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Office photo

Yemeni forces advance toward Marib despite U.S.-backed Saudi brutal campaign

Former chief of Marketing Committee not satisfied with results of FFIRI's elections

BY FARROKH HESABI
Sadeh Dorudgar, former head of Marketing Committee of the Football Federation, believes that despite some amendments in the federation's statutes, the general format of the presidential election has remained the same as before.

Shahabeddin Azizi Khadem has been voted President of the Football Federation Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) after the governing body held its long-awaited election on Sunday Feb. 28.

The presidential election was delayed several times after FIFA demanded changes to the FFIRI's statutes, due to the government interference.

In November 2020, the new statutes were approved and the dispute with FIFA was solved after removing the Iranian Sports Minister as an assembly member.

However, Dorudgar thinks that in the new statutes, the provincial football associations still play a key role in the FFIRI's assembly and the presidential election.

"What we saw in the elections was that still and again the unity of the provincial associations which played the major role in electing the new president of the federation and the members of the FFIRI board of directors. Despite the increase in the number of assembly members, the vote of provincial associations has the main impact on the results of the elections. We must respect the assembly's decision and I hope that Iranian football will see better days in the future," Dorudgar said in an exclusive interview with Tehran Times.

Sadeh Dorudgar was the Head of the Marketing Committee of the Football Federation in recent years. He resigned from his post just after the results of the FFIRI's elections were announced.

"Due to the economic plans that have been presented by the FFIRI's new president, I concluded that I'm not able to implement these plans as the head of the marketing committee so I decided to resign," he explained.

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Annual sales of nano companies rise by 100%

TEHRAN – Iranian nanotechnology companies have increased sales by 100 percent over the past year, Vice President for Science and Technology, Sourena Sattari, has announced.

Some 270 companies are active in the nanotechnology field and it is predicted that their revenue will reach up to 80 trillion rials (nearly \$1.9 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials).

Sattari inaugurated 40 industrial and 17 development projects in the field of nanotechnology during a ceremony on Saturday.

Iran improves in nanotechnology
Iran's ranking in nanotechnology articles citation in 2019 has significantly improved compared to 2018, as it moved 26 levels higher, according to the StatNano's statistics collected from the WoS database.

Based on a report Nanotechnology Publications report, Iran ranked 38 worldwide for the average times the nano-articles have been

cited in the Journal Citation Reports in 2019, while in 2018, it was placed 64.

Iran ranked 4th for the highest number of nano-article publications.

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

Currently, over 5,700 knowledge-based companies are active in the country, manufacturing diverse products to meet the needs of the domestic market while saving large amounts of foreign currency.

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

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U.S. mysteriously removes 3 names from Khashoggi report

The U.S. intelligence community has replaced its long-awaited report on the murder of Jamal Khashoggi with another version that saw the names of three men it had initially identified as complicit removed.

CNN reported on Monday that the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) switched the report several hours after it was published on Friday afternoon.

The first link to the report that was sent out by ODNI stopped working and was replaced with a second version, whose file name on the ODNI website includes "v2", that removed three of the men it had just announced had "participated in, ordered, or were otherwise complicit in or responsible for the death of Jamal Khashoggi".

CNN said the change went largely unnoticed amid outrage over the failure of Joe Biden's administration to impose sanctions on Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman after the

report confirmed that he had directly approved the assassination.

Khashoggi, a former advocate of the Saudi royal court who later became a critic, was brutally murdered in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on October 2, 2018, after he entered the premises to collect documents for his planned wedding to his Turkish fiancée Hatice Cengiz.

According to Turkish officials, Khashoggi was killed and his body was cut into pieces by a 15-man Saudi squad inside the consulate.

The Washington Post, where Khashoggi was a columnist, reported in November the same year that the CIA had concluded that bin Salman had personally ordered the murder.

During his election campaign, Biden pledged to treat Riyadh as a "pariah".

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Rare relics put on show for first time at Tehran museum after five-year closure

TEHRAN – Collections of rare relics have been put on show for the first time at Tehran's Dafeh Museum, which opened to the public on Sunday after some five-year closure due to an extensive restoration.

The museum is owned by the Mostazafan Foundation of Islamic Revolution, which is one of the largest commercial enterprises in the country.

The opening ceremony was attended by Parviz Fattah who presides over the foundation, and a host of cultural officials, artists, cultural aficionados, researchers and journalists.

Achaemenid-era (c.550-330 BC) scepter made of gold, busts and figurines, oil paintings, Seljuk-era earthenware, personal ornamentations, calligraphic works, banknotes, ancient coins, and rare rugs are amongst objects on display at the museum.

Last year, Iranian architect Seyyed Mohammad-Hossein Rahmati was honored at the 35th edition of the WA Awards, which is organized by the World Architecture Community, for the

design of the lobby of Dafeh Museum.

The building's architecture was inspired by the works of late American architect Frank Lloyd Wright. The building's architecture was inspired by the works of late American architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

Also, the doors of Kakh-e Marmar ("Marble Palace"), a historical royal residence in Tehran, opened to the public on Sunday as an art museum after more than four decades.

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OSNA

Armed Forces receive overhauled aircraft

In a ceremony attended by Defense Minister Brigadier General Amir Hatami, 9 military planes, 10 helicopters and dozens of engines overhauled in the Aviation Industry Organization run by the Ministry of Defense, were delivered to the Armed Forces on Monday.

MBS seems hasty for normalization with Israel: ex-Japanese diplomat

BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI

TEHRAN – A former Japanese diplomat says that Saudi de facto leader Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) is enthusiastic about normalizing Riyadh's ties with Tel-Aviv despite the fact that most Saudi people have a negative view towards Israel.

«Saudi Arabia, especially MBS, seems hasty for normalization with Israel, but the Saudi crown prince is still cautious about pushing normalization with Israel,» Shuji Hosaka, the visiting professor of Waseda University in Japan, tells the Tehran Times.

In the closing months of 2020, the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan have normalized ties with Israel. Analysts firmly believe that normalizations would not have taken place without a greenlight by Saudi Arabia.

Despite the Saudi-U.S. honeymoon during Trump's presidency and rapprochement between some Arab regimes and Israel, the Biden administration has decided to shift policies when it comes to West Asia.

While certain Persian Gulf Arab states established a coalition against Iran in collaboration with Israel, the result of presidential election in the U.S. have changed the balance against these regimes.

Hosaka says Saudi Arabia enthusiastically supported Donald Trump "because of his hostile policy against Iran.»

The release of an intelligence report by the Biden administration, in which it has been revealed that the Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi was murdered in October 2018 upon a direct order of bin Salma, the relations between Washington and Riyadh is entering a new phase.

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Atlantic Council: A compartmentalized approach at the talks

By Azin Sahabi

While the Biden administration explores ways to reengage Iran over its nuclear program, the Atlantic Council, has shed light on the issue from various aspects.

In this regard, on Feb 25, the think tank released a piece of opinion penned by Mehran Haghiriyan titled “With Iran, nuclear diplomacy comes first.”



The article argues that, notwithstanding the bitter experience of dealing with the Americans in terms of its nuclear program, now Tehran seems willing to reengage the U.S. on the issue. Therefore, “it is past time that the Biden foreign policy team implements what they have been preaching and reaches out to Iran in a constructive manner.”

Grand bargain: A path doomed to fail

The analyst points out that some in Washington have been arguing for concluding a new deal that encompasses nuclear, regional, and bilateral U.S.-Iran issues as a whole pack. In this regard, he quotes Secretary of State Tony Blinken, who in an interview with NPR on February 16, said if both Iran and the U.S return to compliance under the JCPOA, “we need to work on an agreement that’s longer and stronger than the original one.”

Blinken also stressed that the U.S. would require to engage “Iran’s ballistic missile program” and what he called Iran’s “destabilizing actions in country after country.”

Haghiriyan believes that Iran does not intend to renegotiate the JCPOA framework and does not want any other topics to be included in the 2015 deal, either. He argues that if it were so, Tehran would have made such a move under harsh sanctions of the “maximum pressure” campaign during the last four years.

It is worth mentioning that just a day after Trump’s withdrawal from the JCPOA, Robert Einhorn, a nonproliferation expert at the Brookings Institute, told Reuters: “For quite some time, and I am talking about years, Iran will resist any kind of negotiation on a new deal.”

2015 deal: Based on realistic perceptions

The Atlantic Council believes that the JCPOA was achieved due to the realistic framework that all parties worked to resolve the dispute.

In this context, the author cites Blinken as the deputy secretary of state under the Obama administration in 2017. On September 21, 2017, in an interview with NPR, he stated: “The only issue that our partners were prepared to negotiate, was the nuclear program. Had we got engaged in a negotiation trying to bring everything on the table with Iran into the negotiation, we never would have gotten anywhere.”

In parallel, in an event held by Woodrow Wilson Center on March 22, 2017, Catherine Ashton, former High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and coordinator of the nuclear negotiations, expressed similar remarks. She argued that the regional countries “did not wish us to start engaging in broader questions that affected them and not the people in the [negotiating] room.”

Against the backdrop, the Atlantic Council underlines that pushing for an expanded framework may just breed further mistrust and end up the U.S. and Iran in a worse place than the starting point.

Compartmentalize issues with Iran

Thereupon, the think tank proposes some recommendations for the Biden administration. It highlights that, in collaboration with five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany, the Oval Office should address bilateral, regional, and nuclear issues with Iran via a compartmentalized approach. The author also underscores: “Any modification of the JCPOA should only be about the nuclear issue and in exchange for removing more sanctions.”

The Atlantic Council suggests that in parallel with nuclear talks, regional issues and Iran-U.S. bilateral concerns can be pursued in other forums, but for the process to be sustainable, essentially the U.S. and Iran should return to full compliance with the JCPOA.

Regional actors for regional Issues

The analyst believes that Iran’s regional activities should not be excluded from negotiations at all but the relevant parties via proportionate mechanism should be included. The Atlantic Council emphasizes: “Iran’s regional actions must be negotiated with regional actors” and recommends the U.S. and other world powers to work with the UN secretary-general to facilitate a dialogue among Iran, the GCC, and Iraq.

Make bold moves but verify, verify, verify

With plenty of Obama’s key nuclear negotiators already at the White House, the Atlantic Council mentions that Biden’s foreign policy team enjoys many fellows who are fully aware of how valuable the agreement is. On the other hand, these old handed negotiators are very clear-eyed on the best ways of approaching Iran. Thus, there exists enough incentive “to make bold moves while remaining in the framework of ‘don’t trust and verify.’”

JCPOA: An iterative process

To underline the importance of reviving the JCPOA before delving into other matters, the author cites current CIA director William Burns in October 2019 who helped lead the back-channel talks with Iran that led to an interim nuclear agreement in November 2013 and set the stage for the JCPOA in 2015. On Oct. 14, 2019, in a New York Times op-ed, Burns wrote: “The nuclear deal agreed to in 2015 was meant to be the beginning, not the end, of diplomacy with Iran.”

He stresses that to the American side, the JCPOA is an iterative one in which one agreement becomes a foundation stone for further negotiations.

Ronald Reagan invoked “trust, but verify” during disarmament negotiations with the former Soviet Union. Ernest J. Moniz, the U.S. Secretary of Energy under President Obama, mentioned that in the JCPOA talks their North Star was “don’t trust, and verify, verify, verify.”

Now, it is obvious that for the Biden administration in any future talks with Iran, the North Star will remain identical and this is up to the other parties to fix their compasses not to lose their interests.

Resolution against Iran at IAEA will disrupt the situation, Zarif warns

POLITICAL
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TEHRAN — Mohammad Javad Zarif, the Iranian foreign minister, on Monday warned the three European parties to the 2015 nuclear deal that a resolution against Iran by the IAEA Board of Governors would disrupt the current conditions.

Speaking to reporters after a meeting with members of the Parliament National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, Zarif warned of agitation in case the International Atomic Energy Agency’s board issues a statement against Iran over its decision to suspend the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol of the NPT.

“The Europeans (the UK, France and Germany) have begun a wrong move at the Board of Governors with backing of the United States. We believe such an action would upset the conditions,” Zarif noted, according to Tasnim news agency.

He also stressed that Iran’s ambassador to the Vienna-based international organizations has already warned the Board of Governors about the consequences of



confusing the status quo.

“We hope wisdom would prevail, otherwise, we would have (other) approaches,” Zarif warned.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed

Khatibzadeh also reiterated Iran’s position in a tweet on Sunday.

