequently posted fake news stories and called for violence with the aim of overthrowing the Islamic Republic system.

During the protest rallies in Iran in December 2018, he urged the people to take arms against the government.

In its statement, the IRGC said it lured Zam into Iran using “clever, multidimensional and innovative tricks”, which even deceived foreign intelligence agencies.

The IRGC also said the French intelligence service was behind Zam’s activities, which were also backed by the U.S. and the Zionist regime’s spy services.

In his second trial in February, Zam said he had the highest security protection after French President Emmanuel Macron.

“The heaviest French security protection after Macron was for me,” Zam told the court.

Tehran: U.S. trying to tempt others to sacrifice Palestinian cause

1 → The West African Arab country is currently in control of 80 percent of the region, including its phosphate deposits and fishing waters.

Morocco was the fourth Arab country that agreed to a normalization deal with the Tel Aviv regime since August.

On September 15, the UAE and Bahrain agreed to establish full diplomatic, cultural and commercial ties with Israel after signing controversial agreements with the Israeli regime at the White House.

Sudan also agreed to normalize ties with the Zionist regime after the U.S. removed the African state from its terrorism blacklist and offered it financial aid in exchange. Trump sealed the deal in a phone call on October 23 with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok and Transitional Council Head Abdel Fattah al-Burhan.

Meanwhile, the deals have drawn widespread condemnation from Palestinians, who say the agreements ignore their rights and do not serve the Palestinian cause.

New Syrian ambassador submits copy of his credentials to Zarif

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The new Syrian ambassador to Iran, Shafiq Dayoub, submitted a copy of his credentials to Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif on Saturday.



Prior to the ambassador’s meeting with Zarif, Syrian Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad made a two day visit to Iran. The visit took place on December 7-8. During his stay, Mekdad held talks with senior Iranian official including President Rouhani, Parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf and Supreme National Security Council secretary Ali Shamkhani.

Iran urges global vigilance in face of Daesh resurgence

Iran says the international community must remain vigilant as extremist and terrorist ideologies are still alive and may try to revive the Daesh terrorist group, which was officially defeated three years ago.

In December 2017, Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi declared final victory over Daesh after Iraqi forces drove its last remnants from the country, three years after the terrorist group captured about a third of Iraq’s territory.

On the third anniversary of the announcement, Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh released a statement on Friday to warn about the resurgence of such Takfiri terrorist groups.

He said although the military force of Daesh has been defeated, the Takfiri, anti-human, and terrorist thoughts and the overt and covert regional and extra-regional supports for the group continue.

“It is necessary for the international community to remain vigilant in the face of the ideological spread and resurgence of that current,” the Iranian spokesman said.

He further offered congratulations to the Iraqi government and nation on the anniversary of their victory over the terrorist group, and hailed the victory as a result of the firm resolve and integrated fortitude of the Iraqi government and nation as well as all military and security forces of Iraq.

Khatibzadeh noted that the triumph over terrorism has been inspired by the Iraqi religious authority, Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani.

(Source: Press TV)

Araghchi meets top Afghan officials in Kabul

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has met with Afghanistan’s top officials in Kabul to discuss bilateral ties.

Araghchi met with his Afghan counterpart Meerwais Nab on Saturday during which Araghchi voiced hopes that the comprehensive document for long-term cooperation between the two countries will be finalized and be signed soon.

The two sides discussed the peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban and the role of the Islamic Republic of Iran in establishing a regional consensus on the political and security situation in Afghanistan.

They also exchanged views about expanding political, economic and trade relations between the two countries.

Also on Saturday, Araghchi met with Afghanistan’s National Security Adviser Hamdullah Mohib. They discussed bilateral issues, security, and the peace process in Afghanistan, according to Mehr.

Araghchi emphasized Tehran’s support for the Afghan government and constitution.



It came days after Iran and Afghanistan inaugurated a strategic railway that connects Iran’s eastern city of Khaf to Afghanistan’s western city of Herat.

The railway project began in the fiscal year of 2007-2008. It included four parts, of which Iran was in charge of completing three, including two on its own soil and one

on the Afghan soil.

During the Thursday inaugural ceremony, which was held via a videoconference, President Rouhani hailed the brotherly relations between the Iranian and Afghan nations, saying the inauguration of the Khaf-Herat railway will bolster the two countries’ ties.

“Today is a day of greeting, a day of

blessing and a day of commencement for the two great nations of Afghanistan and Iran,” Rouhani said during the ceremony.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani also expressed satisfaction over the inauguration of the railway project, saying it was the outcome of the two countries’ tireless efforts to bring prosperity to both sides.

He said the completion of the project in spite of problems created by the coronavirus pandemic is a clear example of the two sides’ national will to ensure development and economic progress.

Also, in remarks on Wednesday, Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif described the railway as an act of bridge-building, saying it will contribute to regional stability and development.

“The Khaf-Herat railway’s significance is not only for Iran & Afghanistan, but for the greater region,” Zarif wrote in a tweet.

“As a gateway that’ll boost trade and people-to-people exchanges, it will also contribute to regional stability & development,” he said, adding, “Turning our frontiers into bridges is a priority.”

GC spokesman to Pompeo: Iran not like U.S. regional minions

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Guardian Council spokesman Abbas Ali Kadkhodaei has censured U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo over interfering in Iran’s domestic affairs, saying Iran is not like the United States’ minions in the region.

“@SecPompeo, who lost in the recent election and the American people did not vote for him and his government, has interfered in Iran’s domestic affairs and criticized the Majlis for its new nuclear approach,” Kadkhodaei wrote in a tweet on Saturday.

“Regardless of the validity of this law, it must be said that Iran is not like the countries in the region that are subject to the illegitimate will of the American regime!” he added.

The response came after Pompeo urged the international community to reject “Iranian nuclear gamesmanship” over the

recent strategic action plan passed by the Iranian Parliament.

“The international community must not reward Iranian nuclear gamesmanship,” he said via Twitter on Friday.

“The steps passed by Iran’s Majles, if implemented, would bring Iran to the dangerous 20% uranium enrichment level with no credible rationale for any peaceful purpose,” Pompeo added.

The Parliament passed the strategic action plan earlier this month. According to the 9-article bill, the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) will be required to produce and store at least 120 kilograms of enriched uranium with 20 percent purity at the Fordow nuclear facility every year, and to fulfil the country’s peaceful industrial demands with uranium enriched above 20%.

The bill became a law as the oversight Guardian Council

approved it by asking the parliament to make some amendments to it. It will oblige the AEOI to install advanced centrifuge machines, to increase the monthly output of enriched uranium for various peaceful purposes with different purity levels by at least 500 kg.

The parliamentary ratification also obliges the AEOI to stop the Additional Protocol to the NPT if sanctions are not lifted within a specific period of time.

The Additional Protocol allows for surprise and unannounced inspections.

Iranian lawmakers accelerated the process of passing the nuclear bill following the assassination of top Iranian scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh and even described the bill as one of Iran’s options to respond to Israel by speeding up nuclear activities.

Takht-Ravanchi rails against politicizing OPCW processes against Syria

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Majid Takht-Ravanchi, Iran’s ambassador to the United Nations, has voiced concerns over the systematic abuse of the processes of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) against Syria

“It is a source of grave concern that, in the past several years, a group of member states, systematically abusing the processes of this Council and the OPCW, have politicized the consideration of the implementation of the Convention by Syria,” Takht-Ravanchi said.

He made the remarks on Friday, while speaking at the UN Security Council meeting on the situation in the Middle East (West Asia), Syria and chemical weapons.

Referring to Iran as the main victim of the large-scale, most systematic and frequent use of chemical weapons in contemporary history, the diplomat said some Western states, not only assisted former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein in developing chemical weapons but also refrained from taking any action when he extensively used such weapons against Iranian citizens and later against Iraqi citizens.



“Such bitter experiences have taught us that no one should possess such inhumane weapons and the legal regime to prohibit their development and use, must not allow any sort of politicization,” the ambassador remarked.

“Now, we understand and feel, more than any other country, both the horrible nature of these inhumane weapons and the poisonous nature of politicizing the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the work of the OPCW,” he added.

Takht-Ravanchi said Iran condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the use of chemical

weapons by anyone, anytime, anywhere and under any circumstances, and also calls for promoting the full, effective, balanced and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention as well as upholding the integrity, authority and legitimacy of the OPCW.

Pointing to states that politicize the issue of Syria, he said, “They disregard the fact that, in her final report to this Council in 2014, the head of the Joint Mission to Eliminate Chemical Weapons in Syria confirmed that Syria has fulfilled all its commitments and that its entire chemical stockpiles have been destroyed. This was confirmed later by the OPCW, as well.”

“They refer to a technically defective report of the IIT – prepared without on-site investigation or due regard to the chain of custody – and intentionally disregard the progress achieved so far by Syria in implementing its obligations,” he stated.

Takht-Ravanchi said they also overlook Syria’s commitment – reiterated also very recently – to continue to work with the Technical Secretariat to resolve all outstanding issues as soon as possible.

He further voiced regret about the “unpro-

ductive” policies of some Western countries that were pursued adamantly during the past several years, saying such acts have resulted only in division within the Council and the OPCW and eroded their legitimacy.

More importantly, the envoy continued, such politically motivated approach continues to endanger the consensual decision-making tradition in the OPCW – the latest example of which is the decision of the recently held 25th Session of the Conference of the States Parties on program and budget of the OPCW for 2021 that was adopted by voting.

“Such unconstructive approach will continue to adversely affect the efforts for the full and effective realization of the very purpose of the CWC, namely the elimination of chemical weapons, which is yet to be realized due to blatant failure by the U.S. as the sole major Possessor State Party,” he said.

Takht-Ravanchi concluded his remarks by saying that the continuation of such policies is not acceptable and must not be allowed anymore, adding, “Therefore, every effort must be made to restore the OPCW’s authority and promote the full and non-discriminatory implementation of the CWC.”

Russia’s Lavrov rules out possibility of JCPOA revision

1 → The JCPOA, which Iran signed with the U.S., Britain, France, China, Russia and Germany in 2015, has been unraveling since President Donald Trump quit it in May 2018 and imposed sweeping sanctions under what his administration has called the “maximum pressure” campaign.

Lavrov said some politicians in the U.S. believe that they should prevent America from reaching any agreement with Iran.

The capacities of the JCPOA should be used to create a balance in commitments while Iran’s interests should be served, he suggested.

He described the JCPOA as a “great achievement” that helped solve questions related to non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, adding, “Despite the U.S. provocative measures, Iran is faithful to its commitments, the faithfulness which are praised by the global community.”

In another interview with Iran’s state television and radio broadcaster on Saturday, Lavrov pointed to the assassination of Iran’s top nuclear scientist late last month, saying



the international community is interested in the results of a probe into the case.

Russia resolutely denounced the scientist’s assassination at various levels, including an official statement by its Foreign Ministry, Lavrov said, according to TASS.

Senior MP asks Erdogan to apologize to Iranian nation

TEHRAN (FNA) — Chairman of the Iranian parliament’s National Security and Foreign Policy Commission Mojtaba Zonnour blasted Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan for remarks during his visit to the Azerbaijan Republic, calling on him to apologize to Iran.

“If Erdogan had not failed in literature, geography and history, he would have realized that the poem (he recited during the ceremony in the Azerbaijan Republic) had been said to mourn the separation of Azerbaijan from its homeland (Iran),” Zonnour wrote on his twitter page on Saturday.

He asked Erdogan to take lesson from Saddam’s fate and rapidly apologize to the united and zealous Iranian nation.

