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# Iran serious about its recent nuclear decisions

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© File photo

## ‘Iran won’t be indifferent to freezing its money by South Korea’

TEHRAN – The Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Abdolnaser Hemmati, in a meeting with South Korean Vice Foreign Affairs Minister Choi Jong Kun, said Iran will not stay indifferent to blocking its money by South Korea.

Hemmati called on the South Korean government to take an independent approach towards the issue of releasing Iran's resources in the country, saying: "Seven billion dollars belonging to the

Iranian nation has been blocked in South Korean banks for more than two years, this is unacceptable and Iran definitely will not be indifferent towards this issue."

Expressing hope for the results of the negotiations between the two countries in this regard, Hemmati said: "South Korean banks have frozen our resources in this country for many years and even our deposits have not received any interest."

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## Iran plans to import AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines from India, China, Russia

TEHRAN – Iran plans to import some two million doses of AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines from India, China, and Russia by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20).

The Iranian-made vaccine is more reliable than many foreign-made vaccines, but it takes a long time to be approved. So, the health ministry plans to import some two million doses of vaccines from

India, China, and Russia by the end of the year, IRNA quoted Mohammad Reza Zafarghandi, head of the Medical Council, as saying on Monday.

Pfizer and Moderna vaccines were never on the agenda to be purchased by Iran due to their high prices, transportation problems, and the need to be kept extremely cold, Zafarghandi said.

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## Night-long nightmares, one year after Iran’s retaliation

TEHRAN – An American newspaper has broken the story of some U.S. troops who survived Iran's missile attack on American military bases in Iraq on the early hours of January 8, 2020 in revenge for the assassination of Lt. Gen. Qassem Soleimani by the America government.

Many American soldiers are still dealing with psychological disorders after the attack on that night, The Washington Post said in a report on Sunday titled "These U.S. troops survived one of the greatest crises of Trump era. A year later, they're still coping".

*Continued on page 2*

Karimi can make a difference in football: expert

BY FARROKH HESABI

Iran football expert Amir Hajrezaei supports Ali Karimi's candidacy for the presidency of the Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) and sees it as a message to those who have damaged the country's football in the last decade.

The legend of Iran football and Persepolis club has officially submitted his bid to become president of the FFIRI.

In an exclusive interview with Tehran Times, Hajrezaei talked about Karimi's challenge for Iranian football's top job.

"Honestly speaking, Ali Karimi and the ones who have been introduced by him as his vice-presidents, will not likely make the "fundamental changes" but they can make difference. I am not even sure who will win the election.

"However, I support his candidacy for the presidency of the FFIRI and consider it as a message from football society to those who have done nothing and also harmed the Iranian football over the past 10 or 15 years. The football community will use Karimi as a symbol and his voice should be heard by those who have led football for years. The Iranian football fans have made request for transition and Karimi and his group, who among them is the legendary Mehdi Mahdavi, can make it happen," Said Hajrezaei, one of the country's most respected Iranian football analysts.

The election for the presidency of the Iranian football federation will be held on Feb.28. The federation is currently heading by Heydar Baharvand after Mehdi Taj announced his retirement.

"It has always been said that football must be separated from politics, but Politics often manifests itself through football, and it has often been used as political propaganda. Even we can see that FIFA, as the international governing body of football, makes decisions based on political considerations.

"I hope that Karimi's candidacy will not be invalidated or rejected in the process of vetting the candidates. Karimi has already secured support from football figures and fans. As I said, this is a clear protest by the football community against those who have never lived with football and have never loved football but have chaired our football governing body. Even if Karimi is not elected, some of the current people still must be removed from the football federation," he concluded.

## Doc “The Fourteenth Province” studies separation of Bahrain from Iran

TEHRAN – Iranian filmmaker Mohsen Karimian has made a documentary named "The Fourteenth Province", which studies the separation of Bahrain from Iran in 1971.

The film won the Golden Lantern for best documentary during the 11th Ammar Popular Film Festival, which is organized every year by a number of Iranian revolutionary figures.

Speaking to the Persian service of MNA on Monday, Karimian said that he started research for the documentary in 2018.

"The research was really profound so that it could even be turned into a book," he said.

To make the documentary, Karimian began searching for those officials who were involved in or had directly witnessed the process of the separation. The documentary also studies the role of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Iran's last monarch, in this issue.

"The separation of Bahrain is a disputable issue," Karimian said and added, "Some people

considered it a black mark and others said that Iran had no other choice, and this bipolar attitude made the job difficult for us."

He said that he chose a middle way to make his documentary and stated, "History is full of positive and negative issues, but in 'The Fourteenth Province', we tried to give a neutral account of an unpleasant historical event to prevent the likelihood of errors arising in the future."

He lamented that the Iranian people do not have much knowledge about this issue and other historical events and added, "We tried to prepare first-hand accounts and documents to raise the awareness of the issue."

The decline of Iran's Qajar dynasty, followed by a consequent politico-military crisis during the Pahlavi era, is associated with the firm establishment of British hegemony in the Persian Gulf with a view to guaranteeing India's security.

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## Democrats give Pence ultimatum to remove Trump from White House

US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has stepped up the pressure on Vice-President Mike Pence to act to remove Donald Trump from office over his role in last week's storming of Congress.

Lawmakers are expected to bring up a resolution asking Pence to invoke the 25th Amendment to declare the president unfit for office.

Mr Pence is said to oppose the idea. If he refuses, the House will hold a vote to impeach Trump who had urged supporters to march on the Capitol.

The Republican president has been accused by Democrats and an increasing number of fellow Republicans over the riot, following a rally in which Trump repeated unsubstantiated allegations of vote fraud. Five people died in the attack, including a Capitol police officer.

Trump has made no public statements since he was banned from several social media platforms - including Twitter - on Friday.

He is due to leave office on 20 January, when

Democrat Joe Biden will be sworn in as president. Trump has said he will not attend Mr Biden's swearing-in ceremony.

Pelosi wrote to lawmakers saying the House of Representatives would present a resolution on Monday to formally request that Mr Pence invoke the 25th Amendment to the Constitution, which would allow Mr Pence to remove Mr Trump from the White House and become acting president.

The House could vote on the resolution on Tuesday. After that, Mr Pence and the cabinet would be given 24 hours to act before the House's potential move toward impeachment.

"We will act with urgency, because this president represents an imminent threat to both," Ms Pelosi said in her letter on Sunday. "The horror of the ongoing assault on our democracy perpetrated by this president is intensified and so is the immediate need for action."

*Continued on page 5*

## No ETs here, only Americans

There, still readable.

"Project for the New American Century". It was not created by your regular Joe Six Pack. But by some of the top names that controlled U.S. foreign and military policy for decades and then went on to start major overseas wars when they came to power, during the George Bush administration, who also lost the popular vote and was then declared winner by the U.S. Supreme Court. That was also another drama that eventually ended in tragedy. Thanks to "Project

for the New American Century".

You should read that document. Especially now. Nothing could be more relevant.

Emmanuel Macron told us that what we saw in Washington is not American. No, Mr. Macron, as in many other things, you are again wrong. You should really stop making silly comments on world politics. What we saw was very American. I don't know what you were reading or observing or doing 20 years ago.

*Continued on page 5*

## Tehran writes to Guterres, criticizing WHO for biased support of ‘inadequately-tested American vaccine’

TEHRAN – The Academy of Medical Sciences of Iran has written a letter to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, criticizing the World Health Organization for being biased in favor of inadequately-tested COVID-19 vaccines produced in the United States.

"We are concerned that the WHO is biased in favor of inadequately-tested American technology, which could risk many lives around the world, in order to woo the U.S. back into the organization," reads the letter undersigned by Seyed Alireza Marandi, president of the Academy of Medical Sciences of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

"While the meaning of your silence and that of other human rights organizations in the face of these oppressive medical sanctions has never been clear to our medical community, what did the Executive Director of the WHO's Health Emergency Program mean when he responded to our Leader Ayatollah Khamenei's rejection of inadequately tested vaccines, by saying "Do not politicize this virus" during a recent press conference?" Marandi wrote, referring to remarks recently made by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, prohibiting the import of American and British coronavirus vaccines to Iran.

"Nothing else explains why a senior WHO official would involve himself in the rational, measured, and scientific determinations of a member state."

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## Iranian exemplary exporters honored

TEHRAN – Iran's 24th National Export's Day ceremony was held on Monday at the place of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) during which the country's top exporters were introduced and honored.

The ceremony was attended by senior officials including First Vice President Es'hag Jahangiri, Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Alireza Razm Hosseini, ICCIMA board members, some MPs, and representatives of the private sector.

This is the first time that the ICCIMA is directly in charge of selecting and introducing the country's top exporters.

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## Is Biden up to the challenge of wise governance? That's now the question...

By Martin Love

Donald Trump has probably done more damage to the U.S. than any president ever has, and inciting the violent raid on the Capitol in Washington in which five people died and much physical damage was done is his last destructive act and the end of his political career.

He also, along with many of those who wreaked havoc on January 6 around and inside the Capitol as the final Electoral Vote certification was underway, could quite possibly be prosecuted himself. The fear of a military attack on Iran, a fear which has been in play ever since Trump lost the election to Joe Biden on November 3, seems to be waning the closer Biden gets to his inauguration on January 20. So, this latter – that Iran may be “safe” for now – is one positive outcome of Trump’s overreach and his petulant refusal to go quietly.

Trump virtually handed the two run-off elections in Georgia for the U.S. Senate to his Democratic foes, War-nock and Ossof, which means the Senate is now evenly split between the two political parties but also in the Democrats’ control given the extra vote on legislation in the hands of Biden’s Vice-Presidential pick Kamala Harris.

And as well, some of the most prominent Republican Trump supporters in the Senate have virtually destroyed their longer-term political prospects and dreams going forward, especially Senators Josh Hawley of Missouri and Ted Cruz of Texas. Both these men, and other Republicans, helped egg on the violence at the Capitol. What were they thinking? One must ask rhetorically. As for members of the mob on January 6, the new Department of Justice is likely to put many of them in jail for insurrection. And to boot, General James Mattis, who for a time was a part of the Trump Administration, has called for Trump to lose his citizenship and be exiled to another country for his alleged traitorous perfidy. And Trump has announced he will not attend Biden’s inauguration, breaking with tradition. Yes, it’s true: Trump managed to create a cult following of voters with his lies and bombast over four years, and now he has gone too far and they, too, will be in disrepute going forward assuming the country is literally not split apart in coming months.

Few Americans can legitimately pity Trump’s fall from any grace. He has been the worst president in U.S. history. He had no legislative victories but his huge tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations. He rescinded scores of environmental safeguards. He turned the Department of Justice into joke. His cabinet appointees like Mike Pompeo were a joke, and he turned the U.S. into what amounted to a burgeoning fascist state like Israel. And this not to mention how he sullied most all of any respect the U.S. had on the international scene with his sanctions against what sometimes seemed like the entire world, but especially Iran. He rescinded working deals like the JCPOA and so on. He threw millions of Americans out of reliable healthcare access, too. In sum, Trump has always been an ignorant rube whose prime focus has consistently been himself, not Americans. Far from MAGA, he has accelerated U.S. decline. But now the question must be with Biden, decline to what?

Well, for one thing, the long established so-called “Deep State” which was horrified when Trump became president, is now going to be firmly back in the saddle of governance under Joe Biden. But Biden as Barack Obama’s loyal vice president was hardly a person to cheer about. He was instrumental in supporting the war on Iraq earlier and then Obama’s wars on Libya and Syria. He supported the coup in Ukraine and later his family, or his son, profited from Ukraine’s corruption.

But now, still, with Biden as president and Trump out of the way at last, there is a chance at least that the listing monster ship that is the U.S. may right itself at least marginally – but the government will be much larger along with financial debt and deficits and further erosion of the country, but at a more subdued pace. Bad actors who supported Trump will be deeply diminished and even supporters like his lawyer and former NYC mayor (during 9/11) Rudy Giuliani could be prosecuted. In a line, Biden is likely to take America back to some facsimile of the governance it had during the Bush and Obama periods, which were nothing to applaud except in comparison to Trump’s four years in the White House.

Would this be progress? Not really, unless Biden eschews wars of choice, resurrects the JCPOA, cuts the Pentagon budget and overseas military bases, begins to consider honestly the extension Medicare to all Americans, re-creates environmental safeguards and attacks the racism and racists so visible in Trump’s tenure. In other words, Biden must fully become who he has mostly pretended to be in the past – a wise steward and leader of fresh policies that benefit ALL citizens and not just the wealthy.

