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1,200 idle industrial units revived in Iran since last March

TEHRAN - Iran's deputy interior minister for economic coordination has announced that 1,200 idle industrial units have been revived throughout the country in the current Iranian calendar year, which started on March 20, 2020. Babak Dinparast said that there are over 46,500 industrial units in Iran's industrial parks and zones, of them 37,000 units (over 80 percent) are active. He also said that 743,000 persons are working in these units, and if the 9,200 idle

units will return to the production cycle, jobs will be created for 192,000 persons. Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry was initially planning to revive 1,500 idle units in the current year, but then it revised its programs to revive 2,000 units. Iran's industrial parks play a significant role in making the country independent through boosting production, which is a major strategy of Iran to combat the U.S. sanctions. *Continued on page 4*

Importing Pfizer vaccines 'is no more the question': Iranian Red Crescent Society

TEHRAN - The Iranian Red Crescent society issued a statement on Friday, stressing that importing Pfizer vaccines made by the United States 'is no more the question'. In a televised speech on Friday, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei prohibited the import of American and British coronavirus vaccines to Iran, saying if the Americans were able to produce vaccines they weren't in such

dire circumstances. "I really don't trust them. They sometimes want to test the vaccine on other nations," Ayatollah Khamenei added. Following the Leader's remarks, Mohammad-Hassan Qossian-Moqaddam, the IRCS spokesman, said that importing Pfizer vaccines made by the United States 'is no more the question'. *Continued on page 7*

IRGC unveils new underground missile base on Persian Gulf coast

TEHRAN - Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps unveiled a new underground missile city on the Persian Gulf's coast during a visit by IRGC Chief Commander Major General Hossein Salami and IRGC Navy Commander Rear Admiral Ali Reza Tangsiri. Speaking at the missile city, General Salami said the IRGC Navy's strategic

missiles and their launchers are stored at the base. "What you see today in this complex is one of several facilities containing the Guard's naval strategic missiles, in which we see a column of missiles and their launch systems," the IRGC chief said. *Continued on page 3*

Trump's disgraceful end

BY M.A. SAKI

It was too late for Americans, especially most of his fellow Republicans, to realize how dangerous Donald Trump was.

I cannot forget remarks by Arshin Adib-Moghaddam, an expert in global thought and comparative philosophies, who said that "Trump is the most dangerous man in the world."

On Wednesday, Trump provoked assault on the Capitol in a last-ditch effort to overturn the results of the November 3 election in which he lost with a rather large margin.

According to CNN, in his first presidential debate on October 1, Trump refused to condemn White supremacists and blamed what he called "antifa and the left" for violence and told the Proud Boys to "stand back and stand by."

At last, his Proud Boys, a mob of fanatics, caused mayhem by storming and capturing the Capitol, violently disrupting the ceremonial electoral count. The move by the fanatics came as a severe blow to the heart of democracy that the U.S. has been boasting of.

Trump has been repeatedly claiming that the U.S. presidential election looked like an election in a third world country. But, in fact, it was Trump himself who behaved like a dictator in a third world country as he refused to admit losing the election.

It is very difficult for the liar-in-chief to admit defeat and resist his egoism. He proved that he is ready to push the United States toward a crisis in order to please his egoism.

Just prior to the elections, he kept claiming that he will win the presidency for a second term otherwise the votes are rigged.

Trump's entire presidency was filled with numerous lies. He has no principles. In addition, the self-centered president shows no respect to democracy, freedom of expression, human rights, etc. By inciting his supporters, who attacked the Capitol building, he crucified democracy and the rule of law in the U.S. and showed complete disregard for those who had not voted for him.

If the American Constitution had not restrained Trump, he would have acted more irresponsibly and recklessly at home and abroad.

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American analyst censures social media double-standards in regard to U.S.

BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI

TEHRAN - An American terrorism researcher describes the reaction of social media like Twitter as double-standard when it comes to U.S. internal integrity.

"The concept of 'American Exceptionalism' seems to obscure the glaring reality of our hypocrisy," Mila Johns tells the Tehran Times. "It is 100% a double standard."

However, Johns believes that "Twitter's move to lock President Trump's account on that platform was certainly welcome, but it's far too little, far too late."

The U.S. Capitol descended into chaos and violence Wednesday as hundreds of pro-Trump rioters swarmed the building, leaving four people dead and forcing the Senate to evacuate and Vice President Mike Pence to be ushered to safety.

The rioters attacked Capitol after provocations by Trump, who keeps claiming vote rigging. Through

incitement of his loyalists, Trump was seeking to reverse the result of the November 3 elections.

The frenzied scene after rioters broke through barricades forced Congress to evacuate parts of the building and abruptly pause a ceremonial event affirming that President-elect Joe Biden won the November election. In one dramatic moment, police officers drew guns as rioters tried to break into the House chamber.

After the U.S. Capitol attack, the social network had originally imposed a 24-hour ban.

Twitter said that it would ban Trump "permanently" if he breached the platform's rules again.

The following is the text of interview with Mila Johns:

How do you assess the recent events in Washington as pro-Trump protestors stormed the Capitol building? Is that a peaceful protest or violent?

Continued on page 5

Pro-Trump rioters storm Congress, top Democrats seek Trump's removal after Capitol Hill assault

Democratic leaders have called for Donald Trump to be removed from office after a group of his supporters violently stormed the Capitol.

House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi directly accused President Donald Trump of inciting "armed insurrection" against the United States.

Supporters of President Donald Trump stormed the U.S. Capitol on Wednesday while Congress was certifying the Electoral College's votes for Joe Biden's victory in the November election.

It took several hours for the Capitol to be secured. Vice President Mike Pence was moved to a safe location.

"This president has committed an unspeakable assault on our nation," Speaker Pelosi told a news conference at the U.S. Capitol on Thursday.

Earlier, Pelosi and Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer attempted to reach Vice President Mike Pence by telephone to urge him to

replace Trump immediately through the 25th Amendment to the constitution, which allows a vice president to replace a president, if they are unable to perform their duties. Pence would not take their call.

"If the vice president and Cabinet do not act, the Congress may be prepared to move forward with impeachment," said Pelosi, who said she had not slept since a pro-Trump mob invaded the Capitol on Wednesday.

"By inciting sedition as he did yesterday, he must be removed from office," Pelosi said.

U.S. media reported on Thursday that Pence was opposed to invoking the 25th Amendment.

Pelosi is the top Democrat in the House of Representatives which impeached Trump in 2019 on charges of abuse of power for tying U.S. military aid to Ukraine in exchange for fabricating political dirt on Joe Biden. *Continued on page 5*

Will of legendary Iranian wrestler to go on display in Sports Museum

TEHRAN - Coinciding with the 53rd death anniversary of legendary Iranian wrestler Gholamreza Takhti, the will of the Olympic gold medalist will go on display at Iran Sports Museum.

The will, which was donated to the National Museum of Iran by Takhti's family, has undergone some rehabilitation works by the cultural heritage experts over the past year, the director of the museum, Jebrael Nokandeh, announced on Wednesday.

The testament has been documented, restored, and strengthened in the laboratory of conserva-

tion and restoration of the National Museum of Iran, the official said.

The will, which is now considered as a cultural heritage and a valuable historical document was installed in a suitable frame and handed over to the Sports Museum, he added.

Takhti, whose manly virtue and social activities during the 1960s made him a national hero, won the gold medal in the 1956 Olympic Games in Melbourne, defeating Boris Kulayev from Soviet Union in the final match.

He also claimed two Olympics silver medals in 1952 Helsinki and 1960 Rome. Takhti won two World Championships gold medals in 1959 Tehran and 1961 Yokohama.

The freestyle wrestler also seized a gold medal in the 1958 Asian Games held in Tokyo, Japan.

He is perhaps the most famous wrestler in Iranian history, best known for his chivalry and sportsmanship, and continues to symbolize the essence of sports to the Iranian people. *Continued on page 6*



Projection mapping in memory of Ukrainian plane victims

A projection mapping was carried out on the iconic Azadi Tower in Tehran to commemorate the Ukrainian passenger plane victims on Wednesday night.

The Ukrainian airliner flight 752 was shot down by missiles shortly after taking off from Tehran's Imam Khomeini airport on January 8, 2020, killing all 167 passengers and 9 crew members.

Using Iran as a threat to the Arabs is bogus: Canadian lawyer

BY AMIR MOHAMMAD ESMAEILI

TEHRAN - Edward C. Corrigan, a Canadian analyst and lawyer, tells the Tehran Times that the United States has intensified its Iranophobia project among Arab states in West Asia in order to advance the "Fraud of the Century", the term he uses for "Deal of the Century" that was pronounced by Donald Trump on January 28, 2020.

"Using Iran as a threat to the Arabs of the region is bogus. Americans want to divide the Arabs and to divert attention away from Israel and the Palestine issue. The Americans also want to provoke a Sunni/Shia conflict in the region to divide and weaken the Arabs," Corrigan notes.

Corrigan, an international lawyer and journalist based in Canada, adds, "The Iran 'bogymen' is a good pretext to sell arms to the Persian Gulf states and to keep an arms race going in the area for American companies to profit from."

On the so-called "Deal of the Century", the lawyer says "this deal is better described as the 'Fraud of the Century' as it did nothing for the Palestinians except to crush them and to legitimize Israel's illegal 'Jewish Only' settlements in the West Bank and the illegal confiscation of Palestinian land."

The following is the full text of interview with Corrigan:

The Saudi-led Qatar blockade is ending after three years. What exactly did Saudi Arabia and its Arab partners achieve?

A: Saudi Arabia and its allies achieved nothing. They lost influence in the area and pushed Qatar towards Iran and also brought Turkish troops to Qatar to protect Qatar from Saudi Arabia. *Continued on page 5*

Iran says will halt 20% enrichment if U.S. lifts sanctions

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has said Iran will stop enriching uranium to 20 percent purity if U.S. sanctions against the country are lifted. In an interview with Japan's public broadcaster NHK on Wednesday, Araghchi said Iranians have suffered from the effects of U.S. sanctions over the past four years.

He said that as a diplomat, he "would not lose a minute to ensure that sanctions are lifted once again."

On Monday, government spokesman Ali Rabiei announced that Iran has started the process to enrich uranium to 20 percent purity at Fordow.

President Hassan Rouhani has ordered the implementation of a new law, dubbed the Strategic Action Plan to Counter Sanctions, which has been already approved by the Parliament, Rabiei said.

Araghchi said if the sanctions are lifted and Iran can benefit from the nuclear deal, the country would return to its obligations, adding the 20 percent enrichment "can be easily and swiftly reversed."

Commenting on Washington possibly signing up to the pact again, Araghchi said, "It is up to them to decide," adding that "we



welcome their return, but we are not begging for their return."

Referring to the incoming administration of U.S. President-elect Joe Biden, Araghchi said Iran will wait "to see how they want to return" to the pact and its requirements.

U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally pulled his country out of the historic nuclear agreement in May 2018 and pursued a policy of "maximum pressure" against the Islamic Republic.

The maximum pressure campaign prompted Iran to reduce its commitments under the nuclear deal, officially called the JCPOA, especially after the other signatories of the deal failed to protect Iran's interests.

Iran, however, has repeatedly said that its actions can be reversed if the other parties fulfilled their JCPOA commitments.

In a tweet on Monday, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said Iran's latest move conforms fully with paragraph 36 of the JCPOA, but also pointed out that Iran's measures are fully reversible.

"We resumed 20% enrichment, as legislated by our Parliament. IAEA has been duly notified," Zarif said.

"Our remedial action conforms fully with Para 36 of JCPOA, after years of non-compliance by several other JCPOA participants. Our measures are fully reversible upon FULL compliance by ALL," he added.

Meanwhile, late on Monday, Tehran announced that it had produced its first UF6 (uranium hexafluoride or hex) product.

Behrouz Kamalvandi, the spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), said that considering the previous experience of enrichment at the Fordow facility, the new production line for enriching uranium up to 20 percent was prepared very quickly.

He also said Iran is ready to enrich uranium at purity levels beyond 20 percent.

Iraqi court issues arrest warrant for Trump over assassination of Gen. Soleimani, PMU deputy cmdr.

(Press TV) — An Iraqi court has ordered the arrest of outgoing U.S. President Donald Trump as part of its investigation into the assassination of top Iranian anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani and his Iraqi trenchmate Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis in a U.S. drone strike near Baghdad International Airport on January 3 last year.

