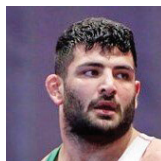




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Alireza Karimi takes silver at Matteo Pellicone *Page 3*



Iran, Iraq discuss joining railway networks *Page 4*



Animation “Wet Mirror” produced based on Attar’s story of Sheikh Sanan *Page 8*

Palace intrigue

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Saudi Arabia’s crown prince faces uncertain future as relations with U.S. sour



© File photo

Persepolis; transfer ban’s never-ending story

BY FARROKH HESABI

TEHRAN - Persepolis football club have been handed a domestic transfer ban by the Players Statutes Committee of the Iranian football federation over non-payment of dues to their former players.

The leaders of the Iranian Professional League (IPL) paid compensation amounts of 500,000 euros to their former Croatian striker Mario Budimir to lift the transfer that had been imposed by FIFA to the Tehran-based club for the 2021 winter transfer window.

However, it was not enough to solve the deep financial problems of the club and to let them sign new players as they planned.

The Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) did not allow the transfer window to be open for Persepolis and some other clubs including the other Tehran giants, Esteghlal.

Following unending complaints of the players and coaches to the FFIRI for their unpaid salaries by, the federation has decided to ensure the several debtor clubs to fulfill their financial obligations.

Towards achieving that, the teams that had been handed a transfer ban by FIFA are obliged to pay their compensation amount to the Iranian players and coaches who are owed sums of money remaining from the previous years as well.

Abdolrahman Shahhoseini, former head of the FFIRI’s Disciplinary Committee, said: “Debtor clubs should be obliged to implement their commitment to the players and coaches. However, they should be given a deadline at first to clear their dues and after that, if they failed to pay, the ban must come into effect.

“The problem is that the previous officials of the federation ignored these issues and, painfully, the debtor clubs have continued to the wrong way without any problem and with no commitment to clear their indebtedness to former players and coaches.

“I believe that the new management of the football federation has set motions in readiness for its battle against debtor clubs and it’s a good action by the FFIRI. But it cannot be done immediately and the teams need some time to resolve their financial problems at the earliest possible time,” Shahhoseini added.

Persepolis club current managers have voiced their anger over the federation’s decision as they have signed Mehdi Torabi recently but were not allowed to register him in the squad’s list at the game against Sanat Naft Abadan on Saturday.

Webinar sharpens focus on how to safeguard traditional medicine

TEHRAN – Tens of health and cultural heritage experts, academia, researchers, and students have begun discussing ways to safeguard traditional medicine as intangible cultural heritage during an online seminar, which began in Tehran on Sunday.

Strategies to protect traditional medicine as intangible cultural heritage are top on agenda for the three-day event that is organized by Tehran Intangible Cultural Heritage Center in close collaboration with the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage & Tourism.

Furthermore, participants are scheduled to attend specialized sessions on the subject of folk medicine, which has been practiced for a long in the villages around Ziviyeh and Karaftu, according to organizers.

An approach to traditional medicine, indigenous knowledge of orthopedics, etc., as well as remedies used by local women therapists in Kermanshah, are amongst topics being scrutinized during the event.

Iranian traditional medicine is one of the most ancient forms of traditional medicine. It is grounded in

the concept of four humors: phlegm (Balgham), blood (Dam), yellow bile (Safra), and black bile (Saouda). The four humors concept is based on the teachings of Rhazes and Avicenna into an elaborate medical system.

Some scholars believe that efforts for revitalizing Iranian traditional medicine in recent years have shaped two main attitudes: evidence-based medicine, and quackery. While many academics use evidence-based scientific measurements, there is also a pseudoscientific stream in modern academia.

Globally, this medicine reached its peak in Iran, concurrent with polymaths such as Muhammad ibn Zachariah al-Razi, Ibn Sina, and Esmail Jorjani. Ancient Iranian Medicine, the basic knowledge of four humors as a healing system, was developed by Hakim Ibn Sina in his medical encyclopedia The Canon of Medicine.

Iranian traditional medicine strongly focuses on prioritizing health maintenance and disease prevention over treatment.

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Anti-Netanyahu protesters attacked in 37th consecutive week of demos

With the elections fast-approaching, the weekly nationwide protests against Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu kicked off bigger and louder than usual in recent weeks on Saturday – the 37th consecutive week of protests.

The protest group the Black Flags Movement announced that this week’s protest was recognizing the demonstrations nearing the one-year mark since they first kicked off in the summer of 2020, The Jpost reported.

Protesters gathered at some 550 central junctions, squares and bridges across the country starting Saturday afternoon, calling on Netanyahu to resign over his ongoing criminal trial, before coming together to the protests’ central meeting points in Jerusalem and Caesarea.

A statement by the Black Flags noted that famed Israeli artists, activists and lecturers will attend several main junctions in order to show

their support.

These included sculptor Itay Zalait, industrial designer and lecturer Nitzan Waisberg, writer Eshkol Nevo and others.

The statement also criticized the Likud Party for deliberately trying to harm protesters.

“The defendant (Netanyahu) and his supporters are doing everything in their power to hurt the protest movement. Cyber warfare, physical assaults and incitement coming from the Likud elections campaign have become normal,” a Black Flags statement read.

“This culture of incitement and hate is directed toward anyone who opposes the defendant heading this government. This madness must come to an end on March 23. The protests will continue,” the statement added.

The statement reflected the reality met by several protests on Saturday.

Continued on page 5

Iranian universities improve in QS rankings

TEHRAN – Iranian universities have advanced in 17 subject areas of 2021 QS rankings, Mohammad-Javad Dehghani, head of Islamic World Science Citation Database, has announced.

The QS World University Rankings by Subject highlights the world’s top universities in a range of popular subject areas, covering 51 subjects. Published annually since 2011, the rankings are based on academic reputation, employer reputation, faculty/student ratio, citations per faculty, international faculty, and international students.

QS World University Rankings, an annual league table of the top 600 universities in the world, is arguably the best-known and respected rankings of its kind. Compiled by QS in close consultation with an international advisory board of leading academics, the rankings are widely referenced by prospective and current students, university professionals, and governments around the world.

In the general field of engineering and technology, as of 2020 ranking, three universities,

including Sharif University of Technology, University of Tehran, and Amirkabir University of Technology, were listed among top institutions worldwide, two of which had a growth rate compared to last year, he stated.

In particular, Sharif University of Technology has been promoted from 221 to 178 and Amirkabir University of Technology from 361 to 345, Dehghani noted, adding, also in this ranking, the University of Science and Technology was ranked 451-500.

Continued on page 7

Ex-Lebanese diplomat doubts MBS will be allowed to enter U.S.

BY MOHAMMAD ALI SAKI

TEHRAN – A former Lebanese Ambassador to Chile, Poland and Canada predicts that the Saudi crown prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS) will not be invited to the U.S. even if he becomes king.

“Maybe the relations between the two countries will continue to be good but without direct contacts between Biden and MBS,” Massoud Maalouf tells the Tehran Times.

Despite Saudi Arabia-U.S. longtime alliance and common interests, Biden will balance the interests of the U.S. with its values and priorities, especially when it comes to human rights, the former diplomat remarks.

The Office of the Director of National Intelligence in the U.S. released a long-awaited report on February 26 that said MBS approved an operation to capture or kill journalist Jamal Khashoggi in 2018 in the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul.

Following the release of the report, the Biden administration announced sanctions and visa bans targeting a number of Saudi Arabian officials but stopped short of imposing sanctions on bin Salman himself.

Following is the text of the interview: **How do you see the record of the successive U.S. administrations when it comes to resolving the Palestinian issue?**

The U.S. policy towards the Middle East (West Asia) has always been supportive of Israel at the expense of the Palestinians. Before Trump became president, and since the presidency of George W. Bush and his road map, there has been hopes for a two-state solution.

Continued on page 5

Defense Minister Hatami shows locally-made modern shooting gun

TEHRAN -- Defense Minister Amir Hatami is showing a locally-made modern shooting gun. The revelation of the gun took place at a ceremony named “the young soldier”. At the ceremony on Sunday morning, five models of the gun were also put on show. During, a number of families whose sons have been martyred during the military service were also honored.



© Mehr/Shahab Ghavoumi

U.S. and Saudi: A green light that turns to amber

By Azin Sahabi

TEHRAN — While Donald Trump gave Saudi Arabia a blank check, a change in U.S. policy vis-à-vis the kingdom is looming large and the glue that cemented the bilateral ties for decades has been cracked.

Thanks to U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's recognition of the strategic essence of oil, the U.S., first through its oil industry and afterward through government contacts, established a relationship with Saudi Arabia's founder, King Abdelaziz Ibn Saud, which evolved into close ties, particularly in the energy and security sectors.

According to the Pentagon, the Americans have been the major supplier of Saudis' arsenals of various kinds of sophisticated armaments since the 1950s which culminated in 2017.



During Trump's May 2017 trip to the kingdom as his first official foreign visit, Washington and Riyadh signed a series of arms deals expected to total some \$350 billion over a decade. According to the deal, Saudi Arabia's total arms imports faced a dramatic rise in comparison to a decade earlier, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) reported.

Regardless of Riyadh's determinant role in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) as the leading U.S. tool to counter the Islamic Republic of Iran, the White House has enjoyed firm support from the oil-rich monarchy for the normalization of relations between Israel and some Arab nations.

There exists fundamental divergence between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia in terms of values, the system of governance, and ideology. The former's operational policies are quite in contrast with the stated ones the latter expresses; however, the geopolitics of the region in which the oil factor is pivotal has contributed to this long-lasting amity.

While Trump gave the monarchy a blank check to realize its regional ambitions, maybe in the wake of Joe Biden's pledge to "reassess" relationship, a change in Washington's policy toward the kingdom is looming.

The historically complicated relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia has been a matter of controversy, especially since Biden's inauguration. In this regard, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP), one of the world's leading foreign-policy think tanks, has not hesitated to speculate on the issue.

In a commentary published on March 4, Aaron David Miller, a senior fellow, argues that the kingdom with interests and values quite in contrast to those of the U.S. is at best a "partner" not an "ally."

He believes that Saudis' manner, especially in recent years, has not been in favor of fulfilling Washington's interests but just made the regional dynamics more complicated for the U.S. to manage.

Carnegie points out that a recently released intelligence report outlined the role Mohammed bin Salman played in the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, a Washington Post contributing columnist. To discuss how the Washington-Riyadh ties might alter given the crime, Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said that "the relationship with Saudi Arabia is bigger than any one individual. We have significant ongoing interests. We remain committed to the defense of the Kingdom."

Against this backdrop, Miller describes the notion to consider Saudi Arabia a close ally of the United States as "antiquated" and stresses: "Any arguments that Saudi Arabia is too valuable to U.S. strategic interests to risk criticizing, or that Washington should not pressure an important American partner, don't hold up under scrutiny."

To clarify the matter, Miller analyzes the current dynamics from different angles.

A changed oil picture

The expert argues that due to a series of developments the West Asia theatre has witnessed in terms of political economy, an interruption in the flow of Saudi oil to the global market would not be a total game-changer. Concerning this, Miller underlines that the oil picture has substantially changed in recent decades, therefore, the argument that the U.S.-Saudi relationship is too big to fail is still valid but needs to be modified and revised.

In this regard, he says now that the U.S. is experiencing an oil production boom that has made it a "swing supplier", Washington and Riyadh are now more competitive with one another. Saudi Arabia's oil-addicted economy serves as the primary driving force of Riyadh's decisions on oil production and pricing, not the U.S. interests.

The expert also points out that while Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, can disrupt the oil market with oil price shocks, an abundant supply of oil in the strategic petroleum reserves all across the globe can prove a proportionate antidote.

Besides, Miller argues that Riyadh as the major destination of U.S. arms sales has been hardly efficient to counter Iran and writes: "It's not clear how the Saudi military and security apparatus supports the U.S. approach toward containing Iran. Indeed, should the Saudis and Iran find a way to lower tensions or negotiate some sort of modus vivendi, it would lessen the burden on the U.S. military and further American interests in the (Persian) Gulf, not undermine them."

Saudi Arabia's stability, one of the pillars of the "twin pillars" of U.S. policy to serve Washington interests in the region is significant for Washington. In this regard, Biden's changed rhetoric towards Saudi Arabia, with no meaningful move indicating a fundamental policy shift, should not raise eyebrows.

