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Report reveals Saudi crimes against Yemenis

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OMEE

In 2,300 days of the Saudi continuous attacks against Yemen around 18,000 Yemenis including 3,842 children have been slaughtered and around 27,000 injured; about 575,000 houses destroyed; and 1,110 schools, 1,446 mosques and 248 historical sites demolished.

A story that has no end

BY FARROKH HESABI
Iranian football team, Esteghlal, have been banned from signing new players, ONCE AGAIN!

Based on the local media reports on Sunday, Esteghlal's forward Cheick Diabate has lodged a complaint before FIFA against the club he is playing for right now.

The Malian striker has claimed that the Tehran based club have failed to pay him his salary for several months.

FIFA has sent a letter to Esteghlal and informed them about the player's request. However, the Iranian club did not complete their financial obligations, and now it is confirmed in another letter by FIFA that the club are banned from signing new players.

"We wish to inform the parties that a ban of registering new players internationally has been implemented by FIFA at the beginning of the next registration period. Moreover, the respondent's member association is requested to implement on the respondent, club Esteghlal FC, at the beginning of the next registration period, a ban from registering new players at the national level," the letter says.

Meanwhile, Esteghlal Club were already banned from signing new players due to a complaint by Nebojsa Milicic Lekic, Serbian coach who was a former assistant of Farhad Majidi, and the club were not allowed to recruit new players until the coach's claims were paid.

Esteghlal and their archrival, Persepolis, have been handed transfer bans by FIFA several times just in recent years. The reasons behind all the complaints against the Iranian clubs have been their inability to fulfill their financial obligation to their foreign staff. A story that has no end.

In FIFA's letter to Esteghlal, it is mentioned that the club shall be banned from signing new players up until the due amount is paid and for a maximum duration of three entire and consecutive registration periods. However, it is emphasized that the ban against the Blues will be lifted immediately and prior to their complete serving once the due amount is paid.

Last year, Esteghlal had been handed the transfer ban by FIFA's Dispute Resolution Chamber (DRC) over non-payment of dues to former coach Winfried Schaefer. Later the ban was lifted.

Esteghlal also have the same problem with another foreign player, Hrvoje Milic. The Croatian player left Esteghlal after two years of playing for the club and returned to Croatia. Reports claim that he is also considering to fill a complaint before FIFA against the Blues to receive his unpaid salaries.

Jameh Mosque of Kerman lures sightseers, historians for its location, design, and ornamentation

TEHRAN - Jameh Mosque of Kerman has long been a source of charm for history buffs, architects, and travelers to the ancient Iranian city.

Originally constructed in the 14th century, the congregational mosque boasts four lofty iwans (porticos), and loads of exemplar tile-work, stuccowork, and masonry.

The monument has undergone extensive restorations during the Safavid era (1501 to 1736) and later periods. Furthermore, it is the earliest surviving example of Muzaffarid architecture, according to Archnet.

It was built in 1350 by Amir Mobarezuddin Mohammad-e-Mozaffari-e-Meybodi-Yazdi under the Muzaffarids, who pushed away from the Il Khanids after Abu Sa'id's death in 1335 and established their own dynasty, ruling central Iran from 1314 to 1393.

The location of the mosque is of great significance as Kerman has been a cultural melting pot since antiquity, blending Persians with subcontinental tribes dwellers.

Such a position has led to the emergence of its famous, vibrant bazaar that begins at the Friday mosque's rear portal and extends along the east-west axis, ending at the Arg Square.

The mosque is a feat of Islamic architecture for many reasons. Its continuous tile mosaic is, however, limited to certain areas-- the main portal and the facing of the arcade-- and is restricted to a four-color palette (white, yellow, and dark and light blue). In the court, tile mosaic in geometric patterns cover the arcade's piers and the upper edge of the arcade's frieze; the arcade's spandrels are decorated with arabesque vegetal decoration of tile mosaic.

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Why do the Western media refer to the former Yemeni government as "internationally recognized?"

Following the Islamic Awakening in 2011, also known as the Arab Spring, Yemen was one of many nations to protest against monarchies, dictatorships, discrimination and corruption among many other problems facing the people of these countries in West Asia.

Facing massive nationwide unrest and a year of protests calling on the entire ruling elite to resign, President Ali Abdullah Saleh who held the helm for 33 years, agreed to a peaceful transition period where he would step down in return for immunity.

This may have been seen as a good step at the time to avoid further unrest. However, it was also a major policy blunder. The last organization that should have interfered in Yemen during this so-called transition period was the (Persian) Gulf Security Council. The members who sit

on this council have been interfering in Yemen for decades, depriving the country of its sovereignty.

However, sure enough, the Council allowed Saleh to cede power to his Vice President Abdrabuh Mansour Hadi (he was vice president to Saleh from 1994 to 2012).

Despite some claims that Hadi had been sworn in following elections in February 2012, this was actually nowhere near an election. This was the initiative by the (Persian) Gulf Security Council that barred anybody else from standing on the ballot box. Winning as a single candidate means Hadi had been chosen to become President not elected. Chosen by whom? He received 99.999 percent of the vote count. Yes, it was one of those elections.

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U.S. brought insecurity for Afghanistan, says police official

TEHRAN — General Ghasem Rezaei, the deputy commander of the Iranian police, has said that arrogant countries led by the U.S. with their illegitimate presence in Afghanistan created a deplorable situation for the Afghans.

Rezaei made the remark on Monday when visiting Iran's southeastern borders and the Milak border terminal. The deputy police chief added that the result of the illegitimate U.S. presence in Afghanistan is nothing less than destruction and insecurity.

He said today the Afghan people need humanitarian assistance from world countries so the best help is to allow people to form a popular government based on their own wishes and not to meddle in the internal affairs of the country.

Developments in Afghanistan has unnerved the Afghan people and the countries neighboring Afghanistan. The Taliban, which is making rapid advances in Afghanistan, have so far captured some regions bordering Iran and Tajikistan. However,

Iran has launched relentless efforts to reconcile the Afghan government and the Taliban. Last week, Tehran hosted talks between top representatives from the Afghan government and the Taliban.

General Rezaei said arrogant governments led by the "criminal U.S." have taken peace away from the region's peoples for more than 40 years and imposed such a deplorable situation on the people of Afghanistan.

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S. Arabia always has appetite to harm Iran: Bahraini researcher

BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI

TEHRAN — A Bahraini political analyst says Saudi Arabia has unsatiable desire to undermine Iran's power and stability.

"Do not forget that Saudi Arabia always has an appetite and a desire to harm Iran whenever it finds an opportunity," Abbas Bu Safwan tells the Tehran Times.

"Whenever a hardline president who deals tough with Iran is elected in America, Saudi Arabia is the first to welcome," Bu Safwan adds.

According to the Bahraini writer, Saudi Arabia is afraid of the Islamic model in Iran, and this is questioning American Islam in the region. "Saudi Arabia is under pressure because of Iranian democracy, as there are elections and freedoms in Iran, and this is what embarrasses the unilateral authoritarian regime in the (Persian) Gulf."

Following is the text of the interview:

Can you update us about the latest developments regarding the Bahraini people's movement against the Manama regime? Has the opposition failed?

There is no doubt that most of the movements that began since 2011, and what we call the Arab Spring movements in Egypt, Bahrain, Libya and Yemen, faced meddling by Saudi Arabia and the U.S., and other states that form the axis of counter-revolution.

So, either they suppressed this movement, like what happened in Bahrain, or the protests were contained, as happened in Yemen the first time when the counter-revolution (coalition) wanted to produce the same old regime led by Abd Rabboh Mansour Hadi, or in Egypt, in which the revolution degenerated into a military coup.

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© Mehr / Khadijeh Naderi

Spirit of life in Zayandehrood

Water is allowed to flow Zayandehrood River and pass through the touristic city of Isfahan. On Sunday evening, the water was released from a dam in upstream. The water reached the city center by passing through Falavarjan and Mahmoud Abad cities and reaching the famous Isfahan bridges. Droughts and excessive use of water have made the river dry in downstream. From the time of reopening, the river will only be streaming for 10 days, which is intended only for irrigating the gardens of east Isfahan.

Zarif: Iran committed to peaceful coexistence of all Bosnian groups

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iran's special envoy attended the 26th anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre in Bosnia and Herzegovina on Monday. He read a message by Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in which it was stated that the Islamic Republic is committed to peaceful coexistence of all groups in the Balkan country.



The message reads as follows:
“On the 26th anniversary of the genocide of thousands of innocent people from Bosnia and Herzegovina in the horrific crime of Srebrenica, I salute the high spirit of those martyrs and express my deepest condolences and solidarity with the government and people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially their bereaved families.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is proud to have stood by the oppressed people of Bosnia and Herzegovina since the beginning of its independence and to provide any assistance in this way. It is committed to upholding the independence, territorial integrity and peaceful coexistence of all ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The events of July 1995 are one of the darkest chapters in the contemporary history of humanity. The commemoration of this genocide reminds the international community of the need for a commitment to justice, non-violence and a sense of responsibility in defending the oppressed, and calls on the international community, especially the powers that claim to uphold human rights and democracy, to adhere to genuine human values.

Although the rulings of the former International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the mechanism of the remaining cases of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia are important steps towards the administration of justice, Srebrenica remains a wound to the conscience of many, as survivors' mothers and homeless people are suffering.

We share in the grief of the families of the victims of Srebrenica who have worked tirelessly for twenty-six years to seek justice and work day and night, and we are committed to remembrance of the victims of this painful event to prevent it from being forgotten and denied.

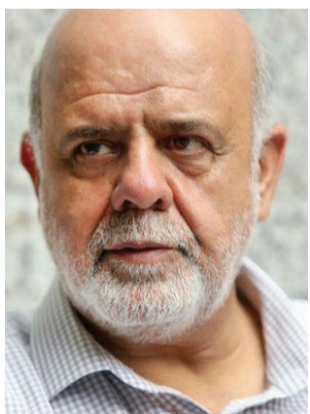
I once again pay tribute to the high spirit of the oppressed martyrs of Srebrenica and wish them and their late leader Ali Ezzat Begovic divine mercy and for the government and honorable people of Bosnia and Herzegovina security, progress and pride. I believe that the will of the Islamic Republic of Iran is to develop relations with Bosnia and Herzegovina in all areas.”

The Monday ceremony was held by burying the bodies of 19 victims of the 1995 genocide, whose identities were determined by specialized tests, in the presence of the victims' survivors and thousands of citizens of Srebrenica and other regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as foreign representatives.

On July 11, 1995, the Serb forces commanded by General Ratko Mladic overran Srebrenica, which was protected by lightly armed Dutch peacekeepers. They sent women and children away and captured and executed the men and boys they found. The bodies were dumped into mass graves and later exhumed by UN investigators and used as evidence in war crimes trials of Bosnian Serb leaders.

Ambassador predicts Iran-Iraq ties will become stronger during Raisi presidency

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The special envoy of the United Nations Secretary General for Iraq met with



Iraj Masjedi, Iran's ambassador in Baghdad on Monday.

During the meeting, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert discussed the latest political, security and upcoming parliamentary elections in Iraq with Masjedi.

For his part, Ambassador Masjedi said that Iran will support security, stability, as well as the upcoming parliamentary elections in Iraq.

He added that the future government in Iran supports strengthening and expanding relations with Iraq.

“In Raisi's government, the relations between Iran and Iraq will be deeper and broader.”

U.S. brought insecurity for Afghanistan, says police official

➔ **1** Afghanistan was first invaded by the Soviet Union in 1979. 22 years later, in 2001, the country was occupied by the United States. The flames of war that started in the Central Asian countries more than 40 years ago is still raging.

According to IRNA, the Iranian police official referred to the recent developments in Afghanistan, saying absolute security is prevalent in Iran's eastern borders.

The law enforcement forces of Iran are guarding borders with full vigilance and will not allow the least insecurity in the country's border areas thanks to the appropriate infrastructures created in the southern border regions over the past years to protect Iranian borders, General Rezaei stated.

Due to the recent developments in Afghanistan, there are some limitations in the Mahiroud border terminal and Dogharoon-Islam Qala border, while there are no security issues in the Milk border terminal and cars and goods have the same old traffic based on border protocols, he stated.

JCPOA close to revival, says Iran

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — For the second time in a row, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh responded to questions from reporters in an offline interview.

The spokesman began responding to reporters about the negotiations in Vienna to revive the JCPOA, saying from the point of view of the Islamic Republic the negotiations have made a good progress.

