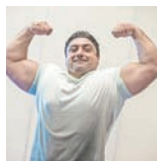
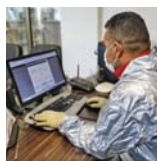




Iran rejects Moroccan FM remarks as 'groundless' *Page 3*



Iran comes first at Para Powerlifting World Cup medal table *Page 3*



Over 12,000 PCR tests for passengers at borders *Page 7*



Iranian cultural centers launch green film festival *Page 8*

Iran, reliable partner

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Iran to restrict IAEA access by May 24 if no progress made in Vienna talks, MP warns

TEHRAN – A senior Iranian lawmaker warned that Iran will further restrict the UN nuclear watchdog's access to its nuclear facilities within few weeks if the West failed to make progress in the Vienna nuclear deal talks.

The lawmaker, Mojtaba Zolnouri, who is the head of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said the nuclear talks in Vienna have so far failed to produce a concrete result and they have become "draining."

"We hope that the lock of negotiations will be broken and the path will continue quickly," the lawmaker said. But at the same time, he warned, if this lock is not broken by May 24, Iran will implement a parliamentary nuclear law obligating the Iranian government to rapidly increase nuclear activities and restrict the International Atomic Energy Agency's access to Iranian nuclear facilities.

Continued on page 3

Iran, India discuss removing trade barriers, expanding ties

TEHRAN – Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) held online talks with Indian Ambassador to Tehran Gaddam Dharmendra to discuss removing trade barriers and expansion of ties.

As reported by the TPO portal, during the meeting the two sides expressed dissatisfaction with the current levels of trade between the two countries and called for serious measures to be taken for reviving the mutual economic exchanges.

Speaking in the meeting, Zadboum stressed the need to remove barriers to mutual trade and find new ways to develop trade relations between the two countries.

The official noted that the two sides should resume discussion on the preferential trade agreement and exchange the list of commodities that are going to be included in this agreement.

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The tragedy of Sheikh Jarrah

In the aftermath of the 1948 expulsion of Palestinians by Zionist gangs to pave the way for the creation of the state of Israel, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were forced to flee their homes in historical Palestine to neighboring countries.

Following these events, which came to be known to the Palestinians as "Nakba", or the Catastrophe, 28 families settled in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in East Jerusalem in 1956, hoping that would be the last time they

are forced out of their homes.

But these families, whose number has grown to 38 since then, say they are experiencing a renewed Nakba on a daily basis.

The Israeli Central Court in East Jerusalem approved a decision earlier this year to evict four Palestinian families from their homes in Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in favor of right-wing Israeli settlers.

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Maritime sector to realize 'supporting production, eliminating obstacles'

BY MAHNAZ ABDI

Based on the latest statistics, over 80 percent of cargo transportation in the world is conducted through sea, which highlights the significance of maritime transportation.

The figure is 90 percent in Iran and it is why the development of ports and maritime activities is attached high importance in the country.

Iran's maritime transport is important because of the country's good access to the open waters in the south and also Caspian Sea in the north that allows international trade between Iran and Russia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan.

It should also be noted that Iran's geo-strategic position in the north of the Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf, which is of great importance in international energy trade, doubles the possibility of the country benefiting from maritime transport.

Iran has the 22nd largest shipping fleet in the world.

According to United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Iran has 246 registered vessels with a carrying capacity of more than 18 million tons.

International organizations such as UNCTAD estimate that one of Iran's most important tools for combatting the U.S. sanctions is its large shipping fleet.

In this regard, and considering the strategic importance of maritime transport in Iran and the world and its undeniable effect on the country's economic situation, double attention to the modernization of maritime transport fleet, attention to new technologies in the field of shipping, shipbuilding, construction of new docks with up-to-date equipment along with the creation of infrastructure for the carrying of goods from deck to shore can help the country in realizing the slogan of the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 21), which is "Production: Support, Elimination of Obstacles".

To materialize this motto, Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) has announced its full support and prepared necessary plans and programs, including some plans to take all the necessary measures for supporting the companies active in various maritime sectors during the current year.

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Paleolithic sewing evidence comes to light in western Iran

TEHRAN – Iranian archaeologists have found traces of sewing such as a bone needle and pieces of wolf fur fabric, which are expected to date from the late Paleolithic era.

Significant evidence has been discovered in the cave and its surrounding rock shelters situated in Kermanshah province, western Iran, provincial tourism chief Jabbar Gohari announced on Saturday.

A team of archaeologists led by Saman Heydari-Guran has found clues about sewing such as a bone needle and fragments of wolf fur fabric, which date back to the late Paleolithic era, the official explained.

Talking about the discovery, Heydari-Guran explained his team has also found a fragment that bears the effect of an incision on a wolf bone.

"The effect of incision caused by hitting a stone tool on a wolf bone is very rare in ancient Paleolithic sites, and such incision on the phalanx

bone is linked with the process of preparing animal skin based on previous cases discovered across the world."

Heydari-Guran expressed hope that comprehensive and more accurate results will be obtained by conducting additional research in the cave and neighboring shelters.

Even small findings relating to the Paleolithic can provide important key points about how humans lived and behaved in this period, the archaeologist said.

A study, published in the Journal of Human Evolution in 2019, suggests that Neanderthals were roaming at the Iranian Zagros Mountain sometimes between 40 to 70 thousand years ago, it also refers to a human tooth discovered in 1999 in a cave called Wezmeh near Kermanshah, noting the tooth that previously thought to be modern human belongs to a Neanderthal child.

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UN: Possible Israel war crimes in East Jerusalem land right case

The United Nations urged Israel to call off any forced evictions in Israeli-annexed East Jerusalem warning its actions could amount to "war crimes".

"We call on Israel to immediately call off all forced evictions," UN rights office spokesman Rupert Colville told reporters in Geneva.

"We wish to emphasize that East Jerusalem remains part of the occupied Palestinian territory, in which international humanitarian law applies," Colville said. "The occupying power ... cannot confiscate private property in occupied territory."

Transferring civilian populations into occupied territory is illegal under international law and "may amount to war crimes", he added.

Colville's comments came after 15 Palestinians were arrested in Israeli-annexed East Jerusalem overnight after protests over an eviction threat

against four Palestinian families.

The second straight night of arrests in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood was fueled by a years-long land dispute between Palestinian refugees and Jewish settlers in the strategic district near Jerusalem's Old City.

According to al Jazeera, tensions are high over a long-running legal case over the homes of four Palestinian families on land claimed by Jews, which is due to go before the Supreme Court on Monday.

Colville demanded Israel halt actions that "further contribute to a coercive environment or leads to a risk of forcible transfer".

"We further call on Israel to respect freedom of expression on assembly, including with those who are protesting against the evictions, and to exercise maximum restraint in the use of force," he said.

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COVID-19 vaccination should prioritize rare disease patients

BY FARANAK BAKHTIARI

TEHRAN – Patients with rare and hard-to-treat diseases should be prioritized to be vaccinated against coronavirus, while more vulnerable patients are given a higher priority.

Rare diseases include peritoneal dialysis, hemophilia, thalassemia, Multiple sclerosis (MS), Spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), Epidermolysis bullosa (EB), Cystic fibrosis (CF), Mucopolysaccharidosis type I (MPS I), autism,

organ transplantation, and tissue therapy, patients with primary immunodeficiency disease (PID).

In the Iranian calendar, May 8 is registered as a day of rare and hard-to-treat diseases to organize and promote the status of rare and hard-to-treat diseases in various fields of treatment, medicine, education, prevention, and social.

Patients with rare diseases often face a long journey from diagnosis to treatment. There are 540,000 patients in the country, Mehdi Shad-

noush, head of the Health Ministry's center for transplantation and disease management, announced.

As coronavirus is more fatal to those with underlying diseases, vaccination of vulnerable groups must be given priority.

So far, some 20,000 patients with rare diseases have received the COVID-19 vaccine, Shadnoush announced, ISNA reported on Saturday.

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Tehran Municipality unveils sculpture of Gen. Soleimani

TEHRAN – The Tehran Municipality unveiled a sculpture of Lieutenant-General Qassem Soleimani on Friday at the western end of an expressway earlier named after the martyred commander.

Tehran Mayor Piruz Hanachi, a group of top IRGC commanders and a number of artists attended the unveiling ceremony of the 6-meter high statue.

General Soleimani, the chief of IRGC Quds Force, and a number of his comrades were assassinated in a U.S. air raid in Baghdad on January 3, 2020.

Resistance is entrenched in Arab literature: ex-Lebanese minister

BY MOHAMMAD ALI SAKI

TEHRAN - Noting that some Arab regimes seek reconciliation and negotiation with Israel, former Lebanese labor minister Tarad Hamadeh says that the concept of resistance is entrenched in Arab literature and media.

"In the Arab political, literary and media discourse, the concept of resistance to the enemy prevails," Hamadeh tells the Tehran Times.

"However, there are some discordant voices in the circles of the (Persian) Gulf states who are promoting the discourse of reconciliation with the enemy, the normalization of relations with Israel, and entry into bargaining, to establish internal conflicts inside Islamic world," the Lebanese literary figure adds.

Following is the text of the interview:

Why is Palestine important for Muslims?

Palestine is the central issue for Arabs and Muslims. This is because it is part of Muslim lands.

But today is under the Zionist occupation, and its people unlawfully were expelled from their homes and homeland.

Palestine is the first home of revelation. It includes the Al-Aqsa Mosque, and it is the cradle of Christianity.

The blessed al-Aqsa mosque has been referred to in the Quran and hadith as a land on which Allah placed special blessings upon.

It is where Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was transported from the Sacred Mosque in Mecca to al-Aqsa during the Night Journey. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) led prayers towards this site until the seventeenth month after the emigration (Hijrah).

Continued on page 5

Iran strongly condemns Al-Aqsa mosque attack

POLITICAL **TEHRAN**—Saeed Khatibzadeh, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman, has reacted to the Zionist regime's brutalities at Al-Aqsa Mosque in the occupied West Bank.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran categorically condemns the attack on Al-Aqsa Mosque, the first Qibla of Muslims, and the killing and wounding of Palestinian worshippers by Israeli forces on the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan which marks the International Quds Day," Khatibzadeh said on Saturday.

"These war crimes once again proved to the whole world the criminal nature of the illegitimate Israeli regime and highlighted the need for prompt international action to stop the violation of the most basic principles of international human rights," he added.



"The Islamic Republic of Iran condemns this blatant crime against humanity, and expresses condolences to families of those killed in this incident and wishes a rapid recovery for those wounded, and at the same time calls on the United Nations and other relevant international institutions to fulfill their definitive responsibility of dealing with this war crime," the spokesman noted.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is proudly standing by the Palestinian people and asks all world countries, particularly Islamic states, to fulfill their historical responsibility and rally behind Palestinian people and stand up to Israeli aggressors," he said.

More than 170 Palestinians were injured after Israeli police stormed the Al-Aqsa Mosque and dispersed worshippers elsewhere in occupied East Jerusalem.

Ambassador: Tehran welcomes de-escalation in the region

POLITICAL **TEHRAN**—Iraj Masjedi, the Iranian ambassador to Iraq, said on Saturday that a new approach has been taken in the countries of the region to resolve differences and tensions, and Iran welcomes that.

"The Islamic Republic has always been a promoter and supporter of peace and friendship, so we welcome the resolution of any differences, especially with Muslim and neighboring countries in the region," the ambassador said.

He added, "The Islamic Republic is interested in developing its relations with Islamic countries and the region so that there will be no differences and tensions in the region."

The diplomat stated that a new atmosphere has been created in neighboring countries and the region to resolve tensions with Iran, "which we welcome and hope will achieve results."

"We welcome and encourage Iraq to be able to play a constructive and positive role in this regard," Masjedi said.

'We hope the U.S. will lift sanctions'
Elsewhere in his remarks, Masjedi talked about the Vienna nuclear deal negotiations, saying that Iran welcomes the return of the United States to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The diplomat said, "We hope that the U.S. will lift sanctions and move within the framework of the deal and continue their work (obligations). All sanctions against the Islamic Republic must be lifted and Iran is ready to fulfill its obligations."

Parliament vice speaker advises presidential candidates to avoid defamation, insult and pessimism

POLITICAL **TEHRAN**—The Iranian parliament's vice speaker has called on presidential candidates to avoid defamation, insult and a pessimistic view of the country.

Amir-Hossein Ghazizadeh Hashemi, a representative from Mashhad, is himself a candidate for the June 18 presidential elections.

"We should use all our capability and energy at the service of the system and the revolution, and the resolution of major and fundamental problems in the country," Ghazizadeh Hashemi said in a letter to other presidential candidates.