“Considering U.S./E3 positions & actions, time isn’t ripe for the proposed informal meeting. Remember: Trump failed

to meet because of his ill-advised ‘Max Failure’. With sanctions in place, same still applies. Censuring is NOT diplomacy. It doesn’t work with Iran,” Khatibzadeh tweeted.

Speaking at the parliamentary meeting, Zarif also said the U.S. has no right to return to the JCPOA — the official name for the 2015 nuclear deal — until it recommitments itself to its obligations.

In accordance with the Iranian Parliament’s legislation on lifting sanctions, Iran has halted the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol because the signatories to the 2015 nuclear deal have failed to fulfill their commitments.

Following last week’s visit to Tehran by the IAEA director general, Tehran and the UN nuclear watchdog issued a joint statement declaring that Iran will stop its voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol and will deny IAEA inspectors access to its nuclear facilities beyond the Safeguards Agreement as of February 23, 2021 for three months.

‘Time not right’ for nuclear deal talks, Iran says

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Biden has insisted the United States will return to the deal if Iran first returns to the commitments it made when it was signed. Iran has demanded that the U.S. lift all sanctions against it, and it has recently taken steps to increase uranium enrichment and limit the access by International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors to its nuclear sites.

That impasse prompted European signatories to the deal to suggest an informal meeting in which the Americans would attend as a guest and the two sides would get the opportunity to engage directly.

“Privately, American officials have expressed confidence that the timing questions could be resolved, noting that when the nuclear deal was being put into effect in early 2016, Iran and the United States engaged in a series of precisely coordinated actions that eliminated the question of who was making the first move,” the New York Times said.

The American newspaper said the political sensitivities are high and stressed, “Biden is aware that Republican opponents of the deal are looking for any signs that his new administration is making concessions without getting anything in return. And Iran has a presidential election in less than four months, meaning no Iranian officials want to appear to be bending to American will.”

It praised the U.S. moves to abandon Trump’s failed policy

towards Iran, saying, “The good-will gestures included an abandonment of a failed effort by the Trump administration to force the re-imposition of United Nations sanctions that date to before the 2015 deal. Trump argued that since Iran had resumed the production of nuclear material at levels prohibited by the accord, those sanctions should automatically snap back into place.”

“The State Department also eased travel restrictions on Iranian diplomats coming to the United Nations and accepting Europe’s invitations to direct talks,” the Times added.

Iran is also angry that the U.S. and Europe are trying to take an anti-Iran step at the IAEA Board of Governors. Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif

A White House spokesman said Sunday that the United States was “disappointed” by Iran’s rejection of the talks but that “we remain ready to re-engage in meaningful diplomacy.”

Henry Rome, a senior analyst who follows Iran for the Eurasia Group, a political-risk consultancy, believed Iran’s decision in part reflected its leaders’ desire to look resilient in the face of U.S. pressure.

“This is far from a death knell for negotiations,” he added.

In his remarks Sunday, Khatibzadeh said Iran would respond in kind to both pressure and concessions

from Washington.

He asserted Iran will “return to its commitments” if sanctions are lifted. But, he warned, it will also “respond to aggressive actions accordingly.”

According to the Times, Rome said “Washington and Tehran will zig and zag in efforts to build up leverage and handle their own domestic political considerations.”

Iran is also angry of a move by the U.S. and Europe to adopt an anti-Iran resolution at the IAEA Board of Governors which started its session on Monday.

We hope wisdom will prevail at IAEA Board

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif warned that if a resolution is ratified it will worsen the situation.

“We have given the necessary explanations about this situation to all members of the board of governors. We hope that wisdom will prevail.”

The chief diplomat warned if a resolution approved the Iran will have its own approaches.

Khatibzadeh also told a press briefing on Monday that Iran won’t hold “bilateral talks” with the United States until Washington changes course.

In certain cases the Biden administration is even “worse” than the Trump administration, Khatibzadeh lamented.

Europeans circulate draft resolution against Iran at IAEA board

POLITICAL
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TEHRAN — Britain, France and Germany draft a U.S.-backed resolution at the IAEA’s board to criticize Iran for limiting cooperation with the Agency, despite Russian and Iranian warnings of serious consequences, according to Reuters.

The IAEA’s 35-nation Board of Governors is holding a quarterly meeting this week against the backdrop of faltering efforts to revive Iran’s nuclear deal with major powers now that U.S. President Joe Biden is in office.

Iran scaled back its cooperation with the IAEA last week, ending extra inspection and monitoring measures introduced under the deal, including the power given to the IAEA to carry out snap inspections at facilities that have not been declared to be related to nuclear energy. Tehran’s move is a response to the U.S. withdrawal from the deal in 2018 and the reimposition of sanctions that had been lifted under it.

The European trio (E3), all parties to the 2015 nuclear deal, circulated a draft resolution for the Vienna meeting



voicing “serious concern” at Iran’s reduction of transparency and urging Iran to reverse its steps.

Iran has warned to cancel a deal struck a week ago with the IAEA to temporarily continue many of the monitoring measures it had decided to end - a black-box-type arrange-

ment valid for up to three months and aimed at creating a window for diplomacy.

Diplomacy, however, is not moving quickly if at all. Iran said on Sunday it would not take up a proposal by European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell to hold an informal meeting with the United States.

It is unclear how many countries would support a resolution. Moreover, Russia warned that a resolution could hurt efforts to revive the deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and that it would oppose it.

“Adoption of the resolution will not help the political process of returning to the normal comprehensive implementation of the JCPOA,” Russia’s note to other member states said.

“On the contrary it will hugely complicate those efforts undermining the prospects for the restoration of the JCPOA and for normal cooperation between Iran and the Agency,” it added.

Rouhani says Iran has succeeded to neutralize sanctions

POLITICAL
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TEHRAN — President Hassan Rouhani says his administration has succeeded to neutralize sanctions by supplying essential goods for the people, according to Iran Press.

Speaking at a meeting of the government’s economic coordination headquarters on Sunday, Rouhani stressed the need to increase non-oil exports in efforts to reduce dependence on oil revenues.

“The development of non-oil exports is crucial as one of the powerful tools of a resistance economy to counter oppressive and illegal U.S. sanctions,” he noted.

He emphasized that Iran had been able to neutralize the sanctions imposed on the people during the economic war, which were meant to create famine and economic insecurity in the country.

Donald Trump, the former president, unilaterally withdrew the U.S. in 2018 from the JCPOA, which required Iran to limit its nuclear program in exchange for the termination of economic and financial sanctions. The Trump administration imposed the toughest ever sanctions on Iran in order to strangle the Iranian economy.

Biden has said he will seek to revive the agreement, but insisted that Iran must

first reverse its nuclear steps. Iran has said it is still a party to the JCPOA and it has only taken remedial measures based on paragraph 36 of the JCPOA which has 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.

Biden’s demand that Iran first returns to full compliance does not seem politically, legally and rationally acceptable. From the very first day that Iran stated to reduce its commitments to the JCPOA it stated that it will immediately reverse

its decision if sanctions are lifted.

Iran started to reduce its commitments exactly one year after the U.S. abrogated the deal and imposed sanctions on Iran.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Leader of the Islamic Revolution, has said the U.S. must lift all sanctions in a verifiable manner if it wants Iran to meet its commitments under the nuclear agreement.

“If (the U.S.) wants Iran to return to its commitments, it must lift all sanctions in practice, then we will do verification then we will return to our commitments,” the Leader asserted in his first comments on the matter after Biden took office.

Experts urge Iran, U.S. to find modus vivendi

POLITICAL
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TEHRAN — In an article in The National Interest, two experts offer solutions how to make the Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, “durable”.

“What can save the Iran nuclear deal, in the long run, is resetting the Iran-U.S. relationship and establishing a modus vivendi between the two countries,” Abolghasem Bayenat, currently a Stanton nuclear security postdoctoral fellow at Harvard University’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, and Princeton University researcher Seyed Hossein Mousavian wrote on Feb. 28.

The article, titled “How to make the Iranian nuclear deal durable” is as follows:

The fate of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), or what is more commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal, is hanging by a thread. As diplomats are jockeying to find a way to revive the nuclear agreement, the bigger question hanging on policymakers’ heads is how to prevent a revived JCPOA or any other similar deal with Iran from suffering the same fate under President Joe Biden or his successors, and ensure its durability. Reaching a grand bargain with Tehran and involving the U.S. Congress in

the adoption of the nuclear deal appear as two potential solutions, but they are not practical and realistic. Rather, what can save the Iran nuclear deal, in the long run, is resetting the Iran-U.S. relationship and establishing a modus vivendi between the two countries.

The record of the JCPOA’s enforcement over the past five years demonstrates that the main threat to any nuclear agreement with Tehran emanates in large part from Washington’s desire to preserve most of its economic leverage over Iran and minimize the actual benefits of sanctions removal for the country. This is basically because the core dispute between the United States and Iran is about the region, not just the nuclear issue. Trump’s withdrawal from the JCPOA in May 2018 and the reimposition of unprecedented U.S. sanctions against Iran clearly bear out this assessment, as they were meant to regain and expand U.S. bargaining power against Iran in the hope of securing a better nuclear deal and addressing the regional issues.

The fear of U.S. defection along with security motivations also incentivizes Tehran to refrain from undertaking irreversible commitments and to preserve a significant portion of its nuclear capabilities as leverage. The asymmetry of

commitments reversibility between the United States and Iran—or the relative ease and speed with which Washington may snap back its sanctions and the arduous and lengthy process of rebuilding its nuclear infrastructure and low-enriched uranium reserves for Tehran—makes these concerns more acute for Iranian policy-makers. The experience of the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA has only validated these fears for Tehran and exacerbated the atmosphere of mutual mistrust between the two countries.

Overcoming this dilemma would not be possible without departing from the current zero-sum mentality plaguing the Iran-U.S. relationship. Both Washington and Tehran need to recognize that their intractable conflict over the past four decades has produced no clear winner and has only brought about lose-lose outcomes for them. The United States and Iran should aim for reaching a modus vivendi keeping their political conflict within manageable limits. However, it would not be possible to minimize animosity without anchoring U.S. strategy in a more realistic assessment of Iran’s capabilities and intentions in the region and divorcing it from exaggerated and alarmist views.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

A Saudi-American fiasco

POLITICAL
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TEHRAN — Yemen's government forces have launched a liberation campaign to capture the strategic province of Marib while initiating a new operation against Saudi Arabia, a move that indicates the growing capabilities of the Sanaa government despite the Saudi-led war on Yemen.

The Saudis began a war on Yemen in 2015 in the hope of eradicating Yemen's Asarallah movement, which they accused of being backed by Iran.

But after more than five years of non-stop aggression, the Saudis not only failed to defeat Ansarallah, but they also helped the movement become even stronger than ever by continuing their aggression.

This fact was on full display in February when the Ansarallah-led forces launched to separate operations against Saudi Arabia and its allied groups inside Yemen.

On Sunday, Brigadier General Yahya Sare'e announced in a statement that Yemen's Air Force along with the Missile Force successfully carried out a large and joint offensive operation deep inside Saudi Arabia.

The operation, formally called "5th Operation of Balanced Deterrence," targeted sensitive sites in the Saudi capital of Riyadh.

"The 5th Operation of Balanced Deterrence came in retaliation for the kingdom's ongoing escalating aggression and siege on our dear people," Sare'e said.

He explained that the operation was carried out with a Zolfaghar ballistic missile and 15 drones, including 9 Sammad-3 drones, targeting sensitive sites in the enemy's capital, Riyadh, according to Al-Masirah TV.

The spokesman pointed out that 6 Qasef-2K drones targeted military sites in Abha and Khamis Mushait, stressing that the hit was accurate.

Sare'e stated that the 5th Operation of Balanced Deterrence continued from Saturday evening until Sunday morning.

He confirmed that "our retaliatory attacks are continuing and will expand more and more as long as the aggression and siege on our country continues," renewing caution to residents of these areas to stay away from all military sites and airports or places that may be used for military purposes.



The fact that the Yemeni forces were able to launch the fifth operation against Saudi Arabia while fighting with Saudi-backed forces inside Yemen is in itself a telling indication. The government in Sanaa has been under Saudi bombardment right from the start. It not only survived, but also managed to become strong enough to fight on various fronts.

