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Iranian women look to make history at FIBA 3x3 Olympic Qualifying *Page 3*



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Leader congratulates Shahrestane Adab on 10th anniversary *Page 8*

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Khorramshahr: a prime destination for war tourism

FFIRI lifts ban on signing foreign players and coaches

BY FARROKH HESABI
TEHRAN - The Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) has nullified the rule that banned Iranian football clubs from signing foreign players and coaches.

In August 2020, the Iran Football League Organization announced that THE football teams playing in the Iran Professional League (IPL) could not sign new foreign coaches and players.

The ban came due to the clubs' failure to fulfill their financial commitments to foreign staff in previous years. The number of unsettled financial disputes between Iranian clubs and their foreign employees were especially increased after the imposition of tough and unilateral sanctions by the United States former government against Iran that created problems for the country.

However, after the changes that took place in the top ranks of the football federation after the FFIRI's presidential election, it was predictable that the mentioned law would be repealed.

The FFIRI's General Secretary, Mansour Ghanbarzadeh, has recently confirmed that this law will be lifted with some conditions for the next season of the IPL.

"Under the new regulations that will be introduced upon the beginning of the next season, and according to Mr. Azizi Khadem, FFIRI's President, special criteria will be set for signing foreign coaches and players by the Iranian clubs," Ghanbarzadeh said.

According to Ghanbarzadeh, regarding the financial issues, there should be a guaranteed fund by the clubs in the FFIRI to avoid the opening of new legal cases in FIFA against Iranian football.

"In the technical aspect, the new regulations, which will be approved by the Football League Organization and the FFIRI, will see the IPL clubs limited or better to say disallowed to signing low-quality foreign players. Some criteria will also be set for the technical level of the coaches and players who tend to enter Iranian football. These items will be set based on global standards. By setting clear regulations and filtering, we will help the clubs to sign the best possible foreigners," he added.

According to new rules, any club that is to sign a foreign player and coach must put ten percent of the player's contract fee in a fund that will be spent on grassroots and football academies under the auspices of the FFIRI.

Sometimes it takes a volcano to start the healing

BY MUNIRA A. SAEED
Let me start by saying something some may consider outrageous.

One day, not long from now, many may look back on the four years of Donald Trump's presidency and consider it to be not just the worst choice Americans made, but, ironically, the best thing that happened to America and the world. Why? The U.S. needed Donald Trump to save it from itself.

Biden's inaugural speech introduced a new narrative and his first presidential directives – so far – suggest that he means what he said. At least when it comes to immediately undoing some of his predecessor's foolish yet harmful publicity stunts. But, it's only the beginning and the road is long and challenging. Undoing other decades old wrong policies will take much more than the stroke of a new presidential pen. And that is where Biden's past may become useful in his

presidency, not just to redeem his own participation in those past decisions, but to change America's image of itself and the destructive global consequences of that self-image.

In a previous article, I wrote, "Trump was not the problem. Trump was the result of the problem." It took the shock of a volcanic four years for Americans and the world, hopefully, to finally realize that. It took the unprecedented magnitude of a destructive world war for the Germans to realize and get rid of the cumulative growth of a mindset that brought Hitler to power. Fortunately, neither Americans nor the world have had to pay that kind of heavy price again – not yet, anyway. Hopefully, all is not lost. We can avoid that outcome. But the dangers have not been completely overcome. Taming the mindset is not an event, it's a process, and one that must start immediately.

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For the first time, French foreign minister uses 'apartheid' to refer to Israel

France's foreign minister has expressed rare concern over the recent Israeli violence against Palestinians in Jerusalem al-Quds and elsewhere, warning of the risk of "long-lasting apartheid".

"It's the first time and it clearly shows that if in the future we had a solution other than the two-state solution, we would have the ingredients of long-lasting apartheid," Jean-Yves Le Drian said, referring to raids on a Palestinian neighborhood in the holy city and worshippers at the al-Aqsa Mosque compound.

Jerusalem al-Quds remains at the heart of the decades-long West Asian conflict, with Palestinians insisting that East al-Quds – illegally occupied by Israel since 1967 – should serve as the capital of a Palestinian state.

Le Drian is one of the first top French officials to use the term "apartheid" in reference to Israel.

He said the "risk of apartheid is high" if Tel Aviv keeps on acting "according to a single-state

logic," and also if it tries to maintain the status quo.

"Even the status quo produces that," he added in an interview with RTL radio and Le Figaro newspaper on Sunday.

Last month, Human Rights Watch concluded that Israel is committing crimes against humanity of "apartheid and persecution" against Palestinians, and that the group plans to forward its findings to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for due action.

B'Tselem, an Israeli advocacy group, also said Israel is an "apartheid regime" that systematically oppresses the Palestinians via military occupation and racist laws.

Referring to the latest Israeli aggression on the besieged Gaza Strip, the French minister stressed the need to revive the so-called peace process in West Asia.

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UN appreciates Iran for vaccinating foreign nationals

TEHRAN – Iran has generously considered refugees over the age of 75 for vaccination against coronavirus, said Indrika Ratwatte, Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), appreciating Iran for over four decades of hosting refugees.

Iran cooperates with the United Nations on hosting refugees, and the main focus of the UNHCR is to help the country to find a solution for

the foreign nationals, Ratwatte stated.

Pointing out that over the last 20 years, a large number of foreign nationals have returned to their homeland voluntarily, he said that however, in recent years, there has been a significant decline in the voluntary return of citizens to their country, and despite efforts in Afghanistan to restore stability to security.

Our focus is on supporting the services provided to Afghan refugees, especially in the field

of health in Iran, he further highlighted, IRNA reported on Monday.

He expressed appreciation for generously vaccinating the foreign national aging 75 or above, adding, the UNHCR has also supported Iran's activities, especially in the field of personal protective equipment and disinfectants, and is working closely with the Ministry of Health.

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© Ministry of Defence

Defense Ministry exhibits military, civilian equipment

The Defense Ministry has held an exhibition of technological progresses in military and civilian industries. The exhibition is being held on the 40th anniversary of the liberation of Khorramshahr. The exhibition organized by the Defense Industry Organization showcases different smart weapons, newest tactical vehicles, tactical ground-to-ground missiles, and anti-armor missiles. It also exhibits advanced equipment in the field of oil, gas, mining, chemistry, bio-defense, etc.

Power outages in Iran, reasons & solutions

BY EBRAHIM FALLAHI
TEHRAN – With the early arrival of the hot season across Iran, once again the issue of electricity shortage and systematic power outages has come under the spotlight. These days Iranians are left in the dark for several hours each day based on a pre-planned outage program implemented by the Energy Ministry.

Considering the country's special conditions this year due to the coronavirus pandemic and the risks that the electricity outages could impose on Covid-19 patients, the Energy Ministry is facing a much bigger challenge compared to the previous years.

Furthermore, new deteriorating factors like severe drought and the decline in the country's water resources as well as a new wave of illegal cryptocurrency mining across the country have also worsened the situation in the current year.

Iran's Power Generation, Distribution, and Transmission Company (known as Tavanir) has previously announced that the company is implementing over 40 different programs for managing the situation and to prevent blackouts in the country, however, so far these programs do not seem to be working as expected.

In this regard, the Tehran Times has spoken with the Head of Tavanir Office of Public Relations Abouzar Salehi to get more information on the matter. What follows is the gist of the interview.

The consumption
Asked about the country's electricity consumption situation in the current year and the difference with the previous years, Salehi said "This year we are facing two major phenomena in this regard, one is natural and the other manmade:

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5,000 academics support Raeisi

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — In a letter written by 5,000 academics, they expressed their utmost support in the June presidential elections for the Judiciary Chief, Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raeisi.

In the letter, the academics thanked Raeisi for his smart move to nominate for the presidential election, asking him to form a strong government from the people, by upholding dignity and promoting economy "all-round authority of the country."

They stated that Raeisi's candidacy will help boost voter turnout and erase the atmosphere of hesitance in the election. In their letter, they called Raeisi a "plan-oriented" candidate who is capable of administering a wise management.

The academics let Raeisi know that should he need help, they are more than ready to assist him in various issues such as foreign policy, economics, development and industrial sectors.

The presidential election will be held on June 18. The names of the qualified candidates will be released on Tuesday.

Rouhani calls Tehran-Beijing ties durable, strategic

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — President Hassan Rouhani on Monday described relations between Iran and China as strategic and durable.

In a telephone conversation with Chinese President xi Jinping, Rouhani said Tehran-Beijing ties have been on the rise over the past 50 years and expressed hope that bilateral relations and cooperation would increase in all areas.

Iran and China signed a long-term strategic partnership in Tehran on March 7. It was officially signed between the Iranian and Chinese foreign ministers.



Rouhani said Iran has a long-term view toward strengthening cooperation with China as a world power and insisted on the need to implement the terms of the strategic partnership.

Noting that Iran is ready to promote economic cooperation with China in West Asia, the president said such a move will lead to closer ties especially in economic and commercial areas, including export of oil and non-oil products from Iran to China and facilitation of Chinese companies' presence in Iran.

Rouhani also pointed to Iran's Hormuz Peace Initiative (HOPE) for cooperation between countries in the West Asia region, saying, "The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to cooperate with China in the West Asia region on different issues including working to resolve the Palestine issue and in this endeavor the HOPE initiative can serve as the cornerstone of interaction between the two sides."

The president also thanked China for its principled positions, including its support for the 2015 nuclear deal -JCPOA – and its constructive approach toward the ongoing Vienna talks to revive the multilateral agreement.

The Iranian president also said it is necessary that unilateral sanctions against Iran be lifted and also accelerate efforts to complete the Arak nuclear reactor project within the framework of the JCPOA.

It is also necessary that Tehran and Beijing to strengthen cooperation on international issues to counter the cold war and prevent coalition building by the U.S. and its Western allies against independent states like Iran and China, Rouhani suggested.

The president also praised China for aiding Iran, including providing vaccines, to control the Coronavirus pandemic and expressed hope that Iran's needs to vaccines to be met soon.

For his part, Xi said China and Iran can play an influential role in resolving regional and international problems by adopting similar approaches.

The Chinese leader said Beijing has been supporting the JCPOA as an international agreement and wants it to be fully implemented.

Xi added, "The U.S. cannot quit the JCPOA or reenter it whenever it wishes and that the cancellation of sanctions against Iran is a necessity for a U.S. return to the JCPOA."

He also said China comprehends Iran's need for Coronavirus vaccines, adding Beijing will fulfill its commitments to provide vaccines to Iran.

Xi also said China is committed to its obligation on reconfiguring the Arak heavy water reactor.

He also pointed to Israel's cruelty against the Palestinians and called for international efforts to put an end to the killing of the Palestinians.

"Iran and China can play important role in this regard," Xi suggested.

Nuclear chief: 60% enrichment continuing

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Ali Akbar Salehi, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), said on Monday that Iran is still enriching uranium at different levels of purity, including 60%, 20% and 5%.

Speaking to state TV, he dismissed rumors that Iran and the IAEA have released a joint statement, saying that Iran currently possesses 2.5 kilograms of 60% enriched uranium.

He then went on to say that Iran's reserves of the 20% enriched uranium are over 90 kg and the 5% enriched uranium stockpiles are over 5 tons.

Rafael Grossi, head of the International Atomic Energy Organization, said on Monday that Iran and the IAEA have agreed to extend the monitoring deal for another month.

The deal allowed the Agency to continue its monitoring of Iran's nuclear facilities for a period of three months, which expired on Monday. The monitoring deal was reached during a two-day visit by Grossi to Tehran in February.

Mohammad: 'Neighbors first' is my foreign policy priority

"Depending on the candidates qualified, I might quit the race in favor of Raeisi"

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — In an interview with ISNA news agency published on Monday, presidential hopeful Saeed Mohammad has said that his priority will be to strengthen internal abilities and also prioritizing relations with 15 neighboring countries in the foreign policy area.

"Our priority to prove the effectiveness of the system and build public trust is to continue foreign interactions, especially with the P5+1, and, of course, in other international arenas, to achieve a new space with the policy of balancing (relations between) the East and the West, as well as improving relations with 15 neighboring countries based on the slogan of 'neighbors first'. In my government, issues will be addressed with an internal empowerment approach," he said.

He said he believes that the Americans will never lift sanctions on Iran completely, predicting that they may temporarily ease them, but they will never lift them permanently.

