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The curious case of new UK ambassador to Iran

TEHRAN — On Monday, the Queen of England appointed Simon Shercliff as the new ambassador of the UK to Iran, leaving analysts wondering what does this sudden change of ambassador, which coincided with the presidential election and a new president will take over in the country in mid-August. This intrigued us to do some investigative reporting about Simon Shercliff.

Shercliff joined Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 1998. He began advancing to higher positions pretty soon when he was sent to Tehran as a political officer in

2000. Now, that is not what FCO normally does with its newcomers, is it?

Shercliff entered Tehran in 2000 and left in 2003, in the midst of U.S.-Afghanistan and U.S.-Iraq war. This raised eyebrows. He returned to London to become head of Political Section in Iraq Policy Department. The question remains how does a newcomer advance to such high positions in a short period of time? Can it be related to Shercliff's mentor, Sir Jeremy Greenstock?

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8th meeting of Iran-Qatar joint economic committee to be held in Doha soon

TEHRAN - Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian and Qatar's Minister of Commerce and Industry Ali bin Ahmed Al Kuwari, who are the chairs of the two countries' Joint Economic Committee, held online talks on Tuesday and expressed hope that the next meeting of the committee will be held in Doha in near future.

As Tasnim news agency reported, during the online meeting, the two sides discussed various issues including industrial cooperation, tourism, sports, and other mutual interests, and called for taking necessary measures to develop and accelerate cooperation between the two countries.

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Iran stands tall against COVID-19 ‘vaccine apartheid’

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NIOC pushing EOR projects in preparation for oil market return

BY EBRAHIM FALLAHI

As the Vienna nuclear talks between Iran and world powers show signs of progress, the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) is also getting prepared for boosting the country's oil output to pre-sanction levels or even higher.

Iran and other signatories of the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), are currently negotiating the revival of the mentioned pact from which Donald Trump had withdrawn the U.S. in 2018.

The withdrawal of the U.S. from the nuclear deal was the beginning of a new round of sanctions on the Islamic Republic's oil industry that pushed the country to reduce its oil production levels as its major oil customers pressured by the U.S. refused to continue buying Iranian oil.

According to unofficial data, Iran is currently pumping nearly 2.5 million barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil, while the country's output was about 3.83 million bpd in mid-2018.

Now, the country is once again getting ready to boost its oil output to the pre-sanction levels to claim its market share seized by other competitors in the region. In this regard numerous production enhancement projects underway across the country have been ordered to accelerate the operations in order to finish the projects earlier than scheduled.

Having confidence on the above-mentioned projects and planning, senior Iranian oil officials, including Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh, have repeatedly stressed that NIOC is fully prepared to return to the oil market.

“We can easily reach [an output of] 6.5 million barrels per day,” Zanganeh said at a ceremony to award studies on the country's giant Azadegan oil field on May 31.

Earlier this month, NIOC's Deputy Director for Production Affairs Farrok Alkhani also said: “Precise weekly, monthly and quarterly planning has been made to restore oil production to pre-sanctions level, and if sanctions are lifted, most of the country's oil production will be restored within a month.”

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10 Iran travel destinations you must see

Famous for its splendid architecture, rich traditions, and warm hospitality of the locals, Iran is known to be one of the friendliest countries which speak of ancient civilizations and glorious days of the past.

With its lovely Persian gardens and labyrinth bazaars, and a myriad of old mosques, it is one of those countries in West Asia that should be on every traveler's list.

Such a list would have to be filled with hundreds of places, starting from every grain of sun-kissed sand in the north to the crimson-colored mountains, deserts, beaches, and islands of the south. However, here is a tight selection of the best places to visit in the country:

Persepolis

An ever-present name on all Iran tourist destination lists is Persepolis, which was once the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire (c. 550 -330 BC).

In 1979, Persepolis was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage for its immeasurable value, both as an archeological city and as the representative of a once glorious culture. It was completed over several decades at the foot of Kooh-e Rahmat which translates into “Mountain of Mercy”.

The main structure of the Persepolis had several great halls, throne rooms (Apadana palace), and stairways each of which with delicate eye-catching architectural elements unique to themselves. Travel insiders believe traversing Iran without visiting Persepolis is most definitely a missed opportunity.

Arg-e Bam

The UNESCO-registered Arg-e Bam (“the citadel of Bam”) is one of the oldest and most substantial adobe structures in the country and even in the world.

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Israeli settlers attack Palestinians in flashpoint Jerusalem al-Quds neighborhood

Israeli settlers backed by the regime's forces have attacked Palestinian residents protesting in the occupied Jerusalem al-Quds Neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah in the occupied West Bank. Palestinians had gathered to rally against Israel's ethnic cleansing campaign of their neighborhood in the holy city.

However, they were met by tear gas and stun grenades, the attacks left at least 20 Palestinians injured, while at least two others have been arrested. The Israeli occupation has been trying, for an extended period now, to force the indigenous people out of their land.

On Saturday evening, the regime used similar force against another protest in the neighborhood. These are the latest in a series of demonstrations by Palestinian residents of the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood to remain in the homes they have lived in for decades. It has been reported that the latest flare-up of tensions came after Israeli regime forces tried to storm the al-Kurd family home in the same neighborhood. The family's two siblings Mohammed and Muna al-Kurd have already

been arrested once. The teenage activists are behind a social media campaign raising awareness about Israeli efforts to forcibly remove the inhabitants of the neighborhood. Last month, The Palestinian resistance in the besieged Gaza Strip declared it will not leave the residents of Sheikh Jarrah alone. In May, tensions in the area coincided with Israeli troops storming the al-Aqua Mosque compound and the Mosque itself in occupied Jerusalem al-Quds. Staying true to their word, the resistance retaliated with a barrage of missiles towards Israeli settlements in retaliation. Israel responded by pounding Gaza in an 11-day war that many experts say the Palestinians resistance won and changed the equations on the ground. Meanwhile, in a separate incident, a Palestinian intelligence officer was killed after being attacked by Israeli settlers in the Northern occupied West Bank city of Nablus. Israeli settler attacks have increased since new Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett took office earlier this month.

Arabic translation of General Soleimani's autobiography “I Feared Nothing” released

TEHRAN — An Arabic translation of Lieutenant-General Qassem Soleimani's autobiography “I Feared Nothing” has been released at the 22nd Iraq International Book Fair in Baghdad.

The book was introduced during a special meeting, which was attended by Hojjatoleslam Falah Quraishi, the director of the Asil Islamic Cultural Institute, and a group of Iranian and Iraqi cultural figures.

“Fear is one the feelings that, according to

some hadiths, if people do not have it they would not go the right path, but the lack of fear mentioned in the title of the book in fact refers to the fear that Martyr Soleimani had of God, and this was the main characteristics of Hajji Qassem Soleimani,” Quraishi said.

“Due to the special conditions in the region, Commander Soleimani was present in Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq and Yemen. In this book, we read that this person, who had such a serious presence in

the region, had a tender spirit and the fear of God,” he added. He noted that the book doesn't show all aspects of Soleimani's character, and added, “However, it showcases some small parts of his immortal soul.”

The original edition of “I Feared Nothing” published by the School of Hajji Qassem was released in January 2021 on the first martyrdom anniversary of Soleimani who was assassinated in a U.S. airstrike in Baghdad.

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U.S. divided along ideological lines between Red States and Blues States: American scholar

BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI

TEHRAN - American anthropologist William O. Beeman says that the United States is divided along ideological lines between Republicans and Democrats.

“Now the country is deeply divided along ideological lines between Red States (Republican-dominated) and Blue States (Democrat-dominated),” Beeman, a professor emeritus of the State University of Minnesota, tells the Tehran Times.

“The Red States are defying any laws that might threaten Republican dominance, as happened in the last presidential election in the states of Arizona and Georgia who voted for Joe Biden after having not voted for a Democrat for decades,” Beeman says.

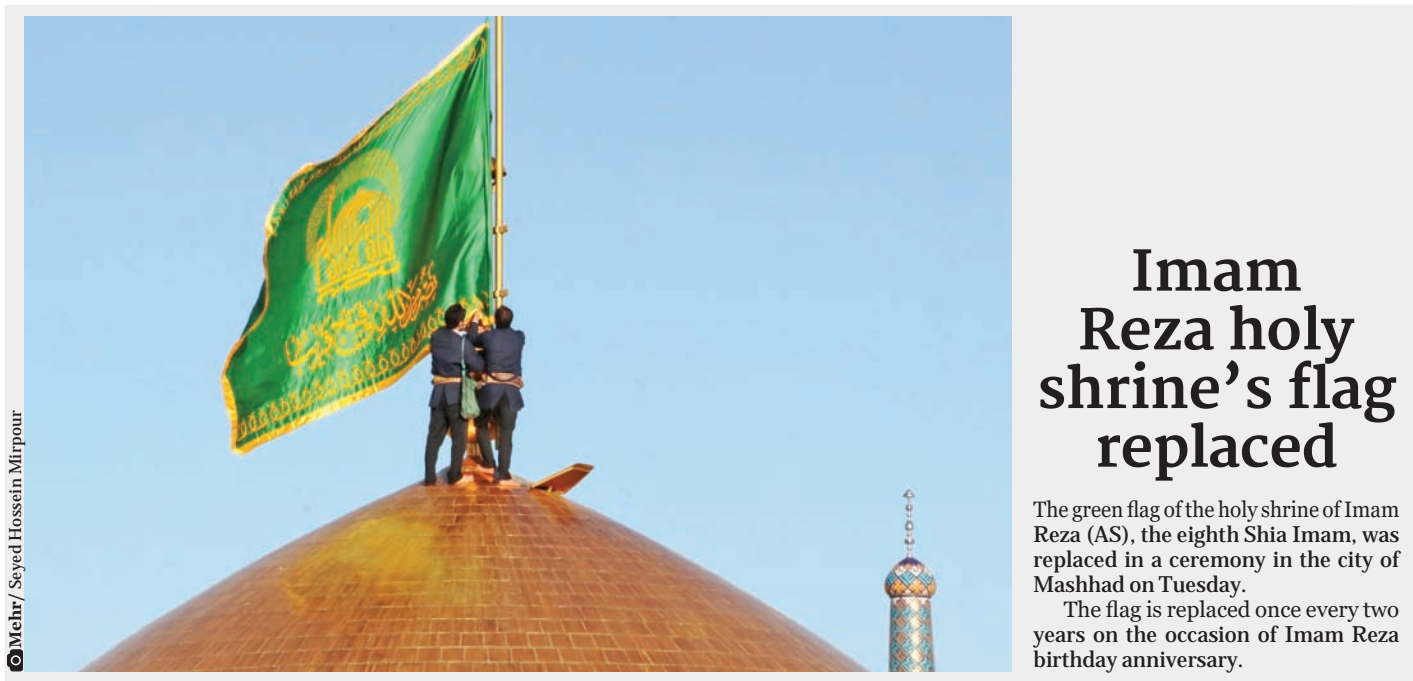
The unprecedented chaos in the nation's capital after storming Capitol Hill on January 6, 2021, showed that democracy in the U.S encounters many challenges that were not explicit before.

These developments revealed the reality of America which is divided between people who support Trump and Democrats who hate him.

Nevertheless, some people inside the U.S. no more trust the election mechanism. Some others are also against Republicans' attempts to restrict voting in Red States.

“States controlled by Republicans, including Arizona and Georgia, are trying to make sure that minority populations, who vote heavily Democratic will not be able to vote easily in future elections,” Beeman notes.

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Imam Reza holy shrine's flag replaced

The green flag of the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS), the eighth Shia Imam, was replaced in a ceremony in the city of Mashhad on Tuesday.

The flag is replaced once every two years on the occasion of Imam Reza birthday anniversary.

Biden should admit Trump's 'maximum pressure' campaign against Iran was complete failure: scholar

U.S. President Joe Biden should admit that former President Donald Trump's "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran was a complete fiasco and failure, and remove sanctions and join the nuclear deal unconditionally, an American scholar has said.

Kevin Barrett, a former academic, author, journalist and radio host with a Ph.D. in Islamic and Arabic Studies, made the remarks in an interview with Press TV website on Monday.

Iran's President-elect Ebrahim Raisi said on Monday the United States must return to full compliance with the 2015 landmark nuclear deal with Iran, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and fulfill its commitments as per the accord.

Raisi made the remarks during his first press briefing attended by representatives of domestic and foreign media outlets, following his election as the country's next president.



Asked what message he had for the United States and Europe, the President-elect said, "I emphatically urge the United States to return to the JCPOA and comply with its commitment. The Iranian people expect you to abide by your obligations."

He said the United States' "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran has failed to bring the Iranian nation to their knees.

Dr. Barret told Press TV that President-elect Raisi's statement "makes perfect sense."

"The U.S. unilaterally abrogated the deal under Trump. And Iran never got the sanctions relief that the deal promised. So, Iran has taken these five or so steps towards going outside the limits of the deal - sort of these escalating steps, intended to pressure the Europeans into finding a way around the US sanctions and restoring trade," he stated.

"But ultimately, to fully restore this deal and bring the US back into it, obviously, the US has to comply with it, which means dropping all US sanctions on Iran immediately. And then, of course, Iran would immediately return to compliance, and that's the solution. It doesn't require any negotiations. And that's basically what President-elect Raisi is saying," he noted.

The U.S., under Trump, left the JCPOA in 2018 and initiated a "maximum pressure" policy against Iran, prompting Tehran to take remedial measures by gradually reducing its nuclear commitments under the deal.

Biden has said Washington is willing to return to the pact if Tehran first suspends its countermeasures taken in response to U.S. violations and re-imposition of sanctions.

Iran says the onus is on the US to revive the deal as it was Washington, not Tehran, that left the internationally recognized accord in defiance of global criticism.

'U.S. position is dictated by the power of the Zionist lobby'

Dr. Barret said he wonders "how the Bind administration will respond. Theoretically, they could drop the sanctions and return to the deal. And there's really no reason why the US shouldn't do that in terms of US national interest."

He stated that "the US national interest is barely even affected by whether or not Iran had whatever kind of nuclear program. That's not really an issue for the U.S. anyway. And that's the problem."

