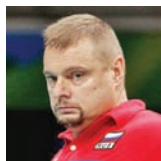
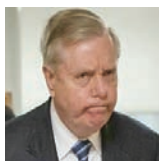




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VNL a preparatory competition for Olympics: Alekno *Page 3*



Graham slams Biden as 'a very destabilizing president' *Page 5*



Iranian students win 27 medals in international Olympiads *Page 7*

Tough talks expected as nuclear negotiators gather in Vienna

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Iran-Cuba vaccine enters phase three clinical trials

Lifting sanctions should not be used as pretext for political disputes: Raeisi

TEHRAN—A lifting of all sanctions and their verification are a “national demand” and this demand should not be used as a pretext for political disputes at home, Judiciary Chief Ebrahim Raeisi said on Monday.

Speaking at the meeting of the Supreme Council of the Judiciary, Raeisi also suggested, “Those who seek to fulfill this promise to the Iranian nation should not allow the other side to waste time.”

Iran and P4+1 (the four permanent

members of the UN Security Council – Russia, China, France, Britain - and Germany are holding talks in Vienna with the hope of reviving the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. The negotiations are led by the European Union.

The United States is also involved in the talks in Vienna through intermediaries. Iran has said it will not talk directly to the U.S. side until all sanctions are lifted.

Iran's monthly petchem production up 7% yr/yr

TEHRAN - Iran's petrochemical production in the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-April 20) increased by seven percent compared to the same month in the previous year, an official with the National Petrochemical Company (NPC) announced.

The country's petrochemical complexes produced 5.5 million tons of products in

the mentioned month, according to Jalal Mirhashemi, NPC's production control manager.

Mentioning the current year's motto which is “Production: Support and Elimination of Obstacles”, Mirhashemi noted that the Iranian petrochemical industry is ready to achieve the goals of production growth in the current year.

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TEHRAN – Iran started on Monday the third phase of the human trial of Soberana-02 coronavirus vaccine, jointly developed with Cuba.

Manufactured by Cuba's Finlay Vaccine Institute and Pasteur Institute of Iran, the vaccine is a conjugate vaccine with two injectable doses. It consists of the receptor-binding domain of the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein conjugated chemically to tetanus toxoid, IRIB reported.

The two first phases of the human

trial have been conducted in Cuba, while the third phase will be performed on a population of 24,000 people aging 18 to 80 years in seven provinces and eight cities across the country.

The Soberana-02 is one of the most successful vaccines in the world with few side effects; the quality control of this vaccine is done in Iran, Alireza Biglari, director of the Pasture Institute of Iran, said.

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Iranians love basketball: Petty

BY FARROKH HESABI
Shahrdari Gorgan basketball team point guard Parish Perry Petty says that he is very happy to be in Iran since the nation is interested in basketball.

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.

In an exclusive interview with Tehran Times, Petty revealed that he is very happy to play in Iran since the Iranians are interested in the sport.

Congratulations on winning the trophy. Before talking about the final match, let us know how the Iran Basketball Super League season in general was? Considering pandemic and other issues.

It was perfect considering what corona has done and is still doing to the world. The organizers in Tehran did an amazing job keeping the gym clean and made everything comfortable. So, it was simple for the players to feel safe and come and do their jobs. I wish we could have won it in front of our fans in Gorgan, but it still was a great season.

When did you feel assured that Shahrdari can win the trophy?

I would say as soon as I got here. A little bit before, when I heard about the team that we had, the players that were coming with an experienced coach, in my mind I was already prepared to win the trophy. I knew that we would play well together, fight on the court. So, I just knew that because I already knew the guys. I knew we could win as long as we practice hard and play better. So, I felt assured even a little bit before I got here.

After three years of living in Iran, how do you explain the country for someone who doesn't know Iran well?

For the people back home or anywhere else that are unfamiliar with Iran, I would tell those people that don't believe the things that spread in the media. Iran is a very safe place. The people here are very nice and kind, and most of the people love basketball. They're very family-oriented people. If you don't bother anyone, no one will bother you. Here everyone helps you; if I'm in a grocery store or a market if I need having something, people walking around might not speak English, but they try to help me already to find the things I'm looking for. Certainly, I would say that Iran is a pretty safe place, and it's a good place to be, in my opinion. That's why I come back every year (smiles)!

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War is not the solution but patience is...

BY MARTIN LOVE

If ever a nation was severely stuck between various hard places, the U.S. is it, and the only blame that can be meted out is to the U.S. government and the Federal Reserve Bank after several decades of mismanagement and bad policy.

Anyway, last week, several hundred Zionist settlers in Palestine went on a “wilding”, storming through parts of East Jerusalem where they assaulted anyone without a yarmulke, any Palestinian, causing serious damage and scores of injuries to the natives. It was one of the worse expressions of racism and Jewish nationalism seen in some time, but this happens on a lesser scale all too frequently. It has become evident they want to take over al-Aqsa and expel even more people from their homes in Jerusalem to install themselves illegally there. The U.S. did respond, but very tepidly, and did not condemn the mob actions outright. The mob

chanted “Death to Arabs”. Of course, the U.S. has long been complicit, because a harsh word against the Zionists and making aid to Israel conditional is not yet likely. Consider this to understand it better:

Say one is a 32-year-old living in Brooklyn in a rundown apartment and working some night shift in a New York warehouse driving a forklift and has a wife and kid both of whom are difficult. And being a Jew, he suddenly discovers life could get a whole lot better with a fresh identity as a hardcore Zionist because the Apartheid entity will give his entire family airline tickets on El Al and a nice, newly constructed apartment on a hill in the West Bank on stolen land with a great view. And to boot, the family gets to carry around the latest military rifles and be a part of a colonial enterprise anointed by Yahweh, which in effect means Yahweh has in effect anointed this young man, too.

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Yemeni drones hit again King Khalid airbase in Saudi Arabia

Yemen's armed forces and allied Popular Committees fighters have conducted a retaliatory drone strike on King Khalid Airbase in southwestern Saudi Arabia.

A Qasef-2K drone was used in the retaliation that targeted the airbase near the city of Khamis Mushait at dawn Monday, spokesman for the Yemeni Armed Forces Brigadier General Yahya Saree said. The strike was accurate and hit its target “successfully,” he added.

Saree stressed that the attack is as part of the “legitimate” response to the Saudi aggression on his country, vowing to conduct more “painful” strikes against the kingdom until Riyadh stops its war on Yemen and lifts its siege on the Yemeni nation.

The airbase was targeted in a similar drone strike on Sunday.

Saudi Arabia, backed by the U.S. and other regional allies, launched a devastating war on Yemen in March 2015, with the goal of bringing

former president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi's government back to power and crushing the popular Ansarullah movement.

Yemeni armed forces and allied Popular Committees have, however, gone from strength to strength against the Saudi-led invaders, and left Riyadh and its allies bogged down in the country.

The Saudi-led military aggression has left hundreds of thousands of Yemenis dead, and displaced millions of people. It has also destroyed Yemen's infrastructure and spread famine and infectious diseases across the country.

Yemen's al-Masirah television network reported that Saudi fighter jets conducted 19 airstrikes on the district of Sirwah in the strategic province of Ma'rib and another two on the province's Madghal district on Sunday, amid fierce battles between Yemeni forces and Saudi-backed militants.

Continued on page 5

Gando: the only crocodile native to Iran

BY FARANAK BAKHTIARI

TEHRAN – The mugger crocodile, also called Gando in Iran, is a crocodilian native to freshwater habitats of the southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan.

The broad-snouted crocodile was also native to the Indian subcontinent, which is extinct in Bhutan and Myanmar and has been listed as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List since 1982.

In English, the species is called Mugger, which

is rooted in Hindi meaning sea monster, but the locals of southern Iran have chosen the name “Gando” for this large reptile, which in Balochi means walking on the belly.

Gando, one of the tourist attractions in the Chabahar Free Zone, is the only crocodile native to Iran and the largest reptile in the country.

It is interesting to know that the species is one of the rarest in the world and has a shorter

snout than other similar species, which can be a valuable potential for attracting tourists and preserving wildlife in Iran.

“Wherever Gando is, there is plenty of water” is a common belief in southern regions of Sistan-Baluchestan, as they consider the animal as a symbol of blessing and prosperity and believe that with the migration and death of this animal, drought and famine will overshadow their lives.

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Art Bureau showcases Palestine Is Not Alone

TEHRAN – An exhibition showcasing a select of artworks submitted to the Palestine Is Not Alone International Cartoon, Caricature and Poster Contest opened at the Abolfazl Aali Gallery of the Art Bureau in Tehran on Monday.

The Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization has organized the contest to show solidarity with the oppressed people of Palestine.

The contest will announce winners on May 7 during International Quds Day, which falls on the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan every year.

Oxford professor says Iran-China cooperation undercuts U.S. efforts to isolate Iran

BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI

TEHRAN - A professor of international relations at the University of Oxford believes the 25-year Iran-China partnership undercuts U.S. efforts to isolate Iran economically and diplomatically.

In an interview with the Tehran Times, Richard Caplan notes, “The agreement, which predates Biden, undercuts U.S. efforts to isolate Iran economically and, to some extent, diplomatically.”

“I don't expect the partnership to change the balance in the Middle East (West Asia), but it will affect the dynamics there,” Caplan adds.

On March 27, Tehran and Beijing finalized the 25-year roadmap for comprehensive partnership.

The plan was finalized in a meeting in Tehran between Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and Ali Larijani, advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution and Iran's Special Representative for strategic ties with the People's Republic of China.

The U.S. expressed concern over the partnership. Asked if he was concerned about the partnership between Iran and China, U.S. President Joe Biden said a few hours after the plan was signed that he has been “concerned about that for a year.”

Not only the agreement prevents Iran's isolation in the future, according to the Oxford professor, “it also supports China's ambitions to extend its economic and strategic influence throughout Eurasia.”

Following is the text of the interview:

How do you assess Iran's nuclear talks in Vienna? Are you optimistic about these talks?

A: I am cautiously optimistic about the talks. By many accounts, progress is being made.

Continued on page 5

IRGC chief: Recent incidents against the Zionists may be repeated

POLITICAL **TEHRAN**— Speaking to Al-Mayadeen News Network on Monday, Major General Hossein Salami, commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, warned the Tel Aviv regime that the evil acts committed by the Zionists will backfire.



Commenting on the events that took place inside the occupied territories in recent days, General Salami said that the Islamic Republic will respond to any evil act “of the same level or stronger than it.”

Salami added, “The evil deeds committed by the Zionists in the region will turn against themselves and expose them to real dangers in the future, and if they continue to commit them, they will be drawn closer and closer to collapse, especially since all the conditions for the collapse of the Zionist regime are ready.”

He pointed out that over the past days people have seen how Israel’s evil acts did not remain unanswered, and how some events took place inside the occupied territories.

“Certainly, these events may be repeated and expanded later,” the highest ranking IRGC official asserted.

The general reiterated that Iran will respond to any evil act that is committed against it from any side.

Top-secret Israeli nuclear reactor of Dimona hit global headlines Thursday after a mysterious missile coming from Syria landed in the vicinity of the facility, setting off air raid sirens.

Iran sympathizes with Indonesia over submarine incident

POLITICAL **TEHRAN**— Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh on Monday offered condolences to the “brotherly” government of Indonesia over the sinking of an Indonesian submarine that has resulted in the death of a group of navy personnel.

The spokesman also wished divine mercy and forgiveness for the victims and offered condolences to the bereaved families.

On April 21, an Indonesian submarine was reported to be missing in north of the island of Bali.

On April 24, Indonesian officials said that debris from a missing submarine was found after the vessel sank, fading hopes for rescuing 53 onboard personnel.

Officials also said the oxygen supply for its 53 crew ran out early on Saturday.

Nazanin Zaghari sentenced to one-year imprisonment, one-year travel ban

POLITICAL **TEHRAN**— Nazanin Zaghari is sentenced to another year in prison in Iran for “propaganda activities against the government,” ISNA reported on Monday.

Her lawyer, Hojjat Kermani, said on Monday that the UK-Iranian citizen is also barred from leaving the country for a year.

Nazanin Zaghari is convicted on charges of “propaganda activities against the Islamic Republic by participating in a rally in front of the Iranian embassy in London in 2009 and an interview with the BBC Persian.”

Iranian delegate heads to Vienna to resume nuclear deal talks

POLITICAL **TEHRAN**— The Iranian negotiating team headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi left for Vienna on Monday to resume nuclear deal talks.

The Iranian delegate is set to participate in the negotiations within the framework of the JCPOA Joint Commission for a possible revitalization of the 2015 nuclear deal.

The top Iranian nuclear negotiator has warned that Tehran will stop the Vienna talks if the negotiation process tilts toward bullying, bargaining, and wasting time.

The Reform Front of Iran elaborates on the process to naming presidential candidate

POLITICAL **TEHRAN**—The Reform Front of Iran issued a report on Monday setting the criteria and the dates in the process of naming a final candidate for the June 18 presidential election.

