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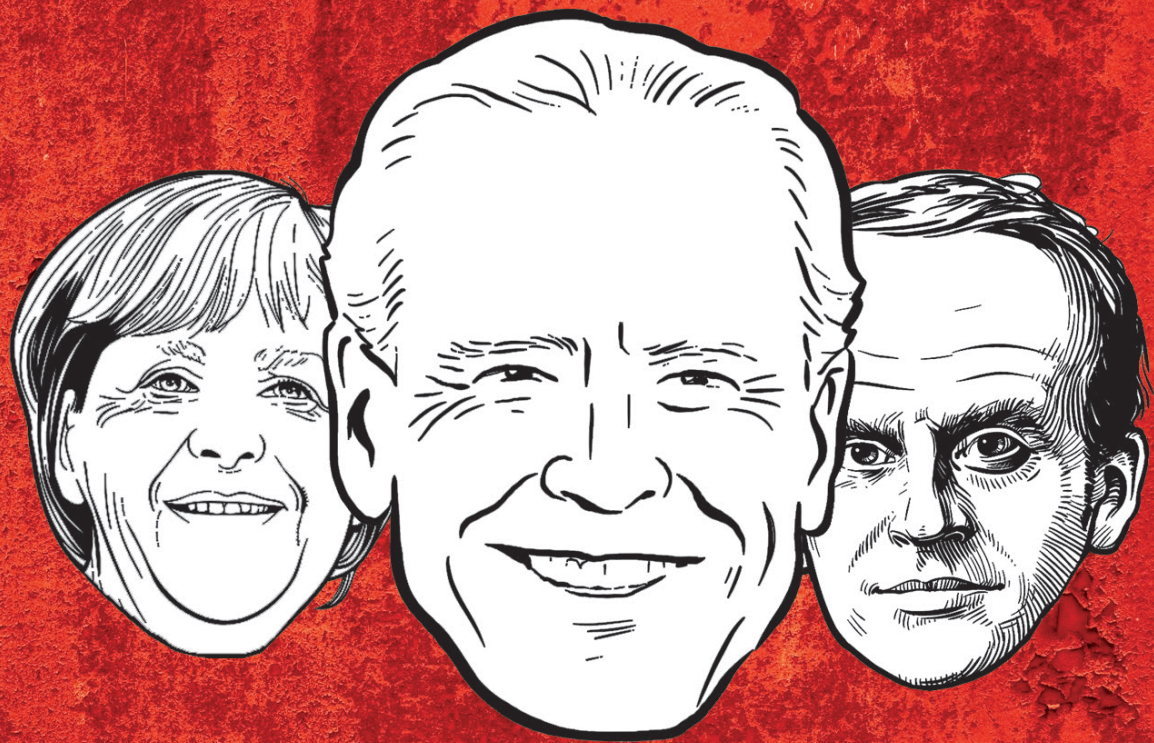
Iran midfielder Vahid Amiri wary of Hong Kong threat *Page 3*



Annual exports of polymer products exceed \$1.3b *Page 4*



Artists remembering Imam Khomeini in "Mourning for the Sun" *Page 8*



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Big brother is watching you

This terrible, horrible, no good very bad alliance

© Tehran Times/ Illustration by Bahman Vakhshour

Israeli onslaught on Gaza qualifies for war crimes

BY YASIR ALI MIRZA
As the guns fell silent in the besieged Gaza Strip after 11 days of Israeli aggression, people scrambled to extract injured people and collect remains of their belongings amid rubbles of the flattened buildings. The recent Israeli attack codenamed 'Operation Guardians of the Wall' on the Palestinian people is another instance of sheer violation of international law that qualifies to war crimes. As an occupying force, Israel has been flouting the international regulations by forcefully evacuating the legitimate Arab owners from their homes in the Shiekh Jarrah neighbourhood in East Jerusalem. The eviction triggered the hostilities as Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) and again Gaza Strip became a flashpoint which has been an 'open air prison' since the imposition of Israeli and Egyptian blockade since 2007.

When people around the world have been grappling with the biggest public health emergency in the form of the Coronavirus pandemic, the Zionist regime of Israel was busy pounding tons of bombs on besieged people of Palestine in Gaza. These attacks were carried out in retaliation of rocket fires coming from Palestinian resistance movement Hamas' and PIJ's installations triggered by repression being done in the al-Aqsa compound on peaceful protesters during the holy month of Ramadan. The Israeli blitzkrieg offensive on the ghetto civilian population has claimed, according to Palestinian Health Ministry data, more than 250 lives, including 66 children and wounded more than 1900 people. The UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) has said that more than 52,000 people displaced sought shelter elsewhere. The death toll adds to many woes where around 3,500 people have died in the pandemic so far.

Tensions are running high in the occupied Palestinian territories since the Israeli court, which has no legal adjudication for restitution laws in the occupied territories, ordered the eviction of 58 Palestinian families in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood in East Jerusalem. This move added much fuel to the fire in the protracted conflict.

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Spicogen vaccine to begin human testing in Iran

TEHRAN – The second and third phases of clinical studies of the Iranian-Australian Spicogen vaccine for coronavirus will be performed in Iran, Iranian Food and Drug Administration spokesman Kianoush Jahanpour said.

The first phase of the clinical trial was performed on volunteer Australians and the two next phases will be administrated to 400 Iranians, he stated.

He went on to note that Spicogen is a recombinant protein subunit vaccine.

Vaccines against viruses can be divided into three main categories: live attenuated, inactivated/killed, and subunit vaccines. Recombinant protein subunit vaccines are composed of at least 1 type of viral antigen. These vaccines are significantly more secure than live attenuated and inactivated vaccines.

An Iranian pharmaceutical company will produce the vaccine jointly with an Australian

company in Iran, he concluded.

Other joint vaccines

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

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

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.

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,

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Israeli siege about to be broken: Hamas

Hamas says the Gaza Strip is about to break the Israeli regime's 2007-present siege on the Palestinian enclave.

"Gaza's siege will be broken soon" and the Palestinian people there would be accommodated with proper living conditions, the Palestinian resistance movement's leader Yahya Sinwar told a visiting Egyptian delegation on Monday, the Palestinian Ma'an news agency reported.

Tel Aviv imposed the all-out land, aerial, and ground siege after Hamas rose to power in the enclave. Through the blockade, it has been controlling the Gazans' access to the entire range of their requirements, including their bare necessities.

The international atmosphere is currently in favor of the Palestinian nation, he said, adding that the provided opportunity had to be seized upon in the best way.

The official was referring to the groundswell of international support for Gaza after it came

under a 12-day-long Israeli war.

The aggression saw the Israeli war machine laying indiscriminately into civilian buildings, including a famous tower that housed international journalists. At least 253 Palestinians, including 66 children, 39 women, and 17 elderly people, were martyred, and some 1948 others wounded during the Israeli assaults.

According to Press TV, the far-and-wide condemnation of Tel Aviv's offensive helped raise an unprecedented level of awareness throughout the world concerning the regime's ferocious nature. An incessant rocket-powered retaliation on the part of the coastal sliver's resistance groups, meanwhile, forced it to accept a ceasefire last Friday.

"We impose ourselves and our cause [of liberation from Israeli aggression] upon the world. We are a people, which deserves to live, and a people that is entitled to its rights," Sinwar added.

Museum of education, related archives inaugurated in Shiraz

TEHRAN – On Monday, a museum dedicated to education and its related history and archives was officially opened its doors to the public in the ancient city of Shiraz, southern Iran.

Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Deputy Minister Mohammad-Hassan Talebian cut the ribbon on the museum, which is the first of its kind in Fars Province, IRNA reported.

Talking about the importance of safeguarding humanity's heritage, the official said: "In the

realm of cultural heritage, we believe there are no sustainable development or future that has [strong] links with the path. And, it does not mean getting stuck in the past."

Celebrated as the heartland of Persian culture for over 2000 years, Shiraz has become synonymous with education, nightingales, poetry, and crafts skills passed down from generation to generation. It was one of the most important cities in the medieval Islamic world and was the Iranian capital during the Zand dynasty from

1751 to 1794.

Shiraz is home to some of the country's most magnificent buildings and sights. Increasingly, it draws more and more foreign and domestic sightseers flocking into this provincial capital.

Eram Garden, Afif-Abad Garden, Tomb of Hafez, Tomb of Sa'di, Jameh Mosque of Atigh, and Persepolis are among the historical, cultural, and ancient sites of Shiraz that are of interest to domestic and foreign tourists.



© Mehr/ Maryam Kamyab

Reviving qanats, supplying water projected

TEHRAN – The Ministry of Agriculture inked a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Execution of Imam Khomeini's Order (known as Setad) on Tuesday for reviving 300 qanats (ancient subterranean aqueducts) across the country.

The MOU also included projects for supplying drinking water to 500 rural areas.

Iran's fertility rate alarmingly low

BY SADEQ LAVASANI

No more than a decade ago, Iran boasted one of the world's youngest populations all thanks to a baby boom that began in the mid-seventies and reached its peak soon after the revolution of 1979. Millions of Iranian baby boomers are now either reaching middle-age or are well into it.

The population that, not too long ago, was among the world's youngest is according to some estimates going to be among the eldest in two decades if the fertility rate remains low. The Iranian Health Ministry says the rate among Iranian women has dropped 25% just over the past four years.

Based on statistics, the decline in birth rates in Iran over the past few years means the number of babies born each year is now around 1.6 percent per woman. That's well below the 2.1 percent replacement fertility level necessary to sustain population.

The director general of the ministry's department of population, family and school health described this downward trend as extremely worrisome. Hamed Barakati warned recently that Iran is running into trouble so fast that there is little time left for intervention. Economic factors seem to be at play here.

Young Iranians have been finding it increasingly difficult to get married, and more young married couples are choosing not to have babies, or have only one child. Statistics show the number of childless families or those with only one child has gone up more than 5.6% over the past decade.

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Iran nuclear chief sends letter to IAEA

TEHRAN - Ali Akbar Salehi, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), has sent a letter to the chief of the UN nuclear watchdog informing him that a February deal between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency has expired but Iran decided to continue to store data related to monitoring activities.

The letter was announced after the Agency released a quarterly report on Iran in which it accused Iran of failing to explain traces of uranium found at several

allegedly undeclared sites. The letter also came after IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi announced on May 24 that he had agreed with Iran to extend by one month a February deal between Iran and the IAEA allowing the UN nuclear watchdog to continue necessary monitoring activities.

However, Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's permanent representative to the UN offices in Vienna, said that Salehi, in his letter, told Grossi that the monitoring deal has expired.

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Iran's biggest cement production line inaugurated

TEHRAN – Iran's biggest cement production line was put into operation in northern Alborz Province's Abyek Cement Complex on Tuesday in a ceremony attended by the Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Alireza Razm Hosseini, Shata reported.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Razm Hosseini put the country's annual cement production capacity at 80 million tons saying that the domestic demand for the product is 70 million tons per year.

"The country that once imported cement has today become one of the countries exporting this product," he stated.

The official also mentioned the 13-percent growth of cement production in the country and added: «Apart from the production growth, indigenizing the knowledge for the production of equipment and machinery in this sector is also of significant importance.»

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National libraries of Iran, Indonesia sign MOU

TEHRAN – The National Library and Archives of Iran (NLAI) and the National Library of Indonesia (Perpusnas) signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on Monday to expand their cooperation on librarianship and information science.

The MOU was inked in a virtual meeting between NLAI director Ashraf Borujerdi and National Library of Indonesia director Muhammad Syarif Bando, the NLAI announced.

"We feel really happy and honored

about the MOU that will help improve cultural relations between Iran and Indonesia," Borujerdi said in the meeting.

"As the largest Islamic country of the world with a culturally diverse population, Indonesia has always had close, friendly relations with Iran, and due to the broad scope of cultural exchange, conditions are excellent for the expansion of relations between the countries," she added.

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‘Principlist candidates may not quit in favor of Raeisi’

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — The spokesman for the Combatant Cleric Society says principlist presidential candidates may not withdraw candidacy in favor of the candidate backed by the Unity Council of the Principlists, saying it is dependent on the “personal views” of other principlist candidates to stay or leave the race.



