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Mining exploration by GIS 16% more than sixth development plan targets

TEHRAN - Head of Geological Survey and Mineral Explorations of Iran (GSI) said his organization has carried out 16 percent more mining exploration in the county compared to the targets set for the Sixth National Development Plan (2016-2021), IRNA reported.

Referring to the targeting of 425,000 square kilometers of exploration in the Sixth Development Plan, Alireza Shahidi noted: "The performance achieved is 16

percent ahead of the plan, which indicates good productivity as a result of centralized, scientific and resource-oriented decision-making."

"Despite all the restrictions and limitation [created by the U.S. sanctions and the pandemic], more than 490,000 square kilometers of exploration operations were carried out in this organization during the Sixth [National] Development Plan," Shahidi said.

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"Morning of the Ninth Day", biography of senior IRGC commander Alireza Nuri, released

TEHRAN - "Morning of the Ninth Day", a biography of Alireza Nuri, a senior commander in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), has been published.

Nuri first worked for the railways and the Islamic Republic of Iran. He was later assigned to the IRGC after the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq broke out. In 1982, he lost one of his hands during a military operation, and finally, he was martyred in Operation

Karbala 5 four years later when he was a deputy commander of the 27th Muhammad Rasulullah Division.

Besat 27 is the publisher of the book written by Golali Babai based on research by Zahra Zamani. Babai, a number of IRGC commanders, and Nuri's family attended a ceremony the publisher organized on Tuesday to introduce the book.

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TEHRAN - In its relentless efforts to broker peace between the Afghan government and the Taliban, high-ranking Afghan delegates comprised of the Taliban and government representatives have visited Tehran for negotiations.

The intra-Afghan talks began on Wednesday morning by a speech from Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif.

The delegates have visited Tehran upon Iran's invitation.

Pointing to the U.S. failure in Afghanistan after 20 years of invasion, Zarif said

it is essential that Afghans take "tough decisions" for the future of their nation.

"Today the people and political leaders of Afghanistan must take tough decisions for the future of their country," Zarif told the delegates.

Zarif warned that continuation of conflicts between the government and the Taliban will have "unfavorable" consequences for Afghanistan, noting that a return to the intra-Afghan negotiations is the "best solution".

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Afghanistan did not turn out the way most security professionals envisioned: professor

BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI
American professor Karl Kaltenthaler says that civil war and prolonged conflict are "definitely likely" in Afghanistan after the U.S. troop withdrawal from the country, noting "Afghanistan did not turn out the way most security professionals envisioned."

While Afghanistan's neighbors are concerned about the rising of conflicts, the U.S. military left Bagram Airfield - its key base in Afghanistan - on Monday, in the dead of night without notifying the Afghans.

In an interview with the Tehran Times, Kaltenthaler says, "The Biden administration has decided that it has different priorities and likely believes that U.S. efforts to stabilize Afghanistan have not been successful."

The professor of political science and director of Security Studies at the University of Akron adds, "I think that is likely that Afghanistan will see increased instability in the next few months. It is very likely that the Taliban will gain more territory and even take the capital and other major cities."

Following is the text of the interview:
What are the main reasons for the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan after two decades of war?

The main reasons why the United States has withdrawn its forces from Afghanistan are the growing attention to great power competition with China and Russia and the Biden administration's assessment that there is no immediate threat to U.S. national security from Afghanistan.

Because the U.S. security establishment has grown increasingly concerned about the aggressive postures and behavior exhibited by China and Russia, the resources of the U.S. government's national security assets should be redirected to meeting those threats. The Taliban in Afghanistan do not rise to the same level of threat to U.S. national security and therefore a U.S. withdrawal makes strategic sense in the thinking of President Biden.

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Royal palaces you must see in Tehran

TEHRAN - Known for its cool climate and old plane trees, Tehran has long been a favorite of Iranian kings.

A number of historical palaces can be found in the Iranian capital, which has always been a center of decision-making, power, and politics.

Several palaces date back to the Qajar-era (1789-1925), which were later restored and renovated, but some were destroyed and rebuilt in the Pahlavi period (1925-1979).

Qajar palaces are simpler than those of the Pahlavi era, while Pahlavi palaces are more luxurious and modern.

These are some of the palaces that one should see while in Tehran.

UNESCO-tagged Golestan Palace

A destination for domestic and international travelers, Golestan Palace is located in the heart and historic core of Tehran. The

palace complex is one of the oldest in the Iranian capital, originally built during the Safavid dynasty (1501-1736) in the historical walled city.

Located in the heart of Tehran, the palace is like a beautiful pearl that evokes an innate sense of the luxury of Persian kings. Beautiful fountains and lush greenery surround the palace.

Following extensions and additions, it received its most characteristic features in the 19th century, when the palace complex was selected as the royal residence and seat of power by the Qajar ruling family (1789-1925). At present, the Golestan Palace complex consists of eight key palace structures mostly used as museums and the eponymous gardens, a green shared center of the complex, surrounded by an outer wall with gates.

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Why did Saudi Arabia wage a war on Yemen?

To say the war on Yemen is a major development in the history of West Asia might be an understatement. It will certainly go down in history, perhaps not in favor of the Saudis though.

In March 2015, Saudi Arabia declared that it and some allies had formed a coalition to begin a military operation. At the time, this was something unheard of, especially in the Arab world; that the Arabs had formed a military alliance for the first time in many decades and were conducting wide-scale bombing campaigns with such energy and enthusiasm.

The military campaign was dubbed Operation Decisive Storm. Many in the region had jokingly highlighted what exactly happened that we are suddenly witnessing this courageous will and heroic leadership among a handful of Arab states. The Storm of the Arabs! In fact, it was quite unfortunate. For decades, since 1948, the Palestinians had witnessed one massacre after

the other and we never got to see an Arab storm. Not even a breeze of this storm on Yemen. The Palestinians and the Lebanese who also suffered from Israeli occupation had dreamt to only smell an Arab storm of this magnitude. The reasons or excuses at the time, Saudi Arabia offered to wage a war to this extent on another country were THREE. Firstly, the Saudis claimed that the former government of Yemen led by former President Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi had requested the military intervention. By the way, the Palestinians had also requested such an intervention and are still requesting such an intervention today but to date, their appeals have fallen on death ears. Instead, the Saudis and their allies are accused of conspiring against the Palestinians and sold the third holiest site in Islam in occupied Jerusalem al-Quds to the Israelis.

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First intl. innovation center to open in Tehran

TEHRAN - The first international innovation center of Iran will open next week in Tehran, ISNA reported on Wednesday.

The center, called Yas, will be inaugurated by Ahl Al Bayt University in cooperation with the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology, on Sunday.

Supporting the entrepreneurial ecosystem, facilitating the process of commercialization of knowledge-based ideas, creating employment,

and empowering Muslim students in the knowledge-based economy are among the goals of the center, which seeks to establish contacts with educational and research centers in the Islamic world and attract talented Muslim students across the world.

Accordingly, this innovation center intends to play a key role in empowering and developing the cultural and economic development of Muslims around the world by attracting, organizing,

managing, and synergizing accelerators, startups, technology companies, and knowledge-based companies.

Iran improves rank in global innovation index

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

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U.S. on losing side in Afghanistan, Turkish researcher says

BY ALIA. JENABZADEH

TEHRAN - Dogacan Basharan, a Turkish researcher, says the pullout of U.S. forces from Afghanistan shows that Washington has lost its cards in the country.

"It can be stated that the U.S. is on the losing side in Afghanistan. Therefore, the Washington administration is withdrawing from the aforementioned country," Basharan tells the Tehran Times.

"The U.S. wants to get rid of the military cost of its existence in this country by withdrawing from Afghanistan," he adds.

While some American commentators talk about U.S. efforts to stabilize Afghanistan over the past 20 years, ANKASAM international relations expert argues that "the USA is not disturbed by the scenario that the power vacuum will form after the withdrawal in Afghanistan resulting in a civil war. Because the Washington administration has a desire to destabilize the Central Asia-Russia line and Belt-Road Project route through Afghanistan."

Following is the text of the interview:
How do you assess the pullout of U.S. forces from Afghanistan after 20 years? Why did Biden consider talks about Afghanistan a sad topic?

A: For the United States of America (USA) the war in Afghanistan is no longer sustainable. Both the cost of the war and the result of the emerge from the end of the 20 years drew the reaction of the American public.

In this environment, it can be stated that the U.S. is on the losing side in Afghanistan. Therefore, the Washington administration is withdrawing from the aforementioned country.

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Thespians stage performance to keep hope alive amid pandemic

TEHRAN - A cast of 100 thespians staged a performance named "Life Is Still on" in a crowded neighborhood in the southern Iranian city of Shiraz on Wednesday to encourage people to live with hope during the pandemic.

Throughout the performance, they also warned the people about the ongoing threat of the virus.

© ISNA / Mohammadreza Dehdari

Iran envoy to UN slams the West's double standards in terror fight

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iran's ambassador to the United Nations, Majid Takht-Ravanchi, on Tuesday slammed the double standards and political approach of some Western countries in the fight against terrorism.

Addressing a UN General Assembly meeting titled "The United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy", the ambassador said Iran is determined to confront the ominous phenomenon of terrorism in all its forms.

Takht-Ravanchi blasted terrorist acts against critical infrastructures such as the one carried out against Iran's Natanz nuclear site on April 11, saying terrorist attacks against energy facilities, including nuclear facilities, can lead to "radiological as well as radioactive environmental disasters."

The full text Takht-Ravanchi's speech reads as follows:

I begin by paying special tribute to the victims of terrorism particularly Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani, a prominent figure in the fight against Daesh in Iraq and Syria, who was assassinated in a terrorist attack perpetrated by the U.S. forces on January 3, 2020 in Baghdad International Airport.



While emphasizing national ownership and leadership in combating terrorism, and recognizing the pivotal role of the General Assembly in this process, the Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates its unwavering commitment to combat terrorism and rejects all acts and methods of terrorism.

The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that terrorism can only be countered through international cooperation as well as methods that primarily address its root causes.

Still, in most parts of the world, socioeconomic and political problems, illegitimate military presence and foreign military intervention and occupation, constitute the main sources of terrorism and violent extremism.

However, our longstanding legal position is that any resistance against occupation and foreign intervention in the exercise of self-defense cannot be considered terrorism.

In this context, the Palestinian people have every right to resist the occupation of their territory by the Zionist regime.

It is also our strong belief that under the pretext of fighting terrorism, no State has the right to commit acts of aggression, interference in the internal affairs of other States, or condone flagrant violations of human rights and humanitarian law, such as torture, kidnapping, illegal detention, disappearance or extrajudicial execution and targeted killing.

At the same time, unilateral coercive measures (UCMs) continue to undermine the efforts of targeted countries in countering terrorism. Furthermore, since by nature, UCMs target ordinary people, they contribute to the root causes of terrorism.

In addition, UCMs are generally imposed to incite insurgency and dissatisfaction among ordinary citizens against their government and as such are no less than acts of terrorism.

The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly rejects double standards as well as unlawful unilateral actions under the pretext of combating terrorism. Unilateral listing of UN member States or their constitutionally-established institutions accusing them of supporting terrorism, in order to pursue a political agenda, contradict purposes and principles of the UN Charter and as such must be rejected.

The presence of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTFs) and their accompanying families in the conflict zones is still a growing source of concern to our entire region. My delegation welcomes the achievement of the 7th review to address the issue of transfer of FTFs to and within conflict zones. Unfortunately, since the last review in 2018, the 7th Strategy has failed to address some other fundamental issues related to FTFs that are among the emerging issues such as repatriation.

While there are unanswered questions as to how and why those FTFs including from countries that claim to pioneer human rights have been radicalized and deployed, committing acts of terrorism in our region, it is also a matter of serious concern that the same countries refrain from repatriating those FTFs and their families especially women and children from camps in conflict zones.

Since 1979, more than 17,000 of our innocent citizens, including the President, the Prime Minister, the Head of Judiciary, several ministers and members of Parliament as well as several nuclear scientists, have been assassinated by terrorist groups that are being sheltered and provided safe havens in Europe and North America with unimpeded access to and connections with government officials.

It is to be reminded that the strategy "calls upon member states to deny terrorist groups safe haven, freedom of operations, movement and recruitment and financial, material or political support" and "to ensure that terrorists do not find safe haven online."

In the same vein, the Islamic Republic of Iran strongly supports access to justice for victims of terrorism and victims of measures taken under the pretext of fight against terrorism including through drone attacks.

As the Strategy recalls, any national efforts to compensate the victims of terrorism should fully respect international law including the principle of immunity of states and their properties.

On the issue of terrorist attacks against critical infrastructures, the Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the reference, in this resolution, to the condemnation of terrorist attacks against energy facilities, including nuclear facilities, that lead to radiological as well as radioactive environmental disasters.

This is in reference to the first ever terrorist attack on 11 April 2021 and simultaneously with the current 7th review of GCTS negotiations, against the Natanz Fuel Enrichment Plant, a nuclear facility under the supervision of the IAEA.