"Dear Iran has abundant capacities and opportunities that in case of proper and measured plan, which is supported by highly talented scientific figures, will make resolution of problems possible," he remarked.

Amir-Abdollahian demands immediate end to Zionist atrocities

POLITICAL **TEHRAN**—Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, the special aide to the Iranian Parliament Speaker for International Affairs, has reacted to the brutal actions of the Zionist regime in Al-Aqsa Mosque, calling for an immediate end to the crimes of the fake and terrorist Israeli regime and the systematic violation of the Palestinian human rights.

Pointing to the human and legal responsibility of international institutions, international parliamentary assemblies, and the United Nations, Amir-Abdollahian said inciting the flames of the Al-Quds Intifada is another measure that is in line with the will of the Palestinian people to achieve their legitimate rights.

He described helping the Palestinian people and fighters at this critical juncture as important and necessary.

He called on the Islamic parliaments, especially the inter-Islamic and Asian parliaments, to pay special attention to the issue of Al-Quds and Al-Aqsa Mosque.

News sources reported on Friday night that the Zionist's regime military forces attacked Palestinian worshippers at Al-Aqsa Mosque. The Israeli military forces closed the doors of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and attacked Palestinian worshippers.

According to the report, more than 200 Palestinians were injured in an attack by Zionist's regime's military forces inside the courtyard of the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Iranian Jewish leader: It is 'human duty' to confront Zionists

POLITICAL **TEHRAN**—The **d e s k** religious leader of Iranian Jews said on Saturday the Zionists have been taking advantage of Judaism to pursue their own ill-intentions, suggesting it is a "human duty" to confront Zionism.

Rabbi Younes Hamami Lalehzar made the remarks in an interview with the Fars news agency, one day after people marked the International Quds Day in support of the Palestinians' resistance movement to liberate their homeland from the Israeli occupation.

Every year, Quds Day falls on the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan. It was named by the founder of the Islamic Republic Imam Khomeini. He tasked Muslims around the world to rise in demonstration on the occasion in support of the Palestinian cause.

"Naming a day as the Quds Day helped the issue of Palestine not drift into oblivion. Imam Khomeini's move is in fact a kind of initiative that reminds the world of the issue of Palestine every year so as to think about a solution," Hamami Lalehzar said.

"As we are witnessing, the grandeur of the Quds Day has increased every year. Today, on this occasion, a large number of people from different nations express their disgust at the Zionist regime," Rabbi Hamami Lalehzar said, according to Press TV.

The Jewish leader said Zionism was



formed in the late 19th century amid the formation of nationalist movements in Europe, but it abused Jewish ideals for its own benefits, sparking opposition from the

Orthodox and religious Jewish community.

"The Zionists have used Judaism, which is a monotheistic religion, as a pretext to justify within their own political framework any

"The Zionists have used Judaism, which is a monotheistic religion, as a pretext to justify within their own political framework any strategy to achieve their goal."

My administration will respect JCPOA, says presidential hopeful

POLITICAL **TEHRAN**—In a press briefing on Saturday, Saeed Mohammad, the former director of the Khatam-al Anbiya Construction Headquarters and a presidential hopeful, stated that his future administration will respect the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, as it has been ratified by the parliament and the United Nations Security Council.

"The JCPOA was an agreement between Iran and the P5+1 that, despite the many problems of the deal, was legally signed between Iran and its member states and was approved by the United Nations Security Council and the Iranian Parliament, which we respect," he said.

Mohammad stated that the Iranian nation have faced many problems over the last few years because the United States left the deal unilaterally, and now the Islamic Republic has set two conditions for Washington's return to the agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"The first condition is for the United States must return to the deal and it be observed by other countries; and the second condition is that we must verify these measures. And if the other side commits (to its obligations), we will (also) remain committed to the JCPOA. We are waiting for the results of the Vienna talks, which should take place within the framework drawn by the Leader," he remarked.

The former IRGC official said, "Instead of putting all the eggs in the basket of the imperialist governments, we will look to the West and the East so that we can face any negotiation with a full hand," emphasizing that he seeks to strike a balance in relations with the West and the East.

The former director of the Khatam Al Anbiya Construction Headquarters said that the imperialist system has affected the countries of the region.

He noted that, "We are on a ship in which the United States

and other countries are abusing the countries of the region."

He stressed that Libya and Iraq have given their oil reserves to the imperialist countries and ISIS is a product of these imperialist countries.

"We must join hands to recognize the danger of imperialism and rely on each other to complete the security of the region. Imperialism says that Saudi Arabia is a milk cow and once its milk is gone, we will behead it," Mohammad said.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the presidential candidate said Iran has neglected trade and commercial sector, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has focused too much on the JCPOA.

On his administration's foreign policy, he said, "We must establish economic relations with the countries of the region."

Mohammad went on to say that he believes that when the West and the imperialists do not fulfill their obligations, why should Iran fulfill its obligations like "a good kid in the class?"

Criticizing the current administration's nuclear policy in regard to the West, he said, "Iran has fulfilled its commitments, accepted rigorous visits, poured cement on nuclear sites, and the other side has flipped the table, and we are still running after it," he said, criticizing the current administration's approach.

He noted that the Europeans played a "good cop bad cop" policy with Iran in regard to the JCPOA.

"We are a committed country and when we make a commitment, we will act on it. In this situation, they were looking for FATF and CFT, and they say that if these are not implemented, we will be miserable."

Mohammad began to question the current administration's diplomatic approach, asking, "If this situation continues, should we still fulfill our obligations? We need radiopharmaceuticals but we cannot access them. What is the reason when we need radiopharmaceuticals and it requires 93%



uranium; we do not do it despite their non-commitment? We must do our work for peaceful purposes."

He underlined that Iran is not after a nuclear bomb "and no one in our country is looking for it, but we are looking for it (93% enriched uranium) in the form of peaceful uses."

The presidential nominee said after forty years, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution permitted the administration to negotiate with the United States, "but now this negotiation is no longer relevant, because we negotiated for 8 (12) years and it did not work. We are not satisfied with the JCPOA, which was abandoned unilaterally, but if this is implemented, we will move on to the next negotiations. Our people suffered a lot from the deal, and the wall of distrust created by the U.S. If the people's economic problems are solved, we will decide to negotiate later."

The presidential elections will be held on June 18. Registrations will open on May 11 and will continue for 5 days.

Many political figures such as Rostam Ghasemi, former Minister of Petroleum; and Mohsen Rezaei, Secretary of the Expediency Council have so far declared candidacy.

Iran, Portugal pledge to strengthen parliamentary relations

POLITICAL **TEHRAN**—In a meeting in Lisbon, Iran's Ambassador to Portugal Morteza Damanpak Jami and Vice-Chairman of the Iran-Portugal Friendship Group Luis Graça emphasized the importance of expanding reciprocal cooperation between the two countries' legislatures.

Damanpak Jami and Graça met in Portugal's capital on Friday to discuss ways for the two parliaments to support political, economic, cultural, and academic ties.

Meanwhile, the Iranian ambassador reported developments in the friendly ties between the Iranian and Portuguese parliaments in economic, political, cultural, and science fields.

Graça, for one, criticized the US's inhumane sanctions against Iran and hoped that the new US administration would take a more optimistic and pragmatic approach to the nuclear issue and other international issues.

He also hoped that the Vienna talks would result in the sanctions being lifted.

In a noteworthy development in November 2020, Damanpak Jami and the Consular Director-General of the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs met and emphasized expanding reciprocal cooperation between the two countries.

Damanpak and the Portuguese official discussed ways to strengthen bilateral ties during their meeting in Lisbon.

"In a meeting with the Consular Director-General of Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we talked about the delay in the extension of the residency permit of Iranians reside in Portugal, the visa certification process, and two countries cooperate on judicial assistance and criminals extradition," Damanpak tweeted.

Following the outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19), some Iranians living abroad, especially students studying in foreign countries, who have returned to Iran face visa extension issues and are unable to return to their respective countries to continue their studies.

Human rights chief asks Germany to cooperate with Tehran regarding anti-Iran sanctions

POLITICAL **TEHRAN**—In a meeting with German Envoy to Tehran Hans-Udo Muzel on Saturday, Ali Baqeri Kani, the Deputy Judiciary Chief and Head of the Iranian Judiciary's High Council for Human Rights, asked Berlin to investigate the involvement of German figures in the illegal sanctions against Iran, especially those related to medicine, food, and medical equipment.

He also urged the ambassador to review the condition of Iranian prisoners in Germany.

Baqeri referred to Iran's initiative as a new member of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, urging the international human rights bodies to take seriously the rights of Palestinians, Yemenis, Iraqis, and Syrian women and girls, who have been persecuted by occupiers,

aggressors, and terrorists.

He went on to say that Iran's significant role as a new member of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women is to reclaim the rights of Iranian women and girls, who have been brutally abused by U.S. and European sanctions.

In mid-March, the deputy judiciary chief blasted Washington for maintaining restrictions on the supply of drugs and medical equipment to Iran, saying that the U.S. and Europe are complicit in the deaths of Iranian patients with special needs.

Baqeri made the remarks while addressing a meeting of high-ranking Judicial officials, headed by Judiciary Chief Seyed Ebrahim Raeisi on Monday, March 15.

He referred to an earlier meeting with foreign ambassadors in Tehran on the inhumane effects of sanctions on the Iranian people, and said that two Thalassemia and Epidermolysis Bullosa (EB) patients who served their peers were present in the meeting and elaborated on the difficult situation of patients due to drug shortages caused by U.S. sanctions.

"The patients claimed that many adults and children had died in the previous year due to a lack of access to necessary medication and medical equipment," the deputy judiciary official noted.

He went on to say that the countries that have placed sanctions on Iran and its collaborators led by the United States and some European countries, are unquestionably complicit in the deaths of these innocent children.

Iran, reliable partner

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — As Iran moves ahead with talks with the world and regional powers, more coordination and harmony are taking shape between Tehran and its regional allies.

Iran resumed talks with the remaining parties to a 2015 nuclear deal in Vienna in April. The talks are now in an advanced stage compared to a few weeks ago, with all sides ushering in progress and voicing optimism about the way ahead. Iran also voiced openness to discussing regional issues with some Arab states, namely Saudi Arabia.

Tehran and Riyadh held two rounds of talks in Baghdad to discuss regional issues. A senior official at the Saudi foreign ministry confirmed on Friday that these talks took place but said it was too early to expect concrete results. In the midst of these talks, Saudi Arabia's crown prince appeared on television and struck a note of reconciliation with Iran.

All this created the impression that a wave of de-escalation is sweeping over the region and that some parties in the region may lose their relevance. Some observers and press reports created the misperception that these parties also include groups close to Iran. Seyed Hassan Nasrallah, secretary general of Lebanese Hezbollah, repudiated this misperception during his Friday speech, which was delivered on the occasion of International Quds Day. He underlined the deep trust between Iran and its allies in the



region, saying Iran is a reliable partner that will never "sell" its allies and friends.

He pointed to press reports claiming that Iran's friends, particularly Hezbollah, should be concerned because the Vienna talks and the Iranian-Saudi dialogue will, at the end of the day, come at the expense of Iran's allies and friends.

But Nasrallah rejected this claim and said Iran does not need to assure its allies that it will not sell them simply because it will never do so. Judging by the history of Iran's relations with its allies and friends,

Nasrallah said Iran will not let down its allies. Over the past 40 years, he noted, Iran, even in the darkest of days, has not sold its allies.

This also applies to what happened in Syria over the past decade. During the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s, Syria was one of the few countries in the region that supported Iran in the face of Saddam Hussein, the former dictator of Iraq who enjoyed overwhelming support from regional and world powers during the war. Iran reciprocated the Syrian support in 2011 when Syria lapsed into a devastating war. Iran provided the Syrian

government with a package of help needed to overcome the crisis.

Therefore, Iran will not let down its allies and friends no matter what happens at the talks. Nasrallah knows this for sure and that's why he dispelled concerns over the outcome of Iran's talks with regional and world powers. Instead, he showed support for these talks.

"From this standpoint, we support any Iranian international, regional, or Arab dialogue, and we believe that it contributes to calming the region, and we see that it strengthens the axis of resistance, the front of friends, and weakens the front of the enemy," the secretary general asserted. "Those who should be worried are America's friends in the region and they have worried. I mean, Israel is now in great anxiety. Some [Persian] Gulf countries are worried and therefore they began to change their language and use backchannel."

Nasrallah urged Iran's friends to be highly confident that what's going on in the region is in their interest. "We are confident that what is happening in the region is in our interest and that of this axis," he pointed out.

The comments show the degree to which Iran is harmonizing its foreign policy in the region. They also signal complete coordination in Iran's foreign policy. That a regional ally such as Hezbollah voices support for the Vienna talks is another sign of how integrated Iran's foreign policy became.

