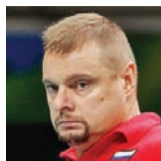




Zarif warns Israeli attack on Iran will be suicidal *Page 3*



Leading Iran at Olympics is exciting: Vladimir Alekno *Page 3*



'Israel won't be able to survive for next generation' *Page 5*



Complutense University of Madrid to review Majidi's films *Page 8*

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Israeli dead end

With military and diplomatic options off the table, Israel faces impasse



©File photo

The curious case of Iran football

BY MASOUD HOSSEIN

Iran football needs six more days to know its new president. The crisis-hit football is running by Heydar Baharvand since December 2019 and it's the curious case of our football. The Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) confirmed the final four candidates for the presidential elections which is slated for Feb. 28. The elections have been postponed due to FIFA's objections over the FFIRI statutes for several times. FFIRI was involved in a long process with the world governing body over alleged government interference. FIFA demanded changes to the FFIRI statutes more than a year ago and rejected amended documents submitted on several occasions. Finally, it was in the last month that FIFA approved the football federation's statutes. Iran, a nation of largely football mad people, is not where it should be because the basic needs have not been met over the past decades. While football is the most coveted sport in Iran and could generate income, the infrastructures have not yet been equipped after many years. For example, the Iranian football officials have previously said over and over again they would use Video Assistant Referee (VAR) at the stadiums. We see so many Iranian teams protest the decisions and say refereeing decisions have gone against them, because there is no VAR to prove that they are right or not. Iran football has shown in the recent years how powerful it is, since, for instance, football club Persepolis have qualified for the AFC Champions League final twice in three years. It means the country has a great potential to grow and become more competitive, but it depends on who is leading the football. Based on the FFIRI's electoral commission's announcement, Ali Karimi, Mostafa Ajorloo, Shahabeddin Azizi Khadem, and Kiumars Hashemi will vie for presidency. Karimi, the legendary Iranian footballer, who has played in Iran national football team for more than 100 times, has been welcomed by the Iranian football family. However, experience has shown that the most deserved people sometimes could not win the elections. The three other candidates have previously worked in Iran football but a real change is needed for the Iranian football. Maybe, Karimi, as a former player of Bayern Munich, can make change our football. Iran football needs a renaissance, whether Karimi wins the elections or not.

Gigantic kilim carpet unveiled in southern Iran

TEHRAN – A gigantic handwoven kilim carpet was unveiled on Sunday during an official ceremony held in the town of Ghrokarzin, southern Iran. "The kilim carpet, measuring 84 square meters (14 by 6 meters), was made in 35 days by eight prominent local weavers," Ghrokarzin's tourism chief, Mohamadjafar Ebrahimqiri said, IRIB reported. The colorful kilim carpet was made to order by Qatar, the official said, addressing the unveiling ceremony attended by Ghrokarzin's governor and a host of local officials and craftspeople. "Last year the largest kilim of the country, covering an area of 60 square meters, was woven in this town that is considered as a hub of hangwomen flooring," Ebrahimqiri explained. Kilim is a pileless floor covering handwoven in most places where pile rugs are made. The term is applied both generally and specifically, with the former use referring to virtually any rug-like fabric that does not have a pile. When used specifically the term refers to a more limited number of techniques, including slit tapestry, warp sharing, and various forms of interlocking tapestry weave. The kilims are often woven on narrow looms, and two mirror-image pieces are sewn together along the long edge to produce the completed kilim. The vertical color junctions involve a discontinuity of the wefts, the colored yarns that produce the design. At these boundaries, there are small slits in the fabric. Extremely fine kilims of silk were woven for the Safavid court (1502–1735), possibly in Kashan. Persian carpets are sought after internationally for their delicate designs and their good quality. Among Persian carpets, particularly those of the classic period, the medallion may represent an open lotus blossom with 16 petals as seen from above, a complex star form, or a quatrefoil with pointed lobes.

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U.S.-backed SDF militants steal 140,000 barrels per day of Syrian oil in Hasakah

Militants of the so-called Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), which is supported by the United States, steal 140,000 barrels of crude oil on a daily basis from oil fields in Syria's northeastern province of Hasakah, a report says. Ghassan Halim Khalil, governor of Hasakah, announced the grim news in an interview with the Lebanese al-Akhbar newspaper on Saturday, adding that Syrian oil is being plundered by the SDF militants in various ways, all with the participation and support of American forces deployed to the region. He stressed that precise intelligence collected and received show that U.S.-backed militants use tanker trucks from Taramish area in the vicinity of Tigris and in al-Malikiyah to smuggle the Syrian oil to neighboring Iraq. Khalil further noted that many tanker trucks pass through the illegal al-Mahmoudiyah crossing into Iraq every day, adding that the SDF militants also regularly send mounts of stolen oil to their controlled areas in Syria. The Syrian governor also revealed that the U.S. forces have ordered the SDF militants not to allow the Damascus-controlled areas receive oil. Khalil added that while the Syrian people are suffering from the cold weather and hunger, these U.S.-supported militants plunder Syria's national oil resources. The U.S. looting of Syrian oil was first confirmed during a Senate hearing exchange between South Carolina Republican Senator Lindsey Graham and then U.S. secretary of state Mike Pompeo last July. During his testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Pompeo confirmed for the first time that an American oil company would begin work in northeastern Syria, which is controlled by the SDF, which is an alliance of Kurdish militants operating against Damascus and currently controls areas in northern and eastern Syria.

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Engineers endeavor to change the world for the better

BY FARANAK BAKHTIARI

TEHRAN – Iran marks National Engineer's Day on February 23, honoring the efforts and achievements of the engineers who are behind nearly any development to change the world for the better. National Engineer's Day commemorates the birthday of Khajeh Nasir al-Din Toosi, a polymath and prolific writer, who is considered to be one of the greatest Persian scholars. He is also known as a philosopher, mathematician, astronomer, theologian, physician, and a prolific writer. Toosi was born in Toos in the year 1201 and began his studies at an early age. He studied Arabic, the Quran, Hadith, logic, philosophy, mathematics, medicine, and astronomy. The Mongol ruler, Hulagu Khan, built an observatory in Maragheh for Toosi. Toosi is considered the first of the Maragheh School of astronomers, who made significant contributions to the development of astronomy. He was perhaps the first to treat trigonometry as a separate mathematical discipline. He also wrote extensively on biology and is one of the early pioneers of a kind of evolutionism in scientific thought.

What is the role of engineers in our life? Engineering is a profession in which scientific knowledge and mathematics are used and experimented with to develop ways that benefit mankind, making it extremely important to society for several reasons.

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Biden admin not serious to stop war in Yemen: Yemeni politician

BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI

TEHRAN – A senior member of the political office of the Yemeni Ansarullah says the new Biden administration is not serious to put an end to the Saudi-led war on Yemen or halt the siege on the impoverished Yemeni people. "They are not serious in stopping the aggression and lifting the siege on the Yemeni people, otherwise Biden would make the decision to end the war and lift the siege directly," Hezam al-Assad tells the Tehran Times. The Ansarullah movement was blacklisted by the former U.S. President Donald Trump just days before Joe Biden begins his job as a new president. In a report on February 16, Al Jazeera reported that the Biden administration has formally delisted Yemen's Houthi movement as a "foreign terrorist organization" and "Specially Designated Global Terrorists". Also on February 4, the Biden administration announced that it would end the U.S. support for offensive operations for the Saudi Arabia-led coalition that intervened in Yemen's civil war in 2015, a year after the northern-based Houthis kicked President Abdu-Rabbu Mansour out of the capital Sanaa. "Removing Ansarullah from terrorist groups did not come as a desire to talk or a preparation to bring peace to Yemen," the politician argues. Amid the new U.S. administration's efforts to restore the image of the United States after Trump's reckless policies, the UN envoy to Yemen, Martin Griffiths, also visited Tehran to discuss political solutions for Yemen based on negotiations between the warring sides.

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Assembly of Experts says resistance will continue with or without JCPOA

TEHRAN – The Assembly of Experts says the Iranian nation's resistance will remain unaffected, no matter whether the U.S. rejoins 2015 nuclear agreement or not. 2015 nuclear deal is the common name for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) which was ditched by former U.S. president Donald Trump in line with his policy of "maximum pressure" against the Islamic Republic.

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There should be no miscalculation

By Azin Sahabi

TEHRAN — As both Iran and the U.S. have declared their inclination to come back into full compliance with the 2015 nuclear deal - JCPOA - under certain conditions, it seems that the UK, France, and Germany (E3), are setting policies to act wisely in future talks.

Maybe, Iran's parliamentary law to suspend the Additional Protocol has appeared quite worrisome to the EU and prompts them to choose a different path in terms of dealing with Iran not "to lose time".

In this framework, the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), on 16 February, has discussed the issue in a commentary titled "Iran's Shifting Nuclear Debate and the Shrinking Space for Diplomacy".

Azadeh Zamirirad, the expert on West Asia and Africa affairs at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), argues that as Iran and the U.S. are both waiting for the other side to take the first step, there is an increasing risk of concluding no nuclear compromise at all. She stresses that the more Tehran and Washington continue to hang on to the current attitude, the more such a risk increases. Therefore, the expert recommends while the EU must comprehend the importance and role of nuclear discourse in the Islamic Republic of Iran, it should act wisely and cautiously not to overestimate Iran's establishment's willingness to reentering the deal.

She reviews approaches towards Iran's nuclear program in terms of domestic view since 2002. The expert mentions that among vastly differing stances on the issue, there has been a consensus that conducting a diplomatic process serves to the best of Iran's national interests.

RUSI believes that recent Iran's nuclear remedial measures, which are formally declared and are conducted under Paragraph 36 of the JCPOA, are clear indicators that "the current nuclear debate in Iran has become much harsher in tone."

(Paragraph 36 provided a mechanism to resolve disputes and allows one side, under certain circumstances, to stop complying with the deal if the other side is out of compliance.)

She also adds that Tehran's frustrating experience in dealing with the U.S. as well as the obvious ineffective function of the EU in terms of the JCPOA, in some regards the current conditions are even worse than they were in 2004.

Due to the negative experience of the JCPOA, assumptions within the Iranian political discourse about the lack of U.S. willingness and inability of the Europeans to uphold the JCPOA, a light at the end of the tunnel will hardly appear.

The British think tank also refers to recent projections from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Institute of International Finance conducted in fall 2020, predicting "under the most pessimistic scenario, Iran would post 1.8% growth next year and its foreign reserves would steadily decrease from about \$80 billion this year to \$46.9 billion by the end of 2023." In addition, it writes: "Iran will achieve growth rates of anywhere from 1.5% to 3.2% this year even if sanctions remain in place."

Besides, RUSSI refers to the results of a survey conducted by the Center for International and Security Studies at Maryland (CISSM) which indicate that Iranians' public support for the JCPOA dropped from 76% in 2015 to a little more than 40% at the end of 2019.

In reference to the aforementioned facts, Zamirirad argues that if the Iranian establishment gives up on the JCPOA by "letting it fall apart", it would not be "entirely unreasonable".

Moreover, she claims: "Iran could be inclined to leave the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and further accelerate its nuclear program until it is on the verge of a nuclear breakout."

Pointing to Iran's decision to suspend the Additional Protocol on 23 February, RUSI argues that "harsher public stance by the E3 and continued posturing will not prevent Tehran from suspending the Additional Protocol". It recommends "Europeans should focus on dis-incentivizing Tehran from turning its back on the JCPOA at a time when this is still achievable."

Notwithstanding experts' recommendations which stress that Biden should make the first move to revive the JCPOA, they overtly clarify that the JCPOA can reinforce the U.S. leverage over Iran. Moreover, all U.S. and European policymakers notify that if the White House wants to propose some sanctions relief, the fundamental ones must be untouched to make sure that rejoining the JCPOA would not squander the current sanction regime.

Besides, the United States has articulated a systematic sophisticated sanction mechanism of primary and secondary sanctions to capitulate Iran via increasingly economic pressure. Indeed, this policy which is based on the securitization of Iran's nuclear program chiefly affecting the civilians is not going to be transformed at least in short or middle term.

Undoubtedly, the unprecedented multilateral sanctions imposed by the U.S. have acted as stumbling blocks, slowing Iran's growth and development in recent years. Also, given the medical sanctions Iran confronts, the COVID-19 pandemic has made the situation more demanding for Tehran to manage.

Against the backdrop, the facts on the ground, some of which have been presented by international institutions, are obvious indicators that a "resilient economy" strategy has been meaningful.

At the same time, while it seems that the Oval Office's foreign policy is a departure from the one pursued by the Trump administration, Iranian policymakers should act prudently and smartly.

Taking another hasty leap of faith by Tehran merely because Biden is different from Trump, it may undermine national interests at home and overseas. In such a complicated situation, Iran should stick to the principles of "dignity, wisdom, and expediency".

Assembly of Experts says resistance will continue with or without JCPOA

1 → The Assembly of Experts, a panel of clerics tasked to elect and supervise leader of the Islamic Revolution, also emphasized that Iran's defense and missile capabilities will never be subject to negotiations.