He also said the current talks in Vienna to revive the JCPOA are a "show" by the government in the run up to the June 18 presidential elections "The Vienna talks is a show for presidential elections."

According to the presidential hopeful, in this round of negotiations, concessions will be given to Iran on a part-time basis. "I believe that we should follow the negotiations of the nuclear deal within the framework of the issues raised in the discourse of the Revolution," he noted.

He added that it was the Americans left the JCPOA. "They must first return to the deal and

fulfill their obligations, and we will verify their implementation, and then we will return to fulfilling our obligations in the deal as well. We will also not accept any possible negotiations on our missiles or regional issues, and will only negotiate within the framework of the JCPOA agreement. In my opinion, the Americans and the Europeans are not interested in lifting the sanctions, but explicitly say that they are looking for the second and third JCPOAs," stated Mohammad, the former director of the IRGC's Khatam-al Anbiya Construction Headquarters.

He stated Iran is trying to revive the current JCPOA and lift the sanctions and create a better condition for the people. However, the presidential hopeful says, since the Americans don't abide by their commitments his government's approach could be different because Iranians have suffered from U.S. sanctions for 8 years.

"One approach was to ask for the sanctions to be lifted, another could be for us to empower the internal capacity of the country and neutralize the sanctions," he explained.

"They must first return to the deal and fulfill their obligations, and we will verify their implementation, and then we will return to fulfilling our obligations in the deal as well."

Election headquarters announces health protocols

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iran's election headquarters information committee on Monday announced the required health protocols approved by the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control (NHCC).

The protocols indicate that any election rallies, speeches, talks and debates in closed places such as mosques, meeting halls, reception halls and sports halls are prohibited.

It also says that outdoor rallies are allowed provided that the following conditions are met:

1. There should be an 8-square-meter distance between fans.
2. Only 30% of a space is allowed to be filled.
3. All attendees and organizers of the rallies should wear masks at all times.
4. Rallies should not last more than 2 hours.
5. All health and safety protocols announced before must

be followed throughout rallies.

According to the announcement, any closed doors gatherings are prohibited.

Holding welcoming ceremonies for candidates, launching advertising carnivals and the like are strictly forbidden.

It also asks the state TV to hold debates and allocate most of its time to spread the election campaigns, including candidates' plans.

It also asks the Ministry of Communications to give all Iranians free internet to follow candidates in the cyberspace. Thus, the ministry is giving each person 7 gigabytes of free internet. The presidential elections will be held on June 18.

The candidates whose competence is confirmed by the Guardian Council start campaigns. The names of confirmed candidates are set to be released on Tuesday afternoon.

Larijani says Gazans insert a 'pin into Israeli balloon'

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — In an interview with Al-Mayadeen news agency aired on Saturday, Ali Larijani, a senior advisor to the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, said that the Palestinian resistance emerged victorious in the 12-day battle with Israel.

"The Palestinian people have very high capabilities, and have moved during two decades from the stone intifada to the rockets intifada," Larijani said, noting that the Gazans "inserted a pin in the balloon that Israel had made for itself."

He pointed out that the grievances of the Palestinian people, whose land has been stolen, is no longer a regional issue, but a global one.

The veteran politician said the Islamic Republic consider it a duty to back the Palestinians. "We, as Iranians, believe that it is our duty to support the Palestinian people and their cause."

Larijani also stated that support for the Palestinian people must be constantly raised in international forums.

Larijani, a graduate of philosophy, also suggested that it is necessary that "thinkers" in the Arab world shun normalization deals between certain Arab states and the Zionist regime. "Arab thinkers should reject the relations that were established between the Arab countries and Israel."

Top Iranian officials, including military chief Mohammad Baqeri, Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Hossein Salami, Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, senior foreign policy advisor to the Leader Ali Akbar Velayati, have congratulated the Palestinian resistance movement's victory over Israel in the 12-day war.

Military officials in Iran have likened the victory of the Gaza fighters against Israel to the 33-day war in the summer

of 2006 in which Hezbollah humiliated Israel.

In his interview, Larijani suggested that necessary resources must be provided to preserve the victory over Israel so that the Palestinians can return to their land.

The former top parliamentarian stressed that Iran's support for the Palestinian people will increase "because the resistance has given Muslims hope."

Elsewhere in his remarks, the advisor to the Leader said, "If the Palestinian resistance decimated the Israelis, they could not think about confronting a very large force like Iran."

He added, "We belong to the movement that supports developing the capabilities of the Palestinian people."

Larijani affirmed that Iran has capabilities that may change the face of the entity of the Zionist regime in any possible confrontation.

CANDIDATE PROFILE



Seyed Ebrahim Raeisi

Age	61	Place Of Birth	Noghan distric of Mashhad
Education			
Master of private law from Shahid Mottahari University PhD in jurisprudence and fundamentals of Islamic law from Shahid Mottahari University Grade 4 of jurisprudence from Qom Seminary (the higher the grade the better)			
Career			
Hamedan prosecutor Tehran prosecutor Head of the General Inspection Office First deputy chief justice of Iran Attorney general Chairman of the Astan Quds Razavi organization Member of the Assembly of Experts (serving in the assembly's presiding board for two terms)	Member of the Supreme Council of Cyber Space Member of the Monetary and Credit Council Member of the Center to Combat Economic Fraud Chairman of the Monitoring Council on the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting Member of the Supreme Oil Council		

Social Media Accounts			
	raisi_org		raisi_org
	raisi_org		raisi.ir

Supporters			
Unity Council		Former foreign minister	
principlist faction		Manouchehr Mottaki	
Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf			

Political position on JCPOA	
He has reiterated the stance by the Islamic Republic system, stating that the U.S. has to lift all sanctions, and after extensive verification, Iran will return to its JCPOA obligations. He calls the JCPOA a "blank cheque" that should have been cashed by the government.	

Political position on interaction with neighbors and the West	
He believes that Iran should interact with all countries. He says his foreign policy will be in accordance with the Leader's remarks, and that Iran's national pride and dignity should be respected. He thinks the situation can improve if the government implements the foreign policy announced by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution. "The enemy wants to destroy our pride and national dignity," he says.	



According to statistical sources, from the 7 days leading up to May 23, Raeisi, who had the most social media attention for several consecutive days, saw a decrease in his position on Instagram and Twitter, and the two nominees that topped the platforms respectively belonged to Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Saeed Mohammad.

Despite the fact that Mohammad and Ahmadinejad won the first place on Twitter and Instagram and the total number of Raeisi data decreased at the same time, his huge gap with other candidates has caused him not to change his position in the total number of platforms.

Overall, the volume of cyberspace hypes about the election has diminished as we move away from the excitement of cyberspace on registration days and wait for the results of Guardian Council qualifications.

Top nuclear negotiator briefs lawmakers on Vienna talks

POLITICAL DESK **TEHRAN** — Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi, who led the Iranian negotiating team at the Vienna nuclear talks, attended a "very tough" meeting at the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee on Sunday to discuss the latest developments concerning the nuclear talks.

Abolfazl Amouei, spokesman for the Committee, said on Sunday that Araghchi briefed the lawmakers on the nuclear negotiations. "The deputy foreign minister presented a report on the latest state of the Vienna talks," Amouei told reporters after the meeting.

"This meeting was held in the presence of our country's chief negotiator Araghchi in order to review the latest status of the Vienna talks and in line with the parliamentary oversight status," he continued. "This meeting was held for a relatively long time with the presence of the members of the Committee and after the fourth round of negotiations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the P4+1 group of countries. During the meeting, Mr. Araghchi presented a report on the negotiation process. During the meeting, the deputy foreign minister gave explanations to the deputies regarding the course of several rounds of negotiations."

Amouei also elaborated on the policy Iran follows in the nuclear talks, saying Iran is pursuing a number of important policies in the talks.

"We are pursuing several important policies in these negotiations. The main policy is to lift all sanctions and to verify the lifting of these sanctions. After that, the Islamic Republic is ready to return to its previous commitments. It was also the deputies' demand that these core policies be carefully followed and that all components be carefully followed by the negotiating team," Amouei pointed out.

The spokesman added, "According to Mr. Araghchi, in these negotiations, the negotiating team of the Islamic Republic of Iran, due to its diplomatic logic regarding the lifting of the sanctions, has been able to bring a large part of the sanctions to a stage where the Western and American sides accept that they should be lifted."

Araghchi has just returned to Iran after concluding the fourth round of the Vienna talks, which are aimed at reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The last meeting of the JCPOA Joint Commission was held last week on



Wednesday. After the meeting, Araghchi said good progress was made during the talks but they needed to return to capitals in order to make some final decisions.

"After two weeks of negotiations, we will have a meeting to conclude, and then the delegations will return to the capitals for consultations," Araghchi told Iran's state media.

He added, "There are a few key issues that need further review and decision-making in the capitals, and we hope that they will take place in the next few days and that we will be able to conclude on these issues in the next round of talks."

According to Araghchi, intensive talks and meetings were held at all levels. He said that Iran and its negotiating partners had bilateral and multilateral talks at expert and political levels. "During these discussions, we tried to reach a conclusion on the issues at stake, either to resolve the differences or to decrease them, and the result is that we are in a position where we can have a general conclusion," he pointed out.

He continued, "There are some key issues that need to be resolved and there is agreement on the rest; the texts have been well written and so now is the time to go back to the capitals and have the final consultations and then continue the negotiations."

Araghchi, along with a delegation of Iranian experts and diplomats, left Tehran for Vienna nearly two weeks ago to start the fourth round of talks over the revival of the 2015 nuclear deal. The fourth round ended last week with all negotiating partners, except for the U.S., lauding progress made in the talks. U.S. Secretary of

State Antony Blinken on Sunday claimed that his country has not seen yet whether Iran will move to comply with its nuclear commitments in order to have sanctions removed even as ongoing talks have shown progress, according to Reuters.

"Iran, I think, knows what it needs to do to come back into compliance on the nuclear side, and what we haven't yet seen is whether Iran is ready and willing to make a decision to do what it has to do. That's the test and we don't yet have an answer," Blinken told ABC News' "This Week With George Stephanopoulos" program.

The comments elicited a response from Araghchi who implied that the ball is now in the U.S.'s court.

"Yesterday I spent 4hrs before our Parliament's National Security/Foreign Policy Commission to brief MPs on Vienna talks. Very tough. But useful. Bottom line is same: Having left JCPOA, U.S. must first provide verifiable sanctions lifting. Iran will then resume full implementation. Is the U.S. ready?" the top Iranian nuclear negotiator said on Twitter.

In late April, Araghchi said the U.S. sanctions on Iran were divided into two categories, one imposed on economic entities and activities while the other imposed on Iranian individuals. The first category seems to have been resolved as the U.S. agreed to lift sectoral sanctions, according to Amouei.

"As regards sectoral sanctions, according to the report presented by [Iranian] negotiators, the logic of the Islamic Republic of Iran has prevailed and the American side has announced that it can lift these sanctions, but in the case of the components of sanctions, there are unresolved issues

to be settled," Amouei said.

On human rights sanctions, Amouei said that these sanctions were tied by the American side to human rights and regional issues.

"Some of the sanctions are still a point of contention in the negotiations, and according to the claims of the West and the American side, and according to Mr. Araghchi, the Americans have tied them to regional and human rights issues. And in this context, the [Iranian] delegation demanded that all sanctions should be lifted. Also, the issue of verification is one of the concerns that should be addressed, and the demand of the Islamic Republic is that sanctions should be lifted fundamentally and practically, and not just on paper," the spokesman stated, adding that "one of the important demands of the deputies in this meeting was the strict implementation of the verification of the lifting of sanctions, and Dr. Araghchi also said that talks are underway in this regard and negotiations are underway in earnest."

Iran has announced that it will continue the Vienna talks until the negotiating partners reach a final agreement.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani stated at a meeting of the Administration's Economic Coordination Headquarters on Sunday that Iran will continue to hold negotiations in Vienna until a final agreement is reached.

He added that, in light of the recent round of talks in Vienna, the U.S. has explicitly stated its willingness to lift sanctions against Iran in accordance with the JCPOA.

Underlining Iran's economic achievements, the president stated that figures showing an increase in Iranian industrial products indicate that the U.S.'s policy of maximum pressure has been ineffective.