The Turkish president traveled to Baku on Thursday to attend a military parade of Azerbaijani forces on the occasion of the liberation of the Armenian-occupied territories.

At the ceremony, which was also attended by Azeri President Ilham Aliyev, Erdogan read out poems including separatist sentiments about the Aras River which runs along the Iran-Azerbaijan border.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad

Javad Zarif criticized Erdogan’s recitation of a piece of poetry that contained nationalist sentiments, stressing that no one can talk about Iran’s “beloved” Azerbaijan.

Zarif on his Twitter account, blasted Erdogan’s provocative poems in Baku on Thursday, warning him that such remarks would undermine the sovereignty of Azerbaijan Republic.

Also, the Iranian Foreign Ministry summoned Turkish Ambassador to Tehran Derya Ors over the remarks made by Erdogan during his visit to the Azerbaijan Republic.

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said that Derya Ors has been summoned after Erdogan’s “meddlesome and unacceptable” remarks made during his trip to Baku.

“Tehran has expressed its ‘strong protest’ against such remarks, urging the Turkish government to offer explanations as soon as possible,” Khatibzadeh said.

“The era of claiming lands and warmongering empires has long ended,” an official at Iran’s Foreign Ministry said during the meeting with the Turkish diplomat.

Iran urges IAEA to be ‘independent, professional and impartial’

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian Ambassador and Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna Kazem Gharibabadi has called on the International Atomic Energy Organization (IAEA) to remain professional and impartial.

“Now, it is obvious that to whom the Late DG Amano was referring on 30 Jan 2019: If attempts are made to micro-manage or put pressure on the @iaeaorg in nuclear verification that is counter-productive and extremely harmful,” Gharibabadi said in a tweet on Saturday.

Gharibabadi was responding to JNS’s recent interview with Elliott Abrams, the U.S. Special Representative for Iran. The American official told JNS that the Trump administration has built leverage against Iran and that the next U.S. administration should use it. He said the U.S. administration needs to further cooperate internationally.

“There needs to be a lot of international coordination. Without the ‘maximum pressure’ campaign, I think you would not be seeing the kind of coordination in cooperation you are seeing between Israel, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. That’s very important,” Abrams said, adding, “We also need coordination with the Europeans, particularly the British, French and Germans, who were involved in the negotiation with Iran in 2015, to keep the pressure on the IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency]. So, there are a number of places you need to keep the pressure on in the region, and you need to keep it on the IAEA about nuclear activities. And you need to keep the economic pressure on.”

These remarks elicited a direct response from Gharibabadi, who published a screenshot of Abram’s remarks, using the hashtag “reject pressures on the IAEA.”

The Iranian envoy said these pres-



ures are detrimental to the international community.

“The Agency shall remain independent, professional and impartial. We should all reject these pressures which are detrimental to the interests of whole international community,” Gharibabadi tweeted.

Gharibabadi has recently denounced the remarks of IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi on Iran’s nuclear activities, underlining that presenting any evaluation is out of the IAEA mandate.

In his first interview since the assassination of Iranian nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhri-zadeh, Grossi told Sky News that Iran should not follow through on threats to increase uranium enrichment and throw out his inspectors.

“If implemented,” he claimed, “these measures would be an even further deviation from the commitments that Iran entered into when it joined the agreement.”

He added, “I cannot imagine who would win from such a situation. If there was any limitation of the IAEA inspectors as a result

of this or any other situation were curtailed in their work. Very clearly we would have to inform about this. We would have to be very clear to the world this is happening. And this in itself would not help anyone including Iran.”

Gharibabadi hit back at Grossi, saying the IAEA is not entitled to give any analysis or assessment on Iran’s nuclear activities.

According to the Iranian envoy, the UN nuclear watchdog’s mandate is only to verify Iran’s activities that it has been voluntarily doing as per the contents detailed in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Iran-IAEA relations have been a little bit frictional over the past few weeks, especially after one of the IAEA’s confidential reports on Iran was leaked to Reuters, a move that angered Iran and prompted it to formally censure the UN nuclear watchdog.

Reuters has published details of a confidential IAEA report claiming that Iran plans to install three more cascades, or clusters, of advanced IR-2m centrifuges

in the underground plant 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 report to its member states said.

The leakage of the report has drawn strong criticism from Iran. Kazem Gharibabadi has said Tehran will soon legally pursue the leakage of the report by the IAEA and called on the agency change its confidentiality mechanisms, which it uses for internal communications.

“Iran’s objections and legal proceedings against the Agency in the field of protecting confidential information have a history of more than two decades,” Kazem Gharibabadi said in an interview with IRINN on Saturday. He further explained that for a long time “the Agency’s safeguard reports, which were also very detailed, were prepared and distributed among the members, and in the last five years, the reports on Barjam (the Persian name for the nuclear deal) have been replaced.”

Gharibabadi pointed out that the confidential report was leaked to the press even before members of the IAEA Board of Governors could track it down.

“@iaeaorg confidential report, based on Iran’s confidential letter, appeared in Media immediately even before the BoG Members could track it down. Agency is not merely responsible to update the development, but shall ensure confidentiality of safeguards information. If neither the Agency nor its Member States are to be blamed for this crack in confidentiality, @iaeaorg should revise its confidentiality mechanisms including regarding using GovAtom as the safe and confidential means for communications,” the Iranian diplomat said in a tweet on December 4.

Austrian FM calls on all sides to comply with JCPOA, voices readiness to facilitate talks

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Austrian Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg has called on all parties to a 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers to return to their commitments under the deal, expressing readiness to facilitate any new round of talks with the deal parties.

In an interview with Iran’s state news agency IRNA published on Saturday, the chief Austrian diplomat said it is difficult to predict whether U.S. president-elect Joe Biden would make good on his promise to rejoin the 2015 nuclear deal.

“It is difficult to make predictions. But there are indications that all sides seem to be willing to engage in a process again. This is encouraging. Austria will certainly do its part by facilitating any talks if the sides so wish,” Schallenberg told IRNA on Saturday.

Schallenberg called on all parties to the nuclear agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), to uphold their obligations under the deal, noting that Austria welcomes the cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency on Iran-related issues.

“All sides need to keep up their commitments under the JCPOA. We welcome the cooperation of Iran with the IAEA under the JCPOA. But we are concerned by violations of the agreement. This regards nuclear research, the accumulation of low enriched uranium, and the installation of centrifuges. These developments need to be reversed. We worry that a less for less



approach will only lead to a negative spiral that no one wants,” the Austrian foreign minister said.

Schallenberg refrained from answering a question on Austria’s assessment regarding the recent remarks by German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas in which he said that the JCPOA is not enough and that there is a need to reach what he called a “nuclear agreement +.”

“We welcome all attempts by JCPOA participants to find a diplomatic way forward,” Schallenberg said without elaborating.

The Austrian foreign minister underlined the importance of the current discussions to save the JCPOA.

“These ongoing discussions to preserve the JCPOA are essential, including in preparation of possible exchanges at ministerial level. We are all still in the midst of the pandemic, being forced to deal with lockdown measures and travel restrictions. Because of all of this, it is more important than ever to keep all channels of communication open,” the top Austrian diplomat said.

JCPOA Joint Commission to meet Wednesday

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) plans to meet in Vienna on Wednesday, Iran and the European Union said.

Seyed Abbas Araghchi, the deputy foreign minister of Iran for political affairs, announced in a statement that was published on his Telegram channel that the Joint Commission will hold a meeting at the level of deputy ministers and political directors of the 4+1 (France, Russia, China, the UK and Germany).

The meeting will be held via videoconference. Araghchi said he will represent Iran in the meeting. Earlier on November 30, the European Union External Action Service said in a statement that the meeting will be held in Vienna.

“A meeting of the Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) will take place in Vienna on 16 December. The Joint Commission will be chaired on behalf of EU High Representative Josep Borrell by the Secretary General of the European External Action Service Helga Maria Schmid and will be attended by the representatives of E3+2 countries (China, France, Germany, Russia, United Kingdom) and Iran,” the EU statement said.

According to the statement, the meeting will discuss ways to preserve the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

“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 statement said.

This is the first meeting of the Joint Commission after Joe Biden won the U.S. presidential election in early November. During his election campaign, Biden has said that he will join the JCPOA if he wins the election.

“I will offer Tehran a credible path back to diplomacy. If Iran returns to strict compliance with the nuclear deal, the United States would rejoin the agreement as a starting point for follow-on negotiations. With our allies, we will work to strengthen and extend the nuclear deal’s provisions, while also addressing other issues of concern,” then-presidential candidate Biden said in an op-ed for CNN in mid-September.

Biden reaffirmed support for the nuclear deal after the election, saying he still stands by his views on the 2015 Iran nuclear deal that were articulated in the mid-September op-ed. However, Biden said it would be hard to rejoin the JCPOA.

In a recent 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.”

Poem dispute fails to undermine ties built on historical roots

1→ Also on Friday, Iran’s Foreign Ministry summoned the Turkish ambassador to Iran to strongly protest Erdogan’s poems. “The Turkish ambassador was informed that the era of territorial claims and warmongering and expansionist empires was over,” the Foreign Ministry said in a statement. Ankara also responded by summoning the Iranian ambassador to Turkey.

Meanwhile, a considerable number of current and former Iranian officials rallied against Turkey for harboring ambitions to apparently threaten Iran’s territorial integrity. The Iranian Foreign Ministry told the Turkish ambassador that “the Islamic Republic of Iran does not allow anyone to interfere in its territorial integrity and, as its glorious history shows, it will not compromise on its national security at all.”

Iran’s strong reaction to the Turkish president is another indication that how determined Iran is to counter threats to its territorial integrity, especially if such threats come with efforts to push the country’s ethnic minorities into standing against the central government. Iran has always said that it will not let anyone sow discord among its people or threaten its territorial integrity.

But aside from territorial integrity, some Iranian experts have pointed to another possible motive behind Erdogan’s controversial poems. According to these experts, Erdogan may have sought to undermine Tehran-Baku

relations by addressing sensitive issues such as the bonds between the two sides of Aras River.

“By uttering words that are now being protested by the people and the government in Iran, he has tried to bring his country closer to the Republic of Azerbaijan. Therefore, in this case, he acted not as a president, but as the chairman of an economic consortium. A politician must know that the most important issue for any country is its territorial integrity,” Bahram Amirahmadian, an expert on Central Asia and the Caucasus, wrote in an op-ed for the Iranian newspaper Hamshahri.

Other experts called on Erdogan to be fair and stop acting like a “big brother.”

Assadullah Athari, an expert on Turkey, told the Aftab Yazd daily that many leaders in the region, including Saddam Hussein, had sought to play the role of big brother and lead the region, but all ended up ill-fated.

“It is very unfair for Mr. Erdogan and the leaders of Azerbaijan to forget Iran’s help at a time when the only thing they had was loneliness. Erdogan should at least remember the coup era,” Athari said.

Iran supported the Republic of Azerbaijan during the 44-day Nagorno-Karabakh war, which ended nearly a month ago after Russia brokered a ceasefire deal between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed

Ali Khamenei expressed support for Azerbaijan, saying all Azerbaijani territories occupied by Armenia should be freed.

“This is a bitter incident and it threatens the security of the region. Of course, all Azerbaijani territories occupied by Armenia should be freed. All these lands should be given back to Azerbaijan. One of the main conditions is that these lands should be returned to Azerbaijan. The Republic of Azerbaijan is entitled to be in control of these lands, and therefore, all of them should be freed,” Ayatollah Khamenei said in an early November televised speech.

