

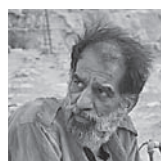
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**"The Wasteland" crowned best at Hong Kong film festival** *Page 8*

# The usual culprits

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**Mohsen Rezaei explains to the Tehran Times the possibility of American involvement in sabotage**

**Will Iran suspend nuclear talks or change their agenda in response to Israeli sabotage?**

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## Natanz nuclear site saboteur identified: Intelligence Ministry official

TEHRAN— An informed official at the Ministry of Intelligence said on Monday that the saboteur of the Natanz nuclear site has been identified.

On Sunday morning the electrical system in the Natanz nuclear site was disrupted. Immediately after the incident, the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said the incident is under investigation.

"Necessary measures are being taken to arrest the main agent of the disruption in

the power system of the Natanz complex," the ministry official added.

Referring to a report by a technical group investigating the accident, the informed official clarified, "How to disrupt the power supply system has also been determined by the technical group, and since yesterday, necessary measures have been taken to return the damaged hall to reactivation circuit."

*Continued on page 2*

## Domestic production of industrial equipment saves Iran over \$3.5b in a year

TEHRAN - Relying on domestic production has saved Iran \$3.5 billion during the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), Iran's Deputy Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Mehdi Sadeqi Niaraki announced.

Last year the indigenization of the knowledge for the production of \$3.2 billion worth of such equipment in various provinces was on the agenda, which increased to more than \$3.5

billion, IRIB quoted Niaraki as saying on Monday.

He mentioned investment in industrial sectors and the increasing trend of production of important industrial products as measures taken by the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry in the previous year which was named the year of "Surge in Production" by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Seyed Ali Khamenei.

*Continued on page 4*

## Iran, Iraq to enhance labor, social welfare co-op

TEHRAN – Iranian Minister of Co-operatives, Labor, and Social Welfare, Mohammad Shariatmadari, and his Iraqi counterpart Adel al-Rikabi have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to exchange experiences on vocational training and social welfare.

Signed in Baghdad on Sunday, the MOU is a 5-year program aiming to ex-

change information on entrepreneurship promotion, as well as the development of cooperation in vocational training between the two countries.

Shariatmadari said that the program is beneficial to both nations, hoping that the implementation of the program will open up new job opportunities for the youth, IRNA reported.

*Continued on page 7*

## Iran has secured 58 spots for Tokyo 2020 so far

BY FARROKH HESABI

A total of 58 Olympic berths have been secured by Iranian athletes in 12 sports so far, and there are still more spots to grab for the country at Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

Iranian wrestling freestylers booked three more Olympic berths as Amir-mohammad Babak Yazdani Charati, Younes Emami, and Mohammad Hossein Mohammadian stormed into the final of Asian Olympic qualifiers in Almaty, Kazakhstan on Sunday.

Iran plans to send a larger delegation to the Tokyo 2020 than Rio 2016 and 58 athletes have so far secured their places in the Games.

Amidst the country's lockdown due to coronavirus pandemic, the athletes who are vying for spots in Tokyo 2020 are allowed to continue their training.

Before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, Iran had secured 52 Olympic spots. After the restart of the qualification games, the number of athletes who have joined the Iranian delegation in Tokyo has reached 58.

The list of Iranian athletes who have booked Tokyo Olympics quota places is as follows:

- Archery:** One spot for the country
- Athletics:** Two spots - Hasan Taftian (Men's 100m), Ehsan Haddadi (Men's discus throw)
- Basketball:** 12 quota places
- Boxing:** Two spots- Daniah Shahbakhsh (men's featherweight) and Shahin Mousavi (men's middleweight)
- Cycling:** One spot - men's road race
- Fencing:** Four quota places - men's team sabre
- Karate:** Four karatekas - Bahman Askari (men's 75 kg), Sajjad Ganjzadeh (men's +75 kg), Sara Bahmanyar (women's 55 kg), and Hamideh Abbasali (women's +61 kg)
- Shooting:** Six quota places: Mahyar Sedaghat (Men's 50 m rifle 3 positions), Javad Foroughi (Men's 10 m air pistol), Najmeh Khedmati, and Armina Sadeghian (Women's 10 m air rifle), Fatemeh Karamzadeh (Women's 50 m rifle 3 positions), Hanieh Rostamian (Women's 10 m air pistol)
- Table Tennis:** One spot - Nima Alamin (Men's singles)
- Taekwondo:** Two quota places - Armin Hadipour (Men's -58 kg) and Mirhashem Hosseini (Men's -68 kg)

*Continued on page 3*

## More advanced centrifuges to be installed at Natanz, senior MP says

TEHRAN-- The head of the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee of the parliament spoke about Sunday's sabotage act in Natanz, saying Iran will install more advanced centrifuges at the nuclear facility.

Mojtaba Zolnour said, "This incident, which occurred through a cyber-disruption in the electrical facilities of the Shahid Ahmadi Roshan Enrichment Complex, can be examined from several perspectives. First, the accident caused damage to some of the first-generation IR1 centrifuges. The capacity of these centrifuges are at their lowest, enriching 800gs to a maximum of 1.2kgs of uranium per year. We can produce a maximum of one ton of enriched uranium in one year if we have a thousand IR1 centrifuges."

He added, "This disruption in the electrical facilities of the Shahid Ahmadi-Roshan Complex has caused a number of these centrifuges to de-commission, and since the enrichment machines

must be fully operational and in orbit, stopping them has caused this damage."

He then moved to discuss what he believed was the second aspect of sabotage act at the facility.

"The second point is that the enemy is trying to focus on the strategy of emptying our hands in the ongoing negotiations between Iran and the P4 + 1 (in Vienna) and, in its own imaginations, undermining our bargaining power by damaging the nuclear infrastructure."

Then, he proceeded to discuss the third aspect of the cyber-attack on Natanz.

"The third point about this incident is the height of hostility and the mendacity of the other side, because we know that the Zionist regime, as the chained dog of the imperialism and international Zionism, is involved in this incident and we do not think that the United States' hands are clean as well."

*Continued on page 2*

## U.S. police fatally shoot Black man in Minneapolis, protests erupt

Protests erupted against police when an officer fatally shot a young Black man after stopping his vehicle for a traffic violation on Sunday about 10 miles (16 km) from where George Floyd was killed during an arrest in Minneapolis last May.

As angry crowds swelled into the hundreds outside the Brooklyn Center Police Department building on Sunday night, officers in riot gear fired rubber bullets and lobbed flash bangs at protesters and let off clouds of chemical irritants, Reuters reported.

The man killed by police was identified by relatives and Minnesota Governor Tim Walz as Daunte Wright, 20. Walz said in a statement that he was monitoring the unrest in Brooklyn Center, a suburb of Minneapolis, as "our state mourns another life of a Black man taken by law enforcement."

Late Sunday, a group of about 100 to 200 protesters gathered around the Brooklyn Center

police headquarters and threw projectiles, including rocks, at the police department, Commissioner John Harrington of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety said in a live-streamed news briefing. The group was later dispersed.

Another pocket of protesters broke into about twenty businesses at a regional shopping center, with some businesses looted, according to the police and local media reports.

Anti-police protesters have already spent recent days rallying in Minneapolis as the trial of Derek Chauvin, a white former city policeman, enters the third week in a courthouse ringed with barriers and soldiers from the National Guard.

Chauvin is charged with murder and manslaughter for kneeling on the neck of Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man, who was handcuffed during the deadly arrest last May, video of which sparked global protests against police brutality.

*Continued on page 5*

## Iranian Tour Operators Association pursues tourist visas resumption

TEHRAN – Iranian Tour Operators Association is formulating a proposal for the resumption of tourist visas after months of suspension amid strict government measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

"Iranian visas are being granted to medical tourists... and we have requested the Foreign Ministry to issue the same permits for the applicants of other tourism arenas," ISNA quoted Ebrahim Pourfaraj who presides the association, as saying on Monday.

"In a meeting with Seyyed Kazem Sajjadi, the deputy Foreign Minister for Consular, Parliamentary, and Expatriates Affairs, I was supposed to provide some information and a plan for re-issuing [tourist] visas," he explained.

The veteran expert has asked the government to issue tourist visas for the international applicants who have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. "The Ministry of Health and the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control can at least agree that the international

tourists who have received the [second dose of] coronavirus vaccine would be allowed to enter Iran."

Last month, he lamented that the continuation of such a trend would result in losing international tourist markets more than before. "Or at least they should make it clear so that we can respond appropriately to foreign companies and tourists to not to miss the international tourist markets more than before."

*Continued on page 6*

## Iran embarrasses the American arrogance: Lebanese academic

BY REZA MOSHFEGH

TEHRAN - A Lebanese political researcher believes that Iran embarrassed the U.S. through avoiding direct talk with American representatives in Vienna.

Pointing to the nuclear deal talk as a process that will show Iran as a "balanced, strong and impregnable country," Tariq Aboud tells the Tehran Times that Iran "embarrassed the American arrogance and rejected direct talks with American representatives as a penalty for its withdrawal from the nuclear deal."

"The future of Iran and its allies in the region is promising as a considerable power and a reliable and respected axis," the Lebanese researcher argues.

Following is the text of the interview:  
**How do you see the recent the nuclear deal talks between Iran and the remaining parties to the agreement?**

A: Today's negotiations between Iran and the Western parties are to take stock the way towards how to push America to return to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

This is an attempt by the Europeans to save the face of the U.S. which insists in negotiations or specific arrangements before immediate return to the deal.

**What are the lessons that can be taken from the performance and behavior of successive U.S. administrations in light of Washington's exit from the nuclear agreement?**

A: The most important lessons were to teach the oppressed nations that if they decide to confront arrogance, they can do that; what the arrogant states decided is not a written destiny.

*Continued on page 5*



## Iran opens National Center for Quantum Technology

TEHRAN— Seyed Ali Akbar Salehi, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, was present at a ceremony opening the National Center for Quantum Technology. He talked about progresses made by the Iranian scientists in this field.

Calling quantum technology "a very important field", he said, "Today we experience quantum in the fields of computers, biology, sensitive sensor construction, and simulation."

Salehi, a nuclear physicist, also said, "Today, advanced countries are investing billions in this field, and Iran is the only leading country in this field in West Asia."



## Iranians have lost trust in South Korea, Ghalibaf tells PM Chung

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN**— South Korean Prime Minister Chung d e s k Sye-kyon and Ali Larijani, advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, met on Monday at the Foreign Ministry Research Institute.

Chung also met with Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, Iranian parliament speaker. The talks mainly focused on ways to release the Iranian assets frozen in South Korean banks.

During the meeting, Larijani welcomed the prime minister of South Korea and stressed the need to develop relations between the two countries in various fields.

Larijani also pointed to the blocked funds in South Korea, saying, “Our resources are entrusted to your country’s banks and your government should try to be trustworthy in this matter.”

The advisor to the Supreme Leader added, “Our resources should be released as soon as possible so that it does not adversely affect the relations between the two countries.”

Prime Minister Chung, while expressing satisfaction with his meeting with Larijani, promised that his government will seek to find an immediate solution for the release of Iranian resources.

He also stressed the need to develop long-term relations between the two countries in all fields.



### “Nations know their friends in difficult days”

In the separate meeting with Chung, Ghalibaf harshly critiqued foreign policies followed by South Korea.

Pointing out that the relations between Iran and South Korea should return to pre-2018, Parliament Speaker Ghalibaf said, “Nations know their friends in difficult days. Therefore, the expectations of the Iranian people from South Korea have not been met.”

He said, “We believe that the vast, ancient and historical continent of Asia has a lot of potential. Therefore, expanding convergence among Asian countries is an important strategy in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I believe that Asian countries should pay attention to the issue of convergence and be at the forefront of world peace and progress by prioritizing comprehensive cooperation, including industry, technology and culture.”

Referring to the good relations that the two sides enjoyed prior to the illegal sanctions on Iran and expressing satisfaction with the visit of the prime minister’s visit to Tehran, Galibaf said, “Unfortunately, South Korea currently has no place in Iran’s foreign economic relations. In other words, economic and political relations, which were at the highest levels, have declined.”

South Korean firms, including LG and Samsung, left Iran after Donald Trump, the former U.S. president, quit the 2015 nuclear deal in May 2018 and imposed illegal sanctions on Tehran.

“If your ambassador in the Tehran Grand Bazaar asks people what has been the behavior of South Korea since 2018, he will realize that this behavior is not acceptable at all and the mentality of the people towards your country is negative,” Ghalibaf remarked.

The senior lawmaker said that all the nations in the world, especially the civilized and cultured nation of Iran, have come to know their friends in difficult days, seriously criticizing the action of Korean banks in blocking Iran’s access to its foreign currencies

“We expect from you to provide immediate and practical solutions to solve the problem of Iran’s currencies and free our blocked funds,” the speaker pointed out.

Ghalibaf noted, “The expectation of the Iranian people has not been met by South Korea; even businessmen with good relations with South Korea are dissatisfied with the practice.”

However, the senior MP called the Korean prime minister’s visit to Tehran an appropriate step to improve the relations between the two countries.

“You are an experienced person in the field of politics and macro-management of the country. Therefore, you must see and understand the effects of the failure of Trump’s maximum pressure policy,” Ghalibaf added.

He also invited the speaker of the Korean Parliament to visit Tehran. For his part, Chung said he was the first South Korean prime minister to visit Iran in 44 years.

“Of course, in the past years, I visited Iran as the speaker of the parliament, and I met with high-ranking Iranian officials, so I hope this trip will be the resumption of good relations with Iran,” Chung said.

Pointing out that the next year coincides with the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Iran and South Korea, the prime minister said, “In the Korean culture, the numbers 60 and 70 are important, so next year could be the beginning of good relations between the two countries.”

Referring to the good historical relations between the two countries, the top South Korean official added, “Undoubtedly, the visits of the officials of the two countries have led to the preservation of these relations; but unfortunately, from 2018 onwards, the relations between the two countries faced obstacles, which we are trying to remove.”