Iran to restrict IAEA access by May 24 if no progress made in Vienna talks, MP warns

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — A senior Iranian lawmaker warned that Iran will further restrict the UN nuclear watchdog's access to its nuclear facilities within few weeks if the West failed to make progress in the Vienna nuclear deal talks.

The lawmaker, Mojtaba Zolnouri, who is the head of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, said the nuclear talks in Vienna have so far failed to produce a concrete result and they have become "draining."

"We hope that the lock of negotiations will be broken and the path will continue quickly," the lawmaker said. But at the same time, he warned, if this lock is not broken by May 24, Iran will implement a parliamentary nuclear law obligating the Iranian government to rapidly increase nuclear activities and restrict the International Atomic Energy Agency's access to Iranian nuclear facilities.

The nuclear law, officially called "Strategic Action to Lift Sanctions and Protect the Nation's Rights," outlines a step-by-step strategy for Iran to increase nuclear activities in case the West failed to honor their obligations under the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"If this lock is not broken, according to the strategic law for lifting sanctions, the opportunity for the West to fulfill its obligations will end on May 24, and the Islamic Republic of Iran will take action in accordance with this law," Zolnouri told Tasnim.



He said the first thing Iran will do in case the Vienna talks failed is the non-implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

At present, the offline agency cameras are operating in our country's nuclear facilities. If the negotiations are unlocked by May 24, the Agency can access the content of these cameras," Zolnouri pointed out. "If the negotiations are not concluded by May 24, the content of the cameras will be deleted and the cameras will be turned off."

He said that the Iranian parliament should be in the know about any agreement reached in Vienna, adding that if the agreement is within the framework of the JCPOA and no issue is added to it, it does not need to be approved by the

parliament, but any new clause added to the JCPOA should be submitted to the parliament for ratification.

Iran and the remaining parties to the 2015 nuclear deal held another meeting on Friday to discuss the latest developments concerning the nuclear deal. During the meeting, participants agreed to expedite talks and start working on a draft text of the final agreement to revive the nuclear deal. The Friday meeting has marked the start of the fourth round of nuclear talks, which is taking place in the Austrian capital of Vienna within the framework of the JCPOA Joint Commission.

Seyed Abbas Araghchi, Iran's deputy foreign minister who leads the Iranian delegation at the Vienna talks, issued a brief statement shortly after the JCPOA Joint Commission saying that during the meeting "it was decided to start expert and technical consultations and work on the draft texts immediately."

The statement added, "All parties reaffirmed their seriousness to achieve the result in the shortest possible time."

The Friday meeting also opened a new round of talks, according to Mikhail Ulyanov, who serves as the head of the Russian delegation to the Vienna talks.

"The Joint Commission of JCPOA at its meeting today opened a new round of the talks on full restoration of the nuclear deal. The participants agreed on the need to intensify the process. The delegations seem to be ready to stay in Vienna as long as necessary to achieve the goal," Ulyanov said on Twitter.

Iran rejects Moroccan FM remarks as 'groundless'

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iran on Saturday reacted to the remarks made by the Moroccan foreign minister in an online conversation with members of the Zionist lobby group, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC).

Saeed Khatibzadeh, spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry, reacted to accusations of sowing instability leveled against Iran by Moroccan Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita.

"As the government of Morocco is unable to settle its own regional issues, it has once again reshaped its unfounded allegations against the Islamic Republic of Iran while supporting the criminal regime of Israel,"

Khatibzadeh said in a statement.

The spokesman said the groundless

accusations by the Moroccan government against Iran are in line with American

"It is regrettable that the government of Morocco, which currently holds the presidency of the Quds Committee, deflects attention from the hot-button issue of the Muslim world, i.e., countering aggression against the holy Quds and defending the rights of Palestinian people, at a time when the Islamic world needs unity and solidarity more than ever," says Khatibzadeh.

and Israeli schemes in the region and against those loyal to the rightful cause of Palestine.

"It is regrettable that the government of Morocco, which currently holds the presidency of the Quds Committee, deflects attention from the hot-button issue of the Muslim world, i.e., countering aggression against the holy Quds and defending the rights of Palestinian people, at a time when the Islamic world needs unity and solidarity more than ever," said Khatibzadeh.

The Moroccan foreign minister accused Iran of threatening his country's integrity and supporting militia groups attacking Morocco, an accusation Iran firmly denied.

Qatar backs Iranian-Saudi dialogue

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Qatar has voiced support for dialogue between Iran and Saudi Arabia, calling such a dialogue a constructive step toward regional stability.

Qatari Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani said his country welcomes any dialogue between Tehran and Riyadh.

"We welcome any dialogue or efforts and a positive spirit related to relations between Iran and the [Persian] Gulf, especially Saudi Arabia, and we support such efforts and believe that dialogue is a constructive step toward the stability of the region," the chief Qatari diplomat said in an interview with Al Jazeera.

He added, "We always encourage dialogue and diplomatic efforts, and there are concerns between the two parties (the Persian Gulf and Iran), and there must be direct dialogue on these concerns."

Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman also touched on the current state of play between Iran and the United States, saying his country does not mediate between the two countries but is in close contact with both of them.

He said Qatar enjoys strategic relations with Washington and good relations with Iran. He also revealed that his country is in continuous contact with Washington and Tehran and urged them to engage in dialogue in a positive way.

"We do not want to increase tension, which will reflect negatively on Qatar and the region," Sheikh Mohammed said.

"We find that continuous and constructive dialogue between the two parties is the way to return to the nuclear agreement. We hope that the Vienna negotiations will succeed and that all concerns of all parties will be addressed, and we hope that these negotiations will result in regional efforts and a

regional dialogue between Iran and the region," he pointed out, according to Qatari newspaper Al-Sharq.

According to the Qatari foreign minister, stability will only take place through diplomatic efforts.

He said in addition to the P5+1 group of countries, the Persian Gulf Arab states should also have a direct dialogue with Iran to solve the problems.

Iran and Qatar are in close contact. Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad paid a visit to the tiny Persian Gulf nation in late April. 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 said Iran's approach is to boost its relations with the regional countries. The chief Iranian diplomat also met with Emir of Qatar Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani. During his meeting with the emir of Qatar, 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.

Earlier in January, Qatar called on the Persian Gulf's Arab states to seize on the momentum of reconciliation drive in the region and patch up their differences with Iran. In an interview with Bloomberg TV, the Qatari foreign minister 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

SPORTS

Iran first at Para Powerlifting World Cup medal table

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran finished in the first place at the 2021 World Para Powerlifting World Cup medal table in Bangkok, Thailand on Saturday.

Iranian powerlifters won five gold medals and a silver in the competition. Host Thailand and Malaysia came second and third in the medal table.

Thailand won the team classification trophy with 72 points, and Iran came second with 71 points.

On the final day of the competition, Hamed Solhipour won a gold medal at the men's under-97 kg with a lift of 227kg.

Thaer Al-Ali from Iraq and Malaysian Mohd Shahmil Md Saad won silver and bronze medal respectively.

In the men's under -107kg, Saman Razi seized a gold medal after he lifted 237kg in the second round.

Iraqi powerlifter Abbas Naisan and Wan Nur Wan Azman from Malaysia finished in second and third place.

And three-time World Championships medalist Mansour Pourmirzaei lifted 249kg in the second round of the men's over +107kg category.

Georgian powerlifter Iago Gorgodze seized a silver medal and bronze medal went to Kazakhstan's Gani Issentemirov.

Rouhollah Rostam in the men's under-80kg and Amir Jafari Aranghe the in the men's under-65kg class had won two gold medals in the competition.

Nader Moradi had also snatched a silver in the under-72kg class.

The competition brought 54 powerlifters from nine countries together.

Sohrab Moradi to compete in Cali for Olympic ticket

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian weightlifter Sohrab Moradi will travel to Cali, Colombia on Sunday to compete at the Ibero-American Championship and the Open Specialty Qualifications.

The competition will be held in Cali from May 10 to 16.

Moradi, who won a gold medal at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro in the 94kg weight class, will be accompanied with his coach Hossein Barkhah in the event.

The 96kg weightlifter will secure his spot if he lifts 388kg in the competition.

Cali will welcome around 200 athletes from Iran, the United States, Canada, Spain, Japan, South Korea, Belarus, Belgium, Austria, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Lebanon, Marshall Islands, Sweden, Albania, Cuba, Mexico, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and Panama.

The event was organized by the Colombian Federation and endorsed by the Pan American Weightlifting Federation. It was originally scheduled to take place in March 2020, but was not held due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Three qualifying events remain on the calendar before the process ends on May 31 - the South American and Ibero-American Open in Cali, Colombia, the African Championships in Madagascar, and the IWF Junior World Championships in Uzbekistan.

Ashkan Dejagah aims to return to Bundesliga

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran international midfielder Ashkan Dejagah has revealed that he wants to return to Bundesliga.

The 34-year-old player currently plays for Iranian team Tractor but his deal expires at the end of the season.

In an interview with Sport Bild, Dejagah has shown his interest in returning to German football. He was part of the Wolfsburg team who won Bundesliga in 2009.

"It would be great to play for a German professional club once again," Dejagah said. "I am open to everything. In fact, I am still in top shape even at 34."

Dejagah also pays tribute to his former coach Felix Magath. "He taught me that success doesn't come easy. To be honest, I owe my career to Magath. I am grateful to God every day that I had this coach at the age of 19. He was also my coach in Fulham," he stated.

Dejagah started his footballing career at Hertha Berlin in 2004. He wished Hertha Berlin sporting director Fredi Bobic the best, whose team are on brink of relegation from Bundesliga.

"I was lucky enough to be able to play and train with Fredi in Berlin. He's a great guy and showed in Eintracht Frankfurt what he can do with a club. It is also crucial that he really loves Berlin and Hertha. I wish him all the best," explained Dejagah.

Parvin, Daei at IFFHS Asia Team OF THE XXth Century

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian legendary football players have been chosen by the International Federation of Football History and Statistics (IFFHS) at the Asia Men Team OF THE XXth Century.

Parvin and Daei are among the most-decorated football players in Iran.

Parvin has won AFC Asian Cup two times at 1972 and 1976 as well as 1974 Asian Games. He also represented Iran at the 1976 Olympic Games and 1978 FIFA World Cup.

Daei, IFFHS World's Top international Goal scorer of All Time, has won a gold medal with Iran at the 1998 Asian Games. He was the best goalscorer of the 1996 AFC Asian Cup and was also chosen the AFC Asian Footballer of the Year 1999.

Goalkeeper:

Mohammed Al Deayea (Saudi Arabia)

Defenders:

Masami Ihara (Japan)

Hong Myung-bo (South Korea)

Yasuhiko Okudera (Japan)

Midfielders:

Said Al Owairan (Saudi Arabia)

Kim Joo-sung (South Korea)

Ali Parvin (Iran)

Kazuyoshi Miura (Japan)

Forwards:

Bum-Kun Cha (South Korea)

Ali Daei (Iran)

Abdullah Majed (Saudi Arabia)

Stock market seen improving over the next 1.5 months

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — A capital market analyst says that TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), is going to improve over the next 1.5 months in comparison to the first 1.5 months of the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21).

Rouzbah Shariati believes reaching a possible agreement on the nuclear deal, the stability of the national currency, as well as the less attractive situation of the parallel markets are the important factors that would contribute to the improvement of the capital market.

“Prospects of a political agreement and positive signals from Vienna have reduced the foreign currency exchange rates in the domestic market. The stock market, however, had already anticipated this agreement. In fact, the anticipation of the agreement has already caused the correction of prices in the capital market,” the analyst said.

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



Following the rising concerns over the market conditions, in early April, the Government Economic Coordination Headquarters, in its 216th meeting, approved some new directives for regulating the stock market.

Also in late April, senior officials including the parliament speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, the Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Abolnaser Hemmati, Finance, and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dehpasand, and the Head of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) Mohammad-Ali Dehqan Dehnavi gathered at the country's parliament to explore ways for supporting the stock market and resolving its current issues.

After the mentioned meetings, SEO unveiled a new directive package dubbed “7+3” which include allocation of one percent of the National Development Fund (NDF) resources to the stock market stabilization fund, lifting the ban on capital market financial institutions to use banking facilities, and granting five-year residency to foreign investors who buy shares in the Iranian capital market.

The above-mentioned directives have been implemented in the capital market as of April 27th, according to Dehqan Dehnavi.

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

In its latest supportive decision, the government has also approved to inject 240 trillion rials (about \$5.7 billion) of resources into the market in the form of bonds which most experts evaluate as a positive measure. It is said that these funds are gradually injected into the market and help increase the liquidity until new resources enter the market.