A liability not an asset

Miller, who served six secretaries of state as an advisor on Arab-Israeli negotiations, underlines Biden's administration should comprehend that "as a partner, the kingdom has proved, in many ways, to be a liability, not an asset, to U.S. interests and values."

Therefore, it makes sense that the bilateral relationship would be balanced and reformed. In fact, as Biden pledged to "reassess" the U.S.-Saudi relationship, the green light that Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman enjoyed during Trump's era may turn to amber under his successor.

JCPOA revival dependent on lifting sanctions, Rouhani says

POLITICAL

TEHRAN — The 2015 nuclear deal will be back on track only if the U.S. lifts the sanctions on Iran and all parties to the multilateral agreement, including Europeans, meet their commitments, President Hassan Rouhani said in a meeting with visiting Irish Foreign Minister Simon Coveney.

The 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), was signed between Iran, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, Germany and the European Union.

Based on the JCPOA, confirmed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231, Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions.

The Iranian president also criticized Europe's inaction and failure to honor the nuclear deal, saying, "The Islamic Republic of Iran has been committed to the JCPOA and saved it, and is the only party that has paid a price for it."

Rouhani also reiterated that Iran will resume implementing all its commitments to the JCPOA fully as soon as the U.S. lifts the illegal sanctions and abandons the policy of threats and pressure.

Pointing to Ireland's membership in the UN Security Council and the European



country's evenhanded approach, Rouhani stressed, "The Security Council should have acted properly against the previous U.S. administration because of its violation of the Resolution (2231)."

Rouhani also said his country is ready to cooperate with international organizations to settle regional crises, suggesting that the best way to work with Europeans to resolve the problems at bilateral, regional and international levels is "negotiations on the basis of mutual respect and avoidance of any threat

and pressure."

"Historic mistake"

For his part, Coveney noted Ireland, as a member of the UN Security Council for the next two years, can facilitate implementation of the JCPOA in line with Resolution 2231.

Deploing the former U.S. administration's withdrawal from the nuclear deal as a "historic mistake", the Irish foreign minister described the JCPOA as a valuable international agreement contributing to peace.

Ireland would do its utmost to save the

JCPOA and is ready to play any possible role to ameliorate the situation and restart negotiations among all JCPOA parties, Coveney pointed out.

Zarif says Iran to take 'compensatory measures' if U.S. lifts sanctions

In a separate meeting with his Irish counterpart Coveney on Sunday, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif also said it is necessary that all U.S. illegal sanctions against Iran are lifted and in that situation Iran will take "compensatory measures" to fully abide by its commitments to the JCPOA.

Ireland is the facilitator of the UN Security Council Resolution 2231 that endorsed the JCPOA.

Pointing to his country's support for the JCPOA, the Irish foreign minister stressed, "As the facilitator, Ireland is eager to talk closely with all players and encourages all participants to fully abide by the deal."

Coveney who arrived at Tehran late on Saturday also held talks on issues of mutual interest with Zarif. They discussed a range of issues including the Persian Gulf, Yemen, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Afghanistan and the Caucasus.

Prior to Coveney's visit to Tehran, Ireland's Foreign Ministry announced that it will reopen its embassy in Tehran in 2023.

IRGC commander says Iran continues to resist pressure

POLITICAL

TEHRAN — Major General Hossein Salami, the Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC), says Iran will not bow to the pressure and sanctions imposed by the enemies and will continue increasing its power.

"We have a brilliant record in resisting against pressures and sanctions, and this progress is only possible with power, science and technology," General Salami noted.

He added, "The map of resistance and progress of our country is designed by the youth. We will stand until forcing all enemies to succumb to the will of the Iranian nation,".

Stressing that the young Iranian scientists are constantly promoting the country's power, the senior commander said, "It does not mean just defense power, although we have done a great job in the field of defense power and deter-

rence, but our country's power is increasing in industrial, scientific, technological, civil and political aspects, and in all economic aspects."

In relevant remarks in December, General Salami said that scientific independence is the source of a nation's authority, cautioning that the enemy has targeted the country's scientific growth.

"If a country's scientific capacities grow, so will the society. While political, economic, or cultural issues are mostly considered as the factors for nations' independence, scientific independence is the source of a nation's authority," he remarked.

"We have enemies who always try to keep us trivial and weak because a country that is far behind will be weak and forced to surrender," he noted, saying, "But if a country



comes out of foreign scientific dominance and produces basic needs domestically, it will be alive and grow even if it is under a global siege."

Iran has reasons to refuse Biden's invitation to negotiate: National Interest

POLITICAL

TEHRAN — It makes little sense for Iran to unilaterally comply with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) for a limited amount of actual economic sanction relief only to then engage in a years-long negotiation where it has little leverage and is being called on to surrender its regional interests and deterrence capacities, according to National Interest.

President Joe Biden ran for office saying that he would like to see a restoration of the Iran nuclear deal. But over a month since inauguration, Iran and the United States are set in a standoff about the order for which the two sides will return to the agreement. The environment is still one that is characterized by distrust and escalation. The United States and the European parties to the agreement rolled out a new motion to censure Iran at the International Atomic Energy Agency and Iran rejected an invitation for a meeting featuring the United States and the remaining members of the deal, National Interest wrote.

National Interest reminded some politicians in Washington, even some supporters of diplomacy between the two countries, are persuading the Biden administration to engage in simultaneous reentry and said, "They put forth as evidence various statements from the administration stating that the United States is interested in rejoining but only when the 'timing' issues are settled to its satisfaction. In this backdrop, Iran's rejection of the meeting is interpreted as intransigence. But it's important to note that none of the Biden administration's statements express an interest in simultaneous reentry and, therefore, U.S. policy is compatible with the formal demand that Iran implement first."

Pointing to the fact that there is no indication at all that Biden is flexible on the demand that Iran implement its commitments first, the American website wrote, "Biden seems to be adopting the most dovish-seeming position that his administration knows Iran can't accept. If Iran was to accept the demand to implement first, the Biden administration can formally reenter the JCPOA but qualify the implementation of its sanctions relief commitments. For example, they could argue that some of the sanctions imposed by the Trump administration are not covered by the JCPOA, effectively meaning key Iranian institutions would still be sanctioned under non-nuclear rationalizations."

Regarding the purpose of sanctions, National Interest argued economic pressure could be used to extract other concessions outside of the nuclear deal's framework at a later time, and said, "If Iran refuses, the Biden administration can portray Iran as the intransigent party to a European audience—that appears ripe for such a message—to help enhance Trump's maximum pressure policy. To be clear, this is the broadly held view in the Iranian government as well as among journalists, analysts, and critics."

It admitted technical issues are complicated factor to resolve in international talks and stressed, "What allows for their resolution is the desire of both parties to achieve the underlying national interests. What the Biden administration has done so far sends the message that it would rather

not be a party to the agreement than implement U.S. commitments simultaneously with Iran. It simply strains credulity that this aggressive posture is simply to achieve a symbolic victory with little practical value—which is why Iran did no such thing."

The American website emphasized both countries hold an official position that the other side needs to implement its commitments first, saying, "But Iran has loudly signaled, or rather just plainly stated, that this is a negotiating position and that they are willing to allow the Europeans to choreograph simultaneous reentry. For Iran, the desire to reenter trumps any wish to pursue a symbolic victory."

According to National Interest, Iran wanted the purpose of the meeting was to focus on nuclear issues generally and a simultaneous reentry. "The meeting,

Did you know that with the formation of specialized commissions, more than 2000 official teaching licenses have been issued to teachers of Sunni seminary schools?

This indicates Iran's recognition of religious rights of Sunni Muslims.

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** – Saud Arabia’s Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is in trouble of his own making. He faces a White House intent on punishing – and maybe ousting – him for a variety of reasons including his murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

From his early days in the White House, U.S. President Joe Biden was keen to signal to Saudi Arabia that there is a new sheriff in town. He suspended arms sales to Saudi Arabia, stopped American offensive support for the Saudi war in Yemen, and, to top it all off, he released a secret CIA assessment about the killing of Khashoggi that incriminates bin Salman. Biden also refused to speak with bin Salman despite the fact that he is the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia.

Taken together, Biden’s measures in relation to Saudi Arabia signify a new American approach toward the oil-rich kingdom after four years of enjoying a carte blanche to do whatever it wants under Donald Trump.

The new approach – best symbolized by the release of the Khashoggi report – sparked a wave of speculations about the future of bin Salman and the possibility that the U.S. pushes for his ouster.

The Khashoggi report was the latest sign that the U.S. will no longer give bin Salman – also known as MBS - a blank check to pursue his ill-advised policies in the region. More importantly, bin Salman’s reputation will now be stained by the brutal killing of Khashoggi forever. He will go down in history as the one who ruthlessly killed his critic in a diplomatic facility and deprived his family even from having a gravestone for their loved one.

This brutality has raised the question of whether the new U.S. administration would seek his ouster and replace him with a more favorite man. The Khashoggi report has given the U.S. strong leverage to do so as it obviously accuses bin Salman of ordering the killing and dismembering of Khashoggi.

“We assess that Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman approved an operation in Istanbul, Turkey to capture or kill Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi. We base this assessment on the Crown Prince’s control of decisionmaking in the Kingdom since 2017, the direct involvement of a key advisor and members of Mohammed bin Salman’s protective detail in the operation, and



Palace intrigue

Saudi Arabia’s crown prince faces uncertain future as relations with U.S. sour

the Crown Prince’s support for using violent measures to silence dissidents abroad, including Khashoggi,” the report, issued by Office of the Director of National Intelligence, said.

The report may have not surprised MBS because he knows what happened inside his consulate in Istanbul. But this report begs the question: Will the U.S. move to oust bin Salman and replace him with onetime powerful prince Mohammad bin Nayef?

Observers in Israel, who now enjoy a warm informal relationship with bin Salman, have speculated that Biden may be in the process of getting rid of the Saudi crown prince.

“Bin Salman had become completely dependent on Trump’s whims and was worried U.S. President Joe Biden, far more sensitive to the issue of human rights, would bring an

end to his career,” wrote Yossi Beilin, a veteran Israeli politician who served in multiple ministerial positions.

In an article for Israel Hayom, the Israeli politician said Biden’s recent measures against bin Salman may be part of a broader strategy to oust him.

“The fact that the new president didn’t call the crown prince and made public his insistence on only speaking to his father the king sent a strong message. Just a few days ago, Biden revealed the findings of a U.S. intelligence report his predecessor had preferred to conceal. Washington has now given its official approval to the assessment bin Salman ordered Khashoggi’s killing,” Beilin said, adding, “It may very well be that in his conversation with the

Saudi king, Biden insinuated he would be wise to replace his rash son with the man who was forced to kiss his feet and relinquish his role as crown prince four years prior. Will this be good for Israel? If it’s good for our one true ally, then it will be good for us, too.”

Speculations over a possible U.S. bid to remove bin Salman was exacerbated after The Times reported that Biden is facing mounting pressures from intelligence agencies in the U.S. and Europe to help secure the release of “America’s favorite Saudi” Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, the former crown prince of Saudi Arabia whom MBS took down and put under house arrest.

The Times said Biden is facing pressure to push for the rescue of bin Nayef, who lives under the eyes of the authorities, indicating that he was tortured while he was in prison in the desert in the Kingdom.

According to the British newspaper, bin Nayef is a key ally of the United States, and he is facing difficult circumstances after Prince bin Salman ousted and imprisoned him.

Nayef, who had moved away from public life in 2017 after MBS took power, was arrested and thrown into a desert camp where he used to take visiting officials to talk and sleep in the open.

According to people familiar with the matter, Prince Mohammed bin Nayef, 61, was placed in solitary confinement for six months and tortured. During this period, the prince lost more than 38 kg and appeared to have injuries to his feet, and sources quoted by the British newspaper said that bin Nayef was moving easily, but now he cannot walk except by leaning on a stick.

Bruce Riedel, a West Asia expert at the Brookings Institution told the newspaper that there is a feeling in the American intelligence community that the U.S. is indebted to bin Nayef for helping the U.S. thwart terrorist attacks during his tenure at Saudi Arabia’s Interior Ministry.

Riedel said that he thinks that they want to work secretly, behind the scenes to try to get bin Nayef out of prison and return him to a place where he can reach doctors.

But these efforts could further deteriorate the conditions of bin Nayef as bin Salman will likely consider these efforts as part of a palace intrigue against himself.