Indeed, one can say that if Biden does not take bold, progressive steps to lead the U.S. out of its self-inflicted morass and division and repair the image the U.S. has abroad, he, too, will as Trump already have, accelerate the decline of the U.S. even more. But at least for now there is a chance for improvements with Trump who finally this week admitted that a new administration is directly ahead.

**“His (Trump’s) cabinet appointees like Mike Pompeo were a joke, and he turned the U.S. into what amounted to a burgeoning fascist state like Israel. And this not to mention how he sullied most all of any respect the U.S. had on the international scene with his sanctions against what sometimes seemed like the entire world, but especially Iran. He rescinded working deals like the JCPOA and so on.”**

# Tehran, Seoul hold talks on Iranian frozen assets and S. Korean tanker case

**POLITICAL d e s k** TEHRAN – In a meeting in Tehran on Sunday evening diplomatic delegations from Iran and South Korea discussed the disputes about the Iranian assets frozen in South Korean banks and Iran’s seizure of a Korean oil tanker for polluting Persian Gulf waters.

The meeting was chaired by Choi Jong Kun, Korea’s first vice minister of foreign affairs, and Abbas Araqchi, the Iranian deputy foreign minister for political affairs. Choi is leading a South Korean delegation comprised of political and financial officials.

South Korea’s senior diplomat described his visit to Tehran as a sign of the importance his country attaches to the expansion of relations with Iran, stressing that Seoul is resolved to rebuild trust in bilateral ties in the new Christian year by addressing the problems in the relations with Tehran, Tasnim reported.

Araghchi pointed to the Iranian financial assets frozen in South Korea, saying Korean banks have illegally blocked Iran’s currency resources for nearly two years and a half by citing a fear of U.S. sanctions.

“This action (by South Korea), which



is only surrender to ransom demand from the U.S., is not acceptable, and naturally the expansion of relations (between Tehran and Seoul) would be meaningful only when this problem is solved,” the Iranian deputy minister noted.

Pointing to the failure of negotiations that Iran, particularly the country’s Central Bank, has held with the South Korean officials about the frozen money, Araghchi said Iran believes that the freezing of its financial assets in South Korea is a result

of the Seoul government’s lack of political will rather than the cruel sanctions imposed by the Trump administration.

He further called on South Korea to make serious efforts to find the necessary mechanism for resolving the issue as a top priority in relations with Iran.

In response, Choi underlined that allowing Iran access to its assets in South Korea is one of the South Korean government’s main priorities, saying Seoul is determined to pursue the case until the problem is finally settled.

**Araghchi advises South Korea to avoid politicizing vessel seizure**

In reaction to a call from Vice Minister Choi for resolving the issue surrounding the seizure of the South Korean oil tanker, Araghchi said the vessel has been captured in the Iranian territorial waters in the Persian Gulf because of environmental pollution, adding that the Iranian Judiciary has started studying the case.

Araghchi advised South Korea to avoid politicizing the seizure and stay away from futile propaganda, and to allow the case to be addressed through legal procedures by the Judiciary in a calm manner.

## Rafael Grossi: Iran is progressing “quite rapidly” in %20 enrichment

**POLITICAL d e s k** TEHRAN – The director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has said Iran is moving very fast in enriching uranium to the purity of 20%.

During a “Reuters Next” meeting, the IAEA chief said, “Reviving Iran’s nuclear deal must happen within the coming weeks. It is clear that we don’t have many months ahead of us. We have weeks.”

An Iranian lawmaker said on Jan. 9 that Iran is giving the incoming Biden administration, which takes office on Jan. 20, until Feb. 21 to reverse sanctions.

In early November the Iranian parliament passed a law that obliges the government to halt inspections of its nuclear sites by the IAEA and step up uranium enrichment if U.S. sanctions are not eased. The law is intended to lift illegal sanctions against Iran.

“I must take it seriously because it’s the law,” Grossi said,

adding that he believed the Islamic Republic’s government intended to implement it.

Grossi said Iran was progressing “quite rapidly” in 20% enrichment and that based on estimations it would be able to reach about 10 kilograms a month at its facility in Fordow.

“There will have to be a clear understanding on how the initial terms and provisions of the JCPOA (nuclear deal) are going to be recompiled with,” Grossi said.

The IAEA director general also said, “I have not received any letters implying Iran’s intention to cut the access of IAEA inspectors under the additional protocol on February”.

Tehran started to reduce its commitments to the 2015 accord in 2019 in a step-by-step response to President Donald Trump’s withdrawal from it in 2018 and to the reimposition of U.S. sanctions that had been lifted under the deal.

In May 2019 Iran unequivocally announced that if the remaining parties to the deal, especially the European trio,



protect Iran from the illegal U.S. sanctions it will reverse its decisions. However, they failed to honor their commitments.

## MP says Iran has started installing IR2M centrifuges

**POLITICAL d e s k** TEHRAN – The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) has started installing IR2M centrifuges in accordance with a parliamentary ratification intended to lift illegal sanctions on Iran.

Abolfazl Amouei, spokesperson for the Parliament National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, broke the news in an interview with the Mehr news agency on Sunday.

Amouei also said in the Sunday session of the parliamentary committee the implementation of the law entitled “Strategic

Counteractive Plan for Lifting Sanctions and Safeguarding Rights of Iranian People” was reviewed.

He also said senior officials from the AEOI and Foreign Ministry attended the session.

“Spokesman of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran Behrouz Kamalvandi submitted a comprehensive report on the implementation of various provisions of the strategic plan. According to him, enriching uranium to 20-percent purity has been implemented in accordance with Article 1 of the law, and the International Atomic Energy

Agency (IAEA) have been informed about its details,” Amouei explained.

Kamalvandi is the AEOI spokesman and the organization’s deputy chief.

MP Amouei added Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Mohsen Baharvand also said the ministry has made clarifications about all the legal paths for implementing the strategic plan for lifting sanctions at international level and that foreign sides will not be allowed to undermine the law.

Lawmakers sitting on the Parliament Na-

tional Security and Foreign Policy Committee also expressed their thanks to the AEOI officials and stressed the need to continue cooperation between the government and Parliament in this regard, Amouei stated.

The parliamentary committee spokesman also said according to a scheduled program, the AEOI is planning to build a reactor similar to the Arak heavy water before modernization.

In line with Article 5 of the strategic plan, Amouei said, the AEOI announced at the session that it is drawing up a plan for designing the reactor.

## Iranian govt. spokesman calls assassination of Afghan official disgusting

**POLITICAL d e s k** TEHRAN – Iran’s government spokesman Ali Rabiei on Monday condemned the Sunday terrorist attack in Kabul that resulted in the death of an Afghan official.

During a terrorist attack on Sunday, Zia Wadan, the spokesman for the Afghan Public Protection Force, was killed after a sticky bomb attached to his car went off while he was on his way to work during the morning rush hour. No person or group has claimed the responsibility for the act yet.

In his message, Rabiei said, “The assassination of the spokesman and his entourage was a shocking news for the



Iranian government and people.”

“While extending our condolences to the Afghan nation, government, and the families of the victims of the attack, we strongly condemn this terrorist move,” Rabiei wrote in his message.

Rabiei deplored the act of assassination as “a disgusting and unacceptable means to achieve political goals that will have no effect other than reinforcing the vicious circle of insecurity and violence”.

“We assure our brothers and sisters in Afghanistan that we will stand by them in the fight against terrorism, violence and occupation as long as necessary” Rabiei added.

## Night-long nightmares, one year after Iran’s retaliation

A number of soldiers describe their personal experiences in Ain al-Asad airbase in Al Anbar province in western Iraq that Iran showered it several long-range missiles on the dead of the night.

The assassination of the top general on the early hours of January 3 dragged the U.S. and Iran close to full-scale war. Iranian officials have since emphasized that the missile attack was “just part of the revenge” that they have planned as a response to the crime that the U.S. committed.

Facing the gravest international security crisis of his presidency, Donald Trump suddenly shifted gears. “All is well!” he tweeted within hours of the attack.

“The U.S. soldiers scrambled from one bunker to the next, stumbling past charred wreckage, 30-foot-wide craters, and puddles of diesel fuel. A barrage of ballistic missiles had briefly knocked some of them unconscious, and more were on the way,” says The Washington Post.

“Iran used weapons about 40 long and carrying 1,600 pounds of explosives, more powerful than any weapon launched at Americans in a generation,” the Post adds.

It also says, “But 110 survivors were ultimately diagnosed with traumatic brain injuries, some requiring long hospitalizations and intensive therapies at the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center outside

Washington. The military disclosed the injuries days after the strike, saying that an earlier Trump announced that there were ‘no casualties’ was based on the best information the Pentagon had at the time”.

One of the soldiers interviewed by the Post is Maj. Alan Johnson. He says, “I struggled to focus after absorbing the monstrous blast waves of several explosions, including one that missed my bunker by about 60 feet” he recalled, adding, “I still have anxiety. I still have recurring nightmares of incoming – just that sound of those things coming in.”

Johnson and 28 other service members were injured seriously enough to receive Purple Hearts in the strike, which Iran called Operation Martyr Soleimani. The attack left some with feelings of anger and helplessness. Survivors are still pondering a night that increasingly seemed overlooked in a year that went on to include the coronavirus pandemic, a fraught national conversation about race, and one of the most contentious presidential elections in American history, the newspaper says.

Another American trooper interviewed is Lt. Col. Johnathan Jordan, the operations officer for an Air Force unit present that night.

“I can’t think that anyone has walked away from this without some sort of effects, psychologically or emotionally, because of how traumatic the event was,” Jordan tells

the Post. “Me and my commander Lt. Col. Staci Coleman drew up a plan. Half of the 160 airmen we oversaw could leave on a C-130 with me leading them, she decided. The other half would stay with Coleman, hunkering down in bunkers. We were expecting just total devastation at that point”.

The newspaper also says, “Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Noal Yarnes took cover in a fortified structure, telling the airmen under his supervision to bring their gas masks – just in case. Johnson, working with soldiers on another part of al-Asad, decided to record a video message. [...] He wanted to leave behind some last words, he said. Moody, a member of the Kentucky Air National Guard, and his colleagues drove around in a mine-resistant truck, making sure the base was secure. Other troops stood watch in guard towers, vigilant in case a ground attack also materialized, while nearly everyone else left on the base sheltered in place. The warning rang out over loudspeakers after 1 a.m.: Incoming! Incoming! Take cover!”

Pointing to the extreme power of missiles upon the impact, Staff Sgt. Drew Davenport says, “The first missile exploded at 1:34 a.m. about 100 yards from the mine-resistant vehicle that Moody’s team was driving, casting debris on the hood. The reinforced doors were blown open by the concussive blast

of missiles, which landed about 300 yards away but sounded much closer. I didn’t even have time to be scared. I was just so pumped full of adrenaline. I remember that mushroom cloud and that bright red, orange color vividly. It was one of the wildest things I’ve ever seen.”

Alan Johnson tells the Washington Post reporter that he has no recollection of the first three blasts and believes it is because the third briefly knocked him and other soldiers in his bunker unconscious. It had landed about 70 yards away. The fourth exploded about 300 yards away. The fifth and sixth missiles whooshed in about 40 seconds later – one 120 yards away and the other just 60 feet. Soldiers who had survived in bunkers were hesitant to leave them, even after an ‘all clear’ message went out. Some were crying, Johnson said. Some were whimpering. Others were vomiting.

“The fact was, everyone had these symptoms of traumatic brain injury,” Johnson said. “But those symptoms were insignificant compared to what we went through all night.”

The report continues to say, “Davenport and Moody said they did not suffer any injuries. But they wonder how America moved on so quickly”.

“It’s kind of disheartening sometimes,” Davenport said. “Some people don’t even know it happened”.



SPORTS

Esteghlal escape defeat against Persepolis: IPL

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Esteghlal football team with d e s k earned a hard draw against Persepolis in Iran Professional League (IPL) on Monday.

In the match held at the empty Azadi Stadium, two teams shared the spoils in a 2-2 draw.

It was Persepolis' fourth successive draw in the Iran league. The Reds have not won a single match after losing to Ulsan Hyundai on Dec. 19 in the final match of the 2020 AFC Champions League.



Esteghlal striker Arsalan Motahari was on target just one minute into the match after the Persepolis defenders made mistake into the area.

Shortly after, Persepolis put the Blues under pressure but failed to equalize the match in the first half.

Persepolis striker Mehdi Abdi benefitted from Esteghlal defenders' error in the 51st minute and found the back of the net.