"The U.S. position is dictated by the power of the Zionist lobby that is the Israeli lobby here in the United States. And that's where Biden may not be able to actually drop those sanctions and return to the deal because he has committed Zionists in his administration, who will undoubtedly pressure him against doing that," he observed. "So, we may be at an impasse. And that's why President-elect Raisi says that his domestic policy is not planning for a restoration of the deal, and the sanctions relief that would come along with that, because he knows, as all realistic observers do that the chances that the U.S. will choose to restore the deal, are pretty low, even though it could be done," the analyst said.

Barrett suggested, "All Biden would have to do is blaming Donald Trump for the problem. And that, of course, scores political points for the Biden and the Democrats."

"He could say that Trump's maximum pressure campaign against Iran was completely insane, which it was, and completely counterproductive, which was and has been a complete fiasco and failure, and it was indeed immoral, especially the murder of Americans in various terrorist attacks including especially if the martyrdom of General Qassem Soleimani," he said.

"So he could easily blame Trump for the problem and say we're going back into the deal and fixing our relationship with Iran and restoring our good standing in the region, but he probably won't because the Zionist political power in the U.S. is so great that the Zionists will tell him that if you do this, then wealthy Jewish Israeli loyalists in the United States will withhold their contributions from the Democrats in the next elections, and they will give that money to Republicans and the Democrats will lose their majority in Congress, and then probably lose the presidency in 2024," he noted.

"So for that reason, Biden won't be able to do the right thing. And President Raisi, who will be the full president soon, not just the President-elect at that point, will continue to steer Iran in its independent course in a world in which the Eurasian axis, Russia, China, and other increasingly independent countries will be the wave of the future. The U.S.-Zionist-empire will be a thing of the past," he concluded.

The curious case of new UK ambassador to Iran

→ 1 Jeremy Greenstock is the chairman of the strategic advisory company, Gatehouse Advisory Partners, established in September 2010, and chairman of Lambert Energy Advisory, the oil and gas specialists, since January 2012.

He joined Diplomatic Service in 1969 and resigned in 2003. The two themes of his career were West Asia and North Africa and U.S./Western European Relations. He studied Arabic at the Middle East Centre for Arab Studies in Lebanon (1970-72) and went on to serve in Dubai and Saudi Arabia in the early 1970s and mid-1980s respectively.

Greenstock left government service in March 2004. His last position in the FCO was chairing the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee from October 2001 to April 2003.

He then founded a website in 2010 named the Gatehouse Advisory Partners, which provided geopolitical information to clients. Simon Shercliff served as the Private Secretary of Sir Jeremy Greenstock, the Prime Minister's Special Representative for Iraq. Shercliff was awarded the Order of British Empire for his work.

Shercliff returned to London in 2004 to the FCO Press Office as a spokesman for Iran and Iraq issues. After a year, he became the Chief Press Officer, then the Foreign Secretary's Press Secretary.

He arrived in Washington to work on counter proliferation issues in 2006. He then deployed to the British embassy in Kabul between November 2007 and February 2008.

Shercliff then returned to Washington, working on Afghanistan, until 2010. He returned to the FCO in early 2011 as the



Deputy Head of the South Asia Department. In 2012 he was promoted to be the Head of the FCO's Counter Terrorism Department. From February 2014 until December 2016, he was the Deputy High Commissioner in Abuja, Nigeria. Yet, this is just the tip of the iceberg.

Shercliff proved his mentor, Greenstock, that he is more than capable to follow his footsteps. Greenstock served as the SC Counter-Terrorism Chairman, Shercliff served as the Head of the FCO's Counter Terrorism Department.

Shercliff's Twitter profile has a lot to say

about him. Seemingly, he has close ties with the MENA section of the Crisis Group. And some analysts, who are presenting Iranian President-elect Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi as a hardliner, conclude that he will throw a lot of obstacles in the way of reviving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). These are all analysts throwing stones to the moving train of progress in Iran. Is this a sign that we should not expect Britain to be supportive of change of government in Iran that will follow a different policy?

Up to the point of writing this article, the UK has not taken any stance, official

or unofficial, on the outcome of Iran's June 18 presidential election, unlike its buddies, the U.S. and France. Must we interpret this change of ambassador as UK's political stance on the matter? Does Shercliff's political career and affiliations help strengthen Iran-UK ties? Or would it be more weakened? Shercliff served as the UK ambassador to Yemen for just one year, from 2017 to 2018, before moving back to London to serve as the Director of National Security of the FCO.

Since the election hype began in Iran, the Crisis Group began spreading rumors that Iran's elections will be rigged, presenting Raisi as a pre-announced winner, estimating that the participation would be very low. The high voter turnout and competitive election changed the direction of the Crisis Group. Now they have focused on obstructing the process of reviving the JCPOA, implying that the president-elect will throw immovable obstacles on the way of reviving the nuclear deal to disappoint the P4+1.

Raisi has time and again stated that the JCPOA is an internationally recognized agreement, and any administration that takes charge in Iran should be committed to it. He has likened the JCPOA to "a blank check that must be cashed." In his first press briefing as the president-elect, Raisi gave a clear message to the United States to return to its JCPOA obligations. Now, the Queen of England appoints someone having close ties with the Crisis Group. This rash decision would implicitly state that the UK does not want the JCPOA to be revived.

The UK, with the appointment of Shercliff, has a tough time mending ties with Iran. It is time for the Queen of England to stop making controversial decisions.

President-elect Raisi receives more congrats OPEC chief says "best days lie ahead" with Raisi's support for oil cartel

POLITICAL d e s k TEHRAN — Congratulatory messages continue to pouring in on Ebrahim Raisi's victory in the June 18 presidential election in Iran.

On Monday and Tuesday, the messages of congratulations were received from the OPEC secretary general, Algerian, Turkmen, Kyrgyz, Afghan, North Korean, Vietnamese, Serbian presidents as well as some political figures.

OPEC Secretary General Mohammad Barkindo has written a letter to Raisi in which he has said the "best days lie ahead" for the oil cartel through the Iranian president-elect's support and guidance.

Iran is a key member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

In a series of tweets, the OPEC secretariat said, "#OPEC Secretary General, HE Mohammad Barkindo has congratulated HE Ebrahim Raisi, President-elect of IR Iran, following his victory in the country's presidential elections.

"In a letter to HE Raisi, #OPEC SG #HEBarkindo stated: "In electing you, the great Iranian people have recognized your lifetime of patriotic service & dedication to the welfare of your country.

"We cherish IR Iran's membership of our Organization and firmly believe that with your support, wisdom and guidance, our Organization's best days lie ahead of it."

Raisi won the June 18 presidential election with a landslide victory, defeating his three rivals with a wide margin.

From a total of 28,933,004 ballots, Raisi succeeded to win 17,926,345 votes. However, Mohsen Rezaei, Abdolnasser Hemmati, and Amir Hossein Qazizadeh Hashemi won 3,412,712 votes, 2,427,201 votes, and 999,718 votes, respectively.

Algerian president congratulates Raisi

Late on Monday, Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune sent a message congratulating Raisi for being elected as the president of Iran.

"Today, Abdelmadjid Tebboune congratulated Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi for his election as the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran," the Algerian presidential office said in a press release.

Afghan president telephones Raisi, wishes success for him

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani telephoned President-elect Raisi on Monday night congratulating him for his victory in the presidential election and wished success for him.

"Iran and Afghanistan are two neighbors and brothers and I wish that your election as the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran will lead to further development of ties and cooperation in different areas between the two countries," Ghani said, the Afghan presidential office said.

For his part, Raisi thanked Ghani for his telephone call and said it is necessary to deepen cooperation between the two countries.

Serbian president says sure ties with Iran will be strengthened

Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic was the first European leader to extend his congratulations to Raisi and wish him success as Iran's new president.

"The Republic of Serbia is still determined to cooperate with the Islamic Republic of Iran," Vucic said in a message. "I am confident that relations between the two countries will develop in line with their mutual interests."

Vucic also appreciated Iran for adopting principled positions in defense of the territorial integrity of countries under the UN Charter, Press TV reported.

North Korean president says Iranians have trusted Raisi

North Korea's Foreign Ministry said on Tuesday that the country's leader Kim Jong-un had felicitated Raisi in a note sent on June 20.

"On behalf of the government and people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, I extend my warm congratulations to you on your election as President of the Islamic Republic of Iran," Kim's message read, Press TV reported.

"Your election as President is a manifestation of Iranian people's deep trust in and high expectation for you," it added. "I take this opportunity to express my conviction that the friendly and cooperative relations between our

two countries would further expand and develop, and wish you success in your responsible work for firmly defending the national sovereignty and building a powerful Iran."

Vietnamese President Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, and Kyrgyz President have also sent separate messages congratulating Raisi for winning the presidential election in Iran.

Nechirvan Barzani, president of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, also telephoned Raisi congratulating him for being elected as new president of Iran.

President-elect Raisi also thanked Barzani for his greetings and expressed hope that with an activation of existing potentials the region would take steps toward better security and economic integration.

Al-Abadi wishes closer Iraq-Iran ties in line with mutual interests

Former Iraqi prime minister Haider al-Abadi sent a congratulatory message to Raisi wishing that during his presidency relations between Iran and Iraq will move on the path of "serving the interests of the two countries" and help constructive approaches to the benefit of the region that would bring peace, security and welfare.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh told a news briefing that until Monday morning 48 presidents, parliament speakers and senior figures had extended congratulations to President-elect Raisi.

The presidents of China and Russia are among top world leaders that have sent messages congratulating presidential elections in Iran.

Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for the UN secretary-general, also told a daily press briefing on Monday that "we've taken note of the announcement by the electoral authorities in Iran that Ebrahim Raisi is the winner of the elections of 18 June. The secretary-general looks forward to the continued cooperation with the Iranian authorities on issues of mutual respect for the benefit of Iran and the people and of the region. The usual process will be followed, I have no doubt. But that's usually closer to the time of inauguration, which, as far as I understand, is about six... at least six weeks from now."

With a flawed democracy, U.S. not in position to judge elections in other countries: Iran

POLITICAL d e s k TEHRAN — Iranian government spokesman Ali Rabiei on Tuesday condemned U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price's interventionist comments about the recent presidential election in Iran, saying the U.S., with its flawed democracy, is in no position to comment about elections in other countries.

Pointing to the June 18 presidential election in Iran in which Ebrahim Raisi won by a landslide victory, Rabiei told a virtual press conference that the holding of the election and people's participation were a "big no" to those were encouraging the Iranian citizens to boycott the election.

Rabiei was responding to Price who on Monday claimed the U.S. views the process that made Raisi Iran's president-elect as "pretty manufactured".

The Iranian government said, "Despite the flashy show of democracy in the U.S., everybody is aware today how defective and corrupt their proclaimed democracy is."

Rabiei also said President Hassan Rouhani has instructed the cabinet of ministers



to work with the president-elect to convey the administration's experience to the new one, which will start its work in mid-August.

Rouhani paid a visit to Raisi on Saturday and told him that his administration was ready to provide him with any information required for the transition period.

"Revival of nuclear deal within reach"

On the latest developments in the Vienna talks on the revival of the 2015 nuclear deal, Rabiei also said an agreement would

soon be reached.

"What has remained is all about political issues," the spokesman said, expressing hope that the nuclear deal negotiations will yield results during the tenure of outgoing Rouhani administration.

"If, for whatever reason, the negotiations would not end in this administration, then the next administration has to take the burden of negotiating and decision-making," he added.

In remarks on Monday, Rouhani also seemed optimistic about the revitalization of the nuclear deal.

Talks for reviving the JCPOA – the official name for the nuclear deal – started in early April. The sixth round of talks ended just recently.

Speaking to Iran's state TV on Sunday, Abbas Araqchi, Iran's lead negotiator in the Vienna talks, said, "The sixth round of Vienna talks ended today with a meeting of the Joint Commission. At the Joint Commission meeting, we summarized a series of intensive talks that took place over the past seven or eight days. All delegations

acknowledged that progress had been made fairly well and that everyone had emphasized the seriousness of continuing to work towards an agreement, but all agreed that some key issues needed to be decided by decision-makers in the countries."

According to Araqchi, Iran is seeking guarantees that the JCPOA will not be violated by the U.S. with a change of president as it happened by Donald Trump.

"It is natural that one of our serious issues in these negotiations has been and is to ensure that what the U.S. administration has done to JCPOA is not repeated, and in this regard, we need to come up with guarantees that assure us what the previous administration did, i.e. the re-imposition of sanctions and the withdrawal from the JCPOA, will not happen again. This is our natural desire and of course, it is not possible for us to return to the JCPOA without such a guarantee. This is one of our serious topics and we have reached some points in this regard, but it is one of the issues that we need to work on more," Araqchi stated.

U.S. 'temporary suspension' ploy and the next administration in Iran

POLITICAL

TEHRAN — In the latest sign of policy change in Iran, Iranian President-elect Ebrahim Raisi gave a resounding no to a question on whether he would meet his American counterpart after U.S. sanctions on Iran are removed, suggesting that Iran is not limiting its foreign policy to interactions with the United States.

During his first presser after winning the Iranian presidential election, Ayatollah Raisi outlined his foreign policy priorities. He said his foreign policy does not begin with the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and does not end with the deal.

"The foreign policy of our administration will not start from the JCPOA nor will it be restricted to the JCPOA," Raisi said in a first sign that he will boost Iran's relations with all major countries around the world.

The president-elect made many remarks on foreign policy issues, including the JCPOA. Among these remarks, Raisi's answer to a question about a possible meeting with U.S. President Joe Biden grabbed global headlines.

A correspondent for Russian video news agency Ruptly asked Ayatollah Raisi whether he would be prepared to meet President Biden after the current points of contention are settled. Raisi's answer was a clear no. This is while the president-elect tried to answer the questions in detail. But the shortest answer was given to the most important issue which is direct negotiations with the United States.

Raisi sent a message to the U.S. and the West in general that his foreign policy options are not limited if he is to pursue a foreign policy based on the three oft-repeated principles among Iranian conservatives: dignity, wisdom, and expediency.

Responding to a question on what message he had for the U.S., the president-elect said, "I emphatically urge the United States to return to the JCPOA and comply with its commitment. The Iranian people expect you to abide by your obligations."

He added, "European countries and the United States must look and see what they have done to the JCPOA. The United States violated the JCPOA while European countries [who were parties to the JCPOA] failed to comply with their obligations."

