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# Iran draws lessons from engagement with the West

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## Diplomat elaborates on the West's ulterior motives in nuclear talks

TEHRAN - An Iranian diplomat comments on a warning by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei about the West's intention to use the 2015 nuclear deal to enable interference in Iran's affairs.

Kazem Gharibabadi, Iran's permanent ambassador to the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), made the remarks in an interview published on Ayatollah Khamenei's official

website, khamenei.ir, on Wednesday.

During a last meeting with the outgoing President Hassan Rouhani and his cabinet team on Wednesday, Ayatollah Khamenei reminded how the Western side had been trying during the recent nuclear talks to include a condition in the deal that would turn into an excuse for subsequent interference in Iran's affairs.

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## Railway, freeway projects worth over \$2.5b inaugurated in 7 provinces

TEHRAN - President Hassan Rouhani on Thursday inaugurated some major railway and freeway projects worth 109.1 trillion rials (about \$2.597 billion) in seven provinces through video conferencing, IRNA reported.

The mentioned projects were inaugurated in Zanjan, Yazd, Fars, Qazvin, Isfahan, Alborz, and Mazandaran provinces in the 86th series of inauguration ceremonies since the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

Addressing the inaugural ceremony

of the projects, Saeed Rasouli, the managing director of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (known as RAI), said, "Improving safety, increasing passenger and cargo transportation and reducing travel time are important achievements of today's inaugurated projects."

The first inauguration was the Yazd-Eqlid railway line, which shortened the Shiraz-Mashhad railway route by about 320 km, which is four hours shorter.

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## PastoCoVac to join public vaccination drive

TEHRAN - PastoCoVac, jointly developed by the Pasteur Institute of Iran and the Finlay Institute of Cuba, is to join the public vaccination drive against coronavirus next week.

"At present, 120,000 doses of this vaccine have been delivered to the Ministry of Health, which will be used for general vaccination," Alireza Biglari, director of the Pasteur Institute of Iran, said at a joint press conference with Vicente Verez Bencomo, director of

Cuba's Finlay Institute of Vaccines, which was held at the Iranian Ministry of Health.

"We are determined to submit the documentation of this vaccine to the World Health Organization upon completion of the information. In addition to Cuba, a clinical trial with good quality has been conducted in eight cities of the country for 24,000 volunteers," Biglari added.

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## Hepatitis in Iran: 100% of infants being vaccinated

**BY MEHDI GARSHASBI**

While just 42 percent of infants around the world are being vaccinated against Hepatitis B, in Iran almost all newborn babies receive the vaccine.

Over 354 million people worldwide live with chronic hepatitis; over 8,000 new infections of hepatitis B and C occur every day, and more than one million deaths from advanced liver disease and liver cancer occur every year, according to the World Health Organization.

World Hepatitis Day is celebrated worldwide on July 28. This year the occasion was held with the theme "Hepatitis can't wait", calling on all countries to work together to eliminate viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030.

Iran is planning to provide free diagnosis and treatment services to people who are suffering from hepatitis and eradicate the disease by 2030.

"By 2030, if we could reduce the incidence of hepatitis by up to 90 percent and decrease mortality by 65 percent, we would have implemented the elimination program as planned by the World Health Organization," Rashid Ramezani, an official with the Ministry of Health, explained.

"Some 1.5 million Iranians are diagnosed with hepatitis B and less than 200,000 people with hepatitis C; nearly 3,000 people are infected with hepatitis C each year," he added.

WHO recently launched first-ever global guidance for countries seeking to validate the elimination of hepatitis B virus (HBV) and/or hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection as a public health problem.

While progress has been made in the hepatitis response, there is still a long way to go. In far too many countries, priority interventions remain inaccessible to the populations most severely affected or at higher risk.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impeded the development and delivery of core services that tackle viral hepatitis and other infectious diseases and non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

However, only 10 percent of patients are aware of their disease, which increases the importance of awareness and diagnostic programs, he said, regretting, 1.4 million deaths per year are caused by hepatitis.

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## ICOMOS assessors to visit caravansaries in Iran

TEHRAN - Assessors and experts affiliated with the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) are scheduled to visit several caravansaries in Iran.

The evaluators will arrive in the Islamic Republic by the end of the current Iranian month of Mordad (August 22) to visit and review the current status of a select of caravansaries for potential inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage list, IRNA quoted Mostafa Purali, a senior official with the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, as saying on Friday.

An all-inclusive dossier of a select of Iranian caravansaries is being prepared to be evaluated during the next session of the World Heritage Committee, which will be held in 2022, the official said.

Last year, 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 make a shortlist in terms of their architecture, historical and cultural values.

Earlier this week, UNESCO added Trans-Iranian Railway and Uramanat cultural landscape to its list of world heritage sites, bringing Iran's share of the list from 24 to 26.

Caravansary is a compound word combining "caravan" with "sara"; the former stands for a group of travelers and the latter means the building. They often had massive portals supported by elevated load-bearing walls. Guest rooms were constructed around the courtyard and stables behind them with doors in the corners of the yard.

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## America's own watchdog on Afghanistan war gives damning assessment of failure

Speaking to reporters at a lengthy conference, the head of the official U.S. watchdog on operations in Afghanistan has slammed America's two-decade presence in the country as a disaster.

One of the most alarming comments, John Sopko, the especially Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, also known as SI-GAR, made was that high-ranking American individuals in positions of power will repeat the same mistakes and failures in Afghanistan; once more in the future.

Sopko warned "don't believe what you're told by the generals and ambassadors or people in the administration saying we're never going to do this again. That's exactly what we said after Vietnam... Lo and behold we did Iraq. And we did Afghanistan. We will do this again. And we really need to think and learn from the 20 years in Afghanistan."

Research suggests the majority of Americans have had enough of U.S. military adventurism

abroad. In the wake of the White House announcement that American troops and contractors will withdraw from Afghanistan by the end of August, the public anger and backlash were mostly directed at the war's failure.

Sopko says the "big question is after all the money, \$86 billion, and 20 years, why did we see such poor results?" (Other experts say \$86 billion is a very conservative figure)

Nevertheless, Sopko says two words describe the U.S. military's failure.

"One is hubris, that we can somehow take the country that was desolate in 2001, and turn it into a little Norway," before adding "the other thing is mendacity. We exaggerated, over exaggerated, our generals did, our ambassadors did, all of our officials did, to Congress and the American people, about 'we're just turning the corner; we're about ready to turn the corner.'"

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## Non-oil trade rises 47% in 4 months yr/yr

TEHRAN - The value of Iran's non-oil trade rose 47 percent during the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-July 22), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, the head of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Mehdi Mir-Ashrafi said that Iran has traded 50.8 million tons of non-oil products worth nearly \$29 billion with other countries in the mentioned four-month period, which indicates also 21 percent

growth in terms of weight on an annual basis.

The official put the four-month non-oil export at 38.3 million tons valued at \$14.3 billion, with a 65-percent rise in value and a 27-percent growth in weight.

The IRICA head mentioned liquefied gas, polyethylene, iron semi-finished products, methanol, gasoline, iron and steel ingots, steel products, iron rods, liquid propane, bitumen, and copper cathode as the main exported products in the

said time span.

He said major export destinations of the Iranian non-oil goods were China with about 10 million tons worth \$4.3 billion, Iraq with 10.9 million tons worth \$2.8 billion, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with 4.3 million tons worth \$1.6 billion, Turkey with one million tons worth \$923 million, and Afghanistan with 1.8 million tons worth \$728 million.

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## U.S. is scorching the earth in Afghanistan: Turkish attorney

BY M. A. SAKI

TEHRAN - Washington is scorching the earth over the fallback lines while retreating, a Turkish lawyer says, noting that the U.S. is deepening the gap in Afghanistan.

"As the United States is withdrawing from the region, it is deepening the gaping hole it had left behind, which could lead to unprecedented political and military instability, as much as can," Onur Sinan Guzeltan tells the Tehran Times.

U.S. President Joe Biden's decision to withdraw all American troops from Afghanistan by 11 September is seen as a move designed to leave a power vacuum in a country that brings together Asian powers like China, Iran and Russia.

Renewed destabilization in Afghanistan can harm neighbors greatly.

"The U.S. army is scorching the earth over the fallback lines while retreating, similar to the withdrawal of the Nazi armies during World War II," Sinan Guzeltan remarks.

"The ways to scorch the earth today are fueling ethnic and sectarian tensions in the region."

Following is the text of the interview:

**How do you see America's withdrawal from Afghanistan? Why is the U.S. talking about negotiations with the Taliban after 20 years of war?**

A: It is now a fact accepted by the entire world that the American empire is in a political, economic and military collapse.

The United States is already struggling to overcome its own economic and social problems in domestic policies, while also being far from holding onto its unipolar world order in its foreign policies.

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## Tehran-based Afghan writer Mohammad-Sarvar Rajai passes away from COVID-19

TEHRAN - Mohammad-Sarvar Rajai, the Afghan author of the acclaimed books "From Lilei Desert to Majnun Island" and "Mission of God" who lived for over 27 years in Iran, died of COVID-19 on Thursday in Tehran. He was 52.

Rajai was admitted to Milad Hospital a few days ago, however, all treatments to save him were in vain due to a severe chest infection, Iranian media announced.

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## Security Council's inexcusable inaction has emboldened Israel, Iranian diplomat says

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN — The UN Security Council's seven decades of "utter and inexcusable inaction" has emboldened the Zionist regime of Israel, an Iranian diplomat to the UN said on Wednesday, noting the history of mankind is a proof to the fact that "when unlawful acts go unpunished, they are repeated."

Zahra Ershadi, the deputy permanent representative of Iran to the UN, made the remarks before a UN Security Council session.



"The Council's decades-long utter and inexcusable inaction has seriously emboldened that regime to commit more crimes with more brutality," Zahra Ershadi, the deputy permanent representative of Iran to the UN, said on Wednesday before a UN Security Council session on "The Situation in the Middle East (West Asia), including the Palestinian Question," Ershadi said.

Speaking on "The Situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian Question," she censured the United States for encouraging Israel by systematically shielding the regime against any action by the Security Council.

"The latest example of such measures was the act of the United States, in May 2021, in blocking the Security Council from issuing even a simple press statement calling for an end to Israel's bombardment of Gaza," Press TV quoted her as saying.

Ershadi made it clear that such "unwavering support" for Israel by the U.S. is against the inherent rights of the oppressed Palestinians, including their right to life, dignity, liberation, self-defense, self-determination, and to establish their own independent state.

"The Security Council must put an immediate end to this unjustifiable and unacceptable trend and to compel the Israeli regime to cease, immediately and completely, all its crimes against Palestinians; remove the unlawful and inhumane blockade of the Gaza Strip; end the occupation of all Palestinian territories, the occupied Syrian Golan and parts of Lebanon; and also, to hold that regime accountable for committing the gravest international crimes for over several decades," the diplomat added.

She said Iran condemns the Zionist regime in the strongest terms and reiterates its support for the just cause of the Palestinian people and the full realization of all their inalienable rights, particularly their right to self-determination and to establish an independent Palestinian state, with al-Quds as its capital.

**"Completely absurd, irrelevant and baseless"**  
Elsewhere in her remarks, Ershadi said the Israeli regime's representative once again played victim in his statement on Wednesday and accused others in the region and the world in order to distract attention from its brutal crimes.

"Instead of proposing to address the challenges of others, the Israeli regime must stop murder and bloodshed and cease expanding its terrorist activities to the entire region," she said, rejecting Israel's accusations regarding Iran's peaceful nuclear program as "completely absurd, irrelevant and baseless."

The accusations, she said, are aimed at covering up the dangers posed by the Israeli regime's nuclear weapons to the region and beyond.

"To remove this threat, the international community must compel that regime to renounce the possession of nuclear weapons, join the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and put all its nuclear activities and facilities under the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Other accusations of the Israeli regime's representative were mere fabrication and disinformation too," she added.

## Ambassador: Iran-Russia ties will become stronger during Raisi administration

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN — The meeting of the ambassadors of the Islamic countries in Russia was held on the sidelines of the twelfth international economic meeting "Russia and the Islamic World" in Kazan, the capital of the Russian Republic of Tatarstan on Thursday.

In the meeting that ambassadors from 28 Islamic countries were present participants discussed the need to strengthen ties between Islamic countries in each other in various fields.

Addressing the meeting, the President of Tatarstan, Rustam Minnikhanov noted that relations with Islamic countries are one of the priorities of Russia's foreign policy, saying, "Tatarstan is ready to cooperate with member countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in various fields such as oil, machine building, truck production, and agricultural products."

In his speech at the meeting, Kazem Jalali, Iran's ambassador to Russia, pointed to the growing relations between Iran and Russia, expressing hope that in the new Iranian under the presidency of Seyed Ebrahim Raisi, the relations between the two countries will become stronger.

Jalali stated that Vladimir Putin was the first world leader to send a congratulatory message to the elected president of Iran, adding, "This shows the serious will and determination of the Russian Federation to further expand relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran."

Referring to Raisi's visit to the Republic of Tatarstan in recent years, Jalali also praised the relations between Tehran and the Republic of Tatarstan and said that the Republic of Tatarstan has a proud history.

