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Report

Macron talks big but few believe him in the region

TEHRAN – During a visit to Iraq, French President Emmanuel Macron sought to portray his country as a reliable outside force that can be counted on in the era of American decline.

But regional power circles with different perspectives said in unison that France is not capable of playing a role previously assumed by other much more powerful countries.

Sensing a regional premonition of danger in some Arab states due to possible American withdrawal from the region, President Macron seized the opportunity of Baghdad's regional summit to open a new chapter for French power projection in the region.

Speaking at a news conference in Baghdad where several regional leaders were attending the summit, Macron struck a different note than that of his American allies who are in the process of withdrawing from decades-long quagmires such as Afghanistan. While Americans are busy handling the repercussions of their withdrawal, Macron made it clear that France is here to stay.

In what appeared to be a reassurance call to apprehensive allies of the U.S. in the region, the French president said his troops will remain in Iraq until further notice.

"No matter what choices the Americans make, we will maintain our presence in Iraq to fight against terrorism," as long as the Iraqi government wanted it, Macron told reporters.

Earlier in a meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi, Macron had justified the retention of French troops with the threat posed by the Daesh terrorist group.

"We all know that we must not lower our guard, because Daesh (ISIS) remains a threat, and I know that the fight against these terrorist groups is a priority of your government," the French president said. ▶ **Page 3**

Op-ed

How imperialist interventionism destroyed Afghanistan

By Yanis Iqbal

Afghanistan has become a hellhole. The Taliban takeover – and the attendant instabilities – has raised the grim prospect of a large-scale hunger catastrophe. Gregory Matthews of the International Red Cross has said: "There is the uncertainty in the political situation, there are 550,000 people displaced and also people are at crisis levels of food insecurity. The government had already declared a crisis in July [2021], after a major drought. Levels of food insecurity are exceptionally high."

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has warned that one million kids in Afghanistan can die due to "severe acute malnutrition". These painful scars are a legacy of the Afghan state concocted by imperialist powers. Even before the Taliban triumph, the country was experiencing a terrible food shortage. At the beginning of 2021, one in three people in Afghanistan were facing crisis and emergency levels of food insecurity and at least two million children were malnourished. ▶ **Page 5**



Production by major automakers exceeds 345,000 in 5 months

TEHRAN – Three major Iranian carmakers, namely Iran Khodro Company (IKCO), SAIPA Group, and Pars Khodro, manufactured 345,392 vehicles during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-August 22), the data released by Codal website showed.

According to the data, the production by the mentioned companies has decreased by 0.83 percent compared to the previous year's same five months in which the output stood at 348,303.

During the said five months, IKCO manufactured 169,956 vehicles, 891 vehicles more than the same period last year.

During this period, this industrial group was able to produce 116,502 vehicles in the Peugeot group, 18,984 vehicles in the Samand group, 20,08 Dena vehicles, 11,061 Rana vehicles, 1,957 Haima vehicles, and 1,341 Tara vehicles.

SAIPA manufactured 131,699 vehicles in the mentioned period. Production by this automaker fell 4.28 percent in comparison to the previous year's same time span.

Pars Khodro also manufactured 43,767 vehicles in the period under review, of which 8,759 were manufactured in the fifth month. ▶ **Page 4**

Iran: Vienna talks not intended to rewrite JCPOA

TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh said on Monday that the nuclear talks in Vienna are not intended to rewrite the text of the 2015 nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), noting the talks to revive the JCPOA does not need "mediation".

The last round of talks between the remaining parties to the nuclear deal was held in June.

The talks took place within the framework of the JCPOA Joint Commission as the Joe Biden administration expressed willingness to return to the international agreement endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

The talks are led by the European Union.

The U.S. is participating in the talks indirectly.

"We do not have direct or indirect talks with the United States in Vienna or anywhere else, and the talks in Vienna took place between Iran and the P4+1," the spokesman told a weekly press briefing.

P4+1 refers to the remaining permanent members of the UN Security Council – Russia, China, Britain and France – and Germany that are still party to the nuclear agreement.

The U.S. as a permanent member of the UN Security Council quit the multilateral deal in May 2018 during Donald Trump's presidency. ▶ **Page 2**

Inscriptions in Persepolis palace hold clues about evolution of Persian script

TEHRAN – The ruined Tachara Palace, located in heart of the UNESCO-registered Persepolis, bears various inscriptions and bas-relief carvings, which according to experts hold clues about the evolution of the Persian script (and language).