It has been said that these resources that enter the market will also motivate shareholders, and therefore real investors will be encouraged to invest in the market.

TEDPIX loses 4,700 points on Saturday

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 4,764 points to 1.167 million on Saturday (the first day of Iranian calendar week).



Over 3,026 billion securities worth 26,965 trillion rials (about \$643 million) were traded at the TSE on Saturday.

The first market's index fell 1,961 points, and the second market's index lost 14,891 points.

Meanwhile, IFX, the main index of Iran's over-the-counter (OTC) market known also as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), dropped 59 points to 17,365 on Saturday.

As reported, 495,536 million securities valued at 55.9 trillion rials (about \$1.33 billion) were traded at the IFB on Saturday.

TSE, and IFB are two of the four major stock markets of Iran, the other two markets are Iran Mercantile Market (IME), and Iran Energy Exchange (IRENEX).

Maritime sector to realize ‘supporting production, eliminating obstacles’

→ **1** PMO Head Mohammad Rastad has recently stated that in line with the current year's motto which is “Production: Support and the Elimination of Obstacles”, PMO has put it on the agenda to provide necessary supports for producers in order to facilitate the process of import and export of goods in the country's ports.

According to the official, one of the important tasks of the Ports and Maritime Organization is to support production centers and industrial units that are active in the area under the supervision of the organization.

Domestic producers that export their products through the country's commercial ports will also be subject to the mentioned supportive mechanisms and will definitely be supported to be able to export their products at the lowest possible costs, Rastad stressed.

He further noted that significant measures have been taken to supply the equipment required by the Ports and Maritime Organization from domestic manufacturers in order to support domestic production.

PMO will pursue its programs in this regard more seriously during the current year, he added.

Back in March, Rastad had said that despite the sanctions imposed on Iran's



shipping activities, loading and unloading of goods have been noticeably successful at the Iranian ports.

While the enemy is trying to halt Iran's exports and imports through imposing sanctions, operations at Iranian ports are underway without interruption as the result

of the PMO's all-out efforts.

As the major gates of exports and imports, Iranian ports play a significant role in the country's battle against the U.S. sanctions, and the ongoing operation at the ports indicates that they are playing their part perfectly.

To realize this year's motto in line with

nullifying the sanctions, a number of projects have been defined in Iran's ports and maritime sector, including 12 port development and maritime projects to be inaugurated in five provinces across the country by the Iranian calendar month of Tir (begins on June 22).

These projects are going to be inaugurated in Mazandaran, Hormozgan, Sistan-Baluchistan, Khuzestan, and Gilan provinces.

The said projects include installing loading cranes, CCTV, and electronic protection systems, construction of logistics services for export and transit, installing fire detection, alarm and extinguishing systems, and multi-purpose warehouses for storing goods as well as tanks for oil products.

Iranian Transport Ministry has been taking serious measures for supporting development projects in the country's ports and in this regard the ministry has been cooperating with domestic companies for supplying the equipment and machinery needed in such projects.

Earlier this year, Transport Minister Mohammad Eslami had announced that the capacity of the country's commercial ports is going to be increased to 500 million tons over the next five years, to make Iran one of the biggest trade hubs in the region.

Business environment improves in last calendar year's Q4

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran's Business Environment Index improved by 0.13 percent in the winter, the fourth quarter of the previous Iranian calendar year (December 21, 2020-March 20, 2021), data released by the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Research Center showed.

As reported by the ICCIMA portal, the country's Business Environment Index reached 5.80 points in Q4, compared to the autumn's 5.93 points.

The index, calculated by ICCIMA, measures the business friendliness of Iran's economy, with 10 indicating the worst grade, meaning that the growth of the index is indicative of a deteriorating business environment.

Based on the mentioned data, unpredictability and price changes of raw materials and products, difficulty of financing and instability of business policies, rules and regulations were the factors which contributed the most to a high business environment index.

According to the ICCIMA Research Center, the average



production capacity of the country's enterprises in autumn was 42.72 percent, which compared to the last fall (40.80 percent), increased by approximately two percent.

The impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the country's business was reported to be 6.3 percent in the mentioned

quarter, the report said.

Earlier this month, the Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry's Business Environment Improvement Committee held a meeting to discuss the ways for realizing the current Iranian calendar year's (started on March 21) motto and to ensure improvement of the country's business environment.

Removing barriers in the way of production and monitoring the implementation of laws and regulations were mentioned in the meeting as the main requirements for the realization of the current year's motto and for improving the country's business environment.

According to Hamidreza Fouladgar, head of the ministry's Business Environment Improvement Committee, monitoring the execution of existing regulations such as the law of improving the business environment, and the law on removing barriers to production are the most important factors that contribute to the improvement of domestic production.

Nearly 4,500 companies registered through TCCIMA single window system

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) data shows that 4,486 companies have been registered through the chamber's Single Window System since it was launched back in May 2020 up to March 20, 2020.

TCCIMA's business single-window system was launched on May 30, 2020 in a ceremony attended by Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dehpasand, Deputy Economy Minister Mohammad-Ali Dehqan Dehnavi, along with ministry officials and TCCIMA representatives.

This system is aimed at facilitating the process of launching new businesses, and according to the TCCIMA Head Masoud Khansari establishing this system would be a great step toward improving the business environment in the country.



Speaking in the inauguration ceremony, Khansari had said that in order to turn threats [U.S. sanction] into opportunities the government needs to support the private sector by reducing unnecessary bureaucracies and facilitating license issuances.

To this end, improving the business environment and improving competitive-

ness indicators are of utmost importance, and fortunately, in both areas, the Tehran and Iran chambers have taken very good steps that can help government agencies, Khansari said.

“We are happy to have been able to do that in the Tehran chamber, and we hope that this will be a prelude to other measures to improve the business environment,” he stressed.

Also speaking in the ceremony, Deputy Economy Minister Dehqan Dehnavi said that with the single-window system going operational, the time for issuing business licenses, which previously took 72 days on average, is going to be reduced to three days.

“Up until now, it took an average of 72.5 days to obtain these licenses, and in this regard, we are in the 178th place among

the world countries,” Dehnavi noted.

Referring to the Economy Minister's support for the single window project, the official said: “With the approval of the minister, the 55 days required to authenticate in the tax system is now eliminated, which means there is no need to obtain an economic code to start a business.”

Also in July 2020, the chairman of the Business Environment Improvement Center of Iran's Ministry of Labor announced the launch of single-window business systems in four provinces along with Tehran.

According to Ali Firoozi the system was set up in Mashhad (Khorasan Razavi Province), Tabriz (East Azarbaijan Province), Shiraz (Fars Province), and Isfahan (Isfahan Province), in order to reduce the required time for the establishment of a company to three days.

Iran, India discuss removing trade barriers, expanding ties

→ **1** He also noted that the necessary measures should be taken to bring back petrochemical, industrial, and steel commodities into the basket of Iranian exports to India.

In this regard, the two sides agreed to work on the raised issues and implement them as soon as possible.

The officials also concluded to make necessary coordination for officials of health, customs and standards organizations of the two countries to meet through video conference in near future to resolve problems and enhance mutual cooperation.

At the end of the meeting, the two sides stressed the two countries' determination to develop and improve economic and trade relations and agreed to discuss and implement



30 idle production units revived in Semnan province in a year

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — As announced by a provincial official, 30 idle production units were revived in Semnan province, in the center of Iran, during the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

Ali Teshnedel, the head of the province's Industry, Mining, and Trade Department, said that last year, 30 production units that had been closed for various reasons and removed from the production cycle were revived and returned to production.

Mentioning the motto of the current Iranian calendar year, which is “Production: Support, Elimination of Obstacles”, the official said, “The main priorities of this department are to emphasize on domestic manufacturing and support and eliminating the obstacles in the production units of the province in order to achieve prosperity and leap in production;

implementation of semi-finished projects, increase exports, import management and market regulation, which should be achieved through cooperation with other executive and economic bodies of the province.”

As announced by Deputy Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Mehdi Sadeqi Niaraki, 1,500 idle industrial units have been revived in the country during the past year.

According to Niaraki, over 6,500 new industrial units were also established across the country during the mentioned year which created jobs for over 121,000 people.

Touching upon the Industry Ministry's plans for the realization of the motto of the current year which is named the year of “Production: support and the elimination of obstacles” by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, the official said: “In the year that has been dedicated to the production sector by

the Leader of the revolution, the orientation of all government organizations and executive bodies should be towards supporting the country's industrial and mining units.”

Niaraki pointed to a 40-percent increase in the issuance of establishment licenses for industrial units in the previous year, saying: “The number of establishment licenses increased to more than 36,000 last year, which shows that people are encouraged to invest in the productive sectors.”

He also mentioned an 85-percent rise in the allocation of land for establishing industrial units across the country and noted that over 4,500 hectares of land were handed over to applicants in the previous calendar year.

According to the official, there are over 46,000 small and medium-sized industrial units in Iran's industrial parks and zones, of them about 9,200 units are inactive.



Iran's industrial parks play a significant role in making the country independent through boosting production, which is a major strategy of Iran to combat the U.S. sanctions.

In fact, strengthening domestic production to achieve self-reliance is the most important program that Iran is following up in its industry sector in a bid to nullify the effects of the U.S. sanctions on its economy.

Signatories of peace deal with Israel failed to internalize their decision: West Asia expert

By reza Moshfegh

TEHRAN — A Turkish researcher says Arab regimes that normalized their ties with Israel failed to internalize these relations.

“Even Egypt and Jordan, which had previously signed peace agreements with Israel separately, have not yet been able to internalize these relations. In addition, we should not forget the awards given to Morocco and Sudan just for normalizing with Israel,” Haydar Oruç tells the Tehran Times.

“The Abraham Accord is the continuation of the so-called Deal of the Century, which failed to be realized,” Oruç emphasizes.

In the last months of his term, at the time of elections, former U.S. President Donald Trump come up with what his camp has called the Deal of the Century, which basically was a normalization deal between several Arab states in West Asia and Israel — the Abraham Accords.

Trump approved the continuation of the illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank.

The Trump administration claimed the Abraham Accords’ primary incentive was to bring reconciliation.

But the timing of the deal made it suspicious when all of these countries were not at war with Israel.

What sort of peace agreement is it if the signatories are regimes that are not at odds with Israel while their people reject any reconciliation? It raises eyebrows and questions concerning what inspired the Abraham Accords.

Following is the text of the interview:

What is Palestine’s importance for the Islamic world?

As it is known, the first qibla of Muslims is Masjid al-Aqsa. Masjid al-Aqsa is currently regarded as the third holy mosque of Islam after Masjid al-Haram and Al-Nabi Mosque. In addition, The Dome of the Rock was also mentioned in the ascension incident. Therefore, Palestinian territories attribute holiness to Muslims. Unfortunately, these regions, which have been Muslim lands for centuries, did not find peace and stability after the Ottoman Empire rule. The fact that the majority of these lands have been under the occupation of Israel since 1948 and the human rights violations that Israel continues against the Palestinians are also an unhealed wound for both Arab countries and the Islamic world. In this respect, resolving the Palestinian issue is a religious and moral responsibility for the entire Islamic world.

How do you see Turkey-Palestine ties?

Turkey-Palestine relations’ history was always formed like that with the other Muslim countries and was shaped within the framework of cultural and religious responsibility. Even in the period in which historically there were problems with other Arab countries, Turkey continued to defend the Palestinian cause. Though Turkey had become the first Muslim country to recognize Israel, this did



not affect the support given to the Palestinians.

Turkey, especially in the period even when it established close relations with Israel in the 1990s, it strived to resolve the Palestinian issue.

Turkey is advocating a two-state solution for a long time, supported by the United Nations. However, it has started to pursue a more active policy in this regard since the 2000s. In this context, Turkey has mobilized every capability by the Palestinians to decide their own destiny. And presently its supports advocating the Palestinian representation in the international organizations with diplomatic and economic aspects, despite all the challenges experienced when the Palestinians are abandoned by the other Arab states. As part of this support, Turkey has recommended the Palestinian opposition parties to achieve unification.

Turkey’s ultimate goal is to provide Palestinians to attain their own free and independent state prior to 1967 borders with Jerusalem as their capital. And to reach that point, it has been struggling for international recognition of the Palestinian state.

What is your comment on the Arab-Israeli normalization, especially when it comes to Bahrain and the Emirates?

Above all, it is not entirely correct to read this process, which is called the Abraham Accords, as Arab-Israeli normalization. If we name it that way, we generalize this process in which only four countries participated. Moreover, even Egypt and Jordan, which had previously signed peace agreements with Israel separately, have not yet been able to internalize these relations. In addition, we should not forget the awards given to Morocco and Sudan just for normalizing with Israel.

