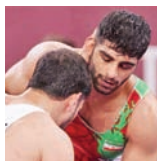




‘Iran drops case of prisoner swap with U.S.’ *Page 2*



Greco-Roman wrestler Saravi wins bronze at Tokyo 2020 *Page 3*



Monthly exports from mining sector stands at \$1.29b *Page 4*



Iranian medical team reviews stuntman Aqdasi's chart after Lebanese crash *Page 8*



Leader reflects on the outcome of Iran presidential election

See page 3

Leader endorses Ebrahim Raisi as president

TEHRAN — In a ceremony attended by number of high-ranking officials on Tuesday, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei endorsed Ebrahim Raisi as the 8th president of Iran.

Raisi received the presidential mandate from the Leader of the Islamic Revolution.

At the beginning of the ceremony, Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli presented a report on the June 18 presidential election in which Raisi won

by a landslide.

Rahmani Fazli said the Interior Ministry followed the principle of observing the rule of law, maintaining impartiality, creating trust, establishing complete security and a fair competition, and providing a condition for high participation.

They were intended to increase political enthusiasm and encourage voter turnout, the minister said.

Continued on page 2

Iran's foreign debt falls 4.3%: CBI

TEHRAN — The latest report published by the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) puts the country's foreign debt at \$8.744 billion at the end of the first quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (June 20), down 4.35 percent from \$9.142 billion at the end of the previous year, IRIB reported.

From the total foreign debt, \$6.733 billion was mid-term and long-term debts while \$2.011 billion was short-term debts, the report confirmed.

External debt is the portion of a country's debt that is borrowed from foreign lenders including commercial banks, governments, or international financial institutions. These loans, including interest, must usually be paid in the currency in which the loan was made.

Foreign debt as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the ratio between the debt a country owes to non-resident creditors and its nominal GDP.

Nine national macro technology projects inaugurated

TEHRAN — Nine national macro projects have come on stream with high technological complexity and strategic importance.

For the first time, knowledge-based companies have succeeded in commercializing the products in the fields of medical equipment, agriculture, and energy to meet the needs of the country, IRNA reported on Monday.

The production of these products is a step towards self-sufficiency and meeting the strategic needs of the country with

the help of Iranian expertise.

Smart management of wheat silos system, a medical smartphone with the ability to process and analyze information, nanodrop spectrometer used in biotechnology, stem cells, and medicine, advanced drones to monitor foreign customs trade, smart surgery system, Mediterranean fruit fly pesticide, paper disinfectant, and three hybrid seeds are the products inaugurated during the ceremony.

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Vladimir Alekno fails to live up to expectations

BY MASOUD HOSSEIN

It seems difficult to believe, but Iran volleyball team, headed by Vladimir Alekno, finished in ninth place in the 2020 Olympic Games. It's while the team had come fifth in the previous edition in Rio.

The Russian coach had been appointed as Iran coach to win the first-ever medal with the team but failed to live up to the expectations.

Yes, it's absolutely disappointing. It's not clear that Iran can compete in the Paris 2024 with the golden generation. Tokyo 2020 was the right time and right place for Iran volleyball to qualify for top four.

Alekno had said there is no guarantee to win a medal in Olympics but he was sure the 2021 Volleyball Nations League would help him know his team. BUT it didn't work.

“My strategy is to move forward step by step. We will go ahead game by game. Our matches in the 2021 VNL have been analyzed carefully. Now, we have valuable materials that we can work on. I hope we can benefit from our analysis in the Olympics,” Alekno said prior to Olympic Games.

It was not just Alekno's fault because Iran's volleyball federation played a key role in the failure. They wasted time to appoint the new coach. I think, Alekno could have done better if he had had more time.

Iran, under leadership of Alekno, failed to meet the expectations in 2021 VNL in Italy and some expert said that the Russian coach would earn the better results in Tokyo but he didn't do that regarding that Iran had been drawn in an easier group than the other group.

Iran started the campaign with an emphatic win over Poland and eased past Venezuela in their second match. The team could have advanced to the next stage with a win over Canada but implausibly lost to the team 3-0. The Persians also lost to Italy and Japan in their following matches.

And it's very worrying for a team who wanted to win their first-ever medal.

Now, the team must prepare for the 2021 Asian Men's Volleyball Championship. The competition will be held in Funabashi, Japan from Sept. 12 to 19.

The Iranian team have been drawn in Pool B along with Thailand, Pakistan and Hong Kong.

The federation must appoint their new head coach as soon as possible since the team want to defend their title in the event.

Kharanaq: a deserted, crumbling but dreamy destination

TEHRAN - Serenely situated in a remote valley about 70km north of Yazd in central Iran, is the deserted and crumbling mud-brick village of Kharanaq.

Kharanaq approximately dates 4,000 years, while its dilapidated adobe buildings that draw sightseers from around the world date back around 1,000 years.

The abandoned town is a photographer's dream with a labyrinth of streets, tunnels, passageways, and rooms, as well as more impressive buildings such as a tiny mosque, a shaking minaret, and an old caravanserai that welcomed merchants and pilgrims centuries ago, according to Ancient Origins.

Meaning 'place of birth of the sun', Kharanaq is divided into two parts – the Old Town, which is almost completely deserted, and the New Town, where tens of families continue to live.

The Old Town was constructed with sun-baked mud bricks, forming one of the largest

collections of adobe buildings in Iran. It was once a prosperous farming village, but when water supplies dried up the inhabitants left, leaving the town to turn to ruins, Ancient Origins writes.

While most of the Old Town of Kharanaq consists of crumbling homes and collapsing roofs, there remain some historically important and well-preserved monuments.

In recent years, a New Town was constructed within 2km of the ancient town with government-supplied water and electricity. Apart from a few elderly people who refused to leave their old houses and continue to live among the ruins, the rest of the Old Town's inhabitants moved to the New Town.

There are several magnificent monuments inside the village. A Qajar-era (1789–1925) mosque has been fully restored and stands with a 15-meter-high minaret, known as the Shaking Minaret of Kharanaq.

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Sheikh Jarrah, the heart of the Palestinian struggle for freedom

The Israeli Supreme Court has adjourned a ruling on an appeal by Palestinian families over their forceful eviction from the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in occupied Jerusalem al-Quds; the last historic bastion of Palestinian identity in the holy city.

In the meantime, until the next court session at least where a ruling could be made, Israeli regime judges have proposed that Palestinians families remain in their homes for now as tenants. They have been offered something that has been described by the Israeli Supreme Court as a "protected status" that will allegedly safeguard them from eviction for "the coming years".

At the same time, they must pay an annual charge of around \$465 to an Israeli settler organization; an organization which lower Israeli courts had already declared as the owners of the Palestinian properties in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood.

The proposal leaves the question of Palestinian legal ownership of their land unanswered but a clear indication of where it will swing. It has been met with anger by Palestinians who will present their arguments in the next court session.

This is despite the Israeli Supreme Court hearing being held in Hebrew for the Israeli settlers and no Arabic translation for the Palestinians.

In essence, the proposal means Palestinians have just been forced to agree that their land will not belong to them in the future.

There are many unfortunate calamities here in the latest episode of the brave Palestinian residents of the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in occupied Jerusalem al-Quds.

Firstly, many West Asian media outlets have regurgitated Israeli propaganda that some form of compromise has emerged for the Palestinian families in the decades old battle.

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Iran ambassador to UK warns of escalation over Israeli ship

TEHRAN — Iranian Ambassador to the UK Mohsen Baharvand has reacted to accusations by London and its allies against Iran over last week's attack on an Israeli-operated oil tanker off the coast of Oman.

In remarks to the Financial Times, the Iranian ambassador cautioned that an escalation “doesn't help anybody.” He told the British paper that London's decision to blame the Islamic republic for last week's assault on the MV Mercer Street

was a “very premature reaction.”

Iran and the UK both summoned each other's ambassadors amid heightened tensions over the attack on the Israeli ship.

The Israeli-operated ship Mercer Street came under attack off the coast of Oman on Thursday while traveling from Dar es Salaam in Tanzania to the United Arab Emirates port of Fujairah. The oil tanker, managed by Israeli shipping magnate Eyal Ofer's Zodiac Maritime, was reportedly at-

tacked by suicide drones. Zodiac Maritime said two crewmen, a British and Romanian national, died in the attack.

“With profound sadness, we understand the incident onboard the M/T Mercer Street on 29 July, 2021 has resulted in the deaths of two crew members on board,” the UK-based Israeli company said in a statement on Friday afternoon, a day after the attack.

Continued on page 3

Pegasus project showed Israel never hesitates to spy on friends: ex-Lebanese diplomat

BY MOHAMMAD MAZHARI

TEHRAN - A former Lebanese ambassador to Chile, Poland, and Canada says that the Pegasus project showed Israel's desire to spy on its allies as well as its foes.

“Historical incidents show how Israel has spied on its friends as much as it did on its foes, and Pegasus is only a new tool for Israel's widespread spying activities,” Massoud Maalouf tells the Tehran Times.

Pegasus as a powerful hacking tool sold to governments around the world by the Israeli surveillance company NSO Group.

It has been used to spy on journalists, human rights activists, the fiancée of the murdered Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi and political leaders, according to a months-long investigation by 17 news organizations, including FRONTLINE.

Among the political leaders who have fallen victim to this project is French President Emmanuel Macron whose cell phone was targeted for potential surveillance on behalf of Morocco, Le Monde reported last week.

The French presidency said that if the revelations about Macron's phone being tapped were true, they would be very serious.

Le Monde said that former French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe and 14 ministers had also been targeted in 2019.

On the other hand the spyware is used to collect information about journalists and rights activists, especially in Arab monarchies that have normalized their ties with Israel.

Continued on page 5



Weightlifter Hashemi represents Iran at Tokyo 2020

TEHRAN — Ali Hashemi participated in the 109kg weight category of the 2020 Olympic Games underway in Tokyo.

He lifted the 184kg in snatch but failed to finish the event as he failed to lift the weight in any of his three attempts in the clean & jerk section.

Uzbekistan's Akbar Djuraev won the gold medal with a total of 430kg. Armenian weightlifter Simon Martirosyan snatched the silver, lifting 423kg and Latvian Arturs Plesnieks finished in third place with 410kg.

‘Iran drops case of prisoner swap with U.S.’

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — A news website has cited an unnamed Iranian official as saying that the Islamic Republic has abandoned efforts for prisoner swap with the United States, saying the decision followed Washington’s “breaches” against efforts to release the detainees.



Tehran and Joe Biden’s administration have been communicating on prisoner exchanges aimed at securing the release of Iranians held in U.S. jails and other countries over allegations of violating American sanctions, and Americans jailed in Iran for spying.

With the continuing Biden administration’s breaches, there is “no incentive on Iran’s part to continue this process and therefore the exchange issue in its current form will be completely removed from agenda,” the official told Nour News, which is close to Iran’s top national security body.

Last month, Iran said a prisoner swap deal had been agreed, though Washington had denied it.

Iran has arrested some dual nationals, including several Iranian-Americans, in recent years, on espionage charges.

Iraq’s Hakim congratulates new presidency in Iran

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Seyyed Ammar Hakim, the leader of Iraq’s National Hikma Movement, issued a message on Tuesday congratulating the start of Ebrahim Raisi’s presidency in Iran.



According to the information office of the Hikma movement, Hakim said, “We congratulate the beginning of the presidency of Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, the new president of the Islamic Republic of Iran.”

In his message, Hakim continued, “We hope that his presidency will be the beginning of a new era in solving regional and global problems and provide a new opportunity to strengthen relations between the two neighboring nations in various fields.”

On Tuesday morning, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei confirmed Raisi as the new president.

After endorsing him, the Leader described Raisi as “a popular, distinguished personage from among the descendants of the Prophet and a scholar who is adorned with great piety and wisdom and who has a brilliant managerial performance sheet, the people of Iran have shown their firm determination to tread the enlightened path of the Revolution, which is the path of justice, progress, freedom and dignity.”

Raisi won the June 18 presidential election with a landslide victory.

Oman pledges cooperation with Iran’s new administration

Foreign Minister of Oman Sayyid Badr Albusaidi reaffirmed the sultanate’s commitment to the promotion of ties with Iran, saying Muscat’s close interaction with Tehran will continue under the administration of new Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi.

The senior Omani diplomat, who is in Tehran to attend the swearing-in ceremony of the new Iranian president, held a meeting with his outgoing Iranian counterpart on Tuesday.



Praising Mohammad Javad Zarif for his efforts to broaden ties between Iran and Oman during his tenure in the past eight years, Albusaidi said Oman’s policy is based on the enhancement of cooperation with Iran.