Azar Mansouri, the front’s spokeswoman, said every potential presidential candidate should receive at least the votes of 10 persons member to the front’s general assembly and May 1 is the deadline for introducing candidates.

And on May 2, in the first stage, the competence of only those candidates is assessed who receive the votes of a third of the assembly members, Mansouri explained.

She added in the second stage, from May 3 to 8, candidates will attend the meetings of the front’s assembly to answer questions and present their plans.

On May 9, those candidates who succeed to receive more than two-thirds of the votes will be identified.

On May 10, one day before the registration of the candidates for the presidential election at the Interior Ministry, the names of candidates confirmed by the front will be released, she said.

On May 11, the candidates will officially attend the Interior Ministry headquarters to register, the spokeswoman added.

If candidates are endorsed by the Guardian Council a national opinion polls will be conducted to name the final single candidate, she concluded.

Foreign Ministry says pursuing cases of two Iranian citizens in border point with Turkey

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The Iranian Foreign Ministry said on Monday that it is following the cases of two Iranian citizens who were reportedly tortured and mistreated in border point with Turkey.

On April 15, several media outlets said two Iranian citizens named Behnam Samadi and Hassan Kachanlou were tortured and abused by ten Turkish border guards at the zero-point border.

“Pursuing the rights of Iranian citizens has always been important to us, and we have been following this issue seriously since the first moment we became aware of it,” Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh told a weekly press briefing.

“We called our friends in Turkey and talked (about the matter),” he said.

Khatibzadeh said Iran’s consulate in Turkey is actively pursuing the issue.

“The border guards of the two countries met with each other in this regard,” he added.

Khatibzadeh noted that Tehran also submitted a note to the Turkish ambassador on the same day to follow up on the issue.

Regarding the incident, the spokesman stated that this is “bad” for the good relations between the two countries.

He said, “I think we can prevent this from happening again with the cooperation of each other.”

Khatibzadeh said that the exact dimensions of the story are not yet clear to Iran and investigations are underway.

“Our friends in Turkey are helping to find out more in good faith,” he noted.

He also emphasized that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is seriously pursuing the rights of Iranian citizens in various places.

“UN Security Council ratifications are the most formidable guarantee”

He also said the Iranian delegation left for Vienna on Monday to continue talks within the framework of the Joint Commission of the JCPOA for a possible revitalization of the 2015 nuclear deal.

The talks are being led by the European Union.

Negotiations on reviving the nuclear deal started some two weeks ago as Biden administration has expressed willingness to return to the JCPOA that was ditched by the Trump administration in May 2018.

Donald Trump quit the nuclear deal despite the fact that it was endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

When a resolution is adopted by the Security Council as the most important international body its implementation is obligatory.

However, Khatibzadeh said in the international system sometimes international law is violated.

He said the most formidable guarantee for implementing an agreement is a ratification by the UN Security Council yet it should be noted that “all these guarantees do not prevent countries from not fulfilling their obligations.”

He went on to explain about the U.S. bad record in breaching its obligations,



saying Washington has shown that it does not adhere to these “guarantees” and does not have a good track record in meeting its commitments.

The JCPOA has the highest guarantee given that UN Security Council has made it legally binding, the spokesman noted.

Iran has been demanding that if the JCPOA is to be revived the U.S. must lift all sanctions in a verifiable way.

“What is important is that the fulfillment of all obligations by the United States are verified; and on the other hand, the Islamic Republic of Iran does not remain silent against the other side’s breach of obligations.”

He reminded the global community that Iran reduced its obligations in response to the other side’s actions.

It must be noticed that the JCPOA “is a two-way road”.

Iran started to gradually reduce its commitments to the terms of the JCPOA one year after Trump left the deal and introduced the harshest sanctions within his “maximum pressure” campaign against the Islamic Republic.

“Iran’s position on lifting sanctions has not changed”

The diplomat also said there has been no change in Iran’s position on lifting sanctions.

“The United States must live up to its obligations under the JCPOA and verify the implementation of those commitments,” he said.

Khatibzadeh also emphasized that Iran will not accept a step-by-step or gradual plan to lift sanctions.

He added that there is no need for direct or indirect dialogue with the U.S. to return to its JCPOA obligations.

“The U.S. commitments are clear and the Joint Commission is a channel that can remind the United States of its commitments to this deal.”

“We do not agree on anything unless we agree on everything.”

Responding to a question about the Vienna negotiations and how long would it take, Khatibzadeh said Iran is not interested in starting or continuing erosive or protracted talks.

At the same time Tehran will not be in a hurry as long as Iran’s interests under

the nuclear deal are not observed and secured in details, he added.

“As I have said before we will definitely not continue the talks if it becomes clear that there is not enough political will by the other side, or the way to lift the sanctions becomes difficult.”

The spokesman stressed that unless the United States fulfills its obligations effectively and verifiably, it will not have any seats at the JCPOA negotiating table, and Iran will continue this policy until the end.

In response to a question about differences of opinion in the U.S. about lifting sanctions, Khatibzadeh made it clear that Iran has nothing to do with the U.S. domestic politics.

“How the United States wants to meet its obligations is a matter for the United States. What is important for us is that the lifting of sanctions should be effective and we should be able to verify them, and this verification should be verified by institutions and departments that can verify practically.”

Iran has been insisting on removal of banking, insurance, and oil sale sanctions.

“U.S. should remove terrorist tag from IRGC”

On the issue of sanctions imposed on entities such as the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) and the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), Khatibzadeh responded, “The glorious Corps of Islam is definitely the pride of Iran. No institution, body or entity in Iran in various fields should be subject to such sanctions. Of course, the United States has long shown its enmity with the pillars of the system and the various pillars of the Islamic Republic of Iran. All these elements, including the Corps, the Islamic Republic of Iran’s Broadcasting, etc., are for Iran, and it is important for us that the United States fulfills its obligations, and the removal of these labels is one of these obligations and duties.”

“Iran needs more details on the Syrian oil tanker”

About the Syrian oil tanker incident, the spokesman said Iran has requested for more detailed information and is waiting for Syria to shed some light on the matter.

“We have also seen these scattered reports; we have requested more detailed reports, and I think that what the Syrian government is saying in this regard should be cited by the media at the moment to see exactly what happened,” he explained.

On April 24, Syria’s oil ministry said firefighters have put out a blaze on an oil tanker outside the Baniyas refinery off Syria’s coast after a suspected attack by a drone.

The official state news agency SANA on Saturday quoted the oil ministry as saying the fire erupted after “what was believed to be an attack by a drone from the direction of Lebanese waters”.

“EU politicizing human rights”

Regarding the attitude of Europeans towards the issue of human rights and related issues, Khatibzadeh said, “The history of Europeans in relation to human rights and their political and double standard approaches have not left any reputation for some European countries.”

The spokesman reiterated that the Europeans’ actions confirm that they politicize human rights and are “the biggest traitors to it.”

The EU recently blacklisted 89 individuals and four organizations in Iran. The move drew a strong response from Iran. Iran cut cooperation with the EU on combating terrorism, drug trafficking, etc. Iran has vowed to retaliate.

“Iran welcomes dialogue with Saudi Arabia”

Responding to a question on possible Iran-Saudi Arabia negotiations, the spokesman once again reiterated that Iran is always open to settle differences with the Saudis.

“We welcome talks between the two countries. Whenever the King of Saudi Arabia makes a decision to hold talks at various levels, we welcome it.”

On the remarks of the Saudi ambassador to the United Nations against Iran and his request to the international community that a stronger nuclear agreement should be reached with Iran, the spokesman said he has not seen such remarks and “it should be answered at its own level.”

On April 24, Saudi Arabia’s Permanent Representative to the UN, Abdullah Al-Mouallimi, urged Tehran to “seriously engage” in the ongoing negotiations over its nuclear program.

“Israel’s actions against Iran will not go unanswered”

The Foreign Ministry spokesman also responded to a question about the Zionist regime’s subversive acts in the region and against Iran’s national security, saying, “As has been said many times before, none of the actions of the occupying regime against Iran’s national security and interests have remained and will not remain unanswered.”

Khatibzadeh remarked that Israel considers its life in “creating a crisis” and it is important for Iran to maintain stability and security in the region.

“Iran will not allow this usurper regime to endanger the security of the region more than before,” the spokesman stressed.

Iran writes to EU, says the bloc exercises double standards on human rights

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** – In a strongly worded letter to the Council of the European Union, Iran formally protested against the blacklisting of several individuals and entities, saying it shows European double standards on human rights in Iran.

The letter, written by the High Council of Human Rights of Iran, was handed to Portugal’s ambassador to Tehran Carlos Costa Neves as the country currently holds the rotating presidency of the EU.

It comes in response to a move on April 12 by the EU to sanction eight military commanders and police chiefs, in addition to three prisons, for their alleged role in a deadly crackdown of public protests in November 2019.

The EU has now blacklisted 89 individuals and four entities as part of its decade-long human rights sanctions regime against those who it claims are violating human rights in Iran.

In response, Iran’s Foreign Ministry said it will immediately suspend talks with the EU on human rights and all resulting cooperation, including that on terrorism, illicit drugs, and refugees. The ministry also said there is “political intentions” behind the move and said is considering reciprocal sanctions.

In its letter, the Iranian human rights council condemns the EU for its policies that are “enforcing the illegal and oppressive sanctions” unilaterally imposed by the United States after it withdrew from the 2015 nuclear deal – JCPOA – with world powers in May 2018.

The sanctions, which intensified only after the COVID-19 pandemic began in early 2020, have hampered imports of food and medicine, in addition to creating money transfer issues in buying coronavirus vaccines.

The letter says a number of EU member states have imposed “intentional damage on the health and wellbeing of the Iranian people, particularly children, women, the elderly, and persons with disability”.

For instance, it lists the names of more than a dozen children who died because of a lack of access to vital medicine to treat epidermolysis bullosa (EB), a rare



medical condition that results in blistering of the skin and mucous membranes.

It also describes how several European countries refused to work or deal with Iranian firms on medicine, medical equipment, and vaccines, and says several airports have failed to provide services to Iranian passenger planes because of U.S. sanctions.

The human rights council also condemns the fact that Iranian migrants and students have faced difficulties in opening bank accounts in European countries based on their nationality, and says several Iranian citizens are held in European prisons on “arbitrary” charges and have been mistreated in prison.

Moreover, it says the EU should have unequivocally condemned the January 2020 assassination of Iran’s top general Qassem Soleimani by the United States as a “clear example of state terrorism” that Iran believes was assisted by elements within the German government.

Among other things, the council also holds that a number of European countries continue to shelter members of the terrorist Mujahedin-e Khalq, and provided

Saddam Hussein with chemical weapons during Iraq’s war against Iran in the 1980s.

The letter is aimed at holding the EU accountable for its double standards on human rights in Iran, according to the deputy director for international affairs at the human rights council.

The letter is focused on two things: the violation of Iranians’ human rights by the EU inside Iran, and in European countries, Seyyed Majid Tafreshi told Al Jazeera.

“The Europeans who have so many claims on human rights are themselves the perpetrators of many human rights violations of Iranian citizens,” he said.

Tafreshi also said it is unfair that the EU directs the majority of its attention towards “following illegal sanctions imposed by the U.S.” while ignoring the plight of Iranians inside and outside the country.

According to Tafreshi, the human rights council expects an “actionable response” to its letter, which called on the EU to “bring the violators of the fundamental rights of the Iranian nation into trial without any politicization”.

It would only “strengthen Iran’s position” if the EU fails to adequately respond, he said.

An EU source told Al Jazeera the Council of the EU has yet to receive the letter, so it cannot comment on its contents.

Peter Stano, an EU spokesperson for foreign affairs and security policy, said the new European sanctions listings are completely unrelated to continuing efforts to restore the JCPOA.

“The EU supports a balanced, comprehensive approach with Iran through dialogue, with a view to addressing all issues of concern including human rights,” he said. “We are critical when there are divergences and cooperation when there is mutual interest.”

Talks on JCPOA in Vienna have been continuing for two weeks, with all sides saying progress is being made on lifting U.S. sanctions and reversing Iran’s nuclear steps despite lingering challenges.

Zarif wraps up visit to Qatar

Iranian foreign minister welcomes regional dialogue to help establish stability in the region

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** – Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif finished a visit to neighboring Qatar where he met the country's high-level officials.

During the visit, which took place on Sunday, the chief Iranian diplomat held talks with Qatari Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani and Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani.

During his meeting with the Qatari foreign minister, the Iranian foreign minister highlighted the importance of Tehran-Doha relations as well as bilateral and regional cooperation, according to a statement issued by the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

Zarif also underscored the need to further diversify the areas of cooperation, especially in trade, economic and investment domains.

He noted the two countries enjoy great potential and capacity for enhancing bilateral collaboration.

Zarif said Iran's approach is to boost its relations with the regional countries. "Absolute necessity"

The Iranian foreign minister also welcomed regional dialogue to help establish stability in the region, describing it as an absolute necessity.

The Qatari foreign minister, in turn, touched upon a meeting of the Iran-Qatar Joint Commission held in the central Iranian city of Isfahan, saying another meeting should be held in Doha to cement mutual trade and economic ties.

