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Ali Moradi nominated for IWF presidency *Page 3*



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Even 'illegal migrants' in Iran will get COVID-19 vaccine *Page 7*

SPECIAL ISSUE

The man of theoretical battlefields

In memory of Ayatollah Mohammad Taghi Mesbah Yazdi, the Iranian renowned theorist and philosopher



© File photo

Four candidates to stand for FFIRI's presidency

BY FARROKH HESABI

The Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) confirmed the final four candidates who will stand in the FFIRI elections which will be held on Feb. 28.

Based on the FFIRI's electoral commission's announcement, Ali Karimi, Mostafa Ajorloo, Shahabeddin Azizi Khadem, and Kiumars Hashemi have all been admitted for the final campaigning.

Heydar Baharvand, FFIRI's current acting president, was the most notable figure that his candidacy for the Iranian football federation presidency was invalidated by the electoral committee.

While Ali Karimi, legendary Iranian footballer, is the most famous person among the candidates and is seen as the frontrunner, all four nominees are involved in a frantic hunt for votes.

Ali Karimi, the former player of Persepolis, Bayern Munich, and Iran national team has introduced Mehdi Mahdavi, another Iranian football legend, as the first vice-president of the FFIRI. He also has selected Saeid Daghighi and Fatemeh Alipour as his second and third vice-presidents if he wins.

This is the first time that, based on the amended version of the FFIRI's statutes approved by FIFA, the former football stars are able to compete in the presidential elections. In the previous version of the statutes, running for elections was only possible for those who had a managerial background.

Karimi is already supported by many celebrated people in Iran, including football legends and also some prominent artistic and even political figures.

Kiumars Hashemi, former president of Iran's National Olympic Committee (NOC), who also served as the interim FFIRI president for a while in 2006 is also believed to be able to play the leading candidate role to assume the presidency of the federation and to win the majority of votes of the FFIRI's General Assembly members.

Mostafa Ajorloo is known as a military figure who has been active in Iranian football for years. He has acted as the general manager of some Iranian clubs such as Pas (2000-2005), Steel Azin (2009-2010), and Tractor (2016-2018).

Shahabeddin Azizi Khadem the former member of the FFIRI's Board of Directors, is now seeking the presidency of the federation. He is a financial expert with some managerial and industrial backgrounds in his career.

The candidates will seek the FFIRI's general assembly support to win the most important chair of the Iranian football on Feb. 28.

Iranian-Azerbaijani relations will strengthen after Nagorno-Karabakh's liberation

BY ANDREW KORYBKO

Ms. Rafiga Mammadzadeh, a journalist with Azerbaijan's popular Axar online media outlet, recently interviewed Iranian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Mr. Seyed Abbas Mousavi about the prospects for bilateral cooperation after Nagorno-Karabakh's liberation. Their conversation was very interesting because it revealed more details about Tehran's plans to take ties with Baku to the next level after the latter's victory in what it regards as its Patriotic War. It also confirmed Iran's consistently constructive approach to the conflict and its aftermath, which is crucial to keep in mind amid the many information warfare narratives spread by its enemies alleging otherwise.

Iran is far from isolated like its foes try to present it as, which was proven by Ambassador Mousavi reminding Ms. Mammadzadeh about his country's role in trying to diplomatically resolve

the conflict back in mid-October. At that time, he noted that the Supreme Leader and other officials below him took a fair position towards the war which helped to stabilize the regional situation and ultimately end the war. In fact, it's real intriguing that "The 3 + 3 format proposed by the President of Azerbaijan was in fact in line with Iran's regional cooperation plan to end the Nagorno-Karabakh war once and for all." This proves that great leaders think alike and shows how visionary Iran's proposal was at the time.

Ambassador Mousavi remarked that Foreign Minister Zarif's recent trip to the other five countries involved in this format showed how much Iran wants to see this format succeed. For those who aren't aware, this refers to Azerbaijan-Russia-Armenia as the first troika and their neighbors of Iran-Turkey-Georgia as the second one.

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Yemen hits Saudi airbase with new generation missile

The spokesman for Yemeni Armed Forces says army troops and allied fighters from Popular Committees have launched a missile attack on an airbase in Saudi Arabia's southwestern region of Asir, in retaliation for a devastating war led by the kingdom against the impoverished country.

Brigadier General Yahya Saree said the missile struck with precision the designated targets in King Khalid Air Base, which lies 884 kilometers south of the Saudi capital Riyadh, late Thursday.

Saree said the surface-to-surface ballistic missile used in the operation is of a new generation, which has not been unveiled yet.

The senior Yemeni official warned Saudi Arabia that retaliatory attacks will continue as long as the Riyadh regime continues its military aggression, all-out siege and relentless raids against the war-ravaged Arab country.

Saudi reconnaissance drone shot down
Yemeni army forces also intercepted an

unmanned aerial vehicle of the Saudi military flying over Yemen's central province of Ma'rib.

Brigadier General Saree said Yemeni air defense forces shot down the CH-4 combat drone with a surface-to-air missile over the Medghal district early on Friday.

The CH-4 drone has a 3,500- to 5,000-kilometer range and a 30- to 40-hour endurance. It is capable of carrying six missiles and a payload of up to 250 to 345 kilograms.

The unmanned aerial vehicle can fire air-to-ground missile from an altitude of 5,000 meters, staying outside the effective range of most anti-aircraft guns.

Yemeni forces seize strategic base

Yemeni further captured a strategic base in Ma'rib from Saudi-sponsored militants loyal to former pro-Saudi president, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi.

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Iran reduces PCR test validity for air passengers

TEHRAN – Iran has reduced the validity of negative COVID-19 PCR test results from 96 hours to 72 hours for inbound and outbound passengers.

According to the Health Ministry, and the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control, people flying to or from Iran need to do their PCR test within 72 hours before their flights.

The new regulation replaced a role that required to bar passengers from boarding if they do not have a negative COVID test within 96 hours of departure.

Iranian citizens without a negative coronavirus PCR test result are subject to medical screening and quarantine for 14 days at their own expense, while non-Iranian nationalities without the certificate are not allowed to enter the country.

All passengers are subject to the medical screening on arrival, and if they are suspected of having the disease, non-Iranian nationalities will be quarantined at a place specified by the Health Ministry at their own expense and Iranian citizens will need to self-isolate for 14 days.

According to some Iranian airlines, passengers from the United Kingdom, Japan, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Seychelles, Angola, Mozambique, Lesotho, Malawi, Zambia, and Mauritius, as well as the travelers who have stayed in these countries for two weeks before entering the Iranian border, due to the spread of a new variant of the coronavirus in these regions, are not allowed to enter the country.

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Iranian position in Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been fair: Azeri expert

BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI

TEHRAN – Head of the Azerbaijan Institute for Democracy and Human Rights says that Iran took a correct position in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict from the first day.

Pointing to Iran's help to Azerbaijan, Ahmad Shahidov tells the Tehran Times that "without the support of Iran at certain points, Azerbaijan could have lost more territory and people."

"The position of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been fair from the first day and it includes the territorial integrity of the countries," Shahidov adds.

The following is the text of the interview:

How do you evaluate the relations of Iran and Azerbaijan, especially after the Nagorno-Karabakh war?

Iranian-Azerbaijani relations have a long history. There are historical, cultural, political and economic ties between the two countries. Millions of people share the same history, culture, language and religion on both sides of the Araz River. From this point of view, Iranian-Azerbaijani relations have always been at a high level, and when the war broke out in Nagorno-Karabakh in September last year, these relations showed themselves once again.

The position of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been fair from the first day and includes the territorial integrity of the countries. This position is what Azerbaijan wants. We were waiting for this position from Iran.

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© ISNA/ Amin Nazari

IRGC gains fixed and mobile defense power

TEHRAN — Major General Hossein Salami, the commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), says the modern tactics employed in a maneuver launched by the IRGC Ground Force in southwest Iran attest to its capabilities in fixed and mobile defense on the ground, according to Tasnim news agency.

Speaking to reporters during "Payambar-e Azam 16 (The Great Prophet)" drill on Thursday, General Salami noted, "The drill involved a combination of modern tactics to hit the enemy's fixed and mobile targets."

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Biden, listen please

By Azin Sahabi

TEHRAN — In several recommendations, the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) and the International Crisis Group (ICG), as two U.S. top think tanks, have elaborated on some building blocks and stumbling stones which Joe Biden faces in fulfilling his foreign policy objectives. They shed light on Russia and Iran as the most challenging foreign policy issues, not to mention the Taliban. Also, in accordance with the so-called principle of “foreign policy begins at home”, CFR advises Biden to revive the concept that domestic disputes are internal matters, and they should not be reflected in dealings with other nations.

Council on Foreign Relations: Russia, China, Trumpism

Richard Hass, the CFR president, writes about the “The shape of Biden’s foreign policy” on February 9. In the article, Hass admires Biden’s tendency to restore relations with NATO members as well as his signal to Russian President Vladimir Putin “not to use foreign adventurism to distract attention from domestic protests.”

Describing Biden’s approach to Saudi Arabia “a fine line”, Hass affirms a policy of distancing the U.S. from military and intelligence support for the war in Yemen in parallel with confirmation from the Oval Office that “Saudis weren’t on their own in facing Iran.”

CFR also puts forward the other side of the coin: Some limitations as stumbling stones for his administration in fulfilling their goals. In this regard, Hass points to the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol in the aftermath of 6 January, polarized domestic politics besides endemic racism and Trump’s failure in management of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Hass also argues that Iran and the Taliban are the most challenging issues to manage in the Oval Office in terms of promoting the wisdom of democracy as the pillar of U.S. foreign policy.

Iran nuclear deal: What to do about?

Describing Iran’s nuclear program as “Iran’s nuclear ambitions”, Hass says, “The Biden administration will need to determine what to do about (and whether to re-enter the 2015 nuclear pact that many observers see as flawed).”

Accord with Taliban: Still a dilemma

Hass believes Biden’s another challenge overseas is how to manage the accord which was signed a year ago with the Taliban. The expert believes it did not prove effective as a cover for U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan.

The U.S. allies and Trumpophobia

CFR also warns that the U.S. allies fear that after four years Americans could return to Trumpism if not witnessing him in the White House. While Hass describes Biden’s temptation to sign successive executive orders to revive Washington’s undermined influence as well as efface Trump’s legacy, he stresses: “When it comes to foreign policy, Biden should try to revive the principle that domestic politics stops at the water’s edge.”

The International Crisis Group: Conflict prevention tips for the Oval Office

The International Crisis Group (ICG) underlines that due to numerous old and new foreign policy problems the U.S. confronts, Biden’s administration should discard approaches such as overreliance on coercion which proved meaningless. ICG believes this can work to articulate policies in service of his stated foreign policy outlines.

The think tank focuses on costly interventions that the U.S. led or supported in Iraq, Libya and Yemen as well as the failures of previous administrations in Afghanistan. Besides, relying on heavy sanctions in parallel with the threat of force were fruitless to bring the desired results in Iran, North Korea and Venezuela. ICG argues: “The U.S. government needs new habits and a different set of moves for confronting complex crises.”

“Afghanistan: Give peace talks a chance”

The think tank considers the peace talks with the Taliban as an opportunity for the U.S. to disengage itself from a long-lasting conflict in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, it reminds high levels of violence, wide divergences among negotiating parties on essential issues which put the prospect of talks in ambiguity. Against the backdrop, ICG recommends: “This should not be a close call for President Biden and his team. A path, albeit a narrow one, is open to achieving a political settlement.”

In this regard it proposes the Oval Office to immediately signal its commitment to continue supporting the negotiations. ICG argues that Biden has little to lose to test the feasibility of the talks while refusing to do so may prove costly because this move may lead to “the loss of at least tacit support for U.S. policy from Iran, Pakistan, Russia, China and other neighbors.”

Moreover, ICG notes that making a decision about future military presence in Afghanistan will be another key decision Biden’s administration faces. Thus the think tank recommends that given Russia, China and Iran’s rejection of U.S. continued military presence in contrary to Afghan’s green light to Washington, “for the time being, Biden’s top priority should be to keep the peace process going and buy the time it will need to face the decisions coming its way.”

“Iran: Return to the nuclear deal”

Making repetitive accusations against Iran in regard to its nuclear program and regional influence, ICG stresses that Trump’s maximum pressure to curb Iran’s “weapon program” and “regional influence” was all in vain.

Therefore, the Biden’s team “must try to reverse four years of damage its predecessor did to regional stability, not to mention to U.S. interests.” ICG believes that the Biden administration should pursue the U.S. re-entry into the JCPOA and recommends:

“Starting by revoking the 2018 order ending U.S. JCPOA participation.”

“initiating a process of fully reversing Trump-era sanctions while Iran brings its nuclear program back into full compliance.”

“As further confidence-building measures, Washington could support Iran’s International Monetary Fund loan request as a sign of good-will in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.”

“And perhaps engage Tehran in discussions on a prisoner swap.”

“Early discussions on ending the conflict in Yemen and supporting a dialogue between Iran and Gulf Arab countries (Arab countries of the Persian Gulf) could also help lower tensions.”

ICG puts overt stress on the vitality of addressing Iran’s ballistic missiles as well as regional issues, noting:

“Biden’s team may be tempted to link rejoining the JCPOA to other issues, but that could put the whole deal at jeopardy. The objective should be a clean re-entry. Other issues, such as regional de-escalation and Iran’s ballistic missile development, are critical, but best pursued subsequent to, not as a condition of, full restoration of the existing agreement.”

If U.S. sanctions continue Iran will change nuclear approach: presidential candidate

“We still see the same policies from the newly elected administration as we did from the Trump team”

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — General Hossein Dehghan, a military adviser to Iran’s leader and Iran’s presidential candidate, told the Guardian, a British newspaper, Iran’s approach to nuclear issue will change if U.S. sanctions continue.

General Dehghan emphasized, “the U.S. was in no position to make conditions, given they left the nuclear deal,” adding Iran “calls for guarantees that the U.S. will not leave the agreement again.”

He believes Joe Biden is continuing Donald Trump’s foreign policies and noted, “Tehran is preparing retaliatory measures to force the U.S. to change its diplomatic trajectory.”

“The Biden administration talked about diplomacy, multilateralism and interaction in the international arena as well as returning to its international commitments. However, we still see the same policies from the newly elected administration as we did from the Trump team: not lifting the oppressive sanctions against Iranian people, continuing to block Iran oil revenue in foreign banks while we need the money to fight against the coronavirus pandemic. Altogether this means the continuation of Trumpism in international relations,” he remarked.

Dehghan insisted that Islamic Republic of Iran would seek to change the course of diplomacy from 19 February – the date it has set to reduce some access for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors to its nuclear sites. He also said Iran would demand damages from the U.S. for the impact of sanctions.

His remarks indicated the huge differences remain between the U.S. and Iran, and how the departure of President Hassan Rouhani may



make it even harder to restore the nuclear deal, known formally as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or JCPOA.

The IAEA reported that Iran had begun producing small amounts of uranium metal, a process that is banned under the JCPOA. Iran has taken a series of steps to increase the costs to the U.S. of maintaining sanctions. The Biden administration and the Rouhani government have expressed willingness to return to compliance with the JCPOA, but they are at odds of who should take the first step.

Dehghan, who is being sanctioned by the U.S., rejected suggestions that both sides may return to their commitments to the nuclear deal by taking some limited opening reciprocal

goodwill gestures – such as the U.S. lifting its block on the Iranian request for a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

“We planned to have the loan to fight against Covid-19 pandemic, and to purchase medication and medical equipment. That is our right as one of the founders of IMF,” he noted.

‘We want to receive guarantees that the Americans will not infringe the agreement again’

He highlighted Iranians don’t trust American politicians and said, “The Americans’ approach has made our nation not trust them. Therefore, we want to receive guarantees that the Americans will not infringe the agreement again.”

Ghalibaf: Iran’s strategic principle is to develop ties with China

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, speaker of the Iranian Parliament, has congratulated China on the spring festival or the Lunar New Year, calling for the enhancement of relations between Tehran and Beijing in various fields, according to Tasnim news agency.

The Iranian Parliament speaker offered his congratulations on the Chinese New Year in separate messages to Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress of China Li Zhanshu and Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference Wang Yang.

In the messages, Ghalibaf said the expansion of friendly

cooperation with China in various fields is a strategic principle in Iran’s foreign policy, noting that the Iranian Parliament supports any plan for stronger ties between the two countries.

He also expressed confidence that the joint efforts would open up a new chapter in mutual cooperation between the two nations.

In comments in October 2020, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said Tehran and Beijing “are determined to further expand their strategic partnership,” adding that China is Iran’s “first economic partner” despite the U.S. “maximum pressure” campaign against the Islamic Republic.

Iranian commodore emphasizes naval co-op with Pakistan

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Flotilla Admiral Ariya Shafghat Rodsari, the head of the Iranian military delegation, has stressed the need to strengthen naval cooperation between Iran and Pakistan at the Aman-21 international exercise hosted by the Pakistani Navy, according to the IRNA news agency.

Delegation of the General Staff of Iranian Armed Forces led by Rodsari met with Commander of Pakistan Fleet Admiral Naveed Ashraf in Karachi on Friday.

General Mostafa Ghanbarpour, military attaché of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Islamabad, was also present during the meeting which was held on the sidelines of the opening ceremony of the seventh multinational maritime exercise Aman-2021.

The two sides assessed maritime security cooperation between Iran and Pakistan and agreed to enhance interactions between the two countries’ navies.

The commander of the Pakistani Fleet de-

scribed the presence of the Iranian military delegation in the international exercise as an important participation.

The two countries decided to expand cooperation between the two navies through visiting each other’s ports and holding joint exercises.

The exercise is conducted by the Pakistan Navy after every two years with a resolve against terrorism and piracy.

It is being held under motto of the exercise

which is “Together for Peace” from February 11-16 in Karachi.

The delegation of the General Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces was scheduled to take part in the International Maritime Conference and meet with various Pakistani military officials.

According to the Pakistan Navy, some countries are participating in the exercise with their ships and combat forces, while others with their delegations.

A thaw in relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia dependent on Yemen issue: analyst

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Ghasem Moheb Ali, an expert on West Asia, says the resolution of conflict in Yemen can lead to the improvement of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, at interview with ILNA news agency.

Moheb Ali highlighted the Biden administration’s policy towards Yemen and noted, “Biden’s administration is seeking to resolve the Yemen crisis by diplomatic and political means. Therefore, Biden’s foreign policy team intends to use the United Nations to handle the crisis.”

“The visit of the United Nations special envoy on Yemen to Iran indicates the U.S. and the United Nations are trying to find out the reaction of Iran towards the Biden’s policy

to Yemen. They are assessing whether Ansarollah can join the peace process in the country and stop firing the missiles on Saudi Arabia,” he added.

Regarding likely changes in Saudi foreign policy, he underlined, “Foreign policy of Saudi Arabia is heavily dependent on the Yemen crisis. After the crisis in Yemen worsened, the relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia deteriorated.”

He expressed his hopes concerning the removal of U.S. sanctions on Yemenis and noted, “The Biden administration has an intention to ease the U.S. sanctions on Ansarollah and to remove the organization from its sponsors of terrorism list. By doing so, the U.S. and Saudi Arabia can negotiate with Ansarollah.”