"We are happy that it is now a platform for cooperation between Islamic countries," the ambassador highlighted.

On June 18, Raisi won a landslide victory in Iran's presidential elections. After Raisi's triumph, Maxim Suslov, the press attaché of the Russian embassy in Tehran, transmitted a message from President Vladimir Putin congratulating Raisi on his win and pledging to strengthen Russia-Iran bilateral relations.

Boris Dolgov, an expert at Moscow's Institute of Oriental Studies, predicted that Raisi will expand economic and political cooperation with Russia.

Vladimir Sazhin, a senior fellow at the Institute of Oriental Studies, noted that "Russia will undoubtedly be included in the list of Iran's priority partners," but acknowledged that Russia and Iran will maintain a situational partnership.

In April 2017, Raisi held a meeting with Tatarstan's President Rustam Minnikhanov, who is a key surrogate for Putin's foreign policy in the Islamic world, and praised Iran's commitment to strengthening its relationships with Russia and Tatarstan.

# Diplomat elaborates on the West's ulterior motives in nuclear talks

**→ 1** The Leader cited the Rouhani administration's experience of dealing with the West on the issue of the nuclear agreement as an important case in point that had clearly shown "trust in the West does not work and will not work [in the future either]."

Since April Iran has been negotiating with the remaining parties to the nuclear deal with an indirect involvement of the U.S. to revive the deal ditched in May 2018 by Donald Trump. Six rounds of talks were held until June 20.

"Some of our diplomats really performed well, but the Americans stuck to their hostile position in an obstinate matter and they did not take a step forward. On paper and in words, they say that they will remove the sanctions, but they have not removed and are not going to remove them. The Americans have laid down a condition: they say that if we wish sanctions to be removed, we should include a clause in the agreement which signifies that we are willing to negotiate over certain matters in the future. They say that if we do not accept this clause, we will not have an agreement in the present time. What is this clause? This clause is actually a pretext for future interferences," Ayatollah Khamenei warned.

The Trump administration left the agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and imposed the heaviest sanctions in history against Iran. It even refused to loosen sanctions during the Coronavirus pandemic.

Under the agreement, Iran had agreed to put limits on its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions.

Washington's European allies party to the accord—the UK, France, and Germany—just paid lip service to the JCPOA and in practice did nothing to protect Iran from illegal sanctions.

The sanctions were in sharp contrast to international law because the nuclear pact is being endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

In a move, pointed out by the Leader during the Wednesday meeting, they have



even been trying to advance a provision that could pave the way for their meddling in the Islamic Republic's affairs.

Gharibabadi went on to offer some details about the controversial provision and the reasons why it was completely unnecessary.

The West alleges that the so-called provision "guarantees the JCPOA's nuclear non-proliferation" goals and also mandates certain "trust-building measures" among the Persian Gulf countries, the envoy said.

This is while there is no need for either, the envoy said. The nuclear deal has its own timetables that ensure implementation of its purposes, he said, adding the other demand runs strictly counter to the talks' agenda too.

**"New pressure tactics"**

Therefore, Gharibabadi said, the Iranian side roundly rejected the proposal since this insistence "showed that they still consider the nuclear agreement to be a bridge enabling their interference in irrelevant issues such as Iran's missile work and its regional affairs."

"The purpose they seek through this is to start addressing these [irrelevant] issues [on various occasions] and consider them to be indivisible parts of the nuclear deal, and [therefore] lay the groundwork

for their interference in these areas," Ambassador Gharibabadi asserted, according to Press TV.

Thus, wherever, the Western side stopped short of its goals, it would be able to start blaming Iran and begin trying to put it under more pressure, the diplomat cautioned.

The official echoed the Leader's remarks during the Wednesday meeting that such insistence on the part of the Americans had come while they, themselves, had "refused to retrace even one step towards reversing their adversarial stance concerning Iran."

Among many other things, the diplomat said, they conditioned the lifting of some of the sanctions and removing the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) from their so-called blacklist on Iran's resigning itself to the provision.

Neither did they agree to recognize an overdue end to an embargo on sales of conventional weapons to Iran, nor approve of lifting their bans on more than 500 Iranian natural and artificial persons, the envoy explained.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif has also censured the United States and E3 over their "ill-intention" with regard to Iran and trying to blackmail Iran into renegotiating the deal.

"The U.S. and E3 have been transparent about their transgressions and have repeatedly stated their ill-intention to compel Iran to renegotiate [the JCPOA] provisions through economic pressure and blackmail," Zarif said in a letter to UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres published on Friday.

**"Counter-approach"**

Gharibabadi went on to delineate Iran's counter-approach in the face of the West's attempted inroads.

He said that during the whole time while the West had been either violating its commitments to the deal or trying to bring Iran under new pressure, the positions adopted by the establishment and a law ratified by the Majlis (Parliament) mandating further remedial nuclear steps on the part of the Islamic Republic had, in turn, improved Tehran's position in the talks.

Now, faced with the West's new pressure tactics, the country would try, on the one hand, to guard its improved standing, and advance its interests on the other, Gharibabadi stated.

Towards the purpose, the country would never lose sight of the fact that it was the U.S. that began compromising the JCPOA in the first place, "so care should be exercised for the complainant and the defendant's rolls not to be switched here," the envoy added.

Besides, the Islamic Republic prioritizes insistence on the practical and verifiable lifting of the sanctions on its agenda, and also tries to ensure that the U.S. would never be able to redeploy the sanctions weapon against it either, he said.

Thirdly, Tehran would resolutely stand by its assertion that neither the talks nor the nuclear deal are allowed to feature any irrelevant subject matters such as Iran's defensive missile program or its regional influence.

"No Iranian official or institution stands against achievement of a good deal that would bring about practical removal of the sanctions. However, given the past experience, one should tread more vigilantly and more perceptively," Gharibabadi said in conclusion.

## Zarif lambasts UN for inaction in face of U.S.-E3 blackmail

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN — Six days prior to the inauguration ceremony of Iranian President-elect Seyed Ebrahim Raisi, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs published a letter by Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif to the secretary-general of the United Nations.

In the letter, written on July 20, Zarif reminded the UN that Iran was fulfilling its obligations under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and it was the United States which ill-intentionally put economic pressure on Iran by abrogating the agreement.

In part of his letter, Zarif also said the U.S. and E3 (Britain, France and Germany) have been "transparent about their transgressions and have repeatedly stated their ill-intention to compel Iran to renegotiate" the provisions of the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the JCPOA.

Below you will find some highlights from Zarif's letter to Antonio Guterres:

"Six years ago today (July 20), the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2231 (2015). In spite of our strong and legitimate objections to the historic mistreatment of Iran by the Security Council—particularly throughout 8 years of aggression by Saddam Hussein, as well as during the course of an unnecessary nuclear crisis—Iran showed its good faith by engaging in negotiations to reach a diplomatic solution to the nuclear question. After thirteen years of complex negotiations, in 2015 Iran and the five permanent members of this Council plus Germany concluded the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which is endorsed by and annexed to Resolution 2231.

The Security Council in its Resolution 2231 has affirmed "that conclusion of the JCPOA marks a fundamental shift in its consideration of this issue..."<sup>1</sup> The purported over-arching purpose of all terminated resolutions of the UN Security Council on the Iranian nuclear issue was to reach "a diplomatic, negotiated solution that guarantees Iran's nuclear programme is for exclusively peaceful purposes."<sup>2</sup> That "diplomatic, negotiated solution" was reached, in a final and comprehensive manner, in the form of the JCPOA3, endorsed by UNSCR 2231. Iran implemented the JCPOA fully and in good faith; it provided the IAEA with all the access it needed under the JCPOA and implemented the Additional Protocol; and all outstanding issues of the past were resolved to the satisfaction of the IAEA Board of Governors<sup>3</sup>. Indeed, as much as the deal fell short of providing Iran with the

benefits of sanctions lifting due to—as will be shown in the following paragraphs—mala fide and insincerity on the part of the United States and lack of will and aptitude on the part of the EU/E3, it proved to be a solid solution in meeting concerns claimed in terminated UNSC resolutions, thus rendering them not just terminated but factually and legally obsolete.

UN Security Council Resolution 2231 also emphasizes "that the JCPOA is conducive to promoting and facilitating the development of normal economic and trade contacts and cooperation with Iran..."<sup>4</sup> and that Member States must "give due regard to the termination" of sanctions. The JCPOA participants have underlined that "the lifting of sanctions, including the economic dividends arising from it, constitutes an essential part of the JCPOA."<sup>5</sup>

However, the United States—aided and abetted by its European accomplices—never implemented these and many other provisions of Resolution 2231 and the JCPOA in good faith. The western JCPOA participants continued to use economic pressure to achieve those illegitimate political objectives that they had failed to achieve in the course of the long and tedious JCPOA negotiations: the same objectives that they had finally agreed to address and dispose of in a way that was not fully satisfactory to any of the JCPOA participants, including—and especially—Iran. Indeed, Iran clearly stated its positions in the Security Council meeting on 20 July 2015<sup>6</sup> and immediately after the adoption of the Resolution<sup>7</sup>. However, it fulfilled all its JCPOA commitments in good faith, verified by numerous IAEA reports<sup>8</sup>—even 15 months after the U.S. unlawful withdrawal<sup>2</sup>.

The US and E3 have been transparent about their transgressions and have repeatedly stated their ill-intention to compel Iran to renegotiate those provisions through economic pressure and blackmail. Such intentions—which in and of themselves constitute a grave violation of Paragraphs 28 and 29 of the JCPOA<sup>3</sup>—were uttered privately—and even publicly—after the "Implementation Day"<sup>4</sup>, and repeated by former US president Trump<sup>5</sup>—and regrettably the E3<sup>6</sup>—since 2017. The Biden administration—again, aided and abetted by the E3—has since its inauguration in January 2021 continued Trump's economic terrorism against Iranians as supposed "leverage" to achieve the same objectives.

The US and E3 illusion that there can ever be a renegotiation of the timetable enshrined in the JCPOA and Resolution 2231 represents utter bad faith. The timeta-



ble for termination of voluntary restrictions accepted by Iran in the JCPOA—maliciously called "JCPOA sunset clauses," in order to evoke fear—were the subject of the longest and most difficult negotiating process—which began from the very first day of the Muscat discussions in August 2012, and continued until the evening of July 13, 2015. Agreement on the current timetable required great flexibility and compromise on the part of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and huge sacrifices by Iran on other significant issues.

Obviously, no one was fully satisfied with the agreed timetable—certainly not Iran, which rightly believed that there was no reason for any restriction on its nuclear program, because in its view, the so-called nuclear crisis had been artificially manufactured from the start. Iran moved from zero limitations to the current time-bound restrictions, and the U.S. and E3 in return abandoned their desire for longer timeframes. However, after Trump withdrew from the deal, the U.S. and E3 believed that they could reap the fruits of their poisonous tree and resume their old habit of "what's mine is mine and what's yours is negotiable."

It should not be forgotten today that to show the pivotal importance of the agreed timeframe, the Resolution in its first operative paragraph "Endorses the JCPOA, and urges its full implementation on the timetable established in the JCPOA." Thus, the timetable—or the so-called "sunset clauses"—is an inseparable, non-negotiable component of the JCPOA and UNSCR 2231. Thus, any attempt to extort an extension of the agreed timetable undermines both the JCPOA and UNSCR 2231 in their entirety."

## Iran says ready to aid Turkey to contain forest fires

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN— Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh on Friday lamented widespread forest fires in parts of Turkey's southern provinces, which have caused extensive property damage and left at least three citizens dead.

While announcing Iran's solidarity with the government and people of the friendly and

brotherly country of Turkey and expressing condolences to the families of the victims, Khatibzadeh announced Iran's readiness to assist the Turkish government to contain the forest fires.

At least three people have been killed in southern Turkey as two forest fires rage near tourist coastal regions.

Dozens of others were also hospitalized

with burns after flames ravaged houses in the Kalemler district.

A wildfire that broke out Wednesday near the Mediterranean town of Manavgat, in Antalya province, had largely been contained, Agriculture and Forestry Minister Bekir Pakdemirli said.

But another fire started early on Thursday and swept through the district of Akseki,

some 50 kilometers further north.

Efforts to tame the flames continue with 4,000 personnel, three planes, nine unmanned aerial vehicles, one unmanned helicopter, 38 helicopters, 55 heavy-duty vehicles, 680 water tenders, and one water tank, Agriculture and Forestry Minister Bekir Pakdemirli told a joint news conference in the Mediterranean coastal city of Antalya.

# Iran draws lessons from engagement with the West

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN – After more than a decade of painstaking negotiations and a landmark nuclear deal, Iran seems to be going through careful deliberations concerning the notion of engagement with the West.