“A lot of texts have been prepared and the sections that have not been completed have a definite status that clearly shows the differences between both sides. It helps politicians understand what stage of decision-making they are at.”

He added Iran's position toward the JCPOA has not changed since the beginning of the negotiations in April and Iran is demanding the lifting of sanctions as well as their verification and then resumption of commitments by the Islamic Republic.

The spokesman said the United States, as a violator of the JCPOA, must provide the “necessary guarantees”.

In the Vienna talks, he said, Iran has only been pursuing the goals set by the top officials of the system based on the framework of national interests.

“Certainly, for the outgoing and incoming governments, what is important is to achieve the highest interests of the people, and time is of secondary importance here. Obviously, the sooner this is done, the sooner the effects of lifting sanctions will appear in the country,” Khatibzadeh underlined.

He said that he wants to make a brief note, and that is given the progress that has been made, it can be assessed that all sides are nearing the end of the Vienna talks.

Some unresolved issues remain, but what is important is that the weight of resolved issues far outweighs the unresolved issues, he explained.

“We have come a long way, but this will not be an easy path. We hope that the other parties will be able to make their own decisions, in which case we too can reach an agreement that will be to everyone's liking,” he added.

The diplomat noted all nuclear teams in Vienna acknowledge that relatively good progress has been made to restore the



JCPOA and that all agreed on the need to seriously continue the path and reaching a final agreement. However, he said, some key issues needed to be addressed by top authorities.

“What everyone in our country agrees on is that first U.S. sanctions must be lifted effectively and second the post-conflict demands have nothing to do with this agreement. It has been repeatedly stated that the Islamic Republic of Iran will resume full implementation of its commitments as soon as the nuclear agreement is fully implemented in a verifiable manner,” he highlighted.

EU resolution has no justification

Reacting to the European Parliament's human rights resolution against Iran and the sanctions imposed on some Iranian officials, Khatibzadeh said, “We strongly condemn the European Parliament resolution. This resolution has no justification and is unacceptable and a clear example of interference in Iran's internal affairs.”

He pointed out that, unfortunately, the European Parliament, which claims it defends

human rights in Iran, has been quite silent in the face of U.S. “economic terrorism” against the Iranian people and the killing of innocent people in Yemen and Palestine.

Khatibzadeh stressed, “The European Parliament must end its misuse of the issue of human rights and take a balanced and rational stance in its interaction with the Islamic Republic of Iran.”

“Washington is addicted to sanctions”

In response to a question about the new sanctions of the U.S. Treasury Department against some companies accused of having ties with China, Russia and Iran, the spokesman said, “Washington's addiction to sanctions has made this country not even see its interests.”

“We respect decisions made by the Lebanese”

The spokesman also said Iran believes that the Lebanese themselves must decide about their internal issues, reiterating the Islamic Republic does not interfere in the internal affairs of any country, including Lebanon.

“We strongly condemn the European Parliament resolution. This resolution has no justification and is unacceptable and a clear example of interference in Iran's internal affairs.”

MPs mull banning talks with U.S. without parliament permission

➔ **1** Under the deal reached in 2015, Tehran agreed to roll back parts of its nuclear program in exchange for termination economic and financial sanctions.

However, Iran gradually stopped implementing parts of its commitments in May 2019, one year after the administration of former U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally abandoned the agreement and re-imposed sanctions and imposed new ones.

The JCPOA Joint Commission, attended by the U.S. delegation indirectly, began to meet on April 6 this year in Vienna to continue previous discussions over a possible return of the United States to the JCPOA and how to ensure the full and effective implementation of the JCPOA.

After six rounds of talks, the parties recently said some serious differences remain between Iran and the United States for restoration of the deal.



Ulyanov: JCPOA revival 90% complete

The work to restore the Iran nuclear deal is more than 90% done, but the remaining 10 percent includes some sensitive matters, Russia's Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Vienna has said.

“Estimates like this are always subjective, but, as I see it, we're more than 90% there. There's relatively little left to do. But there are politically sensitive matters in the remaining 10%, which could cause a delay. That can't be ruled out,” Mikhail Ulyanov told Russian newspaper Kommersant.

The U.S. argues that their laws do not allow them to provide any guarantees, the diplomat explained.

“In theory, and I have said it more than once at the meetings of the joint commission, there is, actually, a guarantee. And a quite serious one. If one side starts misbehaving, the other one can retaliate at once,” Ulyanov said, according to Sputnik.

“We'd like to hope that Americans can learn from their mistakes. As opponents of the nuclear deal, especially in the United States, have had three years to see, the maximum pressure policy brings results that are opposite to what was expected,” the diplomat said.

“Key sanctions may be lifted off Iran in August”

Ulyanov added key U.S. sanctions may be lifted off Iran as early as in August if there is an agreement to restore the nuclear deal, officially known as the JCPOA.

“If we agree to restore the nuclear deal, main U.S. sanctions could be lifted as early as August. Iran will be able to trade oil and not just that. As a result, its treasury will start getting large top-ups,” Ulyanov told Russian paper.

Iran could use these funds to pay back to Russia for the expenses incurred over the Bushehr nuclear plant, Ulyanov said, “The debt has become significant,” according to the diplomat.

“Iran's plans to produce metal uranium because of U.S. pressure”

The Russian diplomat went on to say that Iran's plan to produce metal uranium comes as a direct result of the U.S. pressure, Ulyanov said.

“In a first occasion for non-nuclear countries, Iran began enriching uranium to 60%. And now it's about to start producing metal uranium enriched to 20%. I don't think anyone in the U.S. is happy about that, but that's the direct consequence of the maximum pressure policy,” Ulyanov noted.



First Announcement

ONE STAGE TENDER INTERNATIONAL CALL FOR PURCHASE OF 18000 MT BAKED ANODE BLOCK

TENDER No.: j/15

DATE: 11th /july/2021

1.Subject.: Iran Alumina Company (IAC) intends to purchase high quality Baked Anode Block, in amount of 18000 MT for using in its Primary Aluminum Reduction Smelter Plant through one stage Tender according to following conditions as mentioned in the relevant Tender documents .:

2.: Bid Bond Guarantee: 172.500 Euro/or 49.650.000.000 Rials

3.:Tender proposal.: Since the tendering is to be done in one stage ,thus the eligible Bidders should follow and regard the Tender instructions and present and submit all of required justified documents and the mentioned Tender envelopes in one package together.

4.:Closing Date.: The eligible Bidders should submit their Bids/proposal to the central administration office as mentioned below and also in the Tender documents before 16:00 pm ,local time , on the day 16th August ,2021 .

5.: Opening Date.: 24th August , 2021 on 11:00 AM.

6.: Contact information.: For more details and receiving the relevant Tender documents , the Bidders can refer to the following contact information.

Add.: Km 7 of Sankhast Road, city of Jajarm, Northern Khorasan Province, IRAN, P. O. Box:1135-94415 legal and contractual Affairs .

Tel .: 0098-58-32604467-32604246 - 0098-21-86073184

Fax.: 0098-58-32272487 - 0098-21-88833748

website: www.iranalumina.ir E-mail.: aluminumjajarm@gmail.com

IRAN ALUMINA CO en.iranalumina.ir

Foreign Ministry submits detailed report on JCPOA to Parliament

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iran's Foreign Ministry has sent its quarterly report to the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, elaborating on the latest developments surrounding the 2015 nuclear deal.

The 264-page report offered detailed explanations about the Iranian Foreign Ministry's measures regarding the implementation of the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The report begins with a letter from Mohammad Javad Zarif to Chairman of the Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee Vahid Jalalzadeh explaining the legal foundation of the report, which is the last one to be issued by Zarif in his capacity as foreign minister.

"Now, on the eve of the sixth anniversary of the JCPOA, the twenty-second and last quarterly report is presented by me as the minister of foreign affairs and the head of JCPOA's negotiating team to the honorable representatives of the brave nation of Iran in the Islamic Consultative Assembly," Zarif wrote to Jalalzadeh.

He added, "This report presents the most important achievements and challenges of the implementation of the JCPOA during the last six years and the latest results of the six rounds of the Vienna talks, which stand to reflect the failure of the U.S. government's maximum pressure against the resistance of the Iranian people."

Zarif noted, "In the last working weeks of the twelfth government, these negotiations have approached the framework of a possi-



ble agreement to lift the illegal sanctions of the United States of America, and I hope what has become achievable so far be completed at the beginning of the thirteenth government with the help of God, guidance of the Leader, management of the president-elect and the support of the Islamic Consultative Assembly."

The JCPOA was agreed on in July 2015 between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council along with Germany, known as the P5+1. The agreement was approved by the Supreme National Security Council, the Islamic Consultative Assembly and finally by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei.

Iran strictly complied with the nuclear deal. However, this did not prevent the

Trump administration from quitting it. In May 2018, former U.S. President Donald Trump announced the unilateral withdrawal of the U.S. from the JCPOA, setting off a series of confrontations with Iran.

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

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

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

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

Araqchi also called on the U.S. and Europe to make difficult decisions to revive the JCPOA.

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

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

Zarif holds talks with EU's Borrell on Slovenian PM's 'unacceptable move'

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iran continued to voice protest over a controversial speech delivered by Slovenian Prime Minister Janez Jansa at a virtual gathering organized by an Iranian terrorist group called Mojahedin-e-Khalq (MEK).

Mojahedin-e-Khalq, also known as MKO, began its annual three-day conference online on Saturday with several former and current American and European officials delivering paid speeches via videoconference. The officials mostly launched into blistering tirades about Iran's internal and foreign policy.

About 30 members of the U.S. Congress are expected to participate in this year's conference of MEK, including Senator Bob Menendez, Chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Republican Senator Ted Cruz, and Republican House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, as well as former ministers and officials from Europe, the United States, and Canada.

The Slovenian prime minister, who delivered a speech at the conference, drew a harsh criticism from Iran and promoted the Iranian Foreign Ministry to summon the Slovenian ambassador to Tehran.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif condemned the prime minister's unacceptable participation and imprudent remarks in the virtual gathering of the MKO terrorist group, and called on the European Union to express its position on the issue in view of the fact that Slovenia holds the rotating presidency of the EU.

Zarif made the remarks in a Sunday phone conversation with EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell.

The chief European diplomat, in turn, expressed regret over the issue, and stressed that Jansa's remarks, by no means, reflected the EU's stance on relations with Iran, according to a statement issued by the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

Borrell underscored that the EU's position is expressed by the chairperson of the European Council at the level of heads of state, and by the EU foreign policy chief at the ministerial level.

He said the Slovenian prime minister's remarks have not at all been made in the EU's capacity.

Earlier in the day, the Slovenian ambassador to Tehran was summoned to the Iranian Foreign Ministry where she received Tehran's strong protest over the matter.

The ambassador was told that Iran wants the Slovenian government to give explanation in that regard, and that Tehran will accordingly show the necessary reaction.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry described the Slovenian prime minister's move as "unacceptable and undiplomatic."

"After the presence of Slovenian Prime Minister Janez Jansa in the virtual meeting of Mojahedin-e-Khalq terrorist grouping, the Iranian foreign minister's assistant and



director general of the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe department of the foreign ministry summoned Slovenia's ambassador to Tehran Ms. Christina Radi and after conveying Iran's strong protest against this move and the baseless accusations leveled against the Islamic Republic of Iran, gave her Iran's official notice of protest against the government of Slovenia," the ministry said in a statement after summoning the Slovenian ambassador.

"During the meeting, it was emphasized that Iran condemns the virtual presence of Slovenia's premier in the gathering of a terrorist group, loathed among the great Iranian nation, as well as the official's false and nonsensical remarks, which run counter to diplomatic norms and the atmosphere of bilateral relations."

"This is besides the fact that supporting a terrorist grouping violates the UN charter, recognized international principles and human rights values and is, under no pretext, acceptable."

The ministry added that Tehran asked for an explanation from the Slovenian government on the issue.

According to the ministry's press release, the Slovenian ambassador confirmed that she will urgently convey Iran's message of protest to her government.

Earlier on Saturday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh castigated Western officials including former U.S. secretary of state and CIA chief Mike Pompeo for participating in the MKO gathering.

"Bought western politicians (incl #LyingCheatingStealing Pompeo) sell themselves cheap for a Europe-hosted circus arranged by a once Saddam-backed terrorist cult with Iranian blood on its hands. Insatiable thirst for \$\$ & anti-Iran obsession is driving shameful western hypocrisy," he said on Twitter.

MEK is deeply loathed by large swathes of the Iranians due to its history of killing innocent people and aligning with Iran's sworn enemy, Saddam Hussein.