The arrest warrant, issued by Baghdad's Rusafa investigation court, applies to Trump under Article 406 of the Iraqi penal code, which provides for the death penalty in all cases of premeditated murder.

The court said the preliminary inquiry had been completed but "investigations are continuing in order to unmask the other culprits in this crime, be they Iraqis or foreigners."



General Soleimani, the commander of the Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), and Muhandis, the deputy head of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), were assassinated along with their companions in a U.S. terror drone strike authorized by Trump near Baghdad International Airport on January 3, 2020.

Iraqi lawmakers approved a bill two days after the attack, demanding the withdrawal of all foreign military forces led by the United States from the country.

Both commanders were admired by Muslim nations for eliminating the U.S.-sponsored Daesh Takfiri terrorist group in the region, particularly in Iraq and Syria.

The U.S. assassination drew a wave of condemnation from officials and movements throughout the world, and triggered huge public protests across the region.

Early on January 8 last year, the IRGC targeted the U.S.-run Ain al-Assad air base in Iraq's western province of Anbar to retaliate the assassination of General Soleimani.

According to the U.S. Defense Department, more than 100 American forces suffered "traumatic brain injuries" during the counterstrike on the base. The IRGC, however, says Washington uses the term to mask the number of the Americans who perished during the retaliation.

Iran has described the missile attack on Ain al-Assad air base as a "first slap."

Head of the Iranian Judiciary's High Council for Human Rights Ali Baqeri-Kani announced on December 28 last year that the country had identified and was prosecuting 48 individuals for masterminding and conducting General Soleimani's assassination.

Leader prohibits import of American, British COVID-19 vaccines

The West is obliged to immediately end 'malicious' sanctions on Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei says

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has prohibited the import of American and British coronavirus vaccines to Iran, saying if the Americans were able to produce vaccines they weren't in such dire circumstances. "I really don't trust them. They sometimes want to test the vaccine on other nations," Ayatollah Khamenei said in televised remarks on Friday morning on the occasion of the anniversary of the 1978 Qom protest against the Pahlavi dynasty.

He also said he does not trust the French either, due to France's infected blood scandal. "But if they (Iranian authorities) want to import vaccines from a reliable place, there is no problem."

The Leader also said the enemies must immediately lift their sanctions, which have targeted not only Iranian authorities but also the Iranian people.

"The Western front and the enemies are obliged to end this malicious move and immediately stop it," he stated.

The U.S. government, under Donald Trump, has implemented a "maximum pressure" policy against Iran, including the targeting of Iran's economy with harsh sanctions.

The maximum pressure campaign was launched after Trump withdrew the U.S. from the multilateral Iran nuclear deal, officially recognized as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The United States' sanctions have severely hampered Iran's power to contain the coronavirus outbreak, which has so far claimed the lives of nearly 56,000 people.

With Joe Biden's victory, however, hopes have been raised over the survival of the nuclear deal. Biden has promised to return the United States into the JCPOA if Iran returns to full compliance with the deal.

The Leader explained that while the



enemies must lift the sanctions, Iranian authorities should not pin their hopes on that, and instead, focus on making the economy robust against sanctions.

He also said Iran is in no hurry that the U.S. returns to the JCPOA. "What we put emphasis on is the [immediate] lifting of sanctions, which are a violation of the Iranian nation's right."

"If the sanctions are lifted, then the U.S. return to Barjam (JCPOA) would mean something, but if that does not happen, the U.S. return to Barjam might as well be to our detriment," the Leader noted.

In similar remarks on December 16, the Leader called on the officials to refrain from pinning hope on the lifting of sanctions and, instead, work

to nullify the sanctions.

"Lifting sanctions is in the enemy's hands. Nullifying them is in ours. We should work more on nullifying than removing them. I don't say we shouldn't pursue removing sanctions. But sanctions that were supposed to be lifted according to the JCPOA, 4 years ago, have intensified," he said.

President Hassan Rouhani said on December 26 that his administration is seriously pursuing the nullification of the sanctions.

"That the Leader told [us] to neutralize the sanctions, we are pursuing this moment by moment. Every time money enters the country and goods are exported, you should know that hours of fights have been behind it,"

"The Western front and the enemies are obliged to end this malicious move and immediately stop it," says Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Rouhani: U.S. clashes exposed weakness of Western democracy

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — President Hassan Rouhani has said Western democracy is "weak" and "broken", pointing as an example to the unrest in Washington during certification of the November 3 presidential election results by Congress.

"We saw that unfortunately populism is deeply rooted in such countries, despite their scientific and industrial progress," Rouhani said on Thursday in an address to the inauguration ceremony of three major national projects.

Supporters of U.S. President Donald Trump stormed the U.S. Capitol on Wednesday while Congress was certifying the Electoral College's votes for Joe Biden's victory in the November election. Four people lost their lives during the unrest.

It took several hours for the Capitol to be secured. Vice President Mike Pence was moved to a safe location. This was the first time the U.S. Capitol was breached since the British attacked and burned the building in 1814.

"We have seen what damage a populist person has inflicted upon his own country in the last four years, bringing disgrace upon his nation while also inflicting great damage on our region, on Palestine, Syria and Yemen," President Rouhani said in a reference to Trump.

The president further said when an "unfit person" gains power in a country, he would cause numerous problems for his country and the entire world.

"I hope this would be a lesson for the whole world and also for the next rulers of the White House," Rouhani remarked.

Zarif slams Trump as 'rogue president who sought vengeance against his own people'

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif also voiced

similar sentiments on Thursday, saying Trump's unchecked authority to start a nuclear war was a security concern for the entire world.

"A rogue president who sought vengeance against his OWN people has been doing much worse to our people—and others—in the past 4 years," Zarif wrote in a tweet.

He added, "What's disturbing is that the same man has the UNCHECKED authority to start a nuclear war; a security concern for the entire int'l community."

Meanwhile, President Rouhani advised the incoming Biden administration to compensate for Trump's mistakes and to return to the rule of law, pointing to Trump's lack of respect for international organizations and agreements such as the Iran nuclear deal.

Iran and six world powers, including the U.S., Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany, together with the European Union reached the nuclear deal, officially called the JCPOA, in 2015, under which Iran agreed to put certain restrictions on its nuclear program in exchange for termination of sanctions.

However, despite Iran's strict compliance with the deal, U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew the United States from the deal, which was signed under his predecessor Barack Obama, and imposed harsh economic sanctions on the Islamic Republic to force it to negotiate a new deal.

However, following Biden's victory, hopes have been raised over the survival of the nuclear deal. The U.S. president-elect has promised to return the United States into the JCPOA if Iran returns to full compliance with the deal.

On Wednesday, President Rouhani said if the United States repents, abandons its "glass breaking" behavior



and returns to its nuclear agreement commitments, Iran will also return to compliance with the deal.

"The administration that will come to power in the U.S. in the near future, that is Mr. Biden's administration, which will come to power in the next two weeks, if it says the U.S. has stopped breaking glass, repents and wants to follow the law and fulfills its obligations, and if it asks us, we will say if you fulfill your obligations we will fulfill all our obligations as well," he said at a cabinet session.

Rouhani also maintained that no one in the world should think that the Iranian nation would surrender in the face of sanctions.

"We will continue our path powerfully," he said. "Of course, any time that the other side surrenders to the rule of law, we will welcome it."

S. Korean delegation in Tehran to discuss Iran's frozen funds

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatbizadeh has said that the South Korean delegation's visit to Tehran is aimed at negotiating Iran's frozen financial resources.

"The delegation that has arrived in our country is part of a delegation led by the South Korean deputy foreign minister, which is set to travel to Tehran on Sunday," Khatbizadeh said on Thursday.

He rejected an earlier report that the visit is related to the seizure of South Korea's tanker in the Persian Gulf by Iranian naval forces for repeated violations of maritime environmental law.

"The delegation's trip was agreed upon before the seizure of the violating Korean tanker, and its main agenda is to discuss access to Iran's financial resources in Korea," he added.

The remarks came two days after South Korea's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Choi Young-sam said a delegation, led by Director-General for African and Middle Eastern Affairs Koh Kyung-sok, would soon leave for Tehran to resolve the issue of the seizure of MT Hankuk Chemi tanker through negotiations.

Iranian authorities have been pressing South Korea to release between \$6.5 billion and \$9 billion dollars in funds that had been frozen since 2018 when the United States imposed its unilateral sanctions on Iran.

The release of the funds would enable Tehran to



purchase medicine and medical equipment needed to fight the coronavirus pandemic.

Iran has repeatedly called on Seoul to abandon its "illegal" policies and release the Iranian assets that it has frozen due to the U.S. sanctions so that Tehran can step up its fight against COVID-19.

"We expect South Korea to review its illegal approaches and also speed up the implementation of other negotiated solutions in addition to facilitating the trade in humanitarian items," government spokesman Ali Rabiei said in remarks on July 28, after he

himself tested positive for COVID-19.

This would enable the Iranian nation "to gain access to its financial resources as soon as possible and overcome its economic and health problems emanating from the coronavirus spread," he added.

Hossein Tanhaei, head of the Iran-South Korea Joint Chamber of Commerce, on Sunday announced Iran's decision to use its frozen money for COVID-19 vaccines

"Yesterday, we had a meeting with First Vice President Es'haq Jahangiri about our country's blocked money in South Korea, and suggestions were made to be presented to South Korea on how to barter our money in this country with a variety of goods including COVID-19 vaccine," Tanhaei told ILNA.

Earlier, President Hassan Rouhani had reacted to Seoul's blocking of Iranian assets, saying: "South Korea's ban on Iran's use of its central bank resources to buy basic goods, medicine, and humanitarian items is by no means acceptable, and we expect Seoul to lift this restriction as soon as possible."

Over the past two years, economic relations between Tehran and Seoul have fallen sharply under the increased U.S. sanctions against Iran.

Before re-imposing U.S. sanctions in 2018, South Korea had \$4 billion in annual exports to Iran and \$8 billion in Iran imports.

IRGC unveils new underground missile base on Persian Gulf coast

1→ “The length of these columns is kilometers and the IRGC navy possesses many of these complexes. Thank God, the Guard’s Navy has achieved the adequacy and maturity of power today.”

General Salami said these missiles are precision-guided, capable of overcoming the enemy’s electronic warfare and have a range of hundreds of kilometers as well as high destruction power.

The IRGC chief paid a visit to units and equipment that are stationed at the missile base, which is located in southern Iranian province Hormozgan. The precise location of the new underground base has not been revealed.

He also said that Iran’s logic to defend itself is based on its strength.

“Our logic to defend territorial integrity, the country’s independence, and the achievements of the Islamic Revolution is to get strong,” General Salami said. “We believe that our enemies do not accept the power of logic, rather they rely on the logic of power. Therefore, in order to prevent them from imposing their domineering will and plan, we have no other way than boosting our deterrent defensive and offensive power.”

Last week, Salami paid a visit to Abu Musa



Island, where he issued a stern warning to the enemies.

“We have shown both in words and action that we will respond to any action by the enemy against us with a reciprocal, decisive and strong blow, and it has been proven many

times that we do not ignore or leave any threat or aggression by enemies unanswered,” he said during his visit to the island.

He added, “The Guard’s Navy, especially in recent years, has achieved extraordinary capabilities and achievements, and what we

are witnessing today is part of the Guard’s power at sea.”

During his visit, the commander inspected the IRGC bases and assets on the island, saying that the Basij forces stationed on the Abu Musa Island are at the forefront of defending Iran.

Addressing these forces, General Salami said, “Today, You are at the forefront of defending the country in Abu Musa Island. And when the enemy sees you, it comes to the conclusion that it must act and treat this nation in a polite, respectful and cautious way because your presence is indicative of the will of a whole nation.”

On Thursday, General Salami also issued another warning to the enemies, underlining that the IRGC is ready to defend the country. He warned the enemies of Iran against making the slightest mistake in the Persian Gulf region, adding that the IRGC Navy is fully ready to defend the country.

“The enemy should be careful about its miscalculations in the region,” the general cautioned. “Sometimes the Iranian forces hold military drills to help the enemy to make their calculations more precise and to avoid mistakes.”

