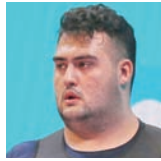




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Iran among pioneers in COVID-19 vaccine development

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Zionist will receive 'fundamental response,' Iran's top general warns

TEHRAN – A top Iranian general has warned that the Resistance Front will give Israel a “fundamental response” after press reports suggested that an oil tanker off the Syrian coast may have been targeted by a drone.

“Zionists think they can target the Syrian soil constantly and conduct acts of mischief in various places and in the sea without receiving a response,” Chief

of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri said on Sunday.

“The measures taken in the recent days and the future measures that would threaten their (Israel's) interests will definitely bring them to their senses, and the future of the resistance front is bright,” he continued, according to Tasnim.

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Iran ranked world's 10th largest steelmaker in Q1 2021: WSA

TEHRAN - Iran was ranked the world's tenth-largest steel producer in the first three-month of 2021, Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) announced referring to the data released by the World Steel Association (WSA).

According to the WSA's data, Iran produced 7.5 million tons of crude steel in Q1 2021, registering a 10.7 percent growth compared to the same period in 2020.

The Islamic Republic's steel output stood at 2.6 million tons in March, indicating a 10.7 percent rise year on year.

Based on the mentioned data, the world's top 64 steel makers managed to produce 648.9 million tons of steel in the mentioned three months to register a 10 percent rise from the figure for the last year's same period.

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TEHRAN - On Sunday, the Iranian Army unveiled seven indigenously-developed high-tech military equipment, including air defense systems, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and electronic warfare devices.

The equipment developed by experts at the Research and Self-Sufficiency Jihad Organization of the Army Ground Force were put on display during a ceremony at the presence of Deputy Chief of Army for Coordination Affairs Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari and Army Ground Force Commander Brigadier

General Kioumars Heydari.

The ceremony rolled out a radar warning system capable of detecting and jamming airborne interception radars used in drones, helicopters and fighter jets, in addition to an alarm system for detection of laser-guided weaponry and airborne threats, which can be employed against the enemy's short-range air defense systems and has the ability to send alerts to UAV ground control stations, Press TV reported.

Continued on page 2

Iran is serious about regional dialogue

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has embarked on a new regional tour to deepen and expand Iran's ties amid reports of a possible thaw in Iranian-Saudi relations.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh announced Saturday that Zarif will head to Iraq and Qatar on Sunday to hold talks with senior officials of the two Arab countries, which enjoy warm relations with Iran and, in some cases, acted as a go-between to soothe tensions between Tehran and Riyadh.

Khatibzadeh put Zarif's visit in the broader context of improving bilateral relations and following up on regional and transregional talks.

Zarif began his tour with a message of sympathy to Iraq over the tragic incident in a Baghdad hospital that killed 82 people and injured more than 100 others.

“I condole with the brotherly nation and government of Iraq and the families of the victims on the tragic incident and huge catastrophe of Baghdad's Ibn Khatib Hospital. I wish divine mercy for the martyrs of this incident and speedy recovery for the injured,” Zarif said on Twitter.

A massive explosion rocked Ibn al-Khatib hospital of Baghdad on Saturday after an oxygen cylinder exploded in an intensive care ward at the hospital.

Iraq's Foreign Ministry said the chief Iranian diplomat will pay a visit to Iraq on Monday, and thus confirming that the visit was postponed, possibly due to the hospital incident. Khatibzadeh also extended the Iranian nation and government's condolences and deep sympathy to the Iraqi nation and government, especially the families of the victims, over the tragic incident at Baghdad's Ibn Khatib Hospital.

Zarif also visited the tiny Persian Gulf nation of Qatar, which has played a remarkable role in exchanging messages between Iran and other countries in the region and beyond. Zarif's visit to Qatar has also been put in the context of regional issues. Zarif arrived in Doha on Sunday and met with his Qatari counterpart.

“For the Islamic Republic of Iran, relations with Qatar and all other Persian Gulf littoral states is very important. The Sunday visit of his Excellency Dr. Zarif to Doha in the context of expanding and deepening bilateral relations with Qatar, especially after the recent developments in the region and the world, is very promising,” Hamidreza Dehghani, Iran's ambassador to Qatar, said on Twitter.

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Tens of Iranian relics returned home from British institute

TEHRAN – A total of 100 Iranian relics, which were on loan to the British Institute of Persian Studies (BIPS) for some half a century, have been finally returned home, ISNA reported on Saturday.

“Through cultural diplomacy, another collection of [Iranian relics, which contains] 10,000 cultural materials, including 100 museum objects have been returned to the National Museum of Iran after half a century. The objects were on loan to the British Institute of Iranian Studies,” the news agency quoted Iran's tourism minister as saying.

We hope to set up a public exhibition of the relics at the National Museum of Iran in near future, Ali-Asghar Mounesan added, the report said.

The museum objects are made of stone, pottery, bone, brick, etc., and the documentation of these works is on the agenda of the National Museum of Iran, the official noted.

“The Tehran headquarters of the British In-

stitute of Persian Studies used to be home to groups of British archaeologists and Iranologists who came to Iran to study, visit, conduct field studies and archaeological excavations...,” the minister explained.

BIPS was founded in 1961 to promote and encourage the study of Iran, its history, civilisation, and culture in all periods of history. Much of BIPS research and work in its early years was in the field of archaeology.

In 1976 BIPS opened its purpose-built centre in northern Tehran, designed by Reza Khazeni architects. The Tehran centre houses an extensive library that exceeds 40,000 English and Persian language volumes, journals and periodicals as well as epigraphic material, maps, photographic and fieldwork archives; a unique resource that is open to Iranian students, scholars and members of the public.

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U.S. protests: 1 verdict, then 6 police killings across America in 24 hours

Even as the Derek Chauvin case was fresh in memory — the reading of the verdict in a Minneapolis courtroom, the shackling of the former police officer, the jubilation at what many saw as justice in the death of George Floyd — even then, blood flowed on America's streets.

And even then, some of that blood was shed at the hands of law enforcement.

At least six people were fatally shot by officers across the United States in the 24 hours after jurors reached a verdict in the murder case against Chauvin on Tuesday. The roll call of the dead is distressing:

A 16-year-old girl in Columbus, Ohio. An oft-arrested man in Escondido, California. A 42-year-old man in eastern North Carolina. The deaths, in some cases, sparked new cries for justice. Some said they reflect an urgent need for radical changes to American policing — a need that the Chauvin verdict cannot paper over. For others, the shootings

are a tragic reminder of the difficult and dangerous decisions law enforcement face daily.

An unidentified man in San Antonio. Another man, killed in the same city within hours of the first.

A 31-year-old man in central Massachusetts. The circumstances surrounding each death differ widely. Some happened while officers investigated serious crimes. Police say some of the people were armed with a gun, knife or a metal pole. One man claimed to have a bomb that he threatened to detonate. In several cases, little is known about the lives of those killed and what happened in their final moments.

The deadly encounters are only a small snapshot of the thousands of interactions between American police officers and civilians every day, most of which end safely. Uneventful encounters between the police and the populace, however, are not an issue.

It's a very different story when a weapon is drawn and a life is ended.

WHO considering malaria eradication certificate for Iran

TEHRAN – Iran has not had any indigenous cases of malaria for three years in a row, so the World Health Organization is considering granting a certificate of malaria eradication to the country, Mohammad Mehdi Gooya, head of the health ministry's center for infectious diseases, has said.

Malaria is a mosquito-borne infectious disease that affects humans and other animals; the disease is most commonly spread by an infected

female Anopheles mosquito. The mosquito bite introduces the parasites from the mosquito's saliva into a person's blood.

It causes symptoms that typically include fever, tiredness, vomiting, and headaches. In severe cases, it can cause yellow skin, seizures, coma, or death. Symptoms usually begin ten to fifteen days after being bitten by an infected mosquito.

There have been no indigenous cases of ma-

laria infection in the country over the past three years, and patients in Iran brought the disease from outside the borders, from Pakistan and Afghanistan, he stated.

According to the World Health Organization, a country that has not had a local case for three years is eligible for a malaria eradication certificate, and this year a team from the organization will travel to Iran to verify its certification, he stated.

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Oxford professor says Israel's adventures against Iran ended up strengthening its enemies

BY MOHAMMAD SARRAF

TEHRAN - A professor of history at the University of Oxford says Israel's recent sabotage operation at Iran's nuclear enrichment facility in Natanz has instead strengthened Israel's enemies.

“Yet these displays of strength have ended up strengthening Israel's enemies instead,” Faisal Devji tells the Tehran Times.

“The revelation of alleged Iranian attacks on Israeli shipping, the ability of Syria to breach Israel's air defenses, and the Russian naval escort for Iranian supplies to Syria are three examples indicative of Israel's increasingly restricted room for action in the region,” Devji argues. While Iran is negotiating with the remaining parties to the 2015 nuclear deal – France, Germany, Britain, Russia, and China – in Vienna, Israel conducted a sabotage against Iran's nuclear facility on April 11.

The new Biden administration has said the U.S. is willing to rejoin the pact that Donald Trump withdrew the U.S. from in May 2018 in violation of international law.

Although Israel is struggling to prevent a possible revival of the nuclear deal, political observers believe that it is not able to stop the process to restore the nuclear agreement, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Following is the text of the interview:
How do you see the Vienna talks over revitalizing the Iran nuclear deal?

The Americans are doubtless serious about returning to the nuclear deal in Vienna, though like all great powers,

Continued on page 5



COVIRAN starts third clinical trial

TEHRAN – COVIRAN BAREKAT, the first coronavirus vaccine made by Iranian researchers, started the third phase of the human trial by being administered to 20,000 people.

Minoor Mohraz, head of COVIRAN BAREKAT's clinical trials, received the first vaccine on Sunday.

The vaccine was unveiled on December 29, 2020, and started to be mass-produced on March 29 with three million doses a month, and is expected to rise to 15 million doses by the end of the spring.

220 MPs call on Raisi to run for president

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — 220 parliament members wrote a letter to Judiciary chief Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi on Sunday calling on him to run for the presidential post.



In the letter the parliamentarians elaborated on the economic, political, social and cultural situation of the country and qualifications needed by the next president, asking him to run for the June 18 presidential election.

Iran expresses condolences to Iraq over deadly hospital fire

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh on Sunday expressed his deepest condolences to Iraq, especially the families of the victims of the fire at the Ibn Khatib hospital in Baghdad.

The tragic incident that took place in the Diyala Bridge area of the Iraqi capital on Saturday night resulted in the death of at least 82 people and injury of another 110 citizens.

Khatibzadeh expressed “mercy and forgiveness for the martyrs of this bitter incident and speedy recovery for the injured and patience and reward for the families of the victims.”

Iraq’s Health Ministry said the fire occurred after an accident caused an oxygen tank to explode.

According to the head of Iraq’s civil defense unit, the fire broke out on the floor reserved for the pulmonary intensive care unit.

Barham Salih, the Iraqi president, announced three days of public mourning. Mustafa Al-Kadhimi, the prime minister, also called for an extraordinary cabinet meeting to investigate the incident.

Army unveils turbojet engine, new radar

➔ The Ground Force also showcased Ranesh-1 (Propulsion-1) micro turbojet engine, which can be used in various drones, single-seat light aircraft, a wide array of missile systems, and unmanned boats.

The turbojet engine is light enough to generate high speed thrust, runs on different types of fuel, has a high service ceiling compared to piston engines, can carry payloads, and can considerably boost the flight endurance record in a variety of drones.

The other home-grown products included self-protection and drone-mounted TIAM 1400 system for detection of the enemy’s radars and air surveillance.

The system uses different frequency bands to decipher various types of air surveillance radar signals, and intelligently transmits the received signal to the jammer in order to disrupt it.

The ceremony also featured a flight system that is based on artificial intelligence and incorporates drones and a land-based Taha 1400 radar jamming system that can be carried by drones.

Taha 1400 system uses directional antennas to intelligently cover a wide area of operation, and maintains the flight safety of various drones in the enemy’s locale.

The system is smart and light, a low-voltage consumer and can be installed quickly and easily.

Finally, a land-based jamming system used for countering hostile drones and remote-controlled systems was among the new military achievements unveiled on Sunday.

“We will respond properly to any act by enemy”

Speaking on the sidelines of the unveiling ceremony, Rear Admiral Sayyari made a reference to military wargames staged during the last Iranian calendar (March 2020-March 2021) year by the Armed Forces and said, “The enemy is well aware that if it does any (adventurous) act we will respond properly and this means deterrence capability, and this capability will keep threats away from the country and also bring sustainable development.”

He also said “an army is self-sufficient that can meet its workforce and equipment inside the country and cut dependence” on foreigners.

Today, the Army, including its Ground Force, through reliance on domestic capacities and in cooperation with knowledge-based companies is able to produce the needed military hardware and this is a “source of honor”, the military official said.

Sayyari added the capability to produce needed military equipment is a proper response to those countries that said “we do not sell equipment to you.”

IPHRC welcomes Iran’s human rights suggestions

TEHRAN (MNA) — During the 7th meeting of the Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC), members welcomed Iran’s suggestions on human rights.

IPHRC, which is an independent body of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), held its 7th meeting online hosted by Saudi Arabia.

The participants discussed women’s human rights, children’s rights, development rights, combating Islamophobia as well as the human rights situation of Muslim minorities in non-member countries, the situation of Muslims in Myanmar, in the Central African Republic, in Europe, and in the United States. They also conferred on the functioning of the OIC human rights watchdog in Jammu and Kashmir.

As Iran’s representative at the event Hossein Rezvani said on Sun., Iran put forward seven suggestions on various sectors including holding a one-day seminar in Tehran to introduce the facilities, infrastructure, and outstanding achievements of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the field of artificial limb production and making Iran a regional hub for manufacturing such products.