Italy says JCPOA is an opportunity for constructive interactions

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Elisabetta Belloni, the secretary general of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has highlighted the importance of resuming negotiations on the Iran nuclear deal officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), saying opportunity for establishing constructive and positive interactions for solving the issues should not be spoiled, according to IRNA news agency.

In her statement which was issued on the occasion of the 42nd anniversary of the Islamic Revolution victory, Belloni noted, “Italy is looking forward to seeing resumption of talks on nuclear agreement which is a necessary tool for maintaining security and non-proliferation in the region.”

Pointing to historic relations between Iran and Italy, she said cooperation between two countries have been reinforced.

Belloni added, “The relations have been established based on mutual respect and joint determination for negotiation and developing innovative and effective cooperation

capabilities, including its missile power, and that Iran’s defense capabilities will be never subject to negotiations.

Also, at the beginning of the military exercise, Brigadier General Mohammad Pakpour, the IRGC Ground Forces commander, explained about the goals of the drill, saying, “We want to assess the latest achievements and capabilities of the forces and equipment and their operational power.”

He said a combination of military tactics were employed in the Thursday night’s strike that included aerial



between Iranians and Italians.”
Earlier, Iran’s Ambassador to Italy, Hamid

Bayat, said Iran has played a unique role in providing stability and security for the region and the world with heroic sacrifice in the front line of the fight against terrorism, extremism, and drug trafficking.

“Iran established 42 years ago by the victory of the Islamic Revolution, is a governmental system based on the will and demand of the majority of Iranian people who toppled the despotic imperial regime in favor of a democratic one,” Ambassador Bayat remarked.

IRGC gains fixed and mobile defense power

1 → “The Guard’s Ground Force has obtained the offense power with the use of all systems and has achieved the fixed and mobile defense power on the ground against the enemies,” the commander remarked.

The military exercise in the southwestern province of Khuzestan involved various IRGC units such as the infantry, commandos, special forces, armored divisions, artillery, missile and drone units, and ground force airborne troops.

Iranian officials have repeatedly emphasized that Tehran will not hesitate to strengthen its defensive military

capabilities, including its missile power, and that Iran’s defense capabilities will be never subject to negotiations.

Also, at the beginning of the military exercise, Brigadier General Mohammad Pakpour, the IRGC Ground Forces commander, explained about the goals of the drill, saying, “We want to assess the latest achievements and capabilities of the forces and equipment and their operational power.”

He said a combination of military tactics were employed in the Thursday night’s strike that included aerial

support by the combat choppers of the airborne division.

The general noted that the troops in the drill have utilized homegrown equipment for night combat.

General Pakpour asserted that the IRGC Ground Force is fully capable of countering any possible threat to the country.

The IRGC held the previous phase of the drill, named the Great Prophet 15, in mid-January, when the Guards tested home-grown ballistic missiles to destroy mock enemy warships in the northern Indian Ocean.

Iran’s top judge holds talks with Iraqi leaders

Ayatollah Raisi urges punishment for those implicated in assassination of General Soleimani

1→ The documents were inked in Baghdad on Tuesday by the prosecutor generals, justice ministers, and heads of the two countries’ prison organizations, according to Press TV. Upon his arrival in Iraq, Iran’s Judiciary chief visited the site near Baghdad International Airport, where the U.S. assassinated top Iranian and Iraqi anti-terror commanders General Qassem Soleimani and his comrade Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis.

“Deserving conclusion”
During his meeting with al-Kadhimi, Ayatollah Raisi said Iran expects a “deserving conclusion” for the General Soleimani assassination case, underlining that the American drone strike that martyred General Soleimani and al-Muhandis violated Iraq’s sovereignty.

“The U.S. violated Iraq’s sovereignty, dominance, and laws by assassinating Martyrs Qassem Soleimani and Abu Mahdi Muhandis. We insist that the case should reach a deserving conclusion as soon as possible with Iran and Iraq’s cooperation,” the chief of Iran’s Judiciary said during a Tuesday meeting with the Iraqi prime minister.

Ayatollah Raisi also called for a due punishment of those implicated in the assassination of General Soleimani.

He said due punishment of the perpetrators and others, who provided a criminal contribution to the atrocities, would preempt the potential repeat of such atrocities in the future.

The office of the Iraqi prime minister issued a statement following al-Kadhimi’s meeting with Ayatollah Raisi.

“The two sides discussed joint bilateral relations, enhancing cooperation in the judicial and legal fields between the two countries, as well as discussing a number of other issues,” the statement said.

Al-Kadhimi pointed to the historical, geographical, religious and cultural ties between Iran and Ira, in addition to the common strategic interests between the two countries. He also praised the distinguished relationship between Iraq and the



Iranian Judiciary Chief Raisi talking to Iraqi President Barham Salih (right)

Islamic Republic of Iran.

On Wednesday, the top Iranian judge met with the Iraqi president. Ayatollah Raisi conveyed greetings from the Leader of the Islamic Revolution to the Iraqis, according to a statement issued by Iraq’s presidency.

According to the statement, the Judiciary chief reaffirmed Iran’s support for the Iraqi government’s fight against extremism and terrorism while underlining Iran’s support for securing the pillar of stability as well as respecting and protecting Iraq’s sovereignty.

Ayatollah Raisi said the U.S. is relocating Daesh terrorists from their former

bastions in Syria and Iraq under the guise of fighting terror, while Tehran, Baghdad and Damascus, along with other neighbors, are working to cleanse the region of the Takfiri outfit’s remnants.

“The U.S. claimed that it seeks to fight Daesh and formed a coalition for the [declared goal], but we have [only] witnessed the strengthening of Daesh in terms of weapons, logistics, intelligence, and other aspects,” Ayatollah Raisi noted.

“While Iraq, Syria, Iran and regional countries are working together to eliminate the remnants of Daesh, the Americans do

nothing but relocate the Daesh terrorists in the region,” he continued.

Ayatollah Raisi praised the joint Iran-Iraq battle against the Takfiri outfit as a “real symbol of solidarity and cooperation between the two nations.”

He pointed out that Tehran and Baghdad have been bolstering their relations in various political, economic and cultural fields against the will of enemies given the strong bonds between the two nations, which are rooted in their rich civilizations and beliefs.

“Enemies have always made attempts to sow discord between Iran and Iraq, but the two countries’ cooperation has thwarted such attempts,” the Judiciary chief continued.

Ayatollah Raisi and President Salih agreed that it was important to strengthen historical ties between Iraq and Iran and to focus on their deep relationship based upon close social, religious, cultural and geographic bonds. They discussed how to do this best so that it serves the interests of the peoples of both countries, according to the Iraqi presidency statement.

“During the meeting, emphasis was placed on developing and promoting Iraqi-Iranian relations at every level. It was agreed that there was space for further memoranda of understanding and other agreements between the two countries. Cooperation and coordination on legal and judicial matters should be a priority,” the statement added. President Salih said that countries in the region have a responsibility to work toward easing tensions in the region and to use dialogue to achieve that.

He stressed that there was a need to coordinate efforts for promoting regional peace and stability and to seek common ground upon which to base constructive dialogue. Iraq’s sovereignty should be considered a vital factor, President Salih noted.

Ayatollah Raisi’s visit to Iraq was his first trip to this country in his capacity as the chief of Iran’s Judiciary.

“The U.S. violated Iraq’s sovereignty, dominance, and laws by assassinating Martyrs Qassem Soleimani and Abu Mahdi Muhandis. We insist that the case should reach a deserving conclusion as soon as possible with Iran and Iraq’s cooperation,” the chief of Iran’s Judiciary said during a Tuesday meeting with the Iraqi prime minister.

Iran calls on U.S. to comply with JCPOA, ditch Trump policies

Zarif asks Biden administration to comply with JCPOA ‘before spouting off’

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Top Iranian officials have called on the new U.S. administration to resume compliance with the 2015 Iran nuclear deal and get rid of the Trump administration’s policies toward Iran.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said the Biden administration keeps calling on Iran to comply with the nuclear deal – officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) – while they still pursue the policies that former U.S. President Donald Trump adopted against Iran.

“Biden administration officials keep talking about Iran’s compliance with JCPOA. In what capacity? U.S. ceased participation in May 2018, violated JCPOA & punished those complying with UN resolution. As of today, U.S. remains in EXACTLY same position. Before spouting off, COMPLY,” the chief Iranian diplomat said in a tweet on Thursday night.

Rouhani says ‘no goodwill’ on U.S. part so far
Similarly, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani has urged the new U.S. administration to take a new path in dealing with Iran and move to make up for the crimes committed by Trump against the Iranian nation, saying the world has no doubt that the pressure policy against Iran has failed, according to Press TV.

“We have not seen [any signs of] new deeds and goodwill on the part of the new [U.S.] administration yet. Its rhetoric may have changed, but the action is what matters;

therefore, we should see what it will do in practice to make up for [Trump’s] crimes,” Rouhani said in an address to the inauguration ceremony of several Health Ministry projects on Thursday.

Referring to Donald Trump, the Iranian president pointed out that a “big terrorist has been sacked and disgraced at a national and international level.”

He underlined the tough financial issues facing the Iranian nation amid the deadly coronavirus pandemic, saying “a criminal in the White House” blocked the country’s access to its assets and caused problems for its banking transactions.

With Trump gone, the White House should now think of how to compensate for his criminal deeds, noted the president, calling on the new U.S. administration “to completely reverse that course, which has turned out to be wrong and bound for defeat.”

However, despite all the sufferings the Iranian nation has gone through, there are no doubts that Trump’s “maximum pressure” campaign and his “economic war” have faced defeat, Rouhani continued.

“Dustbin of history”

Earlier on Tuesday, Zarif said the Trump administration waged an economic war on Iran but this war failed and those who waged it were thrown into the dustbin of history.

“Today, we are seeing that Iranian people stood up to Trump’s economic terrorism and economic war, and are

now standing with pride in front of history and the world,” Zarif said in a speech delivered at a Tuesday ceremony where foreign ambassadors to Tehran met President Hassan Rouhani on the eve of the anniversary of the triumph of the 1979 Islamic Revolution of Iran.

“Those who launched wars against this nation, waged a war against their own nation, too, at the end of the day before they were thrown into the dustbin of history,” said the foreign minister, according to a statement issued by the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

Zarif pointed out, “This may be the best lesson for the generations to come. People who stood up to war and pressure, emerged victorious against an armed-to-the-teeth regime without any foreign support or any other assistance, and resisted economic terrorism, should be addressed only with dignity and respect.”

“This is a lesson for the new U.S. administration and all countries so that they know how they should treat these great people,” he said.

Zarif said Iranians suffered but never gave in to threats and pressure.

“Iranian people respond to respect with respect, and they will also respond to threats and pressure accordingly,” he noted.

“Anyone who has threatened Iranian people has been thrown into the dustbin of history, and these people still stand,” the top diplomat said.

Qatar FM says working to revive JCPOA

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani said on Wednesday that his country is working to de-escalate tensions in the region through reviving the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers.

“The State of Qatar is working on de-escalation through a political and diplomatic process to return to the nuclear agreement,” the Qatari chief diplomat said, according to a Reuters report.

The remarks came in briefing notes about two separate calls earlier in the week between Thani and U.S. Special Representative for Iran Robert Malley and U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan.

The Qatari Foreign Ministry said last week that during his telephone conversation with Malley, Thani discussed “bilateral cooperation, in addition to issues of joint interest.”

The Foreign Ministry did not give further details but Thani said that Qatar’s communication was going on with both Iran and the United States, given the strategic ties Qatar holds with both.

Turkey also said Doha and Ankara can contribute to easing tensions around the Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

“The tensions we experienced over the previous U.S. administration withdrawing from the nuclear deal, and the embargoes, impacted the entire region. On this issue, especially as Turkey and Qatar, we can provide contributions, and we discussed these,” Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said during a news conference with his Qatari counterpart in Doha.

In January, Qatar even expressed readiness to host a summit between Iran and its Persian Gulf’s Arab neighbors.

“We are hopeful that this [summit] would happen and we still believe that this should happen. And I think this is also a desire that being shared among the other GCC countries. I just mentioned to you that there is a difference between the countries on the way how to approach such a dialogue. Also from the Iranian side. They have expressed their willingness several times to engage with the GCC countries,” the Qatari foreign minister said in an interview with Bloomberg TV.

Thani also expressed hope that what will happen between Iran and the U.S. on the JCPOA would contribute to resolving the differences between Iran and the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council. “Of course, things are interconnected at the end of the day,” he noted, adding that Qatar will support negotiations between the stakeholders.

“We will be welcoming this idea. We

maintain a good relationship with the U.S. and we maintain a good relationship with Iran,” the chief Qatari diplomat continued.

Lolwah al-Khater, spokeswoman for Qatar’s Foreign Ministry, also echoed the same position in an interview with the Spanish EFE news agency.

Qatar is ready to mediate between Iran and the United States as the new U.S. president, Joe Biden, assumes office after the turbulent years of the Trump administrations, she noted.

Qatar has recently patched up its ties with several Arab countries after more than three years of diplomatic standoff with some of its GCC partners. After securing a détente with these partners, particularly Saudi Arabia, Qatar voiced readiness to play a role in mediating between Iran and Saudi Arabia on one hand and between Iran and the U.S. on the other hand.

SPORTS

Ali Moradi nominated for IWF presidency

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — Head of Iran Weightlifting Federation Ali Moradi has been nominated for the presidency of the International Weightlifting Federation.

There are 11 candidates vying for the presidency of the troubled federation, including current interim president Michael Irani.

There are 10 other candidates running alongside Moradi: Jinqiang Zhou (China), Pyrros Dimas (Greece), Michael Irani (Britain), Mohammed Jalood (Iraq), Zhanat Tussupbekov (Kazakhstan), Stian Grimseth (Norway), Mohamed Yousef Al-Mana (Qatar), Nicu Vlad (Romania), Ursula Garza Papandrea (U.S.) and Karolina Lundhal (Finland).

Lundahl and Papandrea are the two women in the running. Papandrea was ousted as interim president by the IWF Executive Board in October before Irani took over. She had been leading a reform process within the federation following the resignation of Tamss Ajan in April amid charges of corruption, mismanagement and anti-doping deceptions during his 20 year tenure.

The published list of candidates is provisional, dependent on the checks which are due to be carried out by February 22.

“The most important thing is to maintain and keep our sport in the Olympic program,” Moradi said.

“I have always emphasized the importance of a strong fight against doping and respect for the IOC guidelines and instructions.

“We need considerable changes and reforms inside our system and we all should support each other,” he added.

Iran’s medal tally reaches nine at Para Athletics Grand Prix

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian Para athletes claimed two gold, two silver and two bronze medals on Day 2 of the Dubai 2021 World Para Athletics Grand Prix on Thursday.

Mahdi Olad claimed a gold medal in Men’s Shot Put F11 with 13.89 meters throw.

Russian thrower came second, throwing 12.57 meters and the bronze medal went to Uzbekistan’s athlete who threw 12.24 meters.

Behzad Azizi also won a gold medal in the Men’s Javelin F12/13 with 64.37 meters throw. Lithuanian athlete seized silver medal with 48.45 meters and Iranian thrower Masoud Heydari seized the bronze with 44.30 meters.

Iran’s Vahid Alinajimi took a bronze medal in the Men’s 400m with a time of 50.41 seconds. Algerian runner won the gold medal with 47.91 seconds and silver medal went to Turkish competitor with 49.53 seconds.

Hamed Amiri, who had won a gold medal in javelin on Day 1, seized a silver medal at the Men Discus F54/55.

Alireza Sadeghian also took a silver medal in the Men’s 100m T38 after running 11.66 seconds. French and Thailand sprinters come first and third, respectively. On Wednesday, Saman Pakbaz and Vahid Alinajimi had claimed a silver and a bronze medal in the Men’s Shot Put - F12 and T/F12, respectively.

The competition, which has brought a total of 471 Para athletes from 52 countries together in Dubai, serves as the one of the seven qualifying Para Athletics events for Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games.

Abbasali keeps her fitness levels up for Olympics

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian woman karate practitioner Hamideh Abbasali says that she is training hard to keep her fitness levels up for the Olympic Games.

The Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics were supposed to take place last summer but were rescheduled to this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I’ve been trying to keep up my fitness with hard training during the COVID-19 pandemic. All athlete will do their best to stand atop the podium in the Olympics,” Abbasali told IRNA.

“The best karate practitioners will gather together in Tokyo. It means we have a difficult task ahead to win a medal,” she added.

Abbasali suffered a knee injury at the Karate 1-Premier League event in Salzburg, Austria in March 2020. She underwent a successful surgery last year in Hannover, Germany.

“I’ve participated in three training camp since my surgery and I will take part in the fourth training camp in the next few days,” Abbasali stated.

Abbasali won a quota place for the Tokyo Olympic Games last year but the Iranian women karate practitioners have also chance of winning two more quota places in the upcoming Karate 1-Premier Leagues.

Chabahar to host Takhti Cup

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — Chabhar, located in Sistan-Baluchestan Province, has been chosen to host the 41st edition of Takhti Cup.

The prestigious wrestling tournament will be held in the southeastern Iranian port from May 17 to 21.

The international event has brought the top wrestlers around the world to Iran over the past years.

Takhti, who was found dead in a hotel room in January 1968 at the age of just 37, claimed the gold medal in Melbourne 1956 Olympic Games and won two silver medals in Helsinki 1952 and Rome 1960 Olympic Games.

Popularly nicknamed Jahan Pahlevan - “The World Champion” - because of his chivalrous behavior and sportsmanship, Takhti was the most popular athlete of Iran in the 20th century, although dozens of Iranian athletes have won more international medals than he did.

FIBA Asia Cup qualifiers in Doha cancelled

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — The FIBA Asia Cup qualifying matches in Doha, are not pushing through after world basketball governing body FIBA was forced to cancel the proceedings because of rising cases of the coronavirus in Qatar.

FIBA is currently studying all the available alternatives for having the games in the near future.

The third and final window of the FIBA Asia Cup 2021 Qualifiers are scheduled to be held from Feb. 18 to 22 in Doha, where Iran were supposed to meet Qatar and Saudi Arabia in Group E.

Head of Iran Basketball Federation Ramin Tabatabaei has said the country is ready to host the Group E matches.

Tehran denies arrest of Iranian diplomat in Turkey

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh on Thursday rejected a claim by a Turkish newspaper that Turkey has arrested an Iranian diplomat for his alleged involvement in a killing plot.

Khatibzadeh dismissed the claim as “baseless,” saying that the Turkish newspaper’s report was “based on groundless accusations.”

Daily Sabah, an English-language Turkish newspaper,

claimed Thursday that a staff member of the Iranian consulate in Istanbul was arrested for allegedly helping the mastermind of the murder of an Iranian national in 2019 in the city.

But the Iranian Foreign Ministry denied that any member of the consulate was arrested over the killing.

“Khatibzadeh said none of the staff members of the Iranian consulate in Istanbul has been and is involved in the activities claimed by the Turkish media outlet, whatsoever,”

the ministry said in a statement on Thursday night.

“In addition, none of the staff members of the Iranian consulate has been arrested,” he added.

The spokesman said the person whose name is mentioned in the Turkish media report has not been a staff member of the consulate, and Iran is in talks with Turkish officials through official channels in order to shed light on different aspects of the issue.

TEDPIX up 3.4% in a week

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 3.4 percent in the past Iranian calendar week.

The index closed at 1.214 million points on Wednesday (the last working day of the week).