MEK's unpopularity among the Iranians stems from two things: First, the group had been implicated in many terrorist attacks and assassinations in Iran in the 1980s. Second, while the group was going on a killing spree in Iran, its leaders colluded with Iran's number one nemesis, Saddam Hussein, the former dictator of Iraq who gave them many military bases near Baghdad. With the military support of Saddam, MEK mounted a devastating military attack on Iran that led to its forever eradication in the country. Iranians have never forgotten, nor have they forgiven, this act of treason by MEK.

In addition, over the past few years, the group has faced growing accusations of receiving money from Saudi Arabia. "Over the last few years, the terrorist group has developed close relations with the deep-pocket Saudis. The two sides have done little to hide their ties. Quite the contrary, every now and then they seek to flaunt their romance, in one way or another," Press TV reported.

The MKO's annual rallies often feature pro-Saudi speakers and sometimes even Saudi officials. For instance, Turki al-Faisal, a Saudi prince, former intelligence chief and key diplomat addressed the group's rallies in Paris in 2016 and 2017, prompting accusations from Tehran that Riyadh supports terrorism.

Salman al-Ansari, president of the Saudi American Public Relations Affairs Committee, a pro-Riyadh lobby group in Washington, also spoke at the MKO conference in Albania on 13 July, 2019.

He was repeatedly interrupted by cheers from the group's supporters as he bashed Iran in both Arabic and Farsi.

In an article published in 2018, Al Bawaba revealed that three tons of gold ingots and four suitcases of Rolex watches were given to the MKO by the Saudis when the group was still in Iraq.

Gold and other valuable commodities were later sold in black markets in the Jordanian capital, Amman, via Saudi-linked businessmen and the money went to offshore accounts linked to the MKO. The Saudis have in fact been supporting the MKO since Saddam Hussein's war against Iran, as the group provided the Iraqi dictator with intelligence and military support, according to Press TV.

Report reveals Saudi crimes against Yemenis

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — A human rights group monitoring the Yemen situation has revealed a shocking amount of damage caused by Saudi Arabia during its war in the Arab country.

The group, Humanity Eye Center for Rights and Development (EHCRD), has provided heart-wrenching statistics about the human casualties and economic damage Yemen incurred over the past 2,300 days since the start of the U.S.-backed Saudi aggression against Yemen.

Saudi Arabia has been entangled in one of its worst wars against Yemen since 2015 when it started an air raid campaign against its fellow Arab country with the alleged aim of eradicating the Iranian influence there. After years of bombardment, Saudi Arabia not only failed to oust the Ansarallah-led government, but it also was unable to prevent the Yemenis from mounting retaliatory attacks inside its territory. Facing a well-organized popular resistance in Yemen, the Saudis blamed their failure on Iran, accusing it of providing weaponry to its Yemeni allies.

The Saudi war on Yemen has also produced the worst humanitarian catastrophe ever seen in the region, with millions of Yemenis either unable to make ends meet or have died due to lack of food and medicine. Saudi Arabia has stubbornly refused to allow the entry of humanitarian aid into many Ansarallah-controlled territories, effectively using the humanitarian aid as leverage to put pressure on the Sanaa government and extract more concessions from it.

The Sanaa-based government has urged the Saudis several times to separate political issues from the humanitarian ones, only to face a Saudi insistence on blocking the flow of the much-needed aid into Yemen.

In addition, Saudi Arabia has continued its air raids and blanket bombardment on Yemeni targets without differentiating between civilian and military targets.

This approach has resulted in disaster in terms of the loss of human lives and economic infrastructures, according to the recent survey of EHCRD.

The human rights observatory said

the Saudi aggression against Yemen has resulted in the loss of 17,176 human lives, including 3,842 children and 2,400 women. According to the survey, the total casualties of the Saudi war on Yemen stand at 43,891. This includes 17,176 people killed and 26,715 injured.

As regards economic damages, EHCRD indicated that the Yemen war proved devastating because it inflicted huge havoc on infrastructures, economic and service facilities. For instance, 575,353 civil houses were destroyed during the war. In addition, tens of thousands of other public facilities such as universities, mosques, hospitals, schools, airports, ports, roads and bridges were damaged in the war. This puts the Yemen war at the top of the devastating wars in terms of civilian casualties and damages.

According to EHCRD, 15 airports, 16 ports, 308 power stations and generators, 553 telecommunication networks, 2,397 warehouses and water supply networks, 1,983 government centers and 5,224 roads and bridges have been damaged.

As for economic damages, 396 factories, 352 fuel tankers, 11,479 commercial centers, 423 livestock and poultry farms, 7,945 means of transport, 472 fishing boats, 931 food stores, 397 fuel stations, 685 markets and 858 food trucks have been destroyed.

Service facilities also had their share of destruction with 575,353 homes, 179 university centers, 1,466 mosques, 369 tourism centers, 391 hospitals and health centers, 1,110 schools and training centers, 7,733 farmlands, 135 sports centers, 248 archaeological sites and 49 media centers being damaged or destroyed as a result of the war.

The anti-Yemen coalition led by Saudi Arabia invaded Yemen in March 2015 to suppress the revolution in Yemen and prevent Ansarallah from gaining power, according to Fars News. Britain, France, the United States, Germany and some Arab countries have all supported the coalition militarily and in supplying arms to keep the fire of unequal war, which officials say has been the worst humanitarian catastrophe in the world, still burning, the news agency reported.

SPORTS

No pressure on me to win Olympics medal: Vladimir Alekno

SPORTS **TEHRAN** — Vladimir Alekno, Iran national volleyball team head coach, accepted that the performance of the Iran volleyball team in the 2021 FIVB Volleyball Men's Nations League (VNL) was not satisfying and also emphasized that he has been under no pressure by the Iranian volleyball federation to climb the podium in the Olympics.



Iran finished the 2021 VNL in 12th place after winning five out of 15 matches. Alekno's side stood just above Germany, Netherlands, Bulgaria, and Australia with 18 points.

Alekno said that his plan for the national team in the Olympic Games is to move forward step by step.

"I don't like to take big steps in my life and also don't like to predict about future. But, I can say that in the 2020 Olympics we have been drawn in a difficult group. However, in this group, except Poland and Italy, who are relatively better than us, we can hope to play well and get results against the other teams," Alekno said.

"My strategy is to move forward step by step. It is not right that when, for example, we are going to face Venezuela, we think about playing against Japan. Instead, we will go ahead game by game. Our matches in the 2021 VNL have been analyzed carefully. Now, we have valuable materials that we can work on. I hope we can benefit from our analysis in the Olympics," he added.

When asked about the federation's pressure on him to achieve good results and place the team on the Olympic podium, Alekno replied: "There is no pressure on me neither from the federation nor from anyone else to win a medal. There is no guarantee in sports, and I cannot guarantee to climb the podium in Tokyo. I ask you who could guarantee Italian football team would win the 2020 Euro. Did you know Italy would win the title in penalty shootout?"

"To climb the Olympic podium is not only the dream of the president of the volleyball federation, but it is also the dream of me, you, and all the Iranian people. We cannot criticize or condemn anyone for such a hope or dream. But It's too early to guarantee that Iran national volleyball team will be on the podium. Before we have such an expectation, we must look at the general level of the Iranian volleyball league and compare it with the leagues of other teams that also hope to climb the podium in the Olympics," Alekno said.

The Persians will start their 2020 Olympic Games journey with the game against Poland on 24 July.

Iran are in Pool A along with Italy, Poland, Japan, Canada and Venezuela.

Brighton attacker Jahanbakhsh a target for Feyenoord

SPORTS **TEHRAN** — Brighton attacker Alireza Jahanbakhsh is a target for Feyenoord.

Rotterdam media sources state Jahanbakhsh is a target for Feyenoord as they face selling Steven Berghuis this summer.

Ajax are offering a fee rising to €6.5m for Berghuis, formerly of Watford, and an agreement is close.

As such, Feyenoord have moved quickly and identified Jahanbakhsh as the successor of Berghuis.

It is as yet unclear whether it will be a loan deal or whether Jahanbakhsh will make an outright switch to Rotterdam.

Hassan Kamranifar appointed as General Secretary of FFIRI

SPORTS **TEHRAN** — The Football Federation of the Islamic Republic of Iran (FFIRI) appointed Hassan Kamranifar as the federation's General Secretary.

He replaced Mansour Ghanbarzadeh, who was named as acting Secretary General in March.

Kamranifar is an Iranian retired assistant referee. He officiated in two 2010 and 2014 FIFA World Cups.

Kamranifar also officiated at 2008 Olympic Games, African Cup of Nations 2010, 2011 AFC Asian Cup, 2012 and 2013 FIFA World Club Cups, and 2013 FIFA U-20 World Cup.

Nottingham Forest eye Milad Mohammadi

SPORTS **TEHRAN** — English Championship side Nottingham Forest are reportedly interested in a deal to sign Gent full-back Milad Mohammadi.

Mohammadi has been with the Belgian side since 2019, and has gone on to make 65 appearances in total for the team over the years, and has also made a positive impact in the team's most recent campaign.

He made 41 appearances in the 2020/21 season, and chipped in with one goal and five assists for Gent, as it finished seventh in the Belgian top-flight.

Mohammadi is an experienced international with Iran, having made over 40 appearances for his country over the years.

TEDPIX jumps 19,000 points on Monday

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 19,075 points to 1.304 million on Monday.

As reported, 7.593 billion securities worth 58.795 trillion rials (about \$1.399 billion) were traded at the TSE on Monday.

The first index gained 19,729 points, and the second market's index rose 18,998 points.

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

The index closed at 1.282 million points on Wednesday, July 7 (the last working day of the week).

Iran-Armenia economic ties long-lasting

ECONOMY **TEHRAN**— Armenian Ambassador to Tehran Artashes Toumanian said that Iran and Armenia enjoy an old economic relation.

The envoy made the remarks in a meeting with the businessmen and traders of Iran's central Markazi province and the members of the chamber of commerce of Arak (the center of Markazi) in his trip to the city on Sunday.

Iran and Armenia have good cooperation areas in various fields, including political and economic, and the relationship between the two countries has increased in recent years, he further stressed.

Armenia's relation with Iran is of significant politically, economically and culturally and Iran has a special status among Armenia's neighbors, the ambassador noted.

Saying that Iran-Armenia trade ties can rise significantly, the Armenian envoy said that Iran can re-export its products via Armenia.

Last week, during a meeting between Iranian commercial attaché in Yerevan and Armenian Customs Authorities, the two sides explored the ways to remove the obstacles to boosting bilateral trade between Iran and Armenia.

As reported by Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA), during the meeting it was emphasized on the reform of some trade procedures for the Iranian traders, including under invoicing and problems in non-clearance of goods in the Armenia's customs.

The ways of removing the barriers in the way of trade between the two countries had been also discussed during a meeting between Head of Iran's Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Hamid Zadboum and Armenian Deputy Economy Minister Varos Simonyan two weeks ago.

In the meeting held on June 29, the officials underlined the significant growth in the level of trade between the two countries and stressed the need for planning to further develop cooperation within the framework of the preferential trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and achieve the desired level of bilateral trade.

Speaking in the meeting, Zadboum referred to the two countries' deep cultural, historical, and political relations and stated: "The Trade Development Organization of Iran is ready to hold a meeting of the [two countries] joint industrial, mining and commercial working group in order to identify obstacles and problems facing bilateral trade and to take appropriate and effective decisions to address them."

He further expressed satisfaction with the holding of Iran's exclusive exhibition in Armenia earlier this month and noted that holding such events in the two countries and the exchange of trade delegations is necessary to better introduce export capabilities and to exchange information related to the needs of the two markets.

Zadboum also pointed to the removal of non-tariff barriers and reduction of logistics and transportation costs, along with the expansion of the scope of the preferential trade agreement between Iran and the EAEU, as important factors in increasing the level of trade relations between the two countries and called for addressing such subjects in the joint working groups.

Simonyan for his part welcomed the holding of a joint working group on industry, mining, and trade as soon as possible, and announced his readiness to hold expert talks during the meetings of the joint working group between the two countries.

The Armenian deputy minister also met with the Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Gholam-Hossein Shafeie, in which the two sides stressed the need for boosting joint investment in various sectors.

In this meeting, Shafeie noted that Iran and Armenia could become good trade partners among the EAEU members.

Mining, livestock, and agriculture, textiles, clothing, construction, technical and engineering services, as well as transportation and transit, were among the areas mentioned by the officials for mutual cooperation.

