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290 died in 1988; thousands are now dying due to sanctions

TEHRAN — July 3 is a day of sorrow for Iranians as the United States “accidentally” shot down a commercial Iran Air jet with the flight number 655.

Numbers 655 and 290 remind the Iranians of one of the worst crimes ever committed by the U.S.

Of course, this was not the first and it wasn’t the last crime the United States committed against the Iranian people. They did not even bother to issue a formal apology.

All Ronald Reagan did was to issue a statement to the Iranian government in

the midst of his Fourth of July celebration. The statement was read at the White House by Reagan’s spokesman, Marlin Fitzwater.

“I am saddened to report that it appears that in a proper defensive action by the U.S.S. Vincennes this morning in the Persian Gulf, an Iranian airliner was shot down over the Strait of Hormuz.

This is a terrible human tragedy. Our sympathy and condolences go out to the passengers, crew and their families.

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Iran to return to oil market in shortest possible time post-sanctions: Zanganeh

TEHRAN — Iranian Oil Minister Bijan Namdar Zanganeh has said his country will return to the oil market in the shortest possible time after the removal of the U.S. sanctions on the country’s oil industry, ISNA reported.

Speaking to the press after attending the 18th OPEC+ ministerial meeting which was held online on Friday, Zanganeh said: “At this meeting, I announced that if the

sanctions are lifted, Iranian oil will return to the market as soon as possible; This is our official decision.”

“I announced Iran’s position in the meeting and emphasized that any decision made in this meeting will not affect our plans. We will return to the market with at least an amount equal to the pre-sanctions level,” he added.

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“Uncle Qassem” published in French

TEHRAN — Iranian writer Mohammad-Ali Jaberi’s book “Uncle Qassem”, which reflects Lieutenant-General Qassem Soleimani’s regard for children, has been published in French.

“L’Oncle Qassem” has been published by El Faro, an international publishing house in Caracas, Venezuela that released a Spanish translation “Mi tío Soleimani” by Martha Golzar.

Alireza Sharifian is the translator of the French version of the book, which was originally published by Ketabak in Tehran with illustrations by Mikail Barati.

The book contains 20 stories, which provide a truly deep insight into the character of General Soleimani and enjoin children to think of the personality as a role model.

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Mark Bosnic reveals Iran deservedly qualified for World Cup

BY MASOUD HOSSEIN
Former Australia custodian Mark Bosnic says that Iran national football team deserved to qualify for the 1998 FIFA World Cup.

On Nov. 29, 1997, the Iranian team drew 2-2 with Socceroos at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in front of 128,000 spectators and booked a place at the World Cup. Many Australians have not forgotten the day and their coach Graham Arnold had said he could not wait for a match against Iran to erase that memory. The two teams must wait since they have not been drawn in a same group in the 2022 World Cup qualifications.

But, Bosnic says his team learned lessons from defeats to pave the way for the next success.

In an interview with Tehran Times, Bosnic talked about the 1997 matches as well as the 2022 qualifiers.

Football can be very beautiful and it can be very cruel as well. You missed the 1998 FIFA World Cup after losing to Iran (3-3 on aggregate), while the ‘Socceroos Golden Generation’ could have made a spark in the competition. What do you feel about the match after 24 years?

Obviously, we were disappointed after we failed to qualify, however I believe that sometimes there must be pain before success (like Australia did in 2005 in qualifying). In terms of the two games regardless of the general play, Iran were better when it mattered and I have never thought that they got the credit. They richly deserved.

For sure, Peter Hore played a key role as Iran’s 12th player after running onto the field and caused a lengthy stoppage early in the second half. Do you think you could have defeated Iran if the incident didn’t happen?

No. It was an unfortunate interruption. However, it was the same for both sides. I do not think that the interruption was a factor.

The draw for the next round of World Cup qualifying was conducted on July 1 and Australia learned their fate. Coach Graham Arnold had said he would wait for Iran. Australia and Iran are not in a same group.

I think it could be great if Iran and Australia were drawn together in the final phase of qualifying.

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Visit Turkmen Sahra, the land of music and horses

TEHRAN — Turkmen Sahra is a heaven of traditional music and fantastic horses, which lies in the northeastern part of Iran. It offers breathtaking natural phenomena and a deep and eerie history that captivates any traveler.

Located in Golestan and North Khorasan provinces, Turkmen Sahra covers a large region. A number of cities are located in the area, including Gonbad-e Kavus, Bandar-e Turkmen, Kalaleh, and Aqqala.

It is bordered on the west and the north by the Caspian Sea, as well as the Republic of Turkmenistan. On the east are Bojnord and Dargaz, while on the south are hilly regions of Mount Alborz.

Due to its favorable geographical position, Turkmen Sahra boasts a variety of natural and historical attractions. From the millennium-old tower of UNESCO-registered Gonbad-e Qabus

to natural phenomena called Hezar Darreh, a mysterious stone cemetery, and unique horses.

Turkmen Sahra can also take pride in the rich culture and traditional music of the Turkmen people. The sound of their special music is complemented by the color and design of the costumes of the locals, creating a magical combination.

Gonbad-e Qabus

The one-millennium-old UNESCO-registered Gonbad-e Qabus is of high architectural importance as an exemplar and innovative design of the early-Islamic-era architecture.

Also called Gonbad-e Kavus, the brick tower is located in a city of the same name.

The UNESCO comments that the tower bears testimony to the cultural exchange between Central Asian nomads and the ancient civilization of Iran.

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Record heatwave may have killed 500 people in western Canada

Nearly 500 people may have been killed by record-breaking temperatures in Canada’s west-ernmost province, as officials warn the grim toll from “heat dome” could rise again as more deaths are reported.

On Friday, British Columbia’s chief coroner said that 719 “sudden and unexpected deaths” had been reported over the past week – triple the number during a similar period in a typical year.

“We are releasing this information as it is believed likely the extreme weather BC has experienced in the past week is a significant contributing factor to the increased number of deaths,” the chief coroner, Lisa Lapointe, said in a statement.

The coroner’s office said it would typically expect close to 230 deaths in a similar period.

The overall total will probably rise after more communities provide data, but Lapointe said the province has seen a promising downward trend in recent days as the heat ebbs and shifts eastward.

Officials have cautioned it will probably take months to determine the exact cause of death for hundreds of residents, but they say heat played a significant role in the surge in fatalities, especially among seniors in the province.

“Many of the deaths experienced over the past week were among older individuals living alone in private residences with minimal ventilation,” Lapointe said in her statement.

According to Guardian in a region of the country accustomed to mild summer temperatures, communities were forced to scramble to find ways to help vulnerable residents stay safe amid blistering temperatures.

But regional officials are facing growing questions over their response to the crisis.

On Thursday, the head of the province’s emergency health service apologized after residents were made to wait hours for ambulances during the worst of the heatwave.

Kenya welcomes Iranian knowledge-based products

TEHRAN — The Iranian house of innovation and technology has so far exported knowledge-based products worth \$100,000 to Kenya, ISNA reported on Saturday.

Iran inaugurated a house of innovation and technology in the Kenyan capital of Nairobi in late-January, as the first center in Africa.

By supporting innovative ideas, holding technological and innovative events, the centers will be a platform for the development and promotion

of Iranian knowledge-based companies, startups, and creative industries.

The centers are mainly formed with the investment and support of the private sector to provide the necessary infrastructure for their exports through the innovation houses.

Holding seminars, events and training courses, marketing and research, sending business delegations, and holding meetings between Iranian and Kenyan companies and financial and legal services

including obtaining the required standards and communicating with Kenyan business organizations such as chambers of commerce, trade unions, etc. are among the activities done in the center.

In the short time since the center started operation, 20 products and medical equipment from four knowledge-based companies have been registered in the Kenyan Ministry of Health and brought revenue of \$40,000.

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Researcher predicts U.S. will recognize Iran as regional power

BY ALI A. JENABZADEH

TEHRAN — A senior research fellow at the Middle East Institute of the National University of Singapore says that Iran is going to be a regional power that is likely to be recognized by the U.S.

“In any case, Iran seems to be fast attaining a regional power status that is likely to be recognized by all other countries including the United States,” Asif Shuja tells the Tehran Times.

“It is in the best interest of all if Iran is facilitated to attain that deserved status without charting the nuclear course,” Shuja adds.

Following is the text of the interview:

What is your prediction of the Vienna talks and how could it change the game in the Middle East?

There are two sticking points that are holding the breakthrough in the Vienna talks: 1) The guarantee that Iran receives the economic benefits promised by the JCPOA, which Ayatollah Khamenei has demanded in the form of “the verification of lifting of sanctions”; and 2) Another guarantee that the U.S. does not abruptly walk out of the deal again as it did during the presidency of Donald Trump. The removal of these sticking points is now contingent upon the will of the Biden administration. Since there are no signs of such willingness, a breakthrough appears unlikely. The current situation may result in two scenarios. The more likely scenario is that Iran will cross the nuclear threshold before the Vienna breakthrough, and it becomes accepted as a regional power by all.

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Iranians remember 290 victims of U.S. brutal attack

TEHRAN — During a memorial ceremony on Saturday, officials from Iran’s southern Hormozgan province and the families who lost their loved ones aboard a passenger plane on July 3, 1988, tossed flowers into the waters near the Strait of Hormuz and Hengam Island. Chanting slogans such as “Down with the U.S.” and “Down with Israel,” the participants condemned the inhumane U.S. act in downing the Iranian passenger plane with 290 on board.

Cabinet members brief President-elect Raisi

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — In runoff to transition of power **d e s k** from President Hassan Rouhani to President-elect Ebrahim Raisi on Saturday the ministers of defense, agriculture, communications, the head of the Planning and Budget Organization and the governor of the central bank met separately with President-elect Ebrahim Raisi in his office on Saturday.

Reportedly, Raisi will be sworn in on August 5. Minister of Defense Amir Hatami, who had previously met with Raisi along with other high-ranking military commanders to congratulate him on his victory in the June 18 presidential election, presented a report on the performance and achievements of his ministry in various areas, including the level of defense readiness in the face of threats.

Minister of Agriculture Kazem Khavazi also congratulated Raisi on his victory and wished success for his future government while briefing him about the issues related to the Agriculture Ministry.

Minister of Communications Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi also wished success for the president-elect and his future government and provided a report on actions of the ministry.

For his part, Raisi thanked the ministers for their kindness and reports about the performance of their ministries and emphasized the need for sharing experiences and seeking cooperation of all sectors to advance his government's plans in serving the people and improving the current situation.

At the meeting with Raisi, Planning and Budget Organization chief Mohammad Baqer Nobakht presented a report on the economic situation of the country and the challenges facing the incoming government in various fields.

Raisi thanked Nobakht and stressed the need for a comprehensive economic, social and cultural transformation.

For his part, the president-elect said his government will seek structural reforms and adopt new approaches in running the country.

Raisi added "fair distribution and optimal management of facilities and reliance on domestic capability" are essential to change the situation to the benefit of the masses.

Central Bank Governor Akbar Komijani also provided a report on challenges in monetary and banking spheres and the foreign currency reserves as well as the important issues related to the central bank.

The president-elect thanked the central banker for his kindness and his report on the country's monetary and banking system, emphasizing the need for coordination among his future government's economic team to solve the problems in this area.

The strategies to reform the financial system and providing foreign exchange resources to provide the basic goods were also discussed during the meeting between Komijani and Raisi.

In previous days, a number of other members of the government's economic team, including the ministers of oil, industry, and labor, in separate meetings with the president-elect briefed him on the situation of the respective ministries.

IRGC advises U.S. to leave region right now

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps Aerospace Force on Saturday warned that Washington is after disintegrating regional states, saying that people of the region and the IRGC will not allow materialization of the U.S. plots.

According to Fars, Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh said, "Today, the Americans have established bases in Syria and seek to disintegrate Iraq, Syria and Iran, and they have a plot for the region, but they have not succeeded thanks to the Leader's guidance, and the important thing is the vigilance and insight of the people of the region and Iran," General Hajizadeh said.

Addressing a ceremony in the central city of Qom on Friday night, he added that the regional nations and the IRGC will not allow the Americans to implement their plots, stressing that martyrdom of General Soleimani will not be forgotten and it has further awakened the nations.

In relevant remarks earlier this week, Deputy IRGC Commander for Political Affairs Brigadier General Yadollah Javani called on the U.S. to leave the region immediately.

"The Guards advise the United States to leave the region right now," Brigadier General Javani said last Monday.

He reiterated that the enemy's threats are not new and are repetitions of the previous threats, and said that the enemy knows that the IRGC is ready for any confrontation.

Javani pointed out that the U.S. should know that whatever they do in the region will be to their detriment.

Also late in May, Commander of the IRGC Major General Hossein Salami said that enemies have failed in their plots against the Iranian nation, stressing the impenetrability of the country's borders.

"The enemies of Islam could never tolerate that the Islamic Republic of Iran is rising as a great power in the political geography of the world and is raising its own flag, and they still cannot tolerate it," General Salami said, addressing a ceremony in the southeastern city of Zahedan.

Saudi Arabia cherishes dialogue opportunity with Iran

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister **d e s k** Faisal Ben Farhan has spoken about Iran and Palestine in an interview with the Italian newspaper La Repubblica published on Saturday.