According to Rouhani, the U.S. has conceded that its anti-Iran strategies have failed.

On April 6, a new round of discussions to resurrect the JCPOA began in Vienna between Iran and the remaining parties to the 2015 nuclear deal.

The U.S. withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018 and reinstated sweeping economic sanctions that were lifted under the deal. Tehran responded to the U.S. unilateral withdrawal from the JCPOA by gradually reducing nuclear commitments envisioned in the JCPOA. To this end, Iran raised the level of uranium enrichment and installed new, advanced centrifuges at the Fordow and Natanz nuclear facilities.

Ayatollah Khamenei replies to messages from Palestinian resistance leaders

→1 Ayatollah Khamenei also sent a reply to al-Nakhala in which he praised the struggle of the Palestinian people against Israel.

"I received your brotherly letter. The great and victorious jihad of you Palestinian brothers lit up the eyes of your lovers all over the world. Our hearts are with you at the scene of your struggles and our prayers for the continuation of your victories are constant. The divine promise is true when he said: 'Allah will surely help those who help Him', and you will see the ultimate victory with the strength and might of God, God willing," the Leader said, citing verse 40 of the 22nd chapter of the Holy Qur'an.

Following the end of the Israeli war on Gaza, al-Nakhala and Haniyeh sent letters of appreciation to Ayatollah Khamenei.

"Your continuous, uninterrupted, clear support in all areas has played the greatest, most considerable role in the Sayf (Sword) of al-Quds Operation and its achievements. The Resistance fighters entered the battlefield with all



their strength, bravery, and valiant efforts despite the military advantage of the enemy. The resistance and victory of the Palestinian nation would not have been possible without God's help and approval. God's help caused the

meager facilities to become powerful and made those who feared that the enemy may remove them from the earth look great and powerful in the eyes of the enemy," al-Nakhala said in his message. "The Palestinian nation and Resistance inflicted a resounding defeat upon the enemy in a performance that pleased all the believers in the world and showed that the Zionist regime is frailier than a spider's home."

In his letter to Ayatollah Khamenei, Haniyeh said, "We demand immediate action in taking a decisive stance regarding these crimes and serious attempts in mobilizing Arab, Islamic and international support in order to force the Zionist enemy to stop its brutal crimes against the Palestinian nation, lands and sanctities in occupied Quds and particularly the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque."

He demanded that terrorist actions against Gaza and aggressive actions against Quds and the Al-Aqsa Mosque be stopped. Haniyeh also called for a cessation of Judaization policies pursued by Israel in the Palestinian territories.

Iran extends surveillance deal with IAEA

POLITICAL DESK **TEHRAN** — Iran announced on Monday that it will extend a temporary deal with the UN nuclear watchdog for a period of one month to give the Vienna nuclear talks more time to move forward.

"Due to the ongoing technical negotiations on the settlement of safeguards issues between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency, which are taking place in parallel with the Vienna talks, the storage of surveillance cameras data will continue for one month from May 24 so that the necessary opportunity is provided for the progress and conclusion of the negotiations," Secretariat of Iran's Supreme National Security Council said in a statement on Monday.

The top security body also underlined the continued suspension of the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in accordance with a parliamentary nuclear law obligating the Iranian government to restrict cooperation with the IAEA unless the West lifts sanctions on Iran.

The nuclear law stipulates that the Iranian government should take certain nuclear measures such as raising the level of urani-

um enrichment to 20% and suspending the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol if the Western parties failed to honor their obligations under the 2015 nuclear deal, formally called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Iran's deal with the IAEA came a few days before the nuclear law came into force.

Iran and the IAEA reached in February a temporary deal allowing the Agency to continue its monitoring of Iran's nuclear facilities for a period of three months, which expired on Monday. The deal was reached during a two-day visit by IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi to Iran.

On Monday, Grossi was informed of Iran's decision regarding the February deal. "Iran's decision on the continuation of the data-recording for utmost one more month was informed today to @rafaelgrossi the Director General of the IAEA," Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's Ambassador to the Vienna-based international organizations, said in a tweet.

He added, "The pre-recorded data of the past 3 months will still be kept at the AEOI (IRAN). We recommend the negotiating countries to seize the extra opportunity provided by Iran in good faith for the com-

plete lifting of sanctions in a practical and verifiable manner."

Under the February deal, Iran agreed to store the data recorded by surveillance cameras at Iran's nuclear facilities for three months and if the West failed to reach a deal with Tehran on the JCPOA, Iran will delete the stored data.

However, with the Monday decision, the data will be kept for another month to create a more constructive atmosphere in the Vienna talks.

Grossi confirmed that the deal was extended and welcomed the move.

"I am happy that, through our continued dialogue, we were able to agree on this matter today," Director General Grossi said on Monday.

"I welcome this development. The expiration of the Technical Understanding, which enabled the Agency's verification and monitoring, would have been a serious loss at this critical time," he added. "This agreed way forward ensures continuity of knowledge for a limited period of time."

Russia also welcomed the extension of the deal, calling it a "commendable step."

"Breaking News! Iran extended temporary



understandings with IAEA on verification for one month. Commendable step. It will help maintain businesslike atmosphere at the Vienna talks on JCPOA and facilitate a successful outcome of the diplomatic efforts to restore the nuclear deal," Russia's Ambassador to the Vienna-based International Organizations Mikhail Ulyanov said on Twitter.

The extension came amid intensive nuclear talks in Vienna between Iran and the remaining parties to the JCPOA. Nuclear negotiators from Iran and the P4+1 group of countries as well as the U.S. have just concluded the fourth round of talks aimed at reviving the 2015 nuclear deal. They will begin the fifth round soon, which is expected to be decisive.

SPORTS

Iranian women look to make history at FIBA 3x3 Olympic Qualifying

S P O R T S DESK **TEHRAN** — Iran's women's team want to make history in the FIBA 3x3 Olympic Qualifying Tournament but they have a difficult task ahead since a total of 20 teams vying for just three spots.

The competition will be held in Graz, Austria from May 26 to 30.

Iran are grouped in Pool B along with Ukraine, Japan, Australia and Thailand. Each team will play four times and the top two teams in each pool will advance to the knock-out rounds on the final day.

Iran will kick off the prestigious campaign with a match against Japan, ranked 5th in the world, on May 26. The Persians will also play Thailand on the same day.

Iran have been also scheduled to meet Ukraine and Australia on May 28.

Ukraine have won a medal with the women in 3x3 every year from 2015 and 2018 and bring back some of their most iconic players in Ganna Rulyova and Olga Maznichenko. These two know 3x3 like the back of their shooting hand.

The Iranian team consist of Masoumeh Esmaeilzadeh, Shadi Abdolvand, Negin Rasoolipour and Delaram Vakili. The team will be headed by Nika Biklikli.

The 3x3 basketball will make its Olympic debut and the Iranian women want to make a splash in the Olympic Qualifying Tournament.

Iran midfielder Karimi sidelined by groin injury

S P O R T S DESK **TEHRAN** — Iran national football team midfielder Ali Karimi will miss the 2022 World Cup qualification due to a groin injury.

The Al Duhail player is in Tehran to repair his injured groin and cannot accompany Iran at the competition in Bahrain.

Karimi's absence will be a huge blow to Dragan Skocic's team since the player has been in sensational form in the current season.

He is expected to be sidelined for a month.

Iran will travel to Bahrain on May 31 to Manama to participate at the 2022 FIFA World Cup qualifiers.

The 'Persian Leopards' will meet Hong Kong, Bahrain, Cambodia and Iraq, respectively in the qualification.

Iran are third in their group of five, but have a game in hand over their opponents.

They sit on six points from four matches, having won 14-0 at home to Cambodia and 2-0 away to Hong Kong.

Iraq are top on 11 points, with Bahrain second on nine after five matches.

Iranian referees to officiate in FIVB Age-Group World C'ships

S P O R T S DESK **TEHRAN** — Two Iranian referees have been chosen by FIVB to officiate in the FIVB Volleyball Age-Group World Championships later this year.

Narges Afshin, who has gained refereeing experiences in many Asian competitions, will make her presence felt in a world-level tournament as she has been assigned to officiate in the FIVB Volleyball Boys' U-19 World Championship due to be held from August 21 to September 2, 2021 in Iran.

Alireza Gharib has also been appointed to officiate in the FIVB Volleyball Women's U-20 World Championship in the Netherlands and Belgium between July 9 and 18, 2021. After that, he will come back home to prepare himself for being the reserve referee in the FIVB Boys' U-19 World Championship in Iran.

The 46-year-old referee has been designated to blow whistle at many world-class and Asian tournaments including the 2019 World Universiad in Italy and the Asian Championships as well as serving as the reserve referee in FIVB World League and VNL from 2014 to 2019.

Friendly: Bahrain draw with Ukraine

S P O R T S DESK **TEHRAN** — Bahrain football team drew 1-1 with Ukraine in a friendly match Sunday night.

In the match held in Ukrainian city of Kharkiv, Saeed Ebrahim put the visiting team into the lead in the 75th minute.

Viktor Tsygankov leveled the score in the injury time.

Bahrain prepare for the 2022 World Cup qualification, where the team will meet Iraq, Iran, Hong Kong and Cambodia in Group C.

Hélio Sousa's team will also play a friendly match against Malaysia on May 28.

Iran volleyball team leave for Italy

S P O R T S DESK **TEHRAN** — The Iranian national volleyball team departed for Italy Monday morning to participate in the 2021 FIVB Volleyball Men's Nations League (VNL).

The competition is scheduled to take place from 28 May to 27 June.

Iran national volleyball team will open the campaign with a match against Japan on Friday.

In just a few days' time, 32 of the world's top national teams will join the Volleyball Nations League (VNL) 2021 bubble in Rimini, Italy to showcase electrifying volleyball action for millions of fans worldwide.

The bubble will host just over 1,000 participants, from the team delegations to a streamlined number of officials, staff, TV production crew and service providers, across five hotels that will be used exclusive for the event, fivb.com wrote.

"We have a chance to field our young players in the VNL. The competition can prepare us for the Olympics. Several players have a bright future in Iran volleyball. Javad Karimi and Amirhossein Esfandiari must change their mentality if they want to be successful. Saber Kazemi and Bardia Saadat will have a bright future," Vladimir Alekno said last week in news conference held in Tehran.

Local firm inks deal to add 10,000 bpd to South Azadegan oil output

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iranian Petropars Group, **d e s k** which is in charge of developing the South Azadegan oil field, has inked a deal with a local contractor called Dana Energy Company for adding 10,000 barrels per day (bpd) to the field’s output capacity.

The mentioned Engineering, Procurement, Drilling (EPD) contract includes engineering services, procurement, drilling, drilling services, and completion of 10 new wells over a 16-month period, according to Petropars Managing Director Hamidreza Masoudi.



Masoudi stated that based on the deal, nine production wells and a well for discharging unwanted fluids will be dug. “The contractor has been selected through tender and in competition with other competent contractors; based on the contract it is expected that about 40 kilometers of drilling operations will be conducted in this project,” he explained.

Back in July 2020, the Iranian Petroleum Engineering and Development Company (PEDEC) and Petropars Group signed a deal for completing the development of the South Azadegan oilfield in southwestern Iran.

The deal, worth \$961 million plus 11.83 trillion rials (about \$281.66 million), was signed by PEDEC Managing Director Touraj Dehqani and Petropars Head Hamidreza Masoudi at the presence of Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh.

South Azadegan is one of the five major oilfields Iran shares with Iraq at the western part of Iran’s Karoun region, known as West Karoun fields.

West Karoun holds great importance for the country’s oil industry since according to the latest studies, its in-situ deposit is estimated to be 67 billion barrels containing both light and heavy crude oils, and therefore it could have a big impact on Iran’s oil output increases in the future.

Having an estimated 67 billion barrels of in-situ oil, West Karoun fields definitely deserve the spotlight which has been put on them recently.

Iran, Kazakhstan target \$1b in annual trade

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Head of Iran-Kazakhstan Joint Chamber of Commerce said the two countries have the potential to boost their annual trade to \$5 billion, however considering the current conditions the two sides have targeted \$1 billion in trade over a 3-5 year period.

“Iran-Kazakhstan Joint Chamber of Commerce, considering all the existing conditions, has targeted \$1 billion of non-oil trade over a period of three to five years, but the two sides have the potential to boost their annual trade to \$5 billion” Amir Abedi told IRNA on Monday.