Back in January, Iran, and Armenia signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for the expansion of trade ties between the two countries.

The MOU was signed by Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Alireza Razm Hosseini and the Armenian Economy Minister Vahan Kerobyan in Tehran.

Expansion of trade with the neighboring countries, especially boosting exports to the neighbors is one of the major policies that Iran is seriously pursuing to nullify the effects of the U.S. sanctions on its economy.

In this regard, given its good political and cultural relation with Iran, the neighboring country Armenia is one of the major trade partners of Iran and the Islamic Republic is taking different measures to expand trade ties with this neighbor.

Iran's signing a free trade agreement (FTA) with Eurasian Economic Union has noticeably affected its trade relation with Armenia.

Based on the agreement, which was finally reached in 2018 after several years of negotiations, about 862 commodity items are subject to preferential tariffs.

According to the Head of Iran-Armenia Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry Hervik Yarijanian, the preferential trade agreement between Iran and EAEU has had a significant impact on the country's trade relations with Armenia.

According to the official, the volume of trade between the two countries has witnessed an outstanding rise since the agreement became effective.

Iran mainly imports red meat from Armenia, while Armenia imports polymer raw materials, machinery, industrial gases, manufactured artifacts, leather and leather goods from Iran, he said.

National housing plan's 2nd group of units handed over to owners

➔ 1 According to Deputy Transport and Urban Development Minister Mahmoud Mahmoudzadeh, so far in the two stages of the national housing program hand overs, over 40,000 units have been handed over to the applicants around the country.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Eslami stated that in order to facilitate the access of the target community to affordable housing units, 55 percent of the price of the mentioned units will be lent to the applicants in the form of bank facilities, adding: "We have completed Mehr housing program and it will not be transferred to the next government."

According to the minister, in the process of the registration for the National Housing Plan, over 2.5 million people applied, among which 530,000 were eligible to receive housing units, however, some did not complete the registration.

The National Housing Action Plan aims to construct 400,000 small and medium-size



apartments (70-100 square meters in size) across the country and particularly in Tehran, where housing prices have risen most sharply.

Nearly half of the total number of the said houses will be constructed in Tehran's suburban "new towns" such as Parand and Pardis, respectively located in the west and east of the city.

Back in March, Eslami had announced that 510,000 residential units will be provided for the applicants under the framework of the National Housing Action Plan during the coming months.

Earlier that month Mahmoudzadeh had said that the construction costs for the National Housing Action Plan are set based on the current year's construction material price list and haven't changed.

The official made the remarks in response to some rumors about the rise in the prices of such housing units as a result of the increase in construction costs.

Cabinet approves document on improving industrial productivity

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran's cabinet has approved a document on improving the productivity of the industrial sector in a meeting held on June 30, IRNA reported.

As reported, the mentioned document was proposed jointly by the ministries of oil and industry, mining and trade as well as the State Administrative and Recruitment Organization based on Article 138 of the constitution.

Accordingly, the ministries of industry, mining, and trade and oil (the National Iranian Oil Company) are required to prepare a progress report on the actions and programs contained in this document in six-month intervals and submit it to the National Productivity Organization.

Also, the State Administrative and Recruitment Organization and the National Productivity Organization are obliged to send a comprehensive report on the measures taken based on this document to the cabinet on an annual basis.

The industry sector plays a significant role in the Iranian economy as the government has been taking new measures for distancing the country's economy from oil.

In this regard, since the re-imposition of the U.S. sanctions, the Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry was tasked to pursue a program for indigenizing the knowledge for the production of major industrial equipment.

According to Deputy Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Mehdi Sadeqi Niaraki, relying on domestic production in the industry sector saved Iran \$3.5 billion during the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

Last year the indigenization of the knowledge for the production of \$3.2 billion worth of such equipment in various provinces was on the agenda, which increased to more than \$3.5 billion, Niaraki said in late April.

He mentioned investment in industrial sectors and the increasing trend of production of important industrial products as measures taken by the Industry, Mining and



Trade Ministry in the previous year which was named the year of "Surge in Production" by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Seyed Ali Khamenei.

Tehran, Budapest explore avenues of mutual economic co-op

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Deputy Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Mohammadreza Karbasi met with the Hungarian commercial attaché in Tehran on Monday to discuss ways of expanding trade ties between the two countries.

During the meeting, the two sides explored some of the potential areas for mutual co-operation and called for taking necessary measures for boosting the level of trade to the pre-sanction levels and even higher, the ICCIMA portal reported.

Speaking in the meeting, Karbasi noted that Iran-Hungary trade stood at \$200 mil-

lion in 2018, however, the figure fell to \$35 million due to sanctions and the coronavirus pandemic in 2020.

"We must try to reach the volume of trade to the 2018 level and even more," the official stressed.

He pointed out that Hungarian agricultural products make up a large share (about 25 percent) of the country's exports, suggesting that the ICCIMA and the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with the embassies of the two countries, should organize webinars and face-to-face talks between the two countries' traders in the field of agriculture to facilitate the trade

in this area.

"Considering the export potentials of Iran and Hungary in the field of agriculture, it is possible to exchange a list of products and demanded goods in this field in order to expand collaborations in this sector," Karbasi said.

He further called on the Hungarian embassy and especially the country's commercial attaché in Tehran to take the necessary measures for facilitating the trade between the two countries and to boost the level of economic exchanges to the pre-sanction levels.

The Hungarian official for his part expressed interest in holding business webinars

between the two sides and it was decided to hold two online webinars in the fields of agricultural and medical equipment in the near future.

Holding specialized B2B video conferences in the fields of agriculture and medical equipment, considering a preferential trade agreement between the two countries, bartering of goods and services and paving the way for the expansion of trade cooperation between small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) of the two countries, were among the suggestions that the two sides made for boosting the level of trade between the two countries.

New FTZs are planned to be established by next March

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — As announced by Secretary of Iranian Free Zones High Council Hamidreza Mo'meni, some new free trade zones (FTZs) are planned to be set up in the country in the current Iranian calendar year (March 20, 2022).

Saying that new FTZs will be set up based on the order of the president, the official said: "If we can settle the subject of the comprehensive plans of these zones, I think by the end of this year, the new free zones will be added to the existing ones."

Last week, 62 development projects worth 31.05 trillion rials (over \$739.2 million) were put into operation in Iran's free trade and special economic zones, in the 78th series of inauguration ceremonies since the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

As reported by the government portal, President Hassan Rouhani inaugurated the mentioned projects through video conferencing in various provinces including West Azarbaijan, East Azarbaijan, Hormozgan, Gilan, and Sistan-Baluchestan.

Put into operation in Kish, Maku, Chabahar, Aras, and Anzali free trade, and special economic zones, the said projects are going to provide direct employment for about 2,388 people.

Speaking in the inauguration ceremony, Rouhani underlined the significant role of the country's free trade and economic zones in the country's economy.

"Free trade and special economic zones play an important role in the economy and employment, and in this government, great work has been done in these areas,"



the president said.

He also mentioned the importance of Chabahar Port's free trade zone, saying: "Chabahar Free Zone is of special importance to us because Chabahar Port itself has a strategic and important position and in the future will be one of the first and most important ports in the country."

Back in June, Rouhani had inaugurated and commenced 52 development projects worth 620 trillion rials (over \$14.7 billion) in the country's free trade and special economic zones, in the 74th series of inauguration ceremonies since the previous Iranian calendar year.

As reported, over the past year, six series of inauguration series have been done in the country's free trade and special economic zones, two of which have been in the current Iranian calendar year (started on March 21).

According to the secretary of Iranian Free Zones High Council, currently, 621 development projects are being

Water inflow into Iranian dams declines 47% yr/yr

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Water inflow into the Iranian dams from the beginning of the current water year (late September 2020) up to July 9, has decreased by 47 percent compared to the previous year's same period, according to the Iran Water Resources Management Company's data.

As reported, the total volume of water inflow to the reservoirs of the country's dams in the mentioned period reached 27.29 billion cubic meters, while the figure stood at 51.7 billion cubic meters in the previous year's same period.



Based on the mentioned data, compared to the figures for the previous water

year, the volume of water outflow from the country's dams has also decreased by 34 percent to stand at 28.86 billion cubic meters.

The total volume of water stored behind the country's dams is reported to be 25.56 billion cubic meters on July 9, while the figure stood at 36.11 billion cubic meters last year.

The capacity of Iran's dam reservoirs currently stands at 50.5 billion cubic meters.

The sudden increase in temperature in Iran and the decline of rainfalls across the

country have caused severe drought in the current year so that the energy ministry is implementing new programs for managing water and electricity consumption.

Out of a total of 183 currently operational dams across Iran, 52 are related to the Caspian Sea catchment area, 12 are based in the Urumieh basin, 68 dams are located in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman watersheds, 34 dams are in the Central Plateau, 11 dams are in Sarakhs catchment basin, and another six dams are located across the eastern boundary basin (Hamoun).

S. Arabia always has appetite to harm Iran: Bahraini researcher

➔ Therefore, Bahrain is not an exception in this region in which the dreams of Arab folks and peoples to achieve equality and reform have turned into a kind of nightmare that haunts Arabs.

Currently, most of the opposition leaders are either in prison or in exile, and the government is still using violence against citizens.

In Bahrain, it is no longer possible to hold any political activity, organize a demonstration, or hold a political meeting for an opposition party.

The opposition forces had their parties dissolved, as were the Al-al-Wefaq party, the Waad party, and the National Democratic Action Society. Parties in Bahrain are called associations.

Political activity, civil society, and the freedom of the press are all tied up and restricted, and nobody can act in the political scene freely.

However, after all these suppressions, the Bahraini government has not been able to subdue the opposition, and the opposition is still alive and well, saying a big no to the regime; it is still steadfast in its positions defending equality and reform as well as national independence, which is vital.

Of course, Americans have played an unconstructive role in the region, and do not forget that the (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council has turned into a base for giant American aircraft carriers.

In Qatar there is a large airbase; in Bahrain a military base; in Kuwait an American military base; and in the Emirates an intelligence base. The Pentagon plays a major role in setting policies for the region through these bases.

So, if we want to monitor American policies, we should not follow what the White House says or what the U.S. State Department says. We must track the statements issued or the policies formulated by the Pentagon and the military institutions primarily concerned with the security of U.S. bases in the region.

What is happening is that America equates the security of its military bases with the security of the Arab rulers and governments, and thus the advocates of reform in the region and popular and political movements are considered enemies of America because America wants to preserve the rulers' thrones.

How do you evaluate the attitudes of the Persian Gulf states towards the Bahraini movement?

As for the countries of the (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council, these countries, in general, are not enthusiastic about turning Bahrain into an oasis of freedom because they fear the transmission of what they call "infection".

But there is no doubt that a country like the Emirates or Saudi Arabia is stricter than others, and we may have noticed in 2011 how the Saudi and Emirati armies stormed Bahrain, how they attacked the opposition, and how they were part of the violence against those calling for political reform, participation in the political process and the necessity of holding the election.

The Saudis fear unrest in the oil-rich Eastern Province, which is predominantly Shia. The Emirates sees that the opposition is part of an Iranian alliance and this is what makes Saudi Arabia, the Emirates and Israel stand with each other in the alliance against the national opposition in Bahrain.

The Bahraini movement's demands are mostly balanced as it calls for human rights and equality in Bahrain, but the (Persian) Gulf Cooperation Council countries reject all kinds of criticism.

The Bahraini opposition has always paid the price for any U.S.-Iranian dispute because America views the opposition as a friend of Iran.

This is the case for Saudi Arabia and the Emirates, which played negative roles, not only in the case of Bahrain but also in the case of Yemen, Syria and Libya.

With all of these stations, they played negative, erroneous and detrimental roles in the region.

Stability can only be achieved through political reconciliation and national consensus, while Saudi Arabia and the Emirates have pushed Bahrain to live under the rule of a tyrannical government, a minority and a small family that dominates the country and control its destiny.

As for Kuwait in 2011, it advised the Bahraini regime to address protests through dialogue. Therefore, Kuwait did not send forces to Bahrain, and Oman was also working to ensure that the Bahraini authorities did not resort to suppressing people and parties.

Oman, Kuwait and Qatar tried not to get involved in the



violence inside Bahrain.

Do you see any sign of softness in the Saudi and Emirati position towards the Bahraini opposition?

But the Emirates and Saudi Arabia have become part of the problem through engagement in suppressing movements in Bahrain; the killing of an Emirati officer in the middle of Manama is evidence of the Emirates' involvement in the shedding of Bahraini blood.

