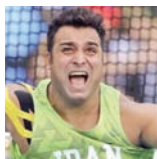




**U.S. linking prisoner swap to political goals: Iran** *Page 2*



**Discus thrower Hadadi casts doubt on Olympics** *Page 3*



**Endemic plant effective in reducing gastric cancer cells: study finds** *Page 7*



## Leader contextualizes resistance against the West

See page 3



©AFP

**U.S. seeking to establish dual government in Afghanistan: Azeri expert**

**BY ALIA. JENABZADEH**  
Head of the Azerbaijan Institute for Democracy and Human Rights says that the U.S. prefers a dual government in Afghanistan.

"The United States, which has been waging civil wars in Iraq and Syria for years, wants to continue the conflict in Afghanistan as well," Ahmad Shahidov tells the Tehran Times.

"They want to recognize the growing Taliban as an official party and establish a dual government in Afghanistan," Shahidov remarks.

The U.S. made serious blunders after 9/11 in both Iraq and Afghanistan and now is quitting West Asia to focus on how to contain China's rise.

The United States invaded Afghanistan to topple the Taliban regime for hosting al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden who was considered the architect behind the September 11 attacks. Hamid Karzai, the former Afghan president, has repeatedly said his efforts to convince the U.S. to hold talks with the Taliban went unheeded.

Officials in Washington were saying that the Taliban is a terrorist group and they would not negotiate with terrorists. However, after two decades the U.S. started talks with the Taliban to find an exit route from the country.

The Taliban have emerged stronger since the U.S. invaded the Central Asia country.

The effort to leave Afghanistan started during the Trump administration. After 20 years, the U.S. realized that it cannot win the war against the Taliban.

The U.S. plans to complete its full withdrawal from Afghanistan by September 11.

The U.S. and its NATO allies have so far withdrawn 90 percent of their troops from the country. Since the U.S. and its allies have started leaving Afghanistan, the Taliban have captured large parts of Afghanistan. It claims that it now controls 85 percent of the country, something which is difficult to verify.

Shahidov says there is a hidden agenda behind the U.S. exit from Afghanistan.

"Official Washington is pursuing a 'divide and rule' policy and is trying to retain power at its own expense. I think that the ugly interests of the United States are behind the Taliban's entry into the political arena," the Azeri expert notes.

*Continued on page 5*

**Christian worshippers make pilgrimage to St. Thaddeus**

TEHRAN – A limited number of Christian worshippers have assembled for observing their annual ritual and pilgrimage at St. Thaddeus in West Azarbaijan province.

The essential core of the pilgrimage, called Badarak, is traditionally observed by travelers from Iran, Armenia, Syria, Lebanon, the Netherlands, France, Austria, Germany, Canada, and some other countries. However, this year, only a limited number of Iranian Christians were allowed to attend the ceremony due to coronavirus restrictions.

"This year, due to the spread of the coronavirus, the ceremony was held only with the presence of Iranian Armenians in a limited scope, and with the absence of foreign guests," deputy provincial tourism chief Hassan Sepahfar said on Monday.

Baptism of children and youngsters along with performances of traditional songs and dances are amongst highlights of the event.

The festivity is of high importance for Iranian Armenians who mostly come from the cities of Tabriz, Urmia, Tehran, Isfahan, and Qazvin, to stage the reunion in groups and families. It also provides them an opportunity to go on holiday and visit distant relatives.

Attendees commemorate the martyrdom of St. Thaddeus, one of the twelve disciples killed while he was preaching the Gospel. The legend says a church dedicated to him was first built in 68 CE where Qareh Klise is standing.

Thaddeus was an apostle of Christ and the ceremony is rooted in the last supper with Jesus Christ on the night of his arrest and execution by the Roman soldiers. Also known as the Qareh Klise ("the Black Church"), the monastery is one of the oldest surviving Christian monuments in the country. It is situated in Chaldoran county some 20 kilometers from Maku, adjacent to the borders of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Turkey.

*Continued on page 6*

**Afghan rivals agree to meet again after inconclusive Doha talks**

Delegations from the Afghan government and the Taliban said in a joint statement on Sunday that they will meet again and plan to expedite peace negotiations after two days of inconclusive talks in Doha, Al Jazeera has learned.

The negotiators from the rival sides, who have been in Doha since Saturday, said "the two sides committed to continue negotiations at a high level until a settlement is reached".

"We will work to provide humanitarian assistance throughout Afghanistan," the statement added.

Reporting from Doha, Al Jazeera's Osama bin Javid said: "A hotly contested draft was put forth by both sides where they finally agreed to talk to each other and to speed up talks. They agreed that the level of negotiations will be expedited."

Javid added that the specifics, however, were not discussed.

**Foreign missions in Kabul issue joint call for Taliban ceasefire**

Meanwhile, fifteen diplomatic missions and the NATO representative in Kabul have joined hands to urge the Taliban to halt military offensives across Afghanistan, just hours after a peace meeting in Doha failed to agree on a ceasefire.

A senior delegation of Afghan leaders met the Taliban's political leadership in the Qatari capital over the last two days, but a Taliban statement issued late on Sunday made no mention of a halt to Afghanistan's rising violence.

The joint statement was supported by Australia, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, the European Union delegation, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Britain and the United States and NATO's senior civilian representative.

*Continued on page 5*

**Italian researcher says U.S. influence over Europe is strong**

**BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI**

TEHRAN – Head of the Global Actors Programme at the Istituto Affari Internazionali says that the U.S. influence over Europe is strong especially in areas of security.

"U.S. influence over Europe is pretty strong but that doesn't mean Europe is entirely at the mercy of Washington," Riccardo Alcaro tells the Tehran Times.

"There's a lot in trade, climate regulations, tax laws, and other stuff that Europe does against

U.S. wishes," Alcaro adds.

According to the Italian expert, "when it comes to security Europe is more vulnerable, but it is still capable of carving out some room for maneuvers."

Following is the text of the interview:  
**How do you see Biden's attitudes towards NATO? Do you think that Biden can re-energize the organization?**

Biden has made the re-launch of the U.S. alli-

ances a centerpiece of his foreign policy and NATO is crucial to the effort. I think Biden can re-create some goodwill towards the U.S. in Europe – he has done it already – and that will reflect positively on NATO too. The alliance will never be as essential as it used to be when it was created, given that the U.S. is increasingly attracted to the Pacific rather than the Atlantic, but it is today on firmer grounds than it was under Trump.

*Continued on page 5*



© Mehr / Behnam Tofighi

## Iranian athletes depart for Tokyo

TEHRAN – The first batch of Iranian athletes left Tehran for Tokyo on Sunday. Some sports officials gave a formal send-off to the athletes in Tehran's Imam Khomeini International Airport.

Iran delegation is made up of 66 athletes in 16 sports in Tokyo.

Male basketball player Samad Nikkhah Bahrami and female shooter Hanieh Rostami are the country's flagbearers in the 2020 Tokyo.

The 2020 Olympic Games will begin on Friday, July 23 with the Olympic opening ceremony.

**Iran's quarterly exports to African countries up 350% yr/yr**

TEHRAN – The value of Iran's exports to its African trade partners in the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21) increased by 350 percent year on year, Farzad Piltan, director-general of Trade Promotion Organization (TPO)'s Office of Arabian and African Countries, said.

According to Piltan, Iran exported nearly 834,340 tons of commodities worth \$340 million to African countries in the mentioned three months, IRNA reported.

The weight of exports in the said quarter also increased by 144 percent compared to the previous year's same period.

During this period, Ghana with \$151 million of imports, Algeria with \$58 million, South Africa with \$32 million, Tanzania with \$25 million and Nigeria with \$18 million were the top export destinations for Iranian products, according to Piltan.

Sudan with less than \$17 million, Kenya with more than \$14.5 million, Ivory Coast with \$12 million, Somalia with \$4 million and Egypt with about \$1.5 million were also ranked sixth to tenth.

According to the official, the ease of restrictions imposed due to the coronavirus pandemic and the re-establishment of trade exchanges and events between the two sides were the most important factors contributing to the increase in the Islamic Republic's exports to the African countries during the said period.

*Continued on page 4*

**Dear readers,**  
The next issue of the Tehran Times will be published on Monday, July 26.



## Velayati: 20 years of occupation have left heavy damages on Afghanistan

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Ali Akbar Velayati, the secretary-general of the World Assembly on Islamic Awakening, on Monday expressed regret at the enormous damage caused by the U.S. military invasion of Afghanistan.

Addressing a virtual conference on Afghanistan hosted by the World Assembly of Islamic Awakening, Velayati warned that despite the shameful withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan, the Americans were still maliciously trying to create divisions among Afghans.



Velayati reiterated Iran's commitment to supporting the Afghan nation on the path of peace, security, and development.

He also commended the Afghan people for their courageous struggles with the Western and Eastern occupiers and invaders over the past decades.

Afghans fought the invading Soviet Army in the 1980s, forcing the Kremlin to leave the country in disgrace. After the September 11 attacks in 2001, the United States also invaded Afghanistan. The U.S. is also leaving the after 20 years shamefully.

Addressing the conference entitled "Afghanistan, Sustainable Peace, and Security", the veteran politician noted that the United States occupied Afghanistan for 20 years by deploying thousands of soldiers and spending billions of dollars, resulting in severe damage and significant disasters in Afghanistan.

Despite the initial delusion, the United States is humiliatingly withdrawing troops from Afghanistan, although it still tries to destroy what is left in Afghanistan, regretted Velayati who was Iran's foreign minister from 1981 to 1997.

The Iranian politician also warned that the United States is engaged in atrocious provocations to create discord among the noble people of Afghanistan.

"However, the elite and educated individuals in Afghanistan are aware of their evil intentions and will thwart these conspiracies," he pointed out.

Velayati attributed the bloody wars between various ethnic groups in Afghanistan over the past 40 years to foreign provocations and called for vigilance to strengthen brotherhood between all parties that have lived in friendship and peace for thousands of years.

On July 8 and 9, the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs presided over a round of intra-Afghan negotiations. Representatives of the Afghan government and the Taliban took part in the talks.

The meeting was also attended by high-level figures supporting the Afghan republic.

The two-day Afghan internal talks ended on July 9 with six statements. All parties participating in the meeting recognized the threat of a protracted war in Afghanistan and its damage to the country. In their statement they also agreed that war is not the solution to the Afghan problem and called for collective efforts to achieve a peaceful and political solution.

Delegations from the Afghan government and the Taliban said in a joint statement on Sunday that they will meet again and plan to expedite peace negotiations after two days of inconclusive talks in Doha, Al Jazeera has learned.

The negotiators from the rival sides, who have been in Doha since Saturday, said, "The two sides committed to continue negotiations at a high level until a settlement is reached."

## Al-Kadhimi says will travel to Iran after Raisi assumes office

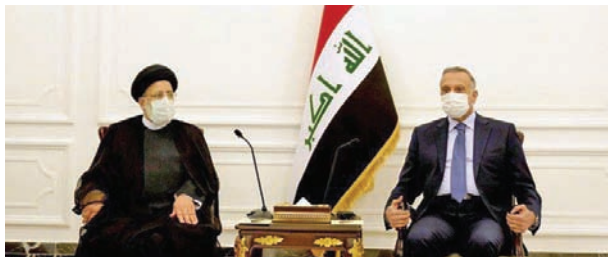
**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa Kadimi has said he will go to Iran shortly after President-elect Ebrahim Raisi officially takes office.

Talking to Arabiya on Sunday night, Al-Kadhimi also said he hopes that his country will not become a scene of conflict between the United States and Iran.

The prime minister added he will not let Iraq become a threat to its neighbors.

Kadhimi also said, "Negotiations between the United States and Iran will affect the region."

Kadhimi pointed out that because Iraq needs stability and peace, he will talk to Iran.



The Iraqi prime minister also described the relationship between Baghdad and Riyadh very well and emphasized that he will not allow Iraq to become a threat to its neighbors.

He also said that border protection is one of his country's priorities.

The top Iraqi official added that the purpose of his visit to the United States is to strengthen relations between Washington and Baghdad.

He also said there is no need for foreign combat troops on the Iraqi soil.

The Iraqi prime minister accused illegal groups of attacking diplomatic headquarters in his country, saying that these groups hope to turn Iraq into a battlefield, but the government has taken serious measures to support diplomatic compounds and will defend its sovereignty.

The White House announced that U.S. President Joe Biden will receive the Iraqi prime minister on July 26.

"We have a long and historic neighborly relationship with Iran, and focusing on the commonalities and interests of the two countries is certainly in the interest of both Iran and Iraq," Al-Kadhimi said in a televised interview on June 24.

Al Kadhimi noted that the Iraqi government's policy is to establish good relations with everyone, and "our relations with Iranian President-elect Ebrahim Raisi are very good."

"Raisi traveled to Iraq some time ago and we had a very good meeting and discussed our approaches to the future of Iran-Iraq relations," he added.

