



There is will by both U.S. and Iran to return to JCPOA *Page 2*



IPL: Sepahan beat Sanat Naft, Persepolis stunned in Arak *Page 3*



Iranian Covid-19 vaccine shows no side effects on 21 volunteers *Page 7*



Liyakat Nathani Takim's "Shi'ism in America" comes to Iranian bookstores *Page 8*

Dark side of the deal

See page 3



© leader.ir

Iran says won't reverse nuclear measures unless U.S. implements UNSCR 2231

TEHRAN – Iran will not back down from the nuclear steps it has taken in response to the United States withdrawal from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal unless the new U.S. administration returns to United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231, Iran's Foreign Ministry said on Monday.

In press briefing on Monday, spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry Saeed Khatibzadeh reiterated Tehran's position on the possible U.S. return to the nuclear

deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Responding to a question on what Iran would do if the U.S. refrained from lifting sanctions on Iran, the spokesman said nothing new has happened with respect to the JCPOA. "Our position is the same as we previously said: the U.S. and other remaining parties to the JCPOA must lift the sanctions and effectively implement the deal," he noted.

Continued on page 3

NISOC inks research agreements with RIPI, Sharif University

TEHRAN - National Iranian South Oil Company (NISOC) has signed agreements with the Sharif University of Technology and Research Institute of Petroleum Industry (RIPI) for developing scientific and technological cooperation.

The MOU was signed by Sadeq Fathollahi, NISOC's technical director, and the representatives of the mentioned institutions on the sidelines of

the 25th edition of Iran International Oil, Gas, Refining, and Petrochemical Exhibition (Iran Oil Show) on Sunday evening.

Based on an agreement worth 1.33 trillion rials (about \$31.6 million) RIPI is going to cooperate with NISOC to conduct research projects in three fields namely Ahvaz, Ragsefid, and Bibi Hakimeh.

Continued on page 4

Ayatollah Khamenei praises Martyr Fakhrazadeh for his scientific achievements

TEHRAN - Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has praised the scientific and technical achievements of Martyr Mohsen Fakhrazadeh, saying that the position of the top nuclear scientist is "not comparable to any of the worldly positions".

According to the Fars news agency, the family of the prominent nuclear and defense

scientist of the country, Martyr Mohsen Fakhrazadeh, met with the Leader of the Islamic Revolution on Monday evening.

"The high position that God bestowed on that nobleman by martyrdom was the reward of his unparalleled hard work and sincerity, and this position is not comparable to any other mundane position," he added.

Continued on page 2

Gun, with occasional music

BY ALIA. JENABZADEH
With the new U.S. administration in the office, expectations are skyrocketing for a better understanding between the country and the bureaucratic world order.

Expectations are high because Democrats in the U.S. are traditionally considered to be the founding fathers of global hierarchy system after the WWII which is manifested in the establishment of the United Nations Organization for several decades. Once the last bullet was fired in Berlin, and the world's then powers decided to put an end on any violent solution for their disagreements, people in the globe cascaded down into a sort of fall of pure joy as they believed for now and in the future the "war" is over.

They couldn't be more wrong... Not only the endless wars didn't end, but also the very country that brought up the initiative of not resorting to force as a means for imposing wills, never stopped taking advantage of this tool. It didn't take long for the new international community to realize what the U.S. has tricked it into! The U.S. now had a double-barreled gun with two distinct triggers. Indeed, the U.S. could now embark a war, then justify it under the Charter of UN: fire and forget.

This has been the American attitude towards international interactions for decades, a dark fact lurking in the countries' past. Many countries have been the victim of this policy. As of right now, the U.S. is militarily present in (you read: have occupied) many countries in different continents, without finding itself in the position of explaining the cause. Well, who pays for this giant money-sucking machinery called "UN" after all?

Today, more than seven decades after the UN was born, a wide range of countries have fallen deep into a pit of troubles for an even wider range of reasons, and a seems-to-be-eternal side of these problems is the UN. The interests promoted by this international organization go hand in hand with those of the U.S. and are perfectly in line with the complex purposes of the country for the future of the globe. So is the story of Iran.

To many observers, the U.S. may seem the arch enemy of Iran which always has the military option ready in the pocket. But this is not all the story, especially if a Democrat takes the office in the White House.

Continued on page 2

Coronavirus causes \$3.3b damage to Iran's tourism so far, minister says

TEHRAN – Iran's tourism industry has suffered a loss of over 140 trillion rials (about \$3.33 billion at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister has said.

Although the worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 has brought the whole world to a standstill, the tourism industry has been the worst affected of all economic sectors, IRNA quoted Ali-Asghar Mounesan as saying on Sunday.

However, efforts are being made by the government to help the tourism sector flourish again with continuous support and injecting supportive packages, he added.

The government has allocated a total of 500 trillion rials (about \$12 billion) to the corona-affected sectors, of which 200 trillion rials (\$4.7 billion) will be given to the health ministry and the rest will be spent on other sectors, he explained.

Earlier this week, the minister announced that the national budget bill for the next calendar year (starting on March 20) has proposed 70 trillion rials (about \$1.7 billion) to support tourism businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

If the budget receives parliament's approval, it will be spent on different sectors of the tourism industry, which has taken a major hit from the coronavirus outbreak over the previous months, he noted.

Despite the toughest economic pressures and sanctions, the government has provided good support to all sectors of tourism, the minister said.

However, there is hope that the beginning of mass vaccination against the coronavirus will provide better conditions for tourism and businesses related to this sector, he explained.

Continued on page 6

Iraq's Kata'ib Hezbollah: Revenge to target source of fire

Iraq's Kata'ib Hezbollah has said the "the American-Saudi-Israeli alliance" is responsible for recent ISIL (Daesh) attacks, warning that the Iraqi resistance group and fellow fighters will target the main source of Takfiri violence.

Abdul-Ali al-Asgari, Kata'ib's security chief, made the remarks in a tweet on Sunday.

"The perpetrators of the massacres in Iraq are the U.S., Saudi Arabia, and Israel," he wrote, adding, "Revenge should be exacted by retaliating against the source and fountainhead of fire, not its branches."

The remarks came after a twin bombing by the Takfiri terrorist group against a busy square in Baghdad claimed at least 32 people and wounded 110 others on Thursday.

A Daesh ambush also killed 11 fighters of the Hashd al-Sha'abi or Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) – a prominent Iraqi anti-terror force, which includes Kata'ib Hezbollah – in

the north-central Iraqi province of Salahuddin on Saturday.

Soon after the attacks, Kata'ib Hezbollah released a statement, denouncing the trilateral alliance for the attacks.

Daesh that subscribes to Saudi Arabia's dominant radical ideology of Wahhabism and has been widely reported to be in receipt of American logistical support, launched its deadly and destructive campaign in Iraq in 2014.

It was defeated after three years of uphill battle by Iraq and its allies, including Iran, which lent it military advisory support, and volunteers from the PMU, whose anti-terror contribution prompted Baghdad to endorse them as an official Iraqi defense force.

The recent terrorist attacks have given rise to fears of underway attempts to reinvigorate the terrorist group inside the Arab country.

Continued on page 5

Martyr Foundation to cooperate with 39th Fajr Intl. Theater Festival

TEHRAN – The Islamic Revolution Martyr Foundation (Bonyad-e Shahid) will be cooperating with the 39th Fajr International Theater Festival, supporting the Soldier of the Revolution, a section dedicated to street theater.

"Theatrical productions play a key role in promoting the culture of sacrifice and martyrdom. The art department of the foundation has long been paying due attention to street theater for its unique characteristics in its performance and communication with the audience," director of

the department Morteza Hosseini said in a press release published on Monday.

He called the Soldier of the Revolution a section that requires hard-working artists, and said that he is sure that a number of valuable works have been prepared for this section. 12 plays have been selected by a team consisting of the stage artists Tohid Masumi, Saeid Kheirollahi and Mohammad Larti for the Soldier of the Revolution section of the festival.

"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. 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.

Continued on page 8

We are back to square one: Afghan MP

BY MOHAMMAD ALI SAKI

TEHRAN – Noting that the path Americans are following in Afghanistan is wrong, an Afghan parliament representative says that Afghanistan is back to "square one" after two decades of a futile war.

"The U.S. war on Afghanistan has not had tangible results for the country's stability. After twenty years of U.S. presence in Afghanistan, we are back to square one," Hayatullah Alami tells the Tehran Times.

"The Taliban has even been given facilities and their prisoners been released. The path that Americans are following is wrong," Afghan politician adds.

The following is the text of the interview:

How do you assess the level of security cooperation between Iran and Afghanistan as two neighboring countries?

Iran is a strong neighbor for Afghanistan, but security cooperation between the two countries is unfortunately not at the expected level. I think the people of Iran and Afghanistan expect more from their governments on security issues, especially in the fight against terrorism.

There are many opportunities ahead: religious, cultural ties and the long common borders, and the vast economic benefits that can be achieved if both countries make a decision to boost cooperation. These opportunities need to be considered by both sides.

The most important challenge in the relationship between the two countries in the matter of security cooperation is linked to the Afghan government, which is strongly dependent on the United States of America. The United States considers Iran as an arch-enemy, and Afghanistan's dependence on the United States is an obstacle to boost cooperation between the two countries.

Continued on page 5



© Mehr/ Mehrdad Safarpour

Paragliding in Iran

TEHRAN – Iranian paragliders flew over Shahr-e Kord in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province, Southwest of Iran.

Shahr-e Kord is Iran's highest capital city at 2,070 m (6,790 ft) above the sea level. This led the city to be known as "Roof of Iran".

Paragliding is the recreational and competitive adventure sport of flying paragliders: lightweight, free-flying, foot-launched glider aircraft with no rigid primary structure.

Ayatollah Khamenei praises Martyr Fakhrizadeh for his scientific achievements

1 → The Leader paid tribute to Fakhrizadeh, describing him as «a hard-working scientist,» who was prominent both in science and practice.

On November 27 at 14:30, the convoy of Fakhrizadeh suddenly came under attack on a highway in the small city of Absard in Damavand County, about 40 kilometers east of the capital Tehran. The scientist lost his life during the attack. Iranian officials were quick to point the finger at Israel, which has carried out many assassination operations against Iranian nuclear scientists over the past decade. Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in a tweet on the day of the assassination that the attack was carried out with “serious indications of Israeli role.” Since then, several Iranian officials have vowed to take revenge against Israel.

On December 13, the family of Fakhrizadeh was awarded the highest military award signed by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution. Armed Forces Chief of Staff Major General Mohammad Bagheri awarded the family the first-class “Order of Nasr”, which is signed by the Leader.

Order of Nasr is a military award of Iranian armed forces which is awarded by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution to recognize distinguished logistics contribution and support of the troops.

Iranian tanker is seized due to technical reason

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Saeed Khatibzadeh, spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said on Monday that Iran is “waiting for more reports from the Indonesian government on the seizure of the Iranian oil tanker.”

In his weekly press conference, Khatibzadeh said the seizure of Iranian tanker “is a technical issue and there have been such incidents in the shipping lines before.”



Khatibzadeh noted the Ports and Shipping Organization and the ship owner company are looking to investigate the reasons for the seizure to resolve it.

“The Iranian embassy and the Iranian Ministry of Transport and Urban Development are pursuing the issue,” he added.

He declined to comment about any connection between the capture of the Iranian ship and the recent seizure of a South Korean vessel by Iran, which he described as a technical issue.

On Sunday, Indonesia claimed its coast guard seized the Iranian-flagged MT Horse and the Panamanian-flagged MT Freya vessels over suspected illegal oil transfer in the country’s waters.

Indonesia’s coast guard spokesman claimed the two tankers concealed their identity by not showing their national flags, turning off automatic identification systems and did not respond to a radio call.

‘Effective steps’

On the recent remarks by the foreign minister of Saudi Arabia who claims that Iran has ignored the message of peace by his country, the Iranian spokesman said, “We cannot overlook the daily bombardment of Yemen while they are talking about peace in Yemen.”