The other six proposals focussed on women’s rights, the need to confront Islamophobia, strong condemnation of the inhumane acts of the occupying regime and systematic violation of Palestinian rights, and etc.

Back in November 2020, Iran’s representative was elected as a member of the IPHRC during the 47th meeting of foreign ministers of the OIC in Niamey, Niger.

U.S. must take the first step to revive JCPOA, says advisor to parliament speaker

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — In an inter-

view with the khamenei, ir published on Sunday, Mehdi Mohammadi, the strategic advisor to the speaker of the Iranian parliament, talked about three main points in the Vienna nuclear deal talks: verification of sanctions removal, simultaneous return of the parties to the nuclear deal obligations, and Iran’s terms and conditions in the negotiations.

Mohammadi said that Iran, as the Leader said, has set conditions for the return of the U.S. to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and the U.S. rejoining the P5+1 group.

According to the political expert, the first issue for Iran is that any U.S. return to the JCPOA and the lifting of sanctions must be as such to ensure Iran’s lasting, tangible and real economic benefit from the JCPOA.

“The first condition is that the lifting of sanctions must be done in such a way that Iran’s intended economic benefit from the JCPOA is achieved. We did not benefit economically from the nuclear deal, but the other side achieved the full benefits that it expected from the JCPOA, which was to limit Iran’s nuclear program to the dimensions seen in the deal,” he explained. Pointing to illegal sanctions, he said, “The Americans exited the deal, and after they exited, they did a lot of damage to us. One estimate is that we have lost about \$200 billion since May 2018.”

He emphasized that “Iran does not accept any kind of segregation of sanctions.”

He elaborated on Iran’s first condition, saying, “Iran’s condition is that we do not enter into such division of sanctions titles. All sanctions that have prevented Iran from benefiting economically from the JCPOA must be lifted. Now, whether they belong to the Trump era or the Obama era, or with what tags and titles and under what law; whether it is the executive order of the president or the law of Congress it is up to them. These have nothing to do with us.”

Pointing to the framework drawn by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution for the negotiating team, he noted that the return of Iran to its full JCPOA commitments has three steps. “First, the Americans must lift all sanctions so that the economic effects of the lifting of sanctions on Iran become apparent and Iran can verify those economic effects. When that happens, Iran will be ready to return to



its nuclear commitments according to the terms of the JCPOA.”

‘All sanctions must be lifted before Iran can return to its commitments’

He said Iran’s second condition is that all sanctions must be lifted “before Iran can fulfill its JCPOA obligations.”

In response to the U.S. exit from the JCPOA in May 2018, on year later Iran took gradual remedial measures in accordance to paragraph 36 of the agreement.

‘Sanctions must be removed practically’

Pointing to Iran’s third condition, he said that Iran’s next condition is that the sanctions must be lifted practically and not just on paper, emphasizing that this condition is of utmost importance for Iran.

“It does not benefit us to give us a piece of paper and call it the executive order of the president of the United States and say that according to this executive order, the sanctions imposed on Iran have been lifted or eased. In practice, we tangibly limit our nuclear program, but in return we are given only a piece of paper.”

‘Iran should verify U.S. actions’

Mohammadi said Iran’s fourth condition is that just as they verify the Islamic Republic’s commitments, Iran should verify their commitments as well.

“There is an international body that verifies Iran’s nuclear commitments (IAEA), but neither in the JCPOA nor in international law, there is not a mechanism for verifying the commitments of a party that wants to lift sanctions, for example. How is this going to be verified? The condition that Iran has set is that

it is important that we verify the lifting of sanctions, that we test the economic benefits of Iran, not the verification of the lifting of sanctions itself.”

‘Iran will not negotiate directly with the U.S.’

The expert said the last condition is that Iran will not negotiate directly with the United States.

Responding to a question about the negotiations with the U.S. and whether this is one of Iran’s terms, Mohammadi responded by saying that this is one of Iran’s most important conditions.

“This is one of our conditions, and the other side is very insistent that you sit down and talk directly with the Americans. The Americans are insisting as well.”

The advisor to the parliament speaker remarked that there is a reason for this persistence and it is the fact that the United States wants to revive the negotiations, not the JCPOA.

“What is vital for the United States is to bring Iran to the negotiation table.”

‘Iran needs more credible guarantees’

On verification procedure, Mohammadi said the process within the nuclear deal itself is that the members mutually verify each other’s commitments.

“If a member of the JCPOA finds that another member is not fulfilling its obligations, the said country is allowed to reduce its obligations under paragraph 36, but the JCPOA experience has shown us that this mechanism does not work.”

He said Iran wants more credible guarantees.

Regarding the time needed to verify the sanctions removal, the advisor said, “The most important thing is that there is a good time interval between fulfillments of obligations of both parties.”

He added, “First, they must fulfill their obligations. Then there must be a reasonable time for us to make sure that the lifting of sanctions really produces an economic ‘effect’ and ‘benefit’.”

Mohammadi believes that the minimum possible time to verify the economic impact of lifting sanctions is between three and six months.

“It will take at least three to six months for us to make sure that the lifting of sanctions really works and that Iran’s foreign trade is in place.”

He explained that this is the only valid verification mechanism. Only if Iran can make sure that the foreign trade is stable, then the Islamic Republic will meet its nuclear commitments again, he added.

‘Iran does not accept simultaneous return to JCPOA commitments’

On reports of simultaneous return to the JCPOA obligations, Mohammadi said in the conditions set by Iran, Tehran does not accept the model of synchronization at all.

“Simultaneity means that Iran would fulfill its commitments and then wait for them to lift the sanctions. And they have said they would not lift the sanctions, why? Because they want to use sanctions (as a leverage). That is, they want to use the sanctions for other purposes.”

He touched on a very important issue, saying, “The Americans say we want to return to the conditions of January 2017; That is, under the circumstances that the Obama administration had just ended and Trump had come to power.

But the question remains: Will the strategic and economic situation of Iran simply go back to January 2017?”

Explaining the logic behind Iran’s request for a reasonable time interval, Mohammadi stated that preliminary estimates show that the Islamic Republic has lost about \$200 billion in the economic field alone.

“So we need time, because we need to make sure that they live up to their commitments, that we can verify its economic effects, and that we can slowly rebuild the infrastructure that has been destroyed in the meantime. Something called a quick return to the JCPOA is against Iran’s interests.”

Step-by-step plan for reviving JCPOA has been set aside, says Araghchi

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Deputy Foreign Minister

Seyed Abbas Araghchi said on Sunday that a step-by-step removal of sanctions plan for possible revival of the JCPOA has been put aside altogether.

“The step-by-step plan has long been abandoned. The Islamic Republic of Iran rejected the step-by-step proposal to lift the sanctions before Nowruz (Iranian New Year), and the issue of step-by-step negotiations is out of the question,” Araghchi told reporters on a meeting with MPs sitting on Parliament National Security and Foreign Policy Committee.

He said, “Discussions on the final stage of the continuation of the agreement, i.e. the arrangements envisaged by the Islamic Republic, are being discussed.”

About the spirit of the negotiations in Vienna and its possible outcome, the senior negotiator said, “There are challenges in the negotiations. Of course, we are on a path that we can reach to a successful end, but it is too early to say whether we can overcome the challenges and obstacles.”

He noted that Iran cannot say whether it is optimistic or pessimistic. “But we are not disappointed and we will



do our job. Our positions are very clear and firm. The sanctions must be lifted, verified and then Iran must return to its commitments. We stood up in this regard and the representatives were given full explanations.”

About P4+1 and the United States’ opinion about the sanctions list handed by Iran, the top negotiator said the

debate is going on.

“There are two types of U.S. sanctions against Iran. First, categorized or so-called divisional sanctions, such as oil, banking and insurance, shipping, petrochemical, building and automobile sanctions, and second, sanctions against real and legal individuals.”

He said that the list of sanctions against individuals includes about 1,500 cases “but we are moving in both directions.”

“Divisional sanctions should all be lifted, and I think there is an understanding in this regard, and sanctions against individuals should be lifted as well. There are complex issues in this area that we are examining.”

On how long he thinks the negotiations will last, Araghchi said nobody can predict the time needed for the negotiations, but “we will not allow the negotiations to be protracted.”

He said if Iran feels that other sides are not serious enough, or they are trying to buy time, the negotiations will be stopped by the Iranian side.

The delegates returned to their countries for consultation on April 21. They plan to reconvene this week to resume the talks.

Guardian Council says participation in elections is a sense of responsibility

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** —

Guardian Council spokesman Abbasali Kadkhodaei, who spoke at the virtual meeting of the Union of Islamic Students’ Associations in Europe on Sunday, stated that from a political point of view participation in elections is a sense of responsibility for the future of Iran.

Through participation, Kadkhodaei remarked, people can show their support and the Islamic Republic’s appreciation for “the dear martyrs”.

He noted if the people don’t participate

in the elections in great numbers, it will be a show of indifference to the country’s fate.

The spokesman also advised the students to study hard in order to better serve the country in the future. “My first advice is that you should work in the front of science and education and in any field you are, God willing, you can be productive for the development of the country.”

Kadkhodaei also said, “The Guardian Council has no partisan interest and acts as a neutral judge and we can’t consider the electability of the candidates in the quali-

cation investigations.”

The Guardian Council performs its duties in accordance to its mandate, and it is possible that it makes a mistake and is not innocent, but it has acted and will act in accordance to law, he said, adding the council should ensure that the qualification of candidates is investigated properly.

The presidential and city council elections will be held on June 18.

According to Jamal Orf, the elections committee chief, more than 50,000 people have registered for council elections.



MP predicts Larijani will not field candidacy if Raisi enters the presidential race

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** —

MP Seyed Hossein Naqavi Hosseini has predicted that former Parliament speaker Ali Larijani will not enter the presidential race if Judiciary chief Ebrahim Raisi decided to run for president.

He called Larijani a “very smart” person with a “great analytical mind” that will not run for the presidential post if there will be no consensus on him.

The MP also said in the list announced by the spokesman for principlists the name of Larijani was not among those 10 potential candidates that were announced and he has said “if Raisi enters the race he does not see any need to” contest the elections, he “likely will not enter the election scene.”

He said his prediction is that Ayatollah Raisi will enter the race and other principlists will undoubtedly reach a

consensus on his candidacy.

According to the Young Journalist Club, Naqavi Hosseini said other potential candidates in the principlist camp have clearly stated that if Raisi fields candidacy they will withdraw in his favor.

“Even Saeed Mohammad, who is classified as the camp of the young revolutionary government, has announced this,” he added.

On the situation of reformists as the June 18 presidential election is fast approaching, the MP said the reform camp is facing a dilemma because they were pinning hopes on the revival of the JCPOA to be able to win the hearts of the electorate.

“They were expecting that with the Joe Biden presidency

in the United States all sanctions would be lifted and the U.S. would reenter the JCPOA,” however this did not happen and the situation did no return to 2016, he pointed out.

“If that had happened probably Mohammad Javad Zarif would have found a favorable situation for presidency,” he claimed.

But at the current time the situation is difficult for them because both former vice president Mohammadreza Aref and senior reformist MP Masoud Pezeshkian have announced that they will run for president and will not withdraw candidacy under any circumstances, he remarked.

Naqavi Hosseini added the prevalent atmosphere in the country also shows that there is no interest toward reformists in the society.

SPORTS

Ali Davoudi takes gold at Asian Weightlifting Championships

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Ali Davoudi claimed Iran's third gold in the 2020 Asian Weightlifting Championships on Sunday.

Davoudi lifted 196kg in snatch and 239kg in clean and jerk for a total of 435kg to pocket the gold medal in the +109kg.

Iraqi weightlifter Man Asaad claimed the silver medal with 433 and the bronze medal went to Eishiro Murakami from Japan who lifted 415kg.

Rasoul Motamedi in 102kg and Kianoush Rostami in 86kg had previously won two gold medals in the competition held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.



Shahrdari Gorgan claim Iran Basketball League title

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Shahrdari Gorgan won the Iranian Basketball Super League (IBSL) for the first time ever on Saturday.

Shahrdari Gorgan defeated most-decorated team Mahram 110-103 in the fourth match.

They had already defeated Mahram twice and lost one time in their last four matches.

The Iranian Basketball Super League (IBSL) is a professional men's basketball league in Iran founded in 1998.

God helped me to score last second three-pointer: Perry Petty

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Shahrdari Gorgan basketball team point guard Parish Perry Petty says that God has helped him to score a last second three-pointer shot against Mahram.

Just before the final whistle, the American player threw a long ball to tie the match at 96-96.

Shahrdari Gorgan defeated Mahram 110-103 in the five-minute overtime and claimed the title for the first time ever.

"God helped me to score the tree-pointer. It was nothing but God's grace. I'm very happy now. I became a legend in Iran and Gorgan with the throw," Petty said.

"I am thankful to my teammates who completed my work. We defeated the strong Mahram team. Shahrdari Gorgan deserved to win the title. Last year, we could have won the title but the competition was postponed due to coronavirus," Petty, who is a member of the Shahrdari Gorgan since 2018, said.

ACL Group C: Esteghlal, Al Duhail settle for draw

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Esteghlal football team of Iran and Qatar's Al Duhail shared the spoils in a 2-2 draw on Matchday Four of the 2021 AFC Champions League Group C on Saturday.

The result means Al Duhail remain unbeaten in four games, topping Group C with eight points, while Esteghlal continue to chase with seven points to their name, level with Al Ahli Saudi FC.

Matchday Five sees Al Duhail facing Iraq's Al Shorta while Esteghlal clash with Al Ahli in the late Tuesday fixture.