During the past week, the indices of Iran Khodro Group, Saipa Company, Social Security Investment Company, Tehran Oil Refining Company, and Isfahan Oil Refinery were the most widely followed indices.

ICCIMA investigating Administrative Health Promotion Law's dos & don'ts

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The permanent law on the promotion of the health of the administrative system and the fight against corruption has been announced and Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA) is reviewing its dos and don'ts.



Also, in a letter to President Hassan Rouhani, Majlis speaker Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf has announced the law to make the "Law on Promoting the Health of the Administrative System and Combating Corruption" permanent.

This law is in line with the implementation of the objectives of Article 123 of the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The bill was originally intended to be piloted for one year. But now Majlis with the approval of the Expediency Council is considering making the law permanent.

'Iran to become self-reliant in manufacturing passenger, cargo wagons'

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami has said that the country will become independent in terms of manufacturing passenger and cargo wagons.

"Through the hard work and efforts of the country's industrialists in different sectors we have managed to indigenize the technology for manufacturing many parts, equipment, and machinery", the minister reiterated.

"We must appreciate these efforts for self-sufficiency and, by strengthening our industrial infrastructure, make Iran one of the most powerful and leading countries, and increase our revenues", he added.

In an unveiling ceremony for domestically-made wagon brake system and wheels in early December 2020, Head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (known as RAD) Saeed Rasouli said that Iranian railway industry has become completely self-reliant in manufacturing freight wagons.



The development of the railway sector is one of the macro policies of the Iranian government as it has been emphasized by the general policies of the Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan (2016-2021).

In this regard, the railway industry has been strongly seeking self-sufficiency after the U.S. imposed a new round of sanctions on the Iranian economy and the imports of high-quality equipment and parts have become more difficult.

As a result, the domestic manufacturing of parts and equipment, rail tracks, wagons, and locomotives has been put on the agenda for many Iranian companies and self-reliance is now being witnessed in many of the mentioned sectors.

Bandar Abbas-Latakia direct shipping line to be launched by early Mar.

1 → According to Kashefi, necessary coordination has been done between the Iran-Syria Joint Chamber and the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRISL) so that cargo ships will be scheduled to carry freight from Iran to Syria once per month, the portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) reported.

The first cargo will be shipped on March 10, the official said, adding that the service could take place twice a month if demand for shipping to Syria increases on the Iranian side.

The official noted that such regular shipping would definitely have a positive impact on the volume of Iranian exports to Syria and the trade between the two countries.

"There are no restrictions on export items; these ships are both container and bulk carriers, and any trader can choose Syria as his export destination if he/she wants," Kashefi stressed.

Before the establishment of the new shipping service to Latakia, Iranian exporters had to wait for weeks and even months for their cargo to be forwarded to Syria.

Iran and Syria had previously agreed on connecting the southwestern Iranian port of Emam Khomeini to Syria's Latakia Port via a railway that passes through Iraq.

The two sides had signed an agreement in this regard back in July 2019, based on which Iran would construct Shalamcheh-Basra railway between Iran and Iraq through which Iran's Emam Khomeini Port will later be connected to Latakia Port in Syria.

Iran has close political and economic ties with both Iraq and Syria and the economic relations among the three nations have significantly developed in the past few years.

Iran sits at UN TIR executive board for 3rd consecutive time

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Mostafa Ayati, Director of Transit Bureau of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), has been elected for the third consecutive time as a member of the TIR Executive Board (TIRExB), the portal of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) announced.

TIR Convention is one of the most successful international transport conventions and is so far the only universal Customs transit system in existence.

The new TIRExB members were elected during the 74th session of the TIR Administrative Committee that took place on 11 February in Geneva for its term of office for the years 2021-2022.

Along with Mostafa Ayati, the European Commission (EC), Austria, Russia, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Italy, Uzbekistan, and the Netherlands are also represented at the TIRExB that supervises and provides support in the application of the TIR procedure at the national and international levels.



According to the TIR Carnet section of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA), Ayati's election for the third time has been a result of successful cooperation between the private sector and

the IRICA.

Ayati also represented Iran from 2019 to 2021 at the TIRExB which is a subsidiary body of the TIR Administrative Committee that works under the UNECE.

Oil production by Iran rises 62,000 bpd in January: OPEC

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran produced 2.084 million barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil in January, registering a 62,000-bpd increase compared to the last month of 2020, according to OPEC's latest monthly report published on Thursday.

Based on secondary sources, Iran had produced 2.022 million bpd of crude oil in December 2020.

The report put average Iranian crude output for the last quarter of 2020 at 1.992 million barrels per day indicating a near 44,000-bpd increase compared to the figure for the third quarter of the said year.

Iranian average crude oil production stood at 1.985 million bpd in 2020, according to the report.

According to secondary sources, 13 OPEC members produced a total of 25.496 million barrels of oil in January, up from 25.315 million barrels in December 2020.

The country's heavy crude oil prices also increased \$5.18 in January to register a 10.5-percent rise compared to December 2020, based on the OPEC report.

Iran sold its heavy crude oil at \$454.38 per barrel in the mentioned month, compared to December's \$49.2 per barrel.

The country's average heavy crude price was \$62.61 since the beginning of 2020 up to the report's publishing date.

OPEC Basket prices also rose over 10 percent to \$54.38 a barrel in January, up \$5.21 from December 2020.

In its report, OPEC has put the average global demand for oil in 2021 at 96.005 million barrels per day, which is 5.79 million barrels more than the figure for 2020.

In addition to the devastating impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on the global oil industry which resulted in the drastic fall in oil prices, the Iranian oil industry has also



been under pressure from the U.S. efforts to isolate the country by re-imposing sanctions.

Domestic production in mining sector saves Iran nearly \$1b

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) has announced that domestic production and indigenizing technology in the mining sector has saved Iran nearly \$1 billion during the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 20, 2020).

The organization has also announced that



the domestic production policy followed up by nine large mining companies saved the country \$350 million during the first half of the current year (March 20-September 21, 2020).

This month last year, the previous head of IMIDRO, which is the country's major state-owned holding active in the mining sector, announced the organization's top 10 targets to be followed up through some

programs for domestic production of parts and equipment used in the mining sector as well as indigenizing required technology of this sector.

The Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade had announced in the last August that it had a comprehensive plan for domestic production of required parts and equipment, and about \$3.3 billion was allocated to this plan.

Housing market expected to stay calm in coming months

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Fardin Yazdani, the planner of the Transport and Urban Development Ministry's Comprehensive Housing Initiative, believes that the housing prices in the Iranian market are not going to experience any sudden rise in the coming months and the market will stay stable.

"Given the housing market situation and the trends in other parallel markets, there will be no significant change in the volume of housing transactions by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20)," the portal of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Trade (TCCIMA) quoted Yazdani as saying.

The housing market expert further explained that price jumps occur when the rate of price increases in a market exceed the cost increase as well as the inflation rate, so apparently no price jump is expected in the housing market by the yearend.



Excessive price increases have left the market with a kind of imbalance between purchasing power and the owner expectations considering the existing prices; therefore, the market has entered a relative recession and this slump in

trading is expected to continue, Yazdani said.

He further referred to the liquidity growth and its impact on the housing market and said: "The liquidity growth will ultimately have its negative impacts on the asset market in the long run; as all the statistical data of the last two decades show, one of the most important and influential factors on the housing market has been the liquidity growth, which unfortunately continues to increase."

Earlier this month, the Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) announced that the housing price in the country rose 8.2 percent during the past Iranian calendar month Dey (December 20, 2020 - January 19, 2021), as compared to the same month in the past year.

According to Parvaneh Aslani, director-general of Housing Economy Office of the Transport and Urban Development Ministry, home prices have registered a 200 percent growth over the past five years.

40 idle mines revived in Sistan-Baluchestan Province

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — As announced by a provincial official, 40 idle mines have been revived in Sistan-Baluchestan Province, in the southeast of Iran, since the beginning of current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2020).

Mandana Zanganeh, the deputy governor-general of the province for economic affairs, said that there are currently 384 active mines in the province, with the nominal capacity of 24 million tons, which constitute three percent of minerals extraction capacity

in the country.

The official said that over 7,000 persons are working in the mines of province.

According to the available statistics, the number of active mines in the country is more than 5,600 mines, from which an average of 400 million tons of various minerals are extracted annually, and the share of construction materials is estimated at 60 to 65 percent.

Currently, 257 mines are being equipped as part of a comprehensive program for reviving idle small-scale mines across the country.



Reviving 200 idle mines and setting up 25 processing units have been planned for

the current Iranian year (ends on March 20, 2021).

Last year, 146 mines were revived throughout the country.

According to the information released by Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), the most small-scale inactive mines are located in Khorasan Razavi Province and the least of them are located in the south of Kerman Province and North Khorasan Province.

Commodities worth \$1.15b exported from Khorasan Razavi Province

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — According to a provincial customs official, 2,250 tons of commodities worth \$1.15 billion have been exported from Khorasan Razavi Province, in the northeast of Iran, during the first 10 months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2020-January 19, 2021).

Omid Jahankhah said the main goods exported in the said ten months were saffron, metal sections, plastic products, construction materials, foodstuffs, fruits and vegetables.

He mentioned Afghanistan, Iraq, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan as the major export destinations of the goods.

The official further announced that 145,000 tons of products valued at \$311 million have been imported to the province during the ten-month period.

He named electronic parts, cotton, fertilizers and chemicals, essential oils, production line machinery, spare parts and auto parts as the main imported items, and UAE, China, Uzbekistan, Turkey, India, and Germany as the major exporters of goods to

the province in the said time span.

Iran has traded 122.8 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$58.7 billion in the first 10 months of the current Iranian calendar year, according to the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

Of the total volume of the country's non-oil trade in the mentioned period, 94.541 million tons worth \$28.63 billion was the share of exports and about 28.249 million tons valued at \$30.639 were the imported goods, Mehdi Mir-Ashrafi said.

According to the official, the exports of non-oil goods in this period decreased by 17.7 percent and 20 percent in terms of weight and value, respectively, compared to the same period last year.

The figures, however, grew significantly compared to the previous calendar month (December 21, 2020-January 19, 2021), the official added, noting that the upward trend is expected to continue in the coming months.

In comparison to the previous year's same time span, the imports of the mentioned commodities also declined by two percent and 15.5 percent in terms of weight and value, respectively, according to the IRICA head.

Iran's top five non-oil export destinations during this period were China with \$7.2 billion worth of exports, Iraq with \$6.3 billion, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with over \$3.7 billion, Turkey with \$2 billion, and Afghanistan with \$1.9 billion.

The mentioned countries imported a total of 69.5 million tons of goods worth \$21.3 billion from Iran in the said 10 months, accounting for 73.5 percent and 76 percent of the total exports in terms of weight and value, respectively.

Meanwhile, the country's top five sources of imports during this period were China with \$7.9 billion, the UAE with \$7.4 billion, Turkey with \$3.4 billion, India with \$1.8 billion, and Germany with \$1.4 billion worth of imports.

Iranian position in Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been fair: Azeri expert

1 → The Islamic Republic of Iran supported the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan at various levels and demanded the immediate evacuation of the occupied territories. Iran's Supreme Religious Leader, his advisers and other officials made statements in this regard. We remember this and appreciate it. Azerbaijanian President Ilham Aliyev also called Iran's position fair during the war. This is the official position of the Azerbaijani state.

How do you see Iran's historic position in resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict?

The position of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has always been based on international law, and Tehran has always taken the same official position on international platforms. Iran's position has not changed since the 1990s: Azerbaijan's territorial integrity must be restored.

Over the years, the Iranian side has repeatedly offered to mediate and expressed its support for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Of course, Azerbaijan was not in favor of bloodshed in the region, and we tried to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group. Although a decisive rapprochement was reached in the peace talks, tensions between the parties continued as a result of Armenia's unconstructive position.

Each time a ceasefire was violated in the region, Tehran called on the parties to be patient and agree on a ceasefire and proposed a mediation mission.

Unfortunately, in the autumn of last year, the war in the region became inevitable and Azerbaijan had to liberate its lands by war. Because Armenia's provocative statements and provocations on the front continued. The patience of the Azerbaijani state and people was exhausted. And finally, the Azerbaijani Army took action.

How do you evaluate U.S. and Western countries' role in mediating between Armenia and Azerbaijan, especially as this time it was Russia that managed the situation?

Despite the presence of countries such as the United States and France among the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group,



which mediates in the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the position of the two countries during the 44-day war was unfortunate. The intermediary countries openly justified the occupation. Specifically, France openly sided with Armenia and justified the occupation of Azerbaijani lands. This policy is completely contrary to the mediation mission. Official Washington's position was not based on international law. We regret the statement of the U.S. secretary of state condemning Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan acted within the framework of international law, wanted to restore its state borders, the whole world supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, but two members of the OSCE Minsk Group opposed Azerbaijan.

This means that for the last 30 years, the United States and France have been engaged in hypocrisy and simply tried to buy time. They tried to justify the maintenance of the status quo in Nagorno-Karabakh and the occupation of Azerbaijani lands. The 44-day war revealed the true nature of those countries.

Russia, another intermediary country, took a more professional approach. On one hand, Moscow supported the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and on the other it launched its mediation mission and took real steps to

ensure long-term peace and reconciliation between the parties.

Which neighboring countries helped Azerbaijan during the First Nagorno-Karabakh War?

The First Karabakh War has left bitter traces in the history of Azerbaijan. It was in the early 1990s that Azerbaijan lost 20 percent of its land. At that time, the Azerbaijani army was just being formed and usually consisted of volunteers. It is a historical fact that in those years, without the support of Iran at certain points, Azerbaijan could have lost more territory and people.

I would like to remind you that during the First Karabakh War, especially during the skirmishes along the Araz River, hundreds of thousands of our citizens became refugees. At that time, Iran's official support, in particular, the opening of a humanitarian corridor in the region by Tehran, helped to safely evacuate thousands of Azerbaijanis from the war zone. Otherwise, our losses could have been many times greater. We must not forget this. We have not forgotten this support from neighboring Iran, and I want to talk about it today.

The Supreme Religious Leader of Iran has repeatedly stated that Nagorno-Karabakh is a Muslim land, the land of Muslim Azerbai-

janis. In those lands, our Muslim religious monuments, Islamic architectural values and mosques have been destroyed and looted.

We have always felt the support of friendly and brotherly Iran, and even in the most difficult days of Azerbaijan, the 44-day war, we relied on friendly countries like Iran and saw Iran with us. A large number of countries supported us. These supports strengthened us and we won the 44-day war.

How can Iran and Azerbaijan take advantage of their common ties like religion, language and history?

I want to emphasize once again that Iran and Azerbaijan are countries with a common history, culture and, I would say, a common future. The two countries have common religious beliefs and a common language and culture. And Azerbaijan and Iran have always supported each other on various issues. And it is important to continue this mutual support.

The war in Karabakh is over. Now we need to look to the future. Azerbaijan needs support to restore the liberated territories, and Iran can be closely involved in this issue. Given that the Islamic Republic of Iran has sufficient experience and potential in the development of water basins, construction of hydropower plants, restoration of historical and religious monuments and construction of mosques, as well as the construction of communication hubs, then Azerbaijan and Iran can agree in this area.

I remember that some time ago when the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev visited the liberated Khudafarin Bridge, he called our border with Iran the "Border of Friendship." Later, the statements made by Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif during his visit to Baku once again show that there are steps to be taken jointly by the two countries. First of all, we are interested in cooperating with Iran in the reconstruction and restoration of Nagorno-Karabakh. Further, I see the Iranian government's mediation mission in maintaining the ceasefire and ensuring coexistence in the region as successful. The fact that Iran and Azerbaijan share the same position and support each other in a number of regional and global energy projects can lead to fruitful results.

Moscow ready to break ties with EU: Lavrov

Moscow is prepared to end the relationship with the European Union if the bloc introduces sanctions that put the Russian economy at risk, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov stated.

The foreign minister noted that Russia is completely self-sufficient in the military sphere, and it should strive for the same situation regarding its economy.

«The assumption is that we are ready. If we see again that there are sanctions that may create risks for our economy, including its most sensitive sectors. We do not want to isolate from the world, but we have to be ready. If you want peace, prepare for war», Lavrov said on the show Solovyov Live.

The statement comes as a response to an announcement made by EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell. The European diplomat, who visited Moscow earlier this month, said that Brussels would consider imposing new sanctions against Moscow, and the topic would be discussed at EU summits in February and March.

Borrell also claimed that Russia was disconnecting itself from Europe. The Russian Foreign Ministry noted it was surprised by the remarks, adding they contradicted the statements he had made in Moscow.

The new round of tensions follows several EU politicians suggesting sanctions against Russia over the case of Russian opposition figure Alexei Navalny. A Moscow court sentenced him to 2 years and 8 months in prison in a financial misdemeanor case. At least three European diplomats (from Sweden, Germany, and Poland) were expelled from the country for participating in unauthorized rallies in support of the opposition figure.

Yemen hits Saudi airbase with new generation missile

1 → Lebanon-based al-Mayadeen television news network reported that Yemeni troops and their allies took control of the Koufel military base on Thursday.

Military sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said scores of Hadi loyalists were killed or wounded.

Heavy fighting has continued between Yemeni forces and Hadi loyalists in Haylan and Makhdarah areas of the Sirwah district over the past few days.

Saudi Arabia launched the war on Yemen in March 2015, with the aim of bringing Hadi back to power and crushing the popular Ansarullah movement.

According to the UN, 80 percent of Yemen's 30 million people need some form of aid or protection. About 13.5 million Yemenis currently face acute food insecurity, UN data shows.

The European Parliament (EP) on Thursday called on EU member states to ban arms sales to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

In a resolution, European lawmakers welcomed a U.S. decision to suspend arms sales to Saudi Arabia and defer the transfer of F-35 fighter jets to the UAE.

Iranian-Azerbaijani relations will strengthen after Nagorno-Karabakh's liberation

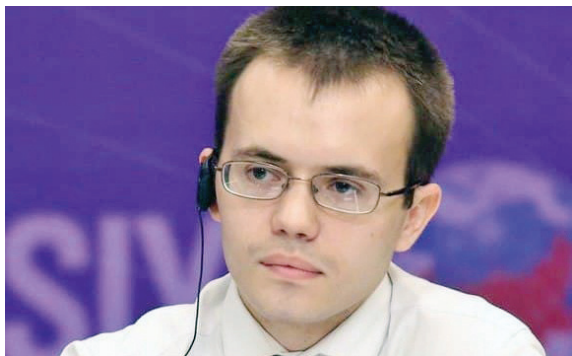
1 → President Aliyev believes that they can all come closer together after the end of the Patriotic War in order to collectively give their shared region a brighter future. In practice, this could result in improved connectivity and a greater role in China's Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) for linking together the Eurasian supercontinent. Iran and Azerbaijan are on the same page regarding this vision, which will strengthen their ties in the coming years.

Earlier in the interview, Iran's top representative in Azerbaijan talked in detail about the tangible benefits that improved cooperation between their countries could entail. He suggested that the Islamic Republic could provide its northern neighbor with technical, engineering, energy, educational, construction, agricultural, mine clearance, and medical assistance, not just in the recently liberated territories, but across all of Azerbaijan. Ambassador Mousavi was also specifically asked about the Khodaafrin dam, which he agreed "has become a bridge to strengthen fraternal relations between the two countries." Altogether, Iran has a comprehensive plan for ensuring that it and Azerbaijan receive maximum benefits from their cooperation.