Putin replies to Leader’s message

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Ali Akbar Velayati, a senior advisor to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, has received a reply from Russian President Vladimir Putin to a message the Leader had sent through Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf.

Putin’s reply was delivered to Velayati on Saturday by Russian Ambassador to Iran Levan Jagarian.

Qalibaf travelled to Moscow in February to hold talks with high-ranking Russian officials and deliver an important message from the Leader to the Russian president.

Qalibaf met with his Russian counterpart Vyacheslav Volodin and other officials. Volodin also served as Putin’s special representative in receiving Ayatollah Khamenei’s message.

“My today’s visit to Russia is being done at the invitation of the chairman of the Russian State Duma. The Leader has always underlined our strategic relations with Russia.... One of the outstanding aspects of this visit is that I am carrying an important message about strategic issues,” Qalibaf told reporters at Tehran’s Mehrabad Airport before leaving for Moscow.

The message’s details are yet to be disclosed. Some Iranian officials suggested that the message was about the current state of play in the region. Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, the special aide to the speaker of the Iranian Parliament on international affairs, noted that the message had something with Iran’s relations with the West after Joe Biden assumed office in the U.S. and the impact of these relations on Tehran’s ties with the emerging powers in the East.

Amir-Abdollahian, who accompanied Qalibaf during his visit to Moscow, said the visit was done in a “sensitive period of time” when new people are moving into the White House.

“The visit... will send a message to the Islamic Republic’s regional allies that Iran will no longer waste time waiting for the game of the White House’s new people or the three European signatories to the JCPOA (France, the UK and Germany),” Amir-Abdollahian said in an article for khamenei.ir website, referring to the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran



and major world powers by its acronym.

“Any decision in the White House will not change the Islamic Republic’s approach to maintaining, strengthening, developing and consolidating Tehran’s strategic relations with Moscow and Beijing, and the Islamic Republic of Iran’s strategic and long-term view of Asia as an important player in the last century,” the special aide continued.

Amir-Abdollahian noted that the White House developments will not affect Iran’s strategic relations and that the Islamic Republic’s regional partners “should know that the White House developments cannot affect our strategic relations.”

He added that Ayatollah Khamenei found it necessary to send a strategic message to Russia in this period.

The message came against a backdrop of renewed efforts to strengthen strategic ties between Iran and Russia on the one hand and with China on the other.

These efforts are being made in midst of a public debate in the West over a possible return of the U.S. to the Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

President Joe Biden had vowed to rejoin the JCPOA during his election campaign but he reneged on his promise. Now, the U.S. says it will return to the nuclear deal only after Iran resumes full compliance with the deal.

Qalibaf himself gave some details about the Leader’s

message during his trip to Russia. Speaking during the trip, Qalibaf noted that through the message, Ayatollah Khamenei had laid emphasis on the “strong and strategic nature of relations between Iran and Russia.”

The quality of the ties had rendered them insusceptible to political changes and unilateral approaches throughout the world, Qalibaf added, still citing the contents of the letter.

In their Saturday meeting, Velayati and the Russian envoy also addressed the issue of bilateral relations, stressing the importance of their development in all areas, including defense, oil, nuclear, industrial, agricultural, and trade sectors, according to Press TV.

Velayati called the neighbors “important friends” to one another, whose strategic relationship was characterized by “adherence to reciprocal respect.”

The official pointed to the longevity of the countries’ strategic ties as well as their economic, cultural, and commercial cooperation, and noted how regional situations and developments had deepened the two sides’ cooperation and interaction even further.

The advisor to the Leader cited Iran and Russia’s decisive contribution to Syria’s anti-terror struggle that has been going on at Damascus’ request, and their consultations and contribution to the restoration of peace between Azerbaijan and Armenia late last year as important instances of their successful cooperation.

As regards Syria, Velayati said, Tehran and Moscow’s “very effective cooperation” helped the Arab country triumphantly resist “an imposed international war” that was recruiting more than 70 countries. He was referring to the 2014 invasion of Syria by a bloated United States-led coalition under the pretext of fighting the Takfiri terrorist group of Daesh.

Velayati said the strategic nature of the Russo-Iranian relations warranted effective cooperation on regional and international arenas.

The Russian ambassador, for his part, expressed delight over the progressive quality of bilateral ties, noting that the two countries have taken “effective steps” towards enhancing relations.

Iran will raze Tel Aviv and Haifa to the ground if Israel makes mistake: defense minister

1→ He said Iran is now capable of maintaining stability and security.

“Fortunately, today the Islamic Republic of Iran has all the dimensions of power to maintain the stability of the country, and one of the salient features of the soft power of the Islamic Republic, which has various components, is the axis of resistance. The regional power of the Islamic Republic of Iran is another feature one of whose results are resistance groups,” the defense minister pointed out.

Hatami’s remarks came after several Israeli officials issued stern threats against Iran, claiming that Israel is updating plans to attack Iran’s nuclear sites.

Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz has recently issued threats against Iran in what appeared to be a message to both Tehran and Washington that Israeli concerns about the 2015 nuclear deal – formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) – should be taken into account in any future nuclear talks, otherwise Israel would “independently” make reckless moves.

“If the world stops them before, it’s very much good. But if not, we must stand inde-

pendently and we must defend ourselves by ourselves,” Gantz told Fox News.

He also echoed threats issued by top Israeli general Aviv Kochavi that Israeli armed forces could attack targets inside Iran.

The Israeli military is updating plans to strike Iranian nuclear sites and is prepared to act independently, Gantz said, claiming that Israel has identified numerous targets inside Iran that would hurt its ability to develop a nuclear bomb.

Following Biden’s win in the United States presidential election, Kochavi, chief of staff of Israel’s armed forces, exactly issued the same threat against Iran while warning Biden against rejoining the JCPOA. In a rare comment on American foreign policy, Kochavi warned Biden against rejoining the nuclear deal and even threatened Iran with military action.

“With the changing of the administration in the United States, the Iranians have said they want to return to the previous agreement. I want to state my position, the position that I give to all my colleagues when I meet them around the world: Returning to the 2015 nuclear agreement or even to an agreement



that is similar but with a few improvements is a bad thing, and it is not the right thing to do,” Kochavi said.

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

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

Conference.

Iran has warned Israel against making any mistakes, vowing to strongly respond to any Israeli adventurism.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly warns against any adventurism by Israeli regime and reserves its inherent right to self-defense to decisively respond to any threat or wrongful act perpetrated by this regime,” Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran’s Ambassador and Permanent Representative to international organizations in Vienna, told the UN nuclear watchdog’s board of governors on Friday.

In his Sunday remarks, Defense Minister Hatami said, “Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei responded well to the Zionists many years ago. He said that the Zionist regime is not our main enemy and not at the level to be hostile against the Islamic Republic.”

Hatami added, “The order of the Commander-in-Chief of the Iranian Armed Forces has been carefully enacted and turned into a blueprint, which will be implemented with a single beckon by the Commander-in-Chief. I advise them not to make this mistake, even verbally.”

S P O R T S

Alireza Karimi takes silver at Matteo Pellicone

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** – Iranian freestyle wrestler Alireza Karimi claimed a silver medal at the Matteo Pellicone Ranking Series 2021.



He lost to Kollin Moore in the 97kg final in Rome, Italy. Both wrestlers exchanged a point each for step out before the Iranian scored a takedown to lead 3-1. His continued pressure on Moore was about to pay off with a step out but the American survived the push and countered with a double leg to score a takedown. That gave him the lead on criteria and the gold.

Alisher YERGALI from Kazakhstan and American Hayden Nicholas Zillmer settled for a joint bronze.

The competition serves as a UWW Ranking Series event for the 2021 World Championships in Oslo, Norway, later this year.

Around 360 wrestlers from 32 different countries are participating in the tournament.

Persepolis complete signing of Shahriyar Moghanlou

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** – Santa Clara forward Shahriyar Moghanlou joined Persepolis on Sunday for the rest of the season.

The 26-year-old forward has joined the Iranian giants from Santa Clara on loan.

Moghanlou signed for Portuguese club in September on a three-year contract but failed to shine in his first experience abroad.

The details of the fee contract have not been released. Persepolis eye title in Iran league for the fifth time in a row. Nazemi elected Motorcycle and Automobile Federation of Iran president

TEHRAN - Maziar Nazemi was elected as head of Motorcycle & Automobile Federation of Iran.

In the presidential elections held at the Iran’s Academy Olympic, Nazemi was elected for a four-year term till 2025. He was elected as head of the federation with 25 votes out of 38 votes in the second round.

He was working as the federation acting president since last year’s January.

Nazemi has already worked as TV commentator and spokesman of Iran’s Ministry of Youth and Sport.

Foolad Sirjan, Shardari Urmia into Iran volleyball league final

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** – Foolad Sirjan and Shahrdiri Urmia booked their tickets in the final match of the Iran Volleyball Super League.

Shahrdiri earned a hard-fought 3-2 (23-25, 26-24, 25-17, 23-25, 15-10) win over Labanariat Haraz at the Iran Volleyball Federation Hall in Tehran.

Foolad also defeated Sepahan in straight sets (27-25, 25-15, 25-21) to advance to the final.

The Iranian Super League (ISL) is a professional volleyball league in Iran at the top of the Iranian volleyball league system. It was founded in 1975 as the Pasargard Cup, but after the Iranian Revolution it was renamed to the first Division.

In 1997 the league system was revamped and the Iranian Super League was established. Paykan Tehran have won the most titles in the new Super League with 12 titles.

Mohammadnabi quits as Iran football federation secretary general

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** – The Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) secretary general Mehdi Mohammadnabi stepped down as his position on Sunday.

He was appointed as FFIRI secretary general in March as Ebrahim Shakouri’s replacement.

Mohammadnabi is the former general manager of Iranian football club Gostaresh Pars Khodro.

He was also a vice-president of Persepolis and a member of the Board of Directors during his tenure there.

Last week, Shahabeddin Azizi Khadem was elected as president of Iran football federation on Sunday for a four-year term.

Three coaches shortlisted for Aluminum hot seat

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** – Hossein Faraki, Saket Elhami and Farhad Kazemi are three candidates to take charge of Aluminum football team.

Aluminum head coach Rasoul Khatibi left the team on Feb. 20 to lead Tractor.

Aluminum lost to Sepahan 6-1 in Matchday 17 of the Iran professional League (IPL) on Saturday.

Now, the Arak-based club’s officials are going to find a replacement for Khatibi.

Aluminum, who won promotion to the IPL in the current season, are ninth in the 16-team table.

Growth returns to stock market

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — After several days of decline, growth finally returned to Iran’s major stock exchange, Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE).

TEDPIX, the main index of the TSE, gained 5,861 points to 1.175 million on Sunday.

Over 5.553 billion securities worth 72.867 trillion rials (about \$1.734 billion) were traded at the TSE on Sunday.

The first market’s index rose 4,779 points, and the second market’s index gained 10,162 points.

TEDPIX had dropped 2.3 percent during the past Iranian calendar week.



The index closed at 1.177 million points on Wednesday (the last working day of the week).

During the past week, the indices of Social Security Investment Company, Mobarakeh Steel Company, National Iranian Copper Industry Company, Bou Ali Sina Petrochemical Company (BSPC), and Amin Investment Bank were the most widely followed indices.

TEDPIX had also dropped 2.7 percent in the week ended on February 24.

Market analyst Amir-Ali Amir-Baqeri has recently told IRNA that Iranian stock market is moving in the right direction and will reach stability in the near future.

Commodities worth \$2.9b traded at IME in a week

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — During the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday), 940,000 tons of commodities worth 123 trillion rials (about \$2.928 billion) were traded at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME).

As reported by the Public Relations and International Affairs Department of the IME, the previous week saw rise in trade volume and value of listed spot commodities with near 940,000 tons of underlying assets’ trade.

The industrial trading floor of the exchange saw trade of 478,000 tons of steel sections and 94,000 tons of copper, aluminum, zinc ingots, iron ore, coking coal, and 16 kilograms of gold bar.

In the domestic petrochemical trade venue and the export ring, market participants traded 362 tons of polymers, vacuum bottom, bitumen, polymeric material, chemical products, lube cut, base oil, insulation rolls and sulfur.

The agriculture market of the IME sold 600 tons of dates and the side market of the exchange sold 4800 tons of non-exchange-listed commodities.

Total spot market volume within the period in question reached 940,000 tons worth \$500 million showing 19 percent and 17 percent rise respectively compared to the week earlier.