The foreign minister stated that his country welcomes dialogue with Iran, but Tehran should demonstrate its commitment to ensuring security and stability in the region, Al Jazeera quoted the newspaper as saying.

Bin Farhan also spoke about regional security issues. Saudi Arabia launched a war on Yemen in March 2015, a war that the United Nations has said has caused the worst humanitarian situation in the modern history.

The top Saudi diplomat described the position of Iran and Saudi Arabia on the recent talks that began in Iraq a few months ago as "positive" and expressed hope that these talks will lead to mending relations Riyadh and Tehran.

Earlier, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said in an interview with Saudi National Television that Saudi Arabia's foreign policy is based on its interests and that the Saudi kingdom is working to strengthen alliances with all partners around the world and is interested in establishing a relationship with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

On June 19, bin Farhan said, "We have initiated some exploratory talks. They are at a very early stage but we are hopeful."

The talks with Iran, facilitated by Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhemi, had remained secret until the Financial Times reported that a first meeting had been held in Baghdad on April 9.

290 died in 1988; thousands are now dying due to sanctions

➔ **1** The Defense Department will conduct a full investigation. We deeply regret any loss of life. The course of the Iranian civilian airliner was such that it was headed directly for the U.S.S. Vincennes, which was at the time engaged with five Iranian Boghammer boats that had attacked our forces.

When the aircraft failed to heed repeated warnings, the Vincennes followed standing orders and widely publicized procedures, firing to protect itself against possible attack.

The only U.S. interest in the Persian Gulf is peace, and this reinforces the need to achieve that goal with all possible speed."

Reagan, speaking to reporters as he boarded a helicopter for a visit to ailing Salvadoran President Jose Napoleon Duarte at Walter Reed Army Medical Center on July 3, replied "Yes" when asked if he considered his message to Tehran an apology.

However, in a brazen statement, Reagan said that the compensation to the families of victims is "a matter that has to be discussed," and the incident could have been avoided if Iran had accepted a ceasefire years before.

The statement added fuel to the anger of the heartbroken Iranians, particularly when Reagan called the downing of the plane "a proper defensive action," refusing to apologize for the lives of 290 passengers. The fact that the U.S. wanted to negotiate over the price of the lives lost due to what it called "carelessness" was unacceptable to the people of Iran. Reagan's falsifications angered the Iranian nation and added to their hatred of the United States.

The White House spokesman said classified data indicated that the Vincennes picked



up two different electronic signals from the Airbus, one of which indicated it could have been a civilian aircraft, and a second, separate signal that indicated it was an Iranian F14 warplane.

Pentagon officials claimed they have no explanation for why a civilian aircraft would transmit electronic messages usually restricted to military planes.

"The signals . . . that the Vincennes was receiving from that aircraft were signals that we had previously identified or associated with an F14," Pentagon spokesman Dan Howard said.

At 9:43 am, the Vincennes opened fire on the Iranian boats just as Iran Air Flight

655 was flying from the port city of Bandar Abbas to Dubai. The plane embarked on a routine normal ascent, except the pilot didn't know he was flying his Airbus A300 over a military engagement. Radar operators on the Vincennes "mistook" the commercial flight for an Iranian F14 fighter jet.

"I will never apologize for the United States — I don't care what the facts are. ... I'm not an apologize-for-America kind of guy."

These are the words of Vice President George H. W. Bush on Aug. 2, 1988. It should be seen how his unapologetic personality turned the region into a highly flammable volcano. George W. Bush, his son, started a war against Iraq under a false pretext and

never apologized for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians. Apparently, being unapologetic runs deep in the bloods of most American officials.

Not only they kill and say they don't apologize, but also they award the killers with awards. In this case, Reagan awarded Captain of the U.S.S Vincennes, William Rogers, with a Legion of Merit, for killing 290 defenseless civilians.

In fact, the award to Rogers was adding salt to the wound and mockery of human rights.

Also, after the cowardly assassination of Iranian anti-terror commander General Qassem Soleimani in January 2020, then-president Donald Trump threatened to destroy "52 Iranian sites" if Iran retaliated, because it equated the number of Americans held hostage in Iran from 1979 to 1981. President Rouhani replied with a tweet, "Those who refer to the number 52 should also remember the number 290. #IR655."

With the passing of time, American weapons have grown more sophisticated. They don't target planes. They target the heart of economies by imposing brutal sanctions. They did not even have the courtesy to remove sanctions in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic that has affected literally every country in the world. Thousands of Iranians have died because of sanctions as the U.S. has refused to lift medical sanctions against Iran.

State terrorism has been replaced with "economic terrorism" and "medical terrorism". This is silent terrorism, something which has been described as "crime against humanity" by officials in Tehran.

Diplomat: Iran's foreign policy will not change

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — In an interview with IRNA news agency published on Saturday, Iranian Ambassador to Croatia Parviz Esmaili said that the foreign policy framework of the Islamic Republic of Iran will remain unchanged. He also said that Iran has had fewer coronavirus casualties compared to the rest of the world.

Esmaili said that President-elect Ebrahim Raisi has a high level of political experience, a history of important national management, and is aware of the demands of the people as well as international relations.

"As for domestic policy, he said he would pay more attention to the livelihoods of the sections of society most affected by the U.S. sanctions, such as workers, retirees and fixed income groups," he said.

The diplomat went on to explain about the possible foreign relations in Raisi's future administration, saying, "I must first say that determining the principles of foreign policy in Iran is the responsibility of the Leader according to the constitution, and governments are the executors of it. Therefore, the framework of our foreign relations will not change."

The ambassador to Zagreb said that Raisi announced during the election campaigns that he supports the negotiations with the parties to the JCPOA.

Of course, Raisi insisted, negotiation should be aimed at lifting the imposed sanctions and verification of them by Iran.

"Both Europe and the other parties to the JCPOA must live up to their commitments, and Iran, while fulfilling its obligations under the nuclear deal, must enjoy all its rights to trade and shape normal economic relations with the international community," he underlined.

Raisi emphasized that developing relations with all countries in a broad and balanced manner, especially with neighbors, will be on the agenda of his government.

"This approach will certainly help stabilize and improve regional conditions. Both Iranian Foreign Minister Zarif and the next Iranian president, Raisi, emphasized that if Saudi Arabia was ready, Iran would send its ambassador to Riyadh tomorrow," Esmaili noted.

Iran had fewer COVID casualties, compared to other countries

Responding to a question about Iran's response to the COVID-19 crisis, Esmaili said that in an emergency situation, where human lives are at stake, all countries help others.

"But at the time of the coronavirus, we had to deal with the problems caused by the oppressive U.S. sanctions, which prevented us from having access to medicine and medical facilities faster. Therefore, the role of the U.S. government in increasing diseases and death in Iran should never be denied," the diplomat said.

The ambassador elaborated that Iran has a good history of producing vaccines in the region and the world, but it faced a lack of financial and primary resources due to sanctions.

"While our assets were in some countries, such as South

Korea and India, U.S. sanctions did not allow us to use our money to provide medicine, raw materials and vaccines. We even went to the International Monetary Fund to get a \$5 billion loan for (importing) medicine and vaccines. They agreed, but the Trump administration stopped it with threats," he said.

He said that the problem of financial resources definitely had a negative effect on the process and slowed down the disease control, however, Iran mobilized all the internal facilities and quickly produced the necessary medical materials and equipment.

"We negotiated with the World Health Organization to get the vaccine from the COVAX basket. The U.S. sabotage of blocking banking channels made things even harder for us. But the Iranian nation does not get tired or disappointed," Esmaili said.

He then said that statistically speaking, despite all the problems, Iran had fewer casualties than many Western countries. However, no issue is more important than the life of every human being.

"Iran-Croatia ties were affected by U.S. withdrawal from JCPOA"

In response to a question about Iran-Croatia ties, the ambassador said, "Unfortunately, Iran-Croatia relations in the economic and trade sectors have been reduced to a minimum due to U.S. sanctions after the withdrawal from the JCPOA. This must have been to the detriment of Croatia more than Iran. INA Oil Company was engaged in major projects in Iran, which was unilaterally stopped and left Iran due to Trump's illegal action and the re-imposition of sanctions. In our opinion, there is room for the development and expansion of economic relations between the two countries in all areas. Economic officials and business activists in Croatia are well aware that a relationship with Iran has the potential to serve their interests."

"Iran's view on Israel based on historical facts"

Responding to a question about Iran-Israel tensions, Esmaili said that Iran's view of Israel is based on a clear historical fact.

"This regime was established from the beginning by occupying the Palestinian lands and by threatening, killing and looting the people of this land, which has continued and expanded uninterruptedly for the past seventy years. International jurists know that a legitimate and acceptable government of the international community can never be established through crime and medieval approaches. Although the Israeli government, with the support of the U.S. government and through threats and bribes, was able to gain the recognition of some countries, this will not be sustainable," the diplomat stated.

Esmaili highlighted that for more than seventy years, Israel's actions have been a major source of crisis and ongoing unrest in the Middle East, sometimes involving the entire world.

Bushehr power plant back on track after renovation

Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant has resumed operations and been reconnected to the national grid after being temporarily shut down for an overhaul, an Iranian official with the power industry says.

According to Press TV, the Iranian Energy Ministry's Spokesman for Power Industry Mostafa Rajabi Mashhadi said on Saturday, "The Bushehr nuclear power plant, like other thermal power plants, needs repairs and the removal of technical problems after working for a while."

He added that the Bushehr power plant is back online after needed maintenance were completed and "1,000 MW of the plant's [power] capacity, which was out of operation for some 11 days, is injected into the country's

distribution network."

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) said in a statement on June 20 that the Bushehr nuclear power plant had been temporarily shut down over a "technical fault."

"Following a technical fault at the Bushehr power plant, and after a one-day notice to the Energy Ministry, the plant was temporarily shut down and taken off the power grid," it added.

Head of the AEOI Ali Akbar Salehi told ICANA last week that the problem had been almost resolved and added, "We are supplying new fuel to the Bushehr power plant and its financial resources are also being supplied."

The Bushehr power plant started operating in 2011 and reached its full capacity the following year.

Iran and Russia signed a number of documents in November 2014, expanding cooperation in the field of peaceful use of atomic energy and opening the possibility of construction in Iran of up to eight power units.

Iran began building two more nuclear reactors in a joint project with Russia's Rosatom energy firm in Bushehr in November 2017.

The country's aim is to build nuclear power plants with 20,000-megawatt capacity to meet growing electricity demand, so it can save its hydrocarbons for export.

Russia has been involved in Iran's nuclear power generation efforts more than any country. It is currently supplying the nuclear fuel used at Bushehr, but the Islamic Republic has said it wants to make its own fuel so that it will

have secure supplies in the future.

Some media reports have recently claimed that Moscow and Tehran have disagreements related to the payment of salaries to the Bushehr plant's personnel, which allegedly could affect the course of the Vienna talks on a potential revitalization of the 2015 nuclear agreement, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The deal has been in crisis since the US' unilateral exit in May 2018.

However, Russian Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna Mikhail Ulyanov told Sputnik News on Tuesday that any issues between Iran and Russia cannot influence the Vienna negotiations.

(Source: Press TV)



Iran pulls the plug on IAEA cameras

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — In what appeared to be a bid to accelerate the process of reviving the 2015 nuclear deal, Iran has decided to cut off the UN nuclear watchdog's access to images and video footages taken by cameras installed inside Iranian nuclear facilities.

CNN broke the news on Sunday, quoting a senior Iranian official, who told the American broadcaster that Iran plans to prevent inspectors from the UN nuclear watchdog reviewing video footage of some nuclear sites until there is an agreement to salvage the nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

"If the talks succeed Iran will surely show the tapes to the IAEA," the official said. "Sharing the tapes depends on the way that the negotiations will proceed. The key to the question is the agreement. If they agree on something that will open the door for cooperation and better understanding including in the area of transparency."

Iran has no intention of destroying the surveillance footage at the nuclear sites as long as the talks in Vienna are continuing, according to the official who added that Tehran has decided to keep the footage hidden from the IAEA right now because they are allowing the diplomacy to proceed.

The Iranian official pushed back on any idea that preventing IAEA access right now could possibly prevent a deal, citing the fact that the IAEA would eventually be able to see the entire footage once a deal that brings the U.S. back into compliance with the deal is agreed to.

The Iranian move came on the heels of a calibrated decision to announce the expiration of a surveillance deal struck between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency in February, which reset cooperation between the two in light of a nuclear law that obligated the Iranian government to restrict cooperation with the IAEA in case there was no agreement on lifting U.S. sanctions.



According to the February deal, Iran agreed that cameras operating at its nuclear sites would continue to store data and Iran will provide the Agency with the stored recordings for an agreed period of time. The deal was first was struck for a three-month period to give nuclear negotiations over reviving the JCPOA more time to conclude. And then it was extended by one month ending on June 24. The time ended while the nuclear talks lingered. This prompted Iran to unilaterally announced the expiration of the deal at the same time as the end of the sixth round of the Vienna nuclear talks.