He added, “Of course, the safety of all Armenians living in those lands should be ensured. International borders should be respected and the two sides should not transgress against the borders of other countries. The integrity of international borders should be protected and terrorists should not be allowed to deploy their forces near the borders. According to the reports that we have received, although some people deny them while there are reliable reports confirming this, a number of terrorists from here and there have become involved in this war.”

Azerbaijan’s Foreign Ministry “highly” appreciated the statement made by the Leader, saying that Tehran-Baku relations “built on historical roots, will continue to develop successfully and will serve to ensure peace, stability and prosperity in the region.”

SPORTS

Persepolis face dilemma over COVID-19

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian football team Persepolis will travel to Doha Sunday night to meet the East Zone champions in the 2020 AFC Champions League but the Reds have not played an official match for three weeks and this worry them.



The Iranian giants hosted Shahr Khodro on Nov. 30 in Tehran but their next match against Nassaji in the league were postponed due to the coronavirus concerns.

Persepolis were scheduled to meet Zob Ahan on Saturday but the match was also called off after seven players of the Isfahan based football team tested positive for COVID-19.

It means Persepolis will play in the final match 19 days since their last match and it could be devastating for a team who are looking to win ACL title for the first time ever.

The Iranian team have reached final for the second time in three years and the fans want their team to end title drought in the prestigious tournament.

Yayha Golmohammadi’s team will lock horns their rivals without several key players.

Persepolis have already lost prolific striker Issa Alekasir, who was handed a six-month ban prior to the Champions League semi-final against Saudi club Al Nassr for a “discriminatory gesture”.

Iconic midfielders Vahid Amiri and Ehsan Pahlavan are not eligible for the match, while defender Shojae Khalilzadeh has left the team to join Qatari club Al Rayyan.

Persepolis will face either Ulsan Hyundai from South Korea or Japan’s Vissel Kobe in the final match but, without a shadow of doubt, both of them are armed to the teeth.

Playing most of the Champions League campaign in a bio-secure bubble in Qatar has only compounded a fraught financial situation at the club, making the US\$4 million prize for winning the competition all the more attractive.

The biggest motivating factor, however, is the chance to become the first Iranian club since Pas Tehran in 1993 to be crowned Asian club champions.

Persepolis will have a difficult task since they will meet the opponents who have played at the highest level and are well-prepared for the final.

Sadegh Moharrami pens long-term Dinamo Zagreb coach

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian winger Sadegh Moharrami has secured his long-term future with Dinamo Zagreb football team.

The Iranian international player joined the Croatian champions from Iran’s Persepolis in June 2018 on a five-year contract.

“I am very happy to extend my contract and I feel like my home here in Zagreb,” Moharrami said.

“I make the most of my opportunities in Dinamo and am very happy to be part of the great team,” he added.

Moharrami, 24, helped Dinamo Zagreb to beat Dutch club Feyenoord 2-0 in Rotterdam on Thursday to advance to the last 32 of the UEFA Europa League.

Dinamo Zagreb are now unbeaten in their last 12 Europa League group matches which is the current record. Villarreal are behind Dinamo with an 11-game unbeaten streak.

Sanat Naft move top of Iran football league

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Sanat Naft football team defeated Gol Gohar 2-1 to move top of the Iran Professional League (IPL) table.

On Saturday, Sanat Naft fought back a goal down to beat the visiting team 2-1 at the Abadan’s Takhti Stadium.

Godwin Mensha gave Gol Gohar the lead with a powerful strike from just inside the area in the 27th minute but Taleb Reykani equalized the match from the penalty spot in the 51st minute.

Sanat Naft midfielder Reza Khaleghifar doubled the score in the 67th minute, producing a fine header from the middle of the box.

In Ahvaz, Foolad defeated visiting team Saipa 3-0 to move to second place. Left-footed Farshad Ahmadzadeh scored a long-range goal in the 31st minute. Saleh Hardani made it 2-0 in the 87th minute and Moussa Coulibaly scored Foolad’s third goal in the injury time.

In Rafsanjan, Mes Beft Masjed Soleymani 2-0 thanks to goals from Ghaem Eslamikhah (42nd minute) and Hossein Karimzadeh (87th minute).

Paykan and Aluminum played out a goalless draw.

Persepolis match against Zob Ahan had been already called off after several players of the Isfahan based football team tested positive for coronavirus.

Karkhaneh steps down as Saipa volleyball coach

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Mostafa Karkhaneh stepped down as Saipa volleyball team head coach due to his health problems.

Saipa are the favorites to win Iran Volleyball Super League and sit fourth in the table, four points behind the leaders Sepahan.

The 61-year-old, who has already worked at all levels in Iran national volleyball teams, had been named as Saipa coach in May but was forced to resign because of health conditions.

Nasser Shahnaz, Jahangir Seyedabbasi and Shaban Khamseh are candidates to replace Karkhaneh.

It’s the fourth resignations in the current season. Mohammad Torkashvand stepped down as Paykan coach two weeks ago. Farhad Nafarzadeh and Sasan Khodaparast have also resigned from their positions as Khatam and Azar Battery coaches, respectively.

TEDPIX gains 21,000 points on Saturday

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 21,234 points to 1.527 million on Saturday (which is the first day of the Iranian calendar week).

Over 15.714 billion securities worth 166.416 trillion rials (about \$3.962 billion) were traded at the TSE on Saturday.



The first market's index increased 18,825 points, and the second market's index climbed 31,326 points.

The index gained 36,000 points, or two percent, in the past Iranian calendar week.

Petchem production rises 10m tons since late March

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iranian petrochemical production has increased by 10 million tons in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 20) to reach 76 million tons following the inauguration of six new petrochemical plants.

This is the most unprecedented increase in production in the history of the country's petrochemical industry.

Based on the Oil Ministry's plans for the current Iranian calendar year, a total of 17 petrochemical projects with \$11.5 billion of investment are planned to be implemented to realize the second leap in the country's petrochemical industry, which will increase the capacity of this industry from 66 million tons at the beginning of the year to 90 million tons with a growth of 35 percent.

So far, six of the mentioned 17 projects have been commissioned since the beginning of this year, bringing the production capacity of the petrochemical industry to about 76 million tons per year. The total investment in these projects is more than \$4 billion, which can generate \$1.4 billion annually for the country.

The petrochemical industry is playing a crucial role in Iran's non-oil economy, so that based on the official data, petrochemical exports constitute the second-largest hard currency earner in Iran after crude oil. Petrochemical exports already make up nearly 33 percent of the country's non-oil exports.



Back in November, the Secretary-General of Iran's Association of Petrochemical Industry Corporation (APIC) said the country's petrochemical production and exports have increased in the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21) despite the limitations caused by the pandemic and the U.S. sanctions.

Ahmad Mahdavi Abhari noted that the country's petrochemical production in the first half of this year has increased by at least five million tons compared to the same period last year.

Residential, repair barge to be commissioned in South Pars

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The director of production and operations in Pars Oil and Gas Company (POGC), which is in charge of developing Iran's giant South Pars gas field, said for the first time, a large residential and repair barge will be commissioned in the field to support safe gas production from the field's platforms, Shana reported.

Emphasizing the need to increase the safety of production in South Pars, Alireza Ebadi said: "One of the important measures in this regard is to reduce the number of people stationed on the platforms of South Pars, which is fortunately in coordination with the Oil Ministry's health, safety, and environment programs, in this regard the ministry plans to establish a residential and repair barge in the field and the executive operations on this barge will begin soon."

According to Ebadi, this anchor barge, which is going to be used to support the repair and service affairs of 22 platforms in South Pars Region 2, will be located in the mentioned area within two months (in mid-January, 2021).

The official assessed the quality of this barge, which is owned by a local company, as desirable and unique, and said: "With the installation of this 3,000-ton barge in the South Pars, the safety instructions issued by the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC)'s HSO management will be fulfilled."

The workers and employees will reside on this barge instead of the gas platforms and will only be sent to the platform according to the repair orders and will return to the barge when the work is completed, he stated.

Ebadi had earlier said that all the necessary measures were taken for the preparation of the South Pars complex for sustained supply of gas during the winter.

"Since the beginning of the year, all the necessary arrangements have been made according to careful planning to ensure constant production from the South Pars platforms, and we are completely ready for winter," he told Shana in October.

South Pars Gas Field, which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf, is currently divided into 24 standard phases in the Iranian side and is estimated to contain a significant amount of natural gas, accounting for about eight percent of the world's reserves, and approximately 18 billion barrels of condensate.

Iran, India, Uzbekistan to hold online meeting on Chabahar port

1 → In addition to Uzbekistan, other Central Asian countries have shown interest in using the port.

"This would open up economic opportunities for the traders and business community of the region. Besides Uzbekistan, other Central Asian countries have also shown interest in using the port. India seeks to cooperate closely with regional countries on this issue," the statement by the Indian ministry said.

India currently operates one of the terminals of Chabahar port and offers loading and unloading services in the mentioned terminal.

"The strategic project has been given a waiver from sanctions imposed by the U.S. on Iran in view of its importance in shipping cargo and humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan," the report highlighted.

Following an India-Uzbekistan Summit on Friday, Adarsh Swaika, joint sec-



retary (Eurasia) in the Indian external affairs ministry, said the two sides had

discussed how to overcome the lack of overland connectivity.

Launching 4 pilot air taxi lines by late January 2021 projected

ECONOMY **TEHRAN**—Iranian Transport Ministry is going to launch four air taxi lines on a trial basis by the Iranian calendar month of Bahman (begins on January 20, 2021), according to an aviation official.

Arman Bayat, the member of the General Aviation Committee of the Iran Airports Company (IAC), said the mentioned four lines will be launched from Mehrabad and Imam Khomeini Airports.

"The Air taxi project will be launched in a pilot operation at Tehran's Mehrabad Airport in Bahman this year to create an opportunity to investigate potential issues and challenges during the operational process, and to address them," Bayat told IRNA on Saturday.

As planned, the pilot operation will be carried out with the opening of Mehrabad International Airport's small aircraft apron (aircraft parking lot) and the repair section of the airport's Flight Control and Air Services Center for airplanes with less than nine or four seats, the official said.

Last week, Imam Khomeini Airport City Corporate (IK-

ACC) also announced the launch of an air taxi project at this airport with an investment of 1.1 trillion rials (about \$26 million) and a capacity of 59 passengers in near future.

A domestic aviation company has invested in this project, according to IKACC.

Having the oldest airline in West Asia and second oldest in Asia, Iran started developing its aviation industry nearly 80 years ago and this industry is still improving in the country, however, despite its long history general aviation (GA) in Iran has been almost completely neglected.

Recently, Iran Airports Company, Iran Civil Aviation Organization, and Aerospace Technology Development Headquarters of the Vice-Presidency for Science and Technology have signed a trilateral memorandum of understanding (MOU) aiming for reducing navigation and aeronautics costs, using the capabilities of the aviation training sector, localizing the technologies required by the general aviation sector, and awarding the industry's non-governmental fields to the private sector.



Launching "Air Taxi" services across the country has been chosen as the first step to achieve the mentioned goals, and the plan is being seriously followed to launch several air taxi lines in various provinces.

‘Country’s monetary system must be directed towards a capital system’

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Gholam-Hossein Jamili, a member of the board of the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), believes that directing the country's monetary system towards a capital system could divert limited financial resources to wealth creation and reduce inflation.

"Now that the government has targeted a 22-percent inflation rate for the next [Iranian calendar] year (begins on March 21, 2021), the first step in achieving this goal is to guide the monetary system towards a capital system based on providing accurate statistics and information," Jamili said.

In this regard, the role of the Central



Bank of Iran (CBI) is very important and therefore it can direct the limited financial

resources that exist in the country in the optimal direction, the official stressed.