Abdi also set up Vahid Amiri for a chance and Persepolis player found the back of the net in the 66th minute.

Persepolis could have won more goals but their players wasted their chances.

Esteghlal forward Mehdi Ghaedi leveled the score in the dying moments of the match with a powerful strike inside the area.

Esteghlal remain second place in the table with 19 points with one game in hands while Persepolis are eighth with 12 points with two games in hands.

The match was 94th competitive meetings between the two teams. Esteghlal have won 26, Persepolis 24 and the remaining 44 games finished as draws.

Sumgayit FK complete signing of Iranian defender Haghverdi

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Sumgayit football club have d e s k completed the signing of Iranian center back Hojjat Haghverdi on Monday.

The details of Haghverdi's contract have not been revealed.

The Mashhad born defender, started his playing career at Aboumoslem in 2013 and joined Zob Ahan after three years.

Haghverdi joined Sumgayit after he canceled his contract with Paykan last week.

Iranian players Ali Ghorbani, Peyman Babaei, Mehdi Sharifi and Adam Hemmati have already played in the Azerbaijani club.

Haghverdi had been linked with a move to Iranian giants Persepolis.

Mes Sungun nominated for World's Best Futsal Club

Mes Sungun Varzaghan from Iran were shortlisted for the Best Futsal Club in the World.

The Futsal Planet website, which introduces the nominees for receiving the best awards in the futsal world at the end of each year, has put the name of the Iranian club among the top 10 nominees to receive the best club award this year.

Mes Sungun claimed the title of the 2020 Iran Professional Futsal League in June.

- Nominees**
- Barça (ESP)
  - Magnus Futsal (BRA)
  - Mes Sungun Varzaghan FSC (IRN)
  - MFK KPFR Moscow (RUS)
  - Movistar Inter FS (ESP)
  - Nagoya Oceans (JPN)
  - PTT Bluewave Chonburi Futsal Club (THA)
  - Sport Club Corinthians Paulista (BRA)
  - Sporting Clube de Portugal (POR)
  - Thai Son Nam FC (VIE)

(Source: Futsal Planet)

Samimi shortlisted for Best Goalkeeper in World

Mes Sungun Varzaghan goalkeeper Alireza Samimi was short-listed for the Best Goalkeeper in the World.

The Futsal Planet website, which introduces the nominees for receiving the best awards in the futsal world at the end of each year, has put the name of the Iranian goalkeeper among the top 10 nominees to receive the best goalkeeper award this year.

Samimi helped Mes Sungun win 2020 Iran Professional Futsal League in June.

- Nominees**
- Fernando Lopes Pereira "Careca" (BRA)
  - MFK Atyrau (KAZ) - Sport Club Corinthians Paulista (BRA)
  - Didac Plana Oltra (ESP)
  - Barça (ESP) - SPAIN N.T.
  - Eduardo Filipe Sousa Veiga (POR)
  - Viña Albali Valdepeñas (ESP) - PORTUGAL N.T.
  - Thiago Mendes Rocha "Guitta" (BRA)
  - Sporting Clube de Portugal (POR) - BRAZIL N.T.
  - Leonardo De Melo Vieira Leite "Higuitta" (BRA/KAZ)
  - Kairat Almaty (KAZ) - KAZAKHSTAN N.T.
  - Jesús Herrero Parrón (ESP)
  - Movistar Inter FS (ESP) - SPAIN N.T.
  - Diego Roncaglio (BRA)
  - Sport Lisboa e Benfica (POR) - BRAZIL N.T.
  - Alireza Samimi (IRN)
  - Mes Sungun Varzaghan FSC (IRN)
  - Albert Tsaidar (RUS)
  - MFK KPFR Moscow - RUSSIA N.T.
  - William Felipe Dorn (BRA)
  - JEC/Krona Futsal (BRA)

(Source: Futsal Planet)

Iran serious about its recent nuclear decisions

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iran has d e s k moved "quite rapidly" to raise the level of uranium enrichment to 20% after it informed the UN atomic watchdog of its intention. The move came a few days after Iran submitted a letter in this regard to the International Atomic Energy Agency. Iran is now warning that it will expel the IAEA inspectors in a few weeks if sanctions are not lifted by February.

But will it follow through on its threat? The answer to this question lies with IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi, who expressed awe at Iran's swiftness in resuming the 20% uranium enrichment.

Reviving Iran's nuclear deal must happen within the coming weeks, Grossi said on Monday, according to Reuters, after Tehran resumed 20% uranium enrichment and its parliament threatened to reduce access for inspectors in February.

"It is clear that we don't have many months ahead of us. We have rather weeks," he said in an interview for the Reuters Next conference.

The UN nuclear chief raised alarm bells after achieving a firsthand experience in dealing with Iran in recent months; something that made him the most qualified UN official in attesting to the credibility of Iran's threats. In early January, Iran informed the IAEA of its intention to raise the level of uranium enrichment to 20%. A few days later, Iran followed through on the threat. Grossi was kept in the loop about Iran's nuclear steps right from the start.

On January 1, Iran's representative to the IAEA submitted a letter to the Agency saying that Iran will soon start the 20% uranium enrichment. Ali Akbar Salehi, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), confirmed the submission of the letter on the same day it was delivered to the IAEA.

"We have sent a letter to the representative of the Islamic Republic to the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna to submit it to the Agency. This letter was submitted to the Agency on Friday, informing it that we want to start 20% enrichment in accordance with the parliament law," Salehi, a nuclear physicist, said on January 1.

Iran's nuclear chief also issued a stern threat that a few people thought would be done. He said Iran is going to resume 20%



uranium enrichment and Iranian officials have their hand on the trigger.

"God willing, we will start enriching [uranium] up to 20% soon. The president should issue an order. Of course, the president has already issued a preliminary order according to which we sent a letter to the Agency and made the announcement. We are just like a soldier having his hand on the trigger, waiting for the commander to issue an order to open fire. We are ready to do this and God willing, we will do it as soon as possible," Salehi continued.

A few people, Grossi included, thought that Iran would do it in a few days. But Iran did it in less than three days.

On January 4, Iran officially announced that it is resuming the 20% uranium enrichment, a move that caught some pundits and officials by surprise.

"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, spokesman for Iran's government, said on January 4.

During the Reuters Next conference, Grossi implied that he was surprised by the pace at which Iran implemented its decision to enrich uranium to up to 20%. He said that Iran has proceeded "quite rapidly" in moving to 20% enrichment, according to a tweet by

Laurence Norman, The Wall Street Journal's Brussels-based correspondent. Norman also quoted Grossi as saying that when he was first informed on Iran's 20% enrichment plan, the IAEA didn't know if it was an immediate intention or plan but then Iran moved ahead in a couple of days. "We are in a new reality," the UN nuclear chief cautioned, adding that "the process has started and we have to see each day how much they can produce."

Grossi also called on the West to take seriously a recent nuclear law passed by the Iranian Parliament stipulating 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.

The IAEA director-general said he has not yet been informed by Iran on whether they plan to end Additional Protocol access in February as the parliamentary law had said. Grossi also said that he can't speculate if the Iranian government will implement the law in full but he said the law is a serious issue.

"I must take it seriously because it's a law and the government seems to be intent in complying," Grossi pointed out, expressing concerns over the law.

This warning is indicative of how Iran

proved to be a country that issues credible threats and sets serious deadlines. Iran's threat to expel the IAEA inspectors if U.S. sanctions are not lifted by February 21 is one of these deadlines that, according to Norman, "is the gravest threat to what remains of the accord right now."

Ahmad Amirabadi, a member of the Parliament Presiding Board, warned on Saturday that Iran will expel the IAEA inspectors unless U.S. sanctions are lifted by a February 21 deadline set by the nuclear law.

"Iran, without a doubt, will stop the voluntary implementation of Additional Protocol if the sanctions against Iran, especially in finance, banking and oil sectors are not lifted by the mentioned day. This is a law passed by the Iranian Parliament. The government is committed to implementing this law," the lawmaker said.

"We gave the U.S. a one-month opportunity. The new U.S. administration will take the office on January 21," he noted.

According to the lawmaker, it does not make sense for Iran to implement the JCPOA while the U.S. sanctions are in place because the main goal of the JCPOA was to lift all sanctions but the sanctions were not lifted.

Amirabadi also noted that implementing the JCPOA commitments is harmful to the Iranian nation, which has suffered from this deal while Americans and Europeans did not suffer any harm.

Expelling international inspectors is part of the nuclear law and that if the West doesn't implement its JCPOA commitments, the Iranian government would be duty-bound to implement this law.

"The law of the Parliament is absolutely binding on everyone and we are all duty-bound to implement it. As soon as the law was completed, we implemented it, despite the government's views from day one," said Saeed Khatibzadeh, the spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry, on Monday.

Iran has waited for so long to see the Europeans move to change tack but they refused to implement their commitment. Now, it seems that Iran is hell-bent on making the JCPOA participants that it cannot continue to implement the nuclear deal one-sidedly. Therefore, the Europeans need to take Iran's deadline seriously before it's too late.

E3 complicit in violating JCPOA, Iran says

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Saeed Khatibzadeh, spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry, has responded to a joint statement issued by the three European signatories to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal by saying that these countries have not only failed to uphold their obligations under the nuclear deal, but they have also been complicit in violating the deal alongside the United States.

Speaking at a weekly press conference, the spokesman said, "We have a big problem with some European countries which is that some European countries, as signatories and participants to the JCPOA, had definite obligations. Unfortunately, not only did they fail to fulfill their obligations, but they were America's partners in violating the JCPOA."

The European signatories to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) — France, Germany and the UK (E3) — have recently issued a joint statement in response to Iran's recent decision to substantially raise the level of uranium enrichment to 20%.

"We are deeply concerned by the commencement by Iran on the 4th of January of uranium enrichment up to 20% at the underground facility of the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant. This action, which has no credible civil justification and carries very significant proliferation-related risks, is in clear violation of Iran's commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and further hollows out the Agreement," the joint statement said. "This is a serious negative development which undermines the joint commitment of JCPOA participants on 21 December to preserve the JCPOA. It also risks compromising the important opportunity for a return to diplomacy with the incoming U.S. administration."

The Europeans also called on Iran to "stop enriching uranium to up to 20% without delay, reverse its enrichment program to the limits agreed in the JCPOA and to refrain from any further escalatory steps which would further reduce the space for effective diplomacy."

On January 4, Iran officially started enriching uranium to 20%. "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," Iranian government spokesman Ali Rabiei said.

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

The nuclear law, officially called "Strategic Action to Lift Sanctions and Protect Nation's Rights," outlines a step-by-step strategy for Iran to force the West into reconsidering its sanctions policy against Iran by increasing nuclear activities. It stipulates that the Iranian government should take certain nuclear measures such as raising the level of

uranium enrichment to 20% and suspend 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.

The UN nuclear watchdog has confirmed that Iran has raised the level of uranium enrichment. Iran has said its nuclear move is remedial and aimed at forcing all JCPOA participants into implementing their commitments.

"We resumed 20% enrichment, as legislated by our Parliament. IAEA has been duly notified. 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," Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in a tweet on the same day as Iran started the 20% uranium enrichment.

Iran also said that European countries are not in a position to castigate Tehran for raising the level of uranium enrichment.

During his Monday press briefing, Khatibzadeh said these countries know very well that Iran's decision to reduce nuclear commitment was in line with the terms of the JCPOA.

"These countries are better aware that what is being done today by Iran to reduce its obligations is in accordance with the JCPOA and within the framework of the JCPOA and under Articles 26 and 36 of the JCPOA. Iran's actions are intended to maintain the JCPOA," Khtibzadeh said, noting, "Most importantly, these three European countries know better what is happening in Iran is a sign of a disease and a problem, not the root of a problem. What Iran is doing

**"If the European countries want to reverse Iran's actions, which are all reversible and can be easily and quickly reversed, it is better for these countries to return to the fulfillment of their obligations and cure the root cause of the violation of the agreement by the Europeans," the Foreign Ministry spokesman states.**

Iran demands Interpol red notice for 4 individuals involved in assassination of nuclear scientist

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iran has requested Interpol to issue a red notice for 4 individuals involved in the assassination of top nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh.

"A request for the issuance of red notice for four perpetrators of the assassination of Martyr Fakhrizadeh has been submitted to Interpol," Brigadier General Mehdi Hajian, spokesman for Iran's police, said in a press

conference on Monday, ISNA reported.