The Iraqi prime minister stressed that he wants to maintain and expand these good relations with Raisi.

After the June 18 presidential election in Iran, the Iraqi prime minister telephoned Raisi to congratulate him for winning the presidential polls in Iran.

At the phone call the two sides assessed the relationship between Iraq and Iraq and discussed ways to develop it.

# Deep ignorance humiliated U.S. in Afghanistan, Leader says in message to Hajj pilgrimage

“Innocent, bloodied Yemen torments every heart,” Ayatollah Khamenei says

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — On the occasion of the beginning of the Hajj ritual, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei issued a message in which he pointed to series of issues concerning the Islamic world.

In part of his message, the Leader said Washington's "deep ignorance about regional nations" led the United States to be "humiliated in Afghanistan."

What follows is the Leader's message posted on the khamenei.ir:

"Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds, and peace and greetings be upon Muhammad, his pure Household, his chosen companions and those who follow them until the Day of Judgment

Dear Muslim brothers and sisters throughout the world,

This year too, the Islamic nation has been deprived of the great blessing of Hajj. Thus, eager hearts filled with sadness and sorrow were deprived of the banquet at the honorable House that God, the Wise and Merciful, built for people.

This is the second year that the season of happiness and spiritual exaltation associated with Hajj has turned into a season of separation and regret. The tribulation of the pandemic and perhaps also that of the policies dominating over the Holy Ka'bah have deprived the eyes of the eager believers from seeing the Islamic nation's symbol of unity, greatness and spirituality. Thus, this glorious, honorable summit has been covered with clouds and dust.

This is another test, which like the other tests that have come to pass in the history of the Islamic nation that will be followed by a bright future. What is important is that Hajj remains alive in its true essence—in the hearts and souls of Muslims—so that now that its physical form is temporarily inaccessible, its exalted message not be diminished.

Hajj is an act of worship that is filled with mysteries and secrets. The exquisite formation and combination of movement and quietude in it build the identity of the Muslims and the Muslim community and display its beauties for the people of the world. On the one hand, it helps the hearts of God's servants to spiritually ascend by remembering God, reciting supplications and being humble. And this brings them closer to God. On the other hand, through their similar garments and harmonious moves, it creates a bond between the Muslim brothers gathering together from the four corners of the world. It displays the most important symbol of the Islamic nation with all its meaningful, transcendent rituals, and it shows the determination and greatness of the Islamic nation to all ill-wishers.

**America and its cohorts are sensitive about the word “resistance” and have decided to show all kinds of hostility to the “Islamic Resistance Front.”**



**The bitter events in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and some other countries—where the interfering, malevolent hand of the US and its cohorts is completely visible—is stimulating the zeal and determination of all the young people.**

This year, the Hajj ritual at the Great House of God is not possible, but paying attention to the God of the House, to remembering Him, to humility before Him, to supplicating Him and to asking for His forgiveness is possible. Being present in Arafah is not within our reach, but enlightening supplications are. It is not possible to stone Satan in Mina, but rejecting the power-seeking devils is possible everywhere. The harmonious gathering of individuals around the Ka'bah is not attainable, but the harmonious gathering of hearts around the illuminating verses of the Holy Qur'an and holding fast to the rope which God stretches out [Qur'an, 3:103] is a perpetual duty.

We who are the followers of Islam—and who enjoy a large population, vast lands, countless natural resources and nations that are aware and awake—must build the future with our assets and resources. Over the last 150 years, Muslim nations have not had any role in deciding the fate of their countries and their governments. Apart from a few exceptions, they have all been led and governed by transgressing western governments while being subject to their greed, interference and malevolence. Scientific backwardness and political dependence in many countries is the product of that passivity and incompetence.

Today, our nations, our youth, our scientists, our religious scholars, our civic intellectuals, our politicians, our political parties and our people must make up for that dishonorable, embarrassing past. They must stand firm and "resist" the aggression, interference and wickedness of western powers.

All that the Islamic Republic of Iran is saying that has caused the world of Arrogance to become despondent and infuriated is actually an invitation to this kind of resistance. This is a resistance in the face of the interference and evil of America and other transgressing

countries so as to take the fate of the world of Islam in one's own hands by relying on Islamic teachings.

Naturally, America and its cohorts are sensitive about the word "resistance" and have decided to show all kinds of hostility to the "Islamic Resistance Front." Some regional governments' cooperation with them is a bitter reality that strengthens those malicious acts as well.

The straight path shown to us by the Hajj rituals, by "Sa'i," "Tawaf," "Arafah," "Jamarat" and the glory and unity in Hajj, is to rely on God, to pay attention to the never-fading power of God, to have national self-confidence, to believe in struggle and endeavor for religion, to show firm determination when moving forward and to have abundant hope for victory.

The truth of the realities in the Islamic region bolsters this hope and builds up this determination. On the one hand, the bitter events in the world of Islam, scientific backwardness, political dependence, and economic and social problems direct us toward a great duty and an untiring endeavor. Usurped Palestine is calling for our help. Innocent, bloodied Yemen torments every heart. The plight of Afghanistan concerns everyone. The bitter events in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and some other countries—where the interfering, malevolent hand of the US and its cohorts is completely visible—is stimulating the zeal and determination of all the young people.

On the other hand, the emergence of the Resistance Forces throughout this sensitive region, the awakening of nations, and the motivation of the young, enthusiastic generation, make hearts overflow with hope. Palestine is wielding "the sword of Quds" in all its territories. Quds, Gaza, the West Bank, the 1948 Lands and the Palestinian camps all

rose up and bravely defeated the aggressor over the course of just 12 days. Yemen, which has been besieged and alone, has endured seven years of war, crimes, and the murder of innocent people by the evil, stone-hearted enemy. It has not surrendered despite a lack of food, medicines and other basic needs. On the contrary, Yemen has perplexed the enemy with its power and ingenuity. In Iraq, the Resistance Forces are powerfully pushing back the occupying US and its puppet DAESH. With their loud cries, they are eloquently expressing their firm decision to confront every act of interference and malice on the part of the US and its cohorts.

The American propaganda effort to distort the will, demands and actions of the brave youth and forces of the Resistance in Syria, Lebanon and other countries and to ascribe them to Iran or any other reference point, is an insult to those valiant, vigilant youth. And this stems from America's deep ignorance about regional nations.

This ignorance led America to be humiliated in Afghanistan. After that raucous invasion 20 years ago and after having used weapons and bombs against defenseless people and civilians, it became stuck in a quagmire and eventually withdrew its forces from that country. Of course, the vigilant Afghan nation should remain watchful concerning America's tools for gathering intelligence and its soft-war weapons, and it must vigilantly fight them.

Regional nations have shown that they are awake and alert and that their path is different from the path of those governments that are even prepared to go as far as to give in to US demands over the vital matter of Palestine in order to keep it satisfied. These are governments that overtly and covertly create ties of friendship with the usurping Zionist regime. In other words, they deny the right of the Palestinian nation to their historical land. This is an act of stealing Palestinian assets. They did not find it sufficient to ransack the natural resources of their own countries, and they are now ransacking the resources of the Palestinian nation.

Brothers and sisters, Our region and the swift, diverse events taking place in it are an exhibition showing us lessons and examples. On the one hand, we can learn the lesson of gaining power using resistance and fighting against the transgressing aggressors. On the other hand, we can learn that humiliation that results from submitting to them and showing weakness.

The true, divine promise is assistance for the fighters in the way of God, "If you aid the cause of Allah, He will aid you, and plant your feet firmly." [Holy Qur'an, 47:7]

The primary result of this struggle in the way of God will be to prevent America and other international aggressors from interfering in the affairs of Islamic countries, God willing.

I ask God, the Exalted, to assist the Muslim nations, I send greetings to the Imam of the Age (may our souls be sacrificed for his sake), and I ask God to elevate the status of the great Imam Khomeini and our illustrious martyrs.

Greetings to God's righteous servants. Seyyed Ali Khamenei July 17, 2021

## Iran says considers Afghanistan's security as its own

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — Speaking at his weekly online press briefing on Monday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said that "Afghanistan's security is Iran's security."

Khatibzadeh said insecurity in Afghanistan is not tolerable for the Islamic Republic.

The comments by the Foreign Ministry spokesman come as the war between the Afghan government and the Taliban has intensified in recent weeks. The clashes between the sides entered a new phase as the United States started withdrawing its troops from the Central Asian country after 20 years.

The Taliban have captured more parts of Afghanistan, including part of the country's territory bordering Iran.

"In the case of Afghanistan, we are closely monitoring the situation at the borders. We monitor the situation and check it regularly," the spokesman said.

Khatibzadeh said that Afghanistan's only way is through dialogue, and lasting peace must be achieved through dialogue.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran is actively involved with Afghan groups in bilateral and multilateral dimensions."

He added, "The Islamic Republic of Iran's special representative for Afghanistan is in contact with these groups in various ways, and we are ready to continue this relationship in person. We welcome any initiative in this direction and help to establish a comprehensive and mutually beneficial dialogue between the various groups in Afghanistan to achieve peace in this country."

Iran will continue this path as long as the Afghan parties

adhere to it, the spokesman remarked.

Iran hosted intra-Afghan talks on July 8-9. The meeting was attended by senior Afghan and Taliban negotiators.

**"European Hijab ban is discriminatory"**

The Foreign Ministry spokesman also said the European ban on Hijab is a "discriminatory" decision.

"The decision announced by the European court is a shameful decision, and it is strange that when the issue of human rights, minorities and freedom of religion takes on Muslims, it gets a narrow meaning in Europe," Khatibzadeh noted.

The European Union's top court ruled on July 15 that employers may forbid wearing visible symbols of religious or political belief, such as headscarves.

The spokesman warned that the decision can be the basis for the spread of Islamophobia and violence against Muslims in Europe.

"We expect the relevant European authorities to right this process, because this is the primary violation of the freedom of law, religion, and rights of the minorities in Europe."

**"Israel won't gain legitimacy as UAE opens embassy in Tel Aviv"**

Khatibzadeh also said Israel as an aggressor regime would not gain legitimacy as the UAE opens opened embassy in Tel Aviv.

The occupying regime suffers from lack of legitimacy and "it will not gain legitimacy in this way," he reiterated.

He added that the UAE should also know that it will be responsible for the violence and what will happen due to the presence of the occupying regime in the region.

## Security chief Shamkhani meets President-elect Raisi

**POLITICAL** **TEHRAN** — In a smooth transition of power, government officials have regularly met with President-elect Ebrahim Raisi.

On Monday, Admiral Ali Shamkhani, secretary of the Supreme National Security

Council (SNSC), met with Raisi in the office of the president-elect.

In the meeting, the top security official wished success for the elected president and presented a report on the latest activities and actions of his respective institution.

Several government officials, including the outgoing cabinet ministers, have met with Raisi over the past few weeks.

Raisi won the presidential election on June 18. He will be sworn in as president on August 5.





## SPORTS

## Discus thrower Hadadi casts doubt on Olympics

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iranian discus thrower Ehsan Hadadi will likely miss the 2020 Olympic Games due to the spinal injury.



Some reports in the past had indicated that he would undergo surgery after the Olympics but there is a possibility that he withdraws from the Games.

Hadadi came second in the domestic league with a throw of 57.47 meters. The 2012 Olympics silver medalist has a tough task ahead in Olympics since he will have to compete with world champion Daniel Stahl, who has recently improved his World discus lead to 71.40m. Jamaican thrower Fedrick Dacres also threw 65.08 and Austrian Lukas Weissshaidinger is a medal favorite in Tokyo with a throw of 64.54.

"I like to register my name as an Iranian athlete who has participated in the Olympics in four editions but not at any price. It will damage my reputation," Hadadi said.

"Every athlete representing his or her country in the Olympics should be at their mental and physical peak. I'm a long way from where I want and need to be at the moment. I hope everything goes well but nothing is clear," he added.

Hadadi's departure time is on Sunday and he has said he will travel to Tokyo if he feels ready.

## Mona Mahmoudi signs for Boavista volleyball team

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Iranian woman volleyball player Mona Deris Mahmoudi joined Portuguese team Boavista. The Iranian middle blocker will play for Boavista in the 2021/22 season.

She is the third Iranian to join Boavista.

Her compatriot Mahtab Rahmani, who plays as outside hitter, is a member of the Portuguese team as well.

Iran international goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand also joined the Boavista football club in early July.

## IPL: Saeid Akhbari named Saipa coach

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Saeid Akhbari was named as new head coach of Iranian football team Saipa on Monday. The 35-year-old replaced Faraz Kamalvand in the top-flight football team.

Akhbari is Saipa's third coach in the current season after Ebrahim Sadeghi and Kamalvand.

Saipa are on brink of relegation from Iran Professional League. Machine Sazi have already relegated from the league and Saipa, Zob Ahana and Naft Masjed Soleyman struggle to escape relegation.