At the Monday meeting, Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati was re-elected as the chairman of the body. Members of the assembly also re-elected Ayatollah Mohammad Ali Movahedi Kermani as the first deputy and Ebrahim Raisi, who is also the head of the Judiciary, as the second deputy of the assembly.

Speaking at the event, Ayatollah Jannati paid homage to Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, who was assassinated during a U.S. strike in Iraq on January 3, 2020, directly ordered by former U.S. President Donald Trump.

"May God damn Trump and America and those who played a role in the assassination



of this beloved man and made a nation suffer his loss," he said, according to Press TV.

In a statement at the conclusion of its

eighth annual meeting, the 88-member body also described renegotiations with the U.S. on what has already been agreed upon as a

"red line", stressing that all Iranian organizations stand united in safeguarding the country's dignity and independence against hostile plots.

Highlighting the failure of the U.S. policy of cruel sanctions and maximum pressure on the Islamic Republic, the assembly noted the U.S. return to the JCPOA without a practical lifting of the anti-Iran sanctions as not only lacking any benefits, but being detrimental too.

The statement also called on people to attend the upcoming presidential elections in June, hailing the polls as an arena for maximum participation of people in political and social decisions.

The June 18 presidential election will be held simultaneously with council and mid-term parliamentary and Assembly of Experts elections.

Ayatollah Khamenei says Parliament's nuclear law must be implemented

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — In a meeting with the members of Iran's Assembly of Experts on Monday, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, said the nuclear law passed by the Parliament concerning the removal of sanctions must be exactly implemented, according to Fars news agency.

Regarding the disagreement between the Rouhani Government and the parliament over the law- formally known

as Strategic Action to Lift Sanctions and Protect the Nation's Rights -, Ayatollah Khamenei underlined, "the government and the parliament need to resolve their differences."

Underlining that the government considers itself to be obligated to implement the law, the Leader pointed out, "This law, which is a good law, must be implemented precisely."

The Leader also said that Iran will go beyond the limit

of 20 percent uranium enrichment depending on the country's needs.

"We are determined to acquire nuclear capabilities commensurate with the needs of the country, and therefore, Iran's enrichment limit will not be 20%, and it will act [to raise the level of uranium enrichment] whenever the country needs, for example, we may even raise the [uranium] enrichment [level] to 60% for nuclear propulsion or other work."

Qalibaf: Any cooperation with IAEA beyond safeguards is illegal

1 → Grossi visited Tehran to discuss how to work with Iran in light of Tehran's plan to halt the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which goes into effect on February 23.

In his message, the Parliament speaker made it clear that the implementation of the protocol will be fully suspended as of Feb. 3

Qalibaf underscored that any future cooperation between Iran and the IAEA beyond the Safeguards Agreement will depend on the Parliament's decision.

The Iranian parliament passed a law some two months ago obliging the government to

reduce commitments to the 2015 nuclear deal – JCPOA – in response to a violation of the agreement by the other parties.

The law, called "Strategic Action to Cease Actions and Protect the Interest of Iranian Nation", has set certain conditions for a revival of the JCPOA. Part of the law says the Additional Protocol will be suspended on Feb. 23 since during this time the remaining parties to the nuclear deal (Germany, France, Britain, China and Russia) failed to honor their obligations under the JCPOA.

Grossi held talks on Sunday with AEI director Ali Akbar Salehi and Foreign Minister

Mohammad Javad Zarif in Tehran.

The two sides issued a joint statement late on Sunday according to which Iran will stop its voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol and will deny IAEA inspectors access to its nuclear facilities beyond the Safeguards Agreement for three months.

"The AEI informed the IAEA that in order to comply with the act passed by the Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Iran called "Strategic Action to Cease Actions and Protect the interest of Iranian Nation" (The "Law") Iran will stop the implementation of the voluntary measures as envisaged in the JCPOA, as of 23 February

2021," part of the statement reads.

In a statement on Monday, 226 Iranian lawmakers insisted on the full implementation of the law concerning the Additional Protocol.

The MPs also underscored that a possible U.S. return to the JCPOA would take place only after a full, practical and verifiable termination of the banking and oil sanctions against the Iranian nation.

In response to the violation of the JCPOA, Iran has already increased nuclear enrichment to 20 percent and installed advanced centrifuges. These steps have been taken in accordance to the parliamentary ratification.

Israeli PM consults cabinet rivals on Iran

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Benjamin Netanyahu, the Zionist regime's prime minister, met cabinet rivals on Monday for their first discussion of Israeli strategy against the Iranian nuclear program since U.S. President Joe Biden took office pledging to pursue diplomacy with Tehran, according to the Reuters news agency.

Netanyahu's meeting with Defense Minister Benny Gantz and Foreign Minister Gabi Ashkenazi followed his first phone call with the U.S. leader last week, and came a month before Israel holds another election triggered by coalition infighting.

Netanyahu disagrees with Biden's Democratic administration on Iran and wanted to forge a united front with Gantz and Ashkenazi.

"This is a matter that is supremely important, certainly more than politicking," an Israeli official said. "We have to ensure



everyone is on board and not tempted to speak out of turn in hope of getting more votes."

Also on the agenda of Monday's meeting was the possible appointment of a special Israeli envoy on the Iranian issue.

Candidates include Mossad spymaster Joseph (Yossi) Cohen and National Security Adviser Meir Ben-Shabbat, both participated in the meeting. As both answer directly to Netanyahu, Gantz had voiced worry the Defense Ministry might be excluded from future diplomacy, one official said.

Grossi, White House eager to avoid suggestion limits on IAEA inspectors was creating crisis: NY Times

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The new limits to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors to the Iranian nuclear sites will be lighter than the Iran's Parliament wanted, giving Western nations three months to assess if they can revive the 2015 nuclear agreement, according to the New York Times.

It seems Iran has partly lifted its threat to sharply limit international inspections of its nuclear facilities starting on Tuesday, giving Western nations three months to see if the beginnings of a new diplomatic initiative with the United States and Europe will restore the JCPOA.

After a weekend trip to Tehran, Rafael Grossi, the director general of the IAEA, said on Sunday that his inspectors would have "less access" as of Tuesday, but that they could still monitor the key production sites where Iran has declared that it is making nuclear fuel. He did not explain what form those new limits would take, but he said there would be a three-month hiatus on some of Iran's new restrictions under a "technical annex" that was not made public due to the security reasons.

At the same time, Mohammad Javad Zarif, Iran's foreign minister, noted that under a law ratified by Iran's Parliament, Tehran would no longer abide by an agreement with the nuclear agency that gives the inspectors the right to demand access to any site where they suspect nuclear activity may have taken place. He also said inspectors would be blocked from obtaining footage from security cameras that keep some of the sites under

constant surveillance.

The vague announcement is part of the maneuvering in Iran over how to react to an offer from the Biden administration to resume diplomatic contact over reviving the deal that President Donald J. Trump quitted nearly three years ago. President Biden and Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken suggested to join European nations in what would be the first substantial diplomacy with Tehran in more than four years.

"Iran has not yet responded," Jake Sullivan, the U.S. national security adviser, said on the CBS program "Face the Nation" on Sunday. "But what's happened as a result is that the script has been flipped. It is Iran that is isolated now diplomatically, not the United States. And the ball is in their court."

Iran has steadily sought to rise pressure on Washington to lift sanctions, with step-by-step increases in the amount of enriched uranium it is producing at higher levels. Threatening to restrict inspectors has been part of that effort, the New York Times claims.

The American newspaper argues there is a connection between Iran's policy towards the JCPOA and next June presidential election in Iran, saying, "But now the Iranians are finding themselves backed into a corner of their own making: With a presidential election in four months, no one wants to appear to be weak in the face of international pressure."

According to the New York Times, Iranian leaders also recognize that Biden's election gives them their best chance since 2018 to have sanctions lifted — and international oil sales flowing. That will require restoring

the production limits concluded in the 2015 deal. The nuclear agreement also requires Iran to submit to the snap inspections of undeclared sites under what is called the Additional Protocol, the rules that IAEA members follow to allow broader rights for the inspectors.

Both Grossi and White House officials are eager to avoid any suggestion that the limits on inspectors was creating a crisis such as the kind that the Clinton administration faced in 1994, when North Korea expelled the agency's inspectors and raced for a bomb. In this case, the inspectors will continue their work in Iran, even if their vision into the production of nuclear fuel and their ability to trace past nuclear activity are restricted.

"Grossi mitigated some damage," Andrea Stricker, a research fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, said on Sunday. But she added that "reduced monitoring in any form is extremely problematic due to the major nuclear advancements Iran has been undertaking."

"The IAEA needs to publish the technical agreement and explain exactly how monitoring has been reduced so the international community can assess the severity of Iran's step," stressed Stricker from the anti-Iran think tank.

Henry Rome, an Iran expert at the Eurasia Group, said the announcement on Sunday "presents an opening, but we're not out of the woods yet," highlighting that the country continued to boost its uranium enrichment and test new, more advanced centrifuges to produce the fuel.

Biden admin weigh easing Iran sanctions: Sunday Times

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The administration of U.S. President Joe Biden is considering easing sanctions against Iran imposed during the rule of former president Donald Trump.

The new head of the White House has pondered this as the U.S. seeks to restore the 2015 nuclear deal, according to the British newspaper The Sunday Times.

It is noted that despite the fact that the new administration insists on the desire to sit down at the negotiating table, "there are signs that a relaxation of sanctions is not far off."

"Easing sanctions is definitely on the way. Not today or tomorrow. But it is on its way," said a source from the national security sector.

Earlier, Mohammad Javad Zarif, the Iranian foreign minister, spoke about the U.S. addition to sanctions, bullying and pressure. Zarif stressed that so far he

does not see any changes in Washington's policy, and the current President Biden is generally repeating the policy of his predecessor.

On February 19, the Biden administration withdrew Trump's demand to restore the UN sanctions against Iran and agreed to attend talks between European countries and the Islamic Republic.

The JCPOA was concluded in the summer of 2015 between Tehran and six intermediary countries. In early May 2018, Trump announced Washington's unilateral withdrawal from the deal and the resumption of anti-Iranian sanctions. Later, in reaction to the violation of the agreement by the U.S., Iran resumed its nuclear activities and started enriching uranium at 20 percent purity to indicate the U.S. economic sanctions will not affect its policy towards its nuclear program and defense capabilities.

Israeli dead end

With military and diplomatic options off the table, Israel faces impasse

1→ Returning to the 2015 nuclear agreement or even to an agreement that is similar but with a few improvements is a bad thing and it is not the right thing to do,” Kochavi said.

The top Israeli general went so far as to say that he ordered Israel's army to prepare offensive options against Iran.

“I have instructed the IDF to prepare several operational plans in addition to existing ones, which we will develop throughout the coming year. The power to initiate them lies with the political echelon. However, the offensive options need to be prepared, ready and on the table,” Kochavi said in remarks delivered at the Israeli Institute for National Security Studies 14th Annual International Conference.

Iran protested these belligerent remarks in a letter to United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

“The Israeli regime has recently not only doubled down on its provocative, warmongering statements against the Islamic Republic of Iran, but has also been planning to carry out its belligerent threats against Iran,” the letter, penned by Iran's Ambassador to the UN Majid Takht-Ravanchi in early February, said.

“The most recent example of such threats is the remarks made by the Israeli military chief of staff on January 26, 2021, in which, in addition to frivolous claims

on Iran's peaceful nuclear program, he also said that Israeli armed forces are preparing a number of operational plans, in addition to those already in place, to develop them for the next year, because these plans 'need to be on the table',” the ambassador continued.

The Israeli threats against Iran were issued after the Israelis felt the danger of the U.S. coming back into compliance with its obligations under the JCPOA, though the Biden administrations never outlined any detailed plan to rejoin the nuclear deal. However, the Israelis seem to think that it's only a matter of time before the U.S. rejoins the JCPOA.

This calculation has put Israel in a much worse position than it was before the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA. Prior to Trump's withdrawal, the Israelis, namely Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, worked their butts off to kill the JCPOA. They succeeded in convincing former U.S. President Donald Trump into pulling the U.S. out of the JCPOA. Trump withdrew from the deal and re-imposed a wide range of economic sanctions on Iran within the framework of the so-called “maximum pressure” campaign.

Netanyahu and his allies were over the moon with Trump's decision to cease U.S. participation in the JCPOA, thinking that the nuclear deal will be a thing of the past. At that time, there was a speculation in

Tel Aviv and elsewhere that “the Islamic Republic is in a strategic impasse that makes it face specific scenarios: either rolling towards the downfall of the regime, or its submission to American demands, or a popular unrest that leads to one of the two previous scenarios,” according to Ali Haidar, a columnist for the Lebanese Al-Akbar newspaper.

Any assessment other than that was considered subjective and expressing more hopes than facts, Haidar said in an article for Al-Akbar.