He said such a stance adopted by Sultan of Oman Haitham bin Tarik is a continuation of the policies of the former sultan, Qaboos bin Said, stressing that Muscat will keep working in cooperation with the incoming Iranian administration.

He added that Oman will do its utmost to bring the views of the regional countries closer together in order to strengthen dialogue.

For his part, Zarif highlighted Iran and Oman’s efforts to promote mutual cooperation, saying one of the fixed policies of the Islamic Republic and the new administration is the expansion of relations with the neighbors.

Ebrahim Raeisi, who was endorsed by Leader of the Islamic Revolution as the 8th president of Iran on Tuesday, says the main priority in his administration’s foreign policy agenda will be maintaining close and friendly relations with the neighbors.

(Source: Tasnim)

Leader endorses Ebrahim Raisi as president



(EAS).

Mora also plans to participate in the inauguration ceremony of Raisi on Thursday.

So far six rounds of talks have been held in this regard. However, with the change of administration in Iran the talks have been put on hold. Six rounds of talks were held until June 20. The talks to revitalize the JCPOA started in April.

“Urgent works”

Raisi went on to say that his top priorities are resolving budget deficit, stabilizing the capital market, controlling inflation, fighting the coronavirus pandemic, addressing the issue water scarcity, and increasing production of electricity.

The president said his government has prepared a short-term transformation plan with a view toward 10 urgent issues.

After Raisi, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution also delivered a speech at the ceremony.

At the beginning of his statements Ayatollah Khamenei stated, “I ask God, the Exalted,

to render this beginning a blessed occasion for the people and the country, particularly on these days which are characterized by the remembrance of the Prophet’s Household,” according to Khamenei.

While thanking God for having helped the Iranian nation succeed in the June elections, which he described as a sign of religious democracy, the Leader said, “This (endorsement) ceremony, which is based on the Constitution and the custom established by our magnanimous Imam (Khomeini), has been held a number of times.”

Speaking about the transfer of power in Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei said, “In other countries, this transfer of power is normally accompanied by conflicts. But in our country, praise God, it is carried out in a calm, safe manner. This was the case in this election too by God’s grace. This is both a sign of the rationality, peace and tranquility that exists among the people and the officials and a sign of political diversity. The administrations that have held office up until today have had

various political orientations. Naturally this diversity is a sign of electoral freedom and healthy elections.”

He described the transfer of power in the country as a source of hope, stressing, “In a transfer of power, new ideas and new resolve enter the field, and this is a source of hope for all those who are highly motivated to serve the country, in particular the youth.”

Ayatollah Khamenei referred to the plot to boycott the elections, saying, “A plot had been devised by the political think tanks of the enemies to bring about a boycott on the elections. Inside the country too, some people pursued this idea out of ignorance or perhaps with some ulterior motives. But the people responded firmly by participating in the elections, and the turnout was good. Considering the circumstances that existed at that time, participation was good and it showed the people’s presence on the scene.”

Referring to President Raisi’s statements and his frequent insistence on revolutionary values such as justice and fighting corruption, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution stated that this insistence is being made on the right path and he advised the president to continue this path. He described Raisi’s slogan as being a popular slogan, and asked him to not abandon it. He also advised him to be with the people, to stand by the people’s side in the true sense of the word, and to always speak with them with sincerity.”

At the end, the Leader spoke of the enemy’s propaganda war and said, “Today, most of the enemy’s moves against Iran are carried out by using soft warfare and media. They spend a great deal in order to dominate public opinion in our country. They hire many intellectuals in order to be able to dominate and control public opinion in countries, especially in our country. When public opinion in a country is controlled by foreigners, the affairs of that country will be shaped according to their whims. Therefore, we must be stronger and wiser in the field of publicity.”

Raisi and JCPOA: Lifting sanctions is top priority

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — After being endorsed by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution as president on Tuesday, Ebrahim Raisi said he “will certainly seek to lift the sanctions” on Iran.

The statement comes amid a report that European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy Enrique Mora is on his way to Iran to participate in the inauguration ceremony of Raisi on Thursday.

“We will certainly seek to lift the oppressive sanctions, but we will certainly not condition the people’s livelihood, and we will not tie it to the will of foreigners. I thank all the government officials of the twelfth government, but there is still a lot of work that needs to be done by the incoming administration. We have identified an immediate and short-term transformation plan to address the issues ahead. We will deal with them quickly,” Raisi said in his endorsement ceremony in the presence of the Leader of the Islamic Revolution and several high-ranking officials.

These remarks caught the attention of several foreign media outlets and analysts as on Monday night it was reported that the EU is sending Iran talks coordinator Mora to attend the Raisi inauguration on Thursday.

Since April, Iran and the six major powers have been negotiating to revive the 2015 nuclear agreement. Iranian and Western officials have said that there is still a significant gap. The sixth round of indirect talks between Tehran and Washington in Vienna was suspended on June 20, and the two sides have not yet announced when they will resume.

The visit comes amid a halt in the nuclear talks. Since the talks stopped more than 40 days ago, no date has been set to reconvene. An EU spokeswoman confirms that’s part of the point of the trip.

Of course, halt in talks was natural because there was a change of government in Iran.

In a tweet on July 17, Abbas Araqchi, Iran’s top nuclear

negotiator in the Rouhani administration, said, “We’re in a transition period as a democratic transfer of power is underway in our capital. #Vienna_talks must thus obviously await our new administration. This is what every democracy demands.”

Josep Borrell, the EU foreign policy chief, has said it is important to restart talks with the new administration in Tehran to revive the nuclear deal.

“It is crucial to engage diplomatically with the new administration and pass directly important messages. As coordinator of the JCPOA,” Wall Street Journal quoted Borrell as saying.

“Key priority is to resume negotiations in Vienna and facilitate the way back to full JCPOA implementation,” Borrell said.

While there are expectations a day may be set to resume the talks after Raisi officially starts his work as president, remarks by Iran and the U.S. over the past weeks suggest the two countries’ demands are at odds, and both may need to make significant compromises for the talks to lead to an agreement.

With the support of the electorate and the duties on his shoulders, the EU’s decision to send Mora to Tehran shows the willingness of the P4+1 to resume the negotiations.

On July 27, Raisi called on parliament for “cooperation” to increase Iranians’ hope about the future.

“I am very hopeful for the country’s future and confident that it is possible to overcome difficulties and limitations,” he said in a statement issued by his office.

Iran’s economic woes, exacerbated by the U.S. sanctions, will be the new president’s top challenge, according to Clement Therme, a researcher at the European University Institute in Italy.

“His main objective will be to improve the economic situation by reinforcing the Islamic republic’s economic relations with neighboring countries,” and others such

as Russia and China, Therme told AFP.

Former U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew from the nuclear accord in May 2018. His administration returned sanctions lifted under the agreement and added new ones under the “maximum pressure” campaign against Iran.

Iran waited for a full year that the European signatories to the deal to compensate Iran for the sanctions. However, seeing no action on the part of Europe Tehran started to gradually remove bans on its nuclear commitments.

Trump’s successor Joe Biden has signaled his readiness to return to the deal and engaged in negotiations with Iran alongside formal talks with the accord’s remaining parties — Britain, China, France, Germany, and Russia, yet, what has been projected so far does not clearly indicate that the U.S. is entirely ready to make a difficult political decision.

During his first presser after winning the June presidential election, Raisi outlined his foreign policy priorities, saying his foreign policy does not begin with the nuclear deal and does not end with the deal.

“The foreign policy of our administration will not start from the JCPOA nor will it be restricted to the JCPOA,” Raisi said in a first sign that he will boost Iran’s relations with all major countries around the world.

If Biden wants to interact with Iran, he should change his tact. Joe needs to prioritize his goals.

In an interview with the Financial Times published on Tuesday, Iranian Ambassador to London Mohsen Baharvand said that the nuclear talks had made “very good progress”. But he added three key requests by Iran: for a guarantee that the U.S. could not unilaterally abandon the deal in the future; for sanctions to be lifted; and for the talks to not be linked to Iran’s missile program or its regional policies.

While the agreement seems so close, it can slip away from Biden’s hands.

Iran’s central bank takes legal action against Bahrain

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The Central Bank of Iran (CBI) reported on Tuesday it has begun legal procedures to pursue action against baseless charges of the Bahraini High Criminal Court.

The central bank, based on the agreement on encouragement and mutual support of investment between the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain approved on 2003, began its legal action against the government of Bahrain to repay funds invested in banks in that country on Monday.

According to the central bank, based on the country’s monetary and banking law, managing the country’s foreign exchange reserves is one of the duties of the central bank, and this bank has been investing in the banks of Bahrain.

But since the signing of the JCPOA agreement, which prompted some Persian Gulf states to oppose the agreement, then officials of the bank, while anticipating the prospects of political relations, withdrew significant amounts of their investment deposits from

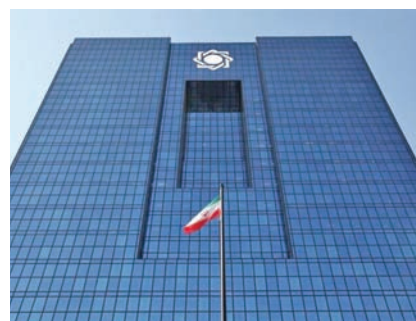
Bahrain, but after severing diplomatic relations with the Bahraini government in In January 2015, Bahraini banks avoided reimbursing the remaining foreign exchange reserves of this bank and stopped cooperation.

Despite numerous correspondences and follow-ups, they even blocked the use of the mentioned assets to pay for Hajj pilgrimage and humanitarian affairs including releasing money to control the coronavirus pandemic.

Therefore, due to the political, biased and discriminatory approach of the government of Bahrain, an investment lawsuit against the Bahraini government under the agreement on encouragement and mutual support of investment between the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the government of the Kingdom of Bahrain was placed on the agenda of the central bank.

Relevant legal proceedings began on Monday.

In a statement on Saturday afternoon Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh strongly condemned baseless accusations of a Bahraini court against the CBI,



saying that the judicial process was flawed.

In response to the action of the Bahraini High Criminal Court against the CBI and several other banks of Iran and fining them on false charges, Khatibzadeh stated that Iran rejects claims by the Bahraini court.

The spokesman added, “The judicial process in the courts of Bahrain against the central bank and Iranian individuals and banks is so distorted that we do not have any official and reliable source to know the details of the cases, except for some media

sources. Therefore, any announcement in this regard is based on the news published in the media.”

Khatibzadeh emphasized that the general purpose behind such baseless accusations and claims against the central bank, Bank Saderat and Bank Melli and some of the managers of these banks are based on political motives and have no legal value.

According to media reports, Bahrain’s High Criminal Court has accused the CBI, along with a number of other Iranian banks and their officials, of being involved in “money laundering” activities.

The Bahraini public prosecutor has sentenced the defendants to various terms of imprisonment as well as financial punishment.

The CBI and the other Iranian banks were handed fines of 1 million Bahraini dinars each, and that confiscation was ordered of laundered funds.

Bahrain’s public prosecutor and state-owned news service claimed that the prosecution was “the largest money laundering case in the history of the kingdom.”

Leader reflects on the outcome of Iran presidential election

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — The **d e s k** Leader of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has officially endorsed Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi as the eighth president of Iran.

The Endorsement (in Persian: Tanfiz) Ceremony for the head of the thirteenth government of Iran was held on Tuesday morning with the participation of almost all high-ranking Iranian officials from the three branches of government.

The Ceremony started with a recitation of Quranic verses, and then, Interior Minister Abulreza Rahmani-Fazli gave a concise report on the arrangements his ministry has done concerning the June elections which handed Ayatollah Raisi a landslide victory. After Rahmani-Fazli, Raisi received the Leader's Endorsement and became President of Iran.

The new president took to the podium to elaborate on his plans for the future of the country. He addressed a variety of issues ranging from justice to combating corruption.

Then the Leader delivered his Endorsement speech in which he praised Raisi's revolutionary line. "Fortunately, in the statements of the President, Mr. Raisi, in the election campaign, the basic values of the revolution were repeatedly emphasized," Ayatollah Khamenei said.

Referring to President Raisi's statements and his frequent insistence on revolutionary values such as justice and fighting corruption, the Leader of the Islamic Revolution stated that this insistence is being made on the right path and he advised the president to continue this path, according to a readout



of the Leader's remarks published on Khamenei.ir.

The Leader described Raisi's slogan as being a popular one and asked him to not abandon it. He also advised him to be with the people, to stand by the people's side in the true sense of the word, and to always speak with them with sincerity.