As the market prepares to bid a farewell to the year 1399 in less than 15 days, trade activity is gaining momentum by traders and clients before the week-long holiday of the New Year. Therefore, the manufacturing units and plants are intensifying works of trade to secure as much commodity as they can afford for their stockpile as the hiatus is looming.



It’s worth noting that, the IME transactions surpassed last year’s trade figures in less than nine month of trade activity this year and is forecast to wrap up higher by 35 percent than the year earlier.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Tire output rises 18% in 11 months on year

1 → Production of the tires of light agricultural vehicles experienced a growth of 47 percent to stand at 3,971 tons, and that of the heavy ones rose 14 percent to stand at 16,597 tons.

Meanwhile, 5,907 tons of road building and industrial vehicle tires were produced, with a 14-percent growth compared to the first eleven months of the past year.

The bicycle and motorcycle tire output stood at 17,830 tons, indicating 30 percent growth.

In early August 2020, an official with Iran’s Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry said that increasing the amount of investment making for the production of the tire in the country is a necessity.

Kamran Kargar, the acting head of planning, supplying, and market regulating office of the ministry, said the consumption of tires is noticeable in Iran due to the country’s big

transportation fleet.

“Now the ground is properly prepared for the production of light and heavy vehicle tires in the country, and investment making will play a significant role both for the establishment of new production units and for launching development projects”, the official noted.

Having an annual production capacity of 426,000 tons of tire, Iran accounts for 41 percent of tire output in the West Asian region, according to the deputy director of the non-metal industries office of the Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry.

Mohsen Safdari has said that 11 tire production units are active in the country creating jobs for 14,500 people.

He said 426,000 tons is the nominal capacity, while the real output is less than this figure as some units are working with 60-70 percent of their capacity.



“Iranian tire industry is dependent on foreign raw materials by 40 percent, so we are self-reliant by 60 percent in this field”, the official announced.

In a bid to nullify the U.S. sanctions, Iran is determined to strengthen its domestic production to achieve self-reliance.

Selecting the motto of “Pickup in Production” for the previous Iranian calendar year (March 2019-March 2020), and the slogan of “Surge in Production” for the current year indicates the Islamic Republic’s determination to achieve this goal.

To this end, the Iranian ministries besides the private sector have been outlining their programs for the surge in production.

Last week, the spokesman of the Iranian Tire Syndicate said that given the process of tire production in the country in the current Iranian calendar year, it is hoped that a new record will be achieved in this regard in this year.

Mostafa Tanha told IRNA that if a record high will be posted, it will be a big success achieved despite the limitations imposed by the sanctions and also the coronavirus pandemic.

Iran, Iraq discuss joining railway networks

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami met with his Iraqi counterpart Nasser Al-Shibli on Saturday to discuss expanding transport cooperation, especially joining of the two countries’ railway networks.

As IRNA reported, the issues regarding the connection of the railway from Iran’s Shalamcheh to Basra province in Iraq was the main issue explored in the meeting, while improving the quality of land, sea, air, and rail transportation was also explored by the officials.

Speaking in the event, Al-Shibli announced Iraq’s readiness to work on a transit system with the Iranian side, based on administrative instructions for transit cooperation with Iraq’s other neighboring countries such as Turkey, Syria, and Jordan.

He went on to announce plans to hold meetings for resolving the remaining issues and finalizing an agreement in this regard between the two sides.

Eslami for his part pointed to transportation as “vital for trade”, and expressed the Islamic Republic of Iran’s readiness to strengthen transport relations between the two neighboring countries in order to improve mutual economic cooperation.

Heading a delegation, Eslami arrived in Baghdad on Saturday morning to meet with Iraqi officials and follow up on previously reached agreements for cooperation in various transportation fields.



Transport Minister Mohammad Eslami (5th L) and RAI Head Saeid Rasouli (3rd L) meet with Iraqi officials in Baghdad on Saturday.

Head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (known as RAI) Saeid Rasouli also accompanied Eslami in his visit to Iraq. Back in May 2020, Eslami had discussed the expansion of transportation cooperation with his Iraqi counterpart over the phone.

In the conversation, Eslami expressed hope that with the new Iraqi minister taking office, a new chapter will be begun in the two neighbors’ mutual cooperation.

“I am confident that with your presence in this position, we will experience a different and prosperous period,” Eslami said, adding “I am ready to meet [with you] both in Tehran

and Iraq and to be able to lay the cornerstone for long-term cooperation.”

Mentioning Shalamcheh-Basra railway project, the Iranian official said, “We have completed the railway to Shalamcheh for many years and I declare my readiness to invest in the completion of the project from Shalamcheh to Basra.”

In order to complete the Shalamcheh-Basra railroad, the 17-kilometer Khorramshahr-Shalamcheh railroad project was completed in 2011 to connect the Iranian railroads to Iraq, and it was decided to join the city of Basra.

To build the railroad, the Iraqi side was to take measures inside Iraq from Shalamcheh to Basra, but due to economic problems and a shortage of funds, the Iraqi government has so far refused to build this part of Shalamcheh’s railroad to Basra.

According to an earlier agreement reached with Iraqi authorities, Iran will construct a 700-meter bridge on Arvand River for the railroad to pass above the river and reach Basra Train Station after 32 kilometers.

Iran and Iraq have been taking significant steps for boosting economic relations in the past few years.

The two countries are following up plans for increasing their bilateral economic trade to over \$20 billion.

In March 2019, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani headed a high-ranking political and trade delegation in a visit to Iraq, during which the two sides inked several agreements and emphasized the expansion of trade ties.

Return of Iran’s energy revenues accelerating: fin. min

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Farhad Dejjasand has said that the country’s oil revenues have increased despite the sanctions and new channels are being opened for the return of foreign assets into the country.

Since the re-imposition of the U.S. sanctions on Iran, a great amount of the country’s energy revenues was blocked in the target countries like South Korea and Iraq due to the restrictions imposed on the banking transactions with the Islamic Republic.

After the outbreak of coronavirus and its

negative impacts on the world’s economic condition, Iran began demanding access to its foreign assets since early 2020 and continuously criticized its trading partners for giving in to the U.S. pressures and not standing up against Washington’s unilateralism.

Now, after months of serious pursuit by the government, Iran’s assets in foreign banks are gradually returning to the country in the form of either euro currency or payment for the imports of basic commodities.

last week, Hamid Hosseini the deputy head of Iran-Iraq Joint Chamber of Commerce said that the Arab country has started

repaying its energy debts to Iran and part of the dues has been settled.

Iraq owes Iran over \$6 billion for electricity and gas imports from the Islamic Republic, of which \$3 billion is claimed to be blocked and inaccessible in the Trade Bank of Iraq (TBI).

In December 2020, Iran reduced its gas exports to the neighboring country by over 45 million cubic meters a day (mcm/d), threatening to further reduce the current five mcm/d of gas supply to three mcm/d.

Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian visited Iraq in late December 2020 to meet with senior officials from the country and

discuss the country’s energy debts to Iran.

Also, Head of Iran-South Korea Joint Chamber of Commerce Hossein Tanhaei announced in late-February that \$1 billion of Iran’s frozen funds in South Korea will soon be transferred to an Iran-Switzerland financial channel to be paid for foodstuff, medicine, and medical equipment.

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

Petropars conducts nearly 4,200m of drilling in SP phase 11

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The managing director of Petropars Company, which is in charge of developing phase 11 of Iran’s South Pars gas field in the Persian Gulf, said his company has conducted nearly 4,200 meters of drilling in this phase despite unstable winter weather conditions.

“Despite the unfavorable and unstable winter weather conditions in the Persian Gulf, the drilling operations of phase 11 of South Pars are underway without interruption, and so far, 4180 meters of drilling has been done,” Hamid-Reza Masoudi said.

According to the official, the drilling operations of the mentioned phase begun on December 14, 2020.

He pointed out that in order to achieve early production from this phase, drilling operations will be conducted in two stages, saying: “In the first stage, a descriptive well and three production wells will be drilled and completed, and then after the installation of the phase’s platform, eight more wells will be drilled and completed.”

Emphasizing that Petropars tries to make maximum use of the capacities and capabilities of domestic companies and workforce in developing this phase, Masoudi said: “This project has so far offered direct employment for about 500 people while creating indirect job opportunities for about 2,000 people.”



Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh, on December 14, 2020, ordered the official beginning of the drilling operations for the first well of Phase 11 in the Persian Gulf waters.

An offshore drilling rig, belonging to Mapna Drilling Company, was settled at the mentioned phase’s SPD-11B platform

on November 6, 2020.

In the early production stage, the output of this phase will reach 500 million cubic feet (equivalent to 14 million cubic meters) per day.

In November 2016, Iran signed a \$4.8 billion agreement with a consortium including France’s Total, China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), and Petropars, a subsidiary of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), on development of phase 11, however Total and CNPCI pulled out of the project in 2019 due to the U.S. sanctions.

Currently, Petropars is developing the phase 11 project after its partners left the contract.

The South Pars phase 11 project will have a production capacity of two billion cubic feet per day or 370, 000 barrels of oil equivalent per day. The produced gas will be fed into Iran’s gas network.

South Pars is the world’s largest gas field, covering an area of 3,700 square kilometers of Iran’s territorial waters.

The giant field is estimated to contain a significant amount of natural gas, accounting for about eight percent of the world’s reserves, and approximately 18 billion barrels of condensate. The field is divided into 24 standard phases.

Stock market seen stable for next 6 months

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian Capital Market Analyst Soheil Kolahchi believes the stock market is not going to go through many ups and downs over the next six months and the market is expected to follow a stable trend.

“In the coming months, the market will not fall heavily, but we also can’t expect the index to enter an uptrend soon,” Kolahchi told IRNA on Sunday.

Pointing to the recent decline in the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE) main index, the expert said: “The stock market is in a good condition both technically and fundamentally, but despite the positive measures that the Securities and

Exchange Organization (SEO) has put on the agenda to improve the market, it is still following a downward trend; and this has increased the shareholders’ skepticism and anxiety.”

He noted that the Iranian stock market is usually negative during the last Iranian calendar month of Esfand (February 19-March 20) and that is a normal trend for the country’s capital market in the last days of the year.

“Because most of the companies active in the market are looking for selling their shares and somehow turn their assets into liquidity by the yearend,” Kolahchi explained.

“We look forward to a positive trend of trading in the next year, he said, adding that

the market is now in a very good condition for growth and we can hope for positive days in the stock market and improve the situation in the coming months”, he added.

In late December 2020, the vice-chairman of TSE’s board of directors had said that the stock market will spend the last months of the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20) calmly.

Mentioning investigation of the periodical (six-month and nine-month) reports of the companies’ performance, Javad Eshqi-Nejad said that given the foreign currency exchange rate situation and the appropriate sales volume, in this period, almost the expectations of listed

companies have been met and positive results have been provided for the capital market.

Regarding the continuation of the stock market trend in the first three months of 2021, he said: “In this regard, the main issue is political relations and international behavior; We seem to be achieving good results in the international arena.”

While predicting that the stock market will be calm in the last months of this year, he said: “But for the next year, according to the budget, we may face new events whose analysis can have special effects on various industries; in a way that these effects may be associated with some industries for the next 2-3 years.”

Changing strategies: From Trump to Biden

By Batoul Sbeity

Although it may seem from the outset that the first major military action of the Biden administration in eastern Syria signals an escalation from the side of the U.S., the reality is that it is a strike in the direction of American compromise.

The general indication of the Biden administration's foreign policy is heading towards reversing Trump's policies, which had diverted the American establishment away from its general framework within the past four years. Through this attack, America's message to the nations of the region is that you have to accept our presence, as we do not intend to leave; at the same time, it wishes to negotiate with Iran and come to an agreement that involves granting certain rights to the latter, denied by the previous administration.

Within the past four years, America was under the label of 'Trump'; it has now returned back to the label of the American establishment.

As opposed to Trump's unilateral approach, Biden has re-directed America towards the co-operation and coordination of policies with Europe and NATO under the sponsorship of the American strategies. The reality is that Biden is reversing Trump's policies that were taken outside of the scope of the established strategies, such as returning back to the Paris Agreement on climate change, easing restrictions on Iranian diplomats' movements in New York, withdrawing Trump's snapback claim on UN sanctions against Iran, and signalling the green light for South Korea to free billions of dollars in Iranian assets, amongst other things.