Raisi noted, "We tell the United States that you have to remove all sanctions [imposed on Iran] and must return [to the nuclear deal] and fulfill your obligations."



Europeans must not be influenced by U.S. pressure and must act upon their commitments. This is what the Iranian nation wants from you."

"The United States must respond to the world. It has been frequently emphasized [by Iran] that the United States must comply with its obligations and remove all cruel sanctions [it has imposed on Iran]," he continued, adding, "The Iranian nation is not satisfied with the JCPOA, because it has failed to deliver on its promises and the reason is that Americans violated their obligations while Europeans failed to observe theirs as well."

Iran and the remaining parties to the JCPOA have been negotiating in Vienna over how to return the U.S. and Iran to full compliance with the tattered nuclear deal. So far, six rounds of talks have been held, with all diplomats involved in the talks saying significant progress made and that a new agreement on resuming the deal is within reach.

Diplomats from Iran and other parties to the 2015 nuclear deal held a meeting on Sunday noon to conclude the sixth round of talks that have been underway since April to revive the nuclear deal.

After the JCPOA Joint Commission, Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Aragchi, who led the Iranian negotiating team in Vienna, hailed the progress made during the most recent round of talks, saying that the talks are nearing the end.

"Our progress in this round has been relatively good, because a large number of texts are ready now, and the amount that is not

ready has at least one very clear situation, and it shows a picture of the differences and what stage (the differences) are in, and this helps decision makers make the right decision. We have come a long way so far and we are nearing the end, but the rest of the way, as I said before, will not be an easy one," Aragchi said in remarks to Iranian state TV.

He added, "I hope and I think that if the other parties can make their own decisions, God willing, we will be able to reach an agreement that we want. Our positions have not changed since the beginning of the talks, and we want all U.S. sanctions to be lifted, as well as their verification and then Iran will return to its commitments under the JCPOA."

But the U.S. does not seem ready to make a constructive decision regarding the Vienna talks beyond its stated plan to "lengthen and strengthen" the JCPOA.

While Iran is insisting that the Vienna talks should result in lifting all Trump-era sanctions, the U.S. continues to avoid making any commitment regarding the lifting of all sanctions. Informed sources told Press TV that the Biden administration refuses to fully remove sanctions without the need for periodic waivers.

"The U.S. has only offered 120-day or 180-day sanctions removal," the sources said, adding that Washington also refused to provide Iran with a guarantee that the next U.S. administration won't quit the nuclear deal.

"U.S. refuses to provide guarantee it will not exit JCPOA again," The sources said, noting, "U.S. seeks further nuclear restrictions on Iran, beyond JCPOA."

The main reason for the U.S. to refuse to lift all the Trump sanctions could be that it intends to use some of them to force Iran into accepting negotiations over issues far beyond the nuclear program, namely Iran's missile program and its influence in the region.

In doing so, the U.S. is obviously ignoring the changes brought about by the recent election in Iran. While outgoing President Hassan Rouhani favored negotiations with the West, Ayatollah Raisi is clearly trying to boost Iran's relations far beyond the West. Of course, this does not mean that Ayatollah Raisi is going to stop the ongoing negotiations, but, instead, he will look for other partners for Iran besides the West.

As he said in his first press briefing after securing a landslide win, Raisi's foreign policy options won't be limited to the JCPOA.

Raisi also made it crystal clear the U.S. stated goal of pursuing a follow-on deal with Iran would be a daydream. He said Iran's missile program and regional influence are non-negotiable.

"Issues related to [Iran's] regional [influence] and missile program are not open to negotiation," Raisi said, adding, "There was an issue (Iran's nuclear program) which was negotiated and an agreement was reached and an accord was concluded and they promised to remain committed to it. However, they did not do that; now, on what grounds do they want to raise other issues? Why Mr. Biden does not observe obligations accepted by former [US] administrations? Why doesn't Mr. Biden fulfill his duty with regard to obligations that the U.S. administration has undertaken?"

He noted, "I seriously propose to the U.S. administration to rapidly return to compliance with its obligations, remove all sanctions [imposed on Iran] and prove through the removal of all sanctions that it is honest."

Whether the U.S. would continue the Vienna talks without having its eye on follow-on negotiations remains an open question. But the new Iranian president made it clear that Iran is not going to trust America. Therefore, the U.S. needs to reassure Iran that it will not renege on its word in a few years as it did with the JCPOA, which was negotiated by the same U.S. officials now demanding a stronger deal than the original one. U.S. track record in backing down on its word in the JCPOA made Iran more suspicious of its future plans. Time will tell whether Iran and the U.S. would be able to overcome decades-long mistrust.

Austrian FM: JCPOA has no better alternative

POLITICAL

TEHRAN — Austrian Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg has underlined the need to protect the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, saying it may not be an ideal deal but it should be preserved.

The Austrian foreign minister made the remarks on Tuesday in a joint press conference with his Saudi counterpart Faisal bin Farhan who traveled to Vienna, where diplomats from Iran and the remaining signatories to the nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), have been negotiating since early April to revive the JCPOA.

During the last meeting of the JCPOA Joint Commission in Vienna, the delegations expressed their satisfaction with the progress made in reviving the nuclear deal, reaffirming their determination and seriousness to pursue the dialogue process with a view to finding solutions to a number of unresolved issues.

Underlining the importance of security of the West Asia region to Vienna, the Austrian foreign minister said, "JCPOA may not be a great deal, but it is better than nothing. Sometimes in politics, the question is whether to wait for a good deal, or you exploit what is available."

He stated that the efforts of the JCPOA parties to maintain and ensure the full implementation of this agreement are valuable, Iran's state news IRNA reported.

Schallenberg said he was aware of the alleged concerns



of countries in the region about Iran. "But the argument is that you are either saying that I would rather have no agreement until these issues are taken into account, or that we should move step by step. In my opinion, the JCPOA is a valuable step and dialogue is very important in international politics."

The Austrian foreign minister stated that in talks with his Saudi counterpart, he had discussed direct talks between Tehran and Riyadh. He called the move encouraging and added, "We have to see if these negotiations will continue

in the new government (in Iran)."

He added, "Our goal in Austria is to have strong and friendly relations with all partners throughout the Middle East [West Asia]."

The top Austrian diplomat stressed the importance of regional security architecture and expressed readiness to help in that regard.

Yemen was another issue that the two sides discussed, according to Schallenberg. The Austrian foreign minister described the humanitarian situation in Yemen as catastrophic and said that the situation has recently changed from bad to worse. Without mentioning Saudi Arabia's deadly attacks in Yemen, he called Ansarallah's retaliatory actions unacceptable and stressed that the Yemeni crisis must be ended through a political solution, according to IRNA.

The chief Austrian diplomat also expressed concern about the human rights situation in Saudi Arabia, adding that the differences between the two countries in this regard are not hidden from anyone.

Responding to a question about his meeting with the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Saudi foreign minister said, "We believe that the role of the IAEA is important and it is necessary to support the activities of this organization to ensure that Iran's nuclear program is peaceful."

Iran congratulates Armenia on successful parliamentary elections

POLITICAL

TEHRAN — Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman congratulated the people of the Republic of Armenia, and those elected in the country's snap parliamentary vote, on holding the elections successfully, according to a statement issued by the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

In his statement, Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh wished success for those elected in the vote in helping Armenia on its path of development and progress while ensuring internal stability there and strengthening peace in the region.

Khatibzadeh also underlined the significance of neighboring countries in the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He said Tehran regards expansion of ties with Armenia as important.

The spokesman expressed confidence that friendly ties between the two countries will deepen after the establishment of the new parliament and government in Armenia.

Armenia held snap parliamentary elections on Sunday which led to the victory of the

party led by acting Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan. According to preliminary results announced by the Central Electoral Commission on Monday, the Civil Contract Party of Armenia's acting Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan won the early parliamentary polls with 53.92% of the votes, while Robert Kocharyan's party came second with 21.1% of the votes, Anadolu Agency reported. Armenia's former president and head of the Armenian Alliance on Tuesday announced that the party will challenge the June 20 snap election results in the country's Constitutional Court, citing "mass violations."

Kocharyan said in a news conference in the capital Yerevan that the election results were "unexpected", noting that the public opinion polls were showing a "different picture."

"We must try to find an explanation. We assume that there have been mass violations, and we have obviously seen the use of administrative resources. We will apply to the Constitutional Court to challenge the results," he said.

"We have a lot of experience in taking the

struggle to the street and I think that combining it with parliamentary work will only strengthen our capabilities. Our struggle will become much stronger," Kocharyan added.

However, Pashinyan announced that the people gave him the mandate to impose what he called a dictatorship of law by voting for his party.

"The internal political crisis, which started in Armenia on November 9, is over. Starting tomorrow, we will work as usual. And we must understand that the conditions and the [political] climate in the country have changed significantly, because the people gave us a mandate to impose a dictatorship of the law in the country," Pashinyan said, according to Russian state news TASS.

The acting prime minister also said that the political crisis in Armenia, which sparked on November 9, 2020, is over. He also noted, that, in the past three years, the Armenian people "carried out two revolutions."

Pashinyan faced fierce opposition from his political rivals in the wake of a devas-



tating war with neighboring Azerbaijan, which lasted for 44 days and resulted in Armenia losing control over vast territories in the Nagorno-Karabakh region. The war ended after Russian President Vladimir Putin brokered a ceasefire deal between the two warring sides in November. Pashinyan tendered his resignation from premiership nearly two weeks after the war came to an end.

SPORTS

Busts of Olympic, Paralympic medal winners unveiled

SPORTS

TEHRAN — Busts of eight Olympic Games medal winners as well as a Paralympics medalist were unveiled at the Hall of Fame in Tehran on Tuesday.

Sports and Youths Minister Masoud Soltanifar, Tehran mayor Pirouz Hanachi and Mohammad Baqer Nobakht, the Vice President of Iran and Head of the Budget and Planning Organization attended the unveiling ceremony held at the Iran's National Olympic and Paralympic Committee.

Reza Salehi Amiri, head of National Olympic Committee (NOC), and Mahmoud Khosravi Vafa, head of Paralympic Committee were among the attendees.

The busts of a Paralympic medal winner Mohammadreza Mirzaei Jafari and eight Olympic medalists Mahmoud Namjoo, Mohammadali Khojastehpour, Esmaeil Elmkhah, Aboutaleb Talebi, Ali Mirzaei, Parviz Jalayer, Shamseddin Seyed-Abbasi and Mansour Barzegar were unveiled.

Javelin thrower Mohammadreza Mirzaei Jafari claimed four gold medals in 1996, 2000, 2004 and 2008 Paralympic Games.

Weightlifter Mahmoud Namjoo won a silver medal at 1952 Olympic Games and a bronze medal in the Games four years later. He also claimed three gold medals in world championships.

Mohammadali Khojastehpour seized a silver medal in freestyle wrestling at the 1956 Olympic Games.

Esmaeil Elmkhah claimed a bronze medal in weightlifting at the 1960 Olympic Games.

Freestyle wrestler Aboutaleb Talebi took a bronze at the 19868 Olympic Games.

Ali Mirzaei won a bronze medal in weightlifting in 1952 Olympic Games.

Parviz Jalayer snatches a silver medal in weightlifting at the 1968 Olympic Games.

Wrestler Shamseddin Seyed-Abbasi won a bronze medal at the 1968 Olympic Games. He also claimed a gold medal at the 1970 world championships.

Mansour Barzegar took a silver medal at the 1976 Olympic Games and a gold medal at the 1973 world championships.

A statue of legendary wrestler Gholamreza Takhti was also unveiled at the Hall of Fame.

Popularly nicknamed Jah' n Pahlev' n - "The World Champion" - because of his chivalrous behavior and sportsmanship, he was the most popular athlete of Iran in the 20th century, although dozens of Iranian athletes have won more international medals than he did.

Behnam Yakhchali leaves Rostock Seawolves

SPORTS

TEHRAN — Iranian international shooting guard Behnam Yakhchali left German basketball club Rostock Seawolves.

There has been an exit clause in Yakhchali's contract which allowed him to leave Rostock Seawolves after he received an offer from a Bundesliga team.

Yakhchali joined Rostock Seawolves last year from for Monkeys Kings where he had very impressive stats: 16.1ppg, 5.2rpg, 3.2apg and 1.5spg in 11 games.

The 25-year-old shooting guard is in Japan along with Iran basketball team as part of preparation for the 2020 Olympic Games. Iran have been drawn with the U.S., and France in Pool A.

Esteghlal keep IPL title hopes alive

SPORTS

TEHRAN — Esteghlal football team defeated Shahr Khodro 2-0 to raise hopes for Iran Professional League (IPL) title.

On Monday, Arman Ramezani was on target for the Blues in the 48th minute with a left-footed strike and Mehdi Ghaedi made it 2-0 in the dying moments of the match.

With seven weeks left, Esteghlal are third, eight points adrift of IPL leaders Sepahan and Persepolis.

12 freestylers to represent Iran at Ali Aliev Memorial

SPORTS

TEHRAN — Iran will participate at the Ali Aliev Memorial with 12 freestyle wrestlers.

The tournament will be held in Kaspiysk, Russia from June 25 to 27.

Ali Zurkanaevich Aliev was a Soviet freestyle wrestler who won five world titles and he was the first wrestler from Dagestan to win a world title in freestyle wrestling.

He competed at the 1960, 1964 and 1968 Olympic Games, finishing fourth and sixth. After his death, the Russian Wrestling Federation has hosted the annual Ali Aliev Memorial International Wrestling Meeting at the Ali Aliev Wrestling Training Center in Kaspiysk, Dagestan, Russia.

57kg: Alireza Sarlak

65kg: Abolfazl Hajipour

70kg: Mohammadmehdi Yeganeh Jafari, Amirhossein Maghsoodi

74kg: Mohammadsadeh Firouzpour

79kg: Bahman Teymouri, Hamidreza Zarrinpeykar

86kg: Hadi Vafaeipour

92kg: Mohammadjavad Ebrahimi, Arashk Mohebi

97kg: Mojtaba Goleji

125kg: Abbas Foroootan

Iran fall short against Poland: 2021 VNL

SPORTS

TEHRAN — Iran were defeated against Poland 3-0 (25-20, 25-20, 25-16) on Week 5 of 2021 Volleyball Nations league (VNL) on Tuesday.