The two top diplomats also discussed cooperation on regional and international issues.

The chief Iranian diplomat also met with the Qatari emir. During the meeting with the emir, Zarif elaborated on the latest developments in Tehran-Doha relations on different political and economic fronts, according to a separate statement issued by the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

He also evaluated the areas and potential for the expansion of bilateral ties as positive.

Zarif also expounded on Iran's regional policies when it comes to expanding relations with countries in the region as well as the latest developments pertaining to Iran's talks with the P4+1 group in the Austrian



capital, Vienna.

The Qatari Emir, for his part, highlighted the importance of bilateral and regional cooperation between Tehran and Doha, saying Qatar is keen to further enhance relations with Iran.

The Qatari Foreign Ministry also issued a statement about the meeting between Zarif and Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman saying the two foreign ministers discussed ways to reduce tensions in the region.

"During the meeting, they reviewed bilateral cooperation, relations between the two countries and ways to reduce tension in the region and enhance its security and stability through dialogue. They also reviewed the latest developments in a number of regional issues," the Qatari statement said.

Zarif also delivered a "verbal message" from Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad, according to Qatar's state news QNA.

"HH the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani received Sunday a verbal message from HE President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Dr. Hassan Rouhani, pertaining to bilateral relations between the two countries, the means of supporting and strengthening them, and issues of joint interest. The message was delivered by HE Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif when HH the

Amir met him and his accompanying delegation at his office in Al-Bahr Palace this evening," the Qatari news agency reported on Sunday.

"Neighbors are our priority"

At the end of his visit, Zarif implied that he discussed the Hormuz Peace Endeavor (HOPE), an Iranian peace initiative that is intended to reduce tensions in the region as has long been proposed by Iran.

"Excellent consultations with my brothers H.H. Emir of Qatar @TamimBinHamad & DPM/FM @MBA_AlThani_ on expansion of constructive bilateral relations & enhanced coordination on regional & global issues. #HOPE initiative is Iran's approach to the region. Neighbors are our priority," the Iranian foreign minister said on Twitter.

Iran had proposed the HOPE amid growing tensions in the region and has long called on the Persian Gulf's Arab states to engage in a serious dialogue within the framework of the initiative.

Iran reiterated its readiness to discuss this initiative after Joe Biden won the U.S. election in November. At that time, some countries in the Persian Gulf, namely Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates 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.

The Qatari foreign minister 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_AlThani_'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.

Following his visit to Qatar, Zarif visited Baghdad on Monday morning. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said on Monday that these visits are part of Iran's "Ramadan diplomacy."

Speaking at a weekly press conference, Khatibzadeh said, "Dr. Zarif's visit to Qatar and Iraq is part of Ramadan diplomacy. We have good and brotherly relations with both countries. Both in Qatar and in Iraq, bilateral issues, issues of the Islamic world and cooperation at the regional and international levels are a priority. These trips have nothing to do with third parties."

Tough talks expected as nuclear negotiators gather in Vienna

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** – After briefing lawmakers and other officials on the recent nuclear deal talks in Vienna, the Iranian negotiating team led by Deputy Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi returned to the Austrian capital with a clear vision on how to proceed with the "very difficult" talks.

During his stay in Tehran, Araghchi attended a session of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee to brief lawmakers on the outcome of the latest rounds of the Vienna talks.

Speaking on the sidelines of the Committee session, Araghchi offered a glimpse into the outcome of the talks, saying that, during these talks, U.S. sanctions on Iran were divided into two categories, one imposed on economic entities and activities while the other imposed on Iranian individuals.

"There is a better understanding as to the [lifting of] economic sanctions," Araghchi noted. But sanctions on individuals, estimated to be more than 1,500 cases, are yet to be resolved, the top negotiator said, adding that they will be negotiated in the next round of talks which is expected to be resumed on Tuesday, April 27.

So far, Iran and the P4+1 (Russia, China, France, and the UK plus Germany) have concluded at least two rounds of talks over reviving a 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The talks are being held within the framework of the JCPOA Joint Commission, with the three European signatories to the JCPOA - France, Germany and the UK (E3) - acting as intermediaries between the Iranian and American diplomats who are present in Vienna in separate hotels.

Diplomats from Iran and the P4+1 as well as the U.S.



will resume nuclear talks in Vienna on Tuesday. The Iranian negotiating team left Tehran for Vienna on Monday.

Before heading to Vienna, Araghchi said that Iran cannot say whether it is optimistic or pessimistic about the Vienna talks. "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," he pointed out.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif echoed the same position during his Monday visit to Iraq.

"Today we had the opportunity to talk about the nuclear talks between Iran and the P4+1 countries. Of course, the Americans are in Vienna, and we have no dialogue with the United States. But we had very good talks on the implementation of the JCPOA, and we hope that the new U.S. administration, with a sensible policy

and the fulfillment of its commitments, will be able to return to the JCPOA more quickly and all sides fulfill their commitments. We are ready to return and fulfill our commitments in full as soon as the U.S. commitments are met and verified," Zarif said.

The Tuesday meeting of the JCPOA Joint Commission is expected to be tough. Araghchi said on Sunday that there are very difficult challenges in the negotiations.

Despite his reiteration that Iran and the P4+1 are now on a path that can reach a successful end, the top Iranian negotiator highlighted the difficulties by saying that "it is too early to say whether we can overcome the challenges and obstacles."

On the other hand, the U.S. has refrained from taking steps to rectify the mistakes of the Trump administration, which withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018 and launched the so-called "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran, a policy that Biden officials repudiated as failed.

Following the recent round of talks in Vienna, a senior U.S. State Department official said that Washington will not accept Iran's demand that the U.S. act first to revive the JCPOA.

"We're not going to accept a process in which the U.S. acts first and removes all of the sanctions that it is committed to removing before Iran does anything," the official said.

The U.S. insistence on keeping sanctions in place comes as Iran made it clear that it will accept nothing short of the total lifting of all the sanctions that were imposed, reimposed, or relabeled under Trump. Araghchi said Iran is not in a rush to reach a conclusion in Vienna. At the same time, he underlined that Iran will stop the talks if they turn into a waste of time.

Iran FM visits Baghdad for talks

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** – Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif arrived in Baghdad on Monday on the second leg of his regional tour that included Qatar.

Upon his arrival in Baghdad, the foreign minister met with his Iraqi counterpart Fuad Hussein and then held a joint press conference with him.

Zarif said his trip to Iraq will be "relatively long" and will include visits to Iraqi Kurdistan and the holy southern city of Najaf. He will also meet with the heads of Iraqi political parties.

Zarif said he will discuss the latest developments in the region with Iraqi officials and travel to the Kurdistan region, adding that the meetings would strengthen relations between the Iraqi and Iranian peoples.

He also stressed that Iran and Iraq have very good cooperation in the fields of oil and gas, railways, banking exchanges and regional issues. The foreign minister said that Iraq has a very important role in the region and "we are always trying to make

this role more prominent," according to the Iraqi Middle East News website.

Following the meeting, Zarif and Hussein attended a joint press conference at which Zarif appreciated Iraq's role in the region.

"We had very, very good talks with Mr. Fouad Hussein, and I thank him and the government of Iraq for his warm hospitality. We welcome the pivotal and powerful role of Iraq in the region, and we hope that the role of Iraq in the region will be stronger every day and a role for stability and peace in the region," the chief Iranian diplomat remarked.

He also thanked Iraq for facilitating talks in the region. "We thank the Iraqi government for its efforts to establish dialogue in the region, and we hope that these efforts will lead to more dialogue and more serious understanding in the region," Zarif pointed out.

The foreign minister was apparently hinting at press reports about Iraq hosting talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia earlier this month.

Western media outlets recently reported

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 April 18 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.

Zarif called for coexistence in the region, underlining that foreign forces will ultimately leave the region.

"We will all be together in this region, others will go, but we will be in this region and we must build our relations based on good neighborliness, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and non-interference in internal affairs and friendship, brotherhood and fraternity. And this is the policy of the Islamic Republic in this region and will be," he explained.

The chief Iranian diplomat also said that

SPORTS

Iranians love basketball: Perry Petty

→1 What's your opinion about Shahrdari Gorgan coach Mehran Shahintab, and how has been your relationship with him so far?

Shahintab is an excellent coach. He's very good and very smart. He knows how to get the best out of each player, how to push the player's buttons to get them to work harder and play better. I really love him because he is a competitor, just like myself. His main focus is just on winning. He doesn't care if it's me; if it's the team's best player, he doesn't care who it is. He treats you the same way he treats whoever is not playing so much. About the coach and me, we are so competitive, and we want to win so much! For me, it's great because I can always talk to him, and he can always talk to me. We both know this; we try to win. He can scream at me, and I may scream back, but we have so much respect for each other. At the end of the day, he's the coach, so I'll listen to him. I really love playing for Mehran Shahintab because he is an excellent coach and a good guy.

Let us know about the matches against Mahram in final round?

They were challenging. Mahram are an outstanding team. Their players are amazing. The games were amazing. As you can see, the last game went overtime. For me, that's exactly what I want in a final; I don't want it to be easy. I prefer it to be tough, to go down to the last shots. Much respect to the Mahram club; they have very talented players, for sure, they'll be back better every year.

Tell us about THAT magical moment? What did you think when you decided to throw the ball?

Oh, I don't know how to say. I feel like I'm in heaven. At that point, I thought everything was finished, and we wouldn't win the game for sure. But that was like destiny; God wanted us to win the game for helping that shot to go in. I can't put it out in the words how I feel because at first, I thought the referee wouldn't count the shot, but after they counted it, it was just an amazing feeling. You know, it was only 0.3 seconds remaining, so I didn't have much time to think. I just threw the ball as soon as it was possible. I thank God I'm still so excited.

VNL a preparatory competition for Olympics: Alekno

SPORTS **TEHRAN** — Iran volleyball national team head coach Vladimir Alekno says that 2021 FIVB Volleyball Nations League in Rimini, Italy could be a preparatory competition for the Tokyo 2020.



Iran will participate at the competition's third edition from May 28 to June 23. Over the course of 31/32 days, 124 top-level volleyball matches per gender will be played within the secure bubble, with the health and wellbeing of all involved the top priority.

The Russian coach, who arrived in Tehran on April 18, says the competition will help his team to be more prepared for the 2020 Olympic Games.

"In a meeting with Mr. Davarzani (head of volleyball federation) I told him there are two goals ahead of us: Participating in the VNL as a preparatory tournament for the Olympic Games or getting results in the event.

"We have a little time to prepare our young players for the Olympics. On the other hand, our experienced players will be under pressure and it will increase the risk of the players' injuries. So, we will take part in 2021 VNL with a mixture of experienced and young players. We are going to use the VNL as a warm-up tournament for the Olympics. And without a doubt Iran will not travel to Italy for fun," Alekno said in an interview with Iran volleyball federation's website.

"The VNL is a good competition for the young players to show their potentials. Iran will send the best and most prepared players to Tokyo," the former Russia coach added.

"After the 2021 VNL, we have a little time to participate in Olympics and it means that players' injury will be a huge blow for our team. The players will have a 10-day break after the VNL for recovery," Alekno concluded.

Persepolis legend Hamid Jasemian dies of COVID-19

SPORTS **TEHRAN** – Persepolis football team's first captain Hamid Jasemian passed away due to coronavirus on Sunday.

Jasemian, 85, was hospitalized at a hospital in Tehran, capital of Iran last week but lost his battle with COVID-19.

He was laid to rest on Monday in Tehran's Behesht-e Zahra Cemetery.

The Health Ministry's spokeswoman said at a press conference on Sunday that 454 coronavirus patients have died across the country over the past 24 hours, bringing the total death toll to 69,574.

2021 ACL: Cheick Diabate misses Al Ahli match

SPORTS **TEHRAN** – Esteghlal football team forward Cheick Diabate will be absent in the match against Al Ahli.

Esteghlal are scheduled to play the Saudi Arabian team Tuesday late in Group C of the AFC Champions League.

The Malian forward suffered a foot injury in the final minutes of the match against Al Duhail.

Diabate's absence could be huge blow for Esteghlal in the must-win game.

Esteghlal will qualify for the 2021 ACL Round of 16 if defeat Al Ahli.

TCCIMA to dispatch trade delegation to Britain in early July

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (TCCIMA) will dispatch a trade delegation to Britain in early July.

The Iranian delegates will stay there from July 4 to 8 to visit Food & Drink Expo 2021, the biggest food and drink show in 2021 at the NEC, Birmingham.

The NEC Birmingham will be a focal point of the UK Food & Drink Shows, where between July 5-7, 2021 Food & Drink Expo will run alongside the Ingredients Show, Foodex, National Convenience Show, Farm Shop & Deli Show and the Forecourt Show.

Water storage in Iranian dams declines 20%

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iranian Deputy Energy Minister for Water and Wastewater Affairs Ghasem Taqizadeh Khamesi said water storage in the country's dams has declined 20 percent in the current water year (started in September 2020) compared to the previous year.

Khamesi noted that the country will be facing some problems for providing water for the agricultural sectors in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 20), IRIB reported.