The significance of this can't be stressed enough because of the information warfare waged against these fraternal nations over the years. Bilateral ties sometimes went through difficult periods, but the leadership of both countries always did their best to ensure that their disputes were manageable. Iran's fair position of supporting Azerbaijan during its Patriotic War and offering to help diplomatically resolve the conflict through its 3+3 format proposal at the time helped both countries enter a new chapter of relations. This wise policy by the Islamic Republic was far-sighted and debunked the false information warfare narratives that were spread about Iran's position and its overall attitude towards Azerbaijan.

Looking forward, there's every reason for observers to be optimistic about the future of Iranian-Azerbaijani

relations. Baku's liberation of the formerly occupied territories was a regional game-changer, one which could ultimately come to have supercontinental strategic consequences if the 3+3 format is successful. It's in all six of those pertinent countries' interests to ensure that their shared region becomes one of the most important in Eurasia, which can only happen through the fostering of excellent relations between each of them on a bilateral level and trust-based multilateral cooperation. Iranian-Azerbaijani relations are a perfect example of how this can be achieved in practice, where pragmatism takes precedence over all else, and everyone thus benefits.



Andrew Korybko is a political analyst, journalist and a regular contributor to several online journals, as well as a member of the expert council for the Institute of Strategic Studies and Predictions at the People's Friendship University of Russia. He has published various works in the field of Hybrid Wars, including "Hybrid Wars: The Indirect Adaptive Approach to Regime Change" and "The Law of Hybrid War: Eastern Hemisphere".

If Senate does not convict Trump, 'he can do this again,' Democrats warn

Democratic prosecutors making the case that Donald Trump incited a deadly insurrection by encouraging his supporters to march on the U.S. Capitol warned the Senate on Thursday that if it fails to convict the former president, "he can do this again."

The first three days of Trump's impeachment trial focused on his fiery

words to supporters in the weeks leading up to the Jan. 6 attack, when he falsely claimed that his election defeat by Democrat Joe Biden was the result of fraud and that the crowd needed to "fight" and "stop the steal."

The Democrats appear highly unlikely to secure a conviction and bar Trump from ever again holding public office

given that only six Republicans voted with Democrats in the 100-seat chamber to proceed with the trial.

"If he gets back into office and it happens again, we'll have no one to blame but ourselves," lead impeachment manager Representative Jamie Raskin told the Senate on Thursday, wrapping up the prosecution arguments.

China will 'eat our lunch,' Biden warns after clashing with Xi on most fronts

U.S. President Joe Biden and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping held their first phone call as leaders and appeared at odds on most issues, even as Xi warned that confrontation would be a "disaster" for both nations.

While Xi has called for "win-win" cooperation, Biden has called China America's "most serious competitor" and vowed to "out compete" Beijing.

According to Reuters, on Thursday, Biden told a bipartisan group of U.S. senators at a meeting on the need to upgrade

U.S. infrastructure the United States must raise its game in the face of the Chinese challenge.

Biden said he spoke to Xi for two hours on Wednesday night and warned the senators: "If we don't get moving, they are going to eat our lunch."

"They're investing billions of dollars dealing with a whole range of issues that relate to transportation, the environment and a whole range of other things. We just have to step up."

Second Announcement



Khouzestan Steel Company

Announcement of the contractors' qualification for Khouzestan steel company new wagon unloading system (tippler No. 3) by EPC contract

Khouzestan Steel Company (KSC), intends to increase the capacity of its wagon unloading system by implementing an EPC contract for a new wagon tippler No. 3. Wagon tippler No. 3 must be able to unload all types of wagons with weight of 90 tons of load and a total weight of 120 tons.

Companies interested in taking part the tender, having the following qualifications, can declare their readiness:

1. **Sufficient Technological Knowledge and experience in the implementation of pelletizing plants, process gas fans equipped and ESP de-dusters.**

2. **The ability of financing and implementing the project by EPCF approach is preferred.**

3. **The equipment must be supplied from European Companies in Europe or other country under their license with European Union Countries Standards.**

The interested companies shall send the following documents to KSC by the date: 10th March 2021.

- Company Profile and Catalogues**
- Company references of similar projects. (Name, Location, Scope, Capacity and Contract Price)**
- The list of projects with frame of financing (if any).**

After receiving the documents and evaluating the companies' competency, KSC will send the tender documents to the selected contractors.

Address: IRAN, Ahwaz, Khouzestan province, Khouzestan Steel Company, Post Box: 1378, Post Code: 61778-1311, Mr. Seyyed Hasan Hosseini contracts department manager.

Contact: Mr. Jamshid Sayyadi project manager - Tel: 0098 61 32908222 - Email: j.sayyadi@ksc.ir

روابط عمومی شرکت فولاد خوزستان

Abu Musa to organize two-day tours for martyrs' families

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Abu Musa, one of the southernmost Iranian islands in the Persian Gulf, is arranging special package tours to be offered to the families of the martyrs.

The two-day recreational tours are expected to launch in the month of Esfand (starting Feb. 19), Mehr reported.



With an area of 12.8 square kilometers, Abu Musa Island enjoys a warm and humid climate as well as a variety of plants and marine life.

The Abu Musa along with two other Iranian islands of Greater and Lesser Tunb sit near important oil shipping channels at the mouth of the strategic Strait of Hormuz in the Persian Gulf.

Millennia-old relics donated to Kerman cultural heritage department

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — Two Iranian individuals have recently donated 14 relics, which are estimated to date from the third millennium BC, to a cultural heritage department in the southeastern Kerman province.

"The objects, which date back to the third millennium BC, include objects in the shape of vase and cup, stone cylindrical vessel, axe and bronze rod, blade and ring," CHTN quoted a senior police official as saying on Thursday.



The big and sprawling Kerman province has been a cultural melting pot since antiquity, blending Persians with subcontinental tribe dwellers. It is home to myriad historical sites and scenic landscapes such as Bazaar-e Sartasari, Jabalieh Dome, Ganjali Khan Bathhouse, Malek Jameh Mosque, and Shahdad Desert to name a few.

UNESCO-designated Tchogha Zanbil equipped with electronic protection devices

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Sets of electronic protection devices and surveillance cameras have recently been installed across the UNESCO-registered Tchogha Zanbil, which is a ruined prehistoric ziggurat and a top tourist destination in southwest Iran.

The position of CCTV cameras have been chosen in such a way that no place within the UNESCO site remains uncovered, CHTN quoted, Atefeh Rashnoei, director of the World Heritage, as saying on Tuesday.

"The electronic protection will not replace physical protection and human resources....It is aimed to bolster support and protection of this World Heritage site," she added.



Tchogha Zanbil is widely known as the world's best surviving example of Elamite architecture. The ruined ziggurat stands in Khuzestan province, southwest Iran. It was made a UNESCO site in 1979.

According to UNESCO, Tchogha Zanbil is the largest ziggurat outside of Mesopotamia and the best preserved of this type of stepped pyramidal monument. Lonely Planet says that even if you're not a fan of ancient ruins, the great bulk and splendid semi-desert isolation of the site can't fail to impress. Try to catch it in the soft, golden light of late afternoon rather than the harsh midday sun.

The ziggurat is located approximately 30 km south-east of Shush and 80 km north of Ahvaz. Reaching a total height of some 25m, the gigantic monument was used to be surmounted by a temple and estimated to hit 52m during its heyday. Tchogha Zanbil was excavated in six seasons between 1951 and 1961 by Roman Ghirshman, a Russian-born French archeologist who was specialized in ancient Iran.

Ziggurats, in general, are pyramidal stepped temple towers that bear architectural and religious characteristics of the major cities of Mesopotamia from approximately 2200 until 500 BC. They were usually built with a core of mud brick and an exterior covered with baked brick. Approximately 25 ziggurats are known, being equally divided among Sumer, Babylonia, and Assyria.

Tourism projects worth \$5.9b underway in Mazandaran

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — A total of 250 tourism-related projects worth 250 trillion rials (\$5.9 billion at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) are being implemented across the northern Iranian province of Mazandaran.

On Thursday, Seifollah Farzaneh, the provincial tourism chief, called on potential private investors to help fund the [unfinished] projects to have them implemented ahead of the schedule.

"We expect all banks [and potential private investors] to come to the fore to help complete those projects, which are under construction and semi-finished."

This way a large number of native young people will be gaining employment opportunities when these projects are completed, the official said.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the official pointed to several tourism projects recently inaugurated across the lush green province.

Although the province's tourism sector is struggling with different problems and issues due to the outbreak of the coronavirus, 23 tourism-related projects were inaugurated across the province on the occasion of Fajr celebrations (Jan. 31- Feb. 10, marking the victory anniversary of



the Islamic Revolution), he said.

Worth 3.2 trillion rials (\$76 million), the recently-inaugurated projects included a 20-room hotel and 22 eco-lodge units, which are expected to create 129 job opportunities for the locals, he explained.

Minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Ali-Asghar Mounesan announced in August 2020 that Iran's travel sector had suffered a loss of 12 trillion rials

(some \$2.85 billion) since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, however, he mentioned that all the tourism businesses across the country would have the capacity to fully resume their activities both in domestic and foreign markets.

"Many tourism projects have been completed, or are being implemented, showing that a very good capacity has been created in the field of tourism in

Ernst Hoeltzer and his shots of 19th-century Isfahan

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Ernst Hoeltzer (1835 – 1911), who was a German telegraphist and photographer, who shot many photographs of the then Isfahan during his life and mission in Persia (Iran).

In spring 1870, Hoeltzer took his first extended expedition into the mountainous regions of Isfahan to visit nomadic tribes there. He, later, took many photos of monuments, people, and everyday life in the central Iranian city.

In those days, after the fall of the Safavid Dynasty, the country had been reunited in the eighteenth century under the Qajar Dynasty, which became an important power in West Asia.

Hoeltzer participated in a series of cable-laying projects in the Mediterranean for Siemens & Halske before going to Persia for the Indo-European Telegraph Department.

In the nineteenth century, the globe still had blank spots, travel was arduous and adventure-filled, and — far more than today — people had to rely on themselves when in distant lands. There were no "user manuals" for foreign regions and cultures, and all travel was individually organized. Engineers in that era also faced these challenges.

The fastest route from London to Tehran in 1863 led through St. Petersburg and Moscow to the Volga and then over the Caspian Sea to Persia. Holtzer, accompanied by two English colleagues, took the train to Nizhny Novgorod. He then proceeded by steamship along the Volga, Europe's longest river, to the Caspian Sea.

According to the Siemens Historical Institute, the Persian headquarters of the Indo-European Telegraph Department was built in Tehran in 1863. Holtzer moved in for the next few months right next to the British Lega-

tion and began to set up housekeeping. Most of his social life took place at the Legation.

His primary task was to train future Persian telegraph operators at Dar ul-Funun (an exemplar school of higher education in Tehran, which was established in 1851).

The telegraph system was established, and the difficult work of building it had given way to everyday routine. Between inspecting the sections and visits to the Tehran headquarters and the telegraphic service in Isfahan, Hoeltzer had more and more free time. He used some of it to document contemporary Persia in word and image.

In 1873, Ernst Hoeltzer began using his plate camera to document landscapes, buildings, and important events including travel by the first Persian railway; the telegraph line; everyday scenes showing merchants, craftsmen, festivals, and customers; and military maneuvers.

He supplemented his photos with detailed descriptions, particularly of the city of Isfahan. He described his motives: "Persia and Isfahan (Isfahan) are on the threshold of a cultural transformation, and for several years now people have started in- troducing and installing a lot of foreign, usually European, style and luxury there. The old buildings, customs, and practices (even clothing) are gradually disappearing."

He died in Isfahan on July 3, 1911, and was buried in the Armenian cemetery in Julfa. His memory lives on in the Armenian community. A couple of years ago, restoration work was carried out on his home, which is located in the New Jolfa district of Isfahan, to help preserve parts of his legacy in Iran for the succeeding generations.

Isfahan has long been nicknamed as Nesf-e-Jahan



Photo captured by Ernst Hoeltzer depicts a view of Ali Qapu Palace in Isfahan

which is translated into "half the world"; meaning seeing it is relevant to see the whole world. The cool blue tiles of Isfahan's Islamic buildings, and the city's majestic bridges, contrast perfectly with the encircling hot, dry Iranian countryside.

It is filled with many architectural wonders such as unmatched Islamic buildings, bazaars, museums, Persian gardens, and tree-lined boulevards. It's a city for walking, getting lost in its mazing bazaars, dozing in beautiful gardens, and meeting people.

Isfahan's UNESCO-designated Imam Square, best known as Naghsh-e Jahan Sq. (literary meaning "Image of the World"), is one of the largest in the world (500m by 160m), and a majestic example of town planning.

Other Iranian antiquities added to national heritage list

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — A total of nine historical moveable properties in East Azarbaijan province have recently been inscribed on the national heritage list.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts announced the inscriptions on Thursday in a letter to the governor-general of the northwestern province, CHTN reported.

A royal silver coin, clay pot and jug, and a padlock were among the new properties added to the national heritage list.



The list also includes Sarab Jameh Mosque's mihrab, a semicircular niche

in the wall of a mosque that points out the qibla - the direction of the Kaaba in Mecca, a gold bracelet, and a clay seal.

The historical objects are being kept in the Azarbaijan Museum in the capital city of Tabriz, which embraces several historical and religious sites, including the Jameh Mosque of Tabriz and Arg of Tabriz, and UNESCO-registered Tabriz Historic Bazaar Complex to name a few.

Tabriz became the capital of the Mongol Il-Khan Mahmud Gazan (1295–1304) and his successor. Timur (Tamerlane), a Turkic

conqueror, took it in 1392. Some decades later the Kara Koyunlu Turkmen made it their capital, it was when the famous Blue Mosque was built in Tabriz.

Tabriz retained its administrative status under the Safavid dynasty until 1548 when Shah Tahmasp I relocated his capital westward to Qazvin. During the next two centuries, Tabriz changed hands several times between Persia and the Ottoman Empire. During World War I, the city was temporarily occupied by Turkish and then Soviet troops.

Traditional arts in Isfahan inscribed on intangible cultural heritage list

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — The skill of designing silver accessories and the art of making handmade knives along with four more skills and arts, all practiced in the central province of Isfahan, have been registered in the National Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts on Thursday announced the inscriptions in a letter it submitted to the governor-general of the province, ILNA reported.

The list also includes the skill of weaving kilims, leather crafting, making metal statues, and the art of Sakmeh-duzi, a kind of traditional needlework.

Soaked in a rich history and culture, Isfahan was once a crossroads of international trade and diplomacy in Iran. Now, it is one of Iran's top tourist destinations for good



reasons. The ancient city is filled with many architectural wonders such as unmatched Islamic buildings, bazaars, museums, Persian gardens, and tree-lined boulevards. It's a city for walking, getting lost in its mazing bazaars, dozing in beautiful gardens, and meeting people.

Isfahan is renowned not only for the abundance of great historical bridges but also for its 'life-giving river', the Zayandeh-Rood, which has long bestowed the city an original beauty and fertility. The cool blue tiles of Isfahan's Islamic buildings, and the city's majestic bridges, contrast perfectly with the encircling hot, dry Iranian countryside.

Modern Isfahan is now home to some heavy industry, including steel factories and a nuclear facility on its outskirts, however, its inner core wants to be preserved as a priceless gem.

Iran reduces PCR test validity for air passengers

➔ 1 The worldwide outbreak of COVID-19 has brought the world to a standstill, and tourism has been the worst affected of all major economic sectors.

World tourist arrivals fell by 72% over the first ten months of 2020, according

to data compiled by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in December.

Restrictions on travel, low consumer confidence, and a global struggle to contain the coronavirus pandemic are amongst factors contributing to the

worst year on record in the history of tourism.

Iran has also suffered the same fate as its foreign arrivals plunged 72% during the first eight months of 2020 when compared to 2019.



Even 'illegal migrants' in Iran will get COVID-19 vaccine

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — All foreign nationals residing in Iran, even those who are undocumented, will be included in the program for vaccination against the coronavirus, Health Ministry's spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour has said.

"All over the world, as soon as illegal migrants are identified, they are detained and arrested. But, in Iran, we will inject the coronavirus vaccine even to them," ILNA quoted Jahanpour as saying.

A majority of Afghan migrants residing in Iran are undocumented, he noted.

Iran is hosting about one million documented foreign nationals, and perhaps another one million are illegally living in the country, deputy minister of interior has said.

Some 700,000 foreign nationals illegally residing in Iran are expelled annually from the country, but many of whom return back for different reasons, IRIB quoted Javad Naserian as saying.

At the end of 2018, Iran hosted close to one million refugees, making it the sixth-largest refugee host country in the world.

Iran also was the eighth largest refugee-hosting country in the world in 2019,



hosting 951,142 Afghan refugees and 28,268 Iraqi refugees, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Undocumented Afghans have access to free primary health services and similarly free COVID-19 related testing, treatment, and hospitalization, just like nationals.

In August 2020, health ministry official Shahnam Arshi, said all foreign nationals infected with coronavirus receive medical treatment free of charge in Iran.

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

No foreign national has been charged for coronavirus testing or treatment, he said, highlighting, this is a service that is not done for free in many countries but has been done in the last 6 months for the treatment of foreign nationals in Iran.

On February 10, Jahanpour said that vaccination of the whole population against the coronavirus will be completed in the next Iranian calendar year (March 2021-March 2022) and it is hoped that Iran will be one of the first countries in this regard.

It is said that the vaccination procedure takes three to seven years in most countries, but the [Iranian] health ministry plans to complete the vaccination of the whole population by the end of 2021 or the end of the next Iranian calendar year (March 2022), Jahanpour explained.

Birth rate declines by 5% in 6 months on year

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The number of births registered in Iran during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 20, 2020) shows a decrease of five percent compared to the same period last year.

During spring and summer, 280,564 births and 300,059 births were registered respectively, compared to 299,389 births and 315,167 births in spring and summer last year, according to the Statistical Center of Iran.

The total fertility rate in simple terms refers to the total number of children born or likely to be born to a woman in her lifetime if she were subject to the prevailing rate of age-specific fertility in the population.

According to the data released by the National Organization for Civil Registration, the number of births registered during the [Iranian calendar] year 1390 (March 2011-March 2012) was equal to 1,382,118, which increased to 1,528,053 births in the [Iranian calendar] year 1395 (March 2016-March 2017).

However, the number of births in the whole country faced a downtrend over the past three years, as



registered births decreased to 1,196,135 over the past [Iranian calendar] year.

Plan to encourage childbearing

Most recently, the Majlis (Iranian parliament) has developed a support plan to encourage families to increase childbearing.

The plan stipulates health insurance for infertile couples, providing services and facilities to working

women, providing health and nutrition support packages to mothers and children, educational opportunities for student mothers, providing livelihood support to families, and ongoing medical services to pregnant women.

Population growth policies

Some 14 policies to support childbearing and the family were announced by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in [the Iranian calendar year] 1389 (March 2014-March 2015) when he stressed that social, cultural, and economic development should be done in accordance with these general policies to support families.

The policies address the need to increase the population and the various dimensions of it, including childbearing, facilitating marriage and strengthening the family, reproductive health, promoting the Iranian-Islamic lifestyle, empowering young people, honoring the elderly, and the environment, which can lead to an increase in the quantity and quality of the population if it is timely and continuous implemented.