Iran will meet Argentina on Wednesday in their last match.

Iran have not registered a win since beating the U.S. on Week 3. Since then, the National Team have lost to Serbia, Germany, Australia, Brazil, Slovenia, France and Poland.

Iran have lost nine matches in the competition and registered just five wins.

The 2021 VNL has brought a total of 32 of the world's top national teams in Rimini, Italy.

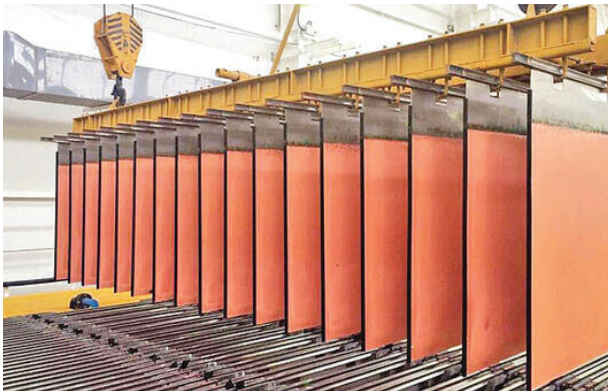
The 16-team tournament began with a round-robin phase where each side play 15 games.

Production of copper cathode up 16% in 2 months yr/yr

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran’s production of the copper cathode has increased 16 percent during 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.

The country has produced 49,989 tons of copper cathode during the tow-month period of this year.

Production of copper cathode has also risen one percent in the second month of this year, as 25,373 tons of the product was produced in the second month



The periodical reports and statistics indicate that Iran’s metals sector is progressing both in terms of production and export despite the limitations imposed by the U.S. sanctions.

The country’s copper industry is moving forward noticeably, as some outstanding projects are implemented.

The country has posted outstanding figures in terms of copper cathode production and export.

Copper cathode is the primary raw material input for the production of copper rod for the wire and cable industry.

In early April, the managing director of National Iranian Copper Industries Company (NICIC) announced the discovery of one billion tons of new copper reserves in the country.

NICIC carried out 101,000 meters of deep drilling to identify new copper reserves across the country in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), which resulted in the discovery of one billion tons of new reserves. Ardeshir Sa’d-Mohammadi said in a press conference.

Sa’d-Mohammadi put the value of the discovered reserves at 350 trillion rials (about \$8.3 billion).

According to the official, NICIC had also discovered 523 million tons of copper reserves across the country during the Iranian calendar year 1398 (March 2019- March 2020).

Considering the new discoveries, NICIC’s total copper reserves across the country have currently surpassed eight billion tons.

The official put the country’s total copper reserves at 40 billion tons, saying that Iran currently has the world’s seventh-largest copper reserves, and hopefully the country will climb to sixth place in the current Iranian calendar year.

Sa’d-Mohammadi further mentioned the new record achieved in the country’s copper cathode production and noted that over 280,000 tons of the mentioned product were produced in the country during the previous year which was 12 percent more than the preceding year.

Pointing to the NICIC’s new projects for the current year, the official noted that three major copper-related projects will go operational in the current year which is going to add more than 400,000 tons to the country’s copper concentrate output, boosting the company’s annual incomes by \$800 million.

According to Sa’d-Mohammadi, NICIC has defined more than €2.4 billion plus 300 trillion rials (about \$7.1 billion) worth of projects to be implemented over the next four years, which will increase the company’s total copper concentrate capacity to 2.3 million tons.

He further noted that the country’s copper exports increased in the previous year despite the negative impacts of the coronavirus pandemic and the U.S. sanctions.

TEDPIX jumps 18,000 points on Tuesday

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 18,232 points to 1.186 million on Tuesday.

Over 10.557 billion securities worth 72.79 trillion rials (about \$1.733 billion) were traded at the TSE on Tuesday.

The first market’s index rose 15,754 points, and the second market’s index rose 28,624 points.



TEDPIX dropped 4,000 points, or less than one percent, in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

Mohammad-Ali Dehqan Dehnavi, the head of Iran’s Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO), has announced that the organization’s advisory council has proposed two new programs for supporting the stock market in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21).

The details of the mentioned programs dubbed “capital market policy package to support production and eliminate obstacles” and “the plan to improve the position and performance of the capital market” were presented in a meeting between Dehqan Dehnavi and the members of the SEO Advisory Council.

“The capital market has witnessed great changes in the past two years and has grown significantly in terms of size, the volume of activity, and presence of people. These rapid developments have changed some of the equations [in the market],” Dehnavi said following the mentioned meeting.

NIOC pushing EOR projects in preparation for oil market return

→ 1 After the re-imposition of sanctions against the country, NIOC prepared a plan for production control, in parallel, programs for production restoration were also put on the agenda, and plans were made to revive production at one week, one month, and quarterly intervals, Alikhani explained.

As mentioned by the official, NIOC’s plans for restoring production have been set way before the recent developments, and the country has been preparing for a strong return to the oil market as earlier as 2019.

In January 2019, NIOC started a \$6.2 billion national program based on which recovery enhancement deals were to be signed with local firms to boost oil production by 355,000 bpd at 33 fields.

The first group of such projects worth \$800 million were signed that month to increase the country’s oil production by 75,000 bpd.

A second group including 13 fields was awarded in August 2020 to Iranian companies with a total investment of \$1.7 billion, to raise oil output further by 185,000 bpd.

These contracts were inked by two NIOC subsidiaries namely the Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC) and the National Iranian

South Oil Company (NISOC), as employers, and 13 domestic companies for the maintenance of the production level and increasing recovery factor of several oil fields.

The third group of deals worth €1.2 billion were also signed between IOOC and NISOC, as employers, and eight Iranian companies for the maintenance of the production level and increasing recovery factor of several other oil fields.

In one of these projects IOOC has implemented a pilot enhanced oil recovery (EOR) project in which a nanofluid has been injected into an oilfield in southern Iran for the first time to boost its recovery factor.

The high-tech project was unveiled in a ceremony attended by officials from IOOC, NIOC, and Iran’s Research Institute of Petroleum Industry (RIPI) in late May.

In this pilot project, 18,000 barrels of nanofluid were injected into one of the wells of Belal oil field in Hormozgan Province.

As the NIOC’s research body, RIPI has been tasked to fully support the local firms that are currently working on the country’s oil fields in order to provide them with the latest knowledge and technologies in the field.



On Monday, the head of RIPI’s Petroleum Engineering Research Department said the institute has been working on the world’s latest EOR techniques to come up with the best possible methods for boosting the output of the country’s oil fields at the shortest possible time.

According to Abbas Shahrabadi, oilfield development and recovery enhancement projects are carried out according to a clear and comprehensive roadmap, and RIPI, like other reputable companies in the world, uses such a roadmap to carry out recovery enhancement projects.

8th meeting of Iran-Qatar joint economic committee to be held in Doha soon

→ 1 The officials also stressed the need to hold a committee to follow up on the implementation of the agreements reached during the seventh session of the two countries’ Joint Economic Committee.

Iran and Qatar signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for cooperation in a variety of areas at the end of the two countries’ seventh Joint Economic Committee meeting which was held in Isfahan in late November 2020.

Based on this MOU, the two sides agreed to cooperate in forming a joint trade working group between the two countries, establishing trade centers between the private sectors of the two sides, establishing commercial affiliates in the embassies of the two countries in Tehran and Doha, and using the ports of the two countries to boost the export and import of goods.

The event which was attended by Ardakanian and Al Kuwari as the chairs of the committee was the first meeting of the two countries’ Joint Economic Committee held after



the coronavirus pandemic in Iran.

Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Gholam-Hossein Shafei, the Qatari

IOOC begins production from giant Asmari oil reservoir

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC) has announced the beginning of production from the country’s giant Asmari oil reservoir in the southern Abouzar field, Shana reported.

According to Javad Rostami, the head of IOOC’s Oil Engineering Department, the mentioned success has been achieved for the first time in the history of the reservoir’s development.

“With the planning made in the past few months for the development of the upper Asmari layer of Abouzar field, a new well called A14-4H was drilled in this reservoir



and after the completion of the well and its commissioning, oil production from this reservoir was realized for the first time in history of the field’s development,” Rostami said.

The official noted that based on the previous studies and evaluation of production results from the new well, plans are now underway for drilling more wells to further development of this reservoir and it is predicted that with drilling five to eight new wells, production of 6,000 to 10,000 barrels of oil from this reservoir will become possible.

The development of Abouzar oil field has been so far focused on two other reservoirs of the field and with the new developments, Asmari has also been added to the productive reservoirs of the field, according to the official.

Abouzar is located 76 kilometers south-

west of Kharg Island in the Persian Gulf. Its output, now at roughly 200,000 barrels per day, is transferred via a pipeline to the island for export after being processed.

So far, 107 oil wells have been drilled in the Abouzar field, of which 90 are in operation and the rest are idle due to age and technical problems.

Currently, more than 100 people are working on the platforms of the field and most of the country’s oil production in the Persian Gulf comes from this field.

The field’s reservoir is estimated to contain about four billion barrels of in-place crude oil, 20 percent of which can be extracted.

Manufacturing of washing machine rises 41%

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Manufacturing of washing machine in Iran during the first two months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21- May 21) has risen 41 percent from that of the same period of time in the previous year, IRNA reported citing the data released by the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade.

The ministry’s data show that 179,600 washing machines have been manufactured during the two-month period of this year.

As reported, over 15 million sets of home appliances have been manufactured in the country during the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), which was 78 percent more than the output in its preceding year.

Rise in home appliances manufacturing and export has been also planned for the current year.

Iran’s Deputy Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Mehdi Sadeqi Niaraki has stated that the production of home appliances in the country has increased by 36 percent following the exit of foreign brands.

“Following the imposition of U.S. sanctions and the withdrawal of South Korean companies from Iran, the production of Iranian home appliances increased by 36 percent,” Niaraki said on the sidelines of a visit to a production unit.

According to Niaraki, the indigenization of the knowledge



for the production of such products has also increased by 20 percent since the Iranian calendar year 1396 (ended on March 20, 2018).

“Currently, Iranian producers have indigenized the knowledge for manufacturing about 70 percent of the country’s home appliance needs, and the figure has reached 90 percent for some products,” he said.

Niaraki noted that considering the Iranian home appliance industry’s infrastructure and capacities, the country will be able to become an exporter of such products in the near future

Over 7,000 km of railways constructed across Iran in 7 years

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Over 7,000 kilometers (km) of railways have been constructed across Iran over the past seven years, the deputy head of the country’s Construction and Development of Transportation Infrastructures Company has announced.

According to Abbas Khatibi, the construction of 1,090 km of new railways, laying more than 1,800 km of rail tracks, laying 2,000 km of track ballast, and the construction and development of more than 161,000 square meters of stations in the country were some of the major achievements in this sector over the past few years.

The official pointed to the connection of

four provincial centers to the country’s rail network as one of the most important achievements of the last seven years, saying: “Gorgan-Incheh Boroun railway, Tehran-Hamedan railway, Maragheh-Urmieh railway, Qazvin-Rasht railway, Miyaneh-Bostanabad railway, and Khaf-Herat railway are among the most important projects that have been put into operation during these seven years.”

“If the accelerated trend of railway development in the country continues in the next 10 years, Iran will become the second biggest country in the region in terms of the density of railway network in proportion to vastness,” Khatibi stressed.

The official has also underlined the plan-

ning and management of infrastructure projects as one of the most important policies in order to achieve the country’s economic goals and said: “Prioritizing infrastructure projects, observing standards and technical specifications, observing environmental measures and achieving new technologies in the design and implementation of railway projects in the country is another part of the goals that have been achieved in this field.”

He further mentioned the use of domestically-made rail tracks (known as National Rail) in railway projects as another significant achievement in the country’s rail industry and added: “this type of rail is produced by limited number of countries and used for



high-speed lines. Iran’s access to the technology for constructing this type of rail has made the country able to export rails to other countries in addition to meeting domestic needs.”

U.S. divided along ideological lines between Red States and Blues States: American scholar

➔ 1 Deep division in the American society and exacerbation of racism against people of color have cast serious questions about the future of democracy in the United States.

Following is the text of the interview with William O. Beeman:

How do you assess the U.S. record in supporting democracy in West Asia? From America's role in the 1953 coup in Iran to coalition with Arab monarchies?

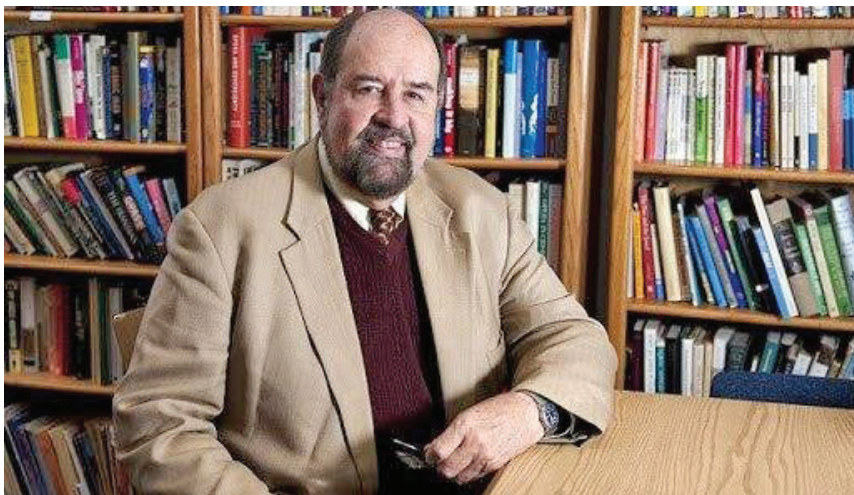
United States leaders have always acted in what they felt to be the best interests of the United States and their own political fortunes with no regard for the interests of the people of the Middle East (West Asia). Before World War II the United States had very little involvement in the Middle East (West Asia). After World War II there were three driving interests that governed United States foreign policy in the Middle East (West Asia).

First, was the Cold War with the Soviet Union. Second was the need for petroleum to fuel United States industry and commerce. Third was protection of Israel because of the sentiment of United States voters toward Israel. One other factor was the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the region in the early 1970s.