While confirming the words of the speaker of the parliament that the next century is the century of Asia, Chung continued, “Accordingly, I believe that Iran and South Korea, as two Asian countries, should maintain and strengthen their relations.”

Stating that a number of South Korean economic and political officials are accompanying him in the visit to Iran to find solutions for problems created in relations between the two countries, he said, “Considering the position of the Islamic Republic of Iran in South Korea’s foreign relations, every effort will be made to overcome problems.”

Prime Minister Chung also expressed hope that Ghalibaf would accept the invitation of the speaker of the Korean Parliament to visit Seoul. “Such a trip can be the beginning of new relations between the two countries and will help solve problems,” he pointed out.

## Natanz nuclear site saboteur identified: Intelligence Ministry official

➔ Sabotage in the Natanz nuclear site occurred on Sunday. Israeli media claimed that Mossad has conducted the attack.

In his weekly press briefing on Monday, Saeed Khatibzadeh, Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesman, called the sabotage act at the Shahid Ahmadi Roshan Enrichment Complex “nuclear terrorism” and a “crime against humanity.”

# Nuclear chief: Natanz incident is definitely a sabotage act

## Emergency power system is set up in Natanz



Nuclear chief Salehi said on Sunday that the world and IAEA must address ‘nuclear terrorism’ against Iran

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Ali Akbar d e s k Salehi, chief of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), said on Monday that the incident at the Natanz nuclear enrichment site on Sunday morning was definitely a “sabotage” act.

“It was definitely a sabotage,” Salehi told the press in a ceremony opening the National Center for Quantum Technology at the AEOI.

He added, “It was not an accident that happened. Security systems got involved.”

Salehi said the incident is different from the one that happened in July 2020.

Israel is considered the chief culprit for the sabotage act that targeted the electricity network of the enrichment facility.

Salehi said Israel is absolutely mistaken to get involved in efforts to hurt the Iranian nuclear industry, saying, “The enemy wants to sow despair and hopelessness in the heart of our nation, but they won’t succeed.”

“They (the enemy) say in their reports that we have postponed 9 months of nuclear activities in Natanz, but I tell you, in the next few days you will see a significant part of the sabotage committed by the enemy will be compensated.”

He stressed, “This country will not stand still and whatever they do, we will move forward with strength and power. The best kind of deterrence is to maintain vitality, morale and readiness to show the enemy that this nation is unyielding.”

Salehi pointed to the previous terrorist attack in Natanz in July 2020, saying, “Last time when they committed a vicious attack and destroyed the modern centrifuge assembly hall, we revived a significant part of that hall and today we inaugurated this hall, while we are making numerous advanced assembly halls in the heart of the mountain.”

“Of course, I must say that we have taken serious measures in terms of protection and security. Our security systems have traced back to the recent incident..., but clues have been found,” Salehi said, referring to the news about

identification of the Natanz saboteur.

**“Enrichment in Natanz is happening right now and has not stopped”**

The top nuclear official said such moves cannot deter Iran’s advancement in nuclear industry.

“In the nuclear industry, harassments do not stop us, and that is not merely a slogan. I was never a chanter. I believed and acted on what I said. Today, the emergency power system was set up in Natanz, and in the coming days, the main power system will be connected and the rest will go on. Enrichment in Natanz is happening right now and has not stopped.”

**“The damaged machines will be restored with greater efficiency”**

Salehi, a nuclear physicist, went on to say that the centrifuge machines that suffered serious damages in the Sunday sabotage act were replaced.

“Some of the machines were decommissioned due to yesterday’s incident, and some need to

be repaired and those that were damaged, were replaced. I have to say that whatever happened, the compensation will be much higher. We will increase the compensation by 50% after the recent incident,” the nuclear chief explained.

He said the Sunday incident will prompt more serious steps.

“The way we deal with them is the way of honor and effort, but their way is evil. Compensation for what happened is not to bring back the past, but to make up for the past in addition to other actions that will be announced later,” he said.

He added, “We will replace the damaged centrifuges with the same type, but I said that with the improvements that will increase the quality and efficiency of the centrifuges by at least 59%.”

On a question that the damaged part is the same part that was damaged in July last year, he stated, “These are two separate incidents. We revived the assembly hall and the number

of assemblies of our new generation centrifuges has increased to an acceptable level, and we practically made up for what happened last year.”

On whether the damaged centrifuges were IR1, Salehi said, “They were mainly IR1, but I said that these machines that will be replaced with an efficiency of more than 50%. The enemy should understand that every harassment act it does, we will not go back, we will jump to a better situation.”

**Iran informing IAEA about Natanz incident**

He also said that Iran informed the IAEA about the incident on Sunday.

He then went on to discuss nuclear progresses in the future, lighting up the mood with some good news.

Salehi further announced the establishment of a pediatric nuclear medicine center in the pediatric ward of Imam Khomeini Hospital in early May.

“This center will be established for the first time in the country and has been completed with the cooperation and support of the Atomic Energy Organization (of Iran).”

In response to some queries about the Vienna talks and whether they should be stopped in reaction to the sabotage act, he said, “Everything is in its place. Negotiations should be continued. The harassment acts of the enemy is a sign of the success of the country’s peaceful nuclear activities, which served as a strong backbone for the country’s negotiators. They thought that by doing so, they could undermine this support. They were thoroughly wrong. Our support has become stronger and negotiations are all in place.”

On the kind of nuclear fuel that is going to be produced for the Tehran research reactor is known worldwide, he said, “They have just entered the field of manufacturing this type of fuel in the world, which we are going to build for the Tehran reactor. The fuel is a new type of 20% fuel and our safety center takes into account safety and technical considerations.”

## Zarif: ‘Nuclear terrorism’ occurred at Natanz

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Foreign Minister Mohammad d e s k Javad Zarif who attended a session of the

Parliament National Security and Foreign Policy Committee on Monday described the incident at the Natanz enrichment facility as a “nuclear terrorism”.

Iran’s response to the sabotage act is to use this threat as an opportunity to install newer and more advanced centrifuges at the nuclear enrichment facility, parliamentary committee spokesman Abolfazl Amouei quoted Zarif as telling the MPs present at the session.

“About the incident at the Natanz nuclear site, Mr. Zarif said that different aspects of the incident are being investigated, but initial assessments indicate that criminal acts and nuclear terrorism have taken place, which is why it could be harmful. Although no material leaks occurred, they tried to influence the nuclear program and the enrichment process at the Natanz nuclear site by sabotaging the electricity,” Amouei said.

Amouei added, “According to Mr. Zarif, Iran’s response will be that, first, enrichment will not stop at all. We are trying to turn this threat into an opportunity by replacing first generation centrifuges with newer, more powerful ones.”

Zarif attended the parliamentary committee to give an-

swers about the Natanz incident, the comprehensive strategic partnership with China, and the nuclear deal talks in Vienna.

“The meeting addressed three issues: The comprehensive Iran-China cooperation plan signed in Tehran between the foreign ministers of the two countries; the process of Iran-P4 + 1 talks in Vienna; and the events that took place yesterday at the Natanz nuclear site of Shahid Ahmadi Roshan and the reactions that the Islamic Republic should show,” he said.

Amouei said Foreign Minister Zarif sees China as a power horse in the global community.

“The foreign minister said that China is recognized as an important country in the future and in the international order, so we must turn our relations with the Chinese into an independent and stable relationship, regardless of the positions of other countries.”

The parliamentary committee spokesman added, “According to the explanations provided by the minister, this comprehensive cooperation plan includes the views of the two countries to develop cooperation. A plan that helps us have long-term stable relations between Iran and China. Mr. Zarif then presented a report on the process of talks between the two countries in recent years. Mr. Xi Jinping’s visit to Tehran in 2016 has been

effective in promoting Iran-China cooperation to the level of strategic cooperation.”

Amouei said Zarif also presented an elaborate report on the talks in Vienna and ruling out “step by step agreement” for a possible revival of the 2015 nuclear deal.

“Mr. Zarif pointed out that at present we do not accept the idea of a step-by-step agreement and we do not accept any intermediate step to fulfill the U.S. obligations. Iran’s policy is that all sanctions should be lifted verifiably. For this reason, three issues are discussed in the Iran-P4 + 1 talks. The first is what sanctions need to be lifted, the second is what Iran’s actions will be in the nuclear matter, and the third is what the verification mechanism is. These three issues need to be discussed between Iran and the P4 + 1.”

Senior MP continued, “In this context, Mr. Zarif emphasized that in our view, the actions related to Iran in the JCPOA have been clarified precisely and the actions of the other side must be accurately identified. In addition, there is no direct or indirect dialogue between Iran and the United States in these negotiations, and the parties to the Iranian dialogue are the P4 + 1 countries. It is they who must demand actions from the United States in their own way. Iran’s actions are clear.”

## Top Iranian, Iraqi security officials meet, Iran calls for implementation of law to expel foreign forces

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Ali Sham- d e s k khani, secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of Iran, met on Monday with Ghasem Mohammad Al-Araji, Iraq’s national security advisor, in Tehran on Monday.

In the meeting, Shamkhani explained the causes of instability in the region and called the United States the biggest cause of insecurity and organized terrorism in the region.

Shamkhani suggested that accelerating the implementation of the Iraqi parliament’s ratification on the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq will strengthen and stabilize the situation in Iraq.

Iran’s top security official said the assassination of resistance commanders, including Iranian Major General Qassem Soleimani and PMU deputy commander Abu Mahdi Mu-

handis, clearly proved the role of the United States in strengthening the Takfiri terrorism. Iran and Iraq have formed a joint committee to investigate the assassination of General Soleimani.

“Prosecution and punishment of the perpetrators of this terrorist crime is one of the priorities of the security cooperation between the two countries, and in this regard, we expect more from the Iraqi government.”

General Soleimani was a guest of then Iraqi minister when he was assassinated near Iraq’s international airport on January 3, 2020 by an order from Donald Trump.

Shamkhani also expressed concern over the reactivation of agents affiliated with the ISIS terrorist group in Iraq, saying, “There is credible information that the Americans are trying to maintain their presence in Iraq

by creating insecurity by supporting ISIS forces and moving them to different parts of the country.”

The top Iranian security chief also referred to the anti-security movements of counter-revolutionary and terrorist agents in northern Iraq, stressing the need for more Tehran-Baghdad cooperation to end evil acts by these groups.

Shamkhani also suggested establishing new security frameworks among the countries of the region to combat common security threats.

For his part, Iraq’s national security adviser praised Iran’s strategic and privileged role in establishing stability and security in the region and fight against terrorism, and stressed the need to continue and expand comprehensive cooperation between Iran and Iraq.

Pointing to the actions taken upon order by the Iraqi prime minister to deal with ter-

rorist groups in northern Iraq, al-Araji said, “The necessary coordination have been taken with the officials of the Kurdistan region to deal with terrorist groups in northern Iraq, some of which started with the U.S. support.”

He also said the Iraqi government is committed to implement the parliament’s law on the withdrawal of foreign troops from Iraq, adding that “executive measures are being taken in coordination with the countries whose troops are present in Iraq to achieve the agreed timetable.”

The Iraqi national security adviser also praised Iran’s progress and its resistance against economic sanctions.

“Iran’s continuous progress in various dimensions in the face of unprecedented economic sanctions has made true lovers of Iran proud.”

## More advanced centrifuges to be install at Natanz, senior MP says

➔ Emphasizing that Iran must seriously and decisively continue the path of developing its peaceful nuclear industry, he said, “We must try launch the advanced generation of centrifuges, including but not limited to IR6 centrifuges which have the capacity of enriching 6 to 7 tons of uranium per year and in the future test the newer generation of centrifuges, which are the same IR9 machines, and replace the destroyed centrifuges.”

Stressing that the sabotage act did not cause serious damage to the country’s nuclear industry, he noted that the policy of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran has long been to gradually

phase out IR1 machines.

The crashing possibility of these machines is high and their enrichment capacity is low, he said.

“If we have a thousand IR1 centrifuges in a thousand square meter hall, a maximum of one ton of enriched uranium can be obtained from them annually, but if a thousand IR6 devices are working in the same hall, at least 6 tons of enriched uranium is extracted annually.”

The head of the parliamentary committee further stated “we will respond in the right place and we will act prudently

## Mixed reactions to Natanz incident: From denial of interference to expressing concern

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN**— The power d e s k outage on Sunday at the Natanz nuclear site on Sunday morning decommissioned centrifuges and stopped the enriching process for a brief peri-

od of time. The Iranian officials called the incident an “act of sabotage”, “nuclear terrorism” and a “crime against humanity.”

However, there are mixed reactions

to the incident. The White House has not taken an official stance on the matter, while an informed official in the Biden administration spoke with the Washington Post, stating that the Biden administration

has observed the reports on the Natanz incident, denying any interference by the U.S., saying they have nothing to add to the rumors surrounding the story.

(See full text at [tehrantimes.com](http://tehrantimes.com))



# The usual culprits

Mohsen Rezaei explains to the Tehran Times the possibility of American involvement in sabotage

**POLITICAL TEHRAN** — Iranian officials have officially blamed the sabotage that targeted the Natanz nuclear enrichment plant on Israel while taking into consideration an American role in the sabotage before drawing a conclusion.

Saeed Khatibzadeh, spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry, said on Monday that Israel was behind the Natanz sabotage. Speaking at a weekly press conference, Khatibzadeh described the sabotage as a "trap" set by Israel to disrupt the process of lifting U.S. sanctions on Iran. He noted that Iran will not fall into this "deceitful trap."

Israel, Khatibzadeh asserted, should know that Iran will retaliate at the proper time and place.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif offered further details about the motivations behind the sabotage. He said the Israelis want to disrupt the ongoing nuclear talks in Vienna. The chief Iranian diplomat said, "The Zionists want to take revenge on the Iranian people for their success in lifting the cruel sanctions, but we will not allow this and we will take revenge for these actions from the Zionists themselves."