Leader urges the West to alter misperceptions about Iran’s view on U.S. return to JCPOA

POLITICAL d e s k TEHRAN — In a televised appearance on Friday, Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei sought to dispel some misperceptions in some Western political circles about an alleged Iranian rush to get the United States to return to a 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and major world powers.

The nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), has become a point of contention between Iran on one hand and the U.S. and its European allies on the other, especially after Joe Biden, a Democrat who campaigned on rejoining the Iran nuclear deal, won the U.S. presidential election in November.

The JCPOA has been teetering on the brink of a total collapse since U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the U.S. from it on May 8, 2018, and imposed sweeping economic sanctions on Iran in an apparent bid to replace it with what Trump called a “better deal” with Iran, one that would include, among other things, extending the original deal’s sunset clauses, curbing Iran’s ballistic missile program and imposing limits on its influence in the West Asia region.

Ever since Trump has been calling for a meeting with Iran to secure such a deal but he never got what he wanted, and finally, he bequeathed Biden tense relations with Iran after he lost the November election. Biden has tried to soothe tensions with Iran by vaguely promising to return to the JCPOA once he is elected president.

“I will offer Tehran a credible path back to diplomacy. If Iran returns to strict compliance with the nuclear deal, the United States would rejoin the agreement as a starting point for follow-on negotiations. With our allies, we will work to strengthen and extend the nuclear deal’s provisions, while also addressing other issues of concern,” then-presidential candidate Biden wrote in a September 13 op-ed for CNN.

Biden reaffirmed this position after winning the election, though he once again refused to say how he plans to rejoin the deal. Biden also raised some other thorny issues while addressing the need for the U.S. to rejoin the nuclear deal.

In a recent interview with The New York Times’ columnist Thomas Friedman, Biden said that he still stands by his views on the 2015 nuclear deal that were articulated in the mid-September op-ed, but a U.S. return to the deal would be “hard.”

Meanwhile, some pundits in the U.S. and Europe said that Biden should not rejoin the JCPOA and throw away “leverage” created by Trump’s sanctions on Iran. Some even called on Biden to bide his time on Iran and let the U.S. sanc-

tions weaken Iran’s economy. The underlying basis of this claim is that sanctions are severely hurting Iran and that the country is in too much of a rush to get the sanctions lifted.

But during his Friday speech, Ayatollah Khamenei made it clear that it’s pure fantasy to think that Iran is in a rush to get the U.S. to return to the JCPOA.

“They raise this issue of whether America should return to the JCPOA or not. The Islamic Republic is in no rush and has no insistence on America’s return to the JCPOA. Instead, our logical demand is the lifting of sanctions and taking back the usurped right of the nation, a duty that should be performed by America and its European vassals,” the Leader noted.

The Leader’s remarks were a clear sign that Iran is not pinning hope on the U.S. return to the JCPOA. These remarks came at a time when some experts in the West call on the incoming Biden administration not to rush back to the JCPOA because they falsely believe that Iran is desperate to get a sanctions relief.

But the Leader made it crystal clear that this allegation is unfounded as he even described a possible U.S. return to the JCPOA as harmful. In fact, Ayatollah Khamenei said that the U.S. should lift its sanctions on Iran before it returns to the nuclear deal.

“If sanctions are lifted, America’s return to the JCPOA would be meaningful. Of course, the compensation issue is one of our demands, which will be pursued at a later time. But an American return to the JCPOA without lifting sanctions may even be harmful to the country,” the Leader pointed out.

Some Iranian officials believe that the Leader set the country on a clear path on Friday. Abolfazl Amouei, the spokesman for the Iranian Parliament’s National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, called the Friday remarks of the Leader “strategic,” adding that these remarks paved the way of the country’s foreign policy.

“The main goal of the JCPOA today is to lift sanctions on Iran. The return of the United States to the JCPOA in the current situation is not an issue that we want to prioritize, but the first priority today is the lifting of sanctions,” Amouei told Tasnim on Friday.

The Leader also called for an “immediate and complete” lifting of U.S. sanctions while underlining that Iran is not in a hurry for the U.S. return to the JCPOA. These remarks were part of a strategy to protect the country from the effects of U.S. sanctions. To this end, the Leader said that Iranian authorities should work to run the country’s economy on the premise that U.S. sanctions would not be lifted.

“Of course, we have repeatedly emphasized that we must

make plans for the economy assuming that the sanctions will not be lifted so that the country is well run and does not have problems with the coming and going of sanctions and with the actions of the enemy. And this is possible by relying on internal capacities and implementing resistance economy policies. Though, sanctions are gradually becoming ineffective,” Ayatollah Khamenei remarked.

Earlier in November, the Leader said that Iran needs to try the option of nullifying the sanctions rather than simply waiting for the enemy to lift them.

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

In addition to nullifying sanctions, the Leader also pointed to Iran’s recent decision to raise the level of uranium enrichment to 20%, calling the decision “logical and wise.”

“Iran’s Majlis (Parliament) and government decision to enrich uranium to 20% is totally logical and wise. When they don’t abide by any of their JCPOA commitments, it’s nonsensical for Iran to abide by all its commitments. If they return to it, so will we. Our logical demand is the lifting of sanctions,” the Leader stated.

On Monday, Iran announced that it resumed enriching uranium to up to 20% at the Fordow nuclear plant.

“A few minutes ago, the process of producing enriched uranium to 20% purity has begun. And the first product of UF6 enriched uranium will be produced in a few hours,” Ali Rabiei, the Iranian government spokesman, announced on Monday morning.

The spokesman also said that Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has issued an order stipulating that the recent nuclear law passed by the Iranian Parliament should be implemented.

Iran started the 20% uranium enrichment in accordance with the nuclear law, which stipulates that the Iranian government should take certain nuclear measures such as raising the level of uranium enrichment to 20% and suspending the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in few months if the Western parties failed to honor their obligations under the JCPOA.

Qatar says deal with Saudis won’t affect ties with Iran

POLITICAL d e s k TEHRAN — Following a landmark deal between Qatar and the so-called Arab quartet to end a three-year bitter Persian Gulf dispute, Doha announced that its decision to mend ties with the quartet will not affect its ties with Iran.

Doha had agreed to cooperate on counter-terrorism and “transnational security” with Saudi Arabia and three other states that had imposed a regional embargo on Qatar. Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani told the Financial Times, adding that “bilateral relationships are mainly driven by a sovereign decision of the country... [and] the national interest.”

“So there is no effect on our relationship with any other country,” he continued.

In June 2017, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates — commonly known as the Arab Quartet — severed diplomatic ties with Qatar, and imposed a total blockade on the tiny Persian Gulf nation. The four countries closed their airspace, land, and sea routes to Qatari planes, cars, and vessels, a move that prompted Qatar to use Iranian airspace. Kuwait, a country stuck in the middle of the dispute between its neighbors, had studiously worked to reconcile the opposing sides and succeeded to do so only recently.

Shortly after cutting ties with Qatar at the time, the Arab quartet submitted a list of 13 demands to Doha that included, among

other things, shutting down Al Jazeera, the Qatar-funded satellite TV network, curbing its relations with Iran, closing a Turkish base in the Persian Gulf state, and halting all military cooperation with Ankara.

The quartet also accused Qatar of supporting terrorism, an accusation Doha vehemently denies.

Last week, Qatar and Saudi Arabia reached a deal to end their dispute and restore diplomatic ties as soon as possible. Qatari emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani participated in the last week’s Persian Gulf Cooperation Council’s summit, which was held, with great fanfare, in the Saudi ancient city of AlUla. During the summit, the Arab leaders agreed to put an end to the disagreements and normalize their relations. While the leaders were preparing to take part in the summit, Saudi Arabia announced that it will reopen all its border crossings with Qatar. The United Arab Emirates also followed suit.

Qatar’s reassurance that the deal with Riyadh will not alter its relation with Iran came after Saudi Arabian Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman railed against Iran during the summit, in which the emir of Qatar was present.

The Saudi crown prince told the summit that they are “in utmost need to unite” their efforts to advance their region and confront the challenges surrounding them. Mohammad bin Salman warned of what he called “the



threats posed by the Iranian regime’s nuclear program, its ballistic missile program, its destructive sabotage projects as well as the terrorist and sectarian activities adopted by Iran and its proxies to destabilize the security and stability in the region.”

The summitters also issued a statement against Iran that echoed the Saudi accusations. The statement elicited a strong response from Iran.

Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said the statement is the result of a lack of understanding of the situation in the region and beyond, the Saudi regime’s grudge and its political pressure on the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

“At a time when, given the compromise between the Persian Gulf states, the regional countries are expected to rethink their viewpoints and approaches, which have had no

other result than animosity and hostility over the past decades, and to adopt a new policy, some Persian Gulf Cooperation Council members persist in remaining on the wrong path and resorting to the threadbare ‘Iranophobia’ scheme,” Khatibzadeh said in a statement on Wednesday.

Khatibzadeh noted the Saudi regime’s regional policy and its destructive approaches vis-à-vis Iran and other countries have destroyed a major part of the neighboring countries’ wealth and turned the region into a depot of weapons supplied by Western companies, which has paved the way for foreigners’ further interference in this sensitive region.

“By hijacking the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council and its meetings and imposing its destructive viewpoints, the Saudi regime is promoting hate and violence in the region,” the spokesman continued.

He noted, “Regrettably, some regional countries have become a gateway for the entrance of the destructive Israeli regime into the region although they are seeing Tel Aviv’s crimes in occupied territories and this regime’s desire to viciously infiltrate into Islamic countries.”

“By continuing to pursue their injudicious policies, these countries have killed off the chances of cooperation proposed by the Islamic Republic of Iran in recent years in a bid to establish security and stability in the region,” Khatibzadeh said.

SPORTS

IAAF President Coe happy with Iranian women’s progress

S P O R T S d e s k TEHRAN — President of International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) Sebastian Coe says that he is pleased with progress of Iranian women in athletics.

In a virtual meeting held on Thursday, Coe and Hashem Siami, head of Iran Athletics Federation, discussed various issues related to the sport in the west Asian country.



At the beginning of the meeting, Siami congratulated Coe on arrival of New Year, wishing him the best of luck in the future.

“Geographically, our country has so many athletes in the North, Center and South, who are talented in throwing, sprints and endurance running and should be discovered. For this purpose, we have set up a zonal talent identification,” Siami said.

Coe also lauded the Iranian federation in terms of what it has done for promoting the sport.

“Our priority is to train a new generation who can shine in the athletics. Our strategic plan is based on training the athletes and I found out that Iran is working well in this regard,” the Briton said.

“You take a big step forward in development of the athletics and want to attract more people to promote the sport for the Olympics. I am confident that with the right planning and existing potentials, Iran can make athletics the most popular sport in the country,” Coe stated.

“We will do our best to help the countries facing financial crisis due to sanctions. We want to help Iran by supplying the equipment, despite the problems caused by the sanctions,” he added.

Emphasizing that gender equality is a key to success to women’s progress, Coe said, “We are very happy to see Iran paves the way for the country’s women to develop and we will help the countries to provide the environment for their women.”

At the end of the session, Siami invited Coe to travel to Iran to see the country’s capabilities in the athletics and the IAAF President promised that he will visit Iran as soon as the pandemic ends.

Ali Karimi registers for Iran football federation presidential bid

S P O R T S d e s k TEHRAN — Legendary football player Ali Karimi officially submitted his bid to become president of Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI).

The ex-Iran and Bayern Munich midfielder had already announced his bid for FFIRI’s presidency on his Instagram page.

The elections will be held on Feb.28.

Karimi has introduced his teammate Mehdi Mahdavia as his first vice president.

The Persepolis iconic midfielder’s decision has been welcomed by many football coaches and players since the federation needs reform. Some people also say Karimi should not participate in the elections since he has no management background.

Presidential elections are to be held after former FFIRI President Mehdi Taj resigned from his position in December, and the federation is currently running by Heydar Baharvand as acting president.

Ali Karimi, 42, has met the requirements approved in the statutes. It is mentioned that four years of playing in national football, futsal, or beach soccer teams and four years of playing in professional football leagues are equivalent to four years of managerial background for former footballers.

He should take the endorsements from assembly members, provincial football associations, football clubs, and players to be elected as the head of the Iran football federation. It is a good step in the right direction for the country’s football to have celebrated football figures in its governing body.