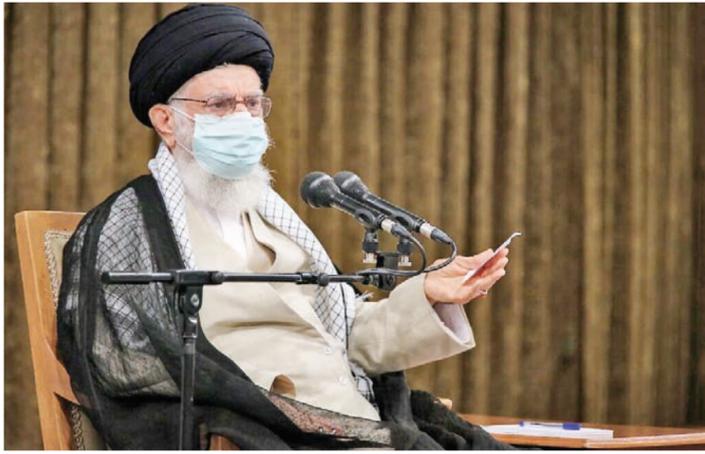
The cautious Iranian approach with respect to engaging with the West has long been in the making and the stalled nuclear talks in Vienna are the latest sign in that regard. After many ups and downs, Iran finally made a decision to “test” the Western allegation of the viability of the diplomatically negotiated solutions to the long-standing disputes between Iran and the West. This new policy culminated in the signing of a landmark deal known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) in 2015, an accord that was supposed to usher in a new era of cooperation between Iran and the West but ended up reinforcing a deeply held belief in Iran that the country can never trust the West.

The Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, reflected on this belief during his “farewell meeting” with the Hassan Rouhani administration on Wednesday.

During the meeting, the Leader offered an overall assessment of the Rouhani administration’s performance and functionality. In assessing the eight-year tenure of the Rouhani presidency, Ayatollah Khamenei explained where the Rouhani administration proceeded well and where it came up against obstacles.

He noted the JCPOA as an example of Rouhani’s poor performance, indicating the lessons Iran drew from engaging in protracted talks with the West.

“The national affairs of the country should never become contingent on the cooperation of Westerners because this will definitely lead to failure. Whenever you made your affairs contingent on Westerners’ cooperation, you failed and whenever you moved forward and showed initiative without trusting Westerners, you succeeded. If you take a look at the performance of the 11th and 12th administrations, this is how it is,” Ayatollah Khamenei told Rouhani and his ministers. “Whenever you made your affairs contingent on reaching an agreement with Westerners and with the U.S., you came up against a brick wall and failed to advance.



This is because they do not help. Instead, they show enmity because they are enemies anyway. However, whenever you stopped pinning your hopes on them and began to use different methods of your own – there are thousands of methods and it is not the case that there is only one method and one path as there are various methods: if people think, they will find a multitude of methods for their personal, social and managerial lives – you made progress.”

President Rouhani is known for his diplomatic efforts in clinching the 2015 nuclear deal. In his two election campaigns, he vowed to lift all sanctions and start a new era of economic boom by narrowing the differences between Iran and the West. At some point, he even called for “JCPOA 2” to bring about economic prosperity and growth.

“It is time for JCPOA-2 to develop [the] national economy,” Rouhani famously said in 2016, referring to the need for another deal with the West to solve the other remaining issues. Rouhani’s push for engagement with the United States and Europe was premised on the belief that the time has come for Iran and the West to move beyond the baggage of hostility and that the West is ready to welcome Iran into the international community.

It was in these circumstances that Donald Trump won the U.S. presidential election in 2016. In the beginning, Trump was

thought to be an interloper who interrupted the process of Iran-U.S. détente. Therefore, the Rouhani administration tolerated almost everything the Trump administration did, hoping that the next U.S. administration would change tack.

But hopes rarely inform international relations. And the Biden administration proved even tougher than its predecessor. The U.S. negotiating team in Vienna offered less than what they had already agreed to in the JCPOA and demanded more concessions in return for resuscitating a deal that, even if revived, would still be subject to vacillations in the White House.

This was one of the major lessons Iran drew from its engagement with the West. Reflecting on this lesson, the Leader underlined the need for future Iranian generations to heed the history of Iran’s record of engagement with the West.

“It is about lack of trust in the West. Future generations should benefit from this experience. It became clear in this administration that trusting Westerners does not work as they are not going to help us and they will strike a blow whenever they can and when they do not strike a blow, it is because they do not have the means to do so. Whenever they could, they dealt us a blow. This is a very important experience,” Ayatollah Khamenei said.

He pointed to the recent talks in Vienna and warned that the U.S. will by no means honor its commitments. During the Vienna talks, the Leader said, “the Americans stuck to their hostile position in an obstinate matter and they did not take a step forward.”

He added, “On paper and in words, they say that they will remove the sanctions, but they have not removed and are not going to remove them. The Americans have laid down a condition: they say that if we wish sanctions to be removed, we should include a clause in the agreement which signifies that we are willing to negotiate over certain matters in the future. They say that if we do not accept this clause, we will not have an agreement in the present time.”

Ayatollah Khamenei said the clause in question is related to non-nuclear issues and is likely to be used by the other side to renege on commitments. “What is this clause? This clause is actually a pretext for future interferences. The clause is about the JCPOA itself and about various other matters such as missiles and regional issues. If later on, we say that we are not going to negotiate over these matters because the policies of the country and our parliament do not allow us to do so, they will say that there is no deal because we have allegedly violated it. These are their methods and their policies. They are behaving in a completely unfair and malicious manner and they have no scruples about breaking their promises in any way,” he noted, according to the khamenei.ir.

The Leader stated, “They violated the agreement once without paying any price and in the present time too, when they are told to promise it and to guarantee that they will not violate it at another time, they respond that they cannot give such a guarantee. They are saying this explicitly to our friends and to our diplomats. They say that they will not give any guarantee about possible violations. They are like this. This is an experience for the future administration and for men active in the political scene. Some people might be political activists, but they might not be executive officials. These individuals should take this into consideration. This is a very important experience which was witnessed in this administration and in all other administrations – of course, this administration experienced it more.”

## Iran voices concern over Armenia-Azerbaijan border clashes

**POLITICAL** TEHRAN – For the second time in a week, Iran expressed concern over continued border clashes between Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan, which claimed lives on both sides and aroused concerns in neighboring countries in the South Caucasus region.

Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh expressed concern over the continuation of border clashes between the border guards of Azerbaijan and Armenia.

In a statement on Thursday, Khatibzadeh expressed regret over the deaths and injuries of the two countries’ nationals, and called on both parties to show self-restraint.

Armenia’s Defense Ministry said Wednesday that three of its troops were killed and two more were wounded in clashes with Azerbaijani forces on the border between the two ex-Soviet nations, which have been locked in a decades-long tug-of-war over the Nagorno-Karabakh region, AP reported.

Azerbaijan announced that two of its troops were wounded on Wednesday.

The two South Caucasus nations once again blamed each other for the latest flare-up which came on the heels of another clash last week. Azerbaijan said Armenian forces opened fire at its positions on the Kalbajar section of the border. The Armenian military said its personnel was attacked by the Azerbaijani forces.

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Armenian Foreign Ministry issued a statement saying that “the Azerbaijani side has been deliberately initiating escalation,” and the Foreign Ministry in Azerbaijan said in turn that “the responsibility for aggravating the situation by committing another provocation on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border lies entirely with the military-political leadership of Armenia.”

In the wake of the clashes on Wednesday, Azerbaijan’s Foreign Ministry urged Armenia “to stop military provocations and start negotiations on the delimitation of the two states’ borders.”

Armenia’s Foreign Ministry vowed to “use all its military-political tools in accordance with international law” in response “to the use of force by Azerbaijan against the territorial integrity of Armenia.”

Khatibzadeh underlined the necessity of the peaceful settlement of border disputes between Baku and Yerevan.

He stressed that the two countries must overcome the tensions and clashes, and respect the internationally recognized borders.

The spokesman further emphasized the necessity of establishing sustainable peace in the South Caucasus region as soon as possible, and expressed Tehran’s preparedness to provide any kind of assistance for the establishment of sustainable peace in the region.

On July 27, a few days before the start of border clashes, Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and his Azeri counterpart Jeyhun Bayramov had a telephone conversation.

During the phone call, the two sides conferred on the latest developments in bilateral relations and regional issues.



Earlier on July 27, Khatibzadeh expressed regret over the casualties resulting from sporadic border clashes between Azerbaijan and Armenia, urging the two neighbors to exercise restraint.

In reaction to the continuation of sporadic border clashes between border guards of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia, Khatibzadeh expressed sorrow over casualties on both sides, and called on the two countries to exercise restraint, according to a statement by the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

In his statement, Khatibzadeh also highlighted the need for a peaceful settlement of border disputes between the two sides.

The spokesman urged Baku and Yerevan to leave behind tensions and conflicts, and underscored the necessity of establishing lasting peace in the south Caucasus region as soon as possible.

He said Iran stands ready to offer any kind of help to both sides to achieve lasting peace.

On July 23, news media outlets reported the outbreak of clashes between Azerbaijan and Armenia in the Kalbajar region. One Azerbaijani soldier was reported killed and three Armenian soldiers were wounded in the clashes.

The Azerbaijani Ministry of Defense said the situation on the Kalbajar section of the Armenian-Azerbaijani state border is stable, according to the Trend news agency. The Defense Ministry accused Armenia of firing at the positions of the Azerbaijani armed forces on the section of the Armenian-Azerbaijani state border in Kalbajar district on July 23, as a result of which an Azerbaijani serviceman was killed.

“The Armenian side’s regular recent provocations, the attempts to aggravate the situation in the region by shelling the Azerbaijani positions are unacceptable and Armenia is responsible for the development of such a situation,” the ministry said, according to a Trend report. “Azerbaijan reserves the right to take all necessary measures to protect its territorial integrity within the international borders, as well as to ensure peace and security in the region.”

On the other side, Armenia accused Azerbaijan of flying a drone into the Armenian airspace. The Armenian Defense Ministry told Armenpress that on July 23, at around 23:00, the air defense units of the Armenian armed forces took actions to prevent the attempt by an Azerbaijani UAV to

enter into Armenia’s airspace in the south-western direction of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border. Armenpress also reported that the Azerbaijani armed forces opened fire at the Armenian positions in the Gegharkunik section of the border on July 23 at about 17:00.

“The shootings in the direction of the Armenian side took place after shootings in their own territory, which can be explained as an interpersonal incident. This is also evidenced by the fact that the Azerbaijani Ministry of Defense informs in its press release that an Azerbaijani serviceman died as a result of the shootings from the Armenian side. The Defense Ministry of Armenia stated that the Armenian side did not take any action until the moment that the Azerbaijani side started to shoot in the direction of the Armenian border guards. As a result of the intensive shooting caused by another Azerbaijani provocation, 3 Armenian servicemen received slight injuries. They have been transported to a hospital in Gegharkunik province,” Armenpress said.

Armenia and Azerbaijan fought a deadly war last year in September over the Nagorno-Karabakh region which resulted in the latter retaking large swathes of the region. After the war, which lasted for 44 days and was ended thanks to a Russian-brokered ceasefire deal, Azerbaijan and Armenia clashed from time to time in border areas but the clashes soon subsided with both sides accusing each other of firing first.

Tensions between the two countries over the region have been simmering since the end of a war in the 1990s and last year’s escalation of violence was the deadliest in two decades. More than 5,000 people lost their lives and tens of thousands were displaced.

The peace deal brokered by Moscow saw Armenia forced to cede significant territory to Azerbaijan.

Both countries have repeatedly accused each other of violating the terms of the agreement since it came into force on November 10.

The recent flare-up also was put to an end by another Russian-brokered ceasefire deal. Azerbaijan’s defense ministry said it has accepted a Russian proposal to enforce a ceasefire in the area, but also accused Armenia of continuing to shell Azeri positions. Armenia’s defense ministry also said it had accepted the ceasefire.

During the clashes between Azerbaijan and Armenia, Iran offered help and voiced readiness to facilitate a peaceful resolution to the long-simmering disputes between Baku and Yerevan. During the 44-day war, Iran also offered a peace initiative to end the war with senior Iranian diplomats paying visits to all countries involved in the South Caucasus tensions. To this end, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Saeed Abbas Araqchi undertook shuttle diplomacy and visited Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Russia. Also, Zarif spoke over the phone with his counterparts in these countries and discussed the situation in the region. Azerbaijan and Armenia both appreciated Iranian efforts.

Iran enjoys good relations with both countries and sought to make use of these relations to bring peace to the region. Iran also expressed readiness to contribute to reconstruction projects currently underway in the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

## SPORTS

### Iran crowned Continental Futsal Championship winners

**SPORTS** TEHRAN – Iran defeated Thailand 5-1 on Friday to win the Continental Futsal Championship.

Alireza Rafeipour and Behzad Azimi each scored two goals and Farhad Tavakoli also scored a goal against the hosts in the final. Uzbekistan also finished in third place with 4-0 win over Egypt.



Iran started the campaign with a 5-0 win over Lithuania in Group B and then defeated Tajikistan 7-0. Mohammad Nazemalsharia’s team were held to a 2-2 draw by Egypt but defeated Uzbekistan 7-5 to book a place in the final.

The tournament was held in Bangkok, Thailand from July 25 to 30.

Iran participated in the competition as part of preparation for the 2021 FIFA Futsal World Cup, which will be held in Lithuania from Sept. 12 to Oct. 3.

Iran are in Group F along with Argentina, the U.S. and Serbia.

### Tokyo 2020: Iran volleyball beaten by Italy

**SPORTS** TEHRAN – Iran national volleyball team lost to Italy 3-1 (30-28, 25-21, 21-25, 25-21) in Pool A of the 2020 Olympic Games on Friday.

