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Here we go again

The Biden administration backs down on its promises

World MS Day: special patients need special care

BY FARANAK BAKHTIARI

Multiple sclerosis (MS) prevalence exhibited an upward trend over the recent decades, especially in urban areas, which spotlights the importance of early diagnosis and special care.

It is one of the most common diseases in the central nervous system, that is, the brain and spinal cord. Multiple Sclerosis is an inflammatory demyelinating condition, which is caused by damage to myelin, a fatty material that insulates nerves.

Every year on May 30, World Multiple Sclerosis Day is celebrated to raise awareness among people regarding this chronic neurological disease and lift social barriers, which has been initiated by MS International Federation (MSIF) and its members in the year 2009.

The theme of this year is continuing from last year, which is 'Connections'. It means building self-connections, connections to quality care, and community connections.

According to the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, more than 2.8 million individuals suffer from the neurological disease, which is found more in women than in men.

The total number of MS patients admitted by the Ministry of Health system all around the country has now reached above 70,000 people, which is an alarming number, Mehdi Shadnough, head of the Health Ministry's center for transplantation and disease management said.

Stating that the prevalence of the disease is still 2.5 times higher in women than men and is developed more in the age group of 20 to 45 years, he noted that according to global statistics, the average prevalence is 112 people per 100,000 populations and its incidence is 5.2 per 100,000 populations. Of course, this ratio varies from country to country.

In Iran, every 87 per 100,000 populations are diagnosed with the disease, which is one of the countries with the highest prevalence rate, he added, IRNA reported on Sunday.

However, in recent decades, MS prevalence in Iran has grown larger than ever, especially in urban areas, he lamented, adding, so that the timely diagnosis and control of the disease among youth comes to attention more than ever.

On average, about 5,000 people develop MS in the country every year, according to Shadnough.

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Comprehensive plan to prepare Qeshm for tourism lift

TEHRAN – Authorities of Qeshm are formulating a comprehensive plan, which is deemed as a prerequisite for tourism development across the southern Iranian Island.

Qeshm Island in the Persian Gulf is heaven for eco-tourists as it embraces wide-ranging attractions such as the Hara marine forests and about 60 villages dotted mostly across its rocky coastlines.

Head of Qeshm Free Trade Zone Ali Darvish on Saturday said the tourism industry is one of the pillars of development in Qeshm Island.

A comprehensive tourism plan is being developed with a focus on different parts of the island, the official said.

"Based on a comprehensive and strategic plan, every potential of the beautiful Qeshm Island will be explored to widen tourism infrastructure."

"In order to create a top tourism brand for

Qeshm, different capacities of this island should be counted into account," he noted.

Darvish made the remarks during a field visit to the villages of Soheili and Laft, which are teeming with natural intact sceneries that could become travel destinations.

"Qeshm villages embrace many pristine natural attractions that can be turned into tourist attractions," he said. "Job creation for the local communities, the launch of new startups and businesses, and ultimately the improvement of the livelihood of residents are amongst goals we pursue."

Referring to ecolodge units that constitute a significant part of the hospitality sector of the Island, Ali Darvish said "Due to the existing capacities, the taste of domestic and international tourists has tended to use traditional and local accommodations."

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Huge rally in Washington against anti-Palestine atrocities as U.S. MPs back Israel

More than one hundred pro-Palestinian groups across the U.S. have sponsored another major protest rally in Washington DC against the Israeli regime's latest terror campaign in Palestine as hawkish American lawmakers introduced yet another bill reiterating support for the occupying entity.

The massive protest march on Saturday - sponsored by Islamic, Palestinian, Arab and human rights groups within the United States - began at the Lincoln Memorial Monument near the State Department and is due to conclude near the U.S. Congress, which has been blocked off by fences and barbed wire since the violent January 6 attack on the legislative compound by pro-Trump supporters.

The Saturday anti-Israel rally came days after the latest Israeli onslaught against the Palestinian population in the besieged Gaza Strip and other occupied territories concluded

with a ceasefire, and followed numerous similar protests held across the U.S. and other parts of the globe condemning repeated atrocities of the U.S.-sponsored Israeli regime.

The rally - dubbed National March for Palestine - also coincides with mounting international pressure against persisting Israeli attacks against Palestinian civilians, particularly children, hospitals, homes, schools, and libraries.

"We are calling our community and all peace-loving people to March in Washington, DC to send a message that the American people are no longer complicit in war crimes by Israel," said Oussama Jamal of the United States Council of Muslim Organizations (USCMO), one of the sponsors of the protest event.

A growing cadre of organizers led by Muslim and progressive organizations are uniting in this historic National March for Palestine.

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Ceasefire signifies victory in the Palestinian struggle for Justice

BY BATOUL SBEITY

The Palestinian struggle for justice has entered a new phase. Unlike any previous confrontation, the equations that govern the rules of engagement on the ground have transformed, crucially displaying the centrality of Al-Quds, Palestine's forever capital, and signalling a red line to the violent uprooting of Sheikh Jarrah's Palestinian homeowners.

Jerusalem has proven to be the focal point, the motive, link, and connection- regionally,

locally and internationally, for the whole Palestinian cause.

After the Abraham Accord, that secured the Israelization (normalization) of ties between the FakeState and several Arab states, preceded by the Trump brokered 'Deal of the Century', through which they sought to bribe the Palestinians into foregoing any Palestinian state, particularly Jerusalem; such efforts have not only proven futile but have essentially accelerated the defeat of the Wrong State.

On the 20th of May 2021, the Wrong State (Israel) initiated a ceasefire after the 11-day onslaught of Gaza, whilst the culmination of events leading to this signified victory for the Palestinian struggle for Justice, with important strategic implications summarized below:

1) Palestinians living within the 48' borders began mobilizing, and the assumption that they had integrated within the Wrong State and had no psychology to rise up has been crushed.

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Veteran artists vaccinated

TEHRAN – A group of veteran artists were vaccinated against the coronavirus at the institute for veteran artists in Tehran on Sunday.

Iran started mass vaccination against COVID-19 on February 9. According to the national vaccination document, vaccination against coronavirus started with priority given to health workers, vulnerable and high-risk groups, and then ordinary people will receive the vaccine.

Damascus can restore its active role to mediate between Tehran and Riyadh: Syrian politician

BY REZA MOSHFEGH

TEHRAN - A member of the National Reconciliation Committee in Syria stresses that the Syria-Saudi Arabia rapprochement is not at the expense of relations with Iran, and Damascus can restore its role to mediate between Tehran and some Arab capitals including Riyadh.

"The Syrian-Saudi rapprochement is a necessity, and it is a reasonable and realistic move. It is natural for Syria to restore its relations with its Arab surroundings, as the Arab countries' reluctance to support the opposition gave Syria strength and speed in getting rid of armed terrorist organizations," Omar Rahmoun tells the Tehran Times.

Amid news of a potential Saudi-Iran rapprochement, media reported of a Saudi intelligence delegation in Damascus have received considerable coverage. An exclusive report by Rai al-Yaum about Saudi Arabian intelligence chief's meeting with Syrian President Bashar Assad has raised questions over the timing of the move.

As the Biden administration in the U.S. seeks to recalibrate the unorthodox, Trump-era West Asian policies, the Saudis have been hedging their bets, uncertain over the future of Washington's interests in Riyadh. The latest move by the Saudis also comes after the UAE and Bahrain publicly embraced rapprochement with Syria in recent years.

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Iran’s permanent membership at SCO is among major plans: Tajik ambassador

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The Tajik ambassador to Tehran said on Sunday that a permanent membership of Iran in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is among major plans.

“I was the first person who proposed membership of Iran in the Shanghai Organization, but decisions should be done with the consent of all countries. That Iran to become a major member is among plans of the Shanghai Organization and if other countries are ready to accept Iran, Tajikistan will also be ready,” Zohidi Nizomiddin told a press conference at the embassy.



Iran is currently an observer member of the SCO.

Zahedi also pointed the capacities of the SCO, saying “The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is among efficient organizations in the world.”

On the current presidency of Tajikistan over the organization, the ambassador said during this time the Republic of Tajikistan has drafted and approved a list of important plans.

“The presidency of Tajikistan is based on principles of equality, understanding and respect to interests of all members,”

the ambassador remarked.

He added, “Our slogan is cooperation for stability and progress.” Ambassador Nizomiddin also said Tajikistan pushes for friendship and strengthening stability in the region and consolidating the status of the SCO in the world.

The diplomat also said the SCO holds annual conferences and the next president of the organization is determined in Shahrivar (August 23-September 22).

Nizomiddin said after the presidential election in Iran, Tajikistan will send letter to the next president to attend the annual summit.

The ambassador added that the SCO is seeking to develop cooperation with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and ASEAN.

Ambassador Nizomiddin also said the SCO summit will be held on September 16-17 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan’s capital.

The SCO is an association of Eurasian nations founded 2001 in Shanghai by China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Under the charter signed in 2002, the member nations cooperate on security and military issues, especially with respect to terrorism, as well as on economic, environmental, cultural, scientific, and other issues.

All of the founding members except Uzbekistan had been in an earlier group, the Shanghai Five, created in 1996. The SCO encourages economic, political, and cultural exchanges among its members and conducts joint military exercises; it also acts as a counterbalance to U.S. and NATO influence in Central Asia and more generally Asia. The organizational bodies of the SCO include councils of heads of state, heads of government, and foreign ministers and an executive committee on regional counterterrorism.

Terrorist team nabbed in West Azarbaijan, two terrorists killed

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The public relations office of the Hamzeh Seyyed Shohadda headquarters in Wes Azarbaijan Province said in a press release on Sunday that a terrorist team has been disbanded in the south of the province and two of its members have been killed.

“The ground forces the Hamzeh Seyyed Shohadda headquarters were caught in a fight last night (Saturday night) with a villainous and anti-Revolution team who intended to enter our country from the Piranshahr border,” it said.

It added, “In the clash two terrorists were killed and some weapons were confiscated from them.”

Piranshahr is a city bordering Iraq. It is in the south of West Azarbaijan.

Armed forces are in continuous fight against villains and terrorists in the border areas of West Azarbaijan.

Hemmati airs views on social media

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — In a Clubhouse session arranged by a group of reporters, presidential candidate Abdolnasser Hemmati, who is currently the governor of the central bank, discussed various topics, including FATF, future of the central bank, and economic issues.

“I came in because I think over the last three decades, our problems have increased, and economy has been driven by politics. I am trying to do the opposite. I think an economist president can be a way forward and take serious steps with his economic vision,” he noted.

Hemmati said that he considers himself as an economist, therefore he doesn’t believe in state-run economy.

“The government must play the role of investor in infrastructure. I am in favor of downsizing the government,” he remarked.

The presidential candidate said that the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is one of the requirements of governing the country, but “unfortunately it is caught in the political complexities in Iran.”

“I once said that the governor of the central bank should give the most effective opinion in this regard, but I had the least effective opinion. And the idea that if we accept the FATF we can no longer bypass sanctions is completely wrong. There are about 200 institutions and countries that are members, but does it mean that only we and another country understand this?” he asked.

Hemmati criticized members of the Expediency Council for not approving the FATF, saying that they have been withholding the decision-making process for two years for no apparent reason.

He said that the member countries are cooperating with the Islamic Republic to circumvent the sanctions. “How can they



do that?” he questioned.

“Our economic team has always been uncoordinated in government because there has not been an economist president,” he said.

“The main decision-maker is the one who has to analyze the economy. I’m not just focused on economics. I also share my political plans and views. In the last three decades, we have seen inflation averaging 20%. The government’s priority must seriously be the economy. People are in a tight spot. We have to solve these problems. We have a political program. Certainly the government is political, but the priority of its work is economic,” the presidential candidate said.

Hemmati said he believes that his opponents are not other candidates.

Rather, he said, “It is the anger of the people. I hope the people’s anger will be broken with the elections.”

In another part of his remarks, Hemmati described Mohammad Javad Zarif as a patriot and a clever person.

In an open reference to presidential candidate Qazizadeh Hashemi Hemmati said some candidates are comparing the stock market with “microwave”, promising to solve its problem in three days only.

Rezaei vows to make drastic diplomatic changes

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — In a televised program aired on Sunday, Mohsen Rezaei discussed various issues, including Financial Action Task Force (FATF), stock market and named his government “the government of action and reform.”

He said if the West does not want to lift some JCPOA sanctions, it will become a complicated issue that must be resolved.

“I promise Iran will get out of ‘paper diplomacy’ and when the United States sees that we have formed such a government, people will see how they will back down. The United States will follow a logical path when this government comes to power,” he said.