The Unity Council of Principlist backs Ebrahim Raeisi, the Judiciary chief, as favored presidential candidate.

Gholamreza Mesbahi Moqaddam said the Combatant Cleric Society started its activities for the presidential elections about 10 months ago and it formed the Unity Council of Principlists with involvement of representatives from political parties, the youth, women, university students, teachers and other social classes.

The purpose of the clerical society was to agree on a single candidate in the presidential

elections and it backs Raeisi and it obeys the collective decisions of the Unity Council.

He said the Unity Council only introduces Raeisi to the electorate but the people have the right to vote for any candidate they wish.

“Seyyed Ebrahim Raeisi is the exclusive candidate of the Unity Council of Principlists and whether other principlist candidates will withdraw candidacy in favor of Raeisi or stay in the race until the election day is dependent on the personal views of them, and it is possible that they would not withdraw,” Mesbahi Moqaddam told IRNA in an interview published on Tuesday.

On a refusal by the Guardian Council to confirm certain candidates to run for president and the airing of certain doubts about the performance of the council in social media, he said the Leader of the Islamic Revolution answered these doubts and what the Leader says is the “firm stance” of the Islamic Republic system and all those who consider themselves the followers of the late Imam Khomeini and the Leader.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Iran, Tajikistan firm to develop ties: interior minister

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran and the Republic of Tajikistan are determined to develop ties and cooperation, Iranian Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli said on Tuesday.

Rahmani Fazli made the remarks in a meeting with Tajik Interior Minister Ramazon Rahimzoda who made a working visit to Tehran on Tuesday along with a delegation.



“The will of the two nations and countries is to develop cooperation,” Rahmani Fazli said.

Rahmani Fazli said the relationship between Iran and Tajikistan has been on the rise by capitalizing on cultural and historical affinities as well as geographical proximity.

He also said the two countries are focused on strengthening capacities for convergence and cooperation at different fields.

Rahmani Fazli said he as interior minister, Zarif as foreign minister and Rouhani as president favor close economic and cultural ties with Tajikistan.

The interior minister also said an MOU has been signed between Iran and Tajikistan for cooperation in campaign against drug trafficking, organized crime as well as education, and exchange of student and professor.

The minister also said strengthening regional economic integration is favored by senior officials of Iran and Tajikistan and in line with this purpose there is a good capacity for joint investment and banking commercial ties.

For his part, the Tajik interior minister said he has visited Tehran with the aim of assessing the grounds for developing ties with Iran in different arenas.

Rahimzoda also said working visits between the two countries should continue.

Rahimzoda added, “We are assessing all ways for developing economic and cultural cooperation between Iran and Tajikistan and hope that with a focus on the centrality of common culture, especially the Farsi language, the friendship between the two countries will be strengthened.”

Jalili: Every village could serve as a ‘cell’ for development

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Speaking to the people of Iran on televised program on Monday night, presidential contender Saeed Jalili said that every village could be a big part of Iran’s development.

“Today, 25% of our population lives in villages, and as far as I know, every village can be a “cell” of progress for the development of the country. If we solve the problems of 40,000 villages in the country, we will see that each village can be the leap cell of the country, and this problem will be solved through planning and management,” he stated.

Jalili went on to say that those in charge should not allow an individual or a group to gain money from the pockets of the people.

“This issue requires serious determination and will, and one must first start from the faction of friends and insiders in order to stand against it,” he remarked.

Pointing to the rising inflation rate in the country, the presidential candidate said that the average inflation in many countries is below 5%, “but our country has experienced 50% inflation. Solving this problem requires will and planning; it should be noted who will benefit from this inflation and why only a certain and limited number of people have benefited from heavy banking facilities.”

Regarding nuclear negotiations, Jalili said that if Iran is going to negotiate with the West, it must have tools to use as bargaining chip.

Raeisi lays out landmark housing plan

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Seyyed Ebrahim Raeisi’s campaign office presented a housing plan to the public on Tuesday.

Afshin Parvinpour, a member of Raeisi’s popular campaign, stated that house construction will positively stimulate the economy.

“Due to the needs of the country and the shortcomings of the last few years, it is necessary to strengthen the constructions by implementing strong plans,” he said.

Parvinpour said that a team of experts and researchers in the field of economics and housing has been working on a project for about 7 months, which is an upgraded and

strengthened version of the Mehr housing project, and is currently on the agenda of Ayatollah Raeisi as one of the main programs of his possible government.

“The solution to the housing problem in the country is to create a housing movement, the principles of the mentioned plan are the same as the principles of Mehr housing; that means free land, low-interest construction loans, and the use of private sector capacity to build houses,” he said.

The Mehr housing project was introduced by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2007. It was to build around 2 million housing units within 5 years for low-income families.

The first Rouhani administration however, took the project

off the balance sheet of the Central Bank of Iran. Rouhani announced that by 2017 the Mehr housing project will be replaced with cheap loans to needy families with the stated objective to build only 150,000 homes on a yearly basis.

Parvinpour said that the new plan is to build 4 million housing units in 4 years.

The project will be financed by banks and will be crafted by a very strong financial team, he stated.

“In preparing this plan, we have assumed that Iran will be under sanctions for another 100 years and that the United States will impose sanctions on us,” the campaign member added.

Qazizadeh: Stock market, cryptocurrency, and tackling COVID-19 are my priorities

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — In a brief interview with the state TV, presidential contender Amir Hossein Qazizadeh Hashemi shared vision on his priorities.

“Currency exchanges and cryptocurrencies are critical, and this does not mean that this is our basic program in the field of economics, but our basic program in the field of economics is to stabilize prices permanently to control inflation and stabilize inflation rates,” he said.

He also said that the first thing his ad-

ministration needs to do is to stimulate the stock market.

He added, “The government has an emergency plan. The case of the coronavirus is completely urgent, and 60% of jobs are affected by this. We must act urgently in this regard and control this issue in two or three months.”

Qazizadeh said that these issues must be solved quickly to make people sure they can have a normal life next year.

The presidential election will be held in June 18.

Hemmati says he will focus on low-income deciles

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Presidential contender Abdolnaser Hemmati says he considers people’s livelihood as his most important and basic priority.

Hemmati also says payment of subsidies, though it was supposed to be targeted, is not.

“Now the lower three deciles of our society are people who are under a lot of economic pressure, and I will pay special attention to these three lower deciles, and in order to be able to target and redistribute

subsidy resources, we must pay special attention to the low-income classes and the lower three deciles,” he stated.

He said that he has been on the firm belief from the beginning that at least “every household in the bottom three deciles should be paid one million toman (almost \$238).”

The presidential candidate said he will not emphasize the issue too much because he doesn’t want to enter the competition of announcing numbers.

He said nobody should go to bed hungry.

Government: Vienna talks not related to elections

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Speaking at his weekly press briefing on Tuesday, Iranian government spokesman Ali Rabiei said that Iran won’t let the Vienna nuclear talks for a possible revival of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) to protract, yet he seemed eager to announce the full restoration of the JCPOA in the incumbent administration.

“These negotiations will continue based on their independent and legal procedure and within the framework of the general policies of the Islamic Republic and with the guidance of the Leader until the desired result is achieved,” he said.

Rabiei stated that the nuclear negotiations are not related to the presidential elections, reiterating that the government is determined to fulfill its mission and hand



over the country to the future administration without illegal sanctions.

The presidential elections will be held on June 18.

The spokesman also said there is no impasse in the Vienna talks.

“Negotiations have reached a stage where a few key issues need to be decided, and these issues require the attention, obsession and time they need. We do not allow the talks to protract, nor do we rush to reach an agreement. Our criterion is the rights of the nation and the interests of the people and the Islamic Republic,” he added.

Rabiei noted that the Iranian nuclear team has been following the directions given by Tehran step by step.

The fifth round of the Vienna negotiations is underway in Vienna, with delegates ironing out details of the agreement.

Cleric urges candidates to avoid mudslinging, giving hollow promises

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — A member of the Combatant Cleric Society has advised the presidential candidates not to sacrifice national interests for political or factional purposes and avoid trading insults or giving hollow promises.

“The candidates of the elections should know that they have entered the scene to serve the country and therefore there is no need for clash and mudslinging,” Seyyed Reza Akrami said, IRNA reported on Monday.

Akrami said only three days are left to

the election day and the scope of campaigns has intensified in these days and certain candidates in addition to presenting plans are making allegations against the government and each other.

This is taking place despite the fact that the Leader of the Islamic Revolution in a recent speech to parliamentarians urged the candidates to avoid turning elections into a “scene of power struggle and insulting behaviors” like what happens in the U.S. and certain European countries, the

soft-spoken cleric remarked.

Akrami said the Leader warned that whenever in the past such damaging approaches were adopted in the presidential debates or the candidates tried to frighten the people from the competitor “the country suffered”.

He also said the Leader insisted that the presidential candidates should avoid giving “unrealistic and deceitful slogans” and that they should make promises based on the “realities”.



Leader’s remarks on elections



1993

Participating in the elections is a public duty for the people of Iran.



1997

Anyone who goes to the polls and casts ballots out of a sense of responsibility and discretion should feel that he has done his homework.



2001

The presence of people in the elections is one of the most important manifestations of national authority.



2005

Whoever goes to the polls, in fact, votes for the Islamic Republic, votes for the constitution and votes for the unchangeable articles of the constitution - Islam and Islamic values.



2009

A sign of the people’s trust in this system was the participation of 40 million people in the elections.



2013

The main criterion is that persons take office who seriously work to maintain the dignity and movement of the country towards the goals of the revolution.



2017

I believe that the presidential election is very important, the fate of the country is in the hands of the people who elect the head of the executive branch.

Big brother is watching you

This terrible, horrible, no good very bad alliance

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** – Last year in February, the world was shocked when it came to light that the CIA used Swiss-made encryption machines to spy on governments all over the world for more than half a century. The machines were produced by an ostensibly Swiss company and were sold to more than 120 countries well into the 21st century.

On the surface, the company, Crypto AG, was Swiss but, in reality, it was owned by the CIA in a highly classified partnership with West German intelligence, according to The Washington Post.

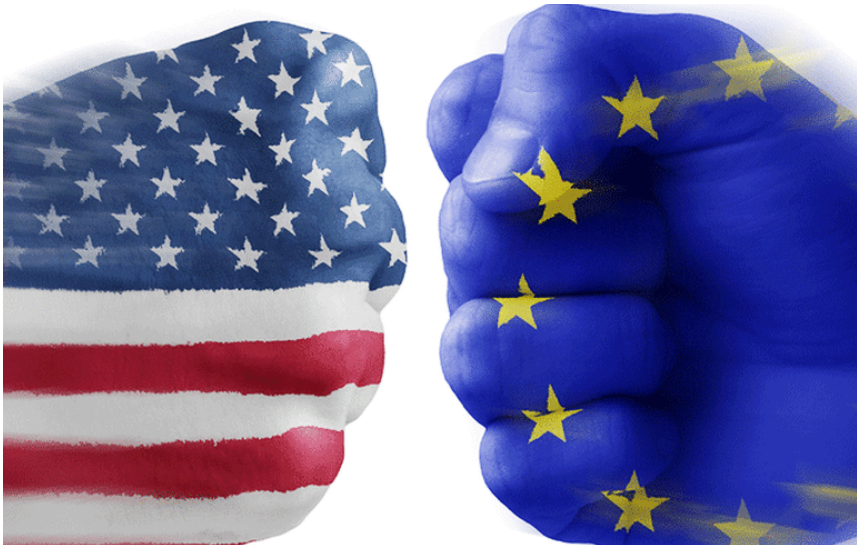
In the Crypto AG scandal, the victims were mostly non-Western governments who trusted the company to send seemingly encrypted messages without knowing that their messages were being decoded in the CIA. Europe was also complicit in the American spying plot.

Now, things have changed and the Europeans have fallen victim to the U.S. lust for espionage. Danish state broadcaster DR has reported that the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) used a partnership with Denmark's foreign intelligence unit to spy on senior officials of neighboring countries, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel, according to Reuters.