Osmany Juantorena earned 20 points for the Italians and Iran’s Meysam Salehi scored 14 points.

Iran will have to defeat Japan on Sunday to book a place in the next round.

The 12 men’s teams are divided into two pools of six teams. Each team will play against the five other teams in the same pool in a single round robin system.

Then the top four teams from each pool will advance to the next phase playing in a knockout system in the quarterfinal, semifinal and final rounds.

### Yazdani can become Iran’s two-time Olympic gold medalist

**SPORTS** TEHRAN – Returning world and Olympic champion Hassan Yazdani is on the verge of becoming Iran’s first-ever two-time Olympic gold medalist, but his path to that historic feat will likely go through his biggest rival, David Taylor from the U.S.

The duo of headlining superstars are on a collision course for a third career meeting. Taylor earned hand-raining performances in each of their two colossal matchups, unitedordwrestling.com reported.

Their first meeting took place at the ‘17 World Cup in front of an Iranian-friendly crowd in Kermanshah. The then-relatively unknown American gassed Yazdani in the second period and scored a stunning fall over the Iranian – sparking one of the sport’s biggest rivalries. A year later, Taylor proved the Kermanshah match wasn’t a fluke. After trailing by four points after the first period, Taylor outscored Yazdani 9-0 in the second period of their opening-round clash at the ‘18 World Championships en route to winning his world title.

But Yazdani, known as “The Greatest,” reclaimed 86kg supremacy at the ‘19 World Championships after Taylor underwent season-ending surgery after tearing his ACL in an exhibition bout.

He easily blew through the 86kg bracket at the ‘19 World Championships. The 27-year-old picked up a pair of falls and technical superiority wins before earning an injury default in the gold-medal final against Deepak Punia (IND). It was Yazdani’s second world gold and fourth overall world medal. He won a silver medal in ‘15 and a bronze medal in ‘18. He backed that up with a 30-0 thumping of his three opponents at the Asian Championships.

### Taremi bicycle kick voted UEFA.com Goal of Season

**SPORTS** TEHRAN – Mehdi Taremi’s sensational bicycle kick for Porto against Chelsea has been voted UEFA.com Goal of the Season for 2020/21.

Mehdi Taremi received nearly 30% of the votes to win UEFA.com Goal of the Season for his stunning overhead kick against Chelsea.

Taremi’s sensational effort came deep into added time of the teams’ UEFA Champions League quarter-final second leg, though it was not enough to prevent Porto from being eliminated by the eventual winners.

Lorenzo Insigne (Belgium 1-2 Italy) in the Euro 2020 quarter-final and Kemar Roofe (Standard Liège 0-2 Rangers) at Euro 2020 group stage came second and third respectively in the poll.

### Iran defender Pouraliganji sidelined for six months

**SPORTS** TEHRAN – Iran international defender Morteza Pouraliganji will be sidelined for at least six months due to a foot injury.

The Shenzhen defender tore the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee in the match against Qingdao in China Super League on Tuesday.

It’s a bad news for Iran national football team since the player is a key member of Dragan Skocic’s team in the 2022 FIFA World Cup qualification.

Iran have been drawn in Group A along with South Korea, the UAE, Syria, Iraq and Lebanon.

## Railway, freeway projects worth over \$2.5b inaugurated in 7 provinces

→ 1 The other inaugurated project was the double-tracking of Zanjan-Qazvin railway. A part of the Bafq-Zarrinshahr second railway project, 120 km long, between the Sistan railway station and the Abnil railway station, was another inauguration.



Alborz Tunnel, as the tallest tunnel in the West Asia region with a length of 6.5 km, was opened on a trial basis at the end of the second section of Tehran-North freeway with a video message from the president. Since the beginning of the current year, every week several industrial, development, infrastructure, production, and agricultural projects have gone operational in various provinces.

## Manufacturing of refrigerators, freezers increases 29%

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Manufacturing of refrigerators and freezers in Iran during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21) has risen 29.1 percent from that of the same period of time in the previous year, IRNA reported citing the data released by the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade.

The ministry's data show that 374,000 refrigerators and freezers have been manufactured during the three-month period of this year.

Production of home appliances in Iran has increased 29.4 percent during the first quarter of the current year, as compared to the first quarter of the past year.

As reported, over 1.048 million sets of the mentioned products have been produced in the three-month period of this year.

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

Regarding the return of foreign brands like Samsung and LG to the country, Niaraki said: "Currently, the return of foreign companies is not on the agenda; domestic companies have found their place and are fully capable to produce and meet the needs of the country."

Stating that the Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry will definitely support domestic manufacturers and national brands, the official added: "Today we have the necessary manpower, knowledge, and infrastructure in the field, so there is no reason to look for foreign sources to meet the country's demands."

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

The home appliances sector has been one of the pioneers in this regard and like many other areas, the production of home appliances has witnessed a significant rise in the past two years so that in the Iranian calendar year 1398 (ended on March 19) this industry's production capacity increased by 10 percent compared to the preceding year.

# Non-oil trade rises 47% in 4 months yr/yr

→ 1 The official further announced that Iran has imported 12.5 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$14.5 billion in the first four months of the present year, with 32 percent growth in value and five percent rise in weight year on year.

He said that the basic goods accounted for 9.4 million tons of the imported items.

Mir-Ashrafi named cellphones, livestock corn, sunflower oil, barley, meal, wheat, soybeans, sugar and rice as the main imported commodities.

The United Arab Emirates with four million tons of goods worth \$4.7 billion was the first largest exporter of goods to Iran in the four-month period, followed by China with one million tons of goods worth \$3.1 billion, Turkey with 1.3 million tons worth \$1.5 billion, Germany with 351,000 tons worth \$563 million, and Switzerland with 672,000 tons worth \$539 million, the official stated.

As Mir-Ashrafi has previously announced, the value of Iran's non-oil trade stood at \$73 billion in the past Iranian calendar year.



He has put the weight of non-oil trade at 146.4 million tons, and said that the figure shows a 25-million-ton annual decline, which

is the result of sanctions and coronavirus pandemic. Iran's non-oil export was 112 million tons

valued at \$34.5 billion, and that of import was 34.4 million tons worth \$38.5 billion in the past year, the official added.

Among the country's non-oil export destinations, China was the first, with importing \$8.9 billion worth of products, Iraq was the second with importing \$7.3 billion, the United Arab Emirates the third with importing \$4.6 billion, Turkey the fourth with importing \$2.5 billion, and Afghanistan the fifth with importing \$2.2 billion, Mir-Ashrafi announced, and named gasoline, natural gas, polyethylene, propane, and pistachio as Iran's major exported products during the past year.

He further named Iran's top sources of non-oil imports in the said time, as China with exporting \$9.7 billion worth of products to the Islamic Republic, the UAE with \$9.6 billion, Turkey with \$4.3 billion, India with \$2.1 billion, and Germany with \$1.8 billion, respectively, and mentioned corn, cellphone, rice, oil meal and oil seeds, wheat, and raw oil as the major imported items.

## Heavy vehicles tire production up 20 in a quarter on year

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — Production of heavy vehicles tire in Iran has increased 20 percent during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, an official with the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade announced.

Mohammad-Ali Emami, the head of the ministry's commercial services group, said, "Since the past year, although we have been facing difficulties, we have directed our capacities towards domestic production and tried to meet the need for car tires through domestic production."

Tire is a strategic commodity for the country, and in the first quarter of this year, 15 million euros was provided for the import of heavy tires, he further stated.

Currently, the market is such that the thirst for imports has decreased due to a 20-percent increase in production and increased market surveillance, the official underlined, and announced that according to statistics, seven manufacturers of heavy tires have produced about 532,000 tires, of which 467,000 have been sold.

Emami went on to say that according to the decision of the cabinet and Note 4 of Article 18 of the Law on Combating Smuggling of Goods and Foreign Currency, monitoring of sensitive and essential goods is mandatory and the distribution of these goods must be done according to the rules.

Most sellers insist that all goods be sold systematically and transparently, and this shows the success of this plan, he highlighted.

As previously reported, the number of tires produced in Iran has risen 10 percent during the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year, compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Over 11.137 million tires weighting 70,447 tons have been produced during the three-month period of this year, indicating also six percent growth in terms of weight.

According to the statistics, in the first three months of this year, the highest growth was due to the production of

bicycle tires, which increased by 58 percent in number and 41 percent in weight compared to the same period last year.

In a bid to nullify the U.S. sanctions, Iran is determined to strengthen its domestic production to achieve self-reliance.

Selecting the motto of "Pickup in Production" for the Iranian calendar year 1398 (March 2019-March 2020), and the slogan of "Surge in Production" for the year 1399 (March 2020-March 2021) indicates the Islamic Republic's determination to achieve this goal.

To this end, the Iranian ministries besides the private sector outlined their programs for the surge in production in the past year, and pursued the set objectives seriously in this due.

It is clear that among different ministries, the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade was one with a somehow heavier responsibility to materialize the motto of the year.

The ministry managed to fulfill its duty as the production of some major industrial products was noticeably increased in the previous year.

One of the sectors, which achieved outstanding output growth, was the tire production industry.

The country's tire industry, despite the continuation of sanctions and the coronavirus pandemic conditions, as well as some domestic restrictions, has had a thriving and successful year overall; a year that was accompanied by record-breaking production and entry into some new fields.

In this regard, breaking of production records in the production of various types of tires was witnessed, and for the first time the annual output surpassed 24 million tires.

In addition to the successes achieved in terms of the output amount, the tire manufacturers entered new areas including production of the wide base tires and the tires of SUVs.

Wide base tires, which are a new generation of the heavy vehicles' tires, were produced for the first time in the West Asia by the Iranian producers.

In recent years, with the high investment making of



domestic companies and with more emphasis on research and development (R&D), the production of this type of tires with a high-quality standard has been on the agenda, it is while in the past, Iran had to rely on foreign aid to change the generation of tires.

Mostafa Tanha, the spokesman of the Iranian Tire Syndicate, has recently said, "The investments made by companies in the past years in the field of research and development (R&D) and equipment and machinery, are now bearing fruit and we are witnessing the prosperity of companies."

Now, as the approach of strengthening domestic production is also pursuing in the current Iranian calendar year, which is named "Production: Support and the Elimination of Obstacles", tire production industry is among the sectors focused for the materialization of this motto.

Iran accounts for 41 percent of tire output in West Asia, according to Mohsen Safdari, the deputy director of the non-metal industries office of the Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry.

Development of the country's tire production industry, not only is to materialize self-reliance, but also is to boost non-oil export and get a larger share of the regional market for Iran.

## Commodities worth over \$1.5b traded at IME in a month

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — During the past Iranian calendar month (June 22-July 22), 4.21 million tons of commodities worth \$1.56 billion were traded at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME).

As reported by the IME's Public Relations and International Affairs Department, the volume of traded commodities shows an 11-percent growth on a monthly basis.

According to the report, the exchange played host to trading 2.555 million tons of commodities on its metals and minerals trading floor, valued at more than \$830 million.

On this floor, the exchange saw trades of 821,176 tons of steel, 1,252,000 tons of cement, 15,785 tons of copper, 490 tons of



molybdenum concentrate, 63 tons of precious metals concentrate, 21,495 tons of aluminum, 280,500 tons of iron ore, 107,785 tons of zinc, 400 tons of coke, 16,000 tons of cast iron, 47,500 tons of sponge iron and 34 kg of gold bars.

Furthermore, there were 1,449,000 tons of commodities sold on both domestic and export pits of the IME's oil and petrochemical trading floor with a total trading value of more than \$717 million.

The IME's customers purchased on this floor 349,831 tons of bitumen, 320,321 tons of polymeric products, 125,773 tons of chemicals, 15,908 tons of base oil, 100 tons of slops wax, 492,350 tons of vacuum bottom, 27,025 tons of sulfur, 450 tons of argon, 1,030 tons of insulation and 113,000 tons of lube cut.

It's worth noting that there was 16,605 tons of various types of commodities traded on the IME's side market.

The value of trades at Iran Mercantile

Exchange in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20) rose 108 percent compared to the preceding year.

During the past year, about 3.5 quadrillion rials (about \$83.5 billion) worth of commodities were traded at the mentioned market.

In the past year, several new records were achieved in terms of the volume and value of transactions in the mentioned market's various floors including the industrial, petroleum, and petrochemical floors.

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

## TSE's main index climbs 5,000 points in a week

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 5,000 points in the past Iranian calendar week.

The index closed at 1,316 million points on Wednesday (the last working day of the week).

During the past week, the indices of Civil Servants Pension Fund (CSPF), Social Security Investment Company, and Berekat Pharmaceutical Group were the most widely followed indices.

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

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

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

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

## Annual export to Russia increases 10%

**ECONOMY** TEHRAN — The value of Iran's export to Russia rose 10 percent in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), the spokesman of Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Saying that Iran exported 1.051 million tons of commodities worth \$504.575 million to Russia in the past year, Ruhollah Latifi said that the export also indicates a 14-percent rise in terms of weight year on year.

Also, as previously announced by Iranian Ambassador to Moscow Kazem Jalali, the value of Iran's exports to Russia has increased 105 percent in 2020.