Pointing to the slogans of Raisi's election campaign, the Leader said, "This is the right path. Our strong recommendation is to continue on this path."

Ayatollah Khamenei said clinging to the basic values of the Islamic Revolution will achieve the basic rights of the nation and put the country in its basic position. "These values are not delusional. They are evidently articulated in the statements of Imam [Khomeini]. They must be used [by the Raisi administration] as a criterion and must be pursued," the

Leader noted, according to Fars News.

In addition to Raisi's valorization of the Revolution, Ayatollah Khamenei shed light on the circumstances under which the latest elections were held. The enemies' plot to boycott the elections and their staging of propaganda warfare to undermine the presidential race stood out as two important points of the Leader's speech among other issues.

Ayatollah Khamenei referred to the plot to boycott the elections, saying, "A plot had been devised by the political think tanks of the enemies to bring about a boycott on the elections. Inside the country too, some people pursued this idea out of ignorance or perhaps with some ulterior motives. But the people responded firmly by participating in the elections, and the turnout was good. Considering the circumstances that existed

at that time, participation was good and it showed the people's presence on the scene."

On the enemies' propaganda war against Iran, the Leader noted, "Today, most of the enemy's moves against Iran are carried out using soft warfare and the media. They spend a great deal in order to dominate public opinion in our country. They hire many intellectuals in order to be able to dominate and control public opinion in countries, especially in our country. When public opinion in a country is controlled by foreigners, the affairs of that country will be shaped according to their whims. Therefore, we must be stronger and wiser in the field of propagation."

Ayatollah Khamenei has also stressed the smooth transition of power in Iran while having governments with varying political persuasions.

"In other countries, this transfer of power is normally carried out accompanied by conflicts. But in our country, praise God, it is carried out in a calm, safe manner," he said, adding, "This was the case in this election too by God's grace. This is both a sign of the rationality, peace and tranquility that exists among the people and the officials and a sign of political diversity. The administrations that have held office up until today have had various political orientations. Naturally, this diversity is a sign of electoral freedom and healthy elections."

He described the transfer of power in the country as being a place of hope and stressed, "In a transfer of power, new ideas and new resolve enter the field, and this is a source of hope for all those who are highly motivated to serve the country, in particular the youth."

Iran ambassador to UK warns of escalation over Israeli ship

→1 Israel, the U.S. and the UK blamed Iran for the attack without presenting any evidence to support their accusations.

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett claimed that Tel Aviv knows with certainty Iran attacked the Mercer Street ship and will respond to it.

"I determine, with absolute certainty — Iran carried out the attack against the ship," Bennett stated, according to the Jerusalem Post. "The intelligence evidence for this exists and we expect the international community will make it clear to the Iranian regime that they have made a serious mistake."

London also summoned the Iranian ambassador to the UK. "The Iranian Ambassador to the UK, Moshen Baharvand, was summoned today to the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office by the Minister for the Middle East, James Cleverly, in response to the unlawful attack committed on MV Mercer Street on 29 July," the UK Foreign Office said in a statement.

Iran responded by summoning the British charge d'affaires in Tehran, in the absence of the country's ambassador, to protest the anti-Iran accusations leveled by the British foreign secretary.

During the Monday meeting, the director of the Foreign Ministry's third department of Western Europe expressed regret about the unfounded accusation by the British top diplomat, and said, "These hasty, contradictory remarks made without any evidence or proof are rejected and strongly condemned."

"This is not the first time Britain levels hasty and unsubstantiated accusations against the Islamic Republic of Iran. This country [Britain] had in some instances in the past also accused Iran of actions that were never proven and no proof or evidence was presented to support them."

The Iranian official also underlined Iran's efforts to ensure and strengthen security in the Persian Gulf, stressing that Tehran considers the waterway a secure route for the innocent passage of vessels.

"The source of instability in the Persian Gulf is not Iran; it is rather the presence of warships and military forces of countries from outside the region," he pointed out.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry official also warned against any adventurism by the occupying regime of Israel or others in the region. He said Iran's definite policy is defending itself and giving a crushing, timely and proportionate response to any act of adventurism.

The British charge d'affaires also pledged to promptly



convey the proceedings to London.

Earlier, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh warned the UK about accusations against Iran. Khatibzadeh strongly condemned and deeply regretted the baseless accusations made by the British foreign secretary against the Islamic Republic, which were repeated by the U.S. secretary of state in the same context and contained contradictory, false and provocative accusations.

"Such coordinated statements (from Britain and the U.S.) include contradictory phrases per se, in a way that they first level accusations against the Islamic Republic of Iran without providing any evidence and document and then talk about the 'possibility' of this," Khatibzadeh said on Monday.

The spokesman described Iran as an advocate and supporter of the safe navigation of ships in the Persian Gulf and international waters, and said as a country that has the longest sea borders in the Persian Gulf, Iran is always prepared for cooperation with regional countries to ensure maritime security.

He also noted that Iran considers the presence and interference of the extra-regional forces in the Persian Gulf waters and its littoral states to be harmful to the region's stability and security.

"It is a pity that these countries (the U.S. and Britain) have remained supportively silent about the terrorist attacks and acts of sabotage against Iranian trade vessels in the Red Sea and international waters, but have raised bogus allegations against Iran with political

bias in a brazen manner. If these countries have any evidence for their bogus claims, they should present them," he added.

Khatibzadeh finally noted that Iran has no hesitation in protecting its security and national interests and will respond promptly and strongly to any possible adventure.

Also on Monday, the spokesman warned on Twitter, "As guarantor of Persian Gulf security, Iran strongly condemns provocative & orchestrated UK/US statements. Having kept silent abt REPEATED terrorist attacks on IRANIAN ships, they now baselessly accuse IRAN. Any anti-Iran adventurism will receive IMMEDIATE & DECISIVE response."

Speaking hours after he was summoned to the Foreign Office over the incident, Baharvand pointed out that the dispute should not damage relations between the two countries or derail talks with the UK and other nations designed to revive the nuclear deal Tehran signed with world powers.

"We understand one of the UK's citizens has lost a life and that is for everybody a regrettable act, but that doesn't mean you can put the blame immediately on one country. You have to investigate the case, you have to have evidence," Baharvand said. "We are not for escalating — escalation doesn't help anybody."

Boris Johnson, the UK prime minister, said on Monday that Iran "should face up to the consequences of what they've done". He described the incident as "an unacceptable and outrageous attack on commercial shipping."

Baharvand, a former deputy foreign minister for international and legal affairs, said the nuclear deal was a "very special case" with its own process and the talks on the accord "should not be affected by anything."

He said that the talks, held in Vienna, had made "very good progress". But he added three key requests by Iran: for a guarantee that the U.S. could not unilaterally abandon the deal in the future; for sanctions to be lifted; and for the talks to not be linked to Iran's missile program or its regional policies.

Baharvand suggested that Israel, which is vehemently opposed to the nuclear deal, was stoking tensions in the region.

The Iranian ambassador said Israel had attacked 11 Iranian merchant vessels this year. "If you are worried about the trade [and] shipping you have to see what is happening there," he said. "Israel is nervous about the JCPOA [the nuclear deal]. They are nervous about the power of Iran."



and international issues during their meeting in Tehran.

In his meeting with the Qatari foreign minister, Ayatollah Raisi stated that the two nations of Iran and Qatar are religious brothers and regional partners.

Iran ambassador meets senior Qatari diplomat

POLITICAL **TEHRAN** — Iranian **d e s k** Ambassador to Qatar Hamid Reza Dehghani has met with a senior Qatari official to discuss co-operation between the two neighbors.

The Qatari Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Monday that Dehghani held a meeting with Qatari Assistant Foreign Minister and spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Lolwah bint Rashid Al Khater.

"During the meeting, bilateral co-operation between the two countries was reviewed," the Qatari statement noted.

In recent weeks, diplomatic contacts have increased between Doha and Tehran, with the foreign ministers of the two countries holding phone talks

and then in-person meetings. In July, Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif had a phone conversation with Qatar's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani. During the phone call, the two sides conferred on bilateral relations. Foreign Minister Zarif also congratulated his Qatari counterpart on the Eid al-Adha.

Five days later, the Qatari foreign minister paid a visit to Tehran. He met with Zarif and Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi, who had won the Iranian presidential election in June.

Zarif and Al Thani discussed the latest developments in bilateral relations and the most pressing regional

S P O R T S

Greco-Roman wrestler Saravi wins bronze at Tokyo 2020

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian Greco-Roman wrestler **d e s k** Mohammadhadi Saravi won a bronze medal at the 97kg category in the 2020 Olympic Games.

He defeated Finland's Arvi Savolainen 9-2 in the bronze medal match.

Poland's Tadeusz Michalik also defeated Hungarian Alex Szoke 10-0 to win a bronze medal in the category.

"I am happy to win the bronze medal but I think I could have competed in the final. I am happy at the moment since I made my nations happy," Saravi said.

Iran's Mohammadreza Geraei has already qualified for the final match of the 67kg.

He will wrestle with Ukraine's Parviz Nasibov in the final match on Wednesday.

The wrestling competition at the 2020 Summer Olympics is taking place at the Makuhari Messe in Mihama-ku.



Iran's Saipa learn rivals at Asian Women's Club Volleyball C'ship

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian volleyball club Saipa **d e s k** knew their rivals at the 2021 Asian Women's Club Volleyball Championship.

The Iranian team have been drawn in Pool B along with Supreme Chonburi (THA-1), which picked up silver medal at the previous edition in Tianjin, China, Altay (KAZ-1) and Rebisco (PHI-1).

Nakhon Ratchasima QminC VC (THA-2), Zhetysu (KAZ-2) and PVL (PHI-2) are in Pool A with As Tianjin Bohaibank have been confirmed not to return to defend their title this time.

"Nine federations with 10 teams have been confirmed to compete in the Asian Men's Club Championship. According to the competition regulations, if less than 16 teams participate in the Championship, the organizers will have the right to send two teams," AVC Executive Director Mr Shanrit Wongprasert explained.

The 2021 Asian Women's Club Volleyball Championship will be held in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand from Oct. 1 to 7, 2021, with 7 teams vying for top honors.

Sepahan forward Shahbazzadeh linked with Persepolis

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Persepolis football team have set **d e s k** their sight on signing Sepahan striker Sajad Shahbazzadeh.

Media reports suggest that the Iran Professional League champions are going to hire the player for the upcoming season.

Shahbazzadeh was named as the best goalscorer of the team and the IPL with 20 goals, Tasnim news agency reported.

Portuguese club Santa Clara have asked 500,000 euros for Shahriyar Moghanlou and Persepolis cannot afford to spend such type of transfer fee.

Sepahan are reportedly going to reach an agreement with Santa Clara to sign Moghanlou.

FIVB Ranking: Iran volleyball in 12th place

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** - Iran national volleyball team **d e s k** remained unchanged in the latest FIVB Senior World Ranking.

Iran remained in 12th place in the ranking.

Vladimir Alekno's finished in ninth place in the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo.

Brazil are the No. 1 team in the world, followed by Poland, Russia, France and the U.S.

Japan are the best Asian team in the ranking, sitting in the 11th place.

Iranian forward Rezaei on NEC Nijmegen's radar

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iranian striker Kaveh Rezaei has **d e s k** caught the eyes of NEC Nijmegen, voetbalprimeur.be reported.

NEC Nijmegen play at Eerste Divisie, the second tier of Dutch football.

The 29-year-old Club Brugge player has one year left on his current deal.

"It is certainly not finished yet, but NEC has good hopes for the arrival of the striker," Football Primeur reports on Monday.

Rezaei signed for Bruges from Charleroi in 2018 for 5 million euros.

He has represented Iran 16 times and scored four goals. Rezaei started his playing career in Foolad in 2009 and has also played in Iranian teams Saipa, Zob Ahan and Esteghlal.

Saeid Marouf calls time on national duty

S P O R T S **TEHRAN** — Iran volleyball setter Saeid **d e s k** Marouf has reportedly retired from national duty.

Marouf was a member of the team who failed to qualify for the 2020 Olympic Games quarter-finals, media reports suggest.

Now, Iran volleyball team director Amir Khoshkhabar has confirmed that Marouf has no intention to play for the national team again.

The 36-year-old player, who is one the world's best setters, traveled to the U.S. from Japan after Iran's elimination and didn't return to Tehran.

Freeway network to reach 3,100 km in coming weeks

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran's Transport and Urban Development Minister Mohammad Eslami announced that the country's length of freeway network will be increased to 3,100 kilometers in the coming weeks.