Indian, Chinese coronavirus vaccines awaiting Iran's approval

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — The Food and Drug Organization of Iran is weighing up importing India's Bharat Biotech and China's Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccines in a bid to boost the country's drive against the disease.

"In addition to importing Russian vaccine, Sputnik V, and its production by the end of the current [Iranian calendar] year (March 20), importing two other foreign-made vaccines, namely India's Bharat Biotech and China's Sinopharm, are currently under investigation," FDA spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour said on Friday, IRNA reported.

For the time being, only Sputnik V has met the importation requirements, he said, adding that the documentation

of the Bharat Biotech vaccine has been completed and is passing the judgment phase. Sinopharm is also working to complete its documentation process.

On January 27, Health Minister Saeed Namaki said that there are four different ways to supply the coronavirus vaccine, including direct purchase from a foreign country, procurement from the World Health Organization's COVAX facility, a joint production with a Cuban company as well as domestic production of the vaccine.

The first consignment of Sputnik V, the Russian-made vaccine for the coronavirus, was imported on February 2.

"We have signed an agreement with the Russian side to receive two million



doses of the vaccine," ISNA quoted Mohammad Reza Shanehsaz, head of the Food and Drug Administration, as saying.

This is for ten thousand people, he said, adding that the next batches will be imported within the next one or two

months.

"Of course, we will not import just the Russian-made vaccine. There are other reliable sources, as well that have successfully passed clinical phases and we will receive them by the end of the [Iranian calendar] year (March 20)."

Importing vaccine from COVAX, a global initiative to ensure rapid and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, is also on the agenda, he noted.

On February 5, the Iranian Ambassador to the UK Hamid Baeidinejad wrote on his Instagram page that 4.2 million doses of the Anglo-Swedish AstraZeneca vaccine will be imported in the near future within the framework of the agreement with COVAX.

Social inequalities overtake climate change in EU citizens' concerns: poll

Reducing poverty and social inequality has become the main policy priority for EU citizens after the COVID-19 pandemic, a new survey commissioned by the European Parliament has shown.

The yearly Eurobarometer survey of the European Parliament was conducted by the data consultancy Kantar between November and December 2020, thus taking into account the first impact of the pandemic on public perceptions.



Nearly half the respondents (48%) believe the fight against poverty should be put at the top of the European Parliament's agenda, an increase of 17% compared to the last edition of the survey.

In a recent forecast drafted by the World Bank, COVID-19 is considered having a clear impact on the global poor, pushing some 88 million to 115 million people into extreme poverty during 2020.

For the World Bank, many of the new poor are likely to live in congested urban settings and work in the sectors most affected by lockdowns and mobility restrictions.

Shadows of concern about the rise in inequality worldwide due to the pandemic were also recently cast in a research published by the NGO Oxfam.

According to this study, it could take more than a decade to recover from the economic hit of the pandemic, meanwhile pushing more people into poverty.

Combating terrorism and organised crime, as well as improving the access to quality education, are also high on the EU citizens wish list, respectively with 35% and 33% of the preferences.

The protection of environment and biodiversity is stable at 32%, but only a year ago, this figure placed the topic at the very top of EU citizens' desires.

This shift in priorities can be considered as a strict consequence of the pandemic, the authors of the study explained in a technical briefing.

But the impact of the pandemic seems to go beyond the list of priorities, involving the very image of the European Union.

One out of two respondents has a fairly positive or very positive image of the EU, a rise of 10% points compared to 2019, with just 14% saying that it is negative.

The historic 'Next Generation EU' stimulus plan (NGEU) played a crucial role in the improved image of the bloc, as 72% agree or tend to agree it will allow EU countries to rebuild their economies more rapidly from negative effects of the pandemic.

Expectations from the post-COVID world are, however, pretty bleak, as the majority of respondents think the situation in their national economy after the pandemic would be worse than before, although most believe their personal living conditions will be the same in one year's time.

Another consequence of the pandemic can be seen in how solidarity among EU countries is perceived, as 41% of respondents put it on the top of the list of the core values that the European Parliament should defend, compared to 33% one year ago.

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 128)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

نگارش

● تمرین ۱. جواب سؤال‌های زیر را کامل بنویسید:

۱. پارک ملت در کجا قرار دارد؟
۲. چه کسانی به پارک ملت می‌روند؟
۳. جمعه‌ی گذشته هوا چطور بود؟
۴. دخترها اول چکار کردند؟
۵. نظر هاروکا در باره‌ی پارک چه بود؟
۶. دخترها وقتی نشستند چکار کردند؟

● تمرین ۲. در انشای این درس، چیزهای جالبی را که در باره‌ی یکی از پارک‌های بزرگ و معروف کشورتان می‌دانید بنویسید.

خط فارسی

ما مداد من مِربا میز مردم مریم نام تمام

گفتار

فراموش	Thank you; you are very kind.	فراموش کردن	Thank you; لطیف شما زیاد.
فراموش نکنید.	Don't forget.	فراموش نکنید.	Thank you very much.
از لطیف شما می‌تشکر کنم.	Thank you; wholesome for you.	نگاه کردن	to look
نگاه کردید.	Thank you.	نگاه کنید.	Look.
فراموش کردن	to forget	نگاه کردن	to look
فراموش نکنید.	Don't forget.	نگاه کنید.	Look.
لطیف	kindness	نگاه کردن	to look
از لطیف شما می‌تشکر کنم.	Thank you; wholesome for you.	نگاه کردن	to look
نگاه کردید.	Thank you.	نگاه کنید.	Look.

(خیالی) لطیف دارید.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A < > C

Special plan prepared to attract overseas Iranian researchers

The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology has prepared a special plan to attract scientists and researchers living abroad, IRNA news agency reported on Saturday.

The project aims to promote "supporting technological activities and startups", "postdoctoral facilities", "supporting employment in innovation centers and accelerators as a trainer and consultant", "providing facilities for opportunity studies", "providing housing facilities", "supporting employment in reputable domestic companies", "support for lectures and specialized workshops" and "support for cooperation as invited and appointed professors".

It is estimated that about one percent of all Iranian students are studying abroad, which is not above the international average of around 3 percent.

طرح ویژه برای جذب پژوهشگران ایرانی مقیم خارج

جذب محققان و پژوهشگران خارج از کشور یکی از اولویتهای کشور محسوب می‌شود و در این راستا معاونت علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری طرحی ویژه پیشنهاد کرده است.

به گزارش ایرنا، معاونت علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری، این طرح شامل «حمایت از فعالیتهای فناورانه و ایجاد شرکتهای نوپا»، «تسهیلات پسا دکتری»، «حمایت از اشتغال در مراکز نوآوری و شتابنده‌ها به عنوان مربی و مشاور»، «تسهیلات دوره فرصت مطالعاتی»، «تسهیلات مسکن»، «حمایت از اشتغال در شرکتهای معتبر داخلی»، «حمایت از برگزاری سخنرانی و کارگاههای تخصصی» و «حمایت از همکاری به عنوان اساتید مدعو و معین» است.

بر اساس برآوردها نزدیک یک درصد از کل مجموع دانشجویان ایرانی در خارج از کشور تحصیل می‌کنند. این رقم در مقایسه با میانگین بین‌المللی که حدود ۳ درصد است، رقم بالایی محسوب نمی‌شود.

INTERNATIONAL DAILY
www.tehrantimes.com

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» 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

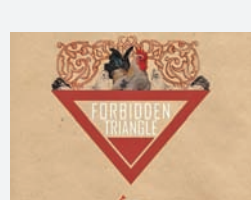


GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Lying would negatively influence your livelihood.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES



Painting
■ Rasul Soltani is displaying his latest collection "Forbidden Triangle" in an exhibition at CAMA – Contemporary and Modern Art Gallery. The exhibit runs until February 17 at the gallery located at No. 44, 10th Golestan, Pasdaran St.



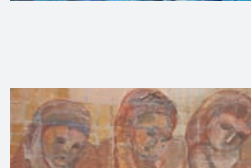
■ Negar Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Maryam Asadi. The exhibit named "Gol-Setan" will run until February 17 at the gallery located at 33 Delaram Alley, Roshanai St. in the Qeitarieh neighborhood.



■ An exhibition of paintings by Farzaneh Amirjahi is currently underway at Ehsan Gallery. The exhibit will run until February 17 at the gallery located at No. 22, East 14th St. in the Ajudanieh neighborhood.



■ Ghazal Khatibi is hanging her latest collection of paintings in an exhibition at O Gallery 1. A collection of drawings and installation art by Ali Vaziri is also on view in an exhibition at O Gallery 2.



The exhibitions will run until February 23 at the gallery located at 18 Shahin St., Sanai St.



■ Shirin Gallery 1 is playing host to an exhibition painting by Shirin Ettahdieh entitled "People...". Hossein Irandoost-Moqaddam is also showcasing his latest collection named "Love-Stricken" in an exhibit at Shirin Gallery 2.



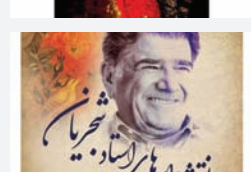
The exhibitions will run until February 24 at the galleries located at No. 5, 13th St., Karim Khan Ave.



■ Homa Gallery is currently hanging paintings by Mojan Eim in an exhibition entitled "Yellow Rave". The exhibit will continue until February 23 at the gallery located at No. 8, Fourth Alley, Sanai St., Karim Khan Ave.



Photo
■ An exhibition of photos by Davud Amir is currently underway at Saleh Gallery. The showcase will be running until February 23 at the gallery that can be found at 148 Karim Khan Ave.



Multimedia
■ Artworks in various media by a group of artists, including Majid Akbari, Mohsen Ahmadi, Nasim Sobhgahi, Fereshteh Nesati, Mohammad Shakib, and Jamal Veisi, are currently on view in an exhibition at Ayrik Gallery. The exhibition will run until February 27 at the gallery located at Ayrik Center on East Ferdows Blvd.



■ Zohreh Fathi, Zahra Ghiasi, Neda Eftekhari, Aian Mansur, Hedyeh Qorban, Mohammad Ghazazani and several other artists are displaying their latest works in various media in an exhibition at Atashzad Gallery. The exhibit will run until February 26 at the gallery that can be found at 3 North Abbaspur (Tavanir) St. near Vanak Sq.



■ Artworks in various media by a group of artists, including Sara Musavi, Mansureh Moaddeli, Marjan Asgari, Zeinab Rafati, Zahra Nuri, and Erfan Bayatian, are on view in an exhibition at Zarna Gallery.

The exhibit will continue until February 26 at 10 Esko Alley near Daneshgah St. and Enqelab Ave.

“Yadoo” tops at 39th Fajr Film Festival

→1 The film tells the story of a teenage boy named Yadu living with his family and people under siege in the southwestern Iranian city of Abadan in the early days of the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war. The family is finally forced to migrate.

During the closing ceremony of the festival held at Tehran's Milad Tower on Wednesday evening, producer Mohammadreza Mesbah dedicated his award to the people of Abadan and lamented that people are living under difficult conditions over 30 years after the war.

He also expressed his thanks to the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults (IIDCYA) and the Farabi Cinema Foundation for their contribution to the project.

After accepting his award, director Mehdi Jafari expressed his appreciation to the people of Abadan and IIDCYA, also acknowledging the acclaimed movies such as "Bashu, the Little Stranger" and "The Runner" produced by the institute during the 1980s.

Morteza Najafi won the award for best director of cinematography for his collaboration both in "Yadoo" and director Ruhollah Hejazi's "Bright".

"Yadoo" also won Amir-Hossein Qasemi and Rashid Daneshmand the Crystal Simorghs for best sound effects engineer and best sound engineer respectively.

"Without Anything", director Mohsen Qarai's loose adaptation of Friedrich



Producer Mohammadreza Mesbah speaks after accepting the Crystal Simorgh for best film for "Yadoo" at the 39th Fajr Film Festival at Tehran's Milad Tower on February 10, 2021. The film's star Milad Soveilavi is also seen holding the award. (FFF/Mehdi Qasemi)

Dürrenmatt's "The Visit", won the special jury award and the Crystal Simorgh for best screen adaptation. The screenplay has been co-written by Qarai and Mohammad Davudi.

The real-life drama "The Sniper", which portrays Abdorrasul Zarrin, who was one of the most lethal snipers in the Iranian forces

during the Iran-Iraq war, won the Golden Simorgh for best film from the national point of view. Ali Ghaffari is the director film.

"The Piebald" directed by Narges Abyar won the best audience film award.

"Zalava" by Arsalan Amiri received the award for best directorial debut.

Co-written by Amiri, Ida Panahandeh and

Tahmineh Bahram, the drama also won the best screenplay award. The film's story is set in the 1970s in an Iranian village where villagers' peace is threatened by an incident, but the sheriff tries to restore peace there.

The award for best actor went to Reza Attaran for his role in "Bright", and Roya Afshar won the award for best actress for her role in "Mom" directed by Arash Anisi.

Gelareh Abbasi won the best supporting actress award for her role in "The Piebald", and Puria Rahimi-Sam was honored as best supporting actor for his role in "Zalava".

The following is a list of other winners at the festival.

Best editor: Emad Khodabakhsh for "Without Anything".

Best composer: Hamed Sabet for "Without Anything".

Best set design: Soheil Danesh-Eshraqi for "Once Upon a Time in Abadan".

Best costume designer: Maral Jeirani for "Without Anything".

Best makeup artist: Iman Omidvari for "The Piebald".

Best practical special effects supervisor: Iman Karamian for "The Sniper".

Best computerized special effects supervisor: Farid Nazer-Fasili for "The Piebald".

Best documentary: "Coup 53" directed by Taqi Amirani.

Best short film: "Emergency" by Maryam Esmikhani.



"Sun Children" by Majid Majidi.

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director Majid Majidi's child labor drama "Sun Children" is among the 15 movies shortlisted in the foreign-language film category at the 93rd Academy Awards.

"Another Round" by Thomas Vinterberg from Denmark, "Better Days" by Derek Tsang from Hong Kong,

“Sun Children” selected for 2021 Oscars foreign-film shortlist

"Charlatan" by Agnieszka Holland from Czech and "Collective" by Alexander Nanau from Romania are also seen on the shortlist.

The shortlist also includes "I'm No Longer Here" by Fernando Frias from Mexico, "Hope" by Maria Sødahl from Norway, "The Mole Agent" by Maite Alberdi from Chile, "Two of Us" by Filippo Meneghetti from France and "A Sun" by Chung Mong-hong from Taiwan.

"Sun Children" tells the story of 12-year-old Ali and his three friends. Together, they work hard to survive and support their families, doing small jobs in a garage and committing petty crimes to make fast money. Everything changes, however, when Ali is entrusted to find a hidden treasure underground but must first enroll at the Sun School, a charitable institution that tries to educate street kids and child laborers.

The movie had its Iranian premiere during the 38th

Fajr Film Festival in Tehran in February, 2020, garnering the Crystal Simorghs for best film, script and set design.

Numerous international events, including the 77th Venice Film Festival, have also screened the movie. The festival honored the film's star Ruhollah Zamani with the Marcello Mastroianni Award.

The 33rd International Film Festival for Children and Youth in Isfahan also awarded Majidi as best director and Zamani as best actor.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has announced the shortlists for nine categories for the upcoming Oscars.

The shortlist voting concluded on February 5, and the remaining films will move on to the official phase one voting, which will take place on March 5 to 9. The Oscar nominations will be announced on March 15, with the show scheduled to take place on April 25.

“Bab Bara” crowned best at Fajr Theater Festival

A R T TEHRAN — "Bab Bara", a play by Nima Imanzadeh from the northwestern Iranian city of Sanandaj, won the grand prix of the official competition of the 39th Fajr Theater Festival, while Imanzadeh was named the best director for his play.

Winners of different sections of the festival were honored last Tuesday at Vahdat Hall during a closing ceremony attended by Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Abbas Salehi and the winners.

Ayeh Kianpur and Soroush Taheri received the best actress and actor awards for their roles in "Sagdo", while Mohammad Charmshir was named the best playwright for the play.

"Jaleh Ambush" by Hamed Mokammeli received the special jury award.



Organizers of the 39th Fajr Theater Festival pay tribute to nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrazadeh during the closing ceremony of the event at Tehran's Vahdat Hall on February 8, 2021. (ILNA/Alireza Ramezani)

The ceremony was followed by honoring the winners in the Soldier of the Revolution section.

Najmeh Mehrabi Khuzani and Puya Emami received the best actress and actor awards for their roles in "Life with the Taste of Gunpowder" by Mojtaba Khalili.

Saeid Badini was named the best director for the play "General", while the play was honored as the top play of the Soldier of the Revolution section.

Mehdi Ziaian was selected as best director for "Roof Battle", which also brought Mohammad-Hadi Atai the award for best actor.

Arman Mirzaim the young adult actor of the play "Bodies" by director Alireza Marufi was also honored for his powerful performance

by the director of Iran's Dramatic Arts Center, Qader Ashena.

The ceremony continued with paying tribute to the nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrazadeh, who was assassinated in a terrorist attack in a region near Tehran last November.

A video depicting Fakhrazadeh's sons speaking about their father's interest in Iranian art and music was screened at the ceremony.

Photographer Akhtar Tajik, critic Homayun Aliabadi, and actors Bahram Ebrahimi and Jamshid Davarpanah were honored with lifetime achievement awards.

The ceremony was brought to an end with a live Azarbaijani music performance by Vahid Asadollahi and his sons.

Berlinale to screen “Ballad of a White Cow”, “District Terminal” from Iran

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian films "Ballad of a White Cow" and "District Terminal" will be screened during the 71st Berlin International Film Festival.

"Ballad of a White Cow" co-directed by Behtash Sanaeiha and Maryam Moqaddam will go on screen in the official competition, and "District Terminal", a co-production between Iran and Germany by directors Bardia Yadegari and Ehsan Mirhosseini, will have its world premiere in the Encounters section.

"Ballad of a White Cow" is about Mina, a young woman who lives alone with her deaf child while her husband had been executed for a murder charge a year ago. She tries to get her life together, take good care of her child and make both ends meet. However, her life gets more sorrowful when she finds out that her husband was innocent.

"District Terminal" is about a junkie poet named Peyman who attempts to finish a poem, where his city



A scene from "Ballad of the White Cow" by Behtash Sanaeiha and Maryam Moqaddam.

of Tehran falls prey to pollution and a lethal virus. The festival's 71st edition will take place in two stages.

Fourth episode of “Domus Eyes on Iran” released

A R T TEHRAN — The fourth episode of "Domus Eyes on Iran", a video series dedicated to architecture and design, was released during a special ceremony in Tehran on Thursday.

The ceremony attended by a group of architects and entrepreneurs was held at the residence of Italian Ambassador Giuseppe Perrone.

This episode of the documentary series showcases the unique blend of history and modernity in Iranian architecture by the study of the history of the Orsi window, a typical element of traditional Iranian architecture.

It also regards elements in modern buildings such as the Orsi Khaneh, a residential building constructed by Keivani Architects in 2015 on Olayi Street off Nasr

Street in Tehran, which was reviewed by Domus magazine in 2016.

The documentary has been produced by the Italian Embassy in cooperation with the Italian magazine.

The project depicts a reinterpretation of the traditional elements of Iranian architecture, such as colors, lights and plants.