“If Saudi Arabia moves away from the vicious cycle of violence and cooperation with extra-regional countries, in a way be reflected in the words and deed of Riyadh, our arms are open and we will take more effective steps,” he pointed out.

Khatibzadeh, however, said that Iran has already proposed the Hormuz Peace Initiative (HOPE) to all regional countries, including Saudi Arabia.

Gun, with occasional music

Things we can learn from our previous experiences with a Democratic U.S. administration

1 → Regardless of the propaganda circling around the military plans of the U.S. for a hypothetical war against Iran (which reached its height during the last weeks of Trump’s presidency), the U.S. has always had a better weapon to encounter Iran; the second barrel of its gun, a little softer, but even deadlier: the UN.

Indeed, the UN has been the real arch enemy of the Iran over the last four decades. The U.S. acknowledges well how it’s turning to a shadow of its former self (remember what happened in the U.S. Capitol just a few days ago), but the international bureaucracy it established years ago still works. With a Democrat in the Oval Office, things get even more complicated, as Democrats know much better how to work things out, using only regulations which seem quite rational at the first glance.

Iran has suffered the economic damages of sanctions designed by the U.S. and confirmed directly or indirectly by the UN for years and years. There are actual casualties among Iranians which you can trace their loss back to those sanctions. Search the internet about the shortage of certain medicines in Iran because of the U.S. sanctions and silence of the UN during the hard times. These economic damages, these losses, are no less than that of an actual war with guns and shells.

The point is it would be much fairer if a Republican had the guts to wage a war against Iran since Iran has enough power to retaliate. But the war a Democrat starts through back channels and corridors of the UN, leaves even deeper wounds.

For the people of the world, the establishment of the UN after years of war and millions of lost lives was like a relaxing music for a kid after parents stop fighting. A promising warm song which brings about hope for a brighter future. Unfortunately, the music was not everlasting, but the fight was.

For the international community life is gun with occasional music.

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Source: Press TV

Dark side of the deal

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The war between Azerbaijan and Armenia came to an end when the two countries agreed to a Russian-brokered deal on November 10. The deal brought an end to more than six weeks of deadly clashes that killed thousands of people on both sides but it created new concerns about the future of Nagorno-Karabakh and the geopolitics of the broader region.

Although the November deal was welcomed by regional countries as a positive development toward peace and security, it sparked confusion and concerns in some countries in the region that need to be addressed as soon as possible.

The war over the Nagorno-Karabakh region broke out in late September when Armenian and Azerbaijani forces exchanged fire along the contact lines in the disputed region. Initially, the clashes appeared to be an evanescent moment in the decades-long sporadic clashes between the two South Caucasus nations. But over time, it became increasingly obvious that things will be different this time around. While Azerbaijan used a variety of state-of-the-art weapons, especially combat drones, Armenia heavily relied on decrepit weapons that failed to prevent Azerbaijan's armed forces from retaking large swathes of territories in the disputed region.

The Armenia-Azerbaijan war lasted for 44 days. In the final days of the war, Russia succeeded in bringing both sides of the conflict back to the negotiating table and convincing them into signing a deal to put an end to the deadly war.

On November 10, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan and President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin issued a joint statement declaring that they have signed a 9-article deal on ending the war.

According to the deal, Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to "a complete ceasefire and termination of all hostilities in the area of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict," with Armenia admitting to return several



districts to Azerbaijan such as Aghdam, Kalbajar and Lachin in a few weeks.

The ceasefire deal allowed Russia to deploy peacemaking forces in the region concurrently with the withdrawal of the Armenian troops for a period of five years, which will be automatically extended for subsequent five-year terms unless either Party notifies about its intention to terminate this clause six months before the expiration of the current term.

The deal established a new route connecting Armenia to the Armenian enclave in the Nagorno-Karabakh region. It also included an article stipulating that "new transport links" between Azerbaijan and the exclave of Nakhchivan Autonomous region, a move that caused huge debates — and in some cases concerns — in the region as the war was being fought far away from Nakhchivan.

The last article of the ceasefire deal vaguely stipulates, "All economic and transport connections in the region shall be unblocked. The Republic of Armenia shall guarantee the security of transport connections between the western regions

of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic in order to arrange unobstructed movement of persons, vehicles and cargo in both directions. The Border Guard Service of the Russian Federal Security Service shall be responsible for overseeing the transport connections. As agreed by the Parties, new transport links shall be built to connect the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic and the western regions of Azerbaijan."

This article was apparently left out of public discussion intentionally given the sensitivity of the issue. The deal speaks of "new transport links" between mainland Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan but it does not say where and when these links will be established. Will they be constructed near Iran's border with Armenia? If yes, how will they affect border movements between Iran and Armenia?

Iranian officials were under pressure from public opinion to give a clear-cut answer to these questions. They have tried to soothe concerns in this regard by saying that the Iranian government

will defend the country's national interests. But they did not — or maybe they were unable to — provide any details about the Nakhchivan-Azerbaijan route.

Upon his arrival in Baku on Sunday evening, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said he will discuss with the leaders of Azerbaijan the situation around the Nagorno-Karabakh region as well as transit routes and corridors but he didn't say whether these corridors include those connecting Nakhchivan and the western territories of Azerbaijan.

During his visit to Baku, Zarif met with several high-ranking Azerbaijani officials including Ilham Aliyev and Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov.

Zarif discussed with Bayramov issues related to the East-West and the North-South corridors, according to two statements issued by the foreign ministries of Iran and Azerbaijan.

"The Iranian foreign minister finally described the establishment of calm in the region as a great opportunity for mutual cooperation in the transit industry and bringing into operation the East-West and the North-South corridors," the Iranian statement said.

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry confirmed that the two ministers discussed the issue of corridors while implying that the Nakhchivan-Azerbaijan corridor was also discussed.

"During the meeting, the ministers discussed the current situation in the region, the implementation of the trilateral statements of November 10, 2020 and January 11, 2021. It was noted that new opportunities for cooperation have been opened up in the region, including the prospects for the development of North-South and South-West transport and transit corridors," Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Monday.

The last article of "the trilateral statements of November 10, 2020" deals with the issue of Azerbaijan-Nakhchivan transport links so this issue was likely a part of the two minister's discussion.

Iran says won't reverse nuclear measures unless U.S. implements UNSCR 2231

1→ Nothing will be done by Iran as long as the U.S. doesn't comply with Resolution 2231, Khatibzadeh remarked.

The spokesman pointed out that if all the sanctions imposed by the Trump administration are lifted and U.S. starts implementing the JCPOA effectively, Iran will reverse all the steps it has taken since the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA.

"All of Iran's measures that were done in accordance with the JCPOA as well as the process of reducing nuclear commitments are reversible," Khatibzadeh asserted.

He stated that Iran has so far heard a lot of talks but now it's the time for the U.S. to act.

"If the new U.S. administration is willing [to rejoin the JCPOA], it must show that it's distancing itself from the previous administration and return to the right path of implementing its commitments," Khatibzadeh insisted.

Following the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA on May 8, 2018, Iran gradually reduced its nuclear commitments, resuming some nuclear activities that were banned by the deal. Iran suspended the implementation of a multitude of obligations in five steps. In early January, Iran also took the most important step of resuming 20% uranium enrichment at the Fordow nuclear plant, where Iran is basically not allowed to spin any kind of centrifuges under the JCPOA.

But Iran said that its nuclear move is reversible if other parties to the nuclear deal return to it.

"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," Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said in a tweet on January 4.

The new U.S. president, Joe Biden, had expressed willingness to rejoin the agreement during his election campaign. "I will offer Tehran a credible path back to diplomacy. If Iran returns to strict compliance with the nuclear deal, the United States would rejoin the agreement as a starting point for follow-on negotiations. With our allies, we will work to strengthen and extend the nuclear deal's provisions, while also addressing other issues of concern," Biden wrote in a September op-ed for CNN.

Zarif holds talks in Azerbaijan

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who arrived in the Azerbaijani capital of Baku on Sunday evening in the first leg of his tour of the Caucasus and Turkey, held meetings on Monday with the leaders of the Republic of Azerbaijan, including President Ilham Aliyev and Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov.

In his meeting with President Aliyev, the top Iranian diplomat congratulated the Republic of Azerbaijan's people and government on the recent victories, stressing the need for the promotion of cooperation between the two neighbors, according to a statement issued by the Iranian Foreign Ministry on Monday.

"He also welcomed a six-party regional cooperation initiative proposed by the president of the Republic of Azerbaijan, expressing Iran's readiness for help and cooperation in any field contributing to regional peace, stability and calm. Zarif then pointed to the successful visits that Azerbaijan's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister paid to Iran, saying the mutual cooperation, particularly in the economic fields, is ready to make a leap," the statement said.

The Iranian foreign minister expressed delight with the results of the 14th meeting of Iran-Azerbaijan Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation, voicing Iran's readiness for active participation in the process of reconstructing the recently-liberated Azeri lands, particularly in construction

activities, for the export of technical and engineering services, and cooperation in the electricity and energy industries, agriculture, extra-territorial cultivation, mine-sweeping, as well as the reconstruction of mosques and historical sites.

Zarif's visit to neighboring Azerbaijan comes after the South Caucasus country fought a deadly 44-day war with Armenia over the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh from late September through to November 2020. The war resulted in Azerbaijan liberating its land in the region that were under Armenian occupation.

During the war, Iran refused to side with any of the warring countries, all while trying to resolve differences between Baku and Yerevan through dialogue. To this end, Iran presented a peace initiative in the midst of the war. Deputy Foreign Minister of Iran Seyed Abbas Araghchi traveled to all countries involved in the war to present the Iranian initiative.

In addition, Iran voiced support for Azerbaijan to liberate its occupied territories while underlining the need to protect the rights of minorities in the region.

"This war is a bitter incident and it threatens the security of the region. Of course, all Azerbaijani territories occupied by Armenia should be freed. All these lands should be given back to Azerbaijan. One of the main conditions is that these lands should be returned to Azerbaijan. The Republic of Azerbaijan is entitled to be in control of these lands, and therefore,

all of them should be freed," the Leader of Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei said in the final days of the Nagorno-Karabakh war.

Azerbaijan was quick to thank Iran for its support. The Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry issued a statement at that time to thank the Leader for his stance on the war.

During his Monday meeting with Zarif, the Azerbaijani president once again praised Iran's position on the Nagorno-Karabakh crisis.

"President Aliyev, for his part, praised Iran's stances on the recent developments in the region, hailed the level of cooperation between the two nations, and said there exists a positive atmosphere for the expansion of relations in all fields, specifically the economic cooperation. Enumerating the economic projects carried out jointly by the two countries, the Azeri leader welcomed the participation of Iranian companies in reconstruction of areas in the Karabakh region," the statement by the Iranian Foreign Ministry said.

The Azerbaijani president also expressed satisfaction with Iran's view on the six-party regional cooperation platform, saying the initiative would benefit peace and common interests in the region. He welcomed plans for holding trilateral meetings among the Republic of Azerbaijan, Iran and Russia, as well as among Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkey in the future.

The Iranian foreign minister also met with his Azerbaijani counterpart on Mon-

day. During the meeting Zarif paid homage to the victims of the war, describing the post-war stage as an important moment for peace and stability.

"The minister of foreign affairs of our country expressed his satisfaction with his presence in the Republic of Azerbaijan after the liberation of the occupied territories of the country and paid tribute to the victims of the war, especially civilians, and expressed his condolences to their families. He assessed the new stage as an important moment to help establish peace and stability in the region for the benefit of all parties," the Iranian Foreign Ministry said in another statement.

Zarif said the goal of his visit to Azerbaijan was to contribute to advance peace and calm in the region. He expressed Iran's readiness to "massively and actively" participate in the reconstruction efforts in the liberated territories.