The sixth round was concluded nearly four days before the expiration of the Iran-IAEA deal with little progress. Following this round, the U.S. and its European allies ramped up diplomatic, and in some cases military, pressures on Iran in an apparent effort to get Iran to make more concessions in the next round, which is reportedly expected to begin in the coming days.

U.S. officials said they will not lift all the sanctions imposed by the Trump administration and won't give any guarantee that the next U.S. administration wouldn't withdraw from the deal again, two Iranian demands that were brought up during the past rounds of talks. They even threatened to walk out of the talks if Iran continued to insist on its demands.

"We wouldn't be going back to Vienna if we thought that it's not possible to reach a deal. I don't think that this window is going to be open forever. At some point, we'll have to conclude that this is not succeeding. But we're not there yet," U.S. envoy to Vienna talks Rob Malley told NPR.

In parallel with the diplomatically tough rhetoric, the U.S. targeted several groups in Iraq and Syria for allegedly being backed by Iran. The U.S. Department of Defense justified the airstrikes by saying that the groups targeted were "Iran-backed militia groups," which "are engaged in unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) attacks against U.S.

personnel and facilities in Iraq."

The U.S. concerted measures against Iran failed to intimidate Tehran into making concessions in the nuclear talks underway in Vienna. Instead, Iran, showing a great deal of confidence, responded by keeping the IAEA from reviewing video footage of its nuclear sites. This move happened despite the fact that the U.S. and its allies have been pressuring Iran to resume full cooperation with the IAEA.

This pressure is likely to continue in the coming visit by Massimo Aparo, Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Safeguards, to Iran. The visit is in line with cooperation in the context of the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (CSA), according to Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's ambassador to the IAEA.

"@iaeaorg DDG Aparo will go to Iran next week. He's also a designated inspector. The purpose of the visit is in line with routine safeguards activities in the context of the CSA. Although we are in continuous contact, but there are no pre-planned talks in Tehran during the visit," he said on Twitter.

Aparo's visit is unlikely to change Iran's mind as the decision on data recordings was necessitated by the parliamentary legislation and most probably the only way to annul it is to strike an agreement with Iran in Vienna that would remove sanctions. Iranian Majlis Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf asserted that Iran's three-month deal with the UN nuclear watchdog has expired and thus Iran won't give its data recordings to the UN body. The remarks came a few days after the expiration of the February deal.

"After the three-month opportunity, which came to an end, nothing has been extended and after that none of the items recorded inside will ever be given to the Agency and are in the possession of the Islamic Republic of Iran," Qalibaf said in response to a query from one lawmaker on the Iran-IAEA deal.

China's Wang calls on U.S. to rejoin JCPOA

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — China's foreign minister has underlined the need for the United States to make an earlier decision to return to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

Wang Yi said it is most critical for the U.S. to make an earlier decision to rejoin the agreement, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, according to the Japan Times.

Wang was speaking at the World Peace Forum organized by Tsinghua University and the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs, a government-run policy group.

The top Chinese diplomat described the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA as the root cause for the current situation around the tattered pact.

"The U.S. unilateral withdrawal from the JCPOA and its maximum pressure on Iran are the root causes of the current Iranian nuclear crisis," said Wang. "As the saying goes, he who tied the bow should untie it."

Former U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018 and imposed sweeping economic sanctions on Iran. Trump piled up sanctions on Iran in a bid to force Iran into making more concessions to the U.S. within the framework of a new nuclear deal. Trump, however, failed to get his deal, bequeathing his successor a litany of unresolved issues with Iran. The Biden administration has said it wants to open a new chapter with Iran and change tack, though it is yet to make any move to break with the Trump legacy on Iran.

Since April, diplomats from the remaining parties to



the JCPOA and the U.S. have held six rounds of talks in a bid to revive the deal. They made significant progress but failed to get Iran and the U.S. back to full compliance with the nuclear deal.

The sixth round was concluded nearly two weeks ago. Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araqchi, who leads the Iranian negotiating team in Vienna, issued a statement about the conclusion of the sixth round.

Araqchi, while referring to the progress made in this round of negotiations, especially regarding the draft of negotiation texts, said that the remaining important issues require serious decisions in the capitals, especially in the negotiating countries. He called on the negotiating parties

to make the necessary decisions with realism, seriousness and strong will to maintain and revive the JCPOA.

While stating that the sides are closer to an agreement than ever before, the deputy foreign minister expressed hope that an agreement could be reached in the next round of talks, although it could not be guaranteed.

The heads of the other delegations, while confirming the progress made, stressed the need for the participation of all parties with a constructive approach in creating the ground for reaching an agreement.

Araqchi has recently said that the U.S. needs to make difficult decisions regarding the JCPOA.

"So far, six rounds of talks have been held with the P4+1, and we are almost close to the final stages. There is a series of issues that have been sufficiently negotiated and it is time for the countries to decide," Iran's top nuclear negotiator said.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has already made tough decisions. When the United States withdrew from the JCPOA and Iran decided to stay in the JCPOA. It was Iran's big and difficult decision that led to the preservation of the JCPOA so far. Now it is the turn of the opposing parties, and according to the negotiations we had, they must decide and reach a conclusion on the revival of the JCPOA in order to reach an agreement," Araqchi told Iranian media after briefing lawmakers sitting on the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee on the Vienna talks last week.

Iran rejects involvement in attacks on American facilities in Iraq

POLITICAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — In a letter to the president of the Security Council, the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations stated that Iran has not been directly or indirectly involved in any attacks on U.S. personnel or facilities in Iraq, Fars News reported.

In response to a recent letter from the U.S. ambassador to the UN, Majid Takht Ravanchi denied the allegations against Iran and strongly condemned the recent U.S. attacks in Syria and Iraq, which he described as violation of the UN Charter.

U.S. Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield recently claimed in a letter to the Security Council that recent U.S. airstrikes on the Iraqi-Syrian border were aimed at preventing "Iran-backed militias" attacks on U.S. personnel and facilities.

In his letter to the president of the Security Council, Majid Takht Ravanchi stated that he had stated several times in the past, including in his letters to the president of the Security Council, that the Islamic Republic of Iran was not involved, directly or indirectly, in any armed attack by any institution or individual against U.S. personnel or facilities in Iraq.

He added that, therefore, any attempt to implicitly or explicitly attribute such an accusation to Iran is inaccurate and lacks even the most obvious reliable information to prove it, and is completely baseless, and

"therefore we categorically reject such claims."

He noted, "We consider them legally invalid and devoid of any effect."

Takht Ravanchi has emphasized that the Islamic Republic of Iran has categorically rejected the U.S. arbitrary interpretation of Article 51 of the UN Charter to justify its illegal military attack on Syria and Iraq on June 27 and strongly condemns these illegal actions, which violate the sovereignty of the two countries.

He pointed out that the U.S. argument that such attacks were carried out to "deter" the Islamic Republic of Iran and so-called "Iran-backed militias" from further attacks on U.S. personnel or facilities in Iraq has "no real or legal" basis.

He said such allegation is based solely on an arbitrary interpretation of Article 51 of the UN Charter, and that the U.S. attacks are a clear violation of international law, in particular Article 2 of the UN Charter.

The Iranian ambassador concluded by emphasizing that the recent U.S. attempt to accuse others in the region of covering up irresponsible and destabilizing activities or its attempt to divert attention away from its illegal and adventurous military actions in the region are doomed to failure.

Last week, the U.S. Department of Defense announced airstrikes on the positions of Iraqi and Syrian groups in the border areas of Iraq and Syria. The Pentagon said in an official statement that its fighter jets had targeted

two weapons depots and military installations in Syria and a position in Iraq.

"Specifically, the U.S. strikes targeted operational and weapons storage facilities at two locations in Syria and one location in Iraq, both of which lie close to the border between those countries," the Pentagon statement said, claiming that the facilities have been used by Kata'ib Hezbollah (KH) and Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhada (KSS).

The Pentagon also said that the airstrikes were carried out at the U.S. president's direction and were in line with the U.S. "right to self-defense." The Pentagon also justified its move by saying that the groups targeted were "Iran-backed militia groups," which "are engaged in unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) attacks against U.S. personnel and facilities in Iraq."

Iran strongly condemned the attacks, describing them as fomenting further instability in the region.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said the airstrikes are a step in the wrong direction. "The U.S. still continues along the wrong road in the region," the spokesman said.

Khatibzadeh said the U.S. air raids are yet another indication that the Biden administration is following in the Trump administration's footsteps in terms of pursuing hostile acts against Iran whether by using sanctions or regional airstrikes.



"Unfortunately, not only in the field of imposing oppressive sanctions against the Iranian nation, but also in the field of regional behavior, we see the continuation of the failed U.S. policy and legacy in the region," Khatibzadeh lamented.

He described the U.S. move as "sentimental," calling on Washington to let the region's people determine their destiny away from foreign interference.

"The advice to the new administration in the United States is to change its course instead of these sentimental behaviors and instead of creating crises and living in tension and creating problems for the people of the region, it should let the people of this region decide their own destiny without their intervention," Khatibzadeh continued.

"What the United States is doing is disrupting regional security, and one of the victims of this disrupted regional security will be the United States itself in the region," the spokesman pointed out.

SPORTS

Mark Bosnic reveals Iran deservedly qualified for World Cup

→1 The two sides have not met since 1997. I remember speaking with Carlos Quieroz at the 2015 Asian Cup here in Australia when it looked like we may meet and how exciting that would be. Unfortunately, it did not happen.

Australia have been drawn in Group B along with strong teams Japan and Saudi Arabia. can you mention your idea about your group?

I think that Australia group is a bit better than Iran's group, although neither group is easy at all. The main thing that I have noticed about Asian football since I returned to Australia in 2008 is the overall improvement of all the sides. The gap is very close. I respectfully and humbly predict Australia to qualify for the 2022 World Cup as one of the top two teams.

You are a favorite person for the Iranian passionate football fans. Do you have a message for them?

I have good memories from there, especially in Tehran where we stayed in 1997. Thank you always for your support. You were so nice to all of us then, and have been ever since. You are good people, and hopefully after this pandemic I can come and visit you all again.

Jahanfekrian becomes first female lifter to represent Iran at Olympics

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — Female weightlifter Parisa Jahanfekrian will represent Iran at the 2020 Olympic Games.

The Iranian lifter was awarded the quota place after Samoan Iuniarra Sipai withdrew from the 87kg weight class.



Farzaneh Fasihi in women's 100 meters and Soraya Aghaei in badminton had been awarded the Olympic quota places last week. Jahanfekrian is the 11th Iranian woman in the 2020 Olympic Games.

Armina Sadeghian, Najmeh Khedmati, Fatemeh Karamzadeh and Hanieh Rostamian in shooting, Sara Bahmanyar and Hamideh Abbasali in karate, Nazanin Molaei in rowing, Nahid Kiani in taekwondo, Farzaneh Fasihi in athletic and Soraya Aghaei have previously secured their places at Tokyo 2020.

Iranian U19 Basketball players know each other well

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — One of the biggest issues often for countries at the FIBA U-19 Basketball World Cup is how quickly the players can become a unit and learn to play together but that will not be a concern at all for Iran.

All 12 players of Iran in the match against Latvia play together for the Koochin Amol club, which has concentrated on developing young talent and will be playing next season in the Iranian Super League, FIBA wrote.

And Iran's head coach is also the Koochin head coach Mohammadreza Nouri. The Iranian team features two sets of twins (Mohammad Hadi and Mohammad Mahdi Lakzaeifard and Amir Hossein and Nosratollah Yazarloo) with Amirhossein Yazarloo and Mohammad Mahdi Lakzaeifard due to be two of the team's leaders.

Sorena Alizadeh Goorandani meanwhile participated in the Basketball Without Borders Asia Camp in 2019 and Iranian captain Parsa Fallah led the Koochin team in rebounding and was second in scoring. Whether that continuity is enough to make up for a lack of elite talent - and size as Iran's roster has just one player taller than 6ft 8in (2.02m) - remains a major question mark.

Iranian karat athlete Asgari misses Olympics for doping

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian karate athlete Bahman Asgari Ghoncheh missed competing in the 2020 Olympic Games after being handed a one-year ban for using prohibited substance.

He was supposed to represent Iran in the Male Kumite -75 kg. American karateka Tom Scott has been awarded a qualification spot by World Karate Federation as Asgari's replacement.

Scott, 31, is a two-time kumite gold medalist from the Pan American Games (2015, 2019), competing in the men's 75 kg division. He also earned a silver medal at the 2011 Pan American Games in Guadalajara.

Scott will join three other Americans — Sakura Kokumai, Ariel Torres and Brian Iri — in Tokyo as karate makes its Olympic debut.

The Olympic karate competition will begin on Aug. 5 at Nippon Budokan in Tokyo and is scheduled to run through Aug. 7.

Iran start CAFA U17 Women's Championship on high

S P O R T S d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iran defeated Afghanistan 6-0 on the first day of the CAFA U17 Women's Championship on Saturday.

Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Iran and Afghanistan are in Dushanbe on a round-robin basis, with the final match between Tajikistan and Iran to close out the schedule on Wednesday.

Among the favorites will be regional women's football powerhouse Uzbekistan, who are coached by winning CAFA U20 Women's Championship boss Ilkhom Khanjariev.