As announced two weeks ago by the deputy minister, there is currently 20,000 kilometers of highways and 2,500 kilometers of freeways across the country.



Back in May, Kheirollah Khademi, who is also the managing director of Iran's Construction and Development of Transportation Infrastructures Company (CDTIC), had announced that 440 km of freeways and 1,200 km of highways are going to be added to the country's road network by the end of the current Iranian calendar year (March 2022).

The official noted that the ministry prioritized the completion of nine major freeway projects which would have the biggest impact on the country's transportation and transit operations over the past two years and these projects have had average progress of more than 70 percent so far.

Khademi stressed that the completion of 221 km of freeways in the previous year was achieved despite the fact that the annual freeway construction in the country has been 80 km.

TEDPIX gains 17,700 points on Tuesday

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 17,716 points to 1.375 million on Tuesday.

As reported, over 6.966 billion securities worth 47.296 trillion rials (about \$1.126 billion) were traded at the TSE on Tuesday.

The first market's index gained 9,725 points, and the second market's index rose 45,844 points.

TEDPIX had risen 5,000 points in the past Iranian calendar week.

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

A capital market analyst says that TEDPIX is going to improve in the second half of the current Iranian calendar month (ends on August 22).



Mehdi Bayat-Manesh noted that considering the current trend of capital inflow into the market TEDPIX is expected to rise in the current month.

"It is expected that the upward trend of the market in the last one month, when the stock index rose from 1.4 million points to 1.8 million points, will continue, and it is also likely that according to the forecasts, the stock index will once again enter the 1.4 million-point channel by the end of the current month," he said.

According to Bayat-Manesh, the government policies for supporting the upward trend of the market should continue in the coming months in order to ensure this upward trend.

"It is also better for the managers of Iran's Securities and Exchange Organization (SEO) to also take the necessary measures for supporting the market so that the stock market index can once again reach more than two million points, which takes at least a few months to happen."

He pointed to the continuous increase in inflation rate in recent months and its effect on capital market transactions and added: "Shareholders' fears and worries about investing in the market will be eliminated by increasing government support and will increase their willingness to invest in this market."

Following the supportive measures taken by the government, the Iranian stock market has been gradually getting back on track and experts believe that the market is regaining people's trust.

In early July, Market Expert Reza Alavi said that the inflow of liquidity into the market and the increase in the value of transactions indicate that people are once again trusting the capital market.

"At present, other markets such as gold, foreign currency, and cars are not attractive enough for investors, and the stock market is still a good place for people's investments," Alavi said.

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

The analyst further mentioned the rise in the global oil prices and the stability of the foreign currency exchange market as factors that resulted in the stability of the stock market.

Monthly exports from mining sector stands at \$1.29b

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The value of Iran's export from the mining sector stood at \$1.29 billion in the third Iranian calendar month Khordad (May 22-June 21), which was a record high, the data released by the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) indicates.

The IRICA data indicates that in the third month of this year, steel accounted for 65.9 percent, copper for 11.6 percent, zinc for 3.2 percent, sponge iron for three percent, aluminum for 2.9 percent, cement for two percent, pellets for 1.4 percent and other products of mining and mineral industries for 10 percent of the export share.

Iranian mining industry has registered a \$4.271-billion positive trade balance in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20), according to the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry data.

Based on the mentioned data, some 55.124 million tons of minerals and mining industry products worth \$7.682 billion were exported in the previous year, while the imports of such products stood at only \$3.410 billion.

As reported, the Islamic Republic imported 4.156 million tons of mining and mineral products in the year under review, registering six percent and 13 per-



cent year-on-year rise in terms of value and weight, respectively.

The exports of such commodities in the previous year, however, fell 11 percent in terms of value and 21 percent in terms of weight, compared to the preceding year.

Steel had the biggest share in Iran's

export basket of mining products (53.7 percent) with \$4.127 billion worth of exports, followed by copper, cement, and zinc chain products.

In line with Iran's major plans for distancing the country's economy from oil and moving toward a resilient, oil-free econo-

Jask oil terminal's storage capacity to be increased

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The director of the Goreh-Jask oil transfer project's storage tanks said that according to the planning done for Makran region, 10 million barrels of storage capacity will not definitely meet the need in the future, so increasing storage capacity in the second and third phases is inevitable.

Regarding the storage tanks of the Goreh-Jask oil pipeline project, Abdollah Ahmadi said that 20 tanks, each with 500,000 barrels capacity, with a total storage capacity of 10 million barrels will be set up in Jask.

On July 22, Iran started pumping oil into Goreh-Jask strategic pipeline. The project was officially inaugurated by a direct order from President Hassan Rouhani via videoconference.

The national and strategic project for the transfer of crude oil from Goreh in southwestern Bushehr province to Jask terminal in southern Hormozgan province, with the support and leadership of the Ministry of Oil and the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) was implemented benefiting from the highest domestic capabilities.

Goreh-Jask pipeline project is going to provide Iran

with an alternative route for the country's crude oil exports that are currently carried out through the Strait of Hormuz. The pipeline will open a new gate for Iranian oil to the Indian Ocean by transferring it from Goreh in Bushehr Province to Jask on the shores of Oman Gulf.

Implementation of this project took place with about \$2 billion investment, and with the aim of creating a daily export capacity of one million barrels of crude oil through the new Jask terminal, ensuring continued oil exports, decentralization of export terminals and diversification of oil export centers, sustainable development and job creation on the shores of Makran, where a capacity of 300,000 barrels of oil (per day) has been provided so far, and this capacity will gradually increase to one million barrels in the near future.

The share of more than 90 percent of domestic manufacturing and maximum use of the power of Iranian contractors and manufacturers is one of the most important features of this national plan; 250 contractors and domestic manufacturers have participated in the project's implementation and by relying on domestic capabilities, the equipment and goods required for the



project were manufactured domestically for the first time in the country.

Another notable feature that stands out in this national plan is building about 1,000 kilometers of crude oil transmission pipeline and putting it into operation in less than two years, with full reliance on domestic capabilities.

18,000 MW power generation deficit possible in next 5 years

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — The managing director of Iran's Thermal Power Plants Holding Company (TPPH) has stated, "Based on the forecast, the country's electricity consumption will reach about 78,000 megawatts (MW) by the next five years, which according to the current amount of electricity generation, we will face a deficit of 18,000 MW in this field."

Mohsen Tarzatab said, "In addition to the fact that about 4,000 megawatts should be added to the nominal capacity of the country's power plants annually, we should pay special attention to the worn-out power plants and the replacement of new power plants with old ones."

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

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

Iran's Power Generation, Distribution, and Transmission Company (known as Tavanir) has previously announced that the company is implementing over 40 different programs for managing the situation and to prevent blackouts in the country.

Meanwhile, in mid-July, the managing director of Thermal Power Plants Holding Company announced that the necessary permits for the construction of the power plants were issued for the big industries.

Making the remarks in a press conference, Tarzatab said that the big and high-consuming industries



of steel, metals, and mining have been previously supplying for the permits to construct the electricity self-supply and self-consumption units, and their requests have been examined.

The minister of industry, mining, and trade examined 13 applications in this regard in a meeting with the mentioned industries, and finally a list was prepared and sent to the Energy Ministry, the official explained.

On July 7, the deputy industry, mining, and trade minister applied for the permits for constructing power plants with the total capacity of 10,536 megawatts, and related agreement in principle was issued yesterday, he added.

Mobarakeh Steel Company for 1,500 MW of new capacity, the Persian Gulf Special Zone for 1,500 MW, Al-Mahdi Aluminum Company for 500 MW, Chadormalu Mining and Industrial Company for 1,000 MW

and Golgozar Mining and Industrial Company Phase 2 for 1,300 MW were among the industries that applied, the official further announced.

In an interview conducted by Mehr news agency in mid-July, Deputy Industry Minister Saeed Zarandi said, "Since earlier this year, the Industry Ministry, on behalf of the industrial sector, started seeking a permit for building 13 power plants. We held several meetings with Tavanir [Iran's Power Generation, Distribution, and Transmission Company] and the Energy Ministry and proposed to sign a memorandum of understanding with the ministry. We also sent a letter to the Energy Ministry last week to expedite the issuance of the permit."

According to the official, the mentioned power plants are financed by 12 investors from various industrial sectors and will be constructed within 2.5-3 years.

The official noted that the power plants will have a total capacity of about 10,536 megawatts whose output will be used by the mentioned industrial units.

As reported, the said power plants will be constructed in Isfahan, Hormozgan, Markazi, Yazd, Kerman, Fars, Semnan, and Khuzestan provinces.

One of the main goals of this program is to provide reliable and sustainable electricity to high-consuming industries and the country's industrial parks in order to reduce the pressure imposed on the national grid in the industry and mining sector, according to Zarandi.

"If these power plants are built, a significant load will be removed from the national electricity distribution network," he stressed.

The official further noted that in case of any surplus electricity generation, the industrial units can sell the surplus electricity to the Energy Ministry.



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).

Nearly 10,000 tons of steel sheets offered at IME

ECONOMY **TEHRAN** — Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) offered 9,900 tons of steel sheets on its metals and minerals trading floor on Tuesday.

The mentioned floor also played host to offering 40,000 tons of steel slabs and 107,500 tons of steel blooms in the same day. The value of trades at the IME increased 150 percent during the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

As reported by the IME's Public Relations and International Affairs Department, 895,813 tons of various types of commodities with a total value of more than \$290 million were traded at the exchange, showing also 122 percent growth in the weight of goods.

The exchange sold 611,807 tons of commodities worth more than \$124 million on its metals and minerals trading floor.

Commodities traded on this floor included 59,677 tons of steel, 6,030 tons of copper, 5,450 tons of aluminum, 120 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 30 tons of precious metals concentrate, 540 tons of zinc ingots, 506,960 tons of cement, 30,000 tons of iron ore, 1 kg of gold bars and 3,000 tons of sponge iron (DRI).

Furthermore, the IME saw trade of 282,690 tons of commodities valued at more than \$165 million on the domestic and export pits of its oil and petrochemical trading floor.

On this floor, customers purchased

58,150 tons of vacuum bottom, 56,687 tons of bitumen, 74,730 tons of polymeric products, 36,229 tons of chemicals, 47,000 tons of lube cut, 4,981 tons of base oil, 20 tons of argon, 2,000 tons of slops wax, 210 tons of insulation and 2,225 tons of sulfur.

Also, 1,551 tons of commodities changed hands on the IME's side market within the same week.

As previously reported, 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.

The volume of traded commodities shows an 11-percent growth on a monthly basis. IME is one of the four major stock

Pegasus project showed Israel never hesitates to spy on friends: ex-Lebanese diplomat

➔ 1 "These countries may have gained access to Israel's technological skills, including Pegasus, to spy on their citizens and human rights activists," Maalouf remarks.

Following is the text of the interview:
What is Israel's record in spying on other countries? Apparently, Israel is a pioneer in this regard.

We remember very well the story of Eli Cohen who was an Israeli spy in Syria in the early sixties. He even became the advisor to the Syrian Minister of Defense before he was uncovered, sentenced to death and hanged by the Syrian authorities.

We also know that Israel, under some so-called aid and assistance programs to different African countries, sends undercover spies to these countries to infiltrate their governments and influence their policies in its favor.

It is common knowledge that Israeli embassies around the world are staffed with intelligence officers as diplomats or administrative employees.

How do you read the Pegasus Project and its implications for the world?

Israel is technologically advanced and it has always used its technology to spy on countries. Pegasus is a dangerous spyware developed by an Israeli firm. It can be installed on all kinds of electronic devices including cell phones and it can read all the information stored in these devices. Although some governments are ostensibly purchasing this software in order to track terrorists and criminals, it appears that this software has been used to hack opponents including journalists, activists, NGOs and others in clear violation of civil rights.

French President Emmanuel Macron



has changed his phone and number after reports that he was targeted with Pegasus. This shows that Israel's spying is not limited to its foes. What is your comment?

A few historical incidents show how Israel has spied on its friends as much as it did on its foes, and Pegasus is only a new tool for Israel's widespread spying activities:

In the aftermath of the 1968 Israeli attack on Beirut airport and the destruction of 13 civilian airplanes on the tarmac, French President Charles de Gaulle ordered an embargo on arms sales to Israel, which, at the time, had ordered the building of 12 military ships in the Cherbourg shipyards. In order to bypass the embargo, Israel sent spies posing as

tourists to Cherbourg, where, on Christmas Eve 1969, they took the boats and moved them to Israel.