Underlining the need for Iranian people and official to avoid falling in the "deceitful trap set by the Zionist regime," Zarif reiterated that the political and military officials of the Zionist regime had explicitly stated that they would not allow progress in lifting the cruel sanctions and now they think that they will achieve their goal, but the Zionists will get their answer in further nuclear progress, according to state news IRNA.

Iran will install a set of new centrifuges at the Natanz nuclear enrichment facility following the Israeli sabotage targeting the facility's electrical distribution grid, a senior Iranian lawmaker said.

The lawmaker, Mojtaba Zolnour, who is the head of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said centrifuges that were targeted by an Israeli cyber attack were enriching uranium at the lowest possible level and that they will be replaced with new, more advanced ones.

According to the lawmaker, the damaged centrifuges are of IRI type that "produce 800 grams to a maximum of one kilogram and 200 grams of enriched uranium per year, and if there are a thousand units of this generation of centrifuges, we can produce a maximum of one ton of enriched uranium per year."

Zolnour said Israel had a role in the Natanz incident "but we also don't see the U.S. as innocent."

The U.S. sought to distance itself from what Israel did in Natanz, although the Israelis, taking pride in the Natanz sabotage, implied that they did the U.S. a favor by knocking out Natanz centrifuges for



nine months.

"We have seen reports of an incident at the Natanz enrichment facility in Iran. The United States had no involvement, and we have nothing to add to speculation about the causes," a senior Biden administration official was quoted by The Washington Post as saying on Monday.

However, some Israeli media outlets were clear about the service that Israel provided to Washington.

DEBKAFle, a news website close to Israel's intelligence community, opined that Washington and Tel Aviv had "good reason" to damage the uranium enrichment process at Natanz.

"Israel and the United States, together and separately, had good reason to out the electrical grid feeding the operation by what appears to have been a cyberattack," it said, adding, "The Biden administration is suffering from Tehran's foot-dragging and delaying tactics in response to its call for renewed nuclear talks to negotiate an improved version of the 2015 nuclear accord. The Iranians are obviously wasting time to bring their program to break-out level and then confront the world with the fait accompli of a fully-fledged nuclear power. Disrupting enrichment at Natanz should have told Tehran that Washington would not tolerate this gambit."

Analysts and officials in Iran have also pointed to an American role in the sabotage, saying that the U.S. is a prime suspect because it, along with Israel, largely benefited from Iranian centrifuges at Natanz being knocked out.

"Negotiations should be suspended for at least nine months. He who sees America and Israel as separated is ignorant," Masoud Barati, a sanctions expert, said on Twitter.

He was most likely referring to a report by The New York Times claiming that the

sabotage would stymie uranium enrichment at Natanz for at least nine months. Citing two intelligence officials, The Times said that "the explosion had dealt a severe blow to Iran's ability to enrich uranium and that it could take at least nine months to restore Natanz's production. If so, Iran's leverage in new talks sought by the Biden administration to restore the nuclear agreement could be significantly compromised."

The American newspaper also raised the possibility of the Biden administration receiving advance word before what it called the Natanz operation.

"It was not immediately clear how much advance word — if any — the Biden administration received about the Natanz operation, which happened on the same morning that the American defense secretary, Lloyd J. Austin III, was visiting Israel," The Times said.

The Natanz incident is still under investigation, but Iranian officials don't rule out American participation in the Natanz sabotage, according to Mohsen Rezaei, the secretary of the Expediency Council.

"Iran is investigating the Natanz incident and the investigation has not finished. So, there is no official conclusion on what happened at Natanz. But a U.S. role in the incident cannot be ruled out given Washington's behavior toward Iran," Rezaei told the Tehran Times.

He drew a link between the sabotage and the ongoing nuclear talks between Iran and the P4+1 in Vienna. According to Rezaei, the sabotage happened after Iran showed resistance in the Vienna talks.

Iran and the P4+1 are engaged in renewed talks to revive a 2015 nuclear deal officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). They held several rounds of talks in Vienna and are going to meet again on Wednesday.

The latest meeting of the JCPOA Joint

Commission, a group comprised of Iran and the P4+1 responsible for overseeing the implementation of the deal, was held on Friday.

During the meeting, participants received a report from the two newly-established expert groups, which were put together on Wednesday to conduct technical talks over how to revive the JCPOA and what measures are needed to be done by Iran and the U.S. in this regard. One of the groups is tasked with specifying the sanctions that the U.S. should lift to revive the deal while the other is discussing how to reverse the nuclear measures taken by Iran in response to the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA.

During the Vienna talks, Iran demanded that the U.S. lift at least 1,600 sanctions all at once, something that the U.S. rejected. American officials interpreted this demand as Iranian "intransigence," warning that this so-called intransigence will lead the talks to a deadlock.

Rezaei told the Tehran Times that the Americans want to restrain Iran's nuclear enrichment capability while retaining economic sanctions. Therefore, he said, they were likely implicated in what happened at the Natanz nuclear plant as the sabotage serves American interest.

This calculation has resonated with some Iranian analysts, who called for a measured response to the Israeli move. They underlined the need to continue the Vienna talks but they said these talks should be pursued in a reconsidered framework, in which Iran should present a package of comprehensive policies compatible with the country's national interests.

According to this package, nuclear talks should not be seen independently from the Israel-U.S. joint plan, which was manifested by the recent sabotage at Natanz. Under this plan, analysts said, Washington and Tel Aviv pursue concerted efforts against Iran. The Vienna talks, the Natanz sabotage and other political and security measures against Iran are all parts of these efforts.

Accordingly, Iran may respond by changing the agenda of the Vienna talks. Some pundits believe that the Iranian government must condition the continuation of these talks on the West reining in Israel's operations against Iran. Others say that Iran should up the ante by presenting new demands. Some even called on the government to raise the issue of receiving compensation from the West for the damage it incurred over the past few years.

Some other analysts called for a suspension of the nuclear talks, saying that negotiating under pressure does not make any sense. With the public pressuring the government to respond to Israel, a suspension of the Vienna nuclear talks seems to be a serious option. How will the Iranian government respond? That remains to be seen.



to continue negotiations," he warned.

Araghchi reiterated that the lifting of all U.S. sanctions imposed during the previous U.S. administration was a necessary step in reviving the JCPOA and that only after verification of the lifting of these sanctions Iran would be ready to suspend its remedial measures and fully return to JCPOA.

At the end of the meeting, it was agreed that the next meeting of the Commission at the level of deputies and political directors to be held next Wednesday in Vienna. The Iranian Foreign Ministry said the Wednesday meeting will immediately be followed by technical and specialized intensive negotiations in the framework of expert groups to prepare a list of nuclear and sanctions measures that should be done by all parties to revive the JCPOA.

Araghchi has said that the Vienna talks are moving in the right direction, although some points of disagreement continue to dampen hopes for a rapid breakthrough.

"The biggest obstacle is Washington's desire to maintain sanctions," the top Iranian nuclear negotiator told Japanese broadcaster NHK.

## SPORTS

Iran has secured 58 spots for Tokyo 2020 so far

**→1 Volleyball:** 12 quota places

**Wrestling:** 11 spots - six in the men's freestyle and five in the men's Greco-Roman

There are still more spots to grab for Iran's Olympic delegation in sports such as shooting, boxing, gymnastics, canoeing, athletics, weightlifting, Greco-Roman wrestling, archery, and table tennis. The National Olympic Committee of the Islamic Republic of Iran fielded a team of 63 athletes, 54 men and 9 women, across 15 sports at the 2016 Rio Games. Now the country hopes to increase the number of its athletes in Tokyo to more than 70.

## Sepahan held by Naft Masjed Soleyman to remain second: IPL

**SPORTS TEHRAN** — Sepahan and Naft Masjed Soleyman football team played out a goalless draw in Matchday 20 of Iran Professional League (IPL) on Monday.

Sepahan could have moved up top of the table with a win but were held by visiting team Naft Masjed Soleyman at the Naghsh-e Jahan Stadium in Isfahan.

The Yellows are second since Persepolis have a better goal difference.

"We created several goalscoring chances but our players wasted their chances. Sepahan could have won the match and we lost two important points," Sepahan coach Moharram Navidkia said after the match.

In Tehran, Gol Gohar defeated Paykan 2-0 thanks to goals from Morteza Tabrizi in the 21st minute and Saeid Sadeghi (own goal) in the 72nd minute.

## Vahid Amiri; Persepolis key man in 2021 ACL group stage

**SPORTS TEHRAN** — Vahid Amiri will be key man for Persepolis in the 2021 AFC Champions League group stage.

The Group Stage of the AFC Champions League arrives in India for the first time in the competition's history, and Group E brings together a fascinating mix of the old and new as two-time finalists Persepolis from Islamic Republic of Iran, Qatar's Al Rayyan, hosts FC Goa and Al Wahda from the United Arab Emirates face off.

Veteran winger Amiri returns to the AFC Champions League for another crack at the title, having missed out on last year's final after picking up a suspension that ruled him out of the defeat at the hands of Ulsan Hyundai FC.

Now 33 years old, Amiri brings creativity, resilience and versatility to Yahya Gholmohammadi's team and is as important defensively as he is in attack.

## Freestylers win two gold and one silver in Asian qualifying

**SPORTS TEHRAN** — Yones Emami at the 74kg and Mohammadhossein Mohammadian at the 97kg won two gold medals at the Asian Olympic qualifying tournament while Amirmohammad Yazdani claimed a silver at the 65kg on Sunday.

Emami took the title when Bekzod Abdurakhmonov (UZB) defaulted, and Mohammadian received a forfeit from Rio 2016 Olympic bronze medalist Magomed Ibragimov (UZB) at 97kg.

Mohammadian, who returned from a four-year doping ban, said he will try to live up to the Iranian tradition of excellence in the 97kg class set by the legendary two-time world champion Reza Yazdani.

"Definitely I feel the pressure of replicating what Reza Yazdani did for Iran at 97," Mohammadian said. "I have forgotten about the bad times when I was banned for four years and now I am only training to win gold at the Olympics. That is the only thing that will satisfy me after what happened."

Yazdani lost to Kyrgyzstan's Ernazar Akmataliev 15-13 at the 65kg final and won a silver medal.

The Iranian trio had qualified for Tokyo with victories in the semifinals in the afternoon session in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

## Esteghlal, Persepolis players test negative for COVID-19

**SPORTS TEHRAN** — Esteghlal and Persepolis football team players and staff tested negative for COVID-19 ahead of the 2021 AFC Champions League.

All the players and support staff of the Iranian teams underwent COVID-19 tests.

Esteghlal are in Saudi Arabia to play in Group C along with Al Ahli Saudi, Iraqi powerhouse Al Shorta and one of Qatar's most successful sides Al Duhail.

Persepolis, who have traveled to Goa, India, will also compete in Group E with Qatar's Al Rayyan, hosts FC Goa and Al Wahda from the United Arab Emirates.

## Mehdi Ghaedi; Esteghlal Key Man in ACL Group Stage: AFC

**SPORTS TEHRAN** — Esteghlal football team forward Mehdi Ghaedi is a key man for the Iranian team in the 2021 AFC Champions League group stage.

Long touted as the next big name to come out of the Iran Pro League, 22-year-old Ghaedi is starting to deliver on his potential as a promising youngster and is becoming an integral part of the Esteghlal side hoping to reach the knockout stage for the fourth time in five years, the-afc.com wrote.

In the 2020 AFC Champions League, Ghaedi scored a goal and assisted another. He created seven chances and took seven shots on target, both numbers top of the charts for the club which played in a three-team group after the withdrawal of Al Wahda.

## Iran to replace damaged centrifuges at Natanz with more advanced ones

**POLITICAL TEHRAN** — Iran has vowed to replace damaged centrifuges at Natanz nuclear enrichment plant with advanced ones after the plant suffered a problem involving its electrical distribution grid.

Saeed Khatibzadeh, spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry, said on Monday that the incident caused damages to the plant's centrifuges, which he identified to be of IRI type.

Speaking at a weekly press briefing, Khatibzadeh said, "All the centrifuges knocked out due to this incident were of IRI type and they will be replaced with advanced centrifuges. The Islamic Republic now has the ability at the highest level to replace these [damaged centrifuges] with the most advanced ones."

The spokesman was responding to a question on whether the Natanz incident would negatively affect the ongoing nuclear talks between Iran and the remaining parties to the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

This probably was to suggest that Iran's hand at the negotiation was not undermined.

Khatibzadeh said the incident did not undermine Iran's nuclear capability.

He described the incident as a "trap" set by Israel to disrupt the process of lifting U.S. sanctions on Iran, saying that Iran will not fall into this "deceitful trap."

Israel, Khatibzadeh vowed, should know that Iran will retaliate at the proper time and place.

Khatibzadeh also said the Vienna talks are not nuclear negotiations.

"What is happening in Vienna is not a nuclear negotiation. It is technical talks between Iran, the P4+1 and the European Union to lift U.S. sanctions on Iran. We once negotiated about the JCPOA and the clauses of JCPOA have been finalized and specified. There is no negotiation and what is there is the lifting of sanctions," the spokesman said.

However, what happened in Natanz cast doubts on the future of the talks. Some Iranian observers and offi-

cials believe that the main goal of the Natanz incident was to prevent the lifting of sanctions.

Jalal Mirzayee, a former Iranian lawmaker, told state news IRNA, that "the Israeli sabotage" at Natanz was done with the purpose of pressuring the U.S. and Europe into putting pressure on Iranian officials to change their calculations.

"The sabotage in Natanz is similar to the martyrdom of Dr. Fakhrazadeh, and the Zionist regime [Israel] is doing this to disrupt the negotiation and agreement process," Mirzayee said, noting that "in fact, this is not to put pressure on the United States and Europe, but to put pressure on Iranian officials to reconsider their calculations."

Iran and the P4+1 are expected to meet in Vienna again on Wednesday in continuation of the meetings of the JCPOA Joint Commission.

The latest meeting of the JCPOA Joint Commission, a group comprised of Iran and the P4+1 responsible for overseeing the implementation of the deal, was held on Friday.