The bombshell was a result of a 2015 internal investigation in the Danish Defense Intelligence Service into NSA's role in the partnership.

According to the investigation, which covered the period from 2012 to 2014, the NSA used Danish information cables to spy on senior officials in Sweden, Norway, France and Germany, including former German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and former German opposition leader Peer Steinbrück.

Denmark, a close ally of the United States, hosts several key landing stations for subsea internet cables to and from Sweden, Norway, Germany, Holland and Britain. Through targeted retrievals and the use of NSA-developed analysis software known as XKeyscore, NSA intercepted both calls, texts and chat messages to and from telephones of officials in



the neighboring countries.

Leaders in Europe reacted to the U.S.-Danish collaboration and demanded answers on the spying scandal, which included tapping Angela Merkel's mobile phone. Merkel and French President Emmanuel Macron said on Monday that they expected an explanation about this scandal.

Following a meeting with Merkel, Macron condemned Denmark's secret collaboration with the U.S. in spying on European leaders. He said wiretapping "is not acceptable between allies" and asked the United States for clarity. "This is not acceptable between allies, and even less between allies and European partners," Macron stated.

In an attempt to encourage the U.S. into giving explanations, the French president said that "there is no room for suspicion between" the U.S. and its European allies.

"We requested that our Danish and American partners provide all the information on these revelations and on these past facts. We are awaiting these answers," Macron said after a Franco-German video summit.

Merkel said she "could only agree" with

Macron. In a sign that the trust between the U.S. and Europe was damaged after the Danish revelations, she said, "In this regard, I see a good basis not only for the resolution of the matter, but also to really come to trusted relations."

Other Scandinavian countries also reacted to the bombshell, demanding answers from Denmark and the U.S. "It's unacceptable if countries which have close allied cooperation feel the need to spy on one another," Norwegian Prime Minister Erna Solberg told NRK, a public broadcaster that also took part in the investigation.

Swedish Defense Minister Peter Hultqvist had also been "in contact with Denmark's defense minister to ask if Danish platforms have been used to spy on Swedish politicians."

The U.S.-Danish spying scandal revived debates over the necessity for the European countries to stand up to the U.S. spying efforts against Europe, which are estimated to be much more than what's been revealed.

In 2013, Edward Snowden, the former NSA worker, released thousands of documents of the U.S.'s vast spying operations against

Europe that shook political relations between Washington and its European allies.

At that time, Merkel called for rebuilding trust between the United States and its European allies. But the U.S., instead of dispelling the mistrust, doubled down on its spying efforts and this time even wiretapped the mobile phone of Merkel.

James R. Clapper Jr., who was director of the U.S. national intelligence at the time, recalled the diplomatic tensions after the Snowden leak, which included reports that the NSA had collected millions of digital communications in France and the phone calls of the Brazilian and Mexican presidents.

"We had many uncomfortable and awkward meetings," Clapper said, according to The Washington Post. "We had our usual venting sessions and went on with business. We acknowledged that nation-states do things in their interest."

Commenting on the U.S.-Danish scandal, Snowden said U.S. President Joe Biden was deeply involved in spying operations against Europe and that he is prepared to whitewash the issue.

"Biden is well-prepared to answer for this when he soon visits Europe since, of course, he was deeply involved in this scandal the first time around. There should be an explicit requirement for full public disclosure not only from Denmark, but their senior partner as well," the American whistleblower said on Twitter.

Russia said the recent revelation is "just the tip of the iceberg" and the U.S. may have involved in wider spying operations.

"I think this is just the tip of the iceberg, and the situation is even direr for NATO member states themselves," Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Tuesday.

The Europeans have treated the U.S. as their closest friend and ally in history but the U.S. continues, from time to time, to remind them that they should remain under American control. With friends like the U.S., who needs enemies?

Iran nuclear chief sends letter to IAEA

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** - Ali Akbar Salehi, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), has sent a letter to the chief of the UN nuclear watchdog informing him that a February deal between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency has expired but Iran decided to continue to store data related to monitoring activities.

The letter was announced after the Agency released a quarterly report on Iran in which it accused Iran of failing to explain traces of uranium found at several allegedly undeclared sites. The letter also came after IAEA Director-General Rafael Grossi announced on May 24 that he had agreed with Iran to extend by one month a February deal between Iran and the IAEA allowing the UN nuclear watchdog to continue necessary monitoring activities.

However, Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's permanent representative to the UN offices in Vienna, said that Salehi, in his letter, told Grossi that the monitoring deal has expired.

"Dr. Salehi's letter to @rafaelgrossi: Whereas the Technical Understanding was expired on May 24, Iran decided not to extend it, meanwhile we decided to continue recording for one month aimed at providing another opportunity to conclude bilateral tech negotiations with the Agency," Gharibabadi said on Twitter, adding, "On safeguards, Iran has so far done its utmost efforts to cooperate with the Agency substantively and provide the necessary clarifications and responses. We welcome the Agency's readiness for engaging in a proactive and focused effort to resolve the issues without any delay."

The Iranian diplomat also said, "And as before, we would continue to cooperate constructively with the Agency. We highly expect such a mutually determination would result in reaching a visible practical outcome as quickly as possible."

In May, Grossi said he had agreed with Iran to extend by one month the necessary verification and monitoring activities carried out by the Agency in the country. He made the announcement after reaching the agreement with Salehi.

Under their agreement, the information collected by the Agency monitoring equipment covered by a Technical Understanding signed last February will continue to be stored for a further period of one month up to June 24, according to a statement issued by the IAEA. They also agreed that the equipment will continue to operate and be able to collect and store further data for this period, the statement noted.

"I am happy that, through our continued dialogue, we were able to agree on this matter today," the IAEA chief said at the time.

"I welcome this development. The expiration of the Technical Understanding, which enabled the Agency's verifica-



tion and monitoring, would have been a serious loss at this critical time," he added. "This agreed way forward ensures continuity of knowledge for a limited period of time."

Iran's top security body also confirmed the decision, saying in a statement that the extension was made to give nuclear negotiations between Iran and the West more time.

"Due to the ongoing technical negotiations on the settlement of safeguards issues between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency, which are taking place in parallel with the Vienna talks, the storage of surveillance cameras data will continue for one month from May 24 so that the necessary opportunity is provided for the progress and conclusion of the negotiations," Secretariat of Iran's Supreme National Security Council said in a statement. It also underlined the continued suspension of the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in accordance with a parliamentary nuclear law obliging the Iranian government to restrict cooperation with the IAEA unless the West lifts sanctions on Iran.

The nuclear law stipulates that the Iranian government should take certain nuclear measures such as raising the level of uranium enrichment to 20% and suspending the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol if the Western parties failed to honor their obligations under the 2015 nuclear deal, formally called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Iran's monitoring deal with the IAEA came a few days before the nuclear law came into force.

Iran and the IAEA reached in February a temporary deal allowing the Agency to continue its monitoring of Iran's nuclear facilities for a period of three months, which expired more than a week ago. The deal was reached during a two-day visit by IAEA chief Grossi to Iran.

At that time, the IAEA and the AEOI issued a joint statement announcing the deal.

"The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency recalled and reaffirmed the

spirit of cooperation and enhanced mutual trust that led to the Joint Statement in Tehran on 26 August 2020, and the importance of continuing that cooperation and trust," the February statement said. "The AEOI informed the IAEA that in order to comply with the act passed by the Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Iran called 'Strategic Action to Cease Actions and Protect the Interest of Iranian Nation' Iran will stop the implementation of the voluntary measures as envisaged in the JCPOA, as of 23 February 2021."

The statement added, "In view of the above and in order for the Agency to continue its verification and monitoring activities, the AEOI and the IAEA agreed: 1. That Iran continues to implement fully and without limitation its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA as before. 2. To a temporary bilateral technical understanding, compatible with the Law, whereby the IAEA will continue with its necessary verification and monitoring activities for up to 3 months (as per technical annex). 3. To keep the technical understanding under regular review to ensure it continues to achieve its purposes."

In early May, a few weeks before the expiration of the deal, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araqchi, who is leading the Iranian negotiating team in Vienna, said that Iran would consider extending the deal if needed.

He told Japanese broadcaster NHK that Iran hopes enough progress will be made so that there will be no need for an extension. But he said that if needed, Iran will consider an extension at a proper time.

Saeed Khatibzadeh, spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry, reiterated this position, saying that extending the deal is one of Iran's options.

"In this interview, Dr. Araqchi pointed to only one of the choices for the date of May 21. If the talks are on the right track, with the coordination of both parties and Tehran's approval, this date can be extended," the spokesman said.

Salehi's letter came amid the fifth round of the nuclear talks currently underway in the Austrian capital of Vienna. The talks made progress but are yet to reach a final stage.

Araqchi has said that all parties are still serious and have taken these talks seriously and 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," he said.

S P O R T S

Iran midfielder Vahid Amiri wary of Hong Kong threat

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** – Iran iconic midfielder Vahid Amiri says that Hong Kong could be a dangerous team in the 2022 FIFA World Cup qualification.

Iran defeated Hong Kong in the first leg thanks to goals from Sardar Azmoun and Karim Ansarifard but Amiri says they played them about two years ago and they could be a different team on June 3 in Bahrain.



The 'Persian Leopards' will have to win their four matches against Hong Kong, Bahrain, Cambodia and Iraq to secure their place in the Third Round.

"We're well aware that there are four difficult matches ahead of us but we are determined to book our place in the next stage," Amiri said.

"First, we need to concentrate on our first match against Hong Kong. We will move step by step. In the first leg, we earned a hard-fought win against team because they were very compact and worked hard. Also, we met them about two years ago and they will likely be stronger than before for the competition," he added.

"We had to host the competition in our country but the Asian Football Confederation awarded them the right to host the matches. It doesn't matter, because I think that'll make us stronger and we are determined to win our four matches to make our people happy," Amiri concluded.

History maker Jamali dreams of Olympic medal

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** – Yekta Jamali wants to write her name in history book once again as an Iranian woman to win an Olympic medal.

Jamali became the first-ever Iranian woman to win a medal in an international competition. She won a bronze medal in the 87kg weight class at the 2021 IWF Junior World Weightlifting Championships held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

"My coaches inspired me ahead of the competition and I started my work without stress. I just focused on lifting my weights. I want to thank God for winning the bronze medal," Jamali said.

"I don't know if I can describe it. I thank all the people who gave me positive energy."

"I've started the weightlifting for three years and the 2021 IWF Junior World Weightlifting Championships was my first experience. My dream is too big. I will try hard to win an Olympic medal and am sure I will win the Olympic medal," Jamali stated.

IPL: start date of 2021/22 season announced

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** – The 2021/22 Iran Professional League season will kick off on Sept. 24 and finish on June 20, 2022, Iran's League Football Organization announced.

The current season has not yet finished and Persepolis and Sepahan compete to win the title with seven weeks to spare.

The Iran Professional League is the highest division of professional football in Iran.

The league was also known as the Persian Gulf Cup from 2006. It is the top-level football league in Iran since its foundation on Nov. 2, 2001.

Each year, the top finishing team in the league become the Iranian football champions, and the lowest finishing teams are relegated to Azadegan League.

Persepolis are the most decorated football team in the IPL with six titles out of 19.

Italian coach Gabriele Pin to join Esteghlal coaching staff

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — Cesare Prandelli assistant in UEFA Euro 2012 Gabriele Pin will travel to Iran next week to start his job as Esteghlal technical advisor.

Esteghlal coach Farhad Majidi announced that via a post on his Instagram account.

The Iranian top-flight club had already announced that they would sign a contract with Italian coach Angelo Alessio.

Pin started his playing career in Juventus in 1979 and played as a midfielder in Parma, Lazio and Piacenza.

He served as assistant in Italian teams Parma, Fiorentina and Genoa. The 59-year-old coach also worked as assistant in Galatasaray, Valencia and Emirati team Al Nasr.

Majidi has said the Italian will work at Esteghlal as advisor until the end of the season and sit on the bench as assistant in the next season in Iran Professional League.