But now, Haidar noted, the situation has dramatically changed in Iran's favor in light of two facts: Iran has weathered the economic storm, with international estimates projecting Iran's economy to achieve a positive growth rate this year.

“Second, on the strategic level, is that [Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah] Khamenei has set critical conditions for returning to the nuclear deal, which are the lifting of sanctions in practice rather than verbally, and for the Iranian people to feel that,” the columnist continued.

These facts have sent the Israelis scrambling to find a solution to their impasse. The Israelis first sought to up the ante by issuing military threats to Iran. They threatened to attack Iran in an effort to impede any U.S. plan to “rush back” into the JCPOA. The Israeli threats

elicited a strong response from several Iranian officials across the political spectrum, with the latest response coming from Iran's top diplomat Mohammad Javad Zarif.

The Iranian foreign minister warned Israel against any attack on Iran, saying that such a move would amount to “committing suicide.”

“If Israel attacks Iran, this will amount to committing suicide,” Zarif said in an interview with the Lebanese television network Al Manar.

Aside from their boisterous threats, Israelis know that their military options against Iran, if any, are limited. They have always sought to entangle the U.S. in a war with Iran.

After four years of a bromance with the Trump administration, the Israeli leaders find themselves in a corner; they neither can issue credible military threats nor can prevent the West from pursuing diplomacy with Iran. And this is trouble of their own making. The JCPOA was working well but Netanyahu contributed to undercutting it. Now they face the prospect of an Iran that is emerging stronger than ever from economic pressure while significantly advancing its nuclear program.

All this while Israel does not enjoy the luxury of having real options to prevent Iran from moving forward.

Zarif warns Israeli attack on Iran will be suicidal

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Minister warned Israel against any attack on Iran, saying that such a move would amount to “committing suicide”.

In an interview with the Lebanese television network Al Manar, Zarif said, “If Israel attacks Iran, this will amount to committing suicide.”

He said Iran's goal in Syria is to combat terrorism, calling on Israel to stop supporting terrorism.

“Our goal in Syria is to combat terrorism, and Israel must realize that the policies of supporting terrorist groups will not go unanswered,” the Iranian foreign minister said.

Zarif's remarks came after top Israeli General Aviv Kochavi had threatened to attack Iran.

Kochavi, Chief of Staff of Israel's Armed Forces, had said that Israel is not welcoming the expected efforts by the U.S. and its European allies to revive the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). He claimed that he had ordered several plans to launch offensive operations against Iran while voicing Israel's opposition to any efforts to revive the JCPOA or even to improve it.



“I have instructed the IDF to prepare several operational plans in addition to existing ones, which we will develop throughout the coming year. The power to initiate them lies with the political echelon. However, the offensive options need to be prepared, ready and on the table,” Kochavi said in remarks delivered at the Israeli Institute for National Security Studies 14th Annual International Conference.

“I would like to clarify my position regarding the JCPOA: Even if an improved agreement is reached, it will be a bad agreement at the operational and strategic level. Therefore, such an agreement must not be enabled,” he continued.

As regards the situation in Lebanon, Zarif said, “We are working to help the Lebanese to reach an agreement among themselves, and we cannot impose an agreement on the Lebanese, and no one can do that.”

“We submitted proposals to help Lebanon after the disaster of the port explosion, but U.S. pressure prevented that,” he continued.

The chief Iranian diplomat also warned Iran's Arab neighbors against cooperating with Israel. The Iranian foreign minister pointed out that “Saudi Arabia cannot achieve a military victory and cannot obtain through negotiations what it has failed militarily.”

“The mistake of our neighbors is that they have allowed Israel to transfer the conflict to their lands, and it will rob them of security and will not defend them,” Zarif noted.

Iran, IAEA reach understanding to continue cooperation

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have reached an understanding on how to continue cooperation two days before Iran starts implementing a nuclear law obligating the Iranian government to halt implementing the Additional Protocol to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The deal was reached during a two-day visit by the IAEA Director-General Mariano Grossi to Iran. During the visit, Grossi met with Ali Akbar Salehi, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, and Iranian Foreign Minister of Iran Mohammad Javad Zarif.

“Intensive consultations led to a good result. A temporary technical understanding has been reached. The IAEA will continue its necessary verification and monitoring in Iran,” the UN nuclear watchdog chief said in a tweet following his visit to Iran.

The IAEA and the AEOI issued a joint statement outlining the content of the understanding moments after Grossi concluded his visit to Iran.

“The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) recalled and reaffirmed the spirit of cooperation and enhanced mutual trust that led to the Joint Statement in Tehran on 26 August 2020, and the importance of continuing that cooperation and trust,” the statement said. “The AEOI informed the IAEA that in order to comply with the act passed by the Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Iran called “Strategic Action to Cease Actions and Protect the interest of Iranian Nation” (The “Law”) Iran will stop the implementation of the voluntary measures as envisaged in the JCPOA, as of 23 February 2021.”

The statement added, “In view of the above and in order for the Agency to continue its verification and monitoring activities, the AEOI and the IAEA agreed: 1. That Iran continues to implement fully and without limitation its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA as before. 2. To a temporary bilateral technical understanding, compatible with the Law, whereby the IAEA will



continue with its necessary verification and monitoring activities for up to 3 months (as per technical annex). 3. To keep the technical understanding under regular review to ensure it continues to achieve its purposes.”

This deal was reached only two days before Iran starts the implementation of the nuclear law.

The law, officially called “Strategic Action to Lift Sanctions and Protect the Nation's Rights,” stipulates that the Iranian government should take certain nuclear measures such as raising the level of uranium enrichment to 20% and suspending the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol if the Western parties failed to honor their obligations under the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, formally called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The law was adopted in December.

The sixth article of the law clearly stipulates that if the remaining parties to the JCPOA — Germany, France, China, Russia and the UK- failed to facilitate Iran's oil exports and the return of Iranian oil revenues in two months, the Iranian government would be obligated to stop inspections beyond the IAEA safeguards, including the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol, which allows

unannounced and intensive inspections of nuclear sites.

Iran will implement the nuclear law which obligates the government to halt implementing the Additional Protocol on February 23, Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to international organizations in Vienna, said on February 15.

“Act of Parliament will be executed on time (23 Feb) and the IAEA has been informed today to ensure the smooth transition to a new course in due time. After all, goodwill brings about goodwill!” Ambassador Gharibabadi tweeted.

In a Twitter thread on Sunday night, Gharibabadi gave more details about the content of Iran's agreement with the IAEA. He said this agreement is consistent with the Parliament's nuclear law.

“The Agency will not be given any access beyond the [IAEA] safeguards. The continuation of the Agency's verification, as per the technical annex to the Joint Statement, is solely for the purpose of maintaining information on certain activities and monitoring equipment by Iran for three months. The Agency has no access to this information and the information remains exclusively with Iran. If the sanctions are lifted completely within three months, Iran will

provide this information to the IAEA, otherwise, it will be deleted forever,” Gharibabadi tweeted.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh also echoed the same remarks, saying that the deal with the Agency is compatible with the nuclear law.

Speaking at a weekly press conference on Monday, Khatibzadeh said, “The result of what happened during Mr. Grossi's visit between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency is a remarkable diplomatic and technical achievement. Dr. Salehi and his colleagues worked hard to move within the framework of the parliament's binding law. As stated in the joint statement with the IAEA, all that has been agreed is in accordance with parliamentary law.”

The nuclear law is part of Iran's strategy to force the West into lifting sanctions. Iran has said many times that it will return to the full implementation of the 2015 nuclear deal after the U.S. lifts its sanctions.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Friday that the U.S. should lift all sanctions if it wants Iran to reverse its nuclear measures.

“U.S. acknowledged Pompeo's claims regarding Resolution 2231 had no legal validity. We agree. In compliance with 2231: U.S. unconditionally & effectively lift all sanctions imposed, re-imposed or re-labeled by Trump. We will then immediately reverse all remedial measures. Simple: #CommitActMeet,” Zarif said in a tweet on Friday.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said in a recent telephone conversation with his Swiss counterpart Guy Parmelin that it's up to the U.S. to make the first move toward reviving the JCPOA.

“The ball is in the U.S. court now. When it lifts illegal sanctions in practice, everything will return to the right path,” the Iranian president pointed out.

With Iran stopping the implementation of the Additional Protocol on February 23, the West now has a period of about three months to address Iran's concerns. Otherwise, Iran will continue to restrict cooperation with the IAEA until it gets the sanctions lifted.

SPORTS

Leading Iran at Olympics is exciting: Vladimir Alekno

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — Russian coach Vladimir Alekno says that to lead Iran at the Tokyo 2020 will be his fourth Olympics and it's very exciting for him.



Alekno won a bronze and a gold medal in Beijing 2008 and London 2012, respectively, and finished in fourth place in Rio 2016. The Russian coach is expected to reach quarterfinals at least with Iran, with the aim of winning a medal.

“As I said before, the fourth Olympics in my career is very exciting. When I was offered to lead Iran in the Games, to participate at the Olympics was the main motivation. The Olympics are the ultimate dream not only for the players, but also for any coach. There is a very special atmosphere. If I say that the money was not important for me, I will lie. This also matters. A worthy offer was made and I accepted,” Alekno told sport.business-gazeta.ru.

The U.S. head coach John Speraw had already said Alekno is not the best option for Iran. According to the American trainer, the style of Russian volleyball is very different from Iran. The most Iranian players are technical and play smart volleyball, while the form of Russian volleyball is based on physical training.

Alekno reacted to Speraw's comments, saying that the U.S. coach must focus on his own work.

“I will advise the American coach to focus on his team,” Alekno said. “Iran does not have the same physical capabilities as Russian team have, but they have more variable and faster volleyball, due to player like Saeid Marufu. We will work hard because there is no other option to achieve the result.”

Setter Maruf has worked with Alekno at Zenit Kazan in the 2014/15 season. He helped the team win the Russian Championship and the Champions League. The 35-year-old setter is one of the main stars of Iranian team, Alekno said.

“Maruf is probably among the top five players in the world. He is the team leader and unites it. Marouf is a very important player for Iran. I think it will be a great encouragement both for me, Marouf and all other Iranian volleyball players to show themselves at the Olympics,” Alekno stated.

At the Olympic tournament, Iran's rivals will be teams from Japan, Poland, Italy, Canada and Venezuela. But Alekno doesn't want to talk about them at the moment.

“The main rivals of Iran are themselves. You need to know yourself at first. The recent results do not suit the Iranians. The FIVB Volleyball Men's Nations League final six is not a place they are dreaming of. A coach who promises results is a deceiver. You can promise to do the best you can in order to achieve a result, and prepare as well as possible for each opponent. We will move forward step by step,” concluded the coach.

Alireza Beiranvand possibly out for weeks

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand is likely to be sidelined several weeks with a foot injury.

The Antwerp goalie suffered a foot injury in the match against Sint-Truidense VV at the Bosuilstadion Sunday night in the 34th minute.

Beiranvand was replaced by Ortwin De Wolf, former Belgium U21 keeper, who kept a clean sheet during his time.

Beiranvand will miss the Round of 32 second leg against Rangers in a UEFA Europa League at the Ibrox Stadium.

Het Laatste has reported that Jean Butez will be back on the field. The French keeper suffered an ankle injury six weeks ago, but he is almost fit again.

Mes Rafsanjan promoted to Iran Volleyball Super League

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — Mes Rafsanjan volleyball team have ensured promotion to Iran Volleyball Super League.

The team eased past Oghab Melal of Ardabil 3-0 and advanced to the First Division Volleyball League final match.

Pas Gorgan had also won promotion to the Super League after defeating Iranshid Chalous in the semi-final match.

The Iranian Super League (ISL) is a professional volleyball league in Iran at the top of the Iranian volleyball league system.

It was founded in 1975 as the Pasargard Cup, but after the Iranian Revolution it was renamed to the first Division. In 1997 the league system was revamped and the Iranian Super League was established. Paykan Tehran have won the most titles in the new Super League with 12 titles.

Asian Youth Handball Championship delayed due to COVID-19 sears

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — The Asian Handball Federation (AHF) has decided to postpone the 17th Asian Youth Handball Championship as result of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The competition, which acts as a qualifier for the World Cup in Hungary 2021, has been delayed until further notice.

The competition was originally scheduled to be held in Shiraz from March 20 to 29 but the Asian Handball Federation (AHF) moved the event to Bahrain.

The top four teams from the tournament will qualify for the Junior World Championship which is scheduled to be held from June 22 to July 21 in Hungarian capital Budapest.

IME's value of monthly trades rises 16%

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The value of trades at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) rose 16 percent during the eleventh Iranian calendar month of Bahman (January 20 – February 18).

As reported by the Public Relations and International Affairs Department of the IME, during the past month 2.96 million tons of commodities worth \$1.62 billion were traded at the exchange, while the weight of traded goods shows a two-percent growth as well.



The IME's mineral and industrial trading floor witnessed trade of 1.349 million tons of commodities worth more than \$875 million.