During the 1967 war, Israeli Air Force jet fighters and Israeli boats attacked the U.S. technical research ship USS Liberty, killing 34 and wounding 171 crew members. Although Israel apologized for the attack claiming that it was a mistake, survivors of the attack maintain it was a deliberate act.

The case of the infamous Israeli American spy, Jonathan Jay Pollard, who pleaded guilty in 1987 to spying and providing top-secret classified information to Israel, proves that this regime does not hesitate to spy on its closest ally and benefactor.

The spying on French President Macron

is clear evidence that Israel does not limit its spying to its foes, but it also extends to its closest friends and allies.

Some Arab monarchies are allegedly using Israeli-supplied Pegasus spyware to spy on journalists and human rights activists. What is your comment?

Former U.S. President Trump convinced some Arab countries to establish diplomatic relations with Israel. Beside trade and technological assistance, these countries may have gained access to Israel's technological skills, including Pegasus, to spy on their citizens and human rights activists.

What is Lebanon's experience when it comes to Israel's spying and assassination operations?

Before the 1967 war, a vibrant Jewish community lived and thrived in Lebanon with their schools, synagogues and businesses. Although most of the members of this community were loyal Lebanese citizens, a few of them became spies for Israel.

In 1973, Israel dispatched a team of army special forces by boat to Beirut where they assassinated three top military leaders of the PLO in their homes. Such an operation could not have been conducted without spies on the ground.

In 1979, the Palestinian activist, Ali Hassan Salameh, known as Abou Hassan, was assassinated in Beirut by an Israeli commando.

In its numerous military attacks on Lebanon by air, sea and land, Israel has definitely relied on a network of spies to determine its targets and for planning.

These are only a few examples of the result of Israel spying on Lebanon which has been the scene of numerous attacks by Israeli commandos.

Sheikh Jarrah, the heart of the Palestinian struggle for freedom

➔ 1 The Palestinian families themselves say they reject the court proposal to stay as "protected tenants" but recognize the area as Israeli ownership.

Some residents near the historic Damascus Gate entrance to Jerusalem al-Quds's Old City, now aged over 70, spent their entire lives living in the occupied city before the Zionist entity was created. They have wasted decades locked in battles with Israeli settlers in so-called Israeli courts over whether they have the right to stay on their land.

There has been no compromise as some media outlet has reported.

A comprise is the liberation of militarily occupied Jerusalem al-Quds along with all Israeli settlements.

That's Israeli settlements that began construction in 1948, not 1967 or over the past decade. And critics argue even that would not be a comprise, not unless Palestinians fulfill their legal right to return, Israel pays compensations for the hundreds of billions if not trillions of dollars in compensation for 70 years of ethnic cleansing. And of course hands back the keys of houses to their rightful owners.

Sheikh Jarrah lies about 500 meters from the Old City's Damascus Gate. It a sensitive part of the holy city that Israeli settlers have been trying to capture for decades.

Like the rest of the occupied West Bank, Israeli military checkpoints have been installed to tightly control access to the area. Palestinians say the neighborhood has the atmosphere of a militarized zone.

The same argument can be made about other towns and villages in the occupied territories. So many Israeli checkpoints have been set up that Palestinian families face a nightmare of humiliation traveling from one village to a neighboring one.

The case of Sheikh Jarrah reflects the injustice and Israeli violations in Palestine since 1948. Some of the residents moved to the neighborhood after they were evicted from their homes in the 1950s from what is now Israeli occupied Haifa.

It highlights Israel's broader ethnic cleansing campaign

against the Palestinians, the Palestinian right of return enshrined in international law under UN Security Council resolutions, countless General Assembly resolutions and the daily violations Palestinians go through in the occupied West Bank.

Secondly, the idea that there is an Israeli Supreme Court or Lower Courts gives one the impression that there is a just Israeli judicial system.

These Kangaroo courts are Israeli settler courts with settler judges proceeding over settler imposed rules and regulations. They have never and will never rule in favor of the indigenous people of the land.

The same Israeli settler courts have played a major role in the Israeli ethnic cleansing campaign of the Palestinians. These Israeli settler courts ruled in favor of settlers' ownership claims of Palestinian property in east Jerusalem al-Quds.

No such ruling by these Israeli settler courts entitles Palestinians to do the same in West Jerusalem al-Quds or other parts of occupied Palestine.

As the young writer and Sheikh Jarrah resident, who rose to popularity as his recent activism led to temporary arrest by Israeli regime forces, Mohammed el-Kurd, stated before the hearing began "I am furious that my fate is in the hands of settlers, settler establishments, settler courts and settler laws".

Thirdly the terminology used to address this issue makes it sound like a real estate dispute between tenants and a landlord over a delay in the rent payment. A media spin on the developments gives that impression.

In the memory of some, recent events are short lived.

It was only this April and May when the threatened expulsions of Palestinians from Sheikh Jarrah sparked protests.

Israeli regime forces used a savage level of force to attack the protesters and their supporters.

Weeks of Israeli attacks and the storming of the holy al-Aqsa Mosque in the same city sparked the 11-day battle between Palestinian resistance missiles and Israeli warplane bombardments.

But this has been a decades-long campaign by Israeli

squatters to evict Palestinian families from the neighborhoods in Jerusalem al-Quds. The campaign is backed by the regime itself to Judaize the third holiest site in Islam and wipe out the Palestinian identity from the city.

Palestinian Prime Minister, Mohammad Shtayyeh, has called on the international community to put an end to the Israeli regime's policies of persecution, racism, and ethnic cleansing against Palestinians. These calls of course always fall on death ears.

If the international community had listened to the Palestinians, it would have implemented UN resolution 194 passed in December 1948 which clearly stipulates that Palestinians be allowed to return to their homes at the earliest time possible after Israel stole their property in May 1948.

The world has yet to punish Israel for failing to adhere to UN demands more than 70 years ago, let alone the scores of UN resolutions that followed afterwards.

Many so-called peace talks have taken place that resulted in Palestinian territory shrinking and Israeli settlements expanding; despite the Israeli settlement activity being considered illegal under international law.

The irony is that this is even recognized by Israel's staunch ally the United States.

In December 2016, even Washington abstained from a resolution passed in a 14-0 vote by members of the UN Security Council. That means all the veto power members including the United Kingdom that established the Israeli entity voted in favor.

But where has been the action, the sanctions, embargoes or any punitive measures against Israel?

You don't need any more evidence than this.

Unless the international community wakes up and finds a solution to what is the main source of instability in West Asia, there will not be any peace in West Asia.

And for that reason, analysts say an effective armed resistance has emerged as the last and only viable option for the future of the Palestinians. As was seen in the 11-day battle this year, this resistance is getting stronger and stronger until the day comes when it liberates Palestine.

Senior Bahraini Shia cleric felicitates Nigeria's Sheikh Zakzaky on release from prison

Bahrain's most prominent cleric Ayatollah Sheikh Isa Qassim has felicitated Sheikh Ibrahim Zakzaky, leader of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria, over his and his wife's acquittal of the charges leveled against them and their subsequent release from jail.

Sheikh Qassim, in a statement released on Monday, described the 68-year-old Nigerian

Muslim cleric as a "zealous" campaigner for Islamic teachings, human dignity, and freedom of human beings.

"The day of your release from prison marked a truly joyful event for believers and for all those who appreciate your role in advocating freedom and brotherhood, who strive to promote truth and justice,

who seek nothing other than pride, dignity and liberty for themselves, their comrades, and all people, and who do their utmost to confront oppression," the statement said.

Sheikh Qassim added, "Your acquittal of all charges leveled against you brought disgrace on all those who caused you an injustice."

The senior Bahraini Shia cleric then prayed for Sheikh Zakzaky's and his wife's health.

On July 28, the high court in Nigeria's central state of Kaduna acquitted Sheikh Zakzaky and his wife, Mallimah Zeenat, of all the charges brought against them back in 2015 and ordered them released.

Saudi Arabia executes young Shia man for taking part in anti-kingdom protests

Saudi Arabia has executed a young man on charges of participating in anti-government protests in the Shia-majority city of Qatif in the Eastern Province, according to media reports.

Citing the Saudi Arabian Interior Ministry on Tuesday, Lebanon's al-Ahed news website identified the victim as Ahmed bin Saeed bin Ali al-Janabi from the village of Qudeih, located north of Qatif.

The ministry claimed that the youth had had a "preliminary sentence" issued against him on charges of alleged insurrection against the country's establishment and non-compliance with government authorities.

Al-Ahed, however, described the manner of the execution as "sudden."

Prominent Saudi lawyer and human rights activist Taha al-Haji also said al-Janabi's name had not been included in the list of the people who faced the threat of execution.

No death sentence, he added, had been issued against him in the court of first instance, let alone such a sentence being upheld by the kingdom's appellate and supreme courts.

The campaigner, meanwhile, warned that Riyadh refused to release any information concerning the fate of many people, who had been threatened with execution, under a policy of "intimidating their families."

Al-Haji separately said Mohammed al-Shakhouri from al-Awamiyah, another town located in the Eastern Province, had had his death sentence upheld by the country's judicial authorities. Shakhouri's case was passing through its final stages at the supreme court, he added.

Shia Muslims comprise the majority of the population in the Eastern Province in a country that takes pride in holding onto the extremist Wahhabi school of thought as its official ideology.

The province has, over the years, been witnessing

daring protests in the face of a marginalization campaign led by Riyadh against the Shia faithful.

The kingdom has come down very hard on the rallies and even manipulated its so-called counter-terrorism law to prohibit any sort of dissent.

In 2019, Riyadh quietly beheaded 37 people, mostly Shia men from the Eastern Province, following what international human rights organizations condemned as "grossly unfair" trials in a special court that deals with terrorism.

None of the bodies was returned to the families, who were warned not to hold funerals. Two of them were pinned to a post for the public to see.

Two years earlier, Riyadh had razed the entire Awamiyah to rubble under the pretext of implementing an alleged construction project. Activists, however, denounced the decision as one of the country's most radical measures until that time to target dissenters.

Public in Pakistan don't want the U.S. bases in their territory: journalist

By Ali A. Jenabzadeh

TEHRAN — A Pakistani journalist says the public in his country oppose hosting U.S. bases.

"Public in Pakistan doesn't want the U.S. bases here," Imad Hussain tells the Tehran Times.

The experience of Pakistan as a country that collaborated with former U.S. President George W. Bush to invade Afghanistan proved costly. The extremists took the cooperation as a pretext to do many terrorist activities.

"After that Pakistan was dragged into regional conflicts and the result was long and massive terror acts in Pakistan which is no secret," Hussain laments.

Prime Minister Imran Khan has ruled out hosting American bases in Pakistan for military action in Afghanistan, fearing it might lead his country being "targeted in revenge attacks" by the Taliban.

In an opinion piece in The Washington Post ahead of U.S. President Joe Biden's meeting with top Afghan leaders at the White House last month, Khan also questioned the efficacy of such U.S. bases in Pakistan.

"Extremist elements found a pretext to launch war against Pakistan. Finally, since long PTI chief Imran Khan was opposing such arrangements and he has been telling his voters to not go into wars for others," the journalist explains.

Following is the text of the interview:

What are the repercussions of U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan?

Obviously it immediately created a mess in Afghanistan, and also some misunderstanding among regional countries as basing games among Pakistan, Afghanistan and India. Announcing the deadline for withdrawal boosted Taliban's morale that can encourage them to set inflexible demands while negotiating peace with Kabul. The immediate withdrawal has triggered uncertainty and there are concerns that such a situation could prolong instability in the country and the region.

Pakistan's prime minister has said his country won't host American bases. What are the main reasons for such a policy shift while Pakistan collaborated with the Bush administration to fight the Taliban and al-Qaeda when the U.S. invaded Afghanistan in 2001?

Pakistan has shifted its policies from geo-strategic into geo-economics that is what the regional countries including Kabul do not understand. For Pakistan geopolitics bears no fruit now. No group in Afghanistan is important for Pakistan. Stability and peace is important for it. It wants access to Central Asia and beyond now, it needs routes through Afghanistan and hence all groups or all Afghans are important for Pakistan now. Islamabad wants to not go against anyone in Afghanistan to encourage local cooperation for its project. And the American bases mean beginning of new controversy at home and abroad.

Nevertheless, as far as statement of Imran Khan is concerned, it is controversial.

First of all there is no evidence that the U.S. has made any such request and secondly the prime minister might have said it for political scoring. Yet at the moment there is a government in Pakistan that cannot afford going against public opinion. Public in Pakistan don't want the U.S. bases here.