NOC president Salehi Amiri visits Iran athletics federation

S P O R T S d e s k TEHRAN — President of Iran’s National Olympic Committee (NOC) Reza Salehi Amiri held fruitful discussions with the Iran athletics federation’s officials on Thursday.

Salehi Amiri was accompanied by NOC secretary general Keykavous Saeidi and Peyman Fakhri, Director of the National Teams’ Monitoring Center in the NOC.

“I am confident that athletics will protect our reputation in the international events. The sports have spread across the country and can attract the talented athletes from the country.”

“We know that to win a medal in the team sport is a great honor but I believe that taking a medal in athletics is special. It can take us to the optimal point in sports,” Salehi Amiri said.

Salehi Amiri said that the NOC will not stop supporting the Iranian athletes since they are the country’s children.

“Our girls have progressed well over the past years and have convinced us to support them more,” he added.

Hossein Rahmati, a member of Iran Athletics Federation’s Board of Directors, also talked about the problems the federation faces due to the sanctions.

“Due to the fact that we have financial problems to supply athletic equipment in the country, we managed to buy new equipment from the European and Asian countries by attracting financial resources outside the federation. The first part of the consignment has entered the country and the second part will enter in the next few weeks,” Rahmati said.

“Most of the foreign exchange resources needed to set up the training camps for the athletes outside the country have been provided by the sponsors,” he added.

TPO holds webinar on trade opportunities with Russia

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) has held a webinar on Iran-Russia trade opportunities and the challenges facing Iranian traders in the Russian market, TPO announced on Thursday.

The online event was attended by TPO officials including Behrouz Olfat, director of the TPO's Europe and America Department, former commercial attaché to Russia Farhad Parand, and representatives of some chambers of commerce as well as businessmen active in a variety of areas.



Russia's foreign trade with the world and Iran over the past five years, the opportunities of this \$245-billion market from the imports prospective, and Iran's position among the Russian trade partners were among the subjects explored in this webinar.

In this virtual meeting, Farhad Parand, who is currently the secretary of TPO's Russian Trade Desk, described the economic and trade characteristics of Russia as one of the most important countries among Iran's 15 neighbors and underlined its important role in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

Parand called on the Iranian traders to focus on exporting new products with high added value, such as chemical and plastic products, leather and shoes, clothing, medicine, construction materials, and knowledge-based products, in order to increase their two-percent share in the Russian market.

The official mentioned lack of centers for direct supply of Iranian goods in Russia, lack of scientific and applied marketing strategies, banking problems, transportation and logistics problems, lack of proper knowledge about Russia's regulations, laws, standards, health protocols, and consumer taste, as some of the issues hindering the development the Islamic Republic's trade with Russia.

Further, in this virtual meeting, some strategies for identifying new markets in Russia and diversifying the products in the export basket to this country were discussed.

Iran and Russia have been expanding trade and economic ties over the past few years despite the pressures imposed by the U.S. sanctions on both nations.

Back in November 2020, the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) hosted an Iran-Russia business forum via video conference.

Tehran, Kabul to ink preferential trade agreement

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Director General of the Asia-Pacific Office at Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) said on Wednesday that a preferential trade agreement with Afghanistan is going to be signed in the near future, IRNA reported.

Speaking in the fourth meeting of Khorasan Razavi-Herat Joint Trade Committee in Mashhad, Reza Seyed-Aqazadeh said: "Necessary coordination has been made with the Ministry of Commerce of Afghanistan and primary talks will be held on January 13 in the form of a video conference between the officials of the two sides to finalize and operationalize this agreement as soon as possible."

He mentioned previous tariff agreements between the two countries and said: "Previously, in 2015, the tariffs for the imports of five commodity items from Afghanistan including the imports of sesame were reduced; the tariffs on sesame imports were reduced from 10 percent to five percent."



According to the official, balancing international trade, especially with Afghanistan is one of the major strategies of Iran in foreign trade, and TPO's goal is to establish a balanced trade between the two countries.

Special strategies have been adopted by the Trade Promotion Organization for balancing trade with Afghanistan and for resolving problems in this field, he said, adding that the issues and demands of Afghan businessmen will also be reviewed in a special working group in this organization to take the necessary measures and resolve their issues.

The fourth meeting of the Joint Trade Committee of Khorasan Razavi and Herat was held on Wednesday with the presence of the Deputy Governor of Herat and some officials from this province, as well as the heads of various committees from Khorasan Razavi Chamber of Commerce.

Having shared historical, cultural, political, and economic backgrounds, Iran and Afghanistan have been allies for many years and the strategic cooperation between the two countries has been broadened especially over the past two decades.

The value of Iran's exports to Afghanistan is anticipated to reach \$3 billion in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20), according to Hossein Salimi, the chairman of Iran-Afghanistan Joint Chamber of Commerce.

1,200 idle industrial units revived in Iran since last March

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — In fact, strengthening domestic production to achieve self-reliance is the most important program that Iran is following up in its industry sector in a bid to nullify the effects of the U.S. sanctions on its economy.

In this due, the current Iranian calendar year has been named the year of "Surge in Production", and all governmental bodies, as well as the private sector, are moving in

line with the materialization of this motto.

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

The ministry's seven main axes of the surge in production are being pursued under 40 major programs.

In this regard, the development of in-



dustrial parks and supporting the units located in these areas is one of the major programs underway by the ministry.

According to Asghar Mosaheb, the acting head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO), preventing

the inactive status of the industrial units is a major plan of ISIPO, while lack of liquidity, problems in terms of supplying raw materials and machinery, and absence of market are the main reasons making the units inactive.

VP inaugurates major development projects in Chabahar port

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — First Vice President Es'haq Jahangir on Thursday inaugurated four major development projects worth over nine trillion rials (over \$214.2 million) in the southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan's Chabahar port, ILNA reported.

During his visit to the province, Jahangiri ordered the beginning of the projects for construction of a Maritime Rescue Coordination Center (MRCC) substation, the full radio coverage of the province's coasts, a project for establishing firefighting services and drip irrigation systems at Shahid Kalantari, Shahid Beheshti and residential dormitories of the Chabahar port, as well as the investment project for the construction of storage tanks for petroleum (petrochemical) products in Shahid Beheshti port.

Over 180 billion rials (about \$4.28 million) was invested in the MRCC station project, the radio coverage project is going to be completed with 110 billion rials (about \$2.6 million) of funding, some 550 billion rials (about \$13.09 million) is allocated for the firefighting and irrigation systems, while 8.169 trillion rials (about



\$194.5 million) is invested for the construction of the petrochemical storage facilities.

Upon his arrival in Chabahar on Wednesday evening, the official also inaugurated the first phase of Tang Fishing Port in Konarak County which was completed with 1.27 trillion rials (about \$30.2 million) of investment.

TSE's main index dips 6.5% in a week

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 6.5 percent in the past Iranian calendar week.

The index stood at 1.31 million points on Wednesday (the last working day of the week).

During the past week, the indices of Mobarakeh Steel Company, Iran Khodro Group, Social Security Investment Compa-

ny, Saipa Company, and National Iranian Copper Industry Company were the most widely followed indices.

Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dejpasand has recently said that the stock market is now on the right track and has reached a stage that can be trusted in terms of performance.

"Except for the peripheral variables that affect this market, we do not have a

specific market disturbance", the minister stated.

Sometimes the policies that are made in different sectors affect the market, which is natural, he added.

For example, if a price floor is to be set for a commodity group and a ceiling is to be released, it is in the interest of that group, but because it is badly reflected, it has the opposite effect, Dejpasand explained.



Iran's daily gas refining exceeds 800 mcm

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Daily processing of natural gas in Iranian refineries has reached a new record high of 840 million cubic meters (mcm), according to the head of National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC).

"This figure has been unprecedented in the history of the country's gas processing industry and we hope it will increase even further in the next 10 days," Shana quoted Hassan Montazer Torbati as saying.

According to Torbati, some changes have been made to the country's refinery systems in order to meet part of the recent increase in natural gas consumption across the country by increasing production.

"These measures have been taken due to the significant surge in gas consumption by the household and commercial sectors, in order to balance the production and consumption to some extent."

He called on households to manage their consumption during the cold season to ensure sustained supply of fuel to the industrial sector as well as the country's power plants.

Despite all the external challenges like the coronavirus



pandemic and the U.S. sanctions, the Iranian gas industry has been developing at a fast pace and the country is passing new milestones in this industry every day.

Various sectors of Iran's gas industry including exploration, production, processing, and distribution are all among the world's top charts and the country is taking

new steps to develop the industry even further.

Among the NIGC's latest achievements the significant increase in the gas refining and processing capacity is one that has been under the spotlight in recent years.

With the new developments in the country's giant South Pars gas field, which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf, and the increase in the gas production from this field, the Oil Ministry has been taking serious measures for the development of the country's gas refineries to process the extracted gas.

Back in October 2020, the Head of NIGC's Production Coordination and Supervision Directorate Masoud Zardovian said the daily processing capacity of Iranian gas refineries is planned to increase 10 percent in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20).

"With the gas sweetening units of phases 13, 22, and 24 of South Pars going operational, the gas processing capacity in this complex will increase by 10 percent," Zardovian said.

According to the official, considering the mentioned increase, the country's gas refining capacity will exceed one billion cubic meters per day by late March.

Home appliance output stands at 6.9m sets in 9.5 months

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran has manufactured 6.9 million sets of home appliances during the 9.5-month period started from March 20, 2020 (beginning of the current Iranian calendar year), according to an official with the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade.

Stating that the goal of this ministry for this year is to manufacture 12 million sets of home appliances, Keyvan Gardan, the director for the electrical and metals industries and home appliances office of the ministry, said, "Considering the upward trend in the production of home appliances in the country, more than 80 percent of this goal has been achieved so far."

The secretary of the Association of Industries of Household Appliances of Iran has recently said that domestic production of equipment and parts used in the home appliance industry has saved Iran \$220 million.

Currently Iranian producers have indigenized the knowledge for manufacturing 70-75 percent of the country's home appliance needs, Abbas Hashemi said in a

press conference in late December.

According to Hashemi, the Association of Industries of Household Appliances of Iran has established a parts manufacturing department, the purpose of which is to promote the position of component makers in the association to deepen domestic manufacturing of the required parts and equipment in this industry while providing a platform for home appliance manufacturers and component makers to stay connected.

The official noted that the country has managed to export up to \$250 million of home appliances in the previous years and currently, the production and assembly lines for Iranian home appliances have been set up in some of the countries in the region and Iran is exporting its products to the target markets by sending Completely Knocked Down (CKD) kits to the mentioned production lines.

Iran has various comparative advantages in this industry in terms of supplying raw materials such as steel sheets, petrochemicals, copper and brass sections,

the abundance and low costs of energy and workforce in addition to the strategic position of the country, compared to other countries in the region, he said.

"So, the development of exports to countries in the region and to the neighboring countries is possible even despite the strong regional competitors," Hashemi added.

In recent years, the Iranian government has been following a new strategy for supporting domestic production to neutralize the impacts of the U.S. sanctions while reducing the reliance of the economy on oil revenues.

The home appliances sector has not been an exemption and like many other areas, the production of home appliances has witnessed a significant rise in the past two years so that in the previous calendar year 1398 (ended on March 19, 2020) this industry's production capacity increased by 10 percent compared to the preceding year.

Two weeks ago, the spokesman of the Association of Industries of Household Appliances of Iran said with foreign



companies leaving the country's home appliance market the production of domestic companies has increased and the unemployment rate in this sector has significantly declined.

While it was expected that the home appliance industry, like some other industries, would suffer from the effects of the coronavirus pandemic and the U.S. sanctions, the inauguration of several new projects in this industry showed that the industry is expanding strongly and moving forward, Hamidreza Qaznavi said on December 28.

Using Iran as a threat to the Arabs is bogus: Canadian lawyer

Corrigan says it is better to describe the Deal of the Century as the “Fraud of the Century”

1 → The Americans have a big air force base in Qatar and a big naval base in Bahrain. I am sure the Americans were not happy to see their “allies” fighting. Pressure to resolve this conflict must have been brought by the Americans.

The problem as I see it was that Qatar was too independent. Its news channel Al Jazeera was critical of Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf States on the Palestinian issue. Saudi Arabia and other allies accused Qatar of supporting terrorism. This accusation is bogus and hypocritical given Saudi Arabia and the UAE's support for terrorism against Syria. Qatar had broken away from this alliance against Syria.