This floor was a platform to sell 236,000 tons of steel, 26,040 tons of copper, 54 tons of precious metals concentrate, 510 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 24,500 tons of aluminum, 500 tons of coke, 18,100 tons of zinc, 50,000 tons of iron ore concentrate, 100 tons of cast iron, 50 tons of lead and 65 kg of gold bars.

In addition to that, the IME traded on both domestic and export pit of its oil and petrochemical trading floor 1,589,000 tons of commodities worth more than \$740 million.

Commodities sold here were 494,337 tons of bitumen, 331,664 tons of petrochemicals, 152,840 tons of chemicals, 13,382 tons of base oil, 423,050 tons of vacuum bottom, 18,790 tons of sulfur, 200 tons of argon, 250 tons of insulation and 159,500 tons of lube cut.

Last but not least, the exchange saw trade of 21,645 tons of commodities on its side market.

As previously reported, over 2,893 tons of commodities worth nearly \$1.5 billion have been traded at IME during the tenth Iranian calendar month of Dey (December 21, 2020-January 19, 2021).

The exchange hosted trading of 1,176,000 tons of commodities with a trading value of more than \$740 million on its mineral and industrial trading floor.

On this floor the IME sold 1,093,000 tons of steel, 5,160 tons of copper, 30 tons of precious metals concentrate, 480 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 15,955 tons of aluminum, 800 tons of coke, 20,500 tons of zinc dust, 40,000 tons of iron ore concentrate, 300 tons of cast iron and 54 kg of gold bars.

On its oil and petrochemical trading floor, the IME traded more than 1,707,000 tons of commodities worth nearly \$749 million, which included 602,855 tons of various types of bitumen, 257,511 tons of polymeric products, 124,965 tons of chemicals, 6,300 tons of slop wax and 503,760 tons of vacuum bottom. Moreover, the exchange sold on this floor 11,825 tons of base oil, 69,725 tons of sulfur, 200 tons of argon and 129,000 tons of lube cut.

The next trading floor of the IME was agricultural with 10,500 kg of saffron sold on it.

Last but not least, the IME's side market saw trade of 9,510 tons of various types of commodities within the same month.

IME is one of the four major stock markets of Iran, the other three markets are Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market known also as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), and Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX).

Regional CIRED conference underway in Tehran

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The 8th edition of Regional Conference on Electricity Distribution (CIRED IRAN) was opened in Tehran on Monday.

The opening ceremony was attended by senior officials from the country's electricity industry, including the Deputy Energy Minister Homayoun Haeri.

As one of the most important electricity distribution industry associations in the world, CIRED (Congrès International des Réseaux Electriques de Distribution) has been set up as an international association and since October 2004, it takes the legal form of de facto association (association de fait) based in Belgium.

As one of the major electricity hubs in West Asia, Iran is the only country in the region which is licensed to hold the CIRED conference biannually.

Iranian researchers have been continuously among the countries with the most number of research papers presented to this international event.

By attending this conference, Iranian researchers, engineers and scholars will stay in touch with the latest achievements in the world's electricity industry and also share their knowledge and experiences with their counterparts all around the world.

Electric vehicles, responding to demand in the distribution market, using new equipment and technologies in the country's distribution industry, reducing losses, capital management, new solutions and equipment for smart grids, evolution of standards, economic issues in distribution business, electricity market, smartening grids, electricity market regulations, smart metering experiences and future orientations, as well as network development are among the important topics that are discussed in this event.

CIRED works for the purpose of increasing the business relevant competencies, skills and knowledge of those who see themselves as a part of the electricity distribution community, whether they are from the utility, product, consultancy, service, business or academic sector.

CIRED is dedicated to the design, construction and operation of public distribution systems and of large installations using electrical energy in industry, services and transport.



Iran, S. Korea discuss details about transferring frozen funds

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Abdolnaser Hemmati met with the South Korean Ambassador to Tehran Ryu Jeong-Hyun on Monday to discuss the details regarding the transfer of Iranian frozen assets in the Asian country.

As reported by IRNA, in the meeting which was held on the invitation of the South Korean embassy, the two sides negotiated the ways and protocols for allocating a part of Iranian funds in South Korea for purchasing essential goods from third countries.

Hemmati, in this meeting, presented CBI's demands regarding the volume of funds and the names of the foreign banks to which the money should be transferred.

Ryu Jeong-Hyun for his part expressed his country's readiness for taking all the necessary measures for ensuring the transfer of the mentioned funds to the destination banks.

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

Iran has repeatedly called on Seoul to abandon its "illegal" policies and release the Iranian assets that it has frozen due to the



South Korean Ambassador to Tehran Ryu Jeong-Hyun (1st R) and CBI Governor Abdolnaser Hemmati (C) meet in Tehran on Monday.

U.S. sanctions so that Tehran can step up its fight against COVID-19.

Earlier, President Hassan Rouhani had reacted to Seoul's blocking of Iranian assets,

saying: "South Korea's ban on Iran's use of its central bank resources to buy basic goods, medicine, and humanitarian items is by no means acceptable, and we expect Seoul to lift

this restriction as soon as possible."

Following the intensification of disputes between the two sides, South Korean Vice Foreign Affairs Minister Choi Jong Kun visited Iran in January and met with senior Iranian officials including the CBI governor for discussing ways for resolving the issue.

In the meeting with Choi, Hemmati called on the South Korean government to take an independent approach towards the issue of releasing Iran's resources in the country, saying: "Seven billion dollars belonging to the Iranian nation has been blocked in South Korean banks for more than two years, this is unacceptable and Iran definitely will not be indifferent towards this issue."

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

After the Korean official's visit to Iran, the two sides finally agreed that South Korea should provide the necessary monetary channels for Iran to be able to use its assets in this country for purchasing essentials goods through third countries.

Iran's non-oil trade stands at \$65.5b in 11 months

1 -> Meanwhile, the country's top five sources of imports during these 11 months were China with \$8.8 billion, the UAE with \$8.4 billion, Turkey with \$3.8 billion, India with \$2 billion, and Germany with \$1.7 billion worth of imports.

The mentioned countries exported a total of 15.2 million tons of commodities to the Islamic republic to account for 50 percent and 72 percent of the country's total imports during the said period in terms of volume and value, respectively.

The imports of non-oil goods in this time span decreased by six percent and 15 percent in terms of weight and value, respectively, compared to the same period last year.

Of the total imported commodities in the mentioned 11 months, some 21.4 million tons worth \$11 billion were basic goods.

Like all other countries around the world, Iran's trade with its foreign partners has been affected by the coronavirus pandemic, however, the situation is getting back to normal and the country's trade is reaching its pre-pandemic levels.

Oil industry exhibition underway in southwestern Iran

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The 12th edition of South Pars Petroleum Exhibition (SPPEX 2021) kicked off on Sunday in the southwestern city of Asaluyeh, Bushehr Province.

The opening ceremony was attended by senior officials from the mentioned province and the Oil Ministry, IRNA reported.

Over 110 domestic knowledge-based companies are showcasing their latest products and achievements in the oil, gas, and petrochemical industries, during this four-day exhibition.

According to the Secretary of the Exhibition Hossein Daris-Zadeh, some of the exhibiting companies in this exhibition have saved the country millions of dollars with their innovative products even during the U.S. sanctions.

"The existence of capable companies and suppliers of items needed by the oil, gas, and petrochemical industry is an opportunity to materialize the slogan of "surge in production" by taking advantage of the capabilities and capacities of domestic experts," Daris-Zadeh said.

The purpose of holding the oil, gas,



refining, and petrochemical industry exhibition is to complete the supply chain in these industries and to introduce domestic manufacturing companies in the South Pars Special Economic Zone, according to the official.

With the coronavirus pandemic seemingly under control, physical exhibitions and affairs are once again resuming in the country in full compliance with the health and safety protocols.

Due to the special conditions created by the pandemic, only certain groups of people including managers, experts and scholars are allowed to visit most of the exhibitions.

3 key pipelines launched to transfer oil products

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — During a ceremony held via video conference, three major pipelines for the transfer of oil products were launched on Monday.

The ceremony was attended by Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh, and National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company (NIORDC) Managing Director Alireza Sadeq-Abadi.

The three pipelines are the 26-inch Shazand-Qom-Rey pipeline for the transfer of oil products with a length of 293 km and a capacity of 300,000 barrels per day; the 20-inch Naein-Kashan-Rey pipeline with a length of 420 km and a capacity of 204,000 barrels per day of oil products; and the 14-inch Tabriz-Khoy-Urmia pipeline with a length of 220 km from Tabriz to Urmia with a total capacity of 65,000 barrels per day.



Output of 86 major production units doubled in 10 months

ECONOMY d e s k

TEHRAN — Iranian Deputy Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Saeed Zarandi said on Monday that the output of 86 major production units across the country has more than doubled in the first 10 months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2020-January 19, 2021) compared to the same period in the previous year.

According to Zarandi, the production data pertaining to 319 major units in the country during the mentioned 10 months has shown that the output of 148 units has increased by 20-50 percent, the production by 40 units has risen by 50-70 percent, while 45 units have registered a production growth of 70-100 percent.

"The production by 86 major units has more than doubled in this period," Zarandi told ISNA.

The official underlined that the units under review are among the country's top producers in the industry and mining sector which are active in a variety of areas including automobiles, home appliances, mineral



products, health products, and so on.

He further noted that the Industry Ministry monitors the production of 40 major industrial and mining commodity items on a monthly basis and in this regard over 1000 production units go through the monitoring process.

Stating that the mentioned 1000 units account for more than 60 percent of the value-added production of the industry and mining sector, Zarandi said: "Therefore, the statistics of these 1000 units can be considered a representative of more than 60 percent of

the country's industrial sector."

As reported by ISNA, the latest data released by the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry has shown that the production of 20 major industrial commodity items in the country has increased by a range between 0.3 percent and 554 percent during the first 10 months of the current Iranian calendar year.

Iran's Ministry of Industry, Mining, and Trade has implemented several programs for promoting domestic production and increasing exports in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 20, 2020).

Supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), reviving the country's idle production units and small and medium-sized mines, supporting domestic auto part manufacturers, holding exhibitions for encouraging domestic production, signing cooperation agreements with knowledge-based companies and universities are among the major steps taken by the Industry Ministry in order to promote domestic production.

Launching a system (known as Tavan-

iran) for registering the country's production units' information in order to create a database for future references has been also one of the major steps taken by the industry ministry in order to promote domestic production.

Back in January, the Industry Ministry had announced that the production of six major mining industry products has increased by an average of 16 percent in the first nine months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-December 20, 2020).

Based on the mentioned data, during the first nine months of this year, production of crude steel and steel products, copper cathode, cement, aluminum ingots, as well as alumina increased compared to the same period in the previous year.

Also in August 2020, the ministry data showed that the production of 22 major mining and industrial products in the country had increased during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-August 21, 2020), compared to the same period of time in the past year.

U.S. pushed to irreversible decline due to its policies: analyst

By M.A Saki

TEHRAN — American political analyst Martin Love believes that the U.S. is being pushed towards an irreversible decline due to its harsh policies, especially when it started to threaten and use military power.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 the debate on U.S. decline which had characterized the 1980s was succeeded by a debate on the new and unchallenged dominance of the United States, following the implosion of its serious military rival.

However, some observers say that the U.S. now seems to be embedded in an irreversible decline unless Joe Biden can manage to allow positive perceptions of the country by shrewd deeds and realignments overseas.

“For one, the U.S. now seems to be embedded in an irreversible, self-inflicted decline,” Martin Love tells the Tehran Times.

“There is no question the country is in decline. Any country that has to resort to threats and military power to maintain its edge is already suffering a decline,” Love notes.

Three decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union, America has acted the world’s hegemon. In fact, the end of the Cold War was an ideological and political triumph for the United States and was widely celebrated as a vindication of the long-term strategy of containment and pressure which the Americans had pursued over four decades.

At the same time, it created a vacuum in U.S. policy, raising questions of whether the elaborate system of bases and the huge military budgets established during the Cold War were any longer necessary.

Under the Trump presidency, the U.S. faced more difficulties in its international ties



“One must credit Iran for its capacity to endure. But Iran has been around for over 2000 years and I believe if it can hold out a few more years, if necessary, it will be a leading country in Asia.”

due to its unilateral policies and sanctions against other countries all around the world.

Trump tried to exploit the dollar as a leverage to threaten or pressure countries that don’t follow U.S. orders.

“The U.S. really has few real friends nowadays, and it is not offering the world anything but further conflict,” Love argues.

“The most important factor is probably the fact that the dollar is probably going to die this decade. It’s been printed to oblivion

and has no backing.”

Though the new administration makes every effort to repair the international reputation of the U.S., superficial steps may not change the situation.

“Biden is already reversing some of Trump’s policies but the most important ones he seems unwilling to change, especially regarding the Middle East (West Asia) and absurd support of the Zionists,” the American analyst notes.

“However,” Love says, “Biden is prob-

ably not going to reunify the country.” He says, “As the American condition worsens, the divisions will only increase. It’s just a matter of time.”