The spokesman also said that Iran has prepared a bill facilitating the issuance of the Interpol red notice, which is a request to law enforcement worldwide to locate and provisionally arrest a person pending extradition, surrender, or similar legal action.

Underlining the role of Iran's police in protecting human rights, Hajian said, "The performance of our police includes the whole



world and the international community must know that we are at the forefront of the fight against organized crimes."

Hajian also said that "authoritarian governments consider Iran to be violator of human rights, but in practice, the people of the world know which countries are the protectors of human rights and what our worldwide actions have been in this regard."



## Alumina powder production rises 1.8%

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN**—Production of alumina powder in Iran increased 1.8 percent during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-November 20, 2020), compared to the same period of time in the past year.



Production of alumina powder reached 175,300 tons during the nine-month period of this year, while it was 172,100 tons in the same time span of the previous year.

Aluminum oxide, which is commonly called alumina, is an inert, odorless, white amorphous material often used in industrial ceramics.

## Issuance of industrial unit establishment permits increases over 40%

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** – According to the latest data released by Iran's Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry, during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-December 20, 2020), 27,953 permits have been issued for establishing new industrial units in the country, which marked a 40.3-percent increase year on year.

The estimated investment making for these units was more than 3.64 quadrillion rials (about \$86.87 billion), up 50 percent compared to the figure for the past year's same time span.



The units are predicted to create jobs for 627,548 persons, indicating 37.8 percent growth year on year.

During the said period, also 5,083 licenses were issued for the commission of newly completed industrial units, indicating an increase of 8.3 percent compared to the same period last year.

Over 1.48 quadrillion rials (about \$35.26 billion) was invested in the mentioned units, registering a 282.2-percent increase compared to last year's same nine months.

As previously announced by the ministry, the issuance of permits for setting up industrial units in the country increased 16 percent in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19, 2020).

Most of the issued permits were related to the food industries; and Semnan, Qom, and Khorasan Razavi were the provinces receiving the highest number of permits.

The acting head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) has recently announced that 1,170 idle industrial units have been revived in the country during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year.

Asghar Mosaheb said that reviving the mentioned units has created jobs for 19,446 persons.

The official said there are over 46,000 small and medium-sized industrial units in Iran's industrial parks and zones, of them about 9,200 units are inactive.

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.

Bringing the mentioned 1,170 units back to the production cycle, the plan for reviving such units in the present year has been completed by 78 percent.

According to Mosaheb, 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.

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

"Currently, the share of the country's production and industrial units in receiving bank facilities is about 31 percent and it is necessary to allocate a larger share of banking facilities to the country's production and industry," he had stated.

Strengthening domestic production to achieve self-reliance is the most important program that Iran is following up in its industry sector in a bid to nullify the effects of the U.S. sanctions on its economy.

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

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

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

# Iran's copper cathode production, export significantly rising

By Mahnaz Abdi

**TEHRAN** — The periodical reports and statistics indicate that Iran's metals sector is progressing both in terms of production and export despite the limitations imposed by the U.S. sanctions.

The country's copper industry is moving forward noticeably, as some outstanding projects are implemented.

Iran has seen its copper exports doubled in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19, 2020) despite a series of bitter sanctions imposed by the United States aimed at hampering the Islamic Republic's trade of lucrative metals.

A senior official at Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), Iran's largest metals and mining holding, has said that the value of exports for main copper products reached more than \$1 billion over the past year.

The country has posted outstanding figures in terms of copper cathode production and export.

Copper cathode is the primary raw material input for the production of copper rod for the wire and cable industry.

The most recent report released by the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry shows that the production of copper cathode in



the country has risen nine percent during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-December 20, 2020), as compared to the last year's corresponding period.

As reported, 192,000 tons of the product was produced in the mentioned time span.

Also, the data published by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) indicate that Iran has exported

80,000 tons of copper cathode worth \$512 million during the nine-month period.

The average price of each ton of exported copper cathode was \$6,394, based on the customs statistics released by the IRICA.

Iran has exported 45,600 tons of copper cathode at the price of \$6,414 per ton to China during the first eight months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-November 20, 2020).

The value of copper cathode exported to China was 6.6 percent of the total worth of Iran's non-oil export to that country in the first eight months of the present year.

Also in the mentioned eight-month period, copper cathode constituted the lion's share of India's non-oil imports from Iran, as they purchased \$65.4 million of the product from Iran.

Iran's copper cathode export to its neighbor Turkey stood at 10,000 tons in the mentioned time span.

According to the data released by the National Iranian Copper Industry Company, the value of Iran's copper cathode exports reached \$419 million during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21, 2020), which was 26 percent more than the figure projected for this period.

Meanwhile, the production of copper cathode has increased six percent during the first half of this year, compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Copper cathode output hit 139,899 tons in the first six months of the present year, while the predicted figure was 130,015 tons.

Production of copper cathode, which stood at 250,000 tons in the past Iranian calendar year, is planned to reach 280,000 tons in the present year.

## 'Iran won't be indifferent to freezing its money by South Korea'

**1 →** "The freezing of our money in South Korea is our main challenge with this country," he stressed.

"We had resources in other countries and we were able to access them despite the U.S. sanctions; but in the case of South Korea, which has been one of Iran's main trading partners, we have not yet been able to access our resources in that country", he explained.

Referring to a previous visit to Seoul, Hemmati said: "A year and a half ago, I had talks with South Korean officials, including the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy, about this issue, and they promised assistance and cooperation, which unfortunately were not realized."

Choi Jong-kun arrived in Tehran early on Sunday to hold talks with Iranian officials over a range of issues including Iran's blocked assets in the Asian country and also the Islamic Republic's seizure of a South Korean ship in the Strait of Hormuz.

Tehran and Seoul are locked in a bitter dispute over Iran's blocked assets in South Korea, with the seizure of the South Korean ship being the latest in a series of disagreements between the two Asian countries.

Some seven billion dollars of Iranian oil revenues have been frozen in two South Korean banks since September 2019, when Washington's sanctions waiver for South Korea's imports of Iranian oil expired.



## Iranian exemplary exporters honored

**1 →** According to ICCIMA Vice Chairman Ali Mollaei, one of the measures taken by the ICCIMA to select this year's top exporters was correspondence with private sector export organizations, chambers of commerce across the country, as well as joint chambers of commerce.

A working group comprised of the representatives from the Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), Industry Ministry, Agriculture Ministry, Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), Program and Budget Organization (PBO), Institute of



Standards and Industrial Research of Iran, Iran Chamber of Cooperatives (ICC), and related organizations was also formed in

this regard, the official explained.

After obtaining and determining the necessary criteria by the mentioned working group, public calls for nominees were announced and applicants were registered.

In the admission process, a total of 822 applicants applied for the title, of which 568 companies active in a variety of fields including industry, mining, agriculture, food, and services were finally registered, Mollaei added.

TPO was previously the main body in charge of evaluating and selecting the country's top exporters and ICCIMA

only collaborated with the mentioned organization.

Based on an agreement reached in the Iranian calendar year 1398 (ended on March 19, 2020), TPO decided to task ICCIMA with the selection of the best exporting companies on the national and provincial scale and TPO would supervise the process.

The decision was made for the maximum participation and cooperation of TPO with the private sector representatives (ICCIMA members) in selecting the country's top exporters.

## NIOC inks deals worth €1.2b to boost oil output

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** —The National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) signed eight deals worth €1.2 billion with domestic companies on Monday for developing the country's oil fields, Shana reported.

The deals were signed in a ceremony attended by senior oil industry officials including the Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh.

The mentioned contracts were inked by two NIOC subsidiaries namely the Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC) and the National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC), as employers, and eight domestic companies for the maintenance of the production level and increasing recovery factor of several oil fields.

The awarded fields are located in various provinces including Bushehr, Fars, Khuzestan, Kohgiluyeh-Boyer Ahmad as well as Hormozgan provinces.

Accordingly, seven contracts for the development of Golkhari, Gachsaran 3 and 4, Binak, Bibi Hakimeh,



Soulabdar, and Lali Bangestan were signed with Sina Energy Development Company (SEDC), Iranian Offshore Engineering and Construction Company (IOEC), Petroiran Development Company, Mashin Sazi Arak,

Qeshm, and Maroun Oil and Energy Consortium, National Iranian Drilling Company (NIDC), and Jahanpars engineering and construction Company, respectively.

Ahvaz 2, 3, and 5 and Reshadat projects were also awarded to the Khatam-al Anbiya Construction Headquarters.

Since the reimposition of the U.S. sanctions, the Iranian Oil Ministry has been following a new strategy to encourage the country's private sector to have a stronger role in the development of the country's oil industry.

In this regard, NIOC has awarded several exploration and development projects to capable domestic companies in the past two years.

Back in August 2020, NIOC signed 13 deals worth €1.527 billion with domestic companies aiming to add 185,000 barrels per day to the country's oil production capacity.

## Steel ingot output up 8% in 9 months yr/yr

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Production of steel ingot in Iran increased 8.3 percent during the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-December 20, 2020) compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Over 21.65 million tons of steel ingot was produced during the nine-month period of the present year, while the figure was 19.98 million tons in the same time span of the previous year.

Production of steel ingot in Iran is expected to surpass 30 million tons in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20), Deputy Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Darioush Esmaili has announced.

Saying that Iran is currently the world's 10th biggest steel producer, the official underscored that the country is planning to rise to 8th place by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (starts in March 2025).

He said the Industry Ministry has it on the agenda to increase the country's steel ingot production to 55 million tons by 2025, for which 160 million tons of iron ore is required annually.

"Given the country's 2.8-billion-ton iron ore reserves, we need new explorations in this field, because when the annual steel ingot production capacity reaches 55 million tons, the current production levels of iron ore can only supply the industry for 12 to 13 years," the official stated.

He further noted that over 90 million tons of iron ore were produced in the country during the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 19) of which only seven percent was exported.

The reduction in the exports of iron ore came as the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has urged the government to prevent the exports of raw minerals in order to be processed in the country for making

products with more added value.

Following the leader's remarks, the government levied a 25-percent duty on the exports of raw minerals (especially iron ore) since late September 2019.

The industry ministry believes that the duty is going to encourage the production of more processed minerals such as pellets and concentrate instead of selling the raw minerals.

Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry has announced that production of iron ore concentrate in Iran reached 47.306 million tons in the previous Iranian calendar year, registering a four-percent rise compared to the preceding year.

Iran's export of steel products in the past Iranian calendar year rose 27 percent compared to its preceding year.

As reported, the country's major steel producers managed to export about 7.33 million tons of the products in the previous year.



According to Esmaili, 10 years ago Iran exported more than 20 million tons of unprocessed iron ore and the figure fell to six million tons last year.

Meanwhile, the data provided by Trade Map website showed that Iran was ranked 19th among the world's top steel ingot exporters in 2019.

The country ranked 53rd among 195 countries in the exports of steel products.

Iran exported \$312 million and \$252 million worth of crude steel and steel products in the mentioned year, respectively.



# No ETs here, only Americans

**1 →** But I saw it all. Blatantly. There were no ETs (extra terrestrial) there from outer space on that Washington DC day. The politicians and the rioters, or insurgents or protesters or any name that takes your fancy, in fact the entire nation that brought those events, is very American. As American as hot dog.

Macron and the rest of the hypocrites are not doing Americans a favor by mis-leading them. And the sooner Americans realize that and start soul searching and a serious attempt to change, the better for them.

If Trump's presidency is remembered only by its thuggery and ignored for having exposed and brought to light that American political character, then the opportunity for change will have been wasted.

I have been endlessly pointing out to the dangers of American politics. Not because I am an enemy of Americans, but because I wanted to warn against the enemies of Americans, foreign and domestic, who led and also gave Americans a false sense of exceptionalism, and did so with destructive consequences. All the time exploiting and enriching themselves by the ignorance they created among a population kept busy by Hollywood's fantasy of Capt. America and Superman flying around to save the globe. And the notion that any U.S. president automatically is the "most powerful man in the world", ignoring the reality that their "most powerful man" is in fact presiding over a nation with dangerous internal weaknesses and cracks that renders the nation's long term viability vis-a-vis its global competitors, questionable.

While Macron, due to his inexperience and naivety, can be excused for his thinking, it is the American media's expression of shock which is all the more dangerous. The American media seems to be determined to hold its deceptive narrative despite developments many of us outside America, and many inside, knew were ultimately coming and have warned about. The danger that America could become another Nazi state is something many of us have seen coming for a long time. Blind loyalty to a political elite that is driving your country over the cliff is hardly an act of patriotism. It is foolishness that might even border betrayal to the very oath of allegiance one has taken. And that difference, sadly, is what many Americans have failed to distinguish. And in the process have become bystanders or, worse in servitude of some of the biggest horrors the U.S. political elite have presided over, foreign and domestic.