## Morteza Mehrzad among Ones to Watch at Tokyo 2020

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — The tallest Paralympian at Rio 2016 towering 2.46m will be out to ensure his country retains its Paralympic gold at Tokyo 2020.

In 2018, Mehrzad helped Iran regain the world title after eight years in Arnhem, Netherlands, and they accounted for defending champions and long-time rivals Bosnia and Herzegovina 3-0 in the final.

He was the second-best spiker at Rio 2016 — his Paralympic debut - as Iran won its sixth Paralympic gold medal in sitting volleyball in the past eight Paralympic Games.

Iran and Bosnia and Herzegovina have played in the past five Paralympic Games gold medal matches.

Mehrzad, as he is known, continues to make an already strong Iranian team even better, with his highest block reach of 1.96m and highest spike reach of 2.30m creating plenty of headaches for opposition coaches.

He took up sitting volleyball in 2011, when a coach spotted him on television and identified his raw potential, calling up Mehrzad to the national side in March 2016.

## Jahanbakhsh reveals key reason why he joined Feyenoord

**S P O R T S** **TEHRAN** — Alireza Jahanbakhsh has revealed the key role Feyenoord manager Arne Slot played in him returning to the Netherlands.

The 27-year-old joined the Rotterdam outfit from Albion on Saturday. Slot was assistant manager at AZ Alkmaar to John van den Brom during Jahanbakhsh's time at the club, The Argus reported.

But the Iranian international revealed that when Slot expressed his interest in signing him for Feyenoord, he was determined to make the move happen.

He told the club's official website: "During my time at AZ as assistant coach, Arne Slot was one of the people who helped me to become a better player."

"So when he called and asked if I wanted to come to Feyenoord, I told him I was going to do everything I could to make this transfer. I had no doubts."

Feyenoord's sporting director Frank Arnesen believes Jahanbakhsh could become a valuable player for them.

He said: "With Alireza we add the desired offensive reinforcement to the selection."

"A player who has proven to achieve a high return for several seasons. Moreover, he is now in the phase of his career where he can quickly be of enormous added value to us."

## Ayatollah Khamenei contextualizes resistance against the West

**POLITICAL**  
d e s k

**TEHRAN** — In a message to the 2021 Hajj, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has put the need to resist Western domination in the region in a much broader context than present-day power projection.

He said over the last 150 years Muslim nations have mostly been subject to aggressive Western countries' greed, interference and malevolence, therefore, these nations must make up for the past by resisting against Western domination in the region.

"We who are the followers of Islam—and who enjoy a large population, vast lands, countless natural resources and nations that are aware and awake—must build the future with our assets and resources. Over the last 150 years, Muslim nations have not had any role in deciding the fate of their countries and their governments," the Leader said in the message, adding, "Apart from a few exceptions, they have all been led and governed by transgressing Western governments while being subject to their greed, interference and malevolence. Scientific backwardness and political dependence in many countries is the product of that passivity and incompetence."

He underlined those Muslim nations should use all their material and intellectual capacities to make up for that "dishonorable, embarrassing past." He asserted, "They must stand firm and 'resist' the aggression, interference and wickedness of Western powers."

Ayatollah Khamenei offered a new meaning of the Iranian notion of resistance against Western influence in the region. He outlined what Iran means by resistance. "All that the Islamic Republic of Iran is saying that has caused the world of Arrogance to become despondent and infuriated is actually an invitation to this kind of resistance. This is a resistance in the face of the interference



and evil of America and other transgressing countries so as to take the fate of the world of Islam in one's own hands by relying on Islamic teachings," he stated.

Ayatollah Khamenei denounced the United States and "its cohorts" as well as some regional governments for being hostile toward the "Islamic Resistance Front." He called for untiring efforts to overcome the region's malaise.

"The bitter events in the world of Islam, scientific backwardness, political dependence, and economic and social problems direct us toward a great duty and an untiring endeavor. Usurped Palestine is calling for our help. Innocent, bloodied Yemen torments every heart. The plight of Afghanistan concerns everyone. The bitter events in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and some other countries—where the interfering, malevolent hand of the U.S. and its cohorts is completely visible—is stimulating the zeal and determination of all the young people," the Leader said, according to the khamenei.ir.

But despite this dark reality, Ayatollah

Khamenei stressed, there are a number of reasons that make hearts overflow with hope. The emergence of the Resistance Forces throughout this sensitive region, the awakening of nations, and the motivation of the young, enthusiastic generation are among these reasons.

The Leader pointed to a number of promising facts that revive the hope among Muslims. "Palestine is wielding 'the sword of Quds' in all its territories. Quds, Gaza, the West Bank, the 1948 Lands and the Palestinian camps all rose up and bravely defeated the aggressor over the course of just 12 days. Yemen, which has been besieged and alone, has endured seven years of war, crimes, and the murder of innocent people by the evil, stone-hearted enemy. It has not surrendered despite a lack of food, medicines and other basic needs. On the contrary, Yemen has perplexed the enemy with its power and ingenuity. In Iraq, the Resistance Forces are powerfully pushing back the occupying U.S. and its puppet Daesh. With their loud cries, they are eloquently expressing their firm decision to confront

every act of interference and malice on the part of the U.S. and its cohorts," he said.

The Leader also underlined the Resistance axis is by no means an Iranian job. He noted that "the American propaganda effort to distort the will, demands and actions of the brave youth and forces of the Resistance in Syria, Lebanon and other countries and to ascribe them to Iran or any other reference point, is an insult to those valiant, vigilant youth. And this stems from America's deep ignorance about regional nations."

The Leader also took a jab at Israel and some regional governments that established diplomatic relations with it.

"Regional nations have shown that they are awake and alert and that their path is different from the path of those governments that are even prepared to go as far as to give in to US demands over the vital matter of Palestine in order to keep it satisfied. These are governments that overtly and covertly create ties of friendship with the usurping Zionist regime. In other words, they deny the right of the Palestinian nation to their historical land. This is an act of stealing Palestinian assets. They did not find it sufficient to ransack the natural resources of their own countries, and they are now ransacking the resources of the Palestinian nation," Ayatollah Khamenei stated.

The leader concluded that what is happening in the region offers some lessons and examples. "Our region and the swift, diverse events taking place in it are an exhibition showing us lessons and examples. On the one hand, we can learn the lesson of gaining power using resistance and fighting against the transgressing aggressors. On the other hand, we can learn that humiliation results from submitting to them and showing weakness," Ayatollah Khamenei said.

## U.S. linking prisoner swap to political goals: Iran

**POLITICAL**  
d e s k

**TEHRAN** — The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman has once again accused the United States of using a deal on prisoner swap to score political goals.

Saeed Khatibzadeh said Iran had indirect talks with the U.S. and direct talks with the UK on humanitarian issues such as swapping prisoners but the U.S. didn't fulfill its part of the deal and linked the swap to political issues.

Speaking at a weekly press conference on Monday, Khatibzadeh said the U.S. remarks concerning the swap were astounding. "The comment we heard from America is astounding. In addition to the JCPOA talks in Vienna, we had parallel but separate talks with the United States and with the British on this humanitarian issue. Releasing Iranians who have been unjustly and cruelly imprisoned in the United States, some European countries, and other countries under false pretenses is a priority for Iran, but we looked at it as a humanitarian issue. What the United States is doing is tying a human issue to political issues," Khatibzadeh stated.

He added, "All sides went to make preparations, and the U.S. part of the deal was not fulfilled until yesterday, and when Iran told the other sides that the seventh round [of Vienna nuclear talks] will be held by the new government, the U.S. tried to tie this humanitarian issue to the JCPOA talks."

The spokesman was reiterating what he said a day earlier. Khatibzadeh on Sunday confirmed that a swap has been agreed with Washington and London a day after the U.S. denied the swap. "Iran is ready to proceed TODAY," Khatibzadeh said on Twitter. He was responding to a U.S. response to an earlier tweet by Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araqchi saying that the U.S. and the UK were linking the swap to nuclear talks currently underway in Vienna over the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Araqchi said ten prisoners on all sides stand ready to be swapped but the U.S. and the UK did not fulfill their part of the deal.

"We're in a transition period as a democratic transfer of power is underway in our capital. Vienna talks must thus obviously await our new administration. This is what every democracy demands," the deputy foreign minister said in a tweet on Saturday.

He added, "US & UK need to understand this and stop linking a humanitarian exchange—ready to be implemented—to political aims achieves neither. TEN PRISONERS on all sides may be released TOMORROW if US&UK fulfill their part of deal."

The U.S. rushed to deny that already a swap deal had been agreed with Iran, accusing it of an "outrageous" effort to deflect blame for the impasse in the Iran nuclear deal talks. "These comments are an outrageous effort to deflect blame for the current impasse," U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price said,

"We stand ready to return to Vienna to complete work on a mutual return to the JCPOA once Iran has made the



necessary decisions," Price added.

The spokesman also said "there is no agreed deal yet" on the swap.

"We had been engaged in indirect talks on the detainees in the context of the Vienna process, and the delay in re-starting that process is not helping," Price noted. "While it would be more effective to make progress if we were meeting in Vienna, we are also prepared to continue with talks on detainees during this period."

Khatibzadeh lashed out at the U.S., reiterating that a deal on the prisoners had been agreed with Washington. "Outrageous"=the U.S. denying simple fact that 'there IS an agreed deal on the matter of the detainees.' Even on how to announce it," he said.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman added, "Humanitarian swap was agreed with US & UK in Vienna-separate from JCPOA- on release of 10 prisoners on all sides. Iran is ready to proceed TODAY."

**"We let the American side go and make their own political decision"**

In his Monday presser, Khatibzadeh dismissed U.S. approach toward the swap deal as "wrong." He pointed out that this approach will only complicate matters. "This is a wrong approach and makes all paths difficult. If the United States fulfills its obligations today, the release of 10 prisoners can be done with the United States and Britain. We advise them to abandon a human issue and act instead of empty statements," he said, underlining that "this path can still be left open if they fulfill their commitments."

Khatibzadeh also touched on the stalled nuclear talks in Vienna, blaming the hiatus in the talks on U.S. refusal to fulfill their commitments. "The Western side had not agreed to its commitments in the sixth round to return [to the JCPOA], and most of what had to be agreed upon was agreed on. A disagreement over some lists and names that the United States blocked in the sixth round still persists. We let the American side go and make their own political decision," the spokesman noted.

He also said that the delay in the resumption of the Vienna talks was due in part to the transition period in Iran. "In Iran, too, with regard to elections and the peace-

ful and civil transfer of power, a number of issues had to be discussed and the issues were raised in the Implementation Committee," Khatibzadeh said, referring to a newly-established committee tasked with overseeing the outcome of the Vienna talks.

"The Foreign Ministry, as a sovereign body, transmits the orders of the government and takes action to implement them. There are no major changes in the continuation of what was done in the twelfth government, and work will continue in the thirteenth government, and it is natural for the Foreign Ministry to act within the framework of government orders," he continued.

Khatibzadeh stated that the resumption of the nuclear deal talks in Vienna hinged on the inauguration of the new government in Iran.

"Negotiations in six rounds in Vienna proceeded with vigor and seriousness. Religious democracy is running Iran. These talks were delayed due to non-implementation by the United States, and then elections were held in Iran. It is natural to allow the government to be established and move forward because of the requirements of democracy," Khatibzadeh explained.

He stressed, however, that high-stakes policies are determined by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution and supreme bodies and that the government is the executor of these policies.

"The macro-policies of the establishment are the ones set by the Supreme Leader and the higher institutions, the government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs implement the decisions. This will continue in the normal way. It is important that the interests of the people and the supreme decisions of the establishment be implemented exactly," Khatibzadeh noted.

He asserted, "The moment the United States returns to its obligations under Resolution 2231 and the JCPOA, and we've done with verification, naturally, the Islamic Republic of Iran will have a full resumption of its obligations. We have to wait for the formation of the new government."

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.

After the sixth round, Iran and the U.S. called on each other to make tough decisions to break the deadlock over the deal.

Ever since the end of the sixth round of nuclear talks in Vienna on June 20, the U.S. and its European allies, namely France, Germany and the UK - collectively known as the E3 - have been urging Iran to make "tough decisions" to revive the JCPOA, as if it was Iran that pulled out of the deal in the first place.

Iran responded by saying that if a party is to make tough decisions it is the United States and its European allies, not Iran. Because Iran had already made tough decisions after the U.S. unilateral decision to withdraw from the JCPOA in May 2018.

## Iran condemns Israel aggression against Al-Aqsa Mosque

**POLITICAL**  
d e s k

**TEHRAN** — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh has reacted to an Israeli attack on worshippers at Al-Aqsa Mosque, condemning the attack in the strongest terms.

Speaking at a press conference on Monday, Khatibzadeh said, "This violation, which took place on the eve of Eid al-Adha, is strongly condemned and the Islamic Republic of Iran expresses its disgust with it."