In the past and in the current time the U.S. have undermined many opportunities, including the nuclear deal - officially known as the JCPOA- that was inked with Iran in 2015.

“The JCPOA may be dead, but it won’t be because of Iran. We wait to see whether Biden drops sanctions, as the U.S. should,” Love says.

To make matters worse, the Biden administration seems hesitant to lift sanctions on Iran in an effort to add preconditions to the nuclear pact before to rejoin it.

“I suppose with the JCPOA dead; the question then becomes can Iran defend itself against further attacks by the U.S., Israel? One certainly hopes so. Meanwhile, how can anyone trust the U.S. government,” he adds.

Love expects Iran to be pleased if sanctions are dropped, but “Iran will be wary, too.”

He adds, “Iran really can’t justifiably reject the JCPOA if the U.S. does its part. But no one is holding their breath.”

Nevertheless, the U.S. “maximum pressure” showed that the sanctions always do not prove effective to change other countries’ behavior, and the era of unipolar hegemony is gone.

“Economic sanctions applied so widely across the world by the U.S. are insane and not helping the U.S. make friends anywhere,” Love points out.

“The ‘maximum pressure’ campaign against Iran has not worked and never will,” he maintains. “One must credit Iran for its capacity to endure. But Iran has been around for over 2000 years and I believe if it can hold out a few more years, if necessary, it will be a leading country in Asia.”

Biden admin not serious to stop war in Yemen: Yemeni politician

1 → He announced that he met Iranian officials to talk about possible ways of stopping the war in Yemen, supporting an agreement between the warring parties for a ceasefire, sending humanitarian aid to the country, and resuming the political process.

The following is the text of the interview:

How do you evaluate the efforts of the United Nations to end the war on Yemen?

The international role is very unproductive and almost represents the interests of Western powers, where the UN envoy Martin Griffiths as a British national always gives the political cover for aggression launched by the Saudi-led coalition and provides justifications for all war crimes committed against our people.

The killing is ongoing through an unjust and suffocating siege that violates international and legal norms, and in all his briefings to the Security Council, Griffiths praises the criminal Saudi regime, describing its role in Yemen as humanitarian even after massacres against children and women.

In his visit to Tehran, Griffiths discussed ways to end the war in Yemen with Iranian Foreign Minister Muhammad Javad Zarif and other officials. What were the results of the visit?

Unfortunately, Griffiths represents the United Kingdom, not the United Nations. In fact, he failed in his mission as an international mediator.

He tried, through his visit to the Islamic Republic, to give



an impression that the Yemeni people who defend themselves are being led under the direction of Tehran.

It was a move to give legitimacy through media to the regimes that launched an aggression on Yemen in an effort to justify their interference and crimes against the Yemeni people.

He knows well that the solidarity of the Islamic Republic with the Yemeni people doesn’t mean dictating policies and directing the Yemeni leaders, especially since the Yemeni people are in a position to defend themselves in the face of foreign aggression waged by 17 states, led by the U.S.

The Iranian position during Griffith’s visit to Tehran reflects a logical and fair response to those who claim peace while practicing aggression, killing, and continuous blockade for six years.

What is your comment on the new U.S. administration’s decision to reverse Trump’s designation of Ansarullah as a foreign terrorist organization?

Trump’s decision to classify Ansarullah as a terrorist organization came on the last days of his administration; it came in the context of the state of confusion and crisis that Washington experienced politically, and the repercussions of that classification would have been negative for the Biden administration and the American people.

Removing Ansarullah from terrorist groups did not come as a desire to talk or a preparation to bring peace to Yemen.

They are not serious in stopping the aggression and lifting the siege on the Yemeni people, otherwise Biden would make the decision to end the war and lift the siege directly.

How would you describe the role Saudi Arabia is playing in the war on Yemen?

The Saudi regime serves the U.S. and Britain in the region and is not able to take any decision independently and has no control over its territory, so it is not entitled to be a decision-maker for war or peace.

Trump has previously stated that had it not been for Washington, Saudi Arabia would not have been able to fly its planes.

Thinking outside the mediated box: Why the EU shouldn’t condemn China’s BBC ban

By Keith Lamb

The EU’s urging of China, to reverse the ban on the BBC is misplaced considering how often Britain has gone against European’s interests. China’s banning of BBC World News comes as a reaction to Ofcom’s recent banning of the Chinese media outlet CGTN from broadcasting in the UK.

The EU said that Beijing’s move restricted “freedom of expression and access to information inside its borders.” However, the BBC, in conjunction with deep state transatlantic interests, has been engaged in a psyops propaganda war against China.

Take Xinjiang, where the BBC has parroted claims of genocide and concentration camps. This is a naked attempt to link China’s image, in the consciousness of Westerners, with the policies of Nazi Germany. Despite such serious allegations, the BBC has never once looked into who produces and funds these claims, let alone examine closely the findings.

It is the right-wing Christian Adrien Zenz and the think-tank Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) who produce the reports on Xinjiang. Importantly, Zenz is paid for by the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation (VCMF) and ASPI is funded by government and military-industrial-complex sources.

The VCMF is linked to the former think-tank Project for a New American Century which drew up the plan to overthrow Syria, Iraq, Libya, North Korea and prevent China’s rise. Furthermore, the VCMF, funded by Washington, classifies all deaths including Nazi deaths, to the Soviet Union, as victims of communism. It is a right-wing propaganda organization that seeks to demonize socialist states which it is now doing through Adrien Zenz.

ASPI, funded by the likes of Lockheed Martin and Raytheon, has an obvious agenda to stir up a hostile narrative against China. This is because such a narrative result in false heightened perceptions of an aggressive China which in turn

leads to greater arms sales.

In addition, Xinjiang is the key gateway for the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) that will bring to development and poverty alleviation to Central Asia. In the case of Europe being at the other end of Eurasia it will also benefit greatly from increased connectivity and trade. This is why Eastern European EU members have so enthusiastically joined BRI.

However, for states whose power traditionally rests on controlling the sea lanes, such as the UK and the US, inland development represents a geopolitical challenge to their order. Consequently, they seek to keep the continental inlands in a state of uneven development. Thus, BRI which most of the Global South is signed up to must be countered.

One could argue that the BBC has been cleverly taken in by such propaganda. Maybe some will incredulously argue that the BBC exists separately from the British state. However, the BBC’s staff are closely vetted by MI5. As such, one can only assume that at the top of the organization there must be some consciousness at what is at hand.

Perhaps the EU has simply fallen for the propaganda war directed against China that emanates from Anglosphere states. After all, the art of propaganda and psyops was invented in the UK. These psyops operations have been used effectively in Europe and around the world for the cause of empire.

The EU stands with the UK despite forces within Britain campaigning for Brexit based on disseminating the view that the EU is a corrupt and undemocratic organization. Be that as it may, Westminster can hardly be described as a bastion for justice when it comes to the interests of Europe and those further afield.

Let us not forget that Britain, along with the US, stormed into Iraq killing thousands just after Saddam had started selling oil in Euros rather than dollars. Yet such tragedies including the never-ending occupation of Afghanistan seem easily forgiven and forgotten.

These wars could not have happened without a cooperative media. True, in the UK there is often debate in the media leading up to war. However, this merely gives a false impression of where power lies. In fact, the debate is just dressing to manage the illusion of democracy while the imperial policy of war has been predetermined.

One must always keep in mind that the weapons of mass destruction claims, which justified the invasion of Iraq, proved to be false. Ominously, hanging over the events of 911, which justified the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, are the over 3000 architects and engineers, represented by Architects and Engineers for 911 Truth, who contest the official narrative of the 911 event.

At any rate, the imperative question is how could any section of a responsible media entertain calls for the illegal invasions of another country? Such a nefarious debate should simply not be able to take place. Any media worth its salt, conscious of the fact that false evidence and atrocity propaganda has been used to justify war, would surely try to make amends for past failings?

Tragically, imperial policies decorated with the frills of liberal democracy and media which sells itself as free perpetuates a democratic illusion that hides deep state imperialism to this day. For example, in 2020, leaked documents show that UK government contractors developed an advanced infrastructure of propaganda to stimulate support in the West for Syria’s political and armed opposition.

This has led to mainstream outlets across the world, including the BBC, producing a one sided narrative supporting forces which seek to upend the Syrian state, which like Gadhafi’s Libya, rejects the Western banking system. This chaos in Syria has brought the destitute from Syria into Europe as refugees. It has robbed Syria of its best as their skilled labor flees to Europe. For Europeans, this has brought the imperial policy of divide and rule into the imperial core.

The right demonizes the innocent enter-

ing Europe who they see as diluting European identity and a threat to the achievements of the European welfare systems. Simultaneously, liberals, who see homogenous European societies as an inherent evil, support the influx of the world’s desperate.

However, their righteousness, in part, is also misplaced for these liberals do not recognize the hard power that lies behind their soft ideology. While the right is still coopted by the ideology of the former liberal empire, modern liberals (often called the left) are unaware that they have bought into the propaganda of the new liberal empire.

Western invasion based on the white man’s civilizing burden has now transformed into invasion based on a new civilizing mission. This civilizing mission seeks to bring Western universal freedoms and the liberal political-economic form through the atrocity of war.

Clearly, when it comes to freedom of expression in China, there are evidently certain expressions such as the call to war, such as divide and rule tactics, and outright propaganda, paid for by those who wish to spark conflict, that China could do without.

For the EU or at least the EU citizens they too should look at the shambles their elites, backed by forces in the U.S. and the UK, have created around Europe from Libya to Syria and Iraq. It is these Europeans who in fact need a greater plurality of views and not a chorus of a multitude of similar hues representing a thin spectrum of debate.

Unfortunately, the banning of CGTN from the UK will delete one of the few remaining voices that do not entertain debates about neo-colonial invasions which do nothing but bring misery to Europeans and non-Europeans alike.

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(Source: Press TV)

U.S.-backed SDF militants steal 140,000 barrels per day of Syrian oil in Hasakah

1 → The Syrian government at the time denounced in the strongest terms the agreement inked to plunder the country’s natural resources, including Syrian oil and gas, under the sponsorship and support of the administration of former U.S. president Donald Trump.

According to Press TV, since late October 2019, the U.S. has been redeploying soldiers to the SDF-controlled oil fields in eastern Syria, in a reversal of Trump’s earlier order to withdraw all troops from the war-torn country.

The Pentagon claims that the move aims to “protect” the fields and facilities from possible attacks by the Daesh Takfiri terrorists, while Trump famously said that the U.S. seeks economic interests in controlling the oil fields.

A U.S.-led military coalition has been pounding what it claimed was positions of Daesh inside Syria since September 2014 without any authorization from the Damascus government or a UN mandate. The strikes have on many occasions resulted in civilian casualties and failed to fulfill their declared aim of countering terrorism.

‘Israel won’t be able to survive for next generation’

A former senior Israeli security official said that ‘Israel’ will not be able to survive for the next generation. ”

The Israeli official explained the reasons for that, according to his estimation, and expressed his fear of the Zionist occupation entity’s demise “for internal reasons and influences.”

This former Israeli official added that “most of the economic and military burden in ‘Israel’ will soon be borne by only 30% of the Israelis, and in this way, the Israeli society will not be spared from the problems that await it.”

Yuval Diskin, the former head of the ShinBet, confirmed in his article in the newspaper “Yediot Ahronoth” that there is a “strategic existential question that has made clear the extent of its seriousness.

Diskin added that he is talking about demographic, social, and economic trends that are already changing the essence of ‘Israel’, and can endanger its existence within one generation

He warned that the division between Israelis deepens, and the division between right and left has become dominant much more than the dispute between Jews and Arabs, and the lack of trust. Regimes of government are increasing, corruption is spreading in the government, and social solidarity is weak.”

Italian ambassador killed in Congo while in UN convoy

The Italian ambassador to Congo and an Italian carabinieri police officer were killed Monday during an attack on a UN convoy in an area that is home to myriad rebel groups, the Foreign Ministry and local people said.

The ambush on the World Food Program convoy that killed Ambassador Luca Attanasio and the officer occurred near Goma, Congo’s eastern regional capital in the territory of Nyiragongo, in North Kivu, Congolese civilians said, AP reported.

It is the same area, known as the “three antennas,” where two Britons were kidnapped by unidentified armed men in 2018, said Mambo Kaway, president of a local civil society group in the Nyiragongo territory.

Lebanese activist Anis al-Naqqash dies of Coronavirus

Anis al-Naqqash, a political Lebanese activist in the field of Islamic resistance, died at the age of 70.

He died on Monday after contracting the coronavirus, el-Nashra website reported.

Naqqash was a veteran activist in the Islamic resistance front. He was also a comrade of Imad Mughniyeh, a senior Hezbollah member who was assassinated in Syria in 2008, and the CIA claimed credit for his unlawful murder.

Resistance News

Court invalidates Balfour Declaration, holds UK responsible for Palestinian plight

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN**— A Palestinian court has declared as invalid the Balfour Declaration, a document issued by the British government in 1917 that paved the way for the creation of Israel, as it violates the rules of international law.