The presidential candidate also said that he will get the required warrants and will definitely make sure that the FATF bill will be passed in his administration.

Saeed Mohammad expresses support for Raeisi

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Saeed Mohammad, who himself registered to run for president but rejected by the Guardian Council, met with Seyed Ebrahim Raeisi on Saturday.

Mohammad was accompanied by his team who was supposed to act as his right-hand men in the presidential campaign.

He presented a report on the process of forming and organizing popular campaign offices that had been formulated for the future government. He also pointed to the activated capacities of the network of faithful and

revolutionary youth throughout the country.

The former chief of the IRGC construction unit also announced the full readiness of these campaign offices to support Raeisi. He said the groundwork for these activities has also been prepared.

Mohammad announced that these campaign offices will maintain their former structure with the new title of the youth campaign offices supporting Raeisi, and would continue their activities during the campaigns to realize the “young revolutionary government”.

Komeijani replaces Hemmati as CBI governor

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The cabinet officially thanked Abdolnasser Hemmati for his services at the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) and appointed Akbar Komeijani, his deputy, as his successor.

The cabinet said that since governing the central bank entails full concentration and as Hemmati has entered the election race

they released him of his duties, transferring his authorities over to Komeijani.

Hemmati had stated in a Clubhouse session on Saturday night that the president was seeking to replace him, as he has entered the presidential race. “I know they have spoken to a few economists to replace me,” he said.

7 candidates in 7 days

CANDIDATE PROFILE



Mohsen Mehr Alizadeh

Age **65**

Place of Birth **Maraghe, Eastern Azerbaijan**

Education

- PhD in engineering economics from Tilburg University, the Netherlands
- PhD in financial management from Tehran University

Career

- Governor of Khorasan province
- Head of the Physical Education Organization
- Governor of Isfahan

Social Media Accounts

Instagram: [mohsen_mehralizadeh](#) Telegram: [mohsen_mehralizadeh](#) Twitter: [M_mehralizadeh](#) Website: [mehralizadeh.ir](#)

Supporters

A segment of the reformist faction

Political position on JCPOA

Mehr Alizadeh had previously said that economic challenges that Iran is facing is due to the fact that the incumbent administration has put all its eggs in the JCPOA basket, not thinking about alternatives.

Political position on interaction with neighbors and the West

Mehr Alizadeh has stated that his foreign policy will be development-centered which would be in service of economic and political development. He has not elaborated on his plans in details yet.

Candidates’ promises



Seyed Ebrahim Raeisi

From vowing to create 1 million jobs a year to reducing healthcare expenses to up to 50%, Raeisi entered the election race with less promises than his fellow competitors. His plans are not focused on giving the people free money. He has planned to privatize the public sector and strongly opposes the over-injection of foreign currencies. He has also promised to use the “maritime economy” capacities at its fullest.



Saeed Jalili

Jalili has given very complicated, extensive and detailed promises, some of which are rare, including a plan to send every Iranian to 3-day vacations per year. He promises more to the newly-weds, saying he will send them on a 5-day vacation per year. He has also written a plan to ration fuel for all Iranians, that is to give every Iranian a ratio of fuel. Jalili says citizens can use it or sell in the stock market. Jalili has also said that he will create an “ultra-intelligent distribution system in the optimal food basket with 13 items.” The plan is too much complex to be explained in this column. Jalili has also likened government to a vehicle which is moving “too slowly” and said the executive and administrative structure of the government should be “seriously reformed” and the next president should focus on this.



Mohsen Rezaei

Rezaei began his campaign with a controversial promise that sparked questions among economists and political pundits. He claims that he will grant a cash subsidy of 450,000 tomans (almost \$107 at the official rate of 42,000 rials) to 40 million Iranians per month. He says he has worked on this plan for four years. He has also made another controversial promise, saying to pay a monthly salary to household women. Rezaei has also stated that he is planning to give each province economic provisions to govern its affairs.



Mohsen Mehr Alizadeh

He promises to create an administration similar to an aquarium that can be seen from distance. He has promised to fight unemployment, high inflation rate and to reform the banking system. Yet he says the priority is to tackle corruption. The reformist candidate made a big claim saying that he will reduce the dependency of the budget to oil money to zero percent. Mehr Alizadeh also says with a control of inflation the temptation for corruption and hoarding will be greatly reduced



Alireza Zakani

Zakani’s motto is “development”. This development should take place in all parts of the country, he says. He also says he will pursue an “active and smart” diplomacy in the interaction with the West, and make efforts to remove all obstacles to production. Zakani also says he will tackle economic corruption and bureaucracy and give priority to the manufacturing sector to create wealth and power for all.



Abdolnasser Hemmati

“I will bring inflation rate down to 8% in four years,” Hemmati says. In addition to claiming to rescue the economy, he has also promised to interact with all countries. He has also promised to increase the cash subsidies.



Amir Hossein Qazizadeh Hashemi

Senior MP Qazizade Hashemi entered the election race with two big claims: Giving couples an allowance of 500 million tomans (almost \$120,000) and fixing the stock market in 3 days through a presidential order. He has also said no Iranian will remain homeless under his administration. He has also said that his administration will reduce inflation rate to a single-digit figure. He has also said that he will give every Iranian a nutrition package worth 300,000 tomans (\$72).

Here we go again

The Biden administration backs down on its promises

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — As the Vienna nuclear talks go forward the Biden administration intensifies its efforts to maintain the sanctions that the previous U.S. administration imposed on Iran in clear violation of its promise to change tack on Iran.

In late January, when the Biden administration was considering appointing Rob Malley as special envoy on Iran, the Tehran Times published a report saying the kerfuffle over his appointment was gratuitous as Malley was not going to change the deeply institutionalized American hostility toward Iran.

Now that the Vienna talks have entered a determining phase, the prediction of the Tehran Times proved right because Malley is now striving to wheedle more concessions out of Iran's negotiating team in exchange for nothing.

The U.S. negotiating team at the Vienna talks has presented maximalist demands and offered minimalist concessions, according to press reports. This approach has so far been rejected by Iran, indicating that the current round of talks may not be enough for both sides of the negotiations to bridge the gap between their positions.

The U.S. has agreed to lift half of the sanctions imposed by the Trump administration while it continues to reject the lifting of all the sanctions, which stands at 1,500, according to a report published by Al Araby Al Jadeed newspaper. Citing Iranian sources familiar with the matter, the newspaper said lifting the nuclear-related sanctions did not constitute a major obstacle to the negotiations, as Washington affirms its readiness to lift the sanctions that include the most important Iranian economic sectors, but Iran believes that lifting these sanctions alone is useless, as they include basic sanctions on Iran's oil and financial sectors, which were re-sanctioned under counterterrorism authorities.

According to Al Araby Al Jadeed, the U.S. administration continued to cling to



the sanctions related to combating terrorism, alleged human rights violations and the missile program during the first three rounds, but it showed flexibility during the fourth round regarding some of the sanctions related to combating terrorism, which constituted an important breakthrough in the negotiations.

The U.S. also declared its readiness to "suspend" sanctions imposed on oil and the Central Bank of Iran, which the previous U.S. administration sanctioned under The Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) passed by Congress in August 2017.

In line with CAATSA, the U.S. administration once again imposed sanctions on major Iranian economic sectors, such as the Central Bank, the National Development Fund, the National Oil Company and the National Iranian Tanker Co, under the pretext of their links to the Iranian Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC), which was designated by Washington as a "terrorist organization" in 2019.



While this kind of sanctions was basically meant to make it difficult, if not impossible, for the Biden administration to revive the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the Biden administration's negotiating team at the Vienna talks proposed only a "suspension" of sanctions not lifting them. They justified this proposal by complaining that the U.S. president lacked the necessary legal authority to lift the CAATSA-related or Congress-led sanctions, according to the Qatari newspaper.

Al Araby Al Jadeed said the suspension of this type of sanctions, - counterterrorism sanctions- is subject to timetables of up to six months, and that the continuation of the lifting of the sanctions would be subject to renewal every six months, something that aroused fears in Iran that this renewal would be used by the U.S. as leverage to impose pressure on Iran.

Article 112 of CAATSA stipulates that the U.S. president can suspend sanctions for a

period of 180 days by notifying Congress that the suspension of sanctions is based on national security reasons. That means that even the lifting of half of the sanctions would be temporary and not perpetual. In addition, the U.S. has refused to remove sanctions on the IRGC.

The U.S. linked the lifting of all sanctions to discussing all issues, according to Al Araby Al Jadeed. In addition to the issue of sanctions, the U.S. also sought to extract new concessions from Iran in terms of nuclear research activities. Al Araby Al Jadeed said the U.S. wanted Iran to "destroy" the advanced centrifuges it installed at Fordow and Natanz after the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA because the Americans believe that Iran went too far in developing its nuclear capabilities.

Furthermore, the U.S. also demanded a prolongation of the JCPOA's sunset clauses in an attempt to achieve what the Trump administration failed to achieve through multi-pronged pressures. Among these clauses is a restriction on the procurement of dual-use goods and equipment.

The most diplomatically explosive part of the Al Araby Al Jadeed report is the U.S. refusal to lift an arms embargo on Iran that expired in October 2020 in accordance with the JCPOA. The sources told the newspaper that Washington refused to cancel the arms embargo on Tehran, which ended under the nuclear agreement on October 18, 2020. Instead, the Biden administration expressed a desire to maintain the arms embargo by adhering to the executive order issued by Trump regarding the continuation of this ban.

That the Biden administration wants to extract more concessions from Iran by using the Trump-era sanctions is not surprising. What is surprising and amounts to political chutzpah is that the diplomats - such as Wendy Sherman and Rob Malley- who negotiated the JCPOA in the first place now refuse to implement what this deal stipulates concerning the end of the arms embargo.

Maximum participation in election will ensure national security: defense minister

→1 but their ultimate goal is to destroy the national interests of the Islamic Republic and push the country back from its position of authority," the defense minister said, according to state news agency IRNA.

Referring to the glorious holding of the Syrian presidential election and congratulating the victory and re-election of Bashar al-Assad with a decisive vote of the Syrian people, Hatami said, "Undoubtedly, this event and the historical epic of the Syrian people symbolize the will of the Syrian people to maintain independence in the face of the greed and intrigues of the enemies of the Islamic Ummah."

He added, "The most important issue that guarantees national interests and security of the country and the future of the people is maximum presence and participation in the elections, and God willing, this epic will turn the conspiracy of global arrogance against them on June 18."

Hatami also pointed to the victory of Palestinian resistance groups against Israel and lauded the missile capabilities of these groups.

"The most important achievement of this victorious jihad was the unity and empathy of all Palestinians in the various parts of occupied territories against the criminal Zionist regime and its Western and American supporters," the defense minister said, adding, "As the wise Leader of the Revolution said, 'the Zionist regime will not see the next 25 years,' and from now on missiles, drones and the defense capabilities of the owners of Palestine will be the nightmare



of the usurpers."

The remarks came a day after several senior Iranian military officials expressed support for the Palestinian resistance groups.

Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) General Hossein Salami said the Palestinians emerged stronger from the war and they will get stronger by the day. "A new Palestine has emerged, and the recent war imposed a strong Palestine on the calculations of the Zionist entity [Israel] from now on. The Palestinians will become stronger day by day, and the Israelis must realize that they cannot live in the midst of an enemy that has become so powerful," General Salami told Russian state broadcaster RT.

The IRGC Quds Force Commander, General Esmail Qaani, also issued a stark warning to Israel, underlining that Israel should think of an imminent delivery of rule over the Occupied Lands to the Palestinians.

"I advise the Zionists to return to their houses that they have sold in Europe and America before these houses become more expensive," Qaani said, according to Fars News.

"Many of the infrastructural facilities were within the reach of Palestinian missiles and could be targeted... but, they [Resistance groups] refused to target them because it will not take long for Palestinians to use these facilities," the Quds force chief predicted.

According to Qaani, during the first three days of the Gaza war, the number of the missiles fired by the Resistance Front at the Occupied Territories was as much as the entire 22-day war which indicates the power of Resistance.

"We all witnessed how Gaza bravely defended all Palestinian lands, despite being under sanctions for 15 years," the general said, adding, "The Palestinian Resistance acted in such a way that from the first day, the Zionist regime begged its friendly countries to call on the Palestinians to stop the war."

"The era when the Zionist regime wanted to kill the Palestinians with weapons, bullets and guns has gone. Today, more than 3,000 missiles fired at the occupied territories were produced by the Palestinians themselves," Qaani underlined.