During the meeting, participants received a report from the two newly-established expert groups, which were put together on Wednesday to conduct technical talks over how to revive the JCPOA and what measures are needed to be done by Iran and the U.S. in this regard. One of the groups is tasked with specifying the sanctions that the U.S. should lift to revive the deal while the other is discussing how to reverse the nuclear measures taken by Iran in response to the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA.

Receiving a report about these groups' technical talks was the most important agenda of the Friday meeting, the Iranian Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Friday shortly after the meeting was concluded.

Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi underlined during the meeting Iran's willingness to continue "serious interactions" but said that hinges on witnessing "political will and seriousness" on part of the other sides. "Otherwise, there will be no reason



## Iran planning to export electricity to Oman

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Energy Ministry's spokesman for Electricity Industry Mostafa Rajabi Mashhadi said the country is pursuing a plan for exporting electricity to the southern Arab neighbor Oman through the sea, ILNA reported.

"For the countries that we share a water border with, studies are underway that need to be completed so that the two countries can reach a conclusion on technical issues, and the plan for the export of electricity to Oman is also at this stage," Rajabi Mashhadi said.

According to the official, the Energy Ministry's priority plan is to have electricity exchange with all the neighboring countries that share land borders with Iran, and this plan is currently in place.



Regarding the southern Arab neighbors, Rajabi Mashhadi said: "Technical talks have been held between consultants and contractors and some solutions have been considered, but no energy exchange contract has been signed yet."

Mentioning the electricity exports to Afghanistan and Iraq, the official noted that exports to Afghanistan and Iraq are carried out as before.

"There are good capacities in the country for increasing exports to Afghanistan, which has new demands to supply electricity to its industries and increasing exports to Iraq is also a matter of negotiation," he added.

"Currently, we have energy exchanges with both countries within the contractual capacity, and we have not had any specific negotiations to increase exports. Requests have been made by both Iraq and Afghanistan to do so, but have not yet led to a new contract," Rajabi-Mashhadi reminded.

Earlier this month, the head of Trade Promotion Organization of Iran (TPO)'s Arab and African office announced that Iran is planning to commence exports of gas and electricity to Oman in near future.

Referring to the development of Iran's trade program with neighboring Arab countries, Farzad Piltan said, "We are pursuing the exports of gas and electricity as two Iranian export projects to Oman."

Iran has developed into an electricity hub in the region, having power exchanges with many of its neighbors.

"We are an energy hub in the region and seek to have electricity exchange with all the neighboring countries," Iran's Deputy Energy Minister Homayoun Haeri said back in June 2020.

## Commodities worth over \$2b exported from Isfahan province in a year

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — As announced by a provincial official, over 6.19 million tons of products worth \$2.072 billion were exported from Isfahan province in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

Rasoul Kouhestani, the director-general of the province's customs department, said the annual export from the province shows 21 percent drop in terms of value, and 16 percent fall in terms of weight.

The official named steel, petrochemical products, and carpet as the major exported products, and Iraq, China, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Afghanistan, and Indonesia as the main export markets of the products.



As announced by the head of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of Iran's non-oil trade stood at \$73 billion in the past year.

Mehdi Mir-Ashrafi also put the weight of non-oil trade at 146.4 million tons, and said that the figure shows a 25-million-ton annual decline, which is the result of sanctions and coronavirus pandemic.

Iran's non-oil export was 112 million tons valued at \$34.5 billion, and that of import was 34.4 million tons worth \$38.5 billion in the past year, the official added.

Among the country's non-oil export destinations, China was the first, with importing \$8.9 billion worth of products, Iraq was the second with importing \$7.3 billion, the United Arab Emirates the third with importing \$4.6 billion, Turkey the fourth with importing \$2.5 billion, and Afghanistan the fifth with importing \$2.2 billion, Mir-Ashrafi announced, and named gasoline, natural gas, polyethylene, propane, and pistachio as Iran's major exported products during the past year.

He further named Iran's top sources of non-oil imports in the said time, as China with exporting \$9.7 billion worth of products to the Islamic Republic, the UAE with \$9.6 billion, Turkey with \$4.3 billion, India with \$2.1 billion, and Germany with \$1.8 billion, respectively, and mentioned corn, cellphone, rice, oil meal and oil seeds, wheat, and raw oil as the major imported items.

# Gas supply noticeably successful during winter

By Mahnaz Abdi

**TEHRAN** — Despite the unprecedented increase in natural gas consumption in the country, the gas industry was able to register a record high in terms of gas supplying during the peak consumption period in winter.

National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC) and all its subsidiaries were seriously working in a few months before the winter to ensure the sustained supply of gas during the cold season.

Having the biggest network in the region, Iran is one of the leading countries in terms of gas accessibility, and in this regard, making sure that this access stays uninterrupted during the pick consumption periods is a top priority for NIGC.

All the NIGC's endeavors made in this regard last year bore fruits, because despite the high growth of gas consumption in the country over the past year, the company managed to supply gas to different areas in a successful way.

It should be considered that at the beginning of the previous winter, Mohammadreza Julaei, the dispatching director of NIGC, had announced that the daily gas consumption in the country had risen 55 million cubic meters (mcm), as



compared to the same time of its previous year.

Also at that time, NIGC Head Hassan Montazer Torbati said, "Gas consumption has reached the alarming stage and 80 percent of the country's gas is consumed in the domestic sector"; so, he called on all people to economize on the gas consumption, because for each degree of temperature reduction in heating systems, the amount of production of one phase

of South Pars gas field is saved.

In any case, despite this unprecedented consumption, the country's gas industry was able to pass winter successfully, and the NIGC head announced in the last days of winter (mid-March) that his company had done its job well in supplying and transferring gas continuously during the winter.

The development of gas supply in winter, despite the cold weather, not only

did not stop, but was pursued more rapidly.

Meanwhile, Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh, in a report to the president, announced that 95 percent of the Iranian people benefit from natural gas.

While several projects conducted during the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20) ensured non-stop gas supply throughout the country, a number of more projects are supposed to expand gas supply even more in this year.

A major area seriously under focus in this due is gas supply to the rural areas.

The government has proposed to allocate 15 trillion rials (about \$357.14 million) for the supply of natural gas to over 8,000 villages across the country in the present year.

The mentioned budget will be spent on new gas supply projects in rural areas, and for the completion of semi-finished gas supply projects across the county with Sistan-Baluchestan, Hormozgan, South Khorasan, and Kerman provinces, as well as Khouz and Biabanak cities, being the priorities.

Currently, over 32,000 villages across Iran are enjoying natural gas through the national network and the number is planned to reach 40,000 by the end of this Iranian year (March 2022).

## Domestic production of industrial equipment saves Iran over \$3.5b in a year

→ 1 "The country's industrial sector was able to grow significantly in a situation where the outbreak of the coronavirus had created unfavorable conditions for the country's productive sector; fortunately, we have witnessed a good leap in the production of products needed by people to fight this disease," the official stressed.

Touching upon some of the major industrial growth indicators in the previous year, Sadeghi Niaraki noted that industrial investment reached more than 1.8 quadrillion rials (about \$42.8 billion) in the first 11 months of the previous year (March 20, 2020-February 18, 2021), registering a growth of 225 percent.

The upward trend continued to the end of the year, he emphasized.

The official also pointed to a 23-percent increase in job creation in various industrial sectors, saying that direct employment was provided for 121,000 people during the

previous year.

Niaraki also informed about the increase in production of 20 important industrial products and added: "We hope that this trend will be maintained in the current year which named the year of "Production: Support and the Elimination of Obstacles."

Since the re-imposition of the U.S. sanctions, the Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry was tasked to pursue a program for indigenizing the knowledge for the production of major industrial equipment.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei said in October 2019 that government officials should ban the import of goods that are also produced domestically.

Back in 2019, when the mentioned program was started, the Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister at the time Reza Rahmani had said that relying on domestic



production was going to save \$10 billion for the country in two years.

## Supreme Council of Non-oil Exports approves facilitating regulations

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iran's Supreme Council of Non-oil Exports Promotion, in a decree, has approved new regulations for facilitating the country's non-oil trade, especially with the neighboring countries, in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21).

The mentioned decree which was issued in the 10th meeting of the council is addressed to the related government bodies and organizations to follow in the current year, the portal of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) reported on Monday.

In the meeting, it was also decided to hold another meeting with the presence of the head of the Trade Promotion Organi-



zation (TPO) and the deputy governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) to prepare a proposal package for resolving the issues related to the foreign currency obligations of the country's exporters.

The council also agreed to allow the exporters of technical and engineering services to sell the machinery and equipment necessary for their projects in the destination market if the mentioned machinery and equipment are damaged or worn out and cannot be returned to the country.

It was also decided to provide bank facilities to the owners of traditional wooden ships active in the Persian Gulf in order for them to be able to buy new small-scale commercial vessels.

To expand non-oil exports during the sanctions and the coronavirus pandemic, Iranian government has defined some new strategies and has been pursuing them vigorously.

The major strategy is to focus on the neighboring countries and the trade partners in the region, and it is, in fact, one of the top priorities of the government for defying the U.S. sanctions.

Earlier this month, TPO Head Hamid Zadboum announced the allocation of eight trillion rials (about \$190.5 million) for supporting non-oil export activities in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21).

Mentioning the current year's motto which is "Production: Support and the Elimination of Obstacles", the official underlined planning for the development and expansion of non-oil exports as well as the promotion of export culture as the TPO's main priority in the current year.

## IOIV inks four deals to support domestic companies

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — Iranian Oil Industry Ventures (IOIV), a newly established semi-governmental entity that is helping startups active in oil industry, has signed four deals with domestic companies in order to support their activities in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21).

As Shana reported, the mentioned contracts were signed in IOIV's official opening ceremony on Monday.

Two of the said deals were signed for the guaranteed purchase of electrical submersible pumps (ESP) and drill bits with Fanavar Parsian Company and Asmary Field Services Company, respectively.

The other two deals were signed as venture capital (VC) deals with Faradid Company and Aban Company for two projects on artificial intelligence in the field of HSE and EO purification.

As reported, IOIV is going to offer about 20 trillion rials (about \$476 million) worth of guarantees for supporting startups and knowledge-based companies active in the oil, gas, and petrochemical sectors.

The fund has so far issued over one trillion rials (about \$23.8 million) worth of guarantees for such



companies.

Established in August 2020, IOIV is a semi-governmental fund that is aimed to help startups and knowledge-based companies active in the oil, gas, and petrochemical industries fund their innovative projects.

Over the past decade, the Iranian Oil Ministry has

been pursuing a program for using the capacities of domestic knowledge-based companies for meeting the oil industry's technological needs.

Back in August 2020, the Head of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) Research and Technology Directorate Ebrahim Taleqani said that NIOC intends to overcome some of its challenges regarding technological needs in various sectors including construction, services, and innovative solutions in cooperation with such companies and institutions.

According to Taleqani, NIOC and its subsidiaries have selected 51 main challenges among more than 220 issues and various needs, which can be solved by using technological solutions and the scientific and technical capacities of knowledge-based companies.

Since the reimposition of the U.S. sanctions, Iran has been encouraging domestic companies' presence in its oil and gas projects more seriously.

According to Ali Vatani, an advisor to the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, currently, about 300 knowledge-based companies are active in various fields of the oil industry in Iran.

## TEDPIX loses 4,800 points on Monday

**ECONOMY** **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 4,857 points to 1.226 million on Monday.

Over 3.169 billion securities valued at 30.986 trillion rials (about \$737.7 million) were traded at the TSE on Monday.

The first market's index fell 4,601 points, and the second market's index dropped 6,205 points.

TEDPIX had risen eight percent in the last week of the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

The index increased 101,000 points to 1.307 million in that week.

After several weeks of decline, growth finally returned to the TSE, Iran's major stock exchange, as TEDPIX rose 2.4 percent during the last week of February.

Market analysts and experts suggest investors to focus more on long-term

investment in the Iranian stock market and to invest through intermediary tools like exchange-traded funds (ETFs) to prevent possible losses in the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 21).

They also advise shareholders to avoid impulsive decisions for quitting the market rattled by the surprising fluctuations in the stock market in the previous year.





# Iran no longer in hurry to reach agreement with U.S., says Lebanese researcher

By Mohammad Mazhari

**TEHRAN** — A Lebanese political researcher says that Iran is not in a hurry to reach an agreement with the U.S. in terms of reviving the 2015 nuclear deal.

"Iran is no longer in a hurry and is not obliged to make concessions because it has started building important economic ties with China, Russia and India," Hadi Kobeisi tells the Tehran Times.

Talks in Vienna started last Tuesday in an effort to bring both the United States and Iran back into compliance with the 2015 nuclear deal.

A joint commission responsible for overseeing the Iran nuclear deal is looking for a way for the U.S. to rejoin the agreement — abandoned under Donald Trump — and lift its sanctions on Tehran, and for Iran to end its retaliatory steps of the limits placed on its nuclear program.

Throughout past week experts from the deal's remaining signatories — Iran, France, Germany, the UK, Russia, China and the EU — were meeting in Vienna's Grand Hotel and relaying messages to the U.S. delegation over the road in a neighboring hotel.

On Friday the joint commission will reconvene to review whether enough progress has been made to continue the talks on reviving the deal, which lifted economic sanctions on Iran in return for curbs to its nuclear program.

However, many pundits believe that it won't be easy due to a deep gap between Iran and the U.S. views.

"Americans express the difficulty of negotiations and describe Iran's demand to lift all sanctions as a dilemma," Kobeisi argues. Following is the text of the interview:



**How do you see the ongoing negotiations between Iran and the remaining parties to the nuclear deal to revitalize the pact? Is there any hope to revive the agreement?**

The ongoing talks, to some extent, have the chance of success, yet they are still at the beginning point and we have a long road ahead. There is hope to revive the deal, but, in fact, a return to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action under the Iranian terms means a defeat for America.

Americans express the difficulty of negotiations and describe Iran's demand to lift all sanctions as a dilemma.