The Abraham Accord is the continuation of the so-called Deal of the Century, which failed to be realized. Just like in Trump’s so-

called Deal of the Century, Palestinians were ignored in this agreement. Unfortunately, the Arab countries in question have normalized ties with Israel by ignoring the occupation of Palestine. Moreover, in the decisions taken by the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in 2018, it was stated that all members rejected Trump’s decision on Jerusalem, and other countries were warned not to accept this decision. But contrary to this decision, the steps of the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain are not ethical and legal in the scope of OIC resolutions.

The accusations of the Palestinians that the UAE and Bahrain stabbed them in the back are understandable in this context. Because the UAE’s justification of normalization with Israel as supposedly preventing Israel’s annexation of the West Bank is just a deception. There is no concrete evidence to believe that these regions, which are already under de facto occupation, were not annexed just because the UAE wanted it. This is only a game that BEA uses to reduce the reaction from the Arab world about normalization. Moreover, all Israeli officials, especially Israeli prime minister Netanyahu, rejected this claim and had no echo in the field.

Ultimately, the normalization process greatly relieved Israel’s hand in the region and gave Netanyahu a trump card to use in the elections. However, both the change of administration in the USA and the failure of Netanyahu to achieve the success he expected in the elections made the future of the process uncertain.

How do you evaluate European and Western stances vis a vis the Palestine cause?

Europeans’ stance on Palestine generally differs from the attitude of the West. Because many European countries have accepted the Palestinian state and criticize Israel’s occupation policy. Despite this, it is not possible to take decisions against Israel both in the UN

and the EU. The attitude of the USA and the UK on this issue is decisive. Although France is generally critical of Israel, it avoids taking steps that would harm Israel in practice.

The Holocaust-based guilt psychology is determinant in Germany’s attitude towards the Palestine-Israel issue. On the other hand, they support the Palestinian state and especially oppose Israel’s human rights violations arising from the occupation.

Especially in recent years, with the contributions of the Palestinian diaspora in Europe, it has been understood that what happened in the region is not just what Israel says. EU institutions and NGOs operating in the region have been effective in this regard. However, Israel is trying to cut their support to Palestine by manipulating the EU countries. It is expected that this struggle will continue in the upcoming period. Therefore, it is possible to say that the EU countries stand by Palestine, although the West generally supports Israel. However, since the EU alone will not be able to solve the problem, a common consensus cannot be reached on this issue. If the EU persuades the Western camp, there may be concrete progress in the solution of the problem.

What is Israel’s role in destabilizing the region? How could the Zionist regime benefit from crises in the Islamic world?

Israel is the single country that benefits most from the lack of coordination between Arab countries and the differences of opinion between Islamic countries. Thanks to these disagreements, stability cannot be achieved in the region, and this situation is directly proportional to Israel’s regional projects. However, it is not rational to completely blame Israel for the problems experienced among the Muslim countries in the region. Because Israel is an actor benefiting from this chaotic environment, but the main factor for the chaos is other countries’ meddling in the region.

Although the sectarian differences between Muslim countries are shown as the sole responsibility of the chaotic environment, the fact that the rulers of the countries prioritize their own interests and ignore the demands of their people has also contributed to this situation. The rulers of Arab countries, that pull back their support from the oppressed Palestinian people, especially the sacred places in the occupied Palestinian territories, seem to have accepted the regional order built by the U.S. for their own seats and with Israel at the center.

Since institutions such as the Arab League and the Islamic Cooperation Organization are not effective enough, unity cannot be achieved, and naturally, Israel strengthens its position by taking advantage of this gap. It is seen that Israel, which has been given a pivotal role in the anti-Iran axis, is very pleased with this situation. However, it is unclear how long this situation can continue without the continuous support of the USA.

Resistance is entrenched in Arab literature: ex-Lebanese minister

➔ **1** Palestine is important because its occupation constitutes a strategic danger and a permanent threat to the Arab and Islamic world.

The real threat is establishing a Zionist regime that wages aggressive wars against those around it. The threat is the Israeli occupation of the territories of other Arab countries and its hostility towards Palestinians.

We need strong countries like the Islamic Republic of Iran to restore our rights. The Zionist enemy considers the resistance axis led by Iran as the most dangerous enemy.

That is why Israel resorts to normalization of ties and reconciliation with Arab countries, but that will not benefit this usurping regime. Muslim nations know that Israel is a dangerous enemy and resists the existence of such a dangerous threat.

How was the Palestinian cause entrenched in Arab literature?

In the Arab political, literary and media discourse, the concept of resistance to the enemy prevails.

However, some of the discordant voices in the circles of the (Persian) Gulf states are promoting the discourse of reconciliation with the enemy, the normalization of relations with Israel, and the entry into bargaining to establish internal conflicts inside the Islamic world.

They prefer the hostility to the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Palestinian and Lebanese resistance over the hostility to the Zionists and their usurper regime. But these voices will not find a listening ear.

How do you see the positions of Arab states and regimes towards the Palestinian issue?

The positions of the Arab regimes and governments range from resistance and compromise, but most of them tend to negotiate and enter into settlements and the normalization of ties with Israel. Some Arab monarchies have formed alliances with Israel, and they are cooperating with the Zionists.

The Arab countries member to the resistance, such as Syria, Iraq, Algeria, Yemen, Tunisia, Lebanon and others, continue to reject normalization and reconciliation. They focus on “no reconciliation, no recognition, no negotiations.” but other Arab governments have failed to remain committed to Palestine’s cause.

Meanwhile, Iran pioneers in resisting Israeli occupation and leads axis of resistance. Iran is the leader of a movement to liberate Palestine and Al-Quds Al-Sharif.

How do you rate Iran’s role in supporting the Palestine cause?

Iran, as I mentioned, is the country that is leading the resistance against the enemy.

Rejecting all forms of reconciliation, Iran faces a multi-faceted war; Economic war, soft war, intelligence war, and assassinations, as well as the threat of a comprehensive war. But the strength of Iran makes it difficult to kneel it because of its deterrent force.

Iran is a deterrent to these hybrid wars and will raise the victory flag on Palestine.

Why do Muslims consider Israel the biggest threat to regional peace and security?

The establishment of the Zionist regime in Palestine, as I mentioned, constituted a strategic threat to the Islamic and Arab world and made West Asia the scene of successive wars.

The conflict over Palestine was one of the most prominent issues with the highest risks to regional and international security and stability. The establishment of Israel also threatens the economic growth in the region and encourages an increase in military budgets, placing the region in a state of permanent tension and arms race.

Therefore, we consider that Israel represents an imminent and ever-present danger and that the only way to restore stability and security to West Asia is the dismantling of this usurping regime. It will pave the way to liberate Palestine, and from there, we can look forward to gaining freedom, development, stability and peace.

U.S. Military sending B-52s to protect Afghanistan withdrawal

The White House approved the temporary deployment of the carrier and at least six B-52 bombers in an attempt to protect U.S. and NATO forces as they leave Afghanistan starting in less than two weeks, The Wall Street Journal reported on Saturday, quoting officials.

U.S. President Joe Biden announced on April 14 that he will end the U.S. role in the 20-year-old conflict.

Quoting Pentagon spokesman John Kirby, Bloomberg reported that two of the B-52s have long-range bombers arrived in the region around Afghanistan Friday to bolster security as the U.S. prepares to withdraw all 2,500 troops from the country by September.

Kirby told reporters that the bomber

deployment was approved by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin along with an extension of the carrier USS Eisenhower’s current tour in the Middle East as the military anticipates potential attacks by the Taliban and works to send signals to deter them, according to Bloomberg report.

Kirby said the number of ground troops in Afghanistan is also expected to increase temporarily to assist and secure the departing U.S. and NATO forces.

He added that military equipment will be transferred back to the U.S. or redeployed in the region.

Kirby said that some will be given to the Afghan government or destroyed, Bloomberg reported.

UN: Possible Israel war crimes in East Jerusalem land right case

➔ **1** Meanwhile, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Britain urged Israel to halt settlement-building in the occupied West Bank.

“We urge the government of Israel to reverse its decision to advance the construction of 540 settlement units in the Har Homa E area of the occupied West Bank, and to cease its policy of settlement expansion across the Occupied Palestinian Territories,” the European nations said in a statement.

“If implemented, the decision to advance settlements in Har Homa, between East Jerusalem and Bethlehem, will cause further damage to the prospects for a viable Palestinian State.”

The tragedy of Sheikh Jarrah

➔ **1** Israel’s Supreme Court was scheduled to issue a ruling on the evictions on Thursday amid heated demonstrations and clashes between Palestinians and Israeli settlers, but the decision was delayed until May 10.

In the event that the court rules in favor of the settlers, the Palestinian families will lose their homes. Other families will face a similar fate.

Beginning of tragedy

In 1956, the 28 refugee families who lost their homes during the Nakba reached an agreement with the Jordanian Ministry of Construction and Development and the UN refugee agency UNRWA to provide housing for them in Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood.

At that time, the West Bank was under Jordanian rule (1951-1967). According to the Civic Coalition for Palestinian Rights in Jerusalem (CCPRJ), the Jordanian government provided the land while UNRWA covered the cost for constructing 28 homes for these families.

“A contract was concluded between the Ministry of Construction and Reconstruction and Palestinian families in 1956, with one of the main conditions stating that the residents pay a symbolic fee, provided that ownership is transferred to the residents after three years from the completion of construction,” the CCPRJ said in a statement.

This, however, was interrupted by the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, including Jerusalem, in 1967 which prevented the registration of the houses under the names of families, the statement said.

Expulsion of Palestinian families

The Sheikh Jarrah cause has escalated over the past week despite the issue running for decades.

Jewish settler organizations filed a lawsuit in the 1970s claiming the area belonged to Jews originally, and seeking the expulsion of Palestinian families living there since 1956.

These families, refugees from the 1948 Nakba, eventually settled in Sheikh Jarrah under an agreement between Jordan and the UN refugee agency.

The Israeli district court ruled that four families — al-Kurd, Iskafi, Qassim and Jaouni — must leave their homes for settlers to take over, or reach an agreement with these settler organisations by paying rent and recognising them as landlords.

The families refused and the court postponed their final verdict to May 10.

Several U.S. lawmakers, including Rashida Tlaib, Cori Bush, and Marie Newman have spoken out against the attacks and imminent forced displacement in Sheikh Jarrah.

Palestine asks ICC to probe Israeli violations in Sheikh Jarrah

Meanwhile, The Palestinian Foreign Ministry has asked the International Criminal Court (ICC) to investigate the forced relocation of Palestinians from Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in Jerusalem al-Quds.

The ministry sent a letter pertaining to Israel’s treatment of Palestinians in Sheikh Jarrah to the ICC on Tuesday.

Ibrahim Melhem, a spokesman for the Palestinian Authority, said in a post on Facebook that the threat from the Israeli regime to seize Palestinian homes in the neighborhood violates international law.

In a letter sent to the chief prosecutor of the ICC, Fatou Bensouda, the ministry urged the prominent lawyer to include the issue at hand in the court’s investigation into Israeli war crimes against Palestinians.

The ICC opened the formal investigation in March.

On Wednesday, the Wafa news agency cited Omar Awadallah, an official within the Palestinian Foreign Ministry, as saying that the letter had been sent “under the directive of President Mahmoud Abbas.”

“The forcible transfer of population and associated war crimes and crimes against humanity fall within the Rome Statute [of the International Criminal Court],” the official was quoted by the agency.

Some 28 Palestinian families face the threat of forceful eviction from the neighborhood.

The Palestinian resistance movement Hamas has already warned Israel against the move.

In a statement on Sunday, Fawzi Barhoum, a Hamas spokesman, held the Israeli regime responsible for harming the inhabitants of Sheikh Jarrah.

Palestinian homes and structures in the area are being demolished for the construction of a new Israeli settlement outpost.

Resistance News

Hamas urges mobilization amid Israeli violations

INTERNATIONAL DESK **TEHRAN**— The Palestinian resistance movement of Hamas in Jerusalem al-Quds has stressed that the battle in the occupied East Jerusalem al-Quds is ongoing, urging the resistance forces in the Gaza Strip to mobilize to confront the Israeli acts of aggression.

“The battle is still going on and we call on our resistance [brothers] in the Gaza Strip to sound the alarm,” Hamas said in a statement on Friday.

It referred to the acts of aggression committed by Israeli forces and settlers against Palestinians in Jerusalem al-Quds and a planned raid on al-Aqsa Mosque, the third holiest site in Islam, scheduled for Monday.

Hamas reiterated its support for the Palestinians who have been confronting the Israeli violations at the Damascus Gate, one of the main entrances to the Old City of Jerusalem al-Quds, and in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood.