All three of these interests directly explain the measures U.S. politicians have undertaken in the region. The 1953 coup is explained by the fear the United States had that the Soviet Union would invade Iran under Mossadeq, whom they thought to be weak; coupled with the need for U.S. access to Iranian oil, which had been nationalized by Mossadeq. The coalition with Arab monarchies and with the Shah's Iran after the British withdrawal from the region was to serve as a bulwark against Soviet incursion into the Persian Gulf, and to cement oil supplies. The hostility toward Iran after the Revolution of 1978-1979 was a reaction to losing a reliable ally in the region, and possible reduction in economic influence through control of the Iranian oil supply. Continued hostility to Iran was due to Iranian hostility toward Israel, who was viewed by Iranian leaders as the "little Satan" having supported the Shah. One can continue forward examining every event since then, but they all come down to these three motivating factors.

As an objective example, how do you read the results of the U.S. decision in invading Iraq to change its regime? Did it help democracy?

The occupation of Iraq was undertaken under false pretenses. Neoconservative politicians had been urging the occupation of Iraq and the elimination of Saddam Hussein as protection for Israel since 1996. These neoconservatives were appointed to major U.S. government positions under George W. Bush, and after the tragedy of 9/11 persuaded Bush to invade Iraq, although



Saddam had nothing to do with the attack on America. Saddam was a terrible person, and the world is better off without him, but the United States did nothing to assure that Iraq would be stable after he was eliminated. Iraq is an artificial country created by the British out of former Ottoman territories that had never been together under one single state structure. The social and religious tensions in Iraq have not yet been contained, and certainly did not lead to democracy in any realistic form. Millions died during the American occupation, and the effects are still being felt. It is an open question whether Iraq will ever achieve stability within its current borders. It is already breaking into three distinct regions replicating the old Ottoman territories that comprise it.

Many political observers were used to argue that though U.S. foreign policy approaches are unfair and based on interests, it has a stable democracy. But now the world is witnessing moves that are threatening stability and democracy in the United States. What is your analysis?

Thoughtful American observers are very worried about American democracy. There has always been tension between the Federal government and the governments of individual States. This is what caused the American Civil War in the 19th Century. Now the country is deeply divided along ideological lines between Red States (Republican dominated) and Blue States (Democrat dominated). The Red States are defying any laws that might threaten Republican dominance, as happened in the last presidential election in the states of Arizona and Georgia who voted for Joe Biden after having not voted for a Democrat for decades. Therefore, States controlled by Republicans, including Arizona and Georgia, are trying to make sure that minority populations, who vote heavily Democratic will not be able to vote

easily in future elections. In fact, Republicans are a minority throughout the United States, but by restricting the vote where they are in power, they hope to maintain their control over government. This is very troubling for American democracy.

Trump keeps claiming election fraud in the presidential election. Republicans also repeat the claim. To justify their moves to restrict voting, Republican claim they want to make sure that every legitimate vote will be counted. What is your comment?

There was no election fraud in the 2020 election. Republicans can make all the false claims they wish, but they rely on being able to deceive their own voters into doubting the results of the election. Despite immense effort to prove that there were irregularities in the election, including some absolutely insane conspiracy theories, no proof has ever been verified. However, people will believe what they want to believe, and Trump supporters, with no evidence, are willing to accept the lie that the election was illegitimate. It is the willing belief of many people in this lie that is the threat to democracy, not any action on the part of Democrats.

Let's turn to class division in the United States. Some criticize the U.S. for being a haven for wealthy people and neglecting ordinary folks. Is it the ultimate goal of liberal democracy and founding fathers?

The great attraction of the United States for the people of the world is that the United States is the "Land of Opportunity." There are myriad stories of people who come to the United States with nothing and become millionaires within a generation. This is also true about current leaders in politics, business, and public service who were born in the United States. They start with nothing coming from

poor families, and end up wealthy and powerful. This social mobility is a driving force in American life. For this reason, even poor people support policies that hurt themselves and their families because they still hold out the dream that one day they or their children will become rich and powerful. This is close to being a religious belief, and indeed, it is a doctrine of Protestant Christianity, particularly Calvinism, which promulgates the belief that successful people are "beloved of God." As a result, success is more important than ethics or morality for many people.

Sadly, the dominant population does not think that minority populations "deserve" success, so the economic benefits in the United States are restricted for African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians, and other minorities. This attitude has been prevalent for centuries in the U.S. Slavery were one reason African-Americans are still thought to be inferior by many white Americans today. Immigrants have always been disadvantaged as they arrived. There was prejudice against Germans, Irish, Italians and Jews in the last century, more recently Hispanics, Africans, and Muslims face discrimination as they have arrived in greater numbers. Every immigrant group has faced prejudice from "nativists" who were already established when the immigrants came, and who want to keep those new arrivals out of the country.

Access to upwardly mobile housing, to investment capital, to health care, and to decent education has been systematically denied to these minority groups. The fact that some members of these groups succeed with enormous effort despite the institutional restrictions on their progress only reinforces the myth that "deserving people who work hard" succeed, and "undeserving people" are poor because they are deficient in some way-lazy, criminal, on drugs, making poor life choices. All of these accusations are lies, but they keep the dominant white population highly advantaged over the minority populations.

The situation is slowly changing as minorities assimilate and become more successful. The African-American middle class is growing. Germans, Irish, and Italians are now part of the "white" majority. There is still lingering prejudice against Jews and Asians, and unfortunately, very hostile prejudice against Hispanics and Muslims. But over time these prejudices and disadvantageous economic and legal structures have softened as these disadvantaged populations have become more successful, because economic success in the United States continues to be proof that a person is worthy. This is one of the chief attractions of Donald Trump. The single fact that he is "rich" has been enough for many people to support him.

Cleaning up after Donald Trump

By Munir A. Saeed

Interesting to watch how the current negotiations will proceed in Vienna considering the time running out on the outgoing Rouhani administration in Iran.

One condition precedent that seems to be the potential deal breaker for Iranians is for the U.S. to commit itself not to violate the agreement or abrogate it in future. The Iranian position is that this is an agreement between nations, not between one president and another. Future American presidents must respect this important tenet of international agreements. Americans say that no American president can guarantee what the next president will do.

If Iran violates its commitments under the agreement, there are clear stipulations for the penalties to be imposed. What happens if other members to the deal violate their

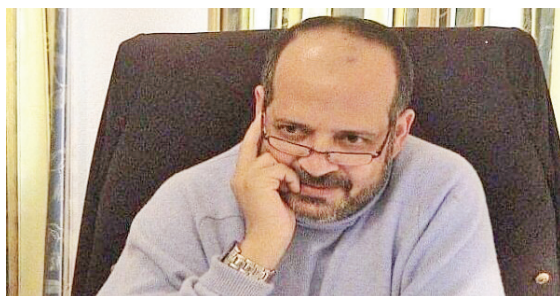
commitments, like America has already done?

Perhaps to resolve this American claim of "immunity" from consequences of its behavior, there should be either a law passed by the U.S. Congress committing the U.S. to the agreement or better still, a U.S./Iran treaty entered pari passu with the nuclear agreement that will penalize any abrogation or violation of the nuclear agreement.

Looks like Trump has put, not Iran, but his own country and allies in a mess they have to find a way out of. And Biden, if he wants to focus his energy and resources on China and Russia, the two giants in the East, he better come up with a solution fast for his predecessor's foolishness.

Incoming president Ebrahim Raisi, who will take office soon, is no fan of this nuclear deal in the way it has been crafted. Time is running out for those who want to conclude it.

What distinguishes a wise person from a clever one is,



the clever person is good at getting out of crises that a wise person avoided to start with.

Perhaps it's time for someone to tell America, be wise today so that you don't need to be clever tomorrow!

Pakistan says will no longer allow U.S. to use territory for ops in Afghanistan

Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan says his country cannot afford to again make a mistake by hosting a U.S. military base to be used against alleged militants in Afghanistan but is ready to be a "partner for peace" in the neighboring country.

In an op-ed for The Washington Post, Khan said Pakistan "has suffered so much from the wars in Afghanistan" and learned many lessons from its previous mistakes.

"In order to avoid further conflict, US bases will withdraw from Pakistan," he said. "On the other hand, Pakistan is ready to be a partner for peace in Afghanistan with the United States."

He acknowledged that Islamabad "made a mistake by choosing between warring Afghan parties" in the past, but has now "learned from that experience."

"History proves that Afghanistan can never be controlled from the outside," Khan wrote.

He wrote the opinion piece as the US and its NATO allies are engaged in the process of pulling out their forces from Afghanistan to end two decades of war in the county. All foreign troops were supposed to have been withdrawn by May 1, but US President Joe Biden pushed that date back to September 11.

The US is considering options to keep a foothold in the region, and there has been widespread speculation that Pakistan may allow the US to use its soil for operations after a full withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Last week, David Helvey, the US assistant secretary of defense for Indo-Pacific affairs, told the US Senate Armed Services Committee that Islamabad would allow the US military to use its territory again.

"Pakistan has always allowed overflights and ground access to the US to facilitate its military presence in Afghanistan and would

continue to do so," he said.

Prime Minister Khan, however, rejected that prospect.

"We simply cannot afford this. We have already paid too heavy a price," Khan said.

Pakistan secretly allowed the US to operate drones over Pakistani territory and from at least one base in the southwest of the country during the former presidency of Barack Obama. Islamabad also provided tacit approval for the use of US drone attacks on Pakistani soil, while publicly condemning them, leaked US diplomatic cables showed in 2011.

He said, "The interests of Pakistan and the United States in Afghanistan are the same. We want a negotiated peace, not civil war."

Khan has formerly warned that a "civil war" could spark in Afghanistan after all the US troop withdrawal.

The Taliban's five-year rule in Afghanistan

came to an end following the US-led invasion of the country in 2001. But the militants have now intensified attacks to seize territory again. They are said to be present in almost every province now and are encircling several major cities.

Afghan President Ashraf Ghani has previously said that his government is ready to fight against the Taliban after the full withdrawal of foreign troops from the country.

But amid the surge in violence, he launched a security shake-up on Friday with the appointment of new defense and interior ministers.

Ghani and his chief peacemaker, Abdullah Abdullah, will also meet with US President Joe Biden on a visit to Washington on Friday.

In their first face-to-face meeting, Biden will seek to reassure Ghani and Abdullah of US support for Afghanistan, including diplomatic, economic, and humanitarian assistance, the White House said in a statement on Sunday.

Israeli Foreign Minister Lapid set to make first trip to the UAE

The Israeli Foreign Ministry says Yair Lapid will visit the United Arab Emirates from June 29 to 30. Lapid will inaugurate an Israeli embassy in Abu Dhabi and a consulate in Dubai. The newly appointed Foreign Minister's trip next week will be the first-ever visit by a top Israeli official to the Persian Gulf kingdom. This comes after the normalization of ties between the two sides last year. The UAE, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan established diplomatic relations with Israel under the so-called Abraham Accords brokered by former U.S. President Donald Trump.

The Palestinians have condemned the normalization deal, saying they are a stab in the back by the Arab states and undermine efforts towards an end to the Israeli occupation of their land. The UAE and Israel have already agreed to waive visa requirements for each other's Emiratis and Israeli settlers as well as signing a number of bilateral agreements on investment, tourism, direct flights, security, and telecommunications.

Prior to the so-called Abraham Accords, Egypt and Jordan were the only Arab countries to have diplomatic ties with Israel. The UAE was the first Persian Gulf Arab state to announce active ties with Israel. Shortly after the normalization deals, the former Trump administration authorized the sale of 50 advanced F-35 warplanes to the UAE. The current Biden administration put that agreement on hold in January following strong condemnation from Democrats in Congress over the UAE's devastating war on Yemen and its current human rights record. However, in April, the White House proceeded with the \$23 billion arms sale, despite the objections. The normalization deals themselves have sparked anger across the Islamic world. The Islamic Republic of Iran says the UAE can't buy security by normalizing ties with Israel. Many Islamic nations and movements have denounced Abu Dhabi, saying Israel is using the Emiratis for its own interests.

Rights groups call on British government to investigate UAE activist's death for 'foul play'

Human rights groups are urging Downing Street to open an urgent probe into the death of a young Emirati activist who headed a London-based Non-Government Organization, that mainly probes human rights abuses by Saudi Arabia, but also other Persian Gulf monarchies. On Saturday, Alaa al-Siddiq, the executive director of the prominent group ALQST, died in a car crash. Human Rights Group, Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN) has called on the UK to make sure the death of the 33-year-old daughter of an Emirati political prisoner was not a targeted killing.

In a statement DAWN said: "We need UK authorities to reassure us that no foul play was involved, given the Emirati and Saudi government's record of surveilling, targeting and harassing activists and their families abroad". Speaking to the Britain Telegraph Newspaper, another rights group, the (Persian) Gulf Centre for Human Rights, has also called for a rapid police investigation, saying "Alaa was at risk all the time". The group also told the Telegraph "We work in a very hostile environment and such governments as those in the (Persian) Gulf are using surveillance technology to hack into our accounts" before adding "We all know what happened to Jamal Khashoggi." British Police are reportedly appealing for witnesses following the death of the activist. In 2018, Siddiq gained asylum in the UK. Her research focused on the release of political prisoners in the UAE. It is unclear if Abu Dhabi will release Siddiq's father to attend her funeral. The Emirates has yet to comment on the matter.

Resistance News

Islamic Jihad: All resistance forms must be activated in West Bank to deter Israeli settlers

INTERNATIONAL **d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The Palestinian Islamic Jihad resistance movement has called for resistance against Israeli occupation to be activated in all its forms and shapes across the occupied West Bank, emphasizing that Palestinians have the inalienable right to defend themselves and protect their dignity, which is being constantly violated by the regime.

"Settlers are perpetrating various acts of terror and aggression against our (Palestinian) nation under the protection of the occupation army. The Israeli military forces are besieging cities, villages as well as camps, and are assaulting our people by means of incursions, arrests and killings at checkpoints," Tariq Salmi, the movement's spokesman, said in a press statement on Tuesday.

He called on Palestinian resistance fighters to mount their activities across the occupied West Bank, noting that the Israeli enemy will not be deterred except by force.

Salami described illegal Israeli settlements as legitimate targets for Palestinians' resistance operations.