No plans for another round of Vienna talks, Russia says

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Russia's ambassador to the Vienna-based international organizations has reacted to speculations over a possible prolongation of the Vienna nuclear talks into the sixth round, saying the negotiators proceed on the premise that the current round would be final.

Mikhail Ulyanov's comments came amid intensive nuclear talks in Vienna between Iran and the remaining parties to the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The fifth round of nuclear talks in Vienna between Iran and the remaining parties to the JCPOA was resumed on May 25. Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi visited the Austrian capital for nuclear talks that are aimed to revive the 2015 nuclear deal.

"Today, the fifth round of our negotiations with the Joint Commission of the JCPOA, which consists of Iran and the P4+1 countries, began, and we had the first meeting of the

Joint Commission. Work will continue by working groups in both nuclear area and sanctions lifting, and a third working group on how to implement the agreements will also continue," Araghchi told state media Tuesday after a meeting of the JCPOA Joint Commission, which marked the beginning of the fifth round of the nuclear talks.

He added, "All parties are still serious and have taken these talks seriously, many delegations are hoping that this round can be the last round of talks and we will reach a conclusion. You can have such hope, but you have to be a little bit cautious. The issues that remain to be finalized and decided are still important issues, although their number has decreased and we have made great strides in writing the text in previous periods. We can move forward further, but the few issues that remain are still key issues that need to be decided."

In recent days, however, a wave of speculations resurfaced that the negotiating parties

in the Austrian capital may fail to reach a final agreement by the end of the fifth round, which is expected to take two weeks.

Ulyanov rejected these assumptions, saying that the current round will highly likely be the last one.

Responding to a Twitter user's question on when the next round of talks would begin, Ulyanov tweeted, "The fifth round of the Vienna talks on JCPOA is under way. As of now, there are no plans for the sixth. The negotiators proceed from the understanding that the current round should be final."

Araghchi has said that he could not say if the Vienna talks would be concluded in the current round. He told Press TV that he still cannot ascertain that a conclusion was possibly within reach despite progress made on some key differences over reviving the landmark deal.

"In the last round, we were able to make some meaningful progress in our negotiations but still there are some key issues to



be resolved," Araghchi said.

"I cannot say that we are able to conclude our job in this round of negotiations but this is possible; it depends on how much we are able to make progress on key issues and how much the other parties are prepared to make their own difficult decisions," the Iranian deputy foreign minister underlined. "I am not confident that it would be possible to conclude the negotiations but there is a possibility."

SPORTS

Yekta Jamali wins Iran's first-ever medal in weightlifting

SPORTS **TEHRAN** — Yekta Jamali from Iran claimed Iran's first-ever medal in the weightlifting championships.

She won a bronze medal in the 87kg weight class at the 2021 IWF Junior World Weightlifting Championships underway in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.



Jamali lifted the 92kg in snatch and 116kg in clean and jerk. She won the bronze medal with a total of 208.

Uzbekistan weightlifter Tursunoy Jabborova made 111-113-244 to win the gold medal and American participant Avery Owens took the silver medal with 93-118-211.

The 2021 IWF Junior World Weightlifting Championships is being held in Tashkent from May 23-31.

The event has brought 244 weightlifters together in Uzbekistan.

Iran ease past Netherlands in 2021 VNL

SPORTS **TEHRAN** — Iran eased past Netherlands 3-0 (25-18, 25-23, 30-28) in Week 1 of 2021 Volleyball Nations League on Sunday.

Netherland's Abdel-Aziz Nimir grabbed 11 points and Amirhossein Esfandiari score 14 points for Iran.

It was Iran's first win in the tournament after two defeats against Japan and Russia.

"We knew that Netherlands are a good team and at the VNL there are no weaker opponents. We have to give our maximum and push to gain victory," Mousavi said in the post-match conference.

"We fought until the end for our country. With our National Team we always want to win big matches and fight hard for every point, like in this match. I'm happy about this victory. Our fighting spirit was a key to success," he added.

"We struggled in reception and also in attack. In the first two sets we served very well and we managed to put the ball far from our opponent's setter and we played fast, but in the last set we stopped serving and it was a problem," he concluded.

Vladimir Alekno's side will play Canada, Italy and Bulgaria on June 3, 4 and 5, respectively in Week 2.

A total of 32 of the world's top national teams have joined the VNL 2021 bubble in Rimini, Italy to showcase electrifying volleyball action for millions of fans worldwide.

The 16-team tournament began with a round-robin phase where each side will play 15 games.

The third edition of the competition is being held from May 28 to June 27 in Rimini, Emilia-Romagna, Italy.

Ghoddos's Brentford promoted to Premier League after 74 years

SPORTS **TEHRAN** - Brentford won promotion to the Premier League for the first time in 74 years on Saturday as they beat Swansea 2-0 in a Championship play-off final.

Brentford completed their fairytale rise thanks to first-half goals from Ivan Toney and Emiliano Marcondes at Wembley.

Beaten by Fulham in last season's Championship final, Brentford had failed to earn promotion in all nine of their play-off appearances before this term.

No team had lost more play-off finals than Brentford's four, but Frank had insisted the bad omens would count for nothing.

Iranian international midfielder Saman Ghoddos was a member Brentford in the final.

Taremi chosen AFC International Player of Week

SPORTS **TEHRAN** — Iranian forward Mehdi Taremi beat his countryman Reza Asadi to be named as AFC International Player of Week.

The Porto striker won the poll with 64 percent of votes, the-afc.com wrote.

It was a fitting way to end an excellent season for Taremi, who scored the opener and set up another as FC Porto eased to a 4-0 win against Belenenses, which sealed second place in Portugal's Primeira Liga.

Taremi's 16 league goals were good enough for third on the league scoring charts. The Iranian forward netted 23 in all competitions.

Lee Kang-in (Valencia, Korea Republic) and Reza Asadi (SKN St. Pölten, Iran) came second and third, respectively.

Iraq beat Nepal in friendly

SPORTS **TEHRAN** — Iraq national football team pummeled Nepal in a friendly match on Saturday.

Iraq defeated the minnow Asian team 6-2 at the Al-Fayhaa Stadium in Basra.

Alaa Abdul Zahra Khashin, Mohammed Abdulzahra Obaid, Aymen Hussein Ghadhbhan (two goals), Mohanad Ali Alshammari and Sajaad Jasim Almsarrafaee scored for the host.

Safaa Hadi Al-Furaiji (own goal) and Manish Dangi were on target for the visiting team.

Iraq prepare for the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

The team sit first in Group C above Bahrain, Iran, Hong Kong and Cambodia.

Candidates mustn't address 'professional' conscription: military spokesman

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Spokesman for Iran's Armed Forces Brigadier General Abolfazl Shekarchi instructed the presidential candidates to refrain from addressing the issue of compulsory military service.

"Candidates for the 13th presidential election are by no means allowed to address issues such as professional conscription in order to gain votes," Shekarchi said, according to state news agency IRNA.

The spokesman said the issue of conscription requires "expert work" in the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces.

Iran is among the countries that still use compulsory conscription to beef up their armed forces. In Iran, all young men above the age of 18 are required to perform

compulsory military service for nearly two years. Those who avoid conscription face a variety of fines and restrictions such as deprivation of government jobs and a ban on traveling abroad.

Shekarchi said it is up to the military to decide on conscription. "The Joint Staff of the Armed Forces will deal with anything that has an effect on the country's defense authority and can use the great potential of the country's youth and take into account the interests of the youth," he said, adding, "Of course, the result of the expert work will be such that in addition to paying attention to the youth, there will be no harm to the security and national interests and the deterrent

power of the country; with this explanation that all the considerations that exist about the dear youth of the country are also taken into account."

He underlined that the presidential candidates should avoid using the issue of conscription as a way to gain votes. "They know that they should not use some keywords that are only used for elections," Shekarchi said.

Iran's 13th presidential election will be held on June 18 with seven candidates from different political backgrounds on the ballot. The candidates got the go-ahead from the Guardian Council to start their campaigning after the vetting process resulted in seven candidates being qualified to run for president.

Thermal power plants’ overhaul operation completed by 85%

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — As announced by an official with Iran’s Thermal Power Plant Holding (TPPH), so far, 85 percent of the overhaul operation of the country’s thermal power plants has been completed.

Naser Eskandari, the deputy head of TPPH for strategic affairs, said the management of repair programs and the cooperation of large thermal power plants have increased electricity generation and prevented further blackouts in the first two months of this Iranian calendar year (March 21-April 21).

Every year, in order to maintain the readiness of the power plants, the repair program is announced to these units, he said, adding that the power plants repairs are being carried out around the clock to reduce the number of blackouts, and the operations have significantly improved, especially compared to similar activities in previous years.

The management of repair programs and the cooperation of large thermal power plants, despite the problems and risks of repairs, have increased power generation and prevented further blackouts in the first two months of this year, the official repeated, announcing, “Most of the unimplemented programs are related to periodic visits, which in order to prevent the occurrence of accidents, we try to take these measures in coordination with the national dispatching, if necessary.”

In order to meet the country’s consumption needs and prevent blackouts, the repair program was implemented in a highly managed manner compared to previous years, and this spring, thermal power plants will cooperate to compensate for the growing consumption needs to reduce blackouts in the country, Eskandari further stated.

The current increase in the country’s electricity consumption needs cannot be met with existing power plants, but the electricity industry subscribers are assured that thermal power plants will be in maximum generation circuit in the summer of this year, despite all the above issues, to take special measures for the reliable supply of electricity to consumers, he added.

Meanwhile, the head of Iran’s Power Generation, Distribution, and Transmission Company (known as Tavanir) has announced that the company has defined 40 programs for maintaining electricity supply and preventing power outages during the hot season peak consumption period.

Mohammad-Hassan Motevalizadeh underlined early increase in the temperature and water shortage for hydropower plants as the most important challenges this year, saying: “These issues have forced the early implementation of preventive programs and in this regard, 40 programs have been prepared by Tavanir, and will be implemented across the country.”

Based on the mentioned programs, the responsibilities of various ministries and specialized parent companies have been determined and assigned, the official said.

He noted that the ceiling for incentive packages allocated to each province has also been determined and the governorates of the provinces have been notified in this regard.

“Government organizations and entities are the first priority for implementing consumption management programs, and in this regard monitoring and optimization of air conditioning and lighting systems in such offices should be seriously pursued”, he stressed.

According to the latest data provided by the Energy Ministry, currently, 55 hydroelectric power plants with a total capacity of 12,169 megawatts (MW) are operating across the country and the water shortage will seriously affect their output.

Iran’s current power generation capacity stands at about 85 GW of which the share of hydroelectric power stands at nearly 16 percent.

Water shortage in Iran has become a serious issue in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 20) since the amount of rainfalls in the country have declined significantly in the current water year.

TEDPIX jumps 17,000 points on Sunday

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), climbed 17,377 points to 1.156 million on Sunday.

Over 7.503 billion securities worth 58.632 trillion rials (about \$1.396 billion) were traded at the TSE on Sunday.

The first market’s index gained 15,954 points, and the second market’s index rose 24,061 points.

TEDPIX lost 45,000 points, or four percent, in the past Iranian calendar week.

The index closed at 1.109 million points on Wednesday (the last working day of the week).

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

Mohammadreza Pour-Ebrahimi, the chairman of the Iranian parliament’s economic committee has said recently that the stock market is going to follow a positive trend in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21).

“[This year] the profits of major industries and influential companies in the capital market have been assessed positively, which is why the market will follow a positive trend this year,” Pour-Ebrahimi stated.

Meanwhile, the governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has said predictability of the economy is a prerequisite for the stability of markets adding that the central bank welcomes the prosperity of the capital market.

“Stability of all markets along each other is of utmost importance for the central bank, therefore the bank supports the stability of the capital market,” Abdolnasser Hemmati said in a meeting with the representatives of the capital market.

He emphasized that the approach of the Central Bank is to support the capital market, stating: “One of my personal economic beliefs is that our problem in economics is the underdevelopment of financial markets and capital market in particular.”

According to Hemmati, inflation expectations affect the bank interest rates and consequently the market, therefore it is hoped that lower inflation expectations will lead to lower inflation and lower interest rates.

“All markets are highly sensitive to change and inflation expectations, and this is not limited to the capital market,” Hemmati said.

The Iranian capital market has been going through some turbulence over the past few months and in this regard, the government and related entities have been taking serious measures for stabilizing the market.