While acknowledging the importance of efforts to counter the financing of terrorism, we reiterate our principled opposition regarding any reference to non-UN, non-inclusive initiatives that embrace political rather than technical considerations on the financing of terrorism.

However, the Islamic Republic of Iran implements this strategy in accordance with its international obligations as well as relevant internal policies and regulations."

Iran set to produce uranium metal for Tehran research reactor soon

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Iran's ambassador to the Vienna-based international organizations announced on Tuesday that the Islamic Republic will soon produce enriched uranium metal for the Tehran research reactor.

Kazem Gharibabadi said Iran had earlier informed the United Nations nuclear watchdog's International Atomic Energy Agency of the move.

The uranium silicide plate is enriched to 20 percent purity.

"Research and development regarding this issue with natural uranium began about three months ago. In the new process, a new fuel plate will be produced using 20 percent enriched uranium," Gharibabadi told reporters.

"This measure, which will significantly improve the quality and quantity of radiopharmaceutical production, will make the Islamic Republic of Iran one of the leading countries in the field of nuclear technology," the Iranian diplomat added, according to Press TV.

Gharibabadi said the IAEA had been informed of Iran's move nine days earlier and the relevant operations had begun right afterwards.

Gharibabadi described the silicide plate as a modern type of nuclear fuel whose technology is only available to a handful of countries.

The IAEA said in a statement on Tuesday that Iran intends to use domestically enriched uranium (U-235) with 20 percent purity as fuel in the Tehran reactor.

"Today, Iran informed the Agency that UO₂ (uranium oxide) enriched up to 20% U-235 would be shipped to the R&D laboratory at a plant in Esfahan, where it would be converted



to UF₄ (uranium tetrafluoride) and then to uranium metal enriched to 20% U-235, before using it to manufacture the fuel," the statement said.

The IAEA also said the process would be a multi-step measure, suggesting that it would take much time.

Reacting to the news, Russia referred to the Iran's move and the U.S. continuation of the so-called maximum pressure by former President Donald Trump as a "vicious circle" and said the only way out of it was resuming the Vienna talks on the revival of the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and the full implementation of the landmark accord.

"The IAEA reports that Iran moves to production of uranium metal enriched up to 20%. The US in its turn maintains maximum pressure policy of D.Trump. The only way out of this vicious circle is resumption of Vienna Talks without delay and full restoration of JCPOA," Russia's Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna Mikhail Ulyanov wrote in a tweet.

On the other side, the three European countries of Britain, France and Germany in a statement expressed "grave concern" about Iran's decision to produce uranium metal enriched to up to 20% purity for reactor fuel.

"We strongly urge Iran to halt all activities in violation of the JCPOA, without delay and to return to the negotiations in Vienna with

a view to bringing them to a swift conclusion," the statement added.

The United States also warned Iran to stop what it called "nuclear brinkmanship," and urged Tehran to "return to Vienna prepared for real talks."

The remaining parties to the JCPOA have been engaged in talks since early April to bring the United States back into the deal, three years after the former hawkish U.S. president withdrew.

The U.S. left the Iran deal in May 2018 and reimposed the anti-Iran sanctions that the JCPOA had lifted. It also placed additional sanctions on Iran under other pretexts not related to the nuclear case as part of the "maximum pressure" campaign.

On June 20, the sixth in-person round of the talks came to an end so that the negotiators would return to their capitals for further consultations, which turned out to be the longest break the diplomats have taken since the beginning of the negotiations.

The parties to the nuclear deal are expected to convene in the Austrian capital once again for the seventh round of talks, which is speculated to be — as usual — the final round.

The new U.S. administration, under President Joe Biden, says it wants to compensate for Trump's mistake and rejoin the deal, but it is showing an overriding propensity for maintaining some of the sanctions as a tool of pressure.

Tehran insists that all sanctions should first be removed in a verifiable manner before the Islamic Republic reverses its remedial measures.

Iran hosts intra-Afghan talks, says Afghans must take 'tough decisions'

➔ Zarif also said Iran is firm to wholeheartedly help Afghanistan politically and economically after the establishment of peace in the country.

The high-ranking political delegation representing the Afghan government is headed by Yunus Qanouni and the Taliban team is headed by Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai.

Stanikzai is the head of the Taliban's political office in Doha.

Zarif: 'Iran stands with our Afghan brethren'
Writing on his Twitter page, Foreign Minister Zarif said Iran is happy to host talks between the representatives from the Afghan government and the Taliban, calling them Iran's "brethren".

"Honored to be host of cordial & substantive dialog between senior Afghan reps. As foreign forces leave Afghanistan, no impediment remains for Afghans of all political stripes to chart a peaceful & prosperous future for the next generation. Iran stands with our Afghan brethren," Zarif tweeted.

Iran has held numerous meetings with the Taliban officials and the Afghan government to broker peace between the two sides. The case in point is the negotiations between Iranian ambassador to Doha Hamid Dehghani and the Taliban delegation.

After the assassination of top Iranian nuclear scientist Mohsen Fakhrizadeh on November 27, 2020, a few members of the Taliban's political office in Doha came to express their condolences over the tragic and cowardly assassination of the scientist to the ambassador. Dehghani then hosted a high-ranking political delegate from the Taliban's office in Doha, triggering Iran's efforts to mediate between the two sides in Afghanistan.

Two months later, upon the invitation of Foreign Minister Zarif, top Taliban politicians headed by Mullah Abdolghani Baradar came to Iran to start a fresh round of negotiations. At the time, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said that the visit was made to consult with Zarif and his special envoy for Afghanistan, Mohammad Ebrahim Taherian Fard.

Iran has been mediating between the Afghanistan government and Taliban at different levels.

At a meeting held during the Antalya Diplomacy Forum on June 20, Zarif, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu and Afghan Foreign Minister Mohammad Hanif Atmar emphasized the need for active cooperation between countries to help the peace process and cooperate against terrorism in

Afghanistan and the wider region.

The three ministers issued a joint statement at the end of the meeting.

"On the occasion of the trilateral meeting, the three foreign ministers reaffirmed their commitment to further enhance solidarity and cooperation among the peoples of the three countries based on deep-rooted historical, religious and cultural commonalities and shared values that will serve to strengthen peace, stability, prosperity and cooperation in the region, underlined their commitment to further expand cooperation particularly in the areas that would contribute to economic progress and sustainable development," the statement said.

In line with continuation of Tehran's efforts to stabilize Afghanistan, Iran's special envoy for Afghanistan, who has had made several visits to Afghanistan and Pakistan, held talks with Foreign Minister Atmar on June 28.

In his recent visit to Pakistan, Taherian Fard stressed the importance of a plan to hold a trilateral meeting among foreign ministers of Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan as well as the need to boost relations between the three countries.

At the meeting, the Afghan foreign minister stressed the need to expand bilateral and multilateral relations with Iran.

Expressing his approval over holding a tripartite meeting among Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, Atmar stressed that such a meeting will be useful in strengthening regional consensus in the efforts to stabilize Afghanistan.

The Iranian diplomat had met with Foreign Minister Atmar and Abdullah Abdullah, the head of Afghanistan's High Council for National Reconciliation, before heading to Pakistan. During the meetings, the current developments in Afghanistan were discussed and the two sides stressed the need to continue consultations. It is worth mentioning that Taherian paid a visit to Islamabad on June 23 at the invitation of Mohammad Sadegh Khan, the special envoy of the prime minister of Pakistan for Afghanistan.

Iran has doubled down on its diplomatic efforts to achieve peace in neighboring Afghanistan as the conflict has intensified between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

The Afghanistan crisis has been a main issue for Iranian officials. Ali Rabiee, the government spokesman, said on June 29 that the Taliban is part of Afghanistan and a part of its

future solution.

"What is important for us is the formation of an inclusive government with the presence of all Afghan groups and the achievement of a peaceful and lasting solution in this country," he noted.

He added that the Islamic Republic is closely monitoring developments in Afghanistan and is following the recent moves with concern.

"While calling on all parties to calm down, we do not consider the use of violence and non-peaceful behaviors useful in resolving disputes, and we will continue our consultations with Kabul to end unconstructive conflicts and replace dialogue and engagement with the participation of all influential political groups," the spokesman underlined.

Rabiee said the Islamic Republic continues to urge all countries not to interfere in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

"Our mission is to communicate with the Afghan government and provide any necessary assistance," Rabiee highlighted.

'Russia won't hesitate to stabilize Afghanistan if needed'

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Wednesday that the Afghanistan crisis could rapidly "worsen," while noting that Russia will not hesitate to help "if needed."

Russian President Vladimir Putin told Tajik President Emomali Rahmon on Monday that Moscow will help the poor former Soviet republic deal with the impact of NATO's withdrawal from neighboring Afghanistan if necessary.

Rakhmon has ordered the mobilization of 20,000 military reserve personnel to strengthen the border between his country and Afghanistan, after more than 1,000 Afghan security personnel have fled the border due to an offensive by Taliban militants.

Lavrov, who was visiting Laos on Wednesday, said Russia is ready to use its military base in Tajikistan, which is one of its largest overseas, to ensure the safety of its allies in the region. Tajikistan was part of the Soviet Union before the breakup in 1991.

As it has been repeatedly said by the Iranian officials, the Afghan crisis can be resolved only through intra-Afghan talks. Armed conflict will only result in worsening the situation. It seems that the Taliban has agreed to negotiate as well, when they said they will put forward a peace plan in one month.

Regional diplomacy needed to prevent civil war in Afghanistan, says ex-diplomat

POLITICAL TEHRAN — A former Iranian ambassador believes that the United States is seeking to push Afghanistan toward civil war and the only way to prevent it is to activate "regional diplomacy."

Hassan Kazemi Qomi, the former Iranian ambassador to Iraq, says that Americans never allowed a "national and professional" army to take shape in Afghanistan which can have the ability to stand on its own feet.

"In view of Washington the Kabul government should have been formed in a way that it can be manageable by the U.S.," Kazemi Qomi tells the Tehran Times.

On Iran's policy toward Afghanistan, he says Iran's view toward "new Afghanistan"

has been based on an independent, free, stable, prosperous, sovereign, inclusive government.

For Iran democracy in Afghanistan is important and not which group rules the country and that is why that Iran's policy is based on interaction with all groups in the country.

For example, he said, this has not been Iran's approach to deal just with Hazaras since they are Shia or that "since we speak in Farsi we should just be in contacts with the Tajiks.

There are diverse ethnic groups in Afghanistan and "interaction with all these ethnicities are important," he added.

The former diplomat said since the

Bonn conference, which set the stage for new Afghanistan, Iran has never had an "ethnic-religious view toward Afghanistan and it is following this policy."

He notes, "Iran's policy is based on the interests of the people of Afghanistan."

He also said the United States' strategy toward Afghanistan remain the same but it is their military doctrine which has changed.

"In this new doctrine the U.S. should withdraw its troops (from Afghanistan) but this does not mean a permanent withdrawal."

The former ambassador said Iran has a realistic view toward Taliban.

"Iran believes that Afghanistan is part of reality in Afghanistan."

However, he said, Iran does not believe

that Taliban is the whole Afghanistan.

The former diplomat also said the Taliban should not think that it can control Afghanistan militarily.

The United States plan to withdraw all its troops from Afghanistan by September 11. Reportedly, so far 90 percent of U.S. force have left Afghanistan.

There is a wide belief that Afghanistan will degenerate into civil war as the U.S. is leaving the country after two decades.

Kazemi believes that the United States is purposefully pushing the country toward "civil war".

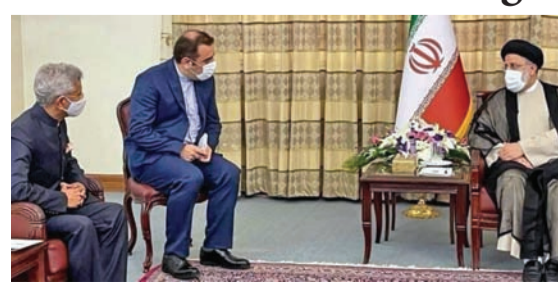
Interaction with all Afghan groups mean that Iran is neutral toward conflicts between the ruling government and the Taliban.

Indian FM delivers Modi's message to Raisi

POLITICAL TEHRAN — Indian External Affairs Minister Jaishankar made a stopover in Tehran on Wednesday afternoon and held a meeting with Iran's Foreign Minister Javad Zarif.

Jaishankar visited Tehran to present Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's written message to Iranian President-elect Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi.

Zarif and Jaishankar discussed developments in Afghanistan and exchanged views about the nuclear talks in Vienna aimed to revive the Iran nuclear deal, officially called the JCPOA.



On the issue of Afghanistan, both sides emphasized that intra-Afghan talks are the only way to solve the current crisis. Jaishankar also thanked Zarif for hosting Taliban and Afghanistan government's delegations for peace talks.

In another part of his stopover to Iran, Jaishankar handed Prime Minister Modi's message to President-elect Raisi.

This is a first time that a foreign official delivers a confidential message to an Iranian president-elect before his swearing-in as president.

Jaishankar had made a similar stopover in Iran in September of 2020 while on visit to Moscow.