Biden's administration represents a return to the deep state trajectory of securing long-term investments and interests in the region. This relies on policies that, on the one hand, deal with the establishments' growing threats and depending on their magnitude. For example, the economic growth of China, which remains on the course to be the only major economy to have expanded in 2020 during the COVID-19 crisis, has rattled Washington. Add to this the Russian influence in West Asia, a region that prior to the Syrian conflict was an exclusive zone for the West. Russia's strategies that are based on their presence in Syria, their growing influence in Libya, and the expansion of their military reach to areas in Africa like Sudan, has given them a strong grounding in the region.

Indeed, American policy's bedrock rests on trade, so it can remain the superpower that dictates the word order, no matter the means of exploitation by which they achieve their interests. It is one based on American prestige and hegemony. On the other hand, the establishment wishes to strengthen its allies, including Saudi Arabia, in the region. For example, it ensures smooth economic activity and production in these countries in order to continually benefit from their investments and have leverage over the energy supplies in this strategic region.

This is whilst the Saudi kingdom fully depends on American security and has given them all their cards, such that they are not in a position to argue or dictate matters. A recent example is the U.S. release of the 2018 intelligence report that concluded the murder of Khashoggi was done on behalf of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

Indeed, this report was revealed as part of the American establishment's wider strategy of uncovering which Trump had denied and placed under the table, as he rebuffed and falsely asserted the U.S. intelligence was not certain about bin Salman's role. Since this case has been under the watchful eye of the world and is not something the U.S. can afford to turn a blind eye to, the current administration has sought to heal the deep scar left by Trump, through



polishing their image to the world and under the pretence that the establishment cares about human rights; it is simply Trump's mishandling that is to blame. Indeed, this diversion of strategy is a matter of not remaining silent on issues that would undermine the way America seeks to promote itself onto the world stage, as it is a case of embarrassment to remain silent in order for it to safeguard its brutal interests.

This strategy is in stark contrast with the trajectory of Trump's administration, which relied on short term policies of bargains, thereby using his certain authorities as a president to exercise what was in contradiction to the line of the deep state; this resulted in weakening the fixed American institutions, for example, the military, during his tenure.

Trump's trade policy was one of milking Saudi Arabia and inevitably leading to its bankruptcy through agreements for open arms trade that America can withdraw any time, spanning a decade and worth over half a trillion dollars. Trump does not realize that whilst this temporarily boosts the American economy, the strategy of maximizing and incurring short-term gains will not serve the American interests in the long run.

Additionally, his efforts to pull out from the region reflects his balance-of-payments mentality, since it proved more expensive to remain in the region than to pull out, whereas the deep state recognizes that strategies cannot be built on such one-dimensional policies and rather function on the basis of influence and prestige. This was also triggered by the largest discoveries of proved reserves of crude oil in 2019, in areas such as Texas and New Mexico, since Trump considered domestic energy security to be the main concern for exploiting the region. Given the relation spanning Saudi Arabia and the West is built upon the formula 'protection for oil', now that America has no need for Saudi oil, it expects them to still pay for the empty security and legitimacy they grant the kingdom. However, the deep state recognizes that it is not simply concerned with obtaining oil from West Asia, as much as it is with having control over a strategic region of vast energy reserves and trade routes, through which it can have leverage over the whole world economy.

Biden has come to put a halt to what Trump had not finished, that is pulling out from West Asia.

At the same time- America's grip- no matter how strong will begin to loosen, triggered through expanding the spectrum of sanctions and sieges on nations, as this has encouraged the opposing side to construct alternative systems that threaten the American order. For example, China has been steadily working towards introducing a parallel international financial system, that could operate outside the U.S. dollar's influence, such as the alterna-

tive international payment system to SWIFT called CIPS.

Sanctions also fuel the growth of the black market; for example, lack of medical equipment in Iran has led traffickers to profit from the sale of an underground supply of life-saving drugs, which may contain components brought from countries where a lack of robust medical standards have seen them banned.

While Trump's sanctioning and reckless actions have incurred massive harm on the nation of Iran, it is through such policies that Iran has been put to the test and has shown its strength. For example, Iran's targeting of Al Assad Airbase shows its uncompromising stance that has left the Islamic Republic's mark on history. Moreover, the recent U.S. release of the Iranian ballistic storm on the airbase is another indication of Biden's changing policies, signalling that the American establishment did not agree with Trump's assassination of Major General Soleimani, hence revealing the blow this incurred on the American prestige thereafter.

The strategic change in the American establishment's policies depends on the balance of forces on the ground that is dynamic in nature, and the entity that wants to influence the scene needs to take account of the developments and changes occurring, otherwise they will remain outside of the ground reality. The establishment is taking these factors into account and, as a result, seeks to build strong relations and to get rid of previous policies. For example, America sees that it has no choice but to give the green light for other countries to unfreeze Iranian assets, despite the fact that this will allow Iran to grow in strength; hence America is in front of a real problem. On the flip side, if they deal too strongly with the opposing side, as did Trump, this will also enable a strong reaction, that will be to their disadvantage.

How does Biden's administration seek to deal with Iran? There is no way they can get rid of Iran, nor can they get them to compromise on their principles and comply with American demands, whilst the maximum pressure policies of Trump's administration have not worked. If anything, Iran has survived through them and managed to expand its capabilities. As a result, Biden seeks a formulation for co-existence within the space, which is within a formula of understanding that does not allow the tensions to reach the conflict's extent.

However, the main obstruction is Israel, which is an existential issue

for Iran. No solution can be found with respect to co-existing in their presence; this is especially an issue for America since Iran is moving forward and expanding its capabilities. Unless Israel is dismantled, there will be constant tension in the region, as it is an entity rejected by the people of the surrounding neighbouring nations. At the same time, America has not reached the point where it will forego sustaining Israel despite the fact it represents a heavy burden on America's shoulders. This is due to the complexity of doing so on a historical and psychological level, whilst the general culture of the far-right has internalized the need for Israel on a theological level.

The reality is that the affairs will go in this direction until it becomes uncontrollable. Indeed, Israel is the stick that America uses to punish others in the region, and when this stick becomes ineffective- due to the changing balance of powers that are not in its favor- and when this stick itself needs another stick to provide it with protection, it will lose its functional role.

Hence, a change in strategy to secure the supreme American interests will be pursued, which will eventually necessitate foregoing Israel. Indeed, the recent U.S. revealing of Israel's nuclear facility expansion in Dimona is an indication of the American establishment's changing policy for Israel and a signal for this regime to know its limits with respect to the important American interests.

Given that America does not want to leave the region, and the people of the region are rejecting the American presence, they are preparing the grounds for this to become a reality, for example through attacking American bases, such that its presence is no longer stable, and America is unable to carry out its intended work.

At the same time, America does not have the capability nor the capacity for a full-blown occupation.

Having put Biden's recent military attack into context, it should be clear that the apparent military escalation serves the purpose of compromise and not war; hence the other side was told about the attack prior and headquarters were emptied, whilst it was strategically planned on Syrian soil, an open battleground for all, in order for America to claim that it seeks to respect Iraq's sovereignty.

Anti-Netanyahu protesters attacked in 37th consecutive week of demos

1 → One protester was reportedly assaulted near Moshav Yavne'el in northern Israel. "Two haredi young men walked past us and started tearing down signs ... one of them attacked a protester, tossed her glasses and her phone ... she was bleeding from her nose," a protester told N12.

Other violent and verbal assaults directed at protesters were reported in Tel Aviv, Karmiel, Moshav Eliakim, Soleim Junction and Jalama Bridge near Haifa.

'Russian, Syrian missile strikes target militants smuggling oil to Turkey'

Russian and Syrian military forces have launched a barrage of missiles at makeshift refineries in Syria's northwestern province of Aleppo, causing a massive blaze as hundreds of tankers caught fire in the area that is controlled by Turkish troops and their allied Takfiri militants.

Local sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said a series of strikes were launched from Russian warships and by Syrian government forces on local oil refineries near the towns of al-Bab and Jarablus on Friday, sparking huge fires.

The sources added that the missile strikes took place as Turkish-backed Takfiri terrorists were trying to smuggle hundreds of trucks loaded with oil across the Syrian-Turkish border.

The fire spread to about 400 oil tankers, according to the sources.

Resistance News

Three Gazan fishermen killed in projectile attack on boat

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Three Palestinian fishermen were killed on Sunday morning when a projectile fell onto their boat off the shore of Khan Yunis, south of the besieged Gaza Strip.

A reporter for the Palestinian Information Center (PIC) said that the head of the fishermen syndicate in Gaza asserted that three fishermen were killed in a projectile attack and that their bodies arrived at Naser Hospital in Khan Yunis, without providing further details.

In this regard, the Palestinian interior ministry in Gaza said it started investigating the death of three fishermen following an explosion in their boat off the coast of Khan Yunis.

Such development took place as earlier reports in the morning talked about Israeli attacks on Gazan fishermen and farmers.

Local sources told the PIC reporter that Israeli forces opened fire with live ammunition and water cannons at fishermen and their boats during their presence within three nautical miles off the shore of al-Sudaniya area in the north of Gaza City.

In the east of Gaza, Israeli forces opened fire from watchtowers and military vehicles at farmers and shepherds in the east of Khan Yunis City, forcing them to leave the area and go home.

Ex-Lebanese diplomat doubts MBS will be allowed to enter U.S.

“It does not seem that the Palestinian cause is a priority for most of the Arab states,” says Massoud Maalouf

1 → Unfortunately, with Trump's presidency, the U.S. gave everything to Israel and took all the negotiating cards from the hands of the Palestinians. With the Biden administration, the two-state solution is back on the table. Mr. Hady Amr, who Biden has appointed as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Israeli and Palestinian Affairs, has started contacts with the two sides to restart negotiations. However, this issue is not a priority for the Biden administration and I do not expect serious developments on this front.

How do you describe Trump's performance and policies in West Asia? Do you think that Abraham Accords and Deal of The Century served Palestinian interests?

Trump has done everything possible to please Netanyahu. He caused lots of damage to the Palestinian cause. The Deal of the Century is what I would call the Netanyahu Deal. The Abraham Accords have not been good for the Palestinians. The Palestinian interests should have been taken into consideration before Arab countries normalized with Israel. Now there is little leverage for the Palestinian negotiations.

How do you see Arab states' role in



supporting the Palestinian cause? Is there any consistent stance towards Palestine?

It does not seem that the Palestinian cause is a priority for most of the Arab states. I should add that the divisions among the Palestinians do not encourage Arab states to be more helpful to the Palestinians. Also, the divisions and the troubles within a number of Arab states prevent them from helping solve the Palestinian problems while they are unable to solve their own internal ones.

How do you measure the Biden administration's attitude towards Saudi Arabia? Is Biden going to penalize Saudi princes because of their close

collaboration with Trump?

I think that Biden will try to balance the interests of the U.S. with his human rights agenda and priorities. He has said clearly that he wants to see an end to the Yemen war and his administration is reviewing weapons sales to Saudi Arabia. I doubt that MBS will be invited to the U.S. even if he becomes king.

Saudi Arabia and the U.S. are longtime allies and they have common interests. Maybe the relations between the two countries will continue to be good but without direct contact between Biden and MBS. Some other members of the administration might be allowed to keep in touch with the Saudi crown prince.

While the European troika and the U.S. are focusing on Iran's nuclear deal, nobody pays attention to the Israeli nuclear arsenal. What is your opinion?

The Israeli nuclear arsenal has always been subject to question by many states. This issue has been discussed in the UN and many other instances, but we all know the support Israel gets from the U.S. and European countries, and we also know that even Russia is not pushing hard on this issue.

First Announcement



IN THE NAME OF GOD

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

INTERNATIONAL TENDER No:99/108-58/10

Tender Holder:
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Tender :
PurchasingSite equipment to convert archived video resources in accordance with the technical specifications and other terms and conditions mentioned in the tender documents

Deadline and how to receive the tender documents:
From **9.3.2021 (1399/12/19)** by **14 p.m.** until on **Monday 15/3/2021 (1399/12/25)** with presentation of introductory letter by company or its representative and the receipt of paying the documents fee.

Place of receiving the tender document:
Interested participants may refer to purchasing (KALA) Dept. , 4th Floor of IRIB Administration Complex, Hotel Esteghlal St. Vali –Assr Ave, Tehran, Iran

The fee of the tender documents and how to deposit it:
Submission of payment receipt for the amount of 1,000,000 Rials to account No.4101029171204273 (IBAN: IR310100004101029171204273) with CENTRAL BANK OF IRAN in the name of IRIB.