Underlining that there is no limit to cooperation between Iran and Azerbaijan, Zarif said all of Iran's economic sectors stand ready to actively participate in the economic projects of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

For his part, the Azerbaijani foreign minister described the relations between the two countries as based on friendship and historical and cultural commonalities and appreciated the positions of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the highest and popular levels on the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan.

SPORTS

IPL: Sepahan beat Sanat Naft, Persepolis stunned in Arak

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Sepahan football team defeated Sanat Naft 2-1 in Abadan on Monday to go top of Iran Professional League (IPL) behind leaders Esteghlal on goal difference.

Sajad Shahbazzadeh put the visiting team ahead in Abadan's Takhti Stadium just six minutes into the match but Ahmad Shariatzadeh leveled the score in the 70th minute.

With two minutes remaining, Mohammadreza Mehdizadeh scored the winner for Sepahan.

In Tabriz, Foolad defeated rock-bottom Machine Sazi 1-0 thanks to an early goal from Ayanda Patosi.

Persepolis suffered their first defeat in the current season losing to Aluminum 2-1 in Arak.

Kamal Kamyabinia opened the goal with a header un the seventh minute but Shahin Tavakoli and Hamed Pakdel scored for the hosts in the first half to seal a valuable win for their team.

Esteghlal are top of the table with 22 points, followed by Sepahan and Sanat Naft.

Foolad to host Al Ain in 2021 ACL play-off

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian football club Foolad will host Al Ain of the UAE in Ahvaz in play-off round of 2021 AFC Champions League.

Foolad General Manager Saeid Azari has said they will host the Emirati football team at the Foolad Arena on April 7.

Foolad, who finished third in the Iran league last season, will start the campaign with a match against Al Ain.

The 2021 AFC Champions League qualifying play-offs will be played from March 2021 to April 2021. A total of 19 teams will compete in the qualifying play-offs to decide the remaining eight of the 40 places in the group stage of the 2021 AFC Champions League.

AFC cancels U16, U19 Asian Championships

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) said on Monday that a number of competitions supposed to be held this year are canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the AFC U16 and U19 Championships.

"The Asian Football Confederation (AFC), taking into consideration the uncertainty and risks in view of the current pandemic, has decided to cancel a number of competitions to safeguard the interests of all stakeholders," said the Asian football governing body.

"In line with FIFA's decision to cancel the FIFA U17 and U20 World Cups in 2021 and taking into consideration the safety and health of Asia's youth players, the AFC has reluctantly decided to cancel the AFC U16 Championship Bahrain 2020 and the AFC U19 Championship Uzbekistan 2020," said AFC.

The next editions of both competitions will be allocated to the same hosts in 2023 when the Uzbekistan Football Association will host the AFC U20 Asian Cup and Bahrain Football Association will stage the AFC U17 Asian Cup.

The AFC has also decided to cancel the AFC Futsal Championship Kuwait 2020 and the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup Thailand 2021.

Both the Kuwait Football Association and the Football Association of Thailand will host the next editions, namely, Kuwait will stage the AFC Futsal Asian Cup 2022 and Thailand, the AFC Beach Soccer Asian Cup 2023.

The AFC has also decided to reschedule the qualifying rounds for the AFC U20 Women's Asian Cup 2022 and AFC U17 Women's Asian Cup 2022 until later this year.

Esteghlal to extend Milic's contract

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Esteghlal football club will extend the contract of defender Hrvoje Milic.

The contract of the 31-year-old Croatian left-back will expire at the end of January.

Milic left Esteghlal two weeks ago after he was sidelined by coach Mahmoud Fekri for several matches.

The local media have reported that Esteghlal have failed to meet their financial commitment.

"We are going to extend Milic's contract since his contract expires at the end of the current month," Nazari said.

Esteghlal forwards Cheick Diabate and Mehdi Ghaedi have been also linked with move abroad.

"We want to keep our players and will extend his contract," Esteghlal member of board of directors Hojat Nazari said.

Sajjad Shahbazzadeh moves to top goalscorer table

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Sepahan forward scored a goal against Sanat Naft Abadan in Matchday 12 of Iran Professional League (IPL) on Monday.

He went top of the goalscorer table with 10 goals.



Gol Gohar Nigerian forward has scored nine goals so far. Sepahan defeated Sanat Naft 2-1 in Abadan and went top of the table behind Esteghlal on goal difference.

The 31-year-old forward started his playing career at Saipa in 2010 and has also played at Qatar SC, Esteghlal and Naft Tehran.

Inflation rate increases 8.1% in rural regions

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) has announced that the inflation rate has risen 8.1 percent in the country's rural areas in the tenth Iranian calendar month of Dey (December 21, 2020-January 19, 2021). The SCI put the inflation rate at 49.8 percent in the rural regions in the tenth month.

According to the SCI, the inflation rate in the twelve-month period ended on January 19, which marks the end of the tenth month, stood at 32.2 percent, rising 1.7 percent from the figure for the twelve-month period ended on the last day of the ninth month.



Central Bank of Iran (CBI) in a statement last April had announced that the annual inflation rate for the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20) is set to be 22 percent.

The statement published on the website of the CBI read, "Given the adopted policies and taken measures and also taking the country's macro-economic factors into account, the CBI believes that based on the realistic scenarios, the inflation rate in the current year will continue its downward trend."

Last year, CBI Governor Abdolnaser Hemmati had said, "Our goal is curbing inflation rate and no estimation shows an inflation rate of over 20 percent for the next year".

Over 70% progress achieved in Goreh-Jask pipeline project's 1st phase

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** —The progress of the first phase of Iran's strategic Goreh-Jask oil pipeline project has surpassed 70 percent, the deputy director of the project in Petroleum Engineering and Development Company (PEDEC) stated.

Making the remarks on the sidelines of visiting the 25th edition of Iran International Oil, Gas, Refining, and Petrochemical Exhibition (Iran Oil Show) on Sunday, Ali Jafarzadeh said that such progress promises that the project will be completed by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20).

Despite the tough condition created by the sanctions and also coronavirus outbreak, this strategic project will be completed at the scheduled time, he underscored.

He announced the supply of more than 96 percent of the parts and equipment of this project from domestic sources and said: "This is an all-Iranian project and a high percentage of items required for this national project is supplied by the domestic companies."

As announced last month by the managing director of PEDEC, the implementation of Goreh-Jask project by domestic contractors has saved the country over €500 million.

Touraj Dehqani said that the implementation of the project so far has created direct jobs for 8,000 people, while providing indirect job opportunities for over 15,000 people as well.

Dehqani stated that the first phase of this project with a capacity to transfer over 300,000 barrels of crude oil per day will be ready for operation by the end of the current Iranian calendar year.

So far, more than 780 kilometers (km) of pipes have been delivered to the site and more than 400 km of piping has been carried out, the official said at the time.



According to the plan, the entire pipeline, which is about 1,000 kilometers, will be installed, tested, and operational by the year-end, he added.

Goreh-Jask project, which is aimed at expanding the oil transport capacity in the south of the country to one million barrels a day, was inaugurated in late June 2020 by President Hassan Rouhani.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony of the project, President Rouhani said this project was currently the country's most strategic project.

"We hope that exports from Jask will begin as the government's most strategic project by the end of this [calendar] year," the president noted.

Last week, the operator of Jask oil terminal project in southern Iran announced the beginning of the offshore pipeline extension operation for the early-phase of this project.

"Following the favorable weather conditions and the completion of initial preparations in recent days, the shore pulling operation of a 2.5-kilometer pipeline leading to the first single-point-mooring (SPM) of the terminal was started," Vahid Maleki said.

The mentioned operation is being carried out by a pipe-layer vessel called Sea Master, according to Maleki.

The official pointed to the implementation of this operation as the first part of the offshore development of Jask oil terminal and added: "The offshore section of the early phase of this project will be completed with the construction of two 36-inch offshore pipelines with a total length of 12 kilometers, various coastal facilities, as well as a single point mooring."

As the country's second major oil terminal, Jask terminal is under construction by Pars Oil and Gas Company (POGC) on 60 hectares of land and with nearly €260 million of investment.

In line with the development of the mentioned oil terminal, a pipeline project, dubbed Goreh-Jask oil transfer project, is also underway which is going to provide Iran with an alternative route for the country's crude oil exports that are currently carried out through the Strait of Hormuz.

Trade co-op discussed between Iran, Armenia

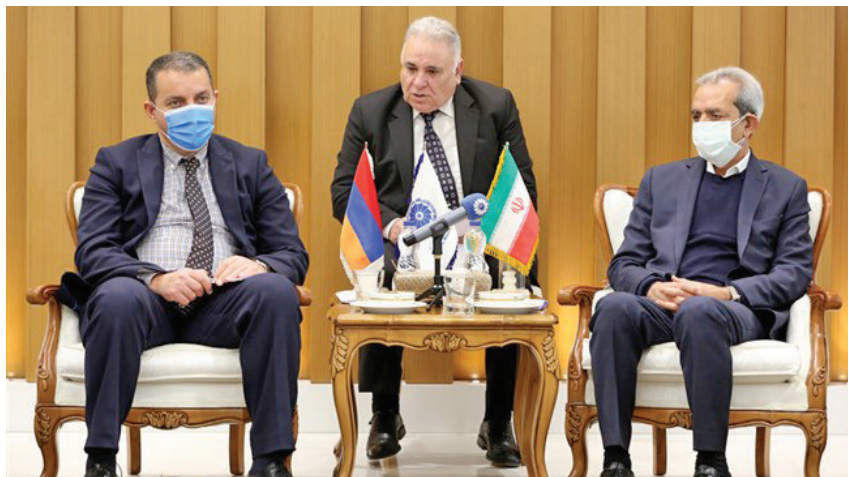
ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Gholam-Hossein Shafeie met with Armenian Economy Minister Vahan Kerobyan on Monday to discuss ways of removing barriers to the expansion of economic cooperation.

In this meeting, the two sides underlined the capacities for bilateral cooperation and explored ways for removing the existing challenges and obstacles to the expansion of trade relations and increasing the volume of joint investments by the two sides' private sectors.

Mentioning some of the problems in the field of transportation, Shafeie proposed the establishment of a joint transit and transportation company between the two countries to overcome such problems.

The official noted that joint production by the two countries would be a successful solution for removing the existing hurdles in the way of boosting trade relations between the two sides.

He further pointed to Armenia's prominent role in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the country's convenient access to the European market, describing the Armenian market as very valuable for



ICCIMA Head Gholam-Hossein Shafeie (R) and Armenian Economy Minister Vahan Kerobyan (L) meet in Tehran on Monday.

the Iranian private sector's trade and investment purposes.

"Iran and Armenia can reach an agreement in order to reduce trade costs by negotiating, exchanging trade delegations, and holding exhibitions," Shafeie said.

Stating that the only common land bor-

der between Iran and the EAEU region is the border between Iran and Armenia, the official stated that the fields of cooperation between the two countries are very diverse.

"Iran and Armenia can cooperate in the fields of agriculture, animal husbandry, processing industries, and development of

relations between small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)."

The Armenian minister for his part announced the dispatch of a delegation of Armenian entrepreneurs to Isfahan within the next month and proposed the dispatch of a delegation from the Iranian private sector to Armenia.

According to Kerobyan, these visits will make the two sides' private sectors more familiar with each other and their existing capabilities.

Heading a trade delegation, Kerobyan arrived in Tehran on Friday to discuss the expansion of trade relations between the two countries.

During this visit, which was organized by the Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry, the two sides signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for boosting trade ties.

The MOU was signed by Kerobyan and the Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Alireza Razm Hosseini in Tehran on Saturday.

The Armenian minister also met with the Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Abdolnaser Hemmati and discussed banking issues and ways of increasing the level of trade between the two sides.

NISOC inks research agreements with RIPI, Sharif University

1 → According to Fathollahi, the mentioned agreement covers a variety of areas including upstream studies, surface facilities, optimization, technical inspections, and metal corrosion, as well as environmental and safety issues.