The ambassador put the worth of Iran's export to Russian at \$390 million in 2019, and at \$800 million in 2020, and reiterated that the Russian market has a good capacity for the Iranian products.

He stressed the existence of various fields for economic relations between Iran and Russia and said, "Russia's economy

is a large economy and this country has about \$260 billion in imports, so we, as Russia's neighbor, can provide some of the goods it needs and have our share of the market of this country."

"Our relations with Russia are mostly in political, security and defense fields, and on the other hand, due to the mutual economic potential that exists, economic relations between the two countries should undoubtedly be developed and expanded", the ambassador further stressed.



# Trump won't come back to office in 2024: professor

By Mohammad Mazhari

A professor of political science at Rutgers University in New Jersey rules out that Donald Trump would come back in 2024 as more information is coming out about him.

"I think Trump frightened a lot of people and now, as more information is coming out, he looks worse and worse," Ross Baker tells the Tehran Times. "He will not come back to the White House in 2024."

Many describe Trump's legacy for the U.S. as a real catastrophe.

While the American society is considered conservative, it is facing social problems like racism, carrying of handguns and so on. Apparently, there is no serious will to change the course due to some political obstacles.

Noting that America, in general, is a middle-of-the-road country, Baker believes that "moderates like Biden are usually preferred. Trump was an exception."

Asked if Trump was an exception, how could he succeed to gain considerable votes in the November 2020 election, Baker said, "He appealed to people who needed something or someone to believe in. There is an almost-religious attachment to him among about 1/3 of Americans but he has never been supported by a majority."

"He received fewer votes than Hillary Clinton but he got them in the right places," the American academic added.

However, nobody doubts that Trump's term has left an undeniable effect on U.S. political scene. A piece in the



New York Times says that "the United States used to be a country of the dramatic invention and dynamic change. Today, our politics are sclerotic, and our dreams are small. What happened?"

But professor Baker preferred not to bet against the

U.S. "We occasionally veer off in a crazy direction but we usually come back to the middle. The New York Times is still in shock from Trump."

American media outlets insist that the division in the American society is not a newfound phenomenon. They describe Trump as a symptom of deep-rooted social split that may be represented in racism cases against people of color, especially Blacks and Asian-Americans. However, Baker is of the opinion that "the roots of anti-Asian sentiments in the United States go back to the 19th century when Chinese and Japanese laborers were brought to the U.S. to build the transcontinental railroad."

The American professor said "although they were looked on by white Americans, they established themselves in commerce and the professions only to have the country turn on them when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941."

"The racism at that time was directed only at the Japanese. Those on the West Coast were placed in internment camps," he adds.

However, there was another outbreak of anti-Japanese feeling in the 1980s when Americans began buying Japanese cars for their high quality and turning away from U.S.-made cars which were inferior.

Asked about the correlation between the government's performance and the rise in racist acts, Baker denied any connection between the effectiveness of the government and racism. "I don't see much of a connection."

## America's own watchdog on Afghanistan war gives damning assessment of failure

→1 Sopko was given a mandate from the American congress in July 2012 to monitor the effectiveness of the military and development effort. Since then, he has been delivering quarterly reports on the American presence in the country. Each time, the reports struck a similar or darker tone.

Last year, speaking before the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee, Sopko criticized the U.S. administration for encouraging officials to deceive the public about alleged progress in Afghanistan. At the time he noted "[the U.S. administration] creates from the bottom up an incentive because of short time frames - we're there for six months, nine months, or a year - to show success. That gets reported up the chain and before we know it the President is talking about the success that doesn't exist."



He now says lessons have not been learned and the U.S. military was focused on short-term achievements while constantly changing its objectives to look better; saying "every time we went in, the U.S. military changed the goalposts, and made it easier to show success. And then finally, when they couldn't even do that, they classified the assessment tool."

Such has been the failure of the U.S. war in Afghanistan, the American expert wittingly said "the number of times" the U.S. military claimed to have "turned the corner" it has been "going in circles for years" to the extent that it appears the U.S., after twenty years, has returned to its original (alleged) intentions for invading the country.

As America leaves, the expert noted the U.S. is also leaving behind a country suffering from a large untrammelled trade in opium and heroin as well as huge power shortages, problems U.S. officials had just "kicked down the road."

Some analysts say America is taking advantage and making a massive profit from hundreds of tons of heroin produced from Afghan poppies and exported across the world.

For years, the Congress-appointed Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction has been denouncing the lack of any progress in Afghanistan. In many reports, the watchdog has underlined where the problems are and where possible solutions can be found; which begs the question why American politicians, who gave him the mandate, didn't listen to his alarming remarks?

Critics of the U.S. invasion would argue the reality is America does not, will not and never did care for the welfare of Afghans. The poverty levels of Afghans and their security would be right at the bottom of the list for the Pentagon's priorities in Afghanistan. More than likely it's not even on a list.

As the U.S. occupation of the country dragged on, the destruction of the state got worse and worse. From a security point of view, the U.S. military has proven to be extremely poor in training and advising another country's army. Take the U.S.-trained Iraqi army as an example and how it collapsed in the face of the Daesh terror group.

Sopko highlight how American forces have failed to train a motivated Afghan army.

The SIGAR chief himself admits "you know, you really shouldn't be surprised if you've been reading our reports for at least the nine years ... that I've been there... We've been highlighting problems with our train, advise and assist mission with the Afghan military."

Observers note the aim of the invasion and the 20-decade occupation was to prevent the country from moving forward and progressing. Why would Washington want a nation that neighbors its enemy the Islamic Republic of Iran from developing?

Experts say this is part of wider Pentagon plans in Afghanistan and Iraq, two neighbors of Iran that America invaded and the people saw nothing but violence, terror and poverty amid Washington's goal of destabilizing West Asia.

While President Joe Biden, says the war in Afghanistan had not failed. Other experts would beg to differ. As one former senior Pentagon official, Carter Malkasian, who served in Afghanistan for years, noted in a recently published book "There can be little doubt that we lost the war"

Sopko himself sums up the twenty-year occupation with this final assessment saying "what you see in Afghanistan is the evidence of problems of our own government, you know, we have a lousy [human resources] system ... we have a lousy procurement system in place. And, you know, we have ... a lousy way of hiring people. You need the best people for the job, and firing the bad people. And we have a lousy way for planning, and we also have a lousy way of collecting lessons or observations for major actions like we did in Afghanistan."

Many would say the U.S. needs to perhaps get its house in order before throwing bricks at others. There is a lot for America to learn before it starts another war. It might be simple for the U.S. to start wars but it has been proven very difficult for the U.S. to end them, certainly not on Washington's terms.

Every conflict America has ignited backfires on itself and the American people. The taxpayers who pay the costs of their hawkish leaders' actions, the soldiers, many of whom recruited from poorer communities, returning in body bags and equally important, the public anger, the scenes of homeless Americans or those queuing at the food banks, the state of the country's infrastructure is not a pretty sight.

The American public has a right to question their politicians, many of whom, according to Sopko, can just about manage the equation that one plus one equals two. However, when it comes to two plus two, that's where the confusion and mismanagement begins. Do Americans have a right to ask why trillions of dollars are being spent on wars overseas and not being invested in much-needed basic services back home?

## U.S. is scorching the earth in Afghanistan: Turkish attorney

→1 At this point, the United States lacks the ability and the capacity to fight a war with many fronts.

The American political elite is already aware of the multipolar world reality and is currently trying to develop policies accordingly.

The U.S. decision to withdraw its troops from Afghanistan should be evaluated through this framework.

Iran and China as neighbors to Afghanistan have been taking a stance against the United States for many years.

And the recent developments show that Pakistan has also shifted away from its Atlantic allies, and is moving towards a policy of balance between the United States and China. The Pakistani officials have repeatedly announced that they do not want another U.S. base on their territories.

On the other hand, we also know that Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are diplomatically distant from the United States and closer to Russia.

The European members of the Atlantic Alliance are also turning towards policies that are not as closely engaged with the United States as they used to be in the past.

In short, the Americans whose political and military logistics lines have been cut off, have chosen to leave Afghanistan before they suffer a crushing defeat.

This situation, of course, does not mean that the U.S. interests in Afghanistan, which we can call the heart of Central Asia, have perished.

As the United States is withdrawing from the region, it is deepening the gaping hole it had left behind, which could lead to unprecedented political and military instability.

I resemble this U.S. strategy to a "vacuum" analogy.

The U.S. army is scorching the earth over the fallback lines while retreating, similar to the withdrawal of the Nazi armies during World War II.

The ways to scorch the earth today are; fueling ethnic and sectarian tensions in the region. In an area that is vacuumed out this way, a political, military, economic and social vacuum is being created, that sucks everything into its void and creating



constant instability.

That is the U.S. plan for Afghanistan. They are thinking "Yes, we had to withdraw, but let us create such civil unrest that would also not allow our rivals to have smooth relationships with Afghanistan either..."

On the other hand, this instability we have created in Afghanistan would also spread over the region..." That is their mentality.

As for the U.S. meeting with the Taliban, this is not a new thing. We still remember photos of former American National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski with Taliban militants who were hosted at the White House in the midst of their fight against the USSR.

And today, whether you like it or not, the Taliban has become a political actor in the region and are negotiating not only with the Americans but also with the Chinese, the Iranians and other forces in the region.

**Why has Turkey decided to remain in Afghanistan? Don't you think that Ankara may be caught in a futile war?**

Turkey has some deep-rooted relations with Afghanistan. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk supported former Afghan leader Amanullah Khan in making reforms.

And in recent history, the Turkish military has maintained its military presence in Afghanistan at a reasonable distance from both parties. And as far as I remember, not a single attack has ever taken place in Afghanistan against the Turkish Army. The Turkish Army has undertaken a rather humanitarian mission to help the Afghan people.

After the NATO withdrawal was announced, Turkish officials have said they

are willing to stay in Afghanistan and take the mission of securing the Kabul International Airport.

But there is not enough information on the terms of this mission yet. Staying in cooperation with the Americans in Afghanistan will surely not bring anything positive for Turkey.

And the right decision would be for the Turkish Army to maintain its presence in the country with the approval of the Afghan people and in cooperation with the neighboring countries.

**Do you think Afghanistan's neighbors can implement an initiative like the Astana process to restore security in the country?**

Yes. The reality of our time is the multipolarity and new international mechanisms as a natural consequence of this multipolarity.

Who could have predicted 10 years ago, that Turkey, Russia and Iran would cooperate under a single mechanism in Syria?

Today, the same principles also apply in rebuilding Afghanistan. China, Iran, neighboring Central Asian Republics, Russia and Turkey can clear the rubble in Afghanistan left behind by the West, and help the independent Afghan people to build a new country.

Afghanistan and Syria are the test sites of the newly emerging world order; if the Asian and the Eurasian countries do not act in greed as the Westerners did, and if they can act on the principles of win-win and respect for their internal affairs, the new cooperation lines that have arisen, will bring stability and prosperity to the region.

Otherwise, the destruction and the fire that will devastate the entire region, will continue.

**Don't you predict a renewed civil war in Afghanistan? How can Afghan people advance an intra-Afghan dialogue?**

Afghanistan has been plagued by wars for many decades. Foreign occupations and civil unrest have unfortunately come without giving rest and have left behind a country that was left in ruins.

Today, the fate of Afghanistan rests in the hands of the Afghan people. Howev-

er, it is also necessary for the countries in the region, to strive for Afghanistan's prosperity.

As I mentioned above, if countries in the region develop policies through ethnic and sectarian tensions in Afghanistan, similar to what the West has done, it will not only be Afghanistan that will lose but the region in its entirety.

We need to develop some constructive policies. For this, we need dialogue and new approaches. And the way to develop such new approaches is through open channels of dialogue that are free of prejudgments.

Afghanistan's remedy is through a structure similar to a government of national accord, which respects the choices of the Afghan people. The approaches of the countries of the region are also important in these types of initiatives.

**What is the impression of Turkish media about recent developments in Afghanistan?**

Turkish media are deeply confused by President Erdogan's "politics of balance" between the East and the West.

President Erdogan can one day criticize the Americans in the harshest way, and then he can declare that he will cooperate with the United States in Afghanistan, on the next day.

Likewise, we also have very close ties with Russia and Iran.

The state officials in Turkey call this a "politics of balance". The current stance on Afghanistan should also be evaluated within this framework.

However, as the lines between the West and the East becoming clearer and the field of movement between those axes is getting narrower, the "politics of balance" pursued by the AKP government seem far from sustainable in the future.

Whoever will come to power in Turkey, it will be a time for them to make a firm and clear choice between the East and the West; it does not matter if it is Erdogan or anyone else in the future.

Will it be the collapsing Atlantic alliance? Or will it be rising Asia and the multipolar world order?

Today, this question is in front of the Turkish political elite.

## Lebanon army warns against Israeli moves on border

The commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces has warned Israel against any provocative moves across the country's borders, saying the forces will allow no one to take advantage of Lebanon's political and economic crises to foment instability there.

"We keep an eye on our border to confront the Israeli enemy's danger, which has recently stepped up its aggressiveness against Lebanon and threatened to wage a new war," Joseph Aoun said on Friday on the occasion of the Lebanese Army Day.