He added, "Once again, the Zionists have shown that the Palestinians and the Muslim

world are left with no choice to liberate the Holy Quds but resistance. The united voice of the Islamic world can certainly help in this regard."

He also said Iran will do its part to prevent the Israelis from desecrating the holy site. "The Islamic Republic of Iran will continue all its efforts to unite the Islamic world in order to prevent these aggressions," Khatibzadeh said.

Israeli occupation forces, along with scores of Israeli settler fanatics, broke into the court-

yards of the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound on early Sunday morning attacking worshippers at the holy site and detaining many of them while firing tear gas canisters and stun grenades into the worshippers, Palestinian News and Info Agency (Wafa) reported.

Early in the morning, dozens of Israeli police officers started raiding the holy site through the Chain and Moroccan gates, before they embarked on beating and assaulting the Muslim worshippers attending prayers at the holy site in an effort to make way for the entry

of hundreds of Israeli settlers there, Wafa said. The police locked down the southern main building inside the holy site, and hundreds of worshippers were left inside and were unable to leave. Groups of Israeli settlers later broke into the courtyards after it was almost emptied of all Muslim worshippers by force. Israeli extremist groups have called on settlers to force their way into the Al-Aqsa complex in large numbers on July 18, on the occasion of the anniversary of what Israel calls "the destruction of the temple."



## FTZ’s trade balance positive for 3 consecutive years

**ECONOMY d e s k** **TEHRAN** – The secretary of the Iranian Free Zones High Council says the trade balance of the country’s free trade zones (FTZs) and special economic zones has been positive over the past three years. “With the measures taken for the promotion of exports in the country, the trade balance of the free trade and special economic zones has become positive over the past three years,” Hamidreza Mo’meni said.



Speaking at a meeting of Bushehr free trade zone’s strategic council, Mo’meni said: “However, there are still weaknesses in the first and second generation of the country’s free trade and special economic zones, which we will try to minimize by improving the infrastructure in these zones.”

The official noted that the country’s free trade zones lack a comprehensive development plan which means the managers of each zone act based on their own preferences.

Exports, transfer of technical knowledge, attracting domestic and foreign investment, and creating sustainable employment are among the expectations from free trade zones, and in order to prepare a comprehensive plan for the development of free zones, these issues should be considered for the next 50 years.

Noting that Bushehr free trade zone will be officially inaugurated by President Hassan Rouhani in near future, he expressed hope that this free trade zone can play a positive role in boosting trade with the country’s southern neighbors.

Earlier this month, Mo’meni had announced that some new free trade zones are planned to be set up in the country in the current Iranian calendar year (ends on March 20, 2022).

“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,” he said on July 12.

The establishment of free trade zones in Iran dates back to the Iranian calendar year 1368 (March 1989- March 1990) following the fall in the country’s oil income in the preceding year which prompted the government to promote the non-oil exports.

The first two free trade zones of Iran were established in the south of the country. The first one was Kish Free Trade Zone established in 1368 on Kish Island in the Persian Gulf and the second one was Qeshm Free Trade Zone established the year after on Qeshm Island in the Strait of Hormuz.

Some five other free trade zones have been also established in the country since then, including Chabahar in southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan Province, Arvand in southwestern Khuzestan Province, Anzali in northern Gilan Province, Aras in East-Azarbaijan Province, and Maku in West-Azarbaijan Province, both in the northwest of the country.

While near three decades have passed since the start of free trade zones activity in Iran, their planned objectives have not been fully achieved and their development is still facing some impediments.

Lack of proportion between the facilities and the objectives, lack of a national definition for free trade zones’ performance, limited resources for establishment and completion of infrastructures, no comprehensive management between the zones, and not complete implementation of zones management law are some of the barriers in the way of free trade zones’ activity and development in the country.

## Monthly red meat production rises 69% yr/yr

**ECONOMY d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) announced that production of red meat in Iran stood at 51,307 tons in the third month of the current Iranian calendar year (May 22 – June 21), showing 69 percent growth compared to the same month in the past year.

The SCI’s report said that beef and veal had the lion’s share in the country’s red meat output during the third month with 28,483 tons, followed by lamb and mutton with 18,708 tons, goat meat with 3,133 tons, and red meat from other livestock with 983 tons.



Also, the amount of red meat supply in the official slaughterhouses of the country in the third month of this year has increased by about 12.1 percent compared to the previous month.

Iran’s deputy agriculture minister, Morteza Rezaei, has said that currently the per capita consumption of red meat is 12.5 kilograms, chicken meat 31.25 kilograms, raw milk 124 kilograms, eggs 11.72 kilograms and honey 1.35 kilograms in the country.

Iran is among the leading consumers of red meat in the West Asia region with lamb being the most sought after.

However, the consumption per person is around a third of what is normally seen in countries like the U.S. and Australia, mainly due to the prohibition of pork in Islamic law.

The major part of Iran’s red meat imports comes from countries like Brazil, where Iranian supervisors directly control culling methods to ensure they comply with religious rules.

# Agricultural projects worth over \$2.7b inaugurated across Iran

**ECONOMY d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The secretary of the Iranian Free Zones High Council says the trade balance of the country’s free trade zones (FTZs) and special economic zones has been positive over the past three years. “With the measures taken for the promotion of exports in the country, the trade balance of the free trade and special economic zones has become positive over the past three years,” Hamidreza Mo’meni said.

Some 3,913 of the inaugurated projects

were related to installing new irrigation systems that covered an area of 72,000 hectares, while 150 projects were implemented in the fisheries sector and 571 projects were related to livestock and poultry sectors.

In the past forty years, since the Islamic Revolution, Iran has witnessed a remarkable improvement in various sectors and the agriculture industry has been one of the



areas in which the country has undergone huge development.

Iran is situated in a dry plateau with limited water resources, so most of the country’s

development projects in the agriculture sector have been focused on decreasing and managing water consumption by introducing new irrigation methods.



## Iran’s quarterly exports to African countries up 350% yr/yr

**ECONOMY d e s k** **TEHRAN** — The secretary of the Iranian Free Zones High Council says the trade balance of the country’s free trade zones (FTZs) and special economic zones has been positive over the past three years. “With the measures taken for the promotion of exports in the country, the trade balance of the free trade and special economic zones has become positive over the past three years,” Hamidreza Mo’meni said.

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were related to installing new irrigation systems that covered an area of 72,000 hectares, while 150 projects were implemented in the fisheries sector and 571 projects were related to livestock and poultry sectors.

## Nearly 56,000 tons of alumina powder produced in a quarter

**ECONOMY d e s k** **TEHRAN** — Iran has produced 55,974 tons of alumina powder during the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21).

As announced by Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO), the figure shows 11 percent decline as compared to 62,789 tons of the product produced in the first three months of the previous year.

Aluminum oxide, which is commonly called alumina, is an inert, odorless, white amorphous material often used in industrial ceramics.



Alumina is an important ceramic material for industrial applications. The numerous

fields of application range from construction materials, to filling materials, as well as abrasives and catalysts.

In plants and mechanical engineering, alumina ceramics are mainly used for wear and corrosion protection.

The particle size distribution largely determines the application range and the quality of an alumina powder. Reliably identifying the differences in particle size is therefore an essential requirement of the measuring instrument.

While the production of alumina powder has fallen, the production of aluminum ingot has risen 30 percent during the first

quarter of this year.

The country’s aluminum ingot output stood at 131,376 tons in the three-month period of the present year, while the figure was 101,202 tons in the same time span of the previous year, data released by IMIDRO showed.

As previously announced by the organization, the production of aluminum ingot in Iran rose 61 percent during the previous Iranian calendar year 1399 (ended on March 20) compared to the figure for the preceding year.

The country’s aluminum ingot output stood at 446,800 tons in the previous year.

## Iranian companies ink MOU for exporting water industry goods to Eurasia

**ECONOMY d e s k** **TEHRAN** – Two major Iranian firms have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for cooperation in exporting water industry equipment and products to the members of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and also to CIS countries, ILNA reported.

Under the framework of the mentioned MOU, the companies, namely Sirang Tejarat Iranian (STI) and Hamoun Nayze Company (Hanyco), are going to cooperate for promoting the exports of various water industry items including cast iron pipes and fittings and electric cast iron bases to Eurasia and CIS countries.

The signing ceremony of the MOU was attended by senior officials including the Head of the Iranian Electrical Power Equipment Manufacturing and Provision Company (known as SATKAB) Mohammad-Vali Alaedini and the Head of Iran-Russia Joint Chamber of Commerce Hadi Tizhoush.

Iran and Eurasian Economic Union reached a free trade agreement in October 2018 based on which about 862 commodity items were subjected to preferential tariffs.

The interim agreement enabling the formation of a free trade area between Iran and the EAEU was signed on May 17, 2018, and officially came into force on October 27, 2019.

EAEU is a very important market in the region and the development of trade ties with the members of this union is of high significance for the Islamic Republic.

The free trade agreement between Iran and this union has laid the ground for the expansion of trade ties between the two sides.

The agreement with the bloc has increased Iran’s exports to the EAEU member states significantly, which is a turning point for the Islamic Republic’s plans for boosting non-oil exports during the U.S. sanctions.

Iran’s First Vice-President Es’haq Jahangiri has



described the free trade agreement between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union as a good opportunity for the country’s economy and called on the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade and other relevant organizations to set a timetable for the finalization of the agreement and follow it seriously.

In a meeting in mid-June to review the latest status of Iran’s relations with Eurasia, which was chaired by him, the official named free trade with neighboring countries as a way to develop Iran’s economy, industry and agriculture and said that the free trade between Iran and the Eurasian Economic Union not only is not a threat to domestic production, but provides a large market for the country’s manufactured goods.

During the meeting, which was also attended by the ministers of energy as well as industry, mining and trade, the ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Russia, and representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Central Bank of Iran, Head of

Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) Hamid Zadboum released a report on the latest status of Iran-EAEU trade and negotiations.

In late January, Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (TCCIMA) hosted an Iran-Eurasia economic diplomacy meeting, attended by senior officials including the TCCIMA Head Masoud Khansari, the TPO head, and the Head of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) Mehdi Mir-Ashrafi.

During the meeting, the attendees reviewed the requirements and aspects of developing trade relations between the two sides, and by listing the existing challenges, offered solutions to remove obstacles and problems and facilitate trade.

At the beginning of the meeting, Khansari noted that the development of economic agreements in the region will help increase stability and security in the economies of member countries.

He stressed the need for using a common currency and replacing the U.S. dollar in trade exchanges between the members of the EAEU.

Ardakanian, in his message, praised the TCCIMA for holding this specialized conference and stressed the significance of using the capacities of the preferential trade agreement with the EAEU in the development of Iran’s non-oil exports.

Earlier this month, Tehran hosted Iran’s first exclusive Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) exhibition, which was a platform to showcase the trade capabilities of the EAEU members and their Iranian counterparts.

Over 30 companies from Russia, 30 companies from Kyrgyzstan, more than 10 companies from Armenia, more than 10 companies from Kazakhstan, and some companies from Belarus participated in the four-day exhibition which was held during July 9-12.

## TEDPIX goes up 8,400 points on Monday

**ECONOMY d e s k** **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 8,420 points to 1.311 million on Monday.

As reported, over 5.785 billion securities worth 47.215 trillion rials (about \$1.124 billion) were traded at the TSE on Monday.

The first market’s index gained 6,837 points and the second market’s index rose 14,859 points.

TEDPIX had risen 23,000 points in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

During the past week, the indices of Civil Servants Pension Fund (CSPF), Social Security Investment Company, Isfahan Oil Refining Company, Mobarakeh Steel Company, and Barekat Pharmaceutical Group were the most

widely followed indices.

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

These systems are going to offer various services to the companies and people active in the market.

Launching these single window systems would accelerate and facilitate many affairs and hopefully services would be provided more quickly and easily to the clients and companies.

Earlier this month, Market Expert Reza Alavi said that the inflow of liquidity into the market and the increase in the value

of transactions indicate that people are once again trusting the capital market.

“At present, other markets such as gold, foreign currency, and cars are not attractive enough for investors, and the stock market is still a good place for people’s investments,” Alavi told IRIB.

“After the election debates, people have come to the conclusion that the stock market is one of the priorities of the new government, and for this reason, they have re-trusted this market, and as a result, the inflow of new capital into the market has increased,” he said.

He further mentioned the rise in the global oil prices and the stability of the foreign currency exchange market as fac-



tors that resulted in the stability of the stock market.



# U.S. seeking to establish dual government in Afghanistan: Azeri expert

➔1 Following is the text of the interview:

**What are the main reasons for the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan?**

U.S. troops have been stationed in Afghanistan for years in the name of "peace". In fact, Washington wanted to break the will of the Afghan people and secure U.S. interests in the region. The United States eventually realized that it was impossible to subdue the Afghan people. In this regard, the U.S. eventually withdrew its troops. Because keeping an army in Afghanistan is an additional expense and a headache for official Washington.