He also mentioned the agreement with Sharif University of Technology, saying: "20 fields of work are defined in this agreement for cooperation with Sharif University of Technology and with this agreement in place, in the next few days we will see the signing of its first contract."

Further in the signing ceremony, the RIPI Head Jafar Tofiqi announced the readiness of his institute for any scientific and research cooperation with companies active in the field of oil and gas industry and said: "We have always been eager for the expansion of the relationship between

industry and academic centers, which fortunately in recent years, this challenge has been met, and today we are witnessing a paradigm shift in both universities and senior oil executives."

National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) has been seriously pursuing programs for using the capacities of domestic knowledge centers for meeting the oil industry's technological needs.

According to Ebrahim Taleqani, NIOC director of research and technology, cooperation between the oil industry and the country's knowledge-based companies and research institutions is going to play an important and practical role in solving challenges and operational problems of NIOC subsidiaries and meeting the key needs of the oil industry.



RIPI Head Jafar Tofiqi (R) and NISOC Technical Director Sadeq Fathollahi exchange signed agreement documents.

Intercity passenger car fleet to be renovated



late August.

In this regard, 800 million rials (about \$19,000) of bank facilities with an interest rate of four percent will be provided to the owners of old cars in order for them to purchase the new cars.

As reported, during the Monday ceremony, 250 taxis were symbolically handed

over to drivers in different provinces; the number will reach 450 by February 18.

The second phase of the mentioned program will be started in late August under a new contract between the Road Maintenance and Transportation Organization and Iran Khodro.

Improving the services provided to passengers, improving the level of travel safety, reducing fuel consumption and car maintenance costs are among the benefits of implementing this program.

There are currently 28,000 intercity passenger cars active in the country with an average age of 11 years, 17,000 of which are taxis.

More than 28.846 million passengers are transported by intercity cars every year, and 51 percent of the total public suburban trips are made by this fleet.

The Iranian government has been im-

plementing several programs for the renovation of the country's public transport fleet in order to reduce fuel consumption and reduce air pollution in major cities.

Back in May 2020, Transport Ministry had unveiled a portal for the owners of worn-out vehicles to register in a renovation program.

Speaking in the unveiling ceremony of the mentioned portal, the minister said the government's program for renovating the country's road transport fleet is going to reduce the average age of the fleet to 14.5 years.

The official noted that in order to accelerate the implementation of the plan, 25 domestic companies are going to participate in the program.

Domestic companies can participate in the renovation of up to 1,000 vehicles including, trucks, buses, and taxis a year.

ICCIMA hosts private sector's meeting with Majlis speaker

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA)'s board members gathered on Sunday in a meeting with parliament (Majlis) Speaker Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf, to discuss the issues and problems that the private sector is currently facing.

Chaired by the ICCIMA Head Gholm-Hassein Shafeie, the 11th board meeting of the ICCIMA was also attended by the heads of the chamber's committees, ICCIMA portal reported.

Speaking in this meeting, Shafeie underlined some of the problems that the country's private sector is currently struggling with and said that the private sector has been left out in several economic fields due to unfair competition in many areas and the country's business environment is not providing an equal platform for their activities.

The official said the solution to the country's economic problems is highly dependent on the implementation of resistance economy policies, as stated by the Leader of the



ICCIMA Head Gholm-Hassein Shafeie (1st L) and Majlis Speaker Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf (1st R) in a ICCIMA board meeting on Sunday.

Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei.

Shafeie further criticized the parliament's performance

regarding its programs for improving the country's business environment, saying: "Since starting its activity, the 11th Majlis has always considered issues such as improving the business environment and promoting economic indicators as its main programs, but the implementation of such programs requires tools and mechanisms, the most important of which is to adopt strict regulations and supervise their execution."

He pointed to the continuous changes in tax and tariff regulations as a major source of problems for the country's businessmen and called on the parliament not to change the country's long-term regulations regarding tax and tariffs, and major economic factors.

"Listen to the demands and suggestions of the private sector," Shafeie demanded.

The way to save the country's economy passes through production, he stressed, adding: "The way to save the production and exports is to strengthen and support the real and committed private sector."

4m tons of basic commodities imported in 10 months

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran has imported four million tons of basic goods during the first ten months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2020-January 19, 2021), according to the deputy managing director of Government Trading Corporation of Iran (GTC).

Amir Talebi said that 194 ships carrying basic goods have been docked and unloaded in Iranian ports during the 10-month period to supply the country's strategic reserves.

These goods have been imported to the country from the southern and northern ports, and the share of Imam Khomeini Port is more than other ports, the official stated.

"The process of importing the basic goods, from order registration, purchase, transportation, unloading, loading and warehousing to regulating the market and providing the strategic reserves has been done in the difficult condition of sanctions and the outbreak of coronavirus, and we are in good condition in terms of the strategic reserves", he pointed out.

In early October 2020, the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) announced that \$5.267 billion was supplied for importing basic commodities in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21, 2020).

Iran imported 25 million tons of basic goods during the previous Iranian calendar year, based on the data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

According to the IRICA Head Mehdi Mirashrafi, 35 million tons of commodities were imported into the country in the mentioned year, of which 25 million tons were basic goods.

"This year, the trend [of trade] has slowed down, and we hope that with the measures taken by the central bank, Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry, and IRICA, we will be able to minimize the deposition of goods



in the customs before and after clearance", Mirashrafi said in last June.

We are back to square one: Afghan MP

1→ How do you see Iran's role in fighting terrorism and violence in Afghanistan?

Iran's role in the fight against terrorism is very prominent. Iran is one of the countries that has made most sacrifices in the fight against terrorism. Iran's highest officials, including its president, prime minister and other influential figures, have been martyred by terrorists. Since the establishment of the Islamic Republic, Iran's slogan and approach were confronting terrorism, and we have witnessed this on the ground.

But regarding feeling inside Afghanistan, I should say that Iran is popular among Afghans due to its wise policy.

One of the main reasons why some other countries are so hated by Afghans is their meddling policies in Afghanistan's domestic affairs. They interfere in Afghanistan's internal affairs and support terrorism. Unlike these countries, Iran is not notorious in Afghanistan because it has not meddled in the country. The expectation of the Afghan people is that no country interfere in Afghanistan.

What have been the consequences of the U.S. war in Afghanistan after two decades? Why is the United States negotiating with the Taliban today?

The U.S. war on Afghanistan has not had tangible results for the country's stability. After twenty years of U.S. presence in Afghanistan,



we are back to square one.

A new political system has been established in Afghanistan and it had some advantages; however, the presence of the American troops in Afghanistan has intensified extremism and violence, and most importantly, the poverty and misery of the people have increased due to the wrong policy of the U.S. administration in Afghanistan.

The United States entered Afghanistan under the slogan of fighting terrorism and rooting out the Taliban and restoring security,

but today the Afghan people are witnessing that none of the promises made by the United States have been fulfilled. In many cases, the process is reversed.

What is your comment on some Arab regimes' financial support for the Taliban and reinforcing extremism in Afghanistan?

Unfortunately, terrorism and extremism in Afghanistan have large financial backers, including some Arab countries that were active in Afghanistan in the 1980s, and today a lot

of money is being injected into Afghanistan by Arab regimes, especially Saudi Arabia, to support extremist ideas.

The policy of these regimes is to wage sectarian and religious wars inside Afghanistan, of which we see many examples. The financial cost of this war is being paid from outside.

Saudi Arabia is one of the countries that has played a prominent role in sponsoring terrorism during the thirty years of civil war in Afghanistan, where the Taliban ruled for a while and kept the flames burning.

What changes are likely to occur in Washington's foreign policy toward Afghanistan as the new administration takes office in the United States?

In my opinion, with the new American administration coming to power, as the advisor of the new government announced, Mr. Khalilzad's mission has been extended.

This means that U.S. policy in Afghanistan will not change. We believe that the Americans have chosen the wrong path in the negotiations with the Taliban, and this path will not lead Afghanistan to prosperity. Instead of restricting the Taliban, the Americans are unfortunately putting pressure on the Afghan government, giving the Taliban more legitimacy via giving concessions every day.

The Taliban has even been given facilities and their prisoners been released. The path that Americans are following is wrong.

New generation of Taliban emerging, MP says

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN – Pointing to the brutality and violence among the first generation of the Taliban, an Iranian parliamentarian says that the Taliban has changed and the new generation of the movement is totally different in attitude.

"The first generation of the Taliban was reflecting brutality and violence and committed massacres against many Afghans, especially Shias," Ahmad Naderi tells the Tehran Times.

However, according to the MP, this was the first generation of the Taliban and observers must take into consideration recent changes in the Taliban's attitudes.

"Certainly, the Taliban, like many other movements, has changed, and the new generation of the movement is different from the previous generation," argues Naderi, a graduate of anthropology.

The following is the text of interview:

What did you mean when you said in a tweet that the Taliban is a genuine movement?

Sociology considers classical social movements as a phenomenon that has three components: Social actor, ideology,

and social context.

According to the French sociologist Alain Touraine, these three components, if combined well, can raise the project level of a movement. So, we call it a genuine movement.

We have three types of social actors; assuming the movement to be a pyramid, we can see some actors play the role of leadership at the top of the pyramid. Meanwhile, some others are distributors, and the rest are the mass of people at the bottom of the pyramid.

Distributors actually act as mediators between the bottom of the pyramid and the top. We have this definition in the classical sociology of the social movement. Ideology is a vital component in any movement that can be communist, Islamic or liberal, and so on. The social context also refers to the economic, cultural, or political context. A movement that has these three components is a genuine movement in the classical sociology of social movements.

When I say the Taliban is a genuine movement, I do not mean approval of this phenomenon; I just say the Taliban is a movement on the ground.

Nevertheless, the Taliban movement is a deep-rooted

movement in Afghanistan enjoying a social background called the Pashtuns; however, Taliban is not limited to the Pashtun people. There are various groups in the Taliban that are not necessarily Pashtuns. Therefore, from this perspective, the Taliban is a genuine movement. I do not make any positive or negative judgment.

What is the Islamic Republic's stance on the Taliban?

The Taliban must be understood in a chronological context. It should be viewed from an anachronistic point of view, not synchrological. That is why we need to look at the Taliban as a historic phenomenon.

The first generation of the Taliban was reflecting brutality and violence and committed massacres against many Afghans, especially Shias.

It is said that Iranian diplomats were assassinated by the Taliban, but I very doubt it. According to some accounts inside and outside Iran, the Iranian diplomats were martyred by Mazar-e Sharif but not by the Taliban. Rather, an intelligence service attributed to one of Iran's regional rivals engaged in terror operation to worsen the relationship between Iran and the Taliban at that time and even brought Tehran to the brink of war on the Taliban in Afghanistan.

These events pushed the Islamic Republic to decide entering the Afghanistan territory. "I transferred two mechanized divisions to the Afghan border within 48 hours and we were ready to attack the Taliban on the Afghan soil," said former IRGC commander Rahim Safavi.

However, this was the first generation of the Taliban and their attitudes and behavior are not defensible. But is the Taliban a constant phenomenon that has not changed at either the structure or the agent level? Certainly, the Taliban, like many other movements, has changed, and the new generation of the movement is different from the previous generation.

Besides, in the current situation, the only alternative that can stand against the global jihadists of ISIS is the Taliban.

We now see that the United States has several candidates for hosting ISIS, one of them is Afghanistan. The most important reason for sending ISIS terrorists to Afghanistan is its geopolitical and geostrategic position.

Afghanistan is located between regional and global powers: China, Russia, India, Iran and Pakistan. These powers are seeking a serious position and contribution to the future world order.

Afghanistan is still important to the United States, and the deployment of ISIS in Afghanistan could disrupt the balance between regional actors. Who can stand in face of ISIS as a local player?

Certainly, the Taliban! Because they make up half of Afghanistan's society and have an ethnic social background inside Pashtun people.