Tehran, Baghdad take new steps for expanding economic ties

→ 1 “Given the long history and common culture between Iran and Iraq, we need to take special measures to develop economic relations between the two countries as well,” he said.

Speaking to the press following the meeting, Dejpasand announced that the two sides in the meeting reached some positive agreements regarding customs, transport and investment cooperation.

“We agreed on exchanging experiences in the field of customs activities,” he said, adding: “The head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration is scheduled to visit Iraq soon and hopefully more measures will be taken for developing relations.”

Increasing joint investment was another subject discussed between the two sides, the Iranian minister said.

“We have decided to establish a special organization in this regard to increase the volume of foreign investment of the two sides by creating new industrial parks or in other forms,” Dejpasand explained.



Iranian Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dejpasand (R) and his Iraqi counterpart Ali Abdul-Amir Allawi hold talks in Tehran on Saturday.

The finance minister mentioned the development of cooperation in passenger and freight rail transport between the two countries as another issue agreed upon in

his meeting with the Iraqi counterpart and expressed hope that this cooperation would develop as soon as possible.

Allawi for his part expressed satisfaction

with the agreements reached in the meeting.

Settling energy debts

Another major issue that was discussed between the two sides was Iraq’s energy debts to Iran. In the course of the talks, the two sides negotiated a schedule and ways for repaying Iraq’s energy debts to Iran.

Allawi also met with Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh and Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian on the same day to discuss settling his country’s natural gas dues in details with the Iranian ministers.

In this meeting, Zanganeh noted that Iran is ready to even boost its natural gas exports to Iraq and expressed hope that the Iraqi government would settle its dues to Iran soon.

Allawi was accompanied by Iraqi Electricity Minister Majid Mahdi Hantoush, and the Governor of Trade Bank of Iraq (TBI) Salem Jawad Abdul Hadi Al-Jalabi in this meeting.

At the end of the meeting the two sides agreed on holding some specialized meetings in the upcoming weeks in order to finalize protocols for settling the energy debts.

Production of 32 major industrial, mining products rises in a month

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The production of 32 major mining and industrial products has increased in the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-April 20), compared to the same period of time in the past year, Iranian Deputy Industry Minister Saeed Zarandi said.

According to Zarandi, the mentioned products include all kinds of home appliances (washing machines, refrigerators, air conditioners, etc.), passenger and heavy vehicles, paper, leather, motor oil, fiber and chipboard, steel, copper, aluminum, cement, ceramic tiles, etc.

The production growth has been achieved despite the specific economic conditions of the country due to the U.S. sanctions and the outbreak of coronavirus which has created problems in the production sector, IRNA reported.

The official noted that nearly \$3 billion worth of the non-oil products were exported from the country in the mentioned month, while the value of the imports of such commodities stood at about \$2.8 billion, both following an upward trend.

He further said that more than 2,000 establishment licenses and 347 operation licenses have been issued for industrial production units in the said month, while 70 mining exploration licenses, as well as 306 mining operation licenses were also issued in the mining sector.

Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry has been following the programs started in the previous year for supporting domestic production also in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21) which has been named the year of “Production: Support and Elimination of Obstacles.” by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Seyed Ali Khamenei.

These programs include reviving idle units and providing bank facilities for the country’s production units and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry’s programs for the current year have been prepared in seven major axes, according to Zarandi.

Development of domestic production, management of imports and development of non-oil exports, development of mines and mining industries, development of technology and knowledge-based products, market management and organization of commercial logistics, improving the business environment and ultimately providing financial resources to the producers and investment development are also among the Industry Ministry’s major programs for the current year.

Major automakers’ output exceeds 118,500 in 2 months

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Three major Iranian carmakers, namely Iran Khodro Company (IKCO), SAIPA Group, and Pars Khodro, manufactured 118,546 vehicles during the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-May 21), the data released by Codal website showed.

According to the data, the production by the mentioned companies has increased by 1.1 percent compared to the last year’s same two months in which the output stood at 117,257.

During the said two months, IKCO manufactured 54,281 vehicles, registering a 6.2 percent decline compared to the same period last year.

SAIPA manufactured 48,560 vehicles in



the mentioned period, of which 27,166 were manufactured in the second month (April 21-May 21). Production by this automaker increased by 12.06 percent in comparison to the previous year’s same time span.

Pars Khodro also manufactured 15,705 vehicles in the period under review, of which

6,639 were manufactured in the second month.

Three mentioned major Iranian carmakers, IKCO, SAIPA, and Pars Khodro, had manufactured 900,714 vehicles in the previous year (ended on March 20), which was 4.3 percent more than the figure of its preceding year.

According to Codal data, during the past year, IKCO manufactured 480,338 vehicles, which was 21.9 percent more than the output in its preceding year, which was 393,812 vehicles.

SAIPA manufactured 317,321 vehicles, with a 12.6-percent fall from 363,379 vehicles manufactured in 1398. And Pars Khodro manufactured 103,055 vehicles in the past year, showing a 2.8-percent drop from

the output of its previous year, which was 106,072 vehicles.

Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry’s programs for the current Iranian calendar year show that the manufacturing of 1.2 million cars has been put on the agenda.

According to the Industry Ministry data, since Iranian automakers had produced 984,200 such vehicles in the previous calendar year, the country’s car output is planned to increase by over 21 percent in the current year.

The production of 8,968 buses, minibuses, and vans is also planned for the current year, which would be an increase of 378 percent in this sector. Last year, domestic automakers managed to produce only 1,873 units of such vehicles.

Monthly production of refrigerators, freezers jumps 115% yr/yr

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Manufacturing of refrigerators and freezers in Iran during the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21- April 20) has risen 115 percent from that of the same month in the previous year, IRNA reported citing the data released by the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade.

As reported, 102,400 refrigerators and freezers have been manufactured during the mentioned month.

In the first month of the current year, domestic companies also produced 68,700 washing machines, registering a 68.9 percent increase in production compared to the same period last year.

The production of water air coolers has also witnessed a growth of 64.7 percent in the said month and domestic manufacturers succeeded in producing 111,800 units of this product.

Last year, more than 15 million units of various home appliances were produced in the country, which was 78 percent more than the figure for the preceding year, according to Industry Ministry data.

The ministry has it on the agenda to further increase the



production and exports of home appliances in the current year.

Last week, Keyvan Gordan, director-general of the electrical, metal, and home appliances office of the Industry Ministry said that \$200 million worth of home appliances were exported during the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

Nearly 600,000 tons of commodities traded at IME in a week

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Nearly 600,000 tons of commodities worth over \$365 million traded at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) during the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

As reported by the IME’s Public Relations and International Affairs Department, the exchange traded 254,266 tons of commodities worth more than \$174 million on its mineral and industrial trading floor in the past week.

IME’s customers purchased on this floor, 169,756 tons of steel, 4,660 tons of copper, 3,240 tons of aluminum, 120 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 30 tons of precious metals concentrate, 45,000 tons of iron ore concentrate and pellets, 21,460 tons of zinc dust and 10,000 tons of sponge iron (DRI).

The next trading floor was the oil and petrochemical, on which the exchange saw trade of 342, 779 tons of commodities valued

at more than \$191 million.

Products sold here included 116,500 tons of vacuum bottom, 64,929 tons of bitumen, 82,154 tons of polymeric products, 39,356 tons of chemicals, 39,500 tons of lube cut, 2,156 tons of base oil and 1,890 tons of sulfur.

Moreover, the IME hosted trade of 682 tons of commodities on its side market.

As previously reported, the value of trades at Iran Mercantile Exchange rose 16 percent in the past Iranian calendar month (ended on May 21).

As reported by the IME’s Public Relations and International Affairs Department, 2,925 million tons of commodities valued at \$1.828 billion were traded at the exchange in the previous month, indicating also a six-percent rise in terms of weight.

The IME witnessed trades of 1.464 million tons of commodities worth more than \$1.044 billion on its mineral and industrial trading

floor.

On this floor the exchange traded 1.189 million tons of steel, 12,780 tons of copper, 480 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 48 tons of precious metals concentrate, 11,690 tons of aluminum, 239,000 tons of iron ore, 1,000 tons of zinc, 400 tons of coke, 10,000 tons of sponge iron and 250 tons of lead.

The other trading floor of the exchange was the oil and petrochemical on both domestic and export rings of which customers purchased more than 1.449 million tons of commodities valued at almost \$770 million.

Commodities traded on this floor were 412,630 tons of bitumen, 238,686 tons of polymeric products, 155,372 tons of chemicals, 12,238 tons of oil, 490,300 tons of vacuum bottom, 4,450 tons of sulfur, 350 tons of argon, 150 tons of insulation and 132,500 tons of lube cut.

Moreover, the IME saw trade of 11,505

tons of commodities on its side market within this month.

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

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

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

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

Ceasefire signifies victory in the Palestinian struggle for Justice

→ 1 They have become an uncalculated source of fear, as they formed a local front within the heart of the Wrong State.

2) The resistance in Gaza came to the defence of Jerusalem. It has gone from defending itself to becoming a source of liberation for other parts of occupied Palestine.

3) The compass- that is, Jerusalem has been defined clearly, with new rules of engagements on the ground that equate attacking Jerusalem to a full-scale war, and decisive conclusions have been established due to the change in the balance of forces.

4) The Wrong State has proven its demographic fragility- manifested by the 'Israeli' settler's fear of the Palestinian resistance's rocket attacks, that is incomparable to modern weapons inability to cause damage; however, the success of the resistance's attacks has been through morale- forcing the settlers to interrupt their lives and hide in shelters when the alert sounds.

The alert sound is enough to cause substantial fear, and the prospect that the settlers are targets in any upcoming future war, due to rockets such as R-160, that have ranges up to 40 miles away from Gaza and can target further than Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, are enough to make the settlers pack up their bags and flee back to the places they came from before they colonized historic Palestine.

This is even more pronounced for those across the globe, particularly in countries like America, Ukraine and Russia that are considering moving to and gaining citizenship of the Wrong State. Since their allegiance to the Wrong State is unlikely to overpower their wish for safety, particularly considering they are erected on the ruins of the rightful Palestinian owners of the land, the Wrong State will not be able to



sustain itself since there is no government or state without a people.

5) The Wrong State has proven its geographic vulnerability since the Palestinian resistance demonstrated that it could target very sensitive areas within the Wrong State, such as airbases and oil platforms, with strikes having caused a fire in a petroleum depot in Ashkelon and the shutdown of several airports. This is the case since its geographic expanse is very limited, especially in areas between Gaza and the West bank- it is a matter of a few kilometres away. Hence, the ability of the Wrong State to hold a confrontation on all fronts is difficult, and it, therefore, cannot sustain itself in the long term.

6) United resistance front: the 11-day war was only between the Wrong State and Gaza; the Syrian and Lebanese war fronts-

that form the axis of resistance were not opened – despite this, the Palestinian resistance caused massive harm to the Wrong State in launching over 4,000 rockets, up to 100% higher in volume than during the 2014 war, with twice as many lobbed at distant cities like Tel Aviv.

The axis of the resistance front, spear-headed by the Islamic Republic of Iran, has been raised in the eyes of the people as the true vanguards of the oppressed. Previously, every entity in a respective region used to defend itself on its own during a war and wasn't linked logistically. The 'New Middle East' project of the West that sought to topple the government in Syria and destabilize Iraq through the funding of ISIS, in addition to the Saudi attack and siege on Yemen, have only backfired, leading to the rise of the more

strongly united resistance front, that considers an attack on one as an attack on all.

It became clear to the West that if the Wrong State increased their war against Gaza and crossed further red lines, other forces of the resistance would get involved. These include the PMU in Iraq, the Houthis in Yemen, the IRGC in Iran, and it became apparent that the issue would become much stronger than it is and a real source of threat to the existence of the Wrong State. This coordination is very important.

The Fake State was not patient and could not go further than 11 days, a short period of time, considering previous wars and they did not achieve anything but the targeting of civilian life and infrastructure- this in itself is proof of their failure. When the Wrong State announced it wanted to target the interior structure of the resistance and wasn't able to do so, and it wasn't able to specify its targets, it became embarrassed of stopping the attacks on Gaza.

When the West felt there was a real threat, it intensified its pressure on the Wrong State, with Biden speaking privately with Netanyahu six times. These talks and the American pressure are in themselves acknowledgements of failure and of the new balance of powers.

7) Nations that have Israelized (normalized) are lowering their heads in shame.

8) People's awareness of the savage nature of the Wrong State has increased, and their intolerance against censorship, the double standards of mass media and the distinguishing between good and evil has never been so clear.