Iran wins four medals at Asian Boxing Championships

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** – Iranian boxers won four medals at the 2021 Asian Elite Boxing Championships.

In the men's 60kg final bout, Danial Shahbakhsh won a silver medal after losing to Mongolian Erdenebatyn Tsendbaatar.

Meisam Gheslaghi was defeated against world champion Dilshodbek Ruzmetov from Uzbekistan in the men's 81kg class.

Iranian boxers Shahin Mousavi and Pouria Amiri had previously won two bronze medals in the 75kg and +91kg, respectively.

It was Iran's best result since 2005.

The competition brought 150 boxers from 17 countries together in Dubai, the UAE from May 24 to 31.

‘Very creative’ approach needed to revive JCPOA, Russia says

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** – Russia's ambassador to the UN in Vienna has called for a creative and responsible approach to overcome difficulties concerning the Vienna nuclear talks between Iran and the West.

"The areas of disagreement reduced significantly at the Vienna talks on JCPOA. But Mr. Araqchi is right: the remaining outstanding issues are rather complicated. A very creative and responsible approach is needed to find solutions," Mikhail Ulyanov said on Twitter in the midst of nuclear talks aimed to revive the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"Talks are 'very complicated' and reached to main issues of dispute"

The Russian diplomat was responding to remarks by Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araqchi who leads the Iranian negotiating team in Vienna.

The top Iranian nuclear negotiator has told Iranian state media that the Vienna talks are "very complicated" and reached to the main issues of dispute. Underlining that he was not sure if the current round of talks would be the last round, Araqchi noted that the negotiating delegations may need to return to capitals to make more consultations.

The spokesman for Iran's Foreign Ministry,

Saeed Khatibzadeh, has also shed light on the latest developments in the nuclear talks, saying that the negotiating teams have not resolved the key issues yet.

"If the remaining key issues are resolved, it could be the last round, but if it is not, it will continue. The Vienna talks have made good and significant progress in all three working groups, but key issues remain. These issues must also be addressed carefully," Khatibzadeh said on Monday. "All JCPOA-related sanctions must be lifted and verified. This verification will take place in the formulas discussed in Vienna, and then Iran will reverse its compensatory measures."

The spokesman also said there is no stalemate in the nuclear talks in Vienna.

"There is no deadlock in the Vienna talks, and the talks have reached key points, and key issues need to be decided, and this requires its own care, obsession and time. We do not allow dialogue to become protracted, nor do we rush," the spokesman said, adding, "Our criterion is to ensure the highest interests of the people and the system. Our team carefully follows the instructions from the center. The United States must decide whether to continue Trump's failed legacy or turn the page and return to its commitments under the JCPOA and if that happens, Iran's response is the full implementation of the JCPOA. The JCPOA is what is written, neither more nor less."

Exports from Shahid Rajaei port rises 49% in 2 months on year

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Exports from Shahid Rajaei port, Iran's largest and best-equipped container port, increased 49 percent in the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-May 21), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to a provincial official.

Alireza Mohammadi Karajiran, the director-general of Ports and Maritime Department of Iran's southern Hormozgan province, where the port lies, said that 81,036 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of commodities were exported to different countries from Shahid Rajaei port in the said months.

Mentioning the rising rate of operations in the port, the official said, "This growth has been achieved while Hormozgan province has been facing a high outbreak of the coronavirus in the last two months, and many economic activities and businesses have faced severe restrictions, however, the container companies of Shahid Rajaei port container terminals have played a key role in the sustainability of maritime trade and the supply of goods needed by the people, in compliance with health policies and protocols."

Enjoying the most modern container terminals and port equipment, Shahid Rajaei accounts for 85 percent of the total loading and unloading at the Iranian ports.

Given its significant role in the country's import and export of products as well as transit and transshipment via Iran, the development of Shahid Rajaei Port has been among the most important development projects in the country.



In late December last year, Iranian Ports and Maritime Organization (PMO) signed six memorandums of understanding (MOU) with domestic companies for investing 100 trillion rials (about \$2.38 billion) plus €800 million in development projects of Shahid Rajaei port's hinterland.

The signing ceremony was attended by the Iranian Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami, and the PMO Head Mohammad Rastad.

The mentioned investments will be made in a variety of projects including zinc, lead, manganese, and copper factories, the construction, and development of industrial components and parts production units, development and integration of the existing industrial units in the area, construction of an alumina refinery, as well as the construction of container manufacturing units.

Implementation and construction of production units in Shahid Rajaei Port will make this port a center for value-added production and a logistics center, which will upgrade the port's level to the third generation and significantly reduce transportation and storage costs.

The third phase of the port's development plan is going to go operational by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2021), according to PMO.

Back in August 2019, PMO's Director of Engineering and Infrastructure Development Mohammadreza Allahyar had said that the port's capacity is planned to rise 2.1 million TEUs to reach 8 million TEUs.

Today, transit has become more important due to the expanded global trade relations and the intensity of competition for new markets. So that many countries have achieved huge incomes in this way by planning and making optimal use of their transit opportunities and facilities.

Iran is one of the countries that has a special status in trade and transit relations due to its strategic location and special geography, as the country is the passage of several important international corridors.

This status has provided the country with many opportunities that making optimal use of them through the expansion of the transportation network and reliable and efficient communication, Iran can achieve foreign currency earnings and economic growth, and make transit revenue a suitable alternative to oil export, while improving its strategic position in the region.

Considering the country's transit statistics, it is obvious that Iran is taking the advantage of its strategic status in this due.

As reported by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), 7,532 million tons of commodities were transited through Iran in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20) despite the restrictions created by the coronavirus pandemic.

Also, the reports related to the transit via the country in the current Iranian year indicate a rising trend.

For example, transit of goods through Shahid Rajaei port increased 160 percent in the first month of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-April 20), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, according to Karajiran, who said that 20,231 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of commodities were transited via Shahid Rajaei port in the said month.

TEDPIX drops 5,400 points on Tuesday

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 5,432 points to 1.14 million on Tuesday.

As reported, over 5,744 billion securities worth 41.754 trillion rials (about \$994 million) were traded at the TSE on Tuesday.

The first market's index fell 5,533 points, and the second market's index dropped 5,649 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, May 26, (the last working day of the week).

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.

Iran, China establish center for joint cooperation of SMEs

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) and Shanghai International Cooperation Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) have launched a center for joint cooperation of the two countries' SMEs.

The center was inaugurated in an online ceremony attended by Iran's Consul-General in Shanghai Ramezan Parvaz and ISIPO Head Ali Rasoulouian on Monday, IRIB reported.

The two sides also signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for expanding cooperation and exchange of experiences between the two countries' SMEs.

Speaking in the online ceremony, Parvaz said the new center should facilitate the exchange of information and sharing of experiences to resolve the problems of the two sides' SMEs.

Highlighting the role of SMEs and industrial parks in the promotion of ties between Tehran and Beijing, he said Iran's market has suitable economic parameters that have turned it into an attractive and promising market for the Chinese companies.

Further in the meeting, ISIPO Head Ali Rasoulouian said: "Small industries play an important role in the production of wealth



ISIPO Head Ali Rasoulouian (C) speaks at the online signing ceremony of Iran-China SMEs co-op MOU in Tehran on Monday.

and its distribution in the economy, and all countries have given this sector a special priority and place in the sustainable devel-

opment of their economies."

"One of the challenges that countries face today is the unfair distribution of wealth

Annual exports of polymer products exceed \$1.3b

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran exported over \$1.31 billion worth of polymer products in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), according to the chairman of the Export Committee of Iran National Plastic and Polymer Industries Association.

Speaking at an international conference on promoting polymer products exports in Tehran on Monday, Masoud Jamali said: "We are top exporter of polymer products to Armenia and the second biggest exporter of such products to the Republic of Azerbaijan."

Jamali noted that the mentioned conference has been held with the aim of exploring issues and challenges in the polymer industries and to discuss ways of increasing exports.

"In this conference, we have focused on empowering and informing the businessmen and traders active in this sector," the official said.

As IRNA reported, introducing Iran's polymer export capacities and opportunities, identifying new target markets, and getting acquainted with the laws and

regulations of the mentioned countries were among the topics explored in this conference.

According to Reza Tofiqi, the secretary of the conference, one of the best ways for boosting non-oil exports, and especially polymer exports, is by signing trade agreements with other countries.

"In recent years, a preferential trade agreement has been signed with the Eurasian Economic Union, which covers a significant number of the items," Tofiqi said.

He said that 60 percent of the items in the agreement are related to the polymer and plastics industries, adding that if traders have enough knowledge in this regard, they can supply part of the union's \$4.5 billion imports of such products, while currently, Iran exports only \$600 million of the mentioned commodities to the union.

Tofiqi further noted that Pakistan imports \$2.2 billion of polymer products a year and said: "Iran ranks sixth among the top polymer exporters to this country with only \$103 million of exports; the country accounts for five percent of Pakistan's total imports, while Iran has



a 20-year agreement with this country."

According to the official, government bodies should reconsider the trade of polymer products with other countries like Pakistan in order to include these products in the list of items with tariff reductions.

Iran's biggest cement production line inaugurated

→ 1 According to Razm Hosseini, currently, more than 80 percent of the country's cement production units have been established by domestic companies.

Emphasizing the Industry Ministry's policy for supporting domestic production, Razm Hosseini referred to the long

history of the cement industry in the country and note that this industry is a great contributor to the development of the country's infrastructure.

Iran's cement industry has a history of more than eight decades of activity.

Currently, there are 96 cement production lines active in 74 factories across

Iran, nearly half of them are less than 10 years old. This is an indication that new production units have a greater share of the total output in this sector.

With an annual production capacity of over 80 million tons, Iran's cement industry holds the world's sixth place in terms of production capacity.

The country's annual cement consumption stands at about 70 million tons and the annual exports of the commodity chain are over 11 million tons.

Neighboring countries are not only the consumers of Iranian cement but also demand the transfer of the cement industry's technology to their countries.

IMIDRO allocates over \$238m to developing mining infrastructure

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) is going to spend 10 trillion rials (about \$238.1 million) for developing mining infrastructure across the country in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21), an official with the organization said.

Speaking in an online meeting with the representatives of companies active in the mining transportation sector on Monday, Jamshid Mollarahman said: "This year were are mainly focusing on exploration operations; however, infrastructure is also a necessity for development of this sector."

"We should take into account international patterns of transportation development in the mining sector and examine the relationship between this field and the mining sector in order to find effective solutions to solve mining transportation problems," the official said.

The official noted that for accelerating the development of the mining sector's infrastructure, bottlenecks of this sector should be determined and resolved first.

Speaking in the mentioned meeting, the Head of Iran Mine House (IMH) Mohammadreza Bahraman also men-



tioned some of the issues that the mining sector is currently facing and said: "Since rising transportation fees is posing a serious challenge to mining operations, the capacity of roads and railways in this sector needs to be assessed so that IMIDRO can better decide on supporting and financing transportation projects."

Last year, Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry signed a trilateral memorandum of understanding (MOU)

with IMIDRO and Geological Survey and Mineral Explorations of Iran (GSI) for expansion of the country's mining sector.

Development of cooperation in the fields of exploration, extraction and processing of minerals, developing infrastructure, exchanging experiences and abilities among various sectors, and attracting more investment from the country's private sector and cooperatives in this industry were reported to be some of the main goals of the signed agreement.

In the past few years with new resilient economy strategies coming into play, the mining sector has become a major point of focus for the Iranian government and various organizations and bodies active in this sector have been tasked to implement new programs for developing this sector.

As a major state-owned holding company active in the mining sector in the country IMIDRO has been playing a significant part in the mentioned planning.

The organization has been implementing several new programs in all the main fields of the mining industry including exploration, machinery development, extraction and also reviving the country's idle mines.

55 idle industrial units revived in Sistan-Baluchestan in a year

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — A provincial official announced that 55 idle industrial units were revived in Iran's southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan province in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

Davoud Shahraki, the head of Sistan-Baluchestan province's Industry, Mining, and Trade Department, also said that in the field of removing production barriers, the number of approvals in the province for production units has increased from 300 units last year to about 900 units this year.