Also expected to be in title contention are Iran, the champions of the regional U15 Girl's title in Tashkent two years ago, who will be under the stewardship of highly experienced national youth coach Shadi Mahini.

Iran almost self-sufficient in production of home appliances

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian Industry, Mining and Trade Minister has said the country is on the verge of self-sufficiency in the production of various types of home appliances, IRNA reported.

“Despite the economic sanctions, the production of home appliances in the country has grown significantly and we are on the verge of achieving self-sufficiency in the production of various types in this field,” Alireza Razm Hosseini said on Saturday.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony of a washing machine production line in Khorasan Razavi Province, Razm Hosseini said: “over 13 million home appliances were produced in the country in the previous [Iranian calendar] year (ended on March 20), which was a great achievement for the industry.”



The official noted that the growth in the home appliance industry shows the surge of domestic manufacturing in this field, saying: “in the near future the Iranian home appliance market will no longer need foreign brands.”

Over the past few years, the Iranian government has been following a new strategy for supporting domestic production to neutralize the impacts of the U.S. sanctions while reducing the reliance of the economy on oil revenues.

The home appliances sector has been one of the pioneers in this regard and like many other areas, the production of home appliances has witnessed a significant rise in the past two years.

Back in May, Iran’s Deputy Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Mehdi Sadeqi Niaraki said that the country’s home appliance industry experienced 78-percent growth in the past Iranian calendar year.

The growth was achieved despite the restrictions on the manufacturing sector, the official said, adding, “While foreign brands left Iran, manufacturers were able to achieve this leap by relying on domestic capacities.”

Niaraki had previously said that considering the Iranian home appliance industry’s infrastructure and capacities, the country will be able to become a net exporter of such products in the near future because most of the raw materials needed by the mentioned sector are produced domestically.

“Today we have the necessary manpower, knowledge, and infrastructure in the field, so there is no reason to look for foreign sources to meet the country’s demands,” he said in early April.

Railway fleet receives 169 domestically-made, renovated wagons, locomotives

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Iranian railway fleet received 169 new domestically-made or renovated locomotives and wagons worth 3.52 trillion rials (about \$83.8 million) on Saturday in a ceremony attended by senior transport officials, IRIB reported.

As the first stage of the program for the renovation of the country’s railway fleet in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21), 156 freight wagons, three locomotives including two renovated ones and a newly made one by MAPNA Group, as well as 10 renovated passenger wagons joined the railway fleet.

The unveiling ceremony of the mentioned fleet was attended by the Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami and the Head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (known as RAI) Saeed Rasouli.



As reported, the mentioned vehicles have been manufactured and renovated by six domestic companies including Wagon Pars, Arak Steel Company, and Wagon Kowsar Company.

Construction and renovation of the freight wagons have saved the country over five million euros, while the manufacturing and renovation of the said locomotives by MAPNA has created jobs for over 80 people.

The renovation of the passenger wagons by domestic companies has also created jobs for over 132 people.

Earlier in May, Eslami had announced that his ministry plans to renovate 1,500 wagons and locomotives to be added to the country’s railway fleet by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2022).

Speaking on the sidelines of an event on the occasion of the National Productivity Day on May 24, Eslami said: “The renovation of the mentioned fleet will be accelerated if the necessary funds for the program are provided on schedule.”

According to the official, over 1,800 freight and passenger wagons and locomotives were produced or renovated in the country over the past two years.

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

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

Iran to return to oil market in shortest possible time post-sanctions: Zanganeh

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The official noted that some OPEC members are in disagreement regarding their assigned shares for the cuts in the coming months and discussions are ongoing to settle the issue.

The 181st meeting of the OPEC conference was chaired by Angola’s Minister of Mineral Resources and Petroleum Diamantino Pedro Azevedo.

In the Friday meeting OPEC paid tribute to Zanganeh for his long-lasting contribution to the organization and the oil market.

Iran has repeatedly stated that the country is ready to come back to the oil market with full force after the removal of the U.S. sanctions.

Earlier in June, the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) Deputy Director for Production Affairs Farrokh Alikhani said that the company has taken all the necessary measures and is ready for boosting oil output to the pre-sanctions level within a month.

“Precise weekly, monthly, and quarterly planning has been made to restore oil produc-



tion to pre-sanctions level, and if sanctions are lifted, most of the country’s oil production will be restored within a month,” Alikhani said.

“The average daily production of Iranian oil before the re-imposition of sanctions was 3.38 million barrels per day, and the National

Iranian Oil Company has planned to return to the pre-sanctions production in the first step if the sanctions are lifted, and in the next step to increase production capacity to more than four million barrels per day,” Alikhani explained.

RAI takes new steps for domestic railway signaling

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — The Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (known as RAI) has inked a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with two local entities namely Iran Khodro Company (IKCO) and Farab Industrial Group for equipping a railway line near capital Tehran with signaling systems.

The MOU was signed by the RAI Head Saeed Rasouli and the managing directors of the mentioned companies on Saturday in Tehran, IRIB reported.

Based on the mentioned MOU, the consortium comprised of the said companies will carry out the design, construction, and financing for the signaling of the Tehran-Garmsar suburban railway over a 24-month period.

The signing ceremony was also attended by the Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Eslami noted that following the implementation of the mentioned project,



the signaling of other railway lines in the country will be put on the agenda of the ministry and RAI. Suburban railways near large cities will be the priority for the

signaling, Eslami said.

According to the minister, attracting private sector investment for the financing of railway projects, using the maximum capacity of domestic companies in the construction and development of rail transportation technologies, and increasing the share of railways in the country’s transportation are among the goals of the signed MOU.

RAI Head Saeed Rasouli had earlier said that Iran is currently among the top eight countries regarding the technology of railway signaling systems.

“Currently, two advanced railway signaling systems have been created inside the country, which marks Iran as one of the eight advanced countries with this technology,” Rasouli said in the opening ceremony of the 7th International Exhibition of Rail Transportation, Related Industries & Equipment of Iran in June 2019.

Commodities worth \$644,000 exported from Kohgiluyeh-Boyerahmad in Q1

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — As announced by a provincial official, commodities valued at \$644,000 were exported from Kohgiluyeh-Boyerahmad province, in the southwest of Iran, in the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21).

Behnam Ahmadi, the director-general of the province’s customs department, put the weight of the exported products at 428 tons.

He said the quarterly exports show 32 percent rise in terms of value and 42 percent growth in terms of weight year on year.

The official named Germany, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and South Africa as the main export destinations of the products.

The value of Iran’s non-oil exports reached \$10.7 billion in the first three months of the current Iranian calendar



year, up 69 percent compared to the last year’s same period. IRNA reported quoting the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA).

According to Mehdi Mir-Ashrafi, Iran exported 30 million tons of non-oil commodities in the mentioned three months, registering a 38-percent rise compared to the figure for the last year’s Q1.

Meanwhile, some 8.4 million tons of goods valued at \$10.2 billion were also imported into the country in the said period to register a 34-percent rise in terms of value compared to the last year’s same quarter.

In total, the Islamic Republic traded 38.4 million tons of non-oil goods worth \$20.9 billion with its trade partners in the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year, up 25 percent and 50 percent in terms of weight and value, respectively, Mir-Ashrafi said.

According to the official, the country’s trade balance was \$476 million positive in the mentioned time span.

Iran’s top five non-oil export destinations during this period were China with \$3.1 billion worth of exports, Iraq with \$2.3 billion, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with over \$1.3 billion, Turkey with

\$595 million, and Afghanistan with \$570 million.

Meanwhile, the country’s top five sources of imports during these two months were the UAE with \$3.2 billion, China with \$2.2 billion, Turkey with \$1 billion, Germany with \$414 million, and Switzerland with \$384 million worth of imports.

The official also noted that over 2.742 million tons of goods were transited through Iran in the said period, registering a 121-percent rise compared to the same period in the previous year.

The value of Iran’s non-oil trade stood at \$73 billion in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

According to Mir-Ashrafi, Iran’s non-oil export was 112 million tons valued at \$34.5 billion, while that of import was 34.4 million tons worth \$38.5 billion in the past year, the official added.

TCCIMA to hold Iran-Tajikistan business forum in late July

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (TCCIMA) will hold an Iran-Tajikistan business forum on July 27, the chamber announced on its website.

The event titled “Investigating Opportunities for Trade Cooperation with Tajikistan” will be held online and with the aim of boosting Iranian businessmen’s knowledge of the Tajik market and elevating bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

The 14th meeting of Iran-Tajikistan Joint Economic Committee was held in Tajikistan in early June.

As reported, promoting economic relations was the major focus of the mentioned meeting which was co-chaired by Iranian Energy Minister Reza Ardakanian and Tajikistan’s Minister of Energy and Water Recourses Daler Juma.

Speaking in the opening ceremony, Ardakanian underlined the long historical, cultural, and economic relations between the two countries and said: “Considering the will of the top leaders of the two countries, the implementation of approved agreements requires serious determination [by the two sides].”



“One of the important factors for the expansion of trade relations between the two countries is the establishment of banking relations between the two countries and it is necessary for both sides to take necessary steps in this regard,” the Iranian minister stated.

Welcoming the Tajik side’s proposal for the expansion of Iran’s industrial investments in Tajikistan using the country’s workforce and resources, Ardakanian said: “Solving banking problems is a prerequisite for the

development of Iranian investments [in Tajikistan].”

Further in the event, Juma welcomed the Iranian delegation, saying: “the 14th session of the Joint Committee for Economic Cooperation between the two countries will create a special movement in the promotion and development of economic relations between the two countries.”

Referring to trade relations and trade balance between the two countries in the past few years, he said: “based on the two sides’ import and export data, there is great potential for improving trade relations between the two countries.”

He mentioned the cooperation between the two countries in the construction of a dam and a hydroelectric power plant as successful examples of cooperation between the two countries, both of which were designed and built by specialized companies and put into operation by the presidents of the two countries.

Juma also referred to the agreement between the two countries for the implementation of a project to complete the facilities of the Tajikistan Esteghlal Tunnel and noted that his country is ready to fulfill its financial obligations in this regard.

TEDPIX loses 10,900 points on Saturday

ECONOMY d e s k **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), lost 10,923 points to 1.246 million on Saturday, which is the first day of Iranian calendar week.

Over 6.946 billion securities worth 54.142 trillion rials (about \$1.289 billion) were traded at the TSE on Saturday.

The first market’s index dropped 11,752 points, and the second market’s index lost 9,228 points.

TEDPIX rose 43,000 points in the past Iranian calendar week.

The index closed at 1.256 million points on Wednesday (the last working day of the week).

During the past week, the indices of Social Security Investment Company, Iran Khodro Company, Saipa Company, Esfahan Oil Refining Company, and Kourosh Food Industry Company were the most

widely followed indices.

Iran’s Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) has launched three single window systems for facilitating the processes and procedures related to the stock market activities.

The unveiling ceremony of the mentioned systems, held on Tuesday, was attended by Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Farhad Dejjasand and the SEO Head Mohammad-Ali Dehqan Dehnavi.

According to Dehnavi, these systems are going to offer various services to the companies and people active in the market.

The official noted that launching these single window systems would accelerate and facilitate many affairs and hopefully services would be provided more quickly and easily to the clients and companies.

Through the mentioned systems, the SEO, in collaboration with the Real Estate

Registration Organization of Iran, the Iranian National Tax Administration (INTA), official newspapers, and the Iran Post, will provide all the necessary services in the shortest possible time, he explained.

According to the official, the single window services will be accessible at the SEO’s new building, and by launching these windows, services that need frequent commute will be provided more easily and in shorter times.

SEO had launched another single-window system, on June 30 2020 to accelerate the process of private companies’ acceptance to the stock market.

Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (ICCIMA), Iranian Association of Internal Audits (IAIA), Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), and Iran’s over-the-counter (OTC) market, known as Iran Fara Bourse (IFB), signed a memo-



randum of understanding (MOU) on June 30, 2020, for launching the mentioned single-window system.

The mentioned system was aimed at creating a single portal for evaluating, assessing and monitoring the financial and technical situation of private sector companies for approving their entrance into the capital market.

Iran-China partnership can be game-changer, says Indian journalist

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN — Editor of Delhi's Hardnews magazine says that the Iran-China partnership is a game-changer as it ends U.S. ability to pressure Iran.

"Iran-China 25-year partnership accord can be a game-changer. It will end Iran's dependence on Western products and the U.S.'s ability to withdraw its easy access to the international financial order," Sanjay Kapoor tells the Tehran Times.

"Iran-China partnership fixes many issues. It gives energy security to China. It provides an assured market to Iranian petroleum products," Kapoor notes.

Financial pundits believe that China is a great opportunity for Asian countries in general and its neighboring countries in particular as it can provide an option to many countries to follow a development model different from the West.