The first Yemeni operation that targeted the oil-rich country was launched in mid-August in 2019 when ten drones targeted the Shaybah oil field in eastern Saudi Arabia.

The Yemeni Air Force launched one of its most consequential operations against Saudi Arabia in mid-September 2019, targeting Saudi Arabia's eastern oil processing facilities of Abqaiq and Khurais, and cutting off half of the country's oil production — nearly five percent of global oil supplies — for a few days.

Five months later, the Yemeni forces launched another operation in which they hit Saudi Aramco's oil facilities in Yanbu with 12 drones, three medium-range and long-range missiles.

Last year in June, the Yemeni forces launched their fourth operation in which the Saudi capital of Riyadh was hit with a large number of ballistic and winged

missiles as well as drones.

The fifth operation carried a long-term strategic message at the regional level, especially with the ongoing battles between the Yemeni army and the coalition forces in Marib, according to Al-Masirah TV.

Citing observers, the channel network said the operation proves once again the increase in Yemeni military capabilities and the failure of Saudi Arabia at the tactical and strategic level despite the capabilities it possesses.

The observers emphasized that the strike at this time is a warning message to stop the mobilization of takfiri and terrorist organizations to Marib. And also, that the Saudi regime may pay a lot for the consequences of not responding to it, in the event that the Yemeni forces are forced to carry out a Sixth Operation of Balanced Deterrence.

Marib has become a battleground that would determine the fate of the Yemen war. Over the past few days, the Sanaa-based government forces have increased their military activities in a bid to liberate Marib from the Saudi-backed forces who appeared to endure a series of defeats on various fronts. A military source close to the Saudi-backed forces

told the AFP news agency that more than 20 members of the Saudi-backed forces were killed in the last 24 hours in the fighting.

Marib is the last bastion of the Saudi-backed forces in northern Yemen. "Fighting continues unabated on all fronts in Marib province," the source said.

In an attempt to prevent Marib city from falling in the hands of the Yemeni forces, Saudi Arabia has launched an air campaign against the Yemeni forces in a number of provinces.

However, Saudi Arabia failed to stop the march of the Sanaa forces toward Marib. This debacle is the latest in a series of failures that Saudi Arabia has faced in Yemen in recent weeks despite enjoying overwhelming international support, including from the United States.

Of course, the U.S. has most recently sought to distance itself from the Saudi fiasco in Yemen by taking a series of measures that seemingly restrict American support for the Saudi war on Yemen.

The Biden administration has ended Washington's support for offensive operations in Yemen.

"This war has to end. And to underscore our commitment, we're ending all American support for offensive operations in the war in Yemen, including relevant arm sales," President Biden said in a recent speech at the State Department while underlining the U.S. commitment to ensuring Saudi Arabia's security and territorial integrity.

The Biden administration also removed Yemen's Ansarullah movement from the U.S. government's list of foreign terrorist organizations.

But these measures were taken only after the new U.S. administration took office with a clear understanding that the Saudi war on Yemen is bound to end in failure and thus American support for this war will make no difference in the fate of the war.

The U.S. threw its weight behind Saudi Arabia over the years of the Yemen war, selling it state-of-the-art offensive weapons. But this all-out earned the U.S. nothing but a heinous reputation as complicit in the worst humanitarian disaster of the world.

Iran rejects EU talks offer, says U.S. must first lift sanctions

POLITICAL
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TEHRAN — Iran once again rejected an offer by the European Union to engage in direct talks with the United States over the 2015 nuclear deal, underlining that Washington should lift sanctions before any kind of talks can go ahead.

Spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry Saeed Khatibzadeh said Iran has received an offer from the EU foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell, to start direct talks with Washington by attending a session of the nuclear deal's Joint Commission.

Speaking at a weekly press conference on Monday, Khatibzadeh said Tehran received an offer from Borrell without a specific date to attend an informal session with the United States.

The spokesman said Iran gave a clear response that the U.S. should recommit itself to UN Security Council Resolution 2231 and lift the sanctions that it imposed on Iran if it wants to rejoin the nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"This trajectory does not require negotiations and trade-offs," Khatibzadeh asserted.

He pointed out that the U.S. still tries to maintain pressure on Iran and move forward with what the Trump administration initiated.

"Unfortunately, it seems that the present U.S. administration, with a cognitive mistake and by using passive multilateralism, seeks to move down a path on which Trump failed to make progress for four years," Khatibzadeh pointed out.

Earlier on Sunday, Khatibzadeh said in a statement that the time is not ripe for an unofficial meeting with the U.S. and the E3 proposed by Borrell considering the recent stances and moves by the U.S. and the three European countries.

"In view of the recent stances and measures taken by the United States and the three European countries, the Islamic Republic of Iran believes this is not a good time for holding an unofficial meeting on the accord as proposed by the European Union foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell," the statement said.

"There has been no change in the United States' stances and behavior, and the Biden administration has not only failed to abandon Trump's failed policy of maximum pressure, but has also failed to declare its commitment to the implementation of all its obligations under the JCPOA and the UN Security Council Resolution 2231," it added.

"All options for give-and-take were exhausted five years ago"

Khatibzadeh noted that the implementation of commitments by all parties to the JCPOA is not a matter of negotiation and give-and-take, and all options for give-and-take were exhausted five years ago.

"The path forward is quite clear: The U.S. must end its unlawful and unilateral sanctions and return to its JCPOA commitments. This issue neither needs negotiation, nor a resolution by the Board of Governors [of the International Atomic Energy Agency]," he continued.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran will respond to actions with action, and just as it will return to its JCPOA commitments with the removal of sanctions, it will also answer in kind to all hostile measures and behaviors," Khatibzadeh pointed out.

He finally stressed that the Islamic Republic will continue its close bilateral and multilateral consultations with the current parties to the JCPOA as well as Mr. Borrell as the



"The Islamic Republic of Iran will respond to actions with action, and just as it will return to its JCPOA commitments with the removal of sanctions, it will also answer in kind to all hostile measures and behaviors," Foreign Ministry spokesman Khatibzadeh points out.

JCPOA coordinator.

"Censuring is not diplomacy"

Khatibzadeh also reiterated his position in a tweet on Sunday.

"Considering U.S./E3 positions & actions, time isn't ripe for the proposed informal meeting. Remember: Trump failed to meet because of his ill-advised 'Max Failure'. With sanctions in place, same still applies. Censuring is NOT diplomacy. It doesn't work with Iran," he tweeted.

The statement came a few hours after The Wall Street Journal reported that Iran rejected a European Union offer to hold direct nuclear talks with the U.S. in the coming days, risking renewed tension between Tehran and Western capitals.

According to the American newspaper, the EU floated the idea of holding talks in Europe that would include all of the remaining participants in the 2015 deal—Iran plus China, the UK, France, Germany, and Russia, as well as the U.S. The Biden administration immediately announced it would attend a meeting, with Washington's envoy Rob Malley set to participate.

"EU officials had been trying to get an agreement on dates for a meeting and had floated the possibility of talks in Vienna or Brussels in the coming days. EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said last Monday that he was 'reasonably optimistic' talks would happen. However, Iran this weekend sent a note saying it wouldn't attend a meeting in the current circumstances," The Wall Street Journal wrote, adding that Iran proposed a different approach instead.

Citing Western diplomats, the newspaper claimed that "Tehran told the EU that it wants the EU to serve as a mediator, brokering a step-by-step process in which the U.S. and Iran would each agree to concessions before a

possible meeting between Iranian officials and their U.S. counterparts."

The U.S. and its European allies' intention to put forward a resolution against Iran in this week meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency's board of governors might have prompted Iran to reject the European offer of talks because accepting such an offer while the West is pushing for adopting a resolution against Iran would have been tantamount to succumbing to diplomatic pressures and bullying.

Iran has recently struck a deal with the UN nuclear watchdog on how to continue cooperation in light of an Iranian nuclear law that came into force on February 23.

The nuclear law, officially called "Strategic Action to Lift Sanctions and Protect the Nation's Rights," 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.

The IAEA chief paid a visit to Iran a few days before the law was implemented. He succeeded in securing a deal with Iran that would ensure the IAEA access to Iranian nuclear sites.

Under the deal, Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) and the IAEA agreed to continue cooperation in a new way.

"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," according to a joint statement issued by the IAEA and the AEOI following the signing of the deal.

However, the deal did not prevent the U.S. and its European allies — namely France, Germany and the UK (E3) — from pushing for a new resolution against Iran at the meeting of the IAEA's board of governors.

According to a Bloomberg report, U.S. diplomats circulated a draft resolution on Thursday which lists Washington's grievances and orders Iran to fully cooperate with inspectors.

The proposed resolution would "underscore strong concern at the IAEA's findings" and "express the board's deepening concern with respect to Iran's cooperation," Bloomberg said, adding that this resolution would suggest that Iran could be providing incomplete information on its nuclear activities, something that has potentially serious consequences, including another referral to the United Nations Security Council.

As the IAEA's board began a virtual meeting on Monday, Reuters reported that Britain, France and Germany are pressing ahead with a U.S.-backed plan for a resolution by the UN nuclear watchdog's board criticizing Iran for curbing cooperation with the agency, despite Russian and Iranian warnings of serious consequences.

S P O R T S

Former chief of Marketing Committee not satisfied with results of FFIRI's elections

1→ When asked about the results of the elections and about the new-elected president, Dorudgar said:

"Honestly speaking, Mr. Azizi Khadem was not my choice in the elections and I preferred another candidate to be chosen, namely Kiumars Hashemi. I also believe that Ali Karimi didn't enter the elections in the best way possible as he didn't follow the standard processes needed for the federation elections. Generally, I think Azizi Khadem was the supported candidate by the Ministry of Sports, and contrary to rumors, Hashemi was not," Dorudgar added.

Persepolis extend winning streak to six: IPL

S P O R T S
d e s k

TEHRAN — Persepolis football team edged past Saipa 1-0 to extend their winning streak to six in Iran Professional League (IPL) on Monday.

Persepolis captain Jalal Hosseini scored the only goal of the match just after six minutes.

The Reds could have won the match with more goals but the team's players failed to capitalize on their chances.

Persepolis remained top of the table with 33 points, two points above Sepahan who also defeated Gol Gohar courtesy of Sajad Shabbazzadeh's goal in the 68th minute.

Earlier in the day, Esteghlal were held to a 1-1 draw by Mes Kerman. Masih Zahedi was on target for the hosts but Mes defender Hamed Noormohammadi scored an own goal in 52nd minute.

Tractor escaped a defeat against 10-man Naft Masjed Soleyman. Sajad Jafari found the back of the net in the 76th minute but Mohammad Abbaszadeh equalized the match in the dying moments of the match.

Foolad also remained on course thanks to Ayanda Patosi's goal in Ahvaz.

Rock-bottom Machine Sazi drew 1-1 with Shahr Khodro and struggling Nassaji were held to a 1-1 draw by Aluminum. Paykan also defeated Sanat Naft 2-0 in Ahvaz.

Ex-Iran U23 coach Zlatko Kranjcar passes away

S P O R T S
d e s k

TEHRAN —Former Iran U23 football team head coach Zlatko Kranjcar passed away on Monday.

He died at the age of 64 at Merkur Clinical Hospital in Zagreb, Croatia due to severe illness.

The Croatian coach was named as Persepolis coach in 2009 but left the team to head Montenegro a year later.

Kranjcar has also coached Iranian team Sepahan in two stint and helped the Isfahan based football team win Iran Professional league and Hazfi Cup.

He was appointed as Iran U23 football team head coach in 2019. Kranjcar collected 11 caps and scored 3 goals for Yugoslavia from 1977 to 1983. He also has two caps and scored one goal for the Croatian national team and is notable as the first team captain of the Croatian team in their first international match against the United States on 17 October 1990 in Zagreb.

The world never forgets Siamand Rahman's smile

S P O R T S
d e s k

TEHRAN — One year ago today, the world's strongest Paralympian Siamand Rahman passed away due a heart attack. It was one of the most unexpected things that has ever happened to the world of the sports.

The two-time gold medalist in London 2012 and Rio 2016, who was preparing to win his third successive gold at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games, died on March 1, 2020 and his death shocked the world.

Rahman broke the 300kg barrier in the men's over 107kg at the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games, lifting an unprecedented 310kg. The mark he set is the equivalent of three baby elephants.

The Iranian powerlifter had already won three gold medals in the last three Asian Para Games (2010 Guangzhou, 2014 Incheon and 2018 Jakarta).