It probably took the wizardry of one, Vladimir Putin, to bring about that hard truth to Americans and show them the



**“Trump was not the problem. Trump was the result of the problem. Left unattended, there are many Trumps waiting in line.”**

many cracks that exist in the glasshouse. If Americans don't quickly wake up to fix the cracks and mend the weak joints, that house will quickly crumble. And it won't be the first big cookie to crumble.

Joe Biden, at long last got his chance to be president. Kamala Harris to be the first woman, and of an ethnic minority at that, to be vice president, and in all probability, very soon, if wisdom prevails, to replace the old and haggard Biden. Had it not been for their abysmal predecessor, election history tells us they would have failed, again, to reach the top job. The two are winners by an accident of circumstances. They should use their opportunity well. They have their jobs cut out for them.

And if wisdom also prevails, the new administration, headed by Biden, who belongs to the generation of foreign adventurism and invasions, will use its entire energy fixing the many dangerous domestic cracks and crises the Trump era brought to the surface. Remember, Trump was not the problem. Trump was the result of the problem. Left unattended, there are many Trumps waiting in line. And the next one might be shrewdly more attractive and more dangerous and able to garner a bigger following, with catastrophic consequences. Consider these numbers. Seventy four million Americans voted for what Donald Trump represents. About 21% of Americans overall and 45% of Republicans polled, supported the at-

tack on the Capitol building.

<https://today.yougov.com/topics/politics/articles-reports/2021/01/06/US-capitol-trump-poll>

The need for housekeeping has never been greater. If it is to survive as a nation, if it is to remain intact as a federation between the angry states, America must cease to exist as an interventionist world power. That era, thanks to Trump, and probably Putin, has ended. And good riddance too. Not just us, but Americans themselves must say that too. This is not a piece writing America's obituary. Not at all. I am saving that for if, hopefully not when, America fails to take an inward look and change its ways. We still need a bi or even multipolar world. But only one led by wise leaders. Which brings me to China. A sore spot for many Americans. But here is the reality.

China, as the global power that has won, thanks to Trump's MAGA, will have to learn from its predecessor's many follies. As it continues to pick up the pieces, we should not bank on the mercifulness of Chinese policy. We have long learned that mercy and politics are not synonymous terms. But we can, from what we have seen, so far, bank on China's wisdom, political maturity and strategic thinking. In China, those are synonymous. It is unlikely that we will see trigger happy thuggery and military invasions as China continues its dominance of the world. So far, China is expanding through "The Belt and Road

Initiative", through water wells, through hospitals, through bridges and export of Made in China. The type of invasions that do not bring about the death of a million people in one country. Nothing that reduces the consuming population of the places China invades. I call that brilliant business sense!

In our region, Iran and Turkey have the opportunity of emerging as the uncontested regional super powers. After Turkey's victory in Libya and in the Azerbaijan-Armenian wars, which also underline Turkey's successful political and strategic thinking, we must now insist on a greater political and strategic alliance between Turkey and Iran, divorced from petty sectarian ideology prevailing on the Arab side of the region. The issues facing us are political and economic, not religious or sectarian. Our management of those issues should also be political and economic, leaving religion out of the equation. The two regional powers, Turkey and Iran are now uniquely positioned to use their joint muscle in resolving and putting off the fires that burn Yemen, Syria, Iraq and other parts of the region, where both are actively engaged. With Egypt and Saudi Arabia losing the priority attention of the U.S., under a domestically focused Biden administration, and also the apparent recent moves by both to start stepping away from their anti-Turkey rhetoric and belligerency, there is even greater opportunity to bring about inclusive substantial and real changes to the region's political landscape, beyond the superficial shifting of alliances seen from the recent GCC summit of the Saudi Qatar reconciliation. Going forward, the decline of American influence in the region offers the long awaited opportunity for regional superpowers to create security arrangements that can check mischievous regional players, some who historically depended on what will now, inevitably, be the declining international role of American power.

Whenever a major power starts to decline, there are global winners and losers. The West won after the Soviet Union declined then disintegrated. But failing to properly manage the advantage, and clearly outsmarted by Putin, the West faced a pushback it couldn't stop. Hopefully the global players winning from the American decline will do a better job of taking advantage and correcting the imbalance for longer. What brought about America's current predicament is its trigger happy global mindset and behavior which infected its domestic mindset and behavior. Or perhaps it was the other way around, seeing its 200 year plus history. What could keep the next one longer on top is to understand that trigger happy policies don't create friendships nor build mansions and certainly, neither do they, ultimately, win wars.

Although President-elect Joe Biden has appointed a foreign and military affairs team of like-minded foreign adventurists, the reality is that the past four years have exposed how weak and cracky America is internally, despite its global muscle flexing. If this weakness is not resolved starting with the Biden administration, these cracks will be exploited by America's adversaries and that country will ultimately be made to disintegrate. It happened before. And Putin is not bluffing about what he intends to do against those who helped the Soviet Union disintegrate. The world reaction to the past four years and to the most recent events shows Americans how they are truly viewed by most of the world, even their own allies. To blame it all on Trump is another self-deception that ignores decades which created the current cracks, including those that brought Trump to power. There are lessons to be learned here and mending to be done, big time. And foreign adventurism, one of the major reasons for America's current pass, will be deadly for America if it is still continued.

Joe Biden recently promised that America will soon be ready to lead the world again. That smells of adventurism America cannot afford and the world should reject. No Mr. Biden, just lead America please. There's enough cleaning needed in your own backyard to last several lifetimes. MAGA can still be the mantra. But only for building America within. The days of global muscle flexing and "Project for the New American Century" must end and be replaced by "Project to Save America from disintegration"!

And if, instead of mending themselves in the broken places, Americans decide to follow Joe Biden's promise of more foreign adventurism dressed up as leadership, or listen to Emmanuel Macron's disillusioned version of America, well, bon chance with that.

*Munir A Saeed is a former president of TAWQ, a non-partisan Yemeni democratic alliance. He currently lives in exile. The author can be contacted on masaeed456@gmail.com*

## Democrats give Pence ultimatum to remove Trump from White House

**1 →** Although Mr Pence has appeared to distance himself from the president by saying on Sunday he planned to attend Mr Biden's inauguration, there is no sign that the vice-president is prepared to invoke the amendment.

Meanwhile, a second Republican senator, Pat Toomey of Pennsylvania, said the president should "resign and go away as soon as possible", joining Lisa Murkowski of Alaska.

According to BBC, in a separate development, First Lady Melania Trump, who rarely makes public comments about political events, condemned Wednesday's violence, saying the "nation must heal in a civil manner".

"I implore people to stop the violence, never make assumptions based on the colour of a person's skin or use differing political ideologies as a basis for aggression and viciousness," she said in a statement called Our Path Forward released by the White House.

## Biden to nominate William Burns as CIA director

President-elect Joe Biden will nominate William Burns as director of the Central Intelligence Agency, CNN has learned, tapping a respected veteran American diplomat who has served in posts around the world from the Reagan to the Obama administrations.

"The American people will sleep soundly with him as our next CIA Director," Biden said in a statement.

If confirmed, Burns would become the first leader in the CIA's history whose lifelong experience comes from the State Department.

"Bill Burns is an exemplary diplomat with decades of experience on the world stage keeping our people and our country safe and secure," Biden said. "He shares my profound belief that intelligence must be apolitical and that the dedicated intelligence professionals serving our nation deserve our gratitude and respect."

Biden was drawn to Burns because of his diplomatic experience and his perceived ability to restore credibility to the intelligence agency in the post-Trump era, people familiar with the matter said, along with his expertise on Russia. His selection would bypass other contenders with more formal experience in the intelligence field.

Burns, who is known as Bill, is president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a respected international affairs think tank in Washington. He served as deputy secretary of State in the Obama administration after working for more than three decades in positions across the foreign service, which he joined in 1982.

He also served under five American presidents, both Democrats and Republicans, and 10 secretaries of state in a variety of posts, including as ambassador to Jordan in the Clinton administration and to Russia under George W. Bush.

Burns has talked extensively about the damage he believes the Trump administration has inflicted on the United States' foreign policy. He warned of the dangerous consequences of President Donald Trump not accepting election defeat in a prescient essay last August in the Atlantic.

## U.S. to designate Yemen's Ansarallah as 'terrorist' group

The United States plans to designate Yemen's Houthi Ansarullah movement as a foreign "terrorist" group on Monday, three sources have told Reuters.

According to two of the sources quoted by Reuters, the decision to blacklist the Yemeni group could be announced as soon as Monday. The move comes as the administration of U.S. President-elect Joe Biden prepares to take over from the Trump administration on January 20.

Saudi Arabia and a number of its regional allies launched the war on Yemen in March 2015, with the goal of bringing the government of former president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi back to power and crushing the popular Ansarullah movement.

The U.S.-based Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED), a nonprofit conflict-research organization, estimates that the war has claimed more than 100,000 lives.

The Houthi Ansarullah movement, backed by armed forces, has been defending Yemen against the Saudi-led alliance, preventing the aggressors from fulfilling the objectives of the atrocious war.

Diplomats and aid groups worry the U.S. designation of Ansarullah could threaten peace talks and complicate efforts to combat the world's largest humanitarian crisis caused by the Saudi-led coalition's aggression against the Yemeni nation, Reuters reported.

"This serves no interest at all," Ryan Crocker, a retired U.S. ambassador who served in the Middle East, said of the designation.

"The Houthis are an integral part of Yemeni society. They always have been. This is making a strategic enemy out of a local force that has been part of Yemen for generations," he added.

In November UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said Yemen was in "imminent danger of the worst famine the world has seen for decades," warning against any unilateral moves as the United States threatened to blacklist the Houthis.

## Resistance News

## Haneyya calls for backing Palestinian efforts to restore unity

**INTERNATIONAL d e s k** **TEHRAN**— Head of Hamas's political bureau Ismail Haneyya on Saturday called in letters sent to heads of state for backing inter-Palestinian steps aimed at restoring the national unity, and congratulated, in particular, the Saudi leadership on the achievement of the Persian Gulf reconciliation.

According to a statement released by the Hamas Movement, Haneyya sent a letter to Saudi King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz in which he congratulated him on the success of the 41st Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC) summit and the reconciliation declaration that was signed by the member countries in Saudi Arabia.

The Hamas political chief hailed the efforts that had been made by Saudi Arabia to make such achievement, which he said is "a continuation of its historic role in embracing the nation's issues, and supporting and defending it."

He also sent a similar letter to Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman, applauding his role in holding the GCC summit successfully.

Haneyya affirmed that his Movement considers the Persian Gulf reconciliation an important step in pooling the joint efforts to support the Palestinian cause in light of the challenges facing it.

In addition, the Hamas leader sent letters to a number of international figures and heads of state as part of his political and diplomatic efforts to mobilize Arab, regional and international support for the current steps taking place in the Palestinian arena to restore the unity of the Palestinian people.

### INVITATION TO RENEWAL OF ONE STEP INTERNATIONAL TENDER

#### SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT

55/99/24274

12/01/2021

Agricultural Support Services Company

Ministry of Jihad-e-Agriculture

#### AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES COMPANY

Agricultural Support Services Company, hereinafter will be referred as ASSC, affiliated to Ministry of Agriculture-Jahad of I.R of Iran, is considering the purchase of the below item of technical, through renewal of one step international tender.

ITEM	Name	PACKING	Quantity KG
1	Fipronil Tech (18.8-21.2) pct. (premix 20%)	200 kg drum	5500

All of the qualified and interested companies are invited to receive tender documents **from Monday dated 11/01/2021 until Wednesday dated 20/01/2021** (7 working days) from our purchasing committee (located at the 9<sup>th</sup> floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi st., Tehran, Iran). The bidders are requested to submit their letters of introduction, along with remittance bill of I.Rials 1,200,000 to ASSC's account no. 4001039704005791 with SHEBA no. IR250100004001039704005791 at the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran through payment order of SATNA or PAYA with the 30 character identification code of 3580397822635006500000000000006.