Three days after serving an entertaining seven-goal affair that saw Al Duhail emerge 4-3 winners in the corresponding fixture, the two sides locked horns again and there were goals in abundance once more.

Esteghlal were awarded a penalty in the 27th minute after their former player Ali Karimi brought down Farshid Esmaili inside the box and Malian forward Cheick Diabate converted from the spot, putting the Iranians in front with his fourth goal of the campaign.

Seconds before the referee blew his whistle for half-time, Esteghlal captain Vouria Ghafouri fouled on Olunga and the Kenyan striker stepped up and powered in from the spot for his fifth goal of the 2021 AFC Champions League.

Olunga continued his fine scoring form in the second half, finding space at the far post to rise unopposed and head Edmilson's cross from the free-kick into the back of the net just before the hour mark, moving clear of Omar Al Soma at the top of the competition's scoring charts with six goals.

Esteghlal's response was almost instant as Ghafouri dribbled down the right flank and sent a pinpoint low cross for Mehdi Ghaedi who swept home his third goal of the campaign to bring the Iranian side level, setting the stage for an exciting Matchday Five on Tuesday.

Esteghlal played against one of Asia's best teams: Kamalvand

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Esteghlal technical director Faraz Kamalvand believes they have played against one of the best teams in Asia.

Esteghlal and Al Duhail shared the spoils in a 2-2 draw in the 2021 AFC Champions League Group C early Sunday.

"Our players played with dedication," said Kamalvand. "Due to the short period between matches, quality drops and injuries become more likely."

"Al Duhail are a strong team, they have international experience and have earned good results. I believe we played against the best team in the group.

"We lost some players due to injuries, including Cheick Diabate who had to leave the match, and we played with 10 men at the end," he added.

"We made several changes to the plan because of this. At the end, we got one point although we were hoping to get three," Kamalvand concluded.

Zionist will receive 'fundamental response,' Iran's top general warns

P O L I T I C A L **TEHRAN** — A top Iranian general has warned that the Resistance Front will give Israel a "fundamental response" after press reports suggested that an oil tanker off the Syrian coast may have been targeted by a drone.

"Zionists think they can target the Syrian soil constantly and conduct acts of mischief in various places and in the sea without receiving a response," Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri said on Sunday.

"The measures taken in the recent days and the future measures that would threaten their (Israel's) interests will definitely bring them to their senses, and the future of the resistance front is bright," he continued, according to Tasnim.

The top general refrained from commenting on the perpetrator of the recent incident but warned that that "the Resistance Front will give a fundamental response to the Zionists."

Responding to questions about Iran's response to continued hostile actions by the Israeli regime against Iran, the general said Iran's response would not be made known now but added that the Zionist regime will not stay "calm".

The Syrian Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources said in a statement on Saturday that an oil tanker off the Syrian coast caught fire that is thought to be caused by a drone attack.

The ministry said in a statement that a fire that erupted in one of the tanks of the oil tanker is believed to be an attack by a drone coming from the direction of Lebanese territorial waters, according to Syrian state news SANA.

The statement of the Syrian Ministry did not mention the party involved in the attack on the oil tanker, while Arab media suggested that the drone that attacked the Syrian oil tanker was Israeli, according to Al-Alam.

Last week on Thursday, Israel targeted a suburb of Damascus with missiles, prompting Syria to call on the UN to condemn the hostile repeated acts against sovereignty of the Syrian Arab Republic.

"Israeli occupation forces, at 1:38 a.m. on Thursday, April 22nd, 2021, launched a new missile aggression from the direction of the occupied Syrian Golan on the lands of Syria which targeted some regions in the surroundings of Damascus in a blatant violation of the Agreement on Disengagement of 1974," Syria's Foreign and Expatriates Ministry said in a statement.

The statement added that Syria calls on the UN, particularly Security Council to condemn the Israeli cowardly attack and the repeated hostile acts against sovereignty of Syria perpetrated by the three



occupiers "Israel, U.S. and Turkey" in a systematized manner.

Iran condemns Israeli atrocities against Palestinians

Iran's Foreign Ministry condemned on Saturday the Zionist regime and Israeli settlers' atrocities against residents of al-Quds after Israeli police and far-right extremists attacked Palestinian residents of the occupied Jerusalem (al-Quds).

In a statement on Saturday, Saeed Khatibzadeh, spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry, condemned the Zionist regime and Israeli settlers' atrocities against residents of al-Quds, calling for an immediate end to their savage acts.

"Stop crimes against Palestinian people and residents of al-Quds," said Khatibzadeh on Saturday night.

He praised resistance by Palestinians, especially the residents and youths in al-Quds, against criminal Zionists, urging the international community to take action to halt the Israeli regime's anti-human rights moves against defenseless Palestinians and Israel's aggression against holy sites in al-Quds.

Khatibzadeh touched upon Israel's continued occupation and crimes against Palestinian people and emphasized the necessity of supporting the resistance front until Palestine is liberated.

"The Palestinian land belongs to Palestinian people, and the Israeli regime is a usurper and occupying regime, and the only way to settle the Palestinian crisis is to hold a referendum among the real residents of Palestinian territories," he pointed out.

Palestinian residents of the occupied East Jerusalem have taken to the streets to protest Israel's mistreatment, after the Israeli police set up bans on public gatherings during the

holy month of Ramadan, which Palestinians celebrate by holding congregational prayers.

Israeli authorities also paved the way for extremist far-right Jews to stage anti-Arab marches. These extremists marched in the occupied Jerusalem chanting provocative slogans such as "death to Arabs," something that enraged Palestinians and prompted them to launch what some observers called another Intifada which soon spread to other parts of Palestine, including the Gaza strip.

The Presidency of Palestine has strongly condemned the growing incitement by extremist far-right Israeli settler groups advocating for the killing of Arabs, which in recent days manifested in a wave of attacks against Palestinian civilians in the Old City of occupied East Jerusalem, according to Palestinian news Wafa.

The Presidency said in a statement on Thursday that "East Jerusalem is the eternal capital of Palestine and is a red line", calling on the international community to protect the Palestinian people from the ongoing settler attacks, which it said were encouraged by the Israeli government.

Palestinian people in Gaza and the West Bank continued their demonstrations against the Israeli regime on Sunday. Wafa reported that three Palestinian youths sustained gunfire injuries early on Sunday morning during clashes with the Israeli occupation army in the village of Al-Lubban ash-Sharqiya, to the south of Nablus city in the occupied West Bank.

The Israeli army reportedly raided the village and attacked hundreds of protesters taking part in a protest against the ongoing Israeli escalation in the occupied Jerusalem using live gunfire, teargas and stun grenades, injuring three of them and causing many cases of suffocation from gas inhalation, the

Palestinian news agency said.

It added that clashes also erupted in many areas of the occupied West Bank on Saturday night against the backdrop of the ongoing Israeli daily assaults on Palestinian worshippers attending prayers at Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem, which have escalated since the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan.

"The world is witnessing a new Intifada"

Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, the special aide to the speaker of the Iranian Parliament on international affairs, praised the Palestinian Intifada, underlining the necessity for all Muslims around the globe to defend the al-Aqsa Mosque as the first Qibla of Muslims.

"These days, the world is witnessing a new Intifada of the men, women and youth of Jerusalem against the crimes of the Zionists and the defense of religious sanctities and human values," the Iranian diplomat said.

He expressed Iran's support for the Palestinian people and condemned the violence by Zionist armed forces and settlers against the oppressed people of Palestine.

He also praised the Resistance's missile response to Israel, saying that this response is the beginning of changing the equation to the favor of the Palestinian people.

A mysterious missile coming from Syria landed in the vicinity of Israel's top-secret nuclear facility of Dimona on Thursday, setting off air raid sirens and causing Israeli officials to give conflicting reports on what happened near the nuclear facility.

The Israeli military identified the projectile as an SA-5 surface-to-air missile fired by Syrian forces against Israeli aircraft. An Israeli military spokesman admittedly said that the missile reached the Dimona area, 200 km (125 miles) south of the Syrian border.

Although the spokesman said the missile did not hit the reactor and exploded some 30 km (19 miles) away, the fact that a missile flew from Syrian territories all the way to Israel's secretive nuclear reactor raised alarm bells in Tel Aviv, prompting Israeli officials to acknowledge their failure in intercepting the missile.

Israeli War Minister Benny Gantz said Israel's anti-missile systems had attempted to intercept the SA-5 but were unsuccessful.

A few days later, the armed wings of the Palestinian resistance groups in Gaza launched a barrage of rockets against Israeli targets bordering the strip as the Israeli army bombed Palestinian sites in Gaza. The Palestinian resistance said they will not leave their fellow Palestinians in East Jerusalem struggling alone against the Israeli regime. The recent rockets that were launched from Gaza were a response to Israeli mistreatment of Palestinian residents of al-Quds.

Iran is serious about regional dialogue

→1 During his regional tour, Zarif is expected to discuss bilateral issues. But regional issues will also be discussed and one of the most important issues in the region at the present time is the ongoing talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia, which took place in Baghdad earlier this month.

Western media outlets reported last week that officials from Iran and Saudi Arabia held direct talks in Baghdad for the first time since the two regional rivals severed diplomatic ties in 2016.

The Financial Times reported on Sunday that Saudi and Iranian officials held the first round of their bilateral talks in Baghdad on April 9 and the next round was scheduled to take place in the coming weeks. Citing regional officials, the newspaper said the Yemeni Ansarallah's attacks on Saudi Arabia were discussed in the negotiations.

Reuters confirmed the Saudi-Iranian talks, saying they touched on Lebanon, which is facing a political vacuum amid a dire financial crisis.

Saudi Arabia severed diplomatic relations with Iran in January 2016 after Iranian protesters, enraged by the Saudi execution of prominent Shia cleric Sheikh Nimer al-Nimr, stormed its embassy in Tehran. Since then, Saudi Arabia has struck a tough tone on Iran and strongly supported former U.S. President Donald Trump's so-called "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran.

But the Saudis changed their tone of voice after their ally Trump lost the U.S. presidential election in November.

Having proposed several peace initiatives for the Persian Gulf, Iran has welcomed the new Saudi approach. Khatibzadeh responded to foreign media reports of talks between Tehran and Riyadh in Baghdad by saying that Iran supports dialogue

with the Saudis, though he did not confirm those talks. But the spokesman did not deny the talks either.

"We have seen these press reports. Conflicting quotes have been reported in these reports. The Islamic Republic of Iran has always welcomed dialogue with the Saudi kingdom and considered it in the interest of the peoples of the two countries as well as regional peace and stability. [Iran] will continue to think this way," Khatibzadeh said.

Officially, Saudi Arabia remained silent about the Baghdad talks, but it showed little enthusiasm about the talks. Some observers said the Saudis are testing the waters to see whether they can reach a middle ground with Iran on some hotspots in the region. But others sought to downplay the importance of the talks by casting doubts on Iran's seriousness. Al-Arab, a London-based newspaper owned by the United Arab Emirates, accused Tehran of pursuing talks with Riyadh only to strengthen its negotiating position at the Vienna talks.

This is while Iran has long been calling on the Saudis to change tack and enter constructive dialogue with Iran on regional issues even during the Trump administration. If fact, Iran proposed an initiative called Hormuz Peace Endeavor (HOPE) to reduce tensions in the region.

Iran reiterated its readiness to discuss this initiative after Joe Biden won the U.S. election in November. Instead of welcoming the Iranian initiative for peace, the Saudis asked the negotiating partners of Iran to include them in the Vienna talks, a demand that elicited a response from Zarif in December last year.

"Dear neighbors Why ask US/E3 for inclusion in talks with Iran when: a) There won't be ANY talks about OUR region with them as they're the problem themselves b) We can speak

directly about our region without outside meddling. Hormuz Peace Endeavor (HOPE) is still on the table," Zarif tweeted on December 8 after Saudi Arabia and its allies in the region called on the U.S. to include them in any future talks with Iran.

In addition, the top Iranian diplomat also welcomed a proposal by Qatar on launching dialogue between Iran and the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council.

Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani has expressed hope that a summit between leaders of the six-member Persian Gulf Cooperation Council and Iran would happen.

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

Zarif positively responded to the Qatar proposal. "Iran welcomes my brother FM @MBA_AIThani's call for inclusive dialogue in our region. As we have consistently emphasized, the solution to our challenges lies in collaboration to jointly form a 'strong region': peaceful, stable, prosperous & free from global or regional hegemony," he tweeted on January 19.

During his visit to Qatar and Iraq, Zarif is likely to call for regional dialogue. Whether the Saudis welcome this call remains to be seen. But this time, Iran seems to be serious in soothing the concerns of some of its neighbors.

U.S. 'medical terrorism' hinders global COVID-19 vaccination efforts: Zarif

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif says unilateral sanctions and medical terrorism by the United States have hampered global vaccination efforts and left many nations to fend for themselves during the coronavirus pandemic.

In a Twitter message on Sunday, Zarif called for "a global vaccination response" to confront the pandemic, which has killed more than 3 million people across the world.

But global vaccination efforts, he emphasized, have been restricted "whether due to sanctions & #MedicalTerrorism against Iranians, or out of malice toward Palestinians."

The U.S. "has a vaccine surplus," Zarif pointed out.

The top Iranian diplomat has repeatedly denounced the illegal and unilateral U.S. sanctions that have blocked the country's access to crucial medical supplies during the pandemic.

Iran is battling the highly contagious virus under illegal sanctions which the United States re-imposed against the country after withdrawing from a UN-backed nuclear deal between Tehran and major world powers three years ago.

Washington, under former president Donald Trump, then unleashed a so-called maximum pressure campaign against the Islamic Republic, characterized by sweeping economic sanctions that also hit Iran's health sector.

The sanctions have intensified the adverse effects of the pandemic and hindered the government's pathways to contain the deadly virus.