Referring to the measures that have been the background for the removing of the barriers and started last year, he added that in addition to six trillion rials (about \$142.8 million) in the last two years, facilities have been provided to the industry sector from various sources.

Referring to the good events of last year

in order to revive the production units, the official said that 55 idle production units were revived in the province in the last year and 19 units returned to the production cycle in its previous year.

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

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

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



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

Niaraki pointed to a 40-percent increase in the issuance of establishment licenses for industrial units in the previous year, saying: "The number of establishment licenses increased to more than 36,000 last year,

which shows that people are encouraged to invest in the productive sectors."

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

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

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

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

Israeli onslaught on Gaza qualifies for war crimes

→ 1 However, this episode considers being an immediate starting point of recent flare-ups, but it should be understood as Israel's larger premeditated design to take over Palestinian lands and arrogate to themselves in a piecemeal manner since the Day of Nakba (The Catastrophe) in 1948 when Israel was proclaimed.

For Palestinians, the recent move is a part of a larger project to erase the memory related to the Arabs in order to impose Israeli sovereignty in the holy lands. Since 1948, when Zionist-Jewish settlers became strong enough to found a Jewish state on occupied land, it has been a modus operandi of ethnic cleansing of the local population. The history is crystal clear and very much evident that how Palestinian territories have been shrinking from a prosperous Arab country to two confined enclaves--- the West Bank and Gaza.

The forced expulsion of families from their homes in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood is an explicit pattern of Israel's settler colonialism and systematic ethnic cleansing being carried out in the occupied lands. This action clearly violates the multiple UN resolutions that Israel cannot annex lands that it had occupied in the 1967 Six-day War and considers it as 'disputed territories.' UN General Assembly Resolution 2253 dated 4 July 1967 clearly states that "these measures (occupying lands) are invalid" and "calls upon Israel to rescind all measures already taken and to desist forthwith from taking any action which would alter the status of Jerusalem."

When it comes to the Israeli offensive against the non-state actors like Hamas and PIJ, it employs punitive actions and the entire civilian population has to bear the brunt of collective punishment. The incessant bombing on the neighborhoods in Gaza unleashed terror among civilians. It has taken a heavy toll on mental health; even children are more prone to the illness. It cannot be justified as an act of self-defense nor as a spontaneous reaction to "terror". Drawing false equivalence between non-state actors Hamas/PIJ and Israel for the death and destruction is pretty illogical when it comes to asymmetric warfare.

Successive Israeli governments have a history of blatant use of firepower when it comes to crushing the resisting factions or belligerent states. In recent times, the 34-day Israeli invasion of the Lebanese Shia



movement Hezbollah in 2006 is such a classic example of Israel's ruthless attacking capabilities. This is called Dahiya Doctrine. This nomenclature derived from the Israeli military strategy after the 34-day war on Hezbollah, where it followed the blitzkrieg offensive in the densely populated civilian area in south Beirut, considered a stronghold of the resistance movement. This strategy has a unique trait that deliberately attempts to instill trepidation among the civilian population as well as the opponent combative entities. A similar strategy had been tried in following military operations--- Cast Lead in 2009, Pillar of Defense in 2012 and Protective Edge in 2014.

The recent 2001 raw video clipping of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu emerged in the mainstream media suffices the argument where he was saying "Israel uses to strike Palestinians not once but several times" and "so painfully that the price they pay is unbearable." He disdainfully went on to say that he was not afraid of U.S. and UN objections.

There is a plethora of instances where Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) can be indicted for committing acts of war crimes. I have identified violations where it can be started on three counts, i.e., plundering of property, the killing of non-combative civilians including children and destruction of hospitals. In

Article 33, the Geneva Conventions by-laws clearly prohibit the destruction of property in the form of collective punishment. It clearly states: "No protected person may be punished for an offence he or she has not personally committed. Collective penalties and likewise all measures of intimidation or of terrorism are prohibited. Pillage is prohibited." The targeted demolition of high-rise residential buildings, including media offices of Al Jazeera, Associated Press and Middle East Eye, shows that the Israeli leadership has thrown down the gauntlet to the international community.

Children are the most affected victims in the conflict zones. Around 66 kids have been killed as Israel started to rain down the lethal weapons on the cramped enclaves in the city. Chilling videos emerged on social media platforms showing children so frightened that they were not able to sleep all night. Killing children in war, the Convention had the provision which states: "Willful killing" or "willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health" for no clear military justifications are "grave breach" of Article 17. It qualifies for war crimes under the statutes of the International Criminal Court at The Hague. Criticizing the minor deaths, even the Israeli daily Haaretz newspaper published the photos of Palestinian children captioned "This is the price of war."

The attack on al-Rimal Clinic, the only hospital which had the Corona testing laboratory in Gaza, is another instance of violation of international law. In addition to it, two medical doctors and a dental student were also killed in the 'collateral damage.' On protection of hospitals, conventions state in its Article 18: "Civilian hospitals organized to give care to the wounded and sick, the infirm and maternity cases, may in no circumstances be the object of attack, but shall at all times be respected and protected by the Parties to the conflict." Understandably, it does qualify for war crimes for terrorizing the civilian population and the international community must hold the Israeli occupation accountable for its heinous crimes against the oppressed Palestinian people.

Even UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) chief Michelle Bachelet, an ex-Chilean President and herself a daughter of an army officer who was killed resisting the dictator Augusto Pinochet's coup against Salvador Allende, voiced particular concern for the 'disproportionate use of force' and saying it may constitute war crimes including the Palestinian factions. The international community, especially UNHRC, showed the spine in admonishing Israel's act by passing the resolution and calling for the institution of the "Commission of Inquiry." As the previous antecedents show the non-compliance or procrastinating of any UN resolutions, the Israeli regime under the beleaguered Likud government has condemned and accused the UN body of having anti-Israel bias. Neither the U.S. nor other major European powers would take any steps beyond the limit against Netanyahu & Co. as the Zionist-Jewish lobby has a strong presence in the corridors of power in the respective countries for nixing any anti-Israeli moves. American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) and American Jewish Committee (AJC) are some of the few influential lobbying organizations that work as an overseas arm of the Zionist state. On the contrary, the Joe Biden administration's approval of arms sale worth \$735 million in the middle of war has sent a strong signal that the U.S. is standing behind Israel. Despite the proactive international response, the ideals of international law might go for a toss, but this military adventure had revealed new realities and pressed Israel for recalibrating its geopolitical strategy in the region.

Republicans endangering U.S. democracy: professor

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN - A professor of political science at the University of Pennsylvania says that Republicans' attempts inspired by former President Donald Trump's false claims over the November 2020 election may threaten American democracy.

"Donald Trump's false, deeply anti-American claims that American elections are rigged, which has persuaded Republican voters and officials to adopt new laws to suppress Democratic voting," Rogers M. Smith tells the Tehran Times.

"Those laws may actually not help Republicans win elections, but they do threaten to endanger American democracy further," the distinguished professor of political science adds.

Texas Republican lawmakers moved closer Sunday to imposing a slew of new restrictions on voting, as state Senate members voted along party lines to adopt legislation that would make mail-in voting more difficult and prohibit the after-hours and drive-through options that voting rights advocates said helped Black and Latino voters in the Houston area cast their ballots in the 2020 election.

The measure moves Texas closer to joining Florida, Georgia and other states that have seized on Trump's lies about widespread voter fraud and enacted new laws that make voting harder for some of their states' residents.

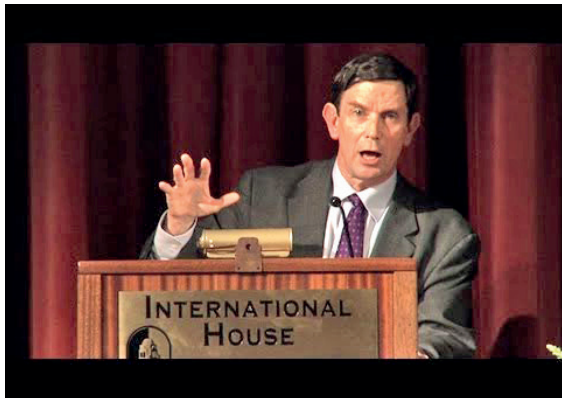
Apparently, Republicans are concerned about coming elections and that is why they are attempting to restrict voting conditions in a hope to enter the White House at expense of democracy.

Smith says, "Democracy can be undermined in any country, definitely including the United States."

Following is the text of the interview:

How do you assess the status of democracy in the U.S. as some observers are concerned that persons like Trump can weaken democracy in the country? Now Republicans are seeking to restrict voting in Texas. Don't you think these moves can undermine democracy in the United States?

Democracy can be undermined in any country, definitely including the United States. Republicans rightly fear that they are becoming a permanent minority party. They have lost the popular vote in seven of the eight national elections.



But they still hope to win elections, due to three things: America's system of federalism, which over-represents in Congress the small states where Republicans predominate; the more spread-out distribution of Republican voters, which permits them to win more state legislature and congressional districts even when the Democrats have more voters (packed into cities); and Donald Trump's false, deeply anti-American claims that American elections are rigged, which has persuaded Republican voters and officials to adopt new laws to suppress Democratic voting. Those laws may actually not help Republicans win elections, but they do threaten to endanger American democracy further.

If we suppose that a liberal philosophy constitutes a base for U.S. democracy it can result in "minority rule" in the country. Instead of serving ordinary people the government functions to secure the elites' interests. What is the philosophical basis of the U.S. democracy?

America's founding philosophy stressed both republicanism---popular self-governance---and protection for the basic rights of all, including minorities. Today we call that concern for basic rights "liberal." It is true that it can sometimes protect elite interests against democratic majorities; but it can also protect disadvantaged minorities against majority tyranny. In U.S. history, both things have occurred and

still occurred. Neither is inevitable, it depends on whether Americans succeed in governing themselves wisely through their institutions of self-governance.

Let's turn to gun violence. Why does the U.S. government fail to take a step forward when it comes to gun control law? Is the failure related to attempts of gun lobbies and their financial ties with officials?

Under America's system of federalism, the states have far more power to regulate guns than the U.S. government does. At both levels, however, there are strong gun lobbies that do wield financial influence, and there are also lots of Americans who genuinely believe in easy access to guns. The result, sadly, is that far too often, Americans use guns to kill each other, or themselves.

Do you think that having a democratic system guarantees the rightness of foreign policies? The U.S. has gone through endless wars. We also have other democratic states that colonized other countries. Isn't this a contradiction?

No system of government ever has or ever can guaranteed the rightness of foreign policies. The U.S. began a revolution against imperialism, but it is true that it always has been and remains a colonial power. That is a contradiction that the U.S. must continue to struggle to overcome as much as possible. But democracy as a system is not responsible for America's bad or good choices. The American people, and our leaders, are.

What is your comment on democratization of Iraq and Afghanistan through military invasions? Biden is also withdrawing U.S. troops from Afghanistan while violence is continuing. Your comments please.

The U.S. interventions in Afghanistan succeeded in punishing those responsible for the September 11, 2001 attacks. Beyond that, the use of American military force in Afghanistan and Iraq have been extraordinarily costly failures, for the U.S. and for the peoples of those countries. President Donald Trump was a catastrophe for America and the world in many ways, including his callous botching of the Covid 19 pandemic; but as President Biden has recognized, he was right that the U.S. needs to end these interventions.

bruck, DR said.

The investigation found the NSA had access to extensive data streams that run through internet cables to and from Denmark and intercepted everything from text messages and telephone calls to internet traffic including searches, chats and messaging services.

DR said its report was based on interviews with nine unnamed sources, all of whom were said to have had access to classified information held by the FE.

Xi Jinping: China to render all possible assistance to Syria in restoring economy

Chinese President Xi Jinping sent Bashar Assad a telegram with congratulations on the latter's re-election as Syrian president and pledged all possible assistance in the economic recovery of the country, China Central Television reported.

"China strongly supports the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Syria, will provide all possible assistance in the fight against the COVID-19 epidemic, in revitalizing the country's economy and improving the lives of the population, will help to ensure that the Sino-Syrian cooperation rises to a new level," the statement says.