Many experts say the blockade deepened Qatar's ties with Iran and Turkey. Do you think that policy would hold?

It definitely pushed Qatar into a closer relationship with Iran. There are a number of reasons for this strengthening of ties with Iran. An important reason is that they share a large gas field with Iran. It is in Qatar's and Iran's interest to cooperate in exploiting this resource. Saudi Arabia was not happy the Iran and Qatar were working together on this project. The increase in the use of natural gas was undercutting Saudi's oil sales. Saudi Arabia does not have significant gas reserves. This was a major sore point between Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

Turkey is the other major Islamic state in the region. There is an old rivalry between Turkey and Saudi Arabia. This crisis allowed Turkey to intervene into the area



and to set up a military base in Qatar. It gave Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan a chance to enhance its power in the Persian Gulf area. There also is a close relationship between the Muslim Brotherhood and Erdogan. The Saudis see the Muslim Brotherhood as their enemy.

Washington's West Asia diplomatic offensive is seen by many as attempt by the U.S. to form a united front against Iran. What's your analysis?

In my opinion it is an attempt to legitimize Israel in the Persian Gulf and to expand the alliance between

the USA, Israel and the conservative feudal monarchies in the Persian Gulf region. Most of the feudal states are dependencies of the United States. Jared Kushner, Trump's son in law, is a strong supporter of right-wing Zionism and is a big support of expanding the Jewish only settlements in the West Bank. Kushner and Trump were pushing the so-called “Deal of the Century” as a solution to the Israel-Palestinian dispute. However, this deal is better described as the “Fraud of the Century” as it did nothing for the Palestinians except to crush them and to legitimize Israel's illegal “Jewish Only” settlements in the West Bank and the illegal confiscation of Palestinian land.

Using Iran as a threat to the Arabs of the region is bogus. Americans want to divide the Arabs and to divert attention away from Israel and the Palestine issue. The Americans also want to provoke a Sunni/Shia conflict in the region to divide and weaken the Arabs. The Iran “bogymen” is a good pretext to sell arms to the Persian Gulf States and to keep an arms race going in the area for American companies to profit from.

This tactic also was designed to divide the Arab world and to bring Israeli military support to help keep the feudal Persian Gulf states in power and loyal dependencies of the United States. In my view this is a dangerous policy aligning the United States and Israel to support weak feudal regimes and to put them in opposition to popular movements in the region and the growing demand for democracy.

American analyst censures social media double-standards in regard to U.S.

1 → The “Save America” rally on the Mall and in front of the Capitol building started out peacefully; sadly it didn't stay that way. The rioters refused to acknowledge and respect the security boundaries set up along the Capitol's perimeter, even in the face of orders to disperse and the use of tear gas. However, up until the rioters began breaking windows and forcing their way inside the building, there's at least a theoretical argument that could be made that such activity, whilst legally trespassing, amounted to civil disobedience. It was when the destruction of property began (shattering windows and glass, ripping the Speaker of the House's nameplate from the wall, etc.) that the line into violence was firmly crossed. Notably, the rioters also used chemical irritants or tear gas that they brought with them against the security forces, a significant difference in behavior than that of the Black Lives Matter protests over the summer.

What is your comment on the measures by Twitter when it suspends Trump's account?

Twitter's move to lock President Trump's account on that platform was certainly welcome, but it's far too little, far too late. A 12-hour ban may have helped calm inflamed passions in the moment, but unless consistent and meaningful changes are made to ensure that the president

is help to the same Twitter standers as other users, it was the equivalent fighting a forest fire with a super soaker water gun and expecting it to have any real impact.

It is notable that the U.S. and its social media platforms support and cover any protest (peaceful or violent) all around the world, but when it comes to U.S. security these platforms and American institutes call for limitations and restrictions. Isn't that a kind of double-standard?

It is 100% a double standard. The only explanation - and by no means is it an excuse or justification - is that the concept of 'American Exceptionalism' seems to obscure the glaring reality of our hypocrisy.

Is there any mechanism in the American constitution to prosecute a president who violates the law?

I'm not an expert on federal law, but presidents enjoy immunity for the vast majority - if not all - of their actions taken in discharging their duties as the head of the executive branch.

The Democratic Party of U.S. President-elect Joe Biden is on the verge of taking control of the Senate. Do you expect this victory will lead to a change in U.S. policies, especially in foreign policy areas?



I do expect to see changes in American foreign policy under a Biden presidency and a Democratic-controlled Senate. I am delighted that Biden supports a return to the Iran nuclear deal and that a top priority for his incoming administration is to focus on ending the war in Yemen.

I believe Biden will make restoring America's international relationships and reputation a key focus and having a Democratic-led Senate will make that far easier that it would be if the Republicans controlled that chamber. That said, I'm very much a realist and the horse trading that is par for the course in the Senate isn't going to change, which means Biden's

domestic policy agenda will still face a tough road in Congress' upper house.

How do you assess police's behavior after rioters stormed Capitol in comparison to their performance in the summer protests? Was the Insurrection Act applicable?

Again, as federal and constitutional law are not my areas of specialty, I can only say that while the Insurrection Act may have been applicable, there has been a concerted effort by DoD leadership since this summer to avoid going down that road.

But as to the differences in police (Capitol Police, Park Police, Metropolitan DC Police, etc.) responses to the BLM protests over the summer and those of storming of the Capitol building, they can only be described as the protectiveness of White Privilege on full display. When a multi-ethnic group of citizens peacefully protesting in Lafayette Square can be tear gassed, shot with rubber bullets, and beaten out of the way in order for the president to stage a photo op at a church, while an overwhelmingly white group of rioters in body armor are allowed to deploy their own chemical irritants against police as they storm and deface the Capitol building during a session of Congress...The optics alone tell the story better than I ever could.

Trump's disgraceful end

1 → His unprecedented sanctions against Iran under the name of the “maximum pressure” campaign are in violation of international law. The sanctions have pushed millions of Iranian citizens to the verge of poverty and instead made a small percentage of Iranians millionaires because of skyrocketing inflation. This will remain in the memory of Iranians forever. His reckless order of assassinating Iran's Major General Qassem Soleimani in Iraq in January 2020 reminded the people of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria which ignited the First World War.

Also, his move in recognizing Israel's sovereignty over the stolen Golan Heights and moving the U.S. capital to Jerusalem in violation of UN Security Council resolutions are some other examples of the illegal moves that the Trump administration should be ashamed of.

Trump picked Mike Pompeo as his secretary of state, who according to Professor Adib-Moghaddam, “continued to pursue an essentially ideological foreign policy, driven by a distinctively irrational approach to world politics in general and Iran in particular.”

Actually, from the very beginning, Trump was unfit for the

post of president. However, a great majority of Republicans in Congress, especially in the Senate, kept supporting him just for partisan interests.

Regardless of certain extremist senators such as Ted Cruz and a considerable number of lawmakers in the House of Representatives who still repeat Trump's unsubstantiated claims of voter fraud, finally it was realized that the person that the Republicans supported for four years based on party lines dealt the greatest blow to the Republicans themselves. And fortunately, he is being forced, of course legally, to leave the White House in disgrace.

Time for E3 to issue vacuous announcements over: Entessar

By Payman Yazdani

TEHRAN— Political scientist says resuming 20% enrichment of uranium is Iran's strongest signal to EU and U.S. that the JCPOA cannot survive unless the West decides to start abiding by its obligations in a serious and meaningful way.

Given the E3 failure to fulfill its commitments under the JCPOA after Trump's illegal unilateral withdrawal from the deal, the Iranian government was obligated to reactivate some of its peaceful nuclear activities by the parliament.

Yesterday, Iran announced that it has begun a 20% enrichment of uranium observing all formalities and notifying the IAEA which was confirmed by the agency.

Following Iran's move, the European Union claimed that Iran's move is a significant deviation from the nuclear deal.

To know more about the issue, we reached

out to Nader Entessar, professor emeritus of political science from the University of South Alabama.

Here is the full text of his interview:

What is the message of Iran's move to E3 and the U.S.?

For some time now, Iran has been sending signals to the Western parties, especially to the E3, that the JCPOA is not a one-way agreement in which only Iran is expected to abide by its commitments while the other parties refuse to fulfill their commitments under the nuclear deal. Most of the steps Iran has taken in the past two years have been incremental and minor that has not borne fruit. Iran's decision to start 20% enrichment at Fordo is the strongest signal to the E3 and the U.S. that the bruised and injured body of the JCPOA cannot survive unless the West decides to start abiding by its obligations in a serious and meaningful way and that the time for the E3 to issue vacuous announcements is over.

To what extent can Iran's move press the E3 and the U.S. to fulfill their commitments under the JCPOA?

Only time will tell. The E3 will follow the U.S. lead in this matter. If the incoming Biden administration decides to return to the JCPOA without imposing further conditions, then Iran's latest move can be reversed. However, as President-Elect Biden and his foreign policy team have announced on numerous occasions, Washington's return to the JCPOA will be contingent upon redoing the JCPOA and imposing more restrictions on Iran in both nuclear and non-nuclear matters and debilitating Iran's defense as well as scientific capabilities.

Is Iran's move breaching international law and NPT?

No. There is nothing in general public international law or the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) that limits Iran to 20% uranium enrichment. Under the JCPOA, Iran had

agreed to put significant limits on its uranium enrichment. Without the JCPOA, Iran will not be obligated to abide by its self-imposed limit of 20% enrichment.

E3 has reacted to Iran's move seriously while they didn't fulfill any of their commitments after Trump withdrew from the JCPOA. How do you assess their double standards?

As I have repeatedly stated in previous interviews, Europe is not an independent player with respect to the Iran nuclear deal. Rather, Europe, or more specifically the E3, is an adjunct p to the U.S. in its Iran dealings, specifically in nuclear and defense matters. Unfortunately, some people in Iran have operated under the illusion that the E3 can be trusted to act independently of the U.S. with respect to the JCPOA and other related issues. The E3's actions in the past four years should have disabused Iran from its belief in European independence from Washington.

by the prevailing situation and the changed times,” KCNA said.

The congress is the party's top decision-making body which review past projects, lay out new priorities and reshuffle top officials. This month's congress was convened as Kim is struggling to overcome what he calls “multiple crises” caused by an economy battered by pandemic-related border closings, a series of natural disasters and U.S.-led sanctions.

U.S. envoy to UN to visit Taiwan; China says playing with fire

The U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Kelly Craft, will visit Taiwan next week for meetings with senior Taiwanese leaders, Taiwan's government and the U.S. mission to the UN said, prompting China to warn they were playing with fire.

Beijing, which claims the self-governed island as its own territory, has been angered by stepped-up support for Taiwan from the outgoing Trump administration, including trips to Taipei by top U.S. officials, further straining Sino-U.S. ties, Reuters reported.



Chinese fighter jets approached the island in August and September during the last two visits - by U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar and U.S. Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment Keith Krach, respectively.

“During her trip, the Ambassador will reinforce the U.S. government's strong and ongoing support for Taiwan's international space in accord with the U.S. one-China policy that is guided by the Taiwan Relations Act, the three U.S.-PRC joint communiques, and the Six Assurances to Taiwan,” the U.S. mission to the United Nations said in a statement on Thursday.

She will be in Taiwan from Jan. 13 to 15, it added.

While the United States, like most countries, has no formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan, it is the island's strongest international backer and arms supplier, being obliged to help provide Taiwan with the means to defend itself under the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act.

Pro-Trump rioters storm Congress, top Democrats seek Trump's removal after Capitol Hill assault

1 → Now, a growing number of House members have called for Trump to resign and some are circulating new articles of impeachment against him.

“The president must be held accountable again,” she said, adding she expects to hear an answer from Vice President Pence “yes or no” whether he will move to replace Trump.

Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer joined Pelosi in calling for Trump's removal.

“We don't need a lengthy debate,” Schumer said in a news conference in New York.

“The president's abuse of power, his incitement of a mob against duly elected representative body of the United States is a manifestly impeachable offence – if there ever was an impeachable offence, what the president did was it,” Schumer said.

Republican Senator Lindsey Graham discounted the prospect of Pence taking over from Trump with just 13 days left in his presidency.