U.S., E3 cry foul on JCPOA after killing it

POLITICAL TEHRAN – Iran has started the production of highly advanced uranium fuel in the latest step to accelerate nuclear research aimed at improving its radiopharmaceuticals amid soaring tensions with the United States and its European allies over a U.S. refusal to rejoin a 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

In a major announcement on Tuesday, Iranian Ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency Kazem Gharibabadi said Iran will soon produce a highly sophisticated nuclear fuel called uranium silicide fuel.

The ambassador said in a statement that Iran has informed the IAEA of its intention to produce a uranium silicide fuel pellet for the Tehran Research Reactor nine days ago and has immediately made arrangements in that regard.

Silicide fuel is an advanced type of nuclear fuel whose technology is only available to a handful of countries. According to Gharibabadi, Iran has started R&D activities using natural uranium to produce sophisticated fuel over the past three months. "In the new process, one new fuel pellet is to be produced from 20% enriched uranium," the Iranian diplomat said, adding, "This measure, slated to significantly improve the quality and quantity of producing radiopharmaceuticals, will turn the Islamic Republic of Iran into a pioneering country in terms of nuclear technology."

The IAEA confirmed the Iranian move, providing technical details about the whole process. "Iran informed the Agency that UO₂ (uranium oxide) enriched up to 20% U-235 would be shipped to the R&D laboratory at the Fuel Fabrication Plant in Esfahan, where it would be converted to UF₄ (uranium tetrafluoride) and then to uranium metal enriched to 20% U-235, before using it to manufacture the fuel," it said in a statement, according to Reuters.



The move drew criticism from the U.S. and its European allies, who expressed concern about the new fuel production. The three European signatories to the 2015 nuclear deal - France, Germany and the UK, collectively known as E3 - said they had "grave concern" about Iran producing enriched uranium metal and even accused Iran of "threatening a successful outcome to the Vienna talks," which have been underway since April to revive the nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price reiterated a previous American threat to withdraw from the talks with Iran while voicing concerns over the latest Iranian nuclear move.

The diplomatic tensions came at a delicate moment of the Vienna nuclear talks, which have hit a deadlock due to U.S. intransigence and insistence on maintaining sanctions on Iran. The last round of talks was concluded

more than two weeks. At the end of the sixth round, Iran and the other negotiating partners underlined the need for tough decisions to reach a final agreement on the JCPOA.

Following the sixth round, the U.S. and its European partners ratcheted up diplomatic pressures on Iran, urging it to make such decisions while Iran said it was not the party to make these decisions because it had already made a series of difficult decisions to preserve the tattered nuclear deal after the U.S. quit it.

The U.S. and European calls for Iran to make tough decisions were the latest sign that they are not going to pursue constructive policies to have the deal revived in the near future. They rejected a number of Iranian demands such as giving assurances that Washington won't renege on its commitments again once the deal is revived. Iran also brought up other demands regarding the lifting of sanctions, but most were rejected

by the U.S., indicating an American lack of interest in reviving the JCPOA.

However, the U.S. continues to blame Iran for the stumbling of talks and its nuclear measures, ignoring Iran's sacrifices in keeping the JCPOA alive over the past three years.

Now Washington and its European allies are crying foul at Iran's production of uranium metal while torpedoing any diplomatic pathways to address this issue.

Iran has made it clear time and again that it has no intention of paying the price of keeping the JCPOA alive and turning a blind eye on European inaction in ensuring its economic interests envisaged in the nuclear deal during the Trump administration.

According to Iran's top nuclear negotiator, Seyed Abbas Araqchi, if there is one party to make tough decisions on the JCPOA, it's certainly not Iran. Instead, he said, it's the U.S. and its European allies.

"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 said in recent remarks to Iran's state media.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh has reiterated the same call, putting the onus of making tough decisions on the U.S. "The progress made in the Vienna talks is a fact acknowledged by all parties to the talks, although there are still important issues that largely need to be decided by the other parties, especially the United States. In fact, the finalization of the agreement to revive the JCPOA depends on the political will of the other parties to make tough decisions on their part," he said.

Vienna talks won't change Iran regional policy: ambassador

POLITICAL TEHRAN – Iranian Ambassador to Syria Mehdi Sobhani has underlined that the Vienna talks between Iran and the West are only concerned with the nuclear issue, and will not affect Iran's consistent policy towards the region and the entire resistance axis.

In an interview with the Al-Ahed news website, Sobhani stressed the continuation of Iranian material and moral support for the Palestinian cause, and said that "the Zionist enemy will beg for a cease-fire in the first new aggression it undertakes against the Palestinians."

Sobhani spoke about more than one concept of power that peoples and states may possess: "hard power, soft power, smart power, and moral power," explaining that "moral power means the power to influence ideas, visions, beliefs, and the power to create standards, and what the Islamic Revolution did under the leadership of Imam Khomeini and then Imam Khamenei is that it created this strength in the people. It is true that the enemy possesses the tools of coarse force and is superior in this regard, but the strength of the belief and belief of the Palestinian people is much stronger than those hard tools."

The ambassador added, "I think that what led to these successes is the creation of this strength in the Muslim peoples, especially the Palestinian people, and I think that this represents the greatest help from the Islamic Revolution in Iran and from the thought of the Islamic Revolution to achieve these achievements."

On the latest developments concerning the nuclear deal talks in Vienna between the West and Iran, Tehran's ambassador to Damascus stressed that the talks were long and difficult, but they are progressing, and these discussions are taking place within the framework of the nuclear agreement, and whatever the outcome of these negotiations, they will not affect the fixed policies of the Islamic Republic towards the region and the axis of resistance.

Sobhani indicated that "the other side withdrew from this agreement and today it wants to return to it and talks are taking place to determine the framework under which it will return to this agreement."

The Iranian ambassador to Damascus pointed out that in addition to the withdrawal of the other side from the nuclear agreement, it created itself problems and obstacles to return to it. Therefore, the discussions focus on finding a mechanism to overcome these obstacles and remove obstacles.

Sobhani reiterated that the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is a "fixed policy regarding the axis of resistance and support for the resistance, and the discussions taking place in Vienna regarding the nuclear agreement focus on the nuclear agreement only."

Sobhani stressed that what matters to Iran is the continuation of resistance.

Since April, diplomats from the remaining parties to the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, formally called 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 more than two weeks ago. Deputy Foreign Minister 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 the 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.

On Tuesday, Iran once again underlined the need for the negotiating parties in Vienna, particularly the United States, to make difficult decisions regarding a revival of the 2015 nuclear deal. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh has reiterated a previous call by Iran's top nuclear negotiator Araqchi for tough decisions concerning the nuclear talks, which aim to revive the JCPOA.

In a briefing statement on Tuesday, Khatibzadeh said, "The progress made in the Vienna talks is a fact acknowledged by all parties to the talks, although there are still important issues that largely need to be decided by the other parties, especially the United States. In fact, the finalization of the agreement to revive the JCPOA depends on the political will of the other parties to make tough decisions on their part."

He added, "The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran seeks to conclude the negotiations as soon as possible and to lift the cruel sanctions against the Iranian people. However, we do not set any deadline for reaching an agreement that serves the interests of the Iranian people and negotiations will continue until a desirable agreement for Iran is reached. As has been said many times, we are not in a hurry to reach an agreement, but we will not allow the negotiations to become draining and protracted."

Earlier, Araqchi echoed the same assessment. He said 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," the top 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.

The Vienna talks were expected to resume this week but were delayed after Iran and the U.S. accused each other of not showing the flexibility needed to resume the talks.

On Tuesday, the Iraqi newspaper Al-Sabah reported that the seventh round has been postponed until after the formation of the Raisi government.

Citing an Iranian source, the Iraqi newspaper said, "The Iranian delegation will not participate in the Vienna talks in light of the current atmosphere that prevails in the talks."

The source added, "Iran did not receive encouraging signs from the American side after the end of the fifth round of talks in which a draft was agreed on to revive the agreement."

At the end of the fifth round, the negotiators agreed on a draft based on the results of three "working groups" that discussed the mechanism of Iran's reversal of its nuclear steps and a list of the sanctions that the American side should remove as well as the mechanism for the United States to return to the P5+1 group.

But the Iranian side said this draft needs guarantees that the U.S. will not withdraw from the nuclear agreement again, something the U.S. refused to give so far.

The source pointed out that "the new Iranian administration believes that there is no need to extend the agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency regarding surveillance cameras after the Vienna talks reached a dead end, in addition to its belief that the course of these talks does not rise to the level of serving Iranian interests."

The source pointed to "the new administration's conviction of the necessity of changing the course of the talks to achieve these interests so that 'a believer is not stung from the same hole twice'."

According to the source, "the talks are postponed until further notice (maybe) until after the formation of the new Iranian government after August 3, and the formation of the new negotiating team according to a new course of talks."

Regarding the fate of the results of the Vienna talks, the source told Al-Sabah: "The new negotiating team will benefit from the achievements made in the Vienna process, but with a view that is consistent with the new directions of the new Iranian administration."

Japan top diplomat to visit Iran

POLITICAL TEHRAN – Japan's Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu plans to visit Tehran as early as mid-August to meet senior officials of Iran's new government, Japanese media reported.

Toshimitsu will likely visit Iran after Ebrahim Raisi takes over as president from the incumbent, Hassan Rouhani, in early August, according to Japanese broadcaster NHK.

In meetings with Iran's new foreign minister and other figures in Raisi's government, Toshimitsu is expected to urge them to play a constructive role in the effort to ease tensions and bring stability to the region.

He is also expected to convey Japan's willingness to strengthen its traditional friendship with Iran.

Toshimitsu and Iranian officials will likely

discuss indirect talks between Iran and the United States over the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The Japanese foreign minister also plans to visit Israel, Palestine, Egypt, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and Qatar.

Following Ayatollah Raisi's victory in the June 18 presidential election, Katsunobu

Kato, chief cabinet secretary of Japan, told a news conference that he hoped that Iran, under the presidency of President-elect Ebrahim Raisi, would help stabilize the West Asian region.

"Peace and stability in the region are very important to Japan," he said, noting that 90 percent of Japan's crude oil imports come from West Asia.

SPORTS

Vladimir Alekno names Iran's roster for Olympic Games

SPORTS TEHRAN – Vladimir Alekno announced a 12-player men's team that will compete for the Iran at the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020.

Iran have been drawn in Pool A along with Japan, Poland, Italy, Canada and Venezuela.

Pool B consists of Brazil, the U.S., Russia, Argentina, France and Tunisia.

Team Iran:

Setters: Saeid Marouf, Javad Karimi

Opposites: Amir Ghafour, Saber Kazemi

Outside Hitters: Milad Ebadipour, Meysam Salehi, Morteza Sharifi

Middle Blockers: Mohammad Mousavi, Masoud Gholami, Aliasghar Mojarad

Liberos: Mehdi Marandi, Arman Salehi.

Pool A Match Schedule:

24 July 2021: Iran v Poland

26 July 2021: Iran v Venezuela

28 July 2021: Iran v Canada

30 July 2021: Iran v Italy

1 August 2021: Iran v Japan

Iran's first delegation to travel to Tokyo on July 17

SPORTS TEHRAN – The first delegation of Iran's participants in the 2020 Olympic Games will leave the country on July 17.

Iran will send the volleyball team (12 athletes), taekwondo (three athletes), table tennis (one athlete) and archery (one athlete) to the Games at the abovementioned date.

Iran is expected to take part at the 2020 Olympic Games with 68 athletes (57 male and 11 female athletes).

The 2020 Olympic Games will take place in Tokyo from July 23 to Aug. 8.

It is expected that 11,091 athletes from 205 countries will compete in the Games.

Iran beat Puerto Rico at FIBA U19 Basketball World Cup

SPORTS TEHRAN – Iran earned first win at the 2021 FIBA U19 Basketball World Cup, defeating Puerto Rico 81-68 in Group B on Tuesday.

Piter Girgoorian scored 24 points for Iran and Phillip Wheeler earned 18 points for Puerto Rico.

Iran had previously lost to Serbia and Latvia 88-67 and 58-48, respectively.

Iran will meet Lithuania on Thursday in Round of 16.

The tournament runs from July 3-11 in Riga and Daugavpils, in Latvia.

The Baltic country is hosting the event for a second time, following 2011. The United States go into the 2021 edition as the reigning champions from 2019 and the winners of seven of the previous 14 tournaments.

IPL: Persepolis, Sepahan held, Esteghlal still on course

SPORTS TEHRAN – Persepolis and Sepahan football teams were held against their rivals and Esteghlal defeated Tractor to keep their title hopes alive with four games to go in Iran Professional League (IPL).

In Ahvaz, Foolad and Persepolis played out a goalless draw at the Foolad Arena.

Persepolis remained top of the table with 55 points, two points above Sepahan.

Sepahan and Paykan shared the spoils in a 1-1 draw in Tehran. Alireza Kushki gave the hosts the lead in the 27th minute and Ehsan Haji Safi leveled the scoreboard 10 minutes later.

Esteghlal also defeated Tractor 2-1 in Tehran's Azadi Stadium. Esteghlal are third with 47 points.

Tractor defender Hadi Mohammadi scored an own goal in the 55th minute and Mehdi Ghaedi made it 2-0 four minutes later.