“Achieving this goal will increase the country’s production capacity and will lead to economic growth and export development,” he added.

Underling the significance of the Iran-Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) free trade agreement as a great opportunity for increasing the level of trade with the members of the mentioned union, Abedi said: “Countries all around the world conduct trade based on free trade agreements, since such agreements open the doors of the country’s economy to exports and imports and consequently increases economic growth and boost export and production capacities.”

He pointed out that Iran’s geopolitical position, especially with regard to the countries in the region, has provided a good capacity for the development of foreign trade.

“One of the best trade agreements signed with foreign partners to date is the trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union, which was approved by the parliament and the government,” Abedi stated.

Noting that Kazakhstan is the second-largest market in the Eurasian Union, he stressed: “This country has special cultural and historical relations with Iran which can hopefully help increase the economic relations as well.”

The official put the trade between the two countries in the previous Iranian calendar year at \$205 million of which \$168 million was the share of Iranian exports to Kazakhstan and \$37 million was for imports.

According to Abedi, Kazakhstan currently has an annual trade of \$95 billion, of which Iran has the potential to account for five percent.

Power outages in Iran, reasons & solutions

→ 1 Lack of rainfall and severe drought has pushed the water reservoirs of the country’s hydropower plants to critical lows and at the same time illegal cryptocurrency mining across the country has imposed a huge burden on the power grid this year.”

“Last year, the inflow of water into the country’s dam reserves was about 12 billion cubic meters, while this year the figure has fallen to six billion, this means that our water resources have been halved,” he said.

“Water shortage this year has led to a 4000-5000 megawatt decline in the output of hydropower plants which is equal to the total consumption of six big cities.”

On the other hand, the consumption has also increased drastically, so that in comparison to the previous year electricity consumption has risen by 19.2 percent this year.

“On May 22, 2020, electricity consumption in Iran stood at 45,847 megawatts, while this year the consumption has increased to 54,448 megawatts, this means 8,600 megawatts more electricity is consumed compared to the same date in the previous year.”

The increase in the electricity consumption in the current summer peak period is equal to the output of 70 gas power plant units, Salehi stressed.

The reasons

Asked about the reasons for the drastic increase in consumption, Salehi pointed to three major reasons: “cryptocurrency



mining, rise in temperature, and industrial boom.”

According to the official, one of the major reasons for the current year’s power shortage is the activity of thousands of illegal cryptocurrency mining units across the country.

“Based on a research conducted by Cambridge University, the electricity consumption by crypto-miners in Iran has increased 4.5 times since October 2020,” he noted.

“We estimate the electricity consumption by such units to be at least 2,000 megawatts at the moment,” Salehi added.

“Also, the drought has led to the decline of the water levels in agricultural wells so the pumps need to work more hours and consequently consume more electricity; at the same time the early arrival of the heat has also caused a sudden jump in the use of cooling appliances in households and once again led to a drastic rise in consumption, especially in arid regions.”

The industrial sector in the country has also been demanding more electricity in the current year following the boom in the country’s domestic production, he added.

Railway fleet to receive 1,500 renovated wagons, locomotives

→ 1 “Although the figure was less than the previous periods, all the new locomotives and wagons produced in the past two years have been domestically-made, whereas, in the past, renovations were done with imported products.”

The National Productivity Day ceremony, held in Tehran, was attended by senior officials including the head of the National Productivity Organization of Iran and the Head of the Islamic of Iran Railways (known as RAD).

The development of the railway sector is one of the macro policies of the Iranian government as it has been emphasized by the general policies of the country’s national development plans.

Advantages such as consuming less fuel and creating less pollution as well as high safety attaches priority to the railway when compared to some other transportation systems, and makes its development economically viable.

When it comes to railway development, the renovation of existing infrastructures comes also under the spotlight, as according to RAI, currently the average age of the country’s passenger and freight wagons stands at 24 years and there are also rail tracks that have been built over 50 years ago.

In this regard, RAI has been implementing new programs for replacing old wagons and locomotives with new ones to reduce the age of the country’s fleet.

Based on the mentioned programs, some 451 wagons and locomotives valued at 9.33 trillion rials (about \$222.1 million) were added to the country’s railway fleet in seven stages during the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

Back in December 2020, RAI Head Saeed Rasouli announced that the Iranian railway industry has become completely self-reliant in manufacturing freight wagons.



ICCIMA director expounds upon economic issues next government will face

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — In a recent **d e s k** article, Ali Chaghavand, the planning director of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA), expounded upon the economic condition that Iran’s next government will face.

What comes as follows is a summary of his comments.

The new government is scheduled to take office in the middle of the current Iranian calendar year (began on March 21), when economic indicators do not show the desired situation, and the economic and social conditions of the country need decisions with a strong expertise.

What needs urgent action the most, and seems to be the public demand, is to improve living conditions and increase welfare.

The fact is that in recent years, sanctions, currency shocks, and 50 percent inflation have threatened the livelihoods of many households, leading to widespread poverty and inequality.

Rising unemployment has also reduced household purchasing power and welfare in

an unprecedented way.

The conditions described indicate that the level of economic and social welfare in the country has significantly declined due to the threat of factors such as sanctions, chronic inflation, forex jumps, economic instability, barriers to production, market fluctuations and wrong decisions of policymakers in various markets (including in the capital market, which led to the loss of a large part of the people’s capital).

Under these circumstances, and according to the principles of economics, to increase economic prosperity, per capita income, improve living conditions and sustainable employment, there is no way rather than increasing investment, economic growth and production boosting.

Chronic inflation and macroeconomic instability in recent years have led to reduced investment, increased incentives for intermediation, and reduced long-term, productive and employment-generating investment incentives.

Undoubtedly, by increasing investment, creating sustainable economic growth and

improving the cycle of non-oil production and exports, promoting employment and the possibility of increasing wages and improving the welfare of households, and government tax revenues fulfilling livelihood and welfare obligations, steps can be taken to reduce inequality.

Under these circumstances, it seems that more than ever, we need a development-oriented government with a strong expert body that prioritizes economic growth and stability, increased investment, boosted production, and curbed inflation, and creates the conditions for economic stability and planning for productive private sector activity.

The government should make the institutional structure of the economy move in a direction that prevents any brokerage and intermediation activities in various ways, and in return any kind of productive and entrepreneurial activities will receive economic encouragement and bring profit.

It should be a government whose policies and decisions in all monetary, foreign exchange, financial and commercial markets are formulated with the opinion of experts

and in coordination with each other and in order to remove barriers to production, investment and entrepreneurship.

In this direction, resolving tensions in international relations, improving the business environment, creating economic stability, removing barriers and cumbersome regulations, limiting market intervention, and removing entrepreneurial barriers should be a priority in the next government’s plans.

Undoubtedly, in order to achieve the goal of prosperity of production and investment, it is necessary to direct the facilities of banks to production and productive activities and entrepreneurship.

Also, strengthening the principles of the capital market in order to support and finance production should be a priority in the plans of the next government and facilitating the conditions for companies to enter the stock market, and preventing any interference in this market and injection of budgetary resources for artificial growth of the stock market’s index should be pursued.

Modern irrigation system implemented in 4,500 hectares of Ardebil farmlands

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Modern irrigation system is implemented in 4,500 hectares of farmlands in Ardebil province, in the northwest of Iran, a provincial official announced.

While visiting some modern irrigation projects of Ardebil, Akbar Behnamjou, the governor-general of the province, said the area under this irrigation system has risen to 4,500 hectares from 500 hectares in the province over the past three years.

The official said that the area under modern irrigation system is planned to reach 15,000 hectares in the province, adding that the Agriculture Department of Ardebil is trying that the figure of 6,000 hectares will be materialized this Iranian calendar year (ends on March 2022).

He considered the reduction of water used in lands, creating a suitable environment for pest control and



improving productivity as the advantages of the new irrigation system.

According to Behnamjou, the implementation of modern

irrigation projects will save about 40 percent of agricultural water and will increase productivity by 15 percent.

With the measures taken regarding modern irrigation, this province has been upgraded from the last ranks of the country to the first ranks in the implementation of this system, the official further underlined.

In last October, the director of Iranian Agriculture Ministry’s modern irrigation systems development plan had said that the implementation of this plan was going to increase the irrigation efficiency of the farmlands to 44 percent which will increase the production capacity of agricultural products by 30 percent.

“Over the past three years, each year, an average of 150,000 hectares of farmlands have been equipped with modern irrigation systems, and we have witnessed a 300 percent jump”, Abbas Zare said at the time.

TEDPIX falls 12,000 points on Monday

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, **d e s k** the main index of Tehran stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 12,189 points to 1.095 million on Monday.

Over 4.032 billion securities worth 28.235 trillion rials (about \$672.2 million) were traded at the TSE on Monday.

The first market’s index fell 12,799 points, and the second market’s index dropped 11,284 points.

TEDPIX lost 29,000 points, or 2.5 percent, in the past Iranian calendar week.

The index closed at 1.154 million points on Wednesday (the last working day of the week).

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

Sometimes it takes a volcano to start the healing

➔ 1 Those who allowed it to be implanted and fester, if now also entrusted to change it, must be put on a very short leash. And the sooner the cleanup starts, the earlier the healing can begin. Joe Biden came as a result of 4 years of Trumpism. He was repeatedly not America's first choice, but rather, finally, the alternative for a majority who went to the voting booth convinced that anyone is better than Trump. Just any one!

Biden will be doing himself and America a disservice if he allows himself to be dominated by the media hype now predictably proclaiming him "the" savior. Building that kind of high expectations is dangerous, and Biden has the experience to hopefully not fall into that trap. Rather than the media, Biden must focus on the mission ahead. The challenges facing him are formidable. America must change, domestically and globally.

Biden's own inauguration would not have been possible without the highest security measures that were put in place following the attack on America's legislative buildings. Despite Biden's claims, it was not democracy that won the day, but the more than 20,000 armed soldiers deployed to lockdown the capital city that enabled Biden to be inaugurated. That is more than the American soldiers currently deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan, combined. For the first time since its civil war, America's vast war machine was pointing its guns towards itself inside its own streets and not towards a foreign enemy overseas, real or imagined. It wasn't a foreign power or "Islamic" fundamentalists that threatened to derail America's peaceful transfer of power, but a white Christian American mob led by white Christian American leaders. Ironically, the army that stood guard to save American democracy and its constitution, and were prepared to die for that cause included many from the religious and ethnic minorities who are often the victims of racial profiling and discrimination!

The image of America is represented by the likes of Raytheon whose missiles have killed thousands in weddings, funerals and even school buses.



The author is a former president of TAWQ, a none partisan Yemeni democratic alliance. He currently lives in exile.

Ironically, the army that stood guard to save American democracy and its constitution, and were prepared to die for that cause included many from the religious and ethnic minorities who are often the victims of racial profiling and discrimination!

In Yemen, former military strongman and president, Ali Abdullah Saleh used to claim that the military is the safety valve. A claim that I have always felt corrupted everything we must stand for. It is the institutions of governance that must be the safety valve of our political process. On January 20 of 2021, in Washington, which is one of the citadels of the institutions of governance, it was the military that saved the day to ensure the peaceful transfer of power. The elected political, judicial and legislative institutions of governance and the democratic political process they represent had progressively failed to protect the country. What precedent that mobilization has set in motion remains to be seen? What is clear, however, is that America is not out of woods yet. Not by a long shot. And Americans cannot afford the deception of, again, being led by leaders and America's powerful mercenary media into believing otherwise. There are more than 70 million Americans, about 20% of that country's population, many armed and ready, who voted for Donald Trump and his fascist call to MAGA.

If Biden is serious about healing America internally and rebuilding the nation that 77% of

its people feel has become bad (according to a CNN poll), then he must change how Americans view themselves. The decades-old deception that Americans have been systematically fed has to be replaced by bringing home its current realities and the need for change. The age-old mantra, "the first step to solving a problem is to recognize its existence" has never been truer or more profoundly needed. Anything else is destructive.

Globally, Biden must lead America back to America where it is needed most. He talked of engagement and partnership. He must, if he wants to save America's global image, make that new narrative a commitment that is translated into practical policy. He will find an audience willing to give America, yet again, one more opportunity to move to the right side of history. We are eager to engage and partner with America, but not to be bullied by it. Biden has been part of that leadership that brought about America destructive foreign policies. He could now be the healer, the leader who leads America to changing its course and build partnerships. Dictatorship is imposed by military muscle and thuggery.