The bidders are requested to submit their sealed and stamped envelopes containing offers latest on **Saturday dated 20/02/2021** (during official working hours) to our security office located on the 8<sup>th</sup> floor. Meanwhile the meeting for the opening of the envelops will be held on **Sunday dated 21/02/2021** at 14:00 PM with the presence of bidder's representatives at our purchasing committee hall (9<sup>th</sup> floor, no. 1, Fourth Alley, Gandhi st., Tehran, Iran). We would like to emphasize that the bid bond amount should be in bank guarantee as follows:

1- € 16685 for **Fipronil Tech(18.8-21.2) pct.** (premix 20%) equivalent to Iranian Rials **5273934000**

- The bid bond value will be in Euro or in equal value of any other foreign currencies, except US dollars, based on Telegraphic Transfer rate in Sana rate website, [www.sanarate.ir](http://www.sanarate.ir). It should be noted that this site lists the currency transactions, executed in Integrated Currency Transactions System [Nima website] on 28/12/2020.

**For more information, you may refer to our website [www.assc.ir](http://www.assc.ir), and <http://iets.mporg.ir> or contact us by phone no. 00982188776325.**

**PR & Intel Affairs Dept. of Agricultural Support Services Company (ASSC)**



## Abadan to host Arabian horse festival

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** – The southwestern Iranian city of Abadan will be hosting a horse festival dedicated to the pure Arabian breeds of the animal.

The festival, which is sponsored by Arvand Free Trade Zone, will be held in the month of Esfand (beginning on Feb. 19), and in close collaboration with the Equestrian Federation of Iran, IRNA reported on Monday.

“In order to improve the quality of holding this festival, we intend to hire foreign juries for judging, as in the previous period, and if the Equestrian Federation approves, foreign judges will be invited,” a local official said.



A breed that originated on the Arabian Peninsula, the Arabian or Arab horse is one of the most easily recognizable horse breeds in the world. The breed exhibits a distinctive head shape and high tail carriage.

It is also one of the oldest breeds, with archaeological evidence of horses in West Asia that resemble modern Arabians dating back 4,500 years. Throughout history, Arabian horses have spread around the world by both war and trade, used to improve other breeds by adding speed, refinement, endurance, and strong bone. Today, Arabian bloodlines are found in almost every modern breed of riding horse.

## Oriental Institute and its Persian expeditions in 1930s

(Part 2/2)

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** — Over the course of several seasons, the Persian Expedition conducted archaeological excavations at Naqsh-e Rostam and recorded the major monuments on the site.

Darius the Great and his three successors chose the imposing cliff face at Naqsh-e Rostam, north of Persepolis, as the site of their rock-cut tombs. Near these tombs stands a square tower, which may have been built by Darius I to shelter the royal fire of the Achaemenid monarchs. Both the tower and the royal tombs were enclosed in a sacred precinct, whose outer wall, with rounded towers, was traced by Herzfeld. Further Oriental Institute excavations within the precinct revealed occupation extending from the Achaemenid into the Early Islamic period (ca. 500 BC-800 CE).

During the early Sasanian period (third-fourth centuries CE), numerous reliefs were carved into the foot of the rock-cut tombs, indicating that the site continued to play a significant role during the reigns of later rulers.

### Flights over ancient Iranian cities and the Holmes expeditions to Lurestan

On August 7, 1935, a Waco biplane, donated by Erich Schmidt's wife, Mary-Helen Warden Schmidt, arrived in Teheran. Over the next two years, Schmidt used the plane, which he christened “Friend of Iran,” to photographically document the sites he was excavating and to make aerial explorations of other parts of the country.



In 1935-36 and 1937, Erich Schmidt led two expeditions into the rugged mountains of Lurestan. Both endeavors combined aerial surveys from the plane with archaeological excavations in an attempt to learn as much as possible about this little explored region of Iran.

In addition, the group prepared maps and compiled data concerning temperature, altitude, landscape, and the local population. They conducted brief excavations at more than a dozen sites, one of the most interesting of which was Surkh Dum-e Luri in the Kuhdasht plain.

Here they cleared several levels of a sanctuary dating to the first half of the first millennium BC. The shrine contained quantities of votive offerings to the goddess Ninlil, including cylinder and stamp seals and quantities of bronze pins with elaborately decorated heads.

The Oriental Institute's collection of bronzes from Surkh Dum-e Luri is a unique corpus. It is the only large collection of excavated Lurestan bronzes in the world. The vast majority of “Lurestan Bronzes” are of unknown origin, and forgeries are common among them. The Oriental Institute's collection plays a pivotal role in all efforts to define the characteristics - both stylistic and scientific - of excavated Lurestan bronzes against which those purchased on the art-market can be evaluated.

**Clay tablets returned home after 84 years**  
In 2019, a total of 1,783 Achaemenid-era clay tablets, which were on loan from Iran to the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago since 1935, were returned home.

It was the fourth batch of the Achaemenid objects which were recuperated with great deal of efforts made by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts and the presidential office for legal affairs, according to the tourism minister, Ali-Asghar Mounesan.

In February 2018, and following years of ups and downs, the fate of those ancient Persian artifacts, was left in the hands of a U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in favor of Iran.

# Archaeologists to make final attempt to unearth Laodicea Temple

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** – Iranian archaeologists will be making a final attempt to unearth the ruins of the enigmatic Laodicea Temple, believed to be buried under the modern town of Nahavand in Hamedan province, west-central Iran.

The sixth and the last archaeology season has been scheduled to possibly unearth the main structure of Laodicea Temple, Nahavand's tourism chief Mohsen Khanjan announced on Sunday.

“A budget of three billion rials (some \$71,000 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been allocated to the mission which will commence in the month of Esfand (starting Feb. 19).”

Regarding the achievements of the last five archaeological seasons, the official noted: “In addition to a Greek inscription, other significant objects such as bronze statues of Greek gods, a stone altar, column head, column shaft, column base and pottery pieces had been discovered in Dokhaharan neighborhood [of Nahavand].”

“Regarding those findings, we concluded that the history of the city of Nahavand goes far back in prehistoric times, on the contrary to what previously believed it only dates back to the Seleucid period.”

“The outcome of previous excavations determined that a Seleucid city was established on remains of a prehistoric settlement... and the sixth season aims to discover the main structure of Laodicea Temple, the official said.

In the fifth season of excavation, 12 trench-



es were dug tightly based on speculations and discoveries made during the four previous seasons... the season, however, yielded some new clues on the ancient sanctuary, Khanjan explained.

The archaeological project also aims at solving the problems of the residents of the districts near the site, who haven't been allowed to construct buildings for over 50 years.

In 1943, archaeologists discovered an 85x36 centimeter ancient inscription of 30

lines written in Greek calling on the people of Nahavand to obey the laws of the government. The inscription indicated the existence of the Laodicea Temple, which had been built by the Seleucid king who ruled Asia Minor, Antiochus III the Great (223-187 BC), for his wife Queen Laodicea.

Two of the inscriptions as well as four bronze statuettes, unearthed at the site, are on display in the National Museum of Iran in downtown Tehran. And, column capitals

## Iranian artists, heritage enthusiasts sign petition demanding salvage of masterpiece in Iraq

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** – Hundreds of Iranian artists, architects, and cultural heritage enthusiasts have signed a petition demanding an urgent restoration of Taq Kasra, a Sassanid masterpiece of architecture, which was collapsed partly in modern Iraq earlier this month.

A group of actors, cineastes, musicians, architects, and restoration experts have filed a petition requesting Iranian and Iraqi governments to take urgent action to save and restore the landmark monument, Mehr reported on Monday.

In early January, some Iraqi social media users posted pictures of Taq Kasra, which is located near Baghdad, writing the vault of the monument is partly collapsed.

Social media activists and cultural heritage lovers have also criticized the Iraqi government's neglect of the monument, disapproving the poor governmental performance in maintaining it..., the news agency said.

For years, there have been talks between Iranian and Iraqi officials to jointly restore the magnificent structure, but nothing happened.

Even Iranian archaeologists have repeatedly asked the Iranian authorities to consult on the restoration of the monument in cooperation between the two countries. Because they believe Taq Kasra is in dire need of urgent repairs as every time a part of it collapses.

In 2019, Tehran Municipality hold talks with Baghdad's

urban planners and authorities to restore several aging monuments in Iraq including Taq Kasra.

Taq Kasra, also called Ivan Madaen or the Archway of Ctesiphon, are names given to the remains of a circa 3rd–6th-century Sasanian-era Persian monument, which is located near the modern town of Salman Pak, a city located approximately 15 miles (24 km) south of Baghdad.

The arch was part of the imperial palace complex, however, the exact time of its construction is not known with certainty. Some historians believe the founder is Shapur I who ruled Persia from 242 to 272 CE and some others believe that construction possibly began during the reign of Anushirwan the Just (Khosrow I) after a campaign against the Byzantines in 540 CE.

Ctesiphon served as the winter capital of the Parthian empire and later of the Sasanian empire. Classical writers claimed that Ctesiphon was founded by the Parthian king Vardanes. The first reliable mention of Ctesiphon, however, is as a Greek army camp on the east bank of the Tigris River opposite the Hellenistic city of Seleucia, according to Britannica.

Since then the course of the river has shifted, no longer flowing between the ruins of the two cities but instead dividing Ctesiphon itself. In 129 BC, when the Arsacids (Parthians) annexed Babylonia, they found Ctesiphon a



convenient residence and cantonment, and under their rule Seleucia and its royal suburb of Ctesiphon came to form a twin city and a capital of the empire. A discontinuous Roman occupation of Seleucia and Ctesiphon began under the emperor Trajan in 116 CE. During the Roman sack of the city complex in 165 CE by the general Avidius Cassius, the palaces of Ctesiphon were destroyed and Seleucia was depopulated. The Sasanian monarchy, which replaced the Arsacids in 224 CE, resettled Ctesiphon.

## Ancient watermill starts rotating after decades of abandonment

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** – An ancient underground watermill, which is said to be the biggest of its kind in Iran, has started operating after being fully restored by private investors after decades of abandonment.

The thousand-year-old watermill, locally known as “Asiab-e Khan” is located at the entrance to the oasis city of Zavareh on the edge of the central desert of Iran in Isfahan province. Zavareh is named after the brother of Rostam (the Iranian legendary and mythical hero).

The watermill, which is one of the six ancient watermills built in the city, has begun grinding wheat into flour after almost 60 years of neglect, ISNA reported on Monday.

A budget of 10 billion rials (\$238,000 at the official rate of 42,000 rials) was spent on the restoration project of the mill, which aimed at making it a destination for domestic and foreign tourists, the report added.

A traditional restaurant has been built next to the mill and accommodation centers



and a permanent handicrafts exhibition are also scheduled to be constructed in the area in near future.

One of the most essential features of the mill is that it is built underground with almost no similar match to it worldwide. The watermill is situated on the confluence of the qanats (subterranean aqueducts) so that it is important from a hydraulic point of view.

Watermills were typically constructed by the then design requirements for instance they featured dome-shaped roofs with high-enough vestibules to allow camels or other livestock to move back and forth with ease

to convey grains or flour.

There are lots of attractions in this small city (formerly a prosperous one). The first and oldest four-ivan mosque in Iran is the old Zavareh Jame Mosque going back to the Seljuk period, around 900 years old. Zavareh Sangbast Castle is the second largest castle in Iran after Alamut Castle. It is made up of mud and brick dating back to the 11th century.

Another predominant historical attraction, 33 kilometers from Zavareh, is Sarhangabad Palace built during the reign of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar (r. 1848-1896).

This palace with twenty stone columns looks like Chehel Sotoun Palace in Isfahan, decorated with peculiar plasterwork, mirror-work, wood carving, stucco, inlay, and marquetry. It was a hunting ground and summer promenade for Qajar princes. It has a view of the mountains, river and prairie. There is a two-story wind tower, a bath, watchtowers, and a mill around it. It is a mixture of the Safavid era (1501–1736) and the Qajar era (1789–1925) architecture made up of mud,

brick, and wood.

Other attractions, according to the Iran Doostan Tours, are as follow: Zavareh conical adobe traditional Yakhchal (ice storage), an ancient mud-brick domed roof refrigerator with thick rounded walls; Zavareh old bazaar dating back to Zandieh period (1751–1794) with vernacular architecture, flanked by two caravan series with a Roman ceiling (not in used anymore except a couple of traditional workshops); The two Husainiyahs, grand Safavid roofed and unroofed Husainiyah and small Husainiyah; Hasht Behesht, an adobe building with vaulted ceiling used for religious ceremonies, and Amirabad Palace (15 km south of Zavareh) both date back to Qajar period; camel farming in traditional ways, carpet weaving, brick making, wood-turning, pottery and forgery workshops. The vernacular houses, four cross rooms in the center of the house around the courtyard, cool in the hot desert summer and warm in the cold desert dreamy nights with breathtaking desert landscape welcome tours to Iran.