Tractor striker Amin Asadi halved the deficit in the stoppage time, four minutes after who came off the bench.

Almost-relegated Machine Sazi defeated Mes 3-0 in Tabriz and Gol Gohar beat Aluminium 2-1 in Kerman.

Struggling Nassaji earned a 1-1 draw against Sanat Naft in Abadan and Shahr Khodro edged past Naft Masjed Soleyman 1-0 in Mashhad.

U21 volleyball coach Ataei tests positive for COVID-19

SPORTS TEHRAN – Iran U21 volleyball team head coach Behrouz Ataei has tested positive for COVID-19.

He has to undergo a period of 14-day quarantine.

The total number of people tested positive for COVID-19 in Iran has surpassed 3.3 million after the detection of 17,212 new cases since yesterday.

Ataei's team prepares for the FIVB Volleyball Men's U-21 World Championship.

Iran have been drawn in Pool C along with Argentina, Morocco and Belgium at the Championship.

The competition will take place in Italy and Bulgaria from September 23 to October 3.

Iran 3rd at World Deaf Junior Freestyle Wrestling C'ships

SPORTS TEHRAN – Iran came third at the 4th World Deaf Junior Freestyle Wrestling Championships.

The Iranian wrestlers bagged one silver and three bronze medals.

Abolfazl Jamedari seized a silver medal in the 57kg weight class.

Sajad Taherian (61kg), Ali Mumivand (65kg) and Hossein Kazemi (79kg) won three bronze medals.

Russia and Turkey finished in the first and second place respectively.

The competitions are being held in Istanbul, Turkey.

TEDPIX gains 831 points on Wednesday

ECONOMY TEHRAN — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 831 points to 1.282 million on Wednesday.

As reported, over 6.928 billion securities worth 54.844 trillion rials (about \$1.305 billion) were traded at the TSE on Wednesday.

The first market's index fell one point, while the second market's index rose 3,754 points.

Over the past two years, a number of factors affecting Iranian economy have created a new status in the country's capital market, in a way that this market experienced such a growth in the past Iranian calendar year 1399 (ended on March 20) that was never seen in its history of more than 50 years.



The fall in oil prices and the reimposition of the U.S. unilateral sanctions on Iran's economy led the Iranian government to turn to the capital market for funding.

On one hand, the government tried to prevent liquidity from going to the markets such as gold and foreign currency, and on the other hand, considering the recent events in the Iranian economy, it also looks at this market with a view of financing, which resulted in the prosperity of this market.

The rising rate of inflation and also that of foreign currency exchange have been also mentioned as two major factors led to the flourishing of the capital market.

In addition to inflation, which has been one of the main drivers of capital market growth in the past two years, another market driver is changing the attitude of government officials towards the capital market and trying to transfer the shares of 18 large state-owned companies through exchange-traded funds (ETFs).

While some economic factors such as reduced banking interest rate, and less profit-making status of the parallel markets including the markets of gold coin, forex, and housing led people to make investment in the capital market, their improved knowledge of this market was also a prominent factor contributing to the capital market's flourishing.

Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) have been taking some major steps in this regard to make people acquainted with the capital market and investment making in this market.

IME offers 24,000 tons of bitumen on its export floor

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) offered 24,275 tons of bitumen on its export floor on Wednesday.

As reported by the IME's Public Relations and International Affairs Department, the export floor of the exchange also hosts the supply of 299 tons of SC-CC engine oil of Sepahan Oil Company for the first time on Wednesday.

IME offered 11,634 tons of polymer and chemical products on its oil and petrochemical trading floor, and offered on its metal and minerals trading floor 15,546 tons of beams, 53,615 tons of rebars, and 80 tons of copper slabs and billets.

As further reported, more than one million tons of commodities worth \$412 million were traded at Iran Mercantile Exchange in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday, July 2).



The volume of trades at the exchange witnessed 13 percent growth in the past week.

The exchange sold on its metal and minerals trading platform 665,862 tons of commodities valued at more than \$233 million.

Commodities traded on this floor included 203,700 tons of steel, 9,985 tons of copper, 10,940 tons of aluminum, 27 tons of precious metals concentrate, 250 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 550 tons of zinc, 389,560 tons of cement, 5 kg of gold bars, 11,000 tons of sponge iron and 40,000 tons of iron ore.

Furthermore, the IME saw trade of 345,056 tons of commodities with a total trading value of more than \$180 million on its oil and petrochemical trading floor.

The IME's customers purchased on this floor 92,150 tons of vacuum bottom, 91,530 tons of bitumen, 94,801 tons of polymeric products, 36,934 tons of chemicals, 27,000 tons of lube cut, 3,577 tons of base oil, 110 tons of argon, 120 tons of sulfur and 205 tons of insulation.

It's worth noting that the exchange also played host to trading 906 tons of various types of commodities on its side market.

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

Mining exploration by GIS 16% more than sixth development plan targets

→ 1 Since its establishment, GIS has put the exploration of mineral resources and the use of geological methods in conducting these studies on its agenda, the official stressed.

He stated that Iran has 68 types of minerals, stating: "Proven reserves of Iranian iron ore amount to 2.7 billion tons (0.8 percent of the world's total reserves) and copper ore reserves amount to 2.6 billion tons (0.4 percent of global reserves), the country also has 11 million tons of zinc (four percent of the total global reserves).

Shahidi further noted that the total proven reserves of Iran's mines are estimated at about 60 billion tons, which is expected to reach more than 100 billion tons with the implementation of priority exploration operations in an area of 500,000 square kilometers.

Back in July 2020, Shahidi had said that GSI was going to improve its per-



formance, especially in the area of exploration of new mineral reserves in the coming years.

The head of the Geological and Mineral Exploration Organization said improving GSI's exploration performance requires defining a mechanism to provide new financial resources for conducting targeted and extensive exploration operations.

"We are seriously looking to pave the way in this regard, and so far we have made significant progress compared to the previous years," Shahidi said.

The official also voiced GSI's readiness for effective cooperation with the private sector with the aim of completing the exploration cycle and supplying the minerals needed by the country's industries.

GSI signed several agreements with the private sector for conducting exploration operations in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

'Developing downstream petchem industries to create more added-value'

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Developing downstream industries in Iran's petrochemical sector is going to create three times more added value than selling raw materials, a National Petrochemical Company (NPC) board member said.

According to Abdolhossein Bayat, the value of petrochemical product exports stands at \$2.7 billion which indicates that \$3,000 more revenue has been earned for each ton of petrochemical exports compared to selling raw materials.

Speaking at the International Conference of Export Development in Polymer Industries in Tehran on Tuesday, Bayat said: "We are trying to steer the economy in a direction that is oil-based instead of 'oil-dependent', and the development of complementary downstream industries is an example of this principle."

"We are not going to produce oil as black gold and sell it to others to process it into white gold [petrochemical products], the added value of petrochemical products

is much more than black gold [raw oil], so oil must be converted to other products by downstream industries so that all could benefit from it," he said.

The official noted that in addition to creating more added value, developing downstream industries would create more job opportunities making the economy more resilient in the face of external factors like sanctions.

The petrochemical industry plays a crucial role in Iran's non-oil economy, as the export of such products is the second-largest source of revenue for the country after crude oil. Petrochemical exports already constitute nearly 33 percent of the country's non-oil exports.

Facing the restrictions that the unjust U.S. sanctions brought about for the oil industry, its development has not been halted and, with a change in strategies, the Oil Ministry has been distancing itself from crude selling and is moving toward the production of products with more value-added.

One of the major areas for the realization of this goal



has been the petrochemical industry, where a wide range of valuable products can be produced from Iran's vast oil and gas resources.

Economy experts call for revising bill on CBI structure

ECONOMY TEHRAN — A group of economy experts have written a letter to the head of the Iranian parliament's Economy Committee calling for revising a bill passed on the responsibilities, goals, structure, and duties of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI), IRNA reported.

The parliament had passed the mentioned bill on "CBI responsibilities, goals, structure and duties" in an open session on May 16.

According to the Parliament Economic Committee, this bill is supposed to amend the country's monetary and banking law approved in 1973; the bill is aimed at preserving the value of the



national currency.

The bill is also going to make sure that the central bank would act more independently to be able to monitor and deal with irregularities that are relatively

independent of the government.

Economy experts have called for parts of the mentioned bill to be amended, saying that if the reforms are not implemented, the bill will not be effective in reforming the legal structure of the country's monetary and banking system.

The experts have stressed that the central bank must be independent, powerful, and accountable to be able to control inflation.

According to experts, the conditions of the country's financial sector show that delaying the updating of monetary and banking laws is no longer permissible, and improving the productivity of the real productive sector depends on

financial reforms; reforms that include a fundamental review of the legal capacity of the country's financial sector.

They emphasize that in order to strengthen the authority of the CBI governor, his dismissal before the end of his term should be subject to the president's consultation with non-executive members of the supreme board, and only allowed in case of proven negligence in performing duties.

Experts say that in the parliament's bill, credit policy harms monetary policy in the sense that providing preferential credit facilities to certain banking institutions would undermine the independence of the monetary policy.

Iran nearly zeroes electricity exports amid surging domestic demand

ECONOMY TEHRAN — Iranian Energy Ministry's Spokesman for Electricity Industry Mostafa Rajabi Mashhadi said on Wednesday the country has stopped electricity exports to neighboring countries due to the surge in domestic demand and only 50 megawatts (MW) of electricity is exported to Afghanistan at the moment.

According to Rajabi Mashhadi, the imports of electricity, on the other hand, have been raised to 650 MW and the country is currently importing electricity from Turkmenistan, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, ISNA reported.

The official had announced on Tuesday that the country's power plants are currently able to generate only 54,000 MW of electricity which is nearly 12,000 MW less than the domestic power demand.

According to Mashhadi, daily electricity consumption in Iran reached 66,250 megawatts (66.25 gigawatts) on Monday, registering a new record in the history of Iran's electricity industry as a new heatwave has blanketed the



country over the past few days.

The mentioned figure was 8,000 MW more than the consumption in the previous year's peak period, and 10,000 MW more than the figure in the previous year's

same date, he said.

The official further noted that each degree of temperature rise would boost the country's electricity consumption by 1,500 MW and the temperature is expected to increase even more in the coming days.

He underlined the increasing use of air conditioning devices in the summer period as one of the major reasons for the increase in the country's electricity consumption, calling on people to manage their consumption and use the automatically regulated devices to decrease energy waste.

In the past decade, constant temperature rising and the significant decrease of rainfalls across Iran have put the country in a hard situation regarding electricity supply during peak consumption periods.

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

Exports from Isfahan province up 150% in a quarter on year

ECONOMY TEHRAN — The value of exports from Isfahan province rose 150 percent during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21), as compared to the first quarter of the past year, a provincial official announced.

Rasoul Kouhestani-Pajouh, the director-general of Isfahan's customs department, said that 570,025 tons of commodities worth \$368.073 million was exported from the province in the first quarter, showing also 82 percent rise in terms of weight.

Existence of the industrial hubs in the province such as steel, textiles, home appliances, paints, and military industries is one of the reasons for the importance of Isfahan Customs.

As announced by the head of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration

(IRICA), 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.

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, regis-



tering 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.

Afghanistan did not turn out the way most security professionals envisioned: professor

→ 1 Do you predict a civil war in Afghanistan in light of U.S. and NATO troop withdrawal? Is it a responsible move to leave the Afghan government alone in such a situation?

I think that is likely that Afghanistan will see increased instability in the next few months. It is very likely that the Taliban will gain more territory and even take the capital and other major cities. The non-Pashtun Afghan communities and even some Pashtuns are not likely to accept this outcome. Thus, civil war and prolonged conflict are definitely likely. The United States has been engaged in Afghanistan for 20 years, trying to help build a viable state there to replace the repressive and incompetent Taliban regime. The Biden administration has decided that it has different priorities and likely believes that U.S. efforts to stabilize Afghanistan have not been successful. It might also be the case that Biden's administration might think it is time for those countries that tried to chase the U.S. out of Afghanistan to actually try to be constructive and help stabilize Afghanistan.

Do you predict other regional powers like Russia and China will fill the gap in Afghanistan?

Neither Russia nor China has the will nor the capabilities to stabilize Afghanistan. Russia has played more the role of spoiler rather than stabilizer in Afghanistan over the last several years. Russia wanted the



U.S. to leave Afghanistan, which explains some of the support Russia has given to the Taliban. But it is one of those situations of "be careful what you wish for." Both Russia and China wanted the U.S. to lose the war in Afghanistan but they may come to regret that wish given that Islamist extremism from Afghanistan is a closer threat to their borders than it is to the United States.

What is the new U.S. security doctrine in West Asia under the Biden

administration?

The Biden security doctrine in the Middle East (West Asia) is different from Trump's in some ways but also continues with many of the standard themes in U.S. policy toward the region. The priorities of U.S. policy remain to avoid a situation in the Middle East (West Asia) that can lead to war, keep oil flowing at a reasonable price, and keep U.S. allies protected.