Type and amount of guarantee for participation to tender:
The amount of deposit for participant in tender is USD20200 fixed or its equivalent in Rials 5/050/000/000 which should be in the form of Bank Guarantee.

Time and place of delivering priced bid:
The sealed evaluation qualitative envelop in addition A, B&C packages/envelopes should be submitted no later than **9 a.m. on 17th Apr 2021 (1400/1/28)** and at the address mentioned in 4th clause.

Time and place of opening evaluation qualitative envelopes:
The date of opening the evaluation qualitative envelopes is on **17th Apr 2021 (1400/1/28)** at 10 a.m. in the office of purchasing manager.

Time and place of opening envelopes:
The date of opening the envelopes A&B is on **18th Apr 2021 (1400/1/29)** at **3 p.m.** in the office of Financial Vice President. The bidders must have independent auditor's report and also qualification documents from related authorities for acting in the Field of the Tender Subject in obligatory
Fore more information please see :www.iriboffice.ir/tendersandhttp://iets.mporg.ir/

Purchasing (Kala) Dept., IRIB

Seminar sharpens focus on how to safeguard traditional medicine

➔ Iranian traditional medicine is one of the most ancient forms of traditional medicine. It is grounded in the concept of four humors: phlegm (Balgham), blood (Dam), yellow bile (Safra'), and black bile (Sauda'). The four humors concept is based on the teachings of Rhazes and Avicenna into an elaborate medical system.



Some scholars believe that efforts for revitalizing Iranian traditional medicine in recent years have shaped two main attitudes: evidence-based medicine, and quackery. While many academics use evidence-based scientific measurements, there is also a pseudoscientific stream in modern academia.

Globally, this medicine reached its peak in Iran, concurrent with polymaths such as Muhammad ibn Zachariah al-Razi, Ibn Sina, and Esmail Jorjani. Ancient Iranian Medicine, the basic knowledge of four humors as a healing system, was developed by Hakim Ibn Sina in his medical encyclopedia The Canon of Medicine.

Iranian traditional medicine strongly focuses on prioritizing health maintenance and disease prevention over treatment.

Historical objects seized in western Iran

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – Iranian police have recently confiscated a total of 18 historical relics from a smuggler in Qorveh county, western Kordestan province, CHTN reported on Sunday.

The objects are estimated to date back to the [early] Islamic era, said Rasul Moradi, a senior police official in charge of protecting cultural heritage.



Four metal detectors were seized from the culprit, who was handed over to judiciary officials for further investigation.

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.

Prehistorical, Islamic-era relics donated to cultural heritage department

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – A total of 16 historical relics, which date back to the prehistorical and early Islamic times, have recently been donated to the cultural heritage and tourism directorate of Kerman province, southeast Iran.

These objects, which include earthenware jars, cylindrical vessels, burners, clay statues, bronze bracelet, earthenware bead, etc., date back to the Islamic period and the third millennium BC. CHTN quoted a provincial police official as saying on Sunday.



The police official, however, did not mention the name(s) of the donor(S), adding: "Fortunately, the police forces, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, honorary members, as well as security and law enforcement agencies, protect the historical sites and monuments for 24 hours a day."

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

Attention devoted to revive archaeological hill in northwest Iran

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – A restoration project is scheduled to commence on Tepe Qalaichi to help revive the archaeological hill, which is situated in Bukan, West Azarbaijan province, the provincial tourism chief has said.

A budget of two billion rials (\$47,000 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) is needed to be allocated to the project, Jalil Jabbari announced on Sunday.

Bukan's Municipality has announced readiness for collaborating in the project, the official added.

Back in December, a total of 49 glazed bricks attributed to the Qalaichi archaeological site that had been looted and smuggled out of Iran some four decades ago, were returned home with the aid of Swiss officials.

"49 pieces of glazed bricks, which were smuggled out of Iran on the advent of the Islamic Revolution, were recuperated with a great deal of efforts made by the cultural heritage ministry, and the ministry of foreign affairs," according to Ali-Asghar Mounesan, the minister of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.



"The cultural heritage ministry in close collaboration with the ministry of foreign affairs, filed a lawsuit... as it presented relevant documents and evidence to the competent

international authorities. And ultimately, the historical objects were returned to the country after years of follow-up," the official explained.

Dar ul-Funun has potential to turn into school of traditional arts: minister

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – Dar ul-Funun, which is a symbol for the start of the modern education era in the country, holds the potential to be turned into a school of traditional arts, Iran's tourism minister said on Sunday.

"Some schools of the Ministry of Education, such as Dar ul-Funun, have a very good capacity to become schools of traditional arts," Ali-Asghar Mounesan said.

He made the remarks during a meeting with Education Minister Mohsen Haji-Mirzaei, in which they discussed ways to deepen cooperation in the fields of travel services, preservation of cultural heritage, as well as equipping and enriching cultural places.

Established in 1851 in the heart of Tehran, Dar ul-Funun is renowned as Iran's first modern university. Parts of the property have recently been handsomely restored to make it into a museum on education.

Its courtyard houses an atmospheric garden that is hemmed by walls featuring Persian poetry inscribed on decorative tiles.

According to Encyclopedia Iranica, the number of students in its first year reflected an immediate popularity of Dar ul-Funun, with about 105 students enrolling in seven main subjects.

The center was opened by Mirza Taqi Khan Farahani

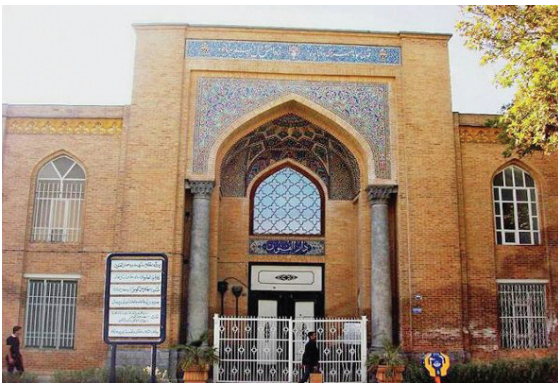
(1807-1852), who was nicknamed 'Amir Kabir' who was chancellor under Naser al-Din Shah Qajar, appearing to be one of the most capable and innovative figures in the whole Qajar period.

Traditional arts are learned from person to person, passed from one generation to the next, and influenced by culture, family, ethnicity, and era. With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the number of cities and villages registered by the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next.

In January 2020, the cities of Shiraz, Malayer, and Zanjan and the village of Qasemabad were designated by the WCC-Asia Pacific Region, putting Iran's number of world crafts cities and villages from ten to 14.

Shiraz was named a "world city of [diverse] handicrafts". Malayer was made a global hub for woodcarving and carved-wood furniture. Zanjan gained the title of a "world city of filigree". And Qasemabad village, which is nationally known for its traditional costumes, was also promoted to a world hub of handicrafts. Chador Shab, a kind of homemade outer-garment for women, was, however, the main subject for the WCC assessment for the village.

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 ornamentalations with precious and semi-precious gemstones are traditionally exported to Iraq, Afghanistan, Germany, the U.S., the UK, and other countries.

Mausoleum of generous benefactor Haji Mohammadreza Lari restored

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – The oldest mausoleum of Haji Mohammadreza Lari, who was a generous Iranian benefactor of the 19th century, has been restored in the city of Torbat-e Heydarieh, northeastern Khorasan Razavi province, the city's tourism chief said on Sunday.

"The mausoleum belongs to Haji Mohammadreza Lari, one of the late, prominent benefactors and elites of the city, who built several public structures including five caravanserais and two bridges, all of which have been endowed," Ali Moham-



madi said on Sunday.

The restoration project involved strengthening the structure as well as lightening the roof and repairing the flooring, the official added.

In collaboration with Torbat-e Heydarieh's Municipality, the monument is planned to turn into a museum in near future, he explained.

One of the caravanserais built by Lari, Known as Robat-e Lari, is one of the prominent tourist attractions in the region and was inscribed on the National Heritage list in 2002.

Located inside the historical texture of the city and near its old bazaar, the 24-room caravanserai is still working after over 100 years.

According to archaeological studies, Torbat-e Heydarieh is home to several historical caves due to its favorable habitat conditions and traces of habitation from about 40,000 years have been identified in the caves of the region, the official added. The history of the area stretches back to the Achaemenian Empire from the 6th to 4th century BC and the Parthian Empire from the 3rd century BC to the 3rd century CE.

Ancient sites, ruined monuments in Dehloran undergo restoration

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – Work to restore and document historical sites and ruined structures has begun across Dehloran plain in the western province of Ilam, the provincial tourism chief announced on Sunday.

A budget of one billion rials (\$23,800 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been allocated to the project, Abdolmalek Shanbehzadeh said.

Dehloran plain is one of the most significant areas of the country where a lot of archeological excavations and surveys have been carried out so far, the official added.

However, the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988) and land leveling for agricultural purposes over the past two decades have caused irreparable damage to the ancient sites across the plain, he explained.

He also noted that with a budget of two billion rials (\$47,000), an archeological survey and documentation project have recently been commenced on the historical sites.

The Dehloran plain is best known for the excavations



conducted at several prehistoric sites, which elucidated the origins and development of sedentary agricultural villages and towns in the region, and for surveys documenting the

history of settlement into the modern era.

As a relatively small and remote rural area, it has always been affected by political, economic, and technological developments in the adjacent regions of Khuzestan, the Zagros Mountains, and Mesopotamia. Beginning as early as the 3rd millennium BC and throughout its subsequent history, it was under the political control of kingdoms in one or another of these regions according to Iranica Encyclopedia.

Although no cuneiform texts have been found at any of the Dehloran sites, the most prominent mound, Tepe Musiyan, is possibly to be identified as ancient Urua, an Elamite city known from Mesopotamian texts.

Dehloran has been on a trade route linking the Zagros Mountains with Mesopotamia; in the 1st millennium, the route linking the Achaemenid capitals of Susa and Ecbatana passed through the region.

From the 18th century, Dehloran has been a winter resort for the local tribes.

Qajar-era mosque in Tabriz being restored to former glory

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – A restoration work has been commenced on the Qajar-era (1789–1925) Khalkhali mosque, which is located in the UNESCO-registered bazaar of Tabriz, the capital of East Azarbaijan province, the director of the World Heritage site has said.

Besides several passages and shops, there are several aging mosques, dating back to different historical eras, inside Tabriz historic bazaar complex, some of which need restoration, CHTN quoted Hossein Esmaeili as saying on Saturday.

The restoration project involves repairing damaged parts, flooring, and organizing the mosque with the aim of better preservation, the official added.

Tabriz Historic Bazaar Complex has been a UNESCO World Heritage site since 2010

and was mentioned by Marco Polo when he traveled the Silk Road in the Middle Ages.

A jumble of interconnected covered passages that stretches for about 5 km, the bazaar has been a melting pot of cultural exchange since antiquity. It embraces countless shops, over 20 caravanserais and inns, some 20 vast domed halls, bathhouses, and mosques, as well as other brick structures and enclosed spaces for different functions. Its history dates back to over a millennium, however, the majority of fine brick vaults that capture most visitor's eyes date from the 15th century.

Most mazes and passages offer certain commodities such as carpets, metalwork, toys, clothing, jewelry, and kitchen appliances, traditional spices, herbal remedies, and natural perfumes. One can also bump

into colorful grocery stores, bookbinders, blacksmiths, tinsmiths, coppersmiths, tobacconists, tailors, flag sellers, broadcloth sellers, carpenters, shoemakers, and knife-makers.

Several divided carpet sections across the bazaar enable visitors to watch or buy hand-woven Persian carpets and rugs with different knot densities and other features. The bazaar was also well-known and prosperous during the 13th century when Tabriz became the capital of the Safavid Dynasty (1501–1736).

The city lost its status as capital in the 16th century but remained important as a commercial hub until the end of the 18th century, with the expansion of Ottoman power. It is one of the most complete examples of the traditional commercial and cultural



system of Iran.

By the way, the city distanced its heyday as the capital was transferred eastward to Qazvin in the 16th century, but the bazaar remained vital as a commercial hub more or less.

Iranian universities improve in QS rankings

Iranian universities shine at world rankings

Times Higher Education has published its annual ranking of the world's top universities for 2021, listing 47 Iranian universities, which shows an increase of 7 universities compared to the last year.