Iran has seen an uptick in the number of COVID-19 cases in recent weeks. The country has recorded more than 2.3 million infections and a death toll of over 69,000.

President Hassan Rouhani said earlier this month that Washington had blocked Tehran's access to ten million doses of a coronavirus vaccine by pressuring the companies that were transferring the vaccines to Iran.

Iran, however, has developed several coronavirus vaccines, including one in cooperation with Cuba and has also received vaccine shipments from Russia, China and the COVAX initiative.

(Source: Press TV)

PGSR daily Euro-quality gasoline output reaches 47m liters

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Persian Gulf Star Refinery in Iran’s southern province of Hormozgan is producing 47 million liters of gasoline with a quality higher than Euro-5 standards, the refinery’s Managing Director Mohammad-Ali Dadvar announced.

As IRNA reported, Dadvar underlined the refinery’s determination for producing high-quality fuels in order to help protecting the environment, saying: “Our main mission is to produce fuel in order to ensure the security of the country’s energy basket, however, we always pay attention to environmental requirements because sustainable development depends on paying attention to environmental issues.”



He mentioned taking appropriate measures to optimize and manage energy consumption as one of the most important ways to protect the environment and said: “By consuming clean fuels, reducing gas flaring, using high-efficiency equipment and recycling gases from the production process as fuel, we have tried to show our determination for environmental protection in practice.”

PGSR is the first of its kind designed based on gas condensate feedstock received from the South Pars gas field which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf.

Construction of the refinery started in 2006, but the project was delayed as the result of some mismanagement and also financial limitation due to the West-led sanctions against Iran.

As the largest processing facility for gas condensate in West Asia, PGSR is planned to play a big role to turn Iran into an exporter of gasoline.

This refinery has increased Iran’s gasoline production to 110 million liters per day, while the country’s consumption is 74 million liters.

PGSR has made Iran independent in gasoline production, while an exporter of the product, which has been a big step to nullify the U.S. sanctions.

The refinery’s exported products during the first half of the previous Iranian calendar year (March 20-September 21, 2020) were 120 percent more than the products exported in the same period of time in the preceding year.

Iran has always been considered an importer of gasoline in recent decades. As in the previous round of sanctions, one of the tools of pressure on Iran was the embargo on the sale of gasoline to the country.

TEDPIX drops 11,500 points on Sunday

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), fell 11,520 points to 1.187 million on Sunday.

Over 3.206 billion securities worth 30.495 trillion rials (about \$726 million) were traded at the TSE on Sunday.

The first market’s index fell 9,604 points, and the second market’s index dropped 19,244 points.

TEDPIX dropped 36,000 points, or three percent, in the past Iranian calendar week.

The index closed at 1.207 million points on Wednesday (the last working day of the week).

During the past week, the indices of Social Security Investment Company, National Iranian Copper Industry Company, Iran Khodro Company, Isfahan Oil Refining Company, and Bank Mellat were the most widely followed indices.

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.

Unprecedented fluctuations in the Iranian stock market over the past few months have led shareholders, experts, and scholars to call for the government to increase its support for the market, some shareholders want the government to guarantee the return of their stocks, some believe providing infrastructure is the best way to help this market.

Some, on the other hand, believe that the government should not interfere in the stock market, saying the government’s pre-ordered and unrealistic pricing of some state-owned shares is the main reason for the capital market’s current downward trend.

Now the question is how the government can really support the stock market to help it get back on its trail?



So far, the government has repeatedly stated that the activities carried out in this market are not aimed at interfering in stock exchange transactions or directing the market, but are efforts for reducing the bubble created in the market and to prevent further decline of the stock market index.

Two weeks ago, in the 216th meeting of the Government Economic Coordination Headquarters, President Rouhani presented a report on the government’s supportive measures for the stock market, saying: “This year, which has been named the year of supporting production and eliminating obstacles, the government is trying to remove obstacles to the growth of the capital market and will try to encourage people to enter this market with the necessary training and arrangements.”

The government supports the capital market to direct liquidity into productive sectors and, in general, to de-centralize the economy and to help economic transparency, he said, adding that the government will continue to offer shares in state-owned enterprises and institutions in the capital market.

Monthly non-oil exports up 80% yr/yr

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran exported 8.302 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$2.968 billion in the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-April 20), registering an 80 percent rise in terms of value compared to the same period in the previous year.

According to the Head of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) Mehdi Mir-Ashrafi, the country’s non-oil exports in the said period also increased by 56 percent in terms of weight.

Iran traded 10.343 million tons of non-oil goods worth \$5.762 billion with its trade partners in the mentioned month, IRIB quoted Mir-Ashrafi as saying.

The country’s trade balance was \$174 million positive in the said month, according to the official.

China, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Turkey, and Afghanistan were the Islamic Republic’s top export destinations in the period under review.

Mir-Ashrafi noted that gasoline was the top exported item in the mentioned month.

According to the official, Iran also imported 2.041 million tons of goods worth \$2.794



billion in the said month, which indicated an 18 percent decrease in terms of weight and a 47 percent increase in terms of value.

Mobile phones, sunflower oil, wheat, rice, and meal were the top imported items of

the country during the mentioned period.

The UAE, China, Turkey, India, and Russia were Iran’s top five import sources in the mentioned month.

The value of Iran’s non-oil trade stood

Iran plans to indigenize \$3.4b worth of industrial equipment by Mar. 2022

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry has it on the agenda to indigenize the knowledge for the production of \$3.4 billion worth of industrial equipment in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2022), Deputy Industry Minister Saeed Zarandi announced.

According to Zarandi, the Industry Ministry’s programs for the current year, which has been named the year of “Production: Support and the Elimination of Obstacles” by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Syed Ali Khamenei, have been prepared in seven major axes.

“Indigenizing the knowledge for the production of \$3.4 billion worth of industrial equipment and the production of 1.2 million passenger cars, are among the mentioned programs,” Zarandi said.

The official noted that 14 major projects have been defined for the realization of the indigenization goal in the current year.

Zarandi pointed to the development of domestic production, management of imports and development of non-oil exports, development of mines and mining industries, development of technology and knowledge-based products, market management and organization of commercial logis-



tics, improving the business environment and ultimately providing financial resources to the producers and investment development as the Industry Ministry’s major programs for the current year.

According to the official, completion of 450 semi-finished projects, reviving of 2,000 idle production units, solving problems related to the supply of raw materials for production sectors, modernization of the country’s transport fleet, development of the railway fleet, development of marine

industries, and reconstruction and modernization of 1,610 production units are also among the Industry Ministry’s projects defined in order to support domestic production in the current Iranian calendar year.

Earlier this month, Head of the Domestic Production Center of Iran’s Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade Mohammad-Mehdi Hadavi had said the program for indigenizing the knowledge for the production of major industrial equipment was realized by 110 percent in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

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, however, more than \$3.565 billion worth of such products were indigenized, Hadavi said on April 17.

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.

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.

Iran ranked world’s 10th largest steelmaker in Q1 2021: WSA

→ 1 Also, the production of world’s major steel producers reached 169.2 million tons in March, with a 15.2 percent increase over the same period last year.

Producing 271 million tons and 29.6 million tons of the product, China and India stood at the first and second places in the said period, respectively, while Japan stood at third place producing 23.7 million tons of crude steel.

The U.S., Russia South Korea,



Germany, Turkey, and Brazil took fourth to ninth places, respectively.

The Iranian Steel industry has been constantly developing over the past years against all the pressures and obstacles created by outside forces like the U.S. sanctions and the coronavirus outbreak that has severely affected the performance of the world’s top producers.

The country is expected to climb to seventh place among the world’s top

steel producers by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025).

According to the former Acting Minister of Industry, Mining, and Trade Hossein Modares Khiaabani, the production capacity of the country’s steel chain increased from 123 million tons in the Iranian calendar year 1392 (ended in March 2014) to 230 million tons in the previous year (ended on March 20).

Annual exports from Kermanshah province rises 8%

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The value of exports from Kermanshah province, in the west of Iran, increased eight percent in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), according to a provincial official.

Behzad Babakhani, the acting director of the economic affairs coordination office of Kermanshah governorate, announced that commodities worth \$2.4 billion have been exported from the province in the past year.

Saying that the weight of export has also risen 12 percent in the past year, the official said that the province could boost its export under the condition of severe sanctions and coronavirus pandemic which reduced trade in the country and in the world.

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.

Over 740,000 tons of commodities traded at IME in a week

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — During the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday), 740,132 tons of commodities valued at \$513 million were traded at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME), the Public Relations and International Affairs Department of the exchange reported.

In the past week, IME sold 378,696 tons of commodities valued at nearly \$305 million on its mineral and industrial trading floor.

Commodities traded on this floor were 371,751 tons of steel, 4,560 tons of copper, 2,079 tons of aluminum, 120 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 200 tons of coke and 20 kg of gold bars.

The next trading floor was the oil and petrochemical with trading 360,482 tons of commodities valued at more than \$208

million.

On this floor the exchange traded 82,500 tons of vacuum bottom, 120,933 tons of bitumen, 75,563 tons of polymeric products, 44,904 tons of chemicals, 24,000 tons of lube cut, 5,215 tons of base oil, 110 tons of argon and 7,525 tons of sulfur.

It’s worth noting that the IME also saw trade of 953 tons of commodities on its side market.

The value of trades at Iran Mercantile Exchange in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20) rose 108 percent compared to the preceding year.

During the past year, about 3.5 quadrillion rials (about \$83.5 billion) worth of commodities were traded at the mentioned market.

As reported, over 33.39 million tons of

goods valued at 3.12 quadrillion rials (about \$74.43 billion) were traded at the exchange’s physical market, registering 27 percent and 127 percent of growth in terms of weight and value, respectively.

In the mentioned year, several new records were achieved in terms of the volume and value of transactions in the mentioned market’s various floors including the industrial, petroleum, and petrochemical floors.

The IME’s mineral and industrial trading floor witnessed the trade of 13.738 million tons of commodities worth more than 1.66 quadrillion rials (about \$39.5 billion) in the said year.

This floor was a platform to sell 12.437 million tons of steel, 207,205 tons of copper, 238,920 tons of aluminum, 13,795 tons of

zinc, 1,300 tons of cast iron, 515 tons of lead, and 675 kg of gold bars.

On its oil and petrochemical trading floor, the IME traded more than 5.141 million tons of commodities worth over 833 trillion rials (over \$19.8 billion), to register 11 percent and 96 percent of growth in terms of value and weight, respectively.

Saffron and dates were the top traded commodities on the agricultural floor with 84 tons of saffron and 610 tons of dates being sold on this floor.

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

China, Iran are highly complementary: Chinese professor

“The 25-year cooperation agreement will effectively reduce the pressures of U.S. sanctions to Iran”

By Mohammad Ali Saki

TEHRAN - Professor Yongzhong Wang, a Chinese professor at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, tells the Tehran Times that the 25-year partnership between Iran and China is based on mutual benefit and it can contribute to peace and stability in West Asia.

“The oil and gas sector will greatly benefit from the comprehensive strategic partnership agreement. China and Iran are highly complementary in the oil and gas sector,” Wang emphasizes.

Iran possesses large oil and gas reserves. At the same time, China is the largest importer of oil and gas. However, the illegal U.S. sanctions on Iran have greatly affected Tehran’s oil sale.

“Under the agreement, China will provide huge potential market for Iranian oil and gas. Also, the settlement in RMB between Iran and China can escape the constraints of SWIFT and U.S. sanctions,” says Professor Wang, who is director and senior fellow in the Institute of World Economics and Politics at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

The following is the text of the interview: **How would you characterize China’s current policy in West Asia?**

West Asia and China are highly complementary in economic fields. West Asia is the largest producer and exporter in oil and gas in the world, as well as being an important market for China’s manufacturing products. China is the largest importer of oil and gas in the world, and this region is China’s predominantly largest source of energy import. China’s long-term and current West Asia policy is to maintain friendly mutual relationships, and continue to enhance ties in economic fields particularly in the oil and gas sector. Due to the critical importance of West Asia in the supply of oil and gas, and Chinese energy consumption heavily depends on import, therefore the regional stability in West Asia is critical for China, and



Beijing has high willingness to contribute to the peace and stability of the region.

In his visit to West Asia, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi proposed a five-point initiative on achieving security and stability in the region. How do you assess the initiative?

The five-point initiative reflects China’s long-standing West Asian policy. The security and stability in the region are in accord with the world’s interests including China. China feels happy to conduct contributions to bring about the stability to the region through its close ties with West Asian countries.

Recently, China and Iran, both subject to U.S. sanctions, signed a 25-year cooperation agreement to strengthen their centuries-old ties. In your view, how will the agreement impact mutual cooperation?

The long-term agreement will strongly stimulate the mutual cooperation between China and Iran in infrastructure, communications, oil and gas, and industrial zones. China has rich experience of promoting eco-

nomie growth and industrialization through increasing investment in infrastructures such as, express roads, ports, railways, airports, electricity generations and networks, communications, and establishing many industrial zones. Iran has large potential in industrialization and urbanization and it can learn from Chinese experience through in-depth cooperation with China.

How do you assess the significance of the comprehensive strategic partnership, specifically in developing oil and gas projects?

The oil and gas sector will greatly benefit from the comprehensive strategic partnership agreement. China and Iran are highly complementary in the oil and gas sector. Iran is the richest country in oil and gas resource, and China is the largest importer of oil and gas. Due to the U.S. sanctions, Iran’s oil export has faced obstacles and challenges. Under the agreement, China will provide huge potential market for Iranian oil and gas. Also, the settlement in RMB between Iran

and China can escape the constraints of SWIFT and U.S. sanctions. The agreement can also enhance reciprocal investment in oil and gas sector, for instance, China can increase investment in the upstream of the oil and gas sector, while Iran can conduct investment in China’s downstream sector.