Leadership is earned through engagement and partnership, when and if needed. Biden might be forgiven for telling his domestic audience "we have never failed". Whether those "feel good" words send the right message to a nation in desperate need of solutions for past policies, is for Americans themselves to determine. But outside the U.S., in every one of its brutal misadventures, from East Asia to the Middle East (West Asia) to South America, Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and Yemen, America failed miserably. Because people, by nature, reject intervention and all those who come to lead or tell them how to live. We may despise our own rulers but we may despise more those who come unsolicited to tell us how to revolt against our rulers. Especially when they come with a self-serving agenda of their own. In these places America is not viewed as a leader as much as a bully. The image of America is represented by the likes of Raytheon whose missiles have killed thousands in weddings, funerals and even school buses. And by Erik Prince whose mercenaries brutally killed civilians then obtained a presidential pardon for doing so. Going forward, neither Biden's presidency nor America's recovery process can afford to allow its worst characters to be America's global ambassadors.

Biden and America must make a choice. They can no longer at once be a global power demanding the world's respect and the greatest purveyor of violence in the world by military invasions and arms selling to the world's most ruthless despots.

Neither can relations between nations be sustained if they are only built with ruling tyrants rather than peoples.

The two opposites do not mix.

If Biden is serious about healing America internally and rebuilding the nation that 77% of its people feel has become bad (according to a CNN poll), then he must change how Americans view themselves.

Biden admin. stoking political, military tensions inside and abroad: American writer

By Reza Moshfegh

TEHRAN — Nothing that Joe Biden has created chaos inside the U.S. in his early months of presidency, an American writer says that the U.S. administration is sparking political tensions around the world.

"In mere months, the Biden Administration has unleashed mayhem in major American cities while stoking political and military tensions too many places worldwide," Charles Ortel tells the Tehran Times.

The American investor and writer interested in lasting peace adds that "unwise and irresponsible government spending initiatives, as well as punitive and likely ineffective tax proposals, are crushing the value of the U.S. dollar."

When it comes to homeland security, observers point to 14,400 gun-related homicides in 2019.

Killings involving a gun accounted for nearly three-quarters of all homicides in the U.S. in that year.

That's a larger proportion of homicides than in Canada, Australia, England and Wales, and many other countries.

Nowhere in the world is gun control more controversial than in the United States, where gun possession is constitutionally protected but where murders (including mass murders) committed with guns are extremely common; the United States has by far the highest homicide-by-firearm rate among developed countries. Proponents of increased gun control in the United States argue that limiting access to guns will save lives and reduce crime; opponents insist that it would actually do the opposite by preventing law-abiding citizens from defending themselves against armed criminals.

Ortel, an opponent to gun control, argues that "when it comes to statistics in the United States about violent crime (see FBI data, for example), a crime involving illegally owned guns is a concern, but crime (excluding suicides) involving legally owned guns is not significant."

Following is the text of the interview:

People in the world cannot understand why Republicans in the U.S. are opposed to gun control while once in while, Americans face murder cases with guns. Is that a matter of financial links with gun lobbyists or cartels?

Across the world, crime is a constant.

In America, we have a constitutionally protected right to "keep and bear arms". Going back into our history, this right was enshrined not merely to assist residents in protecting themselves from criminals but also as a check against absolutist tendencies of

some public servants who may decide; instead, they are "rulers".

When it comes to statistics in the United States about violent crime (see FBI data, for example), a crime involving illegally owned guns is a concern, but crime (excluding suicides) involving legally owned guns is not significant.

Certainly, gun manufacturers profit from the sale of legal guns. But given movements to defund police forces and rising violent crime, rising demand for legal guns is natural and expected.

What changes could Trump bring to the Republican party? Some observers say Trump is directing Republicans instead of following their principles. Can we describe Trump as a Republican, basically?

For decades, "country club" Republicans have worked hand-in-glove with many multinational companies to outsource jobs and incomes internationally. Some have also welcomed illegal immigration, thinking that presence of potential undocumented workers will put downward pressure upon wages.

One key element in Trump's thinking is that government policies should promote job and income growth inside our own vast market, which remains the largest in the world by far. This means simplifying supply chains inside the United States and not scattering these through chokepoints worldwide.

A second key element is to reduce our foreign military entanglements. After all, many key American allies are today rich nations and not challenged as they were in 1945.

A third key plank is to "drain the swamp" by reforming the ways in which tax-exempt entities shape narratives and trade cash for influence across vast swaths of the media, academia and the nonprofit sector.

How do you assess Biden's performance in his first 100 days? Was he successful in bringing calm and stability back to the U.S. political scene?

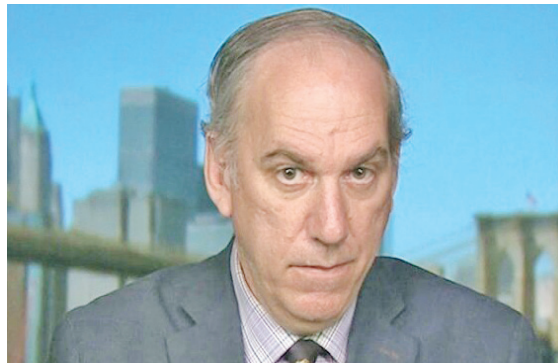
In mere months, the Biden Administration has unleashed mayhem in major American cities while stoking political and military tensions in too many places worldwide.

Meanwhile, unwise and irresponsible government spending initiatives, as well as punitive and likely ineffective tax proposals, are crushing the value of the U.S. dollar.

Already, Jimmy Carter's woeful record over four years from 1977 to 1981 is starting to look good by comparison.

Some observers say that America (as a society and government) tends to endorse discrimination inside and abroad. Do you think that America can lead the globe through discriminatory policies?

Quite the opposite. In America, people of all backgrounds



have abundant opportunities to follow their dreams. There are countless examples of poor people facing desperate challenges who rise in short periods of time to great success.

Outside our borders, American governments under each party have had mixed records, particularly since 1989. Here, we have done a poor job of promoting true national interests and have been too quick to embrace corrupt, unregulated, globalist institutions.

What is your comment on American exceptionalism? Do Americans consider their country a part of the world that needs cooperation, or is there a kind of supremacist attitude among American politicians? It seems that Trump and most Republicans follow such a policy.

The world might be much better off if we solved problems one person, then one family, one neighborhood, one city, one state, and one nation at a time, rather than rushing to try to solve "global" problems.

Looking at U.S. data, for example, Americans spent more money on "government" than all but a handful of nations generate annually on total economic activity.

All nations have important moments in history and the potential to contribute greatly to the human experience. However imperfect it may have been, the American governance model, enshrined in our Constitution, was positively exceptional.

Could we and others do more? Of course.

The foundation for true success starts inside each of us, not at global Symposia or in slogan-slinging. To the project of self-improvement and renewal, may each of us soon return.

For the first time, French foreign minister uses 'apartheid' to refer to Israel

➔ 1 The Israeli regime intensified its attacks on Palestinians in the holy occupied city of Jerusalem al-Quds with the start of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan. The escalation saw Israeli forces assaulting Palestinian worshippers and preventing them from gathering and performing their religious duties.

Gaza rose up in protest against the atrocities, something to which the regime responded with ramped-up military attacks. The Gaza-based resistance fighters fired thousands of rockets against the occupied territories, eventually forcing the regime to accept a ceasefire on Friday.

The last round of the so-called peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians collapsed in April 2014, with Israeli settlements being cited among major reasons behind the failure. Settlements are considered illegal under international law as they are built on occupied Palestinian lands.

Myanmar's Suu Kyi appears in court for first time since February coup

Myanmar's deposed leader Aung San Suu Kyi has for the first time appeared in person at a court hearing on a myriad of charges brought against her by the military junta, which overthrew her government in a February coup.

Suu Kyi was apparently in good health and held a meeting with her legal team for about 30 minutes before the hearing began on Monday, her lawyer, Thae Maung Maung, said.

Suu Kyi, aged 75, is one of almost 4,000 people jailed since the coup. She made an apparent reference to her National League for Democracy party, which Myanmar's junta-appointed election commission plans to dissolve.

At the meeting with her defense team, Suu Kyi stressed that "the party was established for the people so the party will be there as long as the people are," her lawyer told Reuters.

Meanwhile, the European Union (EU) denounced the planned dissolving of the party by the election commission over alleged fraud in the November election.

"If the Commission were to proceed with this proposal, it would show yet again the junta's blatant disregard for the will of Myanmar's people and for due legal process," a spokeswoman for the EU's executive commission said in a statement.

Myanmar has experienced deep civil chaos since the February 1 coup, with daily protests, marches, and strikes nationwide against the junta.

The military has responded with a heavy-handed crackdown, leading to the deaths of at least 815 people.

In the latest flare-up of violence, anti-junta rebels seized a police station in Moebay town, Shan state, east of the capital Naypyidaw on Sunday and allegedly killed dozens of security forces and captured another four, following heavy fighting in Myanmar's eastern fringe.

Fearing Iran 'attacks,' Saudis seek 'reassurance' from Washington, U.S. general suggests

Saudi Arabia seeks "reassurance" from the United States, says a top U.S. general, citing Iran.

Chief of the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) Marine Gen. Frank McKenzie made the allegations to reporters following him during a visit to the kingdom on Sunday.

"I think they want reassurance that they're going to be helped if they're attacked by Iran, and they want help against the continuing attacks," claimed the top U.S. general in West Asia.

The commander further suggested that the U.S. support for the monarchy is not only about American military equipment like American Patriot missile systems.

"The point that I made today and we continue to make it all the time is: It's not actually the types of equipment that are here, it's maximizing the use of the more than 20 Patriot batteries that you do have the interoperable with us, maximizing those capabilities, so that if trouble occurred, we can certainly come back in very quickly to help our Saudi friends," McKenzie alleged.

'US smart games!'

Enumerating even more Saudi concerns, McKenzie further brought up Yemeni retaliatory attacks.

"They're under constant bombardment from Yemen, with a variety of ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and small UAS (unmanned aerial systems) they're very concerned about. We want to help them with that," he claimed.

He also promised that Washington would continue its military presence there.

"I think we're still going to have a presence here. It might not look exactly like the presence it was five or seven years ago where we get hundreds and thousands of forces here, but I think we're going to play very smart games to leverage what we have," he said.

Tehran has time and again asserted that the Saudi-led aggression and blockade against Yemen must end as there is no military solution to the ongoing crisis.

Resistance News

Irish parliament to vote on motion to expel Israeli ambassador

INTERNATIONAL **TEHRAN** — The motion points to Israel's war crimes against Palestinians, ethnic cleansing and illegal settlement expansion, and says "the Israeli ambassador's presence in Ireland is untenable in these circumstances."

A motion to expel Israel's ambassador from Ireland is expected to come to a vote in Ireland's parliament this week.

Eleven legislators from four parties submitted the motion early last week, before the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Gaza took effect.

The motion states that "over 60 children have been murdered by the [IDF,]" and that "the current escalation of violence was instigated by the attempt to ethnically cleanse 28 Palestinian families from the Sheikh Jarrah area of Jerusalem."

In fact, in Operation Guardian of the Walls, the IDF struck Gaza over 1,000 times and killed only about 60 civilians in total.

The motions' lead sponsor, Gino Kerry of People Before Profit, a socialist party, wrote a blog post about the motion on the PBP's website expressing outrage that "the EU has never once ever envisaged to sanction apartheid Israel economically and hold them accountable for war crimes."

U.S. committed to support Israel: Blinken

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken says the Biden administration remains committed to providing Israel with what it needs to defend itself following the regime's recent brutal airstrikes on Palestinians.

Presided Joe Biden "has been equally clear we're committed to giving Israel the means to defend itself," Blinken said in an

interview with ABC News program This Week on Sunday.

He also pointed to what he claimed to be the Biden administration's "relentless, determined, but quiet diplomacy" in the region, saying it's "what got us to where we needed to be."

His remarks came as progressive

U.S. legislators, including Democratic Congresswomen Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar, have criticized Biden for his unequivocal support for Israel during its recent bombing campaign on the Gaza Strip.