"Directing the monetary system to the capital system can cause limited financial resources to be used to generate wealth, and this will result in less inflationary effects in the country, which the central bank is trying to achieve."

He further mentioned the recent developments regarding the pandemic and in the White House and noted that considering the recent development in the global economy and politics, "we hope to be able to make up for some of the economic issues and achieve an inflation rate even below 22 percent."

According to Jamili, Iran's economy has

great potential, which is why many international economists believe that the chances of the Iranian economy getting back on track in near future are very high.

He further noted that the stock market has been institutionalized among the people and has attracted a lot of capital.

"Despite its early fluctuations, when people become aware that they can bring their idle assets into the capital system and be part of the country's production and economic cycle and share its benefits, a big change will happen and government can also continue to encourage and guide people in this direction in the years to come with better planning."

Loading, unloading of goods up 40% in Astara Port

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Loading and unloading of goods in Iran's northwestern Astara Port has risen 40 percent during the first eight months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-November 20), compared to the same period of time in the past year (March 20-November 20), according to a local official.

Kianoush Amiri, the head of Astara Ports and Maritime Department, announced that 135,000 tons of commodities have been loaded and unloaded in this port during the mentioned time span.

Last week, the managing director of Khazar Shipping Company said that Astara Port, located by the Caspian Sea, has become a new hub for container shipping in the region following the launch of new shipping services from this port.

Mentioning the establishment of regular container transportation services from Astara port to Aktau port of Kazakhstan and Astrakhan in Russia, Davood Tafti said: "According to the plans, two regular transportation services will operate on this route weekly, one service



from Astara to Aktau port and the other service is done from Anzali- Astara route to Aktau port."

Emphasizing that the launch of these regular services has created a competitive environment between road and sea transport, Tafti continued: "One of the most important

Exports from South Khorasan Province increases 66%

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The value of exports from South Khorasan Razavi, in east of Iran, has increased 66 percent during the first eight months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-November 20), compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to a provincial official.

Mohammad-Ali Khashi, the director-general of the province's customs department, announced that 2.386 million tons of commodities worth \$421.65 million have been exported from the province in the said time span, indicating a 45-percent rise in weight as well.

The official mentioned cement, oil, tiles and ceramics, gasoil, salt, and eggs as the major exported products, and Afghanistan, Iraq, Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Taiwan as the main export destinations during the first

eight months of the present year.

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.

Her sözün bir yeri var

By Mohammad Mazhari

During his visit to Baku on Thursday, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan attended a parade in which he recited an Azeri poem about the division of Azerbaijan's territory between Russia and Iran in the 19th century.

Tehran believes that recitation of this piece of the poem by Erdogan is "meddlesome and unacceptable". It fans sense of separatism in Iran.

Erdogan was in the Azeri capital Baku to review a military parade marking Azerbaijan's victory over Armenia in a war over the Nagorno-Karabakh enclave that ended last month.

It is not clear whether the Turkish president deliberately recited this piece of poem or it was just an emotional remark. However, the coincidence of this poem and the anniversary of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Iran's Azerbaijan (December 12, 1945) carries a provocative message.

Iranian authorities and media say the poem recited in Baku is one of the separatist symbols of pan-Turkism.

It said the verses point to Aras and "complaints of the distance between Azeri-speaking people on the two sides of the river."

The poem includes the lines: "They separated the Aras River and filled it with rocks and rods. I will not be separated from you. They have separated us forcibly."

According to the Treaty of Gulistan between the Russian Empire and Iran on 24 October 1813 in the village of Gulistan (now in Goranboy Rayon of Azerbaijan), which was signed after the first full-scale 1804-1813 Russo-Persian War, what is now Daghestan, eastern Georgia, most of the Republic of Azerbaijan and parts of northern Iran were ceded to the Russian Empire.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif reacted to Erdogan, tweeting, "President Erdogan was not informed that what he ill-recited in Baku refers to the forcible separation of areas ... from [the] Iranian motherland."

"NO ONE can talk about OUR beloved Azerbaijan," Zarif said, referring to the northwest region of Iran where many of its ethnic Azeris live.

This verse has been heard by people on both sides of Aras in albums of Azeri folk music in Iran, even with an official license. It has been sung many times by various singers for a long time and no one has protested.

Whoever the poet was, he pointed out that the people of the same language were separated as a result of the Iran-Russia war.

Some may consider it a cynic view to concluding that this poem is used to question the territorial integrity of Iran. But this pessimism doesn't seem to be baseless; the Iranians closely followed Turkey's provocative role during the Nagorno-Karabakh war and were concerned about the policy of transferring Takfiri terrorists from Syria to the disputed region between Iran's northern neighbors.

The reaction of Hesamuddin Ashna, the advisor to Iranian President Hasan Rouhani shows that Iran is monitoring the activities of



Turkish think tanks which are connected with the pan-Turk separatists.

Ashna, writing on Twitter, blamed Erdogan's poem on the Center for Iranian Studies (IRAM), an Ankara-based think tank that has long been suspected by some Iranians as pushing for the disintegration of Iran through creating discord among Iran's ethnic minorities.

But apart from the media fuss and different political attitudes, we must mention a few points about Erdogan's provocative policies.

Turkey's foreign policy under Recep Tayyip Erdogan's nearly 20-year rule is rampant with creating instabilities and a demonstration of highly volatile behaviors. During these years, Turkey's foreign relations have fluctuated between zero differences with neighbors to confrontations. At present, Turkey's relations with most of its neighbors are not desirable at all.

Turkey is geographically located between countries, most of which are either in a state of severed relations or strained relationship with Ankara. Syria, Iraq, Armenia, Greece, Cyprus, and Bulgaria are examples. Among these neighbors, Turkey's relations with Iran and Azerbaijan are an exception.

Although, Iran and Turkey have been striving for friendly and stable relations in recent years, Erdogan's remarks on Thursday about Aras-linked areas reminded Iranians of Erdogan's adventures in Syria, a country that had the closest relations with Turkey before the crisis began in 2011.

It is well known in the Arab world that Erdogan longs for the revival of the Ottoman Empire. The Arabs call it Ottoman colonization, while the Iranians call it the Ottoman Empire. That is the difference between the Arabs and Iranians' views of the Ottomans. The Iranians see the Ottoman Empire as only a political rival and the Arabs consider it as a usurping colonial enemy.

With the establishment of the Safavid rule by Shah Ismail in Iran, the enmity between Shiite Iran and the Sunni Ottoman Empire started to intensify, though both dynasties were of Turkish descent with racial and religious affinities. But in the first step, Sultan Salim I, the fanatical Ottoman caliph, massacred 40,000 Shiites living in the Ottoman Empire territory, suspecting they were going to migrate to Iran

and join Shah Ismail's army. Sultan Salim I then wrote a letter to King Ismail requesting that Iran be annexed to the Ottoman territory. Shah Ismail refused and from this time on, Sultan Salim I and other Ottoman sultans continued wars against Iran (Persia) under various pretexts.

Although at first glance the reason for the differences between the Safavids and the Ottomans was over religion, in fact a set of political-economic factors, border expansionism, non-recognition of each other, and European conspiracies to weaken the Ottomans are the real roots of these long-term tensions between Safavids and Ottomans.

The Europeans in particular took great advantage of the hostility between Iran and the Ottomans. According to European writers, it would not have taken a long time for the Ottoman Turks to conquer European lands one after the other, and European countries could not survive from the Ottoman invasion without preoccupying the Ottoman empire with the Safavids.

European states succeeded to exploit the discord between Iran and the Ottoman Empire and tried to provoke the two sides against one another. On the one hand, they indirectly encouraged the Ottomans to aggress Persia through spies and mercenaries in the Ottoman court, and on the other hand they helped the Iranians to reinforce their naval force and armed the Iranian army.

Let's imagine for a moment what would have happened if the Safavids and the Ottomans as two regional powers had stood side by side instead of confronting and stabbing one another's back? Who could imagine that a great empire will collapse one day?

Even today, the Saudi-Emirati media call Iran "Safavid" and the Erdogan government "the colonial Ottoman Empire". It means the formation of independent and emerging powers in the region led by Iran and Turkey. That is why our enemies are plotting to undermine and even disintegrate the two Islamic powers. In their plan, Iran must be engaged in internal conflicts and Turkey must sink into the mire of regional tensions, and one of the best tools is to sow discord between Iran and Turkey by using separatist mercenaries.

Iran's history bears witness to the religious

spirit of the Iranians and their national sensitivity to territorial integrity. Any attempt to sow discord among the Iranian ethnic groups has ultimately led to the strengthening of national unity.

In his eight-year war against Iran in the 1980s, Saddam Hussein failed to create divisions between Iran's ethnicities. On the contrary, the war united the Iranians over one cause: the national sovereignty. An interesting point was that the Arabs of Iran formed the first front to confront Saddam and defend their territory. So let us not forget the Chaldoran war that was triggered by Sultan Salim with the aim of disintegrating Iran, however it paved the way for Safavids' next victories.

If Erdogan wants to revive a strong and independent Turkey in the Ottoman way, he will surely be given a green light by Iran, but only if the Ottoman-Safavid historical mistakes will not be repeated. This time we can stand together and not stab one another in the back.

Therefore, to become a regional power, it is necessary to form a coalition, which means Iran and Turkey need to rely on each other.

Historical experience has shown the Turks cannot count on Western and European powers who just follow "divide and rule policy". If a coup takes place in Turkey, they just wait for the result to congratulate the final winner, while in the 2016 coup Iran made every effort to support the Erdogan government.

Erdogan should not forget when the UAE and Saudi Arabia were waiting to celebrate the fall of his government, Tehran was striving to stabilize Turkey.

Iran wants to be strong and influential in the region and has shown that it is ready to pay the price of its independence; however, it does not follow the policy of disintegration and destabilization of neighbors, because we all know that any side that uses wrong and immoral methods to undermine others will end up paying a heavy price. When one claims Greater Azerbaijan, he should also expect Greater Kurdistan, and perhaps other ethnic and religious conflicts.

The point is that our region is an intertwined mix of ethnicities and religions and any adventurous step may lead to the magic turn against the magician.

In a word, we never forget that ancient Iran was geographically larger than present-day Iran, and many of our northern neighbors once were part of great Iran.

However, Iran never questioned the national sovereignty of those countries. Instead, it sought to consolidate historical and cultural ties with them as independent countries.

But if anyone questions the national sovereignty of Iran, we will surely remind him that it was not Iran which was separated from these areas, but they were the ones which were forcibly divided and separated from their homeland Iran. Also, our hearts transcend borders to reach our brothers and sisters both in eastern Iran and north of Aras.

Definitely, all Iranians whisper that "They separated the Aras River. They have separated us forcibly."

Rocket attacks in Kabul kills one

At least one person was killed and two were injured on Saturday in Afghanistan's capital Kabul as ten rockets hit various parts on the city, officials said.



A Taliban spokesman said that his group was not behind the attack as they continued talks with the Afghan government's representatives to end nearly two decades of war, Reuters reported.

Security officials said it was not clear if militants of Afghan affiliate of Islamic State, known as Islamic State Khorasan, were involved in the attack.

Last month, a barrage of rockets hit residential areas in Kabul, killing at least eight people and wounding more than 30.

The regional Islamic State group had claimed responsibility for the November attack.

OPCW has become a tool in the hands of U.S., allies: Syria's deputy FM

Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Bashar al-Jaafari says the Organization of Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is being manipulated by the United States and its allies, emphasizing that his country's chemical dossier must be closed as Damascus has fully complied with its relevant obligations.