The documentary also goes on to explore the sun and Mithraism concepts as developed in the design of the Mehr Khaneh, and the recreation of the vertical garden in the Pardis Khaneh, two other buildings constructed by Keivani Architects.

This latter work, featuring a constant search for green spaces in the context of relentless urbanization, finds its most

eloquent parallel in Milan's "Vertical Forest", an innovative idea developed by Stefano Boeri, Gianandrea Barreca e Giovanni La Varra (2007-2014).

The series "Domus Eyes on Iran" highlights the role of Iranian architects and designers and their fruitful connection with Italy and its architects and designers.

The first episode featured Alireza Taghaboni's "Villa for an Older Brother", published by Domus in 2018.

The second one shed light on Gaetano Pesce's 1977 visionary project for the Tehran National Library, an inspirational endeavor and a forerunner of architectural trends.

The third episode highlighted the relationship between architecture and nature, through the work of Sara Kalantari and Reza



Images of the buildings being reviewed in the fourth episode of "Domus Eyes on Iran" on display at the courtyard of the residence of Italian Ambassador Giuseppe Perrone in Tehran.

Sayyadian in their Saba Apartments.

All episodes can be viewed on the social media channels of the Italian Embassy in

A philosophical order, an epistemological universe

Interview with Mohammad Legenhausen, former Southern Texas University professor and the winner of Iranian Science and Culture Hall of Fame award for philosophy

BY ALI A. JENABZADEH

"When Mr. Mesbah was studying a philosophical issue, he was trying to create a whole philosophical order surrounding the topic", says Mohammad Legenhausen, the former Southern Texas University professor in an interview with the Tehran Times.

Also, regarding the status of Islamic philosophy in the western countries, Legenhausen believes that "there is a very limited knowledge about Islamic Philosophy in the West. Scholars and students in the West are more attracted to the 'Islamology', a limited part of which is Islamic philosophy. Even those western academics who study philosophy disciplines are not really that much in touch with Islamic philosophy".

The following is the text of interview.

Thanks for giving us the opportunity for this interview. As one of the students of Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi, tell us a little about the first time you met him. Where and how it happened? How did you get so interested in his thoughts and reflections?

I first met Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi in New York in 1990, one year before I came to Iran. At that time, I was thinking about coming to Iran and studying Islamic philosophy. I had some sort of a cooperation with Dr. Kharrazi in Iran's embassy to the UN. One day, accidentally, I was in his office and Ayatollah Mesbah stepped in. I remember that Dr. Kharrazi introduced me to him. I told Mr. Mesbah about my decision to come to Iran and learn something about Islamic philosophy. He just got straight to the point and told me, "It's great, come to me once you arrived at the country". I was really shocked, because he didn't know me at all and we just had started talking about things. I just had met him two or three minutes earlier.

That was it. I never heard from him again. Later, I started preparing for a trip to Iran. I was waiting for the visa, but I needed a letter I didn't have. I didn't know what I have to do. A while later, Dr. Kharrazi managed to provide me with an official invitation letter from Tehran. The Association of Logics and Philosophy had issued the invitation. So I traveled to Tehran, Iran. I had an Iraqi friend who was about to get married at the time. The girl he was going to marry was from an Iraqi family which had immigrated to Iran and was living in Iranian city of Qom. My friend traveled to Iran from Texas and joined me there. He told me that he has to go to Qom because he was going to officially ask that girl to marry him. So, he asked me to accompany him on his journey to Qom. I accepted.

We traveled to Qom. He proposed to the girl and married her immediately. Previously, I had met another Iranian religious scholar named Mr. Qara'ati in Tehran. He accidentally met me in the streets of Qom and was surprised to see me there. "While you are here, let's go and have a meeting with Ayatollah Mesbah", he told me. I answered positive and the next day, we went to Bagher al-Olum Foundation to meet with Ayatollah Mesbah. The first thing Mr. Mesbah told me kindly after the usual greetings was: "Why didn't come to meet me once you arrived at the country?"

How long was it since the first time you met Ayatollah Mesbah? Was it long after?

It was six months after I first met Ayatollah Mesbah in the U.S., or maybe a little more, but that second meeting happened at least six months after the first time. One year after the first meeting, Mr. Mesbah asked me to stay in Qom. He said, "If you don't want to stay in Qom, at least come here from Tehran once a week". "OK" I answered. This marked the beginning of our relationships. During the first year, I used to travel to Qom from Tehran once a week. Then it increased to two times a week, then three times and after a while, I moved out from Tehran and settled down in Qom permanently.

You've been in touch ever since?

Yes.

Could you please tell us a little about your weekly conversation sessions with Ayatollah Mesbah?

I can't remember at what point it started. The date. But it was after we produced a series of TV programs for the national television. There were renowned figures in that TV program, including Mr. Malekian, Dr. Ahmadi, Mr. Sadegh Larjani and Mr. Fayyazi. We had deep conversations together surrounding a wide range of issues. Those sessions continued on for



years and various topics like epistemology or philosophy of morals we discussed. I think the institution is preparing the transcription of those sessions to produce a book out of it. After those TV programs finished, Ayatollah Mesbah invited me to continue the discussion, this time not on the TV. The subjects were very important and this is how we kept meeting and discussing over a varying range of issues. I found it a very good opportunity. We could now do even other important things too. For example, I started surveying the philosophy of Mullah Sadra while he was accompanying me. Some of Mullah Sadra's books were translated to English and I could use those translations because it was much easier for me to understand. I established a weekly review of Sadra's works. Every week, I would read a part of his work. Then I could have a meeting with Mr. Mesbah and we would talk about it. I asked him questions to realize have I reached a proper understanding from Sadra's work, and he explained everything to me. It was perfect.

What is your current discussion with Ayatollah Mesbah now? What are you debating over?

We've had numerous topics to discuss over. Not just the philosophy of Mullah Sadra. There are a wide range of topics like the philosophy of morals, the question of science and religion and many other things. I always write down the content of this debate sessions. We've been doing this for years now. I don't remember for how many years, but it's been a long time. We do this every week.

I think it was three years ago when Ayatollah Mesbah suggested we can also bring human rights issues into our weekly debates. I was not really that much interested in this topic. But I agreed to discuss it. I started studying different sources of human rights. After surveying each source, I prepared a report containing a brief overview and my analysis about the content of the source. During the weekly session, I presented the report and spoke about my own views and opinions on the topic. After that, I asked questions about Mr. Mesbah's opinions and he gave me his thoughts about the notion. This is what we've been doing every week for several past years.

Sometimes the debate is much of a philosophical nature. Sometimes it's more defined under the criteria of religious debates and interpretation of the Holy Quran. I am very thankful for having this opportunity to use Mr. Mesbah's teachings.

I remember during one of these weekly discussions, I told him something very

interesting. I don't remember what the topic was exactly. Maybe it was about the relations of science and religion. I told Mr. Mesbah, "Something really amazes me". "What's that?" he answered. I said, "Every time I read about an issue, I feel there are thousands and thousands of other opinions both in the opposing side and in the favoring side which are impossible to take in during a short-time study. But whenever I present the subject for you, it's like as if you know everything about every opposing and favoring opinion. It's like you have a file where everything is collected and you only have to reach the file which is more related and open up the core of the debate". It was really interesting. He answered by giving me clues on how to organize my studies on different topics. He showed me how simple my problem was. He said when it comes to philosophy, my problem is 'dispersion of studying'. When I was overviewing a philosophical subject, I was just relaying on the things that I find related to the topic; nothing more. On the contrary side, when Mr. Mesbah was studying a philosophical issue, he was trying to create a whole philosophical order surrounding the topic. Everything is classified orderly in his studies. He is truly a philosopher.

To what extent you knew about Ayatollah Mesbah's travels to the Europe and the U.S. and his lectures in various western universities?

During the weekly sessions we had together, a very interesting part of the sessions was the stories he told me about his trips to other countries and debates he had with foreign tinkers. It was really amazing for me how his travels had influenced his take on western people and their civilization. He used to tell me moral tips and things like this regarding different experiences he had in other countries.

There was this specific story from a time he traveled to New York he used to repeat many times. He was going to New Jersey from New York in a car. It was the Fourth of July, when Americans celebrate the independence of the U.S. and streets were jammed with people and cars. One car with a number of boys and girls in it, comes close. Those youths were not clothed properly. They started asking the driver of Ayatollah Mesbah's car to pull over. The security team didn't know what they wanted and were worried. Mr. Mesbah tells the driver to pull over and see what they want. After stopping on the street side, a girl climbs off that car, comes close and asks Mr. Mesbah: "Are you Iranian". "Yes", answers Mr. Mesbah. The girl says, "We've heard a horrible

earthquake has happened in your country in the city of Roudbar. I just wanted to offer my condolences and sympathies". Ayatollah Mesbah then used to tell us how surprised he was in that moment, seeing a girl in another country would say something like this right in the middle of having fun in a celebration. He believed things like this are proofs of the fact that there is a heavenly sparkle in heart of every person and despite all the pollutions which affect the innocence of one's heart, the sympathy with the affiliated heart of another person brings hope for a better future.

Tell us about how Ayatollah Mesbah's opinions regarding Islamic philosophy is viewed in the West? Has he ever presented a view on topics like this which attracted attentions of western scholars or changed the views of university students?

There is a very limited knowledge about Islamic Philosophy in the West. Scholars and students in the West are more attracted to the 'Islamology', a limited part of which is Islamic philosophy. Even those western academics who study philosophy disciplines are not really that much in touch with Islamic philosophy. There have been efforts to change the status quo. For example, we have translated some of Ayatollah Mesbah's books about teaching the philosophy to English. But the publications company which published the book, didn't have much at its disposal in the distribution department and the book was not presented in the market as it should have.

Some other books about Islamic philosophy published [in English] after the Islamic Revolution of Iran. Some journals also were established in English which contained the views of Ayatollah Mesbah, martyr Motahari, Imam Khomeini and others, but the readers of these journals and magazines in western country are merely the Shia population living there. They read these journals due to their interest rather than academic work. Although part of these readers are active in the field of Islamology, but philosophy is not their concern and they mainly read the philosophical content published in journals or even books as an instrument to get to know post-Revolution Iran more. They want to know what the main figures of Iran's Islamic Revolution think. So they're not necessarily interested in Islamic philosophy.

Unfortunately, the western academic and public atmosphere is not that familiar with the Islamic philosophy that well. There have been efforts to change the circumstances. We had relations with some

academic institutions in some countries, but the activities of academicians in those countries are more focused on theologies rather than Islamic philosophy.

What's your personal experience on this field? Why the western scholars and students turn their faces away from Islamic teachings?

In my experience, the university professors I knew were not interested in the Islamic philosophy and things like this at all. Once I converted to Islam, they thought I've gone crazy. They face these things with prejudice. This prejudice also exists when they confront Islamic philosophy, but it's not that severe yet.

When I was a university student, many western philosophers had a very negative



viewpoint against religiosity generally. This attitude has changed for better a little bit now, but they still have incorrect distorted presumptions from Islam. When someone says 'Islam', the first thing comes to their minds is ISIS and violence. This prevents western philosophers from falling interested in Islam and Islamic philosophy.

There have been some exceptions though. I remember once I lectured in one of the faculty of theology in one of these western universities. It was about Mulla Sadra's opinion regarding Plato's Theory of Form. One of the priests in the session told me about how fresh and new the content of this lecture was for scholars and students in there. He was interested to know more about these thoughts and was surprised to know debates like this actually exist within the context of Islamic philosophy.

In field of epistemology, during all those sessions and debates you

had with Ayatollah Mesbah every week, did you find something unique you never had heard of? Something you can say exclusively theorized by Ayatollah Mesbah, and nobody else?

Yes, there are lots of theories and acknowledgments put forth for the first time by Ayatollah Mesbah. One of the most important innovations of Mr. Mesbah was the criticisms he brought up about the philosophy of Mulla Sadra. It was really interesting for me as well.

But there are other initiatives one can mention, mostly regarding public issues which generally are defined under the notion of epistemology. Once I first heard about these discourses, I thought of them as being easy to understand or even as being wrong! This misconception led me to dislike these issues. When I started a more precise survey over those topics to extract their flaws, I realized my prejudice towards Mr. Mesbah's opinions on the matter. It was only during the debate and discussion with Ayatollah Mesbah where I found out how wrong I was and realized the true nature and essence of the issues. He educated me to translate those pieces of knowledge into the language of notions and concepts I had in mind from before. These are some delicate details which make big differences on the course of acquiring knowledge. I will never forget this as long as I live.

What surprises you most about the personality of Ayatollah Mesbah? What is the most important characteristic in his personality in your view?

There are lots of things I can mention here. For me, the most important characteristic of Ayatollah Mesbah is his kindness to me. I make many mistakes, and he always forgives. He tolerates the mistakes.

There is also his behavior when it comes to discussing philosophy. I remember sometimes during filming the TV programs I talked about earlier, I could see the exhaustion in his face before the program started. It used to make all of us worried about his wellbeing and sometimes I even thought maybe it's better not to go deep inside the core of the subject in that certain program. But as soon as he engages in a philosophical discourse, Mr. Mesbah acts like he is born again and continues the debate lively and cheerful. This is interesting and memorable for me.

Is there anything left you would like to mention? Something our readers must know?

Ayatollah Mesbah was always insisting on something which was really important

to me: establishing a friendly scientific relationship with Christian scholars. He welcomed any Christian group from all around the world, even if it was not that big or didn't have that many members. He insisted that if a Christian group is interested in Islam, regardless of its current status, we should embrace it as our friend and it's our duty to establish a friendship with it. He believed we can use their perspectives and views on theology and religion. Nobody could believe he would actually suggest that a Muslim scholar can learn something from a Christian one. But Ayatollah Mesbah had logical firm arguments to prove his view on this and maintained the view that we should open up the doors to dialogue and respect towards others.

Prof. Mohammad Legenhausen is a former Southern Texas University professor and faculty member in Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institution. This interview was conducted in January, 2019.

BY FARANAK BAKHTIARI
TEHRAN – Ayatollah Mesbah-Yazdi played a unique role in transmitting internal Islamic thoughts and beliefs to the outside world and vice versa, while promoting Islamic culture, conducting numerous researches and leaving no scientific areas behind, Mehdi Golshani a distinguished philosopher and professor told the Tehran Times in an exclusive interview.

A principlist cleric, Ayatollah Mohammad-Taqi Mesbah-Yazdi spent most of his life teaching and conducting research on Islamic thoughts. “Teaching Philosophy,” “Ethics in Quran,” and “Islam’s Political Theory” are among his famous works.

The ayatollah was a member of the Assembly of Experts and the Society of the Seminary Teachers of Qom. He also founded the Baqir-ul-Uloom Institute and then the Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute in the city of Qom, which he headed for the rest of his life.

He passed away at 86 due to digestive disease, in Tehran on January 1st.

Referring to the international character of Ayatollah Mesbah-Yazdi, Golshani said that “he started his activities before the Islamic Revolution (1979) when he first established Institute of Dar-Rahe-Hagh (literally meaning on the way to the truth) in 1964.”

“He also opened up Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute in 1991, which resulted in numerous researches and publications, however, the results of his efforts and researches have not been sufficiently reflected in national and international arenas,” Golshani said.

Although one of his books has been translated into English in the United States, his significant efforts have not yet been disseminated across the country and throughout the world, which should have been by the responsible bodies like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Culture, and Islamic Guidance, Islamic Culture and Communication Organization, he highlighted.

Mesbah-Yazdi was ahead in many areas, a clear example of that is Imam Khomeini Education and Research Institute which was one of the few centers



Ayatollah Mesbah-Yazdi a unique character in Islamic world

Interview with Prof. Mahdi Golshani, faculty member in Sharif University and the winner of Iranian Science and Culture Hall of Fame award for physics

that awarded doctoral scholarships to graduates of the seminary, he emphasized.

And this action played an important role in transmitting Islamic thoughts and beliefs to the outside world and vice versa, which has been done less. Western countries, for example, offered

scholarships to Christian priests to get a doctorate in physics or biology, but this was the first place to start from the seminary and theology, helping graduates of the seminary get familiar with the issues of the day to be more effective, he explained.

His vast work and Islamic Rev-

olution ideology

Highlighting Ayatollah Mesbah made great efforts to earn a good reputation for the Islamic Revolution in the world, Golshani said that “his conversations with Western thinkers have helped much in this regard, but he has taken various measures to introduce the Islamic rev-

olution’s ideology to the world, to leave no doubts about it.

So that he started working on various areas, including, Quranic teachings, Marxist criticism, the relationship between science and religion, cultural invasion, Islamic ethics, teaching philosophy, teaching beliefs.”

Translation of his works might be an effective way to introduce his character to the world, he further emphasized, adding, some educational centers like Al-Mustafa International University must take steps to translate Ayatollah Mesbah’s books and publications.

Dedicated to promoting Islamic culture

Referring to Ayatollah Mesbah’s thought to strengthen Islamic culture among the people, Golshani said that “Ayatollah Mesbah has published numerous books and held many training courses in related fields like ethics in Quran, Islamic culture and thoughts.

He was very effective in introducing and promoting Islamic culture to the people.”

Ayatollah Mesbah, a rare valuable character

“I was in contact with Ayatollah Mesbah at the same time as the establishment of the Institute of Dar-Rahe-Hagh, but our friendship began in the 1370s (1990s) when I was appointed director of the Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies.

According to the decision of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, the institute had a high council of professors, which I introduced Ayatollah Mesbah-Yazdi, Seyed Jafar Shahidi, and Shahla Habibi to the council, and it was scheduled to invite these professors to the research institute once a month to plan for the activities, so our relationship with Ayatollah Mesbah became closer.

Many achievements and developments of the institute are made by their contributions,” he said.

“In 1990, an international conference on the philosophy of science and methodology of experimental sciences which was held in the Sharif University of Technology, which was the first and largest conference about the philosophy of science in Iran; and we invited

Ayatollah Mesbah and Prof. Fazlollah Reza to attend the conference.

Ayatollah Mesbah’s presence in the conference was a rare and valuable event,” he explained.

Referring to another experience of cooperation with Ayatollah Mesbah, Golshani said that our next cooperation was in the 1380s (2000s) when we held a big council on the humanities books of the universities, and I asked Ayatollah Mesbah to attend the event.

“After a while, I published a book, called “The relationship between science and religion from the perspective of four contemporary scholars”, that had eight questions answered by local and foreign scholars; I decided to publish the second edition of this book, and one of the scholars was Ayatollah Mesbah-Yazdi, who answered our questions one or two months before his death, despite his illness and problems. And this book is going to be unveiled soon.

That was the latest cooperation we had, which might also be the last work of Ayatollah Mesbah-Yazdi,” Golshani noted.

An important role in humanities evolution

Highlighting the role of Ayatollah Mesbah in the evolution of humanities in Iran, Golshani said that “he played a significant role in various scientific fields including humanities, science, and philosophy.

Authorship was his main work and it had to be published and reflected in universities, colleges, and educational centers depending on the level of the students and educational needs.

Universities and schools did not pay special attention to using the thoughts of these valuable thinkers such as Allameh Morteza Motahhari, Mesbah-Yazdi, and sufficed to one or two books. But he was trying to answer all the questions and remove the doubts in his whole life.”

I personally expected the scientific community to disseminate his vast work, thought and effort in the universities at the national and international level, a work that has not been done properly, he lamented.