9) It has been proven that when there is a real will, nothing is impossible, despite the limitations of money, technology, and the apparent strength of the opposing force.

Damascus can restore its active role to mediate between Tehran and Riyadh: Syrian politician

→ 1 Unlike some observers who say that a cozy relationship between Damascus and Riyadh may push Syria into the Saudi-led coalition's arms, Syrian officials are of the opinion that their country is looking forward to restore its traditional role to mediate between Tehran and other Arab capitals.

"The Syrian-Saudi rapprochement has not and will not be at the expense of the strategic relationship between Syria and Iran. The two issues are totally different, and on the contrary, the Syrian-Saudi rapprochement may be in the interest of Saudi Arabia and Iran if Syria restores its active role that it previously played in converging views between Iran and the Arab countries," Rahmoun argues.

Following is the text of the interview:

What are the implications of the presidential elections in Syria at regional and international levels?

The recent Syrian elections carried several messages at both regional and international levels. The most important point in this election is Syria's victory, passing the stage of danger, and containing the enemy's plots that were intended to destroy the country.

The second message is that Syria is facing a new reality after the Syrian people renewed the pledge of allegiance to President Bashar al-Assad. All observers who are interested in Syrian issues must take this fact into consideration.

How do you evaluate the recent elections in the light of Western criticism that the election was neither free nor fair?

There are two axes, a Western axis and an Eastern axis. The Western axis always questions the elections of any



Eastern country, claiming that their elections are unfair and undemocratic.

Western criticism of Wednesday's presidential election has "zero value", as President al-Assad said because they are our enemies who only see what suits their interests.

How has the decade-long war in Syria affected the Syrian political scene?

The recent Syrian presidential elections witnessed a remarkable development. While the elections were previously focused on one person, we saw three candidates, and the government added a candidate who represented the opposition.

So, we witnessed a great development on the Syrian internal political scene, at a time when the opposition outside Syria did not change their posturing, insisting on their

stagnated position, which is the overthrow of the regime instead of active participation in the elections.

What is your comment on the Saudi-Syrian rapprochement? Is this move at the expense of relations with Iran?

The Syrian-Saudi rapprochement is a necessity, and it is a reasonable and realistic move. It is natural for Syria to restore its relations with its Arab surroundings, as the Arab countries' reluctance to support the opposition gave Syria strength and speed in getting rid of armed terrorist organizations.

The Syrian-Saudi rapprochement has not and will not be at the expense of the strategic relationship between Syria and Iran. The two issues are totally different; and on the contrary, the Syrian-Saudi rapprochement may be in the interests of Saudi Arabia and Iran if Syria restores the active role that it previously played in converging views between Iran and the Arab countries.

How do you view the U.S. policies towards Syria under the Biden presidency? Do you see any fundamental change?

There is no difference between Trump and Biden in America's policy when it comes to Syria. America has a policy of enmity with Syria and it does not change with the change of the president at the White House.

The main point is the victory of Syria, on which everything will be impacted by this victory now and later.

Just as Saudi Arabia and others changed their positions on Syria, there will come a day when America will change its position on Syria on the basis of reality and not on the basis of an American desire.

Huge rally in Washington against anti-Palestine atrocities as U.S. MPs back Israel

→ 1 At the heels of United Nations human rights chief Michelle Bachelet comments on Thursday that she has seen no evidence that civilian buildings in Gaza hit by Israeli strikes were being used for military purposes.

"In the past three weeks, people from across the world have shown unprecedented solidarity and support for the rights of the Palestinian people. This unwavering support from just individuals across the globe has sent a clear message to the governments of Israel and the United States that the atrocities and the killing of innocent civilians, including children, is absolutely unacceptable," added Dr. Mohsin Ansari, President of the Islamic Circle of North America (ICNA).

"We are seeing increasing progress in raising awareness for Congress to better support solutions to protect the legal and human rights of Palestinians," added Nihad Awad of Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), another sponsor of the rally. "At the same time, we have witnessed a continued reluctance in the Biden Administration to hold Israel accountable for its war crimes in Gaza or uphold American values by demanding an end to evictions of Palestinians in Jerusalem."

The protest march is a part of the new national #SanctionIsrael campaign calling on the pro-Israel Biden administration and Congress to sanction the Israeli regime and stop giving it billions in U.S. tax dollars and military hardware – like the

very same bombs that the hawkish regime just used to obliterate entire Palestinian families in the Gaza Strip.

Hawkish U.S. lawmakers introduce bill to punish Palestine supporters

This is while Republican Senator Marco Rubio of Florida, along with 15 other fellow right-wing lawmakers, reintroduced legislation on Friday that would impose sanctions on individuals and entities that support the Gaza-based Hamas resistance group or other Palestinian organizations.

"This bill would impose sanctions against foreign individuals, entities, and governments that provide support to Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and other Palestinian terrorist groups," a press release issued by Rubio's office proclaimed on Friday.

The bill -- titled the Palestinian International Terrorism Support Prevention Act -- also requires the U.S. president "to submit an assessment to Congress regarding whether other countries are doing enough to counter the fundraising, financing, money laundering, and other forms of support" for Palestinian groups.

Rubio, the Vice Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and ranking member of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, led the bill's reintroduction, citing the need to hold supporters of such organizations accountable following the encounter between Israeli regime's forces and Palestinian resistance groups that led to the killing of more than 270 people in Gaza and Jerusalem (al-Quds), including many women and children.

Israeli regime planning to deploy 5,000 forces to suppress Palestinian protests

The Israeli regime is reportedly working on a plan to deploy 5,000 forces in the occupied territories to ramp up its crackdown on Palestinian protesters and counter possible future unrest.

The Israeli-occupied territories have been the scene of protests since the regime's deadly onslaught on Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip earlier in the month.

The Times of Israel, citing the public security ministry, reported that almost 2,000 Palestinian protesters and activists have been arrested since the Israeli aggression against Gaza.

The Gaza war began on May 10 and lasted until May 21, when the Israeli regime announced a unilateral ceasefire which was accepted, through Egyptian mediation, by the resistance groups.

The war was sparked by weeks of violence in Jerusalem

al-Quds against Palestinian worshipers at al-Aqsa Mosque and the regime's attempts to force more Palestinians out of their homes in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood to build more illegal settlements.

Throughout the 11-day onslaught, Israeli airstrikes killed at least 254 Palestinians, including 66 children, wounded almost 2,000, and displaced over 72,000 people in the besieged enclave.

In response, Palestinian resistance factions fired more than 4,000 rockets and missiles into the occupied territories, killing 12 people.

Moreover, Israeli troops on Friday attacked Palestinians taking part in protests in the occupied West Bank against Israeli settlement expansion and in support of fellow countrymen in Jerusalem al-Quds.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said a young man was shot dead by Israeli forces as they attacked an anti-settlement rally on Mount Sobeih in Beita town, south of the occupied West Bank city of Nablus.

Israeli settlers also reportedly used live ammunition against Palestinians trying to defend their land and prevent the construction of a settlement outpost in Khirbet Shehadeh, west of the city of Salbit.

More than 600,000 Israelis live in over 230 settlements built since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem al-Quds.

All Israeli settlements are illegal under international law as they are built on occupied land. The United Nations Security Council has condemned Israel's settlement activities in the occupied territories in several resolutions.

Syria: Renewal of sanctions proves EU 'partnership in unjust war'

Syria has slammed the European Union for extending its inhumane sanctions against the nation, saying the move demonstrates the 27-nation bloc's "partnership" in the war on the Arab country and its "responsibility" for the blood spilled there.

Earlier this week, the European Council prolonged the EU's restrictive measures against Syria for one additional year, until 1 June 2022. The list now includes 283 persons targeted by both assets freeze and a travel ban, and 70 entities subject to an assets freeze.

"Once again, the European Union institution proves its complete distance from reality, its full partnership in the unjust war on Syria, and its responsibility for the bloodshed of Syrians and destruction of their achievements," he added.

The European Union first imposed sanctions on Syria in May 2011 and has since renewed them annually.

The illegal measures came two months after a foreign-sponsored militancy erupted in Syria, with Western countries and their regional allies aiding Takfiri terrorist groups.

Now, after a decade-long battle, Syrian army forces, backed by Iran and Russia, have managed to win back control of almost all regions from terrorists.

Syria held a presidential election on Wednesday, in which President Bashar al-Assad won a fourth term in office by garnering 95.1 percent of the votes with a turnout of around 78 percent.

Before the vote, the foreign ministers of France, Germany, Italy, Britain and the United States claimed that Syria's presidential election "will neither be free nor fair."

In the statement, the Syrian Foreign Ministry source said the Syrian people and heroic army managed to defeat terrorism and its supporters.

The Syrians' massive flocking to ballot boxes in the presidential poll "proved that they are more determined to foil all attempts aimed at influencing the independence of the Syrian national decision."

Yemeni army conducts new drone strike against King Khalid airbase in Saudi Arabia

Yemeni armed forces and fighters from allied Popular Committees have launched a fresh drone strike on a major airbase in Saudi Arabia's southern region of Asir in retaliation for the devastating military campaign and blockade.

Spokesman for the Yemeni Armed Forces Brigadier General Yahya Saree announced in a post published on his Twitter page that a domestically-manufactured Qasef-2K (Striker-2K) combat drone hit designated targets inside King Khalid airbase near the Saudi city of Khamis Mushait early Sunday.

The attack, he said, was in response to Riyadh's ongoing military aggression and brutal siege against Yemen.

The development came only a day after Yemeni armed forces and their allies struck the same airbase, using two Qasef-2K unmanned aerial vehicles.

On Saturday, the media bureau of Yemen's popular Ansarullah movement released video footage of a recent large-scale ground operation by Yemeni armed forces in Saudi Arabia's southwestern border region of Jizan, where the troops made rapid advances and took control of dozens of Saudi military positions.

A Yemeni military official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told Arabic-language al-Masirah television network that the multi-pronged offensive was carried out on the road linking al-Khobe to Wadi Jara. Saudi army positions in al-Fakhida Heights and al-Bayda Hills were targeted as well.

Yemeni forces managed to completely take control of several areas within the Saudi territory, and inflicted heavy losses on enemy forces, he added.

The official went on to say that a number of Saudi officers and soldiers were killed and wounded in a series of ambushes that targeted their armored vehicles.

He noted that dozens of Saudi troops and their mercenaries, including Sudanese militiamen, were also captured, while scores of them fled.

The Yemeni military official also said large quantities of various weapons and military equipment, which Saudi forces had abandoned in their positions, were seized by Yemeni troops.

"During the operation, 29 armored vehicles belonging to the Saudi army were destroyed and set on fire as well," he said.

Resistance News

Tel Aviv strongly warned against assassination bids targeting resistance

INTERNATIONAL DESK TEHRAN —The Islamic Jihad sounds a strong warning aimed at the Israeli regime against any potential attempts on its part to assassinate the resistance's leaders.

"We will respond to whatever assassination of our leaders by unleashing shellfire on Tel Aviv," Ziad al-Nakhaleh, the Gaza Strip-based resistance movement's secretary-general, said on Saturday.

The remarks came after the regime that has carried out targeted killing operations against several such senior figures in the past, threatened another assassination.

The threat came hot on the heels of the regime's suffering a heavy defeat in the face of Gaza's resistance groups during a 12-day war that it had launched on the coastal sliver.

The resistance fired upwards of 4,000 rockets towards the occupied territories right after the war began, forcing Tel Aviv to accept a ceasefire last Friday.

'Struggle to last until ultimate victory'

Nakhaleh said, "We triumphed against the vicious enemy, and are currently much stronger than what some may think."

The resistance groups would keep confronting the regime "until achieving ultimate victory," he added, referring to the movements' commitment to the Palestinian cause of liberation from Israeli occupation and aggression.

Nakhaleh said Operation Sword of al-Quds, as the resistance's recent successful retaliation has been named, was an operation of national scale that sought to resolve the Palestinian plight.

He, therefore, called continued struggle the sole way out of the situation facing the Palestinian nation, and roundly rejected any form of "coexistence with the Zionist regime."

Comprehensive plan to prepare Qeshm for tourism lift

➔1 The island also features geologically eye-catching canyons, hills, caves, and valleys, most of which are protected as part of the UNESCO-tagged Qeshm Island Geopark, itself a haven for nature-lovers.

Initially added to the coveted network in 2006, Qeshm Geopark was dropped from the Global Geoparks Network (GGN) in 2013 due to the authorities' failure to address the site's problems, such as underdeveloped infrastructure and unenforced environmental regulations.