With 47 Iranian universities ranked among 1,527 top universities of 93 countries in the world in 2021 rankings, Iran achieved a great improvement in the academic field.

Some 21 Islamic countries were also listed in the ranking, however, Iran holds the highest share with 47 universities.

With a scientific growth rate of 10.4 percent in 2019, Iran ranked second among the top 25 countries in the world, next to China with a growth rate of 12.9 percent, according to the Web of Science website.

According to statistics released by the International Web of Science Database, Iran's citation rank has always been on the rise over the last eight years, from 24 in 2012 to 16 in 2019.



Iran ranks first in terms of the number of universities in the region and among Islamic countries, according to Shanghai Ranking's

Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) 2020.

Two Iranian universities have been ranked

among the top 100 universities in Asia, according to Webometrics Ranking of World Universities for July 2020.

Moreover, 7 Iranian universities have been listed among the best 1000 worldwide; including, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences, Sharif University of Technology, Tarbiat Modares University, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Isfahan University of Technology, Iran University of Science and Technology.

In June 2020, THE Asia University Rankings 2020 ranked five Iranian universities among the top 100 universities worldwide.

The Center for Science and Technology Studies Leiden Ranking has placed 36 Iranian universities in the list of over 1,000 major universities worldwide in 2020 compared with 26 universities in 2019.

Also, five Iranian universities have been placed among the world's top 1,000 universities announced by the prestigious Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings 2021.

Major afforestation project inaugurated in Tehran



ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** — An afforestation project across one thousand hectares area of land around the city of Tehran was inaugurated on Sunday, IRNA reported.

The development of afforestation around the capital (in the form of a green belt) aims to prevent the uncontrolled

development of suburban construction, create beautiful areas, clean the air and improve the conditions of the urban environment.

The predominant plant species planted are selected from native species resistant and adapted to climatic conditions, including common ash, Judas tree, locusts, hawthorn, honeyberry, almond, Tehran pine, oak, and juniper.

This project was implemented on the occasion of National Week of Natural Resources (March 6-13).

With the development of one thousand hectares of forestry in the southern slopes of Alborz and around the city of Tehran, the area of the green belt reached more than 45,000 hectares.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

on Friday warned against "the great blight" to the ongoing process of environmental degradation, urging both people and officials to resist natural resource destruction.

Environmental destruction will endanger the "future of human beings," the Leader said after planting two fruit tree saplings on the occasion of National Tree Planting Day.

He emphasized the need to prevent incidents such as forest fires, noting that those in charge who are not committed to their duties should be held accountable.

National Tree Planting Day is annually celebrated on the fifteenth day of Esfand, the last month on the Iranian calendar, which usually corresponds with March 5. The day marks the beginning of National Week of Natural Resources.

Conservationists sound alarm of threat to jaguars from raging Amazon fires

Conservationists are sounding the alarm on the plight of the jaguar as the species continues to vanish relatively unnoticed.

Population estimates for the Americas' largest cat vary wildly, from 60,000 to 173,000. But of urgent concern is that numbers are in a steady decline due to increased threats across the 18 countries they inhabit. Numbers have dwindled by around a quarter over the last three generations with jaguars wiped out in 50 per cent of their historic range, and extinct in Uruguay and El Salvador.

"We know more about tigers and lions that are our own jaguar, our feline of the Americas, the third largest cat in the world," Dr Maria José Villanueva, WWF's Mexico conservation director and leader of the regional jaguar initiative, told The Independent.

"We're losing jaguars in many areas and starting to see shrinking populations. The biggest sub-population in the Amazon has 85 per cent of jaguars in the world but with the Amazon fires and strong deforestation rates, it's starting to become a real concern to us."

In 2018 conservation groups and 14 countries in Latin America committed to a "2030 roadmap" to strengthen protections for jaguar habitats. The plan included creating a continuous jaguar "corridor", winding up the continent from Argentina to Mexico, to provide the solitary big cat with the range it needs for survival.

The roadmap also proposed strategies to reduce conflict between humans and jaguars as well as boost sustainable development, like eco-tourism, for communities which

live in the same landscape.

However WWF reported last month that "minimal progress" had been made at the international level, even as indigenous communities continue to drive conservation work locally.

"I think that the role of indigenous peoples and local communities is fundamental. They are our main stewards of conservation, and they need to be acknowledged as such," says Dr Villanueva.

Jaguars teetered on the edge of extinction in the mid-20th century. Approximately 18,000 jaguars were killed each year until 1975 when international trade was banned. Although hunting declined, jaguars still faced retaliatory attacks by people protecting livestock, and by those who feared the large cats in remote areas.

The explosion of trade routes between Latin America and Asia in the past decade, along with the establishment of Chinese-owned mining and logging operations in the region, has played a significant role in the increased demand for wildlife products.

A 2020 report by TRAFFIC, an NGO focused on trade in wild animals, found that much of the wildlife leaving Latin America is destined for markets in China, and possibly Southeast Asia.

Jaguars are particularly vulnerable to habitat loss driven by the rampant destruction of the Amazon for agricultural expansion, logging and mining. In 2020, deforestation in the Amazon soared to a 12-year high.

Slashing and burning through the rainforest poses a twin threat to jaguars. It opens up access for trophy hunters, traf-

ficking gangs and opportunistic poachers, while the chopping up of "forest corridors" leaves the solitary cats without the expansive areas of land they need, with males often traveling hundreds of miles to find a mate.

Trapping jaguars in isolated pockets of shrinking forest also reduces their ability to hunt, reproduce and remain genetically diverse.

In February, WWF appealed to the 14 countries who agreed to the 2030 roadmap - Argentina, Brazil, Belize, Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Suriname - to do more. Conservationists also urged Guyana, French Guiana, Nicaragua and Venezuela to join the initiative.

Conservationists point to the impact that establishing a jaguar corridor will have on the climate crisis. The area encompasses over 4.8 million sq km2 of forests - an area a little larger than the EU - which capture nearly 125.9 gigatonnes of carbon emissions annually, more than three times the amount released by energy use in 2020.

WWF launched a campaign last month to bring attention to the jaguar. So far 120,000 people have signed the wildlife non-profit's petition that will be presented to international forums in the coming months.

The conservation of jaguar habitats plays a vital role in the livelihoods and cultural continuity of indigenous communities.

Like the jaguar, indigenous peoples are also threatened by deforestation, land being converted for agriculture, unsustainable mining, forest fires and urbanization.

Professor Iguaidigili López, who stud-



ied biology and specializes in intercultural bilingual education, is a member of the indigenous Guna people of Panama. She is also president of the Organization of Indigenous Women on Biodiversity (OMIUBP).

"Jaguars have a lot of significance for indigenous peoples," she told The Independent in an email. "In the Guna culture we believe that, at the beginning of humanity, jaguars were human beings."

In the Dulegaya language the word for jaguar, Igarobandur, means way, opens, person.

"The jaguar was the person who guided the forest path, the one who opened the way to the farms, he was the head of the forests. Through constant struggles to maintain balance, our heavenly father and mother turned him into the spirit of the jaguar, so that he would always be guarding the forests," Professor López added.

OMIUBP holds workshops to educate young people in indigenous communities in legends of the jaguar, linking the stories to conservation. In the past year, these have become Zoom workshops due the coronavirus pandemic, which has particularly blighted indigenous communities.

Education Ministry plans to promote tourism, preserve cultural heritage

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – The Ministry of Education plans to develop students' skills in the field of tourism and help them preserve cultural heritage.

The Ministry of Education can cooperate with the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts in the fields of travel services, acquaintance with cultural celebrities, preservation of cultural heritage, equipping and enriching cultural places, promoting tourism, Education Minister Mohsen Haji-Mirzaei said.

Supporting the development of handicrafts, holding specialized courses and workshops, participating in the establishment of vocational schools by teaching the necessary skills to the students, and the provision of skilled labor, are the other fields of cooperation, he added, IRNA reported on Sunday.

Iran ranks 10th in the world in terms of the number of historical monuments and sites registered on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Before the Islamic Revolution, Persepolis, Naghsh-e Jahan Square, and Choghaznabil were the only three UNESCO-listed monuments, but today the number has been increased this number to 24 historical sites.

The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bath-houses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 24 being inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, it aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025. So it will undeniably try its best to achieve a relatively ambitious goal but when that happens the travel industry is likely to look more altered.

The latest available data show eight million tourists visited the country during the first ten months of the past Iranian calendar year (ended March 20).

Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan has said that Iran's tourism has suffered a loss of 12 trillion rials (some \$2.85 billion) since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

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

Equivalent of Covid emissions drop needed every two years – study

Carbon dioxide emissions must fall by the equivalent of a global lockdown roughly every two years for the next decade for the world to keep within safe limits of global heating, research has shown.

Lockdowns around the world led to an unprecedented fall in emissions of about 7% in 2020, or about 2.6bn tonnes of CO2, but reductions of between 1bn and 2bn tonnes are needed every year of the next decade to have a good chance of holding temperature rises to within 1.5C or 2C of pre-industrial levels, as required by the Paris agreement.

Research published on Wednesday shows that countries were beginning to slow their rates of greenhouse gas emissions before the Covid-19 pandemic struck, but not to the levels needed to avert climate breakdown. Since lockdowns were eased in many countries last year, there have been strong signs that emissions will rise again to above 2019 levels, severely damaging the prospects of fulfilling the Paris goals.

Corinne Le Quéré, lead author of the study, said the world stood at a crucial point as governments poured money into the global economy to cope with the impacts of the pandemic. "We need a cut in emissions of about the size of the fall [from the lockdowns] every two years, but by completely different methods," she said.

Governments must prioritise climate action in their efforts to recover from the pandemic, she said. "We have failed to understand in the past that we can't have tackling climate change as a side issue. It can't be about one law or policy, it has to be put at the heart of all policy," she said. "Every strategy and every plan from every government must be consistent with tackling climate change."

The study joins other research showing that the drastic fall in greenhouse gas emissions associated with the pandemic will have little impact on long-term climate goals, and may be followed by a swift rebound unless countries take rapid action to direct their economies away from fossil fuels.

"There is a real contradiction between what governments are saying they are doing to do [to generate a green recovery], and what they are doing," said Le Quéré. "That is very worrisome."

Glen Peters, of the Cicero centre for climate research in Norway, who co-authored the paper, said structural changes were needed to economies around the world to move away from fossil fuels and other high-carbon activities.

"Emissions were lower in 2020 as fossil fuel infrastructure was used less, not because infrastructure was closed down," he said. "When fossil fuel infrastructure is put into use again, there is a risk of a big rebound in emissions in 2021, as was seen in the wake of the global financial crisis in 2009."

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 141)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

■ Past Perfect

■ گذشته‌ی دور

گذشته‌ی دور از صفت مفعولی + گذشته‌ی 'بودن' ساخته می‌شود:

I had gone	←	رفته بودم		} + رفته
You had gone	←	رفته بودی		
He had gone	←	رفته بود		
We had gone	←	رفته بودیم		
You had gone	←	رفته بودید		
They had gone	←	رفته بودند		

● تمرین ۱. به گذشته‌ی دور تبدیل کنید:

- من چند روز قبل (بیمار شدن)
- تو در اتاق (خوابیدن)
- او دوستش را به بیمارستان (بردن)
- پزشک او را (معاینه کردن)
- شما چند روز (استراحت کردن)
- آنها کمی دیر (تلفن زدن)

FDA to penalize manufacturers producing unlabeled GM foods

Iran's Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will penalize food manufacturers who have not labeled genetically modified (GM) food products, Vahid Mofid, the caretaker of the FDA department of food and beverages has announced.

All food products containing ingredients derived from GMOs must be labeled, including soybean and corn oil, rapeseed and cottonseed, he also noted.

He went on to say that eight laboratories in addition to the Energy & Power Industries Laboratories Company can test the products in terms of containing GM organism.

Labeling the products is merely done out of respect for the customer and providing the consumer with different choices and has nothing to do with the product's safety and health, he concluded.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ج

سازمان غذا و دارو با محصولات تراریخته فاقد برچسب برخورد می کند

مدیرکل فرآورده های غذایی و آشامیدنی سازمان غذا و دارو، وحید مفید در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایرنا اعلام کرد: تمام محصولات تراریخته در سطح عرضه کنترل می شوند و در صورتی که تراریخته باشند اما برچسب نداشته باشند، حتما برخورد می کنیم.