The major change in U.S. policy with Biden has been toward Iran, which, in many

ways, goes back to Obama's policy. The idea is to develop a workable deal with Iran that keeps it from a nuclear breakout, which would be viewed as a major threat to U.S. national security interests.

Whereas Trump tried to break the Iranian government's ability to carry on if it did not accede to his demands, Biden is trying to achieve a win-win deal with Iran that is more likely to accept.

Do you think the U.S. is able to get rid of its endless wars around the world?

While it is good domestic politics to end U.S. military engagements around the world, to say that they are over is unrealistic.

The U.S. is still a world power with significant interests around the world that are threatened by various state and non-state actors. Nobody in the U.S. national security establishment ever thinks the U.S. is getting into an "endless war." Afghanistan did not turn out the way most security professionals envisioned. Part of that is due to the immense difficulties present in creating a well-functioning state in Afghanistan. Part of it is due to the efforts of some of Afghanistan's neighbors to undermine the U.S. efforts in that country. Some of those countries are now bemoaning the U.S. leaving an unstable Afghanistan with the Taliban on a path to victory. It would seem like the height of hypocrisy to complain about the U.S. leaving if one's government has been actively aiding the Taliban.

U.S. on losing side in Afghanistan, Turkish researcher says

→ 1 The U.S. wants to get rid of the military cost of its existence in this country by withdrawing from Afghanistan. On the other hand, the USA is not disturbed by the scenario that the power vacuum will form after the withdrawal in Afghanistan resulting in a civil war. Because the Washington administration has a desire to destabilize the Central Asia-Russia line and Belt-Road Project route through Afghanistan.

Which side do you think will take the control of Afghanistan after the U.S. withdrawal? Do you expect a civil war?

It is not possible that any power to control Afghanistan. There is a truth revealed by Afghan history. That is the aforementioned country cannot be controlled by foreign powers. The situation of the USA and the Soviet Union confirms this. In this environment, it is not possible to say that another country will control Afghanistan. Unfortunately, there is a risk of civil war. The inability to resolve the disagreement between the Taliban and Kabul administration and the preparations of warlords in the different regions point to the possibility of a civil war. But it cannot be asserted that a civil war will

definitely break out. That would be very assertive. Because it is still not too late. There is a change in the peace process.

How do you see the role of Afghanistan's neighbors after the U.S. withdrawal?

The main concern of regional states about the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan is that the radicalization, which is predicted to rise in the context of Afghanistan, will spread to their own lands.

The way to prevent this is through regional cooperation. The regional states should act together to prevent extra-regional intervention and support the peace process so that the Afghan people can live in peace as a prosperous society.

In this sense, President of Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol's analysis published on ANKASAM's website is very important.

In this context, Erol's proposal is to create a "6+1 Platform" consist of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey. I believe that the aforementioned proposal is an important opportunity to open the door to peace.



Why did Saudi Arabia wage a war on Yemen?

→ 1 The Saudis claimed they sensed a threat from Yemen, where peace talks between the former Saudi-backed government in Sana'a and the new National Salvation Government broke down and clashes ensued between the two sides. Here it's important to note, former President Hadi allied with Riyadh naturally took sides with Riyadh. Whereas the new National Salvation Government backed by a popular public revolution on the ground expressed opposition to Saudi Arabia's decades-old control on Yemen and was seeking independence from Kingdom's policies. As Hadi lost grip on the country, so did the Saudis and Hadi quite naturally fled to Riyadh. For argument's sake, even if Hadi's term had not expired and he was overthrown by a popular revolution, was this enough to wage such a devastating war? Even if Riyadh had claimed it wanted to reinstate what it considers or claims to be the legitimate President of Yemen.

Here, again important to note, many other Saudi allies like former Tunisian President, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, who was toppled during the Islamic Awakening in 2011 by the Tunisian Revolution also fled to Saudi Arabia. Where was the Saudi war on Tunisia to reinstate Ben Ali? Likewise Saudi Arabia's neighbor, Egypt with Hosni Mubarak which Saudi Arabia tried its best to reinstate but not to the extent that it waged a war or militarily intervened. Not only does this prove the Saudi reasoning is false in nature but also puts the spotlight on Yemen. Why only a war on Yemen? Why this quick decisive action to wage war on Yemen, why no talks first, no dialogue, or other non-lethal attempts?

The second reason Riyadh stated for this very surprising yet very unfortunate war on its southern neighbor is that the new situation on the ground (the popular revolution spearheaded by Ansarullah alongside the Yemeni army and many legal and popular institutions and committees) poses a threat to Saudi Arabia, the Persian Gulf as well as the security of the Red Sea. Was this accurate? Did Saudi Arabia present any evidence (even a verbal statement by a Saudi official) to back this accusation to the region or the world? Was the presentation of evidence to back up this claim not necessary to wage a deadly devastating war? It is well known that Yemen is the poorest nation



in the region. It was also well known that Yemen had many challenges ahead from legal issues to public issues to security issues for example writing a new constitution, bringing back basic services to its people, fighting Takfiri terrorist cells operating on its land such as al-Qaeda. This needed time for the new Yemeni government. Can a newborn country in this state pose a threat to Saudi Arabia, the richest Kingdom in the region or the Persian Gulf, or the Red Sea? This also proved to be false. The third and most important reason that was circulating on Saudi media and all Saudi sponsored media in the region and the world at the time, perhaps the most serious allegation by the Saudis is that Yemen has become 'occupied' by Iran, 'controlled' by Iran and military intervention is required to return Yemen back to an 'Arab state'.

In other words, Yemen became Iranian overnight. When you study Yemeni history, literature, culture and recent pride, dignity, resistance and willpower and steadfastness against the Saudis; if the Yemenis are not Arabs, then who are the Arabs?

However, as this was a major accusation, it needs to be documented and examined carefully and with logic. When the Saudis said occupation, let's tackle the simple aspects first. Where is the evidence that Iran 'occupies' Yemen? An occupation tends to have a presence, as with every occupation in the world. Was Iran's army or Iranian forces occupying Yemen or parts of Yemen. Were there any Iranian military bases on Yemeni territory? The accusation was so absurd it was actually laughable. Let's assume the Saudis actually didn't mean a military occupation but some form of Iranian control over Yemen. This also needs to be addressed to understand the misconception not just in Yemen but the entire region.

Here, one has to understand the men-

tality of the tribal ruling monarchy of Saudi Arabia that is backed by the United States and widely believed to be backed by Israel. This ruling monarchy has an issue with something called independent democratic states in West Asia. An independent Tunisian state or Syrian state or for argument's sake an independent Egyptian state or independent Persian Gulf States or even an independent Saudi Arabian state with democratic institutions. The monarchies in West Asia where one tribe rules an entire population with an iron fist view any form of independence as a form of resistance to its rule of power.

In fact, the reality on the ground is that this logic by these ruling tribes leads to regular foreign policy miscalculations, losses and diplomatic blunders. It's difficult to find the last time Saudi Arabia made a real foreign policy achievement. More than six years of Saudi Arabia's war on Yemen, which Riyadh predicted would end in a couple of weeks has been a failure, a defeat and a quagmire for the Kingdom.

These are the same statements that we hear again and again and again from regional states like Iraq, like Syria, like Palestine, like Lebanon and others. The lack of strong Saudi leadership in the region despite all its rich resources and home to the two holiest sites in Islam, this lack of leadership or failed policies is what leads nations to request help from an independent nation in West Asia such as the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Here is where Riyadh needs to change its mentality and be a source of inspiration for West Asia. For example, Lebanon 1982, when Israeli forces invaded and reached Beirut. All the Arab monarchies and dictatorships ignored Lebanon. The only two states that supported Lebanon during its darkest era were Iran and Syria. Both countries under blockade and siege or war and terrorism. Despite that, Lebanon requested help from Iran, a country that itself was facing a war from Saddam's regime but Iran fulfilled its duty to another oppressed nation by sending a team of military advisors.

However, it's very important to highlight, despite western and regional propaganda, that the Lebanese resistance that was formed against Israeli occupation was a Lebanese resistance; made up of Leba-

nese men; commanders and soldiers not Iranian. Until today, the Saudis describe the Lebanese resistance in its media as Iranian without a shred of evidence while there are thousands of shreds of evidence proving otherwise. The same again with Palestine, if Saudi Arabia supported the Palestinians against the Israeli occupation with the same willpower and money and hundreds of billions of dollars worth of weapons it spent on the war on Yemen, the Palestinians may not have turned to Iran for support. The same goes for Iraq and Syria during the era of Daesh's occupation. Where were the Arab monarchies? had it not been Iranian military advisors, Daesh would have taken over both countries. More important than this, to make the picture clearer (and counter American/Israeli/Saudi propaganda) never once have these nations stated in their history, that Iran ordered us to do something in return for Tehran's support.

This reality, where independent states, or those still looking to liberate their lands from occupation, can form an alliance and be free or independent at the same time poses a danger to Saudi Arabia and its allies. Elections in Iran, Iraq, Syria or Lebanon, or Palestine or Yemen pose a threat to monarchical rule. Saudi nationals are asking (quite rightly) why don't have elections, but analysts argue this is why American support for these monarchies (whether Saudi Arabia knows it or not) allows it to maintain its hegemonic presence in West Asia and serve Israeli interests.

Returning to Yemen, prior to March 2015, Saudi Arabia had been interfering in Yemen for decades and in literally every aspect; controlling its governance, policies, army, economy and even faiths and sects. What has Saudi Arabia offered to Yemen after all those years? Where was the infrastructure in Yemen? where was the state of the economy? where was the security? Did Saudi Arabia include Yemen in the Persian Gulf Security Council, considering its alleged staunch support for the country? Saudi Arabia kept Yemen as the region's poorest nation. The Yemeni people are the ones that reached the conclusion based on their will and took a decision to part ways with Riyadh and reclaim their country, borders, sovereignty, independence and most importantly dignity.

'Saudi Arabia responsible for attacks targeting Iraq power grid'

Iraq's Kata'ib Hezbollah resistance group has held Saudi Arabia's spy service responsible for terrorist attacks targeting high voltage electricity transmission lines across the country.

"With definitive evidence, we have concluded that the Saudi intelligence agency is behind the acts of sabotage against Iraqi transmission towers," the group said in a statement.

Kata'ib Hezbollah — which is part of the country's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) or Hashd al-Sha'abi — added that the Riyadh regime is seeking to throw Iraq into chaos again and revive the Takfiri Daesh terrorist group through such destructive moves.

The Iraqi resistance group said Saudi Arabia is offering assistance to ease Iraq's power crisis while targeting its power towers as part of failed attempts to paint itself as a "savior" and erase its criminal record.

It said Israeli, U.S. and Saudi networks have launched a propaganda campaign to misinform and mislead the public opinion about the root cause of the attacks on power towers and clean up Riyadh's image.

Iraq's electricity lines have been targeted repeatedly in the past few months, mostly in the territories where Daesh remnants still pose a threat, whereas the terrorist group had already been crushed across the Arab country through a joint effort by Iraq's army, resistance groups and other regional actors.

Italy eases curbs on arms sales to Saudi Arabia, UAE, despite crimes in Yemen

Italy has eased the restrictions on the sale of weapons to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in an apparent attempt to soothe the diplomatic tensions with the kingdoms, despite the duo's bloody crimes during the war on Yemen.

In July 2019, the Italian government temporarily suspended arms sales to the two aggressor regimes, amid a public outcry over the two kingdoms' leading role in the war, which the United Nations says has brought about the world's worst humanitarian crisis in Yemen.

In January this year, Italy's Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio made the ban permanent and announced that "the government has revoked the authorizations underway for the export of missiles and aircraft bombs to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates."

"[This is] an act that we considered due, a clear message of peace coming from our country. For us, respect for human rights is an unbreakable commitment," he said in a statement back then.

According to Press TV, the Italian Network for Peace and Disarmament said Rome's decision would prevent the sale of around 12,700 missiles to Saudi Arabia.

The blocked sales were part of a total allotment of 20,000 missiles worth \$485 million agreed in 2016 under the center-left Italian government of then-Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, the disarmament group added.

Major U.S. bases hit in W Iraq, E Syria; many Americans wounded at Iraqi base

Two major U.S. bases in western Iraq and on the other side of the border in eastern Syria have come under simultaneous attacks, with the attack on the Iraq-based outpost reportedly wounding many American personnel members.

The concurrent strikes took place on Wednesday against the Ain al-Assad airbase that hosts the U.S. troops in the western Iraqi province of al-Anbar, and the military base run by the American troops at the al-Omar Oilfield in Syria's eastern province of Dayr al-Zawr.

The attacks came more than a week after the American military conducted a deadly air raids against targets reportedly belonging to Iraqi anti-terror forces on the both sides of the Arab countries' common border.

Casualty count

Iraq's Sabereen News agency put the number of the wounded from the attack on the Iraq-based outpost at five, citing preliminary figures.

U.S.-led coalition spokesman, Col. Wayne Marotto, however, alleged that the attack had only wounded two personnel members.

The Thar al-Muhandis Brigade claimed responsibility for the attack on Ain al-Assad. It said it struck the base with 30 Grad rockets, adding that the projectiles hit their targets accurately.