Therefore, we must look at this issue from the perspective of national interests. I think the second generation of the Taliban can confront ISIS, and this creates a strategic link between the Taliban and the national interests of Iran, and also Russia and China.

Do you expect that the Taliban has cut ties with its traditional supporters, including Saudi Arabia?

Unlike its new generation, the old generation of the Taliban had a strong connection with Saudi Arabia that no longer continues.

In other words, the Taliban has turned away from the ideology of Salafism and Wahhabism. I recommend you to watch Mohsen Islamzadeh's documentary film "Alone among the Taliban", which offers a brilliant account of what is going on inside the Taliban.

The documentary by Mohsen Islamzadeh was made in 2015 before Jurgen Todenhofer wrote "My Journey into the Heart of Terror: Ten Days in the Islamic State". Islamzadeh went to the Taliban and produced this global documentary, which has been translated into multiple languages.

This documentary shows that the media representation of the Taliban no longer is true, at least in the new generation of the movement.

The violent Salafism that was rooted in the first generation of the Taliban due to close ties between Deobandiyya schools and Saudi Arabia has faded in later generations, according to the film.

Therefore, the Taliban has no significant ties with Saudi Arabia and even no longer has the former ties with Pakistan.

In the current situation, our relationship with the Taliban is based on the principle of "The enemy of my enemy is my friend." We and the Taliban have a common enemy, and that is the United States.

Iraq's Kata'ib Hezbollah: Revenge to target source of fire

1→ Iraqi security expert Sabah al-Akili told the country's al-Maloume news website that by the end of 2020, American forces had transferred around 4,000 Daesh terrorists from neighboring Syria soil to Iraq.

He said the terrorists had been brought over in U.S.-flagged vehicles, which Iraq is barred from scrutinizing.

The American presence hampered Iraq's efforts to destroy the terror outfit, said al-Akili.

According to Press TV, in his tweet, the Kata'ib official also praised an aerial revenge attack against Saudi capital Riyadh that came following the Baghdad massacre.

"We congratulate the attack on [Mohammed] bin Salman's den," he said, referring to Saudi Arabia's crown prince.

Liberals can't accept U.S. is a 'leading terrorist state,' just as Trump supporters can't accept his election loss: Chomsky

Just like many Trump supporters, U.S. liberal intellectuals exist in a fantasy world in which a leading purveyor of "international terrorism" – the U.S. government – is perceived as a fundamentally benign force, Noam Chomsky told RT.

"Just as you can't get the Republican mobs to admit that the election was lost, you can't get liberal American intellectuals to recognize that the United States is a leading terrorist state," Chomsky told RT's Chris Hedges.

The facts are that for almost the entirety of its history as a sovereign state, the U.S. has waged a war of aggression against somebody, Chomsky said. The so-called "War on Terror", which Ronald Reagan made the focus of his foreign policy, was Washington dealing with "resistance to U.S. terrorism in Central America and also in South Africa."

Nelson Mandela was considered terrorist by the US until 2008, long after the apartheid regime was dismantled. The U.S. clandestine war on Nicaragua was ruled by the International Court of Justice a breach of international law.

"What the Reagan administration was doing was the peak of terrorism by our own definitions," Chomsky said. "But the New York Times ran an editorial saying we can dismiss the judgement of the court because it's a hostile forum. Why is it a hostile forum? Because it condemned the U.S."

Another victim of the U.S. is Cuba, which endured a decades-long blockade and a sustained U.S. campaign to undermine its government and cause an uprising. In the U.S., those actions are perceived as the CIA hatching silly plots to take away Fidel Castro's beard. "It was not that, it was a serious terrorist war that almost led to the destruction of the world" with the Cuban missile crisis, Chomsky pointed out.

22 aid agencies make unprecedented and united call for Biden administration to revoke Ansarallah terrorist designation

Twenty-two aid organizations working in Yemen remain extremely concerned about the humanitarian consequences of the designation of Ansar Allah as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) and Specially Designated Terrorist Group (SDGT) which came into effect on 19 January. This designation comes at a time when famine is a very real threat to a country devastated by six years of conflict, and it must be revoked immediately. Any disruption to lifesaving aid operations and commercial imports of food, fuel, medicine and other essential goods will put millions of lives at risk.

The four general licenses issued by the U.S. government aim to allow for the continued flow of aid to Yemen, seeking to mitigate the impacts of the designations, including by providing broad authorizations for humanitarian organizations. The legal implications of the designation and its impact on our work on the ground are yet to be clarified. However, it is already clear that even with licenses and exemptions in place for humanitarian work, the designation will have serious implications, causing delays and uncertainty in our ability to deliver assistance and making it even more difficult to operate in Yemen, particularly in areas controlled by the de facto authorities which are home to the majority of people in need.

Resistance News

Shin Bet warns Sheikh Barghouthi of running in elections

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN**— Israel's internal security service, **d e s k** Shin Bet, summoned Sheikh Omar al-Barghouthi, a senior Hamas official in Ramallah, for interrogation and threatened to arrest him if he tried to stand for any upcoming elections to be held in the Palestinian arena.

Sheikh Barghouthi's wife said that the Shin Bet had summoned her husband three times in the last few days.

She added that a Shin Bet officer at the Ofer detention center threatened to persecute and jail Sheikh Barghouthi if he ran as a candidate in the Palestinian elections.

During the questioning, she said, Sheikh Barghouthi replied to the officer that the Israeli occupation state would remain the enemy of the Palestinian people and that the elections need legitimacy, strength and standing in the face of the occupation.

About two weeks ago, Sheikh Barghouthi was released from an Israeli jail after he spent nine months in administrative detention.

Sheikh Barghouthi is a noted national figure who had spent a total of 30 years in different Israeli jails. He is the brother of prisoner Nael al-Barghouthi and father of a martyr and a prisoner, and his family has always been exposed to Israeli persecution.

The Shin Bet has already arrested many Hamas lawmakers and officials in the West Bank and warned them of participating in any efforts aimed at achieving the national reconciliation.

First Announcement



Khouzestan Steel Company

IN THE NAME OF GOD

INVITATION TO INTERNATIONAL TENDER

No. :428139

KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY INTENDS TO PURCHASE
15000 MT HIGH CARBON FERRO MANGANESE
WITH THE FOLLOWING SPECIFICATIONS:

Mn	76 – 78 %	Min 76%
Si	1.2 %	Max
S	0.02 %	Max
C	7.5 %	Max
P	0.3 %	Max
Fe	Rest	
Size Of Pieces	20-60 mm	Min 90 %
	<20 mm	Max 10 %
Packing	Bulk in Container	
Delivery Date 2021	March	April
	(2500 MT)	(2500 MT)
	May	June
	(2500 MT)	(2500 MT)
	August	September
	(2500 MT)	(2500 MT)

INTRESTED BIDDERS MAY OBTAIN SET OF DOCUMENTS, CONTAINING THE RELEVANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS BY SUBMISSION OF A WRITTEN APPLICATION AND PAYMENT OF A NON-REFUNDABLE FEE OF:

EUR 50 "FIFTY EURO" TO THE ONE OF BELOW ACCOUNT No.:

- ACCOUNT No.**0100013543943** AT "EXPORT DEVELOPMENT BANK OF IRAN AHVAZ CENTRAL BRANCH"
- ACCOUNT No.**1902-750-4019644-1** AT "EGHTESAD NOVIN BANK- OF IRAN AHVAZ SHARIATI BRANCH" OR

Rials 2,000,000, "TWO MILION RIALS" TO THE ONE OF BELOW ACCOUNT No.:

- ACCOUNT No.**0102513186002** AT "MELLI BANK OF IRAN AHVAZ KSC BRANCH"
- ACCOUNT No.**0100304453001** AT "SADERAT BANK OF IRAN AHVAZ KSC BRANCH"

AND PRESENT THE PAYMENT RECEIPT TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:

RAW MATERIAL & ENERGY PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY (KSC)
KM 10 AHVAZ – BANDAR IMAM KHOMEINI ROAD
P.O.BOX: 1378
POST CODE: 61397-31398
AHVAZ – IRAN

Note1: BIDDER SHALL SUBMIT WITH TENDER A BID BOND ISSUED BY AN IRANIAN BANK OR BY A EUROPEAN FIRST CLASS BANK, IN THE AMOUNT OF **310,000 Euro OR 88,000,000,000 Rials FOR 15000 MT HIGH CARBON FERRO MANGANESE** AND MAY REDUSED IN PROPORTION WITH THE QUANTITY OF BIDDERS OFFER.

Note2: ALL BIDS MUST BE INFORMED US WHICH PARTICIPATE IN OUR TENDER UP TO **3thFeb, 2021**. WHEN YOUR COMPANY IS CONFIRMED AND THE TENDER DOCUMENT IS SENT TO YOU, YOU MUST BE DELIVERED TO THE AFORESAID ADDRESS ON OR BEFORE THE CLOSING DATE **14thFeb,2021**.THE OPENING DATE OF ENVELOPES WILL BE AT 10 AM ON THE **16thFeb,2021** IN THE BUYER'S CONFERENCE ROOM LOCATED AT THE HEAD OFFICE OF KSC AHVAZ-IRAN AND THE BIDDERS OR THEIR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES CAN ATTEND THE MEETING OF THE TENDER.

Note 3: FOR MORE INFORMTION PLEASE CONTACT WITH FOLLOWING DETAILS:

Tel No. : +98 61 32908115 / 32136159

Fax No. : +98 61 32908115

Mr.M.FARZINEJAD EMAIL : m.farzinejad @ksc.ir OR VISIT:http://WWW.KSC.IR

روابط عمومی شرکت فولاد خوزستان

Five tourism projects to come on stream in Bushehr

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — A total of five tourism-related projects are scheduled to be inaugurated in southwestern Bushehr province, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

Two hotels, a tourist complex, eco-lodge unit and traditional restaurant will come on stream by the end of the current Iranian month of Bahman (February 18), Sakineh Salari said on Monday.

A budget of 2.1 trillion rials (\$50.5 million at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been allocated to the projects, which will generate over 127 job opportunities for the locals, she noted.

She also noted that as the province enjoys several natural and historical attractions, establishing such centers and providing needed services will attract more domestic and foreign tourists to the region.



Last April, the provincial tourism chief Mohammad-Hossein Arastuzadeh announced that the tourism sector of the province is ready to jumpstart after coronavirus crisis ends.

He also stressed that the province needs innovative plans and programs to attract more tourists and travelers to its tourist attractions and historical sites.

With over 6,000 years of history and significant monuments from the Elamite, Achaemenid, Parthian and Sassanid eras, Bushehr Province is one of Iran's most important historical centers.

Besides its cultural heritage, beautiful beaches and lush palm groves make it an attractive destination for world travelers.

The historical and architectural monuments of Bushehr include Islamic buildings like mosques and praying centers, mansions, old towers, castles, as well as gardens.

When it comes to cultural attractions, there are many historical mounds in Bushehr including Tall-e Khandaq with Sassanid architectural style, Tall-e Marv located near an Achaemenid Palace and Qajar era Malek al-Tojar Mansion. Qajar era Kazeruni Mansion, which has been inscribed on the World Heritage List, is another attraction that world travelers love to see among various ancient sites.

Turkish Airlines resumes flights to Isfahan after almost one-year halt

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** —Turkey's flag carrier Turkish Airlines resumed its flights to Isfahan on Sunday after almost a year of suspension over the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the schedule, two flights per week will be carried out between Isfahan and Istanbul under strict health protocols and with the 50 percent of seat capacity, the deputy provincial tourism chief Heidar Sadeqi announced on Monday.

Back in September, and following months of ups and downs, the flag carrier resumed its flights to Tehran after six months of halt.

Outbound passengers are required to hold a health certificate with a negative coronavirus PCR test result, otherwise, the boarding pass won't be issued for them.