وی اضافه کرد: برخی محصولات در کشور مانند ذرت، سویا و کلزا از نوع تراریخته وجود دارد و فرآورده های غذایی در صورت استفاده از این محصولات تراریخته باید آن را روی برچسب خود اعلام کنند.

مفید افزود: هشت آزمایشگاه علاوه بر آزمایشگاه مرجع در کشور می توانند تراریختگی را تعیین کنند.

مدیرکل فرآورده های غذایی و آشامیدنی سازمان غذا و دارو گفت: درج تراریختگی در برچسب جلوی ترکیبات، صرفا احترام به مشتری و فراهم کردن قدرت انتخاب برای مصرف کننده است و هیچ ارتباطی با ایمنی و سلامت آن فرآورده ندارد.

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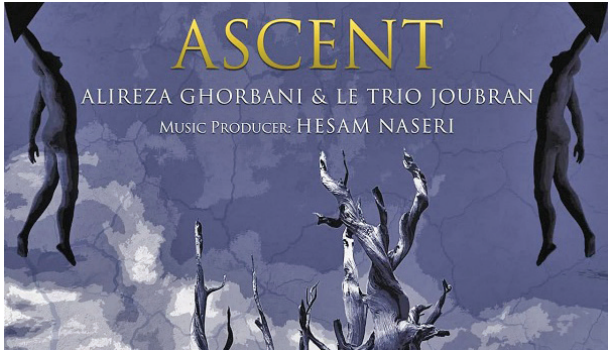
GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Lying would negatively influence your livelihood.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Alireza Qorbani, Le Trio Joubran release single “Ascent”

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** – Iranian vocalist Alireza Qorbani and Le Trio Joubran from Palestine have recently released the single “Ascent”. Hessam Nasseri is the producer of the project and the lyrics have been selected from works of the Persian mystic and poet Abu Sa’id Abu al-Khayr (967-1049 CE).



Cover of the single “Ascent” by Alireza Qorbani and Le Trio Joubran.

The single has been released by the Cultural and Artistic Institute of Ahang Eshtiagh (Aerecords), an Iranian company working in the fields of audio and video productions and publications. Le Trio Joubran consists of the oud virtuosos Samir, Wissam and Adnan Joubran playing traditional Palestinian music. Descendants in a family of oud makers and players for four generations, the three brothers have transformed this instrument into a passion, a skill and a life. Their mastery of oud is singular, and so are the harmony and the synchronization of their performances all over the world before different audiences, united by the Trio’s authenticity and excellence. Le Trio Joubran has been frequently invited to compose music for films and documentaries. Their compositions have received awards at several international events across the world. Qorbani has previously worked with numerous musicians from other cultures. In December 2020, he sang a duet of “Rababi” with Alim Qasimov from Azerbaijan featuring a poem by the Persian mystic and poet, Jalal ad-Din Rumi. Their single was also released by Aerecords. The two vocalists have sung both in Persian and Azerbaijani together in the song composed by Hessam Nasseri.

Anthology of elegies for martyrdom of Gen. Soleimani published

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** – An anthology of elegies for the martyrdom of Lieutenant-General Qassem Soleimani has been published in a book named “Man of the Field”. Poet Milad Erfanpur has collected the elegies for the book published by Maktabe Hajji Qassem Publications in Tehran, the publisher announced on Sunday. “From the first moment after the martyrdom of Commander Qassem Soleimani, poets were among the first groups of artists that responded to the event with their compositions, and many poetry nights were organized to commemorate him,” the publisher said in a press release. “Poets from India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Syria and several other countries also joined the Iranian literati with their verses observing the tragedy,” it added. Some of the poems also describe his bright and attractive personality, and some stress the need for revenge for the assassination. In a preface to the book, Erfanpur said that bringing together the poems composed about the martyrdom of General Soleimani was an absolute necessity. He said that he has done his best to select the best of compositions. Works by Ali Musavi Garmarudi, Yusef-Ali Mirshakkak, Ali-Mohammad Moaddab, Mohammadreza Sohrabinejad, Ali Jahandar, Saied Biabanaki, Ahmad Biabani and dozens of other poets have been published in the book. The book also features compositions by 19 foreign poets. The Arabic poems have been translated by Morteza Heidari Alekasir for the collection.



A poster for “Man of the Field”.

“50+One” depicts how Gen. Soleimani saved Erbil from ISIS

→1 Barzani recounted the story of General Soleimani’s help in an interview with the Turkish daily newspaper Zaman on January 8, 2015. “Hajji (Soleimani) said ‘Kak Masoud! Guard the city just tonight’.” “Hajji Qassem arrived in Erbil’s airport the next morning. I went there to receive him. Hajji had come with 50 men from his special forces. They immediately departed for the clash zone and reorganized the Peshmerga forces. The battle turned in our favor within a couple of hours. Moreover, the Iranian arms supplies were delivered to us. Hajji Qassem kept a number of his forces in Erbil for military advice, and returned to Karbala himself. “Later, we captured a commander of Daesh (ISIS), and asked him how their forces retreated suddenly while they were about to conquer Erbil. The Daesh captive told us ‘our infiltrators in Erbil reported that Qassem Soleimani was in Erbil. So the morale of our men was destroyed and we retreated.’”



A scene from the play “50+One” by Mahtab Asgari.

General Soleimani’s valor has been regarded in numerous artistic and cultural productions created after his martyrdom on January 3, 2020. In November 2020, the Islamic Revolution Documentary House in Tehran released “Liberation of Amerli”, a documentary by Hamed Hadian that underlines the key role General Soleimani played in breaking the 89-day siege of the northern Iraqi town of Amerli by the ISIS terrorists. Amerli, an Iraqi town of Shia Turkmen located in the Tooz District of Saladin Governorate, was besieged by the ISIS terrorists from June 2014, cutting off access to food, electricity and water. On August 31, the Quds Force, the overseas arm of the IRGC under the commandship of General Soleimani, joined the Kurdish Peshmerga fighters and the Popular Mobilization Units – Hashd al-Shaabi, breaking the siege, which was described by some top analysts as Iraq’s biggest victory against ISIS.

Animation “Wet Mirror” produced based on Attar’s story of Sheikh Sanan



A scene from the animated movie “Wet Mirror” by Amir-Hushang Moein.

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** – Iran’s Documentary and Experimental Film Center (DEFC) has produced an animation entitled “Wet Mirror” based on the Sheikh Sanan story from Persian poet Attar Neyshaburi’s “The Conference of the Birds”. The animation is about an old miniaturist who has painted images of romance in his paintings for

years, but all at once is trapped in a burning love for a young girl. Director Amir-Hushang Moein says the animation is an adaptation of the story of Sheikh Sanan’s love for a Christian girl, who forces the sheikh to do things against his beliefs and religion. “The seven-minute animation is made for adults, however, young viewers also will like the movie,” he said. The original story from “The Conference of the Birds” is about a celebrated sheikh named Sanan, who went from Mecca to Greece and fell in love with a Christian maiden. At her suggestion, he converted to Christianity. When his disciples heard about this, they came to Greece and prayed to God that Sheikh Sanan would return to the right path. Due to the disciples’ prayers, he revived his Muslim faith and returned to his home in the Hijaz. Then, repenting of her deed, the Christian maiden followed

him and converted to Islam. Sheikh Sanan sensed that she had true faith in Islam and turned back to seek her with his disciples. When she saw Sheikh Sanan, she fainted and this made him cry. Later, when the Christian maiden recovered consciousness, she begged his pardon and died. Attar’s most famous work, “The Conference of the Birds”, is an allegorical poem describing the quest of the birds, which symbolically represent Sufis, for the mythical Simorgh or Phoenix. Finally, thirty birds that have survived the journey realize that they and the Simorgh are one, a clever play on the words Simorgh, a mystical bird in Iranian mythology, and “si morph” meaning “thirty birds” in Persian. Asrar-Nama, Mosibat-Nama, Elahi-Nama, Mokhtar-Nama, Khosrow-Nama and Tadkerat al-Awliya are among Attar’s masterpieces.

New York hosting festival of Iranian female filmmakers

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** – Venera Films, an independent film distribution company in New York, has organized an online film festival of Iranian female filmmakers opening today. Feature, short and document films by Iranian female filmmakers will be screened in various sections of the event. Nine films by Rakhshan Bani-Etemad, including “Our Times”, “Turan Khanum”, “Angels of the House of Sun”, “All My Trees”, “Room 202” and “See You Tomorrow Elina”, will be reviewed in the documentary section. The New Horizon section will screen “Yeva” by Anahid Abad, “African Violet”



Merila Zarei (L) acts in a scene from “Track 143” by Narges Abyar.

by Mona Zandi-Haqiqi, “Tambourine” by Parisa Bakhtavar and “Track 143” by

Narges Abyar. Yeva is a young woman who escapes her influential in-laws with her daughter Nareh after her husband’s tragic death, and takes refuge in one of the villages in the Karabakh region. She is a complete stranger in this ballgame and is obliged to live her daily life in disguise. “Tambourine” features the story of a couple named Shirin and Mohammad. They need to get some money together to pay for the repair of Shirin’s father’s car. They both go to work in a house belonging to wealthy residents in north Tehran. The film has comic overtones. “Track 143” is based on a book of the

same title written by Abyar. The film is about a great maternal sacrifice during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war. It tells the story of Olfat, a woman who is waiting for her son, who has been missing in action, to return home. “African Violet” is about the middle-aged Shokuh who finds out that her elderly ex-husband Fereidun has been placed in a nursing home by their children. With her second husband Reza, she decides to remove Fereidun and take care of him in their own home. The short film section features “Invisible”, “Playmaker”, “The Drip” and “Double”.

“The Recess” star Mojan Kordi crowned best at Living Skies festival

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** – Mojan Kordi won the award for the best performance at the 33rd Living Skies Student Film Festival in Canada for her role in the Iranian short drama “The Recess” directed by Navid Nikkhah-Azad, the organizers announced on Sunday. She received the award for her portrayal of Sahar, a rebel who decides to run away from school, disguise herself and go to a football game. She won the honor in competition with Breeann DeHaven for her role in “Fine” by Lynette Piper from the University of Regina, Rosa Iranzo for her role in “Pleasure of Killing Bugs” by Leonardo Martinelli from Brazil, and Fan Ding Lun for his role in “Father’s Phone” by Yi Chia Fu from Taiwan. The short film festival is organized every year in Regina, Saskatchewan, showcasing student work from all over the world. The animated movie “Thinker” by Iranian director Mahdiah Raisi was also screened at the festival, however, it failed to receive an award.



Mojan Kordi acts in a scene from the short drama “The Recess” directed by Navid Nikkhah-Azad.

Franklin Foer’s “World without Mind” comes to Iranian bookstores

CULTURE d e s k **TEHRAN** – A Persian translation of Franklin Foer’s “World without Mind: The Existential Threat of Big Tech” has recently been published by Ruz-e Hashtom Publications. The book has been translated into Persian by a team of Iranian graduates under the supervision of Vahid Aqili. Foer reveals the existential threat posed by big tech, and in his brilliant polemic gives readers the toolkit to fight their pervasive influence. Over the past few decades, there has been a revolution in terms of who controls knowledge and information. This rapid change has imperiled the way we think. Without pausing to consider the cost, our

world has rushed to embrace the products and services of four titanic corporations. We shop with Amazon, socialize on Facebook, turn to Apple for entertainment, and rely on Google for information. These firms sell their efficiency and purport to make the world a better place, but what they have done instead is to enable an intoxicating level of daily convenience. As these companies have expanded, marketing themselves as champions of individuality and pluralism, their algorithms have pressed us into conformity and laid waste to privacy. They have produced an unstable and narrow culture of misinformation, and put us on a path to a world without private contemplation, autonomous thought, or

solitary introspection--a world without mind. In order to restore our inner lives, we must avoid being coopted by these gigantic companies, and understand the ideas that underpin their success. Elegantly tracing the intellectual history of computer science – from Descartes and the enlightenment to Alan Turing to Stuart Brand and the hippie origins of today’s Silicon Valley, Foer exposes the dark underpinnings of the most idealistic dreams for technology. Franklin Foer is a national correspondent for The Atlantic. He is the author of “How Soccer Explains the World”, which has been translated into twenty-seven languages, and is a winner of a National Book Award.



Front cover of the Persian translation of Franklin Foer’s “World without Mind: The Existential Threat of Big Tech”.