**What can Iran learn from America's behavior when it pulled out of the nuclear pact unilaterally?**

America's exit from an international agreement means that a return to the agreement

is not guaranteed, and if it even takes place it may will be temporary and may be a superficial move.

It takes a long time for Iran to verify the lifting of sanctions which entails a very difficult process.

Many banks around the world avoid cooperating with Iran for fear of subsequent sanctions, besides direct penalties due to American embargo on Iran, so the issue is complicated for this reason.

**Do you think that Iran will make more concessions in these negotiations? What are Iran's trump cards?**

Iran is no longer in a hurry and is not obliged to make concessions because it has started building important economic ties with China, Russia and India, and I think Tehran will not be obliged to reach to an agreement at all within a year. Albeit Iran needs it now,

but it is not essentially a must.

Iran's cards in this game are to increase uranium enrichment, which is constantly increasing.

It also has military strength and international allies, especially with Russia, which supports the Iranian position when it demands the lifting of all sanctions.

Moreover, Iran has a large Chinese economic support, as well as influential presence in the region.

**How do you see the Europeans' role in these negotiations? Why have they failed to neutralize sanctions imposed during the Trump administration?**

The Europeans want real investments in Iran and they are eager to have economic cooperation with Tehran; that is why they want these efforts to succeed, and at the same time they seek to counter Iran in regional and strategic issues.

They have failed to confront Trump's sanctions because they are economically linked to the United States of America and cannot escape from it, neither economically nor militarily or security.

We saw in the G5 meeting in Britain how the United States banned many of the offers made by China and even the offers made by Russia regarding the Nord Stream pipeline.

**Why do Israel and Saudi Arabia try to meddle in the nuclear deal negotiations?**

Israel and Saudi Arabia want to sabotage the negotiations and therefore they intervene in these negotiations and try to impose conditions related to their security and their interests in the region within the agreement.

They want to change the agreement either in practice or in text by adding political conditions to it.

## Iran embarrasses the American arrogance: Lebanese academic

➔ 1 The other lesson is that our countries and peoples must work diligently and permanently to reinforce their power and deterrence, so that they are able to confront the tyrannical powers.

Third, we must not trust the Americans and not rely on the promises and guarantees of the Europeans because they have proven that they are in a position of weakness and subservience to the Americans. They cannot do anything if the Americans decide to act against their desires.

**Do you think Iran, through the conclusion of the comprehensive partnership with China and Russia, will enhance its regional clout?**

Iran has strengthened its regional position by establishing new balances and through its free decision and its political, scientific and economic independence. This is what made the Chinese and the Russians respect Tehran and seek economic and political partnerships with Iranians.

This partnership (with China) has various advantages for both sides, not just for Iran.

**How do you assess Biden's policies towards West Asia and Palestine?**

We should take into consideration the new U.S. strategic blueprint within Democrats' policy over the last decade,

which its priority is to confront China as a strong competitor to the American empire.

Add to this the historical hostility in the minds of the American industrial complex and American institutions to Russia as the first enemy even before China.

So, U.S. interests in West Asia will not be as important as it was in previous administrations, because this region also has showed that it is not up for grabs for the Americans.

This region brought them successive losses, and contributed significantly to the major economic crisis in 2008 while West Asian people never give up to American arrogance nor to the existence of the Zionist regime; so, we have seen a great reluctance of the Americans to this region.

**What will be repercussions of possible revitalization of the nuclear deal on regional balances?**

The nuclear deal negotiations will show Iran as a balanced, strong and impregnable country, which embarrassed the American arrogance and rejected direct talk with American representatives as a penalty for its withdrawal from the nuclear deal.

Iran could reveal the reality of the United States for international public opinion and give it a harsh lesson in politics, in addition to sending a very important message to



the countries of the region and to free people in the world that we can confront America and make it kneel politically.

This entire spectacle indicates that the future of Iran and its allies in the region is promising as a considerable power and a reliable and respected axis.

## Aggression against Yemen is "an imperialist war: professor

By Mohammad Ali Haqshenas

**TEHRAN** — Professor of political science Colin S. Cavell believes that aggression against Yemen is "an imperialist war by an autocratic kingdom against an impoverished people fighting for liberation."

In an interview with Mehr News Agency, Colin S. Cavell, full professor of political science at Bluefield State College in Bluefield, West Virginia, described the war in Yemen as "an imperialist war by an autocratic kingdom against an impoverished people fighting for liberation," Cavell noted.

According to American professor, "The Saudis want to maintain their decades-long hegemony over Yemen as a *raison d'être* for their continued support by the USA and the UK."

Here is the full text of the interview:

**What are the main reasons behind Saudi Arabia's failure in reaching its aims after six years of war in Yemen?**

In order to answer this question, let us analyze a recent article by a supporter of the Saudi effort to retain control over Yemen so as to provide your readers with contrasting perspectives on the Saudi-Yemeni conflict:

In his March 16, 2021 article "Yemen is More Complicated Than Biden Thinks", Hussein Ibish, Senior Resident Scholar at AGSIW, an outlet which aligns itself with the Democratic Party side of the U.S. capitalist duopoly and which continuously aims to provide some coherence and rationality to the western Middle Eastern alliance by attempting to weave together possible points of agreement between the interests of Saudi Arabia and the region's monarchies with those of Israel and the United States. Ibish, in fact, is perhaps one of the few theorists who understands that the western imperial alliance necessitates some congruity and consistency if its coalition partners are ever going to be able to sell their imperial policies to a very reluctant and distrustful public.

Commenting on the western quagmire in

the country of Yemen, Ibish writes as follows:

*During the Trump presidency, Yemen was primarily viewed as Saudi Arabia's problem. The war was cast as the consequence of Saudi aggression — specifically, Riyadh's leadership of the Arab alliance against the Iran-backed Houthi rebels. As a result, it was assumed that ending the fighting was just a matter of compelling the Saudis to get out of Yemen....*

But the Houthis, a Shiite militia that overthrew the Hadi government in 2015, have never shown any serious interest in peace. Since the war has gone fairly well for them, they have little incentive to stop fighting. And their Iranian patrons are certain to press them to keep the Saudis bogged down. The conflict in Yemen has given Tehran plausible deniability while repeatedly striking at its main regional rival in its exposed underbelly.

In theory, it shouldn't be that difficult to incentivize the Houthis to come to terms. A political agreement would have to recognize and institutionalize the power they have accumulated over the past five years.

However, there are a number of serious challenges. Since the war started, no one has been able to ascertain what the Houthi bottom line is, much less what kind of deal they might accept. Not only are they fanatical in the extreme — their rallying cry is "God is great! Death to America! Death to Israel! A curse upon the Jews! Victory for Islam!" — they are also internally divided. Their representatives at previous peace talks apparently did not represent the views and commitments of commanders on the ground.

*Thus, from a pro-imperialist perspective, one may conclude with Ibish that:*

1) The war on Yemen commenced with the overthrow of the Hadi regime in 2015, thus ignoring the overlordship of a foreign-imposed Saudi puppet regime since North and South Yemen united in May 1990;

2) The Yemeni liberation forces are merely "Iran-backed Houthi rebels" and that it is solely within the power of Iran to control what the Yemenis do or not do, thus repeating the

racist and condescending tactics of imperialist everywhere in denying agency to its foes;

3) Trump was not complicit in Saudi crimes in Yemen, because he viewed Yemen as only a Saudi problem, and yet it was Trump who sold over \$460 billion of U.S. weaponry to Saudi Arabia;

4) The Yemeni liberation forces "have never shown any serious interest in peace", and by this usage of the word "peace", Ibish implies a capitulation to Saudi suzerainty and/or hegemony over Yemen; indeed, by making such an absurd statement, Ibish indicates he holds little appreciation for the difficulty of life in Yemen, living under the rule of a Saudi puppet and its attendant everyday violence while continuously subjected to indiscriminate Saudi bombing campaigns which, as reporter Russ Wellen notes: "In their bombing (using American aircraft and with intelligence and targeting help from the United States), the Saudis have been about as discriminating as the Israelis in Gaza (in other words, not) (Wellen, August 6, 2015);

5) It is impossible to ascertain "what the Houthi bottom line is"; meanwhile, the Yemenis' repeated cries for FREEDOM and STOP THE BOMBING and END THE BLOCKADE are consistently ignored;

6) And, finally, the ultimate insult from a western imperialist perspective—arrogant, paternalistic, snobbish, condescending, and patronizing—by criticizing the Yemenis for their rallying cries of "God is great! Death to America! Death to Israel! A curse upon the Jews! Victory for Islam!", as if a country undergoing "the world's worst humanitarian crisis with nearly 80% or more than 24 million of its people needing humanitarian assistance and protection and more than 13 million in danger of starving to death" (UN Humanitarian Office, January 12, 2021) can afford more eloquent slogans such as "Liberté, égalité, fraternité" and other bourgeois shibboleths which initially helped rally the masses behind the capitalist revolutions of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, at least until the masses realized the

bourgeoisie had no intention of liberating the working masses, fighting for equality, or instilling fraternity amongst all its peoples. And while Ibish is ensconced in cosmopolitan Washington, D.C., I write at present just 338 miles away in rural Appalachia in the state of West Virginia where some of the most popular bumper stickers are: "Jesus Is Lord!"; "Pro God, Pro Gun, Pro Life!"; "STAND FOR THE FLAG, KNEEL AT THE CROSS!"; "No Jesus, No Peace — Know Jesus, Know Peace!" And let us not forget the Proud Boys t-shirt slogan of "6MWE" (i.e. 'Six Million Weren't Enough' -- a reference to the six million Jews who died in the Nazi holocaust); "CAMP AUSCHWITZ: WORK BRINGS FREEDOM" (a reference to the sign at the entrance of the German concentration camp of Auschwitz which stated: "Arbeit macht frei"); the large wooden cross carried around on the January 6, 2021 storming of the U.S. Congress building where at least five people were killed and where QAnon followers claimed to be protesting against "white genocide". So, yes, the U.S. has its questionable rallying slogans as well!

**How do you assess the role of the Western countries in the continuation of the war?**

The Saudi coalition of the U.S., the U.K., Israel, et al. are concerned not only with the continued military victories on the ground by the Yemeni liberation army but, as well, by the lackluster fighting on the part of their Saudi ally. Wiser analysts amongst this western imperial coalition, however, recognize that Saudi soldiers are largely mercenaries whose only incentive to fight is their paycheck, for the average Saudi soldier is quite conscious of the fact that the regime they are fighting for is as corrupt as the Arabian desert is wide and that their monarchical rulers are MINOS (Muslims In Name Only). Alternatively, the Yemenis are fighting for their lives, for liberation, and for freedom, and no amount of imperial weaponry will be able to dissuade them from continuing their struggle.

## U.S. police fatally shoot Black man in Minneapolis, protests erupt

➔ 1 A curfew was imposed in Brooklyn Center until 6 a.m. Monday (11 GMT), Brooklyn Center Mayor Mike Elliott said. "We want to make sure everyone is safe. Please be safe and please go home," he said in a tweet addressed to protestors.

Wright's mother, Katie Wright, told reporters at the scene that she had received a call from her son on Sunday afternoon telling her that police had pulled him over for having air fresheners dangling from his rear-view mirror, illegal in Minnesota. She could hear police tell her son to get out the vehicle, she said.

## Yemeni drones, missiles hit Aramco refineries, military sites in Saudi Arabia

Yemeni armed forces and allied Popular Committees fighters have launched fresh attacks on targets deep in Saudi Arabia in retaliation for the kingdom's ongoing aggression on their country.

Spokesman for the Yemeni Armed Forces Brigadier General Yahya Saree said that 17 drones and ballistic missiles were used in a operation against Saudi Arabia on Monday.

Aramco refineries in Jubail and Jeddah were hit with 10 drones of Samad-3 type as part of the operation, he said.

According to the spokesman, "sensitive military targets" in the Saudi cities of Khamis Mushait and Jizan were hit with five Qasef-2K UAVs as well as two ballistic missiles of Badr 1 type.

The operation, which took place on Sunday evening and continued until dawn, hit its targets "successfully", he added.

Saree stressed that the retaliatory attacks will continue as long as the Saudi aggression and blockade persist.

**Jeddah airport shut down due to military action: Report**

Earlier Monday, an international airport in Saudi Arabia's Jeddah was temporarily closed due to a military activity in the vicinity of the city, an aviation news website saya, with Yemen warning that the kingdom uses its airports for military purposes.

Simple Flying reported on Monday that flights due to arrive in King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah are diverting to other airports around Saudi Arabia.

The Saudi-led coalition against Yemen claimed on Sunday that it intercepted and destroyed a ballistic missile, and six drones launched by Yemeni troops towards the kingdom.

## Kremlin: some conditions must be met for further peace talks on eastern Ukraine

The Kremlin said some of the conditions outlined in the Minsk peace accords on eastern Ukraine must be met before a further round of peace talks can go ahead, Russian news agencies reported.

Political advisers are working on a possible round of such talks under the so-called Normandy format, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov was quoted as saying on a state television channel. The agencies did not immediately give further details.

The Normandy format brought together the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, Germany and France to help end the conflict in eastern Ukraine between Kiev's forces and pro-Russian separatists.

## German CDU top brass back Laschet as chancellor candidate

The executive committee of Germany's Christian Democrats (CDU) backed party chairman Armin Laschet on Monday as the conservative bloc's candidate for chancellor at federal elections in September, party sources said.

Committee members attested to Laschet's "ability to bring opinions together, to develop a stance and to represent it consistently", the sources said.

The candidacy question came to a head on Sunday when Markus Soeder, leader of the CDU's Bavarian sister party, the CSU, put himself forward to run and said he would settle the question soon and amicably with Laschet, his rival.

According to Reuters, Pressure is mounting for a swift decision on who should stand for the two-party bloc as the candidate to succeed Chancellor Angela Merkel, who has ruled out standing for a fifth term.

As the larger partner in the CDU/CSU alliance, the CDU's choice of candidate is likely to be decisive, sources in the alliance say.