In late August, Turkish Airlines extended the suspension of its flights to Iran until October 1, reneging on its previous announcement for resuming flights to Tehran and four other cities of Tabriz, Shiraz, Mashhad, and Isfahan as of September 1.

Although Turkey resumed flights to many countries in June and July after few months of suspension over the COVID-19 pandemic, it kept its common borders with Iran closed, while these repeated delays in the reopening Iran-Turkey borders have damaged the tourism ties between the two countries.

As Turkey is a country through which many trips of Iranians living abroad and foreign nationals to Iran are made, the flight suspensions prevented several businessmen and students from continuing their activities and even left patients who want to go abroad for further treatment helpless.

The pandemic has taken a huge toll on Iran's civil aviation sector with reports showing that airlines lost hundreds of millions of dollars because of flight cancellations during the busy New Year travel season in late March.

Some 1.37 million Iranian tourists visited Turkey during the first eight months of 2019, accounting for 4.4% of all international arrivals in the country.

Meimoon Qaleh in Iran's Qazvin

TEHRAN (Tasnim) — Meimoon Qaleh Castle, also known as Mehman Qaleh Castle, is one of several castle ruins scattered throughout the Qazvin area, north of Iran.



It sits in the middle of the city of Qazvin, hence heavily eroded, and is almost 5000 square meters in footage. The remains indicate the castle to have had a large dome in its central section.

All ceilings no longer exist. The fortification has a subterranean network of 3 east-west tunnels under the structure connected by a north-south tunnel. The two levels were connected via a helical staircase.

The main gates must have been on the northern side, it is believed. Eight towers made of brick surrounded the castle. All evidence indicates this structure to have been a military fortress of some sorts.

The castle's date of construction remains unknown, but it is currently thought to have belonged to the Abbaside era, possible constructed by the orders of Musa Al-hadi, the Caliph, in 784 AD. Some experts however believe it to belong to the Buyid dynasty based on the artifacts unearthed at the site.

Nasir al-Din al-Tusi also spent some time here while residing with the Ismailis in the 13th century.

Coronavirus causes \$3.3b damage to Iran's tourism so far, minister says

→ 1 Government's care and support packages

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

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

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

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

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

Tourism industry in critical situation

In October, Mounesan warned that Iran's cultural heritage and tourism will be in a critical situation if the crises caused by the outbreak of the coronavirus continue.

In August, the minister said that Iran's



tourism has suffered a loss of 12 trillion rials (some \$2.85 billion) since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

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

Last April, the government announced it will support those who are grappling with fiscal problems by offering loans with a 12-percent interest rate. The Ministry of Cultural Heritage,

Tourism and Handicrafts also suggested a rescue package for tourism businesses.

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

Coronavirus may turn tourism into luxury item

In June, the United Nations World Tourism Organization praised efforts made by Iran's tourism ministry to manage the travel industry during the coronavirus pandemic. UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili said in a letter to Mounesan that the country's measures have truly earned plaudits to mitigate the

impact on tourism. "A series of measures that the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts of Iran has taken, in accordance with the guidelines and recommendations of UNWTO, has truly earned plaudits as an effective practice to mitigate the impact on tourism," the letter reads.

Some experts believe that the coronavirus pandemic may turn tours and travels into luxury items as observing health protocols will raise the cost of travel in the country. Mohammad Ali Vaeqi, the vice president of the Iranian Tour Operators Association, warned that with the continuation of the coronavirus outbreak, tourists may prefer individual travel rather than tours, adding that they may also choose to go on a trip by their vehicles and stay in tents or in nature instead of hotels.

In the global scene, part of the new travel puzzle is the jet-set mindset focusing on tough hygiene care and social distancing as cardinal guidelines for slowing the spread of the virus. So the average expenditure will be raised for a typical traveler particularly inbound passengers so lesser ones can afford to buy privacy and space and safer travel amenities.

Iran expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 24 being inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, it aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025. The latest available data show eight million tourists visited the Islamic Republic during the first ten months of the past Iranian calendar year (started March 21, 2019).

Iran students showcase richness of Iranian, Polish cultures

By Zahra Mirzafarjouyan

TEHRAN — The Exhibition of Furniture designed by students of the College of Fine Arts of Tehran University inspired by Iranian and Polish cultures was held on Sunday at the Residence of Polish Ambassador to Iran Maciej Fa?kows, Mehr News Agency reported.

As a part of a joint academic project between the University of Tehran and Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Tehran, students of the Industrial Design Department were tasked to design a piece of furniture that would combine the elements of Iranian and Polish cultures and could be placed in an Iranian-Polish house.

While keeping up with modern trends, the designers aimed to revive the cultural heritage of both Iran and Poland by synthesizing elements of different esthetics. The rediscovery of so many commonalities like cultural symbols, narrative themes and specific sensitivities produced a surprisingly harmonious and innovatory blend that was translated into practical forms.

All students were invited to choose a tangible or intangible element in the cultural heritage of the two countries. Some of them became immersed in the Polish stories and myths through the literature, films, texts, artistic works, monuments and tales. They extracted elements of Polish cultural heritage that could inspire a piece of furniture, but also be linked to some phenomena in Iranian culture. Each project has been conceived on an element, a history, a monument, a craft technique or a trace belonging to the culture of each country. Each object or story chosen by the students was analyzed and transformed it into furniture design evoking distinctive emotions.

Young Iranian students prepared 11 projects. Five of them have been produced by Behman Design Company with the sponsorship of the Polish Embassy in Tehran.

In this project, young Iranian designers set out on a quest to showcase the richness of two cultures in a new way. Abundant in motives, colors and — above all — symbolism, Polish and Iranian art provided much of the inspiration, while up-to-date technology allowed them to create original works of applied art: design-intensive, high-end furniture.

In the unveiling ceremony of Iran-Poland Furniture Exhibition, Polish Ambassador to Tehran Maciej Fa?kows said, "In a joint academic project by the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Iran and the University of Tehran, students of the Industrial Design Department were invited to design a piece of furniture that would combine the elements of Iranian and Polish cultures to display the richness of these two countries cultures in a new way."

"All the students invited to search through literature, films, and artistic works to find distinctive stories or motives that could be paired. So through synthesizing elements, giving them more universal notion and with the use of modern technologies, they created a fully utilitarian, design-intensive furniture," he added.

He went on to say, "During 2020, the students struggled



not only with ideas and materials but also with the pandemic situation which interfered with the learning process greatly limiting the access to sources and their tutors. Despite all the headwinds, the project was successfully finalized and we are all the more pleased to invite you to see its results."

Supervisor of the furniture design project Maryam Khalili, who is the Head of Industrial Design Department at College of Fine Arts, University of Tehran said, "Talking about culture has no limits. When we approach the notion of culture, we touch on a vast subject which has its sensibilities and its strengths. In the industrial design department at the University of Tehran, we always try to create a kind of awareness on cultural topics to bring students closer to anything that they feel is forgotten or being transformed in our modern society and around the world. These topics are not necessarily routine. This furniture design project, inspired by Iranian and Polish culture, is a part of the cross-cultural topics that we carried out during the last semester."

"I remember very well October 2, 2019, the day I met Irena Kolakowska at the University of Tehran. She told us about possible cooperation between the Embassy of Poland and the design department at the University of Tehran. We organized several meetings within the University and with Behman (our official partner) to schedule an international event between students from both countries," she added.

"These meetings progressed until February 2020, when the whole world encountered the COVID-19. This disease had all possible effects on our operational and academic approaches. The presence of students was reduced and the social conditions ensured that the meetings around this project went into a virtual model. Our planned international exchange program was cancelled and we had to think differently about this interesting project. We could neither program a new schedule nor have our students by our side to lead them on this new path. We, therefore, decided to rethink our approach. Everything was set to zero and with new conditions, we thought about the design of this exhibition," Khalili noted.

Supervisor of the furniture design project went on to say, "All students were invited to choose a tangible or intangible element in the cultural heritage of the two countries. This

Some 12,000 historical objects retrieved in 9 months

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian authorities have recovered 12,000 original historical objects from smugglers or illegal diggers over the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-December 20, 2020), a senior police official in charge of protecting cultural heritage said on Sunday.

A total of 1953 culprits were detained in this regard and surrendered to judicial system for further investigation, Amir Rahmatollahi said, Mehr reported.

In this connection, 5,246 fake objects were confiscated as well, the official added.

He also noted that 330 metal detectors,

which were operated by unauthorized users, were seized in this regard.

Several exquisite and priceless relics that represent various eras of the country's rich history, have been unearthed in various excavations in the country's historical sites, and are mostly being kept in different museums.

Iran is home to one of the world's oldest continuous major civilizations, embracing settlements dating back to 4000 BC.

It also hosts some of the world's oldest cultural monuments including bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, gardens, rich natural, rural landscapes as well as 24 UNESCO World



Heritage sites.

The name of Iran, formerly known as Persia, mostly conjures up the first Per-

sian Empire, ruled by the Achaemenids (550 – 330 BC) and sites such as Pasargadae and Persepolis. However, there are tens of prehistorical sites as the Burnt City in Sistan-Baluchestan, Tepe Sialk in Kashan, Susa and Chogha Zanbil in the Khuzestan province and Ecbatana in Hamedan which predate Achaemenid period.

From a wider point of view, Iranian history can be divided into Pre-Islamic and Islamic eras. The Medes unified Iran as a nation and empire in 625 BC. The Islamic conquest of Persia (633–656) that put an end to the mighty Sassanid Empire (224–651) was a turning point in the history of the nation.

Iranian Covid-19 vaccine shows no side effects on 21 volunteers

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Iranian-made coronavirus vaccine has been injected into 21 people through the first phase, which has not yet reported any serious side effects so far, Minoo Mohraz, member of the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control has stated.

COVIRAN BAREKAT, the first coronavirus vaccine made by Iranian researchers of the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam, was unveiled and injected into three volunteers during a ceremony on December 29, 2020.

On January 11, the second dose of the vaccine was injected into the three volunteers.

So far, 21 people have received the first dose of the vaccine, and the permission is issued to inject a group of 14 people. This number should reach 56 people to pass the first clinical study phase.

Pointing out that the first phase of the human study will probably be completed by the end of February, she said that according to the second phase studies, the clinical trial will probably start with 300 volunteers.

The vaccine is given in two doses every two weeks. Some volunteers have already received a second dose, which fortunately has no side effects, she highlighted, ISNA reported on Monday.

She went on to note that If all three



phases of the human trial are successful, the vaccine can be mass-produced in June.

Mohammad Mokhber, the head of the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam said on January 19 that over the next month, 2-4 million doses of vaccine will be produced monthly, which will soon reach up to 4-24 million doses.

On January 18, the second homegrown COVID-19 vaccine developed and proposed

by the Razi Vaccine and Serum Research Institute has been approved to begin a clinical trial.

Mass vaccination by next 2 months

On January 17, President Hassan Rouhani said the government is trying its best to start mass vaccination against the coronavirus by the next two months with the priority given to medical staff and high-risk individuals.

The COVAX vaccines will be provided to the country by the end of the current [Iranian calendar] year (March 20) or at the beginning of the next [Iranian calendar] year, Rouhani said at a meeting of the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control.

Other vaccines have also been purchased which will be available soon, he noted, adding, a co-produced vaccine called "Pasteur" will also be mass-produced during the spring.

Referring to the homegrown vaccines, he announced that two domestic vaccines that have been licensed for the clinical trial will also be available by the next summer.

Covid-19 new cases, toll

In a press briefing on Monday, Health Ministry's spokesperson Sima-Sadat Lari confirmed 6,309 new cases of COVID-19 infection, raising the total number of infections to 1,379,286. She added that 1,171,070 patients have so far recovered, but 4,057 remain in critical conditions of the disease.

During the past 24 hours, 89 patients have lost their lives, bringing the total number of deaths to 57,481, she added.

So far, 8,960,186 COVID-19 diagnostic tests have been performed in the country.