One of Iran's seven free zones, Qeshm Island is a top holiday destination and a treasure trove of natural and ecological attractions in the Persian Gulf. The island is a heaven for eco-tourists as it embraces wide-ranging attractions such as the Hara marine forests and about 60 villages dotted mostly across its rocky coastlines.

Aside from the geopark, sun, and sandy beaches, the island's famed mangrove forests in the Hara Protected Area attract a large number of domestic and foreign tourists. Hara Protected Area is one of the five forests in Hormozgan Province and arguably the most important feature of Qeshm Geopark. With an area of 85,686 hectares, Hara is a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. The ecological importance of the forests has compelled local officials to build a new museum dedicated to showcasing the woodland's ecological features.

Classic, vintage cars stage parade under COVID protocols

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — Owners of over 50 classic and vintage cars staged a parade to promote tourism in the city of Karaj, the capital of Alborz province, on Friday.

Organized under the supervision of the Touring & Automobile Club of the Islamic Republic of Iran (TACI), the car rally was held under strict social distancing guidelines and health protocols to curb the coronavirus, CHTN reported.



Iran is home to thousands of remarkable classic and vintage vehicles, for instance, roaming Iran classic car museum, visitors find a collection of the best classic and unique automobiles, some of which single in kind even in the world.

Touring & Automobile Club of the Islamic Republic of Iran is an institution affiliated with the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts. Its tasks include facilitating the travel of owners of vehicles abroad or foreign tourists who are traveling to Iran by their own vehicles. The institution also helps develop tourism through establishing tourism information offices at home and abroad, as well as developing infrastructures and tourism services.

Mud-brick domed bathhouse to undergo restoration

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — Hammam-e Zerhan, which is a mud-brick domed bathhouse in Tuyserkan county of Hamedan province, will undergo restoration to regain its former splendor, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

Various layers of the exterior and roofs, as well as the interiors spaces and decorations of the historical monument, would be the subject of the rehabilitation project, Seyyede Maryam Mokhtari-Mousavi added on Friday.



Bathhouses or 'hammams' in Iran were not only places for bathing and cleaning up. They had a social concept for people who gathered at these places weekly. It was a place where people talked with each other about their daily life and shared humor and news.

There are still functional bathhouses in various Iranian cities but they do not have their social function anymore since most people have bathrooms in their homes due to the modern lifestyle.

Known in classical times as Ecbatana, Hamedan was once one of the world's greatest cities of ancient times. Pitifully little remains from antiquity, but significant parts of the city center are given over to excavations, and there's a scattering of historical curiosities.

Iranian province to develop, facilitate medical tourism

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Local authorities plan to boost and facilitate medical tourism in East Azarbaijan province after the coronavirus crisis is over.

The quality of the international units of the medical centers throughout the province is to be improved, which will allow health tourism to succeed in the region, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

A targeted marketing and advertising plan to lure foreign medical tourists to the province would be crucial since the provincial capital of Tabriz is one of the major medical hubs of the country, Alireza Bayramzadeh announced on Sunday.

Organizing companies that are active in this field with the help of relevant agencies may also be necessary, the official added.

The developing health tourism industry is one of the most important fields of Iran's travel sector, which is trying to prove its capabilities and capacities in attracting medical and health tourists to the country.

Many domestic experts believe that medical tourism in Iran is a win-win opportunity both for the country and foreign patients, as they are offered affordable yet



quality treatment services and the country gains considerable foreign currency.

Iran's two most popular medical tourist cities are Tehran and Mashhad, but the

Coronavirus outbreak has significantly reduced the number of travelers.

Iran is one of the major destinations for health tourism in the region, and patients

with 55 different nationalities, mostly from neighboring countries including Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan are seeking to use Iran's services and facilities in this field.

Iranian hospitals admitted nearly 70,000 foreign patients over the Iranian calendar year 1397 (March 2018 – March 2019) and it made an economic contribution of around \$1.2 billion to the country, according to the medical tourism department at the Ministry of Health.

In April 2018, the rotating presidency of the International Health Tourism Conference of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) was handed to the Islamic Republic for a three-year term.

Mohammad Jahangiri who presides over a national center for developing health tourism said in May 2018 that Iran can annually earn \$7 billion in medical and health tourism, though the sector now brings in only one-seventh or even lesser of the sum.

The Islamic Republic has set its goals to exceed its yearly medical travelers to around 2 million in the Iranian calendar year 1404.

Historical texture of Tabriz demarcated

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Historical texture of Tabriz and its associated lands, properties, and legal boundaries has been demarcated in order to facilitate the maintenance of the ancient Iranian city.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism has announced the exact legal boundaries of the historical core of Tabriz in a letter to the governor-general of the province, the deputy minister Mohammad Hassan Talebian said on Sunday.

Construction inquiries and urban development plans should be done so as to maintain and preserve the historical character of the area, the official added.

Soaked in history and culture for millennia, Tabriz embraces several historical and religious sites, includ-

ing the Jameh Mosque of Tabriz and Arg of Tabriz, and UNESCO-registered Tabriz Historic Bazaar Complex to name a few. The city became the capital of the Mongol Il-Khan Mahmud Gazan (1295–1304) and his successor. Timur (Tamerlane), a Turkic conqueror, took it in 1392. Some decades later the Kara Koyunlu Turks made it their capital, it was when the famous Blue Mosque was built in Tabriz.

The city retained its administrative status under the Safavid dynasty until 1548 when Shah Tahmasp I relocated his capital westward to Qazvin. During the next two centuries, Tabriz changed hands several times between Persia and Ottoman Empire. During World War I, the city was temporarily occupied by Turkish and then Soviet troops.



240 tourism projects underway in Khorasan Razavi

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — A total of 240 tourism-related projects are currently underway across the northeastern Khorasan Razavi province, which is a top destination both for pilgrims and holidaymakers.

An investment value of 500 trillion rials (about \$12 billion at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar), has been channeled into the projects, the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

Those include hotels, apartment hotels, guesthouses, travel complexes, recreational centers, and villages specifically developed for health tourism, IRNA quoted Ahmad Dinari as saying on Sunday.



Some of the projects, however, have been delayed due to rising construction costs in the face of the depreciation of the Iranian rial against foreign currencies, and the coronavirus outbreak, the official explained.

The projects are expected to create over 11,000 job opportunities following their inauguration, he added.

Mashhad, the capital of Khorasan Razavi province, is Iran's holiest and second-largest city. Its raison d'être and main sight is the striking massive shrine complex of Imam Reza (AS), the eighth Shia Imam.

Dozens of five-star hotels and hostels are dotted across Mashhad. The city has also the highest concentration of water parks in the country, and it also embraces a variety of cultural and historical sites that are generally crowded. The metropolis is also a good place to buy top handwoven rugs and carpets, and it's a staging post for travel to Turkmenistan,

Afghanistan, and little-touristic Khorasan regions.

Before the coronavirus puts almost everything on lockdown, Mashhad, played host to thousands of travelers and pilgrims who come from various Iranian cities, neighboring countries, and even across the globe to visit the holy shrine.

According to official statistics, some 37 million Iranian pilgrims and travelers visited the shrine city of Mashhad during the first ten months of the past Iranian calendar year 1398 (March 21, 2019–March 10, 2020). Of whom some eight million came by road, six million by rail, 3.8 million by air, and 18 million by private cars.

Seven natural properties in Golestan made national heritage

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — Seven natural spots and landscapes across Golestan province have recently been inscribed on the national heritage list.

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

Lamlich Falls, Lou Waterfall, an old plane tree, as well as habitats of the wild pistachio trees and sour pomegranate plants were among the properties added to the prestigious list.

Golestan is reportedly embracing some 2,500 historical and natural sites, with UNESCO-registered Gonbad-e Qabus — a one-millennium-old brick tower — which is



of high architectural importance as an exemplar and innovative design of the early-Islamic-era architecture.

Narratives say the majestic tower has influenced various subsequent designers of tomb towers and other cylindrical commemorative structures both in the region and beyond. The UNESCO comments that Gonbad-e Qabus bears testimony to the cultural exchange between Central Asian nomads and the ancient civilization of Iran.

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.

Top Iranian cities where echoes of ancient civilizations still resonate

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — If you are drawn to ancient destinations, Iran could be your thing. The country bears some of history's biggest names — Cyrus the Great and Darius, Alexander the Great, Genghis Khan — all left their footprints and the regions they conquered or ruled over are now among top travel destinations of the modern country.

Walking around the awesome power and beauty of Persepolis, experiencing the remote power of Susa (Shush), and taking in the wonderfully immense Elamite ziggurat at Tchogha Zanbil will carry you all the way back to the glory days of Ancient Persia. Iran is the jewel in Islam's crown, combining glorious architecture with a warm-hearted welcome. It is a treasure house for some of the most beautiful Islamic architecture on the planet. Here is a selection of ancient cities, deemed as top destinations, in the Islamic Republic.

Shiraz

Shiraz is one of the most important centers of tourism in Iran. The world-renown Persepolis, the magnificent Vakil Bazaar, Shah Cheraq Mausoleum, and tomb complexes of Sa'di and Hafez, the two great

Persian poets, and the spectacular Eram Garden are only a small fraction of the city's many tourist attractions that should not be missed.

Shiraz, with its many master craftsmen, is also one of the best places to buy a souvenir of Iran. No Iran tour package is complete without a visit to this grand city.

Yazd

Yazd is a historical city located in the center of Iran. One of its main attractions is the existence of an old district in the center of the city, which has remained untouched and has retained its original form for many centuries.

This part of the city has been registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site due to its unique properties. The Windcatcher of Dowlatabad Garden, Jameh Mosque of Yazd, and Amir Chakhmaq Complex are among its other tourist attractions.

Isfahan

Isfahan is located in the central part of Iran. It was the capital city of the country for more than six centuries. Some of the most exquisite examples of Islamic architecture can be found in the city, including the biggest



square in the world, Naqsh-e Rostam.

Among its many other tourist attractions, Si-o-se-pol, the Grand Bazaar, and Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque are the most noteworthy. For more information about these and Isfahan's many other attractions, refer to the Isfahan travel guide provided by your Iran travel guide.

Kerman

Due to its central location in Iran, the oasis city of Kerman has always been one of the most important cities of the country, playing the role of a center of commerce, at times, even the seat of government.

Ganjali Khan Complex, Malik Mosque, and Shazdeh Garden are among the most

popular tourist attractions in Kerman. A Kerman travel guide can guide you through your visit to the city.

Kashan

Kashan is a historical city near Isfahan in the central part of Iran. Its history dates back to over ten thousand years ago, and it is home to some of the most beautiful buildings featuring Islamic architecture.

The annual Golab-giri (rosewater distillation) ceremony of Kashan attracts huge crowds to the city every year. Some of the most ancient traces of civilization have been discovered near Kashan, at the Sialk archaeological site.

Tabriz

Tabriz has been the capital of Iran in many historical periods. The 700-year-old Arg of Tabriz, Tabriz Bazaar Complex, the Masoleum of Poets, as well as the many museums and gardens throughout the city, are among its main tourist attractions.

You can find a Tabriz travel guide in most shops in the city to help you navigate through its many places of interest. Without doubt, Tabriz is also another top tourist destination in Iran.

Iran-Cuba vaccine to complete clinical trials by mid-June

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – Soberana-02 COVID-19 vaccine jointly developed by Iran and Cuba will complete clinical trials by mid-June by being administered to 24,000 Iranians.

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

The two first phases of the human trial have been conducted in Cuba, while the third phase is underway with 24,000 volunteers in Iran and 44,000 volunteers in Cuba.

In Iran, it was performed on a population of 18 to 80 years in seven provinces and eight cities across the country, Alireza Biglari, director of the Pasteur Institute of Iran, said.

He expressed hope to analyze the preliminary results in late June in order to obtain a license for mass production.

This is the first vaccine to have a booster dose, and it is a great help to evaluate the results of human trials. Evidence shows that a booster dose will greatly increase immunity, he explained.

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.

Vaccination to end by late November
President Hassan Rouhani said on Saturday that If the volume of COVID-19 vaccine required by the country is provided, the vaccination of people with underlying diseases will be completed by late July, and the whole population will be vaccinated by late November.

To vaccinate people with underlying diseases, about 14-15 million doses of vaccine is required, while we now have 5 million doses, so another 10 million must be provided to complete the process by the end of July, then we will continue the process with foreign and domestic vaccines, he explained.