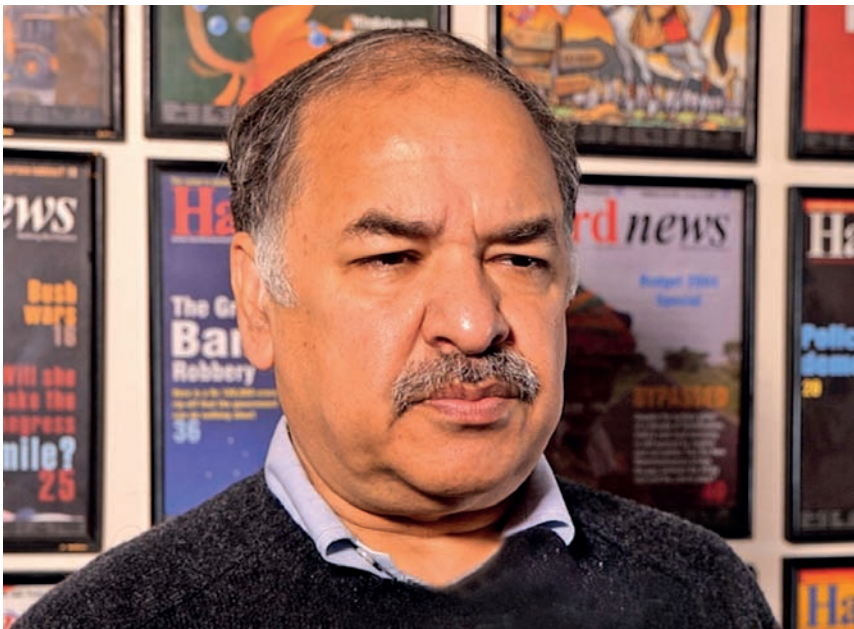
Countries Like Iran and Pakistan can rely on China to boost and reconstruct their infrastructure.

"When Iran's financial troubles end, it will rediscover itself as a civilizational power it is and enlarge its influence in Central Asia and other parts of the world," Kapoor remarks.

Following is the text of the interview:
How do China's neighbors see Beijing's economic rise? How could China reach such a level of development?

I have traveled all along with the countries that share their border with China. All of them have concerns that the highly populous China would change the demographic profile of these border towns. By way of example, I went to Myanmar some years ago and I learned how and why cities like Mandalay have such a large Chinese presence. I learned that behind every instance of Chinese geographical intrusion, their government or the authorities are involved and that is why they (Chinese) enjoy overwhelming influence compared to local businesses. Inexpensive Chinese manufactured goods also affect local businesses. So, China's rise is seen with awe, fear and with deep resentment. It also leads to the weakening of the local governments that can't save local jobs and businesses.

How could China reach such levels of development? At the time when the communists came to power in China, they followed an economic and social ideology that was premised on curbing domestic consumption, increasing savings, which resulted in capital formation that helped in turning China into the factory of the world. China benefited from its relationship with the U.S. that leveraged it to diminish the Soviet Union. It's a long story, but China's authoritarianism that led to the curbing of democratic rights of the people and fierce nationalism also helped it to attain new heights. Subsequently, the



belt and road initiative (BRI) also allowed to enlarge its global footprint.

What opportunities can China provide for Asian countries?

The rise of China represents big opportunities for its neighbors. This was evidenced during the Asian meltdown in 1997-98. China gave a billion dollars to Thailand to stabilize its economy and also provided assistance to other countries in its neighborhood when they were struggling with their dwindling foreign exchange reserves. That period of crisis allowed China to invest in many businesses in Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines. China also took advantage of investing opportunities in the U.S., Europe whenever their economies went through a slowdown. For instance, the period of a global slowdown in 2008 was God sent for China that became truly a world power.

How do you evaluate U.S. -China trade row? Is the U.S. capable to contain China?

The U.S. is undoubtedly a world hegemon. Our reservations about their violent foreign policy should not cloud our judgment about their success in the field of technology, manufacturing. It is a world power far bigger than China and even Beijing's leadership is cognizant of it. China exports some \$500 billion of goods to the United States and there is a big trade imbalance between the two

countries. The row, if it is real, has the potential to diversify manufacturing to other countries of the world. India, for instance, is seriously trying to reduce its dependence on Chinese goods or even on bulk drugs (API) that are imported from China. To its credit, China has become very influential due to Belt and Road initiative that allows it to deal with 100 odd countries from where it accesses minerals and their markets.

China does not want to fight with the U.S. The middle kingdom that is China knows that a confrontation with Washington could lead to its ruin. Perhaps Beijing would need another 20 years to become a military power to challenge the U.S. Over the past few years, it has made rapid strides in software, surveillance technology, drone technology. It has a navy that can challenge the U.S., but there are still many gaps. Even the Chinese believe, rightly so, that it is a developing country.

Do you think China can lead the global economy in near future? Don't you expect emerging Asian powers, like India and Turkey, to form a coalition with China?

The rise of China is a great event of sorts. It provides an option to many countries to opt for a development path distinct from that led by IMF-WB. Africa, Asia and parts of Latin America have been beneficiaries of China, which would have languished in deep

misery after the 2008 global meltdown if China had not come to their rescue. Chinese support is not altruism as it has benefited from the mineral wealth of many of these countries and managed to push its wide range of manufactured goods to them. The only problem is that China does not represent western values like democracy, free speech, etc., which feed authoritarian tendencies in the rulers of these countries.

Do I expect India and Turkey to form a coalition with China? I don't think this coalition is happening anytime soon. Though India is bound with China through many multilateral groups and agreements, it perceives it as a competitor. Its relationship has strained further after it opposed the BRI and more recently when it had a border skirmish with China in which 25 of its soldiers died. Now about 200,000 troops of both sides face each other. After India joined the Quad, which is heading towards increased militarization, the possibility of the two countries making up so soon looks difficult. Having said that the leaders of both countries are very careful in ensuring that the situation does not get out of control. Russia is also mediating between the two countries and despite the amassing of troops, there is hope that there is no war. At the moment when we are talking with you, the situation is very tenuous aggravated by the hostility that the U.S. is displaying towards China. Unwillingly, India is backing U.S. and Quad.

Turkey is also a civilization power, which is bound by its membership in NATO. It is unlikely we will see Turkey form a coalition with China. Though their trade ties will soar.

How do you assess the 25-year Iran-China partnership accord? Can it curb the U.S. sanctions?

25-year Iran-China partnership accord can be a game-changer. It will end Iran's dependence on Western products and the U.S.'s ability to withdraw its easy access to the international financial order. We have seen Iran suffer as it struggled to transfer or receive foreign funds. India's own investment in Chabahar suffered due to that. Iran-China partnership fixes many issues. It gives energy security to China. It provides an assured market to Iranian petroleum products. When Iran's financial troubles end, it will rediscover itself as a civilizational power it is and enlarge its influence in Central Asia and other parts of the world. Another important spin-off from the deal with China could be that the Biden administration- in an attempt to wean Iran from China's embrace- may hasten the completion of the nuclear deal that had been scrapped by U.S. President Donald Trump.

I am extremely excited by the implications of this deal as it would nullify U.S. sanctions and liberate the people of Iran from this scourge.

Researcher predicts U.S. will recognize Iran as regional power

Using sanctions as a weapon is 'self-defeating'

➔ The less likely scenario is that a compromise is reached in Vienna, which serves as the face-saving formula for the U.S. to implement moving out of the Middle East (West Asia). Such a deal would also be half-heartedly agreed by Iran to ensure an intermediate respite from its current economic woes. However, such a compromise would be short-lived, bringing us back again to the same situation, but with Iran which would be closer to the nuclear threshold. In any case, Iran seems to be fast attaining a regional power status that is likely to be recognized by all other countries including the United States. That said, it is in the best interest of all if Iran is facilitated to attain that deserved status without charting the nuclear course.

Saudi Arabia started negotiations with Iran mediated by Iraq. What are the main reasons for Riyadh's policy shift?

Riyadh is currently out of choice because it was depending upon the United States for its security which has shown its back. Having realized this, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has illustrated his pragmatic self by attempting to befriend Iran, which is the most powerful regional country. Indeed, it is unwise to think that either the security of a country or a region can be ensured by any outsider, as that outsider would naturally seek its own national interest first.

The U.S. is weaponizing sanctions to advance its foreign policy against Russia, China, and Iran. How can these countries contain U.S. unilateral moves?

This is self-defeating. In its efforts of global domination since the end of the Cold War, the U.S. dollar has played a more potent role than its fleets of warships and aircraft carriers. By weaponizing sanctions, the U.S. is fast compelling the rest of the world to strive for a dollar-free economy, a

process that is currently spearheaded jointly by the sanctioned countries such as Russia, China, and Iran. As the other, non-sanctioned countries are also impacted, they are bound to join in this endeavor.

Some states like Saudi Arabia and its regional allies follow U.S. policies. What are the main causes of such an approach?

The answer to this question lies in two words: Human resources. The foreign policy apparatuses of these rich (Persian) Gulf countries are dominated by U.S. academics, strategists, and thinkers. And even after years of services, there is no provision of their naturalization in these Arab countries as citizens. Consequently, it is the interest of the U.S. that is first and foremost in their policy recommendations rather than the interests of their "clients", and reasonably so, because they eternally remain U.S. citizens. Fortunately, this phenomenon is gradually being realized by the younger generation of rulers of these (Persian) Gulf countries and they are now turning more to the non-U.S., as well as indigenous, policy experts and consultants for their recommendations on national security matters.

Do you think that the U.S. is going to mitigate its meddling in West Asia? What are the reasons?

Yes, there is no doubt about it. Oil was the primary reason for the U.S. meddling in the Middle East (West Asia). Now the U.S. has attained the coveted position of being the world's largest producer of oil. Ironically, the U.S. has earned this position at the cost of Saudi Arabia, which had historically held that position and in the name of whose security the U.S. was primarily positioned in the region. It is true that there is still a set of other reasons for the U.S. to remain invested in the Middle East (West Asia). These



include a check on international terrorism, securing sea lanes of communications, and helping its regional allies. However, this set of "other reasons" are of nature wherein the U.S. does not need to have one-upmanship over any of its global competitors such as China and Russia. Moreover, the U.S. needs to divert its energy to the Indo-Pacific to check the rapid rise of China, which has already become a major threat to the U.S. global supremacy. The U.S. realizes that if left unchecked, China might soon replace the U.S. as the superpower.

Israeli raids not to affect Palestinian resolve to fight occupation: Hamas

The Palestinian resistance movement Hamas says Israel's overnight bombing of the besieged Gaza Strip is just a "showy" action and will not undermine the Palestinians' determination to fight for their rights against the Israeli occupation.

Fawzi Barhoum, spokesman for the Gaza-based resistance movement, made

the remarks in a statement on Friday after the Israeli regime violated a ceasefire overnight and bombed a site allegedly belonging to Hamas in the coastal enclave.

There were no reports of casualties as a result of the Israeli aggression.

"This will not affect the insistence of our people and their valiant resistance to continue the struggle by all means

to fight for their rights and end their suffering," Barhoum was quoted by the Arabic-language Palestinian Safa news agency as saying in the statement.

"The Zionist enemy's bombing of the site in Gaza is nothing but a showy reaction to appease its settlers and cover up its escalating crises," he added.

According to Press TV, the Hamas

spokesman also stressed that resistance groups would confront Tel Aviv's hostile policies and would force the regime to respect Palestinians' rights.

Tel Aviv claimed that the airstrikes, which hit areas south of Gaza City on Thursday night, were in response to Palestinians sending incendiary balloons toward the occupied territories.

At least 200 U.S. companies hit in cyberattack

A computing network management tool by Kaseya was under cyberattack attack on Friday, prompting the U.S. IT company to urge businesses to shut down servers to avoid ransomware.

Cybersecurity firm Huntress Labs said in a Reddit forum that it was working with partners targeted in the attack, and that some 200 businesses "have been encrypted."

Ransomware attacks typically involve locking away data in systems using encryption, making companies pay to regain access.

Kaseya describes itself as a leading provider of IT and security management services to small- and medium-sized businesses, meaning an attack would make them targets going into the Independence Day holiday weekend in the United States.

"We are in the process of investigating the root cause of the incident with an abundance of caution but we recommend that you immediately shutdown your VSA server until you receive further notice from us," Kaseya said in a message shared in a Reddit forum.

"It's critical that you do this immediately, because one of the first things the attacker does is shutoff administrative access to the VSA."

VSA is the company's flagship offering, designed to let companies manage networks of computers and printers from a single point. The company lists a U.S. headquarters in Florida and an international headquarters in Ireland.

Kaseya said in a post that the apparent cyberattack may have been limited to a "small number" of its customers.

The U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) put out word that it is "taking action to understand and address the recent supply-chain ransomware attack" against Kaseya VSA and the service providers using its software.

CISA called on businesses to follow Kaseya's guidance and quickly shut down VSA servers to avoid having systems compromised.

Rights group urges UAE to release 94 political activists being held behind bars

A UK-based human rights group has voiced concerns over the persecution of human rights activists and treatment in UAE prisons, calling on the Emirati government to release dozens of imprisoned political opponents.

The International Campaign for Freedom in the United Arab Emirates (ICFUE), in a letter to UAE Ambassador to the UK Mansoor Abulhoul on the eighth anniversary of the "UAE 94" mass trial said that several of the prisoners showed visible signs of torture that they had been subjected to during long periods in pre-trial detention.

UAE authorities have failed to order an investigation into such incidents, raising serious concerns about the independence of the court, it said.