In his congratulatory telegram, Xi said China and Syria are traditionally friendly states; Syria was one of the first Arab countries to establish diplomatic relations with China.

"I attach great importance to the development of Sino-Syrian relations, and I am ready, together with President Assad, to develop Sino-Syrian relations to achieve even greater success," the Chinese leader said.

Presidential elections were held in Syria on May 26. Assad, who has served as President of Syria since 2000, was elected for another seven-year term, receiving 95.1 percent of the vote.

Yemen censures UAE for transferring Israeli tourists to Socotra Island

Yemen has strongly condemned a recent move by the United Arab Emirates to transfer Israeli tourists to the strategic island of Socotra on Emirati visas.

The Yemeni Tourism Ministry said in a statement issued on Monday that the UAE's measure violates international law, given that Socotra is a Yemeni island occupied by the aggressor countries of the Saudi-led coalition, Saba Net news agency reported.

"The transfer of tourists to the Socotra Island reveals the plans and programs of the occupying UAE, which are in line with the Zionist schemes to dominate Yemeni islands as well as the steps towards normalization with the regime," it said.

Two weeks ago, Yemeni sources said the UAE is continuing to operate weekly direct flights and tours to Socotra without authorization from the government.

Hundreds of foreign tourists have arrived on the archipelago over the past few days using visas granted to them by Abu Dhabi, the sources added.

The development came more than eight months after the UAE established full diplomatic relations with the Tel Aviv regime in a deal brokered by former US president Donald Trump.

Home to some 60,000 people, Socotra overlooks the Bab al-Mandab Strait, a main shipping route that connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea. It has a unique ecosystem and been listed by UNESCO as a world natural heritage site.

Last June, the UAE-backed separatists of the so-called Southern Transitional Council (STC) took control of the resource-rich island in a move described as a "coup" by the regime of former Yemeni president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi.

Canada's dark history: Indigenous groups demand search for mass graves at school sites

Indigenous communities in Canada are calling for a nationwide search for mass graves at residential school sites, as last week's discovery of remains of scores of indigenous children sparked strong emotions, leaving the nation in great grief and shock.

The discovery was announced by the chief of the Tk'emlups te Secwepemc First Nation --- the home community of the Kamloops Indian Residential School --- on Thursday.

Chief Rosanne Casimir said they had found the remains of 215 children, some as young as three, buried on the grounds of the old school, near Kamloops, British Columbia.

She described the discovery as "an unthinkable loss that was spoken about but never documented."

Indigenous communities are now meeting across the country to figure out how best to investigate the remaining sites, according to president of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, Stewart Phillip.

"It's absolutely essential that there be a national program to thoroughly investigate all residential school sites in regard to unmarked mass graves," he said.

The Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations and the Saskatchewan government have said they want Ottawa to help research undocumented deaths and burials at residential schools in the province.

Resistance News

Hamas, Hezbollah chiefs discussed plan for liberation from Israeli occupation

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** - Leaders of Hamas and Hezbollah resistance movements, Ismail Haniyeh and Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, met in Lebanon last year to draw up a plan for the liberation of the Israeli occupied territories, a Lebanese paper reports.

According to Beirut-based al-Akhbar daily, the recent blow dealt to Israel during the 11-day Gaza war was part of the liberation plan.

The Palestinian resistance adopted tactics used by Hezbollah during the 2006 war by setting up mock rocket launch sites to deceive the Israeli air force, the report said.

Yemen's Ansarullah also communicated with Hamas and requested coordinates for the sites it wanted to target with missiles and drones, but Hamas told the popular movement not to intervene as long as the Israeli army had not crossed the "red lines."

Tel Aviv began bombing Gaza on May 10, after Palestinian retaliation against violent raids on worshippers at the al-Aqsa Mosque and Israel's plans to force a number of Palestinian families out of their homes at the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of East Jerusalem al-Quds.

Apparently caught off guard by unprecedented rocket barrages from Gaza, Israel announced a unilateral ceasefire on May 21, which Palestinian resistance groups accepted with Egyptian mediation.

According to Gaza's Health Ministry, 254 Palestinians were killed in the Israeli offensive, including 66 children and 39 women, and 1948 others were wounded.

According to Press TV, in a televised speech last week, Lebanon's Hezbollah chief Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah warned that any aggression against Jerusalem al-Quds or the city's holy sites would mean a regional war.

Macron, Merkel demand answers from U.S., Denmark on spying report

French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Angela Merkel said on Monday they expected the U.S. and Danish governments to present explanations over allegations Washington spied on European allies with Copenhagen's aid.

"This is not acceptable amongst allies," Macron told a news conference after a virtual Franco-German meeting with German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

"I am attached to the bond of trust that unites Europeans and Americans," Macron

said, adding that "there is no room for suspicion between us."

"That is why what we are waiting for complete clarity. We requested that our Danish and American partners provide all the information on these revelations and on these past facts. We are awaiting these answers," he said.

Giving her position, Merkel said she "could only agree" with the comments of the French leader.

According to a report by the Danish

public broadcaster Danmarks Radio (DR), an internal investigation by the Danish Defence Intelligence Service (FE), showed the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) used the FE to eavesdrop on Danish information cables to spy on senior officials in Sweden, Norway, France and Germany from 2012 to 2014.

In addition to Merkel, the NSA also spied on then-German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier and former German opposition leader Peer Stein-

We encountered rich culture everywhere in Iran, Russian traveler says

TOURISM TEHRAN – A Russian woman, who has previously visited Iran, says she encountered a rich culture throughout her journey to the Islamic Republic.

"Everywhere in Iran, we encountered rich culture and enjoyed it," Lidia said on Monday in an interview with IRNA.

She changed her viewpoint on Iran after visiting this country and understanding the culture and beauties of the nation, witnessing how the Iranians are trying to protect the rich culture is very pleasant, the news agency reported.

Lidia made the remarks during her visit to an exhibition of Iranian artworks held at the East Nations Art Museum in Moscow.

She and her husband Yougni visited the country two years ago when she was "thrilled by the magnificence of the country."

They arrived in Tehran first and then continued their trip to Shiraz, Isfahan, and Yazd, where they could experience tourist attractions in these cities.

Answering a question on her view before visiting Iran, she said that they thought there are some cultural attractions in the country, but they did not think to see numerous fascinating places around the ancient land.

"Given negative propaganda against Iran, we did not think that we will see so many beauties," she said.

"When we arrived in Iran all interpretations changed and we saw how high-level is the culture of the country and how good are the people," she said, adding, "The Iranian foods were very delicious and Iran is in fact a museum under the open sky."

After the end of the coronavirus pandemic, she is determined to visit Iran once more. Many Russian people are loving the ancient country and will visit it yet again.

The exhibition, featuring Iranian arts during the Qajar era, will be run-



ning through July 25 at the East Nations Art Museum in Moscow.

Earlier this month, Mostafa Sarvari, who presides over the tourism marketing and advertising office of the Iranian Tour Operators Association, announced many Russian tourists are eager to travel to Iran, recounting his Russian counterparts. "Many [potential] Russian travelers are motivated to visit novel and lesser-known destinations such as Iran that could be a safe and attractive destination," he said.

"According to Russian tourism experts, the feedback from Russian tourists who have traveled to Iran has been very positive, and its reflection, especially on social media, has caused a great deal of enthusiasm and interest."

According to Ebrahim Pourfaraj, who heads the Iranian Tour Operators Association, rounds of negotiations have been held between Iranian tour operators, travel marketers, and their Russian counterparts. "We've been commenced talks with some Russian travel agents to put Iranian destinations

on their itineraries.... And the Iranian Tour Operators Association has also entered negotiations with Russian unions for outbound tours to attract more travelers from Russia."

Pourfaraj says the majority of potential Russian travelers are unaware of the vast tourist attractions that exist in every corner of Iran. "The fact is that Iran's political and economic relations with Russia are considered as good, but this has nothing to do with attracting tourists because it is directly connected with the Russian people. It is the Russian people who must choose Iran as their destination."

The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 24 being inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, Iran aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025.



INVITATION TO RENEWAL OF ONE STEP INTERNATIONAL TENDER

Second Announcement

55/00/5561
02/06/2021



Ministry of Jihad-e-Agriculture

AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT SERVICES COMPANY

Agricultural Support Services Company, hereinafter will be referred as ASSC, affiliated to Ministry of Agriculture-Jahad of I.R of Iran, is considering the purchase of the below item of technical, through renewal of one step international tender.

ITEM	Name	PACKING	Quantity KG
1	Fipronil Tech (18.8-21.2) pct. (premix 20%)	200 kg drum	5500

All of the qualified and interested companies are invited to receive tender documents from **Tuesday dated 1/6/2021** until **Sunday dated 13/6/2021** (7 working days) from our purchasing committee (located at the 9th floor, no. 1, fourth alley, Gandhi st., Tehran, Iran).

The bidders are requested to submit their letters of introduction, along with remittance bill of I.Rials 1,200,000 to ASSC's account no. 4001039704005791 with SHEBA no. IR250100004001039704005791 at the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran through payment order of SATN or PAYA with the 30 character identification code of 358039782263500650000000000000.

The bidders are requested to submit their sealed and stamped envelopes containing offers latest on **Saturday dated 17/7/2021** (during official working hours) to our security office located on the 8th floor. Meanwhile the meeting for the opening of the envelopes will be held on **Sunday dated 18/7/2021** at 2:00 PM with the presence of bidder's representatives at our purchasing committee hall (9th floor, no. 1, Fourth Alley, Gandhi st., Tehran, Iran).

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

1- € **22713** for **Fipronil Tech(18.8-21.2) pct.** (premix 20%) equivalent to Iranian Rials **5672818800**.

- The bid bond value will be in Euro or in equal value of any other foreign currencies, except US dollar, based on Telegraphic Transfer rate in Sana rate website, www.sanarate.ir. It should be noted that this site lists the currency transactions, executed in Integrated Currency Transactions System [Nima website] on **25/05/2021**.

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

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

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

First Announcement



IN THE NAME OF GOD
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

INTERNATIONAL TENDER No: 1400/103-30/03

Tender Holder:
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Tender :

Broadcasting the TV networks of Press Tv, Al-Alam TV-Syria & Ifilm Arabic in DVB-S2 format on Eutelsat 7WA for three years in accordance with the technical specification and other terms and conditions mentioned in the tender documents.

Deadline and how to receive the tender documents:

From **Monday 07 June 2021 (1400/03/17)** until **Thursday 10 June 2021 (1400/03/20)** by **10:00 a.m** with presentation of introductory letter by company or its representative and the receipt of paying the documents fee.

Place of receiving the tender document:

Interested participants may refer to purchasing (KALA) Dept. ,4th Floor of IRIB Administration Complex ,Hotel Esteghlal St. Vali –Assr Ave,Tehran, Iran

The fee of the tender documents and how to deposit it:

Submission of payment receipt for the amount of 1,000,000 Rials to account 4101029171204273 with BIC No.IR 310100004101029171204273 IRAN Central Bank in the name of IRIB.

Type and amount of guarantee for participation to tender:

The amount of deposit required for participating in tender is USD 78/156 fixed or its equivalent in Rials 17/976/000/000 which should be in the form of Bank Guarantee.

Time and place of delivering Bidding Envelopes:

The sealed (A,B&C) packages/envelopes and the Qualification Evaluation packages/envelopes separately packed , should be submitted no later than **09:00 a.m. on Saturday 10 of July 2021 (1400/04/19)** and at the address mentioned in 4th clause.

Time and place of opening Qualification Evaluation envelopes:

The date of opening the Qualification Evaluation envelopes on Saturday 10 of **July 2021 (1400/04/19)** at **10:00 a.m** in the office of International Purchasing Dept.

Time and place of opening Envelopes:

The envelopes A of those eligible participants who meet the qualification criterion and approval of Technical and Commercial committee will be opened on **Sunday 11 July 2021 at 03:00 p.m (1400/04/20)** in the office of Financial Vice President .In case of complete content in the envelopes A the envelopes of B and C of eligible participants will be opened at the same time and place.