The Court of First Instance in the city of Nablus in the occupied West Bank on Sunday also held Britain legally responsible for the consequences of the Balfour Declaration, demanding an apology to the Palestinians.

The Balfour Declaration came in the form of a letter from Britain’s then-foreign secretary, Arthur Balfour, addressed to Lionel Walter Rothschild, a figurehead of the British Jewish community. It was published on November 2, 1917.

ACCORDING TO The declaration was made during World War I (1914-1918), and included in the terms of the British Mandate for Palestine after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.

It is widely seen as the precursor to the 1948 Palestinian Nakba, when Zionist armed paramilitary groups, who were trained and created to fight side by side with the British in World War II, forcibly expelled more than 750,000 Palestinians from their homeland, captured huge swathes of the Arab land, and proclaimed existence of Israel.

The lawsuit was filed by Palestinian lawyers in October last year on behalf of the National Assembly of Independents, the International Foundation for the Follow-up of the Rights of the Palestinian People, and the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate, against the British government.

“Britain and its foreign minister at the time, Arthur James Balfour, from whom the ‘Balfour Declaration’ was issued at the time, neither owned Palestine nor did they have the right to determine the fate of its people,” the court ruled Sunday.

Police arrest seven excavators, antique smugglers in northern Iran

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — On Sunday evening, Iranian police arrested seven illegal excavators and antique smugglers while digging for historical objects on the outskirts of a tourist village in northern Mazandaran province.

The accused people were traced and finally arrested in Chamestan district of Nur county after the authorities received reports from cultural heritage aficionados about their lawbreaking, IRNA reported.



Some excavation tools and equipment have been seized from the culprits who were surrendered to the judicial system for further investigation, the report said

Soaked in a vibrant history, Mazandaran (also known as Tabarestan) was a cradle of civilization since the beginning of the first millennium BC. According to Britannica Encyclopedia, it was almost overrun in about 720 CE by the Arab raiders. Its insecure eastern and southeastern borders were crossed by Mongol invaders in the 13th and 14th centuries. Cossacks attacked the region in 1668 but were repulsed.

Tabarestan was ceded to the Russian Empire by a treaty in 1723, but the Russians were never secure in their occupation. The area was restored to Iran under the Qajar dynasty. The northern section of the region consists of a lowland alongside the Caspian and an upland along the northern slopes of the Alborz Mountains.

Persian handicrafts: Chamush of Gilan

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — Chamush is a kind of traditional footwear that has long been crafted in some northern regions of Iran, particularly in the province of Gilan.

The footwear, which is made of leather, is traditionally worn by local villagers and farmers. The most prominent center where Chamush is made in the village of Masuleh of Fumanat county that is known for its beautiful and unique architecture.



One of the traits of Chamush, which is a result of shrinkage or expansion of natural leather in different temperatures, is that they keep the feet cool in the warm seasons and warm, when it is cold, according to Visit Iran, the official travel guide of the country.

The Chamush are most commonly made by young girls and women of Gilan, who use natural material that is produced locally. By practicing this craft, which is passed from one generation to the next, they help raise the income of the family.

An interesting trait of Chamush is that, in terms of looks, there is no difference between men's or women's, however, it is usual for men's to be made from buffalo leather, and women's from goat leather.

Gigantic kilim carpet unveiled in southern Iran

➔ **1** Medallion carpet is any floor covering on which the decoration is dominated by a single symmetrical centerpiece, such as a star-shaped, circular, quatrefoil, or octagonal figure.



The name, however, is sometimes also given to a carpet on which the decoration consists of several forms of this kind or even of rows of medallion figures.

Eight historical mosques made national heritage

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — A total of eight historical mosques in different villages of the Uraman cultural landscape in western Iran have recently been added to the National Heritage list with the aim of better maintenance and preservation, the director of the cultural landscape has announced.

Mohammadi Olia and Mohammadi Soffla mosques in Dulab village, Mohammad Rasul Allah and Jameh mosques in Palangan, Abdollah Omar mosque in Tangivar, Pir Omar in Galin, Abdollah Ibn Omar in Ta and the historical mosque of Bozlaneh village were inscribed on the prestigious list, Pouya Talebnia said on Monday.

The mosques belong to different historical eras, however, the oldest one dates back to the Ilkhanid era (1256–1353), while some others date back to the Safavid-era (1501–1736) and Qajar period (1789–1925), the official explained.

Many religious ceremonies are held in this region, which has made the role of mosques more important, he added.

He also noted that over the years people have built new mosques on the remains of the historical mosques instead of restoring and renovating the old ones, therefor in-



scribing the historical ones on the National Heritage list seems necessary.

Uraman is considered a cradle of Kurdish art and culture from the days of yore.

Pirshalyar, which is named after a legendary local figure, is amongst time-honored celebrations and rituals that are practiced annually across the region.

Archaeologists to restore ancient cemetery in Shiraz

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — A team of archaeologists and cultural heritage experts will restore an ancient cemetery in Shiraz, southern Iran.

"The 1200-year-old cemetery of Dar ol-Salam, which is one of the historical treasures of Shiraz, will undergo some rehabilitation works in near future," a member of Shiraz City Council said on Monday.

Moreover, historical structures including two old churches, a fire temple, and a synagogue are also scheduled to go under restoration, Seyyed Ahmadrza Dastgheib said.

A budget of 28 billion rials (\$667,000 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been allocated to the restoration projects, the official added.

Dar ol-Salam cemetery is one of the oldest cemeteries in the world, which dates back to the Islamic era, however, some archeologists believe that it belongs to the pre-Islamic era.

There are several graves of scientists, mystics, literati, and clergymen from different historical eras in the cemetery.

The old gravestones are carved with different styles of calligraphy such as nas'taliq, naskh, and tholth, and images of scissors, combs, mirrors, and work tools are

engraved on some other graves.

Celebrated as the heartland of Persian culture for over 2000 years, the southern Iranian city of Shiraz in Fars province has become synonymous with education, nightingales, poetry, and crafts skills passed down from generation to generation. It was one of the most important cities in the medieval Islamic world and was the Iranian capital during the Zand dynasty from 1751 to 1794.

Shiraz is home to some of the country's most magnificent buildings and sights. Increasingly, it draws more and more foreign and domestic sightseers flocking into this provincial capital.

Eram Garden, Afif-Abad Garden, Tomb of Hafez, Tomb of Sa'di, Jameh Mosque of Atigh, and Persepolis are among the historical, cultural, and ancient sites of Shiraz that are of interest to domestic and foreign tourists.

The UNESCO-registered Persepolis, also known as Takht-e Jamshid, whose magnificent ruins rest at the foot of Kuh-e Rahmat (Mountain of Mercy), was the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire. It is situated 60 kilometers northeast of the city of Shiraz



in Fars Province.

Shiraz is also home to some magnificent historical gardens such as Bagh-e Narenjestan and Eram Garden, which are top tourism destinations both for domestic and international sightseers.

UNESCO describes the Persian Garden as an idea that combines natural elements with manmade components to materialize the concept of Eden or Paradise on Earth.

More illegal constructions tore down near glorious Sialk hills

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — Other illegally-built structures -- previously constructed within the legal boundaries of Sialk hills, were brought down to earth on Monday.

"Two villas were destroyed on the judicial order by [Kashan's] municipality.... They were illegally constructed in an area of 1500 square meters in 1396 (2017) inside the properties of the ancient site of Sialk," CHTN quoted a local official as saying on Monday.



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

Situated halfway between Kashan and Fin in Isfahan province, Tapeh Sialk has yielded interesting pottery pieces, metal tools, and domestic implements made from stone, clay, and bone that date from as early as the 4th millennium BC.

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

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

Private sector establishing tourist complexes in Ardebil

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — A total of six tourist complexes are under construction in northwestern Ardebil province, the provincial tourism chief has said.

"With private sector investment, three complexes in Sarein and three complexes in Meshkinshahr are being built," CHTN quoted Nader Fallahi as saying on Monday.

A budget of 4.3 trillion rials (\$102 million at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been allocated to the projects, some of which are complete by 70 percent, the official added.

The projects are expected to generate over 340 job opportunities as well as attract more tourists and travelers to the region after the coronavirus crisis comes to an end, he explained.

Earlier in January, the official announced that more than 150 tourism-related projects are underway across the province although the COVID-19 pandemic has brought travel and tourism to a near-standstill.

He also noted that the projects would prepare the province's tourism sector for the post-coronavirus era,



when the number of tourists and travelers is expected to rise magnificently.

Last April tourism authorities of the province announced that they have developed extensive plans to draw more tourists during the winter season to the

province and make it the winter tourism hub of the country.

Back in November Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan said that investment in the tourism sector and boosting tourism infrastructure hasn't stopped despite the outbreak of the coronavirus in the country.

Over the past years, a large number of tourism projects have been commenced across the country, some of which have come on stream, he added. This volume of investment indicates that investors have high hopes for the future of this industry in the post-coronavirus era and for the next years to come, the tourism minister said.

Sprawling on a high, windswept plateau, Ardebil is well-known for having lush natural beauties, hospitable people, and its silk and carpet trade tradition. It is also home to the UNESCO-registered Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble.

The province is very cold in winter and mild in summer, attracting thousands every year. The capital city of Ardebil is usually recorded as one of the coldest cities in the country in winter.

Ancient vessels recovered from smugglers in Fars

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — Five ancient vessels have recently been confiscated from smugglers in the southern city of Abadeh in Fars province, a local tourism official has said.

The earthenware objects, which are of historical value, are now under assessment at Abadeh's office for the cultural heritage, tourism, and handicrafts, Davoud Jafarpour said on Monday.

The culprits were surrendered to the

judicial system for further investigation and prosecution, the official added.

The ancient region, known as Pars (Fars), or Persis, was the heart of the Achaemenid Empire founded by Cyrus the Great and had its capital at Pasargadae. Darius I the Great moved the capital to nearby Persepolis in the late 6th or early 5th century BC. Alexander the Great defeated the Achaemenian army at Arbela in 331 and burned Persepolis. Persis became part of the Seleucid king-

dom in 312 after Alexander's death. The Parthian empire (247 BC– 224 CE) of the Arsacids (corresponding roughly to the modern Khorasan in Iran) replaced the Seleucids' rule in Persis during 170–138 BC. The Sasanid Empire (224 CE–651) had its capital at Istakhr. Not until the 18th century, under the Zand dynasty (1750–79) of southern Iran, did Fars again become the heart of an empire, with its capital at Shiraz.



Iran proposes creating intl. fund for climate change

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Iran has proposed setting up an international fund to tackle climate change and taxing all countries in proportion to their share of environmental pollution, IRNA reported on Monday.

Those who harm the environment must be held accountable by an international body independent of powers and governments, Mohsen Rezaei, secretary of the Expediency Council said.

Pointing to the industrialized nations of the United States and China as the main sources of climate change, he noted that some in the world believe that all countries should reduce greenhouse gas equally, but we cannot simply accept it because we are at the beginning of development and on the other hand, some countries have a much greater share in environmental pollution and climate change.

Most environmental hazards are caused by the Industrial Revolution, and the United States plays a role in 20 percent of the world's climate change but does not pay for it, Rezaei highlighted.

Carbon dioxide emissions reached a record high in 2019, according to a report published by the Global Carbon Project. The



report also found that the rate of emissions growth is slowing down among some of the world's largest emitters.

But climate change is a cumulative problem, a function of the total amount of greenhouse gases that have accumulat-

ed in the sky. Some of the heat-trapping gases in the air right now date back to the Industrial Revolution. And since that time, some countries have pumped out vastly more carbon dioxide than others.

According to the most recent data from the

Global Carbon Project, the top five countries that produced the most CO2 are China, the U.S., India, Russia, and Japan.

While the U.S. has become the first nation in the world to formally withdraw from the Paris climate agreement. In June 2017, former United States President Donald Trump announced that the U.S. would cease all participation in the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change mitigation, contending that the agreement would "undermine" the U.S. economy, and put the U.S. "at a permanent disadvantage."

The U.S. is the second-largest emitter of CO2, with approximately 5.41 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions in 2018. The largest sources of CO2 emissions in the U.S. come from power generation, transportation, and industry.

Iran is the seventh-largest emitter of CO2 worldwide, producing 0.72GT of carbon dioxide in 2018.

However, Iran has in place legislation obliging the Ministry of Energy to increase the share of renewables and clean power plants to at least 5 percent of the country's capacity until the end of 2021, according to the International Energy Agency.

Iran closes Iraq border points to contain UK mutant coronavirus



SOCIETY **TEHRAN** — Iran has closed five crossing points with Iraq to prevent the spread of the UK variant of coronavirus, ISNA reported.

Border points of Kileh, Piranshahr, Chazzebah, and Shalamchah were closed to travelers, and on Tuesday Mehran border in the nearby province of Ilam will shut down,

according to the spokesman of Iran's Customs Administration Rouhollah Latifi.

However, the border customs offices are open to commerce so that traders and businesspersons from both countries can carry out border trade observing health protocols, he stated.