Instead, Graham said White House chief of staff Mark Meadows and others close to the president had assured him Trump would facilitate a peaceful transfer of power to Biden.

But Graham also took the opportunity in front of television cameras in the Senate media gallery to send a message directly to Trump.

Resistance News

Bill by Algerian lawmakers looks to criminalize normalization with Israel

Dozens of Algerian legislators have presented a bill to the parliament seeking to criminalize the promotion of normalization with Israel, as opposed to neighboring nation Morocco's agreement to resume its diplomatic relations with the Tel Aviv regime in a deal brokered by the United States last December.

Youcef Adjissa, a member of the Movement for the Society of Peace – Algeria's largest Islamic party, submitted the bill on the behalf of 50 lawmakers to the Presidency of the National People's Assembly (parliament) on Thursday, Palestinian Arabic-language Shehab news agency reported.

According to Press TV, the bill reportedly comes in seven articles, the first of which states “it aims to criminalize normalization with the Zionist entity,” referring to Israel.

It adds, “It is forbidden to communicate, establish any relationships, or open representative offices of any kind and at any level with the Zionist entity, either directly or indirectly.”

Another article stipulates that “it is not allowed to travel to and from the Zionist entity, and it is also forbidden to enter or receive citizenship of the Zionist entity in Algeria or at the headquarters of its diplomatic missions.”

Israeli troops injure dozens of Palestinian protesters in West Bank

Israeli forces have injured dozens of Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, as a crackdown on anti-settlement protests continues in the occupied Palestinian territories.

On Friday, Israeli forces fired tear gas and rubber bullets at the protesters who took part in a rally in the village of Deir Jarir, east of Ramallah City, to voice their anger at the Tel Aviv regime's land grab policies.

At least five people sustained bullet wounds. Dozens of others suffered breathing difficulties due to inhaling the tear gas.

The clashes took place after the Israeli forces tried to disperse the protesters opposing a settler unit that was built in the village on December 23.

Eyewitnesses said the Israeli forces also attacked journalists covering the protests.

Every Friday, Palestinians organize anti-settlement protests in a number of villages and towns in the occupied West Bank.

Un vows to improve ties with outside world at party meeting

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un underscored the need to drastically improve his nation's ties with the outside world as he addressed a major political conference for the third consecutive day.

State media said Kim also reviewed relations with rival South Korea but didn't elaborate on what steps he said he wanted to take. Observers had expected Kim to use the first congress of the ruling Workers' Party in five years to send conciliatory gestures

toward Seoul and Washington as he faces deepening economic troubles at home.

In his speech on the third day of the meeting Thursday, Kim “declared the general orientation and the policy stand of our party for comprehensively expanding and developing the external relations,” the Korean Central News Agency said Friday.

Kim also examined relations with South Korea “as required

Severe wind storm disrupts coastal tourism, shuts recreational piers on Qeshm Island

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — A series of severe wind storms have disrupted coastal tourism, and shut recreational piers on Iran's Qeshm Island in the Persian Gulf.

"Severe northeast winds, sea waves, and the possibility of an instantaneous increase in the wind speeds caused the closure of tourist docks on Qeshm Island," IRNA quoted Ali Ashtari, the director of Qeshm ports and maritime administration, as saying on Friday.



"The safety of the passengers is of paramount importance, and therefore tourists should refrain from gathering at these piers...."

"In this regard, the activity of tourist boats have been temporarily suspended in tourist docks, and for recreational trips to Hengam Island and Dolphin's Bay," he said.

However, sea travels to, and from Pohl, and Laft ports are still smoothly underway, the official said, adding Qeshm has 19 piers, which are utilized for passenger, trade, and recreation purposes.

Qeshm Island is a heaven for eco-tourists as it embraces wide-ranging attractions such as the Hara marine forests and about 60 villages dotted mostly across its rocky coastlines.

The island also features geologically eye-catching canyons, hills, caves, and valleys, most of which are protected as part of the UNESCO-tagged Qeshm Island Geopark, itself a haven for nature-lovers.

Many travelers to Qeshm believe that the Stars Valley or Valley of Stars is a "MUST SEE". It is home to bizarre-shaped gorges, tall pillars, canyon-like paths, hollowed-out spaces as well as smooth and round stones, which have been formed by the wind and rain eroding the soil, rocks, and stones. Locals believe that a star once fell on this area thereby creating the rocky shapes that make it seem as if from another planet.

Anahita: ancient goddess fertility

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Anahita, also known as Anaitis, and Anahit, was an ancient Iranian goddess of royalty, water, and fertility; she is particularly associated with the last.

Possibly of Mesopotamian origin, her cult was made prominent by Artaxerxes II, and statues and temples were set up in her honor throughout the Persian empire.



Anahita with ring and jar (Taq-e Bostan); the larger cave, western Iran; 590 CE - 628

A common cult of the various peoples of the empire at that time, it persisted in Asia Minor long afterward. In the Avesta she is called Ardivi Sura Anahita ("Damp, Strong, Untainted"); this seems to be an amalgam of two originally separate deities, according to Britannica.

In Greece, Anahiti was identified with Athena and Artemis. She is mentioned in the sacred book of Zoroastrianism, the Avesta, note and three Achaemenid Royal Inscriptions from the reign of Artaxerxes II Mnemon (r.404-358 BCE). There were sanctuaries for Anahita in Bactra, in Ecbatana, in Artaxata, in Zela, and in Hierocaesarea, according to Livius.org; a website on ancient history written and maintained since 1996 by the Dutch historian Jona Lendering.

The goddess is also represented in Darabgird and Taq-e Bostan. Modern scholars have suggested that Anahita was also venerated at Kangavar, Qadamgah, and Bishapur, where sanctuaries have been found that can plausibly be identified as water temples. However, not every aquatic deity automatically equates with Anahita, so there is room for doubt.

Will of legendary Iranian wrestler to go on display in Sports Museum



→ 1 Takhti was found dead in a hotel room in Tehran in 1968 and the Persian dailies Kayhan and Ettelaat reported that he had committed suicide due to his unhappy domestic life. However, a large group of people also believed that he was killed by the SAVAK intelligence services due to his disloyalty to the Shah's regime.

Coronavirus causes \$333m damage to Gilan's tourism

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — The tourism industry of the northern province of Gilan has taken over 14 trillion rials (over \$333 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) hit from the coronavirus outbreak over the past couple of months.

Efforts are being made to help the tourism sector flourish again with continuous support and injecting a government-provided supportive package, which includes low-interest loans, into the damaged sector, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

So far, the government has paid 200 billion rials (\$4.7 million) in loans to support people and businesses active in the tourism sector across the province, Hamidreza Purazar announced on Thursday.

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

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

The loans will be allocated to tourist guides, travel agencies, tourism transport companies, tourism educational institutions, eco-lodges and traditional accommodations, hotels, apartment hotels, motels, and guesthouses as well as tradi-



tional accommodation centers, tourism complexes, and recreational centers, the official explained.

In September, Teymouri pointed to the 1.3 million tourism workers in the country, who are facing several issues due to the coronavirus crisis and said "This number, in addition to their households, includes a significant population that makes a living through tourism, who are needed to be considered in ministry's decisions."

Back in August, Teymouri announced that the tourism ministry has approved

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

Tourism industry's critical situation

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

Webinar discusses ways to boost smart tourism

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Tens of Iranian tourism insiders and officials discussed ways to promote smart and responsible traveling during the coronavirus era.

Methods for designing virtual-tourism products, recounting [inspiring] stories about historical places, as well as compiling promotional materials for the mass media were amongst topics discussed during a webinar, hosted by the northwestern Zanjan province on Thursday.

Almost 100 participants exchanged views on attracting tourists through virtual products, using digital marketing, new travel technologies, a dynamic tourism system the coronavirus outbreak, the provincial tourism chief, Amir Arjmand, said.

They also discussed novel ways of designing tourism websites, making online reservations, and how to tap the full capacity of travel agencies to revive the sector, he added.

Last September, Iranian Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Ali Asghar Munesan said that if coronavirus-related restrictions persist, the tourism industry of the country would suffer irreparable losses

and many tourism insiders would be bankrupt, adding it's time to replace "smart and responsible traveling" with "do not travel" recommendations.

To avoid the devastation of the Iranian tourism industry, "smart and responsible traveling" should replace "do not travel" recommendations, Mounesan explained.

Smart tourism is defined according to the technological capabilities of a particular destination, attraction, or the tourist. Many destinations are now modernizing to include increased use of smart technology in their operations ranging from payment methods to interactive activities.

The ultimate aim of smart tourism is to improve the efficiency of resource management, maximize competitiveness, and to enhance sustainability through the use of technological innovations and practices.

The worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 has brought the world to a standstill, and tourism has been the worst affected of all major economic sectors. Against a backdrop of heightened uncertainty, up-to-date and reliable information is more important than ever, both for tourists and the tourism sector.



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

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

Garden houses to be demolished within legal boundaries of Sialk hills

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — A total of eight garden houses, which have been constructed within legal boundaries of Sialk hills, are ordered to be brought down to earth near the significant archaeological site in central Iran.

Unfortunately, in recent years, several illegal constructions have been carried out within the legal properties of Tapeh Sialk ("Sialk hills"), which is one of the most valuable ancient sites in the world, causing irreparable damage to visual elements of the ancient hill, CHTN quoted a local tourism official as saying on Thursday.



So far, a total of twelve same decrees of destruction have been executed within the demarcated properties of the hill,

the official said.

"Recently, eight new [court] decrees have been issued to eliminate the remaining damages... by the order of the city prosecutor in collaboration with Kashan Municipality."

Sialk and the importance of the Proto-Elamite period in Iran; the Iron Age in Sialk; and anthropological collections of Sialk preserved at the Paris-based Homme Museum were among topics discussed at the conference.

Situated halfway between Kashan and Fin in Isfahan province, Tapeh Sialk has yielded interesting pottery pieces, metal

tools, and domestic implements made from stone, clay, and bone that date from as early as the 4th millennium BC.

Sialk is a treasure trove of information about diverse subjects such as paleobotany, palaeozoology, palaeoanatomy, diet, climate change, and ancient metallurgy.

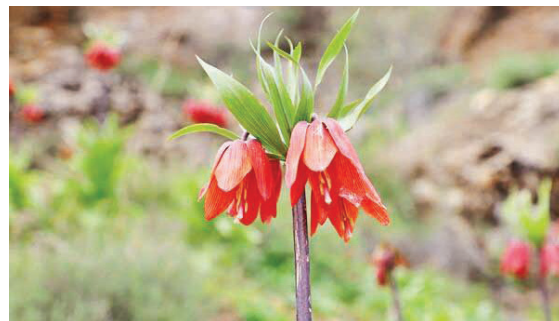
Several excavation projects at the site have so far been conducted, beginning with a 1933 French Louvre delegation led by Roman Ghirshman; capping with a most recent project in 2009, which was led by Hassan Fazeli-Nashli, a faculty member of the Archaeology Department, University of Tehran.

Inverted tulips, juniper trees added to Iran's national heritage list

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Inverted tulips in the city of Mahneshan as well as two juniper trees in Tarom, northwestern Zanjan province have recently been inscribed on the national heritage list, IRNA reported on Thursday.

Each year in the spring, hillsides and surrounding meadows of the city are teeming with colorful flowers, particularly inverted tulips.

Inverted tulips or "Fritillaria" is one of the 120,000 identified plants in Iran. There are more than 170 species of tulips in the country. It is said that the tulip has some remedial use for arthritis and rheumatic pains. Juniper is a very valuable and long-lasting species



Ancient objects recovered as police bust gang of smugglers

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — Iranian police have recently busted a gang of antique dealers in southwestern Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province.

Five ancient objects, estimated to date from the pre-Islamic times, were recovered during the police operation, the provincial tourism chief, Heshmatollah Baqeri, announced on Thursday.

A handheld oil lamp, armband with stone ornaments, and a sugar bowl were amongst

objects confiscated, the official said.

The Iranian authorities also confiscated four members of the gang who were later handed over to the judiciary for further investigation and trial, he added.

The Muslim conquest of Persia, also known as the Arab conquest of Iran, led to the fall of the Sasanian Empire of Iran (Persia) in ca. 651. Within the next two centuries, the Iranian civilization was revived with a cultural amalgam that com-

bined pre-Islamic heritage, arts, thoughts, and attitudes with ones initiated after the conquest.

Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province is known for its nomads and nomadic life. Sightseers may live with a nomadic or rural family for a while or enjoy an independent stay and assist them with day-to-day life. It also opens up an opportunity to feel rustic routines, their agriculture, traditions, arts, and culture.



Clean Air Law ‘up in the air’

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN – The Clean Air Law, enacted in July 2017, was supposed to be a solution to ease air pollution across the country, but now, a few years after the adoption of this law, the air is severely polluted, as different agencies neglect their legal duties to implement the law.

Comprising 34 articles, the law on clean air was adopted by Majlis [the Iranian parliament] after 6 years of continuous revisions.

Various executive agencies in the country, including the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Petroleum, the Ministry of Energy, the police, the municipality, the National TV, etc., have been obliged to implement measures to control air pollution. Three years after the law was enacted, many agencies have not only refused to take action to eliminate air pollution but have also taken steps against the Clean Air Law.

Mobile emitters

There are two main types of air pollution sources, mobile sources including cars, buses, planes, trucks, and trains, and stationary sources such as oil refineries, industrial facilities, and factories.

Some 40 percent of the emission is produced by stationary sources, while 60 percent of the pollution is generated from mobile sources.

However, due to severe air pollution in recent days in some metropolises of the country, including Tehran, Isfahan, Arak, Tabriz, etc., many experts have emphasized the share of stationary sources in air pollution in these areas because there are signs of non-standard fuel consumption such as Sulfur gasoline or mazut (a heavy, low quality fuel oil, used in power plants and similar applications).

Even mazut consumption has been approved in some power plants in the cities of Arak in central Markazi province, and Toos in northeastern Khorasan Razavi province,



ISNA reported on Friday.

Fuel supply in accordance with national standards

Meanwhile, sulfur gasoline or mazut are still used in Iran, according to Article 18 of the Clean Air Law, the Ministry of Petroleum is obliged to produce fuel, including gasoline, gas oil, fuel oil, and kerosene in accordance with approved national standards (Euro 4).

However, unfortunately, the available information shows that not only diesel fuel is used in some parts of the country, but according to Anoushirvan Mohseni Bandpei, governor general of Tehran, industries in the capital use gas and diesel fuel, at least 50 percent of which meet Euro 4 standards, while the Ministry of Petroleum is responsible to produce all fuel according to Euro 4 standards.

One of the agencies that play an important role in enforcing the Clean Air Law is the

police. The law gives the necessary authority to deal with mobile sources of pollutants, including light, heavy, semi-heavy vehicles, and motorcycles, and Article 6 of the Clean Air Law emphasizes that law enforcement is required to fine and even stop the polluting vehicles or those without an inspection label.

While moving sources of pollutants such as diesel cars, motorcycles, private cars, etc. are one of the most important causes of particulate matter less than 2.5 microns - the most important cause of air pollution in the second half of the year - which unfortunately vehicles that do not have technical inspection are only fined in Tehran and several other metropolises.

Clunkers plying the roads

On the other hand, the police, which is responsible for enforcing the clean air law, has been implementing a plan to release old motorcycles from parking lots since November 2020, so that thousands of clunker motorcy-

cles are returning to the transportation cycle, while many of which should be scrapped.

Also, the share of motorcycles in the production of gaseous pollutants is about 21 percent and in the production of suspended particles is 10 percent.

In addition, every 10 carbureted motorcycles emit as much particulate matter like an old diesel bus per kilometer, which is a major cause of air pollution.

In addition to clunker motorcycles, old cars are also important factors in air pollution during fall and winter.

The number of old cars in the country is so high that Issa Kalantari, head of the Department of Environment (DOE), had previously stated that we have become a country of clunker vehicles because now 87 percent of the country's minibuses, 81 percent of motorcycles, 73 percent of buses, and 61 percent of trucks should be scrapped.

On the other hand, Article 4 of the Clean Air Law stipulates that the production and import of all types of vehicles should be compliant with the emission limits announced by the DOE, which means Euro 5 emission standards.

Unfortunately, the car manufacturers still refused to implement Article 4, and even, a number of cars were numbered with the Euro 4 standard due to the DOE permit and the approval of the Cabinet of Ministers.

Responsible bodies neglect

In addition to related ministries, National TV is required by Article 28 of the Clean Air Law to provide education, information, and cultural programs to raise awareness of air pollution.

Masoud Tajrishi, deputy head of the DOE for human environment, had previously stated in an interview with ISNA that, unfortunately, some organizations, despite being obliged to implement the clean air law, do not perform the tasks. For example, IRIB has not yet taken any measures in this regard.

Jungle cat observed for first time in northwestern Iran

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** – After many years, for the first time, a jungle cat was observed in Assadabad plain located in northwestern Hamedan city, Mehdi Safikhani, deputy head of Hamedan department of environment has announced.

The jungle cat also called reed cat or swamp cat, is a medium-sized cat native to West Asia, South and Southeast Asia, and southern China. It inhabits foremost wetlands like swamps, littoral and riparian areas with dense vegetation. It is listed as Least Concern on the IUCN Red List and is mainly threatened by the destruction of wetlands, trapping, and poisoning.

The species image was recorded by one of the nature-enthusiast photographers, he stated, IRNA reported on Thursday.

The jungle cat is an endangered animal in Iran that only unofficial reports from the locals and nature lovers

indicated the existence of this species in the environment, Safikhani noted.

He went on to say that so far, the rangers stationed in the protected areas of Malayer and Tuyserkan cities had reported the observation of this rare cat, which was finally confirmed by images recorded of this species.

This beautiful and rare animal belongs to the cat family and is solitary, except during the mating season and mother-kitten families, he added.

The nocturnal species feed on small and medium-sized mammals such as rabbits and lambs, other large mammals such as rams, ewes, and deer, and species such as snakes, frogs, fish, and birds, he explained.

He further stated that the jungle cat is a medium-sized, long-legged cat, the head-and-body length is typically between 59 and 76 cm, which weighs 2–16 kg. Its large, pointed ears are 4.5–8 cm in length and reddish-brown



on the back; a small tuft of black hairs, nearly 15 mm long, emerges from the tip of both ears.

Villages with over 20 households to have rural administrations

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – The Ministry of Interior has prepared a plan according to which villages with at least 20 households will have rural administrations.

Previously, villages with more than 30 households received permits to establish rural administrations, deputy minister Mehdi Jamalinejad said, adding that the plan will cover over 8,000 villages across the country.

Noting that 30 percent of the country's population lives in rural areas, he said that "despite the oppressive sanctions and the poor economic condition, the government has taken valuable steps to provide services

to the villages," IRNA reported on Friday.

Rural development

In Iran, where villages account for generating 20-23 percent of the value-added in the country, the development of rural areas has been always a top agenda of the governments' activities.

The sustainable economic, social, and cultural development of the villages is one of the major priorities of the current government, and many projects implemented and underway in this regard have led to outstanding development in the rural regions.

One of the sectors with noticeable achievements in this field is gas supplying, while the number of villages supplied with



natural gas has doubled during the past seven years since the current government started its activity.

Based on the statistics, 18,000 villages

(each week 50 villages on average) have been connected to the national gas network over the past seven years, and now about 4.8 million families in 32,000 villages enjoy natural gas in the country. It means that 82 percent of the villages are connected to the gas network.

Many other efforts have been made over the past couple of years by the government to support villagers and slow down the trend of migration from rural areas to cities while decreasing rural community dependency on one main economic sector (agriculture, forestry, energy, or mining), including rural tourism, agritourism, religious tourism, and ecotourism.

ENGLISH IN USE

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A ← → چ

Rainfall increases Lake Urmia level

Recent rainfall has increased the level of Lake Urmia to 1,271 meters, a step closer to its ecological level of 1,274 meters.

The lake is expected to reach its ecological level within 10 years by completing the restoration plans which started four years ago.

Farhad Sarkhosh, head of the Lake Urmia Restoration Program's office in West Azarbaijan province, said that the Lake's level is now 58 cm higher than it was last year.

According to the latest monitoring, the lake's water volume is estimated at more than 3.6 billion cubic meters.

He added that the lake surface area has reached 2,883 square kilometers, adding that the figure is increased by 538 square kilometers compared to the same period last year.

Although the ecological level of the lake is defined as 1,274 meters, the lake will also have favorable conditions at 1,272 meters and more than 90 percent of sand and dust storm hotspots will be eliminated.

افزایش سطح تراز دریاچه ارومیه بر اثر بارش

بارش های اخیر تراز فعلی دریاچه ارومیه را به یک‌هزار و ۲۷۱ متر و ۳۸ سانتی‌متر رسانده است که در حال رسیدن به تراز اکولوژیک یک‌هزار و ۲۷۴ متر است.

به گزارش ایرنا، فرهاد سرخوش رییس دفتر استانی ستاد احیای دریاچه ارومیه گفت سطح دریاچه ارومیه اکنون ۵۸ سانتی‌متر بیشتر از زمان مشابه سال گذشته است. طبق آخرین پایش صورت گرفته حجم آب این دریاچه بیش از سه میلیارد و ۶۷۰ میلیون مترمکعب برآورد شده‌است.

وی با بیان اینکه وسعت دریاچه ارومیه در حال حاضر به بیش از ۲ هزار و ۸۸۳ کیلومتر مربع رسیده، اضافه کرد: وسعت این دریاچه نیز نسبت به سال گذشته ۵۳۸ کیلومتر مربع افزایش دارد.

هرچند تراز یک‌هزار و ۲۷۴ متر به عنوان ارتفاع اکولوژیک دریاچه ارومیه اعلام شده ولی این دریاچه در تراز یک‌هزار و ۲۷۲ متر هم شرایط مطلوب خواهد داشت و بیش از ۹۵ درصد کانون‌های ریزگرد آن رفع خواهد شد.

Importing Pfizer vaccines ‘is no more the question’: Iranian Red Crescent Society

1 → “We are ready to cooperate, if necessary, in case the Ministry of Health puts in a request [for importing vaccines] from eastern countries,” IRNA quoted Qossian-Moqaddam as saying.

This is while IRCS head Karim Hemmati had said on December 28 that the IRCS was planning to take delivery of a batch of 150,000 coronavirus vaccines produced by Pfizer Inc.

He pointed out that the Pfizer vaccines have been donated by a charity group of Iranian people living abroad.

He said that the donation has been made in cooperation with the Ministry of Health.

Christoph Hamelmann, World Health Organization Representative in Iran, said on December 28 that sanctions imposed by the United States will have no effect on importing coronavirus vaccines by Iran from the COVAX, a global initiative to ensure rapid and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines..

“We support and assist Iran in obtaining essential items from the global market, and we did so since the beginning of the pandemic, as we anticipated the provision of medicine to be affected by sanctions,” he added, ILNA reported.

COVAX member states, including Iran, will jointly decide on which brand of vaccine each country to purchase, and the final decision will be announced by the officials, he noted.

Warming oceans linked to mass starfish die-offs around the world

A massive die-off of starfish across the world, leading some species to the brink of extinction, has been linked to warming ocean temperatures caused by the climate crisis, scientists have said.

For more than seven years, a mysterious wasting disease, which turns starfish (also known as sea stars) into “piles of goo”, has caused mass mortality events capable of upending food chains in affected areas, which have been recorded from Alaska down to the gulf of Mexico.

Researchers have previously described it as the single largest, most geographically widespread marine disease ever recorded, the Independent reported.

But new research suggests the starfish may be dying due to respiratory distress and literally “drowning” in their own environments due to higher levels of microbial activity caused by local organic matter thriving in warming oceans.

The research team, led by marine biologists at Cornell University, said the changes to the environment “rob the creatures of their ability to breathe”.

“As humans, we breathe, we ventilate, we bring air into our lungs and we exhale,” said Ian Hewson, professor of microbiology at Cornell University.

“Sea stars diffuse oxygen over their outer surface through little structures called papulae, or skin gills. If there is not enough oxygen surrounding the papulae, the starfish can’t breathe.”

According to Professor Hewson, ocean conditions lead to the production of unusual amounts of organic material, which he said prompts bacteria to thrive.

As bacteria consume the organic matter, they deplete the oxygen in the water - creating a localised low-oxygen environment which can surround starfish and lead to deflation, discoloration, puffiness, and limb twisting or curling.