The Saudi and Emirati position towards the Bahraini opposition is tough, as they reject any discussion with the opposition and refuse to acknowledge the existence of different views in Bahrain. This is the major dilemma. Saudi Arabia and the Emirates provide all security services and military support for a military solution in Bahrain.

How do you see the reaction of the Persian Gulf states to Ibrahim Raisi's victory in Iran's presidential elections?

First, we have to realize that we cannot talk about a single (Persian) Gulf approach or vision, and it is better to talk about each country separately.

Let's start with Kuwait, which welcomed Raisi's victory. Kuwait usually tries to establish balanced relations with the three major powers surrounding it (i.e. Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia), especially after the historical mistake made by Kuwaiti authorities in the early eighties in supporting Saddam Hussein when he invaded some parts of Iran. Saddam's response to Kuwait was an attempt to annex the country in 1990, while Iran refused Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait.

From that moment forward, Kuwait learned to distance itself from problems and to seek a positive relationship with the various parties.

Kuwait, today, prefers to deal with more important issues such as the Palestine cause, therefore decided not to get involved in the normalization of ties with Israel because it follows a balanced policy.

Qatar also welcomed the Raisi election, although Doha's relations with Iran has fluctuated over the last decades. I think since the Saudi-Emirati blockade against Qatar in 2017, Doha has paid attention to the importance of the Kuwaiti experience.

There are serious concerns about possible Saudi-Emirati efforts to smash Qatar and Kuwait.

Kuwait learned in 1990 and Qatar in 2017 that they must establish close ties with Iran, and I expect that Iranian-Qatari relations will continue to grow and will not be subject to fluctuations as it was in the past, but this growth in relations will not be at a rocket speed to reach the level of Turkish-Qatari ties. However, it will be unbreakable, and this is a new development in the region.

As for Oman, it is clear that it always seeks to establish relations with everyone, and has long criticized the Gulf Cooperation Council countries for their hostility toward Iran.

Oman has always demanded that Saudi Arabia and the rest of the Gulf Cooperation Council recognize geography and history, since Iran is part of this region and a large country, and maintaining good relations with it is important. Oman has realized since ancient times that the Saudi move to single out the region is detrimental to stability, so Muscat has sought for many years to establish close relations with Tehran.

As for the Emirates, its relations with Iran are complex. I do not think that the Iranian side trusts the Emirates' policy, but the Emirates remains an outlet for the Iranian economy.

But recently, the Emirates has turned into a Zionist-Israeli platform to harm Tehran, and this is a very complicated issue.

The Emirates is trying to shuffle the cards by opening relations with Syria, an ally of Tehran, but the alliance that Abu Dhabi is building with Tel Aviv is worrying for Tehran.

The Emirates welcomed Raisi's presence, and I think that the two sides are still able to separate the economy and politics; the trade exchange figures are still large, amounting to about \$15 billion between the two countries.

Likewise, Saudi Arabia was forced to reconsider its foreign policies with Biden's ascendance to the White House, as Saudis started reconciliation with Qatar, and now the cards are turned over the situation in Yemen.

Iranian-Saudi relations still face many difficulties. The Saudi side is still calling on the Iranian side to intervene to put pressure on Ansarullah, but Tehran insists on direct Saudi-Yemeni dialogue.

Even if Iran can encourage Houthis to the dialogue, it is Saudi Arabia that must solve its problems with Yemeni sides through direct talks.

I think it is a stumbling block, and the nuclear agreement with the U.S. will determine the course of relations.

But relations between Tehran and Riyadh are not heading to a dramatic change, even if there are efforts to reduce tension.

Do not forget that Saudi Arabia always has an appetite and a desire to harm Iran whenever it finds an opportunity. Whenever a headline president who deals tough with Iran is elected in America, Saudi Arabia is the first to welcome.

Saudi Arabia is afraid of the Islamic model in Iran, and this embarrasses American Islam in the region. Saudi Arabia is under pressure because of Iranian democracy, as there are elections and freedoms in Iran, and this is what embarrasses the unilateral authoritarian regime in the (Persian) Gulf.

Also, Saudi Arabia is embarrassed by the balanced, moderate, and wise Islam in Iran, while Riyadh hosts a despicable and murderous Wahhabism that feeds Daesh (ISIS).

The second issue that irritates Saudi Arabia is the Iranian influence in the region, while Saudi Arabia is losing its cards in Yemen, Syria and Iraq. Tehran is advancing, as it has managed to consolidate relations with these countries, Riyadh has actually retreated.

Now, Riyadh has begun to review its relations, but it is still unaware of the importance of relations with Tehran. Riyadh is afraid of Iran's missiles, as well as negotiations with Iran. Therefore, Saudi Arabia has warned against any serious negotiations. Therefore, it prefers that negotiations continue only between security agencies in the current period until things become clearer.

Why did Saudi Arabia and its allies refuse to welcome Iran's initiatives (including the Hormuz Peace Initiative) for regional cooperation?

Saudi Arabia, the Emirates and Bahrain still refuse to establish a regional security system, and on this basis, they refuse to deal with the Iranian proposal to devise a security system in the region, and this is a factor that complicates matters.

Saudi Arabia still refuses what is called in the American literature the "sharing of influence" between itself and Tehran. Riyadh is still relying on American power, and this is part of the problem in the region.

Do you think the Persian Gulf states are able to restore their previous relations after the removal of siege on Qatar?

In short, Qatar managed brilliantly to split the quadripartite alliance consisting of Saudi Arabia, the Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt.

From 2017 until the beginning of 2020, the Quartet was negotiating as a united side with Qatar, but after the Al-Ula summit in Saudi Arabia in January 2021, dialogues are taking place between Qatar and each country separately; between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, between Qatar and Egypt, and between Qatar and the Emirates.

Now there is a Qatari-Emirati competition to maintain cozy ties with Saudi Arabia, and I think Qatar is ready to engage in a major conflict with Emirates in this regard.

Qatar does not like the Emirates to monopolize relations with Saudi Arabia. Therefore, Doha prefers to focus on the restoration of relations with Saudi Arabia and Egypt rather than Bahrain and the Emirates. The situation in the (Persian) Gulf is still bad.

him under house arrest. To make matters worse, when Riyadh called emergency meetings of the Arab League and the (Persian) Gulf Security Council following retaliatory attacks by Yemeni forces, such as the September 2019 operation that knocked out the Kingdom's eastern oil fields of Abqaiq and Khurais, where was Hadi during these urgent Arab summits? (Yemen is not part of the [P]GCC).

Such is the importance of Hadi to the Saudis; he wasn't even given a platform to speak on behalf of the Yemenis. In fact, during one of these emergency meetings on Yemen, the chairman of Sudan's military transitional council, General Abdul Fattah al-Burhan, who had only been in power for a few weeks and no who one had heard off before, was provided a front row seat and a microphone to read out a statement (on Yemen). If you were lucky, you may have caught a glimpse of Hadi sitting somewhere at the back.

This internationally recognized 'Hadi' government is recognized by the West; all the allies of Saudi Arabia who (for more than six years now) have put a profit from arms sales to Riyadh over the lives of Yemeni children. It is also recognized by Saudi Arabia's fellow regional monarchies, dictatorships and tyrants.

Luckily, the international community does not revolve around these players. The freedom-seeking nations on this planet and the freedom-seeking people on this planet recognize the Yemeni people's struggle and the National Salvation Government as the internationally recognized administration running the country.

China military 'drove away' U.S. warship in South China Sea

China's military said it "drove away" a United States warship that it said illegally entered Chinese waters near the disputed Paracel Islands on Monday, the anniversary of a landmark international court ruling that Beijing has no claim over the South China Sea.

The USS Benfold entered the waters of the Paracels without the approval of the Chinese government, seriously violating China's sovereignty and undermining the stability of the South China Sea, the People's Liberation Army's Southern Theater Command said.

"We urge the United States to immediately stop such provocative actions," the Southern Theater Command said in a statement.

In a statement, the United States Navy 7th Fleet said the Benfold had "asserted navigational rights and freedoms in the vicinity of the Paracel Islands, consistent with international law" and dismissed Chinese claims of a serious violation of its sovereignty as "false" and a misrepresentation.

According to al Jazeera, it stressed that all ships have the right of "innocent passage" under international law as reflected in the Convention on the Law of the Sea and permission is not required.

"The operation reflects our commitment to uphold freedom of navigation and lawful uses of the sea as a principle," the statement said. "The United States will continue to fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows, as USS Benfold did here. Nothing PRC (the People's Republic of China) says otherwise will deter us."

U.S. logistical convoys hit in several locations across Iraq

Iraqi resistance groups strike logistical convoys headed for the United States' occupation forces in a number of locations throughout the Arab country.

Reporting on Sunday, Iraqi news outlets said the attacks targeted the convoys in the city of Babylon in central Iraq, and the cities of Basra and al-Diwaniyah in the country's south.

The first attack has so far not been claimed by any group or individual. However, Saraya Awlia al-Dam, a subdivision of Iraq's Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) or Hashd al-Sha'abi umbrella anti-terror force, has claimed the Basra strike.

It said it conducted the attack on the convoy as it was crossing a path known as Jarishan, which is under the control of so-called foreign security companies.

The attack is suspected to have been carried out using either anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) or an explosive device, known as explosively formed penetrator (EFP).

The attack in al-Diwaniya was claimed by another group, named as Ashab al-Kahf (Companions of the Cave).

Either the convoys or the Iraqi bases hosting the U.S. forces come under regular attack across Iraq.

Iraq's resistance groups have vowed not to lay down their arms or cease their struggle until expulsion of all the American troops.

All forms of U.S.-led military presence was ruled illegal by the Iraqi parliament early last year after a U.S. drone strike martyred senior Iranian and Iraqi anti-terror commanders, Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, the PMU's former second-in-command.

Both the commanders played an indispensable role in the defeat of the foreign-backed Takfiri terrorist group of Daesh. The U.S. has been using Daesh as an excuse to prolong its presence in Iraq.

European countries warming ties with Syria, says report

A new report says some European countries are warming their ties with Syria after President Bashar al-Assad won the May 2021 presidential election.

The Financial Times said Cyprus is moving into a new embassy in Damascus, and Serbia is set to send an ambassador to Syria.

The British newspaper said while such "small steps" are unlikely to be followed by EU's juggernauts France and Germany any time soon, they "make clear the challenge the bloc will face as the situation in Syria normalizes over time".

Laure Foucher, a senior analyst at Crisis Group who focuses on Europe and the Middle East and North Africa region said such moves by fringe states are "weakening the EU position".

Syria has been gripped by foreign-backed terrorism since March 2011. The Syrian government says the Israeli regime and its Western and regional allies have been aiding the Takfiri terrorist groups that were wreaking havoc in the Arab country.

The Czech Republic was the only EU member country not to withdraw from Syria after the eruption of the conflict.

EU's policy stops ambassadors submitting credentials to the Damascus government.

However, some EU member countries currently want direct channels with Damascus as the Syrian government forces have already managed to undo the terrorist gains across the country and bring back almost all of Syrian soil under government control.

Athens last year sent a new chargé d'affaires to Damascus.

"Greece is interested in being present in a country where developments affect our national interests [such] as the migration crisis," said Nikolaos Protonotarios.

Some 5.6 million Syrians have been forced to flee abroad as refugees, mostly to the neighboring countries of Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq, since the eruption of the foreign-backed militancy in Syria about 10 years ago.

Resistance News

Over 60 settlers defile Aqsa Mosque

INTERNATIONAL d e s k **TEHRAN** — Hordes of extremist Jewish settlers on Monday morning desecrated the Aqsa Mosque in Occupied Jerusalem.

According to local sources, 63 settlers entered the Mosque in groups through al-Maghariba Gate and toured its courtyards under police escort.

Some settlers were seen performing Jewish prayers in the eastern area of the Islamic holy site.

More settlers are expected to defile the Mosque later in the afternoon.

The Aqsa Mosque is exposed to daily desecration by Jewish settlers and police forces in the morning and the afternoon except on Fridays and Saturdays.

The Israeli police close al-Maghariba Gate, which is used by Jews to enter the Mosque, at 10:30 am after the settlers complete their morning tours at the holy site. Later in the afternoon, the same gate is reopened for evening tours by settlers.

During the presence of settlers inside the Mosque compound, entry restrictions are imposed on Muslim worshippers at the entrances leading to the Mosque and their IDs are seized until they leave the holy place.

Why do the Western media refer to the former Yemeni government as “internationally recognized?”