But experience of Pakistan with such arrangements (as you mentioned cooperation with the Bush administration when Pakistan was being ruled by a military ruler) is not a good one. After that Pakistan was dragged into regional conflicts and the result was long and massive terror acts in Pakistan which is no secret. Extremist elements found a pretext to launch war against Pakistan. Finally, since long PTI chief Imran Khan was opposing such arrangements and he has been telling his voters to not go into wars for others. If he doesn't say things like "absolutely not" then he might lose voters forever.

Many are concerned about the exacerbation of violence in Afghanistan after the U.S. withdrawal. Do you think that the Taliban have changed after 20 years of war?

The first change should be anti-militancy, they were fighting against their people in 1990s and they are doing so now. So what has changed? A change would be evident if they shun fight against their own people or Kabul and come to negotiate settlement in a non-violent way.

And even if they want to change something inside their country then they must do it by convincing people instead of imposing something on them. If the will or factor of imposition is still there then nothing has changed. There is difference between jihad against aggressor and jihad for change and that is why that jihad took many forms and manifestations like jihad bil saif or jihad bil lisan or pen.

What are the main opportunities for collaboration between Tehran and Islamabad to restore peace in Afghanistan?

Fortunately, there is strategic convergence between the two countries. Both of them want stability in Afghanistan and then interconnectivity through the country for economic prosperity.

Tehran has some influence over Taliban and also over Kabul. They enjoy good relations. So they can collaborate for convincing Taliban for talks, they can also take part in economic development of Afghanistan and economic assistance as well.

Do you think superpowers like China may put themselves at a risk and get involved in the Afghanistan conflict?

If the involvement is for peace and development then the risk would not be real. But powers with some political agenda when come to Afghanistan they get entangled in regional conflict that can also involve players beyond the region.



200 people trained as crafters in Iranian province

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** — 200 people have recently been trained as crafters in the southwestern province of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad, the provincial tourism chief announced on Tuesday.

The courses included the fields of wood carving, weaving kilim, traditional costumes, and handmade bags, Heshmatollah Baqeri said.

The courses focused on promoting artistic indicators used to make indigenous and traditional handicrafts, the official added.



He also noted that gaining the National Seal of Excellence for recently revived fields of handicrafts in the region such as kilim-Mashteh (a kind of hand-woven kilim), jajim-bafi (a kind of hand-woven floor covering) is on the agenda of the county's handicrafts department.

Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province is known for its nomads and nomadic life. Sightseers may live with a nomadic or rural family for a while or enjoy an independent stay and assist them with day-to-day life. It also opens up an opportunity to feel rustic routines, their agriculture, traditions, arts, and culture.

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

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

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

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

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

Safavid-era fortress undergoes restoration

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – Paskuh Fortress in the southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan province has undergone some rehabilitation works, the deputy provincial tourism said on Tuesday.

A budget of 700 million rials (about \$17,000 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been invested in the project, Majid Kolanuri said.

The project involved repairing and insulating the rooftop as well as replacing the worn-out bricks and strengthening the historical structure using cob materials, the official added.



The Safavid-era (1501–1736) monument was inscribed on the national heritage list in 2004.

From ancient to modern times, defensive walls have often been necessary for cities to survive in an ever-changing world of invasion and conquest.

Fortresses were designed primarily to defend territories in warfare and were also used to solidify rule in a region during peacetime.

Many of the fortifications of the ancient world were built with mud brick, often leaving them no more than mounds of dirt for today's archaeologists.

Sistan-Baluchestan was previously shunned by potential foreign and domestic travelers though it is home to several distinctive archaeological sites and natural attractions, including two UNESCO World Heritage sites, namely Shahr-e-Soukhteh (Burnt City) and Lut desert, parts of the latter is situated in Kerman province.

For mainstream Iranians, the name of Sistan-Baluchestan was conjuring up stories of drought, desiccated wetlands, and dust storms. On the international scale, foreigners may consider it a reminiscent of the big red blot on the Iran safety map.

In ancient times, according to Encyclopedia Britannica, the Baluchistan region provided a land route to the Indus Valley and the Babylonian civilizations. The armies of Alexander the Great marched through Baluchistan in 326 BC on their way to the Hindu Kush and on their return march in 325 experienced great hardships in the region's barren wastes.

Kharanaq: a deserted, crumbling but dreamy destination

→1 The 17th-century minaret has three floors and a spiral staircase winding its way up inside. The minaret is frequently seen shaking and vibrating. The cause of this phenomenon remains unknown.

Another blue-domed mosque stands out against the earthen colors of the surrounding town and landscape.

Moreover, a well-preserved caravanserai – a place where merchant caravans are halted – from the time of the Qajar dynasty sits on the edge of Kharanaq. The caravanserai is fortified with stables for pack animals, storage areas, and rooms for travelers passing through.

Other highlights include an old castle linked to the historical periods of Islam, ancient aqueducts built to irrigate the surrounding fields, and an ancient but still functional bridge.

The last remnants of this historic and awe-inspiring city are now under threat due to the existence of iron, uranium, barite, zinc, and granite deposits in the surrounding area. The Saghand mine located 60km west of the village extracts some of these valuable minerals, and it is only a matter of time before profits are placed before the preservation of this ancient town.



The collapsing mudbrick houses of Kharanaq, Iran. (Johannes Zielcke / Flickr)

The oasis city of Yazd is wedged between the northern Dasht-e Kavir and the southern Dasht-e Lut on a flat plain ringed by mountains. Its historical structure enjoys a very

harmonious public-religious architecture that dates from different eras.

Described as the “noble city of Yazd” by Marco Polo, Yazd is widely believed to date from the 5th century CE. It stands on a mostly barren sand-ridden plain about 4,000 feet (1,200 meters) above sea level. Since Sassanian times Yazd has been famous for beautiful silk textiles that were rivaled in later periods only by those of Kashan and Isfahan. The city is still a major center of silk weaving.

With its winding lanes, a forest of badgirs (windcatchers), mud-brick houses, atmospheric alleyways, and centuries of history, Yazd is a delightful place to stay, referring to a ‘don’t miss’ destination by almost all travel associates in the region.

Yazd is a living testimony to the intelligent use of limited available resources in the desert for survival. Water is brought to the city by the qanat system. Each district of the city is built on a qanat and has a communal center. The use of earth in buildings includes walls and roofs by the construction of vaults and domes. Houses are built with courtyards below ground level, serving underground areas. Wind-catchers, courtyards, and thick earthen walls create a pleasant microclimate.

Explore historical churches, Armenian neighborhoods while in Qazvin

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – A Muslim-majority country, Iran is home to many gorgeous churches and chapels that feature amazing architecture and exquisite ornate works.

The ancient city of Qazvin is blessed with some historical churches and Armenian neighborhoods, which are visited as travel destinations for their splendor and architectural beauty.

Armenian neighborhoods of the west-central city mainly date from the time of Shah Abbas I, who transported crowds of Christians from the town of Jolfa (now on Iran's northern border) to Iran. Shah Abbas sought their skills as merchants, entrepreneurs, and artists and he ensured that their religious freedom was respected.

Of the most famed churches in Qazvin is Cantor (or Kan-tur) Church, which was built in 1905 for Russian engineers hired for road constructions.

Armenian neighborhoods of Qazvin can be traced even in books and travelogues authored by Western globetrotters such as Jean Chardin (1643 – 1713), Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (1605–1689), and Pietro della Valle (1586 – 1652), according to experts.

Chardin was a French jeweler and traveler whose ten-volume book The Travels of Sir John Chardin is regarded as one of the finest works of early Western scholarship on Persia and the Near East in general. Tavernier was a 17th-century French gem merchant and traveler, who at the behest of his patron Louis XIV, published Les Six Voyages de Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (Six Voyages, 1676). And Valle was an Italian composer, musicologist, and author who traveled throughout Asia during the Renaissance period. His travels took him to the Holy Land, the Middle East, Northern Africa, and as far as India.

Qazvin was once the capital of the mighty Persian Empire, under Safavids, from 1548 to 98. It is a major tourist destination with a wonderfully restored caravanserai-turned-arts precinct, some quirky museums, and a handful of decent eating options. For most travelers, Qazvin is also primarily the staging point for excursions to the famous Castles of the Assassins and trekking in the sensational Alamut Valley.

The city is also home to one of the biggest roofed caravanserais of the country, Sa'd-al Saltaneh caravanserai. Dating back to the Qajar era, it's a place for discovering tens of Hojreh or shops, cafes, yards, and a stunning mosque.



It's a place for visitors who want to experience the culture, culinary, and hospitality of Iran.

Peaceful coexistence between Muslim, Jewish, Christian, and Zoroastrian communities is a social phenomenon that can be traced in various documents narrated by many travelers to the country.

MOU expected to boost agritourism across Golestan

TOURISM **TEHRAN** – On Sunday, a memorandum of understanding was signed at the provincial level to help develop agritourism across the lush green Golestan, which is situated in northern Iran.

Representatives of Golestan's Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department inked the agreement with the provincial agriculture organization, CHTN reported.

Among other things, the MOU also aims to facilitate issuing agritourism permits to selected farms, identifying and developing tourism capacities in the agriculture industry, monitoring the performance of certified farms, and forming advisory committees and work as a team that will assist the agricultural sector in attracting domestic and foreign tourists, the report said.

Speaking on the sidelines of the signing ceremony, the provincial tourism chief Ahmad Tajari said that this Memorandum of Understanding was inked to advance tourism goals by diversifying different tourism fields according to the needs of tourists, increasing employment, improving rural livelihoods, and safeguarding the legitimate rights of agriculture users and tourism activists.



The first-ever agritourism permit in the country has been issued in Golestan province and this branch of tourism will become prosperous across the province soon, he added.

Earlier in July, the official announced that agritourism is being developed in the lush green province of Golestan by launching new tourist farms.

“The province has issued seven agritourism permits in less than a year, which is expected to attract more tourists.”

Such permits are granted to eligible farm owners in the country to launch agritourism businesses, aiming to set certain standards in a move to ensure the quality of such services in the country.

A total of 720 billion rials (\$17.1 million at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been invested in these tourist farms, which are expected to generate almost 120 job opportunities, the official added.

As tourism and agriculture are the two axes to the development of the province, their combination serves a crucial role in creating jobs and economic prosperity, particularly in the villages, he noted.

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.

Golestan is reportedly embracing some 2,500 historical and natural sites, with UNESCO-registered Gonbad-e Qabus – a one-millennium-old brick tower – which is of high architectural importance as an exemplar and innovative design of the early-Islamic-era architecture.

Narratives say the majestic tower has influenced various subsequent designers of tomb towers and other cylindrical commemorative structures both in the region and beyond. The UNESCO comments that Gonbad-e Qabus bears testimony to the cultural exchange between Central Asian nomads and the ancient civilization of Iran.

Open-air museum to be set up within Iron Age site

HERITAGE **TEHRAN** – An open-air museum will be established on the premises of the ca. 7,000-year-old Qoli Darvish Hill, which is situated in the north-central Qom province.

“The first phase of the project involves building an access road and installing metal grating fences along the route of visitors to the Iron Age site,” deputy provincial tourism chief Ammar Kavusi announced on Tuesday.

A budget of 2.7 billion rials (\$64,000 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been allocated to the project, the official added.

The museum site will be designed and constructed to attract tourists and display old and discovered objects from the area as well as creating a pleasant atmosphere for those interested in ancient and historical monuments, he explained.

Back in January, the provincial tourism chief, Hamid Yazdani, announced that an archaeological project is scheduled to be launched on the ancient hill with a budget of one billion rials (about \$24,000).

Dating back to the Iron Age, the hill is located southwest of the city Qom. Archeological excavations, which began in 2002 showed that Qoli Darvish dates back to six to seven thousand years ago.



The hill covers the land as big as 50 hectares. The discovery of historical elements of an ancient temple from the Bronze Age to the end of the Iron Age led to conclusions about the social classes and further anthropological researches about those periods of history.

In recent years, domestic and foreign tourists can visit the ancient hill, which was inscribed on the National Heritage list in 2003.

Iron Age is the final technological and cultural stage in the Stone–Bronze–Iron Age sequence. The date of the full Iron Age, in which this metal, for the most part, replaced bronze in implements and weapons, varied geographically, beginning in West Asia and southeastern Europe about 1200 BC but in China not until about 600 BC, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica.

Although in West Asia iron had limited use as a scarce and precious metal as early as 3,000 BC, there is no indication that people at that time recognized its superior qualities over those of bronze.