Sources said the strike had most likely been meant to destroy very important and expensive equipment and installations belonging to U.S. troops there.

The Iraqi resistance group has identified its goal as seeking revenge for the U.S. drone strike that martyred senior Iraqi anti-terror commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis in Baghdad early last year. The strike also martyred ranking Iranian counter-terrorism commander, Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani and many others.

According to Press TV, the Iraqi parliament passed a law soon afterwards, ruling all forms of U.S.-led presence in the country as illegal.

Resistance News

Hamas slams Arab and Islamic participation in NATO drills with Israel

INTERNATIONAL TEHRAN — The Hamas Movement has strongly denounced some Arab and Muslim countries for participating in the U.S.-led North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military exercises, some of which would be held in the occupied Palestinian territories with Israel taking part.

In a press release on Monday, Hamas said that the participation of Arab and Islamic armies in military exercises alongside the Israeli occupation army "would not only legalize its existence on the Palestinian land, but it would also perpetuate its devilish plans to Judaize the holy sites, grab more lands, expel the Palestinians from their homes and commit more crimes against them."

"Such participation in maneuvers has sent a betrayal message to our people and their just cause, so we call for an immediate withdrawal from these drills and a boycott of any civilian or military activity joined by the [Zionist] entity anywhere," the Movement underscored.

"Our people look forward to seeing their Ummah (nation) mobilize its forces and carry out military drills intended to help them against injustice and prepare for the great liberation battle," Hamas said.

According to news reports, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia are among the 32 participants in the Sea Breeze 2021 naval drills in the Black Sea cohosted by the US Navy's Sixth Fleet and the Ukrainian Navy.

Over 400 crafters trained in Hormozgan in Q1

HERITAGE TEHRAN – A total of 408 crafters were trained in the southern Hormozgan province by taking courses on handicrafts during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21), the provincial tourism chief has said.

The courses that included the fields of wood curving, wickerwork, traditional embroidery, kilim, and pottery, were held in the city of Bandar Abbas and Baghat Village, Sohrab Banavand announced on Wednesday.



The handicrafts sector is an important sector of the economy that can provide employment and income generation to the people of the province, the official added.

Known as the province of islands, Hormozgan province is located on the northern coasts of the Persian Gulf. It embraces scenic islands among which Kish, Hormuz, Hengam and Qeshm are the most beautiful ones and top tourist destinations in southern Iran.

With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the number of cities and villages registered by the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next.

In January 2020, the cities of Shiraz, Malayer, and Zanjan and the village of Qassembad were designated by the WCC-Asia Pacific Region, putting Iran's number of world crafts cities and villages from ten to 14.

Shiraz was named a "world city of [diverse] handicrafts". Malayer was made a global hub for woodcarving and carved-wood furniture. Zanjan gained the title of a "world city of filigree". And Qassembad village, which is nationally known for its traditional costumes, was also promoted to a world hub of handicrafts. Chador Shab, a kind of homemade outer garment for women, was, however, the main subject for the WCC assessment for the village.

The value of Iran's handicrafts exports stood at \$120 million during the first eleven months of the past Iranian calendar year 1399 (March 20, 2020 – February 18, 2021), Mehr reported. The country's handicrafts exports slumped during the mentioned months in comparison to the same period last year earlier due to the damage the coronavirus pandemic has inflicted on global trade.

The Islamic Republic exported \$427 million worth of handicrafts during the first eleven months of the calendar year 1398. Of the figure, some \$190 million was earned via suitcase trade (allowed for customs-free and tax-free transfer) through 20 provinces, according to data compiled by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.

Ceramics, pottery vessels, handwoven cloths as well as personal ornamentations with precious and semi-precious gemstones are traditionally exported to Iraq, Afghanistan, Germany, the U.S., the UK, and other countries.

Moveable properties in Bushehr made national heritage

HERITAGE TEHRAN – A total of 12 historical moveable properties in Bushehr province, have recently been inscribed on the national heritage list.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts announced the inscriptions on Wednesday in a letter to the governor-general of the southwestern province.



Ancient inscriptions, petroglyphs, gravestones, guns, and statues were among the properties added to the prestigious list.

With over 6,000 years of history and significant monuments from the Elamite, Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sassanid eras, Bushehr is one of Iran's most important historical centers.

Besides its cultural heritage, beautiful beaches and lush palm groves make it an attractive destination for world travelers.

The historical and architectural monuments of Bushehr include Islamic buildings like mosques and praying centers, mansions, old towers, castles, as well as gardens.

When it comes to cultural attractions, there are many historical mounds in Bushehr including Tall-e Khandaq with Sassanid architectural style, Tall-e Marv located near an Achaemenid Palace, and Qajar era Malek al-Tojar Mansion. Qajar era Kazeruni Mansion, which has been inscribed on the World Heritage List, is another attraction that world travelers love to see among various ancient sites.

Royal palaces you must see in Tehran

→ 1 The palace contains numerous ornaments dating from the 19th century, which are one of its distinguishing features. Palace visitors are impressed by the palace's lavish decoration: painting, mural, fresco, marble carvings, mirror mosaic, and stained glass.

Talar-e Salam, or the reception room, is perhaps the most famous hall in the palace and is where the kings welcomed foreign guests arriving in Iran. Beautiful mirrorwork by Iranian masters decorates the ceilings and walls of this hall, and marble mosaics cover the floors.

UNESCO has it that the complex exemplifies architectural and artistic achievements of the Qajar era including the introduction of European motifs and styles into Persian arts.

Niavaran Palace
Niavaran Cultural-Historical Complex, covering an area of about eleven hectares, is composed of several landmark buildings, museums, and monuments constructed in the 19th and 20th centuries during the Pahlavi and late Qajar eras.

The history of the palace complex stretches back to about 280 years ago when Fath-Ali Shah of the Qajar Dynasty ordered for a summer residence to be built over the then countryside area of the capital. The two-story Ahmad Shahi Pavilion is one of the highlights of the complex.

The main palace of the complex was originally erected for the purpose of royal ceremonies and gatherings. However, it later



A view of the UNESCO-registered Golestan Palace in downtown Tehran.

turned into the residence of the second king of Pahlavi king, Mohammad Reza Shah, and his family.

With an area of 9,000 square meters, the palace is entirely adorned with magnificent plasterwork, mirrorwork, and tilework. Its architecture boasts a blend of pre- and post-Islamic art.

Its beautifully decorated and fully furnished

interior features loads of artworks such as precious paintings and sculptures by Iranian and foreign artists.

Sa'dabad Palace

Sprawled on about 110 hectares of a mountainside parkland in northern Tehran, the Sa'dabad Cultural-Historical Complex is used to be a royal summer residence during the Qajar and Pahlavi eras.

The complex was initially established and inhabited by some Qajar monarchs in the 19th century. It has undergone further expansions from the 1920s until the 1979 Islamic Revolution. The site embraces a variety of buildings, some of which turned to be house museums showcasing a wide range of royal families' memorabilia including lavishly-made furniture, dishware, automobiles, carpets, and miniature paintings.

Among the most famous and beautiful palaces of the complex are Green Palace and Ahmad Shah Palace.

The Green Palace was built by the order of Reza Shah in 1922. The palace is built of marble and decorated with stucco. The palace contains oil paintings depicting stories from epic Persian poet Ferdowsi's Shahnameh. The aristocratic French style is represented in the halls of this palace.

Ahmad Shah Palace is the oldest palace in Sa'dabad complex and Part of this palace is now in the hand of the presidential administration.

The first time Tehran is mentioned in historical accounts is in an 11th-century chronicle in which it is described as a small village north of Ray.

Tehran has many to offer its visitors including Grand Bazaar, Treasury of National Jewels, National Museum of Iran, Glass & Ceramic Museum, Masoudieh Palace, Sarkis Cathedral, Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Carpet Museum of Iran, to name a few.

Uraman's World Heritage registration to be finalized within weeks

HERITAGE TEHRAN – The UNESCO World Heritage Status of the Uraman rural landscape is expected to be confirmed by the end of the current Iranian month of Tir (July 22), the tourism minister has said.

Kordestan and the region's livelihood could be developed with such registration, while they used to be little-known and low-income in the past, CHTN quoted Ali-Asghar Mounesan as saying on Tuesday.

For his part, Puya Talebnia, the director of the cultural landscape said that Uraman's dossier prepared for the global registration was particularly strong in the preparation of three-dimensional maps.

In this regard, some 45 historical buildings and seven mosques in the region were also fully restored, he added.

The Cultural Landscape of Uraman, which was previously assessed by visiting panels of experts from the UN body, will formally be evaluated during the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, which will be held in China's Fuzhou from July 16 to 31.

Last September, Hessam Mahdi, the representative of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), announced that the case for the inscription of the

Uraman cultural landscape on the prestigious list had been well prepared and he was "impressed" by the status of the rural landscape. He made the remarks on the sidelines of a visit to the western province of Kermanshah. "I am proud of being chosen to assess the case and traveling to Iran as I could visit the local people in the region," he said.

Stretched on the slopes of Sarvabad county, the rural area embraces dense and step-like rows of houses in a way that the roof of each house forms the yard of the upper one, a feature that adds to its charm and attractiveness. As the cultural landscape covers 300 villages and in terms of architecture and landscape, it is one of the most beautiful and presentable heritages in the world.

Local officials believe that inscription of the property on the prestigious list of the UN body could jumpstart tourism in the region and also look at it as a tool for better conservation of its natural landscapes and unique cultural scenes for the next generations, saying its unique rural texture, architecture, lifestyle, and agriculture is a prominent example of the integration of man into nature.

Iran submitted the UN body a dossier for the Uraman cultural landscape in 2019. Some eighty experts in various



fields compiled and developed the dossier in terms of anthropology, archeology and history, natural sciences, architecture, historical documents, and other related fields.

Uraman is considered a cradle of Kurdish art and culture from the days of yore. Pirshalyar, which is named after a legendary local figure, is amongst time-honored celebrations and rituals that are practiced annually across the region.

Police arrest illegal diggers in Qom

HERITAGE TEHRAN – Iranian police have recently arrested four illegal excavators and antique smugglers in the central province of Qom, CHTN reported on Wednesday.

The accused people were traced and finally arrested in the historical region of Pir Qeisar, near Dizijan village, said Faramarz Bazgir, a senior police official in charge of protecting cultural heritage.

A metal detector and some excavation



tools have been seized from the culprits who were surrendered to the judicial system for further investigation, the official added.

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

Apart from sightseers and pilgrims who visit Qom to pay homage at the holy

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

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

Iranian handicrafts: Marquetry

HERITAGE TEHRAN – Marquetry is termed "Mo'araq" in Persian, which literally means "an object with veins". In terms of handicrafts, Mo'araq is a form of art in which colorful pieces of wood are cut and arranged next to each other on a wooden or polyester background.

A variety of woods are used to make marquetry, from seventy to eighty species, with a variety of colors, and sometimes camel bone, seashells, copper, brass, silver, gold, and ivory are incorporated to create a very beautiful material.

In Iran, it was believed that marquetry was practiced from 90 years ago, however, a wooden comb found recently in "Shahr-e Sukhteh" proves the craft dates back thousands of years. Wood pieces were cut and attached to the handle using tree gum to make the comb's handle.

One of the many examples of marquetry is the stand for Holy Quran at the Metropolitan Art Museum. This piece dates back to the 15th century and is made from carved wood, latticework, and inlaid veneers.



Inlay is a technique used in early marquetry, which is created by cutting out parts of the background based on the design and by using tools such as chisels. The cut areas then receive sections of a different material such as wood, ivory, bone, or seashells.

Additionally, several more elaborate designs were applied on door inlays and boxes during the Safavid dynasty. During the same period, there was also another kind of marquetry in which pieces of wood, bone, and layers of "Khatam" (an ancient Persian technique of inlaying) were attached to each other.

Over time, marquetry has undergone many changes. When it was first designed, it was based on arabesque patterns and used only five limited woods: ebony, silverberry, pear, and areca.

Marquetry was primarily used to decorate the tops of tables, cabinets, doors, backs of chairs, mirror frames, and chessboards. Currently, this beautiful craft is used to create elegant tableaus in addition to making useful objects.

A wide variety of wood types have been incorporated into marquetry products since the 1950s due to advances in the understanding of wood.

Nowadays marquetry is practiced in many cities and provinces of the country.

Tallaght Wells in Qeshm: A Tourist Attraction of Iran

TEHRAN (Tasnim)—In one of the thirdest parts of Iran close to the equator there are low amount of rainfall every year. Water has always been the most valuable element for people in this area, more valuable than gold or gems.

If you go to the Qeshm Island in Persian Gulf in your tour in Iran you will see one of these areas.

Centuries ago people of this area dug 366

wells in the stones to gather clean water from rainfall. They are called Tallaght wells. According to scientists the number 366 represent the number of days in a leap year. Today only about 60 of them are left and half of this number is usable for extracting water. This phenomenon attracts many tourists and also the Iranians who travel with a tour in Iran.

Each well has a name and people used one well for each day. The wells are dug in

the stones of a schist mountain in a hole next to a cliff close to Qeshm Island. These wells are located out of the island and next to the historic Naderi Castle in a village called "Laft".