➔ Elections are contested and this was by no means a contest. Nor was it exactly what the Yemeni people had fought for in 2011 to get rid of the old guard. Nevertheless, opposition groups, including the popular Ansarullah movement supported a two-year transition period on the basis that Hadi would engage with all segments of society to exchange views on the transition process, draft a new national constitution and a new power-sharing government.

Hadi failed to provide neither the leadership needed at the time nor did he provide essential reforms.

Just one year into Hadi's term, the economy was worse than it was before the 2011 revolution, unemployment was sharply rising while the majority of Yemenis faced severe food shortages, water and basic goods.

Separatist groups boycotted the intra-Yemeni talks in another sign that Hadi lacked the leadership skills to unite a country that had a track record of violence and division in the south. Despite Hadi's two-year mandate expiring in January 2014, opposition parties displayed impressive patience by allowing Hadi to stay in power in order to preserve peace in the country. Some Yemeni media reports say opposition factions opposed Hadi clinging on to power and that he had overstayed his welcome.

In any case, the straw that broke the camel's back came between July and September of 2014 after Hadi's decision to curb fuel subsidies. A move widely condemned among Yemenis in what is the region's poorest nation. Mass street protests rocked the country as anger

mounted over rising poverty and the lack of any progress since the 2011 uprising. A second revolution was underway as Hadi was accused of corruption and a massive failure to meet the terms agreed upon when he assumed office. Protesters called on the interim administration to resign. Opposition factions, spearheaded by Ansarullah echoed the people's demands.

However, Hadi refused to leave office while his armed forces opened fire and killed protesters in the capital Sana'a. By late September, forces loyal to Ansarullah and the country's armed forces overtook government offices and the Presidential palace. Hadi's ministers were replaced by what became known as the National Salvation Government, members of Ansarullah under a previous UN-brokered agreement also took up positions of power in the new government replacing those that had been represented by the Hadi administration.

Fact check

The notion that Ansarullah (an umbrella organization) is an Iranian-backed Shia proxy cannot be further from the truth. Without a doubt, it is backed by the Islamic Republic of Iran. The reality on the ground is that Ansarullah is the most popular movement supported by many Sunni Muslims who had also become disillusioned with the so-called transition process. Ansarullah would not be in control of the majority of the country alongside other factions if the people did not support it and did not fight for it and did not take to the streets in demonstrations that stretch as far as the eye can see in support of this umbrella organization.

By late January 2015, Hadi and his ministers submitted their resignation. Hadi was later held under house arrest on a number of charges that included corruption. In February, he escaped and fled to Saudi Arabia, the circumstances of the escape remain murky. Different reports state different accounts.

That takes nothing away from the fact that once Hadi and his administration presented their resignation letters, they are no longer recognized as the government inside Yemen, let alone the international community.

However, once in Riyadh, under the orders of Saudi Arabia, Hadi retracted his resignation.

Now in similar circumstances, anywhere else on the planet, he should have been in court back in Yemen facing multiple charges including corruption; not representing a country from abroad as its 'president' because Riyadh says so.

The most important question here is this: Why did the former Yemeni President retract his resignation once in Saudi Arabia and claim to be Yemen's 'legitimate president'?

The answer is very simple. Saudi Arabia needed a request from a 'legitimate' Yemeni administration to wage war on its southern neighbor.

And sure enough, the Saudis claim that a request came from Hadi; the following month, Riyadh waged a war on Yemen. A war that it predicted would take weeks to complete but is ongoing more than six years later. A war where western arms manufacturers have benefited the most.

Apart from that, Hadi was just a puppet to the Saudis. At one point, even Riyadh placed

Work starts to restore wind towers as reminiscent of genius Persian architecture

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — A new round of restoration projects has been commenced on wind towers in the historical texture of the village of Laft on Qeshm Island.

The project aims at restoring four centuries-old wind towers (badgirs), which are reminiscent of innovative Persian architecture in oasis towns or scorching places, the provincial tourism chief has said.

A budget of three billion rials (\$71,400 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been allocated to the project, Sohrab Banavand announced on Monday.

Laft was registered on the national heritage list in 2006. Perched on a rocky slope in the Persian Gulf, the fishing village offers its visitors a patchwork of delightfully photogenic scenes minarets, and badgirs which once were an essential element for the residential structures as an air-conditioning system.



Qeshm Island embraces a wide range of ecotourism attractions such as the Hara marine forests and about 60 villages dotted mostly across its rocky coastlines. The island has an abundance of wildlife, including birds, reptiles, dolphins, and turtles as well.

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.

New advances put Hir on tourist map in northwest Iran

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — The ancient city of Hir in the northwestern province of Ardebil has become one of the tourism hubs of the country, the provincial tourism chief has said.

With the development of tourism infrastructure and practical measures in the field of cultural heritage, the city has emerged as a major tourist destination, Nader Fallahi announced on Monday.

The tourism sector of Hir entered a new chapter following the inauguration of a curved-glass suspension bridge in January 2020, the official explained.

Made of curved sheets of glass, the bridge measures 220 meters in length and connects two hills in the Hir district. The bridge's all-glass parts and metal cables have been constructed by domestic engineers using high-quality materials and are said to be the first of their kind in the world.

The official also noted that some of the historical structures and aging buildings across the city have been added to the national heritage list and budget and funds have been allocated to their restoration projects.



Hir is well-known for having lush natural beauties, cultural heritage sites, and hospitable people, he said.

In July 2020, Fallahi noted that Ardebil can be named the province of suspension bridges, pointing to Meshginshahr suspension bridge and Hir curved glass suspension bridge as well as Azna suspension bridge.

Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan said in February that Ardebil province has immense potential to become the next tourism hub of the country.

The development of infrastructures, which is currently taking place in Ardebil, could facilitate this region's transformation into a new tourism hub, he mentioned.

The implementation of tourism-related projects worth 40 trillion rials (\$952 million at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) shows the decisive decision of the province's tourism officials for the development in this field, he explained.

The completion of the mentioned projects will add capacity to the tourism sector of the country, the minister noted.

He also expressed hope that the province would become a duly deserving host of the 2023 Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) tourism capital program.

Last April tourism authorities of the province announced that they have developed extensive plans to draw more tourists during the winter season to the province and make it the winter tourism hub of the country.

Sprawling on a high, windswept plateau, Ardebil is well-known for having lush natural beauties, hospitable people, and its silk and carpet trade tradition. It is also home to the UNESCO-registered Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble.

The province is freezing in winter and mild in summer, attracting thousands every year. The capital city of Ardebil is usually recorded as one of the coldest cities in the country in winter.

Jameh Mosque of Kerman lures sightseers, historians for its location, design, and ornamentation

-> 1 The iwan facing the court on the north is framed by a geometric arabesque pattern of tile mosaic inscribed into a geometric inscription band composed of rectangular tile mosaic pieces. It is surmounted by a semi-dome ornamented with a geometric arabesque pattern in white and dark blue inscribing floral patterns and descending from a medallion at the top of the semi-dome.

The main entrance to the mosque is located to the north and is emphasized by its soaring portal iwan opposite a city square with a central pool. Two succeeding spaces lead through this portal iwan to the mosque's court: an intermediary room, four meters square and surmounted by a dome, and an iwan facing the court. Two additional entrances are found on the south and west, extending beyond the rectangular perimeter of the mosque.

The mihrab -- a semicircular niche in the wall of a mosque that points out the qibla, the direction of the Kaaba in Mecca -- was installed in the sixteenth century, whereas the qibla wall and the two side walls date from the original construction. The mihrab is a half-octagonal niche in the qibla wall and is surmounted by a semi-dome comprising two muqarnas tiers of tile mosaics

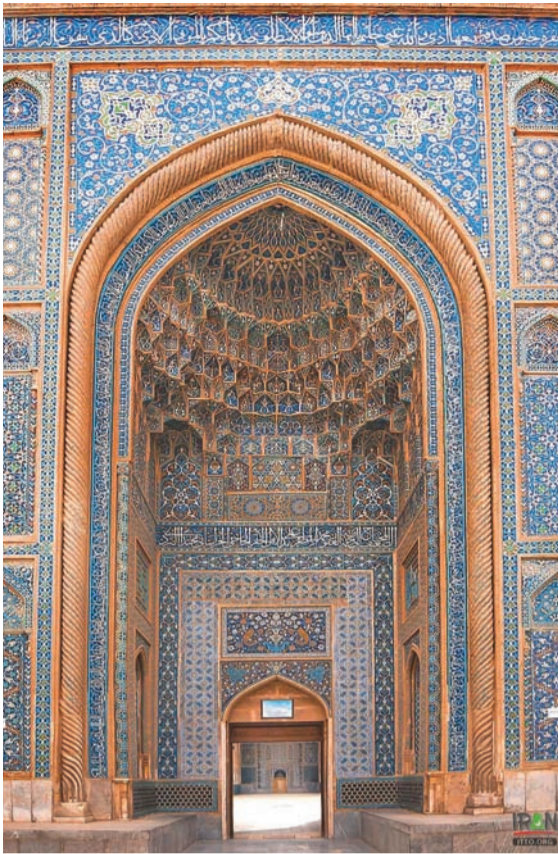
of arabesque motifs placed on top of a marble dado.

The arch of the mihrab is framed by a rectangular frame with an inscription band flanked by two rectangular panels of glazed tile mosaics of geometric arabesque motifs. Another inscription band marks the joint between the prayer hall's walls and the room's pointed barrel vault, which is decorated with glazed terracotta in yellow and blue.

The two walls adjacent to the qibla wall have only a marble dado on their base without any further ornamentation. Column-bounded prayer halls are integrated into the design and extend behind the arcade, aligning with the exterior walls of each of the four iwans (except part of the northern wall) and forming a rectangular outer perimeter of the mosque.

Moreover, the main portal iwan is decorated with an extraordinary variety of rectangular panels of geometric, floral, and vegetal motifs. An inscription band in white script on a dark blue background frames the external perimeter of the iwan.

The terms "Jameh Mosque" or "Masjed-e Jameh" or "Friday Mosque" are used in Iran for a grand communal mosque where mandatory Friday prayers are performed:



An exterior view of the Jameh Mosque of Kerman features intricate tilework and stunning architecture in the south-eastern Iranian city, which has long been a cultural melting pot since antiquity, blending Persians with subcontinental tribes dwellers.

the phrase is used in other Muslim countries but only in Iran does it designate this purpose.

Archaeological hills, cemeteries added to national heritage list

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — A total of eight historical sites and aging structures scattered across Ilam province have recently been added to the national heritage list.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism declared the inscriptions on Monday in a letter to the governor-general of the western province, CHTN reported.

Archaeological hills of Chegini and



Sangar Nader, old cemeteries of Banlakan and Pelleh Kabud and Siah Pir Castle were among the properties added to the prestigious list.

Jahangir historical site, Tangqir defensive wall, and Khoramkuh tower were also inscribed on the list.

Home to almost half of Iran's UNESCO sites, western Iran is a land of hospitable people, wild extremes, and wilder history, and it may be an independent

traveler's adventure playground. The region also witnessed the rise and fall of many great empires once bordering Mesopotamia, Ottoman Turkey, and Czarist Russia.

From the fecund Caspian coast to the stark, mountainous northern borders, and the crumbling desert ruins of the southern plains, the region hosts everything from paddy fields to blizzards to Persian gardens.

Artists make replicas of tiles covering UNESCO-designated palace

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — A team of Iranian artists and artisans has created exact replicas of "Haft-Rang" tiles which cover parts of the UNESCO-registered Golestan Palace in downtown Tehran.

"Kashikari (Tiling) is one of the original arts of Iran, and the best example of which can be found in the Golestan Palace," Soheila Naqizadeh, who leads the team of artists, said on Sunday, IRNA reported.

"Designs and motifs of Qajar-era (1789–1925) ties were scrutinized by members of the team to produce prototypes and later replicas, using watercolor style....," Naqizadeh explained.

Arrays of intricate tilework can be found in ornaments of many architectures and especially mosques, shrines, palaces, and mansions across the country. There is evidence that the beginning of tile-work is traced back to the Achaemenid era (c. 550-330).

The term Haft-Rang (meaning seven-colored, also known specifically as Cuerda Seca OR Dry Cord) tiles were first used by a royal historian of Ilkhanate to describe the technic of painting on glaze and is still



used today, according to Visit Iran.

The number seven however does not refer to the

Earthen jug discovered while digging sewage well

HERITAGE d e s k **TEHRAN** — A fragmented clay jug was accidentally discovered in a central Iranian village while workers were digging sewage well.