Rahman, who was always smiling everywhere and every time, could not wait to compete at Paralympics but the death didn't let him to pursue his dreams.

"It's great to be part of this awesome campaign. I am so excited to see we are getting closer to the Games. I can't wait to compete in Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. In Tokyo, everything is going to be between the bar and me. I will redraw the boundaries," Rahman said a year before his death.

President of Iran's National Paralympic Committee (NPC) Mahmoud Khosravi Vafa said the 'Siamand Rahman Grand Prix' will be held after him.

The world will never forget the strongest man who surprised the fans by his incredible power.

The world will never forget Siamand Rahman's smile.



Sayyadmanesh chosen Man of the Match

S P O R T S
d e s k

TEHRAN — Zorya Luhansk striker Allahyar Sayyadmanesh was chosen as Man of the Match for his glittering performance against Shakhtar Donetsk.

He provided a stunning assist which helped his team beat Shakhtar 1-0 in dying moments of the match in Ukrainian Premier League.

The Iranian forward sent a pass to Dmytro Ivanisenya in the injury time.

Sayyadmanesh has scored three goals and provided two assists in 14 matches for Zorya.

Housing rental rises 30% in Tehran in a month

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN**— Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has announced that the rental price has increased 30.6 percent in Tehran city during the eleventh Iranian calendar month Bahman (January 19 – February 18), from its previous month. The CBI also stated that the housing rental in the capital city has risen 33.9 percent in the mentioned month, as compared with the same month of the previous year.



The Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) has announced that the housing rental in the capital city Tehran has fallen 3.1 percent in the third quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (September 21 – December 20, 2020) from its previous quarter, while rising 40.9 percent as compared to the third quarter of the past year. The center has previously announced that the inflation rate of housing rentals in the country reached 24.3 percent in the 12 months ended on September 20 (end of the first half of the current Iranian year). As reported, the point-to-point inflation rate for house rent rose 28.9 percent in summer (June 21-September 21) compared to the same period last year. The rental price index of residential units in urban areas reached 195.8 in the summer of this year, registering an increase of 2.7 percent compared to the previous season. In the mentioned season, the highest seasonal inflation rate was related to Hamedan province with an increase of 16.4 percent, and the lowest was related to Sistan-Baluchestan province with an increase of 3.8 percent. The housing market in Iran has been experiencing inflation and rise in prices, both in terms of rentals and sales in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 20). According to Hesam Oqbaei, the deputy head of Tehran Real Estate Association, 37 percent of the country's urban population are tenants, who are from the low and middle classes of the society and their salary increase has been up to 22 percent, so if the rent prices were supposed to grow along with the house prices people won't be able to afford it.

‘Iran not to receive goods in exchange for its claims from Iraq’

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN**— The chairman of Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce said that Iran will not import Iraqi products in exchange for its claims from that country. Yahya Ale Eshaq said, “It should be noted that Iraq does not have goods that we want to import in exchange for our money. Therefore, we will not import goods in exchange for this money, and the money itself will probably enter the country.”



“Iran’s relationship with Iraq is a strategic and developing one,” he said, adding, “Our estimate is that by the end of the [current Iranian calendar] year (March 20), our exports to Iraq will reach \$9.5 billion-\$10 billion, up from \$12 billion last year”, the official stated. “The two sides agree to increase trade between the two countries to \$20 billion over the next few years. But the circumstances that arise may change; for example, the coronavirus outbreak, have decreased the bilateral trade by 15 to 30 percent”, he added. In mid-December 2020, Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian said that Iraq is going to open a euro bank account to pave the way for settling all the country’s gas and electricity dues to Iran. “Based on an agreement which is going to be implemented in the coming days, Iraq is going to open a euro savings bank account in which the country’s debts to National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) and the Power Generation, Distribution, and Transmission Company (known as Tavanir) will be saved,” Ardakanian said on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting. “Iraq’s recent and past debts to our country will be transferred and saved in this account after being exchanged to euro,” the minister said.

This way, transferring the money or using it for purchasing basic goods and medicine will be less problematic considering the U.S. sanctions, he emphasized. According to the official, the savings in this account can also be used for paying Iranian contractors and companies’ dues in the mentioned country. Ardakanian announced the formation of a committee for working on the issue and said: “As the Iranian head of the two countries’ Joint Economic Committee, I will monitor the process on a daily basis until we achieve desirable results.” Also, during a meeting between the governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) and the managing director of the Commercial Bank of Iraq on Saturday, the two sides discussed the ways for the transfer of Iran’s funds in Iraq. Iran and Iraq have several times discussed the issue of releasing Iran’s financial resources in Iraq over the past months, based on which Iran was supposed to have access to its funds which are related to the gas export to Iraq.

Majlis continues reviewing details of next year’s budget bill

By Ebrahim Fallahi

TEHRAN – Every year after the government submits the draft of the national budget bill for the next year to the Iranian parliament (Majlis), the parliament’s budget review committee immediately begins assessing general outlines of the bill including the incomes and the expenses. After the mentioned assessments, the details of the bill will be subject to review so that by the yearend a refined version of the bill would be prepared and approved to be used as the base guideline for the country’s monetary framework in the next fiscal year. **The budget bill** Considering the country’s special economic conditions in recent years, the Iranian parliament has mostly rejected the primary drafts of the budget bill and required the government to make some amendments. This year too, in early February, the parliament rejected the general outlines of the primary draft of the budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year 1400 (which begins on March 21). The proposed bill, first submitted to Majlis in early December 2020, amounted to about 24.357 quadrillion rials (about \$579.928 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials), with a 20-percent rise from the current year’s approved budget. The bill estimated the government’s budget at 9.298 quadrillion rials (about \$221.38 billion), with an increase of 47 percent from the

figure of the current year. It envisaged 3.175 quadrillion rials (about \$75.595 billion) of incomes, while 6.37 quadrillion rials (about \$151.666 billion) of expenses. Revenues from exporting oil, gas, and gas condensate were estimated at 1.99 quadrillion rials (about \$47.3 billion), up 323 percent from 454.9 trillion rials (about \$10.83 billion), approved in the current year’s budget. The bill was mainly criticized for being unrealistic about the oil revenues and the government expenses. The budget review committee urged the government to reform the bill and submit it to the parliament again. **The amendments** Therefore, in the reformed bill the government proposed to reduce its expenses by 400 trillion rials (about \$9.5 billion) to prevent the need for increasing tax incomes. It also reduced the National Development Fund (NDF) resources and increased the ceiling of the incomes from publishing treasury bonds by 530 trillion rials (about \$12.6 billion). “The most important factor in the amendment was the discussion of the subsidized foreign currency and the amount of oil revenues; the oil revenues in the amended bill were not changed, and the subsidized foreign currency would still be allocated for essential goods like medicine and crops” Mojgan Khanlou, spokeswoman of the Parliament Budget Committee said. After making the necessary amendments, the government resubmitted the bill to the



parliament, and this time Majlis approved the amendments of the national budget bill in mid-February. **After approval** After approving the general outlines, the budget review committee would hold several sessions for reviewing the details of the bill. The first session of the budget review committee was held on February 20 in which the parliament determined the share of NDF from the country’s oil and gas export revenues in the newly amended budget bill. Majlis continued to review the details of the national budget bill for the year 1400, in an open session on Sunday, February 28. This review session was mainly focused on the expense aspects of the national budget bill. During the session, the MPs came up with some decisions regarding the various aspects of the bill including the resources allocated for the renovation of the country’s electricity network, the resources allocated for the Defense Ministry, and the obligations of the Oil Ministry regarding oil and gas condensate exports. MPs instructed the Oil Ministry to submit a monthly report on the amount of exports of crude oil, gas condensate, and major oil and gas products to the parliament’s Planning, Budget, and Energy committees and also to the Supreme Audit Court of Iran. The government is also obliged to deposit the surplus oil and gas revenues - from the exports of more than one million barrels per day (bpd) - to the country’s foreign exchange

reserve account. It was also agreed that the Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics would be allowed to use up to 300 trillion rials (about \$7.1 billion) equivalent of crude oil and gas condensate on the condition of processing it in the refineries run by the private sector. The decision has been made to promote the contribution of the private sector in the country’s oil and gas sector. The Defense Ministry is constructed to process the allocated share of crude oil and gas condensate only in those refineries which have increased their processing capacity in recent years. As for the Energy Ministry, the MPs allocated the ministry 300 trillion rials (about \$7.1 billion) for renovating the country’s electricity infrastructures. The mentioned funds are going to be mainly spent on renovating the country’s power plants and worn-out electricity network sections. The allocated money, however, should be supplied only from the sale of government assets, bonds, and privatization of government-owned companies. This allocation is also considered as payment for a part of the government debts to the power plants owned by the private sector. In the few weeks remaining to the end of the current Iranian calendar year, more sessions would probably be held for further assessing the details of the national budget bill to make sure that the country would begin the new year on solid economic ground.

Tehran hosts conference on Iran-Syria trade opportunities



Head of Iran-Syria Joint Chamber of Commerce Keyvan Kashefi delivers speech in Iran-Syria trade conference in Tehran on Monday.

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN**— Iran-Syria Joint Chamber of Commerce organized and held a conference on the business opportunities of the two countries in Tehran,

the portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (IICMIMA) reported on Monday. The conference was attended by senior officials from the two sides including the Head of Iran-Syria Joint Chamber of Commerce Keyvan Kashefi and the head of the Federation of Syrian Chambers of Commerce Fahd Mahmoud Darwish, as well as the Head of Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Hamid Zadboum. The security situation in Syria, the political and economic relations between Iran and Syria, trade opportunities and the commodity and services needs of Syria, the ways of presence in the Syrian market, the Syrian trade structures, Iran-Syria credit lines and money transfer strategies, routes and methods of transportation between Iran and Syria, and the Syrian government tenders and procurements were the main subjects covered in this conference. The attendees of this gathering especially stressed the need for focusing trade strategies on the development of the relations between the two countries’ private sectors. Speaking in the event, Kashefi presented a report on

the condition of the two countries’ trade and pointed to some of the major potentials and challenges in the way of expanding mutual economic ties. He further announced that soon a database containing the main economic needs of Syria will be unveiled and provided for Iranian traders so that they would be able to prepare their business plans based on the demands of the destination market. Elsewhere in this conference, Zadboum pointed to the conference as a prelude to the development of Iran-Syria relations in the upcoming Iranian calendar year 1400 (begins on March 21) and said: “Ideological and political commonalities have brought the two countries closer together, but the existing opportunities between Iran and Syria have not been used as they should be, and level of economic relations is not favorable.” Darwish for his part noted that both Iran and Syria are under unjust sanctions and in an economic battle. He also called for the implementation of a free trade agreement between Iran and Syria, which was signed in 2011 but has not yet been implemented.

Major oil industry projects worth over €5.6b inaugurated

1 → Speaking in the opening ceremony, Zanganeh mentioned the desirable state of the development projects in joint oil and gas fields and said: “Fortunately, we are in a good situation in all joint fields compared to our neighbors.” “The production capacity of crude oil in the joint fields of west Karun region has increased from 70,000 barrels per day to 400,000 barrels,” the official added. Mentioning the development of the Azar oil field, the minister said: “Over €1.4 billion



of the investment made in this project has been returned from the revenues earned by

the field’s oil output.” Zanganeh put the cumulative production of the field since it went operational in the Iranian calendar year 1392 (started in March 2013) up to the current year at 36 million barrels. The official further mentioned Kangan Petro-refinery project and said: “We had plans to inaugurate 17 petrochemical projects worth \$11.4 billion and with a total capacity of 25 million tons in the current year; Kanhgan project, with an investment

of nearly \$1 billion and a production capacity of 3.5 million tons per year, is one of the mentioned projects.” Azar, one of the joint fields with Iraq, spans an overall area of 482 square kilometers in southeast of Mehran town in the western Iranian province of Ilam. The field is estimated to hold 2.5 billion barrels of oil in place. The volume of possible oil reserves to be extracted from the Azar field is estimated to be around 400 million barrels.

Iran’s passenger maritime transportation capacity to hit 25m by late Mar.