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

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

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

Over 504,000 passengers screened for coronavirus at borders

SOCIETY
d e s k

TEHRAN — Some 504,928 passengers have so far been screened for coronavirus by thermal tests at the country's official borders since March 10, Mehdi Valipour, head of Relief and Rescue Organization affiliated to the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS), has stated.

During the aforesaid period, IRCS forces have screened 504,928 passengers, 53,941 of whom with symptoms

underwent PCR and 72,331 rapid tests, he said, IRNA reported on Sunday.

He went on to lament that some 193 individuals, who tested positive, have so far been temporarily quarantined, under a plan to rapidly identify suspected cases of coronavirus and prevent the spread of new UK strain.

Some 471 members of the IRCS cooperate for carrying out the plan in 16 provinces across the country, Valipour concluded.



With the cooperation of ministries of health and transport, a plan is being implemented with the goal of rapidly identifying and testing incoming passengers and keeping them in quarantine facilities, if necessary.

Thirty border checkpoints have been

selected, including 18 land borders, nine air borders, and three sea borders, all incoming passengers will be tested and referred to the quarantine facilities in case of necessity.

Around 8,000 individuals enter the country via borders on a daily basis.

Nine national macro technology projects inaugurated



→ 1 Some 141 national macro technology projects have been launched across the country over the past three years until June 21, according to the Center for National Macro Technology Projects.

"National macro technology projects" are knowledge-based and technological projects with commercialization abilities, implementation of which requires the extensive cooperation of various players.

However, these projects respond to the strategic and fundamental needs of the country. Given their impact on production, self-efficacy, and job creation,

these projects must be supported as important tools for the realization of a knowledge-based economy in the country.

In order to implement the national macro projects, the Vice-Presidency coordinates the government and private ministries, organizations, and units and financially supports the advancing of the projects using the budget of the Vice-Presidency and the relevant units. The output of the national macro technology and

"National macro technology projects" are knowledge-based and technological projects with commercialization abilities, implementation of which requires the extensive cooperation of various players. Some 141 national macro technology projects have been launched across the country over the past three years.

innovation projects in the Vice-Presidency is often products manufactured in the country for the first time in a way that can solve a serious problem in a production industry.

Technology development in Iran

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

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

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

Vice President for Science and Technology Sourena Sattari told the Tehran Times in October 2020 that "U.S. sanctions caused exports of knowledge-based companies to decline three years ago, however, it has returned to growth and is projected to reach the pre-sanctions level of more than \$1 billion by the end of the current [Iranian calendar] year (March 20, 2021).

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

Flooding leaves 5 dead, injured in 7 provinces

SOCIETY
d e s k

TEHRAN — Severe rain triggered flooding in seven provinces of the country, which have claimed three lives, and two went missing, spokesman or the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) has announced.

"Relief and rescue forces provided services to 846 flood survivors," ISNA quoted Mohammad Hassan Qousian as saying on Tuesday.

Currently, relief operations have been completed in five provinces, but continue in Qazvin and Zanjan provinces, he stated.

Over the last two years, Iran was doused with rain which was unprecedented during the past 50 years, but last year, unfortu-

nately, the country faced drought, which shows a 40 percent decrease in rainfall. Watershed management is a solution to strengthen the ecosystem in the face of subsequent droughts by penetrating rainfall into the ground.

Wet spell or still short of rain?

Rainfall extremes over the past three years slowly questioned the conception that Iran is experiencing a long-term drought and some of the experts announced that a wet spell will embrace the country.

So, some experts claimed that Iran has entered a period of a wet spell after experiencing dry spells over the past few



decades, some others highly rejected the claim implying that the country faced a lack of rain by 50mm over the past 5 decades.

Climate disruption or global climate disruption, is the new term scientists are

using to explain the extreme fluctuations that can and will occur to our weather systems as anthropogenic-caused carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases increase in our atmosphere, the oceans get warmer, and weather events go wild.

The report regrets that climate disruption will be continuing as climate change is on the rise and it calls on taking proper and effective measures to alleviate the adverse effects of climate change on the country.

In fact, experiencing two or three consecutive years of rainy days cannot ensure that drought no longer hits the country, but then it may enter a multi-year drought.

ENGLISH IN USE

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Medical waste disposal become possible using plasma technology in Iran

Using plasma gasification, Iranian researchers managed to dispose medical wastes and disassemble all its hazardous gases by filters, IRNA reported on Sunday.

Considering numerous problems encountered in medical and urban waste management in the country, we decided to employ high technology to overcome them, Mahmood Quran-Nevis, an official with Vice Presidency for Science and Technology has said.

He went on to add that currently, autoclaves are used as waste disposal facilities in hospitals; the temperature of the autoclave is 130 degrees and most of the bacteria are not killed and subsequently they can contribute to various environmental problems.

Referring to the foreign countries reluctance to provide us with high technology machines, he noted that regarding the importance of medical waste disposal and disinfection, we managed to domestically produce the necessary equipment needed for healthcare waste treatment and disposal.

امحای زباله‌های بیمارستانی با کمک فناوری پلاسما

محققان کشورمان با بهره‌گیری از فناوری پلاسما موفق شدند ضمن امحای تمام زباله‌ها، گازهای خطرناک آن را توسط فیلتری جداسازی کنند.

محمود قرآن نویسنده مجری طرح امحای زباله‌های بیمارستانی به روش پلاسما گفت: با توجه به مشکلات زیادی که در حوزه زباله‌های بیمارستانی و شهری در کشور وجود داشت، به این نتیجه رسیدیم که باید این مشکل را از طریق فناوری «های تک» حل کنیم.

وی افزود: در حال حاضر در بیمارستان‌ها برای امحای زباله از اتوکلاوها استفاده می‌شود که دمای حرارت این اتوکلاوها ۱۳۰ درجه بوده و بیشتر باکتری‌ها در این دما از بین نمی‌روند و مشکلات زیست محیطی زیادی را به وجود می‌آورند.

رئیس مرکز تحقیقات فیزیک پلاسما دانشگاه آزاد با اشاره به این موضوع که هیچ کشوری حاضر نشد فناوری «های تک» را به ما عرضه کند، بیان کرد: با توجه به اهمیت امحای زباله بیمارستانی بر آن شدیم تا با حمایت مادی و معنوی معاونت علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری (مرکز طرح های کلان ملی فناوری)، واحد علوم و تحقیقات دانشگاه آزاد، مرکز تحقیقات فیزیک پلاسما و با همکاری برخی شرکت‌های داخلی، ساخت و تولید تجهیزات مورد نیاز این طرح را انجام دهیم و در داخل کشور بومی‌سازی کنیم.

COVID-19 UPDATES

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

New cases	39,019
New deaths	378
Total cases	3,979,727
Total deaths	91,407
New hospitalized patients	4,838
Patients in critical condition	5,793
Total recovered patients	3,424,650
Diagnostic tests conducted	26,099,787
Doses of vaccine injected	13,586,206

Agriculture in Iran

(Part 6)

In regard to the payment system and income distribution, the sharecroppers are reimbursed according to the area of land they are entitled to work. The general rule is that the size of land attributed to, e.g., each member of a bona is of almost equal size and productivity.

These variations in size can be due to cases of inheritance, or other factors such as indebtedness of one sharecropper to another or similar matters. They are the causes of considerable differences in income among the members of a sharecropping unit, and the almost stable and stationary character of the bona structure proved in the past a restrictive factor for those who were not members of such a working unit to get access to work.

Many of those not included in this system were forced either to abandon their rural living or to develop non-agricultural activities within the village.

The organization of sharecropping labor is even more complicated than that of income distribution (both of "ideal" landlordism and of sharecropping farmers). Sharecropping contracts are seldom made between individuals, i.e., between a single landlord and a single sharecropper.



Sharecroppers organize into working units of mostly two to six members, who work the land together. In many parts of the country (possibly in most) the total agricultural land of the village was therefore divided into several field complexes which were redistributed annually among the different working units and their members.

In order to guarantee a fair distribution of land to all sharecroppers, it is a widespread practice to attach an equal number of field complexes to the different working units by lottery. Within the bona or other unit, a second lottery takes place to provide each member with his share of land.

In the same way that many landlords could not and still cannot point to any locationally fixed tenure rights, the sharecroppers did not have any rights to work in a fixed location. Each year they received different parts of the arable land of the village approximating the size to which they were entitled.

So the sharecroppers also have no interest in putting more effort and means into the soil and its cultivation than absolutely necessary, because others, including the landlord himself, would benefit from any individual's endeavors.

Completing the picture of traditional rural land tenure, two social groups are essential both for the functioning of the rent-capitalistic system of rural production and for analysis of the organization of production: the traders, dealers, brokers, and hawkers and the landless village dwellers.

Participated in traditional rural land tenure as a casual but permanent labor force; they were used as seasonal labor or at times of special demand; and they became part of the division of the production process into production factors and were compensated according to their share in that process either in kind or in money. Not all, however, are engaged in rural activities.

Quite a few make their living as shopkeepers, taxi, bus, or truck drivers, or as middlemen. They very often adopt parasitic attitudes, e.g., by selling on credit or lending money to be repaid in grain or other agricultural products.

In case of non-payment, takeover of land and other properties of sharecroppers or small landlords has been observed repeatedly.

Land reform, its aims and results. Obvious deficiencies in the productivity of rural Iran, the manifold social consequences of the unequal distribution of land, and the problems of sharecropping must be seen as the main reason for the implementation of a land reform program, the discussion of which had started by the late 1950s.

In 1960 a first land reform law was passed but proved impracticable. In 1961 a new law passed parliament and became effective 9 January 1962. Its main goals were to fix the upper limit of private property at one village and to distribute confiscated lands among sharecroppers, who had to join the newly developed rural cooperatives.

Landlords were to be refunded for the expropriated lands in cash or industrial stocks. The organizational structure of land use and cultivation remained untouched during this first phase of land reform.

Limiting rural property to the size of one village meant the immediate availability of 16,333 villages and 1,001 other estates for redistribution; according to Planck (1975), 777,825 farmers received title to newly assigned lands. Further restrictions on the maximum size of landholdings marked the inauguration of the second phase of the land reform program on 25 July 1964. (Source: Encyclopaedia Iranica)

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GUIDE TO
SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Whoever warns you against sins and vices is like the one who gives you good tidings.

Imam Ali (AS)

History of Achaemenid art, architecture

Part 4

The most important composition, that of the Apadana facades, is also completely new: Only the topic of a foreign delegation bringing gifts to the king was adopted from the Assyrians; the reliefs, depicting rulers, court, and ruling class, are used at Persepolis to present an elaborate picture of the empire.

On cylinder seals, the Bisotun motif, the king triumphant, was shown in a more specific way: the king (in one case a nobleman) victorious over one nation.

Greek hoplitai are the victims on a seal used probably during Xerxes' time both in the treasury and by the owners of houses outside of the terrace; the type is still current in the time of Artaxerxes (III?).

According to Herodotus, Darius "coined money out of gold refined to an extreme purity", but we do not know whether he ever abandoned the "Croeseid" type of lion and bull which he employed in the foundation deposits of the Apadana.

If he did, he must have introduced the type showing the king half-length which we know so well from early cylinder seals. The characteristic figures on Achaemenid coins, the running "archers" (in three different designs), were introduced either in Darius' last years or, more probably, by Xerxes.

Artaxerxes I to Artaxerxes III

After the reign of Xerxes I, no new form or idea of any kind was introduced into the architecture and art of the Achaemenid court. While in Greece and especially in Achaemenian Anatolia artistic space, syntax of forms, and realism developed rapidly, at Susa, Babylon, Ecbatana, and Persepolis the masons and sculptors repeated the topics and forms of the classic phases: Darius C and Xerxes. From this moment onwards, imperial art had but one message: the rulership of the Achaemenids was to be the same forever.

It is therefore difficult, often impossible, to distinguish styles within the art of the later six generations of Achaemenids. Even when there is a sequence of well-preserved monuments, as in the case of the royal tombs, these tend to be a series of replicas: Only the rock coffins seem to be adapted to the number of members of the royal family; all the reliefs display the same order and extension of the empire, regardless of the real development. The tombs are therefore less well dated than is commonly assumed.

A small, elegant palace of the Apadana type was built by one of the three kings named Artaxerxes at Susa outside of the royal terrace ("basileia"), where fragments of fine painting and reliefs have been found.

An unknown king built an excellent, large palace at Jin Jan, opposite Kurangun. Artaxerxes II repaired the main Apadana in Susa and built three other palaces. Artaxerxes III added staircases to an unknown palace at Susa and to the Tachara. At Babylon a rather irregular building has been excavated, containing fragments of excellent painted brick decoration.