Some experts believe that the signing of this document will lead to a greater failure of the U.S. pressure on both Iran and China. What is your view?

The signing of the agreement is fundamentally based on the mutual benefits of Iran and China, and is not targeted at any other country. Iran can occupy more Chinese market in oil and gas sector and attract capital from China to stimulate the development of domestic infrastructure and manufacturing industries. China can diversify oil and gas import source and enhance supply security, and find a large potential market for its manufacturing products. Objectively, the agreement will effectively reduce the pressures of U.S. sanctions to Iran, and Sino-U.S. rivalry to China.

Why have Western powers expressed concern over the agreement between the two sovereign states?

The western countries should understand that the agreement is based on mutual benefit between Iran and China, particularly in economic fields, and is a win-win cooperation plan, and which doesn’t target at them. They should feel relaxed.

How do you assess the tensions between China and the United States during Joe Biden’s presidency? Will these tensions worsen during Biden’s presidency?

The tensions between China and U.S. will continue in Biden’s presidency. China will open up more toward outside world to neutralize U.S.’s behaviors of decoupling in technologies, and make friends and establish partnership with more countries to minimize U.S.’s pressures.

Oxford professor says Israel’s adventures against Iran ended up strengthening its enemies

→ 1 they are finicky about their dignity and so cannot give the appearance of seeming too eager. This is all the more important given the Trump administration’s recent demolition of American dignity, which a ponderous disdain must now recover. Yet Iran is not important to the U.S. in its own right so much as for its alliances, particularly with Russia and China, and so as a regional linchpin in their new geopolitics. It is also important, paradoxically, because of the Middle East’s (West Asia) declining importance politically and economically, with the U.S. seeking conditions of relative peace there, so it no longer has to intervene directly. Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and Israel are the four crucial stakeholders in the region, and if they can be brought to some kind of understanding, even short of an agreement, then the U.S. can turn its attention to Asia, which is much more important for global politics and economics.

What is your comment on the Israeli sabotage operation in the Natanz nuclear facility? Can Israel hinder the process of talks in Vienna?

Like the ponderous display of American dignity, the Israeli strike seems to have been a symbolic assertion of its power rather than an effort either to delay Iran’s nuclear capabilities or create the conditions of a conflict that would halt the deal. Israel is no longer a crucial player in the JCPOA discussions and has to stress its importance in other ways, including for domestic reasons given its prime minister’s political travails. Yet, these displays of strength have ended up strengthening Israel’s enemies instead. The revelation of alleged Iranian attacks on Israeli shipping, the ability of Syria to breach Israel’s air defenses, and the Russian naval escort for Iranian supplies to Syria are three examples indicative of Israel’s increasingly restricted room

for action in the region. Military capability alone can create neither stability nor national security, which is why Israel’s new economic and cultural links with the countries who signed the so-called ‘Abraham Accords’ are more important than armed force.

Given the U.S. withdrawal from the nuclear deal in May 2018, do you think Washington is reliable when it comes to agreements? There is no guarantee another president will not violate the deal again.

Great powers are never reliable allies because they think they can dispense with would-be friends by treating them as disposable clients. The U.S. does not even treat its closest European allies as equals, as we have seen from its abandonment of Britain during the Suez Crisis, vilification of France in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq and threats to Germany during the Trump administration. Trump was only doing in a vulgar way what his predecessors did with a degree of subtlety. But the damage done to America’s reputation by Trump’s tearing up of treaties and withdrawal from agreements has been so significant that it is unlikely any president could make such unilateral moves in the future. The failure of Trump’s unilateral measures, themselves made possible by an unrealistic assessment of absolute power, have ensured that the U.S. will now renege on its commitments only with the agreement of its allies, who have in the meantime themselves lost considerable faith in it.

What is your comment on a plan by the U.S. to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan? Is the U.S. administration determined to end the endless wars?

A: The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan only signals the latter’s loss of importance in geopolitical terms and not the end of American warfare globally. Apart from the economic and other interests created there by the war itself,

there were no significant American interests involved in Afghanistan and its ineffectual military presence there should have ended a long time ago. As in the Middle East (West Asia), however, troops and equipment on the ground are likely to be replaced by a few small bases and the deployment of drones and missile strikes in addition to sanctions as weapons of choice. We seem to be witnessing a gradual retreat from the massive power-projection of the War on Terror in some regions while ramped up elsewhere, such as in East Asia and Africa. This offers regional powers in the Middle East (West Asia) as well as South and Central Asia the opportunity to create their own political-economic zones should they wish to do so.

Why has Biden focused on China? Is China able to surpass the U.S. in military and economic spheres in the near future?

China is a significant economic power but, by all appearances, not yet a military one. Yet, it is still unable to compete with the U.S. economically, and the threat it poses is simply that it can no longer be corralled into a geopolitical order led by the former. As I see it, the potential threat posed by China, or Russia for that matter, is that they might pluralize the international order not in the way of the Cold War’s all-or-nothing rivalry, but by creating a real diversity of possibilities within it. That would fragment existing blocs and alliances and allow smaller and weaker countries more leverage, of the kind some of them last had during the Cold War. While commentary in the West is focussed on the lack of democracy and authoritarianism in countries like China, Russia, or even a NATO ally like Turkey, it is important to note that their new politics would remain viable even if they were paragons of human rights since they are not wedded to anti-Americanism or dictatorships.

Dimona explosion: Israel looks weak regardless of what actually happened

By Robert Inlakesh

Days after the massive explosion which took place near Israel’s Dimona Nuclear Facility, the Israeli regime has fallen silent on the incident in an attempt to eradicate the situation’s embarrassing feats from the collective memories of their population.

Thursday morning panic amongst Israelis quickly spread as a massive explosion was reported near Dimona, in the Naqab (Negev), close to where Israel’s secret nuclear facility is located.

The incident, reported throughout Israeli media at roughly 1:34 a.m. (Palestine time), initially sparked speculation on where the explosion had originated with some claiming a rocket was fired from Gaza. These reports were then quickly debunked, as Hebrew media quoted the Israeli military as stating that no such rocket fire had come from the besieged coastal enclave. Israeli media reports then began to emerge, speculating that due to sirens having been triggered around the Dimona area and Israel’s Ariel Sharon military base, a missile

could have been fired from Syria.

The Israeli Occupation Forces later issued a statement in which they claimed that a Syrian surface-to-air (SAM) missile had pursued one of its fighter jets and landed in an open area near Dimona. The IDF’s twitter handle had explained that Israel then bombed the Syrian battery from which the missile had come, as a response.

Syria’s SANA reported that as a result of Israeli airstrikes on the Damer area, in the Western countryside of Damascus, 4 of its soldiers had been injured and material damage had been reported.

Israel’s story not adding up, but looks bad either way

There is a real reason Israel is desperately attempting to bury this incident and that’s because no matter which way you look at this, Israel looks weak.

Firstly, according to Israel’s official narrative, they admit to firing the first shot and also admit to failing to confront a Syrian air defense missile. The Israelis love to claim their superiority in the area of air defenses, bragging about their expensive Iron Dome, David’s Sling and

Patriot Missile Systems. But apparently none of their systems were able to confront a single surface-to-air missile which flew approximately 250 kilometers off course. This is also a point of contention for many who argue that the SAM would not have likely made it so far off course.

If Israel’s account is correct, then considering Israel had specifically re-enforced its air defense systems around the occupied Golan and Dimona, its air defense systems are proven completely useless in the face of a real attack. This does massive harm to the reputation of the Israeli regime and its weapons manufacturers.

Then we have the dispute over what really occurred. Many people fail to believe that an explosion that shook homes as far north as occupied Ramallah in the West Bank, came from SAM.

The alleged SAM was said to have been an SA-5 missile, fired from a Russian S-200 system, packing a 200 kilogram warhead. In all previous known failures of the missile to hit its target, it had exploded just before impact, yet we have no confirmation from the Israeli side whether it did as such. If the 200

kilogram warhead did hit the surface, then it may have caused a big blast, but whether that blast would be felt over 100 kilometers away is a cause for debate.

Israel has refused to provide additional details on what the large explosion actually was and whether the alleged Syrian SAM was the cause of the massive blast heard and felt, or whether it was a Patriot missile attempting to intercept it.

Israel’s official narrative makes it look weak in the face of basic munitions, not even intended to harm it. It also admits that through their reckless offensive actions against Syria, they endangered the lives of their own civilians. Alternatively, they could be lying and it could have been a purposeful attack from within Syrian territory, with this showing Israel’s vulnerability to further strikes.

Although there’s no conclusive evidence to prove exactly what happened, if Israel was struck intentionally, then that means it’s even weaker than if its air defenses failed to shoot down an errant SAM over the course of hundreds of kilometers, landing near their nuclear site.

Major Saudi airbase targeted in Yemen’s drone retaliation

The Yemeni army says it has launched a fresh drone strike on a major airbase in Saudi Arabia’s southwestern province of Asir in retaliation.

Army troops and allied fighters from Popular Committees hit designated targets inside King Khalid Airbase near the city of Khamis Mushait, 884 km south of Riyadh, in the early hours of Sunday, Army spokesman Brigadier General Yahya Saree tweeted.

Yemen’s al-Masirah television network quoted Saree as saying that the retaliatory attack was carried out by a domestically-developed Qasef-2K (Striker-2K) combat drone.

The strike, he said, was “accurate,” which came in response to the continuing aggression and brutal siege on his country.

On Friday, Yemeni forces targeted the same airbase and a state-owned Saudi Aramco oil facility in the kingdom’s southern region of Jizan. Saree said then that two domestically developed Qasef-2K (Striker-2K) armed drones struck with great precision “important and sensitive” targets at King Khalid Airbase.

According to Press TV, a Yemeni Sammad-3 (Invincible-3) combat drone also hit a key Aramco installation in Jizan, 966 kilometers south of Riyadh at dawn.

Yemeni armed forces launched another strike against King Khalid Airbase at 9 a.m. local time (0600 GMT) Friday, using a Qasef-2K drone.

Biden officially recognizes ‘Armenian genocide’, Turkey summons U.S. ambassador

Turkey has summoned the U.S. ambassador to Ankara over President Joe Biden’s recognition of the alleged massacres of Armenians by Ottoman Turks during the First World War as “genocide.”

“We honor the victims of the Meds Yeghern so that the horrors of what happened are never lost to history,” Biden declared on Saturday, becoming the first U.S. president to officially recognize the alleged Armenian genocide.

Turkey’s Foreign Ministry denounced Biden’s statement in “strongest terms,” saying the move “does not have a scholarly and legal basis, nor is it supported by any evidence.”

“We call on the U.S. president to correct this grave mistake, which serves no purpose other than to satisfy certain political circles and to support the efforts aiming to establish a practice of peaceful coexistence in the region, especially among the Turkish and Armenian nations, instead of serving the agenda of those circles that try to foment enmity from history,” it said.

The ministry also on Saturday summoned American ambassador to Turkey, David Satterfield, who was accepted by Deputy Foreign Minister Sedat Onal.

A source at the ministry told Russia’s Sputnik news agency that Onal told Satterfield that Biden’s statement had caused a “wound in ties that will be hard to repair.”

82 killed in Iraq as fire erupts at COVID-19 hospital

At least 82 people were killed and more than 100 injured in a fire that broke out in the coronavirus intensive care unit of a Baghdad hospital as public anger erupted demanding the prosecution of high-level Iraqi officials.

The blaze on Sunday at the Ibn al-Khatib Hospital in the Iraqi capital was sparked by an accident that caused an oxygen tank to explode, according to medical sources.

The flames spread quickly, according to civil defense officials, as “the hospital had no fire protection system and false ceilings allowed the flames to spread to highly flammable products.”

Patients’ relatives scrambled during the blaze to save their loved ones. According to al Jazeera, the interior ministry announced on Sunday afternoon that 82 people were killed and 110 were injured in the blaze.

In response to the fire, Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi fired the director-general of the Baghdad Health Department in the al-Rusafa area, where the hospital is located. He also sacked the director of Ibn al-Khatib Hospital and its director of engineering and maintenance, according to a statement from the health ministry and his office.

Resistance News

Sheikh Sabri calls for forming youth committees to defend J’lem

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN**—Sheikh Ekrima Sabri, head of the Higher Islamic Council in Occupied Jerusalem, has urged the family councils in Jerusalem to pool their efforts and form youth committees to defend the holy city against Jewish settler attacks.

In press remarks, Sheikh Sabri called on the Jerusalemites to necessarily remain vigilant and ready for any malicious aggression against them in the coming days.

He saluted the Jerusalemite youths for their courage in defending the holy city and the Aqsa Mosque against settler attacks that are carried out under police protection.

Israeli forces clash with Palestinian worshippers in al-Quds

Israeli forces have for the third consecutive night clashed with Palestinian worshippers outside one of the gates leading to the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in the occupied Jerusalem al-Quds.

The scuffles took place at Bab al-Amoud (Damascus) Gate overnight into Sunday, as the Israeli forces tried to prevent the Palestinians from holding their usual prayers during the holy fasting month of Ramadan.

The regime forces attacked the worshippers using teargas canisters, stun grenades and foul-smelling water cannons.

They also physically assaulted some of the Palestinians while attempting to forcefully evacuate them from the al-Aqsa Mosque compound. In response, the Palestinians threw rocks at the Israeli forces and burned tires.

No serious injuries were reported, but at least one worshiper was arrested, according to Wafa news agency.

“The police are causing the problems. People want to sit down here at Damascus Gate in Ramadan,” said Fares, a young Palestinian from East Jerusalem al-Quds.