“It’s a cascade of problems that starts with changes in the environment, Professor Hewson said.

Most of the organic matter comes from the release of discharge from microscopic algae, zooplankton excretion, and from decaying animal carcasses.

Together these stimulate a group of bacteria called copiotrophs, which survive on carbon and rapidly consume organic matter.

The copiotrophs also need to breathe, so while absorbing the organic matter, they simultaneously deplete oxygen in starfishes’ watery habitats.

“It’s organic matter concentrations in the water,” he said.

“If you have a dead and rotting starfish next to starfish that are healthy, all of that dead one’s organic matter drifts and fuels the bacteria, creating a hypoxic environment. It looks like disease is being transmitted.”

Professor Hewson said that though more scientific work must be done, the research “reframes the discussion about marine disease ecology, which has focused on pathogenic disease”.

“We should now include microorganisms that don’t directly cause the pathology, since they may hold a key to affecting sea star health.”

LET’S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 103)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

خط فارسی

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حروف خمیده: ب پ ت ث ف ک گ

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excellent	بَه/بَهِ
With pleasure	چشم
I hope,	اِنْشَاءَ اللّٰه
	اِنْشَاءً

واژگان

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ساختِمان	← [ساختِمون]	میلیون	← [میلیون]
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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Every religion has its distinct characteristic, and the distinct characteristic of Islam is modesty.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Painting

■ Atashzad Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Azarafuz Karimi.

The exhibit titled "Free" will run until January 13 at the gallery that can be found at 3 North Abbaspur (Tavanir) St. near Vanak Sq.

■ Paintings by Faraz Nassersharif are on view in an exhibition at Seyhun Gallery.

The exhibit runs until January 20 at the gallery located at No. 11, 4th St., Vozara Ave.

■ An exhibition of paintings by Mojtaba Tabatabai is currently underway at Etemad Gallery 1. The exhibition will be running until January 19 at the gallery located at 25 Shirudi Alley, Mofatteh St., near Haft-e Tir Square.

■ Mohsen Gallery is showcasing paintings by Amir Mobed in an exhibition entitled "Praising the Tool".

The exhibit runs until January 27 at the gallery located at 42 East Mina Blvd., Naji St., off Zafar St.

■ An exhibition of paintings by Samira Darya, Meisam Nijadrasuli, Kamal Tabatabai, Pejman Rahimzadeh, Afshin Baqeri, Keivan Asgari and Masud Amani is underway at Artibition Gallery. The exhibit entitled "Far, Close" runs until January 17 at the gallery located at Qandi Alley, Sasanipur St., Gohnabi St., off Shariati Ave.

Painting/drawing/print

■ Negar Mortazavizadeh is hanging her latest paintings along with a number of her drawings and prints in an exhibition at Vaali Gallery. The exhibit named "Landless" will continue until January 19 at the gallery located at 72 Khodami St., Vanak Sq.

Multimedia

■ A large collection of artworks in various media by a group of artists, including Hilda Nejat-Halim Farrokhi Tusi, Nasser Khesali, Marjan Sharifi, Reza Barati and Fatemeh Bayati, is on display in an exhibition at Sa Gallery.

The exhibit named "Distance" will continue until January 13 at the gallery located at No. 134, 8th Bustan off Pasdaran Ave.

■ A group of artists, including Frabod Morshedzadeh, Amin Rostamzadeh, Samaneh Motalebi, Mostafa Khosravi, Baran Ahmadi-Rad and Foad Bonakdar, is hanging the latest artworks in various media in an exhibition at A Gallery. The exhibit named "Stony Place" runs until January 25 at the gallery located at 7 Ardeshir Arshad Alley, Azodi St., Karim Khan Ave.

■ Artworks from various media by Farhad Zare', Elnaz Shahpasandi, Amir Safai, Rosa Piruznia, Sahar Beigi, Sepideh Jamali and several other artists are on view in an exhibition at Ehsan Gallery. The exhibit will run until January 13 at the gallery located at No. 22, East 14th St. in the Ajudanieh neighborhood.

■ An exhibition of artworks in various media by a group of artists, including Fatemeh Yazdani, Saeid Nabatian, Fatemeh Latifi, Sahar Qazvini, Nurollah Habibi, and Sara Olfati, is currently underway at Ayrik Gallery.

The exhibition will run until January 12 at the gallery located at Ayrik Center on East Ferdows Blvd.

Afshin Ala's long poem on Commander Soleimani published in book

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — Afshin Ala's long versified story on Commander Qassem Soleimani has been published in a book.

The entitled "Sarbaznameh" ("Book of Soldiers") was unveiled during a special ceremony at Imam Ali (AS) Mosalla in Kerman, the hometown of Martyr Soleimani, on Thursday.

Ala, members of Soleimani's family, including his daughter Zeinab, and a number of senior IRGC commanders and cultural figures attended the ceremony.

"I felt deeply indebted to Commander Soleimani; I felt compelled to do something in this way," Ala said earlier in a radio program about his intention to compose the long poetry.

"During the early days after his martyrdom, I also composed some poems about him, however, I saw that it's my duty to compose a long epic versified story about the commander," he added.

To achieve the appropriate ambience to compose the poetry, he paid made a visit to Kerman, which is home to the grave of Soleimani.

Earlier in November, the poetry



IRGC chief Hossein Salami and Zeinab Soleimani, daughter of Commander Qassem Soleimani, unveil copies of Afshin Ala's poetry book "Sarbaznameh" at Imam Ali (AS) Mosalla in Kerman on January 7, 2021. (IRNA/Abuzar Ahmadzadeh)

published on the Persian social media attracted the praise of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed

Ali Khamenei.

"The poetry has been composed eloquently and meaningfully. It will

be everlasting poetry, God Willing. I congratulate Mr. Ala for his talent and success," the Leader wrote in a note published by his office at that time.

"I hope this poetry will be published by the Martyr Soleimani Foundation in Tehran on his first martyrdom anniversary in January," he remarked.

"I hope this poetry will be a little gift for the hearts of the family of the martyr and all those who love him," he remarked.

Ala has previously made affirmative or angry responses to some social and political issues by his poetry.

Ala published a long poem last August in negative response to the deal between Israel and the United Arab Emirates intended to fully normalize relations, which follows a history of peace efforts between Israel and the Palestinians and their Arab allies.

The poem composed in 34 verses is full of praise for Iran and Hezbollah's Secretary-General Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah for their resistance against the Zionist regime and denouncement of the UAE for the deal.

The poem was also hailed officially by Ayatollah Khamenei as "really opportune and timely."

Tehran International Book Fair goes online

organizers have announced.

Last year, the 33rd edition of Iran's most important cultural event was scheduled to be held in April and Turkey was slated to be the guest of honor, however, the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance canceled the fair due to a massive rise in the death toll from coronavirus in the country.

In a webinar held on Thursday, Iran Book and Literature House director Ayyub Dehqankar said that they believe the fair will give more opportunities to the readers that were probably not possible in a physical book fair.

"Iran Book and Literature House had several meetings with the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control in Tehran and the decision was made to hold the fair in summer, however, with the rise in the death toll, it was decided that the fair be held online," Dehqankar said.

"We observed the world online book fairs, while we also attended different international book fairs

such as Bologna and Frankfurt. We are well aware that we can't achieve all the goals of a physical fair, however, we believe that the virtual fair can provide some good opportunities," he added.

"We always had limited spaces for the publishers both in the Imam Khomeini Mosalla, and Shahr-e Aftab Fairground, while the online fair will have no such restrictions, and any publisher that has been active for the past 4 years can request a virtual stand to offer its books, and this can be considered a big step towards fairness," he added.

"The Iranian books will be offered with a 20 percent discount while the foreign books will have a 50 percent discount at the fair," he asserted.

He noted that the books will be delivered to all the various cities across the country for free and also that the virtual fair will be open around the clock.

"So far, 1500 publishers have registered, and we hope to witness good growth in the first edition of the first virtual exhibit," he concluded.

"Characteristics of the School of Martyr Soleimani" published in 12 countries

CULTURE TEHRAN

"Characteristics of the School of Martyr Soleimani", a book giving a brief analysis of the personal characteristics of Commander Qassem Soleimani through his discourses and memories, has been published in 12 countries.

The book originally was written by Hojjatolesalm Ali Shirazi in Persian.

Published by Khate Moqaddam Publications, the Persian version was introduced during a meeting at the Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization (IIDO) in November, 2020.

The book has been published in Azerbaijan, Russia, Turkey, Georgia, Pakistan, Iraq and Syria, and will be published in France and Afghanistan in the near future.



Front cover of the Persian translation of "Characteristics of the School of Martyr Soleimani" written by Hojjatolesalm Ali Shirazi.

The countries of Senegal, Chad and Nigeria have received the e-book versions of the book.

The director of publications Hojjatolesalm Hadi Shirazi has said that the book has also been translated into French.

Soleimani, the commander of the Quds Force, the overseas arm of IRGC, was martyred during a U.S. airstrike in Baghdad on January 3, 2020.

Author Ali Shirazi was a close friend of Soleimani, and has tried to write the book based on words, memoirs and thoughts of the commander.

"To explain about the school of Martyr Soleimani, we need to know the school of Islam first," Shirazi wrote in a preface to the book.

"Next, we should go after the school

of the Prophet Muhammad (S) and the Imams and learn more about the school of Imam Hussein (AS). That is when the characteristics of the school of Imam Khomeini will be clarified, and with the knowledge about the school of Imam Khomeini, the characteristics of the school of Martyr Soleimani can be explained," he added.

However, to explain all these is not possible in the book, and the writer has tried to take a glance at the school of Islam and Imam Hussein (AS), and explain more about the school of Imam Khomeini, and compare them with those of Martyr Soleimani.

The book contains only part of the characteristics of the school of Soleimani followed by the words of the martyr and the points of view of others.

"Cooler" honored at India's Sprouting Seed filmfest

ART **TEHRAN** — Iranian director Iman Sediq's "Cooler" has won an honorable mention at the Sprouting Seed International Short Film Festival in the Indian town of Nandurbar.

The film is a love story that is heard from the cooler channel in a sanatorium.

The festival honored four short films with honorable mentions. "Cooler" received the third honorable mention.

"Men Don't Cry" by Russian director Galina Maslennikova was selected as best short film.

The film is about a family whose son dies from COVID-19. After the death of his son, the father becomes isolated and tries to live as if nothing has happened.



A scene from Iranian director Iman Sediq's short film "Cooler".

Because of this, his wife considers him callous and indifferent. The arrival of an old friend of their son made them all start communication and understand each other once again.

The award for best director went to Prashant Nigade from India for the movie "Inner".

"Breathless" by Oumar Dagnon from Burkina Faso was picked as best feature film, while "Break the Stereotype" by Ritwik Das won the award for best animation.

Italian director Marco Riva's "Boschi - Cavar Carbone" received the award for best documentary, and "Co-War" by Ratheesh Kumar from India won the award for best COVID-19 film.

War veteran Yusefzadeh writing sequel to "Those 23 Individuals"

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — War veteran Ahmad Yusefzadeh, who has authored "Those 23 Individuals" in two volumes recounting the story of 23 young Iranian volunteers who were captives during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, said on Thursday that he is writing a sequel to the book.

"The third book will be the final one, which will contain my memories of captivity at the Mosul Camp in Iraq during the last years of my detention in the camp," Yusefzadeh has said.

He said that the book will be published next year.

Yusefzadeh narrates his memories

about the captivity of 23 Iranian young adults in Iraq during the 1980s. Nineteen of the young adults were from Kerman.

The book tells of the early months of their captivity and the events they confront, and later their visit with the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has written a commendation for "Those 23 Individuals".

"I highly praise this gifted writer and those 23 individuals, and the hand of power and wisdom which has created all this beauty through its miraculous fingers," the Leader wrote about the book.

The Leader wrote the commendation in March 2015 during the last days of Iranian calendar year 1393 and the early days of the New Year.

Filmmaker Mehdi Jafari made a screen adaptation of the story in 2018.

The movie received the award for best screenplay at the 16th edition of the Resistance International Film Festival in November, 2020.

"23 Individuals" also stood first with six awards at the National Will Manifestation Awards in February 2019.

The awards are presented to those films that promote issues being pursued by some public organizations and institutes.



Front cover of the book "Those 23 Individuals" by Ahmad Yusefzadeh.