He expressed hope to start vaccination of the whole population by the end of the summer (September 23), noting that given the country's ability of vaccine administration, vaccinating 500,000 people in 24 hours, the entire population can receive the vaccine

within three to four months.

Five homegrown vaccines

COVIRAN BAREKAT, the first coronavirus vaccine made by researchers at the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam, will complete the third phase of the human trial by late June.

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, entered the second phase of the human trial on Friday.

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.

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

On May 24, 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.

Alarm bells ringing: Persian gazelle facing extinction

ENVIRONMENT **TEHRAN** – Habitat destruction and over-hunting have reduced the population of 20,000 Persian gazelle to less than 500 in habitats of South Khorasan province, putting the species in danger of extinction.

The goitered or black-tailed gazelle is a gazelle found in Georgia, Azerbaijan, Iran, parts of Iraq and Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and in northwest China and Mongolia.

Goitered gazelle are medium-sized, lightly built ungulates; however, they have a more robust body type than most other Asian Gazella species. Goitered gazelle get their name from the goiter-like enlargement on their larynx. Adult males have long, black horns that are 203 to 340 mm long, which are close together at their base and curve away from each other toward the distal ends. Unlike most other gazelle species, females are generally hornless.

Persian deer is a rare species in the east of the country that has been in danger of declining population over the past 70 years, Hassan Akbari, head of the provincial department of environment said.

For several years now, we have been creating protected areas to prevent the goitered gazelle population from declining and breed this rare species, he noted.

During this 20-year period, numerous efforts have been made to increase the pro-



tected lands in the province, and now seven protected areas and three wildlife sanctuaries are reproducing the species, he highlighted.

He went on to note that however, more habitats are needed to revive the gazelle, ISNA reported on Sunday.

Plains, where there are fewer natural barriers to defend the wildlife, have made hunting easier so that in two to three decades, almost a large number of their populations have been hunted, he said.

Drought, lack of food, and water have forced the animals to leave their habitats and enter insecure areas and agricultural lands, which have unfortunately caused them to be trapped and speed up the extinction pace, he further lamented.

Currently, two breeding centers in the province are home to over 150 Persian gazelles, he said, adding, the species that survive in breeding centers have low genetic diversity, and cannot prevent extinction but can help ecotourism.

World MS Day: special patients need special care

→ 1 Measures to provide care

Since 2005, MS was included among rare and special diseases and is supported by the Ministry of Health, he said, adding, so that the registration and census system was launched, as well as an advisory scientific committee to draw up general policies in the diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of patients, as well as academic MS committees, to confirm the disease and address issues.

At the same time, comprehensive centers for providing special patient services in 13 university centers; four of which in Tehran and the rest in Isfahan, Shiraz, Mashhad, Tabriz, Ahvaz, Kerman, Mazandaran, Kordestan, and Kermanshah to provide services to special patients, he added.

He went on to say that "we have also equipped and completed centers for providing comprehensive rehabilitation services to MS patients."

Challenges facing MS patients

According to official statistics, about 120,000 people in the country are suffering from rare diseases. With the onset of COVID-19 in Iran, the situation has been worsened.

At the same time, the issue of social and welfare support for these patients remains strong, although oppressive U.S. sanctions have further increased



concerns about these patients.

Although food and medicine were claimed to be exempted from the U.S. sanctions, financial and banking sanctions have limited the life-saving medicine trade which harshly targeted the patients suffering from rare diseases.

Moreover, fears of falling afoul of Washington have restricted exports to Iran.

There are three categories of medicine used by MS patients; two of which are now produced domestically by Iranian pharmaceutical companies, but those foreign ones are difficult to be provided.

So that exemptions for humanitarian trade (such as food, medicine, and medical equipment) have not been effective in protecting Iranian patients from access to imported medicine.

Over 950 earthquakes rattle Iran in a month

SOCIETY **TEHRAN**– Seismological networks of the Institute of Geophysics of the University of Tehran, recorded more than 950 earthquakes across the country over the past calendar month Ordibehesht (April 21-May 21).

Two earthquakes of more than 4 on the Richter scale have been recorded in the country by the National Seismological Center, the largest of which occurred on May 17, with a magnitude of 5.5 near Sankhast in northeastern North

Khorasan province, which left 25 injured.

Statistically, 883 earthquakes with magnitudes smaller than 3, and 64 earthquakes with magnitudes between 3 and 4, also, 8 quakes with magnitudes 4-5 have occurred.

Also, 3 earthquakes with magnitudes 5-6 shook the country.

The Iranian plateau is located in a very seismically active region of the world and is known not only for its major catastrophic earthquakes but also for the disasters relating to natural hazards, especially earthquakes.

About 2 percent of the earthquakes of the world occur in Iran but more than 6% of the victims of the world earthquakes during the 20th century are reported from Iranian earthquakes. This shows the high level of vulnerability in Iran, according to Mehdi Zare, a professor of engineering seismology.

Most recently, an earthquake measuring 4.7 on the Richter scale shook the Shoghan in North Khorasan province on Sunday.

ENGLISH IN USE

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A ← → چ

Female Asiatic lion to join male companion in Iran

Iran will play host to a female Asiatic lion from Ireland to accompany the recently returned male lion under a population management program aiming at endangered species reproduction by the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA), a veterinarian at Eram Zoo has said.

The female lion, born 4 years ago, now is coming back to its motherland after being extinct for 8 decades, YJC quoted Iman Memarian as saying on Saturday.

He went on to say that the lion has undergone genetic tests and diagnostics under the EAZA supervision, and the results have showed that the animal is completely healthy.

Both will be kept at Tehran Zoological Garden separately for a period, and then will live together, Memarian concluded.

شیر ماده ایرانی به جفت نر خود می پیوندد

دامپزشک پارک پردیسان و مدیر باغ وحش ارم از پیوستن شیر ماده ایرانی از ایرلند به جفت نر خود تحت نظر برنامه تکثیر گونه‌های در خطر انقراض خبر داد.

ایمان معماریان در گفتگو با خبرنگار حوزه محیط زیست گروه اجتماعی باشگاه خبرنگاران جوان، اظهار کرد: شیرماده ایرانی که در باغ وحش دوبلین ایرلند به دنیا آمده و ۴ ساله است، پس از ۸۰ سال در راه بازگشت به وطن است.

وی افزود: شیر ماده ایرانی از نظر ژنتیک و نبود بیماری چک شده و هیچ گونه مشکلی نداشته، این شیر پس از استانداردسازی مورد تایید اتحادیه باغ وحش‌های اروپا به ایران جابه جا شد.

دامپزشک پارک پردیسان و مدیر باغ وحش ارم ادامه داد: دو شیر ماده و نر ایرانی مدتی جدا از هم زیست خواهند کرد و به صورت تدریجی این دو گونه به هم معرفی خواهند شد.

COVID-19 UPDATES

The statistics are related to 24 hours started 2:00 p.m. May 29

New cases	8,876
New deaths	198
Total cases	2,902,094
Total deaths	79,939
New hospitalized patients	1,154
Patients in critical condition	4,219
Total recovered patients	2,441,528
Diagnostic tests conducted	19,814,489
Doses of vaccine injected	4,010,053

Five snake species endemic to Iran

(Part 2)

Unfortunately, illegal hunting is a factor that has severely damaged the population of these vipers due to their venom, Alireza Shahrddaripana, a wildlife expert said.

There is no certain information of their population in Iran, which is a big problem that makes protection more difficult, he said, adding, the habitat of Latifi viper is more vulnerable than spider-tailed horned viper due to the presence of tourists, which indicates the need for serious protection.

Eastern Montpellier snake

"The eastern Montpellier snake (Malpolon insignitus) is a species of mildly venomous rear-fanged snake.

As you know, snakes often live individually and have no desire for group life; but this specie has a dominant male who selects a female in the breeding season, the male takes care of the female he has chosen; While the dominant male has several other males around him, those males are obedient to this dominant male.

Obedient males are those whose strength does not reach the dominant male but live near the dominant male. As a result, if the dominant male goes in conflict with another male, the obedient males help him. This is true even in the case of human conflicts," he explained.

"Dominant males prey for their females, and obedient males do the same so that the females do not move too far from the eggs they lay. The female does not sleep on the eggs but stays close to the eggs anyway.

This species is very special among Iranian snakes and is the only snake that has this unique feature of group life during reproduction. Another characteristic of this snake that is very different from other snakes is that it marks not only its own female but also its own submissive males. This is done by secreting a type of pheromone from the nasal glands so that the group does not mix with the rest of the snakes," he said.

Eirenis

Genus Eirenis, are often small in size. So far, 22 to 23 species of this genus have been identified in the world, tens of species are distributed in Iran.

Rajabzadeh said that "One of the interesting features of Eirenis snakes is that they are often half a meter or even smaller in size. Research shows that these snakes evolved from the large Dolichophis snake; That is, snakes that are often over one meter to one and a half meters in size have shrunk over evolution. The emergence of Eirenis has greatly affected the biodiversity of these snakes because these snakes have greatly diversified. The number of species of the genus Eirenis is much higher than that of the genus Dolichophis; "At the same time, these snakes have found special adaptations."

Of course, the reduction in body size in the genus Eirenis has also brought some adaptations; For example, large Hierophis snakes, which are close to Eirenis snakes, often feed on warm-blooded prey, such as small rodents. Eirenis snakes, on the other hand, feed on cold-blooded prey such as arthropods. Arthropods have exoskeletons, so Eirenis have weaker jaw muscles but stronger, conical teeth than their larger ancestors. On the other hand, these snakes, unlike their ancestors who prefer surface life, like to live in the subsurface and empty spaces underground.

Spider-tailed horned viper

Being pushed toward extinction through poaching, the spider-tailed horned viper has been discovered in 2006. The venomous snake has a unique tail that has a bulb-like end bordered by long drooping scales that give it the appearance of a spider, which is waved around and used to lure insectivorous birds to within striking range.

There are no accurate statistics of spider-tailed horned viper population, but it is spotted in the province of Ilam, Kermanshah, and Lorestan. To date, there have been no reports of spider-tailed horned viper being discovered in other countries.

The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) has banned illegal trade of spider-tailed horned viper in August 2019.

First of all, you should know that the biological characteristics of this snake have been studied very little, but it is probably laying eggs. Although its distribution in the world is only in Iran, its reproduction in Iran has not been studied yet. So what we are referring to here is based solely on what we know so far. Now, perhaps, much more attractive features of this snake will be introduced to the world later. One of the interesting features of this snake is how it hunts birds, Rajabzadeh explained.

The 18th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CITES CoP18 took place in Geneva, Switzerland, from 17-28 August 2019, through which Iran's proposal to add rare spider-tailed horned viper on the Convention's Appendix II have been accepted.

Following the CITES mission designed to protect endangered species against illegal trade, and based on the international demand for such illegal trade, the CITES office in Iran set out to send a proposal to the Convention Secretariat to add spider-tailed horned viper on the Convention's list and thus prevent its illegal trade in early March.

Appendix I includes species threatened with extinction; trade in specimens of these species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances. Appendix II includes species not necessarily threatened with extinction, but in which trade must be controlled in order to avoid utilization incompatible with their survival.

INTERNATIONAL DAILY
www.tehrantimes.com

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» Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807

» Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603

» Printed at: Jame Jam Barta Borna - 44197737

Tehrantimes79 Tehrantimes79 Tehrantimes79

No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran
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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

If the right usurped from us is given back to us we shall take it, otherwise we shall go on claiming it.

Imam Ali (AS)

West-East Divan, Goethe and Hafez poetry

Part 2
The year 1827 marked the publication of the enlarged edition of the divan, which was now complete. Here the prose section bears the title *Noten und Abhandlungen zu besserem Verständnis des West-östlichen Divan*. This edition includes forty-three new poems. In addition, there are a few departures from the 1819 edition, and some rearrangements of the divan's books.

The title *West-East Divan* is ambivalent, and shows that the work is not to be understood unidimensionally, but as a dialogue. A discussion takes place which begins as a lyrical dialogue between Goethe and Hafez, but later expands to encompass East and West. When considering not only the work's title, but its content as well, the ambiguity becomes even more obvious.

The incentive provided by Hafez prompts the German poet to make a fictitious journey to the East, where the competition between poetry and religion, a favorite theme of both poets, leads to instructive discussions.

The eastward journey - which, with its initial poem, "Hegire", in the *Buch des Sangers*, marks the beginning of a new phase in life -- and the sojourn in the East also characterize this lyrical work as poetry based on personal experience.