The Israeli regime intensified its attacks on Palestinians in the holy city with the start

of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan. The escalation saw Israeli forces assaulting Palestinian worshippers and preventing them from gathering and performing their religious duties.

Later in the month, the regime tried to evict Palestinians from the city's Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood.

Newly-unearthed Urartian inscription to go on show in northwest Iran

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – A millennia-old Urartian inscription will go on display at the city of Qarahziyaeddin where the object was excavated weeks ago.

Attributed to the Urartu kingdom (860 BC – 590 BC), the inscription was discovered in a survey conducted in the ruined Bastam citadel of West Azarbaijan province, CHTN reported.



The Urartu kingdom rose to power in the mid-9th century BC, but it went into a gradual decline and was eventually conquered by the Iranian Medes in the early 6th century BC. The Urartians were succeeded in the area in the 6th century BC by the Armenians.

Urartu, an ancient country of southwest Asia centered in the mountainous region southeast of the Black Sea and southwest of the Caspian Sea. Today the region is divided among Armenia, eastern Turkey, and northwestern Iran. As mentioned in

Assyrian sources from the early 13th century BC, Urartu enjoyed considerable political power in the Middle East in the 9th and 8th centuries BC.

According to Encyclopedia Iranica, the territory of the ancient kingdom of Urartu extended over the modern frontiers of Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and the Republic of Armenia. Its center was the Armenian highland between Lake Van, Lake Urmia, and Lake Sevan. Urartian archeological finds in modern Iran including castles, settlements, water channels and other water constructions, rock chambers, rock graves, stelae, rock inscriptions, and building inscriptions.

Museum of traditional clothing, textiles opens in Birjand

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – On Sunday, a museum of traditional clothing and textiles, which is the first of its kind in the country, was opened in the eastern city of Birjand, the capital of South Khorasan province.

Embedded within the Qajar-era (1789-1925) Pardeli Mansion, the museum aims at reviving local clothing and some patterns, which are on the verge of oblivion, IRNA reported.



A vast exhibition hall, a traditional textile weaving workshop, photography studio, and tailoring house are some of the parts of this museum, in which all kinds of handmade textiles such as silk, satin, and canvas are on display.

Due to its position, South Khorasan province is home to different ethnic groups with their own traditional costumes, however, nowadays using the traditional clothes in this province is restricted to some villages.

Birjand is known for weaving a particular type of socks known as Seven-color socks. As far as local clothing goes, the village of Chenesht is famous in the province.

South Khorasan is home to many historical and natural attractions such as Birjand Castle, Dragon Cave, Furg Citadel, and Polond Desert. It is also known for its famous rugs as well as its saffron and barberry which are produced in almost all parts of the province.

Mount Shahvar in Semnan wins national heritage status

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – Mount Shahvar, the highest peak in the north-central province of Semnan, has recently been inscribed on the national heritage list.

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



Located north of Shahroud, the 3900-meter Mount Shahvar is one of the popular natural sites of the region.

The main population centers of Semnan province lie along the ancient Silk Road (and modern-day Imam Reza Expressway), linking Rey (Tehran) with Khorasan (Mashhad). While few visitors spend much time in the area, driving through you can easily seek out several well-preserved caravanserais (notably Dehnamak and Ahowan), cisterns (the Cafe Apenbar in Garmsar is a special treat), and ruined mud citadels (Padeh is lumpy but fascinating). The large, bustling cities of Semnan, Damghan, and Shahrud (Bastam) all have a small selection of historic buildings and Semnan has a fine old covered bazaar.

Having an opulent tourist circuit with 24 UNESCO World Heritage sites, of which the vast Hyrcanian Forest and Lut Desert are among the natural properties, Iran seeks to acquire a greater share of the global tourism industry by 2025.

Khorramshahr: a prime destination for war tourism

→ 1 The third of Khordad (May 24) marks the anniversary of the liberation of Khorramshahr from Saddam Hussein's invading army back in May 1982 when Iranians laid another foundation for sacrifice, resistance, and final victory with their blood. Iranian forces recaptured the southwestern strategic port city in a landmark operation code-named Beit ol-Moqaddas.

According to Sajad Goharpak, the tourism chief of Khorramshahr, 25 spots have so far been identified in the port city which makes it a noteworthy destination when it comes to war tourism. "Khorramshahr is so great that right now we are facing a museum city because countless incidents took place in every neighborhood of the city."

For now, the country has largely been restored, and very few signs of the war, apart from street names and murals of the martyrs on some streets, can be found. These are the areas where domestic travelers usually go by tour packages are called "Rahiane Nour" ("The Path of Light").



For those interested to visit an epitome of frontlines elsewhere from the former battlefields, Tehran embraces several des-

tinations; the Sacred Defense Museum, Tehran Peace Museum, and Behesht-e Zahra—a graveyard where many of the

martyrs are buried. The epic-scale Sacred Defense Museum does bargain something different in modern Iranian history where you can delve into wreckages of rockets, tanks, rifles, vessels, mortars, radars, air defense systems, grounded jets, military supplies, and artillery pieces amongst others. The museum is equipped with a state-of-the-art visual system including projections and video walls, while audio recordings relevant to each period contribute to its charm. The recreation of the liberation of the city of Khorramshahr by the means of virtual exhibits and video projections is amongst the main features of the museum where stands a replica of the Khorramshahr mosque adorned with creamy and turquoise patterned tiles.

Some tourists say they are not just interested in visiting live or former war-zones out of curiosity. What motivates them is guessing the stories of people who lost their lives, being displaced, wounded, captured, or lost their loved ones in those bitter moments of the history of mankind.

Iran could become hub for 'vaccine tourism': minister

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – Iran has the potential to become a destination for vaccine tourism regarding considerable efforts the country is making to develop series of domestic COVID-19 vaccines, the tourism minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan said.

"There is a capacity to add 'vaccine tourism' to the 'health tourism basket' of the country after all [Iranian] people are receive vaccines.... and the move could fuel a boom in the tourism sector of the country."

"In the near future, we will possess the capacity to provide foreigner travelers with the COVID-19 vaccine, especially those from the neighboring countries," Mounesan said.

The Islamic Republic is among the first countries which started developing a vaccine against coronavirus, and now four companies are endeavoring to release their products by September and inoculate the whole population. Out of 16 vaccine production cases, four cases have received a code of ethics and are undergoing clinical trial; it is hoped that another three to four cases will succeed in receiving license



by September.

According to available data compiled by the tourism ministry, the number of foreign visitors to Iran plunged 94% in the first nine months of the past Iranian calendar year (ended March 20, 2021) as the coronavirus pandemic

takes a heavy toll on the tourism industry.

The coronavirus epidemic has ruined more than 1.5 million jobs in Iran's travel sector, tourism minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan said in December. "Over 1.5 million jobs have been lost in the tourism sector of Iran due to the COVID-19 disease.... Many of the tourism-insiders are now unemployed or they are staying at home," according to Mounesan.

Tourism [industry of Iran] was growing before the corona [outbreak], its revenues reached \$11.7 billion in 2019, which accounted for 2.8% of GDP, near the average share of tourism in the world GDP, which was 3.2 percent, the minister explained.

The ancient land embraces hundreds of historical sites such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 24 being inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, the country aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025.

Restoration work begins on ancient Tepe Rivi

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – Portions of the ancient Tepe Rivi in northeastern North Khorasan province has undergone rehabilitation, the director of the historical site has announced.

"Restoration of the ruined structures, particularly those which date from the Achaemenid era (550-330 BC), is top on agenda for us", Mohammad Javad Heidari said on Monday.

So far, more than 500 square meters of historical structures dating back to the Achaemenid period and Parthian era (247 BC - 224 CE) have been restored across the site, the official added.

Archaeological research works in Rivi started in 2012. Since then teams of Iranian and German archaeologists accessed remains of settlements from the Bronze and Iron Age, the Achaemenid (550-330 BC), the Parthian (247 BC - 224 CE), the Sassanid dynasty (224-651 CE), and the early Islamic period.

The teams have completed seven archaeological seasons across the site and based on a new agreement their cooperation will be continued for the next five years.

Experts in the fields of archeology, geography, geophysics, geomorphology, and ecology from the [Ludwig Maximilian] University of Munich; the [Free] University of Berlin; the University of Tehran; and Shahid Beheshti University have worked in the previous rounds of research.

Based on the studies, various architectural and archaeological evidence from the Parthian and the Sassanid era were discovered in the Rivi site, which is situated in Maneh-Samalqan county of North Khorasan province.


The evidence, according to Mohammad-Javad Jafari who headed of the fifth season of archaeological excavation at Rivi site, indicates the sequence of settlement in the area in the aftermath of the Achaemenid era, according to the Archaeology News Network.

In October 2020, a number of historical clay stamps, estimated to date from the Achaemenid and Parthian eras, were discovered in the ancient site.

"The seals were found alongside clay urns in a large hall and the seals are imprinted in a variety of geometric patterns [depicting] plants, animals, and human figures. Studying the findings can yield valuable information on the economy, culture, and arts of the ancient societies," Jafari said.

"These stamps represent the widespread and complicated economic relations that people of the time had with other communities in such a way that made them bring together and store goods."

Evidence suggests that residents of this area sealed the urns that were loaded with particular goods then tied them with ropes, the archaeologist said.




Agricultural Support Services Company

INVITATION TO RENEWAL OF ONE STEP INTERNATIONAL TENDER

Second Announcement

55/00/4827

24/05/2021



Ministry of Jihad-e-Agriculture

AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES COMPANY

Agricultural Support Services Company, hereinafter will be referred as ASSC, a subsidiary of the Ministry of Agricultural Jihad of I.R. of Iran, is considering the purchase of 2x40000±5% MTS of Granular Potassium Sulphate (**GSOP**) through renewal of one step international tender.

All of the qualified and interested companies are invited to receive tender documents from **Monday** dated **24/5/2021** until **Sunday** dated **30/5/2021** (5 working days) from our purchasing committee (located at the 9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi st., Tehran, Iran).

The bidders are requested to submit their letters of introduction, along with remittance bill of I.Rials 1,200,000 to ASSC's account no. 4001039704005791 with SHEBA no. IR250100004001039704005791 at the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran through payment order of SATNA or PAYA with the 30 character identification code of 35803978226350065000000000000006.

The bidders are required to submit their sealed and stamped envelopes containing offers latest on **Tuesday** dated **29/6/2021** at **10:00 AM** to our security office, located on the 8th floor. Meanwhile the meeting for the opening of the envelopes will be on **Tuesday** dated **29/6/2021** at **2:00 PM** with the presence of bidders' representatives in our purchasing committee (9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi St., Tehran, Iran).

1-The bid bond value should be at € 262671 or in equal value of that in any other foreign currencies, except US dollars, based on Telegraphic Transfer rate in Sana rate website, www.sanarate.ir. It should be noted that this site lists the Currency Transactions, executed in Integrate Currency Transactions System [Nima website] on 20/05/2021 for each lot of 40000 MTS ± 5% in bank guarantee.

2 – The bidders are permitted to submit the bid bond in Iranian Rial. Therefore, the value of bid bond for each lot of 40000 MTS ± 5% will be IR 66109000000, which must be only submitted by the bidders.

3 - After approval of ASSC's Financial Manager, the bidders are permitted to use their previous and definite outstanding claims as the bid bond.

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

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

Biotechnology projects aim to save \$1.44 billion

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – The Biotechnology Development Council will launch 129 production projects with the aim of saving up to \$1.44 billion of foreign currency, IRNA reported on Monday.

The projects include the production of 27 biological medicine, 12 vaccine development, and 90 pharmaceutical raw materials through knowledge-based companies. The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology will also support the plans financially and commercially.

The Biotechnology Development Council is also working to accelerate the implementation of such programs by concluding a memorandum of understanding with capable companies to set production priorities, accelerate and lead start-ups, and provide financial support.

Currently, over 5,700 knowledge-based companies are active in Iran, manufacturing diverse products to meet the needs of the domestic market while saving large amounts of foreign currency, in addition to export the items.

The fields of aircraft maintenance, steel, pharmaceuticals, and medical equipment, oil, and gas are among the sectors that researchers in technology companies have engaged in, leading to import reduction.



Irani ranks 12th in biotechnology

Iran is ranked 12th in the world and first in West Asia in terms of biotechnology, as 9.5 percent of the income of knowledge-based companies and more than 60 percent of their exports are related to biotechnology.