The statement came after Palestinian media outlets reported that Israeli settlers had fatally shot a member of the Palestinian National Security Forces in the northern part of the West Bank.

First Lieutenant Alaa Khaled Muhammad Zahran reportedly sustained grave gunshot wounds on Monday night, when a group of settlers opened fire at his vehicle near the Palestinian town of Deir Sharaf, located northwest of Nablus.

He was taken to Rafidia Surgical Hospital in Nablus city, where he was pronounced dead by medical personnel shortly after arrival.

The Jerusalem Post later claimed in a report that Zahran had been killed by Palestinians in an internal incident, and that the shooting had not been carried out by Israeli settlers.

Recently, there has been a rise in attacks on Palestinians by gangs of roaming far-right settlers in the occupied territories.

Earlier on Monday, four Palestinian teenage girls sustained injuries after being pepper-sprayed in the face by an Israeli settler in Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of occupied Jerusalem al-Quds.

Local sources, requesting anonymity, told Palestine's official told Wafa that the settler had pepper sprayed the teenagers who were training for an artistic event in the neighborhood. The girls suffered burns to their faces.

Sheikh Jarrah has been the scene of frequent crackdowns by Israeli police on Palestinians protesting against the threatened expulsion of dozens of Palestinian families from their homes in favor of hardline Israeli settler groups.

Palestinians and rights groups say the case highlights discriminatory policies aimed at pushing Palestinians out of Jerusalem al-Quds.

On Friday, extremist Israeli settlers attacked Palestinian vehicles traveling along the road linking Jenin to Nablus.

Ghassan Daghlis, a Palestinian Authority official who monitors settlement activity in the northern part of the West Bank, told Wafa that a group of settlers had hurled stones and empty bottles at the Palestinian vehicles, causing damage to some of them. No injuries were reported.

Israeli settlers have been known to carry out so-called "price tag" attacks on Palestinian communities.

Yemen shoots down another U.S. spy drone

The air defense systems of Yemen's armed forces have brought down a second American spy plane intruding over the country's skies.

According to a Yemeni armed forces spokesperson the ScanEagle has been carrying out hostile actions in Marib province. Brigadier General Yahya Saree says "The air defenses managed, by the grace of God, shortly before to shoot down an American spy plane (ScanEagle) with a surface-to-air missile over the al-Mashjah area in the Serwah district of Ma'rib province".

On Sunday, Yemen's air defenses managed to shoot down

the same type of unmanned aerial vehicle in the same region. The army later released footage showing the downing of the spy drone.

According to Yemen's al-Masirah news channel, the drone was built by Insitu ScanEagle, a subsidiary of the American Boeing company, at a cost of \$11.25 million dollars per drone. It is a reconnaissance drone that works to locate targets accurately from the air. It is also equipped with an electro-optical surveillance camera and another infrared camera. Yemeni forces are

inching closer to liberating Marib from Saudi-backed militants. The strategic oil-rich city is the last stronghold under the control of Saudi Arabia in Yemen. Many analysts see a victory for the Yemeni armed forces in the battle for Marib as the end of Saudi Arabia's war on Yemen. Riyadh launched the bombing campaign in May 2015. Back then, Saudi officials said the military intervention would take three weeks to complete. More than six years later it appears that Riyadh is stuck in a quagmire that is difficult to get out of.

Another recreational pier to be constructed in northern Iran

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — A new recreational pier will be constructed near the city of Noshahr, which is bounded by the Caspian Sea in northern Mazandaran province. Some 100 billion rials (\$2.4 million at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been allocated to the project, which is to be carried out by the private sector, Noshahr’s tourism chief has announced.

“Through the project, maritime tourism in the region will be reinforced and more tourists will be attracted,” IRNA quoted Mohammad Valipur as saying on Tuesday.



There are also plans to construct twelve more recreational piers on the coastline of the city, but they have not yet found investors, the official added.

Back in January, the head of Noshahr’s Fisheries Department Mostafa Rezvani said that constructing such piers could boost the infrastructure needed for developing fisheries investments. This capacity could also facilitate the activities of the fish farms in the coastal waters of the region, he noted.

Last August, the construction of the first recreational pier in Mazandaran began in the city of Ramsar.

Some 150 billion rials (\$3.5 million) were allocated to the project, which aimed to enhance coastal and maritime tourism in the region.

With a width of three meters and a length of 100 meters, the pier is being constructed by private investors in close collaboration with the provincial cultural heritage department.

This pier is one of the 134 piers, which are decided to be built in the future across the province’s coastal strip, provincial tourism chief Mehran Hassani said.

The project, which is planned to come on stream in one year, also includes restaurants, water sports space, and boat mooring.

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

5-star hotels being constructed in Qom

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — A total of five 5-star hotels are currently under construction across Qom province. Upon their completion in the near future, these hotels will bring a significant change to the tourism industry in the central Iranian province, the provincial tourism chief has said.

The official briefed on one of the accommodation projects, as an example, saying: “An investment of 2.6 trillion rials (about \$62 million at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been made in the Zaferanieh Hotel, one of the under-construction projects,” the official added.



“Covering an area of 1,500 square meters, the project is expected to generate 80 job opportunities directly,” he stated.

“The hotel will have 90 rooms and will add 200 beds to the hospitality sector of the province,” he noted.

The second-holiest city of the country after Mashhad, Qom is home to both the magnificent shrine of Hazrat-e Masumeh (SA) and the major religious madrasas (schools).

Apart from sightseers and pilgrims who visit Qom to pay homage at the holy shrine, the city is also a top destination for Shiite scholars and students who come from across the world to learn Islamic studies at its madrasas and browse through eminent religious bookshops.

The antiquity of Qom goes back to the Sassanid era (224 CE–651) and several historical mosques, mansions, and natural sceneries have been scattered across the city as well as towns and villages nearby.

Festival offers dishes indigenous to every corner of Iran

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — A one-day culinary festival was held in the central city of Saveh on Monday.

The festival offered a variety of local and indigenous dishes from different parts of the country, Saveh’s tourism chief Reza Ayyaz announced on Tuesday.

Groups from the provinces of Ilam, Hamedan, Kermanshah, Gilan, and Lorestan participated in the festival, the official added.



Iranian cooking can be seen as a metaphor for the country itself: It’s tart, sweet, fragrant, and vastly complex. It’s one of the world’s oldest, yet largely obscure, culinary landscapes, with roots dating back to the Persian Empire.

Experts say that food is not merely an organic product with biochemical compositions. However, for members of each community, food is defined as a cultural element.

The Iranian cuisine, usually dominated by fragrant herbs, varies from region to region. It principally accentuates freshness, deliciousness, and colorfulness.

10 Iran travel destinations you must see

→ 1 After a massive earthquake brought this citadel’s walls to the ground, tens of archeologists and engineers worked on the re-construction to revitalize its elements like the single most significant remaining of a once fortified, medieval town.

Arg-e Bam holds more than just magnificent history and architecture within its adobe walls; it yields stories of a civilization older than 2500 years and the lifestyle of the people who were surprisingly well-adapted to the harsh environment of the barren desert.

Shahr-e Sukhteh

Called “Shahr-e Sukhteh” in Persian, the Burnt City is one of the most historically awe-striking Iran tourist destinations. It is associated with four rounds of civilization, all burnt down by catastrophic sets of fire. It is located at the junction of Bronze Age trade routes crossing the Iranian plateau. The remains of the mudbrick city represent the emergence of the first complex societies in eastern Iran.



A view of UNESCO-registered Arg-e Bam in southeast Iran.

Founded around 3200 BC, it was populated during four main periods up to 1800 BC, during which time there developed several distinct areas within the city: those where monuments were built, and separate quarters for housing, burial, and manufacture.

The historic, UNESCO site city of Shahr-e Sukhteh lies just next to the Helmand River and is the most significant touristic destination of the Sistan region. For years, archeologists and historians have studied what has remained of this town, to uncover the mysteries of this burnt city.

According to UNESCO, diversions in watercourses and climate change led to the eventual abandonment of the city in the early second millennium. The structures, burial grounds, and a large number of significant artifacts unearthed there, and their well-preserved state due to the desert climate, make this site a rich source of information regarding the emergence of complex societies and contacts between them in the third millennium BC.

Abyaneh

The ancient crimson-colored Abyaneh is at the foot of the Karkas mountain, and it is one of the oldest and most beautiful stair-stepped villages in the world.

This matchless touristic destination is painted with reddish mud-colored houses from top to bottom, making it famous among tourists as “The Red Village”.

Nestled at the foot of Mount Karkas, Abyaneh is situated at a distance of about 80km to Kashan and 40km to Natanz in Isfahan province. It draws thousands of domestic and foreign tourists year-round, mainly when it hosts special feasts and ceremonies.

It seems like an open-air anthropology museum that showcases architecture and traditions from the Sassanid era (224–651) onwards, for instance, an ancient temple, the ruins of a fortress, a mosque with a unique altar from the Seljuk period (ca. 1040–1196) to name a few.

Hyrcanian forest

Hyrcanian forest in the northern regions of the country is one of the most amazing and ancient of its type, which has made them very popular Iran tourist destinations.

Since this forest has survived between 35 and 50 million years, Hyrcanian forests are among the most ancient forests on the planet.

The presence of over 3000 vascular plants and 58 mammal species, including the famous Persian panther and the endangered wild goat, are just two of the reasons why the Hyrcanian forest was inscribed as a natural UNESCO site. Rare plants such as Beech (Fagus), Alder, Elm, and wild cherry are reported to still exist in the forest.

The Hyrcanian forest, as described by Succow Foundation, extends from the south of Azerbaijan to about 900 km to the east to the Iranian northern provinces of Gilan, Mazandaran, and Golestan. This forest forms the outermost boundary of the west-Eurasian nemoral deciduous forests to alpine thorn cushion corridors and forest-free dry vegetation of the Iranian highlands and Central Asia.

Hormuz island

Hormuz island is one of the most eye-catching islands near Qeshm, known for its red soil and gorgeous rocky shore. Walking along the shore, one will encounter sections where the sand turns glittery, like a red sky filled with numerous stars at night. This site is especially mesmerizing at the times of sunset or sunrise, making the southernmost island, according to many, a must-visit Iran tourist destination.

However, the mountainous beaches of Hormuz have more than just beauty to offer. It comes as a surprise to many people that residents of Hormuz use this islands’ bloody soil to make local dishes or spices with them. Once a year, both local artists and artists from all over the country gather in Hormuz to make a breathtaking carpet from the colorful sands of Hormuz alone. For any traveler interested in taking the off-the-beaten-track tour in Iran, visiting Hormuz is a must.

Darak beach

Darak beach is the meeting point of the mesmerizing blue waters of the Sea of Oman with the golden sands of Chabahar in southern Iran.

Hiking, swimming, and photography are among the best activities that tourists could enjoy while traveling to the scenic beach. It is known for its extraordinary beaches and has a pristine shoreline.

Amazingly crisp and fresh weather, untouched nature, clear waters, and the conventional lifestyle of the local people all add to this place’s inherent beauty.

The starry sky of Chabahar and the delicious traditional Persian cuisine of the people of this city also contribute to the popularity of the beach among nature and adventure lovers.

Bagh-e Shahzdeh

Arriving at this handsome garden is like being beamed onto a different planet as it is

a lush gem in the middle of its surrounding harsh deserts. This mesmerizing contrast is the cause of awe and wonders for the people who rush in to see the beauty of this garden on the daily basis.

Constructed in the 1870s, the garden rises to a small villa that was once the residence of Abdul Hamid Mirza, one of the last princes of the Qajar dynasty. It now houses a handicraft shop, restaurant, and teahouse. In the early evening, it looks charming when floodlit.

Similar to other Iranian gardens, both the natural and architectural elements of this garden represent Persian culture, philosophy, and religion in every small detail. Not only is this garden one of the most beautiful touristic destinations of Kerman, but it is also one of the places every tourist in Iran must visit.

Khan-e Tabatabaei

Located in the oasis city of Kashan, Khan-e Tabatabaei is nationally renowned as a masterpiece in both architecture and style and is visited yearly by tourists from all around the world.

The building of this touristic destination took around years to complete by the masterful hands of Ostad Ali Maryam. The interior and the exterior design of the house are among the most prominent of their kind, and some even have meanings beyond simply beautifying the house.

The seven elaborate windows of the main courtyard are a particular wonder, designed to illustrate the high social status of the original owner. The house is arranged around four courtyards, the largest of which boasts a large pond with fountains, helping to keep the courtyard cool. From mid-afternoon (depending on the month), sunlight and stained glass combine to bathe some rooms in brilliant color.

Masjed-e Kaboud

The blue mosque of Tabriz, which also goes by the name of Kaboud Mosque, is one of the greatest architectural wonders of Iran. Its magnificent tile work, tall curves, unique design, and symmetrical arches are just several things that make Kaboud mosque so extravagantly beautiful.

The mosque survived a devastating earthquake in 1727. However, many parts of it caved in due to a quake struck later in the same century. Many parts of the structure were rebuilt in 1973.

Nowadays, Kaboud mosque stands tall and glorious as one of the oldest mosques of Tabriz and as a gorgeous Iran tourist attraction, drawing fascinated onlookers in during all times of the year. This touristic destination is well worth a place on your must-visit destinations while traveling to Iran!

Historical revolver donated to Khorasan Razavi museum

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — An Iranian woman has donated a historical revolver to the museum department of the northeastern Khorasan Razavi.

The revolver is a sort of short-range weapon once being used by the Iranian police, the director of museums of the province’s Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department has announced.

The pistol appears to have been manufactured in Britain or by the American company of Smith & Wesson, Mohamadreza Pahlavan added on Tuesday, CHTN reported.

Asking cultural heritage aficionados to donate their artifacts and historical objects to the museums of the province, he noted that all donated items will be displayed under the names of the donors.



Horace Smith and Daniel Baird Wesson formed a partnership in 1852 to manufacture a firearm that could fire a fully self-contained cartridge.

From the beginning, Smith & Wesson firearms were noted for their innovative design, high-quality production, and reliability.

Originally called the Seven Shooter, the Model 1 Revolver was introduced in 1857. This revolver was the first practical cartridge revolver and its introduction heralded the end of percussion firearms. It was the first of many Smith & Wesson revolvers that would cement the company’s position in firearms history for over a century.