"This year, due to a 50 percent decrease in rainfall compared to last year and also a 40 percent decline compared to the average rainfall in the past 50 years, we won't be able to supply water for the three cultivation periods of spring, autumn and summer," Taqizadeh Khamesi said.

Pointing out that the priority of the Energy Ministry is to supply drinking water to people, the official said: "seven billion cubic meters of water is needed to supply the drinking water needed in the country, of which 50 percent should be supplied from surface water and 50 percent from groundwater."

"In some parts of the country wells and springs are drying up due to decreased rainfall, which is why this year the Energy Ministry has been preparing to supply water to 6,000 villages by tanker," he added.

The official emphasized the need for managing and rationing of water supply to agricultural sectors in the country since the drought and water problems could continue in the coming years.

"Iran is a semi-arid country and we must be prepared to adapt to water scarcity," he said, adding: "Currently, 50 percent of Iran's population lives in areas where only 20 percent of the country's water resources are available, that is why we have to transport water and supply it through water tankers in these regions."

Over the past year, water consumption in Iran has increased by more than 35 percent following the coronavirus outbreak in the country.

According to the Energy Ministry data, per capita water consumption in Iran is higher than world standards and currently each person consumes 350 liters of water per day.

'Housing prices should decrease 25%'

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Head of Iran's Property Advisers Union has said housing prices in the country should decrease at least 25 percent in order for people to be able to afford to purchase, ISNA reported.

Mostafa Gholi Khosravi noted that the closure of real estate agencies due to the coronavirus pandemic has caused some problems in this market, calling for the re-opening of the agencies in compliance with health protocols.

"The affairs of real estate offices are mostly done through phone and social distancing and health protocols are observed when the parties meet for signing contracts. So, these offices which have been constantly closed since the beginning of the current [Iranian calendar] year (March 21) should be re-opened," Khosravi said.

The official also stressed the need for establishing a market regulation headquarters for housing sector to monitor the activities of dealers and real estate agencies in order to balance the prices.



Housing prices in Iran have been constantly rising over the past year due to various internal and external factors.

Coronavirus has been reported to be a major factor affecting the housing prices in Iran as the pandemic has stoked concerns about losing one's savings and more people entered the housing market.

"People are turning to the housing market in order to protect their savings in the face of rising inflation. No one sees housing as a short-term consumer commodity. Even real consumers view purchasing a home as a long-term investment," Mehdi Soltan-Mohammadi, a housing expert, said.

The average price of each square meter of residential properties in Tehran increased from 263 million rials (about \$6,262) in March 2020 to 530 million rials (about \$12,620) in March 2021, which shows a 101 percent increase.

Housing prices in Tehran city also rose 78.9 percent in the eleventh month of the previous Iranian calendar year (January 20 – February 18), as compared to the same month of the preceding year, according to the latest report released by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI).

Iran's monthly petchem production up 7% yr/yr

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — "All conditions and infrastructure have been provided to achieve a leap in production in the Iranian petrochemical industry in the current year; with the measures taken this year, the idle production capacities of some existing complexes will also be revived," he said.

He pointed to the full observance of health protocols and safety instructions in petrochemical complexes, saying that petrochemical units have always complied with safety requirements and also helped to produce raw materials needed by the healthcare sector.

The petrochemical industry plays a crucial role in Iran's non-oil economy, as the petrochemical export is the second-largest source of revenue for the country after crude oil. Petrochemical exports already constitute nearly 33 percent of the country's non-oil exports.



According to Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh, the country is currently producing nearly 70 million tons of petrochemical products annually and by the end of the industry's second development leap, the country's petrochemical production capacity is projected to reach 100 million tons per year.

The minister has pointed to the diversification of products, greater use of liquid feedstock, and land preparation, as some of the important factors to be taken into account for the future development of the petrochemical industry, and said: "In this industry, great work has been done in creating knowledge, indigenizing technologies, and cooperation with universities."

The production capacity of Iran's petrochemical industry is expected to be increased from 100 million tons to 133 million tons at the end of the third leap.

TEDPIX slides 909 points on Monday

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), fell 909 points to 1.186 million on Monday.

Over 3.888 billion securities worth 31.441 trillion rials (about \$748.5 million) were traded at the TSE on Monday.

The first market's index fell 1,851 points, and the second market's index dropped 2,420 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.

The current trend of stock exchange trading will continue until relative stability is established in the market and the investors are expected to return to the market, the capital market expert Amirali Amir-Aqaei stated.

"The demand side is now waiting for the internal and international political condition to become clear, and investors will invest in the stock market again as soon as the horizons are clear," Amir-Aqaei told IRNA last week.

The point to be noted is that the increase in the sales side in the market over the past week was due to the clearing of the political outlook, the elimination of the expected high inflation, and the outlook for higher exchange rates, the expert said.

According to Amir-Baqeri, traders came to the conclusion that it is likely that a stagnant atmosphere will prevail in the country's physical markets in the short run, and consequently the capital market has been affected by this issue.

He referred to the trend of trades in the previous Iranian



calendar month (March 21-April 20) and continued: "In the first half of the previous year, the market index recorded a peak of near 2.3 million units; reaching such a peak was somewhat justifiable considering the very high exchange rate and the inflation rate.

Iran-China comprehensive strategic partnership from perspective of economic diplomacy

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — On March 26, 2021, Iran and China signed an agreement expressing a desire to increase cooperation and trade relations over the next 25 years. This agreement was signed during a two-day diplomatic visit of Mr. Wang, the Chinese minister of foreign affairs to Tehran. Although, both sides have admitted that the plan contains no "quantitative, specific contracts" and is a "non-binding document", in long-term this strategic partnership can benefit both sides. The text of the agreement has not yet emerged, and likely will not be published, so all analysis must be tempered with caution. However, a draft of the agreement leaked last summer, and it is unlikely the text substantially changed in the intervening six months.

Under the agreement, the Chinese will invest heavily in Iran's oil industry, the National Iranian Gas Export Company and the National Iranian Petrochemical Company, as well as Iran's transportation infrastructure. On the other hand, the agreement will include military, armaments and intelligence cooperation between the two countries.

"China firmly supports Iran in safeguarding its state sovereignty and national dignity," Mr. Wang said in his meeting with President Hassan Rouhani. The United States, Mr. Wang said, should immediately rescind its sanctions on Iran and "remove its long arm of jurisdictional measures that have been aimed at China, among others."

"All the parties can consider an approach of synchronized reciprocity, creating a road map for restoring observance of the agreement," Mr. Wang said in the talks with his Iranian counterpart, Mr. Zarif. "There can be efforts to achieve initial gains, creating the conditions for re-launching the whole agreement."

Comprehensive strategic partnership from the perspective of economic diplomacy With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the bipolar system, the United States claimed the position of unrivaled power and the most powerful government in the international system to present itself as an actor capable of directing international rules and procedures alone. However, by challenging the United States, other major



global and regional powers continued their efforts to change this situation with long-term and strategic planning at the regional and global levels. In recent decades, the United States has been pursuing sanctions, soft war, economic war, and proxy war strategies in West Asia especially against Iran to prevent it from playing a significant role in political and economic arenas in the region. Also, with the emergence of a multipolar structure, China was able to introduce itself as one of the main powers and actors of the international system, and in this regard, continuously and gradually increasing its capabilities in the economic, military, political and cultural fields, which can be considered as a threat to the U.S. hegemony in the region.

From regional perspective, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the 25-year program with Iran are part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), so it is likely that in the near future Iran's request for permanent membership will be repeated and will be accepted by all its members. The program will ease and facilitate it. The program also will unite the interests of SCO member states in many areas.

It is undeniable that without the active presence of Iran and its role as the link between East and West in China's plan, achieving the intended goals in reviving the Silk Road will be difficult and unattainable, and China has understood this well. Because in both land and sea routes, Iran's geopolitical position on the Silk Road is vital. Iran's role in economic relations, because of the geopolitical situation of the region, the transportation route of Central Asia, facilities and infrastructure such as Sarakhs-Tajan-Mashhad-Bandar Abbas and the ports of Chabahar and Bandar Abbas, can be very effective.

Many countries in Central Asia are land-locked countries, so based on Belt and Road Initiative, Iran inevitably is considered one of the access routes to High Seas. Therefore, Iran can provide better transportation, better and more access to the Persian Gulf by strengthening and developing communication infrastructure. In other words, Iran is their connection point to High Seas. The importance of the Central Asian countries in Iran's international trade discourse and also the strategic importance of Iran in China's economic plan has paved the way for Iran's permanent accession to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

The Islamic Republic of Iran presents a serious challenge to U.S. interests in West Asia. The most important concern for U.S. policymakers, however, is Iran's suspected pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability. The United States and its allies have sought to dissuade Iran from developing a nuclear weapons capability through a combination of sanctions and engagement.

Reportedly, Iran and China have done some \$20 billion in trade annually in recent years. That's down from nearly \$52 billion in 2014, however, because of a decline in oil prices and U.S. sanctions imposed in 2018 after then-President Donald Trump pulled the U.S. unilaterally out of a nuclear deal between Iran and world powers, saying it needed to be renegotiated.

The documents claimed China was prepared to invest \$400 million in Iran over the deal's 25-year term. According to the document, China will be a regular importer of oil from Iran, although for the time being, despite the U.S. sanctions and pressure, Beijing continues to buy Iranian oil. Another advantage of the 25-year agreement with China for Iran is that it will ultimately increase Iran's oil and gas production in the country's three key fields. China has agreed to accelerate the development of phase 11 of the South Pars gas field. China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) boosted its stake in the South Pars development project to 50.1 percent from 30 percent when France left Iran due to sanctions.

Indeed from Beijing's perspective, Iran serves as an important strategic partner and

point of leverage against the United States. Iran possesses vast reserves of oil and natural gas that could help fuel China's development, and Iran is also a growing market for Chinese goods. This means the necessity of strong bilateral political and economic interdependence for both sides.

Benefits of comprehensive strategic partnership for Iran:

- * Improving and developing the export situations;
 - * Development of domestic industries;
 - * Neutralization of the U.S. unilateral sanctions;
 - * Increase the efficiency of oil and gas resources;
 - * Utilizing China's influential presence in economic organizations and institutions;
 - * Improving the economic situation;
 - * Repelling security threats;
 - * Buying and selling military and defense weapons; and
 - * Expansion of economic diplomacy.
- Benefits of comprehensive strategic partnership for China
- * Maximizing China's economic interests in West Asia;
 - * Expansion of its political and economic presence in the region;
 - * Continuous economic development;
 - * Utilizing Iran's energy resources in order to decrease its dependence to other energy markets especially Arabic countries (which are mostly in western bloc);
 - * Iran's undeniable geopolitical position for Chia to have access to Europe;

Finally, considering in mind the goals and benefits of this strategic program, it can be concluded that, both sides will enjoy it, as well as, they will be able to fulfill their regional and international objectives. Now, Iran's successful experience of cooperation with Russian Federation in Syrian crisis by introducing parallel and common interests, can happen in the form of strategic partnership with China. It can be said that, this program in long-term will promote Iran's regional and international level.

By Peyman Hassani & Amir Hossein Arabpour

Researchers of the Institute for Economic Diplomacy Studies, Imam Sadiq University

Over 66,000 tons of steel sheets offered at IME

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Over 66,000 tons of steel sheets were offered at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) on Monday.

As reported by the IME's Public Relations Department, the exchange hosted offering of 40,000 tons of hot rolled sheets, 15,000 tons of cold rolled sheets of home appliances, 7,450 tons of galvanized sheets, and 4,000 tons of galvanized sheets of home appliances.

In the industrial and mineral trading floor of the IME, 330 tons of aluminum ingots, 1,305 tons of copper wire, 80 tons of copper cathode, 40 tons of aluminum wire, and 60 tons of copper wire were also offered.

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.

War is not the solution but patience is...

➔ 1 Since he has long and ignorantly considered himself better than any non-Jew, it is now going to be confirmed vastly to him because he gets to do whatever he damn well pleases and can even kill the poor people with impunity in an ancient village near the settlement just because! Life seems golden suddenly. No more worries and it's all virtually free. What an inducement this is to abandon squalid Brooklyn! How wonderful the new identity! No more a mere schmuck but a member of the Army of Yahweh and he's backed by a couple hundred nuclear bombs, too, in a country that declares nothing and does not abide by any rules at all.

This, essentially, is what the world has to deal with given the Zionists. People no better than members of ISIS and in some respects worse as terrorists. And they are creating problems not just in the Middle East (West Asia) but worldwide, and especially in the U.S. One must honor the Islamic Republic for resisting and condemning overtly the Apartheid entity. The paucity of resistance and wide support in U.S. government circles is or will be the end of all respect for America someday.

America is beset by many problems, but maybe the biggest is an indoctrinated population leading them to passivity and ignorance. Many believe themselves to be the "free-est" people on earth, but in fact



citizens are taxed and garner no substantial civic benefits in return while the Military-Industrial Complex and the immensely rich continue to profit enormously. And the MIC literally has become the economy, because the country produces little while most goods are supplied from overseas, and especially from China.