Furthermore, access to legal counsel during the UAE 94 trial was severely curtailed, it said, adding not all the defendants had an opportunity to see a lawyer before the trial, and none of the defendants or their lawyers received documents in good time so as to prepare an effective defense.

According to Press TV, The group went on to say that the UAE government uses various oppressive methods, including indefinite detention and travel bans, against human rights activists and political prisoners.

U.S. must stop looting Syria's natural resources, fight terrorists instead: Lavrov

Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov says Russia does not believe Daesh threats in Syria and Iraq have grown significantly, calling on the United States to end its plunder of Syria's natural resources and fight terrorists instead.

"As for threats from Daesh, I do not think that they have grown seriously in Iraq or in Syria. Both countries have prevented the realization and implementation of caliphate plans designed by Daesh terrorist group," Lavrov told a news conference on Friday.

"We firmly support the government of Iraq in its efforts to wipe out the remaining pockets of terrorists. We can say the same about Syria," he added.

Lavrov stressed that Russia is legally providing support to Syrians, while some countries are occupying Syria on the pretext of fighting terrorism.

Russia, which is legally present in Syria at the invitation of the Damascus government, is assisting the country's security forces and army troops in defeating terrorism, he said.

"In Syria, terrorist groups other than Daesh are active. At the top of the list is Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham and its affiliates," the top Russian diplomat said.

Resistance News

More than 200 injuries in IOF quelling of marches in Nablus

INTERNATIONAL DESK **TEHRAN** — Dozens of Palestinians were wounded on Friday during the Israeli occupation forces (IOF) suppression of peaceful Palestinian marches in the towns of Beita and Osrin, south of Nablus.

The Palestinian Red Cross reported that the total number of injuries during the IOF violent quelling of the demos amounted to 294.

Local sources said that three citizens were shot with live bullets, one of them in his foot while 84 others were injured by rubber bullets and the others suffered breathing problems.

In Beita, IOF deliberately targeted the medical staff, as a metal bullet penetrated the glass of an ambulance vehicle which led to the injury of a paramedic with flying glass fragments, according to the sources.

The IOF soldiers also targeted the press crews, as two journalists, Tariq Al-Sarkji and Naseem Abu Mualla, were wounded by rubber-coated metal bullets.

Avitar outpost witnessed the evacuation of settlers based on an agreement between the Israeli government and the settlers in the outpost built on Mount Sobeih in Beita.

The agreement stated that the settlers would leave the outpost by the end of the week while the facilities they built on the mountain will not be demolished, in addition to establishing a military base and organizing regular meetings for settlers there.

The residents of Beita confirmed that the daily activities against the outpost would not stop until the evacuation of the caravans and the IOF soldiers and until the citizens can reach their lands freely without any presence of the IOF and settlers.

Centuries-old public bathhouse gains former glory

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — Mohammad Beig, a Zand era (1750–1794) public bathhouse in Khoy, the northwestern province of West Azarbaijan, has been restored, the provincial tourism chief has said.

The project involved repairing the tilework as well as strengthening the walls of the historical structure, Jalil Jabbari announced on Thursday.

In the months to come, however, further rehabilitation work is required on the bathhouse, the official added.

The bathhouse is a part of the historical bazaar of Khoy, he noted.



Bathhouses or ‘hammams’ in Iran were not only places for bathing and cleaning up. They had a social concept for people who gathered at these places weekly.

It was a place where people talked with each other about their daily life and shared humor and news. There are still bathhouses in Iranian cities but they do not have their social function anymore since most people have bathrooms in their homes due to the modern lifestyle.

Some cities had separate bathhouses for men and women. They were usually built next to each other. However, there were some bathhouses, which were used by men and women at different times of the day.

There were also male and female public bathhouses; at daybreak, a longhorn (boooq-e javaz) was blown to announce that the bath was ready. Men came to the baths from daybreak till the afternoon. Women could use the bathhouses from then to sunset. In some cases, five days were allocated to men and two days to women.

Persian literature is full of proverbs, narrations, and folk stories about bathhouses, which indicate the importance of the place in the past time.

West Azarbaijan embraces a variety of lush natural sceneries, cultural heritage sites, and museums including the UNESCO sites of Takht-e Soleyman and Qareh Klise (St. Thaddeus Monastery), Tepe Hasanlu, and the ruined Bastam Citadel.

The region was home to several ancient civilizations. According to Britannica, it was conquered by Alexander the Great in the 4th century BC and was named Atropatene after one of Alexander’s generals, Atropates, who established a small kingdom there. Ultimately, the area returned to the Persian (Iranian) rule under the Sasanians in the 3rd century CE.

Visit Turkmen Sahra, the land of music and horses

→ 1 The long-lasting structure capped by an eye-catching conical roof boasts intricate geometric principles and patterns which embellish parts of its load-bearing brickwork. Narratives say the tower has influenced various subsequent designers of tomb towers and other cylindrical commemorative structures both in the region and beyond.

Two encircling inscriptions in Kufic calligraphy date the tower to 1006-7 CE while commemorating Qabus Ibn Voshmgir, Ziyarid ruler, and literati (reigned 978–1012).

The UNESCO also credits Gonbad-e Qabus as “an outstanding and technologically innovative example of Islamic architecture that influenced sacral building in Iran, Anatolia, and Central Asia.”

Khalid Nabi Holy Shrine

Historical records claim Khalid Bin Sinan, better known as Khalid Nabi, was one of the four prophets after Jesus and before Muhammad (S). He was originally from what is now called Yemen and migrated to Iran during the Sassanid era. There are different versions of the reason for his migration. He is highly respected among the people of Turkmen Sahra. Visitors to Khalid Nabi Shrine will find accommodations as well as a mosque next to his shrine.

Hezar Darreh

The Turkmen Sahara region is home to a very unique geological phenomenon known as Hezar Darreh (literally, Thousand Valleys), made up of loose sedimentary rocks. This area has no such vegetation, and water erosion and high water levels have led to a variety of ruptures in the range of the Hezar Darreh.



The Mysterious Khalid Nabi Cemetery

In the vicinity of the Khalid Nabi Shrine, there are various strange statues that may seem like they belong in a cemetery to the beholder. The strange-shaped gravestones have different stories behind them.

In some myths, these are people who were Khalid Nabi’s enemies and turned into stone as a result of their disobedience. Others believe they are Khalid Nabi and his followers who fled from their enemies and asked God to transform them into stone statues.

The significance of the place rests mainly on its historical significance, no matter what the tale behind it might be. The place has a thousand-year history and is a national

heritage of Iran.

Turkmen horses

Three words would accurately describe Iran’s Turkmen horses: beauty, purity, and nobility. However, there’s a lot more to it. They are also known for their speed, endurance, and bravery.

Throughout history, Turkmens bred famous Turkmen horses, of which two, Yomud and Goklan, are only bred in Iran. The other breed, Akhal Teke is world known horse of Central Asia.

Turkmen horses are among the purest breeds in the world, especially considering that they are bred solely for racing.

Land of music

The language of the Turkmen people

is their beautiful and original music. The music of this region reflects its rich history. Among the most original types of music in the world is the traditional music of the Turkmen Baghshies. Freedom, brotherhood, heroism, and solidarity are among the themes in this music.

Chegerdeme traditional food

Chegerdeme or Chekdeme is a Turkmen traditional food and one of the tastiest and popular foods in this region. The main ingredients are rice, meat (usually mutton or lamb). They are cooked with a combination of tomato, onion, tomato paste, spices, and oil.

There are different types of this food depending on the type of meat used. Turkmen tribes cook Chegerdeme at home as a daily food or at rituals and ceremonies such as weddings, funerals, and Muharram.

The dish is usually served with local yogurt, pickles, and local dough (yogurt-based beverage).

“Fire without Smoke”

“Fire without Smoke”, a seven-volume novel by Iranian prominent author Nader Ebrahimi, has given Iranians an understanding of Turkmen Sahara while it has introduced Turkmen traditions and culture.

Within the first three volumes, the book tells the story of Galan, a hero of Turkmen, while describing the beauty of the Turkmen Sahara.

The next four volumes follow the story of Galan’s sons and grandchildren, who fought against the Shah during the Iranian Islamic Revolution, describing Turkmen rituals and traditions.

First boutique hotel to make debut in Zanjan

TOURISM **TEHRAN** — The first boutique hotel in northwestern Zanjan province will be inaugurated in the near future, the provincial tourism chief has said.

Located in the historical texture of the provincial capital of Zanjan, the hotel is originally a Qajar-era (1789-1925) mansion, which has undergone some rehabilitation works, Amir Arjmand announced on Thursday.

Equipping living rooms, kitchens, and handicraft sales-rooms as well as repairing the damaged parts of the building including walls, doors, windows, staircase, and restrooms are parts of the restoration project of the historical structure, which is carried out by the private sector, the official added.

Boutique hotels reflect the rich culture and history of a region and are among popular tourist attractions as they are built in lively urban neighborhoods

or renovated old buildings and they aim to attract guests as well as visitors, he explained.

All people benefit from such projects, which preserve the city’s valuable texture, he noted.

Over the past couple of years, hundreds of historical sites and monuments across Iran have been temporarily ceded to the private investors by auctions reportedly to gain higher productivity and better maintenance.

Conducted by the Revitalization and Utilization Fund

for Historical Places, the scheme is expected to assist a sustainable development for the local communities through fueling a tourism boom along the once flourishing route.

Zanjan is one of the cities founded by Sassanid King Ardashir I (180-242 CE). The province makes a base for wider explorations with the architectural wonder of Soltaniyeh, the subterranean delights of the Katala-Khor caves, colorful mountains, and the UNESCO-registered Takht-e Soleiman ruins are nearby.

Second Announcement



First Notice of Invitation for Qualitative Evaluation

International tender no. 11-97-05 for purchasing 3100 pcs locomotive wheels (2000 pcs GM wheels; 250 pcs GE wheels; 250 pcs Alstom wheels and 600 pcs Siemens wheels)

Iranian Islamic Republic Railways (RAI) intends to entrust purchasing of the above-captioned 3100 pcs locomotive wheels to the qualified and competent companies through holding an international tender within framework of tender-holding law approved in 05.02.2005 by Iranian parliament and by observing the law of maximum utilization of the Iranian's local production and service capacities including protection of Iranian goods also approved in 05.05.2019 by Iranian parliament. For this purpose, all qualified and competent companies having the related records in this field, are hereby invited to obtain the qualitative evaluation documents.

- 1) General particulars:** purchase of 3100 pcs locomotive wheels comprising of 2000 pcs GM wheels, 250 pcs GE wheels, 250 pcs Alstom wheels and 600 pcs Siemens wheels.
- 2) Time period of Contract:** The Contract shall be fulfilled within 9 months.
- 3) Delivery place of the Goods:** The wheels shall be delivered to CFR Bandar Abbas.
- 4) Bid Bond:** The Bid Bond shall be valid for 3 months from its issuance date and also should be extendable.
- 5) Deadline for purchase of qualitative evaluation documents:** Utmost by 14:00 P.M on Tuesday 2021.07.27 corresponding to 1400.05.05
- 6) Deadline & place for submission of completed qualitative evaluation documents:** The applicants can complete and submit the qualitative evaluation documents to the RAI Procurement & Logistics General Dept. (Foreign Purchasing Dept.) located at 2nd Floor, RAI Central Building, Argentina Sq., Africa Blvd., Tehran-Iran utmost by 14:00 P.M on Saturday 2021.08.28 corresponding to 1400.06.06.
- 7) Price of qualitative evaluation documents and method of its receipt:**

The applicants can receive the qualitative evaluation documents by remitting RLS 1,000,000 to the bank account no. IR710100004001064004005747 and with remittance code of 262064074280500885134499908000 in favor of Iranian Islamic Republic Railways opened with Central Bank of Iran (payable in all branches of Bank Melli Iran) via the above address through submitting an introduction letter or receive the qualitative evaluation documents free-of-charge through National Database Portal of Iranian Tenders Information ([HTTP://IETS.MPORTG.IR](http://IETS.MPORTG.IR)).

**Iranian Islamic Republic Railways
Procurement & Logistics General Department**

1222

Second Announcement



IN THE NAME OF GOD
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

INTERNATIONAL TENDER No:1400/108-18/01

Tender Holder:
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Tender:

Purchasing Radio AM Transmitter Spare Parts with the technical specification and other terms and conditions mentioned in the tender documents.

Deadline and how to receive the tender documents :

From **Monday 05 Jul 2021 (1400/04/14)** until **Sunday 11 Jul 2021 (1400/04/20)** by **02:00 P.m.** with Presentation of introductory letter by company or its representative and the receipt of paying the documents fee.

Place of receiving the tender document :

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

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

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

Type and amount of guarantee for participation to tender :

The amount of deposit for participant in tender is USD 8800 fixed or its equivalent in Rials 2.200.000.000 which should be in the form of Bank Guarantee. All guarantees contained in Article 4 of the Government Transaction Guarantee Regulations approved by Cabinet in 15/07/2015 and in accordance with the subject of the tender are acceptable.

Time and place of delivering Bidding Envelopes:

The sealed (A,B&C) packages/envelopes and the qualification evaluation packages/envelopes separately packed , should be submitted no later than **09:00 a.m. on Wednesday 11 of Aug 2021 (1400/05/20)** and at the address mentioned in 4th clause.