"The Lebanese armed forces will remain the safety valve of our homeland and the backbone of the state. We will remain faithful to our oath no matter how rough the road or heavy the challenges. Our priority has been and will remain to protect and fortify the military," Aoun said.

The Israeli military violates Lebanon's airspace from time to time and sporadically fires missiles into the Lebanese territory against the positions of the Hezbollah resistance movement.

Lebanon and the occupying entity are technically at war since the latter has kept the Arab country's Shebaa Farms under occupation since 1967.

Lebanon fought off two Israeli wars in 2000 and 2006. About 1,200 Lebanese, most of them civilians, lost their lives during Israel's 33-day war on Lebanon back in the summer of 2006.

Since Hezbollah was established following the 1982 Israeli invasion and occupation of southern Lebanon,

the movement has grown into a powerful military force, dealing repeated blows to the Israeli military.

During the Lebanese Army Day, Aoun also pointed to a range of political and economic crises gripping the country and said, "Despite the successive crises that worsen day by day, all eyes are on the military institution, which remains the focus of hopes for the Lebanese."

The commander of the Lebanese armed forces warned against the exploitation of Lebanon's crises to sow insecurity in the country.

"Do not allow anyone to take advantage of the poor living situation to question your faith in your country and your institution. Lebanon is in our hands, and it is not allowed under any circumstances to plunge the country into chaos and destabilize its security and stability."

"Additional challenges will confront us, so be ready to face them with wisdom, patience and deliberation. Do not let sedition infiltrate our homeland, and do not allow fishermen in troubled waters to achieve their goals."

Lebanon has been mired since late 2019 in a deep economic and financial crisis, exacerbated by a political deadlock. The economic and financial crisis is the gravest threat to the country's stability since the 15-year civil war ended in 1990.

The crisis is mostly linked to the sanctions that the United States and its allies have imposed on Lebanon as well as foreign intervention in the Arab nation's domestic affairs.



The country has been run by a caretaker administration for nearly a year, as politicians have failed to agree on the formation and makeup of a new government.

The government of Hassan Diab resigned following a deadly port explosion in Beirut last August, leading to a protracted deadlock. Prime minister-designate Saad Hariri also stepped down last week, citing key differences with President Michel Aoun.

New Prime Minister-designate Najib Mikati has been tasked with swiftly forming a cabinet so as to end the political deadlock and address the ongoing socioeconomic crisis in the cash-strapped Arab country.

(Source: Press TV)

## ICOMOS assessors to visit caravansaries in Iran

➔ Iran's earliest caravansaries were built during the Achaemenid era (550-330 BC). Centuries later, when Shah Abbas I assumed power from 1588 – to 1629, he ordered the construction of network caravansaries across the country. For many travelers to Iran, staying in or even visiting a centuries-old caravansari, can be a wide experience; they have an opportunity to feel the past, a time travel back into a forgotten age!



The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, Iran aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025. The latest available data show eight million tourists visited the Islamic Republic during the first ten months of the past Iranian calendar year (ended March 20).

## Archaeological hills in western Iran made national heritage

HERITAGE TEHRAN — A total of seven archaeological hills and a historical site scattered across Lorestan province have recently been added to Iran's national heritage list.

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



The archaeological hills of Chiahosseini, Chiagolan, Sang-e-siah, and Chianurin were among the properties added to the prestigious list. The historical site of Cham Jafarbeg was also inscribed on the list, the report said.

Lorestan, which is a region of raw beauty, was inhabited by Iranian Indo-European peoples, including the Medes, c. 1000 BC. Cimmerians and Scythians intermittently ruled the region from about 700 to 625 BC. The Luristan Bronzes noted for their eclectic array of Assyrian, Babylonian, and Iranian artistic motifs, date from this turbulent period. Lorestan was incorporated into the growing Achaemenid Empire in about 540 BC and successively was part of the Seleucid, Parthian, and Sasanid dynasties.

## 17 cultural heritage elements added to Iran national list

HERITAGE TEHRAN — A total of 17 cultural elements, which are practiced in West Azarbaijan, have recently been added to the National Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts on Thursday announced the inscriptions in an official document it submitted to the governor-general of the northwestern province, CHTN reported.



The skills of making local foods of Iran Ashi, Diushab Halvasi, Yarmashilesi, and Gildik Ashi as well as the talent of Jajim-bafi, a kind of hand-woven floor covering were among the elements added to the significant list.

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

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

# Agritourism expected to aid rural development in northeastern Iran

TOURISM TEHRAN — Agritourism could be a means of achieving sustainable rural development in the northeastern Khorasan Razavi province, the provincial tourism chief has said.

Farmers can take the advantage of agritourism to achieve sustainable development and economic prosperity based on the changing climatic characteristics of the province which enjoys desert conditions, mountainous terrain, and forests, Seyyed Javad Musavi announced on Thursday.

"Developing this branch of tourism could eventually lead to the economic growth in rural areas," the official said.

As the flow of tourists into villages is strengthened, businesses would further thrive and, consequently, the villagers are kept in their communities and prevented from moving to cities, he added.

To facilitate tourists' accommodation in rural areas, some 130 eco-lodges have been constructed so far in these areas, he mentioned.

Agritourism is a relatively new branch of the travel industry in which tourists stay with local people in rural areas. Farm/ranch recreation refers to activities conducted on private agricultural



lands, which might include fee-hunting and fishing, overnight stays, educational activities, etc.

Experts believe that in addition to the customer services jobs, agritourism pays special attention to the production sector, saying agricultural tourism is much

more important and practical than other branches of tourism because it creates a new chain and diversity in the field of production and services.

Agritourism and nature-tourism enterprises might include outdoor recreation (fishing, hunting, wildlife study, horseback

riding), educational experiences (cannery tours, cooking classes, or tea or coffee tasting), entertainment (harvest festivals or barn dances), hospitality services (farm stays, guided tours, or outfitter services), and on-farm direct sales (u-pick operations or roadside stands).

Agritourism is a subset of a larger industry called rural tourism that includes resorts, off-site farmers' markets, non-profit agricultural tours, and other leisure and hospitality businesses that attract visitors to the countryside.

Khorasan Razavi's provincial capital of Mashhad attracts hundreds of pilgrims each day from various Iranian cities, neighboring countries, and even across the globe; the raison d'être is the striking massive shrine complex of Imam Reza (AS), the eighth Shia Imam.

Dozens of five-star hotels and hostels are dotted across Mashhad. The city has also the highest concentration of water parks in the country, and it also embraces a variety of cultural and historical sites that are generally crowded. The metropolis is also a good place to buy top handwoven rugs and carpets, and it's a staging post for travel to Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, and little-touristic Khorasan regions.

## Stratigraphy survey to shed new light on Bander-e Anzali historical texture

TOURISM TEHRAN — A team of archaeologists and cultural heritage experts has commenced a stratigraphy survey in Bander-e Anzali to shed new light on the historical texture of the ancient port city, which is located in northern Iran.

"A number of trenches are being dug near the old bazaar of Anzali in line with the stratigraphy survey, which is supervised by the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage & Tourism (RICHT)," Peyman Tangberis who leads the survey said on Wednesday, IRNA reported.

"The outcome of this significant survey is expected to help preserve the historical identity of the [port] city and lay the ground for other researchers and those interested in new archaeological research connected with the Caspian [Sea]," he explained.

He, however, mentioned that field researches, which are based on archaeological evidence, do not yield instant results but they are a "continuous and extensive" action.

Founded in the early 19th century, the town, which

is bounded by the Caspian Sea, was occupied by the Russians in 1920. During World War II the port was modernized, and traffic greatly increased as a consequence of the U.S. lend-lease program for the Soviet Union.

Situated 40km from Rasht, the capital city of Gilan province, Anzali port is among the most equipped and modern ports in the southern margins of Caspian. Being located in the free zone, Anzali provides some special facilities and possibilities for merchants and investors which makes it of the main ports in the Caspian Sea.

Interesting among other attractions of the city is Clock tower, Anzali Bridge, and Ghazian Bridge in addition to Mian Poshteh Palace which has been transformed into the Military Museum today. Polish Cemetery is also a memorial of World War II and the burial ground of Polish evacuees who escaped from Poland and come to Iran after the Nazi attack on their country.

The summers in Anzali are warm and humid and the winters are temperate. The port city is also char-



acterized by high average annual humidity. The most important edible souvenir of the city is fish in addition to olive, garlic, various pickles, and local vegetables.

## Structure, probably dug by ancient troglodytes, discovered in northern Iran

HERITAGE TEHRAN — Remnants of a rocky structure, which is thought to probably be carved by ancient troglodytes, have been discovered in northern Iran.

The structure was accidentally unearthed during a grading and site preparation in Rudbar county of Gilan province, deputy provincial tourism chief Vali Jahani announced on Wednesday, CHTN reported.

"The finding, according to cultural heritage experts, is most likely a troglodytic structure based on initial archaeological



surveys conducted by the means of digging some trenches," the official said.

Up to the moment, five troglodyte structures have been discovered across the province, the length of some of which reaches up to 500 meters, he explained.

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 Sasanid 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.

## Iran seeks UNESCO recognition for Tabas Geopark

HERITAGE TEHRAN — Tabas Geopark in east-central Iran, which is home to a wide variety of scenic landscapes and untouched terrains, may soon join the listing of UNESCO Global Geoparks (UGGp).

A dossier for the gigantic Tabas Geopark has been submitted to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. The property is hoped to be soon assessed by UNESCO experts for a [possible] registration, Mehr reported on Wednesday.

Tabas Geopark, which is situated in a vast county of the same name, has enormous potential to be registered as "the biggest" geopark in the West Asia region, the report said.

Sprawled in the eastern province of South Khorasan, Tabas Geopark includes some 50 geo-sites, a variety of scenic landscapes, and untouched terrains with the mysterious



Kal-e Jeni (canyon of Jinn) located in Azmighan village, amongst them.

A geopark is a unified area that advances the protection and use of geological heritage in a sustainable way and promotes the economic well-being of the people who live there. A UNESCO definition of the global geopark is a unified area with a geological heritage of international significance. Geoparks use that heritage to promote awareness of key issues facing society in the context of our dynamic planet.

Geoparks usually promote awareness of geological hazards, including volcanoes, earthquakes, and tsunamis and many help prepare disaster mitigation strategies with local communities. Geoparks embody records of past climate changes and are indicators of current climate changes as well.

## Study decodes blood groups of Neanderthals

HERITAGE TEHRAN — A team of international palaeo-anthropologist, population geneticists, and haematologists has deciphered the blood groups of three Neanderthals and one Denisovan, shedding new light on the origins, history, and health of these extinct hominin lineages.

Blood group analyses for three Neanderthals and one Denisovan confirm hypotheses concerning their African origin, Eurasian dispersal, and interbreeding with early Homo sapiens, Science Daily reported.

The team, affiliated with the Anthropologie Bio-Culturelle, Droit, Éthique et Santé research unit, also found further evidence of low genetic diversity and possible demographic fragility.

The extinct hominin lineages of the

Neanderthals and Denisovans were present throughout Eurasia from 300,000 to 40,000 years ago. Despite prior sequencing of about 15 Neanderthal and Denisovan individuals, the study of the genes underlying blood groups had hitherto been neglected. Yet blood group systems were the first markers used by anthropologists to reconstruct the origins of hominin populations, their migrations, and their interbreeding.

In a new study, scientists from the CNRS, Aix-Marseille University, and the French Blood Establishment (EFS) have examined the previously sequenced genomes of one Denisovan and three Neanderthal females who lived 100,000 to 40,000 years ago, in order to identify their blood groups and consider what they may reveal about human's

evolutionary history. Of the 40-some known blood group systems, the team concentrated on the seven usually considered for blood transfusion purposes, the most common of which are the ABO (determining the A, B, AB, and O blood types) and Rh systems.

The findings bolster previous hypotheses but also offer new surprises. While it was long thought that Neanderthals were all type O -- just as chimpanzees are all type A and gorillas all type B -- the researchers demonstrated that these ancient hominins already displayed the full range of ABO variability observed in modern humans. An extensive analysis covering other blood group systems turned up alleles that argue in favor of African origins for Neanderthals and Denisovans.

Especially surprising is the discovery that the Neanderthals harbored a unique Rh allele absent in modern humans -- with the notable exceptions of one Aboriginal Australian and one Papuan.

Finally, this study sheds light on Neanderthal demographics. It confirms that these ancient hominins exhibited very little genetic diversity and that they may have been susceptible to haemolytic disease of the fetus and newborn (erythroblastosis fetalis) -- due to maternal-fetal Rh incompatibility -- in cases where Neanderthal mothers were carrying the children of Homo sapiens or Denisovan mates. These clues strengthen the hypothesis that low genetic diversity together with low reproductive success contributed to the disappearance of Neanderthals.

# Some 140,000 houses to be built for villagers

**SOCIETY** TEHRAN – The Housing Foundation will construct around 140,000 houses for underprivileged families residing in villages across the country by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 2022).

Over the past couple of years, more than two million houses have been built in rural areas and some 500,000 houses have been renovated, as well, Azizollah Mahdian, the Foundation's deputy director, said, ISNA reported.