There are some old and huge trees rooted in the stones next to the Tallaght wells, which locals believe are guardians of the Tallaght wells. The liveliness of these trees shows that water is available in the wells.

Since the wells are located on a deeper

area next to a coral hill, the rain water goes downhill and enters in to the wells. The bottom of the wells is covered by plaster that helps water to stay clean and cool for a long time. Tallaght wells dates back to Achaemenid and Sassanid Dynasty.

The south region of Iran has numerous historical and natural attractions and the best time of the year to book for a tour in Iran to visit these parts is from late September to April.

High salinity of Lake Urmia reduces flamingo population

ENVIRONMENT TEHRAN – The population of flamingos in Lake Urmia National Park has decreased by 30 to 35 percent due to the lack of proper living conditions, mainly as a result of the lake's high salinity, Omid Yousefi, head of the wildlife surveillance of West Azarbaijan's department of environment, stated.

Noting that this year, 35 to 40 thousand flamingos were counted in Lake Urmia islands, he highlighted that in recent years, the lake was host to 50 to 60 thousand flamingos, which significantly dropped this year due to lack of living conditions and high salt concentration.

In previous years, the annual increase in the population of flamingos and the presence of other bird species increased by an average of about 10 to 15 percent, he said adding, the existence of suitable biological conditions, especially food availability and habitat security, in the early months of this year had caused flamingos to breed, but unfortunately hypersalinity of the lake had a negative impact on the population.

According to field studies, the population of birds in this habitat has decreased significantly, although the flamingo chicks of the remaining population, which feed mainly on Artemia, are hatching.

Teams of experts and rangers are currently collecting trapped birds inside the lake and releasing them into surrounding wetlands after washing the salt that settled on their bodies, he explained.

Flamingos are a type of wading bird in the family Phoenicopteridae, four flamingo species are distributed throughout



Lake Urmia, was once the largest salt-water lake in West Asia. However, decades of long-standing drought spells and elevated hot summer temperatures that speed up evaporation as well as increased water demands in the agriculture sector and poor management shrank the lake drastically.

the Americas, including the Caribbean, and two species are native to Africa, Asia, and Europe.

Flamingos are very social birds; they live in colonies whose population can number in the thousands. These large colonies are

believed to serve three purposes for the flamingos: avoiding predators, maximizing food intake, and using scarcely suitable nesting sites more efficiently. Before breeding, flamingo colonies split into breeding groups of about 15 to 50 birds.

Lake Urmia condition

Shared between West Azarbaijan and East Azarbaijan provinces in northwestern Iran, Lake Urmia, was once the largest salt-water lake in West Asia. It was home to many migratory and indigenous animals including flamingos, pelicans, egrets, and ducks, and attracted hundreds of tourists every year who had bathed in the water to take advantage of the therapeutic properties of the lake.

However, decades of long-standing drought spells and elevated hot summer temperatures that speed up evaporation as well as increased water demands in the agriculture sector and poor management shrank the lake drastically. In 1999 the volume of water which was at 30 billion cubic meters drastically decreased to half a billion cubic meters in 2013. Moreover, the lake surface area of 5,000 square kilometers in 1997 shrunk to one-tenth of that to 500 square kilometers in 2013.

Lake's surface area has now reached up to 2,917 square kilometers, indicating 1,582 square kilometers increase in comparison to 2013 when the Lake Urmia Restoration Program began.

The level of Lake Urmia has reached 1,271 meters, which indicates an increase of over 1.39 meters compared to the lowest volume recorded. However, it still needs 9.5 billion cubic meters of water to reach its ecological level.

The above normal levels of rain came to help conservation measures to preserve Lake Urmia, but, this year, the drought and low rainfall are threatening the lake again.

COVID-19 UPDATES

The statistics are related to 24 hours started 2:00 p.m. July 6

New cases	17,212
New deaths	166
Total cases	3,304,135
Total deaths	85,261
New hospitalized patients	1,710
Patients in critical condition	3,344
Total recovered patients	2,967,821
Diagnostic tests conducted	24,198,270
Doses of vaccine injected	6,559,650

First intl. innovation center to open in Tehran

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

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

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

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

Technology development in 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 5,000 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.

Vice President for Science and Technology Sourena Sattari 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, 2021).

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."

Philanthropists donate \$1.4b to construct schools nationwide

SOCIETY TEHRAN – School building benefactors have allocated a total of 60 trillion rials (nearly \$1.4 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials) to construct educational spaces over the past four years, IRNA reported on Wednesday.

Over the past year (March 2020-March 2021), some 50 percent of the country's schools have been constructed either entirely charitable or in partnership with the government and charities, Mehroolah Rakhshanimehr, director of the Organization for Development, Renovation, and Equipping Schools, has said.

Over the past year, a sum of 30 trillion rials (about \$700 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) has been allocated to school construction and renovation by the benefactors, he explained.

"Brick-by-brick" national plan has so far collected 80 billion rials (about \$2 million at the official rate of 42,000



rials), Rakhshanimehr further stated. The plan started early last year and was highly welcome by benevolent people, aiming to encourage people to do-

nate money for building schools in deprived areas of the country, he added.

Rakhshanimehr said in August 2020 that some 30 percent of the country's schools have been constructed by school-building benefactors; there are 450 school-building charities in Iran.

Iran has many school-building benefactors amounting to 650,000 people inside and 1,000 people outside the country.

A total of 36 trillion rials (nearly \$857 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) has been allocated to renovate the schools nationwide over the past 8 years, Seyed Mohammad-Ali Afshani, former head of the Organization for Development, Renovation, and Equipping Schools, said on Saturday.

There are some 107,000 schools nationwide with 530,000 classes, 160,000 of which are dilapidated, not meeting safety standards, accounting for 30 percent of the schools nationwide.

Human activity influencing global rainfall, study finds

Human activity such as greenhouse gas emissions and land use change were a key factor in extreme precipitation events such as flooding and landslides around the world, a study has found.

In recent years, there have been numerous instances of flooding and landslides: extreme precipitation, an amount of rainfall or snowfall that exceeds what is normal for a given region, can be a cause of such events.

Natural variations in climate, such as El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO), affect precipitation. But attribution research studies, such as the latest modelling study, published on Tuesday in Nature Communications, work to better understand whether human actions impacting the climate, such as greenhouse gas emissions and land-use changes, contribute to the likelihood and severity of extreme events.

In the study, UCLA researchers looked at global climate records to examine whether anthropogenic influence – human-induced changes to the climate – had affected extreme

precipitation. By examining multiple data sets of observed precipitation, the researchers were able to build a global picture, and found evidence of human activity affecting extreme precipitation in all of them.

"It is vital to identify the changes [to precipitation patterns] caused by human action, compared to the changes caused by natural climate variability," explained lead researcher Gavin Madakumbura. "It allows us to manage water resources and plan adaptation measures to changes driven by climate change."

Up till now, work in this field has been restricted to countries, rather than applied globally. But the research team utilised machine learning to create a global data set.

Human-induced climate change is causing the Earth's temperature to increase. Different mechanisms link warmer temperatures to extreme precipitation. "The dominant mechanism [driving extreme precipitation] for most regions around the world is that warmer air can hold more



water vapour," said Madakumbura. "This fuels storms."

While there are regional differences, and some places are becoming drier, Met Office data shows that overall, intense rainfall is increasing globally, meaning the rainiest days of the year are getting wetter. Changes to rainfall extremes – the number of very heavy rainfall days – are also a problem. These short, intense periods of rainfall can lead to flash flooding, with devastating impacts on infrastructure and

the environment.

"We are already observing a 1.2C warming compared to pre-industrial levels," pointed out Dr Sihan Li, a senior research associate at the University of Oxford, who was not involved in the study. She said: "If warming continues to increase, we will get more intense episodes of extreme precipitation, but also extreme drought events as well."

Li said that while the machine-learning method used in the study was cutting edge, it currently did not allow for the attribution of individual factors that can influence precipitation extremes, such as anthropogenic aerosols, land-use change, or volcanic eruptions.

The method of machine learning used in the study learned from data alone. Madakumbura pointed out that in the future, "we can aid this learning by imposing climate physics in the algorithm, so it will not only learn whether the extreme precipitation has changed, but also the mechanisms, why it has changed". "That's the next step," he said.

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20% of areas in Iran at high risk of flood

Twenty percent of areas across Iran are highly prone to flooding, Khosro Shahbazi, head of the Forests, Range, and Watershed Management Organization (FRWMO), has said.

"Precipitation in Iran is one-third of the world's average, as the country is located in a dry and fragile region where we experience 11 millimeters decrease in precipitation each 10 years and an increase in evaporation of more than 50 millimeters every year," he explained, ISNA reported.

Rainfall fluctuations usually lead to flood and devastation, so a comprehensive planning for watershed management and flood control is required, he noted. Since most of the water supply is extracted from groundwater resources, the country is in a critical condition in terms of groundwater resources, he stated, highlighting, because perception is less than water withdrawal from the aquifers, so the best way to store rainwater is watershed and aquifer projects.

بیست درصد ایران جزو مناطق با خطر سیل خیزی بالاست

سرپرست سازمان جنگلها، مراتع و آبخیزداری می گوید ۲۰ درصد ایران جزو مناطق با خطر سیل خیزی بالاست.

به گزارش روز جمعه ایسنا، خسرو شهبازی افزود: میزان بارش در کشور ما یک سوم متوسط آن در دنیا است و از نظر جغرافیایی در منطقه ای خشک و شکننده واقع شده‌ایم که هر ۱۰ سال با ۱۱ میلیمتر کاهش بارش و بیش از ۵۰ میلیمتر افزایش تبخیر و تعرق مواجه هستیم که همه منجر به این شده که بارش‌ها در منطقه ما سیلابی و ویرانگر باشد، به همین خاطر نیازمند برنامه ریزی جامع برای مدیریت حوضه‌های آبخیز و کنترل سیلاب‌ها هستیم.

به گفته شهبازی از آنجایی که بیشتر آب مورد استفاده در کشور از آبهای زیرزمینی تامین می‌شود جزو کشورهای بحرانی و فوق بحرانی از نظر منابع آب زیرزمینی بوده و چون برداشت ما از سفره‌ها بیش از ورودی آب به آنهاست و بهترین راهکار برای ذخیره این آب‌ها انجام پروژه‌های آبخیزداری و آبخیزداری است.

Climate characteristic of Iran

(Part 1)

Both the climate of Persia as a whole and the differences in weather among its various regions are determined primarily by its location within the arid belt of the eastern hemisphere. The general dryness and barrenness of the country result from its position in relation to the planetary circulation system and are further heightened, as well as internally differentiated, by the mountain ranges encircling much of its perimeter, specifically the Alborz and the Zagros. On one hand, these high barriers prevent moist Mediterranean and Caspian winds from reaching the Persian plateau and thus ensure the extreme dryness of the greater part of central Persia; on the other, the outer flanks of the mountains are subject to sometimes heavy precipitation, so that they differ fundamentally from the plateau in their ecology and prevailing forms of human activity and land use.

Climate and weather. The Persian national weather service first began publishing its observations only in the year 1335/1956, when a network of synoptic observation stations was first constructed in conformity with international standards; detailed data for many parts of the country are thus available for only about twenty-five or thirty years. The most important sources of information are the meteorological yearbooks that have appeared annually since 1335/1956. On the basis of these data it has become possible to understand the place of Persia within the framework of climatic divisions of the earth's surface.

In W. Koppen's classification the largest portion of Persian territory appears to fall into the dry-steppe (semiarid; BS) and dry-desert (arid; BW) zones. The climates of the plateau and the southern coastal area can be further classified as colder (BSk or BWk) or warmer (BSh or BWh) respectively, the boundary being the 18° C annual isotherm. According to Koppen, only the upland areas of the Alborz and the Zagros can be classified as having a subtropical dry-summer climate (Csa), whereas the northern slopes of the Alborz and the Caspian lowlands belong to the category of subtropical humid climates (Cf).

In the more refined classification of C. Troll and K. H. Paffen, in which seasonal contrasts in humidity and aridity are also taken into account, most of Persia falls into two subcategories of the warm-temperate subtropical zone: the dry-summer steppe climates with humid winters (IV2), to which the greater part of the country obviously belongs, and the semi desert and desert climates (IV5), which are especially typical of the large stream basins on the uplands. The Zagros area is an exception in that it belongs to Troll and Paffen's climate type IV 1, the dry-summer Mediterranean climates with humid winters.

In the system of global atmospheric-pressure and wind belts Persia straddles the boundary zone between the northeasterly trade winds that prevail in summer and the rain-bearing westerlies of winter. The rhythm of seasonal shifts in these zones of atmospheric pressure has a major impact on climate, which is further influenced and modified by variations in topography, as well as by the distribution of land and water masses.

(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



GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

That knowledge which remains only on your tongue is very superficial. The intrinsic value of knowledge is that you act upon it.

Imam Ali (AS)

Art, architecture during Qajar period

Part 7 Enameled work

Gold and silver enameled in opaque shades of pink, blue, red, yellow, green, white, and violet were much associated with the Qajar period.