Perhaps one big reason average Amer-

ican think they are free is because they get to own guns, with which random carnage has become an almost daily event. Make no mistake, the U.S. is in steep, irreversible decline with a virtually broke Treasury dependent on fiat dollars printed in the trillions by the Fed. It's hard to imagine the U.S. will not lose the dollar as the primary world reserve currency this decade and as

well it's "empire" of hundreds of military bases across the globe and also the country's capacity to dominate anywhere.

The absolute KEY to countries like Iran is patience and the avoidance of war, for the U.S. government has long been making all the wrong moves overseas and at home, too. Iran has shown tremendous restraint aside from reminding its enemies very occasionally that it does have defensive capabilities. And Biden is not the solution, but he IS a far better and more popular President inside the U.S. than Trump. (Many in the U.S. are just waiting eagerly for indictments against Trump that may land him in jail eventually.)

Overall, it's unfortunate that most Americans will not wake up to the dangers of its own governance and past misdeeds spawned in Washington, as much of the rest of the world already has, before loss of faith in the U.S. promoted by some further madness comes home to roost further on average U.S. citizens. At that point there may be some sort of "revolution" or a vast anger that is likely to make the situation even worse for a while unless enlightened leaders come to the fore and manage to settle the U.S. into a full acceptance of a multipolar world where cooperation with other countries, and especially alleged "enemies" who have demonstrated patience, emerges.

Oxford professor says Iran-China cooperation undercuts U.S. efforts to isolate Iran

➔ 1 There is an apparent determination on the part of both the United States and Iran to breathe new life into the JCPOA. There are stumbling blocks, and they are serious – notably the lifting of U.S. sanctions (which ones and when?) and the sequencing of steps (does Iran return to compliance first, or does the U.S. lift sanctions first?).

Moreover, the U.S. and Iran are still not negotiating directly with each other but are communicating through European intermediaries. However, both parties seem determined to revitalize the JCPOA.

Do you think the Israel-Iran escalation may affect the efforts to revitalize the nuclear deal?

The Israel-Iran escalation is unlikely to derail the current nuclear talks in Vienna or efforts generally to revitalize the nuclear deal. I am more concerned about opponents of the nuclear deal in the U.S. Congress. They may put pressure on Biden to retain sanctions that will make it difficult for Iran to agree to support a resuscitated JCPOA.

Why has Biden focused on China and Russia? Is he going towards a confrontation?

Biden's focus on China and Russia should not surprise us. It was evident from his presidential campaign

that he views Chinese and Russian behavior as threats to U.S. interests for different reasons. Like Trump before him, Biden maintains that China is not abiding by international rules—for fair competition, fair trade, and human rights. Russia, under Putin, on the other hand, is seeking to exploit U.S. vulnerabilities through America's openness as a democracy. I don't think any of the parties want confrontation and they have shown a willingness to cooperate, to varying degrees, where interests converge, but there is no question that U.S. relations with China and Russia are strained.

Do you think that China is able to overtake the U.S. in the near future?

China has been rising steadily—economically, militarily, and diplomatically. It is quite possible that China will overtake the U.S. in terms of its economic size - by some measures, it has already - but the U.S. continues to enjoy many advantages. The jury is out as to whether China will eclipse the U.S. as a major power in the long term. This is a much-debated issue among scholars and analysts.

Do you think that the Iran-China partnership can change the balance in West Asia?



I don't expect the partnership to change the balance in the Middle East (West Asia), but it will affect the dynamics there. The agreement, which predates Biden, undercuts U.S. efforts to isolate Iran economically and, to some extent, diplomatically. It also supports China's ambitions to extend its economic and strategic influence throughout Eurasia.

Chauvin's guilty, but the system is bigger than Chauvin and it must change

By Richard Sudan

The news that Derek Chauvin, the Minneapolis police officer who knelt on the neck of George Floyd, leading to Floyd's death, has been found guilty on all charges, has been welcomed by millions.

All across the United States, and also around the world, the manner in which former officer Chauvin took the life of Floyd, while staring brazenly and defiantly into the camera comfortable in the knowledge that he believed he could get away with murder, outraged almost everyone that saw it.

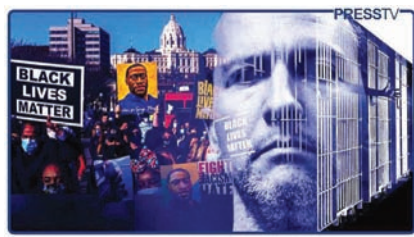
And the fact that Chauvin will now be held accountable for his actions, one would hope, would provide some measure of solace to the family of Floyd who are still grieving the loss of a loved one whose death sparked mass protests of indignation and fury around the globe.

Chauvin deserved this day of reckoning and to pay the price for his actions. Although it will take several weeks for the judge presiding over the case to announce the sentence for Chauvin, and although many feel Chauvin should have faced a charge of first-degree murder, the family of Floyd deserve nothing less than seeing Chauvin behind bars for the rest of his life.

But it is vital at this stage to remember that justice in one case, will not repair a broken system, which in many people's view, is working as it was designed and intended to.

There is a mode of thinking, which persists and which suggests that the problem of unchecked police brutality and violence in the United States can be thought of in terms of a 'few bad apples', and therefore that dealing with rotten individuals within the police force, will fix things. While individuals who commit murder while wearing police uniforms must be held accountable, the idea that they are the exception to the rule is not true.

According to the FBI, the institutional cor-



ruption and the infiltration of law enforcement from those with white supremacist ideologies is a deep-seated and longstanding problem. The FBI staff have themselves, published several reports on the matter.

For those who understand the history of the United States, the scale and depth of the issue is simply the modern chapter of the continued legalized brutality against Black communities, beginning since the days of slavery and the inception of the country. The police of course, have their literal roots in slave catching gangs. That history has never been accounted for, and the legacy of it continues to this day with deadly consequences.

The entire U.S. criminal justice system is riddled with people belonging to white supremacist organizations. We hear about the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers, but the reality is that there are countless groups, which have those leanings and affiliations.

Many believe that part of the reason the United States refuses to designate the Proud Boys as a terrorist group, despite their involvement in the Jan. 6 Washington riots, which was described as an act of domestic terror by the FBI, is because too many current serving police officers would be implicated. It isn't a stretch to imagine this might be true, when one considers that the United States until only very recently, designated the Ku Klux Klan as a terror group.

The problem of police brutality and violence and the links to white supremacy is hundreds of years old. One officer like Chauvin facing

a jail term will not change the entire system. But it might be a step in the right direction.

Each and every officer guilty of the kind of violence we saw from Chauvin must face the full force of the law, which of course they themselves are supposed to uphold. If Chauvin is given the sentence he deserves, his case must set a precedent, move forward and deter other officers from behaving like him. Police officers must be punished for racist killings and murdering with impunity. If they know they face the prospect of jail and will also lose their pensions, they will be deterred from carrying out such acts. It's a question of power and money. The days of officers knowing that they automatically have the benefit of the doubt, no matter their behavior, must come to an end. The energy and momentum and public outcry over the case of Derek Chauvin, must now be directed towards all cases of police violence and injustice with lethal consequences.

Recently, much was made of the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, which many hopes will become law. But what is not being talked about so much is the fact that this measure would actually allocate the police hundreds of millions more dollars, in theory, to ensure that they improve policing methods and to bolster their budgets in this regard.

But, if the police are given more money while being entrusted to police themselves, the move could spell potential disaster.

New legislation might come into fruition. But if rules already exist, which the police are meant to follow, but they do not, what difference will new laws make? Again, to reiterate, the overarching problem is an issue of the abuse of power, which needs to be punished, because officers are already breaking the law when they unjustly kill with impunity. But rarely are they charged. And tragically, we have already seen a sobering reminder of the grim reality of things on the very day Chauvin was found guilty.

(Source: Press TV)

Yemeni drones hit again King Khalid airbase in Saudi Arabia

➔ 1 According to Press TV, since February, the Yemeni forces have been pushing to liberate Ma'rib, the last northern stronghold of Saudi-backed militants and the capital of an oil-rich region.

Lebanon's al-Mayadeen television network reported on Sunday that battles had intensified between pro-Hadi militants and Yemeni forces at the western entrance of Ma'rib.

According to al-Mayadeen, the Yemeni forces managed to make progress in the vicinity of al-Tala al-Hamra as they took control of the strategic area of al-Tabbah al-Baydaa, which overlooks all the western frontlines.

The Yemeni troops also finished the liberation operation in al-Mashjah area, and advanced towards the remaining military positions in the valley of al-Mashgh Mountain, al-Mayadeen said.

Pro-Hadi militants have confirmed that Abdullah al-Haderi, the head of pro-Hadi military justice department, was killed in the al-Mashjah battles.

Graham slams Biden as 'a very destabilizing president'

GOP Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina blasted U.S. President Joe Biden, accusing him of being a "destabilizing" leader during his first 100 days in office.

In an interview on "Fox News Sunday," Graham told host Chris Wallace that Biden started off his presidency straying away from the tone of his successful 2020 presidential campaign.

"During the campaign, he made us all believe Joe Biden would be the moderate choice ... that court-packing was a bonehead idea," Graham said. "All of a sudden we have a commission to change the structure of the Supreme Court. Making DC a state ... I think that's a very radical idea that will change the makeup of the United States Senate."

He added: "AOC [Democratic Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York] said his first 100 days exceeded her expectations. That's all you need to know."

Graham quickly laced into Biden's overall performance. "I think he's been a very destabilizing president," Graham said. "And economically, he's throwing a wet blanket over the recovery, wanting to raise taxes in a large amount and regulate America basically out of business, so I'm not very impressed with the first 100 days."

Biden supports raising the corporate tax rate from 21 percent to 28 percent to fund his proposed \$2 trillion infrastructure bill, but he is open to negotiations with GOP lawmakers.

Syria urges intl. pressure on Turkish forces to stop cutting off water supply to Hasakah city

Damascus has called for international pressure on the Turkish occupation forces to stop cutting off access to drinking water through the Alouk water pumping station in Hasakah city and its suburbs.

In a statement, the Syrian Foreign Ministry said Turkish forces have once again cut off access to drinking water, which is pumped from the Alouk station, in Hasakah city and its suburbs for over 16 consecutive days, affecting over one million Syrians despite the critical health situation associated with the coronavirus pandemic, Syria's official news agency SANA reported.

The ministry reiterated its strong condemnation of the repeated criminal practices by Turkish forces and called on international organizations, especially the UN and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), to shed light on such violations and their catastrophic impacts on the Syrian people.

According to Press TV, these repeated brutal practices have exceeded 23 times since October 2019, the Syrian Foreign Ministry said, adding that such actions are in violation of the provisions of international law.

The statement also said that Syria's Deputy Foreign Minister Bashar al-Jaafari summoned on Sunday morning the representatives of the UN Resident Coordinator and UN agencies operating in Syria and the representative of the ICRC in Syria and informed them of the seriousness of the matter.

Al-Jaafari also called on them to immediately travel to New York and Geneva in order to stop such "unjustified Turkish escalation" towards the Syrian citizens in Hasakah province, it added.

Resistance News

Haneyya: No calm if Israel persists in its aggression in J'lem

INTERNATIONAL DESK TEHRAN — Head of Hamas's political bureau Ismail Haneyya has warned that there will be no calm if the Israel continues its aggressive practices in Occupied Jerusalem, affirming that the Palestinian uprising will continue.

In a virtual meeting, Haneyya said that the Palestinian resistance in Gaza would not leave Jerusalem alone facing the Israeli aggression and would always be ready to protect its people.

He applauded the Jerusalemite youths for forcing Jewish settlers and police forces to leave the square and promenades of Bab al-Amud area and defending the Islamic identity of the holy city.

The Hamas leader expressed his belief that the recent settler practices in Jerusalem, especially in Bab al-Amud, was part of the attempts to take over the Aqsa Mosque and Judaize the holy city.

"What has happened in Jerusalem and its streets is part of the [Israeli] policy of demolishing homes and the plan to divide the Aqsa Mosque spatially and temporally and prevent our people from reaching it," Haneyya underlined.

He made clear that Jerusalem does not belong to the Palestinian people alone but to the entire Arab and Muslim nations, describing the holy city as "the focal point of the conflict" with the Israeli occupation.

He called on the Arab and Muslim nations to get prepared to support and join the Palestinian people in their battle to defend Jerusalem and their land.

Pakistan ready for India talks if Kashmir actions 'revisited': FM

Pakistan says it is ready to engage in dialogue with India if its eastern neighbor "is willing to revisit" its recent actions in the disputed territory of Kashmir, Pakistan's foreign minister says.

Speaking to Anadolu news agency in an interview released on Sunday, Pakistani foreign minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi

welcomed a recent thawing of relations between the two countries.

"If India is willing to revisit some of the decisions that they took on August 5, 2019, Pakistan will be more than happy to engage, sit and talk out our differences and sit and, through a dialogue, resolve the outstanding issues," said Qureshi, referring to India's 2019 move to revoke Indian-administered

Kashmir's special constitutional status and launch a widespread crackdown in the territory.