## Resistance News

## Hamas officials among many citizens kidnapped by IOF in W. Bank

**INTERNATIONAL DESK** **TEHRAN** — The Israeli occupation forces (IOF) at dawn Monday kidnaped several Palestinian citizens, including Hamas officials, during large-scale arrest campaigns in the West Bank and Jerusalem.

According to local sources, the IOF stormed different neighborhoods of al-Khalil at dawn and kidnaped three Hamas officials from their homes. The detainees identified as Anas Rasras, Omar al-Qawasmi and Mustafa Shawar.

The IOF also kidnaped a young man identified as Mohamed Abu Mariya from Beit Ummar town in northern al-Khalil. His father Wahid Abu Mariya had been released two days ago.

In Jenin, the IOF kidnaped a female activist and ex-detainee called Mona Qa'dan after searching her house in Arraba town.

Qa'dan had been arrested five times before and spent a total of seven years in different Israeli jails.

Meanwhile, two brothers identified as Hammouda and Ramez as-Sameer were taken prisoners during an IOF raid on their house in Jenin City.

In Bethlehem, the IOF kidnaped an ex-detainee called Hammad Abu Mariya at the Container crossing in the northeast of the city.

10 other young ex-detainees were taken prisoners during an IOF campaign in Teqoa town in southern Bethlehem. All of them are from the family of al-Amour.

In Ramallah, the IOF raided homes in Deir Jarir town and kidnaped a young man called Mahmoud Maali and another citizen called Abdul-Aleem Alawi, the father of prisoner Maan who was kidnaped about one week ago.

The IOF also stormed other West Bank areas, with no reported arrests.

The Israeli occupation army claimed that its forces in northern Gaza detained an unarmed Palestinian for some hours and released him after questioning him.



## Iran to resume UK flights as of May 6

**TOURISM** **TEHRAN** — Iran’s flag carrier IranAir is set to resume flights to and from the United Kingdom as of May 6 after months of suspension imposed to curb the spread of a novel coronavirus variant into the Islamic Republic. “IranAir will resume flights between Tehran and London on May 6,” IRNA quoted Hossein Jahani, who presides over the airline’s public relations department, as saying on Sunday. Jahani said the flights to London will be operated on Sundays and Thursdays every week due to the lifting of the COVID-19 restrictions in the UK.



In December, the Islamic Republic halted flights to and from the United Kingdom, preliminary for two weeks, and then the ban was initially extended for one month at the discretion of the Health Ministry to prevent the transmission of the ‘British’ variant and to try to maintain public health. At that time, an ensuing wave of travel bans cut off UK travelers from much of Europe and other parts of the world. Some experts believed that there was no evidence the new variant was more deadly or would react differently to vaccines, but it was proving to be up to 70% more transmissible.

## A peek into essential elements of Persian architecture

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** — Iran has inherited abundant architectural traditions over the course of history. The Elamite, Achaemenian, Hellenistic, and other pre-Islamic and Islamic-era dynasties have left striking stone testaments to their greatness, such as Chogha Zanbil and Persepolis—both of which were designated UNESCO World Heritage sites in 1979. Three monastic ensembles central to the Armenian Christian faith, with an architecture representing a confluence of Byzantine, Persian, and Armenian cultures, were collectively recognized as a World Heritage site in 2008. From the Islamic period the architectural achievements of the Seljuq, Il-Khanid, and Safavid dynasties are particularly noteworthy. During that time Iranian cities such as Neyshabur, Isfahan, and Shiraz came to be among the great cities of the Islamic world, and their many mosques, madrasahs, shrines, and palaces formed an architectural tradition that was distinctly Iranian within the larger Islamic milieu, according to Encyclopedia Britannica. There are some elements that share between most of the monuments constructed upon Persian architecture:

**Domes**  
The Persian tradition of dome-building dates back to the earliest Mesopotamian architecture when domes became an integral part of buildings due to the scarcity of wood in many areas of the Iranian plateau. In Ancient Persia, domes were associated with the divine side of life, as their circular shape represented perfection, eternity and the heavens, according to Press TV. Domes moved to the forefront of Persian architecture during the Sasanian period (224 to 651 CE) and they evolved through different eras until the Safavid dynasty (1501–1732) when the last generation of Persian domes were characterized by a distinctive bulbous profile and astonishing tileworks. In the Persian urban designing, domes in places of worship and public places, including traditional bazaars, caravansaries, schools and baths, are designed in such a way that can be seen from different parts of urban or rural area. The domes are normally double-shelled. While the interior shell is designed to carry the weight of the structure, the exterior shell serves as both a decorative element and as insulation against the elements. The aerodynamic shape of the domes also makes the structures more sustainable. **The usage of iwans (porticos)**  
An iwan is a vaulted space that opens on one side to a courtyard. The idea of iwan developed in pre-Islamic Iran where it was used in monumental and imperial architecture. **Extensive use of arches**  
The two famous monuments, the Taj Mahal for the Mughal architecture and the Great Mosque of Isfahan for the Persian architecture displays the example of this fact. It is built for aesthetic reasons, as well as to place windows and to lessen the extent of sunlight to pour into the building. **Gardens, fountains, and pools**  
Water plays a particularly central role in Iranian design: millennia before the invention of the first water pump, Persian agricultural experts created the qanat (subterranean aqueduct) based on their hydraulic laws. Spacious gardens and pools with fountains have always been a main feature of Persian architecture over time. In a traditional mosque, madrasa, house, it is used for ablutions, aesthetics or both. **Symmetry**  
Iranian architecture makes use of abundant symbolic geometry, using pure forms such as the circle and square, and plans are based on often symmetrical layouts featuring rectangular courtyards and halls. Sassanid architecture is decorated with carved stone or stucco reliefs and makes use of colorful stone mosaics. Beautiful gold and silver dishes, bowls, and ewers, often decorated with hunting scenes or animals in high relief, and textiles with symmetrical heraldic designs also remain. **Usage of Muqarnas**  
Muqarnas is typically applied to the undersides of domes, pendentives, cornices, squinches, arches, and vaults and is often seen in the mihrab of a mosque. They can be entirely ornamental, or serve as load-bearing structures. The earliest forms of muqarnas domes, found in the Mesopotamian region, were primarily structural. **Calligraphy**  
Iranians’ passion for using the script as an artistic impression goes back to pre-Islamic times but it is the work of Islamic era calligraphers and illuminators that elevated its use into the high art we appreciate today. Encouraged by the Islamic preference for the art of calligraphy over representational arts, it developed from epoch to epoch and from style to style.

# Iranian Tour Operators Association pursues tourist visas resumption

**➔ 1** Pourfaraj believes that the reasonable prices of Iran tours are expected to bring back the boom into the tourism sector of the country in the post coronavirus era. “Attractive tour plans are also being prepared for those who are eager to explore the historical attractions and natural wonders of the ancient country and want to experience a vacation here.” Pourfaraj also expressed hope that international tour operators and companies who have worked with their Iranian counterparts for years, would put Iran back on the world’s travel route again, considering the facilities they can get at cheaper prices than in other countries.

Last November, the World Tourism Organization announced that international tourist arrivals to Iran plunged 72% during the first eight months of 2020 when compared to 2019, highlighting the severe impact of COVID-19 as the main factor. Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan in October warned that Iran’s cultural heritage and tourism will be in a critical situation if the crises caused by the outbreak of the coronavirus continue. Last August, Mounesan said that



Iran’s tourism has suffered a loss of 12 trillion rials (some \$2.85 billion) since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. Furthermore, the minister also noted that the coronavirus pandemic should not bring traveling to a complete standstill. “Corona is a

fact, but can the virus stop tourism? Certainly not. For us, the coronavirus is a new experience in dealing with crises that teaches tourism experts around the world how to deal with such a disaster, and thankfully governments are turning this into an opportunity for better

## Rock-hewn tomb, bas-relief carvings to undergo restoration in western Iran

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** — Restoration work is set to commence on a historical rock-hewn tomb and several associated bas-relief carvings, which are situated in Sarpol-e Zahab, western Iran. “The millennia-old bas-reliefs of Anubanini and the rock-hewn tomb of Dokan-e-Davood are planned to undergo restoration work in near future,” IRNA quoted Sarpol-e Zahab’s governor as saying on Sunday. Furthermore, local routes to the cited sites will be amended to promote both tourism and to help safeguard the cultural heritage of the region, the official added. Every corner of Iran is filled with ancient and prehistoric heritage, which testify to the colorful past of the nation yet many of them are nearly lost in time and forgotten. Amongst ones consigned to oblivion are millennia-old Anubanini bas-reliefs widely believed to be the oldest rock reliefs in the country. The four heavily damaged reliefs are associated with the Lullubi civilization due to depicting Lullubian kings as conquerors. They are situated on the northeastern edge of the modern Sarpol-e Zahab in Kermanshah province, about twenty kilometers east of the border between Iraq and Iran. The kingdom of Lullubi, in the valley of the Diyala river, is mentioned several times in the cuneiform texts from ancient Iraq; the first references date to the third millennium BC (Naram-Sin’s famous Victory Stela in the Louvre), while the most recent texts belong to the Neo-Assyrian age, according to Livius.org; a website on ancient history written and maintained since 1996 by the Dutch historian Jona Lendering. The four monuments are the oldest rock reliefs of Iran.

They can be dated to c. 2000 BC because one of the reliefs has an inscription that explains that the victorious ruler is called Anubanini, and this man is also known from sources from the Isin-Larsa period. The other three reliefs probably date back to about the same age. All reliefs show the king, facing right and holding a bow and a battle-ax, standing on a defeated enemy; in the sky, symbols of the celestial deities can be seen.

On the Anubanini relief, the goddess holds two naked captives, which are tied to each other with ropes. Below the king and the deity, six other prisoners of war can be seen. This relief is the most interesting of the quartet: not only because it is well-preserved, but also because it was the model of the Achaemenid king Darius’ Behistun relief, which is about fifteen centuries younger. Below the Anubanini relief, a fifth monument can be discerned: it dates back to the Parthian age and shows a king named Gotarzes, seated on a horse, and a man - perhaps a governor or a satrap - who appears to be saluting him. There were two Parthian kings with this name: Gotarzes I was a rebel who controlled large parts of the empire from 91 to 87 BC, while Gotarzes II ruled from 39 to 51 CE. Rock tombs are holy places for the burial of the dead and a large number of them can be found throughout the land of Kermanshah province. The rock-hewn tomb of Dokan-e-Davood is located three kilometers of the south-east of Sarpol-e Zahab at the beginning of the Anzal route. One of the similarities between Dokan-e-Davood and other rock tombs such as Sahneh is the front porch. It



was previously thought that this rock tomb and the stone relief beneath belongs to the time of the Medes, but there is also another thesis that they belong to Achaemenid Empire. They have been carved into the mountain to contain the offerings. There is a grave in the form of an oval on the left side of the room. But the most amazing part of Dokan-e-Davood is the relief of a person in full height that is located beneath the tomb. Kermanshah is a cradle of civilization due to its antiquity and having Neolithic sites that have been yielded rich collections of stone tools and fossil bones. Proximity to the Achaemenid and Sassanid bas-relief carvings of Bisotun and Taq-e-Bustan is amongst other tourist drawcards for the region.

## Historical clock starts ticking once again in downtown Tehran

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** — On Monday, a tower-mounted clock, which Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom presented to Naser al-Din Shah in the 19th century, started working once again in downtown Tehran. “The repairmen of the clock and its bell say that it took 18 months to overhaul them,” ISNA reported. In the 19th century, the clock was mounted on top of Shams-ol-Emareh (“Edifice of the Sun”) to inform all the people of the then small Tehran passing of the time. The loud sound of the clock, however, caused the settlers in the palace to complain. The shah, Finally, ordered to lessen its sound. However, the attainment work on the clock did not do any good and muted the clock. The clock remained silent for over a hundred years. This silence finally ended on 12 November 2012 after repairs were finished, and the clock’s bell sounded again for a while. Although it comprises part of UNESCO-registered Golestan Palace, Shams-ol-Emareh is a masterpiece deserving its own recognition. The five-floor building is



symmetrically parallel from the outside as the two towers on the left and right sides of the building are tall enough to give a pleasant view of the surroundings. Though the whole structure was inspired by European architecture, it has still preserved Persian architectural elements. Its tilework, interior architecture, decorations, and the façade are some of the features of Persian architecture. The decorative art of Shams ol-Emareh contains beautiful mirror work, fantastic paintings, and fascia on the walls or ceilings. The clock on the outer side of the building is said to be the first clock imported to Iran. A destination for domestic and international travelers, Golestan Palace is located in the heart and historic core of Tehran. The palace complex is one of the oldest in

the Iranian capital, originally built during the Safavid dynasty (1501–1736) in the historic walled city. Following extensions and additions, it received its most characteristic features in the 19th century, when the palace complex was selected as the royal residence and seat of power by the Qajar ruling family (1789–1925). At present, the Golestan Palace complex consists of eight key palace structures mostly used as museums and the eponymous gardens, a green shared center of the complex, surrounded by an outer wall with gates. UNESCO has it that the complex exemplifies architectural and artistic achievements of the Qajar era including the introduction of European motifs and styles into Persian arts.

Historical Places, the scheme is expected to assist a sustainable development for the local communities through fueling a tourism boom along the once flourishing route. The collective province -- Sistan in the north and Baluchestan in the south -- accounts for one of the driest regions of Iran with a slight increase in rainfall from east to west, and an obvious rise in humidity in the coastal regions. In ancient times, the region was a crossword of the Indus Valley and the Babylonian civilizations. The province possesses special significance because of being located in a strategic and transit location, especially Chabahar which is the only ocean port in Iran and the best and easiest access route of the middle Asian countries to free waters. It is home to several distinctive archaeological sites and natural attractions, including two UNESCO World Heritage sites, namely Shahr-e-Soukhteh (Burnt City) and Lut desert.