"Syria condemns the use of chemical warfare and all weapons of mass destruction (WMD) at any time, place and under any circumstances. I reiterate that the OPCW has lost its identity as a technical organization tasked with safeguarding the Chemical Weapons Convention, and has instead turned into a tool in the hands of the U.S. and its allies," Jaafari said at a United Nations session on the situation in Syria via a video link on Friday.

He called on OPCW member states to reject any politicization of the technical feature of the organization as such an approach undermines the status and credibility of the international body.

Jaafari stressed that Syria has never used chemical weapons and is closely cooperating with the OPCW, its technical secretariat as well as assessment team to settle all lingering issues and completely close its chemical file away from any political hullabaloo or media hype.

Syria surrendered its entire chemical stockpile in 2013 to a mission led by the United Nations and the OPCW.

Moscow says U.S. recognition of Morocco's sovereignty over Western Sahara violates int'l law

Washington's recognition of Morocco's sovereignty over the disputed region of Western Sahara is a violation of the international law, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov said.

"This is a violation of international law. There are relevant resolutions, there is a UN mission for holding a referendum in Western Sahara. Everything that Americans currently do is a unilateral decision that goes beyond international law and decisions of the United Nations Security Council's resolution, which Americans themselves supported", Bogdanov told reporters.

On Thursday, U.S. President Donald Trump announced that he had brokered a peace deal between Israel and Morocco and granted the latter the recognition of its sovereignty over Western Sahara, which is contested by the Polisario Front, the movement behind the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic.

Resistance News

EU: 200 Palestinian families threatened with eviction from J'lem homes

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN** — The European Union (EU) has d e s k warned that 200 Palestinian families are facing threats of imminent eviction from their homes and their replacement with Jewish settlers, calling on Israel to backtrack on such violation of the international law.

This came in a joint statement issued on Friday by the EU representative in agreement with the EU heads of missions in Jerusalem and Ramallah.

"In the last several years, the number of eviction decisions has increased in particular in Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan, where entire communities of close to 200 families are at risk. In Batan al-Hawa alone, 14 families have already lost their homes since 2015 and over 80 other households are facing eviction demands and are at imminent risk of displacement," according to the statement.

"Israeli domestic laws, creating the basis for the claims to evict the families, do not exempt Israel, as the occupying power, from meeting its obligations to administer the occupied territory in a manner that provides for and protects the local population."

"In line with the EU's long-standing position on Israel's settlement policy, illegal under international law, and actions taken in that context, such as forced transfers, evictions, demolitions and confiscations of homes, the EU calls on the Israeli authorities to reverse the rulings on the intended evictions."

"The EU missions in Jerusalem and Ramallah recall the successive Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions and statements in which the EU has repeated its strong opposition to Israel's settlement policy and actions taken in this context, including evictions."

The heads of the EU missions concluded their statement by describing Israel's eviction and demolition policy in east Jerusalem as "illegal under international law," warning that the continuation of such practices "undermines the viability of the two-state solution and the prospect for a lasting peace."

'A U.S. show of force to deter Iran.' Deter Iran from what?

By John Steppling

I think there are two or three things going on. The first of which is Mike Pompeo and his visit with Mohammed bin Salman and Netanyahu, that Pompeo and Netanyahu went to Saudi Arabia and had him in a "secret meeting" with

bin Salman that everybody in the world knew about. And that was intentional.

And one of the goals it seems with this new kind of Israeli-catering or charm offensive, whatever you want to call it, with the Emirates and with Saudi Arabia is that, so that Israeli fighter jets will form a working relationship

with Saudi fighter jets and then UAE fighter jets and they'll form sort of this seamless policy that is in unison of course with the United States that kind of dictates all of this.

And part of this, the interesting part of that is, you realize how really hostile the Arab monarchies are to the Arab people, you know. They are the enemy of the working-class Arab as much as Israel is their enemy and the United States.

But the second thing that's going on is if you google this story, the U.S. has a 36-hour mission of, you know, the big, huge bombers that were made famous during the Vietnam era -- they've only been slightly updated -- fly this 36-hour mission across Europe down through the Persian Gulf, then is a show of force, the headline is: 'A Show Of Force To Deter Iran.' And I'm thinking to deter Iran from what? Iran hasn't done anything. I mean they invent these narratives. What has actually happened is a series of extraordinary provocations against Iran. They killed the nuclear scientists, they attacked Soleimani and murder him.

It's, you know, a constant source of antagonism to Iran that all of these things take place because there's a whole myriad of secondary provocations that one doesn't hear about cross border clashes and Israeli jets buzz the border region and make incursions and on and on and on.

And, most of those kinds of provocations and sort of micro-aggressions are ignored by the press and the media. And then Iran makes a statement saying we don't accept the idea of Israeli assassins crossing into our country and murdering one of our scientists, and that's. Oh wait, Iran being aggressive and we must deter them. It's really comical for anybody who has followed Middle Eastern (West Asia) politics for any amount of time because the provocations are on the side of the U.S.

I mean, why did they fly these jets? Why? What's the reason? Iran hasn't done anything. Iran is the victim. They've been attacked. They had a citizen assassinated. They had a general assassinated. And yet, you know, the U.S. claims they are deterring. And it's funny. The first sentence of the story in the

Call for Prequalification of Tenderer no.99/22



Tabas Parvadeh Coal Company intends to prequalify experienced longwall equipment manufacturing companies/ consortiums for execution of below mentioned project:

1- Project Title: Expansion Project- Second Longwall System

2- Client: Tabas Parvadeh Coal Company (Public Joint Stock)

3- Tender Subject: Procurement of a complete set of mechanized longwall equipment including engineering, procurement, supervision and management of installation, commissioning, performance test, training and supplying two-year spare parts.

4- Deadline to purchase the documents: From December 13, 2020 until 12:30p.m on December 23, 2020

5- Deadline to submit the completed documents: not later than 11:30 a.m. on 8 February, 2021

6- Submission Address: Tabas Parvadeh Coal Company, Soleimani Blvd, Tabas, Khorasan Jonoubi, Iran, Confidential Secretariat

Notes:

A. Prequalification documents will solely be delivered to Tenderers who inform the Client of readiness for participating in the prequalification process by sending a formal letter with the subject of "tender no. 99/22"; addressed to Tabas Parvadeh Coal Company, by emailing it to: Dabir@tpc.co.ir

B. The submission of the tender documents will not grant any rights to the Tenderers.

C. Advertisement costs shall be borne by the winner of the tender.

D. Project Site: Parvadeh Coal Mine No.1, 75km due southwest of Tabas city, in central part of Iran.

E. The length of Longwall face will be 220m and the intended longwall system shall be capable of producing 1.2 million metric ton of coal per year.

F. As a minimum the equipment shall include: Powered Roof Support, Armoured Face Conveyor, Double Ended Ranging Drum Shearer, Beam Stage Loader and Crusher, Hydraulic Fluid Pumping Station and Supply System, Transformers and Switchgears, Electrical Distribution System, Integrated Signaling and Communication System and Two Years Spare Parts

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Elamite bowl selected symbol of Iran Olympic delegation

→ **1** during which its inhabitants were in various ways involved in the affairs of their Mesopotamian neighbors: the Sumerians and the Akkadians of southern Iraq, the Babylonians, the Kassites in the northeast, and the Assyrians in the far north, and the Persians in the east.

The capital of Elam was Susa; the Elamite language is unrelated to any other known language. One of the main sanctuaries was Dur Untash (Tchoga Zanbil). In the Hellenistic age, Susiana ("the land of Susa") was part of the Seleucid and Parthian Empires. Later, the Sasanian Persians and Arabs took control. Nowadays, Khuzestan is the Arab-speaking part of Iran. The country is fertile and well-known for rice, sugar, linen, and cotton.



The International Olympic Committee has ruled out postponing the Tokyo Games for a second time, while a government-led task force has started planning how the global event can be staged safely, with suggestions that it will put on a simplified version of the event. The announcement comes after growing uncertainty about whether the Tokyo Olympics would be canceled altogether, leaving sponsors, tourism, and hospitality businesses in limbo.

A peek into Iranian traditional houses, mansions

(Part 6/8)

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — The structure of the internal space and the main framework of her design follow its bearing elements. For example, we can point to the structure of a room in which a number of pillars were positioned on two sides of the room under some parts of the dome which acted as columns and a separating wall was built between them where in shallow areas it had small shelves to put some items on.

The structural organization of the room can also be described in this way: the two walls which were perpendicular to the yard had a bearing function. In order to lift some weight off them, shelves were dug in those parts which carried less weight in order to make the wall lighter and also utilize their empty space. Windows were placed in the surfaces adjoining and parallel to the yard. Based on the type of room or hall and its largeness and importance, different types of windows were utilized.

The plinth or the lower parts of porch walls were covered with tiles in order to be more resistant against erosion. Based on some documents, after Timurid dynasty and particularly in Safavid era, wall paintings were used to decorate the internal spaces. Tile and bricks were used to cover the surface of the walls of some porches.



The floor of simple rooms was covered with bricks, yet tiles were used to cover the floor of halls and porches. Carpets were usually put on the floor of rooms and halls and people used to sit on them. High ranking people used to place a cushion on the carpet they put on the floor and used to lean against them.

Kings, lords, and high ranking people used to seat on a special throne during especial ceremonies and other people usually would sit on the floor. It was observed in some portraits that if one or two high ranking guests were present in a party, a type of stool-like chair would be used for them.

The variety of climatic and geographical environments and conditions in Iran has resulted in formation of several concepts and ideas in accordance with environmental conditions and the function of building. The two concepts of introversion and extroversion are of particular importance.

The internal architecture of such buildings can probably be divided into two types: first, a type of internal architecture which includes the design of the central yard and it surrounding spaces, then the internal architecture inside the spaces surrounding the yard which are closer to internal architecture in contemporary era. The simplicity of the external views of such spaces which were due to compression and coherence of the urban context and also had social and cultural reasons in some cases made their internal architecture very significant, especially because, more or less, all the life time of women and children — except for shopping, going to party, pilgrimage and going to bathroom — is spent at home.

The glory and beauty of Iranian architecture especially during the Islamic era depends on the decoration and ornaments used in it. Using all types of decorations such as brickwork, plaster work, tile work, mirror work and painting was common during the whole Islamic era and such decorations have advanced in line with the facilities of each era.

Using all types of paintings on all types of materials, the artists of this field have given a special importance to Iranian architecture. Among all types of Iranian architecture, Iranian houses which were the show case of Iranian popular art exhibited the most beautiful and meaningful designs and shapes. Utilizing decorations in Iranian houses, in addition to its beautifying and decorative function, also had protection and thermal insulation purposes.

Despite obstacles, the Great Wall of Gorgan could win UNESCO status, deputy tourism minister says

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Gaining a **d e s k** UNESCO tag for the Great Wall of Gorgan -- one of the longest brick barriers of the ancient world -- is not hard as it is comparable to the Great Wall of China in terms of age, function, and size, deputy tourism minister has said.

Situated in the city of Gorgan, the capital of northern Golestan province, the defensive wall is about 200 km in length and it was built to prevent the invasion of the northern tribes. It is said to be the longest architectural work of ancient Iran, which was built in 90 years.

Although there are some issues and obstacles, further efforts to preserve and restore the millennia-old wall could be an acceptable justification for UNESCO to add this structure to the World Heritage list, Mohammad-Hassan Talebian announced on Thursday.

To get to that point, complete and accurate mapping of the remnants of the wall is needed, for which a budget of 20 billion rials (\$476,000 at the official rate of 42,000 rials) has been allocated so far, the official added.