“Everywhere else is closed because of the coronavirus, everybody is at home. Damascus Gate is very important to Palestinians, it’s in the name and it’s the way to our holy places.”

Tens of Iranian relics returned home from British institute

➔ It is thought to be the largest collection of English language volumes in Iran. The Tehran centre remains one of the few overseas institutes continuing to operate in Iran. It also houses a hostel for the use of visiting academics and students.



BIPS is one of a small number of British International Research Institutes funded by the British Academy, the UK's national body for the humanities and social sciences. BIPS is also a member organisation, with a worldwide membership, open to anyone with an interest in Iran and the Persianate world.

Historical mansions in northeastern Iran added to national heritage list

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – A total of 21 properties including historical mansions scattered across the north-eastern Khorasan Razavi province have recently been inscribed on the national heritage list.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism announced the inscription on Sunday in a letter to the governor-general of the province, IRNA reported.

Pur-Queisar, Rezai, Mahdavi, Najafi, Qavami, Baseri, and Chupani mansions are among the properties added to the prestigious list.

The list also includes Kandakli public bathhouse, the ancient hill of Kashkak, and Shurloq Stable.



Provincial tourism chief Abolfazl Mokarramifar has previously announced that 119 historical sites are planned to be inscribed on the National Heritage list, while amongst over 100,000 historical sites identified across the province, only 1,500 properties have been inscribed on the list so far.

Sassanid-era castle to reopen after restoration

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – Restoration work is almost complete on Qiz Qa'leh, preparing the Sassanid era (224 CE–651) castle to reopen doors to visitors.

The mudbrick monument stands tall near the city of Saveh in Markazi province.

“With the completion of the restoration project, the historical structure is expected to re-open its doors to the public within a month,” Saveh’s tourism chief, Reza Ayyaz, announced on Sunday.

Local and indigenous materials are being used to preserve the originality of the historical monument, the official added.

A budget of 140 million rials (over \$3,300 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been allocated to the project, he noted.

The castle, which was used as a defensive fortification by the followers of Hasan-e Sabbah (1070–1124), spiritual leader of Islam’s heretical Ismaili sect, known as ‘Assassins’, has numerous halls and porches, which is notable in terms of architecture, he explained.

Literally meaning the Maiden Castle, Qiz Qa'leh castle was inscribed on the National Heritage list in 2013.

From very early history to modern times, defensive walls have often been necessary for cities to survive in an ever-changing world of invasion and conquest.

Fortifications in antiquity were designed primarily to defeat attempts at the escalade, and to the defense of territories in warfare, and were also used to solidify rule in a region during peacetime.



Uruk in ancient Sumer (Mesopotamia) is one of the world’s oldest known walled cities. The Ancient Egyptians also built fortresses on the frontiers of the Nile Valley to protect against invaders from neighboring territories.

Many of the fortifications of the ancient world were built with mud brick, often leaving them no more than mounds of dirt for today’s archaeologists.

Under the Sassanians, Iranian art experienced a general renaissance. Architecture often took grandiose proportions, such as the palaces at Ctesiphon, Firuzabad, and Sarvestan. According to Encyclopedia Britannica, one of the most characteristic and striking relics of Sassanian art are rock sculptures carved on abrupt limestone cliffs, for example at the historical sites Bishapur, Naqsh-e Rostam, and Naqsh-e Rostam.

Metalwork and gem engraving became highly sophisticated. The scholarship was encouraged by the state, and works from both the East and West were translated into Pahlavi, the language of the Sassanians.

First agritourism farm to make debut in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – The first-ever agritourism permit has been issued for a vast farm in the southwestern Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, the provincial tourism chief has said.

Such permits are granted to eligible farm owners in the country to launch agritourism businesses, aiming to set certain standards in a move to ensure the quality of such services in the country.

“Setting up in an area of 17 hectares, the farm has created jobs for 30 people directly,” IRNA quoted Majid Safai as saying on Sunday.

Agritourism could achieve rural development in this region while it generates extra income for the villagers and locals, which leads to economic prosperity, the official explained.

Promoting this branch of tourism can both help improve the living conditions of rural communities as well as provide a different experience for tourists from big cities, the official added.

He also noted that the investors who aim at enhancing agritourism infrastructures in the region are welcomed and supported.



Agritourism is a relatively new branch of the travel industry in which tourists stay with local people in rural areas. Farm/ranch recreation refers to activities conducted on private agricultural lands, which might include fee-hunting and fishing, overnight

stays, educational activities, etc.

Experts believe that in addition to the customer services jobs, agritourism pays special attention to the production sector, saying agricultural tourism is much more important and practical than other branches

New round of restoration starts on old caravanserai in northwest Iran

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – The second round of a restoration project has been commenced on the historical Oil Company Caravanserai in the city of Urmia, northwestern province of West Azarbaijan, CHTN reported.

The project involves repairing arches, walls, pillars, as well as destroyed rooms of the structure, the provincial tourism chief Jalil Jabbari, said on Saturday.

It also includes repairing cracks on the building’s façade and rooftop, and replacing worn-out materials, he added.

A budget of 2.2 billion rials (over \$52,000 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been allocated to the project, the official explained.

The caravanserai, which dates back to the late Qajar-era (1789–1925) and early Pahlavi period (1925-1979), was registered on the National Heritage list in 2001.

Iran’s earliest caravanserais were built during the Achaemenid era (550 -330 BC). Centuries later, when Shah Abbas I assumed power from 1588 – to 1629; he ordered the construction of network caravanserais across the country.

Such roadside inns were originally built in various ep-

ochs along ancient caravan routes in the Muslim world to shelter people, their goods, and animals. The former Silk Roads may be the most famous example dotted by caravanserais.

For many travelers to Iran, staying in or even visiting a centuries-old caravanserai can be a wide experience as they have an opportunity to feel the past, a time travel back into a forgotten age.

West Azarbaijan embraces a variety of lush natural sceneries, cultural heritage sites, and museums including the UNESCO sites of Takht-e Soleyman and Qareh Klise (St. Thaddeus Monastery), Teppe Hasanlu, and the ruined Bastam Citadel.

The region has been the seat of several ancient civilizations. It formed part of Urartu and later of Media. In the 4th century BC, it was conquered by Alexander the Great and was named Atropatene after one of Alexander’s generals, Atropates, who established a small kingdom there. The area returned to the Persian (Iranian) rule under the Sasanians in the 3rd century CE. The Arabs controlled Azerbaijan from



the 7th century until Turkish nomads overran it in the 11th century. Thenceforth the inhabitants of the region were Turkish speakers. The region was overrun by the Mongols in the 13th century, and, under the ruler Hulegu, Azarbaijan became the center of a Mongol empire extending from Syria on the west to the Oxus River (now the Amu Darya) on the east.

Iran jumps two places in passport power global ranking

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Iran has moved up from 101st to 99th place with visa-free access to 42 countries around the world, Donya-e-eqtesad reported.

Iran’s visa-free access includes visas on arrival to the countries such as Azerbaijan, Qatar, Lebanon, Turkey, Armenia, Georgia, Oman, Syria (Middle East), Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Macau (China), Cambodia, Malaysia, and Nepal.



The latest results, released by the Henley Passport Index, indicate that the gap in travel freedom is now at its largest since the index began in 2006, with Japanese passport holders able to access 167 more destinations than citizens of Afghanistan, who can visit only 26 destinations worldwide without acquiring a visa in advance.

Japan firmly holds onto the number one spot. Holders of a Japanese passport have visa-free access to 193 destinations worldwide. Singapore is still in second place on the list with access to 192 destinations without needing a visa, and South Korea and Germany share third place with 191 visa-free destinations. Italy, Finland, Spain, and Luxembourg share fourth place, with Denmark, Austria, and Sweden sharing the fifth spot.

Based on the index, the weakest passports which require the highest number of visas when traveling around the world are the passports of Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, and Palestinian Territory.

The novel coronavirus pandemic has brought travel to a standstill nearly all over the globe, including Iran, causing huge job and revenue losses. However, experts believe the impact of virus infection would be temporary and short-lived for the Islamic Republic, which ranked the third fastest-growing tourism destination in 2019.

Iran is home to one of the world’s oldest continuous major civilizations, embracing settlements dating back to 4000 BC.

INVITATION TO RENEWAL OF ONE STEP INTERNATIONAL TENDER
First Announcement
55/00/2220
26/04/2021

Ministry of Jihad-e-Agriculture

AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES COMPANY

Agricultural Support Services Company, hereinafter will be referred as ASSC, affiliated to the Ministry of Agriculture-Jahad of IR of Iran, is considering the purchase of the below 20 items of formulated pesticides, through renewal of one step international tender

Item	General Name	Formulation	Quantity(MT)
1	2,4-D+MCPA	67.5% SL (W/V)	100
2	Bromoxynil octanoate+MCPA-2-ethyl ester	40% EC (W/V)	40
3	Bromoxynil+2,4-D	56% EC (W/V)	20
4	Pinoxaden+ safener	5% EC (W/V)	60
5	Pinoxaden+Clodinafop propargyl+Cloquintocet	5% EC (W/V)	100
6	Iodosulfuron-methyl-sodium +Mesosulfuron-methyl+Mefenpyr-diethyl	1.2% OD (W/V)	100
7	Mesosulfuron methyl +Iodosulfuron-methyl sodium+Diflufenican+mefenpyr-diethyl	6% OD (W/V)	50
8	Sethoxydim	12.5% OEC (W/V)	20
9	Clopyralid	30% SL (W/V)	60
10	Propiconazole	25% EC (W/W)	400
11	Epoxiconazole+Tiophanate-methyl	49.7% SC (W/V)	90
12	Cyproconazole+Propiconazole	33% EC (W/V)	40
13	Deltamethrin	2.5% EC (W/V)	600
14	Tebuconazole	2% DS (W/W)	300
15	Tebuconazole	6% FS(W/V)	200
16	Tebuconazole+Prothioconazole	40% FS(W/V)	10
17	Difenoconazole	3% DS(W/W)	150
18	Difenoconazole	3% FS(W/V)	100
19	Carboxin+Thiram	75% WP (W/W)	100
20	Carboxin+Thiram	40% FS(W/W)	80

All of the qualified and interested companies are invited to receive tender documents from **Sunday dated 25/4/2021** until **Monday dated 3/5/2021** (7 working days) from our purchasing committee (located at the 9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi st., Tehran, Iran).

The bidders are requested to submit their letters of introduction, along with remittance bill of I.R.Ials 1,200,000 to ASSC's account no. 4001039704005791 with SHEBA no. IR250100004001039704005791 at the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran through payment order of SATNA or PAYA with the 30 character identification code of 35803978226350065000000000000000.

The bidders are requested to submit their sealed and stamped envelopes containing offers latest on **Monday dated 7/6/2021** (during official working hours) to our security office located on the 8th floor. Meanwhile the meeting for the opening of the envelopes will be held on **Tuesday dated 8/6/2021** at 02:00 PM with the presence of bidder's representatives at our purchasing committee hall (9th floor , no. 1, Fourth Alley, Gandhi st., Tehran, Iran).

We would like to emphasize that the bid bond amount should be in bank guarantee as follows:

1- € 15878 for 2,4-D + MCPA 67.5% SL equivalent to Iranian Rials 4511000000.

2- € 12103 for Bromoxynil octanoate+MCPA-2-ethyl ester 40%EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 3438000000.

3- € 7522 for Bromoxynil+2,4-D 56% EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 2137000000.

4-€ 27097 for Pinoxaden + safener 5% EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 7698000000.

5- € 42504 for Pinoxaden + clodinafop propargyl+ cLoquintocet 5% EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 12075000000.

6-€ 34746 for Iodosulfuron-methyl-sodium+ Mesosulfuron-methyl+ mefenpyr-diethyl 1.2% OD equivalent to Iranian Rials 9871000000.

7- € 19448 for + Mesosulfuron-methyl+ Iodosulfuron-methyl-sodium +Diflufenican+mefenpyr-diethyl 6% OD equivalent to Iranian Rials 5525000000.

8-€ 6757 for Sethoxydim 12.5% OEC equivalent to Iranian Rials 1919000000.

9- € 19035 for Clopyralid 30% SL equivalent to Iranian Rials 5408000000.

10- € 47887 for Propiconazole 25% EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 13604000000.

11- € 102012 for Epoxiconazole + Tiophanate-methyl 49.7% SC equivalent to Iranian Rials 28980000000.

12- € 43104 for Cyproconazole + Propiconazole 33% EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 12245000000.

13- € 44048 for Deltamethrin 2.5% EC equivalent to Iranian Rials 12513000000.

14- € 47749 for Tebuconazole 2% DS equivalent to Iranian Rials 13565000000.

15- € 28935 for Tebuconazole 6% FS equivalent to Iranian Rials 8220000000.

16- € 11537 for Tebuconazole + Prothioconazole 40% FS equivalent to Iranian Rials 3278000000.

17- € 21416 for Difenoconazole 3% DS equivalent to Iranian Rials 6084000000.

18- € 19896 for Difenoconazole 3% FS equivalent to Iranian Rials 5652000000.

19- € 30667 for Carboxin+Thiram 75% WP equivalent to Iranian Rials 8712000000.

20- € 43772 for Carboxin+Thiram 40% FS equivalent to Iranian Rials 12435000000.

For more information, you may refer to our website www.assc.ir, and <http://iets.mporg.ir> or contact us by phone no. 00982188776325.

PR & Intel Affairs Dept. of Agricultural Support Services Company (ASSC)

Iran among pioneers in COVID-19 vaccine development

By Faranak Bakhtiari

TEHRAN – Iran is among the first countries which started developing a vaccine against coronavirus, and now four companies are endeavoring to release their products by September and inoculate the whole population.

Out of 16 vaccine production cases, four cases received a code of ethics and are undergoing clinical trial; it is hoped that another three to four cases will succeed in receiving license by September.