Time and place of opening Qualification Evaluation envelopes:

The date of opening the Qualification Evaluation envelopes on **Wednesday 11 of Aug 2021 (1400/05/20)** at **10:00 a.m** in the office of International Purchasing Dept.

Time and place of Opening Envelopes :

The envelopes A and B of those eligible participants who meet the qualification criterion and approval of Technical and Commercial committee will be opened on **Sunday 15 Aug 2021 at 03:00 p.m. (1400/05/24)** in the office of Financial Vice President.

The participant must be qualified by the competent authorities.

For more information, please see:

Tel: 00982122167463 Purchasing (Kala) Dept., IRIB

Purchasing (Kala) Dept.,IRIB

Isfahan, Samarkand become sister cities

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – The Iranian city of Isfahan and the Uzbek city of Samarkand have signed a sister city agreement, IRIB reported on Friday.

A sister city, or twin town, relationship is a form of legal or social agreement between two geographically and politically distinct localities for the purpose of promoting cultural and commercial ties.

While there are early examples of international links between municipalities akin to what we call today sister cities or twin towns dating back to the 9th Century, the modern concept was first established and adopted worldwide during the Second World War.

By signing the agreement, a platform for cultural cooperation and tourism activities will be provided for Iran and Uzbekistan, Qodratollah Noroozi, the mayor of Isfahan, said.

Isfahan plans also to sign sister city agree-



Naqsh-e Jahan Square, Isfahan, Iran.

ments with Porto in Portugal and Hyderabad in India, he added.

Noroozi went on to say that the twinning

agreement between the cities is not only for municipalities' cooperation, but, all relevant institutions, including universities, chambers

of commerce, and other centers, can start their activities under the agreement.

Isfahan and Samarkand can use their commonalities, historical monuments to represent the cultural interactions between Iran and Uzbekistan, he stated, adding, the joint production of books, music, video, and virtual contents to introduce sister relationship and encourage the citizens to visit the other city are other notable programs.

Samarkand's Mayor Bobumirza Oblakulov, for his part said that cooperation between the two cities that share the same religion and worldview will lead to the development of international relations between the two countries.

Isfahan is a member of 9 networks of world cities and has so far signed sister city agreements with 13 cities of Xi'an, Kuala Lumpur, Freiburg, Florence, Havana, Lahore, St. Petersburg, Yash, Barcelona, Yerevan, Dakar, Baalbek, and Kuwait.

Caspian Sea states to hold conference on climate change

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – The "Scientific Conference on Climate Change in the Caspian Sea Region" will be held virtually from October 27 to 28, with representatives from the littoral states in attendance.

The event is organized under the auspices of the Coordinating Committee on Hydrometeorology and Pollution Monitoring of the Caspian Sea (CASPCOM) and the Interim Secretariat of the Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea (Tehran Convention).

The Conference outcomes are anticipated to support the Caspian Governments, global stakeholders as well as other Caspian actors to make informed decisions in addressing climate change in the Caspian Sea region through adapting and building resilience to climate change towards the implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change

and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The event will also support the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

The Conference will focus on 4 areas including, climate of the Caspian Sea region and its changes in the 21st century, the Caspian Sea level change: analysis, modeling, and long-term projection, the effects of climate change on the ecosystem and biodiversity of the Caspian Sea, and economic consequences of climate change and adaptation measures.

Challenges facing Caspian Sea

The Caspian Sea is the largest enclosed inland body of water on Earth by area. It is bounded by Kazakhstan to the northeast, Russia to the northwest, Azerbaijan to the west, Iran to the south, and Turkmenistan to the southeast. The sea has a surface area of 371,000 square kilometers and a volume of 78,200 cubic kilometers.

The Caspian Sea water level has reached its lowest level since 1995, mainly because of a recent drop in the water level of the Volga River, which supplies most of the sea's water, by about 22 percent.

In 2019, the average water level stood at -27.18 meters, showing 13 centimeters decrease compared to the year before.

According to the national center for Caspian Sea studies and research affiliated with the Water Research Institute, seawater temperature is one of the main criteria in heat exchange and an indicator in assessing the potential for evaporation from the water level, which is one of the main components of the Caspian water balance.

The increasing trend of the Caspian Sea surface temperature, especially in recent years, has been one of the factors affecting the reduction of water level.

Barekat plans to generate 9,300 jobs for persons with disabilities

SOCIETY **TEHRAN** – Barekat Charity Foundation, affiliated with the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam, will open up 9,300 jobs for persons with disabilities, YJC reported on Saturday.

Mohammad Mokhber, head of the Foundation, said that so far, some 3,300 jobs have been provided to the physically challenged people, and some 6,000 are planned to be created over the current [Iranian calendar] year (March 21).

"We have launched 1100 job plans for the disabled and will launch another 2,000 plans with the cooperation of the Welfare Organization to invest in entrepreneurial ideas of the disabled," he explained, adding, these plans will result in the creation of 9,300 jobs.

To achieve this number of job opportunities, a sum of 2.7 trillion rials (nearly \$64.2 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) is invested in rural areas of the coun-



try, he noted.

He went on to say that livestock farming, technical services, shoemaking, clothing production, handicrafts, handmade carpet, and poultry farming are among these jobs.

This year, we will launch 70,000 community-based employment projects leading to the creation of 210,000 micro and domestic jobs, of which 20,000 are for vulnerable groups such as female-headed households, families of prisoners, the disabled, and fam-

ilies of children who have dropped out of school, he explained.

Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam was founded in 1989. In the Iranian calendar year, 1386 (March 2017-March 2018) Barekat Charity Foundation- the social arm of the organization- with the aim of promoting social justice was established.

Socio-economic empowerment of communities by encouraging entrepreneurship prioritizing breadwinner women, developing infrastructures such as water supply and power grids, building roads, constructing schools and increasing educational spaces, promoting health for all, granting non-repayable loans and insurance especially in less developed areas and regions most affected by 1980s war and natural disasters are of the priorities of the charity foundation.

Over 1.3m persons with disabilities live in Iran

Pirouz Hanachi, the mayor of Tehran, said in December 2019 that over 1.3 million

people suffering from disabilities live in the country and the figure rises by 50,000 every year.

Majlis [the Iranian parliament] approved both general outlines and details of a bill on the rights of persons with disabilities in January 2018. Development of disability-friendly cities, free transportation, health insurance, free education, job creation, housing loans, and fewer working hours are some of the articles of the law.

Since the approval of the law, education for students with disabilities has been provided in Azad universities, subsidies for patients with spinal cord injury as well as disability care centers have been increased, in addition to residential units to families having members with disabilities.

Asghar Shirzadi, chairman of the board of the Iranian association of the disabled, said in December 2020 that it still seems that the related organizations are not very willing to implement the law.

Kenya welcomes Iranian knowledge-based products

→ 1 The second shipment of Iranian knowledge-based medical equipment worth \$70,000 was also sent to Kenya.

The necessary steps are currently being taken to send a container of all kinds of knowledge-based disinfection products worth approximately \$20,000 to Kenya by the end of July.

According to the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, a trade contract has been signed for construction products worth \$40,000. Also, final negotiations are currently underway to sign a contract for mineral water production machinery.

Technological achievements of Iran

Despite sanctions putting pressure on the country, a unique opportunity was provided for business development and the activity of knowledge-based companies in the country.

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.

In recent years, the vice presidency for science and technology has been supporting knowledge-based companies active in the production of sanctioned items.

Iran also implemented a plan to return Iranian elites from the top 100 universities in the world, through the national model, the facilities are provided for their return, by creating technology parks, innovation centers, and factories.

The plan was able to bring back 2,000 Iranian students

from the top 100 universities in the world over a three-year period, amounting to 600 people a year.

Sattari also told the Tehran Times in October 2020 that "U.S. sanctions caused exports of knowledge-based companies to decline three years ago, however, it has returned to growth and is projected to reach the pre-sanctions level of more than \$1 billion by the end of the current [Iranian calendar] year (March 20).

Fortunately, last year, companies achieved a record sale of 1.2 quadrillion rials (nearly \$28.5 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials), which is expected to increase by 40 percent this year."

To date, 42 knowledge-based companies with a total value of 2.8 quadrillion rials (nearly \$66.6 billion) have been listed on the stock exchange and they will soon turn into the biggest businesses in the county, Sattari said.

ENGLISH IN USE

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A ← → ع

Air pollution has no effect on coronavirus prevalence: expert

Air pollution has no special effect on the incidence of the disease, and our studies showed that there is no connection between these two issues, Ali Maher, deputy chief of Tehran special working group for coronavirus control said.

Pointing to the coronavirus outbreak in winter, he noted that the prevalence of coronavirus in winter depends on the people, if they observe health protocols, the infection will reduce.

Because there has been no evidence that temperature affects the prevalence, therefore the only way to control the virus is the observance of health protocols by the people, he highlighted, ILNA reported.

آلودگی هوا تأثیری بر روی میزان ابتلا به ویروس کرونا ندارد

علی ماهر معاون ستاد مقابله با ویروس کرونای استان تهران در گفت‌وگو با ایلنا گفت: آلودگی هوا هیچ تأثیر خاصی بر روی این بیماری ندارد و بررسی‌های ما هم حاکی از عدم ارتباط بین این دو موضوع است.

وی با اشاره به وضعیت شیوع کرونا در زمستان ادامه داد: وضعیت میزان ابتلا به ویروس کرونا در زمستان بستگی به رفتارهای مردم دارد و اگر رفتارهایی که برای پیشگیری از شیوع ویروس در نظر گرفته شده را به درستی انجام دهیم، میزان شیوع کاهش پیدا خواهد کرد، چون شواهدی بر اینکه دما در میزان همه‌گیری تأثیرگذار باشد را پیدا نکردیم و بنابراین تنها رعایت مردم مسئله اصلی برای کنترل این ویروس است.

COVID-19 UPDATES

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

New cases	8,341
New deaths	111
Total cases	3,241,017
Total deaths	84,627
New hospitalized patients	1,120
Patients in critical condition	3,207
Total recovered patients	2,914,830
Diagnostic tests conducted	23,888,861
Doses of vaccine injected	6,324,707

Environmental protection in Iran

(Part 3)

Soil loss through erosion is very great in Persia due to destructive practices such as ploughing slopes against contour lines, irrigating with erosive gravity techniques and destroying natural plant cover, and overgrazing (Plate I and Plate II). Soil loss is estimated to exceed 1.5 billion tons per annum, equivalent to the loss of 400,000 hectares of farmland.

Virtually all of the country's artificial lakes are rapidly filling with silt. Thirty years after the completion of the Safidrud dam more than half of the reservoir's capacity of 1.8 billion cubic m is filled with sediments (Reynolds, p. 5). The loss of storage capacity has already compromised the function of the reservoir for irrigation and power and threatens to terminate, within ten to fifteen years, the project's usefulness.



Destruction and protection of forests, rangelands, and wildlife. Situated in the Palearctic faunal region, tangential to the Oriental and within the influence of the Ethiopian region, Persia also comprises four phytogeographical regions: Irano-Turanian, Euro-Siberian, Saharo-Arabian, and Sudanian. Persia is one of the large speciation centers of the Holarctic desert and mountain flora, and its great variety of fauna and flora is thus not surprising.

Scientists have recorded 149 species of mammals; 501 species of birds (Reports accessible at the Department of the environment), and about 150 species of freshwater fish (Coad). The number of plant species is variously estimated at between eight and ten thousand.

The appreciation of wildlife and the importance of the conservation of natural resources that emerged in the 1970s was not sustained in the early post-revolutionary period. Despite Art. 50 of the new Constitution making the protection of the environment a public duty and prohibiting pollution and despoliation, there was little sign of environmental awareness within the public sector until the late 1980s. Of greatest concern is the destruction of ecosystems. Earlier, the alteration of a specific plant community might have required centuries, but the rampant population growth and the abusive utilization of technology have provoked radical transformations in a mere decade.

From the steppe pistachio and almond forests of the south-east to the oak forests of the Zagros range and the humid rain forests of the Caspian, the forests of Persia reflect its great ecological and climatic variations. The immense economic, environmental, and aesthetic value of these forests in an arid country like Persia has often been either ignored or misunderstood.

Although the destruction of the Persian forests began millennia ago, the recent acceleration of this trend has been devastating. In 1942 the area of the Zagros forests was estimated at 10 million hectares; in 1961, 5 million; in 1970, 3.5 million; and in 1991, according to all indications from forestry personnel, less than one million hectares remains of what can barely be described as forest. The Caspian forests, unique among the temperate forests of the world and in part a legacy of the Tertiary period, are disappearing with alarming rapidity.

A survey conducted in 1975 showed an area of 1.84 million hectares of prime forest; according to forestry experts, more than three quarters of this area has been destroyed since the 1980s. This is a staggering loss, apart from devastating damage to watersheds and the resultant soil erosion and floods. The Caspian rain forests, unlike the Zagros forests, are commercially valuable; timber valued at billions of dollars, which could have been a sustainable resource, has been lost.

Ironically, during the 1980s more than 100,000 hectares were reforested at great expense, while several million hectares of natural forest were being eradicated. By 1991 the Ministry of Reconstruction, newly responsible for forests and rangelands, had begun a drive, supported by the media, to halt the destruction of forests and rangeland (Plate III).