Tensions have escalated in Sheikh Jarrah in recent days amid Israeli court rulings that order a number of Palestinian families to evacuate their homes there.

Erdogan says Turkey wants to expand Egypt talks

Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Turkey will reinforce efforts to restore its “historic” friendship with Egypt, after the two regional rivals held their first direct talks in eight years.

Ankara and Cairo have been sparring since the Egyptian military’s 2013 overthrow of the late Islamist president Mohamed Morsi, whom Erdogan personally backed.

A Turkish delegation headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Sedat Onal held two days of talks this week in Cairo that both sides described as “frank and in-depth”.

Erdogan promised that dialogue would continue. “A new process (with Egypt) has started,” he told reporters after attending Friday prayers at an Istanbul mosque.

“We will expand, develop and continue

this,” he said. “We are making efforts to restore our historic relations not as enemies but as friends.”

Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu also sounded upbeat, saying the talks were held in “a positive atmosphere”.

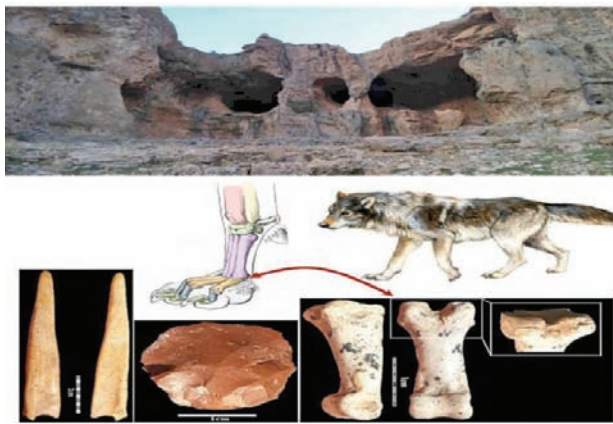
“No one laid down any specific document or condition,” said Cavusoglu, adding that he was open to meeting his Egyptian counterpart, Sameh Shoukry.

“We have already met on several occasions on the margins of the UN and OIC (Organisation of Islamic Cooperation) meetings,” Cavusoglu said.

The talks in Cairo came after Turkey told leading members of Egypt’s Istanbul-based opposition media to “tone down” criticism of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi.

Paleolithic sewing evidence comes to light in western Iran

➔ 1 In many ways, Neanderthals are still considered a mystery for many people. Neanderthals existed for about 200,000 years longer than we modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) have been alive. Evidence of their existence vanished



around 28,000 years ago – giving us an estimate for when they may, finally, have died off.

There are relics and fossil evidence from Neanderthals in several parts of the Iranian plateau, including Do-Ashkaft Cave, which is situated north of Kermanshah, near Taq-e Bostan, about 1,600 m above sea level.

In taxonomy, *Homo sapiens* is the only extant human species. The name is Latin for “wise man” and was introduced in 1758 by Carl Linnaeus (who is himself also the type specimen). Neanderthals are an extinct species or subspecies of archaic humans in the genus *Homo*, who lived within Eurasia from circa 400,000 until 40,000 years ago.

Iranian police bust gang of illegal excavators

HERITAGE TEHRAN – A gang of illegal diggers has been arrested by the Iranian police in Arsanjan of Fars province.

Four illegal diggers, who were trying to unearth relics in a historical site near Gohardan Mountains, north of the city, were detained in this regard, said Mohammadreza Bahmaninejad, a senior police official in charge of protecting cultural heritage, CHTN reported on Saturday.



Some digging tools were seized from the gang, who were traced following reports by local people and cultural heritage supporters, the official added.

He also noted that according to the cultural heritage's set of laws and regulations, any excavation intended to obtain buried relics and monuments is prohibited and is subject to penalty.

The ancient region of Fars (also spelled Pars or Persis) was the heart of the Achaemenian Empire (550–330 BC), which was founded by Cyrus

the Great and had its capital at Pasargadae. Darius I the Great moved the capital to nearby Persepolis in the late 6th or early 5th century BC.

The capital city of Shiraz is home to some of the country's most magnificent buildings and sights. Increasingly, it draws more and more foreign and domestic sightseers flocking into this provincial capital which was the literary capital of Persia during the Zand dynasty from 1751 to 1794.

Ancient rituals, bread-making skills win cultural heritage status

HERITAGE TEHRAN – A total of eleven cultural elements passed down from generation to generation in Fars province have been registered in the National Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts on Saturday announced the inscriptions in a letter to the governor-general of the southern province, CHTN reported.

Three separate traditional skills of bread-making which have long been practiced across the province are among the items added to the list.

The list also includes harvesting ritual in the city of Lar, the ceremony of reciting Shahnameh, the epic magnum opus of Persian poet Ferdowsi in Dezhkord, and the local costumes of Izadkhash.

The skill of making halva - a kind of traditional sweet dessert as well as the talent of making Ash, a traditional slow-cooked, thick soup made with chickpeas, beans, noodles, and fresh herbs were also



inscribed on the prestigious list.

Iranian flatbread is produced by cooking fermented dough, basically made from wheat flour, yeast, and water. Several additives may be added to the wheat flour-

yeast-water dough to increase the shelf life of bread and improve its sweetness, quality, or even nutritional value.

The most commonly used additives are vegetables (such as potato, onion,

and spinach), fruits and nuts (such as raisins, walnuts, and peanuts), seeds (such as poppy, cumin, and sesame), salt, sugars, lipids, milk, egg, spices, and food starches.

The ancient region of Fars, also spelled Pars or Persis, was the heart of the Achaemenian Empire (550–330 BC), which was founded by Cyrus the Great and had its capital at Pasargadae. Darius I the Great moved the capital to nearby Persepolis in the late 6th or early 5th century BC.

The capital city of Shiraz is home to some of the country's most magnificent buildings and sights. Increasingly, it draws more and more foreign and domestic sightseers flocking into this provincial capital which was the literary capital of Persia during the Zand dynasty from 1751 to 1794.

Hafezieh (mausoleum of Hafez, an illustrious 14th-century Persian poet), the UNESCO-registered Persepolis, and Sadi mausoleum are some of the most-visited sites in the province.

Iran's handicraft exports stand at \$120m in 11 months

HERITAGE TEHRAN — The value of Iran's handicrafts exports stood at \$120 million during the first eleven months of the past Iranian calendar year 1399 (March 20, 2020 – February 18, 2021), Mehr reported.

The country's handicrafts exports slumped during the mentioned months in comparison to the same period last year earlier due to the damage the coronavirus pandemic has inflicted on global trade.

The Islamic Republic exported \$427 million worth of handicrafts during the first eleven months of the calendar year 1398. Of the figure, some \$190 million was earned via suitcase trade (allowed for customs-free and tax-free transfer) through 20 provinces, according to data compiled by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.

With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the number of cities and villages registered by the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with

three ones come next.

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

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

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



Museum of anthropology to be set up in Kordestan

TOURISM TEHRAN – An anthropology museum is under construction in Haftash to let visitors find a path into understanding the everyday lives, culture and arts of people living in the western Iranian village and its surroundings.

“A museum dedicated to the anthropology of Haftash village in Baneh county of Kordestan province will be launched in near future,” a provincial tourism official said on Wednesday.

A budget of 550 million rials (about \$13,000 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been allocated to the project, Sadollah Rahimikhah added.

Such projects could help develop



rural tourism in the region, which leads to economic prosperity for the locals, the official added.

Rural tourism takes place in non-

urbanized areas such as hiking or camping in countryside areas, national parks, forests, oasis and desert villages, and mountain areas.

Experts believe that rural tourism can help to disperse tourism in countries with dense populations, directing holidaymakers away from some of the more well-known, busy destinations, and providing economic opportunities in alternative areas. It also lessens the wave of migration from villages to cities.

Iran enjoys a wide variety of natural terrains, unspoiled landscapes, tribes, and ethnic people, giving visitors opportunities to encounter a wide range of lifestyles, handicrafts, and cultures. Sightseers may

stay with a rural or nomadic family for a while or enjoy an independent stay and assist them with day-to-day life. It also opens up an opportunity to feel rustic routines, their agriculture, traditions, arts, and culture.

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

World Portuguese Language Day



The Brazilian Ambassador H.E. Mr. Laudemar Aguiar Neto and the Portuguese Ambassadors H.E. Mr. Carlos Costa Neves with Publisher Mr. Sadegh Samiei and his Spouse Ms. Shirin Samiei

On the occasion of the World Portuguese Language Day the Ambassadors of Portugal and Brazil send the following message:

Brazil, Portugal, Portugal, Brazil. We both speak a global language, Portuguese. In its unity, plural, diverse, rich. The most spoken language in the South Hemisphere. Shared with other seven countries in all continents. With a special presence in Africa (Angola, Cape Verde, Guiné-Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique and São Tomé and Príncipe), but also in Timor-Leste and in other places, like Macau or Goa. On May 5th we commemorate the World Portuguese Language Day. Of the nine States that speak it, two boast an Embassy in this captivating country, to which we are bound by ancient ties of friendship that we value and seek to enhance. Which is why we want to mark this date with a symbolic gesture. Each of us will donate book

of celebrated authors of our countries to Iranian schools and universities, in their beautiful translations into Farsi – a language of fertile and acclaimed literary and poetic tradition, like ours.

This is a day for sharing. And it is also pertinent to recall that both countries have Cultural Institutes which provide online courses of Portuguese. In the case of Brazil, its Cultural Centres, which in the future will be called “Instituto Guimarães Rosa”, and for Portugal, “Instituto Camões I.P.”. Also in Portugal and Brazil, the number of students learning the Persian language is growing. May we know each other better and better, and may the mutual learning of our languages draw us nearer. That is our wish.

Notification of Arbitration Award

Mr. Jafar Saeid

Tasbasi doviz ve kıymetli madenler A.S.

This is pursuant to previous notifications regarding Sarmayeh Exchange Co. claim against Tasbasi doviz ve kıymetli madenler A.S. , Case No. 36/D/98/93 pending before ACIC .

You are hereby notified that arbitration award No. 36/D/98/93/644 dated 14 April 2021 (1400/1/25) is issued in that case and below is the dispositive part of the said award. The arbitration award is sent to your address as specified in the underlying contact.

Beyazit Mah Karaflar SK. No . 17 ,34126, Faith , Istanbul , Turkey

DISPOSITIVE PART OF THE AWARD

1. The Respondent is ordered to pay EUR 7,915,299 (seven million nine hundred fifteen thousand two hundred ninety-nine Euros) and AED 26,935,766 (twenty-six million nine hundred thirty-five thousand seven hundred sixty-six Dirhams) to the Claimant.
2. The Respondent is ordered to pay delayed payment interest to the Claimant on the above amount, at the rate of 0.003 (three thousandths) per day, starting from March 23, 2016 until the enforcement of the award.
3. The Claimant is entitled to collect a part of the above amounts from the cheque no. 015453878 on TURKIYE GARANTI BANK ASI.A.S.
4. The Respondent is ordered to pay IRR 5,884,633,760 (five billion eight hundred eighty-four million six hundred thirty-three thousand seven hundred sixty Rials) for the arbitration costs and IRR 99,000,000 (ninety-nine million Rials) for the costs of publishing notices and IRR 10,000,000 (ten million Rials) for postal costs.

Arbitration Center of Iran Chamber of Commerce

Over 12,000 PCR tests for passengers at borders

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – Some 12,504 passengers have so far undergone PCR tests based on a plan launched on March 10 to rapidly identify suspected cases of coronavirus and prevent the spread of new UK strain.

Meanwhile, 258,937 passengers were screened for COVID-19 by IRCS forces, 37,692 of whom underwent rapid tests, Mehdi Valipour, head of the Relief and Rescue Organization of the Red Crescent Society, said.

He went on to lament that some 57 individuals, who tested positive, have so far been temporarily quarantined, IRNA reported on Saturday.

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

Thirty border checkpoints have been selected, including 16 land borders, 10 air borders, and 2 sea borders, all incoming passengers



will be tested and referred to the quarantine facilities in case of necessity.

Some 471 members of the IRCS cooperate for carrying out the plan; while around 8,000 individuals enter the country via borders daily.

On April 28, shared borders with Pakistan were closed, and a day later, the eastern border terminals of the country stopped operation, to contain the new wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

New cases and mortalities

In a press briefing on Saturday, Health Ministry's spokesperson, Sima-Sadat Lari, confirmed 13,576 new cases of COVID-19 infection, raising the total number of infections to 2,640,670. She added that 2,092,381 patients have so far recovered, but 5,545 remain in critical conditions of the disease.

During the past 24 hours, 283 patients have lost their lives, bringing the total number of deaths to 74,524, she added.