Seyed Mohammad Alavi, Head of Khuzestan Health Center said that so far, 62 cases of UK mutated virus have been identified in the country, 22 of whom were in Khuzestan province.

Khuzestan is in a dangerous situation with 11 high-risk "red" cities and 8 medium-risk "orange" cities, he lamented.

Iraqi nationals visiting Iran have worsened the coronavirus pandemic in the southwestern Khuzestan province, IRNA quoted the province's governor general, Qassem Soleimani-Dashtaki, as saying on Saturday.

More than 300 Iraqi nationals cross Chazzebah and Shalamchah borders on a daily basis, he said, adding that the issue has contributed to a rise in the number of coronavirus cases.

Eleven cities of the province are in the "high alert" situation.

On February 13, President Hassan Rouhani emphasized the necessity for people to follow health protocols, as a new wave of coronavirus may hit the country within the next two months.

He called on the people to observe the hygiene principles, insisting that anyone who enters the country should undergo the COVID-19 test. "We should all join hands to prevent the fourth wave of the outbreak," he asserted.

New cases and mortalities

In a press briefing on Monday, Health Ministry's spokesperson Sima-Sadat Lari confirmed 8,263 new cases of COVID-19 infection, raising the total number of infections to 1,582,275. She added that 1,351,390 patients have so far recovered, but 3,685 remain in critical conditions of the disease.

During the past 24 hours, 89 patients have lost their lives, bringing the total number of deaths to 59,572, she added.

So far, 10,501,415 COVID-19 diagnostic tests have been performed in the country.

Lari noted that currently, 11 cities are at high-risk "red" zones, 52 cities in medium-risk "orange" zones, 217 cities in low-risk "yellow" zones.

Engineers endeavor to change the world for the better

1 → Engineering encompasses a whole range of industries that could include on-site, practical construction work as well as evaluating safety systems from an office. They use the knowledge they have within a specific industry in order to make things work and solve problems, whether this is with transport, medicine, entertainment, space, or the environment. In fact, engineering is behind everything.

Healthcare has also improved dramatically thanks to advancements in medical technology thanks to engineers. The improvement of medical technology has meant that the discovery of illnesses and treatment has helped to save and improve the lives of many people.

The importance of engineering in the modern world

The world is changing, and engineers are the ones behind so much of this development. The majority of today's services and products had some element of engineering involved in their conception at least, paving the way to long, fulfilling, and healthy lives for the people influenced by them.

Engineers must be critical yet creative; curious yet capable; as well as ready to handle the constantly changing world.

In an advanced technological world, we need engineers to bring ideas into reality. By applying the principles of mathematics and science, engineers develop solutions to the world's biggest technical issues.

The engineering portfolio knows no bounds, but these people are all working to the same common goal: building a sustainable world. Whatever you wish to contribute to society through your engineering dedication, nothing compares to the knowledge that you've achieved something that's impacted people's lives for the better.

Iran's ranking in engineering

Iran is ranked 10th in the world in the field of engineering, and in some scientific fields, it also ranked below 10, Gholam-Hossein Rahimi, deputy minister of science for research and technology told ISNA on Wednesday.

In 2020, Iran was ranked 15th in ISI and 14th in Scopus (International Citation Database) in terms of the number



of scientific articles produced, he noted, adding, we have registered more than 6,000 scientific articles and documents in the world's reputable scientific databases in 2020.

World Engineering Day

The World Engineering Day for Sustainable Development was proclaimed by UNESCO at its 40th General Conference in 2019. It is celebrated worldwide on March 4 of each year since 2020. The day offers an opportunity to highlight engineers and engineering achievements in our modern world and improve public understanding of how engineering and technology are

central to modern life and for sustainable development.

The World Engineering Day 2021 (WED2021), with the theme "Engineering for A Healthy Planet- Celebrating the UNESCO Engineering Report", will focus on celebrating the launch of the 2nd UNESCO Engineering Report "Engineering for Sustainable Development: Delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals".

The Day is also an opportunity to engage with government and industry to address the need for engineering capacity and the quality of engineers around the world and develop strategic frameworks and best practices for the implementation of engineering solutions for sustainable development.

The celebration of World Engineering Day is also about promoting engineering as a career and how it is an opportunity to change the world for the better. There is a great deal to be done especially to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals in developing countries to ensure that everyone has access to clean water, sanitation, reliable energy, and other basic human needs.

How bad is bitcoin for the environment really?

In little over a decade, bitcoin has risen from a fringe technology popular with cryptographers, to the world's ninth most valuable asset by market cap.

The cryptocurrency's dramatic ascent has created millionaires, reimagined money, and launched a multi-billion dollar industry inspired by its revolutionary decentralised technology. But it has also brought with it some unwanted side effects.

The computing power required to support bitcoin's underlying network now requires nearly as much energy as the entire country of Argentina, leading to criticism about its environmental footprint.



Analysis by the University of Cambridge suggests the bitcoin network uses more than 121 terawatt-hours (TWh) annually, which would rank it in the top 30 electricity consumers worldwide if it were a country.

The energy demands have been fuelled by the surging price of bitcoin in recent months, which has seen it rise from below \$5,000 (£3,600) last March to close to \$50,000 today.

Concerns about bitcoin's energy demands have been around since the very beginning, with crypto pioneer Hal Finney tweeting about potential future CO2 emissions on 27 January 2009 – just two weeks after receiving the first ever bitcoin transaction from the cryptocurrency's pseudonymous creator Satoshi Nakamoto.

The amount of energy bitcoin's network consumes did not rise to serious prominence until 2017, when a major price rally drastically pushed up its energy needs to the level of a small country. As the market cooled off in the years following, so did the energy demands, but the latest all-time high hit this week is more than double that of three and a half years ago. And this time its energy requirements are even greater.

"Bitcoin's energy consumption has more than quadrupled since the beginning of its last peak in 2017 and it is set to get worse because energy inefficiency is built into bitcoin's DNA," Charles Hoskinson, CEO of leading cryptography firm IOHK, tells The Independent.

"Bitcoin's carbon footprint will get exponentially worse because the more its price rises, the more competition there is for the currency and thus the more energy it consumes."

Bitcoin's environmental impact is exacerbated by the fact that a majority of miners are based in China, where over two thirds of power is from coal.

The mining process required to generate new units of the cryptocurrency involves solving complex but arbitrary mathematical equations, which currently requires vast amounts of computer processing power.

Bitcoin miners therefore gravitate to where electricity is cheapest, meaning the fundamental issue is not with bitcoin but with a lack of cheap renewable energy production.

Fortunately, there are solutions being put in place, with some eco-friendly mining facilities already operating at a massive scale.

In Iceland and Norway, where nearly 100 per cent of all energy production is renewable, cryptocurrency miners are taking advantage of cheap hydro-electric and geothermal energy to power their machines. The low temperatures in the countries also help reduce costs by cooling the computer servers naturally.

Last year, the University of Cambridge's third Global Cryptoasset Benchmarking Study found that 76 per cent of cryptocurrency miners use electricity from renewable sources in their operations. This figure was up from 60 per cent from the same benchmarking study in 2018.

This trend is expected to continue, according to projections from the International Renewable Energy Agency, which reported last year that renewable energy sources are increasingly more cost-efficient than fossil fuels.

"In its current status, the infrastructure that supports the bitcoin protocol cannot be sustained, but the beauty of the protocol is that the incentive structure will force miners to adopt the cheapest form of electricity, which in the near future will be renewable energy," Don Wyper, COO of DigitalMint, tells The Independent.

"I think the latest University of Cambridge study is misguided, as bitcoin is acting as a 'digital gold' and therefore should be compared to the energy consumption of other store-of-value-assets... The gold mining industry consumes 475 million GigaJoules worth of electricity annually.

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 134)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

Positive Adjective		صِفَتِ مُطْلَق	
tired man	مرد خسته	red rose	گل سرخ
tired men	مردان خسته	red roses	گل‌های سرخ
بسیاری از صفت‌های فارسی را با پسوند 'ی' /i/ درست می‌کنیم.			
پسوند 'ی' /i/ تکیه می‌گیرد:			
historic, historical	تاریخی	تاریخ	ی + —
interesting to see	دیدنی	دیدن	ی + —
Islamic	اسلامی	اسلام	ی + —

Comparative Adjective		صِفَتِ بَرْتَر	
bigger	بزرگ‌تر	صفت برتر = صفت مُطْلَق + تَر: بزرگ‌تر	
صفتِ برتر 'خوب' می‌شود بهتر ('خوب‌تر' ادبی و گفتاری است)			
صفتِ برتر 'زیاد' می‌شود بیشتر ('زیادتر' گفتاری است)			
حرف اضافه‌ی صفتِ برتر 'از' است که قبل یا بعد از صفت می‌آید:			
من از شما کوچک‌ترم. = من کوچک‌تر از شما هستم.			
برادرم از من بزرگ‌تر است. = برادرم بزرگ‌تر از من است.			
این کفش از آن کفش بهتر است. = این کفش بهتر از آن کفش است.			

56% of motorcycles running in only 5 provinces

Some 56 percent of the total motorcycles in the country are running in only five provinces, Ali Mohammadi, a senior traffic police official has said.

Of all 32.9 million vehicles in the country, motorcycles amount to 11.6 million, accounting for 35 percent of the total vehicles moving in the country, he stated.

According to the statistics, 56 percent of motorcycles are plying the roads in 5 provinces of Tehran, Khorasan Razavi, Isfahan, Fars and Khuzestan, he added.

There are 2 million motorcycles in Tehran, 1.3 million in Khorasan Razavi, 1.2 million in Isfahan, 916,000 in Fars, and 564,000 in Khuzestan, he also said.

The capital city of Tehran alone has the biggest share of motorcyclists constituting 21 percent of the estimated 56 percent, he noted, IRNA reported on Sunday.

۵۶ درصد موتورسیکلت ها در ۵ استان

تردد دارند

رییس مرکز شماره گذاری و تعویض پلاک پلیس راهور ناجا گفت: بنابر آمارها، ۵۶ درصد موتورسیکلت ها تنها در ۵ استان تردد می کنند.

سرهنگ علی محمدی روز یکشنبه افزود: از ۳۲ میلیون و ۹۰۰ هزار دستگاه انواع وسایل نقلیه در کشور، ۱۱ میلیون و ۶۵۰ هزار دستگاه یعنی معادل ۳۵ درصد را موتورسیکلت ها شامل می شوند.

وی اظهار داشت: برابر آمارها تهران بزرگ، خراسان رضوی، اصفهان، فارس و خوزستان ۵۶ درصد موتورسیکلت های کشور را در خود جای داده اند.

رییس مرکز شماره گذاری و تعویض پلاک پلیس راهور ناجا گفت: تهران بزرگ با حدود ۲ میلیون دستگاه موتورسیکلت، خراسان رضوی ۱.۳ میلیون دستگاه، اصفهان ۱.۲ میلیون دستگاه، فارس ۹۱۶ هزار دستگاه و خوزستان با ۵۶۴ هزار دستگاه موتورسیکلت بیشترین موتورسیکلت های کشور را به خود اختصاص دادند.

محمدی با بیان اینکه بیش از ۲۱ درصد موتورسیکلت‌های کشور در تهران بزرگ تردد می کنند، اظهار داشت: تهران بیشترین سهم موتورسیکلت را در سطح کشور داراست.

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Do you know what is better than charity and fasting and prayer? It is keeping peace and good relations between people, as quarrels and bad feelings destroy mankind.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Al-Kawthar making sequel to series on victim of Saudi sectarianism Zakaria al-Jaber

A R T **TEHRAN** — Al-Kawthar TV, the Tehran-based Arabic-language television channel, is making a sequel to “Zakaria Jaber”, an animation series on Zakaria al-Jaber, a six-year-old Shia boy who became a victim of sectarianism in Saudi Arabia in 2019.

“The first season was made for children and young adults to promote the culture of martyrdom and sacrifice and support of the oppressed, and the second season is now in the pre-production stage,” the director Al-Kawthar Children’s and Young Adults Department, Somayyeh Morovati, said in a press release published on Monday.

“Director of the first series Reza Fasahat will also collaborate in the second series, which will be produced in 100 episodes, with each episode lasting seven minutes,” she said.

The series is due to be

broadcasted in the summer.

According to reliable sources the boy, Zakaria al-Jaber, was in the holy city of Medina with his mother to visit the shrine of Prophet Muhammad (S) when the tragic incident took place in February 2019. The boy and his mother were in a taxi on the way to the green-domed shrine, one of the two holiest shrines for Muslims, when the driver got an inkling that they were Shia.

The taxi driver immediately stopped the car near a coffee shop in the Al-Tilal neighborhood and forced the boy out. Then he smashed a glass bottle and with a shard of broken glass slit the boy’s throat and stabbed him in front of his screaming mother.

The helpless mother tried to stop the assailant but he managed to overpower her. She cried out for help but nobody came. Then she collapsed on the ground, next to the bleeding body of her tender-aged son.