Nationalism or Islam? Which one leads to a better Iran? A question of ‘Islamic Lifestyle’

The subject in question here is the ‘lifestyle’ and Islamic features surrounding the notion. To understand the subject thoroughly, one should first go through the meaning of the title word by word. What does it mean when we say ‘Islamic lifestyle’? in sum, lifestyle means a form of life in a social context where all or most of the people confirm a set of regulations or norms and reflect these regulations and norms in their behavior. There are various factors that differentiate one lifestyle from the other, including natural and geographical, ethnic, racial, tribal, and so on. There also some factors derived from certain values. In the Islamic lifestyle, we discuss the issues which are considered by Islam; meaning the issues either Islam accepts or criticizes or rejects. In other words, these issues have the status of being commented on by Islam. By using lifestyle as an expression, we actually mean the same issues Islam considers as being important. From this perspective, the notion of lifestyle can be divided into two categories: Islamic and non-Islamic.

How to discuss the issue?

Generally, we can discuss the aforementioned notion with two distinct approaches; first, we can provide a list of social problems and deficiencies regarding the notion of lifestyle and then ask people of different backgrounds and specialties to suggest a solution based on their own knowledge, social position, and experience. Of course, since it’s impossible to analyze and rectify the challenges altogether, we must first put to practice the prioritization. We must first see which items have more influence in daily material and spiritual life.

So, the first approach is to analyze certain issues and find solutions to those issues. The other approach is to find the roots and origins of problems. This means we have to recognize that all human behaviors are rooted deep inside cognitions and values. If we find the set of cognitions that create misbehaviors or identify the lack of cognitions that forces a person not to act properly, we can solve the problems by removing the source of such misbehaviors and prove to misbehavers where their problems come from. We can provide society with the proper cognition to build a solid indestructible foundation for the establishment of an appropriate lifestyle.

Therefore, based on cognitions, we must identify and introduce the insights and values that arise from those cognitions and categorize the major problems and minor issues in the society in a binary fashion. Some problems have their own branch but eventually, end in the same body of major problems. This body of problems is connected to a wide set of roots. The first thing we have to do is to modify and rectify the roots. Then, gradually, the body and the branches will be rectified and eventually, a proper fruit will be acquired. In fact, this is an analytical and hybrid method which means we have to analyze the causes of flaws, find the roots of flaws and solve them thoroughly.

It must be noted that neither of these methods can replace the other completely, meaning if we would choose merely the analytical method and rectify the roots, we need a very long time to achieve

a rational proper understanding of the subject. After that, the identification of solutions to tighten the new correct roots will also need much time.

The necessity of solving the corruptions fundamentally

It’s not an easy task to tighten new roots, especially at a social level during a couple of days or months, or even years. Being a time-consuming process is a fact we cannot ignore when we speak about modifying the lifestyle in society. For example, some of the problems we see in our lifestyle today, have their roots in greed for wealth or cupidity. This attitude leads to various subsidiary behaviors, including economic rent, bribery, fraud, slacking, indiscipline, and things like this. The reason for all these misbehaviors is the tendency to earn more money while spending less time.

The origins of some other problems cannot be directly traced back to wealth or property. For example, even a rich person might spend his/her wealth to achieve something else like headship, eminence, social popularity, fame, and similar things. These are parts of another branch. If we don’t rectify the roots, even once you cut off the corrupted branch, the problem will not be solved and the challenges remain unchanged. Because another branch will just pop up and seemingly corrected flaws will reappear.

For instance, if you prevent a person from committing robbery or using economic rent if the roots of this misbehavior are not corrected, he/she will tend to commit bribery or fraud, or hoarding. It’s mainly because this person has a libertine desire for wealth and one way or another, they will find a path to gain this wealth. In this case, the main problem is the insatiable desire, not the act of robbery. As long as this desire exists, fighting the mere crime is useless. You may barricade the ways of committing robbery, but they will find other ways to commit other crimes. The only way is to rectify the roots.

Therefore, we also must design a plan for an analytical method of solving the problem. Fortunately, this plan has already been designed by prophets and divine religions. They have expressed for us our strengths and weaknesses, providing us with moral and religious scripts to cure those weaknesses. But if we would confine to those scripts without taking certain current urgent problems into consideration, we may lose the time and chance to save society. So, besides the divine codes of the religion, we must also prioritize the challenges and find them a solution.

Using soft and rational methods to make a change

For example, the issue of sanctioning merchandise produced by an enemy is something all countries use against their adversaries. Even social reformers have resorted to this technique from time to time. Maybe the most important instance in our era, is what Mahatma Gandhi did in India. Gandhi’s fight was from this type. With his persuasion, along with other factors giving hand together, Gandhi managed to defeat Britain in India and prepare the grounds for his country’s independence. Gandhi fought his enemy with this soft war and by sanctioning English merchandise. This is an appealing and attractive



story every young man and woman must read.

This is a successful strategy that pays back. We cannot call this an Islamic lifestyle though. It was a strategy taken to practice by Hindu Gandhi. Of course, Gandhi was an unprejudiced man who was interested in Islam, especially Shia and Imam Hossein (AS). But he was a Hindu. He never said anything about learning this strategy from Islam’s teachings. This means the aforementioned tactic is a rational way of confronting the enemy that can be employed by anyone and any country. Some people have used this tactic and achieved relatively favorable results in previous centuries.

But this method is rather rational than Islamic, meaning every wise mind appreciates it and accepts it as a smart tactic. For this method to achieve its purposes, national and nationalistic motifs are needed. For example, Gandhi wanted India to be independent, not just Hindus. He didn’t want to prevail Hinduism all over the country but rather intended to liberate India from colonialism imposed on the entire nation by Britain. This movement had national motivations. You cannot find anything in Gandhi’s words implying his intention to promote a certain set of values. He used to say: “We are a nation which wants to be free; something accepted in the whole world as a value.”

Once freedom presented as a political motto, everyone agrees that living freely away from the domination of another country is an acceptable value that must be respected. So, this is a rational public value the whole world agrees upon and all countries can use this sense of nationalism in the fight against their enemies; especially against colonialism and arrogance.

When we want to promote the Islamic lifestyle, one method can be using the motifs we spoke of previously. This means we should send a message to the world, saying we are an independent nation and don’t want to live under the domination of any other one. Why should we submit to the cruelty of others? We are Iranian and have an ancient history that goes back thousands of years ago. So, we have to be independent. This is a successful method, employed by many countries in the world. We don’t

want to deny its effectiveness.

Islam or Nationalism?

The question here is that can we regard this technique (provoking nationalistic emotions to fight back colonial dominance of other countries) as capable of carrying Islamic values for developing an Islamic lifestyle? Is it basically an Islam-friendly technique or it takes much more for these tactics before they can be regarded as Islamic? Then comes another question: if we’d have two methods to choose between, one would be using nationalistic motivations and national pride as stimulation and the other would be taking to practice the methods put forth by Islam and religion, which one should we prefer?

Each option has its own fans and opponents. Some might argue it’s better to use Islamic values, acknowledgments, and beliefs as the motif for social reform. Others may believe things would be much easier if we deploy the notions ordinary people understand more because it’s a tried and trusted method many countries have used.

This is a very serious challenge that is also related to our current social and political issues as well. Many questions arise when the subject of nationalism comes up. What relation exists between the promotion of nationalistic trends as the source of many profits (as it never allows the dominance of any other entity which deprives a nation of its independence) from one side, and Islamic knowledge as a tool for ameliorating the status quo in the society? Are they equal? Is one of them of more efficiency? Is their value and importance equal to each other or they differ? Which one is more precious and worthy? The answers to all these questions depend on our worldview in accordance with Islam and its teachings. How do we see the world? How do we see the universe and position of human beings in this infinite vast sphere? What do we think about the ending of humans and the universe?

Some maintain a sort of the materialistic point of view that implies everyone must only consider the material life and interests on the face of the earth. They don’t necessarily deny the existence of God and hereafter but give the priority to material advancement overall. For example, there have been

many scientific and technological advancements in fields of infrastructures in Iran after the Islamic Revolution; factories, roads, dams, etc. These are the results of the Revolution from a materialistic perspective. Supporters of this view maintain that religion is good, but comes after material advancement.

Under this point of view, despite we don’t maintain a materialistic worldview, we still cannot see that much of spiritual manifestation in our daily lives. In other words, material advancement is much more important than spiritual advancement. This approach implies that our country must be advanced in all material senses, and having a religion is also accepted. Advancement is the core, and spiritual life is marginal.

The other point of view puts Islam in the front, gives more importance to the spiritual life while also recognizing material advancement as a high-profile necessity. This is the second approach. Are these two approaches (one gives material advancement a higher priority and the other considers spiritual advancement as the main goal) the same? Are they parallel in essence or do they stand against each other? We consider these viewpoints as being along with each other. For us, the original phenomenon is Islam and material motivations can be instruments for Islam’s advancement. For example, Imam Hossein (AS) tells to his enemies in the Ashura: “If you are not Muslims, if you don’t believe in the hereafter, at least be free. In his words, Imam Hossein (AS) refers to freedom as a human value. Using this value does not mean one should either choose God or freedom, but rather means that freedom can be used to develop Islam and push the person towards Islamic purposes. Freedom here is an instrument.

Sometimes, some might abuse this instrument. For example, Saddam Hossein used this instrument against Iran. He used to tell his army: be Iraqi, work for your country and fight Iran to make your country great, the city of Ahwaz belongs to us, occupy it and conquer the oil resources there. He was promoting the same sense of nationalism, but for the wrong purpose. So, regarding cases like this, we conclude that nationalism is not the original goal, but rather an instrument to achieve the greater original goal. As long as this instrument is useful for achieving the greater original goal, it’s favorable. If it’d exceed its limits, it will leave negative effects.

That said, we conclude that if one would replace Islam with Iranianism, they’ve gone the wrong way and we don’t accept it. But we can use Iranianism as an instrument to develop and advance Islam because we Iranians have accepted Islam as our path to salvation in this world and the other. Embracing Islam before any other nation has been a source of honor and pride for Iranians. We should keep up with this style and strengthen ourselves. Under this view, nationalism is acceptable as an instrument for achieving a greater goal which is advancing Islam.

This is the text of Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi’s lecture in ‘National Conference on Islamic Lifestyle’ in February 2013.

The engineer of a better intellectual world

Ayatollah Mesbah's thoughts can embark an evolution in western humanities

BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI

Mahmoud Rajabi, professor of Islamic Sciences and the current president of Imam Khomeini Research and Education Institution believes that some western politicians and theorists developed a sense of hatred against Ayatollah Mohammad Taghi Mesbah Yazdi because his thoughts were strong enough to embark an evolution in western humanities.

"Due to his travels to other countries and lectures in different universities, Ayatollah Mesbah also managed to bring the weaknesses of western notions into consideration for western elite academics. So, it was quite natural that the West treat him as a threat and enemy. That's why they used all the power they had at their disposal, including their Iranian allies inside the country, to demolish the image of Ayatollah Mesbah at national and international", said Rajabi in an interview with the Tehran Times.

Rajabi also maintains the view that "Ayatollah Mesbah has outstanding stand-points regarding anthropology that can embark an evolution in western humanities and transcend it. There are noble theories Ayatollah Mesbah has developed in this field".

The following is the full text of the interview.

Tell us about the international character of Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi. How does the western world see Ayatollah Mesbah and his reflections?

Ayatollah Mesbah always felt a sense of duty to guide all human beings. So whenever he felt a certain school of thought is trying to create a deviation in the way of mankind to prevent man from achieving salvation, he considered his primary duty to shed light on the truth by enlightening people using his well-documented arguments and established logics. There were various cases regarding this altitude. For example, he took some parts of western cultures' components into consideration specifically. There were some groups of people in our own society that provoked those components in Iran with the purpose of institutionalizing them deep in Iranian culture.

These certain cultural components, in terms of intellectual bases and religious culture, were built upon weak and shaky foundations. They were also abused by those who intended to damage man's path towards human salvation. Tyrannical arrogant regimes were using the literature composed around these cultural elements to dominate and colonialize the nations. So, Ayatollah Mesbah felt the duty to explain and clarify the nature of these cultural or political components amongst which, was the notion of 'western democracy'.

Western democracy lacks a solid intellectual basis and is used by some as a cover for their illegal actions and autarchy. So, we've witnessed numerous times that despite there were documents, agreements, treaties, and decelerations introducing those notions as laws and regulations, the absolute contrary has happened in the real world. For instance, concurrent with the preparation of the human rights declaration by some western countries and efforts to present it as a global must-be-accepted document, the same countries were enslaving other human beings including black people and kept slavery alive for decades after the declaration. Even today, slavery exists in those countries which;



Ayatollah Mesbah(L) and Pope John Paul II met each other on February 6, 2016 in Vatican City

may be different in form, but the same in essence.

Ayatollah Mesbah kept his tireless endeavor to clarify how notions like western human rights lack a firm and acceptable radix. These concepts, he argued, are based on epistemological relativity, secular mentality, and atheism. He also proved how some regimes abuse these concepts in practice and consider them merely as mottos deceive other nations. We've seen in real life that every time something has put the interests of the west in jeopardy, western countries have abused the notions of democracy and human rights to put other nations under pressure. They have labeled the most democratic countries of the world as terrorist countries. On the opposite side, these countries have always called the most obvious terrorists like the Zionist regime as a democratic entity and supported it.

Ayatollah Mesbah never stopped trying to open the eyes of the world to the true nature of what comes from the West. Therefore, we see that western politicians and theorists tried to portray Ayatollah Mesbah as the killer of democracy in Iran. By 'democracy', they meant the instrument they invented to justify tyranny, slavery, and colonialism. They had plans to institutionalize this deviant concept deep inside Iranian culture and politics. The enlightenments of Ayatollah Mesbah unveiled the truth about this conspiracy. Due to his travels to other countries and lectures in different universities, Ayatollah Mesbah also managed to bring the weaknesses of such western notions into consideration for western elite academics. So, it was quite natural that the West treat him as a threat and enemy. That's why they used all the power they had at their disposal, including their Iranian allies inside the country, to demolish the image of Ayatollah Mesbah at the national and international level by staging conspiracies or insulting and ridiculing him.

As you said, Ayatollah Mesbah had traveled to many different countries in his life. He had lectured for foreign elite academics and had debates with renowned theorists and scholars. Within the intellectual sphere, what part of western wisdom is the specific addressee of Ayatollah Mesbah's thoughts. In other words, if a western intellectual or scholar, would face the opinions and thoughts of Ayatollah Mesbah regardless of political prejudice and other forms of bigotry, which part of Mr. Mesbah's opinions will amaze him/her more?

One part, with which a western intellectual can relate more, is the 'epistemological' part of Ayatollah Mesbah's thoughts. Epistemology is the bedrock for all thoughts, values, and ideals. Knowledge is the core of epistemology. If we would mistakenly believe that knowledge in all its forms is a relative phenomenon and we cannot point out any definite certain form of knowledge, there will be no right and wrong anymore. As a result, the most arrogant bloodthirsty regimes will be equal to fair righteous regimes. In other words, if we embrace the relativity in knowledge, we will not be able to recognize or even define what is definitive justice and what is definitive injustice. Therefore, epistemology is a very important domain for which, Ayatollah Mesbah has provided precious acknowledgments for a western audience.

The other part of Ayatollah Mesbah's thoughts valuable for a western intellectual is categorized under the topic of 'values'. We frame our values based on strong foundations and real backgrounds. In our viewpoint, there are two distinct groups of values: one group contains the values which are actually based on personal tastes. For example, one person might like color and the other might dislike it. Or two different persons can have two totally different feelings once confronting the

same artistic painting. These are based on personal tastes and distinct personalities.

The other group of values contains certain facts; each possesses its own specific borders and frame. We consider these values as fixed and immutable facts because they are not rooted in personal tastes. These values are precious for every and each nation. For example, 'justice' in its true form which implies that the rights of every person must be given to them, is a global undeniable value that is praised equally by every nation. There might be disagreements in defining the notion of justice, but man can determine the territory



Mahmoud Rajabi, president of Imam Khomeini Institution

of what is justice and what is injustice using realistic standards and criteria. It's not true to say that we will never be able to frame and define the decisive notion of justice. We cannot say sometimes justice is good and sometimes injustice is favorable. We cannot say there is no difference between justice and injustice. We cannot say it is

impossible to enforce justice. These are the discourses we encounter under the category of 'values'. What is good and what is bad? What is right and what is wrong? Do we have such things as ethical beauty and ethical ugliness?

These are important questions that arise once the matter of understanding and organizing the values come in. The axial discussion of all legal and ethical orders in the world is the question of values. If we presume there are no fixed certain values in the world, the legal systems will have no difference with each other; we will not be able to differentiate the ethical systems of the world. Then, the morality of Satanists, terrorists, and fascists like Hitler will be equal with the morality of compassionate theists whose main concern is the salvation of mankind.

Hence, the matter of values is a very important component in any discourse and Ayatollah Mesbah has discussed the issue in detail, providing an audience who is interested in the fate of mankind with an invaluable source of knowledge. His works in fields such as philosophy of ethics and philosophy of laws explain a lot about the essence of real values. A survey on these works clarifies the difference between Ayatollah Mesbah's thoughts regarding human values and those of western secular mentalities.

Another part of Ayatollah Mesbah's intellectual teachings that a non-Iranian audience might find interesting is his opinions about 'anthropological' issues. Ayatollah Mesbah has outstanding stand-points regarding anthropology that can embark an evolution in western humanities and transcend it. There are noble theories Ayatollah Mesbah has developed in this field. The variety of issues that can be categorized under this topic is phenomenal. As I said, Ayatollah Mesbah's viewpoints regarding anthropology can upheaval western humanities. It can also influence the social plans and programs in western countries. A western scholar can gain valuable knowledge by accessing Ayatollah Mesbah's thoughts in this field as a source of information.

Of course, there are many other spheres we can mention, but I confine to pointing out a handful of them.

As the last question, please tell us a little about your personal experiences regarding your interactions with Ayatollah Mesbah. How were his personality and behaviors?

His biggest concern in doing everything, be it personal or social, was to assess the accordance of every action with man's duties and tasks as a servant of God. He always asked himself what is our divine duty? What God wants us to do? How God's prophets, especially Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) have asked us to be? He always acted in accordance with instructions presented by the Holy prophets of God as the path to salvation in the material world and hereafter. Whenever something came up, his first question was how to arrange our actions so that God's satisfaction is achieved?

His second important characteristic was his special emphasis on working while using consultants provided by experts. Every major and sometimes minor decision he made in his life was after precise evaluation of the matter and consult with experts of the field. This altitude was aimed to identify the issue in detail and to earn enough information regarding the matter, so wise decision making would be achievable. There were numerous instances where an issue was brought up, but Ayatollah Mesbah's assessment brought him to conclude that the knowledge gathered about the issue was not enough and more consultant with experts is needed. So he asked for more research.

Ayatollah Mesbah was also impressively pious in terms of social etiquettes and common social mores. For some time, he was suffering severe back pain to the extent which physicians wondered how he could even tolerate the pain! But when a student or even an ordinary person had a question, he used to stand on his foot and lean against his hand stick to answer the question. During these conversations, he never acted in a way that implied he is tired or suffering. This was the respect he showed to the person who was interested in learning something.

He had a very distinguishing firm set of moral codes he never violated. He always respected the dignity of people. In some rare cases, when something happened that remotely had the quality of insulting or he felt the dignity of a person had not fully reserved, he apologized times and times. He was not ashamed of apologizing.