Qureshi's statement is in line with Al Jazeera's exclusive reporting of specific actions Pakistan is seeking in relation to Kashmir – the Himalayan region that both countries claim in full but administer separate portions of – to restart bilateral talks.

Ancient sites discovered on southern Alborz range

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – Two ancient sites have recently been discovered near the famous Karaj-Chalus Road on the southern side of the Alborz mountain range.

“Two historical sites have been identified as the result of surveys and field visits being conducted across Bileqan area of Alborz province, which is situated near Karaj-Chalous road,” IRNA quoted a provincial tourism official as saying on Monday.

An initial estimate suggests the sites, which contain the ruins of forts and watchtowers, were utilized for defensive/military purposes, the official said.

“Considering the geographical location of the two ancient sites, it seems that their (original) usage was to provide security and surveillance of this passage.”

Karaj-Chalous road was in fact the most important route and connection of the southern slopes of Alborz to the northern regions of the country, which has been of great importance from the perspective of political geography in the ancient past, the official explained.

As a piece of history, Chalus Road, also less well known as Road 59, was constructed during the Qajar era by the local people with very primitive hand tools.

The 160 km road crossing and crawling up the Alborz Mountains offers beautiful landscapes, waterfalls, and springs. Each season



presents its own special beauty along the road.

The mesmerizing view changes as you travel on Chalus; from trees lining up on both sides of the pavement to getting engulfed and surrounded by the Alborz, and sometimes have dramatic views of the Karaj River, which runs along part of the road.

The road between Tehran and the Caspian Sea has become a destination in itself for many Tehranis who take it just to escape the hustle and bustle of the city or for a relaxing day out with family and friends.

Hop-on hop-off bus roams Tehran in memory of health martyrs

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – In a symbolic gesture initiated by Tehran Miniciapility, a hop-on hop-off bus on Sunday started roaming the downtown streets of the Iranian capital to mark health-care workers who lost their lives to COVID-19.

Hundreds of front-line health professionals have so far died in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic. According to

available official data, some 60 percent of the martyrs were physicians, 20 percent were nurses and the rest were other hospital staff.

On January 27, Health Minister Saeed Namaki said Iran will soon be one of the world’s important manufacturers of the COVID-19 vaccine.

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.

Millennia-old hill in northern Iran to be demarcated

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — New boundaries will be defined for Tepe Kelar Hill, a 6,000-year-old archaeological hill situated in the northern province of Mazandaran to protect the ancient site from destruction.

A budget of 2.5 billion rials (about \$ 60,000 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials) has been allocated to the project, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

The project aims to eliminate threats of land-grabbing, illegal construction, or repurposing the hill’s lands to agricultural fields, IRNA quoted Mehdi Izadi as saying on Monday.

After the completion of the project, an archeological site is planned to be built in the area to attract history buffs and nature tourists to the region, the official added.

In an area of 35 hectares and near Kelardasht, the hill was inscribed on the National Heritage list in 1965.

Tepe Kelar takes its name from an ancient city that was located

nearby. Called ‘The Paradise of Explorers’, it is one of the historical sights of Kelardasht, and a prominent archeological site, which contributes to archeologists’ surveys and researches.

Stretched along the Caspian Sea and Alborz mountain range, Mazandaran is a popular destination for domestic holidaymakers and it is home to more than 3500 villages and rural areas.

The Brazilian Embassy in Tehran will carry out a bidding process for the exchange of a Mercedes Benz, model E 300, year 2012, for a similar car, 0 km. Additional information can be enquired by phone (021-22753010) or by e-mail (administ.teera@itamaraty.gov.br). The offers must be given no later than 12h00 pm on May 9th 2021.

Second Announcement

Iran Tobacco Company

ONE TIER GENERAL INTERNATIONAL TENDER NOTICE

(code :48/125/981)

Iran Tobacco Co. located at Qazvin Ave, Qazvin square, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, P.O.Box 1331838734, intends to purchase below non- tobacco raw materials through international tender:

Row	Description	unit	Quantity
1	filter rod 108mm - T4	Rod	189,000,000
2	Bahman super slim blue 120mm filter rod	Rod	146,000,000
3	Bahman ketabi 108 mm filter rod	Rod	28,000,000
4	Acetate cellulose tow 3y35000	kilo	131,000
5	Acetate cellulose tow 5y30000	kilo	121,000
6	Acetate cellulose tow4y35000	kilo	109,500
7	Tipping paper 50mm X 3000m	Bobin	13,160
8	Tipping paper 38mm X 2400m	Bobin	12,000
9	Tipping paper 70mm X3000m Bahman super slim Blue	Bobin	2,200
10	Tipping paper 64mm X3000m bahman super slim nano	Bobin	1,400
11	Tipping paper 70mm x 3000m bahman super slim black	Bobin	1,000
12	Tipping paper 64mm x 3000m	Bobin	1,710
13	Tipping paper 64mm x 3000 m – T4	Bobin	600
14	Tipping paper 64mm x 3000 m bahman ultra	Bobin	850
15	Cigarette paper 22mmX6000m	Bobin	12,000
16	Cigarette paper 19mmX6000m Bahman super slim	Bobin	7,000
17	Cigarette paper 27mmX6000m	Bobin	2,000
18	Cigarette paper 27mmX6000m Light	Bobin	5,000
19	Cigarette paper 27mm DoubleX6000m	Bobin	3,918
20	Cigarette paper 54mmX6000m	Bobin	1,165
21	Plug Wrap 22mmX6000m	Bobin	5,356
22	Plug Wrap 26.5mmX6000m	Bobin	9,544
23	MAX glue	kilo	53,000
24	Glue7302	kilo	31,000
25	SE glue	kilo	16,000
26	Glue7301	kilo	7,000
27	Triacetin	kilo	35,800
28	Adhesive Tear tape 1.6X12000m	Bobin	4000
29	Adhesive Tear tape 1.6X60000m	Bobin	500

Please note the following:

- Tender documents in English and Farsi will be obtainable from 25.04.2021 till 2.05.2021 at Tender and Contract Unit, first floor, Education Department of Iran tobacco company, Qazvin Ave, Qazvin square, Tehran, Iran, or from the national tender website: www.iets.MPORG.ir register the participation process and receive tender documents after payment 1000000 Rls. to the account number 47000701336609 of Parsian Bank, Azadi branch in favor of Iran Tobacco Company

Note: Tender winner will be responsible for all advertisement expenses.

- The samples of each item and the related data sheet and safety data sheet should be dispatched in standard reinforced packing format as below to Security department of Iran Tobacco Company, first floor of Shahid Golchin building, Qazvin Ave, Qazvin square, Tehran, Iran, P.O.Box 1331838734 exact and complete information of seller should be indicated on each sample.

Item	Description	Quantity of sample	Item	Description	Quantity of sample
1	Filter rod	10000 rods	5	Cigarette paper	5 Bobins of each size
2	Tipping Paper	5 Bobins of each size	6	Plug Wrap Paper	5 Bobins of each size
3	Clear Self Adhesive Tear Tape	5 Bobins of each size	7	Plasticizer	60 Kgs
4	Acetate Tow	2 bale 200- 250kgs of each type			

The samples are receivable from 25.04.2021 till 22.05.2021 and Offers must be submitted to our Security Department secretariat office located at, Shahid Golchin building,Qazvin Ave.,Qazvin square, Tehran Islamic Republic of Iran P.O.Box:1331838734 Iran Tobacco Company until 15:00 pm on Thursday 10.06.2021

The offers will be opened at Imam Ali Conference Hall, located at Iran Tobacco Company at 10:00 Am.saturday 12.06.2021

For more information, you can contact to 0098 21 51261651-1920

The management of Communications and International Affairs, Iran Tobacco Company

Second Announcement

Khouzestan Steel Company

EXTENTION OF INVITATION TO INTERNATIONAL TENDER IN TWO STEPTS

No. :431667

KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY INTENDS TO PURCHASE

3,000 MT UHP Grade Graphite Electrode 450 mm with respective nipples

WITH THE FOLLOWING SPECIFICATIONS:

Description: UHP Grade Graphite Electrode with respective nipples as per following specificatio

Real Density:	1.65 -1.75 g/cm³	Specific Resistance	4.5-6.5 uΩm
Real Density:	2.22 -2.25 g/cm³	Bending Strength:	110-140 Kgf/cm²
Porosity:	21 -27%	Young's Modules:	7.8 - 11.8 GPa
Ash Content:	0.2 % Max.	Co-efficient Of Thermal expansion:	0.3-1 10 ⁻⁶ /°C

Graphite Electrode Dimensions:

Electrode Diameter:	450 mm	Electrode Length:	1800 mm
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Nipple Specification:

Nipple Diameter:	241.30 mm	Number of Thread:	4 Thread per Inch
Nipple Length:	355.60 mm	Thread Type:	Tapered Thread
Socket Depth :	183.80 mm	Nipple Type	241T4L

INTRESTED BIDDERS MAY OBTAIN SET OF DOCUMENTS, CONTAINING THE RELEVANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS BY SUBMISSION OF A WRITTEN APLICATION AND PAYMENT OF A NON-REFUNDABLE FEE OF: EUR 50 "FIFTY EURO" TO THE ONE OF BELOW ACCOUNT No.:

1) ACCOUNT No.0100013543943 AT "EXPORT DEVELOPMENT BANK OF IRAN AHVAZ CENTRAL BRANCH"

2) ACCOUNT No.1902-750-4019644-1 AT "EGHTESAD NOVIN BANK- OF IRAN AHVAZ SHARIATI BRANCH" OR

Rials 15.000.000,"TWO MILION RIALS" TO THE ONE OF BELOW ACCOUNT No.:

1) ACCOUNT No.0102513186002 AT "MELLI BANK OF IRAN AHVAZ KSC BRANCH"

2) ACCOUNT No.0100304453001 AT "SADERAT BANK OF IRAN AHVAZ KSC BRANCH"

AND PRESENT THE PAYMENT RECEIPT TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:

Consumption Material & General Goods PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY (KSC)

KM 10 AHVAZ - BANDAR IMAM KHOMEINI ROAD P.O.BOX: 1378 POST CODE: 61397-31398 AHVAZ-IRAN

Note1: BIDDER SHALL SUBMIT WITH TENDER A BID BOND ISSUED BY AN IRANIAN BANK OR BY A EUROPEAN FIRST CLASS BANK, IN THE AMOUNT OF 60,000,000,000 Rial OR 200 000 EUR FOR 3,000 MT GRAPHITE ELECTRODE Dia 450mm AND MAY REDUSED IN PROPORTION WITH THE QUANTITY OF BIDDERS OFFER.

Note2: ALL BIDS MUST BE INFORMED US WHICH PARTICIPATE IN OUR TENDER UP TO 30th Apr, 2021. WHEN YOUR COMPANY IS CONFIRMED AND THE TENDER DOCUMENT IS SENT TO YOU, YOU MUST BE DELIVERED TO THE AFORESAID ADDRESS ON OR BEFORE THE CLOSING DATE 17th May, 2021.THE OPENING DATE OF ENVELOPES WILL BE AT 10:30 AM ON THE 18"May,2021 IN THE BUYER'S CONFERENCE ROOM LOCATED AT THE HEAD OFFICE OF KSC AHVAZ-IRAN AND THE BIDDERS OR THEIR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES CAN ATTEND THE MEETING OF THE TENDER. Note 3: FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT WITH FOLLOWING DETAILS:

Tel No. : +98 61 3213 6159 / 3213 6190 Fax No. : +98 61 32908130

Mr.M.FARZINEJAD EMAIL: m.farzinejad@ksc.ir OR VISIT <http://WWW.KSC.IR>

Second Announcement

Khouzestan Steel Company

EXTENTION OF INVITATION TO INTERNATIONAL TENDER IN TWO STEPTS

No. :431668

KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY INTENDS TO PURCHASE

10,000 MT UHP Grade Graphite Electrode 600 mm with respective nipples

WITH THE FOLLOWING SPECIFICATIONS:

Description: UHP Grade Graphite Electrode with respective nipples as per following specification

BUIK Density:	1.65 -1.75 g/cm³	Specific Resistance	4.5-6.5 uΩm
Real Density:	2.22 -2.25 g/cm³	Bending Strength:	110-140 Kgf/cm²
Porosity:	21 -27%	Young's Modules:	7.8 - 11.8 GPa
Ash Content:	0.2 % Max.	Co-efficient Of Thermal expansion:	0.3-1 10 ⁻⁶ /°C

Graphite Electrode Dimensions:

Electrode Diameter:	600 mm	Electrode Length:	2400 mm
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Nipple Specification:

Nipple Diameter:	317.50 mm	Number of Thread:	4 Thread per Inch
Nipple Length:	457.20 mm	Thread Type:	Tapered Thread
Socket Depth :	234.60 mm		

INTERESTED BIDDERS MAY OBTAIN SET OF DOCUMENTS, CONTAINING THE RELEVANT TERMS AND CONDITIONS BY SUBMISSION OF A WRITTEN APLICATION AND PAYMENT OF A NON-REFUNDABLE FEE OF: EUR 50 "FIFTY EURO" TO THE ONE OF BELOW ACCOUNT No.:

1) ACCOUNT No.0100013543943 AT "EXPORT DEVELOPMENT BANK OF IRAN AHVAZ CENTRAL BRANCH"

2) ACCOUNT No.1902-750-4019644-1 AT "EGHTESAD NOVIN BANK- OF IRAN AHVAZ SHARIATI BRANCH" OR

Rials 15.000.000,"TWO MILION RIALS" TO THE ONE OF BELOW ACCOUNT No.:

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2) ACCOUNT No.0100304453001 AT "SADERAT BANK OF IRAN AHVAZ KSC BRANCH"

AND PRESENT THE PAYMENT RECEIPT TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:

Consumption Material & General Goods PURCHASING DEPARTMENT

KHOUZESTAN STEEL COMPANY (KSC)

KM 10 AHVAZ - BANDAR IMAM KHOMEINI ROAD P.O.BOX: 1378 POST CODE: 61397-31398 AHVAZ-IRAN

Note1: BIDDER SHALL SUBMIT WITH TENDER A BID BOND ISSUED BY AN IRANIAN BANK OR BY A EUROPEAN FIRST CLASS BANK, IN THE AMOUNT OF 240,000,000,000 Rial OR 800 000 EUR FOR 10,000 MT GRAPHITE ELECTRODE Dia 600mm AND MAY REDUSED IN PROPORTION WITH THE QUANTITY OF BIDDERS OFFER.