Moreover, the Welfare Organization will provide 35,169 residential units for underprivileged families across the country over the current [Iranian calendar] year.

The construction of 10,000 houses will begin this year, Zolfaqar Yazdanmehr, deputy head of the Organization, said in April.

In the Iranian calendar years 1398 (March 2019-March 2020) and 1399 (March 2020-March 2021), 14,700 and 16,500 residential units have been provided to the deprived, respectively, he noted.

Many efforts have been made over the past couple of years by the government to support villagers and slow down the trend of migration from rural areas to cities.



Rural tourism, agritourism, religious tourism, and ecotourism are alternatives or complementary economic activities that could further stimulate rural development while decreasing rural community dependency on one main economic sector (agriculture,

forestry, energy, or mining).

The budget for rural development projects has increased by 2.5 times in the current [Iranian calendar] year compared to that of the previous year.

A total of 80 trillion rials (nearly \$1.9

billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials) were allocated this year for the implementation of rural development projects across the country.

The credit will be spent on preparing, reviewing, and implementing the rural plans, improving the rural infrastructure, and the development of the villages.

Currently, 26 percent of the country's population lives in villages, around 39,000 villages have more than 20 households and 23,000 villages have less than 20 households.

Thus, more than 97 percent of the country's rural population lives in villages with over 20,000 households.

Mohammad Omid, the vice president for rural development, said in November 2020 that for the first time in the country, the migration of people from rural areas to cities has reached zero.

The unemployment rate in rural areas has reached 7.4 percent, which has decreased by over one percent compared to last year.

In October 2020, Omid stated that the rural development projects worth 130 trillion rials (nearly \$3 billion) were inaugurated on the occasion of the National Day of Villagers and Nomads.

## Hepatitis in Iran: 100% of infants being vaccinated

→ 1 Just as Iran has succeeded in producing generic drugs for the definitive treatment of hepatitis C under U.S. sanctions, it is now considering eliminating the costly hepatitis C test by researching to develop a simple, low-cost blood test. The project has begun and is in the process of being tested on samples.

### Elimination of hepatitis C

Complete control of hepatitis C in Iran with the global "point elimination" strategy needs to address several key challenges. One of these challenges is the lack of accurate statistics on people at high risk for hepatitis C, Amir Ali Sohrabpour, the head of the Iranian Hepatitis Network, has said.

While it is necessary to identify 20,000 patients with hepatitis C in Iran annually, only 10 percent of hepatitis C



patients have been identified; Therefore, it seems that the challenge of identifying and accurate statistics of high-risk groups in Iran needs a more immediate solution, he added.

On the other hand, the provinces with high hepatitis C prevalence have not yet been fully identified but is planned to be done, and the country's medical universities can play an important role, while the prison organization can also help hepatitis network by identifying patients to determine how many prisoners are infected with hepatitis C, he emphasized.

There are 1.5 million drug users in Iran, 300,000 of whom are injecting drugs, but one of the challenges is the need for a full treatment of these high-risk groups, including adequate funding for diagnostic tests and distribution of free medicine, he stated.

## PastoCoVac to join public vaccination drive

→ 1 "The first industrial production line of this vaccine will start in September and we hope to be operational in the early fall with a capacity of 3 million doses. At the end of the fall, the second line with the same capacity will be put into operation. In addition to the COVID-19 vaccine, this

product line can also be used to produce other vaccines."

The Cuban official, for his part, said: "The world was amazed by the outbreak of COVID-19 and we also knew we had to respond quickly to this pandemic. Therefore, we used the experience of

pneumococcal vaccine to produce Covid-19 vaccine and our cooperation was formed to produce a vaccine called Soberana02 (in Cuba) and (PastoCoVac) in Iran."

The efficacy of this vaccine in two doses of injection was 65% and using the

booster dose (Soberana Plus), we were able to increase it to 91.2%. Thus, based on the joint findings of Iran and Cuba in the third phase, we will have Strong documentation for efficacy to submit to the World Health Organization, he concluded.

## New batches of Sputnik, AstraZeneca vaccines imported

**SOCIETY** TEHRAN – Two consignments of Sputnik V and AstraZeneca vaccines supplied by Russia and Japan were imported on Friday and Thursday, respectively.

The tenth batch of Sputnik V vaccines, amounting to 100,000 doses, was delivered to the Iranian embassy in Moscow on Wednesday and entered Tehran on Thursday, IRNA reported.

To date, more than one million doses of Sputnik vaccines have been imported to the country.

Iranian Ambassador to Moscow Kazem Jalali said in April that the country has finalized a deal with Russia to purchase 60 million doses of Sputnik V vaccines.

Supported by Iran's Ministry of Health, the contract was signed between the Iranian Embassy in Moscow and the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) to buy 60 million doses of vaccine, which is enough to vaccinate 30 million people.

On July 25, Jalali wrote on his Instagram that Russia itself is suffering from a shortage of vaccines, therefore they cannot export vaccines to any country.

Jalali said he had held a meeting with Igor Morgulov, the Russian deputy foreign minister, discussing various issues such as vaccines, the issues pertaining to Iranian merchants and students.

"Regarding the vaccine issue that I raised with him, he



acknowledged that there is a shortage of production in Russia and because of this shortage, no vaccine is currently sent to any country, and after improving the vaccination process in his country, Russia will fulfill its obligations. The diplomat underlined.

"They will be committed to it," Ambassador Jalali added.

Meanwhile, Japan delivered the second consignment of AstraZeneca vaccines, amounting to one million doses, to the Ministry of Health on Friday.

The first batch of vaccines supplied by Japan had been imported on July 23.

Toshimitsu Motegi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan,

announced on July 13 that the Japanese government will donate 2.9 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine to Iran through the COVAX facility.

Iran has so far received two batches of vaccines from the COVAX facility. The first shipment included over 700,000 doses of Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine manufactured by South Korean firm SK Bioscience, and the second one consisted of 1,452,000 doses of AstraZeneca vaccine manufactured by Catalent Anagni of Italy.

The Islamic Republic is currently producing vaccines jointly with three countries of Cuba, Russia, and Australia, which may also be released by September, while two homegrown vaccines have so far received the emergency use license.

### Homegrown vaccines

COVIRAN BAREKAT, the first coronavirus vaccine made by researchers at the Headquarters for Executing the Order of the Imam which was unveiled on December 29, 2020, started to be mass-produced on March 29.

The second Iranian coronavirus vaccine, Razi Cov Pars, which started the clinical trial on February 27, will be mass-produced in early August.

Fakhra vaccine, the third homegrown vaccine, was unveiled and started the clinical trial on March 16.

On January 27, Health Minister Saeed Namaki said Iran will soon be one of the world's important manufacturers of the COVID-19 vaccine.

## ENGLISH IN USE

### LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

## 56% of motorcycles running in only 5 provinces

Some 56 percent of the total motorcycles in the country are running in only five provinces, Ali Mohammadi, a senior traffic police official has said. Of all 32.9 million vehicles in the country, motorcycles amount to 11.6 million, accounting for 35 percent of the total vehicles moving in the country, he stated.

According to the statistics, 56 percent of motorcycles are plying the roads in 5 provinces of Tehran, Khorasan Razavi, Isfahan, Fars and Khuzestan, he added.

There are 2 million motorcycles in Tehran, 1.3 million in Khorasan Razavi, 1.2 million in Isfahan, 916,000 in Fars, and 564,000 in Khuzestan, he also said.

The capital city of Tehran alone has the biggest share of motorcyclists constituting 21 percent of the estimated 56 percent, he noted, IRNA reported on Sunday.

## ۵۶ درصد موتورسیکلت ها در ۵ استان تردد دارند

رییس مرکز شماره گذاری و تعویض پلاک پلیس راهور ناجا گفت: بنابر آمارها، ۵۶ درصد موتورسیکلت ها تنها در ۵ استان تردد می کنند.

سرهنگ علی محمدی روز یکشنبه افزود: از ۳۲ میلیون و ۹۰۰ هزار دستگاه انواع وسایل نقلیه در کشور، ۱۱ میلیون و ۶۵۰ هزار دستگاه یعنی معادل ۳۵ درصد را موتورسیکلت ها شامل می شوند.

وی اظهار داشت: برابر آمارها تهران بزرگ، خراسان رضوی، اصفهان، فارس و خوزستان ۵۶ درصد موتورسیکلت های کشور را در خود جای داده اند.

رییس مرکز شماره گذاری و تعویض پلاک پلیس راهور ناجا گفت: تهران بزرگ با حدود ۲ میلیون دستگاه موتورسیکلت، خراسان رضوی ۱.۳ میلیون دستگاه، اصفهان ۱.۲ میلیون دستگاه، فارس ۹۱۶ هزار دستگاه و خوزستان با ۵۶۴ هزار دستگاه موتورسیکلت بیشترین موتورسیکلت های کشور را به خود اختصاص دادند.

محمدی با بیان اینکه بیش از ۲۱ درصد موتورسیکلت های کشور در تهران بزرگ تردد می کنند، اظهار داشت: تهران بیشترین سهم موتورسیکلت را در سطح کشور داراست.

## COVID-19 UPDATES

The statistics are related to 24 hours started 2:00 p.m. July 29

New cases	24,715
New deaths	270
Total cases	3,851,162
Total deaths	90,344
New hospitalized patients	2,856
Patients in critical condition	5,384
Total recovered patients	3,348,363
Diagnostic tests conducted	25,857,430
Doses of vaccine injected	12,018,648

## Agriculture in Iran

### (Part 2)

The most common grain grown is wheat; however, barley is also widespread and is especially common in mountain areas. Other plants are very seldom grown, because under the harsh conditions of dry farming they barely survive. Thus, the character of the dry-farmed agricultural landscape is rather monotonous, and the transition to the adjoining natural steppes is often hardly visible, especially after harvest.

The cultivation of the land is still done today in traditional ways. Wooden plows, drawn by donkeys, mules, or oxen scratch only the surface of the soil. Seeding is done by hand, as is the harvest, in which the use of sickles is still common. Threshing and winnowing are done with old-fashioned instruments such as threshing sleds. Huge threshing floors at the fringe of the villages are typical for almost all villages in central Iran and in many mountain villages.



Fallow land, which covers, according to the prevailing rotation cycle, between 50 percent and 66 percent of the agricultural land, is the basis of a sometimes-important rural animal husbandry. Sheep, goats, and cattle use the stubble fields close to the villages. During the winter they are kept in (sometimes subsurface) stables.

Characteristic patterns of land use in the areas of natural irrigation agriculture in Gilan and Mazandaran include permanent crops such as tea and citrus fruits. Among the annual crops rice, cotton, wheat, and tobacco are most important; following is little practiced. Gilan and central Mazandaran are dominated by the cultivation of rice, which is grown almost every year on the same fields.

Eastern Mazandaran has a rotation of cotton and wheat as its predominant two-year rotation cycle; sunflowers have been added to this traditional land use pattern in recent years.

The greatest variety of crops grown and of rotation cycles can doubtlessly be found in the oasis cultures, i.e., in the areas of artificial irrigation agriculture. Size and location, height, the form of irrigation, as well as the location of the oases in terms of market availability and other similar factors, determine their land use. Cultivation in the qanat oases covers almost the entire range of traditional crops—grains, fruits and legumes, fodder crops—but also industrial plants such as opium, henna, or tobacco.

In areas where frosts do not occur the date palm is the most characteristic representative of irrigation agriculture. In contrast to the qanat oases (although perhaps similar in appearance), the mountain fringe oases have a different land use, mostly due to altitude and the consequent climatic differences. Most common are fruits such as apples and pears, nuts, potatoes and legumes, and flowers adapted to temperate conditions. The greatest variety of land use, however, is to be found in the great river oases of central Iran, the oasis of the Zayanda Rud being the best example.

Here multicropping is very common. Besides poplar trees, which flank the borders of many irrigation ditches and which are used both as building material and in furniture manufacturing, fruit trees and viticulture are characteristic. Close to urban centers one finds market-oriented crops—sugar beets, alfalfa, corn, and similar plants.

A typical trait of Iranian agriculture and land use patterns is its vertical differentiation. While adapting Persian terminology H. Bobek (1952) suggested a fourfold differentiation applying to climate and natural vegetation and to human land use: (a) Garmsir, characterized by crops and plants that do not tolerate frosts and are adapted to high temperatures, such as dates, sugar cane, sorghum, citrus fruits. (b) Medium range, whose plants require warm temperatures, but have frost tolerance; typical representatives are a number of fruit trees (e.g., figs, pomegranates, apricots, peaches), cotton, rice, tobacco, sesame, and the grape vine. (c) Sardsir, with plants and crops predominantly of temperate climates—grains (except rice and sorghum), potatoes, and many fruits, such as cherries, apples, and plums. The upper limit of the Sardsir is identical with the climatically determined upper limit of grain growing (up to 2,900 m.). (d) Sarhadd, area of rural or nomadic animal husbandry.

(Source: Encyclopaedia Iranica)

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GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Like your body, your mind also gets tired so refresh it by wise sayings.  
Imam Ali (AS)

WHAT'S IN ART GALLERIES

Painting



Paintings by Behdad Najafi, Saeideh Arian, Saeid Emdadian, Reza Barati, Hamid Jafari-Shakib, Khadijeh Rajabi, Molud Azimpur, Reza Emadi and Morteza Shamisa are currently on view in an exhibition at Shalman Gallery. Najafi is also the curator of the showcase named "Mid-Summer" and will run until August 11 at the gallery located at 27 Kavusi Alley, West Rudbar St., off Mirdamad Blvd.