There are, perhaps, two exceptions to this uniformity: Among the dated works of Artaxerxes I, we find a group of reliefs of the highest quality, perhaps products of the same workshop, in a soft style and rich in details, in spite of the small size of the figures.

On tomb VI as well as on Artaxerxes III's staircase to the Tachara we find a crude style with clumsy proportions, sharp lines, and archaizing details.

Perhaps we may recognize here products of two workshops, of the mid fifth and of the mid fourth centuries BC. A considerable change must have taken place on the Persepolis terrace: The above mentioned works of Artaxerxes I were left unfinished to a greater extent than usual; apparently the place remained in this state up to Artaxerxes III or his predecessor, when it was used mainly for royal burials, probably following an ancient Babylonian custom.

Geographical Range of the Achaemenid Style: Applied arts

Outside of the capitals Susa, Babylon, Ecbatana, and Persepolis, the court style was propagated mainly by metalwork (by way of mutual presents?), and by gold and silver coins.

The latter, the famous darics and sigloi, had been introduced rather late, after minting had been invented in Lydia; hoards of sigloi from eastern Anatolia, Egypt, and Palestine show the range of their value as means of exchange; two hoards from central Mesopotamia.

If silver vessels and jewelry could be cut into pieces to provide small change, sets of plate as well must have served as "gifts," on a more sumptuous level, as depicted on the Apadana facades.

In this form, the court style reached the most distant provinces. The treasure of the Oxus in the east, Tell al Maskhuta in Egypt, and a find of silver vessels from the vicinity of Usak bear witness to this as well as the finds from Thracian tombs; jewelry hoards have been found in Vouni (Cyprus), Sardis, and Akhlagari (Caucasus).

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica
Concluded

Iranian medical team reviews stuntman Aqdasi's chart after Lebanese crash

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — An Iranian medical team is probing Iranian stuntman Arsha Aqdasi's medical history after he was severely injured in a crash last week while shooting a project in Beirut.

Aqdasi was placed in an induced coma by Lebanese doctors in a Beirut hospital to prepare him for surgery, however, the Lebanese doctors' prognosis indicated that they are doubtful of seeing his complete recovery from the trauma.

Consequently, a team of Iranian doctors has examined Aqdasi's medical records, Persian media has reported.

The Iranian medical team gave their opinion that Aqdasi must remain in an induced coma until his vital signs improve, at which time they would travel to Beirut to perform an operation on him.

Aqdasi, who has collaborated in a number of international projects including the James Bond 2012 adventure "Skyfall", was seriously injured when a car he was in turned over during the shooting of the film project.



Iranian stuntman Arsha Aqdasi.

A video, which went viral on social networks on Monday, shows Aqdasi's sobbing mother asking people to pray for her son.

As the founder of Stunt 13, a major studio for Iranian stuntmen, Aqdasi and a group of his Iranian colleagues came together in January 2019 for a meeting in Tehran to ask the organizers of Iranian film festivals and events to recognize them as an active group in the film industry.

He came on stage during the meeting held at the Shafaq Cultural Center while his head was burning, and announced his plan to organize a festival for Iranian stuntmen.

The first festival for Iranian stuntmen was scheduled to open on May 7, 2019, however, the plan was never implemented.

Aqdasi had said that the festival had the potential to be held internationally.

He said that stuntmen have so far been ignored at the Oscars, and only three festivals in Russia, America and Hong Kong are held for stuntmen.

"We want to be the fourth," he noted.

Iran ready to collaborate with Serbia on joint film projects



This combination photo shows the flags of Serbia and Iran.

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — Director of the Farabi Cinema Foundation has said that Iran is eager to collaborate with Serbia on joint film projects.

Speaking in a meeting with Serbian Ambassador Dragan Todorovic, Alireza Tabesh pointed to obstacles in the way of working on joint film projects and added, "We have a strong will to accelerate the process of working on joint film projects with all countries."

"This attitude has been established at the Farabi Cinema Foundation over the past years, and I hope a film mutual project is launched between Iran and Serbia in the near future," he noted.

He also praised the collaboration between a number of Serbian film centers and Iran's Fajr International Film Festival and the International Film Festival for Children and Youth, and emphasized the need to cooperate based on a memorandum of understanding signed earlier between the two countries.

Todorovic also described relations between Iran and Serbia as friendly and called Serbian speaker's presence at President Ebrahim Raisi's inauguration a sign of Serbia's desire to expand relations with Iran.

The Farabi Cinema Foundation and the Serbia Film Center signed a memorandum of understating (MOU) in 2018.

The MOU was inked by Serbia Film Center director Mirosljub Vuckovic in August 2018 when he visited Iran to

attend the Serbian Film Week.

Based on the MOU, several meetings were scheduled to be held between Iranian and Serbian film producers. It had also been agreed to invite a number of European investors collaborating with the center to attend the meetings.

The Serbia Film Center is a government institution working under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Information. The center directs the strategic development of the Serbian film industry.

Iran's Art and Experience Cinema was the organizer of the Serbian Film Week, which was organized in Tehran, Shiraz and Tabriz.

Vuk Rsumovic's acclaimed drama "No One's Child", Milos Radovic's drama "Train Driver's Diary", Mladen Kovacevic's documentary "Unplugged", Marko Kostic's "Out of the Woods", Goran Radovanovic's "Enclave" and Bojan Vuletic's "Requiem for Mrs. J" were among the films reviewed during the program.

Astan-e Qods museum showcases documents on World War I

A R T d e s k **TEHRAN** — A collection of documents on World War I was showcased for the first time in an exhibition at the Astan-e Qods Razavi Museum and Library in Mashhad.

The exhibition has been organized to commemorate the 107th anniversary of the devastating war, the museum announced on Tuesday.

The collection consists of over 1000 documents referring to the repercussions of the war for Iran.

Some of the documents described the efforts made by both the Allies and Germany, Austria, Hungary and Turkey to persuade Iran to join them in the war.

In addition, some other documents refer

to the estimations of the war damages to the region.

The exhibition also placed on view several documents showing the reaction of the Iranian people and top Muslim clerics and their activities to call people for resistance against the occupiers and the early charity organizations founded to support millions people facing famine in the aftermath of the war.

A letter sent to Sokatolmalek, the ruler of Sistan and Qaenat, by Britain's consulate, is a highlight of the documents on view at the exhibition.

In the letter, the consulate had asked the ruler to take action against the arrival of some German and Austrian nationals in the region.

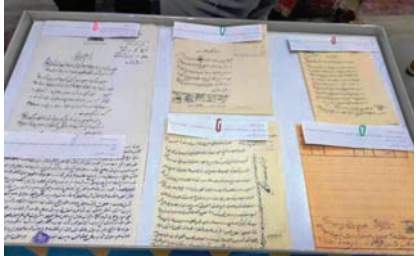
The Astan-e Qods Razavi Organization for Libraries, Museums and Archives Centers, which is adjacent to the holy shrine of Imam Reza (AS), houses over 78,000 copies of rare Islamic manuscripts.

The museum also is displaying rare artworks and historical and ancient objects.

Master miniaturist Mahmud Farshchian has donated over 15 of his masterpieces, including "Heaven on the Earth" to the museum.

The painting measuring 101x82.5 centimeters depicts Hazrat Zainab (SA), the sister of Imam Hussein (AS), and a number of angels mourning for the Imam after being martyred at Karbala in 680 CE.

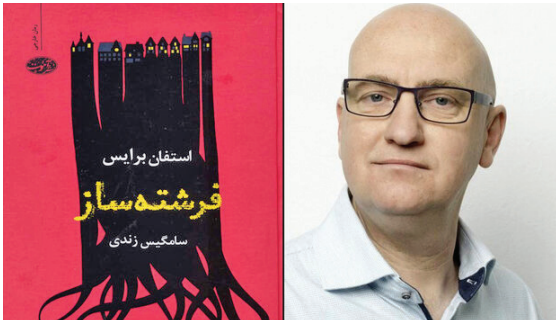
The museum also showcases the master's "The Evening of Ashura", "Ali-Asghar (AS)"



A number of Persian documents related to World War I are on display at the Astan-e Qods Razavi Museum and Library in Mashhad.

and "The Standard-Bearer of Truth", all of which are about the martyrdom of the Imam.

"The Angel Maker" comes to Persian bookstores



This combination photo shows Belgian writer Stefan Brijis and the front cover of the Persian translation of his novel "The Angel Maker".

C U L T U R E d e s k **TEHRAN** — "The Angel Maker", a bestseller by the Belgian novelist Stefan Brijis who writes in Dutch, has been published in Persian.

The literary page-turner about one man's macabre

ambition to create life and secure immortality has been translated by Samgis Zandi and An Amut is the publisher of the book.

The village of Wolfheim is a quiet little place until the geneticist Dr. Victor Hoppe returns after an absence of nearly twenty years.

The doctor brings with him his infant children-three identical boys all sharing a disturbing disfigurement.

He keeps them hidden away until Charlotte, the woman who is hired to care for them, begins to suspect that the triplets-and the good doctor- aren't quite what they seem.

As the villagers become increasingly suspicious, the story of Dr. Hoppe's past begins to unfold, and the shocking secrets that he has been keeping are revealed.

A chilling story that explores the ethical limits of science and religion. "The Angel Maker" is a haunting tale in the tradition of "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" and "Frankenstein".

Brought to life by internationally bestselling author Brijis, this eerie tale promises to get under readers' skin.

He writes in Dutch. "The Angel Maker" reached its 25th printing in Dutch in 2011, selling over 125,000 copies.

It won the 2006 Readers' Golden Owl, the five-yearly Prize for Prose of the Royal Academy for Dutch Language and Literature, the 2011 Euregio Literatuurprijs and several other honors.

It was translated in English as The Angel Maker by Hester Velmans, published in the UK by Weidenfeld & Nicolson and in the U.S. by Penguin Books.

The first translation was the German translation in 2006. The French translation was published by Heloise d'Ormesson.

It was translated into Italian by Franco Paris, and published by Fazi. The Russian translation by Irina Trofimova and Vera Trenina was published by Zakharov.

The book has also been translated into Turkish and Greek in 2007, into Hungarian in 2008, into Hebrew and Spanish in 2009, and into Danish in 2011. The rights for a Chinese translation were sold in October 2011.

Anna Seghers' novel "Transit" published in Persian

C U L T U R E d e s k **TEHRAN** — A Persian translation of German writer Anna Seghers's novel "Transit" has been published in Iran.

The novel set in Vichy Marseilles after France fell to Nazi Germany has been released by Qoqnush Publications in Tehran. Setareh Notaj is the translator of the book.

Written in German, it was published in English in 1944, and has also been translated into other languages.

It has been described as an "existential, political, literary thriller" about storytelling, boredom and exile.

The novel takes place in France during World War II after the German invasion and occupation of the north. The 27-year-old unnamed narrator has escaped from a

Nazi concentration camp and is traveling from Rouen.

Along the way to Marseilles, where he hopes to get passage on a ship to leave the country, he meets a friend, Paul. Paul asks the narrator to deliver a letter to a writer named Weidel in Paris.

When the narrator tries to do this, he learns that Weidel has committed suicide. The narrator also finds that Weidel left behind a suitcase full of letters and an unfinished manuscript for a novel, which he takes with him.

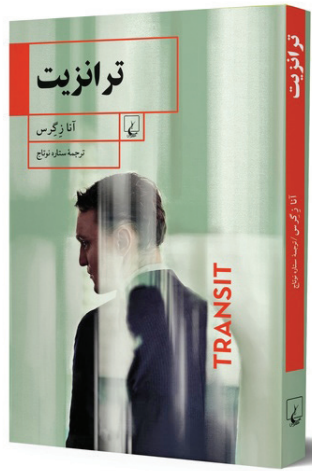
Arriving in Marseilles, the narrator describes the chaos of a town full of people from across Europe who are desperate to escape the Nazis.

Most of his time is spent in cafes, where

he begins to recognize people who are also waiting, while the city has ever more limited amounts of food and alcohol on sale because of the increased population.

A mystery woman who haunts the cafes is Weidel's estranged wife, desperate for his help to leave France. She doesn't know Weidel is dead. The narrator falls in love with her and tries to arrange matters so she can leave with him, without her knowing that he has assumed Weidel's identity (in order to use his visa and Mexican visa).

Throughout the novel, the narrator talks with several other refugees, sharing stories and experiences along the way. The story draws on Seghers' own experience in wartime France.



A poster for the Persian translation of Anna Seghers's novel "Transit".