However, considering the destruction of a large part of the Great Wall of Gorgan throughout history, there is no expectation of a complete reconstruction and restoration of this historical monument, he explained.

He also noted that if the mapping project comes to an end by the end of the current Iranian year 1399 (March 20, 2021), the inscription of the wall on the World Heritage



list will be discussed and possibly approved by the end of the next summer.

Also known as Red Wall, which in some ancient texts is referred to as the Red Snake, this wall is the longest brick ancient barrier between Central Europe and China, longer than Hadrian's Wall and the Antonine Wall put together and the third-largest wall in the world after the walls of China and Germany.

Most parts of the gigantic monument are still hidden underneath the surface through

some segments have so far been unearthed and even restored to former glory.

Archaeological excavations have so far identified ditches, brick kilns, earthen dams, water canals, 38 forts, and watchtowers attached to the wall, and more than 25 castles in the southern margin of the wall as well as several ancient sites from prehistoric, historic, and Islamic eras.

The gigantic barrier is also more than three times the length of the longest late

Roman defensive wall built from scratch, the Anastasian Wall west of Constantinople. The combined area of the forts on the Gorgan Wall exceeds that of those on Hadrian's Wall about threefold.

According to UNESCO, the Gorgan Wall is remarkable not only in terms of its physical scale, but even more so in terms of its technical sophistication. To enable construction works, canals had to be dug along the course of the defensive barrier, to provide the water needed for brick production. These canals received their water from supplier canals, which bridged the Gorgan River via qanats. One of these, the Sadd-e Garkaz, survives to 700 m in length and 20 m in height but was originally almost one kilometer long.

The Gorgan Wall and its associated ancient military monuments provide a unique testimony to the engineering skills and military organization of the Sassanian Empire. They help to explain its geographic extent, from Mesopotamia to the west of the Indian Subcontinent, and how effective border defense contributed to the Empire's prosperity in the interior and its longevity. These monuments are, in terms of their scale, historical importance, and sophistication, of global significance.

Golestan is reportedly embracing some 2,500 historical and natural sites, with UNESCO-registered Gonbad-e Qabus — a one-millennium-old brick tower — amongst its most famous.

Abandoned caravanserais undergo restoration in eastern Iran

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Separate restoration projects have been commenced on the two abandoned caravanserais, which once brought comfort to travelers as roadside inns in eastern Iran.

Two caravanserais of Shur in Ferdows and Zardan in Zirkuh, the eastern province of South Khorasan have undergone some rehabilitation works, a local cultural official Parisa Jamshidi said on Saturday.

These structures, which were built for the rest of caravans and travelers, are considered as the most beautiful cultural heritage of the country, she said.

"They have played an important role in economic and cultural exchanges between countries and ancient civilizations."

Promoting Iranian culture and traditions along with the trade of goods was one of the noteworthy functions of caravanserais, she added.

Last year, the official said that the cultural heritage experts announced their preliminary approval to five caravansaries in the province to be included in a dossier Iran is developing for a selection of its historical caravansaries for a possible inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

After compiling a registration dossier of these caravanserais, which contains documentation, land surveying, historical

investigations, they will be added to the list of the Iranian caravansaries to be submitted to UNESCO, the official said.

"The architectural spaces of these inns include porches, chambers, luggage stations, stables, cisterns, and porticos. Also, some caravanserais bear interacted brickworks and plaster decorations," she explained.

"Iranian caravansaries are a very valuable and important example of our country's indigenous architecture, some of which are considered masterpieces of traditional architecture."

Caravansary is a compound word combining "caravan" with "sara". The first stand for a group of travelers and sara means the building.

They often had massive portals supported by elevated load-bearing walls. Guest rooms were constructed around the courtyard and stables behind them with doors in the corners of the yard.

Iran's earliest caravanserais were built during the Achaemenid era (550 -330 BC). Centuries later, when Shah Abbas I assumed power from 1588 — to 1629, he ordered the construction of network caravanserais across the country.

For many travelers to Iran, staying in or even visiting a centuries-old caravansera, can be a wide experience; they have an opportunity to feel the past, a time travel back into



a forgotten age!

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 barberie which are produced in almost all parts of the province.

Explore Malayer, a world city of woodcarving

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Wood carving is one of the oldest arts of humankind. Wooden spears from the Middle Paleolithic, as an example, reveal how humans have engaged in utilitarian woodwork for millennia.

Iran's Malayer may be top on the list for those who are interested to visit a woodcarving hob. The west-central Iranian town is named a global hub for woodcarving and carved-wood furniture by the World Crafts Council - Asia Pacific Region (WCC-APR).

Located in Hamedan province, the ancient city is home to over 4,000 fur-



niture workshops in which more than 8,000 wood masters and some 25,000 crafters are engaged.

Although the art had been practiced in Malayer for a long time ago, it is about a half-century that it has gained prosperity in the region.

In some cases, the whole family is occupied with traditional furniture making and although they didn't make much money this way, their love for handicrafts and the increasing perseverance of woodcarving artists of Malayer shows today a new face of this art-craft to the world.

Artists and crafter of this region use the wood of beech, walnut, and plane trees to make different products such as traditional, classic, steel, and sofa furniture. Their

other products are dining table, desk, all kinds of chair, bed and decorative pieces.

Currently, more than 60 percent of the furniture and woodcarving products in Iran are reportedly produced in Malayer and they are sent to various Iranian cities or being exported to Central Asian countries, Persian Gulf littoral states, Turkey, and Iraq amongst some others. Known in classical times as Ecbatana, Hamedan was one of the ancient world's greatest cities. Pitifully little remains from antiquity, but significant parts of the city center are given over to excavations, and there's a scattering of historical curiosities.

Six historical objects identified in Siraf port

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — A total of six historical objects have recently been identified in the ancient port of Siraf in southwest Iran.

"A recent examination and survey has found six historical objects on the coastal areas of Siraf in Bushehr province," IRNA quoted Mehdi Azarian, the director of Siraf national heritage site, as saying on Saturday.

"These historical objects are made of limestone. And five of which have been used as platforms and seats over the past couple of years due to the unawareness of the people."

"The objects are composed of three square column pillars, a circular pillar, and two millstones... One of these objects was identified underwater, which was placed on the beach by the waves over time and belongs to the Siraf



Grand Mosque," he explained.

Earlier this year, the national heritage site announced

Achaemenid, Seleucid objects seized from smugglers

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Iranian authorities have confiscated five ancient objects from smugglers in the western province of Kermanshah, a senior police official in charge of protecting cultural heritage has said.

Estimated to date back to the Achaemenid era (550–330 BC) and the Seleucid epoch (312 BC-63 BC), the objects include gold earrings, winged angel statues, and gold inscriptions, Amir Rahmatollahi said on Saturday.

According to an initial assessment by cultural heritage experts, the objects worth some 200 billion rials (around \$4.7 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials),

he explained.

The antique dealers were detained and surrendered to the judicial system for further investigation, the police official added.

Kermanshah embraces a variety of awe-inspiring historical sites including Bisotun and Taq-e Bostan, both on the UNESCO World Heritage list as well as the ancient Temple of Anahita.

Inscribed into the base of a towering cliff, Taq-e Bostan comprises extraordinary Sassanian bas-reliefs of ancient victorious kings divide opinions. Late afternoon is the best time to visit, as the cliff turns a brilliant orange in the setting sun, which then dies poetically on the far side of the

duck pond.

Bisotun is a patchwork of immense yet impressive life-size carvings depicting the king Darius I and several other figures. UNESCO has it that Bisotun bears outstanding testimony to the important interchange of human values on the development of monumental art and writing, reflecting ancient traditions in monumental bas-reliefs.

The Temple of Anahita in the city of Kangavar is believed to have been built circa 200 BC. Several column bases and ruins of a wall remain from the magnificent Greek-style temple. The temple was used during the Parthian era (248 BC-224) as well as the Sassanid era (224-651).



Amir Rahmatollahi, a senior police official in charge of protecting cultural heritage in an undated photo

Red deer population rises in Golestan National Park

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** —The population of red deer in Golestan National Park, northern Golestan province, has increased to 612 in the current [Iranian calendar] year (began on March 20), an increase of 13 percent year on year.

Maral, the Iranian red deer, is one of the largest deer types that unfortunately their population has declined in the country. However, the red deer occur literally from the shores of the Caspian Sea to the high alpine meadows of the Alborz Mountains.

The mating of red deer begins in the second half of September each year and lasts for a month.

According to the latest monitoring in maral habitats during the mating season, the population of this species in Golestan National Park has been counted 612, which was recorded 540 last year, director of Golestan National Park Mehdi Teymouri said.

Road construction, land-use change and livestock overgrazing in the Hyrcanian forests, and, most importantly, the presence of poachers are among the main factors influencing the decline of the maral



population, he lamented. More than 2,000 red marals lived in the park, according to the animal population census of the late 1970s, which dropped

the people, related organizations, and senior national and provincial officials, along with the efforts of environmentalists, the population of this valuable species in Golestan National Park has increased significantly, he concluded.

The national park is a unique refuge for wildlife that has been facing problems in recent years due to man-made damages.

Stretched to 87,402 hectares, it is home to one-seventh of Iran's plant species, one-third of all birds, and half of the country's mammals, hosting 1,350 plant species and 302 wildlife species. It has been listed as one of the top fifty ecosystems on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1930.

So far, 150 species of birds have been identified in Golestan National Park. Golden Eagle, eastern imperial eagle, saker falcon, falcon, and bearded vulture are among the endangered birds of the park. Other birds of Golestan National Park include common pheasants, shrikes, griffon vulture, rosy starling, typical warblers, wheatears, finches, and common blackbirds.

The park holds a share of 3 species of amphibians and 24 species of reptiles.

Italian embassy celebrates traditional cuisine week in Tehran

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN — The Italian Embassy in Tehran celebrated the fifth Week of Italian Cuisine in the World, promoting Italian culinary traditions during a ceremony on Wednesday.

The week of Italian Cuisine in the World aims at promoting quality Italian cuisine and farm produces abroad, which has already become a prominent event.

This year's edition was dedicated to "Knowledge and flavors of the Italian lands, 200 years after the birth of Pellegrino Artusi". His book "Science in the Kitchen and the Art of Eating Well" is still, 130 years after its publication, a milestone in Italian gastronomical culture.



Since mid-November, Italian diplomatic and consular offices have been promoting different events across the world, such as cooking courses, meeting with chefs, tastings and masterclasses, photographic exhibitions, and etc., most of which were held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Different events characterizing the occasion took place in Tehran, on November 16-29.

Served by the Italian chef Maurizio La Masa, the gourmet launch included different traditional meals, one of which was legumes soup similar to the Iranian dish called Abgoosht; interestingly showing the food origin similarities among the two nations.

Bison recovering but 31 other species now extinct, says red list

Europe's biggest land mammal, the European bison, is beginning to recover in numbers thanks to conservation efforts and breeding programmes, according to an update on threatened species.

By the early years of the last century, the once abundant European bison could be found only in captivity in a few places, and it was only after the second world war that animals were reintroduced into the wild in small numbers. By 2003 there were 1,800 in the wild, and by last year the number had more than tripled to a population of more than 6,200 in 47 free-ranging herds in Poland, Belarus and Russia.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), which compiles a regularly updated record of species at risk, has upgraded the outlook for European bison from its previous classification of vulnerable to the less serious grading of "near threatened".

A small release of European bison is now being planned for the UK in 2022, which would be the first time the species has been seen in the wild in the country for 6,000 years, the Guardian reported.