Note2: ALL BIDS MUST BE INFORMED US WHICH PARTICIPATE IN OUR TENDER UP TO 30th Apr, 2021. WHEN YOUR COMPANY IS CONFIRMED AND THE TENDER DOCUMENT IS SENT TO YOU, YOU MUST BE DELIVERED TO THE AFORESAID ADDRESS ON OR BEFORE THE CLOSING DATE 17th May, 2021.THE OPENING DATE OF ENVELOPES WILL BE AT 10:30 AM ON THE 18"May,2021 IN THE BUYER'S CONFERENCE ROOM LOCATED AT THE HEAD OFFICE OF KSC AHVAZ-IRAN AND THE BIDDERS OR THEIR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES CAN ATTEND THE MEETING OF THE TENDER. Note 3: FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT WITH FOLLOWING DETAILS:

Tel No. : +98 61 3213 6159 / 3213 6190 Fax No. : +98 61 32908130

Mr.M.FARZINEJAD EMAIL: m.farzinejad@ksc.ir OR VISIT <http://WWW.KSC.IR>

Iranian students win 27 medals in international Olympiads

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – A total of 28 students participated in international Olympiads over the past year (March 2020-March 2021), who won 27 medals and one honorary diploma.

Last year, two international Olympiads of physics and geography were not held due to the outbreak of the coronavirus, but other Olympiads of mathematics, biology, computers, and chemistry and astronomy were held. Elham Yavari, head of the National Organization for Development of Exceptional Talents, said on Monday.

Some 6 students participated in International Mathematical Olympiad, and International Biology Olympiad, Chemistry Olympiad, computer Olympiad each hosted 4 Iranian students, while 10 students from Iran attended the Astronomy Olympiad, she noted.

"Among the 28 students participating in the international competitions, seven won world gold medals, eleven grabbed silver, and nine won bronze medals and one student gained an honorary diploma.

Some 541 students participated in the national summer competition last year, of whom 507 were awarded national medals," she stated.



More success at international competitions

Most recently, Iranian students won 44 medals in the Indonesia International Applied Science Olympiad and the South Korea science and engineering competition

in December 2020.

Other students won colorful medals at the 2020 South African science and invention festival, which was held virtually on November 28-December 5.

The students also grabbed 8 colorful

medals at the International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics (IOAA), according to the National Organization for Development of Exceptional Talents.

Also, the students grabbed four medals at the 31st International Biology Olympiad (IBO 2020) which took place in Nagasaki, Japan on July 3-11.

The team of Iranian students won six colorful medals at the 61st International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO 2020), putting the country in 18th place. Held on September 21-22, IMO 2020 was hosted by Saint Petersburg, Russia.

The country's team also snatched 4 medals at the 52nd International Chemistry Olympiad (IChO 2020) held in Turkey from July 6 to 15.

Moreover, Iran finished fourth winning three gold medals and a silver medal at the 32nd International Olympiad in Informatics (IOI 2020) which was held in Singapore from September 13 to 19.

The students also won gold and silver medals at the Bangkok International Intellectual Property, Invention, Innovation and Technology Exposition (IPITex 2020) which was held on February 2-6 in Bangkok, Thailand.

500 top Iranian researchers back home in 4 years

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – About 500 Iranian researchers have returned home over the past four years to transfer their knowledge and expertise to the country's universities, according to the vice presidency for science and technology.

With the support of the National Elites Foundation and Science and Technology Vice Presidency, universities, knowledge enterprises, technology parks, and incubators launched a plan titled 'cooperation with Iranian expatriate entrepreneurs and elite' in 2015.

The plan aims to attract Iranians abroad to share knowledge in different forms including postdoctoral research, research opportunity, and visiting fellow, in addition to being faculty members.

So far, it has attracted more than 500 prominent Iranian researchers living in other countries as faculty members of the country's top universities, which has had a significant impact on raising the quality of research, educational and



international activities of universities.

Due to the outbreak of coronavirus, the return of elites to the country decreased in the first 5 months of last year,

however, more than 300 graduates of the top 200 universities in the world came back to cooperate with domestic science and technology centers, which is almost double compared to a year before.

Iran also implemented a plan to return Iranian elites from the top 100 universities in the world, through the national model, the facilities are provided for their return, by creating technology parks, innovation centers, and factories.

The plan was able to bring back 2,000 Iranian students from the top 100 universities in the world over a three-year period, amounting to 600 people a year.

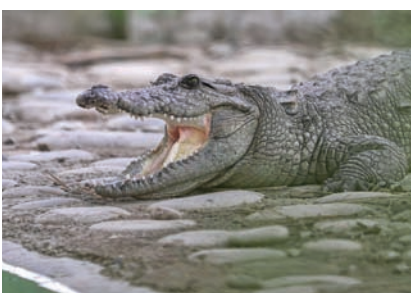
"Despite U.S. sanctions, Iran achieved scientific growth, and with the help of the technology ecosystem and domestic scientists, we were able to become one of the top countries in the field of technology in the region," Vice President for Science and Technology Sourena Sattari said in January.

Gando: the only crocodile native to Iran

→ 1 Bahu Kalat and Sarbaz villages in Sistan-Baluchestan province have turned into a tourist attraction for their rare species of crocodiles found in Iran.

On the Iranian Makran coast near Chabahar lives a population of around 200 mugger crocodiles. Due to human activity and a long drought in the late 1990s and early 2000s, it had been pushed to the brink of extinction. Following several tropical cyclones in 2007 and 2010, much of the habitat of the mugger crocodiles has been restored as formerly dry lakes and hamouns were flooded again.

Although the crocodile is a very intelligent and shy species, it is, therefore, difficult to observe directly, so given the high probability of not being observed by census teams, the estimated number of this species in the region is twice the number observed about 400 crocodiles.



Climate change a major threat to rare crocodile of Iran

Asghar Mobaraki, a member of the crocodile group of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) said that climate change is a major threat to mugger crocodile, as the animal gender is related to nest temperature, not genetics. So, the increase in temperature makes

this species unisexual.

In fact, the population proportion is unequaled and this situation is a disaster in terms of population growth, he lamented.

Pointing to the decrease in rainfall in recent years and water shortages in some habitats and ponds, he said that therefore, the protection of crocodiles requires more attention to natural habitats and the implementation of special management programs.

Habitat destruction for agricultural purposes, improper water withdrawal by pumping and digging canals, various chemical contaminants such as pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, motor oils, and detergents can be catastrophic and directly or indirectly endanger their offspring, he also said.

Some crocodiles are also threatened on the routes due to car accidents.

Human conflicts

The mugger crocodile might be potentially

dangerous to humans. But, during the mating season, the animal is sensitive to humans. Fatal attacks have been reported, though less frequently than by saltwater and Nile crocodiles.

Human victims are dragged into the water and drowned but are rarely consumed. Each year, several attacks of muggers on humans are reported in southern Iran.

As water scarcity is hitting the Sistan-Baluchestan province, children or adult locals get near the muggers' habitat to get water and the animal defends his habitat by attacking the locals.

Attacks out of the water are unlikely- the element of surprise is lost because most of them cannot move fast on the land. But some meetings are harmful especially for children.

Since large muggers occasionally take livestock, this leads to conflict with local people living close to the mugger habitat.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ج

'Iranian children grew taller in last 2 decades'

While 20 percent of Iranian children have been shorter than usual, the number has decreased to 4 percent over the past two decades, which indicates that children are currently taller than before, an official with the Ministry of Health has said. "Since two decades ago, the number of short children have dropped in the country, and Iranian kids have become taller due to a significant improvement in their nutrition," IRNA quoted Zahra Abdollahi as saying on Tuesday. She further regretted that the main problem kids are currently facing is overweight or obesity, which are rising sharply and could endanger children's health.

"Obesity has affected 20 percent of the students in the country, as consumption of fast food and carbonated beverages have risen which are the major causes of obesity and overweight," she explained.

She also said that obesity and overweight are more dangerous in children and teenagers, since overweight kids are more prone to becoming overweight adults.

کودکان ایران طی دو دهه اخیر بلندقدتر شده اند

مدیر کل دفتر بهبود تغذیه جامعه وزارت بهداشت، درمان و آموزش پزشکی گفت: کوتاه قدی کودکان از ۲۰ درصد در دو دهه گذشته به چهار درصد کاهش یافته است و کودکان ایرانی بلندقدتر شده اند.

وی اظهار داشت: در حال حاضر ارتقای معنی دار و قابل توجهی در تغذیه کودکان کشور اتفاق افتاده و مشکل کوتاه قدی نداریم.

عبداللهی، مشکل اصلی کودکان امروز را اضافه وزن و چاقی دانست و ادامه داد: اضافه وزن و چاقی به شدت در حال افزایش است و می تواند سلامت کودکان را به خطر بیندازد.

وی گفت: ۲۰ درصد دانش آموزان چاق هستند یا اضافه وزن دارند. مصرف غذاهای آماده و نوشابه های گازدار افزایش یافته است و مهمترین عامل چاقی و اضافه وزن است.

به گفته مدیر کل دفتر بهبود تغذیه جامعه وزارت بهداشت، چاقی و اضافه وزن در کودکان و نوجوانان خطرناکتر است زیرا اگر تعداد سلول های چربی بیشتر از حد مورد نیاز ساخته شود در بزرگسالی به محض دریافت کالری و چربی بیش از اندازه به صورت چربی در بدن فرد ذخیره می شود.

Iran-Cuba vaccine enters phase three clinical trials

→ 1 The vaccine is to be produced jointly with Cuba after vaccinating 50,000 Iranians, and it is forecasted to be available for the public by early June amounting to 2 million doses, he concluded.

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

Domestic vaccines



COVIRAN BAREKAT, the first coronavirus vaccine made by Iranian researchers, started the third phase of the human trial on Sunday by being administered 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).

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.

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.

Toxic waste: The most polluted waters in the world

About four billion people experience severe water shortages for at least one month a year and around 1.6 billion people – almost a quarter of the world's population – have problems accessing a clean, safe water supply, according to the United Nations.

While the UN's Sustainable Development Goals call for water and sanitation for all by 2030, the world body says water scarcity is increasing and more than half the world's population will be living in water-stressed regions by 2050.

In the run-up to the UN's World Water Day, Reuters photographers used drones to capture dramatic pictures and video of polluted waterways around the world.

In one image, a discarded sofa lies beached in the Tiete river, in Brazil's biggest city Sao Paulo, into which hundreds of tonnes of untreated sewage and waste are tipped each day.

Others show domestic waste clogging the Citarum river in Bandung, Indonesia, and sewage flowing into the Euphrates in Najaf, Iraq.

Dr Julia Brown, a human geographer specialising in environment and development at the University of Portsmouth, says many countries with water-intensive agriculture and industry lack adequate safe drinking water.

"When we buy products and buy food and clothing we don't always appreciate that we're actually importing somebody else's water and often those countries where we're importing water from, like in avocados or our denim jeans, they're actually very water-scarce countries," she says.

Brown adds that, while extending access to water is important, maintaining that access in some of the poorest parts of the world is often overlooked.

"NGOs like to have their photographs taken with a shiny new hand pump ... then they walk away and it's handed over to communities to raise the funds to maintain these systems, to make sure that they're repaired. And if they're not?" she says.