## Vault named after tragic lovers to gain former splendor

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** – An ancient vault, named after tragic Persian lovers Shirin and Farhad, is planned to be restored in near future.

Known as Taq-e Shirin and Farhad (arch of Shirin and Farhad), the Sassanid era (224 CE–651) monument is located in the city of Eyvan, western province of Ilam.

The square-shaped building, which is made of massive stones without any mortar, has only one room... And it is one of the unique buildings in this mountainous region, the provincial tourism chief, Abdolmalek Shanbehzadeh, said on Monday.

The monument is attributed to the tragic story of Shirin and Farhad written by the Persian poet Nezami Ganjavi (1141-1209). In the story, Farhad carved an entire mountain for the sake of his beloved Shirin.

The legends say that Taq-e Shirin and Farhad was built in half a day for Shirin to rest overnight while she was passing the region.

The historical structure was discovered in 2000 after being buried under soil and sand for many years and was inscribed on the National Heritage list in 2002.



Farhad, an artist and craftsman famed for his skill at carving rock, and the Persian King Khosrow were both in love with the beautiful Shirin, the Queen of Armenia. Shirin knew of Farhad's love and used the fact to make the King jealous. As a result, the King tried to get rid of Farhad by assigning him an impossible task: to win Shirin's hand,

he must remove a mountain. However, Farhad's love was stronger than either Shirin or the King had imagined, and he took on the task.

Amazed at the reports of Farhad's progress, Shirin traveled to the mountain to see it for herself. After the long journey, though, she fainted with fatigue, and Farhad put both Shirin and her horse on his shoulders and carried them back to the palace. However, Farhad is tricked by Khosrow into believing that Shirin has died, after which he killed himself using the tools that he had used to carve her image into the rock.

Home to almost half of Iran's UNESCO sites, western Iran is a land of hospitable people, wild extremes, and wilder history, and it may be an independent traveler's adventure playground. The region also witnessed the rise and fall of many great empires once bordering Mesopotamia, Ottoman Turkey, and Czarist Russia.

From the fecund Caspian coast to the stark, mountainous northern borders and the crumbling desert ruins of the southern plains, the region hosts everything from paddy fields to blizzards to Persian gardens.



# Iran-Cuba COVID-19 vaccine successfully completes phase 1 human trial

SOCIETY

**TEHRAN** – The COVID-19 vaccine, co-produced by Iran and Cuba, has passed the first phase of human testing with success.

Iran's coronavirus vaccine jointly made with Cuba has successfully passed the first stage of the clinical trial and the second stage is underway in Cuba, which will soon enter the final stage, Alireza Vahabzadeh, an adviser to the health minister, wrote on his Twitter account on Monday.

Thanks to the efforts of the Pasteur Institute [of Iran], the vaccine is also produced on a common platform in the country, he emphasized.

Earlier on Saturday, Kianoush Jahanpour, spokesman for Iran's Food and Drug Administration, said that Iran and Cuba have formed a 'strategic alliance' through working jointly on a project for producing a potential coronavirus vaccine.



He touched on an agreement signed by the Pasteur Institute of Iran and the Finlay Institute of Cuba which allows the two countries to move faster toward realizing the goal of 'immunization against coronavirus'.

Jahanpour said on January 1 that the first batch of coronavirus vaccine which will reach Iran will be probably purchased directly from a foreign country.

On December 29, 2020, the first coronavirus vaccine made by Iranian researchers, was unveiled and injected into three volunteers.

Hossein Vatanpour, an official with the Ministry of Health, has said 16 Iranian knowledge-based companies are working on all types of vaccine platforms. One company is active in producing DNA-based vaccines, and about three others are working to make mRNA-based vaccines, he added.

## Iranian delegation to market technological products in Venezuela

SOCIETY

**TEHRAN** – An Iranian trade and technology delegation will travel to Venezuela on February 20 with the aim of marketing homegrown knowledge-based products.

Headed by Vice President for Science and Technology, Sourena Sattari, the delegation will hold bilateral meetings and set up a special exhibition of knowledge-based products, ISNA reported on Monday.

Planned by the Center for International Interaction of the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, the event will discuss the conditions for the development of scientific and technological relations between the two countries.

### Technology development in Iran

Despite sanctions putting pressure on the country, a unique opportunity was provided for business development and the activity of knowledge-based companies in the country.

Currently, some 5,000 knowledge-based companies are active in the country, manufacturing diverse products

to meet the needs of the domestic market while saving large amounts of foreign currency.

The fields of aircraft maintenance, steel, pharmaceuticals, and medical equipment, oil and gas are among the sectors that researchers in technology companies have engaged in, leading to import reduction.

In recent years, the vice presidency for science and technology has been supporting knowledge-based companies active in the production of sanctioned items.

Earlier in October 2020, Sattari told the Tehran Times that "U.S. sanctions caused exports of knowledge-based companies to decline three years ago, however, it has returned to growth and is projected to reach the pre-sanctions level of more than \$1 billion by the end of the current [Iranian calendar] year (March 20, 2021).

Fortunately, last year, companies achieved a record sale of 1.2 quadrillion rials (nearly \$28.5 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials), which is expected to increase by 40 percent this year."



To date, 42 knowledge-based companies with a total value of 2.8 quadrillion rials (nearly \$66.6 billion) have been listed on the stock exchange and they will soon turn into the biggest businesses in the county, Sattari said.

## Tehran writes to Guterres, criticizing WHO for biased support of 'inadequately-tested American vaccine'

➔ Hereunder is the full text of the letter published on January 11.

In my 26 Nov. 2012 and 26 Jan 2013 and 21 Aug 2013 and 14 May 2019 and 2 April 2020 correspondence to the United Nations and the World Health Organization, I repeatedly emphasized that the oppressive sanctions of the United States and its Western allies have denied Iranians access to vital medicines and undercut their basic human rights.

These debilitating sanctions have been imposed on us for decades, from the time of Saddam Hussein's imposed war on Iran, supported and armed (with both conventional and chemical weapons) by the United States and many Western countries - until the pandemic today. Covid-19 has hit all the countries of the world, some, like Iran, worse than others.

But there has been no respite for the Iranian people who continue to endure brutal sanctions that deprive them of pharmaceutical materials and medical equipment. And there has been almost complete silence from western funded "human rights" organizations and international bodies who should be demanding Iranian access to medical relief during this global pandemic.

### Excellency

Despite all these oppressive pressures, Iran has succeeded in significantly improving its health indicators over the past four decades, setting a development example for West Asia and beyond. With the help of primary healthcare networks and public assistance, Iran has ensured exponential advancement in healthcare for its population compared to similar countries that, unlike us, enjoy access to all the facilities and medical equipment they need. There is little doubt that if it were not for the oppressive US sanctions, Iran's coronavirus incidence of 1.2 million and mortality rate of 56,000 could have been much, much lower.

### Excellency

While the meaning of your silence and that of other human rights organizations in the face of these oppressive medical sanctions has never been clear to our medical community, what did the Executive Director of the WHO's Health Emergency Program mean when he responded to our Leader Ayatollah Khamenei's rejection of inadequately tested vaccines, by saying "Do not politicize this virus" during a recent press conference? For us, the failure of the UN and WHO to respond to inhumane US



sanctions is what is "politicized." We are concerned that the WHO is biased in favour of inadequately-tested American technology, which could risk many lives around the world, in order to woo the US back into the organization. Nothing else explains why a senior WHO official would involve himself in the rational, measured and scientific determinations of a member state.

### Excellency

Iranian scientists have been working hard to produce corona vaccines that would have been produced earlier if not burdened by sanctions, and we are willing to provide our population with vaccines from any foreign source we believe is reliable. What we should be wary about is injecting people with

mRNA vaccines produced in record time and based on technology never before licensed. The long term potential side effects are so unclear that even citizens of the United States will not be allowed to hold the companies or government legally responsible. Why would we purchase a vaccine from countries/companies that have not adequately proved either efficacy or safety, and then test them on Iranians - the same people who have suffered enormously under medical sanctions from these very same countries? We know very well that the vaccines produced with the new mRNA technology do not provide any guarantee of long-term efficacy without side effects, even as many scientific sources point to possible long term side effects, and that we are years away from obtaining the required data to pronounce it safe.

We are sovereign, and our decision to reject vaccines with dubious or inadequately tested technology, safety or trustworthiness issues is our inalienable right. We would appreciate if you would not further politicize our decisions, and support us by helping us access all the medical equipment, technologies, medications, and reliable vaccines necessary to handle this pandemic.

## Iran plans to import AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines from India, China, Russia

➔

"But, the AstraZeneca vaccine, which is produced by Sweden and only its scientific studies have been done in Britain's Oxford, can be purchased. Moreover, it is possible to be kept in Iran," he explained.

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'.

"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.

## Activating 'tipping points' in society could push world towards greater climate action, researchers say

Activating positive "tipping points" in human society could bring about faster action on the climate crisis, new research argues.

"Tipping points" are thresholds where a very small change can have a large, sometimes irreversible, effect on a system.

Scientists have previously warned that there could be a range of tipping points in the Earth's climate that might be triggered by global heating, if actions are not taken to tackle emissions. It is feared that triggering these tipping points could lead to faster rates of climate change.

In a new commentary published in Climate Policy, researchers argue there might also be tipping points in human society that, if activated, could lead to emissions being reduced much more rapidly.

Study author Professor Tim Lenton, an expert in tipping points and director of the Global Systems Institute (GSI) at the University of Exeter, told The Independent: "What's in common between tipping points in any complex system is the idea of where a small change leads to a large outcome.

"There are reinforcing feedbacks that can both propel a climate tipping point but also one of these positive social tipping points."

The researchers identify two examples of where small policy changes have already led to positive social tipping points being triggered at a national level.

The first example is the rapid adoption of electric cars in Norway. Globally, electric vehicles account for 2 to 3 per cent of new car sales. However, in Norway, electric cars accounted for 54 per cent of all new vehicle sales in 2019.

Norway was able to drive a rapid shift towards electric cars by introducing policies to make them cheaper, said Prof Lenton.

"Norway has achieved a world-leading decarbonisation of their road transport through its clever policy design to make electric vehicles the same price at the point of purchase as a petrol or diesel one," said Prof Lenton.

If similar policies were introduced in key car-producing regions such as China, the EU and California, it could lead to a global tipping point for electric vehicle uptake, he added.

"The more electric vehicles we make, the cheaper they get per unit," he said. "That means that it gets cheaper to buy them, which again leads to them getting cheaper to make, and so on."

The second example is the rapid disappearance of coal from the UK's electricity generation, according to the research.

Over the past decade, the UK has cut carbon from its power supply at almost twice the pace of any other major economy. This is largely linked to a dramatic decline in the burning of coal for power in the UK over the same time period.

In the UK, the introduction of a carbon tax, alongside the falling costs of renewable power, worked in tandem to push coal into unprofitability, according to the research. This caused the use of coal-fired power, once a staple of the UK's electricity system, to fall into rapid decline.

A global tipping point for the world's electricity could be reached once solar and wind become more profitable than coal-fired power in all countries, according to the research.

The paper encourages country leaders to introduce new policies to harness the potential of positive tipping points in human society.

"Everybody and their dog is setting a net zero target for around the middle of the century," said Prof Lenton.

"If you want to follow through on that, you've got to accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels. This could be a tangible way to try to do that."

## LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 106)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

دانشگاه تهران، مادرِ دانشگاه‌های ایران، در تهران،
خیابانِ انقلاب، واقع است. آقا دانشکده‌هایی هم در
جاهای دیگر دارد. ده‌ها هزار دانشجوی این دانشگاه در
صدها رشته‌ی آن تحصیل می‌کنند.
دانشگاه تهران دارای خوابگاه‌ها، رستوران‌ها و
کتابخانه‌های مختلفی است. همچنین دانشجویان
می‌توانند از سالن‌های والیبال و بسکتبال، استخرهای شنا،
زمین‌های بازی و غیره استفاده کنند. دختران و پسران با
هم درس می‌خوانند، ولی بعضی رشته‌ها مخصوص
دختران یا پسران است.
تهران دارای دانشگاه‌های زیادی است. دانشگاه آزاد
اسلامی، بزرگ‌ترین دانشگاه ایران، بیش از یک میلیون
دانشجوی پسر و دختر در شهرهای مختلف دارد.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ج

## 3 million Iranians have organ donor cards

Some three million Iranians have organ donor cards and some 10 percent have signed online consent forms for organ donation, Farahnaz Sadeq-Beigi, head of organ procurement program in Masih Daneshvari Hospital, a national research institute for tuberculosis and lung diseases, has said.