However, Rafal Kowalczyk, a co-author of the new assessment and a member of the IUCN bison specialist group, said more action was needed to improve the areas available to the bison and to foster genetic diversity, as the current populations were isolated from one another and only eight of the herds were big enough to be genetically viable in the long term.

"Historically, European bison were reintroduced mostly to forest habitats, where they don't find enough

food in winter. However, when they move out of the forest into agricultural areas, they often find themselves in conflict with people," said Kowalczyk. "To reduce the conflict risk and the bison's dependence on supplementary feeding, it will be important to create protected areas that include open meadows for them to graze."

The IUCN red list of species at risk is the most authoritative assessment of animal and plant species that are vulnerable, threatened or close to extinction.

The update showed continued losses of key species in vital ecosystems. Freshwater dolphins are now threatened with extinction all over the world, with harmful fishing practices, pollution, river damming and deliberate killing increasing problems for key species, according to the IUCN.

The tucuxi, a small grey dolphin found in the Amazon, has become a bycatch casualty of the increasing use of gill nets in the river system. These are curtains of fishing net that hang in the water, entangling the dolphins alongside the target fish. The IUCN advises that they should be eliminated and a ban on deliberate killing of the tucuxi should be enforced in the region. Reducing the number of dams would also help the species, which is now classed as endangered.

Altogether, 31 species have been newly listed as extinct in Wednesday's red list update, including three frogs of central America: the Chiriqui harlequin frog, which has not been recorded since 1996 despite extensive searches, and whose disappearance probably owes



to the spread of diseases caused by chytrid fungus; the wizened harlequin frog, not recorded since 1986 and another likely casualty of chytridiomycosis; and craugastor myllomylon, which has no common name and is known only from a single female specimen collected in 1978.

Plants are also coming under increasing threat, and the IUCN sounded a warning on the wild progenitor of the farmed macadamia nut, as three wild macadamia species are now threatened with extinction. The discovery comes from a comprehensive assessment of the Protea family of flowering plants of the southern hemisphere, to which macadamia belongs, that found at least 637 of the 1,464 known Protea species were vulnerable or endangered.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → C

Philanthropists support 28,000 orphans, deprived children

Iranian benefactors have made cash and kind contributions from the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan (starting on May 6) to help 28,000 children who are either orphaned or whose parents are financially struggling, deputy director of Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation has announced. There are currently 600,000 philanthropists who support orphaned children as well as children living in families in financial distress, IRNA quoted Alireza Asgarian as saying on Wednesday. The foundation also intends to build housing units for families who cannot afford to rent houses, he added.

مردم ۲۸ هزار کودک بی سرپرست را تحت حمایت قرار دادند

معاون توسعه مشارکتهای مردمی کمیته امداد امام خمینی (ره) گفت: خیرین و نیکوکاران کشور از ابتدای ماه مبارک رمضان تاکنون ۲۸ هزار کودک بی سرپرست را تحت حمایت های مالی و غیرمالی خود قرار دادند. علیرضا عسگریان روز چهارشنبه در گفت و گو با خبرنگار اجتماعی ایرنا افزود: ، ۶۰۰ هزار حامی در سطح کشور در یاری رسانی به ایتام و فرزندان محسنین با کمیته امداد همکاری دارند. عسگریان اظهار داشت: ساخت مسکن برای خانواده های تحت پوشش کمیته امداد از دیگر برنامه های اجرایی و دارای اولویت کاری این نهاد در سال جاری است.

Iran to start testing 'homegrown' COVID-19 vaccine next week

1 → 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).

COVID-19 toll, new cases

In a press briefing on Friday, Health Ministry spokesperson Sima-Sadat Lari confirmed 8,201 new cases of COVID-19 infection, raising the total number of infections to 1,100,818. She added that 800,853 patients have so far recovered, but 5,739 still remain in critical conditions of the disease.

During the past 24 hours, 221 patients have lost their lives, bringing the total number of deaths to 51,949, she added.

Lari noted that currently, 12 cities are in high-risk "red" zones, 231 in orange and 205 in yellow.

Newly discovered shark 'already extinct', a quarter of all species under threat

A shark that scientists had only just discovered might already be extinct – a fate no shark has yet suffered in the human era, a Red List of species in trouble shows.

More than a quarter of the 128,918 animal, plant and fungi species assessed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) are now threatened with extinction.

They include 316 species of shark, rays and skates, and chimaeras. The latest list has 31 new extinctions including several frogs and more than a dozen freshwater fish, the Independent reported.

And an Amazon river dolphin has become newly endangered. "This really shows that the world is under huge pressure," said Craig Hilton-Taylor, head of the Red List Unit.

"The idea of the Red List is to try to draw attention to species and stop them from going extinct but sometimes the process goes too quickly."

Simon Walmsley, chief marine adviser at WWF-UK said: "We've been witnessing the alarming decline in sharks and rays for the last two decades and yet the unsustainable fishing of these crucial species has continued unabated.

"These animals have evolved over 400 million years, and sadly we're now pushing them to the brink of extinction.

"Our ocean is in crisis and if we're going to secure a healthy future for our seas, we need urgent action from the global community to stop this destruction of our marine life."

It's been known for several years that the world is in a sixth mass extinction process, accelerated by loss of habitat and the climate crisis.

Last year, the UN warned humans were risking wiping out a million species.

And earlier this year scientists found nature is racing faster towards the point of collapse than previously thought. Research published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences warned the critical window for preventing mass losses is only 10 to 15 years.

The "lost shark" of the heavily fished South China Sea was only formally discovered last year based on decades-old specimens. But there have been no sightings and it has not shown up in surveys, prompting the IUCN to list it as critically endangered (possibly extinct).

Sharks have survived previous mass extinction events such as the asteroid strike believed to have wiped out most dinosaurs. But this might be the first shark extinction in human times, according to Will White, an ichthyologist at the Australian National Fish Collection.

"Unfortunately, what makes a species a great survivor in the natural world doesn't equate to making them great survivors against man," he said.

The IUCN tends to be conservative on extinctions, since declaring them can spell an end to any remaining protection efforts. So species it calls "possibly extinct" often already are.

The organisation also moved an Amazon dolphin with a pinkish belly called the tucuxi to its endangered list, meaning that all the world's freshwater dolphins are now threatened.

It is being killed by dams, pollution and gillnets – vast curtains of fishing nets that dangle in the current.

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 81)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

Iranian.....	ایرانی	pattern.....	الگو
they; he; she.....	ایشان [ایشون]	hello.....	آلو /ow/
this.....	این	Ukrainian female student.....	اینها
here.....	اینجا	but.....	اما /ammā/
these.....	اینها = این ها [اینها]	Iranian family name.....	ایمائی
	ب	examination.....	امتحان (جمع: امتحانات)
with.....	با	affair; imperative; order.....	آمر
time, occasion.....	بار	today.....	امروز
open.....	باز [وا، واز] بگفت	dictation.....	املا
to open.....	باز کردن [وا، واز]	Muslim male name.....	آمیر
together.....	با هم	fulfilment.....	آنجام
must, should.....	باید	to do, to fulfil.....	آنجام دادن
child.....	بچه (جمع: بچه ها)	composition.....	انشا
section.....	بخش اسم	revolution.....	انقلاب
to excuse;.....	بخشیدن - بخش	(جمع: انقلابات، انقلاب ها)	
awake.....	بیدار میگفت	to forgive.....	
to wake (up).....	بیدار شدن (از خواب).....	bad.....	بد
twenty.....	بیست [بیست]	brother.....	برادر
	پ	for.....	برای /ba'ra'ye/ [برای، برای]
Iranian family name.....	پارسا	برداشتن - بردار /bardār/ [وارد داشتن]	
reply.....	پاسخ رسی	to take.....	
to reply.....	پاسخ دادن رسی	big, large; elder.....	بزرگ
Pakistan.....	پاکستان	to close.....	بستن - بند
Pakistani.....	پاکستانی	parcel.....	پسته ۱-سم
fifteen.....	پانزده /h/ [پونزده]	closed.....	پسته ۲-مقت
five hundred.....	پانصد [پونصد]	plate.....	پشقاب
basic.....	پایه میگفت	next; later.....	بعد میگفت، بعد

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GUIDE TO

SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

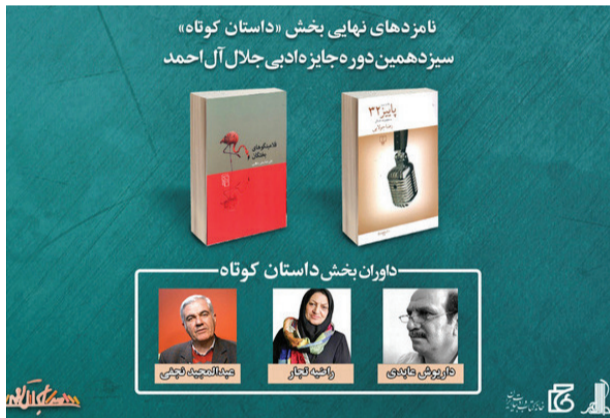
Be afraid of nothing but sins.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Jalal Literary Awards unveils nominations in short story collections competition

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — “Autumn 32” and “Flamingos of Bakhtegan” have been nominated in the short story collection category of the 13th edition of the Jalal Al-e Ahmad Literary Awards.

Written by Reza Julai, all the stories of “Autumn 32” are set in Iran after World War II until the Anglo-American coup in Iran in 1953.



This combination photo shows the nominated books for the short stories collection category of the Jalal Al-e Ahmad Literary Awards and the jury members for this section.

The characters are those obscure people affected by these events. The book recounts untold stories from ordinary people who have been forgotten and ignored, and Julai deems that it is the duty of writers to unfold these untold stories.

The characters are dealing with politics and destiny, while they are struggling to determine their own destinies and to return to their normal lives. However, it seems that there is somebody pushing them onto the margins of society.

Julai has begun his writing career with the short story collection “Story of the Dynasty of the Hunchback” in 1983. History is the common element connecting all his stories. “The Pink Sweetbriars”, “The Eternals” and “Green Rains” are among his credits.

“Flamingos of Bakhtegan” has been authored by Ali Salehi Bafqi, 45, who began writing stories when he was twenty.

In one of his stories from the collection, Salehi Bafqi writes, “He turned off his cellphone and put it in his pocket.

“She took the tickets from the old man who had purchased all the seats in the compartment. She went up the stairs of wagon 3 and took the old man’s hand and both went to compartment 5. The old man sat down and Azar took the seat opposite to him.

“After the train slowly pulled out, the old man leaned forward moving his head close to Azar, and, covering his mouth with his hand, hesitatingly told her: ‘Seyyed and I both loved Hitler’.”

The book has been selected by a jury composed of Razieh Tojjar, Abdolhamid Najafi and Dariush Abedi.

Pakistan eager to expand library ties with Iran

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — The director-general of the National Library of Pakistan has announced the library’s readiness to expand cultural cooperation with the National Library and Archives of Iran (NLAI).

Syed Ghayour Hussain made the remarks in a recent meeting with Iran’s cultural attaché in Islamabad, Ehsan Khazaei, at the library.

Hussain pointed to the high position of the Persian language in Pakistan, and said that there are many cultural and historical affinities that connect the two countries, and that the Pakistani people are really interested in learning the Persian language.

He next gave a brief report about the activities of the library during the pandemic.

For his part, Khazaei also said that the two countries enjoy many commonalities, adding that Iran Pakistan Institute of Persian Studies, an affiliate of Iran’s Cultural Office in Pakistan, is a treasure trove that has been active for fifty years.

The NLAI is home to over 40,000 copies of rare manuscripts with some dating back 700 years.