He used to sit for hours with students and students of his students to hear their opinions. Sometimes he preferred the opinions of his students over his own. He never worried about/feared of being criticized. Of course, he was really sensitive about religious and human values, but if somebody insulted him, he wouldn't mind at all. The only thing he cared about was the truth to be clarified and understood.

His other characteristic was his respectful behaviors when criticizing the thoughts and opinions of others, especially those of his own professors. When he wanted to criticize the views of others, he always used expressions like "I might have got it wrong" or "it might be also true to say that...". He never used even a word that implied someone's opinion is invalid or null. He paid huge respect to his masters and even his contemporaries. Sometimes he even bent to kiss the hand of a person who was contemporary to him, not even higher in quality and quantity of knowledge.

However, whenever he felt a person is deliberately trampling religious, Islamic, and human values, he never remained silent because he believed he had a duty to protect and preserve these values.

The costs of grappling with state liberalism

BY MAHDI JAMSHIDI

[1]. It's been more than a century since a chain of tensions and shocks hit the Iranian society as a result of imposed presence of "western modernity" in Iran. This trend started from mid Qajar era on, and as the time went by, modernity became more and more serious and fundamental within the structure of the society. The modernity flow experienced its climax during the events of the Constitutional Revolution in Iran and marked a huge historical conflict in the country. In the meantime, the only person who raised the flag of enlightenment and, due to his precise and deep knowledge about the nature of western modernity, recognized its incompatibility and conflict with religious traditions, was martyr Sheikh Fazlullah Nuri who was hanged a while after the movement started and removed from the equations. After this bitter fate, the authoritative, accelerating, and wild modernity was created by Reza Pahlavi. He tried to destroy the entire structure and foundation of native and religious culture to replace it with western modernity. Therefore, in contrary to its roots and origins, the Iranian society tumbled



down to a different path and turned into a 'tail of western modernity'.

[2]. The western modernity set foot in Iran with both its Marxist and Liberalist branches. Both those branches were fully active in the country. The Liberalistic narrative of modernity was more compatible with the taste of the Pahlavi dynasty, but in response to choosing this narrative by the Pahlavi and the consequences of this

decision, the Marxist ideology was also formed in the country as an anti-thesis and found a strong social fan base inside the society. For example, the communist party of Tudeh turned into one of the most important and effective groups in Iran. During the following decades, the propagation of the Marxist ideology led to the birth of other narratives which had eclectic ragged nature, including MEK and Forqan cult. It

was at this time where the master-mind of Iran's Revolution, martyr Ayatollah Morteza Motahari, stepped in a difficult bloody battle and formed a front against the social wave of communist ideology. Those who had beliefs similar to Motahari and considered the situation as a huge fatal danger were quite a few in number. He took out his sword from the pod, all alone, and rushed into the theoretical battlefield. During this period of time, Ayatollah Mohammad Taghi Mesbah Yazdi was one of the few people who recognized the specific historical situation and undertook an active enlightening fight against deviation. Mr. Mesbah, during this period, learned the theory of "Materialism Dialectic" which constructs the essence of Marxist ideology. He then taught his findings to his students and tried tirelessly to provide a fundamental criticism of the theory. Ayatollah Mesbah was physically attacked to and beaten by the Marxist forces. Motahari, also, was assassinated and removed from the scene by Marxists because he was considered by them as the main/major threat to the Marxist ideology.

[3]. During the last years of the 60s (in the Persian calendar) when the Marxist ideology was out of breath in Iran and

had no power anymore, the Liberalistic ideology arrived at the country and soon turned into an affective bold force amongst west-oriented elites and intellectuals. In the early years after the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the Freedom Movement in the country, led by Mahdi Bazargan, took in "the state liberalism" as its core manifestation and agenda. After a while, due to his ideological conflicts and contradictions with the Revolution, Bazargan resigned. But this time, those who were categorized as the oppositions and critics of Liberal ideology and had comprehended Islam through a leftist narrative, inaugurated an epistemological trend which was the sign of a 'substantial epistemological transformation'. The man who facilitated and stimulated this transformation the most was Abdul Karim Soroush. He brought up the theory of "the theoretical contraction and expansion of Sharia" in Kayhan Circle and tended towards "philosophical and epistemological revisions" in realm of theology. There were others who followed him down this path and gradually shaped the liberal west-oriented intellectual movement, inspired by thoughts and reflections of Soroush.

[4]. During this period of time, another considerable evolution was beginning in terms of official and state atmosphere of the country: the birth of the Economic Liberalism Policy on the outset of the 5th administration of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Those technocrat forces surrounding administrations' officials, jump-started a different economic policy called 'economic adjustment' which was derived from policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. This policy, from different aspects, embarked an evolution in atmosphere of revolutionary approaches and values of the country: the rule of technocratic forces, the oblivion of knowledge and culture, pragmatism and development of moment-based logics, the precedence of economic growth, and the production of wealth over justice, creation of a gap between the state and the nation, the emergence of social discontent and urban riots and etc. During this historical period, Mesbah, who was a critic of the situation and worried about it, did not have the opportunity for a transparent debate due to the narrow political space of the country.

(Continued on Page IIII)

Islamic humanities vs. Western experimentalism: the grand epistemological warfare of all time

Islam's plan for transformation of sciences

After the Islamic Revolution's victory and during this decade, there have been many discussions on Islamic humanities, and we still need a lot of discussions, researches, and dialogues. There are many perceptions on the subject which requires contemplation.

Various Perceptions of Islamic Humanities

Some people think of it as, proving and solving significant scientific problems in the world, using religious texts and arguments about devotedness and narrated reasoning instead of adopting the empirical methods. We consider this to be incorrect. Islamic scholars' way of research from very long ago shows that they have adopted empirical method in such a way that some have claimed: In getting introduced to empirical method, Europeans have benefited from the work of Iranian and Muslim scientists. Furthermore, the mission of religion is to guide humans toward true salvation, and science and technologies are subject to constant change and evolution. As a result, religion has no mission regarding the science and technology. Instead, religion talks about how these sciences can move humans toward excellence. In other words, the duty of religion is guiding humanity, not solving problems of science and nature.

Another perception is that introducing the motto of "Islamic humanities" has a political or perhaps a nationalistic background and politicians introduced this motto with political motives in order to realize their own goals or they wanted to take advantage of people's nationalistic tendencies and incite them against those who had brought them oppression and persecution so that they can say "We do not need you. We have our own science and we have to develop domestic science." This perception is also incorrect. Nationalistic tendencies, even though they are correct and effective in some instances, have no practicality in discovering the truth and answering the questions of humanity. So they should not be engaged with while solving scientific and philosophical problems.

In order to explain our point about Islamic humanities and also to clarify our position toward the so-called western science, we should state our definition of western or un-Islamic science and also explain what makes a science Islamic.

Discovering the truth, a trans-national and trans-regional value

For a Muslim, science as a means to discover the truth originated from anywhere, any region, or anyone is of value, and based on Islamic teachings such science should be sought out in any country and from anybody. Therefore, science as a means to discover the truth might be in possession of people who are of different races or live in different regions or follow different religions and madhhab than us. But these differences are not something that undermine the value of their scientific works and we respect their science and try to make use of that science.

When we oppose western science and want to eradicate some of its data from our universities, it is because there are deficiencies, shortcomings, and perhaps errors and fallacies in their data, and our sense of truth-seeking in addition to our religious duties demand us to fight with those failures and distortions in order to seek out truths in a more accurate and more genuine manner. We believe that Islamic teachings educate Islamic scientists in a way that they can be safe and be protected from these fail-



ures and distortions. In this regard, we consider the way that is dominant in the western world which has more or less transmitted to other countries, to be incorrect overall, even though there are correct elements in it. In contrast to the western way, we introduce a path that can curb those harms and blights and name this path "Islamic" because of the reason that follows. So far, the concept of Islamic humanities has been explained.

We now explain the arguments for proving this subject – Islamic humanities. Proving the deficiencies of western science - what is currently dominant in western scientific circles and more or less in countries under their influence - identifying the kinds of deficiencies, and elaborating the ways to confront them, can help us understand that why we talk about the need for transforming the science; the kind of transformation that we call Islamic transformation.

Weaknesses in epistemological foundations of western science

The main factor of deficiencies in western science emerged since empiricists and positivists and other similar schools of thought claimed that true science is something that only through sensory experience can be proved and its results can be presented to others. They called such knowledge "science" and discarded other forms of human epistemic knowledge such as philosophy, art, morality, and in general metaphysics from science and believed that you cannot make a definitive judgment on them because these kinds of knowledge are arbitrary and anybody, based on his taste, can choose one of these theories. They believed that only empiricist science is credible and should be discussed and disputed in scientific circles. Thus, they limited science to empiricist science

and discarded other forms of human knowledge from the realm of science.

In contrast, we believe that all the aforementioned epistemic fields - either those which westerners are calling "science" or those identified as "knowledge" and things like that - are provable and can be elaborated and each of them has its own unique method and are not limited to empirical method because the empirical method is about understanding things with our five senses, perhaps studying their many aspects, recording the conditions in which those phenomena are happening, and generalizing the outcomes; doing that, we have ourselves a scientific theory based on experiments. Considering empiricism with regard to epistemological principle of these scientists, it gets clear that this theory has no credibility because, on one hand, the basis of this theory is that truth can be discovered through senses, while sensory perceptions from the epistemological standpoint are disputable and reaching definite outcome from them is hardly possible. On the other hand, this subject is based upon unproven assumptions because if we conduct lab experiments on any two phenomena that we have perceived through senses, we see that whenever phenomenon A happens then we have phenomenon B and in this manner we discover the causality relation between the two phenomena and we identify the first one as the cause for the second one. However, first of all, accepting the causality relation is a metaphysical and philosophical matter and these scientists do not consider metaphysics credible scientifically and recognize it as a subject that is susceptible to expressing different theories, but all experiments need this metaphysical principle. Secondly, after accepting

the causality principle, we can only discover the relation between two phenomena when the conditions of experiment for them are completely controlled, meaning it should be proved that no other factor has any effect on the environment of the experiment, but this is not provable. Controlling all natural factors is out of our power and it is also possible that there are some factors unknown to us, as electromagnetic waves were unknown to us long time ago and no one was aware of them, or radio and electronic waves which in today's world are the basis of most technologies and scientific procedures, were unknown before and nobody believed that they exist. So it is also possible that today, there are also other factors - unknown to us - influencing on a phenomenon's occurrence. Therefore, you cannot get a definite result from sensory experiments. Thus, the empiricist method never gives you an absolute result and you cannot obtain a general and absolute scientific theory using experiment and this is not in line with what empiricists and positivists, and other similar schools of thought claim.

Foundation of western science on incorrect metaphysical principles

Moreover, many of the subjects which are being introduced as scientific theories in different and prominent fields of science and then find global credibility, are based upon an incorrect metaphysical principle. For instance, in cosmology, the theory of coincidental creation of universe (big bang theory) has a global reputation. This theory implies that there was an explosion in a dense matter and as a result, the cosmos, different solar systems, astronomical objects, etc. were created. If you ask these scientists why there was an explosion, they would tell you that it was happened by accident. Submitting to this argument means wrongly accepting the metaphysical possibility that some phenomena may happen without any cause; something called 'the random creation'. However, in metaphysics, we prove that this is impossible and no phenomenon can occur without a cause. Therefore, many scientific theories are founded on an incorrect metaphysical principle – such as the probability of coincidence. Even in new physics, the theories such as random exiting of an electron from its circuit are based upon accepting the principle that things can occur randomly. Firstly, we need to examine in a theological and metaphysical way, whether or not coincidences are possible, and if we were able to prove that coincidences are not possible, all theories based upon this supposition would become invalidated.

Therefore, one of the problems with the kind of sciences that are called 'western science' today, is that they are founded on a series of man-made principles which have to be examined in other sciences including metaphysics and epistemology; but the scientists developing the so called western sciences are actually accepting the theories as 'facts' which either have not

valid bases or have been invalidated. Even if the principal bases of those facts have been proved, based on their own opinion, the arguments leading to the proof are not valid, because these scientists believe that anything besides empirical methods is not of scientific value.

Weaknesses in anthropological fundamentals of western science

Since "human" is subject to imperative humanities and matters that are mainly value-related - such as morality, politics, practical economics, etc. - making a definite judgment on these value-related commandments should be founded upon understanding humanity and all of its existential aspects. But science cannot examine or prove beyond the material aspect of human, and because of that, it is even claimed that human is nothing but its body, there is no soul, and soul is the interactions of brain and nervous system. If we perceive humanity's true nature to be only this material being which has a short life, we will not be able to prove valid moral values and general, absolute moralities for it. But if we prove and understand that other than body, humanity has a nobler element called soul with its own commandments and that there is an interaction between soul and body, and they both have influence over each other, the results will be different. Making a definite proof on any value-related commandment about a being that has an immaterial aspect brings us to understand the relation between body and soul, and the effects of these interactions on the eternal human life. However, the natural sciences with their empirical way are unable of proving such things and should resort to metaphysical principles, though they believe these principles hold no values.

Considering the aforementioned deficiencies in western science, it is concluded that scientific advancement and reaching more accurate and more certain results, particularly in humanities, firstly entails an understanding of humanity, paying attention to its existential aspects, and understanding the relationship between body and soul. Secondly, to prove many of the necessary matters - including the idea that whether or not humans have other elements than the body - we need ways other than method of sensory experience. We have to use spiritual experience, rational arguments, and mystical intuitions to be able to elaborate on the existence of the soul and its relation with the body. Thus, before addressing anthropology we have to investigate ontology and we need to prove necessary principles for anthropology and in general, humanities matters – particularly value-related matters. An obvious example for this subject is the causality principle or invalidation of coincidence (effect without any cause). Therefore, we have ways for acquiring epistemic knowledge other than sensory means, through which we can discover and prove such matters. Solving this matter using only empirical way is not possible, because empirical way is limited to

senses, while our subject of discussion is beyond senses. So, in order to prove them, we have to recourse to other methods. There is a more valid method for gaining epistemic knowledge other than sensory and empirical methods. Proving that there are methods for gaining epistemic knowledge other than senses, brings us to the realm of epistemological science. In such science, we should examine issues such as how many ways are there to reach epistemic knowledge? How valid are those ways? What is the true nature of reason? What is the value of rational perceptions? Are rational perceptions more valuable than sensory perceptions? What is mystical intuition and is it trustworthy? Can things that prophets have claimed as revelations from God be a source of knowledge for us?

And the list of questions goes on and on.

Grand plan for transforming science

In this regard, transforming science, particularly humanities, requires us to strengthen the realm of epistemology in the first step, prove the accurate ways of discovering the truth, and conclude that there are methods other than sensory perceptions in order to understand the truth; methods which can also be a lot more credible than sensory perceptions. After solving epistemological challenges, we have to go to the realm of metaphysics and ontology and try to prove and elaborate the rational principles that are credible philosophically and are required for science – such as causality principle and matters related to it. At the next step, we have to step into the realm of anthropology and understand the true nature of human beings. These three scientific fields respectively have priority over humanities; humanities that today is called human science, examines the actions and qualities of humans and based on those examinations develops prescribed sciences and presents recommendations for morality, politics, economics, family matters, etc. Before researching these kinds of sciences, those three scientific fields must be strengthened and their respective rational path from epistemology to ontology, from ontology to anthropology, and from anthropology to human values in different fields like family, economics, morality, politics, etc. must be taken.

Making a fundamental transformation in humanities demands such a comprehensive and broad plan, and accepting such plans is completely in line with our Islamic teachings. In Islam, we prove that ways of gaining epistemic knowledge are not limited to mere senses and that we can use all the methods provided for human beings – such as reason, mystical intuition, more prominent humans, and revelatory epistemic knowledge that elite humans like prophets can directly get from God - to seek out knowledge; methods which are even more credible than sensory perceptions which form the basis of western science.

We call this comprehensive plan for transforming science "Islamization of Science" according to our own culture, but we hold no prejudice toward any particular religion, madhhab, ethnicity, language, and race. We respect and embrace the kind of science that discovers the truth, whether it comes from the west or from the east, from Muslims or non-Muslims, from whites or blacks.

This is the text of Ayatollah Mesbah's speech at International Congress on Islamic Humanities in May 22nd, 2012

Scientific advancement and reaching more accurate and more certain results, particularly in humanities, firstly entails an understanding of humanity, paying attention to its existential aspects, and understanding the relation between body and soul.

The costs of grappling with state liberalism

III → [5]. By the occurrence of the third event, the triangle of western modernity according to the liberal narrative was completed in Iran. The third event was the rise of the secular intellectual force to power in the mid-70s (in the Persian calendar) and their placement within the official structure of the state. It was at this point in history that all possibilities and opportunities came together and the forces of modernity, united and apparent, challenged the 'revolutionary ideology'. This wave was very much similar to the wave that was formed by west-oriented intellectuals during the events of the Constitutional Revolution in that period of Iran's history. It was here when Mesbah made his 'decisive decision' and set foot in the middle of strife explicitly

and fearlessly; just as Motahari was not afraid of anything in the 50th and had recognized the main jeopardy. This critical and apparent confrontation greatly displeased the official and unofficial liberal ideology forces of the country. As time went on, they felt more and more endangered because Mesbah was squandering their conquests and diverging their social fan base. Mesbah's determination and seriousness in this regard, also made the Iranian liberalism forces more determined in fighting back. Hence, since then, Mesbah became the key epistemological figure and was selected as the main target of media and propaganda attacks on a daily and weekly basis. During that time, no other figure was targeted by the liberal forces as much as he was. Nev-

ertheless, he never retreated and continued his enlightenment and criticism. Thus, a multitude of suspicions, problems, ambiguities, and media objections were formed against Mesbah, and the man who was not much famous until then, suddenly became the subject of the headlines of news broadcast and analysis. The confrontation of state liberalism and west-oriented intellectuals against Mesbah had a deviated nature: it was not originated from "reasoning", but rather "corrupt motifs", "politically wrong intentions" and "greed for power". This confrontation made the thoughts of Mesbah the subject of fragmentation, distortion, propaganda manipulations, and political speculations.

[6]. The destructive attacks against Mes-

bah were so intense and severe and there were so many small and big lies repeatedly feigned about him that, gradually, the truth was marginalized and a different face from Mesbah was forged which had nothing to do with the truth. We've learned from our real-life experiences that how "repetition of a lie" can turn that lie into a truth. Decades passed and not only many attitudes toward Mesbah have not changed, but there are also newcomers to the club of those who criticize Mesbah. These newcomers are repeating the same null fallacious arguments of state liberalism and west-oriented intellectuals. The same thing happened to Motahari. His personality was assassinated by those whom he used to categorize as "hypocrite materialists" and the price he had to pay for

reviving his personality was nothing less than his life. Mesbah, likewise, grappled with "hypocrite liberals" and paid the price for this grapple as long as he lived. When psychological warfare replaces intellectual debates, and when the world of ignorance casts its shadow over the world of knowledge, and when media sources replace hundreds of volumes of Mesbah's books, and when power violates the rights of wisdom, and when intentionality devours truth-seeking, there is no doubt such a satiation will arise. Even today, "referring to Mesbah" is not a virtue and there is an expense for "being by his side". Mesbah was and will be an ever-accused thinker.

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