Notwithstanding this, however, it has now become apparent that 300,000 ha of forest land were transferred to private ownership in the course of the first five-year plan (1989-94); another 300,000 ha of forest will be privatized in the course of the next five-year plan.

(Source: Encyclopaedia Iranica)

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

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



One who says unpleasant things about others, will himself quickly become a target of their scandal.
Imam Ali (AS)

Art, architecture during Qajar period

Part 3

In contrast, the south side consists of a wide central niche in place of a mihrab, and smaller niches on each side. The Masjed-e Sepahsalar was basically constructed as a grand-scale version of the orthodox plan, with a vast two-storied open court and four monumental ayvans; the south one leads into a large domed sanctuary.

Two minarets flank the entrance on the west and four minarets with engaged columnar bases are spaced at intervals along the south facade.

Qajar madrasas adapted the open-court plan, usually by constructing rooms behind the arcades lining the court. The mosque and madrasa of Aqa Bozorg at Kashan, built in 1832 combines both functions in an original manner.

It is an elegantly proportioned building with a single-storied open court. In the center of this court a rectangular sunken garden lined with rooms forms a madrasa at basement level.

The remaining Qajar religious buildings, especially the Imamzadehs, or shrines, are somewhat less explicit in structure. Of early foundation they have developed into large complexes through centuries of pious donations.

The Qajars were diligent patrons, and their work can be seen at the important shrines of Imam Reza (AS) in Mashhad, Hazrat Masumeh in Qom, Abd ul-Azim in Ray, Nematallah Vali in Mahan, and Shah Cheragh and Mir Mohammad in Shiraz.

Their contributions took various forms: additional courts at Mahan, domed chambers at Qom and Shiraz. Shah Cheragh has a cruciform chamber elaborately decorated with mirrorwork centered over the shah's tomb and surmounted by a conspicuous tiled dome.

These Qajar structures date from 1834 but have been restored many times since. The tekkeh, or arena for the performance of the tazieh passion play associated with the martyrdom of Imam Hassan (AS) and Imam Hussein (AS), is a special type of religious building for which there is seemingly no evidence before the Qajar period.

Few examples have survived because they were either set up temporarily for the occasion or have since been destroyed. One of the rare surviving examples, however, is the tekkeh of Moaven ul-Molk in Kermanshah, parts of which were built as late as 1929.

It is a rambling structure consisting of two open rectangular courts with a central domed cruciform chamber. The tilework decoration is related to the tazieh or to Sufi imagery.

Non-religious architecture.

More non-religious architecture survives from the Qajar than from any earlier period, mainly as royal palaces, large private houses, and city gates. The Qajar court maintained several establishments divided between town and country palaces for winter and summer respectively.

In practice, the distance of migration was small, as most of the summer residences were located in the Shemiranat, the hills around Tehran that now form the northern suburbs of the city.

The town residence that also served as an administrative center was the Golestan Palace situated in the south of the present city. It consists of a rambling series of buildings set in walled gardens; as seen today it is essentially the work of Nasser ad-Din Shah, who drastically altered Fath-Ali Shah's buildings and built new ones.

Today about a quarter of his structures remain along the north, east, and south sides, grouped according to function, with private and public areas strictly segregated. Originally to the west were extensive ranges of guardhouses and stables.

Along the north side were the Takht-e Marmar, a deep-columned porch or talar dating from Fath-Ali Shah's reign, and audience hall. The andarun (women's quarters), pulled down in the 1960s, were discreetly concealed behind the audience hall. On the east side Shams ul-Emareh functioned as Nasser ad-Din Shah's private quarters, while buildings on the south side included houses for court employees such as Dr. Feuvrier, the shah's private physician from 1889 to 1892.

Together these buildings show the combination of tradition and novelty. The form of the talar of the Takht-e Marmar can be traced back to Achaemenid times. Nasser ad-Din Shah's buildings show much innovation resulting from European influence: the audience hall is two-storied with a monumental columned porch and a facade punctuated by deep windows; the Shams ul-Emareh, a multi-storied tower with two balconied turrets, shows the same concern with external appearance as 19th-century European architecture.

Few of the summer palaces that once occupied the Shemiranat now remain. Fath-Ali Shah's palace, Qasr-e Qajar, located 6 km north of Tehran, has now vanished completely.

From drawings, plans, and descriptions, it is possible to discuss the monument and compare it with the more eccentric constructions of Nasser ad-Din Shah. Two features are especially striking: that the palace is constructed as a series of terraces, each contained within a brick retaining wall and ascending to the royal apartments of the summit, which takes the form of a two-storied rectangular enclosure with rooms within the walls, looking inward to a garden, and that the proportion of open space far exceeds that of the buildings.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica
To be continued

Leader praises book on restoration of shrine of Imam Reza (AS)

CULTURE **TEHRAN** — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has written a commendation for the book “The Sun's House”, which contains reports on the restoration of the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS) in Mashhad.

The book, which also contains photos of the restorations and refurbishments carried out on the religious site in 2020, has been published by the Astan Qods Razavi, the organizational custodian of the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS).

The commendation was unveiled on Thursday during a ceremony organized by the Astan Qods Razavi to acknowledge those involved in the restoration project and writing the book.

“I have seen the pictorial book, ‘The Sun's House’. The idea for the refurbishment project along with the extensive planning required for it, followed by the research for those places in need of restoration, and finally, the hundreds of intricate artistic and technical tasks performed by the skilled hands of those who were inspired by the power of love and affection, all of this work and those



Astan Qods Razavi custodian Hajjatoleslam Ahmad Marvi (2nd R) unveils a commendation by Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei for the book “The Sun's House” in Mashhad on July 1, 2021. (Photo.razavi.ir/Mohammad-Javad Mashhadi)

involved deserve hundreds of words of praise. Thanks and greetings to those skilled hands and those creative minds,” the Leader wrote in the commendation.

“Uncle Qassem” published in French

→1 The fourth edition of the Spanish translation of “Uncle Qassem” has recently been released by El Faro, which has distributed thousands of copies of the book in Venezuela, Ecuador and Colombia.

The Spanish translation of the book was introduced in the capital Caracas during a ceremony attended by Mayor Erika Farias Pena, the head of the Capital District Government, Jacqueline Faria and Iranian Ambassador Hojjatollah Ansari.

The mayor read an excerpt from the book for the cultural figures and other people who attended the ceremony.

The Spanish translation was published in remembrance of the first martyrdom anniversary of General Soleimani who was assassinated in a U.S. airstrike in Baghdad on January 3, 2020.

After his martyrdom, the commander came under the spotlight even more than before by writers and publishers. The Alhoda International Cultural, Artistic and Publishing

Institute published the book “Great Commander”.

The book published on his martyrdom anniversary contains a series of articles written by Iraqi cultural figures.

Earlier in January, Iran's Cultural Office in Baghdad also published a book on Soleimani both in Persian and Arabic under the title “Guest of Iraq Written by Iraqi Personalities”.

The book contains interviews with 18 political and religious officials, experts and analysts.

“Characteristics of the School of Martyr Soleimani”, a book giving a brief analysis of the personal characteristics of Soleimani through his discourses and memories, was also published in 12 countries.

The book originally was written by Hojjatolesalm Ali Shirazi in Persian and published by Khate Moqaddam Publications.

The book has been published in Azerbaijan, Russia, Turkey, Georgia, Pakistan, Iraq and Syria, and will be published in France and Afghanistan in the near future.



A copy of the French translation of “Uncle Qassem”.

Tokyo exhibit showcase Japanese artists’ paintings on Iran

A R T **TEHRAN** — Paintings by eight professional Japanese artists inspired by cultural attractions in Iran were showcased in an exhibition that opened in Tokyo on Friday.

The exhibition has been organized with contributions from Iran's Islamic Culture and Relations Organization (ICRO) and the Iran Cultural Center in Tokyo, the ICRO announced in a press release on Saturday.

This art show is part of the Iran-Japan Cultural Exchange Exhibition, which will run for five days.

The Japanese artists Jun Matsubara, Shigenobu Moriyama, Hideko Murata, Takumi Sejima, Kidai Taguchi, Soh Tsukamoto, Syouchirou Tsukuda and Kazunori Yamauchi

have also put a number of their artworks on view at the exhibition.

Matsubara is participating in this exhibit with “Beautiful Iran” that depicts a view of Imam Mosque in the central Iranian city of Isfahan.

Murata has created “A Day to Thank Family Members” exclusively for the exhibition.

“Persepolis” by Sejima, “Travel” by Taguchi, “More than a Memory” by Tsukamoto, “Tehran” by Tsukuda, “A Fantasy of Pars with a Vase and Tulip” by Yamauchi and “Desert and Flower” by Moriyama have been drawn for the exhibition.

“The artists, except for one of them, have never traveled to Iran and know very little about the country,” Iranian cultural attaché

Hossein Divsalar said.

“We held meetings with the artists, providing them with information about Iran, as a result of which they finally became interested in Iran,” he added.

The Iran Cultural Center in Tokyo is currently organizing the Iran Cultural Month, which opened at the Japan International Cooperation Agency in Tokyo last Monday.

Top documentaries on Iran have been selected to be screened during the festival. The organizers also plan to screen videos of performances by a large number of top Iranian music ensembles.

Several exhibitions of Iranian handicrafts and cuisine will also be organized during the festival.



Iranian cultural attaché Hossein Divsalar (3rd L) and Japanese artist visit the Iran-Japan Cultural Exchange Exhibition in Tokyo on July 1, 2021.

River Film Festival screening 20 shorts from Iran

is determined to skip high school during recess and go to the football stadium to watch the football match between Esteghlal F.C. vs. Al-Ain as part of the AFC Champions League, which is against the national ban prohibiting women from entering football stadiums in Iran.

Edris Naseri's drama “Wait a Moment” will also compete in the festival. This film is about a couple whose momentary decisions ruin their lives. The male character in this story has a misunderstanding with his wife, and accidentally and unintentionally kills her.

The lineup also includes “The Middle” by Soheil Soheili, “Today Is Friday” by Mohammad Ahangar, “The Dolls Game” by Mehdi Mahaei, “Gazing” Namira Hafizi and “Dream Haulers” by Farzaneh Qaemi.

“The Middle” revolves around some people that are eating their lunch at a table. It's as if there is a battlefield around them: monarchy, chaos, threat, deception, absolute consumerism, and getting lost between different cultures and living in a region with a shadow of war are some of the main themes.

“Today Is Friday” tells the story of Nader and Saeid who

are arguing with each other because of their problems in the company. But suddenly something happens that causes some changes in their destinies.

“The Dolls Game” is about a clown who works in an amusement park in Iran, and is trying to collect his salary from his employer to pay for a lawyer. He wants to get his daughter back!

“Gazing” tells the story of Siavash, a man around his 30s who lost both of his parents during a traumatic childhood event. In early life, this trauma brought him a lack of perspective on the reality of his day-to-day life.

“Dream Haulers” is a modern odyssey set in a suburb of a big city. We follow a young worker that is not happy with his temporary wife and wants to divorce her, but she has no place to go. After an argument, she leaves him and disappears, so he starts a journey to find her.

“Synthesis” by Mohammad Torivarian, “Pass” by Erika Abdollahi, “Borderline” by Hossein Deirdar, “Dualpa” Mohammadreza Moradi and “Civil Defense Siren” by Mohammad Ahmadiania are also among the film.

The festival will run until July 25.

“D-Day Girls” introduced to Persian readers

A R T **TEHRAN** — “D-Day Girls: The Spies Who Armed the Resistance, Sabotaged the Nazis, and Helped Win World War II” by American writer Sarah Rose has been published in Persian.

The book published by Chatrang in Tehran has been rendered into Persian by Maryam Fattagzadeh.

The book relates the dramatic, untold true story of the extraordinary women recruited by Britain's elite spy agency to sabotage the Nazis and pave the way for the Allied victory in World War II.

In 1942, the Allies were losing, Germany seemed unstoppable, and every able man in England was fighting. Churchill believed

Britain was locked in an existential battle and created a secret agency, the Special Operations Executive (SOE), whose spies were trained in everything from demolition to sharp-shooting.

Their job, he declared, was “to set Europe ablaze!” But with most men on the frontlines, the SOE did something unprecedented: it recruited women.

Thirty-nine women answered the call, leaving their lives and families to become saboteurs in France. Half were caught, and a third did not make it home alive.

In “D-Day Girls”, Rose draws on recently declassified files, diaries and oral histories to tell the story of three of these women.

There's Odette Sansom, a young mother who feels suffocated by domestic life and sees the war as her ticket out; Lise de Baissac, an unflappable aristocrat with the mind of a natural leader; and Andrée Borrel, the streetwise organizer of the Paris Resistance.

Together, they derailed trains, blew up weapons caches, destroyed power and phone lines, and gathered crucial intelligence—laying the groundwork for the D-Day invasion that proved to be the turning point in the war.

Stylishly written and rigorously researched, this is an inspiring story for our own moment of resistance, in which women continue to play a vital role.



A poster for the Persian translation of Sarah Rose's novel “D-Day Girls”.