"A fragmented clay jug was accidentally discovered in the village of Hajiabad, which is situated in Semirom county of Isfahan province, while workers were digging a sewage well," Semirom's tourism chief Saied Soleymanian announced on Monday.

"Personnel in charge of protecting cultural heritage were immediately dispatched to the location after receiving the report of the discovery of this earthenware," the

official said, CHTN reported.

The official added the object will undergo a scientific investigation to determine its date of production.

"With the help of authorized archeological experts, the jug was transferred to the archaeological department of Isfahan province's tourism and cultural heritage directorate to initiate an investigation."

"With the cooperation of the local owner, the necessary measures were adopted to continue drilling the well under the supervision of experts from Semirom's cultural heritage directorate," he said.

Isfahan province is situated on a main



north-south highway from Tehran to Shiraz and the Persian Gulf. It is linked by road east and southeast to Yazd, Kerman,

and Zahedan.

Its capital city, Isfahan, was once a crossroads of international trade and diplomacy in Iran. Now, it is one of Iran's top tourist destinations for good reasons. The ancient city is filled with many architectural wonders such as unmatched Islamic buildings, bazaars, museums, Persian gardens, and tree-lined boulevards.

Isfahan has long been nicknamed as Nesf-e-Jahan which is translated into "half the world"; meaning seeing it is relevant to see the whole world. In its heyday, it was also one of the largest cities in the region with a population of nearly one million.

Festival brings Iranian sweets, desserts under one roof

TOURISM d e s k **TEHRAN** — Hundreds of Iranian sweets, cakes, and desserts were brought under the same roof in a one-day festival, which was held in Tabriz on Sunday.

The festival was organized with the motto of health and improvement and in a bid to help create more jobs in the fields of cakes, sweets, and desserts in East Azarbaijan province, the deputy provincial tourism chief said.

Artists and confectioners from South Khorasan, Ardebil, West Azarbaijan, and East Azarbaijan were amongst the people who participated in the festival, Alireza Bairamzadeh added.

In full compliance with health protocols, the exhibition halls of the festival were visited in the fields of cakes, modern sweets, and cake decoration, and new desserts, the official noted.

Throughout the centuries, Iranians have discovered Persian dessert recipes, developed them, and passed them down to the next generation. Some of these recipes



date back as far as ancient Persia.

The availability of certain ingredients, for example,

defines some Persian sweets such as those made with rose water, dates, rice flour, and wheat germ. There are also sugar-free sweets and vegan desserts.

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

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

COVID-19 UPDATES

The statistics are related to 24 hours started 2:00 p.m. July 11

New cases	20,829
New deaths	182
Total cases	3,394,279
Total deaths	86,041
New hospitalized patients	2,287
Patients in critical condition	3,684
Total recovered patients	3,041,541
Diagnostic tests conducted	24,594,420
Doses of vaccine injected	7,057,257

Climate characteristic of Iran

(Part 5)

Differences in precipitation levels caused by relief and exposure are also important on the central Persian plateau, over most of which the annual average is less than 200 mm and often drops below 100 mm. On the other hand, those parts of the piedmont and the plateau that are encircled by mountain peaks are more fortunate in their ecology.

There much of the precipitation falls in the form of winter snow, which in the spring fills the streams with meltwater or raises the groundwater levels in the qanats and can be used to water the newly planted fields. Snowfall thus has special importance in all the mountainous regions of northern and western Persia, the single largest area of the country where rainfall cultivation of winter cereals is practiced.

Finally, the seasonal distribution of precipitation reveals that, except for the southern Caspian lowlands, the hydrology of all parts of Persia is determined by the Mediterranean winter rains. The Persian plateau, the Zagros, and the Persian Gulf coast receive at least two-thirds, in some places up to 80 percent and more, of their annual precipitation in late winter and early spring. On the other hand, the southern Caspian lowlands, which receive heavy rainfall all year round, experience their maximum precipitation in the autumn. Everywhere in Persia summer is the season of lowest precipitation, whether measured in absolute or relative terms.

With the exception of the southern Caspian lowlands, the uplands of the Alborz and Zagros and the central Persian mountains on the plateau itself receive the most precipitation, most of which falls in the form of snow, providing gradually deepening permanent cover from aban/November, sometimes even Mehr/October, until Esfand/February-March.



Humidity and aridity. It is clear from the correspondence of temperature and precipitation levels that the humidity or aridity of the land is of special significance in Persia. By far the largest part of the country is characterized by extreme aridity, which can be defined as precipitation deficits. The land along the southern coast of the Caspian Sea, on the other hand, belongs to a humid zone, with surplus precipitation.

Several American climatologists have attempted to record and map the deficits and surpluses of precipitation over all of southwestern Asia. It can be seen that the whole northwestern portion of that region, as well as the high Alborz and the Zagros ranges, belongs to zones of mean annual precipitation surplus.

The close relation between relief and surplus precipitation can also be seen in the surpluses recorded in the smaller mountain ranges in Khorasan and central Persia, which are clearly exceptional in those regions. On the other hand, the periphery of the central Persian plateau and the Persian Gulf coast area suffer extreme precipitation deficits.

The very large area over which deficits of more than 800 mm are recorded can be further differentiated on the basis of isolated measurements of evaporation; for example, in Fuzestan more than 2,660 mm have been recorded, and in the extremely dry Dasht-e Lout the figure is more than 5,000 mm.

An attempt to define the climatic provinces of Persia. At present any attempt to divide Persia into different climatic provinces must be tentative and incomplete, in view of the great distances between observation stations, the varying time periods over which observations have been recorded, differences in the reliability of the data, and the still largely unexplored nature of the synoptic relationships.

(Source: Encyclopaedia Iranica)



Without water, everything withers

Microplastics reach Lut desert

SOCIETY TEHRAN — Recent studies by Iranian researchers have revealed the microplastic contamination in the soil of Kalout Shahdad and Lut deserts.

Identification of microplastics in desert and pristine areas indicates the spread, overuse, and mismanagement of plastics in the environment.

Humans are known to consume the tiny plastic particles via food and water, but the possible health effects on people and ecosystems have yet to be determined.

Microplastics found in the soil come from plastic waste, plastic-based mulch, the use of sewage sludge as fertilizer, river floods, road runoff, irrigation water, and atmospheric sediment.

Accordingly, researchers of Kerman University of Medical Sciences studied the soil of Kalout Shahdad and Lut deserts for microplastic presence.

The number of MPs identified in 300 g samples ranged from zero (not detected) in several yardang tops to 25 on some yardang hillsides, with an overall average abundance of about 0.02 MP g⁻¹.

The majority of MPs were of a fibrous nature with a size distribution (100m-1000m) skewed toward the lower end, and analysis of a selection of particles showed that polyethylene terephthalate and Nylon (polyamide) were the principal polymers.

Scanning electron microscopy revealed intense degradation of some particles but limited weathering of others. With little evidence of meso- and macroplastics in the deserts, it appears that the majority of MPs are brought into these environments from distant sources via the wind, with



smaller, seasonal contributions from runoff associated with the adjacent mountains.

It is proposed that some windborne MPs are transported through the deserts

Defined as smaller than 5mm in size, microplastics are shed by synthetic clothing, vehicle tires, and the spillage of plastic pellets used by manufacturers. The physical breakdown of plastic litter also creates them. Rain washes them into rivers and the sea, but they can also be blown by the wind and end up in fields when treated sewage waste is used as fertilizer.

DOE plans post-coronavirus environmental training

SOCIETY TEHRAN — The Department of Environment (DOE) has developed public programs for post-coronavirus environmental education, with the cooperation of non-governmental organizations and environmental activists.

A few decades ago, the fever of industrial development had spread around the world, no matter what harm caused to the environment, but with the emerging air pollution, accumulation of waste, extinction of animals, and the loss of plants in human life, the alarm bells rang, and humans came to realize that the development process must be stopped; However, no change is easy. In the meantime, the role of education has become more and more prominent.

Over the past two years, the situation even worsened as the coronavirus pandemic spread around the globe, it left harmful effects on various economic, social, cultural sectors, especially the environment, which is dealing with piles of hazardous and plastic waste more than ever, Abolqasem Mousavi, director of the office of public participation and social responsibility of the DOE said.

Accordingly, the DOE, using the capacity of non-governmental organizations and environmental activists and under the supervision of the public participation department,

developed and implemented educational programs for the public to protect the environment, he noted.

The training courses aim to increase awareness and encourage a sense of individual and social responsibility to the environment, and topics such as waste, water, wetlands, air pollution, and environmental awareness are the most important of the courses, which sometimes coincide with environmental occasions, Mousavi explained.

“Another part of the training is done for special audiences and with the aim of accompanying them in the implementation of environmental protection programs, such as training farmers, fishermen, etc. Also, training state-run organizations and decision-makers such as village administrators, mayors, etc.

Training for teachers and students is also a significant part of the public education programs,” he stated.

Post-coronavirus crisis

The global spread of the new type of virus triggered demand for face masks, disposable gloves, and detergents.

Many manufacturing companies have gone into overdrive to produce more such personal protection equipment; despite epidemiologists and infectious disease experts have been at pains to emphasize against a scramble for face masks.

However, many negligently tossing their used face masks



and gloves on the streets.

While an exact shelf-life period is dependent on what specific material the gloves are made of, a general rule is three years for disposable natural latex gloves and up to five years for disposable nitrile gloves.

That means more and more waste ends up in landfills despite the environmental threat these kinds of hazardous waste can cause both for the environment and people.

Detergents are the second choice for people to prevent novel coronavirus infection, and these days many consumers are rushing to get these items from stores and shopping malls.

Detergents with certain compounds can be harmful to health as much as they can relieve people of disease.

Excessive consumption of detergents is a risk factor for the environment in addition to water and soil resources; wastewater from these substances enters our life cycle and can come up with a health hazard.

Charity allots \$2.6m to free inmates of unintentional crimes

➔ 1 9,398 inmates freed nationwide

Iranian benefactors helped release a total of 9,398 inmates of unintentional crimes across the country over the past Iranian calendar year (March 2020-March 2021), according to the Blood Money Organization.

Freeing prisoners of involuntary crimes is done in three ways; the first way is granting prisoners leave and the second way is providing a number of them with loans to be paid inside the prison.

The third way of assistance is the release of



unintentional convicts by paying their debt; last year, a total of 35 trillion rials (nearly

\$833 million) has been donated to pay the debt of the released prisoners.

Last year, Isfahan province topped the list for releasing the highest number of prisoners amounting to 677 involuntary crime doers, while Sistan-Baluchestan at the bottom of the list.

As an annual tradition, benefactors come together in a ceremony to raise funds for releasing prisoners of unintentional crimes during the holy month of Ramadan (which started on April 13 this year), through which, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali

Khamenei has donated 5 billion rials (about \$120,000).

Last year, heads of the three branches of the government and the private sector donated 6.5 billion rials (nearly \$150,000) to release prisoners who had committed involuntary crimes.

President Hassan Rouhani, former Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani, and Former Judiciary Chief Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raeisi made a total of 3.9 billion rials (around \$92,000) in contributions to free prisoners of unintentional crimes.

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A ← → ع

Afghans life in Iran provided new model of migration

The friendly coexistence of Afghans with Iranians has set a new pattern in migration, secretary of human rights headquarters in Iran has stated.

The two nations of Iran and Afghanistan share similarities in religion, culture and civilization, Ali Bagherikani said on Thursday during a meeting with Afghan immigrants in Tehran.

The west is using all the capacities to turn the differences between the two nations of Iran and Afghanistan into a dispute and then a conflict in order to achieve their illegitimate interests, he lamented.

“The effort of the Human Rights Headquarters is to highly protect the right of immigrants living in Iran,” he highlighted.

زندگی افغانستانی‌ها در ایران الگوی جدیدی از مهاجرت ارائه کرده است

دبیرستاد حقوق بشر جمهوری اسلامی ایران می‌گوید همزیستی ملاطفت‌آمیز افغانستانی‌ها با ایرانی‌ها، الگوی جدیدی را در مهاجرت ارائه کرده است.

به گزارش ایرنا، «علی باقری‌کنی» روز پنجشنبه در دیدار با مهاجران افغانستانی در تهران اظهار داشت: اشتراکات دینی، فرهنگی و تمدنی دو ملت ایران و افغانستان بسیار به هم نزدیک است.

وی افزود: غربی‌ها از همه ظرفیت‌ها استفاده می‌کنند تا تفاوت‌های دو ملت ایران و افغانستان را به اختلاف و سپس نزاع تبدیل کنند تا به منافع نامشروع خود برسند. او گفت: تلاش ستاد حقوق بشر آن است که کوچکترین حقی از مهاجران مقیم ایران ضایع نشود.