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN**— Head of Iran’s Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) has said the country’s passenger maritime transportation capacity is going to reach 25 million people per year by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20), ILNA reported. “The passenger transportation capacity of the northern and southern ports of the country is currently 24.8 million people per year, and considering the ongoing development projects in the mentioned regions, this figure will reach 25 million people by the end of the current year,” Mohammad Rastad said. Speaking in a ceremony for signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Transport and Urban Development Ministry and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism for the development of coastal and maritime tourism, Rastad noted that there are currently 57

passenger ships with a total capacity of 7,500 people operating in the country’s ports, most of which are sailing in a route between southern Bandar Abbas and Qeshm Islands. There are also 12,000 registered boats, 500 of which are operated by marine clubs, the official said. He further noted that in addition to the mentioned passenger boats, ships and fairies, there are 50 landing crafts operating in the country’s ports; these landing crafts have a total capacity for transporting 2,500 cars and 8,000 passengers. The mentioned landing crafts mainly transport passengers and cars from the mainland to Qeshm Island in the southern Hormozgan Province; such vessels are also operating in other coastal areas, including Kish, and also between Genaveh and Khark, according to the official. Having about 5800 kilometers of coastline in the north and south of the country, Iran has great capacities in terms of natural attractions of maritime tourism in the

region and the world. Despite the restrictions and limitations created by the outbreak of the coronavirus, Iranian ports managed to attract 3.57 trillion rials (over \$85 million) of investment in the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20-June 20, 2020). The mentioned investments were done mainly with the aim of developing and maintaining infrastructure and equipping ports. PMO also implemented or studied over 580 projects worth 151.025 trillion rials (about \$3.59 billion) in the mentioned period. The construction of six floating wharves for passengers and tourism in Soheili and Gurzin ports in Qeshm and Hengam Islands, and continuing the third phase of Shahid Rajaei port’s development project are also among the PMO achievements in the first quarter.

TEDPIX loses nearly 4,000 points on Monday

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN**— TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), fell 3,944 points on Monday. Over 4.198 billion securities worth 54.947 trillion rials (about \$1.308 billion) were traded at the TSE on Monday. The first market’s index fell 2,957

points, and the second market’s index dropped 7,731 points. TEDPIX dropped 2.7 percent during the past Iranian calendar week. The index stood at 1.205 million points on Wednesday (the last working day of the week). During the past week, the indices of

Social Security Investment Company, Tamin Cement Company, Amin Investment Bank, Mobarakeh Steel Company, National Iranian Copper Industry Company, Tehran Oil Refining Company, and Bandar Abbas Oil Refining Company were the most widely followed indices. Last week, market analyst Amir-Ali

Amir-Baqeri told IRNA that Iranian stock market is moving in the right direction and will reach stability in the near future. “Market authorities are currently using asymmetric fluctuations to improve the market situation, but we must move in a direction where there is no volatility in the market,” Amir-Baqeri said.

Everyone has known that MBS is new Saddam Hussein, professor says

“HOPE is an excellent step in the right direction, and Iran should continue to promote it in various international forums”

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN — By releasing an intelligence report implicating Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) in the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, the U.S. has done «nothing much» because it has been quite clear that MBS in the new Saddam Hussein of West Asia, a university professor says.

«Everyone has known for a long time the Prince Mohammed Bin Salman is the new Saddam Hussein of the Middle East (West Asia),» Mehran Kamrava, director of the Center for International and Regional Studies (CIRS) at Georgetown University, tells the Tehran Times.

An unclassified U.S. intelligence report released on Friday confirms for the first-time what role top U.S. intelligence officials believe Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler played in the 2018 killing of Khashoggi.

Former U.S. President Donald Trump's administration held back the long-awaited report despite a 2019 law passed by Congress requiring its release.

Khashoggi, a columnist for the Washington Post who had been critical of the Saudi government, was dismembered inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul in October 2018.

Following is the text of the interview:

How do you see the new American administration's attitude toward West Asia?

The new administration's foreign policy team is still not fully in place. But we are beginning to see a few trends already in its approach to the Middle East (West Asia) that differ sharply from the Trump administration: less overt support for Israeli expansion into Palestinian territories; a more balanced approach toward Saudi Arabia; liberal interventionism in conflict zones such as Syria and Iraq; and a desire to engage in discussions with Iran.

Why is Biden is moving too slowly to revive the JCPOA even if he wishes to do so?

For a number of reasons. To start, the Biden administration is still trying to devise a comprehensive policy toward Iran and the nuclear program. Given the domestic



“As is typical with U.S. foreign policy, especially with Democrats, there are often proclamations of lofty American ideals such as human rights and the rule of law, but the reality is continued weapons sales, economic and military support and investments, and the same levels of diplomatic and political support and alliance.”

issues he is facing and needs to address — Trump's second impeachment, the pandemic, economic relief package for Americans, confirmation hearings for his nominees, etc. — complex foreign policy issues have had to wait to be addressed.

In fact, we see that apart from statements saying «the U.S. is back as a member of the global community,» little substantive policy initiatives have been taken in the international arena by the new administration. Also, there continue to be tremendously deep anti-Iran feelings in the United States, fueled by various lobby groups, the media, and individuals with powerful positions throughout the U.S. political system. So,

Biden has been slow in approaching the JCPOA so far.

How may the release of the “explosive” U.S. intelligence document affect U.S.-Saudi ties?

These «explosive» documents do not reveal anything that was not known before. Everyone has known for a long time the Prince Mohammed Bin Salman is the new Saddam Hussein of the Middle East (West Asia). The question is «what will the U.S. do about it?» As we have seen over the last week or so, the answer is «nothing much.» As is typical with U.S. foreign policy, especially with Democrats, there are often proclamations

of lofty American ideals such as human rights and the rule of law, but the reality is continued weapons sales, economic and military support and investments, and the same levels of diplomatic and political support and alliance.

Saudi Arabia says Persian Gulf countries should be consulted in any U.S. return to the JCPOA? Why do they make such a suggestion? Is it reasonable?

There are two things that Iran needs to realize in relation to the Persian Gulf countries. First, these countries have an existential fear of Iran and view it as a threat to their very existence.

Second, and related, is a deep distrust and fear of Shia sectarianism. As irrational and misplaced as these fears may be, they exist among populations and political leaders across the Persian Gulf and they are very real. In addition to great regional tensions, the Arab states of the Persian Gulf have successfully sold this narrative of «Iran as a destabilizing regional actor» to the rest of the world, especially to the European Union and the United States.

So, Iran needs to proactively try to counter this narrative and take actual, concrete steps to allay the fears of its Arab neighbors. This should be done outside of the JCPOA framework, whose focus is on the nuclear issue.

How do you assess Iran's Hormoz Peace Endeavor (HOPE)? What are the challenges to peace in the Persian Gulf?

HOPE is an excellent step in the right direction, and Iran should continue to promote it in various international forums. But very few actors are likely to accept any framework for regional security that has already been devised by someone else and in the crafting of which they were not themselves involved. Parallel to HOPE, therefore, Iran should invite countries like Saudi Arabia and the UAE to join it in devising a comprehensive regional security accord from scratch, with their input. This is urgently needed as now Israel is trying to devise a security arrangement that would involve Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the UAE.

MBS seems hasty for normalization with Israel: ex-Japanese diplomat

1 → “The victory of Biden was a big shock for the current Saudi regime,” the former Japanese diplomat notes.

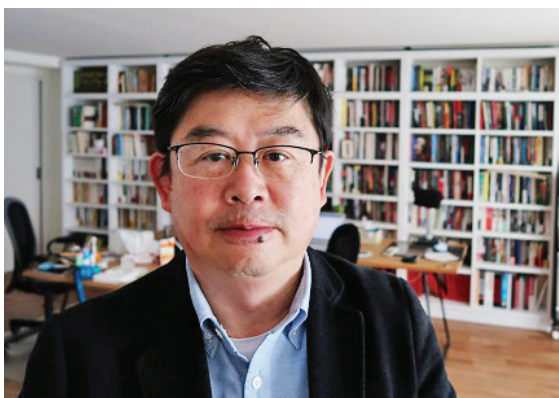
Following is the text of the interview:

How do you see Saudi Arabia's role in sponsoring extremist groups in West Asia?

I don't think the Saudi Arabian government is sponsoring extremist groups and ideologies in Central Asia and other Muslim countries in recent days. However, before 9/11, some NGOs related to official organizations or private institutions of KSA had helped such extremist groups in Muslim countries. After 9/11, especially after 2003, when al-Qaeda or terrorist groups had targeted KSA with similar ideology, the Saudi government started to suppress such groups or individuals inside the Kingdom. Officially, Saudi Arabia is supposed to stop supporting most extremist groups inside and outside the country in the early 2000s. Of course, a lot of clandestine terrorist groups that remain in Saudi Arabia continue to finance extremist organizations abroad and still have some influence among Saudis.

Why has the Biden administration decided to reduce its support for Saudi Arabia? Is Biden punishing Saudi princes because of their close ties with Trump?

Even during the election campaign, Biden declared the change of the policy towards Saudi Arabia, mainly due to the Saudi role in Yemen, human rights, and the Khashoggi murder case. Their close ties with Trump was not the main



reason for Biden's unfavorable attitude towards Saudi Arabia.

I understand Saudi Arabia enthusiastically had supported Trump because of his hostile policy against Iran. So, the victory of Biden was a big shock for the current Saudi regime. But, as many Saudi princes are realists, they are going to adjust their foreign policy, I believe.

Some believe that bin Salman's social reforms in Saudi Arabia are a pretext to cover up lack of democracy in the country. What is your comment?

Partly yes. But even though many young Saudis welcome

the move initiated by Mohammed bin Salman. Saudi political leaders do not proceed with democratic reform, but, at the same time, many Saudis don't want bold political reforms, causing frictions among society and sometimes don't want democracy itself. As a person in a free democratic country like Japan, I am really disappointed.

Is there any hope that Iran and Saudi Arabia can resolve their differences now that Biden has taken power in the U.S.? Do you think that the Iranian Hormoz Peace Initiative is practical?

I still remember the time of the intimate relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran during the period of then Crown Prince Abdullah and Presidents Khatami and Rafsanjani. That means both countries can solve the problem. And leaders of both countries claim the problems should be solved through dialogue and diplomacy.

However, there is a mutual distrust right now. It is very difficult to achieve peace in the region by one-sided initiatives, including Iran's Hormoz Peace Initiative.

How do you assess the Israeli-Saudi relations after a normalization between some Persian Gulf states and Israel?

Middle East (West Asia) Peace Process has stalled for long years, while Israeli pressure is getting harder and harder. Arab countries have to do something to restart the process, either forward or backward. Normalization is one of the answers for restarting the peace process from Arab countries' viewpoints. Saudi Arabia, especially MBS, seems hasty for normalization with Israel, but the Saudi crown prince is still cautious about pushing normalization with Israel because the majority of Saudis harbor ill-feeling towards Israel and believe in a Palestinian cause, including the King himself.

If MBS and Saudis recognize that the Iranian influence in Arab countries is getting bigger, it will bring Saudi Arabia and Israel into a closer relationship.

How do you foresee developments in the West Asia region given the continuing war in Yemen and possible fate of bin Salman?

I think there are three important points for predicting the future of the Middle East (West Asia); one is the COVID-19, second is America's return to the JCPOA and the Yemen war.

President Biden has shifted the U.S. policy towards the Middle East (West Asia) since his inauguration. Biden stopped the support for the coalition led by Saudi Arabia and the UAE in Yemen and at the same time, he promised the U.S. would defend Saudi Arabia from Iranian threats. This will be a big step for Saudi Arabia to withdraw from Yemen while saving MBS's face.

If the U.S. return to the JCPOA will trigger the change of Iranian foreign policies, a more positive situation will come out in Yemen. Anyhow, the establishment of peace in Yemen needs bold compromises from every stakeholder in the region, including Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Iran.

As for the future of MBS, Saudi Vision 2030 will be a very important key in his stable rule, and he will have to produce great results from his vision after restoring the Saudi economy heavily damaged by the COVID-19 and strong decarbonization policy in the Western countries.

U.S. mysteriously removes 3 names from Khashoggi report

1 → The ODNI declined to clarify why the names were originally inscribed on the list and what roles, if any, they may have had in the crime.

“We put a revised document on the website because the original one erroneously contained three names which should not have been included,” an ODNI spokesperson told CNN.

A top administration official had argued on Friday afternoon before the change was noticed that the report contained no new information.

Yet three of the names that ODNI had first listed had not previously been mentioned in reports on Khashoggi's killing. The three names that disappeared are Yasir Khalid Alsaleh, Ibrahim al-Salim and Abdulla Mohammed Alhoeriny.