The participant must be qualified by the competent authorities.

Fore more information please see : www.iriboffice.ir/tenders and <http://iets.mporg.ir/> Tel: 00982122167053

Purchasing (Kala) Dept.,IRIB

First Announcement



IN THE NAME OF GOD
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

INTERNATIONAL TENDER No: 1400/103-29/03

Tender Holder:
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Tender :

Broadcasting the TV network of Sahar Urdu in DVB-S2/MPEG4 format with Constant Bit Rate of 2.5Mbps ,3846 V on Paksat 1R for three years in accordance with the technical specification and other terms and conditions mentioned in the tender documents.

Deadline and how to receive the tender documents:

From **Monday 07 June 2021 (1400/03/17)** until **Thursday 10 June 2021 (1400/03/20)** by **10:00 a.m** with presentation of introductory letter by company or its representative and the receipt of paying the documents fee.

Place of receiving the tender document:

Interested participants may refer to purchasing (KALA) Dept. ,4th Floor of IRIB Administration Complex ,Hotel Esteghlal St. Vali –Assr Ave,Tehran, Iran

The fee of the tender documents and how to deposit it:

Submission of payment receipt for the amount of 1,000,000 Rials to account 4101029171204273 with BIC No.IR 310100004101029171204273 IRAN Central Bank in the name of IRIB.

Type and amount of guarantee for participation to tender:

The amount of deposit required for participating in tender is USD 20/625 fixed or its equivalent in Rials 4/744/000/000 which should be in the form of Bank Guarantee.

Time and place of delivering Bidding Envelopes:

The sealed (A,B&C) packages/envelopes and the Qualification Evaluation packages/envelopes separately packed , should be submitted no later than **09:00 a.m. on Saturday 10 of July 2021 (1400/04/19)** and at the address mentioned in 4th clause.

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Purchasing (Kala) Dept.,IRIB

Iranian university grants scholarships to Afghan girls

SOCIETY TEHRAN – Al-Zahra University in Tehran has approved granting scholarships to 50 graduates of an Afghan girls' high school, which was targeted by a terrorist bomb attack on May 9.

Following the explosion of Sayed Al-Shohada Girls' High School in Kabul, Al-Zahra University's board members approved a plan to support the education of talented and influential women and promote the status of women in Afghanistan.

Under the plan, 25 scholarships, called "Scholarship for Erudite Women," was allocated to girls graduating from Sayed Al-Shohada High School in all fields covered by Al-Zahra University and five other special scholarships, named "Maryam Mirzakhani Scholarship" after the late Iranian mathematician, were granted to applicants to study mathematics.

The Ministry of Science, Research and Technology had offered 25 scholarships to Al-Zahra University to support the humanitarian move, ISNA reported on Tuesday.

The explosion left 85 female students dead and some 150 others injured.

Living conditions of foreign nationals in Iran

The population of Afghan immigrants residing in Iran is about two to three million,



some of whom sometimes have problems with identity cards or do not have identification codes.

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

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

was also the eighth largest refugee-hosting country in the world in 2019, hosting 951,142 Afghan refugees and 28,268 Iraqi refugees, according to the UNHCR.

One of the largest and most protracted urban refugee populations in the world is living in Iran; about 97 percent of refugees live in urban and semi-urban areas, while

three percent are residing in 20 refugee resorts run by the UNHCR's main government counterpart.

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

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

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

Education for foreign nationals

Many of the refugees living in Iran are the second and third generation, according to the UNHCR.

There are 40,000 Afghan students in the country, according to the official report, 17,000 of them are graduated, while the unofficial report is estimated at 26,000.

Preparing national document on ecotourism 'necessary': official

SOCIETY TEHRAN – It is necessary to prepare a national document and provide legal infrastructure for expanding educational and cultural activities to develop ecotourism in the country, the director of the Natural History Museum and Genetic Resources of the Department of Environment, has said.

Mohammad Medadi made the remarks in a conference on "Obstacles and Challenges of Using Biodiversity Capacities in the Development of Ecotourism" which was held virtually on Monday.

"The lack of a clear strategy, appropriate mechanism, standards, and local regulations in accordance with the ecology of each region is one of the major challenges in the field of ecotourism."

Ecotourism, with the least negative effects on the ecosystem and biodiversity of the country, should be considered as a targeted economic activity, he noted.

However, it has no special document and almost no special action has been taken in the field of rules and regulations, so the development of ecotourism without executive standards and proper monitoring mechanism is not possible and is contradictory with the principles of biodiversity conservation, he explained.

Registration of natural monuments, monitoring of nature tours, educating families and individuals for proper interaction with nature and all components of biodiversity, are among the necessities of ecotourism development, which, unfortunately, not employed and cause the destruction of habitats, he concluded.

More eco-lodge guesthouses

The growing tendency of tourists to experience indige-

nous and local cultures has made them want to get closer to natural and indigenous living conditions, experiencing the old-fashioned way of life, considering that staying in these eco-lodge units is much cheaper than other accommodation centers.

In January 2020, Research Institute for Cultural Heritage and Tourism Director Behrouz Omrani announced that Iran has been constructing hundreds of eco-lodge guesthouses over the past couple of years to meet the demands of rising eco-travelers and sightseers.

"At present, issuing guidelines for ecotourism development is on the agenda. Historical villages are amongst target destinations for eco-tourism development," the official said.

Iran's tourism body said in 2018 that 2,000 eco-lodges will be constructed nationwide until 2021. Experts say each eco-lodge unit generates jobs for seven to eight people on average so that the scheme could create 160,000 jobs.

Having a very diverse natural setting, Iran offers varied excursions to nature lovers. Sightseers may live with a nomad or rural family or enjoy an independent stay. The country is home to abundant historical mansions, caravanserais, bathhouses, madrasas, and other massive monuments, which can buttress its budding tourism and hospitality sectors if managed appropriately and refurbished properly.

Five ecoregions, rich biodiversity

Each region is defined by its characteristics that play a significant role in a land's biodiversity and richness, based on which, Iran shares five ecological zones with specific flora from the lowest to the highest parts, namely, Caspian, Iran-Turani, Arasbaran, Zagros, and Persian Gulf-Omani

ecological zones.

The great difference between the two latitudes of the north and south of the country and the existence of different plains, altitudes, and climates have given a very diverse view to the vast land so that a variety of vegetation and plant species are grown across it.

The Hyrcanian ecological zone covers the green belt, the southern margin of the Caspian Sea, and the northern profile of the Alborz Mountain range. The forested areas of the region stretch to 2.4 million hectares covering Astara in Gilan province to Glidaghi in Golestan province.

The area of forests in the Iran-Turani ecological region, which covers most of the central plateau of Iran, is 4,666,941 hectares. Based on topographic and altitude conditions, this region is divided into two mountainous regions with a cold climate and a desert with a hot and dry climate.

Arasbaran forests, which are among the semi-humid forests of the country, are located in the province of East Azarbaijan and northwest of Ardebil province, which covers 174,838 hectares.

Some sources date the Zagros oak forests to 5,500 years. The creation and expansion of these forests are due to rainfall raised by the Mediterranean system and the Black Sea, which extends from the Sardasht area of West Azarbaijan to Firoozabad city of Fars province covering an area of 5,440,494 hectares.

The forests of the Persian Gulf-Omani ecological region include part of the southwest and all southern coasts, covering 2,039,963 hectares. Due to ecological differences, the main vegetation is divided into two territories of the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman.

Spicogen vaccine to begin human testing in Iran

→ 1 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 adminis-

tration, 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 Fakhrazadeh (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.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

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Wildfire extinguished in northern forests

Wildfire, erupted in northern forests of Gilan province over the past 2 days, has been fully extinguished, commander of the protection unit of natural resources and watershed management organization of Gilan has stated.

According to the latest statistics, approximately 130 hectares of forests in Gilan province have been burnt in recent days, IRNA quoted Mohammad Qorbani as saying on Sunday.

He went on to say that 99 percent of fires in 13 cities of Gilan province have caused no serious damage to the trees.

In spite of the complete containment of fire, the protection unit is on full alert, he further noted.

Appreciating all the forces who made efforts to control the wildfire, he concluded that fire broke out in various cities, including Rezvanshahr, Talesh, Roudbar, Siahkal and some others.

آتش سوزی جنگل های گیلان مهار شد

فرمانده یگان حفاظت اداره کل منابع طبیعی و آبخیزداری گیلان گفت: آتش سوزی جنگل های استان گیلان پس از ۷۲ ساعت تلاش ، کاملاً مهار شد.

سرهنگ محمد قربانی لرد عصر روز شنبه در گفت و گوی اختصاصی با خبرنگار ایرنا اظهار داشت: بر اساس آخرین آمارها به صورت تقریبی حدود «۱۳۰ هکتار» از اراضی جنگلی استان گیلان در چند روز اخیر دچار آتش سوزی شدند.

وی افزود: ۹۹ درصد از آتش سوزی جنگل های ۱۳ شهرستان استان گیلان سطحی بوده و خسارت جدی به درختان وارد نشده است.

فرمانده یگان حفاظت اداره کل منابع طبیعی و آبخیزداری گیلان خاطر نشان کرد: به رغم مهار کامل آتش در جنگل های استان ، نیروهای یگان حفاظت اداره کل منابع طبیعی و آبخیزداری در آماده باش کامل هستند.

وی ضمن قدردانی از تمامی نیروها در مهار آتش در جنگل های استان گیلان اضافه کرد: آتش سوزی در سطح شهرستان های مختلف استان از جمله رضوانشهر، تالش، رودبار، سیاهاکل و غیره روی داده.

COVID-19 UPDATES

The statistics are related to 24 hours started 2:00 p.m. May 31

New cases	10,687
New deaths	171
Total cases	2,923,823
Total deaths	80,327
New hospitalized patients	1,600
Patients in critical condition	4,064
Total recovered patients	2,477,596
Diagnostic tests conducted	19,059,238
Doses of vaccine injected	4,312,594

Iran's fertility rate alarmingly low

→ 1 39-year-old Ahmad, a Tehran-based office worker and his 35-year-old working wife, who live in a rented flat have been married for four years. Still they cannot make up their mind about having children.

"Any couple would like to have children at some point, but we know taking care of a baby takes time and money. We cannot afford that right now," he says. "We prefer to put it off until we are financially more stable."

That is the story of a large number of married couples who are even lucky enough to have jobs. For young unmarried Iranians, many struggling to find jobs, the economic downturn has made it almost impossible to even start a family.

Iran's Leader Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has repeatedly urged the people to have more babies, and wants officials to make it easier for families to have children. Figures show this is not happening.

The government has made it clear that it is determined to reverse this worrisome downward trend of fertility rates. But that's easier said than done especially at a time of unprecedented economic hardship largely caused by sanctions and an inefficient system.

The Iranian currency has suffered a steep fall over the past few years and the skyrocketing rate of inflation has left many Iranian families struggling to make ends meet. The prolonged coronavirus misery is certainly adding to the long list of problems facing the Iranians.

The grim situation has led to a heightened sense of uncertainty about the future and this widespread sense of insecurity is fueling the problem with Iran's population growth.

The government has been working on a package of incentives to prevent population decline. Authorities are planning to offer low interest loans for each newly-born baby and grant a piece of land to parents who have a third child among other steps.

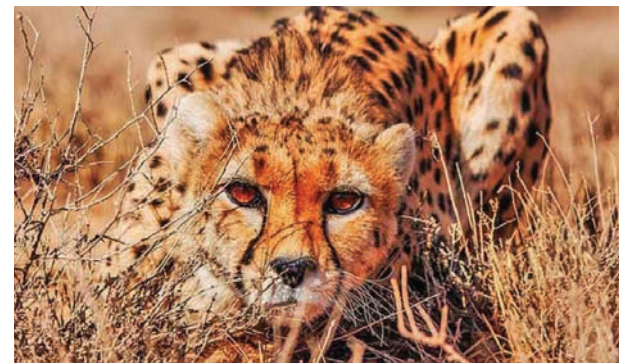
Even if the government is serious about averting this emerging national crisis, success is not guaranteed. Because it could take much more than such incentives – maybe a meaningful improvement in standard of living in Iran- to convince families to get onboard.