Afghanistan is a country where no foreign country can keep an army for a long time. In particular, the Christian state's military presence in Afghanistan is a hopeless step. In this regard, the U.S. move was expected.

**After 20 years of occupation under the pretext of fighting terrorism, now Americans talk about the necessity of negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban. What is the implication of such a shift in strategy?**

America cannot accept the existence of peace and stability in any Muslim country. The United States, which has been waging civil wars in Iraq and Syria for years, wants to continue the conflict in Afghanistan as well. In this regard, they want to recognize the growing Taliban as an official party and establish a dual government in Afghanistan. Official Washington is pursuing a 'divide and rule' policy and is trying to retain power at its own expense. I think that the ugly interests of the United States are behind the Taliban's



entry into the political arena.

**What have been the main consequences of U.S. presence in West Asia over the two past decades? Democracy or chaos?**

Democracy is an excuse in U.S. foreign policy, and the main goal is chaos. Recent decades have shown that Washington is not bringing democracy to any Muslim country, but is trying to create a governed government by creating chaos and civil strife in the name of democracy. An example is Egypt. The main issue is to break the resolve of Muslim countries to fight against the Western world, to engage Muslims in internal intrigues and to plunder the natural resources of Muslim countries.

In the Middle East (West Asia), it is in the interests of the United States to ensure

Israel's security and expansion. In this regard, the main goal here is to bring the Muslim countries around Israel in line with Zionist interests.

**How do people in the region feel about the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan? What is its implication for U.S. regional allies?**

I do not consider the withdrawal of the United States from Afghanistan accidental. Americans just never leave. Some black plans have been developed for the near future, the consequences of which we will soon see. The United States has been developing a mechanism to support terrorism in Muslim countries for years. In this regard, I think that the withdrawal from Afghanistan will lead to disturbing events in the region. The countries of the region have already begun to

take urgent security measures. There is also the Russian factor. The United States is trying to turn the Taliban against Russia. Terrorist attacks are expected in Muslim countries, Russia's allies. Active military operations are likely to spread to Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and other countries in the region. Various terrorist acts are also expected to take place in Russia also.

The United States will try to weaken these countries through the Taliban. On the other hand, the idea that there is chaos in the absence of the American army is formed.

**How can Afghanistan's neighbors and other regional players including Azerbaijan help the country to restore peace and security?**

Only Muslim countries can ensure peace and stability in Afghanistan. In this regard, it is useful to use the experience of Turkey and Iran. Pakistan can also contribute to this issue. Azerbaijan also has something to do.

First of all, it would be right to form a peacekeeping contingent in Afghanistan from the armies of Muslim countries. Interference in Afghanistan from outside, the entry of terrorist groups into Afghanistan and the fact that these groups receive aid from the Western world must be prevented. Afghanistan is a Muslim country and the Afghan people must live their own traditions. Radical and extremist views from the outside are unacceptable. The Islamic Republic of Iran can be considered a successful model for Afghanistan.

I think that Iran should take the initiative in this matter and appeal to Muslim countries to take joint steps to achieve peace and stability in Afghanistan.

## Italian researcher says U.S. influence over Europe is strong

➔1 It will remain a framework for organizing transatlantic consensus, especially on Russia but also on other issues (although the farther you go from military-defense policy the less important NATO's role is). A fully re-energized organization perhaps we'll not get, but NATO is alive and kicking.

**How do you assess the U.S.-Europe alliance when it comes to Afghanistan? Why did they fail to collaborate with their rivals including Russia, China and Iran?**

The Europeans never had much of a say over Afghanistan, their presence there should be placed in the context of their alliance with the U.S. They calculated that helping the U.S. in Afghanistan was necessary to sustain the transatlantic alliance over time. Why the U.S. failed to cooperate with China, Russia and Iran has probably to do with the extreme difficulty of the U.S. foreign policy establishment to achieve and sustain consensus on cooperating selectively with countries that are hostile or unfriendly to the U.S., like the three you mention. That's why the U.S. was incapable of building on the cooperation with Iran on Afghanistan in late 2001-early 2002 and with Russia in 2009-10, notwithstanding the fact that in both cases the results were pretty positive; Iran helped the process that led to the Bonn conference on post-Taliban Afghanistan in late 2001 (or early 2002, I can't recall) and Russia allowed NATO to use its airspace to supply its troops in Afghanistan. On the other hand, I can't recall China, Russia or Iran making big proposals as to the basis on which they'd be willing to cooperate with the Americans in Afghanistan.

**Do you confirm that the U.S. is a hegemon that can dictate many of the EU's policies. For example, in the case of the Iran nuclear deal, the EU failed to confront Trump's unilateral sanctions on Iran.**

U.S. influence over Europe is pretty strong but that doesn't mean Europe is entirely at the mercy of Washington. There's a lot in trade, climate regulations, tax laws, and other stuff that Europe does against U.S. wishes.

When it comes to security Europe is more vulnerable, but it is still capable of carving out some room for maneuvers. It's true that the EU failed to protect its companies and banks from U.S. secondary sanctions but so did China, Russia and all other countries in the world. Would you say that the U.S. exerts hegemony over Russia and China too because of that? In fact, the E3/EU were the most outspoken in seeking to defend the JCPOA and they were the ones who save it from the attempt by the Trump administration to derail it in summer 2020 when the U.S. tried to stop the expiration of the UN arms embargo by making use of the snapback mechanism included in the JCPOA/UNSCR 2231. It was the E3 who maneuvered to make the U.S. claim void.

**Is there consensus between the U.S. and the EU when it comes to containing China and Russia?**

With Biden there's more consensus than you'd expect. Both Russia and China pose challenges to the EU and there's certainly a desire to curb their most damaging practices – unfair economic activities and information warfare to mention a few. But the EU is not as keen on confrontation as the U.S. and will always seek to balance pressure-coercion with diplomacy, dialogue and selective cooperation.



So, while there isn't right now the kind of strong convergence of interests the U.S. and Europe enjoyed during the Cold War, there's certainly a shared understanding that the transatlantic partnership has much beneficial potential – although that may change if Trump's hostility towards the EU becomes entrenched in the Republican Party.

**Don't you think that America may return to Trump's policies again?**

There is the chance that Trump runs again in 2024. Even if he doesn't, the next Republican candidate is more likely to support his policies than not, although on single issues (trade, for instance) he may take a less sanguine position. If a Republican wins the White House in 2024 however you should expect a return to a confrontational approach towards Iran – that's a given

## British PM self-isolating as England marks 'Freedom Day'

On Monday, the British government lifted all coronavirus restrictions on daily life in England, scrapping all social distancing measures despite a repeated warning by scientists and opposition parties that the move is too early and too dangerous. All restrictions on social mixing have been lifted meaning entertainment venues such as cinemas and theaters have reopened and other indoor venues will now be allowed to run at full capacity, the same applies to sports stadiums (only self-isolating rules will remain).

Legal mandates covering the wearing of masks and working from home have also been scrapped. This comes despite scientists' grave concerns as daily infection rates in Britain topped 50,000, behind only Indonesia and Brazil. The opposition Labour party's health spokesman, says the government is being 'reckless for opening up without any precautions

in place', echoing experts who say the move, dubbed 'Freedom Day' by British media, endangers not only regional but global health. Experts have warned that Britain may see at least 100,000 cases a day and maybe even double that number or higher, as the Delta variant of Covid is spiraling out of control. Scientists say even if Britain is suffering far fewer deaths than in previous waves, such infection numbers would put severe pressure on the health sector and risks new variants emerging. Scotland and Wales, however, who have devolved administrations and set their own health policy, will maintain the restrictions such as mandatory face masks in public.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, who delayed 'Freedom Day' by a month (and his Finance Minister Rishi Sunak) tried to avoid self-isolating after they were both exposed to covid-19 by the health minister who tested positive for the

virus on Saturday and is self-isolating. Initially Downing Street, said Johnson and Sunak would join a new pilot scheme that means they can avoid self-isolating, continue working and have daily rapid tests instead. This, despite both politicians being notified by a health system cellphone application that applies to the entire country.

**What is the UK National Health Service Covid application?**

The program, officially known as the National Health Service 'Test and Trace', makes it a legal requirement to self-isolate for 10 days if anyone is identified and informed by the application that they have been in contact of a known COVID-19 patient.

One opposition Labour MP said it was unfair that politicians appear to have access to 'VIP testing' to avoid self-isolation, while the opposition Liberal Democrat party Leader, Ed Davey, questioned if it was only available to the 'privileged few.

Businesses across the country have been forced to send staff home to self-isolate when they got notified by the application. After coming under fierce pressure from opposition parties who accused the government of setting one rule for the public and one rule for themselves, Johnson made perhaps the quickest U-turn in British politics (reported to be under three hours) and joined the one million others who have been notified on their phones to self-isolate. However, the Prime Minister, forced to speak via a video message on 'Freedom Day' defended the lifting of restrictions saying 'If we don't do it now, then we'll be opening up in the autumn, the winter months when the virus has the advantage of the cold weather. The government has been urged to stick to logic and the cautious global consensus on tackling the pandemic, rather than agreeing to a libertarian philosophy of Johnson and others from the ruling Conservative party.

## Major U.S. wildfires grow, forcing mass evacuations

With intensely hot, dry weather looming over much of the Western United States and Canada, the enormous 'Bootleg Fire' in the U.S. state of Oregon has grown again. Officials say Bootleg, which is the largest of some 80 major fires currently active in 13 U.S. states, has spread from 274,000 acres to some 300,000 acres; devastating a region that is larger than New York City and with little sign of letting up. The wildfire is threatening more than 5,000 residential homes. The combined area of all the active blazes has now consumed more than one million acres of land.

Authorities have ordered new evacuations orders for thousands of people with more likely to follow. The National Weather Service has unveiled satellite images that show huge plumes of smoke stretching from Southern Oregon to the Canadian border hundreds of kilometers to the northeast. Heavy winds and widespread lightning storms are also posing major challenges. The state of Montana has reported 18 large wildfires, the most so far in America while Idaho state has reported 17. High temperatures are expected to hit up to 103 degrees Fahrenheit

(40 degrees Celsius) in both states. Firefighters have also blamed lightning strikes and fierce winds for a fast-growing fire in California. The so-called Tamarack Fire has increased to more than 20,000 acres, with little to zero containment so far. A nearby community on the Nevada border has been evacuated. According to scientists, who have pinned the blame on climate change, amplified droughts are creating ideal conditions for wildfires to spread.

A forecast by the National Interagency Fire Center suggests the outlook was 'very

hot, dry and unstable conditions across the inland Pacific Northwest, Northern Rockies and Plains into northern Minnesota'.

It said nearly 20,000 firefighters and support personnel are struggling to contain fires raging across the Western states, with more than 2.5 million acres already have burned this year. Meanwhile, Firefighters in Canada continued to battle dozens of blazes, including some 20 new ones in the British Columbia province and around 15 new ones in northwest Ontario province. Meteorologists say this week's weather forecast does not look encouraging.

## Afghan rivals agree to meet again after inconclusive Doha talks

➔1 "The Taliban's offensive is in direct contradiction to their claim to support a negotiated settlement," said the joint statement.

"It has resulted in loss of innocent Afghan lives, including through continued targeted killings, displacement of the civilian population, looting and burning of buildings, destruction of vital infrastructure, and damage to communication networks."

## Israeli military-grade spyware used to hack phones worldwide

An investigation reveals that an Israeli military-grade spyware has been used to hack dozens of smartphones across the world, whose numbers were listed on a thousands-strong list of designated targets.

The regime licensed its Pegasus spyware to numerous countries that, in turn, used the application to mine information from the phones, revealed the investigation that has been conducted by 17 news organizations, including The Washington Post.

The Post published the findings in a report on Saturday, saying the phones in question belonged to "journalists and activists."

The hacked phones were on a list of more than 50,000 numbers based in countries known to spy on people, it said.

The list of the numbers was provided for the purpose of the investigation by the Paris-based nonprofit journalism body Hidden Stories and the UK-based human rights organization Amnesty International.

The targets, the investigation showed, included the fiancée of Jamal Khashoggi, one of the paper's former columnists, who used to be an outspoken critic of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

Khashoggi was murdered and dismembered at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul in 2018 after entering the facility to obtain the papers he needed to marry the Turkish woman.

Bin Salman has acknowledged that the foul play took place under his watch. The CIA and others have also placed the responsibility for the murder squarely on his shoulders, saying it was carried out by a team that had been directly tasked by the Saudi Royal.

## Iraqi PM says U.S. foreign combat forces 'not needed' in Iraq

Iraq's Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi has said that his upcoming visit to Washington is aimed at regulating Iraq's relations with the United States and pushing for the withdrawal of foreign combat forces from the Arab country.

In an interview with Saudi-owned al-Hadath television news network on Sunday, Kadhimi said there is no need for the presence of foreign combat forces on Iraqi soil.

He also said that he would not allow his country to be used to threaten its neighbors.