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING



The sin which makes you sad and repentant is more liked by Allah than the good deed which turns you arrogant.

Imam Ali (AS)

Hafez and visual arts

Part 1
The extensive scholarship devoted to the poetry of Hafez has not yet extended to a systematic consideration of the impact of his Divan on the visual arts.

Manuscripts of his poetry have been considered primarily as sources for textual criticism but those same manuscripts could yield information about the ways his verses were understood and used in various places and periods.

Even the manuscripts' chronological and geographical distribution could provide an index for the extent and growth of his popularity. Copies with elaborate decoration or illustrations may reveal how his verses were understood.

Sporadic reference has been made to the transcription of his poetry on objects, but a more systematic investigation could be undertaken. His verses have also been used by painters working in the 19th and 20th centuries as a resource for the creation of "word pictures" that provide an alternative to figural representations.

Earliest Hafez manuscripts
The need for a critical edition of Hafez's Divan prompted scholars to undertake a systematic examination of public and private collections to identify manuscripts that were both early and carefully written.

The identification of such copies allowed scholars, notably Mohammad Qazvini, Parviz Natel Khanlari and more recently Rashid Ayyazi, to use them as the basis of their editions.

The edition of Ayyazi utilized nine manuscripts dated between 1410 and 1423. Those copies are now scattered from Istanbul and Tehran to Dushanbe and Hyderabad, but most of the examples illustrated by Ayyazi appear to have been produced in Shiraz.

These manuscripts underscore the fact that during the first three decades of the 15th century Hafez's verses were both excerpted for jongs and safinas (anthologies of rectangular or oblong format) and collected as an independent Divan of over 400 ghazals.

The high quality of calligraphy and illumination found in these same manuscripts also demonstrates that within a few decades of his death his works were being replicated by professional calligraphers and illuminators for highly placed patrons.

Despite the existence of several early manuscripts containing virtually the entire corpus of his work known today, luxury manuscripts of Hafez's poetry are extremely varied in their scope. Some contain only a few poems, others his entire Divan. When his poetry is illustrated those pictures are also diverse in subject and form; in some cases this variety may reflect different interpretations given to his work.

Verses of Hafez on metalwork
Metalwork vessels inscribed with the verses of Hafez provide another index of his popularity.

Those from the fifteenth century are particularly significant because they were mainly produced in Khorasan, possibly in Herat, and thus testify to the widening geographic scope of his audience.

His verses are found on several kinds of objects, such as pen-boxes and candlesticks, but above all on several types of drinking vessels, where the bayts cited usually refer to the act of drinking.

The earliest known example is a mashraba (jug) completed in 1461-62, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum (943-1886). Its neck has the usual wishes for its anonymous owner, but the vessel's body is ringed by four inscription bands that cite two complete ghazals by Hafez.

The upper and lower ones bear the text of Khanlari no. 172, with 1-4 on the top and 5-8 on the bottom. The two middle bands cite Khanlari no. 66.

Another fine example is a badia (wine bowl) in the Hermitage Collection made for a certain Emamqoli Kiani ca. 1494 inscribed on its interior rim with the first three bayts of Khanlari no. 388, verses that are cited on many later vessels including several made for Armenian patrons, probably in Isfahan during the 17th century.

The Hermitage bowl's exterior rim carries references to the magical cup of Jamshid; the cartouches on its body are inscribed with verses that praise wine drinking.

Poetry of Hafez in 16th-century manuscripts
The 16th century constitutes the apex in production for illustrated copies of Hafez's Divan; they were made in several places for a range of patrons.

The most celebrated of these copies is dedicated to Sam Mirza, the son of Shah Esmail and a famous biographer of poets, and contains four paintings, two signed by Soltan-Mohammad Eraqi and another with the signature of Shaykhzadeh, a combination that suggests that some of the illustrations were executed in Herat and others in Tabriz.

Most scholars have accepted the dating of ca. 1527 for this manuscript, proposed by Stuart Cary Welch. Formerly in the Cartier Collection, it is presently divided between two private collections, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the Harvard University Art Museum.

(Source: Encyclopedia Iranica)
To be continued

“Girl Flies in Prayer” wins FIAP Gold Medal at Vernon-Normandy photo exhibit

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian photographer Ahmad Khatiri's "Girl Flies in Prayer" was honored with the FIAP Gold Medal - FIAP blue ribbon J2 at the Vernon-Normandy Photograph Exhibition in France.

He won the prize in the photojournalism category for the black and white photo depicting a little girl opening her arms like wings among a group of Muslims during a congregational prayer.

In this category, his photo "Alone" also received GPU White Ribbon J1 - FIAP blue ribbon J3.

This photo shows a little boy clad in a military uniform marching with a company of troops.

The Vernon-Normandy Photograph Exhibition will be organized from October 16 to 24 in collaboration with several prestigious centers, including the Federation Internationale de l'Art Photographique (FIAP), Global Photographic Union (GPU) the Photographic Society of America (PSA). Belgian photographer Luc Stalmans won the grand prize at the exhibition.

"Girl Flies in Prayer" and "Alone" have previously been honored at some international photography contests across the world.



"Girl Flies in Prayer" by Iranian photographer Ahmad Khatiri won the FIAP Gold Medal - FIAP blue ribbon J2 at the Vernon-Normandy Photograph Exhibition in France.

"Girl Flies in Prayer" won an honorable mention at a contest organized by the Gruppo Operativo Fotografico Ascoli Piceno – GOFAP (Ascoli Piceno Photographic

Operational Group) in Italy in 2020. "Alone" was awarded an honorable mention at the Cross-Continental Festival in Germany, South Africa and Indonesia.

Venice to host Kayhan Kalhor, Behnam Samani for concert of classical Persian music

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian kamancheh virtuoso Kayhan Kalhor and tombak player Behnam Samani will perform a concert of classical Persian music at San Giorgio in Venice.

The concerts will be organized on July 14 at the invitation of the Intercultural Institute of Comparative Music Studies, the institute has announced.

The performances will be held with contributions from the Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage at Ca' Foscari University, Venice.

As a great interpreter of the kamancheh, a bowed string instrument with an end-pin, four-time Grammy Award nominee Kalhor is considered an ambassador of Persian music in the world.

He is also a member of the renowned Silk Road Ensemble founded by Yo-Yo Ma, and continues to tour with the celebrated cellist as well as regularly composing for him.

He has been honored with prestigious awards at

numerous international music events. He won the Artist Award at the WOMEX Awards, the World Music Expo, in Finland in 2019.

Kalhor also received the Artist Award of the globalFEST, North America's most important world music industry event, in New York in 2020.

Samani plays tombak, an Iranian goblet-shaped drum. In his own particular style, he combines an amazing variety of rhythms that have their roots in classical Persian music but are open to influences from other cultures, leading to a wide range of sounds, colors and expressions.

A founding member of the percussion group Zarbang, Samani has played with leading Iranian musicians and has toured extensively internationally, especially with the Dastan ensemble.

In line with the concert, a review session on the music and aesthetics of the classical Persian tradition will also be organized by Giovanni De Zorzi on July 13 at 5 pm.



This file photo shows Kayhan Kalhor (L) and Behnam Samani performing a concert.

Both the meeting and the concert will be streamed on the Youtube channel of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini.

“The Tank” wins Spirit Award for narrative short at Brooklyn festival

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian director Mojtaba Purabdollah's "The Tank" has won the Spirit Award for narrative short at the Brooklyn Film Festival.

The film is about Abolfazl, a 10-year-old boy who lives in an apartment upon the roof of which is a tank that supplies the water of the building. He along with his friends go on the roof to swim in the tank for recreation. One day Abolfazl closes the lid of the tank while Mohammad is in it.

Iranian filmmakers are frequent visitors to the Brooklyn Film Festival, which is annually held in the U.S. Borough of New York City in June.

In 2017, Iranian actress Golab Adineh was honored with a Certificate



"The Tank" by Iranian director Mojtaba Purabdollah.

of Outstanding Achievement at the festival for her role in "Sis" directed by Marjan

Ashrafizadeh.

This year, the Spirit Award for feature narrative went to "Walk with Me" Isabel Del Rosal from the U.S., while "And So I Stayed" by Natalie Pattillo and Daniel A. Nelson from the U.S. won the Spirit Award for feature documentary.

"The Mountain & the Maiden", a co-production between the U.S. and India, received the Spirit Award for short documentary. The film has been directed by Shmuel Hoffman and Anton von Heisler.

"Perfect as Cats" by Kevin Vu and "The Broken Candle" by Felix Kiner, both from the U.S., won the Spirit Award for experimental and animation films respectively.

The Grand Chameleon Award of the

festival was given to the narrative short "Seiva Bruta" ("Under the Heavens") by Brazilian director Gustavo Milan. The film also won the award for best narrative short.

"Corral" by Marcelo Brennand from Brazil was selected as best narrative feature, while "Life & Life" by American filmmaker NC Heikin was picked as best documentary feature.

Lisa Donato from the U.S. was named best director for her narrative feature "Gossamer Folds".

The festival is organized by the Brooklyn Film Society, a non-profit organization missioned to provide a public forum in Brooklyn in order to advance public interest in films and the independent production of films.

“Cage”, “Slow Death” to compete in Portland Horror Film Festival



"Slow Death" directed by Amen Sahrai.

A R T TEHRAN — Iranian shorts "Cage" and "Slow Death" have been selected to compete in the Portland Horror Film Festival in Oregon, the U.S.

Most COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted in Portland, however, the 2021 festival will take place from July 28 to August 5 with both select in-person screenings at the Hollywood Theatre, also streaming online, plus additional streaming-exclusive films.

The story of "Cage" directed by Mehdi Aqajani is set in a young man's house where a dreadful sound is heard. He realizes that the sound is coming from inside the air ducts and sees strange things in it. He decides to discover what is going on.

Directed by Amen Sahrai, "Slow Death" is about, Tal'at, a young girl who tells a frightening tale before going to bed. Her brother is too scared to get water from the kitchen, so Tal'at goes to get the water. But when she returns to

the room, her mother and brother have disappeared.

The Portland Horror Film Festival is the first dedicated all horror genre film festival in Portland, Oregon.

Festival directors Gwen and Brian Callahan are also the directors of the popular H. P. Lovecraft Film Festival, originally founded by Andrew Migliore, the HPLFF has been a Portland institution for over 20 years. They also organized Zompire: The Undead Film Festival from 2012-2014.

After noting an increase in high-quality film submissions that didn't quite fit the narrow Lovecraftian or Weird Tale format, they created PHFF out of a desire to showcase independent horror films from all sub-genres.

With annual screenings featuring regional and world premieres, visiting filmmaker Q&A sessions, and the best audience in the world, the Portland Horror Film Festival is a vibrant outpost of independent horror in the Pacific Northwest.

“The Sweet Indifference of the World” introduced at Iranian bookstores

CULTURE TEHRAN — A Persian translation of Swiss author Peter Stamm's novel "The Sweet Indifference of the World" has been offered at Iranian bookstores.

Ofoq Publications, which had invited the writer to Tehran in 2016, has released the book translated into Persian by Maryam Moayyedpur.

An English translation by Michael Hofmann published in January 2020 was named a best book of the season by Vogue. In this alluring, melancholic novel, Stamm

at his best – a writer haunted by his double – blurs the line between past and present, fiction and reality, in his attempt to outrun the unknown.

"Please come to Skogskyrkogarden tomorrow at 2. I have a story I want to tell you." Lena agrees to Christoph's out-of-the-blue request, though the two have never met.

In Stockholm's Woodland Cemetery, he tells her his story, which is also somehow hers. Twenty years before, he loved a woman named Magdalena—an actress like Lena, with her looks, her personality, her past. Their

breakup inspired him to write his first novel, about the time they were together, and in its scenes Lena recognizes the uncanny, intimate details of her own relationship with an aspiring writer, Chris.

Is it possible that she and Chris are living the same lives as Magdalena and Christoph two decades apart? Are they headed towards the same scripted separation? Or, in the fever of writing, has Christoph lost track of what is real and what is imagined?

In this subtle, kaleidoscopic tale, Stamm exposes a fundamental human yearning to



This combination photo shows Swiss writer Peter Stamm and the front cover of the Persian translation his novel "The Sweet Indifference of the World".

beat life's mysteries by forcing answers on questions that have yet to be fully asked.