Enameled wares were used for luxurious domestic and personal accessories: sets of vases, dishes, boxes, and qalyan (nargileh or water pipe) bases, and were executed in a technique similar to that of lacquer painting, using designs of birds among roses and irises, portraits of women in both European and Persian dresses, and so forth.

Although artists worked in both media, one artist distinctive for his enamels was Ali, who painted the back of an oval hand-mirror with a portrait of Fath-Ali Shah framed in a garland of irises, tulips, and carnations.

Apart from this group of enamels, Qajar metalwork consists of a wide range of utensils worked in brass or copper. These included everyday objects such as cooking pots, washing basins, and more elaborately shaped and decorated ewers and candlesticks, lamps, and cosmetic boxes.

These were generally worked in brass or copper, their engraved and/or pierced designs were usually based on a continuous series of medallions containing a repertoire of figural motifs ranging from conventionalized royal figures to fantastic creatures of legend and myth.

These medallions were reserved against a background of finely worked spiraling and interlacing floral scroll. Elaborately worked armor was not made after the reign of Mohammad Shah, as the army reforms of his reign introduced European-type uniforms. The roughly worked pieces that continued to be made were in the nature of theatrical costume, insofar as they were worn in the taziieh performances.

Ceramics

Qajar ceramic wares are seemingly less interesting than contemporary tilework, presumably for two reasons: quantities of technically superior wares from Europe were imported at the expense of local industry, and the demand for tiles as architectural decoration meant that the best workmanship and design was directed to production.

The ceramic wares have not been completely classified or studied nor have their production centers been fully listed. Tehran, Shiraz, Isfahan, and Nain appear to have been the main centers.

Apart from unglazed earthenware pottery, with their virtually unchanged functions and shapes, Qajar ceramics may tentatively be classified into three main groups.

1. Vessels made in a thin, textured white composite clay and frit paste with a thin alkaline glaze and rather sketchy floral designs in blue, purple, brown, and olive green, probably produced in the early 19th century.

Related to them technically is a distinctive group made at Nain with designs painted in blue and black employing a repertoire of motifs such as sprigs of flowers and Chinese-style willow patterns, possibly influenced by contemporary Staffordshire imports, fish motifs and stepped lozenge bands.

Dated examples show that such pieces covered a long time span, from 1809 up to 1935 when production ceased as Nain went over to carpet making.

2. Bowls, jars, and jugs were made in a buff earthenware decorated with overglaze enamels in a palette of bright pink, blue, yellow, green, and black.

The crudely executed designs of butterflies, floral borders, and groups of pagodas inhabited by people in Chinese dress, are mainly of interest because they are derived from Chinese "famille-rose" porcelain.

A few examples, such as a bowl signed and dated by Ali-Akbar of Shiraz 1846, are painted to a higher standard with scenes of Persian men and women framed in a pastoral landscape.

3. More sophisticated underglaze-painted wares were made in Tehran from about 1880 onward. Using a body fabric of hard white composite clay and frit paste, and designs painted in muted color schemes, they resemble the underglaze-painted tilework that came into fashion at that time.

The ware was shaped into elegant if somewhat contrived chalice- and shield-shaped vases and painted with fluent patterns based on floral and leaf scroll and peony blossoms—motifs used as background fillings to tile designs.

Textiles

If ceramic production was somewhat limited, the versatility of Qajar textiles is more than adequate compensation. Textiles were the main items of domestic furnishing—floor coverings, cushions, bed-quilts, tablecloths, costumes, especially the wide trousers later replaced by ballet-like skirts, and jackets or women's dress.

Textiles may be conveniently classified according to technique. The tradition of complex silk weaves continued using floral motifs derived from Safavid sources but modified to cover the textile surface with rich, closely textured design.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica
To be continued

“Morning of the Ninth Day”, biography of senior IRGC commander Alireza Nuri, released

→1 “I’m really happy that I could introduce one of the heroes of my motherland,” Babai said during the ceremony. “In my research for the biography, I learned lessons from Martyr Nuri’s revolutionary management, his joie de vivre and his valor and generosity,” he added.

Nuri’s son, Hamed, also delivered a speech at the meeting.

“This book begins with stories from Martyr Nuri’s childhood and continues with accounts of his activities working on the railways in the war, and in his private life,” Hamed said.

“The book can be really interesting for those people who want to learn more about martyrs in the war,” he added.

“Writers do their best to exactly express events, however, there some topics that words and phrases can never say, for example, families’ longings for their



Cover of the biography of IRGC senior commander Alireza Nuri “Morning of the Ninth Day”.

beloved ones martyred during the war,” he noted.

“Pens will never be able to express these longings, however, Besat 27 made every endeavor so that this book can be close to the truth,” Hamed stated.

Earlier in March, Besat 27 published “Mountain of Fire”, which has been compiled by Gholi Babai. The book contains a large number of documents on the operations carried out during the Iran-Iraq war.

The documents were declassified by the 27th Mohammad Rasulallah Division of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

27th Muhammad Rasulallah Division was established as the 27th Muhammad Rasulallah Brigade by Ahmad Motevasselian and Mohammad-Ebrahim Hemmat during the war, and was expanded into a division just before Operation Bait ul-Muqaddas.



Front cover of the book “Iran-Japan Cinema”.

CULTURE TEHRAN — A book studying cinema ties between Iran and Japan has been published in Iran.

Qodratollah Zakeri, an Iranian expert on Japanese studies, is the author of the book “Iran-Japan Cinema” published by

Book chronicles Iran-Japan relations on cinema

the Alhoda International Cultural, Artistic and Publishing Institute in Tehran.

Zakeri has written the book based on a commission from the Iran Cultural Center in Tokyo, the Iranian cultural attaché in Japan, Hossein Divsalar, said in a press release published on Tuesday.

In one chapter, the book delves into the common subjects portrayed by Japanese and Iranian filmmakers.

It also provides a deep insight into the history of films in the two countries, discussing joint film projects carried out by Iranian and Japanese filmmakers.

The Japanese knowledge of Iranian cinema and Iranians’ acquaintance with Japanese are among the topics discussed in the book.

Film festivals in both the countries and the presence of their filmmakers at events are studied in a special chapter.

“So far, there has been no book to discuss comprehensively film ties between Iran and Japan,” Divsalar said.

“Now, this book provides film experts with unique information about the Iran-Japan relations on cinema,” he added.

He noted that the book aims to provide a route for closer relations in the field of cinema.

Previously in April 2019, Alhoda released “Japanese Studies in Iran” co-written by Mohammad Taqizadeh and Zakeri based on a commission from the Iran Cultural Center in Tokyo.

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

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.

Paintings by the Japanese artists Jun Matsubara, Shigenobu Moriyama, Hideko Murata, Takumi Sejima, Kidai Taguchi, Soh Tsukamoto, Syouchiro Tsukuda and Kazunori Yamauchi were also showcased in Tokyo as part of the Iran-Japan Cultural Exchange Exhibition last Friday.

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

New Persian translation of “Klara and the Sun” released

CULTURE TEHRAN — A new Persian translation of “Klara and the Sun” by Kazuo Ishiguro, a British novelist of Japanese origin, has been published by Saless in Tehran.

This edition has been rendered into Persian by Soheil Sommi, a translator of numerous books by Western writers, including Alexander Jovy’s novel “I Am Cyrus: The Story of the Real Prince of Persia”

Another Persian rendition of the book by Shiva Maqanlu was released by the Nimaj publishing house in May.

“Klara and the Sun” was originally published by Knopf on March 2, 2021.

It is the first novel by Ishiguro since he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 2017.

The book is about Klara, an artificial

friend with outstanding observational qualities, who, from her place in the store, carefully watches the behavior of those who come in to browse, and of those who pass on the street outside. She remains hopeful that a customer will soon choose her.

The dystopian science fiction story is a thrilling book that offers a look at our changing world through the eyes of an unforgettable narrator, and one that explores the fundamental question: What does it mean to love?

In her review for The New York Times, Radhika Jones notes that “Klara and the Sun” returns to the theme of “The Remains of the Day” as “Ishiguro gives voice to: not the human, but the clone; not the lord, but the servant. ‘Klara and the Sun’ complements his brilliant vision, though it

doesn’t reach the artistic heights of his past achievements. When Klara says, ‘I have my memories to go through and place in the right order,’ it strikes the quintessential Ishiguro chord.”

In a positive review, Cherwell described Ishiguro’s novel as characterized by “elegance and poise,” praising the narrator Klara as “a memorable first-person narrative voice, simultaneously robotic and infantile, scrupulous yet naive.”

The Economist praised the book and mentioned that it affects “a cross between ‘Never Let Me Go’ and ‘The Remains of the Day’, with Klara in the place of Stevens, the butler whose first-person narration provided a between-the-lines portrait of morality among the English upper crust in the interwar years.”



Cover of the Persian translation of Kazuo Ishiguro’s novel “Klara and the Sun” by Soheil Sommi.



“Malakout” by Iranian director Farnush Abedi.

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian short film “Malakout” (“Divinity”) was crowned as best animation at the Ignite Film Festival in Swindon, a town in southwestern England, the organizers announced on Tuesday.

Directed by Farnush Abedi, the film also won the award for best sound design by Soroush Abedi.

“Malakout” named best animation at Ignite Film Festival

Produced at the Documentary and Experimental Film Center, the film tells the story of a pianist, who has lost one of his hands and can’t play the piano anymore. Doctors decide to transplant a dead criminal’s hand to his body. The pianist with his new hand starts killing people.

The film has been screened in numerous international events and won several awards, including the Excellence Award at the 18th Hiroshima International Animation Festival.

It also won two honors, including the best director award for Abedi, at the Dead of Night Film Festival in Liverpool.

It also received the best score award at the festival. Soroush Abedi has also worked as a composer in this acclaimed movie.

“Asphyxiate” directed by Nicole Pott from the UK won the award for best short drama at the Ignite Film Festival.

The film written by Michaela Longden is about a

young woman who tries to gasp for air as she drowns in the memories of a tainted relationship.

“A New Leash on Life” by Canadian director Daniel Jeffery was named best comedy.

In the film, after one too many rage-filled outbursts, a magical talking dog named Basketball must talk his owner, Frank, out of having him put down.

The award for best horror film went to “Black Moon” by American director Ryan Graff. On her walk home, a young mother is lured into a tunnel, unaware of what has been awakened inside on the night of a black moon.

“Ina’s Circle” by William Lorton from the United States was also picked as best documentary.

A filmmaker is shocked to learn that the two paintings hanging in his childhood home were done by a relative born in 1888. This kicks off a four-year journey chronicling the life of California artist Ina Perham Story (1888-1979), to understand her artwork, her independence, and her famous friends from the early 20th century.

Persian readers gain access to “Retrotopia”

CULTURE TEHRAN — Polish sociologist and philosopher Zygmunt Bauman’s book “Retrotopia” has been published in Persian.

Saless is the publisher of the book translated into Persian by Behruz Geranpayeh.

We have long since lost our faith in the idea that human beings could achieve human happiness in some future ideal state, a state that Thomas More, writing five centuries ago, tied to a topos, a fixed place, a land, an island, a sovereign state under a wise and benevolent ruler.

But while we have lost our faith in utopias of all hues, the human aspiration that made this vision so compelling has not died. Instead, it

is re-emerging today as a vision focused not on the future but on the past, not on a future-to-be-created but on an abandoned and undead past that we could call retrotopia.

The emergence of retrotopia is interwoven with the deepening gulf between power and politics that is a defining feature of our contemporary liquid-modern world—the gulf between the ability to get things done and the capability of deciding what things need to be done, a capability once vested with the territorially sovereign state.

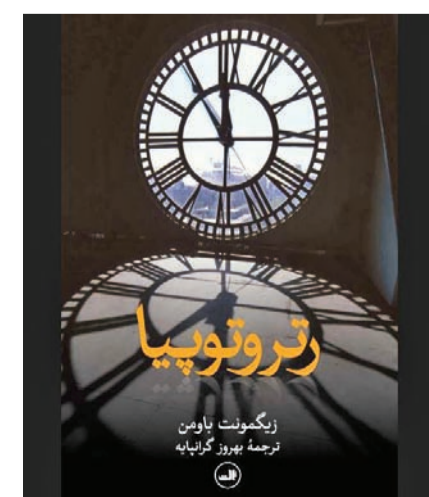
This deepening gulf has rendered nation-states unable to deliver on their promises, giving rise to a widespread disenchantment with the idea that the future will improve the human condition

and a mistrust in the ability of nation-states to make this happen.

True to the utopian spirit, retrotopia derives its stimulus from the urge to rectify the failings of the present human condition, though now by resurrecting the failed and forgotten potentials of the past.

Imagined aspects of the past, genuine or putative, serve as the main landmarks today in drawing the roadmap to a better world. Having lost all faith in the idea of building an alternative society of the future, many turn instead to the grand ideas of the past, buried but not yet dead.

Such is retrotopia, the contours of which are examined by Bauman in this sharp dissection of our contemporary romance with the past.



Front cover of the Persian translation of Zygmunt Bauman’s book “Retrotopia”.