Foreign exchange savings of \$1 billion per year by producing 22 biopharmaceuticals, gaining the first rank in biotechnology products and vaccines in West Asia, and the presence among the top five biotechnology

producers in Asia are among the country's achievements, Mostafa Ghanei, secretary of the biotechnology development office of the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, said in October 2020.

So far, 27 biotechnology medicines, 12 vaccine projects, 90 pharmaceutical raw materials, and 55 projects in agriculture and food security have been implemented in order to gain a 3 percent market share and biotechnology assistance to the development

of the economy, he explained.

Some 8 major companies are responsible for managing the country's 117 priority products in the fields of biopharmaceuticals, pharmaceutical raw materials, vaccines, probiotics, equipment, and chemical drugs, he emphasized.

Pharmaceutical capabilities

Mohammad Reza Shانهsaz, head of the Food and Drug Administration, said in January that the Iranian pharmaceutical industry and scientists are capable of producing any kind of medicine over a two-year period.

Health Minister Saeed Namaki said that some 97 percent of the whole medicine consumed in the country is produced domestically and only 3 percent is imported.

Sourena Sattari Vice President for Science and Technology, also said that "Iran plays a leading role in the field of biotechnology in the region, with the production of 24 biotech medicine.

Ismail Ghaderifar, head of the center for strategic technologies development of the vice presidency of science and technology added that under sanctions in the most difficult conditions, Iran combatted the pandemic and knowledge-based companies could make the country independent. Moreover, they managed to produce pharmaceutical items required by the country's health system.

UN appreciates Iran for vaccinating foreign nationals

→ **1** Mehdi Mahmoudi, director-general of citizens and immigrants of the Ministry of Interior said that during these 40 years, Iran has done good work in various fields of education, employment, vocational training, health, and emergencies for refugees with the cooperation of international organizations.

And after 40 years of hosting, we hope to see the dignified return of Afghans and other nationals to their homelands, he said, calling on the countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq, to provide the right conditions for their people to return back.

The population of Afghan immigrants residing in Iran is about two to three million, some of whom sometimes have problems with identity cards or do not have identification codes, he said.

Some 120,000 refugees residing in Iran are now covered by health insurance, Mahmoudi noted.

So far, no vaccine has not been imported by the United Nations to Iran for refugees, but they have announced their readiness to import 6 million doses through the first phase, he added.



On May 9, the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) asked the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to provide 2 million doses of coronavirus vaccine to be used for Afghan refugees.

Living conditions of foreign nationals in Iran

At the end of 2018, Iran hosted close to one million refugees, making it the sixth-largest refugee host country in the world. The country was also the eighth largest refugee-hosting

country in the world in 2019, hosting 951,142 Afghan refugees and 28,268 Iraqi refugees, according to the UNHCR.

One of the largest and most protracted urban refugee populations in the world is living in Iran; about 97 percent of refugees live in urban and semi-urban areas, while three percent are residing in 20 refugee resorts run by the UNHCR's main government counterpart.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, undocumented Afghans have access to free primary health services and similarly free COVID-19 related testing, treatment, and hospitalization, just like nationals.

Despite the challenges, Iran has continued to generously give refugees access to education and health services. Iran is one of the handfuls of countries in the world that offer refugees the option to enroll in national health insurance for essential secondary and tertiary public health services in the same way as Iranian nationals.

The national insurance scheme allows for free COVID-19 treatment and hospitalization. It also subsidizes the cost of surgeries, dialysis, radiology, laboratory tests, outpatient care, and more.

First COVID-19 vaccine produced by private sector starts clinical trial

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – The first coronavirus vaccine made by the private sector in Iran succeeded in receiving the code of ethics and entered the phase of clinical studies.

The vaccine is recombinant protein-based manufactured by Sinagen Research and Production Company, Iranian Food and Drug Administration spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour said.

So far, five homegrown vaccines have received the code of ethics and began the human trial, he further added, IRNA reported on Monday.

The total number of vaccines injected in the country reached 2,867,966 doses, according to the Ministry of Health.

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

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

Iran is also producing vaccines jointly with three countries of Cuba, Russia, and Australia, which may also be released by September.

Domestic vaccines

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

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

Meanwhile, a vaccine developed by the Razi Vaccine and Serum Research Institute (Razi Cov Pars) is expected to become the second Iranian-made vaccine to be administered among

the population in early August; which started the clinical trial on February 27.

Iran has also successfully completed the first phase of the human trial for Fakhra vaccine, the third domestically developed COVID-19 vaccine, named after nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh (he was assassinated in November 2020 near Tehran), that was unveiled and started the clinical trial on March 16.

"Osvd-19", the fourth domestic vaccine produced by Osvah Pharmaceutical Company is also undergoing human trials, which will also be available in early September.

Iranian physician awarded Florence Nightingale medal 2021

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – Iranian physician, Seyed Nasser Emadi Cheshmi, has won the Florence Nightingale Medal 2021, which recognizes exceptional courage and devotion to victims of armed conflict or natural disaster.

Emadi Cheshmi is a volunteer physician and a member of MSF (Doctors Without Borders) teams in Africa and West Asian countries, who was awarded the Florence Nightingale Medal in the 48th edition of the event.

Studied dermatology at the University of Tehran, he is now a faculty member at Tehran University of Medical Sciences.

His participation in various medical emergency teams

in Iran, Iraq, Kenya, Tanzania, Somalia, Ghana, Nigeria, Burundi, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Afghanistan brought him the well-deserved award.

At the Eighth International Conference of Red Cross Societies in London in 1907, the assembled delegates decided to create a commemorative International Nightingale Medal to be awarded to those distinguished in the nursing field. Subsequently, the Florence Nightingale Medal was instituted in 1912 by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

It is the highest international distinction a nurse can achieve and is awarded to nurses or nursing aides for "ex-

ceptional courage and devotion to the wounded, sick or disabled or to civilian victims of a conflict or disaster" or "exemplary services or a creative and pioneering spirit in the areas of public health or nursing education".

The Florence Nightingale Medal Commission comprises several members and staff of the ICRC, several of whom are nursing professionals, and the head nurse of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. A representative of the International Council of Nurses also participates in the work of the Commission.

In 2015, Iranian nurse Ramin Kohankhaki was awarded the Florence Nightingale Medal by the National Red Cross.

ENGLISH IN USE

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A ← → ج

Special plan prepared to attract overseas Iranian researchers

The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology has prepared a special plan to attract scientists and researchers living abroad, IRNA news agency reported on Saturday.

The project aims to promote "supporting technological activities and startups", "postdoctoral facilities", "supporting employment in innovation centers and accelerators as a trainer and consultant", "providing facilities for opportunity studies", "providing housing facilities", "supporting employment in reputable domestic companies", "support for lectures and specialized workshops" and "support for cooperation as invited and appointed professors".

It is estimated that about one percent of all Iranian students are studying abroad, which is not above the international average of around 3 percent.

طرح ویژه برای جذب پژوهشگران ایرانی مقیم خارج

جذب محققان و پژوهشگران خارج از کشور یکی از اولویت‌های کشور محسوب می‌شود و در این راستا معاونت علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری طرحی ویژه پیشنهاد کرده است. به گزارش ایرنا، معاونت علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری، این طرح شامل «حمایت از فعالیتهای فناورانه و ایجاد شرکتهای نوپا»، «تسهیلات پسا دکتری»، «حمایت از اشتغال در مراکز نوآوری و شتابدهنده‌ها به عنوان مربی و مشاور»، «تسهیلات دوره فرصت مطالعاتی»، «تسهیلات مسکن»، «حمایت از اشتغال در شرکتهای معتبر داخلی»، «حمایت از برگزاری سخنرانی و کارگاههای تخصصی» و «حمایت از همکاری به عنوان اساتید مدعو و معین» است.

بر اساس برآوردها نزدیک یک درصد از کل مجموع دانشجویان ایرانی در خارج از کشور تحصیل می‌کنند. این رقم در مقایسه با میانگین بین‌المللی که حدود ۳ درصد است، رقم بالایی محسوب نمی‌شود.

COVID-19 UPDATES

The statistics are related to 24 hours started 2:00 p.m. May 23

New cases	11,005
New deaths	251
Total cases	2,843,523
Total deaths	78,752
New hospitalized patients	1,605
Total recovered patients	2,347,752
Diagnostic tests conducted	19,054,521
Doses of vaccine injected	3,069,035

Iranian bird fauna

(Part 4)

Of the non-breeding visitors to Iran 86 species are winter visitors from breeding grounds in the Soviet Union. Two-thirds of these are waterfowl (particularly ducks, geese, swans, and shorebirds) and birds of prey. Banding studies have shown that the bulk of ducks wintering in Iran originate from breeding grounds in the basin of the Ob and Irtysh rivers in Western Siberia. In many cases the number of birds overwintering represents only a small proportion of the total present during the migration seasons, indicating that a large through passage is taking place. 24 species occur in Iran only as passage migrants in spring and autumn, breeding to the north of Iran and wintering to the southwest or southeast. The remaining 57 non-breeding species include vagrants and rare stragglers, chiefly from central and eastern Asia, and a small number of species which were formerly reported as breeding in Iran but which have not been recorded for many years, e.g., pied crested cuckoo Clamator jacobinus, brown fish owl Ketupa zeylonensis, scaly-bellied green woodpecker Picus squamatus, black-headed shrike Lanius schach, black drongo Dicurus macrocereus, jungle crow Corvus macrorhynchos, and desert sparrow Passer simplex.

2. Ornithological investigations in Iran.

Prior to the mid-1960s our knowledge of the avifauna of Iran was very sketchy and based to a large extent on the work of a handful of naturalist-explorers who traveled widely through Iran in the second half of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century. The first major account of the birds of Iran to appear in the literature was that of Blanford and the Persian Boundary Commission of 1870-72 (Blanford), which summarized all information obtained till then. The Russian ornithologist N. A. Zarudny traveled widely in Iran between 1884 and 1904 and published a number of papers in Russian and German on the results of his studies. He summarized many of these in tabular form in a paper which appeared in the Journal für Ornithologie in 1911. From 1935 to 1945, Walter Koelz made extensive collections throughout Iran and Afghanistan. His material was studied in depth by Charles Vaurie and the information incorporated in a series of over thirty papers which appeared in American Museum Novitates between 1949 and 1961 (listed in Burgess, Mokhtarzadeh, and Cornwallis and in Erard and Etchécopar).

Other important contributions were made by Buxton, Stresemann, Heinrich, Paludan (1940), Trott, Meiklejohn, Norton, and Passburg in north and west Iran; by Missone and Schuz (1959) in the south Caspian region; by Witherby, Capito, and Paludan (1938) in the Zagros and southwest Iran; and by Sharpe, Cumming, Ticehurst, Cox and Cheesman, and Ticehurst in the Persian Gulf, Sistan, and Persian Baluchistan. In 1958, S. H. Jervis Read produced a provisional check-list of the birds of Iran (1958) and, shortly after, Vaurie's important work "The Birds of the Palearctic Fauna" (1959 and 1965) included a concise summary of range, habitat, and geographical variation of all species of birds occurring in Iran. A general account of the birds of Iran appeared in The Cambridge History of Iran I, and a comprehensive bibliography of the early work was produced by Burgess, Mokhtarzadeh, and Cornwallis at the same time.

In the mid-1960s the newly created Iranian Department of the Environment (or Game and Fish Department as it was then called) set up an ornithological section in its research division and since that time has pursued a variety of research programs on Iranian avifauna. Eskandar Firooz's booklet "Environment Iran," published in Tehran in 1974, gives an excellent summary of the activities and programs of the Department of the Environment. Earlier summaries appeared in Firooz, Hassinger, and Ferguson (1970) and Firooz (1971a). Initially, the ornithology unit of the Department of the Environment focused its attention on birds of economic importance, notably the migratory wildfowl and some of the game-birds. However, in the early 1970s studies were expanded to include a variety of rare, vulnerable, and endangered species, and a nationwide banding project was initiated. At the same time the universities in Iran began to take an increased interest in the birds of Iran, the universities of Tehran and Shiraz being particularly active in this field.