Before the Model One, revolvers were loaded in much the same way as Revolutionary War muskets were. A round ball was backed by black powder and a percussion cap was inserted at the rear of the chamber. While this made for an effective weapon, it required a time-consuming loading process. It was also necessary to frequently dump unfired rounds and reload, as the loose powder was often ruined by moisture.

Smith & Wesson corrected this problem by introducing a self-contained metal cartridge, roughly equivalent to the .22 short that is still available today.

Some three million historical objects are currently being kept in Iranian museums which are affiliated with the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts.

“There are many historical relics that are owned by private

collectors and entities and the government cannot act to preserve them in the museums; therefore, we made efforts that this [cultural] heritage to be conserved and showcased in [their] private museums,” according to Mohammadreza Kargar who presides over the ministry’s museums and historical properties department.

Currently, 740 museums are active across Iran, of which 285 have been established since August 2013, when President Hassan Rouhani began his first administration, Kargar said in March. Back in 2018, he publicized that some three million historical objects were being kept at museums affiliated with the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Ministry.

To: Redox Mining Indonesia Co.

This is an official notification to inform you that **Zarand Iranian Steel Company** has filed a claim against your company in connection with contract dated 1399/11/28.

The claimant explained that your company has not fulfilled the promises and claimed Euro 2,400,000 \$ plus damages for late payment.

The statement of claims have been served to your address as indicated in the contract.

You are hereby notified again and are requested to submit your statement of defense within 30 days as of publication of this notification along with any documents in supporting of your defenses.

Please note that according to article 9(e) of ACIC Rules:

“If any of the parties do not participate in the arbitration hearing or any stage of the proceedings, this will not be an obstacle for continuation of the arbitration proceedings and the arbitrator may continue the proceedings and issue the award in accordance with the existing documents.”

You may visit ACIC site and consult the ACIC Rules of Arbitration.

Dr. Mohsen Mohebi
Secretary General
Arbitration Center of Iran Chamber of Commerce (ACIC)

Cc:
Ms. Zahra Barkhi, For Information- No. 32, Seventh Street, vozara ave, Tehran, Iran.

Iran improves rank in global innovation index

SOCIETY

TEHRAN – Knowledge-based companies and creative startups have grown over the past five years, and Iran has risen 45 places in the Global Innovation Index, according to the UNESCO 2021 Report.

The Global Innovation Index in Iran from 2015 to 2019 has risen from 106 to 61 with continuous improvement, showing 45 steps growth.

The development of accelerators and innovation centers over the last five years has led to a rapid increase in startups and knowledge-based companies.

Between 2014 and 2017, exports of knowledge-based goods grew by a factor of five, before slumping in 2018 after the U.S. withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (2015), commonly referred to as the nuclear deal, and re-imposed sanctions.

The increase in exports, as well as their focus and encouragement to increase production and provide knowledge-based services in the country, are examples of this rapid growth.

The report has also mentioned various reforms and legislation designed to remove barriers to competition in the Iranian market, calling it an effective step in providing innovation and significant improvement of science and technology in the Islamic Republic.

The report states that innovation in Iran has developed rapidly over the past five years, and by the end of last year, 49 accelerators and 113 innovation centers had provided services to start-ups with the participation of the private sector.

Knowledge-based companies

Currently, some 6,000 knowledge-based companies are active in the country, manufacturing diverse products to meet the needs of the domestic market while saving large amounts of foreign currency.

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

Domestic production of 95% of medicine

High capabilities of Iranian biotechnology and pharmaceutical technology are also emphasized in this report. The fact that 95 percent of the medicine used in the country and two-thirds of the pharmaceuticals are produced domestically, as well as the export of Iranian biopharmaceuticals to the European market, especially Germany, is one of the strengths of Iran's development in this field.

The 2021 UNESCO Scientific Report emphasizes that efforts to promote innovation in the biotechnology sector through the launch



of a specialized accelerator are also one of the symbols of development in Iran.

The increase in the number of knowledge-based and creative companies in the biotechnology and nanotechnology sector and the growth of their sales and exports is another example.

Vice presidency for science and technology in tackling pandemic

Another important issue is the role of knowledge-based firms in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic.

The report emphasizes the support of the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology and the Innovation and Prosperity Fund for the production of advanced equipment and supplies for the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of the virus shortly after the onset of the epidemic and is described as a positive and effective experience.

Mehdi Kashmiri, director for technology and planning at the science ministry, said in July that about 450 knowledge-based companies were active in the country for manufacturing protective equipment and treatment products to fight the coronavirus.

Production of more than one million face masks per day, production of more than 1.5 liters of disinfectants per day, diagnostic kits, non-contact thermometers, protective clothing, ventilator are among the products manufactured by these companies, he added. Iranian-made innovative products in the field of diagnosis, screening, and fighting coronavirus were also unveiled to combat the disease, namely, ozone generator, nanotechnology face shields, disinfection gate, and molecular COVID-19 diagnostic kits.

Attracting Iranians abroad in domestic startups

The return program of Iranian spe-

cialists abroad, which was implemented by the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, has also been considered in this international study.

A program that has led to the employment of a large number of Iranians living abroad in domestic startups (354 people in 2017) and the establishment of startups (100 startups with more than 3,000 employees in 2017).

The progress, made in startups, research, and academia since 2015, has led to the return of 2,000 Iranian specialists and graduates from 400 prestigious and top universities in the world.

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

Adopting the approach of developing the technology and innovation ecosystem in the country by supporting creative companies and start-ups in advanced technologies, are of the key policies to developing science, technology, and innovation in Iran in recent years, the report states.

Job creation in innovation factories and technology parks

In this report, different generations of innovation zones are mentioned. According to the Iran Entrepreneurship Association, there are forty-four parks of science and technology, twenty-one of which are located in Tehran.

Over the last eight years, the creation of 13 science and technology parks, 4,553 technology units, and 1,653 new knowledge-based companies could provide employment for 34,707 university graduates.

Pardis Technology Park and innovation factories have played a significant role in the successful implementation of this approach.

Azadi Innovation Factory has created 3,500 jobs for university graduates and young entrepreneurs, who, along with 6,000 employees of 500 companies located in the Pardis Technology Park, play a great role in developing innovation.

Sharif Innovation Zone is another example of implementing the Technology Ecosystem and Innovation Support Approach, which hosts more than 500 startups.

Iran's favorable status for gender equality in higher education students, as 46.6 percent of students are female, described as another strength of Iran in the field of science, technology, and innovation.

Continuous growth of scientific productions

However, according to the announcement of the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology on Sunday, the continuous growth of Iran's scientific production in the last decade has been considerable.

The number of articles indexed by the Iranian researchers on the Web of Science website in 2020 increased by 122 percent compared to that of 2013, which made Iran 16th in the world with 69,779 articles, and first among the Islamic countries for several consecutive years, Gholam Hossein Rahimi, deputy minister of science said in May.

Areas such as nanotechnology and biotechnology and effective support for the country's top scientists, the return of 1,400 Iranian elites, and registration of patents of Iranian scientists in international authorities, are examples of government support in this regard.

Resisting sanctions by resistance economy

The policies of the resistance economy have been discussed as an important mechanism in overcoming the challenges posed by the oppressive U.S. sanctions and enhancing the technological and productive capacity to reduce the country's dependence on imports of technologies and industrial products.

The report points to the need to pay serious attention to the development of exports with the capability created in start-ups, which has been seriously considered in recent years.

Paying more attention to market demand and improving skills in higher education in Iran to reduce the unemployment rate of university graduates, promoting research and development in the business sectors (public and private), increasing the share of renewable resources, and overcoming environmental challenges with scientific and technological solutions are among the most important suggestions of this report to improve the situation of science, technology, and innovation in Iran.

COVID-19 UPDATES

The statistics are related to 24 hours started 2:00 p.m. June 21

New cases	11,716
New deaths	116
Total cases	3,117,336
Total deaths	83,217
New hospitalized patients	1,278
Patients in critical condition	3,249
Total recovered patients	2,771,705
Diagnostic tests conducted	22,699,166
Doses of vaccine injected	5,376,622

Iran stands tall against COVID-19 'vaccine apartheid'

➔ **1** more than 80 percent of the world's vaccines have been received by six countries, and a country like the United States and one of the European countries has 200 million doses of the vaccine expiring.

American, British vaccines banned into Iran

During his January 8 speech, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei praised the Iranian-developed COVID-19 vaccine as "a source of pride," underlining that no one should deny the breakthrough.

He also prohibited importing American and British vaccines due to their unreliable testing.

Ayatollah Khamenei pointed out that Iranian researchers have tested their vaccine on humans and they will develop an even better and more effective vaccine.

"Importing American and British vaccines into the country is forbidden. I have said this to officials and I am saying it publicly now. If the Americans had managed to produce a vaccine, this corona disaster would not have occurred in their own country.

If they know how to produce a vaccine and if their Pfizer company can produce a vaccine, why would they give it to us? Well, they can use it for themselves so that they will not have so many deaths and so many victims. The same is true of England. Therefore, they are not trustworthy. I do not really trust them," the Leader stated.

U.S. oppression

Health Minister Saeed Namaki, in February, emphasized that until the domestic vaccine meets the country's needs, "we will have to import vaccines for vulnerable groups."

"Many countries in the region that say they started vaccinating a long time ago are conducting clinical trials of other countries' vaccines. While we did not allow any foreign vaccine to be clinically tested on our people," Namaki stated.

In the meantime, another important issue was financing the purchase of foreign vaccines, a problem that not only needed a high amount of money, but also was worsened by the U.S. sanctions, and made vaccine import tougher than ever.

Although a mechanism under the auspices of the World Health Organization (WHO) has been set up to address the problem of vaccine shortages in developing countries, COVAX has so far lagged behind schedule due to the actions of superpower countries and has failed to achieve its goals.

Vaccine manufacturers break promises

Meanwhile, the vaccine manufacturers had made many promises to provide Iran with vaccines and several contracts were signed by the country's officials, but unfortunately, the manufacturers could not fulfill their obligations in this field.

"We also negotiated with India to buy the vaccine, and in the first step, we bought the two million doses of the Covaxine made by the Bharat Biotech," Kianoush Jahanpour, Food and Drug Administration spokesman said.

However, only 125,000 doses delivered to the country, and the rest were practically confiscated at the airport by the order of the Indian judiciary.

"China had promised Iran to deliver 10 million doses of the vaccine by the end of June. However, it supplied only 60 percent of the promised amount, as just 3,650,000 doses of Chinese vaccine have been sent so far.

In its initial contract with Iran, Russia was supposed to send two million doses of vaccine, and in another contract, it had promised to sell up to 60 million doses of Sputnik V vaccine, which has so far sent only 920,000 doses of vaccine," he lamented.

Iranian-made vaccines enter the scene

To date, a vaccine has received an emergency use license, which is the first homegrown vaccine called COVIRAN BAREKAT, which produced up to three million doses in the first month, and can provide probably between 30 and 50 million doses, by the end of September, Jahanpour stated.

The Pastu Covac vaccine, developed by the Pasteur Institute of Iran, will soon receive an emergency use license and can deliver one million doses a month in the first trimester, then two million doses a month in the second trimester, and possibly three million doses a month in the third trimester.

In addition, the CovPars Razi, Fakhra, and Spicogen vaccines are likely to be licensed for emergency use and mass-produced by late September if their clinical trial is successful.

South America, African countries, several neighboring and two European countries have asked to purchase COVIRAN vaccine, Hassan Jalili, director of the vaccine research team, said on June 8.

Although, we are capable of exporting the vaccine, however, through the policies adopted by the Ministry of Health, no vaccine will be exported until the domestic need is fully met, he stated.

Iran to thwart vaccine apartheid

While Iran is now capable of sharing the technical knowledge of domestic vaccines, many countries can use Iran's capacity to use knowledge and technology in the coming weeks or jointly produce the vaccines in their countries, Jahanpour stated.

Iran is trying to provide these facilities to these countries with a humanitarian perspective and global health approach, and some of these countries are negotiating with Iranian vaccine manufacturers to transfer technology and co-produce the products, he added.

Of course, fortunately, Iran was able to take advantage of the crisis and domestic capabilities in producing medicine, medical equipment, and today in the field of vaccines.

Today, as a manufacturer of the coronavirus vaccine, we are certainly trying to thwart vaccine monopoly and apartheid. In general, Iran is ready to transfer technology to other countries.

National anti-drug week to highlight international cooperation

SOCIETY

TEHRAN – The national anti-drug week will be held on June 25-31 concurrent with the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking focusing on regional and international cooperation.

In 1987, the General Assembly decided to observe June 26 as the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking as an expression of its determination to strengthen action and cooperation to achieve the goal of an international society free of drug abuse.

This year, the day is observed with a theme of "Together, we can tackle the world drug problem!", aiming to raise awareness of the major problem that illicit drugs represent to society.

Iran also marks the day during a week, each day of the week has assigned a special theme this year as follows:

Friday, June 25: the role of religious principles and spirituality in drug use prevention

Saturday, June 26: cross-sectoral and international cooperation

Sunday, June 27: family and educational environments

Monday, June 28: new therapies and social support

Tuesday, June 29: anti-drug diplomacy

Wednesday, June 30: social participation

Thursday, June 31: effective insurance, more access to mental health services

Drug trafficking fight requires common understanding

Iranian deputy anti-narcotics police chief Naghi Mahmoudi has stressed that the drug trafficking fight requires a common understanding and action by all members of the international community, and no country alone can address the challenges in this area.

Stressed the importance of improving the level of regional and international cooperation, he said that conducting joint operations, simultaneously and based on the rapid exchange of information is of great importance.

Despite the conditions caused by the coronavirus outbreak and the imposition of harsh sanctions against the country, fortunately, with the efforts of anti-narcotics police in 2020, drug detection increased by 41 percent.

Battle against narcotics continues despite sanctions, pandemic

Iran has carried on a battle against narcotics in spite of being highly affected by cruel sanctions and COVID-19

pandemic, Eskandar Momeni, the director of headquarters for the fight against narcotics, said on April 13.

Over the past three years, the counter-narcotics agencies and police forces succeeded in detecting about 2,917 tons of various types of narcotics.