Hannaneh Jalu is showcasing her latest painting collection named "Realm of Absence" in an exhibition at Asr Gallery. The exhibition will be running until August 16 at the gallery located at 18 Delaviz St. off North Mirzaye Shirazi St.



A group of artists, including Hasti Hassani, Amir-Hossein Mansuri, Nasim Ranjbar, Faranak Ahmadi, Mandegar Ajdadi and Sahar Hosseini, is hanging their latest paintings in an exhibition at Golhaye Davudi Gallery. The exhibition will be running until August 4 at the gallery located at 263 near Nejatollahi St., Taleqani Ave.



Paintings by Hosnieh Rumi are on view in an exhibition at Saleh Gallery. The exhibit will be running until August 17 at the gallery that can be found at 148 Karim Khan Ave.



Negar Gallery is currently playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Sadaf Kobari. The exhibition entitled "Visible Stirring" will be running until August 3 at the gallery located at 33 Delaram Alley, East Roshanai St. in the Qeitarieh neighborhood.



Shirin Heidarinejad is displaying her latest paintings in an exhibition at O Gallery 1. O Gallery 2 is also playing host to an exhibition of paintings and sculptures by Mahsa Karimi. The exhibitions will run until August 10 at the gallery located at 18 Shahin St., Sanai St.



An exhibition of paintings by Majid Faal is currently underway at Homa Gallery. The exhibit entitled "Gap" will continue until August 4 at the gallery located at No. 8, Fourth Alley, Sanai St., Karim Khan Ave.

Multimedia



Sharif Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of artworks in various media by Shiva Babai, Ali Rezvani, Fati Sadat, Saeid Gholami, Najmeh Kazzazi, Mahsa Mohammadi and Qader Mansuri. The exhibit will be running until August 17 at the gallery that can be found at 11 Mahruzadeh Alley, Shariati Ave. near Quds Square.



An exhibition of artworks in various media Nilfar Naderi, Zahra Qiasi, Hanieh Davami, Mostafa Qorbani, Atena Dashti, Mahsa Kialha and several other artists is currently underway at A Gallery. The exhibit named "Blockade" will run until August 9 at the gallery that can be found at 7 Arshad Alley, Azodi St. off Karim Khan St.

Tehran-based Afghan writer Mohammad-Sarvar Rajai passes away from COVID-19

Following the destruction wrought by decades of war in Afghanistan, Rajai left his motherland for Iran to find a safe haven to pursue his writing career.

While he was confronted with racist remarks in Iran, he nevertheless persisted upon the path that he had chosen.

"I started a new life in Iran," he once said in an interview and added, "First, I tried to find a job. I worked many jobs from peddling to working as a tailor, shoemaker and construction worker, but I was deeply interested in writing, so the love of writing led me toward finding some cultural friends in Iran a year after my arrival in the country."

"I was certain that there was somewhere in Iran for Afghan people to pursue their cultural interests. One day, I found an article in a newspaper announcing a series of literary sessions by Afghans at the Art Bureau."

Due to the racist attitudes that he had experienced at work with Iranians, he was doubtful if he could get permission to enter the sessions, but a worker at the Art Bureau's information center directed him to the location of the literary sessions.

"Since then, I have found many cultural friends by attending numerous cultural meetings, and my writing career started in Iran," he noted.

From that time to when he passed away, the focus of his writing was to establish unity between Iranians and Afghans.



Afghan writer Mohammad-Sarvar Rajai in an undated photo.

He served for years as director of the Afghanistan Literature House in Tehran and Afghanistan Poetry and Story Office at the Art Bureau.

He spent most of his life gathering information about Afghan volunteers in the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war and the Iranian volunteers who joined the Afghan forces in

their war against the Soviets during the 1980s.

Part of his studies in these fields was published in "From Leili Desert to Majnun Island", which was released by the Study Center of the Islamic Revolution Cultural Front in 2018.

The book carries the memories of those Afghans who volunteered to fight for Iran

during the Iran-Iraq war. He gave a copy of this book to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei in his annual meeting with poets and literati in 2019.

He also wrote "Mission of God", which was published by Rah-e Yar in June 2021. This book recounts the story of Ahmadreza Saeidi, an 18-year-old Iranian volunteer who joined the Afghan forces in their war against the Soviets during the 1980s.

His credits also include the poetry collection "Flowers of the Kabul Garden", "In Arms of Hearts" and several other books.

He was a founder of Bagh, a children's literary monthly that is published in Iran.

In a message published on Thursday, Iran's Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Seyyed Abbas Salehi, offered his condolences to Rajai's family and the Afghan expatriates in Iran.

"For years our dear Iran has hosted a large group of Afghan poets and writers. Hosting this group undoubtedly has helped the growth of literature in both countries," he wrote.

He also added that Rajai was one of those Afghan literati who played a key role in this field.

Art Bureau director Mohammad-Mehdi Dadman also sent a message of condolences.

"His strenuous efforts at the Art Bureau brought the greatest blessings that will remain even after his demise, and his death is absolutely a great loss," he said.

Persian painter Mehrzaman Fakhar-Monfared dies from coronavirus



Iranian painter Mehrzaman Fakhar-Monfared in an undated photo.

TEHRAN — Prominent Iranian painter Mehrzaman Fakhar-Monfared, who was most famous for her skills in the gol-o-morgh genre of Persian painting, died from COVID-19 in Tehran on

Thursday. She was 68.

She was hospitalized at Amir Alam Hospital for a few days, but did not respond to treatment and finally died, Persian media announced.

Fakhar-Monfared born in Rey in 1953, learned Persian painting, also called miniature painting, from masters such as Susan Abadi and Ali Eshraqi.

She then began to improve her skills in illumination, gol-o-morgh, lacquer painting, stained painting and watercolor from Biuk Ahmari.

She also received instruction from master miniaturist Ali Moti (1915-2009), who lived for years in the United States.

In 2005, Fakhar-Monfared and a number of Moti's students organized an exhibition at the Khial Gallery of the Saba Art and Cultural Center to express their

gratitude to Moti for teaching them the wonderful art of Persian painting.

"He taught his students very generously and had a hero-like spirit. He was also flexible about his students' criticism," said Fakhar-Monfared, who studied with master Moti for seven years, at that time.

Fakhar-Monfared also showcased her works at dozens of exhibitions in Iran and abroad.

Deputy Culture Minister for Artistic Affairs Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini offered his condolences to Fakhar-Monfared's family and friends in a message published on Friday.

"She worked hard for the Iranian and Islamic art and showed concern for the development of this genre of art and did her best in this way," he said.

"180° Rule" scores big win at Beirut International Women's Film Festival

TEHRAN — Iranian drama "180° Rule" has won the awards for best feature film and best ensemble cast at the Beirut International Women's Film Festival.

Sahar Dowlatshahi, Pejman Jamshidi, Hassan Purshirzi, Azita Hajian, Amirreza Ranjbaran, Sadaf Asgari, Mohammad Heidari and Ailin Jahed are the main members of the cast.

Directed by Farnush Samadi, "180° Rule" tells the story of Sara, a school teacher whom her students love and who is married to Hamed. As her family gets ready to attend a wedding in northern Iran, an unforeseen obligation falls on Hamed and derails their plans. When Sara's husband suddenly forbids her to attend the event without him, she makes a decision that sets her on the painful path of atonement.

Winners of the Lebanese festival, which was launched in 2017 to highlight the role of women as leaders in their societies, were announced last Monday.

"The Present" by Palestinian filmmaker

Farah Nabulsi was selected as best short fiction movie.

In this film, on his wedding anniversary, Yusef and his young daughter set out in the West Bank to buy his wife a gift. Between soldiers, segregated roads and checkpoints, how easy would it be to go shopping?

Suzannah Mirghani from Sudan was picked as best director for her "Al-Sit" in the short competition.

In a cotton-farming village in Sudan, 15-year-old Nafisa has a crush on Babiker, but her parents have arranged her marriage to a young Sudanese businessman living abroad and her matriarchal grandmother Al-Sit has her own plans.

"Ain't No Time for Women" by Canadian director Sarra El Abed was name best short documentary.

The hairdressing salon Saida is a space where people speak openly, laugh and argue. The subject rarely is hair. In the run-up to the presidential elections in Tunisia the shop turns into a political arena where the women — young or old, conservative or with

a modern outlook — indulge in discussions about the pros and cons of the candidates. Their clever and witty statements reflect a young democracy with all its rifts and fault lines.

"The Wedding Cake" by Monica Mazzitelli won the award for best animated film.

The co-production between Sweden and Italy is about a young woman who is forced to become a prostitute in order to settle her ex-husband's debts. Her destiny is narrated through Playmobil figurines and a wedding cake that disappears along with the woman's illusions. A true story about a very common problem in Eastern Europe.

The award for best feature documentary went to "A Thousand Girls Like Me" by Afghan filmmaker Sahra Mani.

It is an awe-inspiring vérité documentary that tells the story of a young Afghan woman's brave fight to seek justice and protect her children after experiencing years of abuse at the hands of her father.

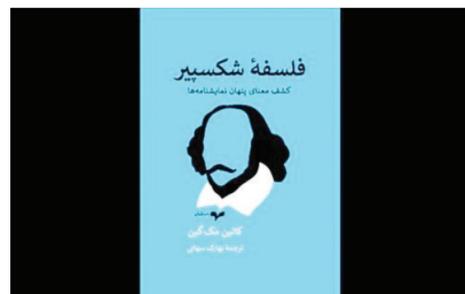
Khatera Golzad's father physically and sexually abused her for more than



Director Farnush Samadi (3rd R) and cast members pose in an undated photo.

thirteen years, and after several aborted pregnancies, she gave birth to a daughter and a son. Despite her many attempts to file charges, neither the Afghan police nor the legal system helped her. In 2014, she appeared on national television to publicly accuse her father, finally succeeding in bringing her case to court despite threats from male relatives and judges who labeled her a liar.

"Shakespeare's Philosophy" published in Persian



Front cover of the Persian translation of Colin McGinn's book "Shakespeare's Philosophy".

TEHRAN — A Persian translation of British philosopher Colin McGinn's book "Shakespeare's Philosophy: Discovering the Meaning Behind the Plays" has been published.

The book translated by Baharak Sahami was released by the Haman publishing house in Tehran.

Shakespeare's plays are usually studied by literary scholars and historians, and the books about him from those perspectives are legion. It is most unusual for a trained philosopher to give us his insight, as Colin McGinn does here, into six of Shakespeare's greatest plays, "A Midsummer Night's Dream", "Hamlet", "Othello", "Macbeth", "King Lear" and "The Tempest".

In his brilliant commentary, McGinn explores Shakespeare's philosophy of life and illustrates how he was influenced, for example, by the essays of Montaigne that were translated into English while Shakespeare

was writing. In addition to chapters on the great plays, there are also essays on Shakespeare and gender and his plays from the aspects of psychology, ethics and tragedy.

As McGinn says about Shakespeare, "There is not a sentimental bone in his body. He has the curiosity of a scientist, the judgment of a philosopher and the soul of a poet."

McGinn relates the ideas in the plays to the later philosophers such as David Hume and the modern commentaries of critics such as Harold Bloom. The book is an exhilarating reading experience, especially at a time when a new audience has opened up for the greatest writer in English.

Earlier in November 2020, Iranian translator Kayhan Bahmani who has rendered numerous books from Western literature into Persian said that he was working on "Shakespeare's Philosophy".

"For a Night of Love" at Iranian bookstores

TEHRAN — Influential French novelist Emile François Zola's "For a Night of Love" has been published in Persian.

The book translated into Persian by Mahmud Gudarzi has been published by Ofog in Tehran.

The book was originally published in 1883 and an English translation of the book by Andrew Brown was released in 2002.

The book has been described as one of the most controversial novellas of its time.

Edmund Gosse writes, "The narrative begins with a carefully accentuated picture of a serene life: that of a timid lad sequestered in a country town; this serenity is but the prelude to events of the most appalling tragedy—a tragedy which does not merely strike or wound, but positively annihilates... It is not needful to do more than say that it is one of the most repulsive productions ever published by its author, and a vivid exception to the general innocuous character of his short stories."

"...the poetic suggestion lurking in the tale 'Pour une nuit d'amour,' which Poe might almost have written, can only be traced with difficulty, for it is wrapped in a ghastly realism," Ernest Alfred Vizetelly said.

"It is interesting to notice from a note presumably furnished by Zola himself that the source of the plot of the psychopathic novel 'For a Night of Love' is in Casanova," Alison M. Lederer commented.

Zola was the most important example

of the literary school of naturalism, and a major figure in the political liberalization of France.

The self-proclaimed leader of French naturalism, Zola's works inspired operas such as those of Gustave Charpentier, notably Louise in the 1890s.

His works, inspired by the concepts of heredity (Claude Bernard), social Manichaeism and idealistic socialism, resonate with those of Nadar, Manet and subsequently Flaubert.