The Iraqi prime minister is scheduled to visit Washington next week to push for a concrete timetable for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq.

On Thursday, Kadhimi and US envoy Brett McGurk discussed the issue in Baghdad.

The White House said on Friday that U.S. President Joe Biden will meet Kadhimi on July 26 to discuss "the strategic partnership between the United States and Iraq."

Baghdad-Washington relations have been complicated since the U.S. assassination of Iran's top anti-terror general Qassem Soleimani along with Deputy Commander of Iraq's Popular Mobilization United (PMU) Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis at Baghdad International Airport in January 2020, in a drone attack that was directly ordered by former U.S. president Donald Trump.

## Russia reports successful test launch of hypersonic missile

Russia has reported another successful test launch of a Tsirkon hypersonic cruise missile, a weapon President Vladimir Putin has touted as part of a new generation of missile systems without equal in the world.

Russia's Defense Ministry said on Monday the missile was launched from an Admiral Gorshkov, a warship located in the White Sea, in the north of Russia.

According to al Jazeera, the ministry said the missile travelled at around seven times the speed of sound before successfully hitting a ground target on the coastline of the Barents Sea more than 350km (217 miles) away.

"The tactical and technical characteristics of the Tsirkon missile were confirmed during the tests," the ministry said.

Russia plans to fit the Tsirkon missile system to its submarines and surface ships.

Putin has previously claimed the Tsirkon missile would be capable of flying at nine times the speed of sound and have a range of 1,000km (620 miles).

But some Western experts have questioned how advanced Russia's new generation of weapons is, while recognizing that the combination of speed, maneuverability and altitude of hypersonic missiles makes them difficult to track and intercept.

## Resistance News

## Pakistan condemns settlers' storming of Al-Aqsa

**INTERNATIONAL d e s k** TEHRAN — The Pakistani Foreign Ministry condemned the storming of Al-Aqsa Mosque by settlers and Israeli police, calling on the international community to take immediate action to protect the Palestinians from Israeli aggression.

The ministry confirmed in a statement that these Israeli attacks infringe on all humanitarian principles and human rights.

It stressed the Pakistani government's solidarity with the Palestinian government and people in demanding their rights.

On Sunday morning, hundreds of Jewish settlers stormed the courtyards of the Al-Aqsa Mosque under the protection of the Israeli police.

Settler groups had called for intensifying their incursions into Al-Aqsa Mosque in large numbers on July 18 to mark the so-called "Anniversary of the destruction of the Temple."



## Christian worshippers make pilgrimage to St. Thaddeus

➔1 The ancient Church shows off elaborate bas-reliefs of flowers, animals, and human figures on its façade and exterior walls. It bears verses of Old and New Testament in Armenian calligraphy as well.

Together with St. Stepanos Monastery and the Chapel of Dzordzor, Qareh Klise was placed on the UNESCO World



Heritage list in 2008 under the name “Armenian Monastic Ensembles of Iran”. All three sites are located in West Azarbaijan and are of high significance from historical and cultural perspectives. They bear credible testimony to interchanges with the ancient regional societies in particular the Byzantine, Orthodox, and Persian.

UNESCO has it that the churches bear examples of the outstanding universal value of the Armenian architectural and decorative traditions.

## Flood harms historical village in northern Iran

TOURISM TEHRAN — A recent flooding has partly hit historical texture of Yush village in the northern province of Mazandaran, the deputy provincial tourism chief has announced.

The scenic village is the birthplace of Nima Yushij (1895-1960), the father of modern Persian poetry, and is adorned with his parental home, which is entitled “the Museum of Nima”.

The overflowing has caused about 10 billion rials (\$238,000 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) to the village and the Museum of Nima, Mehdi Izadi said on Monday.



Paving roads of the village, as well as its thatched walls and water canals, have been destroyed and the village needs emergency restoration, the official added.

Located 105 km off the city of Amol, Yush is one of the top tourist destinations in northern Iran and was registered on the national heritage list in 2010, he noted.

Born Ali Esfandiari, Nima died of pneumonia in the Shemiran neighborhood in Tehran but was buried in the scenic tranquil village of Yush, as he had willed.

Colorful trees, rustic houses, and beautiful hills as well as the Yush River, fruit gardens, and several springs are among the attractions of the small village.

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

## Iran attractions: Mt Damavand, the tallest in West Asia

TOURISM TEHRAN — A majestic stratovolcano that climbs steeply from the central Alborz mountain range, Mt Damavand is Asia’s highest volcano and the tallest mountain in West Asia.

Often referred to as the roof of Iran, Mt Damavand is 5,609 m tall and is still considered active – even though its last known eruption was around 5350 BC.

It is the second most prominent mountain in Asia after Mount Everest. It is located along the southern coast of the Caspian Sea, around 66 kilometers northeast of Tehran.



The best time to ascend to the summit is in August, though even then, the weather can change rapidly, so dress appropriately. There are huts along the way, but fill out and have no way of booking — which is again why an organized tour is recommended.

Most visitors return to Tehran on the same day as they climb to the summit, but one could consider staying in a nearby village of Abgarm which has several accommodation options located around hot springs.

# Bagh Sheikh Caravanserai, a candidate for UNESCO status, undergoes restoration

HERITAGE TEHRAN — The centuries-old Bagh Sheikh Caravanserai, which is a candidate for UNESCO status, has undergone restoration.

Also called Abdol Ghaffar Khan Caravanserai, the monument dates back to Qajar-era (1794–1925) epoch and is located in the city of Saveh, central Iran.

“Pillars, columns, cracks, brick arch ceilings, the façade, and worn-out bricks of the caravanserai are subject to the restoration project,” Saveh tourism chief Reza Ayyaz announced on Sunday.

“The monument is one of (Iran’s) candidates for the [possible] UNESCO registration, which its preliminary work is carried out,” the official said.

Bagh Sheikh is one of Iran’s magnificent comprehensive caravanserais in terms of plan form, decorations, proportions as well as the patterns and arrangements of its functional spaces, he explained.

The roadside inn is one of the Iranian caravanserais prepared for a possible inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage list. In 2019, the tourism ministry announced that Iran is developing a



dossier for a selection of its historical caravansaries for a possible inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

In this regard, cultural heritage experts are assessing such monuments that are scattered across the country to

## Quake shakes historical sites in Bushehr, no reports of damage

TOURISM TEHRAN — On Monday, a 4.2 magnitude earthquake struck Bandar-e Kangan in Bushehr, however, it caused no damage to historical sites across the southwestern province.

Based on field visits by experts of the province’s Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Department, no serious damage to historical relics and monuments has been reported, the deputy provincial tourism chief has announced.

However, it is important to evaluate the monuments more closely during additional inspections since there are several monuments within the historical city of Kangan, which have great historical value and if any damage is done, it will be declared, Nasrollah Ebrahimi said on Monday, CHTN reported.

With over 6,000 years of history and significant monuments from the Elamite, Achaemenid, Parthian, and

Sassanid eras, Bushehr is one of Iran’s most important historical centers.

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

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

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



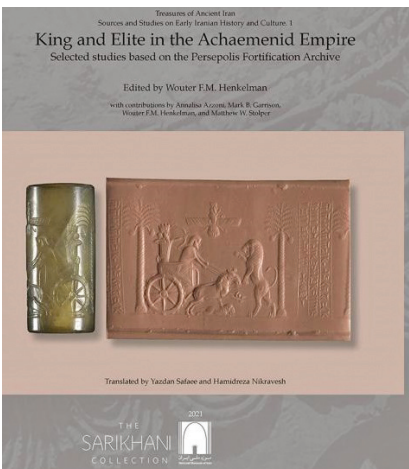
## Book on Achaemenid Empire published by National Museum of Iran

HERITAGE TEHRAN — The National Museum of Iran has recently published a book titled “King and Elite in the Achaemenid Empire”.

National Museum Director Jebrael Nokandeh, said the book contains ten articles on the Achaemenid Empire, its kings and elites, and related studies.

“What brings all these articles together is their common theme of the King’s network of relations with the dominant ethnic class, a group of individuals who formed the main body of power structure during the Achaemenid period,” Nokandeh said.

He emphasized it is also noteworthy that the focus of all these articles is on the analysis of information that the



“Persepolis Fortification Archive”, one of the most important sources of Achaemenid history, provides.

According to the publishing department of the museum, the book is aimed to transfer the results of international studies to Persian speakers, given the return of a significant portion of Persepolis tablets from Chicago to the National Museum of Iran.

“The book consists of 10 chapters in 4 thematic sections and is published in full color in 512 pages and 500 copies.” The editor of the volume is Wouter F.M. Henkelman with contributions by Annalisa Azzoni, Mark B. Garrison, Wouter F.M. Henkelman, and Matthew W. Stolper. The chapters were translated by Yazdan Safaei and Hamidreza Nikravesh, the

museum said.

The empire, founded by the Persian kings Cyrus and Darius, stretched from the Balkans to Central Asia at its peak. It was the first state model based on the diversity and tolerance of different cultures and religions.

Persepolis, also known as Takht-e Jamshid, whose magnificent ruins rest at the foot of Kuh-e Rahmat (Mountain of Mercy), was the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire. It is situated 60 kilometers northeast of the city of Shiraz in Fars province.

The city was burnt by Alexander the Great in 330 BC apparently as revenge to the Persians because it seems the Persian King Xerxes had burnt the Greek City of Athens around 150 years earlier.

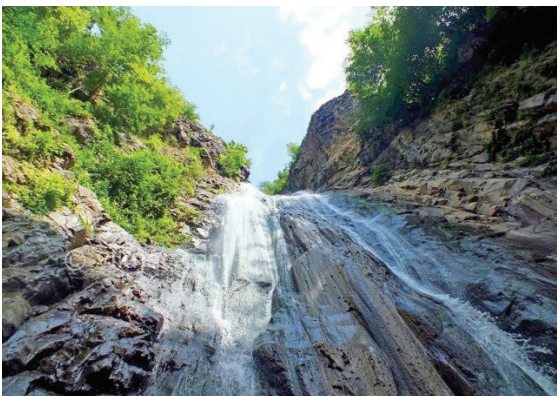
## Waterfalls, gardens in Gilan registered as national heritage

HERITAGE TEHRAN — A total of seven natural properties scattered across Gilan province have recently been inscribed on the national heritage list.

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

Milash and Dodozan waterfalls, Falahat and Salar gardens, and Amir Bekandeh Wetland Forest were among the properties added to the prestigious list.

Gilan is well-known for its rich Iron Age cemeteries such as Marlik that have been excavated over the past century. It was once within the sphere of influence of the successive Achaemenian, Seleucid, Parthian, and Sassanid empires that ruled Iran until the 7th century



CE. The subsequent Arab conquest of Iran led to the rise of many local dynasties, and Gilan acquired an independent status that continued until 1567.

Sophisticated Rasht, capital of Gilan province, has long been a weekend escape for residents of Tehran who are looking to sample the famous local cuisine and hoping for some pluvial action – it’s the largest, and wettest town in the northern region. Gilan is divided into a coastal plain including the large delta of Sefid Rud and adjacent parts of the Alborz mountain range.

Having an opulent tourist circuit with 24 UNESCO World Heritage sites, of which the vast Hyrcanian Forest and Lut Desert are among the natural properties, Iran seeks to acquire a greater share of the global tourism industry by 2025.

## 96 tourism projects underway in East Azarbaijan

HERITAGE TEHRAN — A total of 96 tourism-related projects are currently underway across Iran’s East Azarbaijan province, the provincial tourism chief said on Monday.

An investment value of 100 trillion rials (about \$2 billion at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar), has been channeled into the projects, Ahmad Hamzehzadeh added.

The northwestern province is ranked third in terms of attracting investments in the tourism sector behind Tehran and Khorasan Razavi provinces, the official said.

“The tourism infrastructure of East Azarbaijan is the critical element in attracting

investors, and the more we improve it, the greater the chances of attracting tourists,” he noted.

East Azarbaijan’s historical monuments and tourist attractions are great, but without supporting infrastructure, it will be impossible to attract tourists, he explained.

Moreover, tourism-related projects worth five trillion rials (\$119 million) were launched across the province during the recent visit of Iranian tourism minister Ali-Asgar Mounesan, the official said.

Soaked in history and culture for millennia, Tabriz, which is the capital of East Azarbaijan, 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.

The city 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 Ottoman Empire. During World War I, the city was



temporarily occupied by Turkish and then Soviet troops.



# Wetlands' volume detected for first time nationwide

**ENVIRONMENT** **TEHRAN** — The Department of Environment (DOE) in cooperation with knowledge-based companies detected the volume of wetlands across the country through a combination of aerial photography and satellite images.

Using this type of monitoring, we can identify the changes that occur in the water basin and also around it with very high accuracy and within a detection limit of less than one meter, DOE's head of marine environment affairs Ahmad Reza Lahijanzadeh said.