Traffic accidents are the main reasons of brain deaths in Iran, she said, lamenting that out of 4,000 brain deaths reported by forensics only 1,000 donate their organs.

## ۳ میلیون نفر در کشور کارت اهدا عضو دریافت کردند

فرحناز صادق بیگی مسئول واحد فراهم آوری اعضا بیمارستان مسیح دانشوری اظهارداشت: تاکنون ۳ میلیون نفر از افراد کشور کارت اهداء عضو دریافت کرده اند و ۱۰ درصد از افراد کشور در سامانه های مختلفی که در جهت اعلام رضایت در زمینه اهدای عضو راه اندازی شده ثبت نام کرده اند.

وی تصادفات رانندگی را شایع ترین علت مرگ مغزی دانست و گفت: سالانه ۴ هزار مورد مرگ مغزی در کشور ثبت می شود که سال گذشته تنها ۱۰۰۰ نفر از این افراد قابلیت اهدای عضو را داشته اند.



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GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

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

Prophet Muhammad (S)

## Doc “The Fourteenth Province” studies separation of Bahrain from Iran

→1 At the same time, the discovery of oil and its importance to Britain’s military and global economic empire doubled Britain’s resolve to dominate the southern edge of the Persian Gulf.

Hence, Bahrain’s role in Britain’s economic, political and military diplomacy in the region convinced the colonial power



A poster for Mohsen Karimian’s documentary “The Fourteenth Province”.

to employ tactics to gradually separate Bahrain from Iran, which saw its efforts to retain territorial integrity were in vain.

On November 12, 1957, Iran decided to officially integrate Bahrain as the fourteenth Iranian province in the administrative divisions of the country, drawing strong protests from Britain and the League of Arab States.

The Shah softened his attitude toward Bahrain, and suggested that the indigenous population should voice freely its wishes through a United Nations supervised referendum. This suggestion was rejected, drawing a strong threat from the Shah on September 9, 1969, who declared that Iran would not recognize Bahrain as an independent state, and if it was admitted to the United Nations Iran would leave that organization.

Complications associated with the British-sponsored federation of Persian Gulf emirates encouraged both Iran and Bahrain to contemplate the emergence of an independent state and Manama declared its independence on August 14, 1971.

## “Coup 53” comes to Iranian art houses

A R T TEHRAN — Taqi Amirani’s acclaimed documentary “Coup 53” has gone on screen at the Art and Experience Cinemas, which are dedicated to screening art films.

The interested audience can also watch the co-production of Iran, the UK and the U.S. online on Hashure, an Iranian platform providing video on demand (VOD) service for films.



“Coup 53”, a documentary by Taqi Amirani.

While making a documentary about the Anglo-American coup in Iran in 1953, Amirani and editor Walter Murch find an extraordinary and never before seen archive. Documents and 16mm footage recount this story in unprecedented detail, with explosive revelations about secrets hidden for 66 years. From a historical documentary about four days in August 1953, the film becomes a living investigation that exposes the roots of Iran’s volatile relationships with the United Kingdom and the USA.

The documentary received the audience award at the 14th edition of Cinéma Vérité, Iran’s major international festival for documentary films, last December.

The film has also been screened at several major international events, including the Vancouver International Film Festival in Canada, the 63rd BFI London Film Festival, and the 34th Annual Washington DC International Film Festival.

# Artists from 30 countries to attend Iran Silk Road calligraphy exhibition

C U L T U R E TEHRAN — Calligraphy works by 203 artists from 30 countries will be showcased at the First Raqs-e Qalam International Exhibition and Conference of the Silk Road Calligraphy.

Artworks by the calligraphers will be put on display in a virtual exhibition, which will officially open on January 20 in the northeastern Iranian city of Mashhad.

The Iranian National Commission for UNESCO is the main organizer of the exhibition.

Speaking in a press conference on Sunday, the director of the commission, Hojjatollah Ayyubi, said, “Many luminaries believe that calligraphy is the attestation of our many other arts. The commission believes in dialogue between cultures and we are happy to be hosting such a great event.”

“Every night a selection of over 100 works from different countries will be uploaded, while we will keep in touch live with several of the calligraphers. The works will be selected by the Iran Calligraphers Association as the collaborator of the event. Since Mashhad is the main host of the event, one night will also be dedicated to the calligraphers of Mashhad,” he added.

He further noted that a selection of 204 works also to be later published and exhibited in a museum in Mashhad.

“A selection of the displayed works will later be shown in an exhibition to open in the Iranian Academy of Arts in Tehran on January 24 with a limited number of



A calligraphy work by Ali Shirazi.

visitors. The closing ceremony will be held in the Iran Mall, a large shopping mall in Tehran on January 28, where a number of ambassadors will be invited,” he concluded.

The walls across the city of Mashhad, as well as several historical monuments in Tehran and several other cities will be displaying a selection of works through

video mapping, a system to use light and movement as mediums and buildings or other surfaces as a canvas for some huge, attention-grabbing statements.

The ancient Silk Road has existed for thousands of years, passing through many different empires, kingdoms, reigns and societies throughout history. At certain

times in its long history, traders could travel freely along these routes, whereas at others, travel was difficult or dangerous.

According to UNESCO, the Silk Road enriched the countries it passed through, transporting cultures, religions, languages and, of course, material goods to societies across Europe, Asia and Africa, and uniting them all with a common thread of cultural heritage and plural identities.

There are over 40 countries today along the historic land and maritime Silk Roads, all still bearing witness to the impact of these routes in their culture, traditions and customs.

These vast networks carried more than just merchandise and precious commodities, however. The constant movement and mixing of populations also brought about the transmission of knowledge, ideas, cultures and beliefs, which had a profound impact on the history and civilizations of the Eurasian peoples.

Travelers along the Silk Roads were attracted not only by trade but also by the intellectual and cultural exchange that was taking place in cities along the Silk Roads, many of which developed into hubs of culture and learning. Science, arts and literature, as well as crafts and technologies, were thus shared and disseminated into societies along the lengths of these routes, and in this way, languages, religions and cultures developed and influenced each other.

## Iranian movies line up for Sofia MENAR Film Festival

Sudeh is forced to ask for the ransom money from her ex-husband, Peyman. After Matiar’s release, Sudeh, being curious, comes to the sudden realization that it was all her son’s plan to provide the grounds for his father’s return.

The story of “The Warden” is set in 1966, when a prison in southern Iran is being evacuated because of its proximity to the city’s new airport. Major Jahed, the warden, transfers the prisoners to the new prison and then soon receives a report that one prisoner, sentenced to death, is missing!

“Numbness” is about Jalal, a philosophy student dropout who is influenced by the community to free himself from any constraints. He realizes that his sister Mary, who has the bipolar disease, is married to a bourgeois man named Shahrokh who is addicted to betting on football.

“Just 6.5” is a drama about drug abuse and addiction that has been acclaimed in numerous international festivals.

The official competition is featuring the Iranian movies “Dance with Me” by Soroush Sehat, “When the Moon Was Full” by Narges Abyar, “A Hairy Tale” by Homayun Ghanizadeh, “At 47” by Alireza Tabrizi and Ahmad Otrachchi, and “My Second Year in College” by Rasul Sadrameli.

In addition, the Iranian movies “The Recess” by

Navid Nikkhah-Azad, “Let Tonight Pass” by Hamed Qasemi, “Movement” by Ruzbeh Kazemi and “The Other” by Ako Zandkarimi and Saman Hosseinpour will be screened in the short competition of the festival.

“The Recess” tells the story of a rebel, Sahar, who decides to run away from school, disguise himself and go to a football game.

“Let Tonight Pass” is about Elham, an English teacher who is from a traditional family. Tonight is a very special night for her family. Her suitor will come to their home with his own family. She’s recently been in a photoshoot as a model for an underground agency. Now she finds her pictures are being used for blackmail.

In “Movement”, the family reunites for the last time with the deceased relative. But the preparations around the funeral look rather suspicious.

“The Other” is about a man who sees a blond stranger at the grave after burying his wife. As a result, he suspects that she had engaged in a relationship with another man.

Iranian filmmakers have been frequent visitors to the Sofia MENAR Film Festival over the two past decades. MENAR stands for the Middle East (West Asia) and North Africa Region, and the festival spotlights top cinema productions from these areas.

## Fajr Soldier of the Revolution picks 12 street plays

A R T TEHRAN — The 39th Fajr International Theater Festival has selected 12 plays for the Soldier of the Revolution, a section dedicated to street theater, the organizers announced on Monday.

The plays have been selected by a team of the stage artists Tohid Masumi, Saeid Kheirollahi and Mohammad Larti.

“Those Years” by director Bahareh Saeidinia, “His is Champion Akbar” by Mostafa Dehasht and Bahar Bordbar, “Cocoon of the Revolution” by Puya Emami, “Life with the Taste of Gunpowder” by Mojtaba Khalili and “In the Name of” by Akbar Qahremani are among the plays.



A file photo shows a troupe performing in the courtyard of Tehran’s City Theater Complex. (Honaronline/Mojtaba Arabzadeh)

Also included are “The Ring” by Nesa Soleimani, “General” by Saeid Badini,

“Soldier of the Commander” by Amin Purmand, “Commander of the Shrine” by Amir Amini, “Messenger” by Hessameddin Iranmanesh, “No One Is a Man like You” by Behnam Kaveh and “When Hell Freezes Over” by Mehrdad Kavus Hosseini.

The festival will be running from January 30 to February 9 this year.

According to the director of the festival, Hossein Mosafer Astaneh, the international competition of the 2021 edition of the event will not be held due to a spike in coronavirus cases around the globe.

“There will be no international section for the 39th edition of the festival, because most of the theater companies around the

world are currently closed,” Mosafer Astaneh has earlier said.

He said that several overseas troupes and stage experts will be invited to organize workshops or performances but the festival cannot be considered an international event.

These days in which Tehran has turned from a high-risk red zone into an orange and yellow, and the theaters will also reopen, the festival will likely host several stage performances with limited numbers in audiences, Mosafer Astaneh has said.

Many international festivals and movie theaters around the world have been shut down amid the pandemic.

## Susan Schwake’s “3D Art Lab for Kids” comes to Iranian bookstores

C U L T U R E TEHRAN — A Persian translation of Susan Schwake’s “3D Art Lab for Kids: 32 Hands-on Adventures in Sculpture and Mixed Media” has recently been published by Vajeh-Nashr Publications in Tehran.

The book has been translated into Persian by Jamal Akrami and Mina Mani.

The book encourages an artistic spirit in children with 36 kid-friendly fine art projects in paper, clay, textiles, sculpture and jewelry. Each project is inspired by the work of a prominent artist and is illustrated with step-by-step color photographs of the process as well as finished samples and variations.

Colorful photos illustrate how different people using the same lesson will yield different results, exemplifying the way the lesson brings out each artist’s personal style. On-site visits to the studios of an established potter, metalsmith, jeweler and sculptor illustrate first-hand accounts of their creative processes.

“3D Art Lab for Kids” is the perfect book for creative families, friends and community groups, and works as lesson plans for both experienced and new art teachers. Children of all ages and experience levels can be guided by adults and will enjoy these engaging exercises.

The popular series “Lab for Kids” features a growing list



Front cover of the Persian translation of Susan Schwake’s “3D Art Lab for Kids”.

of books that share hands-on activities and projects on a wide host of topics, including art, astronomy, clay, geology, math and even how to create your own circus, all authored by established experts in their fields.

Each lab contains a complete materials list, clear step-

by-step photographs of the process, as well as finished samples. The labs can be used as singular projects or as part of a yearlong curriculum of experiential learning. The activities are open-ended, and designed to be explored over and over, often with different results. Geared toward being taught or guided by adults, they are enriching for a range of ages and skill levels.

Schwake is an artist, art educator, author and curator. Her passion for teaching art for more than 20 years has found her working in many diverse settings, as well as her own art school, which operates in conjunction with their gallery and design firm in New Hampshire, called Artstream.

Susan exhibits her own artwork in galleries in the United States and Europe. To date, she has curated over 100 compelling contemporary exhibitions in her own gallery with hundreds of national and international artists’ work. Susan has worked with many corporations installing original artwork from the gallery’s stable of artists.

In keeping with her passion for art and teaching, Susan has offered, and continues to offer, workshops and programs to parents, teachers at universities, art studios, community organization, public and private schools, and most recently online with e-courses in teacher training, painting, printmaking and mixed media.