So far, 16,929,609 COVID-19 diagnostic tests have been performed in the country.

Flood hits 17 provinces across Iran

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – Flood has stricken at least 17 provinces across the country over the past nine days, IRNA news agency reported on Saturday.

During this period, 17 provinces of East Azarbaijan, West Azarbaijan, Ardebil, Isfahan, Tehran, South Khorasan, Khorasan Razavi, North Khorasan, Semnan, Sistan-Baluchestan, Khuzestan, Kerman, Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, Golestan, Gilan, Mazandaran, and Yazd were inundated.

The Iranian Red Crescent Society aid workers provided relief and rescue services in 110 cities, villages, nomadic areas, and 20 flood-affected areas, Mehdi Valipour, head of the IRCS Relief and Rescue Organization, said.

"Relief and rescue forces worked tirelessly to help 2,562 flood victims, in addition to providing emergency accommodation to 325 flood victims, and relocated 191 to safe areas," he stated.

"Over the past nine days, 10 people (6 in Kerman and 4 in Yazd) lost their lives," he regretted.

Precipitation in Iran amounted to 127.8 millimeters from the beginning of the current water year (September 22, 2020) until April 24, which demonstrates a 54 percent decline compared to the same period last [Iranian calendar] year.

In comparison with the long-term average (52 years), rainfall dropped by 41 percent over the aforementioned period, according to the data released by the Ministry of Energy.

Over the last two years, Iran was doused with rain which was unprecedented during the past 50 years, but last year, unfortunately, the country faced drought, which shows a 40 percent decrease in rainfall, he explained.

Watershed management is a solution



to strengthen the ecosystem in the face of subsequent droughts by penetrating rainfall into the ground.

Wet spell or still short of rain?

Rainfall extremes over the past three years slowly questioned the conception that Iran is experiencing a long-term drought and some of the experts announced that a wet spell will embrace the country.

So, some experts claimed that Iran has entered a period of a wet spell after experiencing dry spells over the past few decades, some others highly rejected the claim implying that the country faced a lack of rain by 50mm over the past 5 decades.

Climate disruption or global climate disruption, is the new term scientists are using to explain the extreme fluctuations that can and will occur to our weather systems as anthropogenic-caused carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases increase in our atmosphere, the oceans get warmer, and weather events go wild.

The report regrets that climate disruption will be continuing as climate change is on the rise and it calls on taking proper and effective measures to alleviate the adverse effects of climate change on the country.

In fact, experiencing two or three consecutive years of rainy days cannot ensure that drought no longer hits the country, but then it may enter a multi-year drought.

Police discover 1.1 tons of narcotics in Sistan-Baluchestan

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – The Iranian police have disbanded two large smuggling gangs in eastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan, discovering around 1.1 tons of narcotics, IRNA reported on Saturday.

Ahmad Ali Goodarzi, border commander of the police force, announced the confiscation of several weapons, a significant amount of ammunition in Sistan-Baluchestan province during two operations.

"In one of the operations, police forces dismantled a gang and confiscated nearly 821 kilograms of narcotics, and in the other operation, 267 kilograms of narcotics were seized from smugglers."

During the missions, two vehicles have been seized," Goodarzi added.

Iran's fight against drugs continues despite sanctions, pandemic

Iran has carried on a battle against narcotics in spite of being highly affected by cruel sanctions and COVID-19 pandemic, Eskandar Momeni, the director of headquarters for the fight against narcotics, said on April 13.

Last year (March 2020 – March 2021), amid the pandemic, Iran has participated in more than 20 regional and international events online, in cooperation with the UNODC office in Tehran, he highlighted, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

The counter-narcotics agencies and police forces succeeded in detecting about 1,150 tons of various types of narcotics by strengthening the mechanisms for monitoring and exchanging information between the responsible organizations.

This volume of discoveries is a new and unprecedented record in the fight against drugs, which shows a growth



of about 41 percent compared to 2019; some 90 percent of the substances found were opium, 26 percent heroin, and 48 percent morphine.

This success has been achieved with the martyrdom of 10 law enforcement and counter-narcotics forces in the global front against drug transit.

After the Islamic Revolution (in 1979), 3,800 were martyred, 12,000 were wounded and disabled in the fight against drug trafficking.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has praised Iran's efforts to fight against narcotics trafficking on the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

The organization also officially announced that the world's first place in the discovery of opium, heroin, and morphine belongs to Iran.

According to UNODC, Iran remains one of the major transit routes for drug trafficking from Afghanistan to European countries and has had a leading role at the global level in the drug-control campaigns.

UNODC World Drug Report 2020 estimates that in 2018, 91 percent of world opium, 48 percent of the world morphine, and 26 percent of the world heroin were seized by Iran.

COVID-19 vaccination should prioritize rare disease patients

→ 1 All the patients suffering from such diseases will be identified and called by the medical universities based on registration systems to receive the vaccine, he added.

National document on rare diseases

Patients with rare diseases launched and signed a petition calling for drawing up a national document on rare diseases on the occasion of Rare Disease Day, February 28, 2019.

The National Document on Rare Diseases, recently prepared in collaboration with the Rare Diseases Foundation and the University of Tehran, was drafted by prominent domestic and foreign experts.

The main vision of this document is to prevent the birth of infants with rare diseases and to solve the medical and

therapeutic problems of rare patients in the country.

Rare diseases prevalence

According to the statistics published in 2019, the number of rare diseases identified in Iran has reached 332 types of diseases and about 4,750 people are covered by the Rare Diseases Foundation of Iran.

Out of a thousand population, 2 people get a rare disease, while the prevalence can be curbed by changing people's culture, screening, identifying, preventing the births, and raising awareness.

According to WHO, rare diseases are often serious, chronic, and life-threatening. The European Union (EU) definition of a rare disease is one that affects fewer than 5 in 10,000

people. At present, more than 6000 rare diseases are known; around 80 percent of them are genetic disorders and half of them occur during childhood.

Grouped together, rare diseases affect 6–8 percent (or about 30 million people) out of the 508 million population of EU countries. This roughly equals the estimated prevalence of diabetes in the World Health Organization European Region, which in 2013 was 6.8 percent of 658.7 million adults in the 20 to 79-year age group.

Rare diseases are associated with a high psychological burden for the patient but they can also have a major impact on a patient's family. In addition to the health burden on patients, few of these diseases have an effective drug treatment available.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → E

Iran pioneer in cancer innovation, research among Islamic countries

Iran has the most research and innovation in the field of cancer both in the region and among Islamic countries, deputy health minister Reza Malekzadeh has stated.

Referring to the great progress in cancer research, he said that "We have been able to play a role in this area globally."

He added that one of the hopes for early detection of cancer is the use of urine and blood tests for people who are susceptible to cancer.

"We have conducted researches in the field of blood and urine biomarkers, which will help control cancers in the country," he said.

Pointing out that there are about 250,000 cancer patients in the country, Malekzadeh noted that 50,000 people die each year from the disease and 125,000 new patients develop cancer, so that the number of people with the disease increases each year.

ایران بیشترین نوآوری و تحقیقات سرطان را بین کشورهای اسلامی دارد

معاون تحقیقات و فناوری وزیر بهداشت، درمان و آموزش پزشکی گفت: ایران هم در منطقه و هم بین کشورهای اسلامی بیشترین میزان تحقیقات و نوآوری ها در حوزه سرطان را داشته است. دکتر رضا ملک زاده روز شنبه در گفت و گو با خبرنگار علمی ایرنا با اشاره به اینکه ما در زمینه تحقیقات سرطان پیشرفت های خیلی خوبی داشتیم، گفت: ما در سطح جهانی هم توانستیم در این حوزه نقش آفرین باشیم.

وی افزود: یکی از امیدهای خیلی روشن برای تشخیص زودرس سرطان، استفاده از آزمایش ادرار و خون برای افرادی است که استعداد سرطان را دارند.

معاون وزیر بهداشت گفت: در ایران تحقیقات خیلی خوبی در زمینه بیومارکرهای ادراری و خونی در دست اجرا داریم و امیدواریم با این کار، امکان کنترل سرطان ها در کشور میسر شود.

ملک زاده با اشاره به اینکه در حال حاضر تعداد ۲۵۰ هزار مبتلا به سرطان در کشور داریم، گفت: هر سال حدود ۵۰ هزار نفر بر اثر این بیماری می‌میرند و ۱۲۵ هزار بیمار جدید اضافه می شوند. در نتیجه هرساله تعداد مبتلایان این بیماری بیشتر می شود.

Cutting methane emissions is quickest way to slow global heating – UN report

Slashing methane emissions is vital to tackling the climate crisis and rapidly curbing the extreme weather already hitting people across the world today, according to a new UN report.

In 2020 there was a record rise in the amount of the powerful greenhouse gas emitted by the fossil fuel industry, cattle and rotting waste. Cutting it is the strongest action available to slow global heating in the near term, Inger Andersen, the UN's environment chief, said.



The report found that methane emissions could be almost halved by 2030 using existing technology and at reasonable cost. A significant proportion of the actions would actually make money, such as capturing methane gas leaks at fossil fuel sites.

Achieving the cuts would avoid nearly 0.3C of global heating by 2045 and keep the world on track for the Paris climate agreement's goal of limiting global temperature rise to 1.5C. Methane cuts also immediately reduce air pollution and would prevent many premature deaths and lost crops.

Methane is 84 times more powerful in trapping heat than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period and has caused about 30% of global heating to date. But it breaks down in the atmosphere within about a decade, unlike CO2, which remains in the air for centuries.

Cutting carbon emissions remains essential in ending the climate emergency, but some experts liken reducing CO2 in the air to the slow process of stopping a supertanker, whereas lowering methane is like cutting the engine on a speedboat and bringing it to a rapid halt.

Prof Drew Shindell, at Duke University, who led the UN report, said: "We're seeing so many aspects of climate change manifest themselves in the real world faster than our projections," such as increasing heatwaves, wildfires, droughts and intense storms. "We don't have a lot we can do about that, other than this powerful lever on near-term climate of reducing methane. We should do this for the wellbeing of everybody on the planet over the next 20 to 30 years."

"Methane emissions are increasing faster now than at any time in nearly 40 years of the observational record," he said. "Despite Covid ... methane shot upwards – it's going in the wrong direction very, very rapidly."

The surge is partly due to the increased use of fossil fuels, especially gas produced by fracking, Shindell said, and probably more emissions from wetlands as they heat up.

"It's vital to reduce methane for the sake of near-term climate change," Shindell said "But it's also vital to reduce CO2 for the sake of long-term climate change. The good news is that most of the required actions [to cut methane] also bring health and financial benefits."

Andersen said: "Cutting methane is the strongest lever we have to slow climate change over the next 25 years. We need international cooperation to urgently reduce methane emissions as much as possible this decade."

The report produced by the UN and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition found that 42% of human-caused methane emissions come from agriculture, mostly from burping livestock, its manure, and paddy fields. Intentional and unintentional leaks of methane from fossil fuel drilling sites, coalmines and pipelines produce 36% of the total and waste dumps cause another 18%.

The report found feasible and cost-effective methane cuts of 60% could be made from fossil fuel operations by stopping the venting of unwanted gas and properly sealing equipment. Waste sites could cut about 35% by reducing the organic waste sent to landfill sites and through better sewage treatment.

The estimated methane cuts from agriculture by 2030 were lower at 25%. "You can change the feed to cows and the way you manage the herds, but these things are fairly small," said Shindell. "You could make very great inroads into methane emissions by dietary change [eating less meat], but we are just not that sure how quickly that will happen."

Other measures not specifically targeting methane can still cut emissions of the gas, the report said, such as reducing the demand for fossil gas by increasing renewable energy and energy efficiency, and wasting less food.

LET'S LEARN PERSIAN

(Part 178)

(Source: saadifoundation.ir)

مجموعه‌ی فرهنگی-تاریخی نیاوران در شمال تهران

واقع است. شمال تهران هوایی تمیزتر و خنک‌تر از مرکز

و جنوب شهر دارد. در اینجا می‌توانیم کاخ‌ها، باغ‌ها و

ساختمان‌های زیبا و بزرگی ببینیم.

مجموعه‌ی نیاوران از سه کاخ-موزه و یک موزه‌ی

تاریخی-هنری، تالار پذیرایی، سینما، کتابخانه، رستوران

و یک فروشگاه تشکیل می‌شود. کاخ‌ها و موزه‌ها در

فاصله‌ی ۱۶۰ تا ۴۰ سال گذشته ساخته شده‌اند.