The institute holds over 17,000 rare manuscripts and over 10,000 sets of lithographs, which will be a good source for collaboration with the National Library.

The National Library of Pakistan was established in 1993 and is home to over 660 rare manuscripts, part of which are in the Persian language.

Photo: A view of the National Library of Pakistan.

Werner Herzog calls Iran country with great tradition of wonderful films

A R T **TEHRAN** — German documentary filmmaker Werner Herzog in his message to British documentary filmmaker André Singer has called Iran a country with a great tradition of wonderful films.

Singer is scheduled to review the cinema of Werner Herzog in a master class at the 14th edition of Cinéma Vérité, Iran’s major international festival for documentary films.

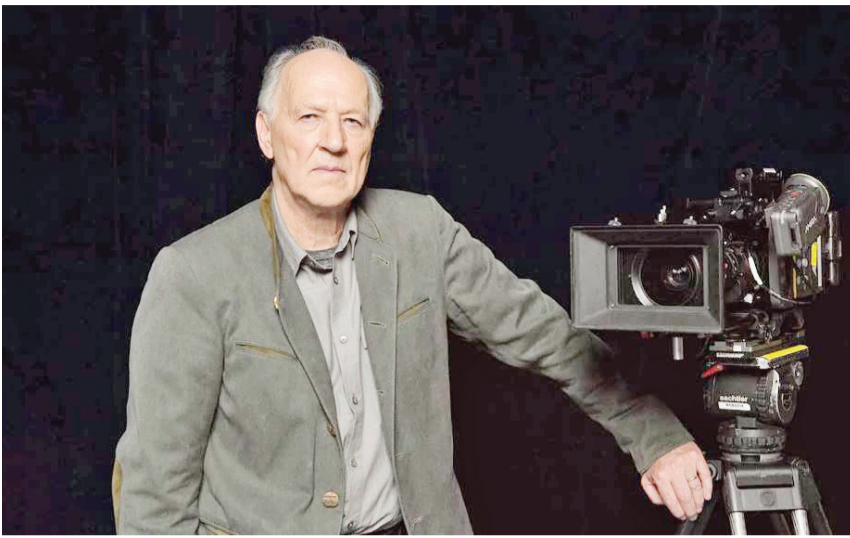
Due to the pandemic, this year’s Cinéma Vérité will be organized totally online from December 15 to 22.

The following is the text of the video message.

“Hello Andrea, I know you are doing a seminar, a workshop with young people in Iran. Young filmmakers and young students, I envy you because I love this country, I love Iran, the country of 5000 years of poetry and Iran has such a great tradition of wonderful films. I wish you could be there, or I could be there in person but we can’t.”

“One thing that I first noticed in the first emails that we exchanged that there are some thoughts about Cinéma Vérité, so be cautious, because I was the one who always preached Cinéma Vérité.”

“Truth in cinema lies beyond the effects, it lies somewhere in the mysterious



German documentary filmmaker Werner Herzog in an undated photo.

area that we cannot really define, I call it sometimes the ecstasy of the truth and I think Iranian films have found something that illuminate us but when it comes to the term of Cinéma Vérité, you should leave it behind because that was the answer of the 1960s; reach out beyond that. You will have some wonderful young people

beyond you, and I wish you all the best, best of luck to all of you.”

Herzog’s unusual films have captured men and women at psychological extremes.

During his youth, the 78-year-old Herzog studied history, literature, and music in Munich and at the University of Pittsburgh, and traveled extensively in Mexico, Great

Britain, Greece and Sudan.

“Herakles” was his early short directed in 1962, and “Signs of Life” (Ebenszeichen) was his first feature film made in 1967.

He became known for working with small budgets and for writing and producing his own motion pictures.

Herzog’s films, usually set in distinct and unfamiliar landscapes, are imbued with mysticism.

In his 1970 “Even Dwarfs Started Small” (Auch Zwerge Haben Klein Angefangen), the microcosm of a barren island inhabited by dwarfs stands for a larger reality, and in “Fata Morgana”, his 1971 documentary on the Sahara, the desert acquires an eerie life of its own.

One of Herzog’s best-known films, “Aguirre, the Wrath of God” (1972) follows a band of Spanish explorers into unmapped territory, recording their gradual mental and physical self-destruction.

Herzog’s most realistic film “Stroszek” (1977), is a bittersweet tale of isolation concerning a German immigrant who, with his two misfit companions, finds the dairy lands of Wisconsin to be lonelier and bleaker than the slums of Berlin.

Herzog’s other films include “Heart of Glass”, “Woyzeck”, “Fitzcarraldo” and “Scream of Stone” (Schrei aus Stein).

“As a Soldier” gives Leader’s accounts of first year of Iran-Iraq war



A poster for “As a Soldier” by Iranian filmmaker Mehdi Naqavian.

➔ Naqavian has used archival footage from Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting and several other organizations to make “As a Soldier”.

The film is scheduled to be screened at the 14th edition of Cinéma Vérité, Iran’s major international festival for documentary films, which will be organized totally online due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Naqavian said that due to the limitations the pandemic has imposed on documentarians, there has a trend toward making documentaries with archival footages.

He said that such films have always been treated with utter contempt by the juries and organizers of festivals in the country.

“Meanwhile, many amazing documentaries are made across the world based archival recordings,” he added.

Naqavian criticized Iranian filmmakers for their paucity of

regard for historical documentaries, and added, “Meanwhile, the Iranian opposition media working abroad are immensely active and instills biased ideas about contemporary Iranian history in people.”

The 14th Cinéma Vérité festival will be organized in Tehran from December 15 to 22.

A lineup of documentaries acclaimed at 2020 international events across the world will be screened in the World’s Best section.

Among the films are “Rockfield by Hannah Berryman from England”, “Tony Driver” by Ascanio Petri from Italy, “Two Roads” by Radovan Sibrt from Czech and “Acasa, My Home” by Radu Ciorniciuc from Romania.

In addition, the Russia and Qatar co-production “Froth” and Dutch documentary “Punks” will be reviewed in this category.

“Asho” wins best short-medium doc award at Greece Olympia festival

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian filmmaker Jafar Najafi’s “Asho” has won the award for best short and medium length documentary at the 23rd Olympia International Film Festival for Children and Young People.

“Asho” is about a little shepherd interested in cinema. The routine with his herd is challenging, but passion for Hollywood and acting allows his dreams to mix in with real life. Asho and a girl, who were promised for each other in marriage since they were small as dictated by tradition in his village, try to ignore love with their childish tenacity.

“This film gave us a great glimpse into the life of a unique young boy and his love of films,” the festival jury said in their statement published on the closing day of the event on December 8.



“Asho” by Iranian filmmaker Jafar Najafi won the award for best short and medium length documentary at the 23rd Olympia International Film Festival for Children and Young People in Greece.

“It gave a great balance between older traditions and the new world intertwining, and the inner conflict it can sometimes create for the young protagonist. The shots were beautifully done, and the audience gets a chance to get to know the unique character of Asho,” the jury added.

“Asho” was selected as the best children’s documentary at the International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) in November.

The Olympia festival, which took place in the Greek cities of Pyrgos and Amaliada from November 28 to December 5, gave the award for best feature film to “Antigone” by Sophie Deraspe from Canada.

The award for best short fiction film went to “Our Time” by Veronica Spedicati from Italy, while “Cornstalk” by Anastasiia

Zhakulina from Russia was selected as best short animation.

Samuel Kishi Leopo from Mexico was picked as best director for the film “Los Lobos”, and the Argentinean drama “Delfin” written by Gaspar Scheuer won the award for best screenplay.

The award best young actress went to Riva Krymalowski for her role in Caroline Link’s “When Hitler Stole the Pink Rabbit”, a co-production between Germany and Switzerland.

Nikolas Kisker won the award for best young actor for his role in “Daniel ‘16” by Dimitris Koutsibasakos from Greece.

The India-South Korea co-production “Pearl of the Desert” by Pushpendra Singh won the award for best feature documentary.

Brian Housman’s “Tech Savvy Parenting” comes to Iranian bookstores

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — Brian Housman’s book “Tech Savvy Parenting” has recently been published in Persian in Tehran.

Mehdi Musavi is the translator of the book published by Arjmand Publications.

“Tech Savvy Parenting” will teach one to navigate and use the technology that is part of every child’s life. Each chapter visually walks readers through a different issue of technology that kids and teens are wading into. Brian’s easy-to-follow instructions and how-to tips will help readers address safety and awareness in online browsing.

Other safety tips are “talk with child about texting”, “set time limits and restrictions with video games”, “understand the role of social networking in the lives of teens/‘teens”, “learn to protect child’s online reputation” and many more issues.

This color book also includes photographs, infographics and e-sources that help bring technical information to life. Every parent struggles to find a balance with cell phones, social networks and video games in the lives of their kids.



Front cover of the Persian translation of Brian Housman’s “Tech Savvy Parenting”.

Most parents feel overwhelmed and ill-equipped to set boundaries for their kids because they don’t know what to do with the technology themselves.

“Tech Savvy Parenting” gives parents the practical tools

and resources needed to help the whole family use technology wisely and responsibly.

Housman has been working with parents and teenagers for more than twenty years. He has served in a variety of positions such as youth pastor, school administrator, teaching pastor and camp director.

He is a prolific writer for parenting magazines, most notably “Parenting Teens” and “Parent Life”. He is the author of “Engaging Your Teen’s World” and “Raising Responsible Teens in a Digital World”. He is the executive director of the 360 Family Conference. Brian and his wife, Mona, have two teenagers of their own. Besides loving and shaping their own children, together they enjoy coaching other parents.

He has had the privilege of speaking at more than 300 conferences and countless schools, churches, camps and military bases. He has lead student and parent programs from coast to coast as well as several international locations.

Brian has been featured as a “parenting expert” (whatever that is) on more than forty radio shows and TV programs including FOX, ABC and NBC affiliates.

Tadeusz Konwicki’s “A Minor Apocalypse” published in Persian

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — A Persian translation of Polish author Tadeusz Konwicki’s novel “A Minor Apocalypse” has recently been published by the Salehs Publishing House in Tehran.

The book has been translated into Persian by Forugh Puryavari.

As in his novel “The Polish Complex”, Konwicki’s “A Minor Apocalypse” stars a narrator and character named Konwicki, who has been asked to set himself on fire that evening in front of the Communist Party headquarters in Warsaw in an act of protest.

He accepts the commission, but without any clear idea of whether he will actually go through with the self-immolation. He

spends the rest of the day wandering the streets of Warsaw, being tortured by the secret police and falling in love. Both himself and Everyman, the character-author experiences the effects of ideologies and bureaucracies gone insane with, as always in history, the individual struggling for survival rather than offering himself up on the pyre of the greater good.

Brilliantly translated into English by Richard Lourie, “A Minor Apocalypse” is one of the most important novels to emerge from Poland in the last twenty five years.

Konwicki is also a screenwriter and film director, and is known for his bitter novels about the devastations of war

and ideology.

He was educated at the universities of Cracow and Warsaw, and began writing for newspapers and periodicals. He served on the editorial boards of leading literary magazines and followed the official Communist Party line. His first work, “At the Construction Site” (Przy budowie, 1950) won the State Prize for Literature.

He began a career as a filmmaker and scriptwriter in 1956. His film “The Last Day of Summer” (Ostatni dzien lata) won the Venice Film Festival Grand Prix in 1958.

By the late 1960s, he had quit the Communist Party, lost his job in the official film industry and become active in the opposition movement.



Front cover of the Persian translation of Polish author Tadeusz Konwicki’s “A Minor Apocalypse”.