COVIRAN BAREKAT, the first coronavirus vaccine made by Iranian researchers, started the third phase of the human trial by being administrated to 20,000 people.

Developed by researchers at the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam, the vaccine was unveiled on December 29, 2020, and started to be mass-produced on March 29.

The line will produce three million doses a month, a capacity that is expected to be boosted to up to 15 million doses per month by the end of the spring (June 20).

Today, we officially begin the third phase of the human trial, which will study the results on a population of 20,000 in six cities across the country, Hamed Hosseini, director of clinical studies of COVIRAN Vaccine said on Sunday.

He went on to say that 11,500 people from Tehran and Karaj and the rest from four cities of Bushehr, Isfahan, Mashhad, and Shiraz will be vaccinated under phase three studies.



Necessary plans are being made for the third phase of human testing to be carried out independently in some neighboring countries, Mohammad Reza Salehi, a member of clinical studies of COVIRAN Vaccine said.

The BAREKAT vaccine, which health officials have said is 90-percent effective according to preliminary results, will be injected into some patients with underlying diseases to prove its safety.

Meanwhile, a vaccine developed by the Razi Vaccine and Serum Research Institute (Razi Cov Pars) is expected to

become the second Iranian-made vaccine to be administered among the population in early August; which started the clinical trial on February 27.

Iran has also started human trials of Fakhra vaccine, the third domestically developed COVID-19 vaccine, named after nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh (he was assassinated in late November near Tehran), that was unveiled and started the clinical trial on March 16.

“Osvd-19”, the fourth domestic vaccine produced by Osvah Pharmaceutical Company is also undergoing human trials, which

will also be available in early September.

Three joint-produced vaccines

Iran is currently producing vaccines jointly with three countries of Cuba, Russia, and Australia.

One of the vaccines is the Cuban-Iranian Soberana-02 vaccine, and the other is the Russian-Iranian Gamaleya vaccine, while the third joint vaccine will be produced in Iran in cooperation with Australia, which is scheduled to enter the market by September.

Mass-vaccination begins

While Iran continues efforts to mass-produce local candidates, several foreign vaccines have already been imported and others are expected soon.

Mass vaccination against COVID-19 started on Iranian citizens with the Russian-made Sputnik V vaccine on February 9.

So far, 718,510 doses of coronavirus vaccine, including the first and second doses, have been injected in the country.

Alireza Raeisi, a spokesman for the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control, announced on Thursday that the sixth batch of the “Sputnik V” vaccine, including over 100,000 doses, has been sent to the country.

Of the total vaccines imported so far, we have received about 420,000 doses of Sputnik V, some 650,000 doses from China, and 125,000 from India. We also received 700,000 doses of Astrazeneca vaccine from South Korea, so that a total of 1.895 million doses of vaccine have been provided to the Ministry of Health, he explained.

Iran ready to help India curb pandemic: health minister

SOCIETY d e s k TEHRAN – Iranian Health Minister Saeed Namaki, in a letter to his Indian counterpart, expressed readiness to provide technical assistance, expertise, and equipment to contain coronavirus as new cases surge in India.

Emphasizing that the control of COVID-19 pandemic is not possible unless through sympathy and cooperation of all countries, Namaki stated that “controlling the pandemic will be possible through the elimination of sanctions, as well as the fair provision of all effective means of prevention, diagnosis, and treatment for all needy people around the world as well as political and economic support of international and non-governmental organizations.

Although Iran has gone through difficult times in the face of oppressive sanctions and pressure to provide medicine, vaccines, and medical equipment, and today



faces a fourth wave of the disease caused by the mutated virus, it has been able to rely on the knowledge of local scientists to cross this terrible wave.

Iran was able to produce the equipment and medicine the needed items and provide a suitable infrastructure in the field of vaccines. We hope that the exchange of experiences with scientific, research, and production centers of the two countries can bring a brighter future for the two nations with a long history of scientific, cultural cooperation.

The government and people of Iran are ready not to withhold any technical, expert, and equipment assistance in these difficult days and help Indian citizens to curb the epidemic.

India is facing a severe wave of coronavirus, reports indicate that the country's hospitals are facing a shortage of bed and medical facilities, including oxygen.

So far, over 16 million people in India have been infected and 345,000 have died.

WHO considering malaria eradication certificate for Iran

→ 1 Undoubtedly, receiving a malaria elimination certificate is one of the greatest achievements in the history of the country's health, he highlighted.

“One of the most important health events of the last 100 years was the eradication of malaria, which has existed in Iran for thousands of years,” he said, adding, while the history of the scientific fight against this disease dates back to only 60-70 years ago.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, malaria was the most important health problem in the country, especially in northern provinces including the Caspian Sea, he stated, noting, some 5 million cases of malaria were reported annually. But the main step toward its elimination began after World War II.

In those years, the Ministry of Health started a malaria control program with few facilities. By 1989, malaria was under control in most parts of Iran. There were still a few cases other than Sistan-Baluchestan, Kerman and Hormozgan, he explained.

The highest rate of malaria toll was re-

ported in 1990 when 98,000 malaria cases were registered; which then decreased to 12,000 per year, Gooya said.

He further explained that 3,700 volunteers were trained to eliminate malaria and dispatched to all indigenous areas and remote villages.

In 2017, the number of malaria cases in Iran reached less than 100, and since today, no case of native transmission of malaria has been reported, he also noted.

Emphasizing that the great achievement of malaria eradication is not only for Iran, he said that the social, economic, and political dimensions of this achievement are very great and shows the strong political commitment of the country to eliminate malaria, which has been done by allocating the necessary and sustainable budgets, social development measures in the affected areas, and free diagnosis and treatment of the disease.

By receiving the malaria elimination certificate, the desire to invest in three provinces of Kerman, Hormozgan, and Sistan-Baluch-

estan and areas such as Chabahar that was affected by this disease will increase, he also highlighted.

Among the 22 countries in the Eastern Mediterranean region, the largest country that has been able to eliminate malaria so far is Iran. Many countries, such as the UAE, have achieved this goal, but they are very small and sparsely populated compared to Iran, he stated.

There are 20 countries in the world that are moving towards the elimination of malaria.

WHO African Region carries high share of global malaria burden

According to the latest World malaria report, released in December 2019, there were 228 million cases of malaria in 2018 compared to 231 million cases in 2017. The estimated number of malaria deaths stood at 405,000 in 2018, compared with 416,000 deaths in 2017.

The WHO African Region continues to carry a disproportionately high share of the global malaria burden. In 2018, the region



was home to 93% of malaria cases and 94% of malaria deaths.

In 2018, 6 countries accounted for more than half of all malaria cases worldwide: Nigeria (25%), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (12%), Uganda (5%), and Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique, and Niger (4% each).

Children under 5 years of age are the most vulnerable group affected by malaria. In 2018, they accounted for 67% (272,000) of all malaria deaths worldwide.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ع

Iran to implement food safety program

A food safety document will be approved and implemented in the future in the country, Vahid Mofid, an official with the Food and Drug Administration has stated.

The document is consisting of standards through which food safety is best ensured; the whole food production process from cultivation to markets will be under control, it also identifies and controls hazards in the production, manufacturing and handling of food rather than relying on end product standards alone, he explained.

The standards enable the country to oblige food businesses to meet the document principles, they will be subject to periodic observations by a suitably qualified food safety auditor, he added.

اجرای سند ایمنی غذا در حال پیگیری است

مدیرکل فرآورده‌های غذایی و آشامیدنی سازمان غذا و دارو درباره وضعیت فعلی سند ایمنی غذا گفت: سند ایمنی غذا در حال تکمیل شدن است و تا پس از طی مراحل اداری اجرا شود.

وحید مفید روز جمعه در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایرنا افزود: با این سند، نظارت بر کل حلقه‌های تولید در زنجیره غذا از مزرعه تا سفره تحت کنترل بخش‌های مختلف درمی‌آید و میزان سموم مصرفی، انواع کودهای مصرف شده و چگونگی حمل مواد غذایی و توزیع آن، نوع آب و آبیاری زمین‌ها در سند ایمنی غذا تعریف شده است چراکه این عوامل در کیفیت محصول غذایی تاثیرگذار هستند.

مدیرکل فرآورده‌های غذایی و آشامیدنی سازمان غذا و دارو اظهار داشت: این استانداردها کشور را قادر می‌سازد که تولیدکنندگان غذایی به رعایت اصول سند مجاب کند، و شرکت‌های تولیدکننده مواد غذایی هر دوره توسط یک سازمان ایمنی مواد غذایی کنترل خواهند شد.

Some \$7.5m of goods seized from smugglers

SOCIETY d e s k TEHRAN – Goods worth 316 billion rials (nearly \$7.5 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) have been seized from smugglers in the country over the past week, police official Jalal Amini said on Sunday.

During the last week, all kinds of smuggled goods, including mobile phones, home appliances, Bitcoin miners, spare parts, currency, and cosmetics, were discovered in the country with the specialized measures and round-the-clock efforts of the anti-trafficking police, he added.

The discovered goods were handed over to the Organization for Collection and Sale of State-owned Properties, and 23 smugglers were arrested and handed over to the judicial authorities, IRNA quoted Amini as saying.

Every year, \$20-25 billion are smuggled in and out of the country, which, if stopped, will create hundreds of thousands of jobs, Hassan Norouzi, a member of the parliament, has said.

In the Iranian calendar year 1396 (March 2017-March 2018), \$12 billion was smuggled into Iran and \$900 million out of the country, according to the Headquarters for Combating the Smuggling of Commodities and Foreign Exchange.

Iran, which has a 900-kilometer border with Afghanistan, has been used as the main conduit for smuggling Afghan drugs to narcotics kingpins in Europe.

Despite high economic and human costs, Iran has been actively fighting drug-trafficking over the past decades.

In June 2020, the first phase of the national anti-smuggling plan was implemented with the priority given to customs, tobacco, and transit goods.

Scientists investigating ‘highly mutated’ Covid variant

Scientists are investigating a coronavirus variant thought to have originated in Tanzania that has acquired 34 mutations, making it the most genetically diverse Covid-19 virus detected to date.

The variant was identified in three people who had flown from Tanzania to Angola in mid-February. Since then, no more cases have been picked up by health authorities.

It has been labelled a variant of interest (VOI) due to its broad “constellation of mutations,” some of which feature in the UK, South Africa and Manaus variants.

The VOI was reported in a non peer-reviewed research paper written by scientists at the Universities of Oxford and Cape Town, the Angola Ministry of Health, Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, and research body KRISP.

Because of the “largely undocumented epidemic” within Tanzania, which has “few public health measures in place”, the authors have expressed their concern that the variant may have spread beyond the three identified travellers.

“We still have very little information about Tanzania – the only information we get is when a virus is sequenced somewhere else in the world from someone with recent travel from Tanzania,” Dr Richard Lessells, one of the paper’s authors, told The Independent.

“So that’s a very small number of sequences. So essentially we have no idea how prevalent this variant was or is within Tanzania.”

The variant carries 14 mutations within its spike protein – the part of the virus responsible for gaining entry to human cells.

It has acquired the E484K mutation associated with resistance to neutralising antibodies, and “there is also the P681H that is seen in the UK variant, that might contribute to increased transmissibility,” said Dr Lessells.

Through evolution, the structure of the Sars-CoV-2 spike protein has mutated to make it easier for the virus to bind with and penetrate our cells, as seen with the UK variant.

In some cases, as with the South Africa variant, it has mutated to become less recognisable to neutralising human antibodies which would normally attach to the virus’s spike protein and block its entry.

This type of mutation therefore allows Sars-CoV-2 to slip past the first line of immunological defence in people who have been vaccinated or previously infected, enabling the virus to carry on circulating.

However, the defining characteristics of these variants and others are the result of their collective mutations, rather than the singular genetic changes, like E484K, which have dominated headlines in recent months.

At the time Dr Lessells’ paper was published, the variant from Tanzania was “the most divergent virus that had been characterised” by scientists.

“Of course, there is a lot of sequencing being done now and lots of variants popping up all over the place, so difficult to be sure now,” Dr Lessells added.

His team in Cape Town is now working to determine whether antibodies generated by previous coronavirus infections are capable of neutralising the variant.

The variant is grown in a lab from the virus sample that was originally sequenced. “Then we test it against a pool of convalescent plasma specimens that we have collected here in South Africa,” Dr Lessells said. “We should have results in the next week or two.”

Depending on those findings, the team may then test the virus against blood plasma taken from people who have received the Covid-19 vaccines, giving an indication of its ability to evade artificially-induced immunity.

LET’S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 168)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

■ Apposition

■ بَدَل

۱. باباطاهر شاعر معروفی است. ۲. باباطاهر اهل همدان است.

۳. باباطاهر، شاعر معروف، اهل همدان است.

شاعر معروف در جمله‌ی سوّم، جانشین و بَدَلِ باباطاهر است.

این جمله ترکیبی است از جمله‌های اوّل و دوّم.

● تمرین ۳. جمله‌ها را با استفاده از بدل ترکیب کنید:

۱. ابن سینا دانشمند بزرگی است. او اهل ایران است.

۲. آقای امامی پدر من است. او کتابفروشی بزرگی دارد.

۳. آقای امینی پیشخدمت هتل است. او بار شما را می‌آورد.

۴. آقای جوادی راننده است. او شما را به فرودگاه می‌برد.

۵. مهسا دختر دکتر نامدار است. مهسا ده سال دارد.

۶. مهیار برادر مهسا است. مهیار هفت سال دارد.

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The elderly are the sources of mercy and divine blessing.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

New Russian-Persian dictionary published

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — Vesal, a major Tehran-based company, has recently published a new Russian-Persian dictionary for basic learners of the Russian language in Iran.