This poetry shows Goethe's wealth of imagination -- an imagination steadily nourished by Hafez -- through masquerades and role-playing, irony, jest and earnestness.

The twelve books of the divan can be interpreted as a reflection of Goethe's Oriental studies. To begin with, the reader's attention is drawn to its structure, for this is the first time that Goethe divides a work into "books".

Each book bears a double title: a Persian title, followed by a German one, with the word *nameh/buch* as the first component. The divan opens with the *Moghani Nameh/Buch des Dichters* (later *Buch des Sangers*), which has as its main theme the poet's "Hegira" to the East and his acquaintance with Oriental culture.

This is followed by *Hafez Nameh/Das Buch Hafis*, which is devoted to characterization and admiration of the Persian poet, and in which Hafez assumes the central role of interlocutor.

The third book, *Uschk Nameh/Buch der Liebe*, discusses love and passion; there is a thematic relationship between this book and the *Buch Suleika*, although the name *Suleika* is not mentioned in the *Book of Love*.

The *Tefkir Nameh/Buch der Betrachtungen* has a didactic and moral character. *Rendsch Nameh/Buch des Unmuts* contains political and social criticism. *Hikmat Nameh/Buch der Sprüche* closely resembles the *Buch der Betrachtungen* and *Buch des Unmuts*, centering on Oriental adages and the art of poetry.

Timur Nameh/Buch des Timur is devoted to the conqueror Timur (1370-1405), Hafez's contemporary, whom Goethe considered as resembling his own contemporary Napoleon; it is linked with the ensuing *Suleika Nameh/Buch Suleika* by the poem "An Suleika".

The *Buch Suleika* takes the form of a dialogue between the Arab Hatem and the Persian Suleika, who figure the poet and his beloved Marianne; a number of Marianne's own poems are included. Monologues and dialogues of a totally different kind are found in the *Saki Nameh/Das Schenkenbuch*, with its anacreontic tone, which Goethe had already used in his younger days and which he now imitates in the style of Hafez.

Mathal Nameh/Buch die Parabeln contains fables and parables; *Parsi Nameh/Buch des Parsen* deals with the Old Persian adoration of fire and the sun. The final book, *Chuld Nameh/Buch des Paradieses*, blends Islamic conceptions of paradise with those of the poet himself.

In his *Noten und Abhandlungen* Goethe paid tribute to several other Persian poets, including Ferdowsi, Anvari, Nezami, Rumi, Sadi, and Jami. But Hafez was the only one to whom he devoted an entire book.

In his *Zwillingbrüder*, he had discovered a poet whose inspiration awakened in him a feeling of rejuvenation. And although in some cases a critical distance can be felt in Goethe's approach to the form of Hafez's poetry, he nevertheless felt inspired to write ghazals; an example is the last poem of the *Buch Suleika*.

Hafez's inspiration was so strong that in some of his poems Goethe called him *heiligen Hafis* or *Meister*. In other books, although Hafez's name is not mentioned, his proximity can be felt through allusions and hints.

A theme shared by both poets was that of poetic madness, already well-known in European literature. As in Hafez's work, panegyrics, anacreontics, mysticism, and eroticism formed the motifs of Goethe's divan, in which passion and intellect, mysticism and irony, love and common sense were equally present.

Through Hafez, Goethe was able to express his own moral and political criticism of his time. A significant aspect of Hafez's work appears in Goethe merely by implication: Hafez's *rendi* (libertinism) is recognized but never appears as such, although Goethe did use Persian words. Allusions to *rendi* can be found both in the *Buch Hafis* and the *Schenkenbuch*.

Source: *Encyclopedia Iranica*
Concluded

“Legend of Bonasan”, appreciation of Shizuko Tsuya’s concerns for chemical warfare victims

→1 “This film was made to show our appreciation for the long service provided by Ms. Tsuya for our people who have been injured in the chemical attacks during the war.”

Ahmadzadeh said that he could barely convince Tsuya for making the film as she didn't want to be the central theme of the movie. However, she agreed on the condition that the film would not focus on her in its story, as well as that it would provide moral lessons for all.

Tsuya also attended the press conference through an online video call.

“I'm not a special person and I've also not done any special thing,” said Tsuya who is a physician and president of the MOCT Association of Hiroshima.

She has collaborated with Iran's Society for Chemical Weapons Victims Support (SCWVS) for 16 years.

“I suppose that when one sees other people are suffering in pain, he/she should do something as far as possible. I saw



“Legend of Bonasan: The Genie in the Lamp” by Habib Ahmadzadeh.

Iran’s Tuti Books nominated for Bologna prize for Best Children’s Publishers of the Year

CULTURE DESK TEHRAN – Tuti Books, a major publication house based in Tehran, has been nominated for the BOP - Bologna Prize for the Best Children's Publishers of the Year.

Tuti Books is the children's branch of the Fatemi Publishing Co. solely dedicated to publishing high-quality content for the age group across the world.

“Tuti Books is proud to be among the handful of publishers that are active in this field on a global scale,” the publisher said.

“Introducing world literature to Iranian children and young adults is a big part of Tuti's mission,” it noted and added, “We are constantly looking for and acquiring titles from all over the world to further tighten the cultural ties between nations.”

“Tuti” is the Persian word for “Parrot”, a bird that is rooted deeply in Iranian literature and is known for telling fascinating stories.

Anhui Children's Publishing House from China, Bronze Publishing from Japan, Mirae Media & Books,

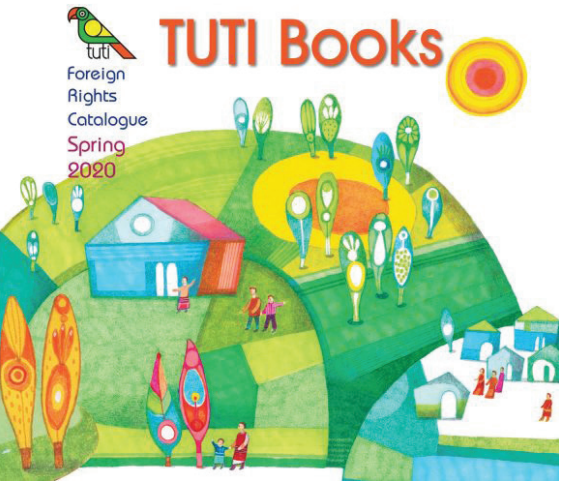
and Picturebook Gongjacks, both from South Korea, are other Asian companies competing for the prize.

A total of 30 publishers from across the world are competing for prizes in six categories. The winners will be announced during the online edition of the Bologna Children's Book Fair (BCBF), which will be held from June 14 to 17.

Established in 2013 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the BCBF, the BOP – Bologna Prize for the Best Children's Publishers of the Year is an extraordinary occasion to highlight publishers at the forefront of innovation in their activity for the creative nature of the editorial choices they have made during the previous year.

The prize initiated in collaboration with the AIE - Italian Publishers Association and the IPA – International Publishers Association are given to those publishers that have most distinguished themselves for their professional and intellectual skills in each of the six areas of the World, Africa, Central and South America, North America, Asia, Europe and Oceania.

At the same time, the prize is designed to foster a mutual



A poster for the Tuti Books foreign rights catalogue for spring 2020.

exchange of knowledge and ideas among different countries, areas and cultural identities across the world.

Paris MENART Fair showcases works by Iranian artists

The Shirin Art Gallery, a major art center in Tehran, had selected the artworks by Katayun Ruhi, Kurosh Shishegaran, Shahriar Ahmadi, Sepehr Bakhtiari, Hamid Ajami and Hanieh Delecroix Tabatabai for the exhibition, which came to an end on Sunday.

The MENART Fair is the first international modern and contemporary art show dedicated to artists from West Asia and North Africa (Middle East & North Africa), presented by major galleries.

The art fair was launched by Laure d'Hauteville, the founder and director of the Beirut Art Fair. She is also the founder of the Singapore Art Fair.

Joanna Chevalier, a curator and artistic director of the Beirut Art Fair, is the president of the MENART Fair.

Over 20 international galleries gathered for four days at the private mansion of the Cornette de Saint Cyr auction house in Paris to showcase works by artists from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Yemen and several other countries at the exhibition, which opened on May 27.

“This new fair in a confidential format offers an initiatory journey to the heart of a demanding selection of more than sixty modern and contemporary artists, most of whom are recognized in their respective countries,” the organizers said in a statement for the fair.

In an introduction to the exhibition, D'Hauteville said “Relatively little known to audiences, the contemporary artistic

mosaic of MENA is still young.”

“Several ‘moderns’ have asserted themselves there, now internationally recognized, and the young generation of contemporary artists is among the most numerous on the international art scene.

“This new generation is unparalleled in its richness and diversity, its fertile ebullition, its languages, which converge or contradict each other forming an unexpected mirror of the world! At the crossroads of Eastern and Western codes, a singular creative syntax is taking shape before our eyes, conveyed in a potentially global way: it's a generational fact, amplified by this technological groundswell that now connects all points of the planet at the moment.”

Nora Ephron’s “Heartburn” comes to Iranian Bookstores

CULTURE DESK TEHRAN — A Persian translation of Nora Ephron's "Heartburn" has been released by Keraseh Publications under the title of "The Private Life of a Chef".

"Heartburn" is a novel based on the author's autobiography, which focuses on Ephron's marriage and subsequent divorce from Carl Bernstein who was her second husband.

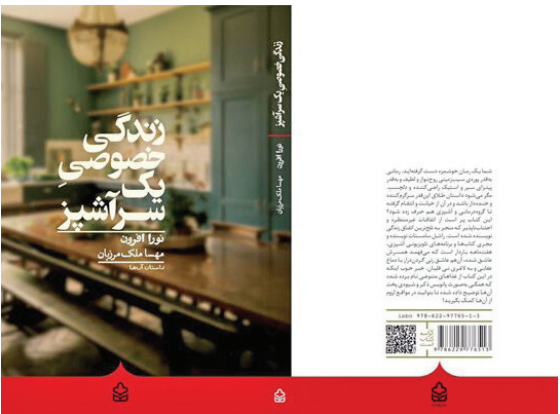
The extramarital relationship of Bernstein with the daughter of former British prime minister, James Callaghan, forms the novel's main plot.

"Heartburn" was first published in 1983 and Ephron also authored a screen adaptation of the novel in 1986.

"Heartburn" has been translated into Persian by Mahsa Malek-Marzban.

The novel is about Rachel who is seven months into her pregnancy, when she discovers that her husband Mark is in love with another woman.

As a cookery writer, Rachel tries to win Mark back but also resents him at the same time, while offering readers



Cover of the Persian translation of Nora Ephron's novel "Heartburn".

some of her favorite recipes.

The book mentions a variety of foods, all of which are referenced in footnotes with cooking methods explained so that readers are able to use them as recipes.

In an introduction to the Persian edition, Malek-Marzban wrote, "You have a delicious novel in hand. A novel as soulful and delicate as mashed potatoes and as satisfying and heartwarming as garlic and steak pizza. How is it possible for a divorce to be so entertaining and hilarious and entail everything from betrayal and revenge to group therapy and cooking?"

"This book is full of unexpected and inevitable tales that lead to the most tragic event in the author's life," she added.

Ephron was an American writer, filmmaker and journalist, best known for her romantic comedy films and she was nominated three times for the Academy Award for "Silkwood".

She was diagnosed with leukemia in 2006 and died as a result of health complications at the age of 71.

Composer Shahin Farhat appointed to Music Department at Iranian Academy of Arts

AR T DESK TEHRAN — Prolific Iranian musician and composer Shahin Farhat has been appointed as director of the Music Department at the Academy of Arts (IAA).

Farhat, who is also a permanent member of the academy, took up his appointment during a meeting with IAA director Bahman Namvar-Motlaq, the IAA announced on Sunday.

Born in 1947 in Tehran, Farhat started

playing the piano at the age of 13. He graduated from the University of Tehran with a degree in music, before completing his master's degree in composition at the State University of New York at Binghamton.

Farhat's Ph.D. thesis focused on the works of Iranian composers.

He pursued a teaching career at the Music Faculty of the University of Tehran.

Over the past two decades, he composed a number of symphonies in honor of a number

of national and religious personalities.

The Muhammad (S) Symphony is one of the compositions that was done in 2006.

The Iranian calendar year was named "The Year of the Great Prophet Muhammad (S)" by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei during his New Year's message on March 21, 2006.

Farhat also composed symphonies for the Persian Gulf, Mount Damavand and the Persian poet Ferdowsi.



Composer Shahin Farhat in an undated photo.