Woody Allen’s “Death” at Tehran theater

A R T **TEHRAN** — Woody Allen’s 1975 comedy play “Death” is on stage at Jamshid Mashyekhi Theater in Tehran.

Alireza Ahmadi-Kheiri is directing the play based on a Persian translation by Shahram Zargar.

“Death” is a comedic version of Eugène Ionesco’s 1959 play “The Killer”. His 1991 film “Shadows and Fog” was based on this play.



A poster for Woody Allen’s play “Death” at Tehran’s Jamshid Mashyekhi Theater.

The play is about Kleinman, a meek salesman that is awoken late one night by a mob led by a man named Hacker, who forces him to join their vigilante group dedicated to catching a serial killer who frequently changes his modus operandi.

Hacker claims to have a plan to catch the maniac, but when Kleinman asks about what he has to do, each man in the group says that they are only aware of their own part of the plan so the killer won’t catch on. They march him to the street to stand guard and leave him on his own to await his part in the plan.

Amirreza Kushani, Seyyed Moslem Hojjati, Amir-Mohammad Azizi, Nasim Nasiri, Parmida Shayan, Mohammad-Javad Rezvani, Ali Bigdeli, Zahra Jafari and Mohammad Rezaei-Mogaddam are the members of the cast. Allen’s plays have always been regarded by Iranian theater troupes and theatergoers.

A group by director Sajjad Qatei performed a reading of Allen’s “Old Saybrook” at Shahrzad Theater in Tehran in March 2019.

In addition, director Shaahin Ramezani staged his “Death Knocks” during the 38th Fajr International Theater Festival in Tehran in 2020.

Complutense University of Madrid to review Majidi’s films

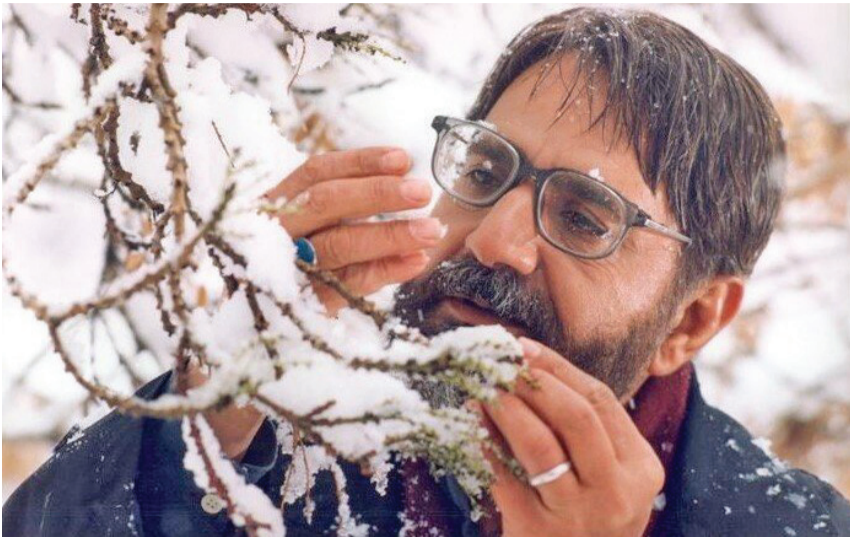
A R T **TEHRAN** — The Complutense University of Madrid will be hosting an international webinar on Iranian cinema opening today with a focus on three films by filmmaker Majid Majidi.

Several Iranian and Spanish scholars are expected to attend the webinar, which has been organized by Iran’s Cultural Office in Madrid in collaboration with the Farabi Cinema Foundation and Casa Asia, a Barcelona-based center promoting Spain’s relations with Asian countries.

Farabi Cinema Foundation director Alireza Tabesh, Cinema Organization of Iran director Hossein Entezami and José Antonio, a scholar from Complutense University, are expected to make speeches at the webinar.

Majidi’s “Color of Paradise” will be screened on the first day and reviewed by Bernardo Herrera, a scholar from Venezuela, as well as Francisco Garcia, and Iranian scholars Zahra Razi and Damun Askari.

“The Color of Paradise” is a fable of a blind child’s innocence and a complex look at faith and humanity.



A scene from “The Willow Tree” by Iranian director Majid Majidi.

The second day will be followed by screening and reviewing Majidi’s “The Willow Tree”, while “Baran” will also be screened and reviewed on the third day.

“The Willow Tree” is about Yusef, a

blind middle-aged university professor who regains his vision after surgery.

“Baran” is set during recent times in which there are many Afghan refugees living on the outskirts of Tehran.

Majidi’s child labor drama “Sun Children” is among the 15 movies shortlisted in the foreign-language film category at the 93rd Academy Awards.

“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.

Movies from Iran line up for Taos Shortz Film Fest



“Doll” by Nasrin Golreyhan.

A R T **TEHRAN** — Nineteen movies by Iranian filmmakers will be screened at the Taos Shortz Film Fest in the United States.

Due to the pandemic, the 2020 edition of the festival was postponed indefinitely, however, it was never was organized.

Consequently, the organizers have decided to combine the 14th and 15th editions, which will be held online.

The Taos Shortz Film Fest, the longest continually running film festival in New Mexico, will be held for 22 days from March 19.

“Doll” by Nasrin Golreyhan is a highlight of the Iranian lineup. It is about a woman journalist who finds a child on the battlefield and is forced to leave and abandon her.

“A Roofless House” by Shayan Shahverdi about two young adults who learn about each other through an unexpected evening.

“Forbidden to See Us Scream in Tehran” by Farbod Ardebili is also competing in the festival.

The film tells the story of the frontwoman for an Iranian death metal band, who risks everything as she plots to call the cops on her own underground concert in the hopes that the raid will help her secure her asylum in another country.

“Haunt” by Siamak Kashefazar has also been selected

to be screened at the festival. It is about Reza and Tuba, a young couple that owns a house mortgaged with a bank. Reza enters a gambling game to pay the bank installments, but he lost his wife without knowing it. Now, he comes back home and understands the depth of the tragedy and looks for a way to escape and run away from gamblers, but it’s too late and they are behind the door. Tuba realizes the facts, little by little.

“You’re Still Here” by Katayun Parmar and Mohammad Ruhbakhsh will also compete in the event. When the relationship of a young couple is on the verge of collapsing in the face of one man’s blindness, the only thing that will save them is their common past.

“Inner Self” by Mohammad Hormozi, “Ava” by Sasan Karimi, “Even an Hour Later” by Parviz Shojaei, “Sfumato” by Amir-Ali Mirdereikvand “The Granddaughter” by Mohsen Habibi and Mostafa Daryadar, “The Rotation” by Hahzir As’adi, “Our Out of Five” by Bahar Tofiqi and “Past Continuous” by Shiva Taheri are also on the lineup.

Mowj Intl. Short Film Festival honors winners

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — Winners of the 4th edition of the Mowj International Short Film Festival were honored during a closing ceremony held on the island on Sunday.

“Lene 1927”, a documentary by Iranian filmmaker Behruz Abbas Dashti, focusing on the journey of the Austrian painter Lene Schneider-Kainer (1885-1971) to Iran, won the award for best documentary in the international section.

“Kavez”, a documentary featuring the efforts by a tortoise which is trapped in a net and tries to save itself by director Reza Akbarian won the special documentary award.

The special award is a one-week trip to the islands of Kish and Hendarabi for research works.

The award for best short fiction was given to “Just like Water” by Manos Triantafillakis



An honoree receives his award at the closing ceremony of the 4th edition of the Mowj International Short Film Festival on February 21, 2021. (Kish.ir)

from Greece.

The movie is about the father of the director, Spyros, his life and experiences, seeking to

promote the natural beauty of the island of Crete on which the father left his imprint.

The awards in the Tourism category were next announced.

The best artistic achievement award was given to “Chaufer” by Arman Fayyaz.

The award for best screenplay was handed to Mahyar Mandegar for “White Winged Horse”, while Mandegar also received the award for best director in this section.

Named the best film of the festival was the film “White Winged Horse”, which, as a result, can directly attend the Slemeni International Film Festival in the Iraqi city of Sulaymaniyah.

“Ojagh” by Iranian filmmaker Ali Bolandnazar won the award for best short documentary. It is a study of the rituals of the Qashqai Turkic tribe regarding fire.

The best fiction award was also handed to “Dabor” by Saeid Nejati.

“Dabor” is about how parents deal with their children’s puberty.

According to director of the festival Ebrahim Hesari, a lineup of 41 films in the national section and 20 films in the international section were competing at the festival this year.

The films were coming from Sweden, Iraq, Morocco, Spain, Tanzania, France, Lebanon, Austria, Syria, Peru and several others.

Founder of the River Film Festival in Italy Emilio Della Chiesa, film producer Irina Ruiz Figueroa from Panama and actress Fatemeh Motamed-Arya from Iran were the jury members of the international section of the festival this year.

Kianush Ayyari, Turaj Aslani, Hooman Seyyedi, Mahvash Sheikholslami and Mohsen Ostadali were the jury members of the national section.

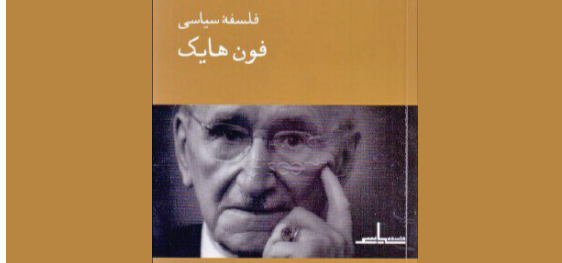
“Hayek on Liberty” by John Gray comes into Iranian bookstores

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — A Persian translation of John Gray’s “Hayek on Liberty” has recently been published by Now Publications in Tehran.

The book has been translated into Persian by Khashayar Deihimi.

Not available since the 1980s, this updated edition by the leading political philosopher, John Gray, outlines his new position on Hayek. In a substantial new chapter, Gray assesses how far the historical development of the last ten years can be deployed in a critique of Hayek’s thought.

His reassessment is not only a provocative study of a classical philosopher, it is also a timely contribution to



Front cover of the Persian translation of John Gray’s “Hayek on Liberty”.

the debate over the future of conservatism, as Gray argues that Hayekian liberalism, the most well-articulated political theory of the new right, is flawed.

John Gray is Emeritus Professor of European Thought at the London School of Economics. He is a regular contributor to the Guardian and the Times Literary Supplement and the author of over a dozen books, including “Heresies” and the bestselling “Straw Dogs”.

His other noteworthy credits are “False Dawn: the Delusions of Global Capitalism”, “Black Mass: Apocalyptic Religion” and “The Death of Utopia”, and “Al Qaeda and What It Means to Be Modern”.

“Brooklyn Girl” surfaces in Iranian bookstores

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — “Brooklyn Girl”, a novel by Guillaume Musso, one of the most popular authors in France today, has recently been published in Persian.

Abbas Agahi is the translator of the book published by Jahane Ketab.

This novel has been published in more than 40 countries around the world, and is particularly exciting because it is more thrilling than any other work.

The following excerpt is from “Brooklyn Girl”:

“I remember the moment very well. We were looking out over the sea, the horizon shining, when Anna asked the question: ‘If I did something terrible, would you still love me?’

“How would you have answered? Anna was the lady of my life. We were getting

married in three weeks. Of course, I would love her, regardless of what she had done. At least that’s what I thought, but she feverishly rummaged through her bag and held out a photo to me.

‘I’m the one who did this.’

“I gazed upon her secret, stunned, and knew that our lives had been shaken forever. In my state of shock, I got up and left without saying a word. When I returned it was too late: Anna had disappeared. And I’ve been looking for her ever since.”

Metronews describes the novel as “A dizzying psychological thriller with a staggering ending!”

“Unbearable suspense! Once you open the novel, you won’t put it down until you know who this Brooklyn girl really is.”

A Persian translation of “Brooklyn Girl”

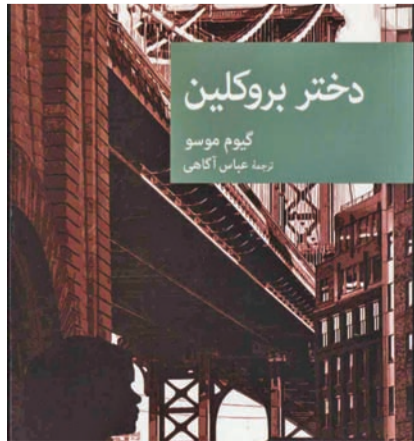
by Aria Nuri was previously published by Alborz in 2016.

From his early childhood with reading books and plays, Guillaume Musso became convinced that one day, he too would write novels.

After finishing high school in France, he left for the United States at the age of 19. He spent several months in New York City, living with other young foreigners and earning his money by selling ice-cream.

He came home to France with his head filled with ideas for novels. The readers can easily see the influence his time in the United States has had on him, as the action in his books takes place overseas.

He currently teaches in a high school in the south of France, all the while working on his novels.



Front cover of the Persian translation of Guillaume Musso’s novel “Brooklyn Girl”.