CNN cited a person familiar with the inner workings of Saudi intelligence as saying that Alhoeriny is the brother of General Abdulaziz bin Mohammed al-Howraini, a minister who is in charge of the powerful Presidency of State Security which oversees multiple intelligence and counterterrorism agencies. Abdulla appears in Saudi reports as the assistant chief of state security for counterterrorism.

Syrian air defenses intercept Israeli missiles targeting Damascus suburb

The Syrian military says the country's air defenses have intercepted Israeli missiles coming from the direction of the occupied Golan Heights.

Syria's official news agency SANA quoted a military source as saying that the Israeli missiles were fired hours before midnight on Sunday at targets in the vicinity of the Syrian capital Damascus.

The source said almost all of the missiles were successfully intercepted by the Syrian air defenses.

Israeli media claim the airstrike was a response to a recent attack on an Israeli-owned vessel in the Gulf of Oman, which Tel Aviv blames on Iran.

Israel frequently targets military positions inside Syria, especially those affiliated with the resistance movement, which has played a key role in helping the Syrian army in its fight against foreign-backed terrorists since 2011.

According to Press Tv, The Tel Aviv regime mostly keeps quiet about the attacks on Syrian territories which many view as knee-jerk reaction to the Syrian government's increasing success in confronting terrorism in country.

Early last month, Israeli air-to-surface and surface-to-surface missiles were intercepted by the Syrian air defense systems over the country's southwestern province of Quneitra.

Suu Kyi hit with new charges as Myanmar protesters rally again

Myanmar's deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi appeared in a court hearing via video link and was charged with additional criminal offences on Monday, as anti-coup protesters rallied across the country again in defiance of a security force crackdown that killed at least 18 people the previous day.

The 75-year-old looked healthy as she took part in the court hearing from the capital, Naypyidaw, and asked to see her legal team, lawyer Min Min Soe told Reuters news agency.

The leader of the National League for Democracy (NLD), which swept last November's now-annulled election, has not been seen in public since her detention on February 1 when the military seized power, alleging widespread electoral fraud.

Shortly afterwards, she was charged with illegally importing six walkie-talkie radios as well as violating a natural disaster law by staging a campaign rally during the coronavirus pandemic.

A third charge, filed on Monday, was under a section of the colonial-era penal code prohibiting the publication of information that may “cause fear or alarm” or disrupt “public tranquillity”, Min Min Soe said.

Another charge was also added under a telecommunications law, the lawyer said, which stipulates that equipment needs a licence.

Resistance News

Over 400 EU lawmakers urge leaders to stop Israeli annexation

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN**— More than 400 European lawmakers have urged leaders to stop Israel's “de-facto annexation” of the occupied West Bank.

The parliamentarians said in a letter addressed to European foreign ministers and EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell that the administration of former U.S. President Donald Trump had left the Israeli-Palestinian conflict “farther away from peace than ever”.

“The Biden administration presents a chance to correct course,” the politicians, including members of national legislatures and senates, as well as members of the European parliament said in the letter, cited by Agence France-Presse.

Trump adopted a pro-Israel policy during his presidency. He sparked controversy by officially recognizing Jerusalem al-Quds as the Israeli “capital” in December 2017, before moving the U.S. Embassy there from Tel Aviv in May 2018.

Israel lays claim to the entire Jerusalem al-Quds, but the international community views the city's eastern sector as occupied territory and Palestinians consider it the capital of their future state.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 478, adopted on August 20, 1980, prohibits countries from establishing diplomatic missions in Jerusalem al-Quds.

Palestinians, who seek an independent state in the occupied West Bank and Gaza, with East Jerusalem al-Quds as its capital, have condemned the U.S. pro-Israel agenda.

Emboldened by the anti-Palestine policies of Trump, Israel stepped up its settlement expansion in defiance of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2334, which pronounces settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem al-Quds “a flagrant violation under international law.”



Vacancy Notice

The Office of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in I.R.Iran, intends to recruit a Programme Analyst/Reproductive Health and Humanitarian for its office in Tehran, Iran.

Details of the vacancy can be found on UNFPA website on the following link:

<https://iran.unfpa.org/en/vacancies/national-post-programme-analyst-reproductive-health-and-humanitarian>

Please apply online by 15 March 2021, 5 PM Tehran Time. This vacancy is open only for Iranian Nationals.

Notice:

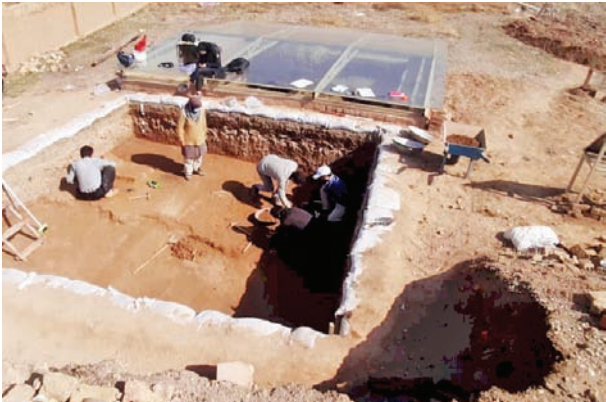
- “There is no application, processing or other fee at any stage of the application process”.
- “UNFPA does not solicit or screen for information in respect of HIV/AIDS or disabilities and does not discriminate on the basis of HIV/AIDS status and disabilities”.

Archaeological site in Qazvin to turn into outdoor museum

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – The prehistoric site of Khalehkuh, situated in northwestern Qazvin province, is planned to be turned into an outdoor museum due to the significance of its antiquities.

Located in Takestan region, the ancient site is one of the most valued in the region and is of great significance to archeological studies, the provincial tourism chief said on Monday.

Establishing an open-air museum seems important due to the historical antiquity of the site and the necessity of introducing



and displaying the works obtained from historical layers and architectural remains discovered during different excavations, Alireza Khazaeli added.

A new archaeological survey has also commenced at the site under the supervision of a team of archeologists and cultural heritage experts, the official added.

With an area of five hectares, Khalehkuh archeological site dates back to the 5th millennium BC. Relics related to the agri-cultural life dating back to the Neolithic and Chalcolithic eras have been found in the region as well.

Qazvin was once the capital of the mighty Persian Empire, under Safavids, from 1548 to 98. It is a major tourist destination with a wonderfully restored caravanserai-turned-arts precinct, some quirky museums, and a handful of decent eating options. For most travelers, Qazvin is also primarily the staging point for excursions to the famous Castles of the Assassins and trekking in the sensational Alamut Valley.

Also known as the castle of the Assassins, the 12th-century Alamut castle is nestled on top of a peak. It was once a shelter for the followers of Hasan-e Sabbah (1070–1124) who was a spiritual leader of an Islamic sect. In the early 1930s, British-Italian explorer and travel writer Freya Stark described her exploration of the place in her book "The Valleys of the Assassins".

Qazvin is also home to one of the biggest roofed caravanserais of the country, Sa'd-al Saltaneh caravanserai. Dating back to the Qajar era, it's a place for discovering tens of Højreh or shops, cafes, yards, and a stunning mosque. It's a place for visitors who want to experience the culture, culinary, and hospitality of Iran.

Permanent sales exhibition of stone objects inaugurated in Mashhad

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – A permanent sales exhibition, dedicated to objects and utensils, which are made from Harkareh stone blocks, opened its doors to the public on Sunday.

"The art of stone carving has always been one of the special and unique arts of Mashhad, and in this regard, the creativity and innovation of the local artists has led to the production of new art that combines several arts," a local cultural official said, addressing the opening ceremony.

Harkareh stone utensils are amongst the popular traditional handicrafts in northeastern Iran, which are believed to have many medicinal and effective properties.



Despite the influx of Teflon and Pyrex utensils, some families still prefer to make broth or even some stews in these pots.

"Serpentine" stone with the local name of Harkareh, which means a pot that does everything, is taken from the southern mountains of Mashhad and is transferred to workshops to be turned into dining utensils, such as stone pots, bowls, glasses, decorative items, samovars, etc.

Harkareh is famous for its flexibility. Enjoying iron and magnesium ions in their structure, these dishes have many medicinal and effective properties against diseases such as anemia and osteoporosis.

In addition to reducing the amount of water in the food, these utensils provide the nutrients needed by the body by releasing the beneficial salts in the stone and gradually provide the food with the extra flavor it needs.

Stone utensils can be used to cook broth, stews, and other dishes, but they never cook rice or fry anything in them. With the help of a hatchet, they cut the unevenness of the stone and make a hole in it. After that, the desired inscriptions are etched on the container.

Iran exported \$523 million worth of handicrafts during the calendar year 1398 (ended March 19, 2020). Of the figure, some \$273 million worth of handicrafts were exported officially through customs, and about \$250 million was earned via suitcase trade (allowed for customs-free and tax-free transfer) through various provinces, according to data provided by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.

Ceramics, pottery vessels, handwoven cloths as well as personal ornamentations with precious and semi-precious gemstones are traditionally exported to Iraq, Afghanistan, Germany, the U.S., the UK, and other countries.

30 dams to be turned into tourism destinations

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – A total of 30 dams across Iran have been selected to be developed into tourism destinations, Deputy Energy Minister for Water and Wastewater Affairs Ghasem Taqizadeh Khamesi said on Sunday.

A total budget of 1,300 billion rials (some \$30 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) has been allocated to develop the tourism infrastructure of the dams, the official said.

Water tourism of the dams is estimated to generate 3,000 direct jobs when fully operated, he added.

"We have negotiated with several tourism agencies to arrange water tours, and it seems that people are keen to learn how potable water is produced [within dam zones]," the official said last year.

The official noted that 182 national dams have been built in the country, most of them have the potential to be tourism destinations.



Back in May 2019, the Ministry of Energy inked a memorandum of understanding with the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Ministry to lay the ground for launching dam tourism.

Though much of Iran is composed of arid and semi-arid lands, the country has many rivers, waterfalls ponds, and wetlands offering scenic vistas to nature lovers and eco-travelers, backpackers, birdwatchers, and fishers.

Water tourism involves traveling to locations specifically to take part in water-based activities. Some people who do not wish to partake in water-related activities embark on water tourism trips so that they can visit tourist sites that sit close to bodies of water such as lakes, seas, or even dams. Water tourists are often independent travelers, although some travel firms do organize group trips.

Qajar-era public bathhouse turns into traditional restaurant

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – A Qajar-era (1789–1925) public bathhouse in Sanandaj, western province of Kordestan, has been repurposed into a traditional restaurant, aimed at achieving higher productivity and better maintenance.

After being abandoned for years, Hammam-e Khan ("Khan Bathhouse") has undergone some rehabilitation works and is ready to be reopened as a traditional restaurant, the provincial tourism chief, Yaqub Guilian, said on Monday.

The project, which was fully carried out by the private sector, aims at reviving the historical structure that is one of a kind for its construction method, interior decoration, and size, the official added.

More than 20 job opportunities are expected to be generated by the opening of the traditional restaurant, he explained.

The bathhouse was built in 1805 by the order of the governor of Kordestan, Amanollah Khan Ardalan. The building has very prominent decorations of seven-color tiles with various hunting, animal, plants, and geometric designs.

Such a trend is being practiced during the past couple of years under the close supervision of the Revitalization and Utilization Fund for Historical Places, however, there have been many opponents saying the scheme will not result in

better maintenance in some cases. There have been reports that some of the historical monuments have been mistreated by private investors, such as damages caused to the walls, arches, or the lack of proper restoration.

Bathhouses or 'hammams' in Iran were not only places for bathing and cleaning up. They had a social concept for people who gathered at these places weekly.

It was a place where people talked with each other about their daily life and shared humor and news. There are still bathhouses in Iranian cities but they do not have their social function anymore since most people have bathrooms in their homes due to the modern lifestyle.

Some cities had separate bathhouses for men and women. They were usually built next to each other. However, there were some bathhouses, which were used by men and women at different times of the day.

There were also male and female public bathhouses; at daybreak, a longhorn (boog-e javaz) was blown to announce that the bath was ready. Men came to the baths from daybreak till the afternoon. Women could use the bathhouses from then to sunset. In some cases, five days were allocated to men and two days to women.

Persian literature is full of proverbs, narrations, and folk stories about bathhouses, which indicate the importance of the place in the past time.