## First boutique hotel to make debut in Sistan-Baluchestan

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** — The first boutique hotel in Sistan-Baluchestan will be officially inaugurated within the next few days. The southeastern Iranian province is home to various lesser-known cultural sites and raw beauties. Located in Zahak county, the hotel is originally a centuries-old castle, which has undergone extensive rounds of restoration, the deputy provincial tourism chief, Mojtaba Mirhosseini, said on Monday. “A boutique hotel is a place of residence that showcases the rich history, tradition, and culture of the region. Such hotels are more popular among foreign tourists and are considered tourist attractions,” the official explained. Over the past couple of years, hundreds of historical sites and monuments across Iran have been temporarily ceded to the private investors by auctions reportedly to gain higher



productivity and better maintenance. Conducted by the Revitalization and Utilization Fund for

## Iran, Armenia unveil Saint Thaddeus Church postage stamp

**HERITAGE** **TEHRAN** — Iran and Armenia on Sunday unveiled a commemorative stamp of Saint Thaddeus Church on the sidelines of a joint online philatelic exhibition. The unveiling ceremony was attended by the head of Iran’s Post Company Ramezan-Ali Sobhanifar, Armenian Ambassador to Iran Artashes Toumanian, IRNA reported. Iranian commemorative stamps of the

Iranian New Year (Norouz) and a selection of Armenian stamps were put on display in the online event, which is co-organized by the Post and Communications Museum and Arch Bishop Ardak Manoukian Museum. Also known as the Qareh Klise (“the Black Church”), the monastery is one of the oldest surviving Christian monuments in the country. It is situated in Chaldoran county some 20 kilometers from Maku, adjacent to the

borders of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey. The ancient Church shows off elaborate bas-reliefs of flowers, animals, and human figures on its façade and exterior walls. It bears verses of Old and New Testament in Armenian calligraphy as well. Together with St. Stepanos Monastery and the Chapel of Dzordzor, Qareh Klise was placed on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2008 under the name “Armenian Monastic

Ensembles of Iran”. All three sites are located in West Azarbaijan and are of high significance from historical and cultural perspectives. They bear credible testimony to interchanges with the ancient regional societies in particular the Byzantine, Orthodox, and Persian. UNESCO has it that the churches bear examples of outstanding universal values of the Armenian architectural and decorative traditions.



# Child adoption up by 10% in Iran

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** – Child adoption has increased in the country by 10 percent, following the actions taken to speed up the process, Habibollah Masoudi-Farid, deputy head of the Welfare Organization, has stated.

Following the Law on Protection of Children and Adolescents in [the Iranian calendar year] 1392 (March 2013-March 2014), adaption experienced an upward trend.

Welfare efforts to fulfill this basic slogan that children must grow in the family led welfare experts to identify children who can be fostered by the families through regular inspections, he said.

The adoption system officially started operating in May 2020, people who signed up for adoption were asked whether they are willing to adopt a disabled or older child. Families could also track their cases.

The system facilitated access, and the important point is that the adoption rate increased by 10 percent over the last year (March 2020-March 2021) compared to a year before, he highlighted.

Since [the Iranian calendar year] 1392, the number of adoption cases has increased and 2,000 children are placed for adoption annually, some of whom are placed under temporary custody because a temporary trustee is better than care centers, Masoudi-Farid said in May 2020.

For adoption, criteria like mental health, the ability to take care of a child, no addiction, no criminal record, and bad reputation, as well as proper income must be achieved. The approach is the result of studying the adoption process in 10 countries around the world, he noted.

In [the Iranian calendar year] 1398 (March 2019- March 2020), 160 children were adopted who were suffering from diseases or disabilities. Also, 130 children were given to single



**Since [the Iranian calendar year] 1392 (March 2013-March 2014), the number of adoption cases has increased and 2,000 children are placed for adoption annually, some of whom are placed under temporary custody because a temporary trustee is better than care centers.**

girls over the age of 30.

Montazer Shabar, the Welfare Organization's director for children affairs, said in July 2019 that there are 10 applicants for fostering each child in the country.

Currently, some 2,800 applicants are waiting for adoption, most of whom are parents not having children or intending to foster a child, he added.

Ahmad Khaki, deputy head of Tehran's welfare organization for social affairs, has

said that the number of children adopted in Tehran increased by 25 percent in [the Iranian calendar] year 1396 (March 2017 – March 2018) compared to the year before, as some 500 children were adopted by Tehraners in the year ended March 2019.

According to the Welfare Organization, the country's adoption and foster laws that dated back to some 44 years ago were revised and modified in 2013. Within the new law, kids could be adopted up to the age of 16

while the former law states that kids aged 12 or less could be adopted. In addition to families with no child now families with one kid and single women are able to apply for adoption.

The law formerly authorized adoption only for orphans while the new law permit adoption for children with dysfunctional families as well in case the judge concludes that the new family is suitable for adoption.

Previously, the adoptive families were required to sign over one-third of their property to their child-to-be but some could not afford to do so and now the judge gets to decide how a family, depending on their financial status, should be treated.

**5,500 female-headed households supported last year**

Last year, in addition to the nearly 240,000 households under the Welfare Organization's coverage, 5,500 female-headed households were also covered, Masoudi-Farid said.

"We also provided health insurance coverage for over 30,000 breadwinner women residing in nomadic or rural areas," he stated.

In Iran, there are 3 million women-headed households, out of a total of 22 million families, and most of them can be found in less developed areas of the country, according to the UNDP office in Iran.

**4,800 multiple births covered by the Organization**

Another important point is the population policies that families with multiple births, especially triplets and above, should be supported, including receiving subsidies for triplets regardless of their income. They are also supported to supply infant milk and diapers.

"A total of 4,800 multiple births are currently covered by the Organization, as last year, 800 multiple births above three were covered," he concluded.

## Iran, Iraq to enhance labor, social welfare co-op

➔ **1** Al-Rikabi also said that the joint action plan includes various areas of cooperation, including the exchange of experiences and the dispatch of professional delegations between the two countries, in addition to holding training courses and workshops.

He added that improving services for the disabled and expanding social security are among the issues covered by the program.

The document also emphasizes cooperation and participation in national skills competitions in the two countries, holding entrepreneurship training courses for Iraqi coaches, and exchanging trainers in required fields.



In addition, the two parties will cooperate in the field of labor relations, including job classification according to international standards, labor inspection training, implementation of current labor laws, social dialogue, and labor dispute resolution authorities.

Cooperation and exchange of experiences in the field of welfare and social security, including vocational rehabilitation, holding supportive workshops, methods of counseling services for the disabled, support solutions for breadwinner women and children, and operating employment-generating cooperatives for job seekers with disabilities and women heads of households are among the other issues that are emphasized in this document.

## Over 7,400 PCR tests for passengers suspected of COVID-19

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** – Some 7,414 passengers underwent PCR tests under a plan to rapidly identify suspected cases of coronavirus and prevent the spread of new UK strain.

Since March 10, some 146,177 passengers were screened for COVID-19 by IRCS forces, 24,374 of whom underwent rapid tests, Mehdi Valipour, head of the Relief and Rescue Organization of the Red Crescent Society, said.



He went on to lament that some 47 individuals, who tested positive, have so far been temporarily quarantined, IRNA reported on Monday.

With the cooperation of ministries of health and transport, a plan was implemented to rapidly identify and test incoming passengers and keeping them in quarantine facilities, if necessary.

Thirty border checkpoints have been selected, including 18 land borders, nine air borders, and three sea borders, all incoming passengers will be tested and referred to the quarantine facilities in case of necessity. Some 5,000 members of the IRCS cooperate for carrying out the plan; while around 8,000 individuals enter the country via borders daily, IRCS head, Karim Hemmati said on March 26.

Last week, President Hassan Rouhani said that the fourth wave of COVID-19 resurgence has been registered in two provinces.

"If people in other provinces do not observe (health guidelines), they may experience the fourth wave as well," Rouhani was quoted as saying.

"According to the statistics, compliance with health guidelines has decreased," he warned.

**New cases and mortalities**

In a press briefing on Monday, Health Ministry's spokesperson Sima-Sadat Lari confirmed 23,311 new cases of COVID-19 infection, raising the total number of infections to 2,093,452. She added that 1,720,084 patients have so far recovered, but 4,440 remain in critical conditions of the disease.

During the past 24 hours, 274 patients have lost their lives, bringing the total number of deaths to 64,764, she added.

So far, 13,770,167 COVID-19 diagnostic tests have been performed in the country.

## LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 157)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

■ **Past Continuous**

■ **گذشته‌ی استمراری**

گذشته‌ی استمراری از 'می' + گذشته‌ی ساده + شناسه‌های گذشته ساخته می‌شود:

I was going;	مِی رَفْتَم	مِی رَفْتَم
I used to go;	مِی رَفْتِی	مِی رَفْتِی
I went	مِی رَفْت	مِی رَفْت
...	مِی رَفْتِیْم	مِی رَفْتِیْم
	مِی رَفْتِیْد	مِی رَفْتِیْد
	مِی رَفْتِیْد	مِی رَفْتِیْد

● **تمرین ۱. به گذشته‌ی استمراری تبدیل کنید:**

- من همیشه به بچه‌ها ..... (فکر کردن)
- معمولاً شب‌ها باران ..... (آمدن)
- در کوه برف سنگینی ..... (باریدن)
- آنها نزدیک قلّه ..... (ایستادن)
- شما با بچه‌ها ..... (راه رفتن)
- او عکس‌ها را با هم ..... (مقایسه کردن)

## What is Bitcoin mining and why is it so harmful to the environment?

Bitcoin has enjoyed a new lease of life over the last year, the cryptocurrency's value booming to a three-year high as the world was brought to a standstill by the coronavirus pandemic, trapping millions of people in their homes.

A single virtual coin is worth £42,269 at the time of writing, up from £5,343 on the same date precisely a year ago, according to CoinDesk data.

The decentralised electronic currency has come a long way since its conception in 2008, when idealistic early adopters, angered by the latest financial crash, saw it as a means of bypassing the crony capitalist institutions that had dropped society into recession through greed and negligence.

Born of the same anti-establishment spirit of "taking back control" that inspired such movements as Anonymous, Occupy and WikiLeaks or the more recent GameStop war on Wall Street short-sellers, Bitcoin's practical problems and inefficiencies have gradually come to light, from its lack of consumer protection to facilitating crimes like black market trading, money laundering and tax evasion.

Perhaps its most glaring issue is the huge environmental impact of Bitcoin mining, the process by which virtual coins are generated.

Even though Bitcoin is unregulated, it still needs to verify all transactions carried out between traders to keep the playing field honest and does so by leaving the responsibility with "miners", who effectively act as auditors updating a ledger, an idea originating with the cryptocurrency's mysterious architect, known only by the pseudonym "Satoshi Nakamoto".

To do this - otherwise thought of as adding a block to the blockchain - miners race to guess a random number, one of which is released approximately every 10 minutes, a chase that involves huge quantities of computer processing power as their machines strive to solve complex but arbitrary mathematical equations in the hope of getting there first and being rewarded with a highly lucrative coin.

As the blockchain becomes ever longer, the calculations become ever more complicated, requiring the use of supercomputers to carry out the trial-and-error hunt for the solution.

More than 150 quintillion attempts at guessing the number are now carried every second of the day all around the world, with sprawling aircraft hangars filled with computers



working 24-hours a day far from uncommon.

These cryptocurrency farms require vast amounts of electricity to go about their business, given that a single Bitcoin transaction leaves a carbon footprint of 360kg, compared to 500mg from an average Visa transaction, according to Digiconomist founder Alex de Vries.

As such, they are commonly set up in places where power is cheapest, most notably northwestern China's Xinjiang Province - home to the oppressed Uighur minority - where coal is abundant and still accounts for two-thirds of the country's energy use.

Chinese Bitcoin mines are not only reliant on finite fossil fuel resources but their huge electricity usage results in carbon emissions that are said to be accelerating so rapidly, according to one new study, that they will soon exceed the energy consumption of Italy and Saudi Arabia if urgent action is not taken to rein them in.

Unchecked, the annual power consumption of China's Bitcoin industry is forecast to peak at 297 terawatt-hours (Twh) by 2024, surpassing the carbon emissions output of the Czech Republic and Qatar.

For the planet as a whole, the computing power required to support Bitcoin's underlying network now requires nearly as much energy as the whole of Argentina.

Analysis by the University of Cambridge published last month suggests Bitcoin mining uses more than 121 Twh annually, which would rank it in the top 30 electricity consumers worldwide if it were a country.

Power demand from crypto farms in Abkhazia in north western Georgia has been so high in recent years that rolling blackouts became the norm and equipment had to be confiscated by the state.

Another environmental impact of Bitcoin mining stems from the fact that the technology is still dependent on short-lived hardware to process its calculations, which inevitably burns out and needs to be replaced, prompting a spike in demand for microprocessing chips.

"Semiconductor manufacturers Samsung and Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company are the only companies capable of mass-producing the specific chips Bitcoin mining device manufacturers like Bitmain need, and these companies are already facing significant challenges in meeting chip demand, in addition to the pressure from Bitcoin miners," says De Vries of the resulting global chip shortage and price inflation.

This shortage has a knock-on impact on the production of other consumer electronics, from smartphones and games consoles to electric cars.

On the positive side, crypto farms have also been set up in countries like Iceland and Norway whose power supplies largely come from renewable energy sources (and whose climate is ideal for keeping servers cool), Inner Mongolia has set an example by moving to ban the practice for the sake of the natural world and more eco-friendly alternative cryptocurrencies like Cardano are springing up.

The latter claims to be 4m times more energy efficient than Bitcoin thanks to its "Proof-of-Stake" blockchain, which validates transactions based on how many coins are held by a network participant, not the amount of computational processing power they possess.

Whether Cardano or other challengers like Ethereum can topple Bitcoin from its perch remains to be seen but it's clear that the current rate of energy usage is unsustainable if global heating is to be curtailed.

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

### ENGLISH IN USE

#### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ج

## Camera traps picture Asiatic cheetah, Persian leopards in Semnan

An Asiatic cheetah and three Persian leopards have been observed through camera traps in Shahrood county in north central Semnan province, Amir Abdous, the provincial department of environment chief, has announced.