Lari noted that currently, 18 cities are in medium-risk "orange" zones, and 154 in low-risk "yellow" zones.

Mangrove forests at serious risk of disappearing, loss of species

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — Although, the existing laws prohibits any destruction and pollution of the wetlands and forests, the mangrove ecosystems in southern Iran are in serious danger due to the construction of roads and shrimp farming sites.

Mangroves are ecosystems that are unique in terms of biodiversity and high production rates with ecological and socioeconomic value. These forests, with atmospheric carbon stabilization, play an important role in controlling global climate change.



In this way, destruction of mangroves liberates a significant amount of carbon storage, which can worsen global warming and other effects of climate change. The most important consequences of climate change on the coast and its ecosystems are temperature rise, change in precipitation and sea level rise.

Iranian mangrove forests occur in the north part of the Persian Gulf and Oman Sea. The areas of Iranian mangrove forests are almost 10,700 hectares which maximum area 67.5 km between Khamir Port and northwest of Qeshm Island, and minimum area 0.01 km in Bardestan estuary.

Only two species of mangrove include *Avicennia marina* from *Avicenniaceae* and *Rhizophora macrunata* from *Rhizophoraceae* are found in the Persian Gulf. A. marina species is dominant specie in these forests and Rh. macrunata specie just is found in Sirik region. Overexploitation of mangrove leaves and oil pollution are the main destruction factors in this region.

Now, mangrove forests in Khor Bardestan wetland of Bushehr province are in serious danger due to road construction and shrimp farming site.

Environmentalists are concerned that the migratory birds will migrate out of the area forever. And the pollution will lead to the gradual death of the mangrove forests and the aquatic species.

If fresh water does not reach the forests, this ecosystem and its biodiversity will be seriously endangered.

Masoud Baqerzadeh Karimi, the director general of aquatic ecosystems at the Department of Environment (DOE) said road construction and the shrimp farming site could have a negative impact on the Khorbardestan Dayyer wetland and its forests.

According to Article one of the law on preservation and rehabilitation of wetlands, any destruction or pollution of the wetland is prohibited. So that, any construction around the wetland should be stopped to prevent any possible danger, he said, ISNA reported on Monday.

Global ice loss accelerating at record rate, study finds

The melting of ice across the planet is accelerating at a record rate, with the melting of the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets speeding up the fastest, research has found.

The rate of loss is now in line with the worst-case scenarios of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the world's leading authority on the climate, according to a paper published on Monday in the journal *The Cryosphere*.

Thomas Slater, lead author and research fellow at the centre for polar observation and modelling at the University of Leeds, warned that the consequences would be felt around the world. "Sea level rise on this scale will have very serious impacts on coastal communities this century," he said.

About 28tn tonnes of ice was lost between 1994 and 2017, which the authors of the paper calculate would be enough to put an ice sheet 100 metres thick across the UK. About two thirds of the ice loss was caused by the warming of the atmosphere, with about a third caused by the warming of the seas.

Over the period studied, the rate of ice loss accelerated by 65%, the paper found, from 0.8tn tonnes a year in the 1990s to 1.3 trillion tonnes a year by 2017. About half of all the ice lost was from land, which contributes directly to global sea level rises. The ice loss over the study period, from 1994 to 2017, is estimated to have raised sea levels by 35 millimetres.

The greatest quantities of ice were lost from floating ice in the polar regions, raising the risk of a feedback mechanism known as albedo loss. White ice reflects solar radiation back into space – the albedo effect – but when floating sea ice melts it uncovers dark water which absorbs more heat, speeding up the warming further in a feedback loop.

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 116)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

freedom	آزادی	
watch	تماشا	
to watch	تماشا کردن	
own; self	خود	
داخل و خارج		
(ذر) داخل / dā'xele/ : تو، توی		
in the middle of	(ذر) وسط /va'sate/	
green	سبز	
white	سفید	
perhaps	شاید /šāyad/	
film, movie	فیلم	
قرار داشتن رَسمی : واقع بودن		
walk	گِردش	ماشین

Migratory birds wintering in northern Iran increased by 30%



ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — The population of migratory birds took flight to spend the cold season in the northern province of Mazandaran increased by 30 percent since the beginning of winter (December 21, 2020) compared to the same period last year, head of wildlife affairs at the provincial department of environment (DOE) has said.

Annual census for migratory birds in Iran begins in the middle of the Iranian calendar month of Dey (December 22- January 20), and ends in middle of the month of Bahman (January 21- February 19), which will be a 1-month period since January 1 to 31.

The reason for the increase in the migration of wintering birds this year is due to the severe and premature cold in Siberia, Korous Rabiei stated, IRNA reported on Monday.

According to the wintering census last year, 90 species of migratory birds with a population of over 500,000 migrated to the three wetlands of Miankaleh, Sorkhrud and Azbaran, reservoirs and protected areas of the province, which is predicted to reach up to 700,000 this [Iranian calendar] year, he explained.

He went on to say that the largest increase in the migratory birds' population is related to the whooper swan, whose number increased about 10 times compared to the same period last year, from 500 to about 5,000.

Due to having 800 reservoirs and wetlands, this province is considered as the main migration destination for aquatic birds in four seasons, which hosts more than 130 species of birds with a population of one million annually.

The migration growth, the severe and premature cold of the province and the outbreak of influenza virus have made the provision of nutrition to the main agenda of the DOE to prevent poaching, he stated.

"So far, about 20 tons of food for wintering birds has been provided with the participation of donors, environmental organizations and the DOE," he added.

Every year, from Early-September to Late-February, Iran hosts rare species of migratory birds heading from north to the southern countries due to reduced seasonal temperatures and food availability.

Among the various groups of migratory birds wintering in Iran, the largest population belongs to the group of geese, swans and ducks amounting to 781,499 and the smallest population of 7 are the long-tailed ducks or oldsquaw.

Provinces of Mazandaran and Golestan are the first provinces with the highest number of migratory birds for having sufficient resources, as movement of migratory birds is closely linked to seasonal availability of resources.

What pushes migratory birds toward disappearance?

Bird migration is the regular seasonal movement, often north and south along a flyway, between breeding and wintering grounds. Many species of bird migrate. Migration carries high costs in predation and mortality, including from hunting by humans, and is driven primarily by availability of food.

Unsustainable development in Iran has resulted in habitat fragmentation posing a serious threat to the migratory birds; also anthropogenic disturbance such as agricultural expansion has resulted in dramatic global habitat loss and fragmentation.

Moreover, poaching, overgrazing, and long-standing drought spells have also impacted habitat destruction which ultimately results in birds' total extinction.

Dalmatian pelican, Siberian crane, lesser white-fronted goose, and white-headed duck are among the endangered migratory birds which migrate to Iran.

Martyr Soleimani plan: 61 m Iranians undergone coronavirus screening

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Some 61 million people across the country have been screened for Covid-19 infection under the national plan named after martyr Qassem Soleimani, ISNA reported on Monday.

Aimed at cutting the transmission chain of the disease, the plan is being implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, Basij, and the Red Crescent Society, through which volunteer forces provide information, testing, diagnosis, referral of suspects to health centers, and offer services by visiting people's homes.

Over 4 million health ambassadors are cooperating in the Soleimani plan, which

has played an effective role in coronavirus control, Gholamreza Soleimani, head of the Basij Organization said.

"We decide to plan an eradication phase in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, and we hope to implement this phase by April and May so that the disease is completely eradicated in the country," he stated.

Some 22,530 monitoring teams have been formed within the framework of the plan since December 15, 2020, with 103,000 members, of which more than 270,000 are in contact to identify COVID-19 patients, said Jafar Sadeq-Tabrizi, head of the Network Management Center of the Ministry of Health said on December 15, 2020.

ber 15, 2020.

Some 6,730 home care teams have been formed in the country with the participation of 18,000 forces, who have taken care of 41,000 people at home, and rapid result tests have been performed on 7,500 suspects, he explained.

So far, with the participation of 61,000 people, more than 10,000 monitoring teams have been formed. About 782,000 visits and monitoring of various places and centers have been done to warn those who do not observe the health protocols, Sadeq-Tabrizi stated.

Daily new cases and mortalities on a declining trend

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ◀ ▶ ☞

Iran plans building desalination plants along Persian Gulf, Sea of Oman

The Department of Environment (DOE) is preparing a plan to deploy desalination plants on the shores of the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman in order to supply drinking water to the coastal provinces.

Ahmad Reza Lahijanzadeh, deputy chief of the marine environment of the DOE, announced that suitable areas that cause the least damage to the environment have been identified in Hormozgan province.

According to him, the project, which is to be carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Energy, will supply water for 17 drought-ridden provinces. The country's coastline stretches to about 5,800 kilometers, which includes the Caspian Sea in the north and the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman in the south.

The provinces of Gilan, Mazandaran, Golestan, Khuzestan, Bushehr, Hormozgan and Sistan-Baluchestan in the north and south are among the coastal provinces that are struggling with water shortages.

برنامه ایران برای تامین آب شرب از طریق خلیج فارس و دریای عمان

سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست ایران در حال مطالعه طرحی برای استقرار آب شیرین کن‌ها در سواحل خلیج فارس و دریای عمان به منظور تامین بخشی از آب شرب استان های ساحلی است.

به گزارش ایرنا، احمد رضا لاهیجان زاده معاون محیط زیست دریایی سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست اعلام کرد مکان‌یابی در استان هرمزگان به پایان رسیده و محل‌های مناسبی که کمترین آسیب را به محیط زیست وارد کند، در این استان مشخص شده‌اند. به گفته او، این طرح که قرار است با همکاری وزارت نیرو انجام شود شامل ۱۷ استان خشک و بی‌آب می‌شود.

طول سواحل کشور حدود پنج هزار و ۸۰۰ کیلومتر است که شامل دریای خزر در شمال و خلیج فارس و دریای عمان در جنوب می‌شود. استان های گیلان، مازندران، گلستان، خوزستان، بوشهر، هرمزگان و سیستان و بلوچستان در شمال و جنوب کشور جزو استان های ساحلی محسوب می‌شوند که با کمبود آب شرب دست و پنجه نرم می‌کنند.

INTERNATIONAL DAILY
www.tehrantimes.com

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

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

Tehrantimes79 Tehrantimes79 Tehrantimes79

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



GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

There is reward for kindness to every living thing.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Organizers agree to extend Tehran virtual book fair

CULTURE TEHRAN — The organizers of the virtual edition of the Tehran Book Fair, which opened last week have agreed to extend the fair for two more days until Wednesday.

The books will be delivered to all the various cities across the country for free, while the virtual fair is open around the clock.

The book fair was inaugurated in a ceremony held at the Iran Book and Literature House last Tuesday.

The ceremony was attended by Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Abbas Salehi, Iran Book and Literature House director Ayyub Dehqanfar, and Union of Tehran Publishers and Booksellers director Hooman Hassanpur.

Speaking at the ceremony, Hassanpur said, "The book fair is usually held to support publishers and booksellers, and due to the pandemic, we focused more on the supportive role of the event this year."

"This is the first time we are holding a virtual book fair, and we might face some shortages and difficulties, however, we will do our best and will review the process day by day," he said.

Deputy Culture Minister for Cultural Affairs Mohsen Javadi, also present at the ceremony, called the virtual book fair a bookshop, and even more a cultural venue.

"The book fair offers a greater facility and a simpler way for purchasing books. The virtual space has more capacity, and if we had initiated the project we could have had even more foreign publishers in the fair this year. However, we hope we can help promote book reading," Javadi said.

The culture minister was the next who made a short speech at the ceremony.

"The publishing industry had a great loss during the coronavirus era in Iran and in the world. However, book reading has increased during the pandemic," he said.

He called the virtual book fair a new experience that can be a valuable event.

"The virtual space has helped the publishing industry. E-book and podcasts have helped promote book reading in this space," he said.

"The economy of the virtual book fair is also of high significance. Publishers from other cities had more problems in attending the fair in Tehran while in this online book fair they can easily participate and there will be more space to compete.