These maps are very accurate and is able to extract with new knowledge the encroachments that have been made on the wetland or the changes that have taken place, he explained, adding, a laser device, known as laser scanning, installed under the plane, and measured the depth of the lagoon.

After the laser scanning stage, with the help of knowledge-based companies, we developed a software model and calculated the volume of the wetland; then, drew the whole wetland bed, he stated.

Highlighting that the technology was done for the first time in the country, he noted that there has been not even a similar foreign method.

With the help of this technology, we have calculated and analyzed the volume of Miankaleh wetland, and soon we will



**In Iran, 141 wetlands with ecological value with an area of over 3 million hectares have been identified, of which 25 wetlands are designated as wetlands of international importance (registered in the Ramsar Convention) covering more than 1.4 million hectares and four sites are biosphere reserves.**

analyze the Anzali and Hur al-Azim wetlands; It is expected that this year we will cover about 400,000 hectares of wetlands across the country, he explained.

Wetlands play a major role in protecting the land against floods and the impacts of storms. They provide food and diverse habitats which support genetic, species, and ecosystem biodiversity. Wetlands play a key role in the life cycles of many species and in annual migration patterns.

Unfortunately, wetlands are being degraded and lost due to pollution, overexploitation, climate change, and human population growth. In recognition of these challenges, the Ramsar Convention, an international treaty, was adopted in 1971.

In Iran, 141 wetlands with ecological value with an area of over 3 million hectares have been identified, of which 25 wetlands are designated as wetlands of international importance (registered in the Ramsar Convention) covering more than 1.4 million hectares and four sites are biosphere reserves.

Of Iran's 25 Ramsar sites about one-third are under pressure or in critical condition.

Chief of the Department of Environment, Issa Kalantari, has said in order to restore wetlands in the country a budget of 600 trillion rials (nearly \$14 billion) is required.

## Iranian knowledge-based products enter Russian market

➔ **1** By supporting innovative ideas, holding technological and innovative events, the centers will be a platform for the development and promotion of Iranian knowledge-based companies, startups, and creative industries.

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

Mehdi Ghalehnoei, an official with the vice presidency for science and technology, said in February that last year, knowledge-based companies gained about \$800 million in revenue from export, and next year (March 21), it seems to reach up to \$2 billion.

Africa, neighboring countries, Southeast Asia and Eurasia are our export target priorities, and we hope to create Iranian innovation and technology in all these areas, he added.

**Innovation in Iran developed rapidly in 5 years** Knowledge-based companies and creative startups have grown over the past five years, and Iran has risen 45 places in the Global Innovation Index, according to the UNESCO 2021 Report.

The Global Innovation Index in Iran from 2015 to 2019



has risen from 106 to 61 with continuous improvement, showing 45 steps growth.

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

Between 2014 and 2017, exports of knowledge-based

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

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

### Knowledge-based companies

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

Currently, over 7,000 knowledge-based companies are active in the country, manufacturing diverse products to meet the needs of the domestic market while saving large amounts of foreign currency.

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

## Relief Foundation provides marriage counseling to 222,000 youths

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation has provided free marriage counseling services to 222,000 individuals over the past [Iranian calendar] year (March 2020- March 2021), Ali Jafari, Deputy head of the Foundation for cultural affairs has announced.

Conscious choice of spouse and partner is the main goal of counseling training for young people on the verge of marriage, he stated.

Providing family education, Islamic-Iranian lifestyle, characteristics of the ideal spouse, correct choice and familiarity with the criteria for choosing a spouse are among the trainings provided to these groups, he explained.

Some 1,300 counselors provide marriage education in these workshops nationwide, he stated.

During the last year, about 58,000 people under the Foundation's coverage received

pre-marital education, Jafari said, adding, more than 27,000 clients also benefited from counseling services for young couples.

Mohammad Mehdi Tondgooyan, deputy minister of sports and youth, has said that the marriage rate downward trend after 17 years, despite the prevalence of the coronavirus and its economic consequences, has risen and Iran experienced a five percent growth in marriage.

The marriage rate in Iran has increased by 5 percent over the past [Iranian calendar] year (March 2020-March 2021).

### Demographic issue

The fertility rate in Iran has been declining over the past eight years, the lowest of which was related to the past [Iranian calendar] year (March 2019- March 2020) with a birth rate of 1.2, according to the data published by the Statistics Center.

The number of births in the whole country

faced a downtrend over the past three years, as registered births decreased to 1,196,135 over the past [Iranian calendar] year; a difference of roughly over 120,000 to 16,000 per year.

Population decline comes up with consequences, including the reduction of the working population (aged 15 to 64) and the aging population in the coming decades.

Some 14 policies to support childbearing and the family were announced by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei in [the Iranian calendar year] 1393 (March 2014-March 2015) when he stressed that social, cultural, and economic development should be done in accordance with these general policies to support families.

The policies address the need to increase the population and the various dimensions of it, including childbearing, facilitating marriage and strengthening the family, reproductive health, promoting the Iranian-Islamic life-



style, empowering young people, honoring the elderly, and the environment, which can lead to an increase in the quantity and quality of the population if it is timely and continuous implemented.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

A ← → ج

## 97% of Iran affected by long-term drought: expert

Based on the data collected over the past decade approximately 97 percent of the country is affected by long-term drought, director of the national drought warning and monitoring center, Sadeq Ziaieian, has said. Some 12.7 percent of the country is hit by extremely severe drought, 53.6 percent of the country is affected by severe drought while 24.8 percent of the country is facing moderate drought and 5.9 percent of the country is withstanding mild drought, ISNA news agency quoted Ziaieian as saying on Wednesday.

He went on to say that extremely severe long-term drought has had negative effects on 14.2 percent of the country's total population, severe long-term drought has hit 47 percent of the country's population, 30.7 percent of the country's population is affected by moderate long-term drought and 5.1 percent of the population is stricken with mild drought.

## ۹۷ درصد مساحت ایران تحت تاثیر خشکسالی است

صادق ضیائی‌ان رئیس مرکز ملی خشکسالی و مدیریت بحران سازمان هواشناسی اعلام کرد: بررسی داده‌های ۱۰ ساله خشکسالی بیانگر آن است که ۹۷ درصد مساحت ایران تحت تأثیر خشکسالی بلندمدت است.

ضیائی‌ان در گفت‌وگو با ایسنا گفت: از این مقدار ۵۳.۶ درصد مساحت کشور با خشکسالی شدید، ۱۲.۷ درصد با خشکسالی بسیار شدید، ۲۴.۸ درصد مساحت با خشکسالی متوسط و ۵.۹ درصد مساحت با خشکسالی خفیف مواجه هستند.

وی ادامه داد: ۲ درصد جمعیت ایران با خشکسالی بسیار شدید بلندمدت است همچنین ۴۷ درصد جمعیت کشور با خشکسالی شدید، ۳۰.۷ درصد جمعیت با خشکسالی متوسط و ۵.۱ درصد جمعیت با خشکسالی خفیف دست و پنجه نرم می‌کنند.

## COVID-19 UPDATES

The statistics are related to 24 hours started 2:00 p.m. July 18

New cases	25,441
New deaths	213
Total cases	3,548,704
Total deaths	87,374
New hospitalized patients	2,740
Patients in critical condition	4,361
Total recovered patients	3,118,248
Diagnostic tests conducted	25,044,984
Doses of vaccine injected	8,818,372

## Endemic plant effective in reducing gastric cancer cells: study finds

**SOCIETY** **TEHRAN** — The results of a study on gastric cancer cells showed that the extract of "Provskia abrotanoides" plant can reduce the number of cancer cells in culture medium.

Gastric cancer is the fourth most common cancer in the world and the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths. The main treatment for this disease in the early stages is surgery; radiotherapy and chemotherapy are supplemented if needed.



Because these treatments have different side effects, researchers are looking to find new medicine with fewer side effects. Examining plants to find effective compounds is one of these measures; Because plants have been the main source of discovery for various treatments for centuries, and various anti-cancer drugs have been made using herbal compounds.

Iranian scientists conducted a research titled "Evaluation of anti-oxidant and cytotoxic potential of hydroalcoholic extract of Perovskia abrotanoides in MKN45 cells of gastric cancer", which showed that Provskia extract can significantly reduce live cancer cells; over time and with increasing concentration, cancer cell survival has decreased significantly.

Mahsa Iraj, Melika Sadeghi and Ali Khaleqian, researchers at the Medical School of Semnan University of Medical Sciences, participated in this research.

Medicinal plant Borazambol with the scientific name of Perovskia abrotanoides Karel, belongs to the family Lamiaceae. It is growing wild in the margin of mountainous roads of arid and cold climate of North Iran. It is for a long time that indigenous people by different methods in traditional medicine use its products in preventing and curing diseases.

## 'Enough with the burning': EU executive accused of sacrificing forests

The EU executive has been accused of "sacrificing forests" after it published proposals that would allow trees to continue to be burned for fuel.

The charges of "accelerating climate breakdown" through wood-burning were made on Friday as the European Commission unveiled its forest strategy, which includes a goal to plant 3bn trees across the EU by 2030.

The forest strategy is part of a broader plan to confront the climate and nature emergencies and put the EU on track to cut emissions by 55% by the end of the decade, a mammoth bundle of legal proposals known as "Fit for 55".

Campaigners said the commission had not gone far enough to tighten the rules on wood that can be burned for fuel. A draft update to the EU's renewable energy directive proposes banning the biomass industry from taking wood from "primary forests" – virtually untouched ancient woodlands, which account for just 3% of all EU forests.

In the next tier of "highly biodiverse forests", wood for biomass would be limited "to ensure no interference with nature protection purposes", the commission said. Overall "the use of whole trees for energy production, whether from the EU or imported, should be minimised", while subsidies for biomass from tree stumps and roots will be phased out.

Burning wood for electricity releases more carbon into the atmosphere than gas or coal, and many scientists are sceptical that planting trees to repay the "carbon debt" squares with commitments under the Paris climate agreement.

Earlier this year, more than 500 scientists wrote to European Commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, and other world leaders, calling on them to end all subsidies for wood burning. "Regrowing trees and displacement of fossil fuels may eventually pay off this carbon debt, but regrowth takes time the world does not have to solve climate change," stated the letter, whose signatories included Jean-Pascal van Ypersele, a former vice-chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. "Trees are more valuable alive than dead both for climate and for biodiversity."

In response to the Guardian, the EU environment commissioner Virginijus Sinkevicius said the EU strategy clearly states that "whole woods" were to be avoided for biomass. "Our aim is very clear: the forests have to play a vital role, a contribution to our Fit for 55 target, for our 55% [emissions-reduction] target."



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GUIDE TO  
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING



Value of each man depends upon the art and skill which he has attained.

Imam Ali (AS)

History of Qajar painting

Part 1  
The Qajar artistic style, like the Timurid style centuries before, had its origins outside the historical period from which it derives its name.

It was in the late Safavid period that a thoroughgoing Europeanized style began to oust the old native traditions, and by the beginning of the 18th century the new style was completely dominant.

In the middle and later years of that century its foremost exponent was Sadeq, who, like most of his successors, worked in various media—oils, miniature painting, and lacquer.

Some of his large-scale works survive at the Pars Museum in Shiraz and at the Negarestan Museum, Tehran. He seems to have had a long working life that spanned most of the second half of the 18th century: Texier reports a current tradition that in 1738 he executed the large mural in the Chehel Sotun at Isfahan depicting the victory of Nader Shah in Karnal over the Mughal emperor Mohammad Shah, while there are lacquer pieces bearing his signature coupled with dates in the last decade of the century (possibly the work of his pupils).

The unsettled political situation following the death of Karim Khan in 1779 left little opportunity for schools of painting to flourish and develop. But even before their rise to supreme power in 1796 the Qajars had captured the services of at least one painter who set a high standard for the first generation of their rule.

Mirza Baba, originally, it is said, a native of Isfahan, has left a very fine small drawing of a dragon and a phoenix, formerly in the Pozzi collection, which is signed and dated “in Astarabad” 1788-89.

Astarabad was the seat of the Qajar family during their struggle for the throne. Once the dynasty was established he was able to undertake various works on a larger scale.

Fath-Ali Shah (1797-1834) made him naqqash-bashi, or painter laureate, and he was accordingly entrusted with important commissions, including the manuscript of the king’s own divan that was taken to England by his ambassador Mirza Abulhassan Khan Ichi as a present to King George III, and is now in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle.

The beautiful painted lacquer covers, the lavish illuminations and marginal decorations, and two very fine miniature portraits of Fath-Ali Shah himself and his uncle, the founder of the dynasty, are all the work of Mirza Baba.

He also painted the life-size portrait of Fath-Ali Shah, dated 1798-99, that was presented to the East India Company in 1806 and now hangs in the Commonwealth Relations Office, London.

Like most top-ranking artists of his time, Mirza Baba showed his versatility in the various available media, including painted enamel and eglomise, (under-glass painting). Virtually nothing is known of him beyond his actual works, the latest of which so far known bears the date 1810.