The name Kordestan refers to the region's principal inhabitants. After the Turkish invasion of Iran in the 11th century CE (Seljuq period), the name Kurdistan was applied to the region comprising the northwestern Zagros Mountains. It was during the reign of Abbas I the Great of Iran's Safavid dynasty (1501–1736) that the Kurds rose to prominence, having been enlisted by Abbas I to help stem the attacks of the marauding Uzbeks from the east in the early 17th century.

Gang of excavators arrested in western Iran

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – A gang of illegal diggers has been arrested by the Iranian police in Bedreh, western Ilam province.

A metal detector and some digging tools were seized from the six-member team, who were traced following reports by local people, the provincial tourism chief said on Monday.



The culprits were handed over to the judicial system for further investigation, Abdolmalek Shanbehzadeh added.

Home to almost half of Iran's UNESCO sites, western Iran is a land of hospitable people, wild extremes, and wilder history, and it may be an independent traveler's adventure playground. The region also witnessed

the rise and fall of many great empires once bordering Mesopotamia, Ottoman Turkey, and Czarist Russia.

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

Glimpses of Persian foods for holidaymakers

Teahouses: Traditionally where Iranians would go to socialize and eat, with tea, qalyan (water pipe), and food.

Kebabs: Simple kabab is tend to be found around major meydan (squares) and serve, yes, kababs. Eat where the locals eat.

Take-away: Fast food is popular and begins (and often ends) with bread-roll 'sandwiches'.

Restaurants: Found across the country; most serve ash-e jo (pearly-barley soup) and salad as standard starters

At home: Possibly the best food you'll ever taste.



Rare relics put on show for first time at Tehran museum after five-year closure

➔ 1 The palace served as a museum for a year before the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution. Now, it is turned into a venue for showcasing Persian arts and cultural heritage handcrafted from the first millennium BC onwards.



Iran embraces hundreds of historical sites such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 22 being inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, the country aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025.

Second Announcement



N.I.S.O.C

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO. : 01-31-9680036

National Iranian south oilfields company (NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods

Items	Material Description	Quantity
6	P/F"ROLLS-ROYCE" INDUSTRIAL AVON GAS GENERATOR AVON MK . 1533-34-76G/101G REF.ROLLS-ROYCE/STD	582

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their" Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no.2, available at: www.nisoc.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded.

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 22.028 EURO or 6.245.200.962 RIAL, in favor of NISOC.

Tender documents including the materials thorough technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via: www.nisoc.ir-material-procurement-management-tab

ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P., NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI IRAN, PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D., SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL NO ADVANCE PAYMENT WILL BE PAID

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
Bldg. No. 104, Material Procurement Management Complex
Kouy-e-Fadaeian Islam (New Site), Ahvaz, Iran Tel. No.: 061 34 12 34 55 Fax No.: 061 3445 7437
Public Relations www.shana.ir www.nisoc.ir

تهران تایمز :نوبت اول ۹۹/۱۲/۹ نوبت دوم ۹۹/۱۲/۱۲

Iran's air quality improving over past decade

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN – The exposure of Iranians to particulate matter less than 2.5 microns (PM2.5) in 2019 decreased by about 3.4 micrograms per cubic meter compared to 2010, according to the 2019 World Air Quality Report.

This is while ozone pollutants in Iran increased by about 5.9 one part per billion (ppb).

Air pollution constitutes the most pressing environmental health risk facing our global population. It is estimated to contribute toward 7 million premature deaths a year, while 92 percent of the world's population are estimated to breathe toxic air quality (WHO, 2016).

In less developed countries, 98 percent of children under five breathe toxic air. As a result, air pollution is the main cause of death for children under the age of 15, killing 600,000 every year (WHO, 2018). In financial terms, premature deaths due to air pollution cost about \$5 trillion in welfare losses worldwide (The World Bank, 2016).

Regionally, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and West Asia carry the highest burden of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) pollution



overall, with only 6 of 355 cities included meeting WHO annual targets in these areas collectively.

The majority of the most polluted cities and countries included in this report are

located in the South Asia region. The region includes 30 of the top 40 most polluted cities and four of the five most polluted countries. Only one city in this region (Sanandaj, Iran), out of 147 cities with monitoring data in

2019, met WHO targets for PM2.5 levels.

Some 13 Iranian cities are also listed among the top fifteen clean cities in the region, while eight Iranian cities top the list.

Iran ranked 27 for average PM2.5 concentrations in the world country ranking, while the capital city of Tehran is listed 24 in the world regional capital city ranking.

PM2.5 concentration is widely regarded as most harmful to human health. PM2.5 is defined as ambient airborne particles which measure up to 2.5 microns in size. Its microscopic size allows the particles to enter the bloodstream via the respiratory system and travel throughout the body, causing far-reaching health effects, including asthma, lung cancer, and heart disease. Air pollution has also been associated with low birth weight, increased acute respiratory infections, and stroke.

Airborne particulate matter can originate from a range of sources. Combustion from vehicle engines, industry, fires, and coal-burning represent the most common man-made sources, whilst sandstorms, agriculture, and chemicals reacting in the atmosphere represent the most common natural sources.



Annual sales of nano companies rise by 100%

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

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

year (March 20, 2021).

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

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

Iranian Covid-19 vaccine platform among world's most successful: WHO

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – Iran has one of the most successful platforms in the world for Covid-19 vaccine production, Christoph Hamelmann, the representative of the World Health Organization in Iran, said.

"Considering the production line of the Pasteur vaccine, Iran is very advanced and successful in developing a vaccine while being able to help other countries, I am sure that Iran's vaccine production platform is one of the most successful ones in the region," he said.

Iran is a special model in the primary healthcare system and using healthcare providers (called Behvarz), who are the connection between the physical health system, the facilities, people, and families who refer to it, he stated.

"Although about 70 percent of the



population lives in cities, the same PHC network and quality services are available in rural areas. During the pandemic, we measured the capabilities and potentials of the network system in densely populated areas, and now we know where the system should be strengthened."

Hamelmann further expressed appre-

ciation for the medical staff efforts, and highlighted that in the light of the pandemic, the importance of the front-line forces of the health system became more apparent, IRNA reported.

During a recent visit of Ahmed Al-Mandhari WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean to Iran, he was impressed by the preventive efforts and such an active database.

Iran started mass vaccination with Russian-made Sputnik V vaccine, with the priority given to medical staff, the elderly, and people with underlying diseases; and is also going to be co-produced by the two countries.

While, the second Iranian coronavirus vaccine, Razi Cov Pars, started the clinical trial by injecting it into two volunteers during a ceremony on Sunday.

COVIRAN BAREKAT, the first coronavirus

vaccine made by Iranian researchers of the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam, was unveiled and injected into three volunteers during a ceremony on December 29, 2020; which will soon start the second phase of the clinical trial.

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

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

He emphasized that Iran will soon be one of the world's important manufacturers of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Fossil fuel cars make 'hundreds of times' more waste than electric cars

Fossil fuel cars waste hundreds of times more raw material than their battery electric equivalents, according to a study that adds to evidence that the move away from petrol and diesel cars will bring large net environmental benefits.

Only about 30kg of raw material will be lost over the lifecycle of a lithium ion battery used in electric cars once recycling is taken into account, compared with 17,000 litres of oil, according to analysis by Transport & Environment (T&E) seen by the Guardian. A calculation of the resources used to make cars relative to their weight shows it is at least 300 times greater for oil-fuelled cars.

The campaign group said battery electric vehicles were superior to their petrol and diesel counterparts across raw material demand, energy efficiency or cost – as well as eliminating

exhaust emissions of carbon dioxide and other harmful gases.

The accelerating move to electric vehicles will entail environmental costs. Higher battery production will require more mining of minerals such as lithium, cobalt and nickel.

However, T&E argued that the cost of oil extraction for fuel represents a much greater environmental toll. The report pointed to a "double standard" used when assessing the relative merits of electric and fossil fuel vehicles, which takes the use of oil for granted.

"When it comes to raw materials there is simply no comparison," said Lucien Mathieu, a transport analyst at T&E and an author of the report. "Over its lifetime, an average fossil-fuel car burns the equivalent of a stack of oil barrels 25 storeys high. If you take into account the recycling of

battery materials, only around 30kg of metals would be lost – roughly the size of a football."

Developments in battery technology will reduce the average amount of lithium, nickel and cobalt required for each car, mitigating some of the increased demand for the materials as well as lowering car prices. At the same time, circular economy regulations requiring higher recycling rates could cut demand further.

T&E calculations suggest that battery electric cars will use 58% less energy than a petrol car over its lifetime and emit 64% less carbon dioxide. Emissions associated with electric cars are mainly produced in the energy-intensive manufacturing of batteries, while the vast majority of emissions associated with internal combustion engine cars come from its use.

Second Announcement



1399.7148

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO. : 01-31-9680033

National Iranian south oilfields company (NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods

Items	Material Description	Quantity
16	P/F"ROLLS-ROYCE" INDUSTRIAL AVON GAS GENERATOR AVON MK . 1533-34-76G/101G REF.ROLLS-ROYCELTD	627

Vendors who intend to participate in aforesaid tenders are requested to send their" Intention To Participate" letter via fax to the following number along with their resume according to Qualitative Assessment Form no.2, available at: www.nisoc.ir, not later than 14 days after the second announcement, otherwise, their requests for participation in the tender will be disregarded.

The applicants should have relevant background in supplying the required goods and capability to provide and submit a bid bond of 33.539 EURO or 9.508.878.897 RIAL, in favor of NISOC.

Tender documents including the materials thorough technical specifications and Qualitative Assessment Forms can be accessed via: www.nisoc.ir-material procurement management tab

ONLY ACCEPTABLE DELIVERY TERM IS D.D.P., NISOC'S WAREHOUSE, AGHAJARI IRAN, PAYMENT TERM IS C.O.D., SUBSEQUENT TO NISOC'S MATERIAL APPROVAL NO ADVANCE PAYMENT WILL BE PAID

FOREIGN PURCHASING DEPARTMENT
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تهران تایمز : نوبت اول ۹۹/۱۲/۹ نوبت دوم ۹۹/۱۲/۱۲

Second Announcement



1399.7147

NATIONAL IRANIAN SOUTH OILFIELDS COMPANY AHVAZ-IRAN

TENDER NO. : 01-31-9680031

National Iranian south oilfields company (NISOC) intends to purchase the following goods

Items	Material Description	Quantity
10	P/F"ROLLS-ROYCE" INDUSTRIAL AVON GAS GENERATOR AVON MK . 1533-34-76G/101G REF.ROLLS-ROYCELTD	136

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Atlantic Ocean current at weakest state in 'over a millennium'

The Atlantic Ocean current that plays a major role in the world's weather is at its weakest state in "over a millennium", researchers have found.

The research combines various lines of evidence to create a "consistent picture" of how the ocean current system, which is known as the "Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation" (AMOC), has changed over the past 1,600 years.



Sometimes called the Atlantic's "conveyor belt", the AMOC is a vast ocean current system that moves warm, salty water from the tropics to regions further north, such as the UK. The gulf stream is part of the AMOC.

As the AMOC carries warm water northward, it releases heat into the atmosphere. The release of ocean heat keeps countries warm – and without it, winters in the UK could be close to 5C colder.

Scientists have previously raised concerns that the AMOC could be "slowing down", with the climate crisis likely playing a role. In 2018, a study found that the AMOC had weakened by around 15 per cent since the mid 20th century.

The new study, which is by the same research team, combines a range of different data to better understand how the AMOC has behaved over the past 1,600 years, the Independent reported.

"For the first time, we have combined a range of previous studies and found they provide a consistent picture of the AMOC evolution over the past 1,600 years," said Dr Stefan Rahmstorf, a climate scientist from the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and an author of the study, which is published in the journal Nature Geoscience.

"The study results suggest that it has been relatively stable until the late 19th century. With the end of the little ice age in about 1850, the ocean currents began to decline with a second, more drastic decline following since the mid-20th century."

The research's main advance is that it combines several different types of climate "proxy data" to study changes to the AMOC, explains study lead author Dr Levke Caesar, an ocean and climate researcher from Maynooth University in Ireland.

"Proxy data" is a term given to natural records that can be used to study past changes to the world's climate. Examples of proxy datasets include ice cores, tree rings and ocean sediments.

"The major difference is that we didn't look at just one or two proxies – we compiled a total of 11 proxies and found that they tell a consistent story of how the AMOC evolved over the last 1600 years," she told The Independent.