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 169)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

to be used	استفاده شدن	
information	اطلاعات (جمع: اطلاعات)	
to inform	اطلاع دادن	
signature	امضا	
to sign	امضا کردن	
bank	بانک	
saying goodbye	خداحافظی	
to say goodbye	خداحافظی کردن	
cheerful	خوش	
happy	خوشحال	
to have a good time	خوش گذشتن (به)	
to be made	دُرست شدن	
to pour	ریختن - ریز	

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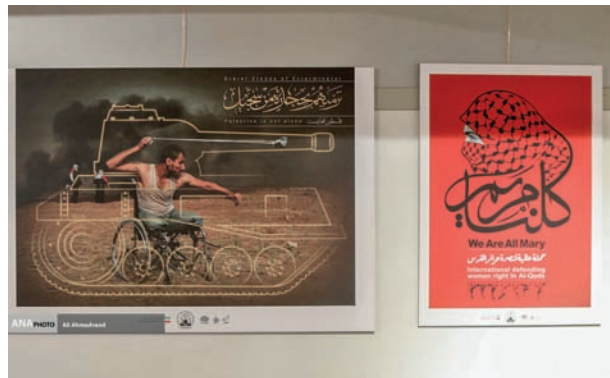
GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

The faithful are tied in kindness and affection together like members of a body, one's pain and hardship affect the others.

Prophet Muhammad (S)

Palestine Is Not Alone represents support of 66 nations for Palestine

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — The director of the Art Bureau has said that the widespread participation of artists from 66 countries in the Palestine Is Not Alone International Cartoon, Caricature and Poster Contest represents their nations' support for Palestine.



Posters are on view at the Palestine Is Not Alone International Cartoon, Caricature and Poster Contest at the Art Bureau in Tehran. (ANA/Ali Ahmadvand)

Speaking during his Monday visit to an exhibition displaying the competition's selected artworks at the center, Mohammad-Mehdi Dadman said, "The skilled, professional participation of the representatives of 66 countries with their works of art in this competition is a source of pride, dignity and hope."

The Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization has organized the contest to show solidarity with the oppressed people of Palestine.

Dadman described the normalization of relations with the Zionist regime as an evil plan designed by Zionist and U.S. think tanks.

He referred to the humiliating participation of a few governments in this plan, as treason that will not be forgotten by the people of the region.

The Art Bureau Director further added that artists from 66 countries participated in this international competition as representatives of their nations showing their support for the oppressed people of Palestine with their art work.

Expressing hope for the rapid liberation of Palestine from its occupiers, Dadman noted, "The Palestinian issue is the priority of the Islamic world and the region, and the people of Palestine will soon be celebrating the liberation of their country."

The Palestine Is Not Alone contest received more than 3000 artworks from 66 countries, and the cartoons can be accessed online via the Iran Cartoon website.

Luiz Carlos Fernandes from Brazil, Cristina Bernazzani from Italy, Izabela Kowalska from Poland and Balai Kartun Rossem from Malaysia will judge the submissions to the international competition.

Mohammad Khazai, Masud Ziai, Masud Shojaei-Tabatabai, Saedi Sadeqi and Abbas Nasserli are the Iranian jury members who will judge the artworks at the contest.

Iranian Academy of Arts to organize webinar on art and Ramadan

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — The Iranian Academy of Arts plans to organize a webinar Tuesday to discuss the connections between Iranian arts and rituals with the holy month of Ramadan.

The webinar named "Ramadan in the Mirror of Iranian Arts and Rituals" will be held with a focus on music, the academy announced on Monday.

Houshang Javid, Mohammad Jafar Qanavati, Mehdi Amin-Foroughi and Martin Rezvanpur will deliver speeches on honar. ac.ir during the webinar, which will commence at 3:00 pm.

The Iranian Academy of Arts has carried out various activities during the holy month of Ramadan in the fields of art and culture, including the virtual exhibition of a selection of calligraphy by female artists entitled "Scent of Revelation" which is available on the academy's website.

Another notable exhibition being organized by the academy to observe Ramadan is "The Mystery of Secret", which showcases an amazing collection of Quranic calligraphy by Iranian and international artists.

A series of research exhibitions titled "Culture and Etiquette of Worship" and a calligraphy exhibition by Ayatollah Nojumi have also been set up at the academy over the past few weeks.

Iranian movies pulled from London Global Kurdish Film Festival over separatism policy

A R T **TEHRAN** — Three **d e s k** Iranian movies were withdrawn from the 12th Global Kurdish Film Festival in London on Monday over its alleged policy of promoting separatism.

In statements published by the Documentary and Experimental Film Center (DEFC) and Mohsen Sakha, the producers of "Sky Sun, Tile Sun" and "Children of the Night" and "Car Wash", said that they withdrew from the festival over the false and controversial title, "East Kurdistan", that the festival used as the country of origin of the movies.

The DEFC called the action "unprofessional and a move to tarnish the identity and genuineness of the films."

In his statement Sakha, the director and producer of "Car Wash", also said that the action promotes separatist feelings and that he takes it as an insult to his country.

"Children of the Night" directed by Behruz Nuranipur and "Sky Sun, Tile Sun" by director Ziba Arzhang have been



A combination photo shows scenes from "Children of the Night" and "Sky Sun, Tile Sun" produced at the DEFC. In "Children of the Night", a child soldier, craving heroin, with a Kalashnikovs in hand has been involved in more than

fifty ISIS wars and conflicts. Balanche is among the first child soldiers to tell his stories and observations of one of the most terrifying wars in the world in full detail, along with his four other companions in the documentary.

At the age of twelve, he fled home after an insurgent attack, taking shelter in his country, in Pakistan's religious schools, and at the age of thirteen was recruited by local liaisons. Terrible violence and the ability to engage in unpredictable behavior in war have prepared them to create dangerous events in the days following the war.

In the animated short film "Sky Sun, Tile Sun", due to the intensity of the explosion and bombardment, the role played by the sun on the tiled wall ceases, and it becomes dark everywhere. People then build a new sun together.

An online edition of the Global Kurdish Film Festival opened on April 16 and will come to an end on Tuesday.

Designs by Iranian architects nominated for ADEX Awards



This combination photo shows views of the projects Pardis Khaneh and Kabootar Khaneh nominated for the ADEX Awards.

A R T **TEHRAN** — Projects named Pardis **d e s k** Khaneh and Kabootar Khaneh designed and set up by Iranian architect Nima and Sina Keivani at Keivani Architects have received nominations at the Award for Design Excellence – ADEX Awards in the United States.

ADEX stands for Awards for Design Excellence and is the largest and most prestigious awards program for product

and project design in the art and design industry.

The Design Journal Magazine, an international trade resource for interior designers, architects and facility managers since 1988 in Woodland Hills, is the sponsor of the ADEX Awards.

Pardis Khaneh located in Tehran is a nearly complete example of house architecture considering a residential atmosphere with regard to space psychology.

The design of the Pardis home has been inspired by the architecture of Iranian gardens, in particular the Takht Garden, an historical edifice in the southern Iranian city of Shiraz.

The architectural pattern of the Takht Garden is in a vertical form and also originated from the architecture of the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

In this project, the designers have tried to revive the missing architecture of hanging gardens in a modern style. This way, a different dynamism of the building is seen all over the construction.

The facade can be reshaped continuously, and therefore, the visitor will perpetually face a new shape of the building.

The wooden surface has a special design pattern inspired by the growth of leaf plants, metaphorically the cedar.

This project was nominated for the Dezeen Awards 2020, Organized by Dezeen, the world's most popular and influential architecture and design website.

As the project name, Kabootar Khaneh (Pigeon House), suggests, the basic concept behind the design was to create a space for co-existence between humans and birds.

After visiting the project site in the northern Iranian town of Babolsar before the design, the architecture team noticed the widespread presence of birds there. Thus, to respect their rights, they decided to design a house where people could live next to them to create an interaction between them that causes a different sense of space to improve its quality.

This project has also been inspired by Iranian historical doves. Therefore, a portion of the interior space was dedicated for this purpose that acts as a patio due to the use of glass material and the resulting transparency around it.

Parviz Tanavoli honored at Asia Arts Game Changer Awards

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian **d e s k** sculptor Parviz Tanavoli is among the four artists and art professionals selected to be honored with Asia Arts Game Changer Awards this year.

He is also a painter and a poet, and is most famous for his iconic Heech sculpture series.

The Asia Arts Game Changer Awards is a signature event honoring visionaries across the arts field making an impact in the world.

Every year, major art collectors, artists, gallerists, dignitaries from the art world, and Asia Society trustees in India and patrons gather to celebrate contemporary art in Asia and honor artists and arts professionals for their significant contributions to contemporary art.

Tanavoli is a founding member of the Saqqakhaneh School, the first modern art movement in Iran. His practice incorporates modernist aesthetics with traditional motifs including handicrafts and Persian literature.

Tanavoli has showcased his artworks at major art centers across the world, including the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Tate Modern in London, Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, British Museum in London, Minneapolis Institute of Art and the Venice Biennale.

Numerous museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, British Museum, Tate Modern and the Museum of Modern Art in Vienna, are displaying his work in their collections.

Tanavoli has devoted himself to serious studies of Iranian nomad carpets and rugs, which have been published in the books "Shahsavan Iranian Rugs and Textiles" and "Persian Flatweaves".

Tanavoli is also known for his expansive body of works including paintings, prints, ceramics, rugs and jewelry. In addition, the artist is a highly-regarded collector and poet.

In his latest book, "Mania for Collecting", published this August, he tells about his passion for collecting strange and rare objects.

The Asia Arts Game Changer Awards will organize its ceremony virtually on May 20.

Indian printmaker Zarina whose minimal compositions reflect her mathematics training and interest in architecture will posthumously



Iranian sculptor Parviz Tanavoli poses with a work from his Heech series in a file photo. awarded.

Uli Sigg, one of the leading collectors and champions of contemporary Chinese art, and Zhang Huan, a Chinese artist who is best known for his provocative durational performances and as a pioneering founder of the Beijing East Village group, are also among the honorees.

"Benjamin" crowned best at Tanzanian animation festival

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian movie "Benjamin" **d e s k** has won the award for best feature at the Kwetu International Animation Film Festival in Tanzania.

Directed by Mohsen Enayati, the film is about Benjamin, who played a role in the lives of the Israelite people in ancient Egypt. Benjamin is the story of a boy who has to go on a dangerous journey to save his mother's life from Pharaoh's soldiers. On this journey, things happen to him that change his view of society and his life.

The film also received the award for best character. In addition, "This Side, Other Side", a short animated movie by Iranian director Lida Fazli, won the special jury mention.



Iranian movie "Benjamin" by Mohsen Enayati.

The animation recounts that no boundary can prevent the formation of friends and affection between children.

The Iranian short films "Flight 655" by Hamid Jamali and Saeid Mayahi, "Gowbangi" by Mehdi Sediq and Ali Fotuhi, "Happy Banana" by Reyhaneh Kavosh and Ali Rais, "The Train" by Javad Maturi and "Thunder" by Mohammad Kheirandish are also screened at the Kwetu International Animation Film Festival, which took place on April 2 and 3, however, they failed to garner an award.

The award for best short went to "Beyond the Trees" by French director Pierre Burgoni, while the audience award was given to "208" by Kenyan director Stanslaus Manthi.

Leonard Mlodinow's memoirs of friendship with Stephen Hawking published in Persian

A R T **TEHRAN** — A Persian **d e s k** translation of Leonard Mlodinow's "Stephen Hawking: A Memoir of Friendship and Physics" has recently been published in Tehran.

Afshin Azadmanesh has translated the book originally published by Pantheon Books in September 2020. Moein is the publisher of the Persian translation.

One of the most influential physicists of our time, Hawking touched the lives of millions. Recalling his nearly two decades as Hawking's collaborator and friend, Mlodinow brings this complex man into focus in a unique and deeply personal portrayal.

We meet Hawking the genius, who pours his mind into uncovering the mysteries of the universe – ultimately formulating a pathbreaking theory of black holes that



A combination photo shows Leonard Mlodinow and the front cover of the Persian translation of his "Stephen Hawking: A Memoir of Friendship and Physics".

reignites the discipline of cosmology and paves the way for physicists to investigate the origins of the universe in completely

new ways.

We meet Hawking the colleague, a man whose illness leaves him able to communicate at only six words per minute but who expends the effort to punctuate his conversations with humor.

And we meet Hawking the friend, who can convey volumes with a frown, a smile, or simply a raised eyebrow.

Mlodinow puts us in the room as Hawking indulges his passion for wine and curry; shares his feelings on love, death and disability; and grapples with deep questions of philosophy and physics.

Whether depicting Hawking's devotion to his work or demonstrating how he would make spur of the moment choices, such as punting on the River Cam (despite the risk the jaunt posed), or spinning tales of Hawking

defiantly urinating in the hedges outside a restaurant that doesn't have a wheelchair accessible toilet, Mlodinow captures his indomitable spirit.

This deeply affecting account of a friendship teaches us not just about the nature and practice of physics but also about life and the human capacity to overcome daunting obstacles.

Mlodinow was born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1959, of parents who were both Holocaust survivors.

Between 2008 and 2010, he also worked on a book with Stephen Hawking, entitled "The Grand Design". A step beyond Hawking's other titles, "The Grand Design" is said to explore both the question of the existence of the universe and the issue of why the laws of physics are what they are.