"Cameras have recently captured photos of an Asiatic cheetah and three Persian leopards around watering troughs," he said.

All are mature and physically healthy, which is so precious, Abdous further highlighted, Mehr reported on Wednesday. Referring to ten camera traps installed in the area by the environmentalists to determine the exact distribution of the species, he said that Asiatic cheetah and Persian leopard are two invaluable species which are endangered despite being among umbrella and flagship species.

## تصویر برداری همزمان از سه پلنگ و یک یوزپلنگ در شاهرود

مدیرکل حفاظت محیط زیست استان سمنان از تصویربرداری سه پلنگ ایرانی و یک یوزپلنگ آسیایی در پارک ملی توران شاهرودخبر داد.

امیر عبدوس در گفتگو با خبرنگار مهر، تاکید کرد: تصاویر ضبط شده از سه قلاده پلنگ توسط دوربین تله‌ای در کنار یکی از آبشخورهای این پارک ملی تهیه شده است، تصاویر شاهد سلامت و وضعیت جسمی مناسب این گونه دارد.

مدیرکل محیط زیست استان سمنان گفت: نصب ده دوربین تله‌ای توسط یکی از عکاسان و دوستداران طبیعت در توران همچنین ثبت تصویر یک قلاده یوزپلنگ آسیایی را نیز به دنبال داشت، تاکید کرد: پویایی جمعیت جانوران وحشی در یک زیست بوم در گرو حفظ گونه‌های شاخص آن زیست بوم به‌خصوص گونه‌های چتر و پرچم است و پلنگ به عنوان گونه چتر و یوزپلنگ به عنوان گونه پرچم در این پارک ملی نقش بسزایی در پویایی جمعیت سایر گونه‌ها به‌خصوص طعمه‌های خود دارند.



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GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Best way to defend Islam, is to practice Islam.

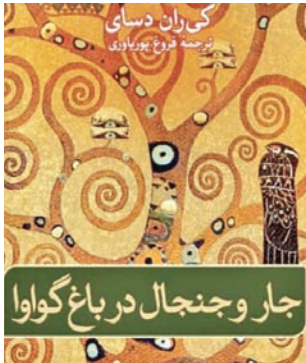
Prophet Muhammad (S)

## “Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard” comes into Iranian bookstores

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** – Indian writer Kiran Desai’s 1998 novel “Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard” has been published in Persian in Tehran.

Sales is the publisher of the book rendered into Persian by Forugh Puryavari.

The novel tells the story of Sampath Chawla, who was born in a time of drought that ended with a vengeance the night of his birth. All signs being auspicious, the villagers triumphantly assured Sampath’s proud parents that their son was destined for greatness.



Front cover of the Persian translation of Indian writer Kiran Desai’s novel “Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard”.

No one believes her until, one day, Sampath climbs into a guava tree and becomes unintentionally famous as a holy man, setting off a series of events that spin increasingly out of control. A delightfully sweet comic novel that ends in a raucous bang, “Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard” is as surprising and entertaining as it is beautifully wrought.

Desai is a citizen of India and a permanent resident of the United States. She is the daughter of the noted author Anita Desai.

Desai’s first novel, “Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard”, received the Betty Trask Award. Her second novel, “The Inheritance of Loss”, won the 2006 Man Booker Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Fiction Award.

## Iran’s “Bandar Band” wins NETPAC Award at Ulju Mountain Film Festival

**A R T** **TEHRAN** – “Bandar Band” by Iranian filmmaker Manijeh Hekmat received the NETPAC Award at the 6th edition of the Ulju Mountain Film Festival in Ulsan, South Korea, on Sunday.

The film is about some Iranian women singers who are going to enter an unofficial competition in a coffee shop in Tehran.



Ascene from “Bandar Band” by Iranian director Manijeh Hekmat

Pregnant Mahla along with the other members of Bandar Band, her husband, and one of their closest friends, starts her journey to Tehran from a southern province just when they have lost all they had in the flood.

They still keep their hopes alive, however, every road they take leads to a dead-end in a flood-stricken land. They intend to go to Tehran, but they wonder if it is just another turn around a vicious circle.

“The Wall of Shadows” a co-production between Poland and Germany by polish director Eliza Kubarska won the festival’s Grand Prize, while “Climbing”, an animated movie by Kim Hye-mi from Korea received the Special Jury Prize.

As the only mountain film festival in Korea, the Ulju Mountain Film Festival started the NETPAC Award in 2018.

Iranian director Yasser Talebi’s acclaimed documentary “Beloved” won the award in 2019.

# “The Wasteland” crowned best at Hong Kong film festival

**A R T** **TEHRAN** – “The Wasteland” by Iranian director Ahmad Bahrami received the Firebird Award for the best film in the main section of the 45th edition of the Hong Kong International Film Festival on Sunday.

Iranian actor Ali Baqeri was also crowned best for his role in the film.

Shot in black-and-white, “The Wasteland” tells the story of the 40-year-old supervisor at a mud-brick factory in Iran who gets trapped between his boss who wants to shut down the factory, and his colleagues who distrust him more and more.

“The Wasteland” previously won the Orizzonti Prize for best film at the 77th Venice Film Festival in September last year, while it also received the Fai Perso-na Lavoro Ambiente Foundation Award of the festival.

Kosovar director Norika Sefa named best for her latest drama “Looking for Venera”



Ali Baqeri acts in a scene from Iranian director Ahmad Bahrami’s “The Wasteland”.

at the international section of the Hong Kong festival, while the film brought the best actress award for Kosovare Kraniqi for her role.

“The Day Is Over” by QI Rui was named best Chinese-language film and Han Shuai received the best director award for his film “Summer Blur” in this section.

A lineup of seven Iranian movies including “180° Rule” by Farnush Samadi, “Careless Crime” by Shahram Mokri, “No Choice” by Reza Dormishian, and “Son-Mother” by Mahnaz Mohammadi was also screened in the World Cinema section of the festival.

“District Terminal”, a co-production between Iran and Germany by directors Bardia Yadegari and Ehsan Mirhosseini, and “Radiography of a Family”, a co-production of Norway, Iran, and Switzerland by Firuzeh Khosrovani were also on screen at the festival.

## Iran’s “Holy Bread” to compete in Trento film festival

**A R T** **TEHRAN** – “Holy Bread”, a documentary by late Iranian director Rahim Zabihi, will go on screen at the main section of the 69th edition of the Trento Film Festival, which will open in the Italian city on April 30.

Produced by Iranian cinematographer Turaj Aslani, the film documents the highly dangerous work of Kurdish Kulbars - workers who try to support their families by transporting goods across the Iranian border.

On foot, they carry their loads along mountain paths that are rocky, steep, and either slippery due to snow or blisteringly hot. Along the way, many of them suffer injuries,

die in blizzards, or are shot by border police.

The powerful scenes of the men’s journeys are matched by their harrowing stories. No one chooses to become a Kulbar, it’s simply an unavoidable consequence of not having any other form of work.

The film crew followed these workers for nine years to document the impact of living like a human pack mule. “Holy Bread” gives exposure to a group of mostly men, who, driven by poverty, hunger, and despair, operate in the margins of society.

The Trento Film Festival will come to an end on May 9, while the online edition of the festival will run until May 16.

## The 6 best Iranian short films in the past years

By Saleh Kashefi

When talking about Iranian cinema and its films, names like Ashghar Farhadi and Abbas Kiarostami, and a lot more comes to mind. There is no doubt that Iranian feature films have been a big success but Iranian short films has been even more successful. There has been over 2,000 selected short films in film festivals in the past year alone. So it’s easy to say the short film community in Iran is one of the best in the world. Here are six most successful Iranian short films in the past years.

### Gaze

Winner of the Grand Jury Award at the AFI Fest, “Gaze” is a great example of the high quality of Iranian short films in the recent years. Farnush Samadi directs and co-writes alongside Ali Asgari a short film about a woman that while coming back from work late and witnessing a young man stealing in the bus. “Gaze” has been selected in over 90 film festivals around the world.



### Animal

What is a person willing to do to get out of their country? Well, I think “Animal” could answer that perfectly: they could turn themselves into an animal. Directed by Bahman and Bahram Ark, “Animal” will get into your mind and stay there for some time. Other than getting selected at the Cannes Film Festival Cinéfondation, “Animal” has been screened in more than 60 film festivals.

### Retouch

Undoubtedly, with being in over 150 film festivals, “Retouch” is the most

successful Iranian short film of all time. Directed by Kaveh Mazaheri and edited by his wife Puyan Sholevar, it tells the story of a young woman who could save her husband’s life but just stands there and watch him die. Winning awards in three Academy Awards qualifying film festivals (Tribeca, Palm Springs ShortFest and Krakow FF) “Retouch” is about mistakes and how to retouch them.

### Not Yet

“Not Yet” is about a middle-aged couple, who skypes their daughter, Hasti, who is studying abroad, to wish her a happy birthday, meanwhile her parents are intent on concealing their crumbling marriage. The subject doesn’t seem very interesting but what makes this film so cool is its form. Arian Vazirdaftari directs and co-writes the film alongside his wife Shirin Karamrudi: the short has been in more than 80 film festivals.

### Lunch Time

A shocking and touching short film, “Lunch Time” tells the story of a

15-year-old girl who goes to the hospital to identify her mother’s corpse. The synopsis alone is enough to make you sad. Directed by Alireza Qasemi, the film is a great example for the term “Never trust the miserably vulnerable.” Nominated for the Palme d’Or at the Cannes Film Festival, it’s safe to say that this is one of the most acclaimed Iranian short films in the past years with being selected in more than 50 film festivals.

### The Baby

Another brilliant work from Ali Asgari, “The Baby” tells the story of a young mother who’s trying to find a place for her newborn child to spend the night at. Again Asgari co-wrote the film alongside Farnush Samadi. “The Baby” was nominated for the Best Short Film at the Venice Film Festival and has won so many other accolades.

With these films, it’s safe to say that Iran is one of the most powerful forces in the short film category and it is expected that new generation of young directors make the cinema of Iran proud.

## Iranian architect Nima Keivani on LOOP Design Awards panel

**A R T** **TEHRAN**— Iranian architect Nima Keivani has been selected for the jury of the second edition of the LOOP Design Awards.

The LOOP Design Awards is being organized every year by the LOOP company in Portugal.

The LOOP Design Awards is working hard to become one of the most prestigious and recognized awards in the fields of architecture, interior design, landscape design, product design and architecture photography industries.

Over 30 architects, designers, photographers and experts, including Jesus Granada from Spain, Adam Mork from Denmark, Ieva Saudargaite Douaihi from Lebanon, Stefan Antoni from South Africa, Manuel Aires Mateus from Portugal, Christiane Bausback from Germany, and Kenji Muro from



Iranian architect Nima Keivani in an undated photo.

Japan, will judge designs will be submitted to the organizers.

Keivani and his brother Sina co-founded the architectural studio of Keivani Architects in 2009, which has won awards at several international architecture contest.

Their joint design “House of the Sun” in the Interior Space and Exhibition Design category of the A’ Design Award and Competition in Italy won a silver award for in 2017.

In addition, their Orsi Khaneh, located on Olyai Street off Nasr Street in Tehran, was announced as the Residential Project of the Year at the 10th Middle East Architect Awards 2017 in Dubai.

The LOOP Design Awards will announce all winners online on its website in September 2021.

## Four brilliant examples of literature from Iran

Iran is much more than what is shown by the media. It is rich in art, culture, and literature. Iranian Literature is amongst the oldest in the world and paints a raw and more detailed picture of Iran that many of people of the world have not seen. Here is a list of four of the most important works in Iranian literature which give you a glimpse of the real Iran.

### 01. “The Blind Owl” by Sadeq Hedayat

Translated by D. P. Costello  
“The Blind Owl” is a frightening story of loss and despair and is regarded as one of the most important works in modern Iranian literature. Filled with powerful symbolism and haunting imagery, the book tells the story of an unnamed pen case painter who drifts into insanity after losing his mysterious lover. The painter then confesses to a shadow on the wall (that resembles an owl) that he is addicted to opium and has killed his wife. This dark and horrifying tale is as intriguing as it is disturbing, and is often compared to the works of Edgar Allan Poe.

### 02. “My Uncle Napoleon” by Iraj Pezeshkzad

Translated by Dick Davis  
“My Uncle Napoleon” is the humorous tale of an unnamed teenage boy who falls in love with his cousin, the daughter of the patriarch of his family. The story revolves around the protagonist’s attempts to stall his cousin’s arranged marriage even as his father and uncle plot against each other to settle family feuds. Pezeshkzad also introduces us to various Iranian traditions and cultures, and interestingly unique, hilarious, and memorable characters. “My Uncle Napoleon” is one of the sweetest, funniest, and most entertaining books to have come out of Iran.

### 03. “Savushun” by Simin Daneshvar

Translated by M. R. Ghanoonparvar  
“Savushun” is the first Persian novel written by a woman and is a magnificent portrayal of mid-20th Century Iran. It is the tale of a Persian family in Shiraz set at the time of the Allied occupation of Iran, during World War II. The story is seen through the eyes of

Zari, a young wife and mother, who is caught between her desire for a traditional family and her struggle to find her own identity. Daneshvar touches on matters of gender politics, literature, love, and nationalism, and gives us a glimpse of pre-revolutionary Iran and its emerging despair.

### 04. “Shahnameh” by Abolqasem Ferdowsi,

Translated by Dick Davis  
“Shahnameh” is among the greatest works of world literature and is called ‘the national epic of Persia’. Written between 980 and 1010 CE., it is an epic poem divided into three parts and provides a historical account of Iran. In the first of the three parts, Ferdowsi focuses on the creation of the world, in the second, he details the pre-Islamic era, and in the last, he tells the story of the Arab invasion of Iran. “Shahnameh” covers a range of emotions, such as triumph and loss, love and grief, and courage and cruelty. This literary masterpiece is often compared with the likes of Dante’s “Divine Comedy”, and the epics of Homer.