The likely causes of AMOC weakening were not specifically investigated in the study.

However, previous research has found that the climate crisis could be contributing to a weakening of the AMOC by causing land and sea ice in high northern regions to melt at an increasingly fast rate. The fast melting of ice is adding more freshwater to the ocean, which could be interfering with the normal functioning of the AMOC, scientists have suggested.

A recent report on oceans from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the world's leading climate science authority, concluded that it was "very likely" that the AMOC will weaken further over the 21st century.

Some researchers have raised concerns that the AMOC could eventually hit a "tipping point" and shut down – with potentially disastrous consequences for the world's climate. However, current evidence suggests that an AMOC shutdown is very unlikely to occur this century.

Nonetheless, the findings reinforce the need to urgently take action to address the climate crisis, said Dr Caesar.

"The AMOC has very likely weakened and will very likely do so in the future," she said.

"We don't know for sure what consequences that will bring, but given the size and impact of the AMOC, I would not want to risk a substantial weakening."

The findings are "very novel", said Dr Andrew Meijers, deputy science leader of polar oceans at the British Antarctic Survey, who was not involved in the study.

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Kindness is a mark of faith and whoever
is not kind has no faith.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Owj makes doc about top anti-secular cleric Ayatollah Nureddin Hosseini

→1 Owj, a major institution that produces revolutionary works in art and cinema, in a statement published last week said, "There are some great people among the outstanding personalities who have influenced the history of the country, however, they have remained unknown in the wake of negligence."

"Ayatollah Seyyed Nureddin Hosseini al-Hashemi is one of the people who has played a key role in the political and religious events in the country over the past century," the statement added.

One of his significant works was the establishment of the Baradaran Party (Brothers' Party) in the Fars region, which sought to change "the regular traditional Islam into an animated and political Islam."

He also began struggling against Reza Pahlavi and his son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Iran's last monarch, Western and Eastern colonialism, deviant Islamic sects, and the Westernophile intellectual currents.

One street in Shiraz, his hometown, has been named after Ayatollah Seyyed Nureddin Hosseini al-Hashemi, however, most people have little knowledge of him.

Consequently, director Yazdani and producer Mohammad Jafari spent six years making the documentary to raise public awareness of the personality.

Yazdani said that they have scrutinized over 40,000 documents to make the film.

"All these efforts were made to reintroduce one of the forgotten personalities of contemporary Iranian history who was influential in shaping the nationalization of the Iranian oil industry, Fadaiane Islam group and several historical decisions in the National Parliament," he added.

The documentary has been produced with contributions from the Sarcheshmeh Cultural Complex and Maha Film and will also be screened in Shiraz on Wednesday.

Mexican agricultural traditions under spotlight at Tehran photo, ceramics exhibit

CULTURE TEHRAN — An exhibition of ceramic works and photos entitled "Seeds of Identity" is presenting Mexican agricultural traditions at the Farzaneh Ceramic Museum in Tehran.



A poster for the photo and ceramics exhibit "Seeds of Identity" underway the Farzaneh Ceramic Museum in Tehran.

The exhibit, which has been organized in collaboration with the Embassy of Mexico in Tehran, features photos by Mexican photographers Ariadna Cuadriello and Juan Pablo Cardona.

Speaking during the opening ceremony of the showcase, Mexican Ambassador Guillermo Alejandro Puente Ordorica elaborated on the importance of local culture and cultural commonalities between Iran and Mexico.

Envoys of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Tajikistan, Switzerland and Ecuador in Tehran and several art and cultural figures attended the opening ceremony, which was organized on Friday.

The exhibition will be open to the public until March 4.

Pandemic forces Iran's Intl. Quran Competition to go online

A R T TEHRAN — Iran's d e s k International Quran Competition, which is organized every year before the holy month of Ramadan in Tehran, will hold its 37th edition online this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fifty-seven finalists from 26 countries will be competing in the contest, which will open on Saturday, director of the competition Hamid Majidimehr said in a press conference on Monday.

The competition will be available on different platforms, while the IRTB Quran Channel will broadcast the competition live.

The primary stage of the competition went online last year with 411 participants from 67 countries in different fields of recitation, memorization and interpretation out of whom 122 found ways into the semi-final stage, he said.

"Moreover, in January, the semifinalists had competed under the supervision of a jury panel consisting of individuals from Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Indonesia, Sudan and Tunisia, who will also judge the finalists," he added.

The director of the organization



A Quran reciter attends the primary stage of the 37th International Quran Competition.

Hojatoleslam Seyyed Mehdi Khamushi, also attending the conference, said that the awards of the 37th edition have increased compared to the previous editions.

"Respecting Quran as the book of thought and action, as well as honoring Quran reciters and memorizers, and achieving happiness among the Muslim nations are among the other major goals of the competition," he said.

He also added that establishing proper fields to achieve solidarity and unity among Muslim nations will be other goals of the competition, while the event will help carry the message to the world that Islam and Quran are alive and that the Islamic society is active and dynamic.

"The International Quran Competition of Iran is the only competition in the world which will be held online despite the pandemic," he added.

"The State Endowment and Charity Affairs Organization as the main organizer of the event is ready to provide other organizations with the necessary knowledge to hold the competition online inside and outside the country," he concluded.

Book of 1st Shahnameh National Photo Festival published

and its Persian digital version was already published.

The Shahnameh National Photo Festival has been organized to focus on the representation of Persian poet Ferdowsi's Shahnameh in people's life.

The first edition opened in the Iranian city of Tus beside the tomb of Ferdowsi in Khorasan Razavi Province in May 2017.

The exhibit displayed a collection of 57 photos that were taken by ordinary people and mostly focused on the main topics of the festival.

The topics included the tomb of Ferdowsi, the statues of Ferdowsi installed in different locations across the country, naqqali, which is a style of storytelling dedicated to Shahnameh epic stories, and the reflection of Shahnameh in the daily lives of people.

"I am well aware of the artistic value of the old miniatures, however, I don't like the image of Rostam with all that grandeur but with a bald head and Mongolian eyes who has been sitting in a corner like an orphan

child," expert Khaleqi Motlaq wrote in the introduction of the book.

"Instead, I like the images and photos taken by a group of people published in the book. In this collection, it is as if Ferdowsi and his Shahnameh have become an integral part of people's lives," he said.

"Ferdowsi has been with people in the streets, and alleys and bazar, and in people's conversations and has his shares in their sorrows and happiness," he added.

The 2nd edition of the festival was held at Tehran's Eshraq Cultural Center in June 2019.

Over 35 selected photos went on display in the 2nd edition with the motto of "Iran a Gallery for Shahnameh". The exhibition was previously held in the Iranian cities of Mashhad, Gorgan, Qazvin and Rasht.

The festival is organized every two years by the Association of Shahnameh Reciters and the Association of Shahnameh Researchers.

Vancouver film festival to screen "Doll", "Song Sparrow" from Iran

A R T TEHRAN — The short d e s k movies "Doll" and "Song Sparrow" from Iranian filmmakers have been selected to be screened at the 16th Vancouver International Women in Film Festival (VIWFF), which will open in the Canadian city on March 4.

"Doll" directed by Nasrin Golrehyar will be competing in the Be Like Water section.

The film is about a woman journalist who finds a baby girl in a war-torn city. The borders are closed to the girl, and she



"Song Sparrow" by director Farzaneh Omidvarnia.

will be killed if she stays in the city. This film is about people who need peace, but are on the battlefield.

"Song Sparrow" by director Farzaneh Omidvarnia will be screened in the Your Worst Enemy category.

A group of refugees flee in search of a better life. They pay a smuggler to take them across borders, in a refrigerated truck, however, the freezing temperature inside the truck turns their hopes for a better future into a fierce struggle for survival. "Song Sparrow" is among the 96

short animated movies qualifying for the Academy Awards 2021 longlist.

"This year's virtual festival showcases an international lineup of short and feature-length films, from narrative and documentary to experimental and animation," the organizers have announced.

The event, which will run until March 14, celebrates the complexity and diversity of ways girls and women choose to challenge, overcome and inspire themselves, each other, their communities and our world today.

"The Case of the Crushed Petunias" arises at Tehran theater

A R T TEHRAN — American writer Tennes-see Williams' short comedy play "The Case of the Crushed Petunias" is on stage at Tehran's Mehregan Theater.

Puya Purhamedani is the director of the play starring Mojtaba Karimi, Sara Judat, Farid Golriz, Mehran Mahjub, Mina Nojavan, Rasul Abed and Nilufar Delir.

The Case of the Crushed Petunias was written in 1941 and is the story of Dorothy Simple, a woman trapped in her job at a prim and proper shop in Massachusetts.

She has barricaded her house and heart behind a double row of petunias. Today, however, she has woken up to find every single petunia crushed by the footprints of a size-eleven-D shoe.

When the perpetrator, a young man, arrives to confess his crime, he comes on a mission to alert Miss Dorothy to the "miraculous accident of being alive." Armed with



A poster for "The Case of the Crushed Petunias" on stage at Tehran's Mehregan Theater.

poetry, seeds for wild roses, and a business card from "LIFE, INCORPORATED," the young man endeavors to convince Miss Dorothy of the tremendous inspiration that lies beyond what one can buy or sell in a shop with four walls.

Williams' plays have always been regarded by Iranian stage directors and theatrical troupes.

A reading performance of his memorable play, "The Glass Menagerie", directed by Romina Jahandideh went on stage at Tehran's Jamshid Mashayekhi Theater on Saturday.

The play translated into Persian by Hamid Samandarian was also directed by his wife, Homa Rusta, in 1972.

In July 2020, director/actor Hamed Sheikhi merged Persian play "Shut up, Honey!" and Williams' "The Case of the Crushed Petunias" and "Talk to Me Like the Rain and Let Me Listen" to stage a play named "Talk to Me" at Tehran's Malek Theater.

"The Flowering of Muslim Theology" by Josef van Ess published in Persian

CULTURE TEHRAN — A Persian d e s k translation of Josef van Ess' "The Flowering of Muslim Theology" has recently been published by Hekmat Publications in Tehran.

The book has been translated into Persian by Sara Mesgar.

Van Ess is the world's most distinguished scholar of classical kalam, the Muslim theology that was the precursor to, and foundation for, modern Islam.

This book is the fruit of Van Ess's thirty-five years of work in the field. A lucid and authoritative introduction to classical Islam, it opens a window on the intellectual world that gave rise to Muslim theology.

A sustained look at important issues in early kalam, "The Flowering of Muslim Theology" discusses the emergence of

theology in the classical period and offers acute and illuminating comparisons with the Christian traditions.

Van Ess looks at the issue of heresy, at early ideas about straying from true belief. In a substantial and original instance of Quranic exegesis, he considers a problem much debated among classical theologians: whether it is possible to see God.

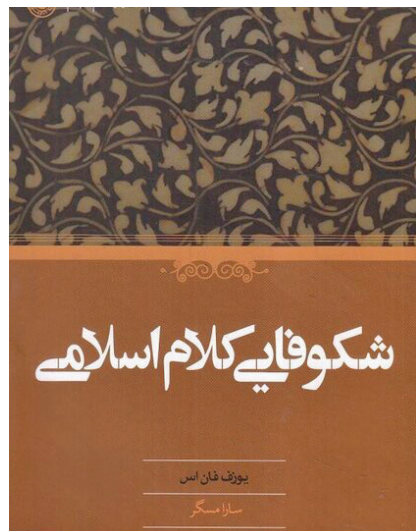
He examines the different ways, in which early Muslim thinkers appropriated atomism, a natural philosophy that was originally materialistic and atheistic, for their own theological purposes. He explores the explosive mix of theology and political thought, in an analysis of the development of ideas about the role and authority of a ruler. And he considers the relationship, or contradiction, between

faith and knowledge: the enduring question of how one can know whether something is right or true.

A work of intellectual history enlivened by vivid examples, "The Flowering of Muslim Theology" gives a wider audience rare insight into Islam's rich classical past.

Van Ess, an emeritus professor of Islamic studies and the Semitic languages at the University of Tübingen in Germany, has published widely on the history of the Islamic world, Islamic theology and philosophy, especially with respect to the formative period (8th-10th centuries) and Islamic mysticism.

His most famous work is "Theology and Society" ("Theologie und Gesellschaft") in 6 volumes, the first four volumes of which are now published in English.



Front cover of the Persian translation of Josef van Ess "The Flowering of Muslim Theology".