در موزه‌ها، آثار مختلفی از تمدن‌های باستانی ایران و

بعضی کشورهای دیگر و نیز آثار هنرمندان معاصر، مانند

فرش‌ها و تابلوهای نقاشی، قرار دارد. فرش‌ها که صورت

پادشاهان و بزرگان ایران از دوره‌ی هخامنشی تا قاجار

در آن بافته شده یکی از این آثار است.

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING



Live amongst people in such a manner that if you die they weep over you and if you are alive they crave for your company.

Imam Ali (AS)

Khamseh, a great romantic epic from classic Persian literature

Khamseh (The Quintuplet), the quintet of narrative poems for which Nezami Ganjavi (1141-1209) is universally acclaimed. It contains the didactic poem Makhzan ol-Asrar (The Treasury of Mysteries) in around 2,260 couplets in sari meter; three epic romances: Khosrow and Shirin in around 6,500 couplets in hazaj meter, Leili and Majnun in around 4,600 couplets in hazaj meter, and Haft Paykar in about 5130 couplets in khafif meter; and the Eskandar-nameh, which can be regarded as an epic interlaced with didactic observations and consists of two formally separate parts, in all about 10,500 couplets in motaqareb meter.



An illustration from a rare copy of the Khamseh on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York

After the author's death, his poems in the masnavi form began to appear in codices assembled as an ensemble generally known as the Khamseh or also as Panj Ganj (The Five Treasures). A large number of manuscripts of the Khamseh have survived. The oldest dated manuscript among the extant copies of the entire Khamseh is dated 1362 and belongs to the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris. There are also a few dated copies belonging to earlier periods, but they are incomplete. The first attempt at a critical edition was made by Wahid Dastjerdi. It contains some helpful explanatory notes, but the attempt at presenting a critical edition is marred by the arbitrary inclusion or exclusion of verses in the text. More recently, richly annotated editions of the poems have been published by Behruz Sarvatian. There is a complete translation of the Khamseh in Russian verse in 5 volumes published in Moscow in 1985 and reprinted in Baku in 1991. There is a vast bibliography on Nezami's Khamseh.

De Blois has brought the traditional relative chronology of the poems of the Khamseh into question. On the basis of the comparison of the manuscripts, the identification of the dedicatees and other textual data, he has suggested the following dates of completion for the poems: Makhzan ol-Asrar likely in or shortly after 1166 (therefore about a decade earlier than the usually accepted date); Khosrow and Shirin between 1176 and 1186, with the epilogue added sometime between 1186 and 1191; Leili and Majnun in 1188 (de Blois does not take the possible additions dated up to 1192 into account); Eskandar-nameh in 1194; Haft Paykar in 1197.

Thus Haft Paykar is probably the last poem of the five composed by Nezami, though in most manuscripts it is placed before Eskandar-nameh.

It must be borne in mind, however, that in the oldest Khamseh written in response to that of Nezami, the Khamseh of Amir Khosrow, completed in 1301-02, hence prior to the extant dated manuscripts of Nezami's Khamseh, the order of the last two poems is: first, Aineye Eskandari, followed by Hasht Behesht.

Sarvatian lays stress on the time gap that often occurs between the date of completion and the date of dedication in Nezami's poems, a gap explicable in terms of the complex political situation of the time, which created difficulties in choosing patrons.

Nezami drew inspiration from several works of Persian literature: Hadiqat al-Haqiqah of Sanai, Vis and Ramin of Gorgani, Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, Varqa o Golshah of Ayyuqi, and Siasat-nameh of Nezam-ul-Molk, among others.

Also oral tradition, Arabic anecdotes, and historians such as Tabari are among his sources. However, Nezami does not try to imitate his predecessors. His way of proceeding is to deal briefly with episodes that the previous poets had treated, focusing instead on new material while introducing important formal innovations.

The influence of Nezami's work on the subsequent development of Persian literature has been enormous. Not only each of his poems, but also the Khamseh as a whole became a pattern that was emulated in later Persian poetry (and also in other Islamic literatures).

The imitations of the Khamseh may be attempts to reply to every original poem, following their subject as well as their meter and other formal features, or they may be collections of masnavis that contain only some imitations of Nezami's poems.

The first and most renowned response to Nezami's Khamseh was, as pointed out above, by Amir Khosrow Dehlavi. Other well-known Khamsehs, more or less complete, composed in response to Nezami were written by Khaju Kermani, Jamali, Hatefi, Jami, who extended to seven the total of poems, and Navai in the Chaghatay language.

The stories in Nezami's poems have provided the Persian art of the miniature with an abundance of subject matter: his Khamseh, together with Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, were the most frequently illustrated literary works.

(Source: Encyclopedia Iranica)

Iranian Film Festival Australia unveils official lineup

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — Eleven films in various genres will be screened at the Iranian Film Festival Australia as the organizers of the 10th edition of the event have announced its official lineup.

Ida Panahandeh's latest drama "Titi" will open this year's festival, which will take place from May 20 to June 16 in the cities of Perth, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney.

Working in a hospital, Titi encounters Ebrahim, a nuclear physicist suffering from a terminal illness. Taking a liking to Titi, he explains his work to her, and she believes that it is essential to the future of the planet. When he slips into a coma, his wife demands his papers are discarded, but Titi takes them home, where her husband lines his rabbit cages with them. Eight-months pregnant as a surrogate for a childless couple, Titi wanders into the sea, where her mystical powers are able to bring the professor back to life. As he searches for the papers she took, he enters the world of Titi, and nothing will ever be the same.

Director Majid Majidi's child labor drama "Sun Children", which was Iran's



"Titi" by Ida Panahandeh will open the 10th Iranian Film Festival Australia on May 20.

submission to the Oscars 2021, is among the films.

Shahram Morkri's drama "Careless Crime", the winner of the Silver Hugo

of the jury at the Chicago International Film Festival in 2020, is another highlight of the lineup.

Another notable movie in the selection

Iranian cultural centers launch green film festival



A poster for the 1st edition of the International Earth Film Festival.

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — Three Iranian cultural centers have teamed up to organize an international film festival to promote environmental issues and sustainable development.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the International Earth Film Festival, established by the Green Civilization NGO, Ordibehesht Oudlajan Art and Cultural Complex and Hashur, a platform providing video on demand (VOD) service, will be organized online from May 15 to 21.

A selection of 55 feature, short, animation and documentary films will be screened during the event, the director of the festival Farhad Tohidi said in a press release on Saturday.

Due to the pandemic, the organizers plan to hold the first edition of the festival nationwide, therefore, they have selected the entries from the films submitted by Iranian filmmakers.

"A sustainable development is a development that meets the needs of today with no harm for the needs of the future generations," Tohidi said in the press release.

"Socio-cultural development, economic development and the protection of the environment are the main pillars of sustainable development, which are the topics regarded

in cinema," he added.

He noted that sustainable development acknowledges a responsibility to improve working conditions and living standards with respect to the preservation of natural assets such as water, air, earth and mineral resources, which have always been regarded by filmmakers in their films.

"In this world interwoven with various problems, topics though local and regional, are in direct connection with global issues; climate change affects the fate of the entire world; poverty, wars, insecurity, unbalanced development and waves of immigration cause problems for all countries," he stated.

Tohidi said that the organizers aim to attract the attention of experts and cultural elites to the topics threatening the environment, as well as to raise public awareness of environmental issues by organizing the International Earth Film Festival.

Several other institutes, including the Iranian House of Cinema, are also contributing to the festival.

New York Frieze Viewing Room hangs works by Iranian artists

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — Frieze Viewing Room, an ambitious new digital initiative that has been launched with an online edition of Frieze New York, is showcasing a collection of works by Iranian artists in its annual exhibit for galleries from across the world.

Works by Ardeshir Mohasses, Mehdi Qadyanlu, Sahand Hesamian, Farrokh Mahdavi, Hoda Kashiha, Iman Rad, Andishe Avini and Homa Delvari have been selected

for the online exhibition by Dastan's Basement Gallery in Tehran.

In addition to showcasing over 60 galleries at Frieze New York, Frieze's online viewing room features an expanded list of international galleries, from world-leading names to the most exciting young spaces, including 303 Gallery, Xavier Hufkens, Jhaveri Contemporary, Maureen Paley, Victoria Miro, Projectos Ultravioleta, Thaddaeus Ropac, PM8/Francisco Salas, Addis Fine

Art, Edel Assanti, Charlie James Gallery, One And J. Gallery, and The Breeder.

Exhibitors present online group shows, two-artist presentations and an extensive number of solo shows including Devin B. Johnson (Nicodim Gallery), Esther Pearl Watson (Vielmetter Los Angeles), Erin Jane Nelson (Chapter NY), Ding Yi (Timothy Taylor), geetha thurairajah (Unit 17), Raymond Saunders (Casemore Kirkeby), Dawit L. Petros (Tiwani Contemporary) and many others.



A drawing by Homa Delvari, whose works are on view on the Frieze Viewing Room in New York.

The Frieze Viewing Room opened on May 5 and will run until May 14. It is open to all.

Vocalists Qorbani, Jayashri team up for single "Jete Nahi Dibo"

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian vocalist Alireza Qorbani and the Oscar-nominated Indian singer Bombay Jayashri collaborated on a single named "Jete Nahi Dibo" ("I Won't Let You Go"), which was released last week.

This is a new single from "The Voices and Bridges", U.S.-based Iranian santur virtuoso and composer Ehsan Matoori's upcoming global full-length album.

Iranian director Omid Ainechi has made a video for the song released on YouTube at the same time.

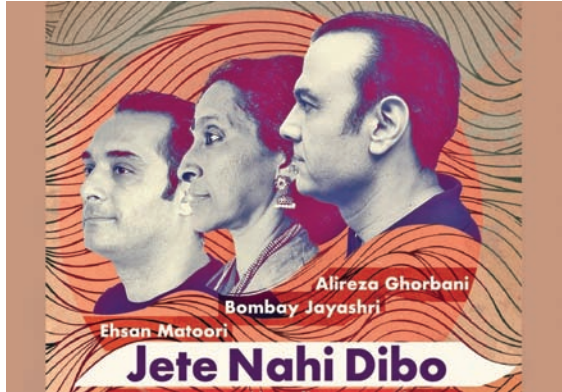
"The Voices and Bridges" will arrive July 16 via Bright Shiny Things.

In a report published by the Broadway World Music, Matoori said, "Jete Nahi Dibo" is the story of my own suffering of being far from the love of my life.

"This story dates back to 9 years ago, at the time when so many difficult moments happened in my life. I was tired, frustrated and felt I could no longer live in my own country.

"The only thing that made me want to stay was the person I loved. But, one night I felt I was in a hurry to leave... and after a few hours I found myself at a destination I had never been to. But, I had left my heart behind.

"I had nightmares every night saying to myself, 'I wish



A poster for the single "Jete Nahi Dibo" ("I Won't Let You Go").

you hadn't gone. I wish I hadn't let you go.' But my body was gone, and my soul and heart were left there.

"This contradiction in life and all the moments when

"Klara and the Sun" comes to Iranian bookstores

CULTURE d e s k **TEHRAN** — "Klara and the Sun" by Kazuo Ishiguro, the British novelist of Japanese origin and Nobel Laureate in Literature in 2017, has recently been published in Persian.

Shiva Maqanlu is the translator of the book published by Nimaj, whose original version was published on March 2, 2021.

Another Persian translation of the novel by Shirin Shokrollahi has previously been published by Kuleposhti in Iran.

"Klara and the Sun", the first novel by Ishiguro since he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, tells the story of Klara, an Artificial Friend with outstanding observational qualities, who, from her place in the store, carefully watches the behavior



Cover of the Persian translation of Kazuo Ishiguro's novel "Klara and the Sun" by Shiva Maqanlu.

of those who come in to browse, and of those who pass on the street outside. She remains hopeful that a customer will soon choose her.

The dystopian science fiction story is a thrilling book that offers a look at our changing world through the eyes of an unforgettable narrator, and one that explores the fundamental question: What does it mean to love?

In her review for The New York Times, Radhika Jones notes that "Klara and the Sun" returns to the theme of "The Remains of the Day" as "Ishiguro gives voice to: not the human, but the clone; not the lord, but the servant. 'Klara and the Sun' complements his brilliant vision, though it doesn't reach the artistic heights of his past achievements.

When Klara says, 'I have my memories to go through and place in the right order,' it strikes the quintessential Ishiguro chord."

In a positive review, Cherwell described Ishiguro's novel as characterized by "elegance and poise," praising the narrator Klara as "a memorable first-person narrative voice, simultaneously robotic and infantile, scrupulous yet naive."

The Economist praised the book and mentioned that it affects "a cross between 'Never Let Me Go' and 'The Remains of the Day', with Klara in the place of Stevens, the butler whose first-person narration provided a between-the-lines portrait of morality among the English upper crust in the interwar years."