Fath-Ali Shah’s inordinate vanity, and admittedly handsome appearance, ensured full employment for any painter who could convey an adequately resplendent impression of the royal person. Mirza Baba’s chief rivals in this field were Mehr-Ali, Abdollah Khan, and Mohammad-Hassan Khan.

Mehr-Ali seems to have made his debut with a full-length portrait of the king sent as a present to the amirs of Sind in 1800; Sir John Malcolm’s Sketches of Persia describes the local governor and villagers prostrating themselves as the securely packed and boxed-up portrait was embarked for Sind in Bushehr, and a large portrait of Fath-Ali, signed by Mehr-Ali and dated 1797-98, has made its way to the Victoria Memorial Hall, Calcutta, most probably among the spoils of the 1843 Sind war.

Mehr-Ali followed this work closely with two fine portraits of the king, dated 1803-04 and 1804-05 respectively, for the Hall of the Marble Throne in the Golestan Palace, and another entrusted to Napoleon’s envoy, M. Jaubert, as a present for the emperor in Paris.

The latter, which now hangs in the museum at Versailles, was finely engraved at the time by Ruotte after a copy by Gregorius. Several other excellent portraits of Fath-Ali Shah were executed by Mehr-Ali, the latest bearing the date 1814-15. By far the finest, formerly in the Amery collection, is now in the Negarestan Museum, Tehran, and shows the king, full-length and life-size, wearing his huge crown (compared by Texier to the crown of the Achaemenids), clad in a gorgeous robe of gold brocade, and holding a jeweled staff of majesty surmounted by Solomon’s hoopoe.

By this time (1805) Mehr-Ali’s style had improved enormously; his early portraits give Fath-Ali Shah a squat neck and round face, but in the later ones the proportions are much more pleasing as well as flattering. Mehr-Ali also executed large portraits of Fath-Ali and his sons in eglomise, or under-glass painting.

Because the paint is applied behind the glass, this difficult technique required the image to be built up in reverse, beginning with highlights and other surface details and finishing with the background color. The idea probably reached Persia from Germany, where the art was extensively practiced. Few Persian examples have survived because of the vulnerability of the thin sheets of glass.

(Source: Encyclopedia Iranica)  
(To be continued)

Iranian artist dedicates painting to mothers of Afghanistan school attack victims

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Iranian artist Abdolhamid Qadirian has dedicated his latest painting to the mothers of the children killed in the terrorist attack on the Sayed Al-Shuhada School in Afghanistan.

The artwork entitled “Girls of the Sayed Al-Shuhada School” was unveiled on Sunday at the Seyyed al-Shohada Girls’ School in Golshahr, a town near the northeastern Iranian city of Mashhad with a population of Afghan refugees.

Qadirian, Mohammad-Mehdi Dadman, the director of the Art Bureau of the Islamic Ideology Dissemination Organization, a number of teachers and the schoolmaster attended the unveiling ceremony of the artwork.

“Master Qadirian has dedicated his life to portraying his perception of the teachings of Islam, and deep Islamic thoughts have been presented in all of his works,” Dadman said in his brief speech at the ceremony.

“What has been portrayed in this artwork is also a great example, and this path has been opened with contributions from him and other artists of the Islamic Revolution,” he added.

“Now, it’s our duty to speak of and think about the artworks created by these artists, discovering their real meanings to present them to the world,” he noted.



Abdolhamid Qadirian autographs a copy of his painting “Girls of the Sayed Al-Shuhada School” for a student after unveiling the original the Seyyed al-Shohada Girls’ School in Golshahr on July 18, 2021.

In a short speech, Qadirian expressed his sympathy with the victims of the terrorist attack, and said, “I did the painting to calm the mothers of the martyrs.”

“I felt a deep sadness from this disaster,

because I have many Afghan friends. Therefore I decided to represent my emotions through this artwork,” added Qadirian who received a nomination for the 2021 Islamic Revolution Artist of the Year.

Iranian troupe to perform “Holodomor”, “Women’s Auschwitz” in Kiev

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Iranian troupe Seganeh is scheduled to perform “Holodomor” and “Women’s Auschwitz” at the Theatre On Pechersk in Kiev from October 4 to 6.

The plays were written by Ali Safari who will also direct “Women’s Auschwitz” in the Ukrainian capital. “Holodomor” will be directed by Raha Hajizeinal, who staged the play at Tehran’s Neauphle-le-Chateau Theater in February with a cast composed of Sarina Azad-Milani, Farshad Ayyubi, Mohammad Pasandideh, Tima Taqizadeh, Farzaneh Seiri, Ahu Shafiei, Milad Salehvand, Mehdi Abbasi, Nika Qasemi, Atefeh Musavi and Alireza Valipur.

This play is the final part of a trilogy, which has been produced by Safari and Hajizeinal about World War II. “Women’s Auschwitz” and “Berlin 10:10” were other parts of the set, which were performed by the group in 2019 and 2020.

“Women’s Auschwitz” is about women in the Auschwitz concentration camp operated by Nazi Germany in occupied Poland during World War II and the Holocaust.

“Berlin 10:10” centers on the event that occurred one minute before the outbreak of WWII.

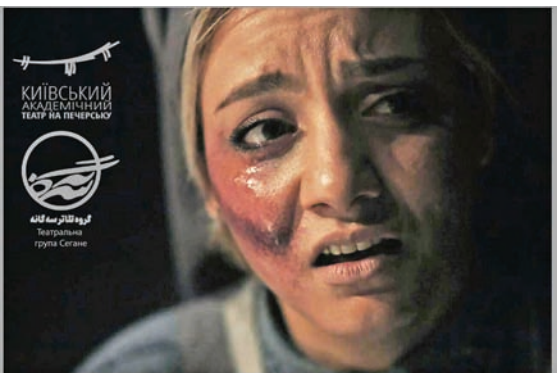
The word Holodomor literally translated from Ukrainian means “killing by starvation”. The term Holodomor emphasizes the famine’s man-made and intentional aspects such as rejection of outside aid, confiscation of all household foodstuffs and restriction of population movement.

As part of the wider Soviet famine of 1932–33, which affected the major grain-producing areas of the country, millions of inhabitants of Ukraine, the majority of whom were ethnic Ukrainians, died of starvation in a peacetime catastrophe unprecedented in the history of Ukraine.

Since 2006, the Holodomor has been recognized by Ukraine and 15 other countries as a genocide of the Ukrainian people carried out by the Soviet government.

Some scholars believe that the famine was planned by Joseph Stalin to eliminate a Ukrainian independence movement.

Serhii Burdyliak, Ukraine’s ambassador to Iran, and a number of his colleagues attended a performance of



A poster for the play “Women’s Auschwitz”, which will be performed by the Iranian troupe Seganeh at the Theatre On Pechersk in Kiev, Ukraine.

“Holodomor” in February, inviting the troupe to perform the play in Kiev.

“Paper God”, “The Recess” honored at San Francisco Frozen Film Festival

**A R T** **TEHRAN** — Iranian short movies “Paper God” and “The Recess” won awards at the 15th San Francisco Frozen Film Festival, the organizers announced on Sunday.

“Paper God” brought Danial Mahmudnia the award for first time director.

The film is about Ali, a disabled boy in a wheelchair who aspires to go to the top of a cliff from which he can launch his paper plane like the other boys.

“The Recess” by Navid Nikkhah-Azad won the award for best dramatic short film.

The movie tells the story of Sahar, a 17-year-old student who is determined to skip high school during recess and go to the football stadium to watch the football match between Esteghlal F.C. vs. Al-Ain as part of the AFC Champions League, which is against the national ban prohibiting women from entering football stadiums in Iran.

“Zoo”, a co-production of Canada, Ivory Coast and Ghana, was selected as best in-



“Paper God” by Iranian director Danial Mahmudnia.

ternational film.

Directed by Will Niava, the film revolves around an encounter between three misfits and a troubled man that takes an unexpected turn.

The award for best feature documentary went to “In the Water: Behind the Lens” directed by Johnny Gonzales from the U.S.

It is about water photographers and the dangers and challenges they face to get the shot seen in magazines and on their covers all over the world.

“Garage Romantic” directed by Dan Sadgrove from New Zealand was crowned best short documentary.

The film tells the story of a big dreamer from the small town of Togliatti, Russia who ponders life while building a rocket powered sled made from discarded trash.

The award for best animation was given to “The Infinite” by Italian director Simone Massi.

In this movie, 15 years have passed and Roberto is still in love with his neighbor, but she prefers to hide ashamed of her body. With his art and an old clothesline as the only ways of communication, Roberto has a plan to push his beloved to confront her monsters all at once.

“Change Is Coming” directed by Sophia Montoya from the U.S. won the award for

best environmental film. This film shows that the destruction of the planet leaves a new generation of activists to fight the status quo and save the earth as well as their future.

The award for best experimental film was given to “Dedicated to Those Who” directed by Jules Retzlaff from the U.S., a hybrid doc and visual album exploring the struggles of the past, present and future of San Francisco.

Nischal Sharma from India was picked as best student director for her movie “Rimi”. It is about Rimi, a housewife, stuck in the mundane life of domesticity who finds herself on the threshold of leaving everything behind and embracing liberation when a desire awakens in her after she encounters young and attractive Riya.

Directed by Ale Damiani from Uruguay, “Made in China” was named best comedy film. In this movie, after matching on Tinder, a young couple wakes up the morning after to find out that a strange pandemic will have them in lockdown together.

Nick Dear’s stage adaptation of “Frankenstein” comes to Iranian bookstores

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — “Frankenstein: Based on the Novel by Mary Shelley”, a stage adaptation of English author Mary Shelley’s 1818 novel by Nick Dear has been published in Persian.

The book translated by Farshad Rezai has been released by Ney Publication in Tehran.

Childlike in his innocence but grotesque in form, Frankenstein’s bewildered creature is cast out into a hostile universe by his horror-struck maker.

Meeting with cruelty wherever he goes, and increasingly desperate and vengeful, he determines to track down his creator and strike a terrifying deal.

Urgent concerns of scientific responsibility, parental

neglect, cognitive development and the nature of good and evil are embedded within this thrilling and deeply disturbing classic gothic tale.

Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein, adapted for the stage by Nick Dear, premiered at the National Theatre, London, in February 2011.

Dear is a British playwright and screenwriter. His best-known plays include “The Art of Success” and “Frankenstein”. Among his many screenplays are “Persuasion” and Agatha Christie’s Poirot.

Shelley was also the editor of the works of her husband, Romantic poet and philosopher Percy Bysshe Shelley.

She was the daughter of the political philosopher Wil-

liam Godwin and the writer, philosopher and feminist Mary Wollstonecraft.

Shelley was taken seriously as a writer in her own lifetime, though reviewers often missed the political edge to her novels.

After her death, however, she was chiefly remembered only as the wife of Percy Bysshe Shelley and as the author of “Frankenstein”.

It was not until 1989, when Emily Sunstein published her prizewinning biography “Mary Shelley: Romance and Reality”, that a full-length scholarly biography analyzing all of Shelley’s letters, journals and works within their historical context was published.

“The Recognition of Shakuntala” published in Persian

**CULTURE** **TEHRAN** — A Persian translation of “The Recognition of Shakuntala”, a drama by Kalidasa composed around the 5th century CE that is generally considered to be the greatest Indian literary work of any period, has been published in Persian.

Translated by the Alireza Esmaeilpur, the book has been published by the Mahi publishing house in Tehran.

Taken from legend, the work tells of the seduction of the nymph Shakuntala by King Dushyanta, his rejection of the

girl and his child, and their subsequent reunion in heaven.

The child that is born is Bharata, the eponymous ancestor of the Indian nation (Bharatavarsha, “Subcontinent of Bharata”).

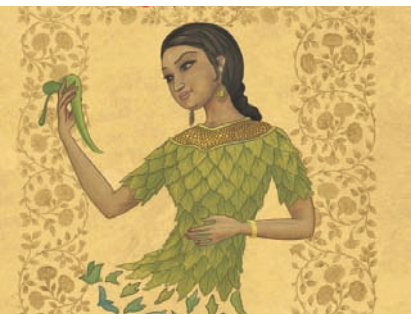
Kalidasa remakes the story into a love idyll whose characters represent a pristine aristocratic ideal: the girl, sentimental, selfless, alive to little but the delicacies of nature, and the king, first servant of the dharma (religious and social law and duties), protector of the social order, resolute hero, yet tender and suffering

agonies over his lost love.

The plot and characters are made believable by a change Kalidasa introduces: Dushyanta is not responsible for the lovers’ separation; he acts only under a delusion caused by a sage’s curse.

As in all of Kalidasa’s works, the beauty of nature is depicted with an inimitable elegance of metaphor.

It is one of the few classical Sanskrit plays that have been adapted to the silver screen in India and of them, the most adapted.



Front cover of the Persian translation of Kalidasa’s drama “The Recognition of Shakuntala”.