The Department of the Environment's major ornithological programs have included the following:

Bird banding (ringing) program A national banding scheme was established by the department in 1966. Emphasis was initially given to migratory wildfowl wintering in the south Caspian region, but by the mid-1970s the program had been expanded to include banding studies of white pelicans Pelecanus onocrotalus, greater flamingos Phoenicopterus ruber, herons and egrets Ardeidae, common cranes Grus grus, and shorebirds Charadriidae and Scolopacidae. By the end of 1976 a total of 22,064 birds of 239 species had been banded in Iran, including 797 white pelicans, 8,766 greater flamingos, and 2,385 ducks. Banding activities and all recoveries reported up to the end of 1975 are discussed in Cornwallis and Ferguson, Argyle (1975 and 1976).



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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Knowledge and wisdom are really the privilege of a faithful Muslim. If you have lost them, get them back even though you may have to get them from the apostates.

Imam Ali (AS)

Leader congratulates Shahrestane Adab on 10th anniversary

CULTURE **TEHRAN** – Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has congratulated the Shahrestane Adab Cultural Institute on the 10th anniversary of the center, which was established to discover young promising litterateurs.

The Leader's letter of congratulations was read during a celebration for the anniversary of the institute held in Tehran on Sunday.

"Firstly, congratulations on the 10th anniversary of Shahrestane Adab," Ayatollah Khamenei wrote in the letter.

"Secondly, I am really pleased about the materials produced at the institute," he added and extended his thanks to the people working at the center.

In the third part of his message, the Leader asked the center's staff members to continue their efforts, observing technical standards and the Islamic Revolution's values.

"Fourthly, in addition to the quantitative development, further improvements in quality are absolutely needed. This gives meaning to your job and the time you invest in it," he noted.



Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei

"Fifthly, you are aware that many efforts are being made to separate art and artists from the Islamic Revolution's concepts, and therefore you must do your best to refute these satanic efforts. You and your motivated and knowledgeable generation must play the role of a defender and aggressor on this front. I always pray for you dear ones," he concluded.

Shahrestane Adab was founded in 2010 by a group of young Iranian poets in Tehran under the auspices of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization (IIDO) to discover and promote young literary talent, as well as to support literary creations on the Islamic Revolution.

The celebration was attended by IIDO director Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Qomi, Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Abbas Salehi and a group of cultural figures.

In a brief speech, Qomi called the establishment of the institute a great event, and said, "We are really proud of ourselves for this event and organizing such a celebration is certainly necessary."

Poet Ali-Mohammad Moaddab is the director of the Shahrestane Adab Cultural Institute. He was nominated for the 2021 Islamic Revolution Artist of the Year award, which is given by the IIDO Art Bureau.

Azerbaijani translation of poems attributed to Imam Ali (AS) published

CULTURE **TEHRAN** – An Azerbaijani translation of a collection of poems attributed to Imam Ali (AS), the first Imam of the Shia, has recently been published.

Published by Osweh Publications, "Divan of Imam Ali (AS)" will be introduced during a meeting with a limited number of guests at the Khayyam Hall of Tehran's Omid Cultural Center at 4 p.m. on Wednesday.

Translator Hossein Mohammadzadeh Sediq and scholars Khalil Parvini and Morteza Majdfar are scheduled to attend the meeting.

According to some historical documents, the followers and devotees of Imam Ali (AS) began accumulating poems and mimesis attributed to the Imam in a collection three centuries after his martyrdom. Some historical records suggest that Imam Ali (AS) had great skill in composing poems.

Parla, an Iranian Ashiqlar music band, will give a performance during the meeting, which will also be live on @lib.emamkhomeini, the Instagram of the Imam Khomeini Library of the center.

Iranian films scoop awards at Mena Film Festival

A R T **TEHRAN** - The 4th edition of the Mena International Film Festival, The Hague concluded in the Netherlands on Sunday with two Iranian films winning three main awards in the competition.

"Mother, I Am Joseph" by Mohamedreza Fartusi won the award best feature film and audience award by obtaining 67 percent of the ballot.

The film was shot in black and white to emphasize the feeling associated with life in the dark. It is the story of Yusuf (Joseph) who decides to hide in a hole for 21 years to avoid serving as a soldier in the war.

The award for best short also went to the Iranian film "Sa'ad's Olive Tree" by Ahmad Zayeri.

Zayeri's film also depicts an experience of confinement, narrating a boy's struggle with depression when he locks himself up at home after losing his eyesight in an explosion.

Sudanese director Marwa Zein's film



Abbas Ghazali acts in a scene from "Mother, I Am Joseph".

"Khartoum Offside" was awarded the Justice and Peace Prize, while Orhan Tekoglu from Turkey won the award for best director for his movie "Time to Leave".

The award for best feature documentary went to the Russian film "When the Snow Melts Down" by Aleksei Golovkov, while "Dima Punk" by Dominique Caubet received a special jury mention.

The 4th edition of the Mena International Film Festival took place from May 20 to May 23, featuring works by filmmakers from Argentina, Iraq, France, Brazil, Chile, Tunisia, Morocco, Spain and several other countries.

Algerian-born Dutch director Karim Traidia, Moroccan critic Hamadi Kerum and Iranian producer Elaheh Nobakht were member of the jury.

Mohammad Amin, an Iraqi expatriate living in the Netherlands, is the president of the festival, which aims to support young filmmakers and independent filmmakers from North Africa and West Asia.

Iran's Amuzadeh, Eftekhari nominated for 2022 Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award



This combination photo shows writer Fereidun Amuzadeh-Khalili and book reading promoter Shahla Eftekhari.

A R T **TEHRAN** – Writer Fereidun Amuzadeh-Khalili and book reading promoter Shahla Eftekhari have been nominated for the 2022 Astrid Lindgren

Memorial Award, a prestigious Swedish honor to promote children's and youths' literature in the world.

The nominees were announced on Monday by the Iranian Association of Writers for Children and Youth, one of four Iranian institutions that are allowed to select the country's nominations for the award.

"Amuzadeh-Khalili has been selected for his career that spans four decades in the creation of literary work for children and young adults, writing brilliant, compelling stories, which are the cry of the voiceless," the association wrote in the announcement.

He received the nomination for "his regard in his stories for others, pluralism, the environment and civilized behavior, and also for his hatred of discrimination, social class inequalities and injustice."

Among his credits are "The Cry of the Mount", "Travel of the Little Spring", "Dear Daddy's Bicycle" and "Exam Days".

Eftekhari was nominated for the award for "the efforts

she made over the past 50 years to promote book reading in remote regions and villages, which have poor access to books and cultural products."

She has also been the executive manager overseeing plans to equip 120 educational libraries of the Children's Book Council of Iran in Bam. She also held numerous reading workshops in the southern Iranian town following the 2003 devastating earthquake.

The Children's Book Council of Iran and the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults are other centers allowed to select Iran's nominations for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award.

The Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award amounts to SEK 5 million (about €570,000), making it the world's largest award for children's and young adults' literature.

The award was established in 2002 by the Swedish National Council for Cultural Affairs to commemorate writer Astrid Lindgren and to promote children's and youths' literature from around the world.

Shanghai festival picks six movies from Iran

A R T **TEHRAN** – Six Iranian films will be competing in the various categories of the 24th edition of the Shanghai International Film Festival, which will be held from June 11 to 20.

The acclaimed dramas "Sun Children" by Majid Majidi and "The Wasteland" by Ahmad Bahrami have been selected to be screened in the SIFF Highlights: Viva la Festival.

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

The child labor drama "Sun Children" is about 12-year-old Ali and his three friends. Together, they work hard to survive and support their families, doing small jobs

in a garage and committing petty crimes to make fast money.

"No Choice" by Reza Dormishian and "Walnut Tree" by Mohammad-Hossein Mahdavian will be competing in the Spectrum: Alternatives section.

"No Choice" centers on a 16-year-old homeless girl who repeatedly works as a surrogate mother for money. A human rights attorney tries to rescue her, but inevitably faces difficulties.

The war drama "Walnut Tree" is based on the true story of the profound tragedy of Iraq's chemical attack on the Iranian town of Sardasht in 1987.

It tells the story of Qader Mulanpur, a man who was away when his family was affected by the chemical attack in a village near Sardasht. His efforts to save his pregnant wife and their three children are in vain, and they die one by one from the fatal wounds sustained as a result of

the chemical attack.

"Maya", a co-production between Iran and the UK co-directed by Jamshid Mojaddadi and Anson Hartford, will be screened in SIFF Documentaries.

The documentary film shows how daily life at Iran's second-biggest zoo is interrupted when Mohsen, the head keeper, takes Maya, his 4-year-old Bengal tiger, to perform in a fiction film in the northern part of the country by the Caspian Sea, which was once home to the now extinct Caspian tiger.

In between filming, Mohsen lets Maya off the leash and allows her to roam in this sparsely populated landscape, she is the first "free" tiger in Iran in over 60 years. But instead of the perfect experience of the wild that Mohsen hopes it to be, the trip kick starts a series of events that mark the end of Mohsen and Maya's relationship and in the process reveals a much darker



"Walnut Tree" directed by Mohammad-Hossein Mahdavian.

and more complex side to Mohsen and the Zoo in which Maya and the other animals are kept.

"The White Whale" by Amir Mehran is competing in the SIFF Short Films section.

In the animated movie "The White Whale", many long years ago, a young man lost his friends in an air attack on a big river during the war. 30 years later, he is looking for their remains. A white whale is the only sign he has.

"Sunless Shadows" director Mehrdad Oskui on ZagrebDox jury

A R T **TEHRAN** – Mehrdad Oskui, the Iranian director of the acclaimed documentary "Sunless Shadows", has been selected as a member of the jury at ZagrebDox, the Croatian international documentary festival.

Oliver Sertic, a documentary producer and festival programmer, and Franka Perkovic Gamulin, the director of the Zagreb Academy of Dramatic Art, are other members of the jury, the Persian service of ISNA reported on Monday.

"Around 80 documentary short and feature-length titles will present extraordinary and important stories, burning issues and intriguing topics both from the global stage and the from local settings," announced the organizers of the festival, which is scheduled to be held from June 13 to 20.

Oskui's "Sunless Shadows" won an honorable mention



Iranian filmmaker Mehrdad Oskui in an undated photo.

at the 2020 ZagrebDox.

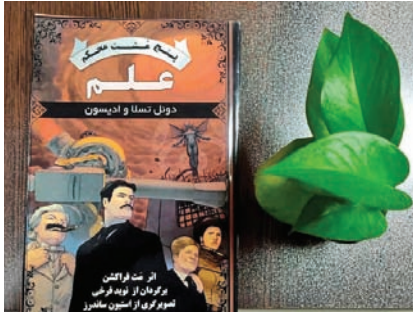
In the documentary, Oskui managed to build a remarkable relationship with these inmates, whose frank conversations and playful interactions he observes, and who gradually open up about the consequences of, and sometimes the reasons for, their terrible acts.

He occasionally leaves them alone with the camera, allowing it to become a means for them to address both their victims and their accomplices. Three of the girls had killed their fathers with the help of their mothers, who await execution elsewhere.

Earlier in 2017, his "Starless Dreams" won the Teen Dox Award for the best film at ZagrebDox.

The documentary shows the lives of seven young teenage girls sharing temporary quarters at a rehabilitation and detention center on the outskirts of Tehran.

Steampunk graphic novel "The Five Fists of Science" comes to Iranian bookstores



A copy of the Persian translation of Matt Fraction's steampunk graphic novel "The Five Fists of Science".

CULTURE **TEHRAN** – "The Five Fists of Science", a steampunk graphic novel created by writer Matt Fraction and artist Steven Sanders in 2006, has recently been published in Tehran.

Sarat is the publisher of the book translated into Persian by Navid Farrokhi.

In this novel, Nikola Tesla, Mark Twain and Bertha von Suttner combine forces

to try to bring about world peace through superior firepower.

The comic's introduction shows Twain explaining that the story does not concern itself very much with historical accuracy, and this assertion is borne out by the story: Twain and Tesla use scientific know-how, general trickery and media manipulation techniques to try to scare world leaders into following their noble path.

In the company of several allies, the two are soon confronted by dark forces led by the dastardly Thomas Edison, John Pierpont Morgan, Andrew Carnegie and Guglielmo Marconi.

The inventors and financiers are collaborating on a bizarre new skyscraper, the Innsmouth Tower, on whose building site many construction workers have already died in mysterious accidents.