"The world of today is the world of data, and the more knowledge and power we have, the better we can reinforce cultural movements," he concluded.

17 international webinars have been organized on various cultural topics.

The Persian language in Europe was discussed in the first webinar of the fair on Wednesday. A number of Iranian and Turkish publishers held a session on the translation of children's books. The topic was also scrutinized in a webinar by Iranian and Arab publishing houses.

A Spanish translation of "Roots of the Islamic Revolution in Iran" written by Hamid Algar was introduced during a ceremony on the margins of the fair on Thursday.

The webinar was attended by translator Shaykh Abdulkarim Javier Orobio, the director of El Faro International Publishing House in the Colombian capital of Bogota, Angelica Maria Rojas, and Iran's Cultural Attache in Spain Mohammad-Mehdi Ahmadi and guests from Iran and Colombia.

Hamid Algar is a British-American Professor Emeritus of Persian Studies at the College of Near Eastern Studies, the University of California at Berkeley.

Srdan Markovic from the Serbian Publishing House Utopia, Iranian cultural attaché in Serbia Mehdi Shirazi and translator Aleksandar Dragovic participated in the webinar on Friday and discussed Iranian books and the translation into Persian of books in Serbia.

Dragovic is the translator of a selection from Iranian children's book writer Hushang Moradi Kermani's bestseller "The Stories of Majid", which was unveiled at the 64th Belgrade International Book Fair in 2019.

The 33rd edition of Iran's most important cultural event was scheduled to be held in April 2020, and Turkey was slated to be the guest of honor, however, the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance canceled the fair due to a massive rise in the death toll from coronavirus in the country.

Finally, the ministry and the Iran Book and Literature House, the main organizers of the book fair, decided to run the event online.

Fajr film festival to pay tribute to Parviz Purhosseini, Changiz Jalilvand

A R T TEHRAN — The **d e s k** organizers of the 39th Fajr Film Festival plan to commemorate Parviz Purhosseini and Changiz Jalilvand, two cinematic figures who recently died of COVID-19.

The commemoration will take place at the closing ceremony.

Stage and screen actor Purhosseini's credits include acting in "Bashu, Little Stranger," by Bahram Beizai, "Kamalolmolk" by Ali Hatami, "Angelica Ship" by Mohamamd Bozorgnia and "Day of Angel" by Behruz Afkhami.

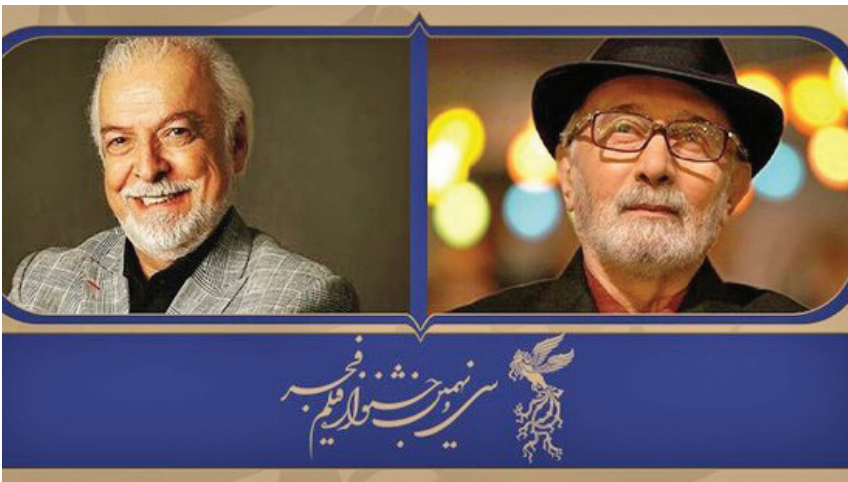
He was a graduate of acting from the University of Tehran.

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

Voice actor Jalilvand lent his voice to Marlon Brando and Paul Newman in many acclaimed movies.

Jalilvand had voiced Burt Lancaster, Richard Burton, Bruce Willis and Ed Harris, as well as some Iranian actors including Behruz Vosuqi, Mohammad-Ali Fardin and Nasser Malak-Motiei.

He also lent his voice to most of the characters played by Jamshid Mashayekhi



This combination photo shows voice actor Changiz Jalilvand (L) and actor Parviz Purhosseini in an undated photo.

in the movies and TV series.

He began his artistic career with theater along with Abolhassan Tahami, who is also famous for his long career in voice acting.

He left the country after the Islamic Revolution and lived in America for about 20 years, however, he returned home and began his voice acting career in 1999.

He had also acted in several films and TV series.

Fajr president Mohammad-Mehdi Tabatabaiejad said earlier that the festival, which is Iran's major film event, will be organized on its regular date from January 31 to February 10, 2021.

Among the members of the jury of the

official competition are Nima Javidi, director of the acclaimed drama "The Warden", and Sareh Bayat, star of the Asghar Farhadi's Oscar-winning drama "A Separation".

On the jury also is Bahram Tavakkoli, director of the acclaimed war drama "The Lost Strait", which was highly acclaimed at the Fajr festival in 2018, earning awards in six categories including best film and best director. He is also the director of "Gholamreza Takhti", a biopic about legendary Iranian wrestler Gholamreza Takhti.

Mostafa Kiai, director of the comedy film "Motreb", which has become Iran's box office hit of the year by grossing 380 billion rials (about \$9 million) in 2020, has also been selected for the jury.

The jury is also composed of cinematography director Morteza Pursamadi, producer Jamal Sadatani and cultural manager Mohammad Ehsani.

This year in addition, seven productions from the Owj Arts and Media Organization, a major institution that produces revolutionary works in art and cinema, will be screened at the festival.

They include the spy movie "The Government Expediency" by Hossein Darabi, "Karo" by Ahmad Moradpur and "Mansur" by Siavash Sarmadi.

Martyr Foundation to cooperate with 39th Fajr Intl. Theater Festival

➔ 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.

Nine artists to receive lifetime achievement honors at Fajr Festival of Visual Arts

A R T TEHRAN — Nine **d e s k** veteran Iranian artists will be honored with lifetime achievement awards at the 13th Fajr Festival of Visual Arts to be held in the Saba Art and Cultural Institute in February.

The honorees are master of sculpture and ceramics Jafar Najibi, cartoonist Ahmad Abdollahinia, illustrator Saied Razzaqi, painter Garnic Derhakopian, miniaturist Khashayr Qazizadeh, graphic designer Ahmad Aqaqolizadeh, art researcher Yaqub Ajand, photographer Mohammad-Hossein Heidari and calligrapher Mohammad Salahshur.

A collection of 93 calligraphy works has been selected to compete in the festival this year.

"The works have been selected out of 511 works submitted by 239 calligraphers," a member of the jury, Mojtaba Malekzadeh, said in a press release published last week.

He noted that most of the works are in the nastaliq style of calligraphy.

He further noted that most of the young



A series of honorary plaques of the Fajr Festival of Visual Arts.

artists have more interest in calligraphic paintings, however, the classic type of calligraphy still has its own devotees.

"The reason could be that calligraphic painting is still new and probably has no specific definition," he said.

He also noted that what will make the final judgment hard would be that all styles of calligraphy must be judged together this year while in the previous editions

each style was judged in its own category.

"We understand the current condition of the country and I think in the calligraphy section it would be better if we have more than one honoree," he remarked.

Member of the cartoon section of the festival Masud Ziai also announced that 49 cartoons will be competing in the cartoon section of the festival this year.

The collection has been selected out of 266 submissions by 100 artists.

In a press release published in late December, the organizers called on Iranian artists who have been honored at international events to participate in the festival.

"Interested artists who have received international awards at the biennials and festivals in 2019 and 2020 are invited to attend the new section named 'World Stars of Iranian Art'," director of the festival Ali-Ashraf Sandoqabadi said.

"We have been in contact with several associations, which so far have introduced 300 artists to the secretariat. However,

others who are interested can get in touch with the secretariat of the festival," he added.

He mentioned that the submitted works will be published in the book of the festival.

He said that the organizers will also honor the veteran artists, adding, "Last year, the honoring ceremony was planned but was postponed due to the spread of coronavirus, but this year we have plans to hold the honoring ceremony."

He also said that an exhibition of lithographs by curator Ahmad Vakili will also be held on the margins of the festival.

"The winners of the Visual Arts Festival for Youth over the past three years as well as the winners from the two previous editions of the Fajr Festival of Visual Arts, the fifth Iranian International Calligraphy Biennial and the 11th National Biennial of Contemporary Iranian Ceramic Art can submit their works to the secretariat. Their works will also be judged for the final awards," he concluded.

Cartoonist Kambiz Derambakhsh publishes new book "Cats and Birds"

CULTURE TEHRAN — "Cats and Birds", a book **d e s k** containing a collection of paintings and drawings by celebrated Iranian cartoonist Kambiz Derambakhsh has recently been published by Karnameh Publications in Tehran.

"The collection mostly includes paintings, drawings and graphic designs, and they are not cartoons," Derambakhsh said in a press release published on Monday.

"I have been working on the collection for several years, some of which were displayed in several exhibits and many were sold. They are the other side of my works and show my interest in animals," he added.

"I have five or six more books with different topics that are waiting to be published but are still in the publishing houses because of the coronavirus and the high price of the sheets," he added.

He said that Karnameh Publications is scheduled to publish a complete collection of his works, adding, "I have selected 10 works from each of the fields of miniature, drawing, cartoon, conceptual art and



Front cover of the book "Cats and Birds" by celebrated Iranian cartoonist Kambiz Derambakhsh.

lithography that will be published in one collection."

He noted that books will remain as the spiritual heritage of an artist helping works to be collected and preserved for the next generations and art lovers.

Known for his talent to find obscure themes for his creations, Derambakhsh, has worked as a cartoonist, a graphic designer and an illustrator for over 50 years.

Derambakhsh has won many awards at international competitions including the grand prize of the Istanbul competition in 1990, the grand prize at Japan's Yomiuri Shimbun competition in 1998 and the grand prize of a Polish anti-war caricature contest in 2002.

The 77-year-old cartoonist has showcased his works in many exhibitions around the world.

In March 2020, Derambakhsh shared a collection of his cartoons on coronavirus with his fans on Instagram.

As the cartoonist had said before his cartoons reflect the coronavirus outbreak in the country. The new images also bore a small note giving warnings or recommendations to people to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Liyakat Nathani Takim's "Shi'ism in America" comes to Iranian bookstores

CULTURE TEHRAN — A new **d e s k** Persian translation of the book "Shi'ism in America" written by Liyakat Nathani Takim has recently been published by Kavir Publications in Tehran.

The book has been translated into Persian by Abbas Aqdasi.

"Shi'ism in America" provides the first general overview of the Shia community in America, tracing its history, its current composition, and how the Shia have negotiated their identity in the American context.

There are over two million Shias, who differ from Sunni Muslims in the United States. With community roots going back

sometimes close to one hundred years, Shias can be found in major cities like New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington, D.C. and Dearborn, Michigan.

Early in the century, Shias and Sunnis sometimes arrived at the same time, worshipped together, shared similar experiences, and confronted the same challenges despite their differences.

Tracing early history and illuminating the more recent past with surveys and interviews, Takim explores the experiences of this community. Filling an important scholarly gap, he also demonstrates how living in the West has impelled the Shia



Front cover of the Persian translation of the book "Shi'ism in America" written by Liyakat Nathani Takim.

community to grapple with the ways in which Islamic law may respond to the challenges of modernity. Shi'ism in America provides a much-needed overview of the history of this United States religious community, from religious, cultural and political institutions to inter-group relations, to the experience of African American Shias.

Liyakat Nathani Takim is Sharjah Chair in Global Islam at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. A native of Zanzibar, Tanzania, he is the author of many works, including "The Heirs of the Prophet: Charisma and Religious Authority in Shi'ite Islam".