Where to find the top wild animals in Iran

(Part 1)

Situated at the crossroads between Western Asia and India, Iran is a land of steep mountainous terrain, semi-arid deserts, and mixed forests.

Featuring a rich history that dates back to the original Persian Empire, it is bound between Iraq in the west and Pakistan in the east, the Caspian Sea in the north, and the Persian Gulf in the south.



The country has a particularly rich heritage of felines, hoofed mammals, bats, rodents, reptiles, and migrating birds.

Rather than a single national animal, Iran instead has a list of national symbols, which includes the Asiatic lion, Asiatic cheetah, Persian leopard, Persian cat, and Persian fallow deer.

The best place to find Iran's rich wildlife is its national parks. The Nayband Wildlife Reserve, which is the country's largest park at 6,000 square miles, consists of mountains and desert plains in the South Khorasan Province toward the east. It is native to leopards, gazelles, goats, and plenty of snakes.

The Khar Turan National Park, which is the country's second-largest wildlife reserve, can be found in the northeast, near the Caspian Sea. It forms a long stretch of protected land with the nearby Golestan National Park and the Mian-dasht Wildlife Refuge.

The Sorkheh Hesar Forest Park, Lar National Park, and Khojir National Park are all located directly to the east of Tehran. They are good places to observe migrating birds that arrive for the winter. Finally, the Kavir National Park to the east of Namak Lake has some Indian wolves, striped hyenas, Asiatic cheetahs, and gazelles.

(Source: a-z-animals.com)

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■ Managing Director: Mohammad Shojaelian
■ Editor-in-Chief: Ali A.Jenabzadeh

» Editorial Dept.: Fax: (+98 21) 88808214 — 88808895
info@tehrantimes.com
» Switchboard Operator: Tel: (+98 21) 43051000
» Advertisements Dept.: Telefax: (+98 21) 43051430
» Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807
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Zip Code: 1599814713





GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Those who give up religion to better their lot in life seldom succeed. The wrath of Allah makes them go through more calamities and losses than the gains they gather for themselves.

Imam Ali (AS)

Artists remembering Imam Khomeini in “Mourning for the Sun”

CULTURE d e s k **TEHRAN** — An exhibition of paintings by a group Iranian of artists opened on Tuesday at the Abolfazl Aali Gallery of the Art Bureau to commemorate the death anniversary of Imam Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic Republic.



A poster for the exhibition “Mourning for the Sun” organized by the Art Bureau to commemorate the death anniversary .of Imam Khomeini

Works by Gholmali Taheri are among the highlights of the exhibition entitled “Mourning for the Sun” that will be running until June 20.

In June 2018, he initiated a project to make a collection of the portraits of those poets, musicians and sculptors who lived over the past century.

He also received a lifetime achievement award during the 5th Islamic Revolution Art Week in April 2019.

The exhibition also showcases works by Abdolhamid Qadirian, who was nominated for the Islamic Revolution Artist of the Year for 2021.

The exhibit also features works by Iraj Eskandari, Kamyar Sadeqi, Mostafa Gudarzi, Hassan Razmjou, Morteza Afshari, Ali Sheikhi, Ali Eslami-Moqaddam, Alireza Khaleqdadi, Ahmad Khalilifard, Kazem Chalipa and Mohammad-Ali Taraqqijah.

Garden in Persian art

Part 2
Allusions to garden in art
Floral and foliate ornament has always played an important role in Persian art, and in the Islamic period it predominates. Life-sustaining vegetation found its way into the arts of the ancient Near East, both as motif with possible iconographic associations and as ornament or pattern.

The “tree-of-life” flanked by two animals appeared on seals and stelae going back at least to about 3000 B.C., which “probably expressed certain ideas about the vital forces of nature”.

This motif continues to appear in Persian art down to the Sassanid period and may have retained some vestige of meaning, evocative of strength and fertility.

With the arrival of Islam the role of vegetal ornament entered a new phase. In religious and official settings it displaced types of ornament that encouraged figural representation, and was therefore given scope to develop in new directions, such as the abstract style associated with the building of the Abbasid city of Samarra.

Vegetal subjects found favor for every context demanding ornament, whether as solitary representations or elements in repeating patterns. As such, this ornament cannot be considered as anything more than an “evocation” of nature.

The question has often been raised as to whether the natural imagery in Islamic art might have paradisiac symbolism related to the relevant descriptions of paradise in the Holy Quran.

Most of the vegetal ornament in Islamic art acts as pattern and therefore cannot convey a message of any sort very effectively.

A case can be made, however, for assigning paradisiac significance to representations of gardens when they are associated with funerary contexts, such as mausoleums.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica
Concluded



Garden in a Persian painting.

Books on modern Iranian cultural currents unveiled

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — A book series studying thought and cultural currents in contemporary Iran was unveiled in a special meeting at the Iran Book and Literature House in Tehran on Tuesday.

“Thought and Cultural Currents in Contemporary Iran” consists of 30 books, eight of which were introduced at the meeting.

The eight books are “Post-Modernist”, “Islamic Feminism”, “Popular Ritualist”, “Practical and Professional Ethics”, “Traditional-Shia Mystic”, “Islamic Seminary Philosophist”, “New Religious and Spiritual Current” and “Religious Reformism”.

The plan to build up the collection was started in 2013 at the Faculty of World Studies at the University of Tehran.

A great number of scholars from top academic centers have contributed to the

collection, which will be gradually published in the future.

Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Abbas Salehi and a group of literati and cultural figures attended the meeting.

In a short speech, Salehi expressed his thanks to the experts concerning the series and said, “This collection should help provide opportunities for dialogue that has been neglected in Iranian society. These books should be used to help lessen the dearth of dialogue.”

He stressed the need for the study of cultural currents in Iran and said, “A clash between tradition and modernity in Iran has been ongoing over the past 150 years. Therefore, we have continuously witnessed constant social movements.”

He noted that these movements need to be scrutinized by scholars.



Eight books of the series “Thought and Cultural Currents in Contemporary Iran” were unveiled in a meeting at the Iran Book and Literature House in Tehran on June 1, 2021.



This combination photo shows views of the National Library of Indonesia (Perpusnas) and the National Library and Archives of Iran.

National libraries of Iran, Indonesia sign MOU

→1 Based on the MOU, the libraries will collaborate on expert exchange, education, restoration of manuscripts and launching plans to raise knowledge of librarianship among the staff of the libraries.

“The NLAI is also very interested to focus on joint research projects on Islamic and Iranian studies with Indonesian scholars,” Borujerdi said and added, “Working on joint projects on the subjects can help foster religious and cultural ties between the two countries.”

For his part, Syarif Bando also pointed to the variety of cultural subjects that can be regarded in the MOU, and said that there are 400 Persian words in the Indonesian language, representing the long history of cultural relations between Iran and Indonesia.

He officially invited Borujerdi to visit Indonesia in the near future.

Indonesian Ambassador Ronny P. Yuliantoro and Iranian Ambassador Mohammad Azad were also in attendance at the meeting.

Tehran museum to reopen with review of Andy Warhol works, Persian painting

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — The Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMCA) will reopen after almost two years of restoration with an exhibition of artworks by American artist Andy Warhol and a showcase reviewing image geometry in Persian painting.

The first exhibition named “The Concealed over the Revealed” will open on June 8 to review the connections between science and art in Persian painting,

TMCA director Ehsan Aqai said in a press conference on Tuesday.

Another exhibit entitled “Persona” will put a collection of Warhol’s artworks of the museum on view on June 15.

“Our intention is to present a different perspective of Andy Warhol’s artworks, hence, it is titled ‘Persona,’” explained exhibition curator Amir Rad.

He further explained that the idea is to show Warhol’s multiple characters in order

to reveal his true image, so that a more accurate understanding of his character can be established by ignoring other levels of his personality that are already known.

Established in 1977, the TMCA is home to works by many august artists of the West, including Claude Monet, Francis Bacon and Pablo Picasso, and notable in the world for its historical narration of art with the largest collection of Western art that exists in the East.



A view of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art.

Cologne Visions of Iran unveils official lineup

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — Eleven feature and documentary films will be screened at the 2021 edition of Visions of Iran – Iranian Film Festival Cologne as the organizers have announced entries to the official competition.

The lineup includes Shahram Mokri’s acclaimed drama “Careless Crime”, the winner of the Silver Hugo of the jury at the Chicago International Film Festival in 2020.

In the movie, students are shooting a film, the audience is waiting for a screening as four men want to make a statement and set fire to a cinema.

The festival will also screen Farnaz Amini’s feature debut “Highway”.

The film follows a young woman, obviously slightly injured, who sits silently on the back seat in the taxi. The nervous driver is supposed to take her to Tehran as quickly as possible. Sometimes he awkwardly tries to make conversation, sometimes he indulges in accusations.

“Drowning in Holy Water” by Navid Mahmudi is also competing in the event.

The film is about Rona and Hamed, a young Afghan couple, arrive illegally by bus in Tehran. From there they



“Coup 53” by documentarian Taqi Amirani.

want to flee to Europe in the hope of a better life. Hamed finds accommodation in the flat of an Afghan friend who wants to continue west via Turkey. But to be recognized as refugees, they need a reason.

“Lift Your Mood” on depression published in Persian



Front cover of the Persian translation of Robert E. Wubbolding’s book “A Choice Theory Psychology Guide to Depression: Lift Your Mood”.

CULTURE d e s k **TEHRAN** — Robert E. Wubbolding’s book “A Choice Theory Psychology Guide to Depression: Lift Your Mood” has been published in Persian.

Translated into Persian by Abuzar Golvarz, the book was published by Arjmand Publications.

The book targets individuals suffering from depression while offering practical methods to treat hopelessness, emotional pain, or indecisive moods.

Wubbolding is a world-renowned teacher, author and practitioner of reality therapy, and the director of the Center for Reality

Therapy in Cincinnati, Ohio.

In an introduction to the book, he wrote, “Do you, your family, or your friends have a sense of being ‘down in the dumps’? Do you ever use phrases even more graphic or even unspeakable to describe your current situation?”

“If so, you will find help and encouragement in this book by using the techniques and suggestions contained on these pages.

“If this happens to just one person, I would know that my time and effort is more than worthwhile”.

The book provides usable ideas for those who fall in occasional depression moods of

discouragement or pessimism, and according to the introduction, the trigger of a better choice or a more appropriate pathway is what will lead to a successful therapy.

He points to the five needs based on choice theory in his book, and explains the WDEP system which consists of Wants, Doing, Evaluation and Planning as part of his reality therapy, whereby the “Wants” of the depressed individual is explored before determining what they are “Doing” to achieve those “Wants”.

Consequently a practical action plan is offered after evaluating the Wants and the Doings.

“Henderson the Rain King” comes to Iranian bookstores

CULTURE d e s k **TEHRAN** — Saul Bellow’s 1996 book “Henderson the Rain King” has recently been published in Persian in Tehran.

Mojtaba Abdollahnejad is the translator of the book published by Nashre No.

The book tells the story of Henderson, who has come to Africa on a spiritual safari, a quest for the truth.

His feats of strength, his passion for life, and, most importantly, his inadvertent success in bringing rain have made him a god-like figure among the tribes.

Bellow evokes all the rich colors and exotic customs of a highly imaginary Africa in this acclaimed comic novel about a middle-aged American millionaire who, seeking a new, more rewarding life, descends upon an African tribe.



A copy of the Persian translation of Saul Bellow’s 1996 book “Henderson the Rain King”.

Henderson’s awesome feats of strength and his unbridled passion for life win him the admiration of the tribe—but it is his gift for making rain that turns him from mere hero into messiah.

A hilarious, often ribald story, “Henderson the Rain King” is also a profound look at the forces that drive a man through life.

Bellow was born in Lachine, Quebec, a suburb of Montreal, in 1915, and was raised in Chicago.

He attended the University of Chicago, received his Bachelor’s degree from Northwestern University in 1937, with honors in sociology and anthropology, did graduate work at the University of Wisconsin, and served in the Merchant Marines during World War II.