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

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

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

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

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

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → چ

Educational projects worth \$330m to be inaugurated

A total of 1,015 educational projects worth 14 trillion rials (nearly \$330 million) will be inaugurated across the country, Mehrolah Rakhshanimehr, director of the organization for renovation, development, and equipment of schools, has announced.

The projects will be inaugurated by the next 10 days, on the occasion of the 41st anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, he stated, ISNA reported on Sunday.

According to Rakhshanimehr, the projects include 4,168 classrooms, 11 swimming pools, and 32 gyms.

About 14,000 classrooms have been built so far this year (started March 21, 2019), compared with some 10,000 last year, he concluded.

افتتاح ۱۴۰۰ میلیارد تومان پروژه آموزشی

رئیس سازمان نوسازی، توسعه و تجهیز مدارس کشور گفت ۱۰۱۵ پروژه آموزشی با اعتباری به میزان ۱۴۰۰ میلیارد تومان در سراسر کشور به بهره‌برداری می‌رسد.

به گزارش ایسنا، مه‌راله رخشانی مهر افزود این پروژه‌ها طی ۱۰ روز آینده و به مناسبت چهل‌ویکمین سالگرد پیروزی انقلاب اسلامی افتتاح خواهند شد. به گفته او، این پروژه‌ها شامل ۴۱۶۸ کلاس درس، ۱۱ استخر، و ۳۲ سالن ورزشی هستند.

رخشانی مهر ادامه داد تاکنون در سال ۹۸ حدود ۱۴ هزار کلاس درس افتتاح شده است در حالیکه در سال ۹۷ حدود ۱۰ هزار کلاس افتتاح شده بود.

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

If someone's deeds lower his position, his pedigree cannot elevate it.

Imam Ali (AS)

History of art in Iran during Safavid to Qajar Periods:

Part 2

Artist and patron

The role of royal patron was of central importance in Safavid architecture and the arts. While this patronage was sometimes unsteady, the royal court set both taste and direction of the arts.

There was scant commissioning of portable arts by members of the Shia religious establishment, and the shah had the financial and governmental power to attract Iran's leading artists to his court.

Several masters who began their careers working for leading aristocrats were unceremoniously commandeered by the shah when the range of their abilities became well known.

An extensive system of artistic interconnections, established either through master-pupil relationships or through carefully fostered family ties, also helped to ensure that a well-trained and talented artist would receive an appointment at court, if the shah was a committed patron.

Safavid rulers tended to be indulgent toward their artists and tolerated conduct that would have been injurious to those in other professions.

Throughout the Safavid period there was a steady growth in artistic individuality. The anonymity that had characterized earlier Iranian art was largely abandoned architectural inscriptions were signed; manuscripts bore the names of painters and calligraphers and illuminators; textiles were provided with the names of their designers.

Differences in individual styles also became more readily apparent, and originality became as prized a feature as adherence to tradition. This altered attitude reflected not simply the artists' own sense of their own worth and the distinctiveness of their respective styles but also a new attitude on the part of their patrons, who regarded artistic identification as an important part of a work of art.

In the second century of Safavid rule other patrons of note emerged, not in the provinces but instead in the capital. Not simply aristocrats, but also merchants, officials, and professionals either bought or commissioned works of art, and the role of these new patrons significantly altered the types and content of Safavid painting and drawing in particular.

Esthetic basis of Safavid art

No artist or historian of the Safavid period presents a complete conceptual framework for the arts, and an understanding of the esthetics of this period must be derived from both literary documentation and visual evidence.

Qazi Ahmad's "Calligraphers and Painters" makes a central distinction between the two qalams of art—the vegetable reed of the calligrapher and the animal brush of the painter.

The reed was the first created thing, and since it is essential to the writing of the Holy Quran, it is the "key to the gates of happiness."

Fine writing then is akin to an act of worship, and the relationship in this art between the religious and the esthetic impulse is obviously close. The various styles of calligraphy are described, and central to the quality of each are clarity, balance, and elegance of form.

For the esthetics of painting the most complete statement is to be found in Sadeqi Beg's "Qanun al-Sowar" ("Canon of paintings").

Much of the treatise is concerned with technical data of painting, but some more general esthetic concepts emerge. Sadeqi differentiates decorative painting (naqqashi) from figural painting (suratgari).

The former is limited to inanimate subjects, especially floral and vegetal patterns used in illuminated margins, and the practitioner of this art should base his designs on the valued works of his predecessors.

In the latter the painter is dealing with animate subjects, whether animals or human beings. In order to render animals properly, a painter should turn to model works from earlier traditions, especially Behzad.

Up until this point, Sadeqi deems it both appropriate and necessary for a contemporary painter to look to the past. But in rendering human beings he makes a crucial distinction, which would appear to be central to the esthetics of later Safavid painting.

The portrayal of human beings should be based upon direct observation. The purpose of representing the appearance or outer form (surat) of a human being is to reveal his or her inner reality or real nature (ma'na).

A likeness is therefore intended to lay bare what is intrinsically real about a person. The two terms, surat and ma'na, are frequent in the language of Islamic mysticism and philosophy, and Sadeqi skillfully exploits the additional, artistic meaning of surat in order to supply a metaphysical basis for his profession. Ideally, original subject and painterly likeness should create the same response in a viewer, since both reveal the inner form.

The visual evidence of Safavid art also prompts certain conclusions concerning the esthetics of this culture, though these remarks deal more with our perception of it than with its philosophical underpinnings.

Whether in paintings illustrating literary texts or in inscriptions bordering the portals of mosques and tombs, the Safavid artist sought linear grace and rhythmic continuity.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

To be continued

“Release from Heaven” ready for release in Iran

A R T **TEHRAN** — The **d e s k** Revayat Cultural Foundation plans to release its acclaimed 2017 animated movie “Release from Heaven” in Iran in the near future.

The film indirectly depicts part of Mostafa Chamran's life story during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war. Chamran who is considered as one Iranian war heroes was martyred in the Dehlaviyyeh region on June 21, 1981.

The story of the movie is set in a war-torn country, where a female teacher and comic writer lives with her students in a boarding school. To calm horrified children who have no hope in our terrifying world, she keeps telling them a story every night; stories about her childhood imaginary hero who has become a part of her life. But one night the school is attacked and destroyed so she has to accompany two of her students to find their parents.

They start a journey during which she finds some signs of her imaginary hero in the real world. Up until that time she thought that the man who had become her hero was just a part of her stories but now with these signs, she knows that he's real. She is determined to find him



“Release from Heaven” by Ali Nuri Oskui.

but she has a big problem; she knows nothing about him.

“Dr. Chamran was one of the contemporary characters, who dramatically appealed to me,” director Ali Nuri Oskui is a press release on Tuesday.

“There are few real characters like Chamran who have experienced such a complex life with numerous ups and downs. In addition, I was seeking to find someone in contemporary history who has the potential to connect between the mythical and real worlds. Dr. Chamran was the one,” he added.

“This film is also in praise of fiction in the world where sometimes people want to flee from the harshness and complexity of life, taking refuge in their mind, i.e. the world of story. Therefore, legends appear to help people continue on the difficult way,” he stated.

“Release from Heaven” has won great acclaim at some of the numerous international festivals that have screened the movie.

The film received the Animation that Matters Award at the 3rd edition of the Animation Day in Cannes in France.

It also won the award for best animation at the Universal Film Festival in Kansas City.

Copy of “Condition of Tawheed” donated to shrine of Hazrat Masumeh (SA)



Culture ministry official Musa Hosseini Kashani (L) and deputy custodian of the holy shrine of Hazrat Masumeh (SA), Hojjatoleslam Mehdi Ahmadi, hold a copy of “Condition of Tawheed” donated to the shrine in Qom on June 22, 2021.

A R T **TEHRAN** — The Imam Reza (AS) **d e s k** International Foundation for Culture and Arts has donated a copy of “Condition of Tawheed (Monotheism)” to the holy shrine of Hazrat Masumeh (SA), the sister of Imam Reza (AS), in Qom.

The donation was made on Tuesday as part of the birthday celebration of the eighth Imam of the Shia.

Musa Hosseini Kashani, as a representative of the foundation and the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, attended the donation ceremony, the foundation announced in a press release.

“One of the ministry's plans is to use art to disseminate Islamic teachings around society,” Hosseini Kashani said.

“There are many artists creating artworks on Islamic subjects, and the foundation has invited some of them to produce works on famous hadiths from Imam Reza (AS),” he added.

One of the artists is Hassan Ruholamin, who has drawn “Condition of Tawheed” based on the Hadith of Silsilah al-Dhahab (The Hadith of the Golden Chain).

The 2 X 3.6-meter oil painting was made public during a special ceremony at the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Culture in Tehran on May 12.

The artwork depicts the story of the Hadith of the

Golden Chain narrated by Imam Reza (AS) upon his arrival at the northeastern Iranian town of Neyshabur.

The hadith refers to the continuity of spiritual authority that is passed down from the Prophet Muhammad (S) to Imam Ali (AS), the first Imam of the Shia, through each of the successive Imams to Imam Reza (AS).

This painting has been commissioned by the Imam Reza (AS) International Foundation for Culture and Arts based on a contract with Ruholamin. Four other paintings about the life of the Imam will be created under this contract.

“I have tried to use colors and the figures common in Iranian paintings to create this work,” Ruholamin said at the unveiling ceremony, which was also attended by Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Abbas Salehi.

In his brief speech, Salehi said, “This tableau takes us into history and represents a spiritual and individual dimension of our ties with the Ahlul Beit (AS).”

Arabic translation of General Soleimani’s autobiography “I Feared Nothing” released

→1 The book was introduced at the IRIB International Conference Center during a special meeting attended by Soleimani's daughter Zeinab.

Zeinab said that her father wrote the book with his injured hand adding, “The book is an account of the life of a man from the heart of a remote village of Kerman [Province] who had recounted some parts of his simple and compelling life story for you before.

“This is the story of the transformation

of a man who evolved from living as a shepherd into an exalted position as high as the sky. I would like to inform those people who saw him only in his army uniform how he had grown up, and ‘I Feared Nothing’ is a beginning of a great mission to know an awe-inspiring man.”

The ceremony went on with the unveiling of a note written for the book by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei.

The Leader had received a rough copy

of the book from Zeinab during his recent meeting with Soleimani's family.

“Whatever causes us to remember the dear martyr is really soothing and pleasant,” the Leader wrote in his note on December 27, 2020.

“Although he was highly acknowledged by God Who blessed him with a worldly reward due to his pure and exemplary behavior, we also have a duty [to him]. I have not read this book yet, but it seems to be a step in this direction.”



Asil Islamic Cultural Institute director Hojjatoleslam Falah Quraishi speaks during the unveiling ceremony of the Arabic translation of Lieutenant-General Qassem Soleimani's autobiography “I Feared Nothing” at the 22nd Iraq International Book Fair in Baghdad.

Book Cartoon biennial receives over 6,000 submissions

A R T **TEHRAN** — The 5th edition of the **d e s k** International Biennial Book Cartoon Contest has received over 6,000 submissions from 57 countries, the organizers announced on Tuesday.

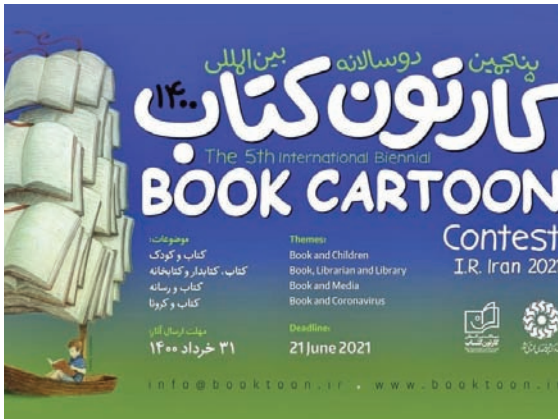
The Iran Public Libraries Foundation (IPLF) organizes the contest to promote reading and criticize the disregard of books.

Most of the submissions are from Iran with 110 artists, followed by China with 37 cartoonists, the director of the contest, Masud Shojaei-Tabatabai, said in a press conference on Tuesday.

This year's biennial has focused on the theme of “Books and Children”, “Books, Librarians and Library”, “Books and Media” and “Books and Coronavirus”.

He said that Ares – Aristides Esteban Hernandez Guerrero from Cuba is a member of this year's jury. He won prizes in two previous editions of the competition.

The jury also has the Brazilian cartoonist Dalcio Machado, who has caused positive reactions from across the world to



A poster for the 5th International Biennial Book Cartoon Contest.

the biennial, Shojaei-Tabatabai said.

Shojaei-Tabatabai, Aref Niazi and Sajjad Rafiei from Iran and Nikola Listes from Croatia are the other members of the jury.

The top winner of the event will receive €1500 and the runner-up and third winner will be awarded €1000 and €500 respectively.

Speaking at the press conference, IPLF Reading Promotion Department director Hadi Ashtiani also said, “The foundation aims to attract artists in various media to help improve the culture of reading.”

He also announced the foundation's plan to showcase a large selection of cartoons from previous editions of the contest in urban spaces in Tehran.

The IPLF also plans to organize exhibitions displaying top works from the competition across the country.

The organizers have extended the deadline for applicants until June 30. However, they gave no date for the event or awards ceremony.

Iran’s “Crab” picked for Czech Anifilm festival



A scene from Iranian director Shiva Sadeq-Asadi's short animated film “The Crab”.

A R T **TEHRAN** — Iranian **d e s k** directed Shiva Sadeq-Asadi's short movie “The Crab” is competing in Anifilm – an international festival of animated films in Czech.

The festival, which opened on Tuesday, will be running until June 27 in Liberec, the fifth-largest city in Czech.

The movie tells the story of a shy schoolboy who is interested in performing in a play with his school's theater troupe. But the only part offered to him is to play

the role of a crab.

The movie will be screened in the international competition of short films of the festival.

Czech director Alexandra Májová, English animator Kate Jessop and Japanese artist Momoko Seto are members of the jury of the short film competition section.

Anifilm founded in 2010 features the most interesting films from the entire spectrum of animation, with awards in the categories of student work, design

for television and made-to-order, and best film.

“The Crab” produced at the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults has been screened in various international events, including the 23rd Shanghai International Film Festival in China.

It also competed in the official section of the 62nd International Documentary and Short Film Festival of Bilbao–Zinebi in Spain in November 2020.