The dictionary contains more than 2,000 main entries and 15,000 sub-entries, the publisher has announced.

The dictionary has been compiled by Rahelh Ziai, the dean of the Russian Language Department of the Iran Language Institute.

In a preface to the dictionary, Ziai wrote, “Due to the increasing trade, political, social and cultural relations between Iran and Russian-speaking countries, there is a growing demand for Russian-Persian educational resources.”

“The compilation of such reference books can be a big help towards teaching the two languages to establish better verbal communication and mutual understanding in various sectors and fields,” she added.

She also said that the dictionary is suitable for Iranian and Russian language learners as well as beginners who are interested in learning Russian or Persian on their own. It is written in a way that the reader can easily communicate with and understand.

One of the features of the Russian to Persian dictionary is to simplify and facilitate language learning via methods used in the learner’s native language, subsequently the definition of terms and expressions and the use of words are described by using them in sentences and phrases.

In addition to the fact that all entries in the dictionary have examples, one of the most important features that distinguishes this dictionary from other Russian-Persian dictionaries is that modern methods have been used to distinguish gender in names.

Ziai also said that in compiling this dictionary, the entries and examples are based on the frequent vocabulary used in the latest Russian language teaching books in foreign languages.

She is also the author of numerous books about Russian literature, including “Tatar Myths and Mythology”, “Their” and “Verbal Motive Actions in Languages with Different Structures”.

Iranian nature photographer Ali-Akbar Aghajari dies of COVID-19 at 62

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian photographer Ali-Akbar Aqajari, most famous for his photography of Iranian natural attractions, died of COVID-19 on Saturday. He was 62.

The photographer had underlying health conditions and had suffered from motion sickness in recent years, the Persian service of IRNA reported on Sunday.

He made headlines after publishing his book titled “Iran, the Land of Glory and Beauty”.

Aqajari’s book was a collection of his works as a nature photographer, showcasing an original image of Iran. The book was published at his own expense, an issue that he had publicly criticized.



Iranian nature photographer Ali-Akbar Aghajari in an undated photo

Aqajari’s efforts were disregarded by cultural officials over the past few years, while the cost of publishing his own book created many hardships for him.

In an interview published few years ago, Aqajari pointed to his long brilliant career in photography and said, “I have labored for the art of this land for many years.”

He has said that the cultural officials promised to fully support him for the cost of his book, however, they only purchased 50 copies of the book for libraries.

“Now I have endured so much stress that I can no longer walk,” he lamented. The book features a chapter providing a set of guidelines for tourists based on his professional experiences of traveling around the country.

Aqajari also built collections in various other fields, the most notable of which was his photos of the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war.

He left behind a variety of images of Iranian traditional rites, nomads and beautiful landscapes, which will remain in the memories of Iranians for generations to come.

Book on Rumi thoughts on women, gender equality published in Indonesian

A R T **TEHRAN** — A book on Persian mystic and poet Molana Jalal ad-Din Rumi’s thoughts on women and gender equality has been published in Indonesian.

“Rumi’s Book of Love and Sufistic Verses” written by Afifah Ahmad was released by Afkaruna, an Indonesian interdisciplinary journal of Islamic studies, the Iranian Cultural office in Jakarta announced on Saturday.

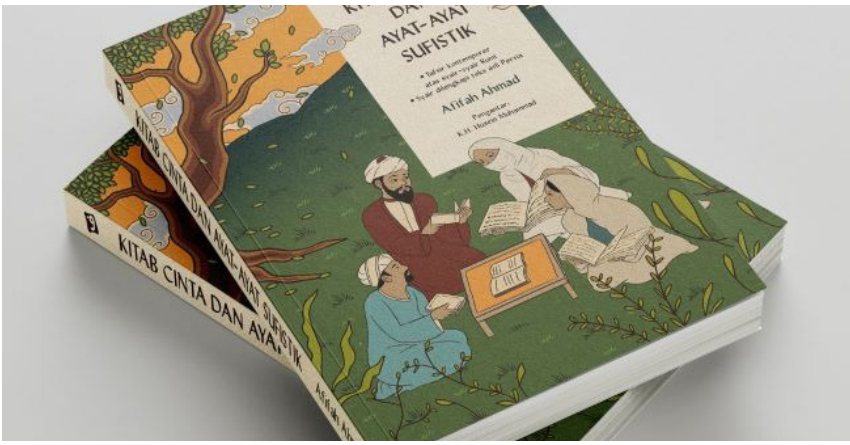
“This book is full of spiritual and intellectual knowledge from a great world legend, Molana Jalal ad-Din Rumi,” the publisher has said.

Afifah Ahmad is one of the few Indonesian women who is able to write about Rumi in Indonesian well and captivantly.

The book focuses on the beauty of love and humanity and its dimensions, also mining Rumi’s thoughts on women and gender equality.

The publisher has also called on readers to study Rumi’s masterpiece, Masnavi-ye Manavi.

The author’s ability to delve into Rumi’s works and thoughts in Persian as well as access



Copies of Indonesian writer Afifah Ahmad’s book “Ngaji Rumi Kitab Cinta dan Ayat-ayat Sufistik”.

to primary sources from Persian scholars, make this book an important and reliable work about Rumi in Indonesian.

“Talking about Rumi without mentioning the word love is impossible; like talking

about life without considering the elements of water and air,” Ahmad wrote in a preface to her book.

“The task of man in the world is to learn continuously to be a lover who is beneficial

to the universe until he meets his beloved one,” she added.

Books on Iran and Persian cultural figures have been regarded by Indonesian scholars and publishing houses over the past few years.

Iran’s Islamic Culture and Relations Organization released Iranian writer Reza Amirkhani’s novel “His Ego” (“Akunya Dia”) in Indonesian in 2020.

Translated into Indonesian by Bastian Zulyeno, the love story is about Ali Fattah, a man from a well-established family in Tehran who falls in love with Mahtab, the daughter of their family maid. Due to Ali’s belief in a pure love, Mahtab declines to marry him until she becomes sure about her real love for Ali. Mahtab enjoys guidelines from a dervish named Mostafa, who is a key character in her life. In the end, however, Ali and Mahtab die unattached in order to marry each other in the future life.

The Iranian Culture Center in Jakarta also published Iranian scholar Abbas Manuchehri’s “Political System in the Islamic Republic of Iran” in Indonesian in the same year.

Persian translation of Tajik writer Gulsifat Shakhidi’s “The City Where Dreams Come True”

peace, prosperity and new opportunities for themselves and fellow citizens.

An English translation of the book was also published by Hertfordshire Press in 2016.

Shakhidi, Iranian cultural attache Qahraman Soleimani and a number of Tajik and Russian scholars attended the unveiling ceremony of the book, the Persian service of IRNA reported on Saturday.

Shakhidi expressed her thanks for organizing the ceremony, and said that this book has been translated into several other languages.

She said that the story focuses on the disintegration that came following the civil war, as well as their return to union after the end of the war.

Soleimani on his part described the publication of the book as a veneration of peace, and added, “This ceremony is a step toward solidifying the cultural relations between Tajiks and Iranians.”

“This book represents the Tajik people’s grief during the civil war and their return to their homeland after an uneasy peace prevailed in the country after the devastating war,” he added.

He emphasized the necessity for writing about the civil war and added that such an attitude can help prevent similar bitter experiences in the future.

Tania Seminenko, an official of the Margarita Rudomino All-Russia State Library for Foreign Literature, pointed to her close relationship with Shakhidi’s family, and said that the family has been able to introduce the Tajiki culture and art around the world.

She also said that due to its highly dramatic content,

the book can be adapted for screen and stage.

Shakhidi is also the author of several other books, including “True Paradise, Lost Paradise”, “Tales of Grandma Gulsifat”, “My Neighborhood Sisters” and “I Am Looking Towards the East”.

“I Am Looking Towards the East” brings together Shakhidi’s two books, “I Am Looking Towards the East” and “Sentimental Journey or All in Good Time”.

This title takes an in-depth look at the historical relationship between Tajik and Russian literature and literary figures.

Volume one draws an endearing portrait of the nineteenth-century translator-poet, Vasily Zhukovsky, while volume two concentrates on Russian-Tajik literary connections during the early years of the Soviet Union.

Through her painstaking analysis of texts, archival documents and personal interviews, Shakhidi masterfully brings the characters and events of both periods to life. Her works are both an academic thesis and a lovingly drawn living history.

The recipient of awards for her work in promoting peace and conflict resolution, Shakhidi’s novel, “The City Where Dreams Come True” won first prize at the Open Eurasia International Literary Festival in 2015. The prolific author of forty-four titles in Russian and Tajik, this collection represents Gulsifat Shahidi’s third book to be translated into English.

Shahidi received an honorary award from the 6th OEBF Festival in Stockholm in November 2017 “for her personal contribution to the unification of the peoples of Eurasia through literature.”

“Careless Crime”, “Titi” picked for Minneapolis film festival

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian movies “Careless Crime” and “Titi” have been selected for the official completion at the 40th Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival, which will take place virtually in the U.S. city from May 13 to 23.

Directed by Shahram Mokri, “Careless Crime” goes back to forty years ago, during the uprising to overthrow the Shah’s regime in Iran, when protesters set fire to movie theaters as a way of showing opposition to Western culture. Many cinemas were burned down. In one tragic case, a theater was set on fire with four hundred people inside, most of whom were burned alive. Forty years have passed

and, in contemporary Iran, four individuals also decide to burn down a cinema. Their intended target is a theater showing a film about an unearthed, unexploded missile.

The film has competed in numerous international festivals and won awards, including the Silver Hugo of the jury at the Chicago International Film Festival in October 2020.

The Venice festival also honored the movie with the best original screenplay last September.

Cinematic magical realism meets director/writer Ida Panahandeh’s stunning look at the life of Titi, an Iranian Roma Gypsy who earns pennies cleaning hospitals, becomes

a surrogate mother... and saves the world from a rogue black hole.

Working in a hospital, Titi encounters Ebrahim, a nuclear physicist suffering from a terminal illness. Taking a liking to Titi, he explains his work to her, and she believes that it is essential to the future of the planet. When he slips into a coma, his wife demands his papers are discarded, but Titi takes them home, where her husband lines his rabbit cages with them. Eight-months pregnant as a surrogate for a childless couple, Titi wanders into the sea, where her mystical powers are able to bring the professor back to life. As he searches for the papers she took, he enters



This file photo shows a visitor taking shots of a calligraphy work in an exhibition.

Tehran institute hosts Islamic calligraphy exhibition

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — A virtual exhibition displaying a collection of calligraphy works on the Holy Quran and Nahj-ul-Balagha of Imam Ali (AS) opened on Saturday at the Saba Art and Cultural Institute in Tehran.

Over 100 works on the theme of artistic etiquettes and culture of worship have been showcased at the exhibit organized in collaboration with the Iranian Calligraphers Association and Mahmud Farshchian University of Islamic-Iranian Arts.

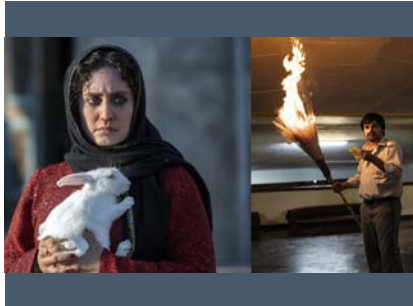
The artworks have been created by young and veteran

artists in various styles of Persian and Arabic calligraphy, including nastaliq, shekasteh, naskh and Thulth.

The organizers also plan to hold a webinar on the sidelines of the showcase, which has been organized to observe the holy month of Ramadan.

Ali-Ashraf Sandoqabadi, Elaheh Khatami, Azad Mahmudi, Gholamreza Sepehri and Mehdi Alizadeh are among the scholars who are scheduled to attend the webinar.

The exhibition will run on www.instagram.com/Artgalleriesaba and the website of the Saba Art and Cultural Institute until May 10.



This combination photo shows scenes from “Careless Crime” and “Titi”.

the world of Titi, and nothing will ever be the same.

Dreamlab Films, the France-based international distributor under Iranian film expert Nasrin Mirshab, is handling the international sales of “Careless Crime” and “Titi”.

“Grown-ups Never Do That” at Iranian bookstores

A R T **TEHRAN** — “Grown-ups Never Do That” by Davide Cali and Benjamin Chaud has recently been published in Persian in Tehran.

Ofoq is the publisher of the book rendered into Persian by Razi Hirmandi.

“Grown-ups Never Do That” is a hilarious picture book about the seemingly unbelievable fact that adults, like children,

misbehave — from Davide Cali and Benjamin Chaudthe, the duo behind the

Junior Library Guild selection “I Didn’t Do My Homework Because...” and “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to School!”

Whether it’s forgetting to do chores, running late, or burping, no adult would ever behave so poorly — at least, that’s what you might think. By the end of this outrageous, laugh-out-loud picture book, you’ll know better.

“Grown-ups Never Do That” showcases the humor — and the humanity — of the most important people in children’s lives.

This relatable and rollicking tale will have readers between the ages 4 and 7 (and the adults that read with them) in stitches.

It can be viewed as a wonderful gift for teachers, librarians and educators who want to teach that it’s okay not to be perfect all the time—and that manners exist for a reason.

Hirmandi has earlier translated “The Truth About My Unbelievable Summer”, “I Didn’t Do My Homework Because...”, “A Funny Thing Happened at the Museum”

and “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to School” from Cali and Chaud into Persian. Ofoq is the publisher of the books.

Born in 1972, Cali is a Swiss-born Italian writer of picture books and graphic novels, primarily for children and young adults.

He lives in Italy. His work has been published in 25 countries and translated into many languages. He also writes under the pseudonyms Taro Miyazawa and Daikon.