Mojtaba Doroodi, who is a specialist in historical linguistics, etymology, and Iranian languages, believes the (modern) Persian language tightly follows Middle and Old Persian, whose inscriptions written in cuneiform exist in Tachara Palace, ILNA reported on Tuesday.

The bas-relief inscriptions are mainly associated with the Achaemenid kings Darius I (commonly known as Darius the Great), Xerxes, and Artaxerxes, Doroodi said.

Furthermore, the palace is home to inscriptions written in Middle Persian or Pahlavi script, which date from the reign of Shapur II (Shapur the Great), the researcher said.

Persian language, also called Farsi, is a member of the Iranian branch of the Indo-Iranian language family. Old Persian, spoken until approximately the 3rd century BC, is attested by numerous inscriptions written in cuneiform, most notable of which is the great monument of Darius I at Bisotun, western Iran.

Middle Persian, spoken from the 3rd century BC to the 9th century CE, is represented by numerous epigraphic texts of Sasanian kings. ▶ **Page 6**

Khosravani claims Iran's fourth gold

TOKYO – Amir Khosravani seized a gold medal in the men's long jump – T12 in the 2020 Paralympic Games on Monday.

Khosravani finished in the first place with his first-best jump of 7.21m assuring him the gold by edging out Greek Leinier Savon Pineda who jumped 7.16m.

Azerbaijan's Saeid Najafzade seized the bronze medal with 7.03m.

It was Iran's fourth gold medal in the Games.

Powerlifter Rouhollah Rostami and judo athletes Vahid Nouri and Mohammadreza Kheirollahzadeh have won three gold medals so far.

TEHRAN— In a meeting in the White House Joe Biden and Naftali Bennett discussed the Iran nuclear issue. The discussion of course did not go well as Biden said "if diplomacy fails, we're ready to turn to other options."

The full quotation of Biden is this, "We also are going to discuss the threat from Iran and our commitment to ensure Iran never develops a nuclear weapon. But we're putting diplomacy first and seeing where that takes us. But if diplomacy fails, we're ready to turn to other options."

Biden's dementia seems to be catching him more often nowadays, as his former boss Barack Obama on March 20, 2013 famously used the phrase "All options are on the table" in dealing with Iran. However, that phrase did not do well, did it?

The Obama administration agreed to a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Iran's nuclear program in 2015, once again proving that the "other option" bluff is not workable, and the U.S. has no option other than make a return to the negotiation table.

Biden's senior advisors are Robert Malley and Anthony Blinken, who reportedly help a lot in drafting the JCPOA agreement. The two even reportedly played a significant role in conducting the 15-minute phone call between Obama and then-president Hassan Rouhani.

However, the Obama-Biden administration were somehow were under the influence of Benjamin Netanyahu, Tel Aviv's former prime minister. It seems that the situation has not changed with the substitution of the actors. The mannequins change, yet, the policy remains the same.

Biden must know that time has passed, and Iran is not in the same position it was 6 years ago. Iran, since the violation of the nuclear deal by the United States, has increased its nuclear activities as a remedial measure. It is vital to remember what triggered Iran to do so, as the Leader of the Islamic Revolution pointed out on Saturday. ▶ **Page 2**

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Director says historical drama "Unfinished Mystery" committed to truth

TEHRAN – Amin Amani, director of the historical drama "Unfinished Mystery" on the assassination of the Iranian prime minister Mohammad-Javad Bahrar, has said that his TV series is committed to truth.

The series, which has recently been completed, is actually a biopic about Bahrar, Iran's second prime minister after the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution, who was assassinated by the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization (MKO) on August 30, 1981.

Bahrar had earlier been selected as the secretary-general of the Islamic Republican Party after the assassination of the former president of the party, Ayatollah Mohammad-Hossein Beheshti, by the MKO on June 28, 1981.

"I did my best to avoid manipulating historical facts, biased attitudes, and exaggeration to give a proper image of ▶ **Page 8**



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Baghdad summit and future of regional cooperation in views of two analysts

TEHRAN - Two experts on regional affairs termed the Baghdad Regional Summit a venue to pave the ground for regional cooperation and Iraq's return to the scene in the equations of the region, IRNA reported on Sunday.

Reza Sadr al-Hosseini, an expert on West Asia affairs, has stressed that there is a very important and fundamental point about the Baghdad meeting, and that is the return of Iraq as a reliable and effective player in the West Asian region, especially in the Arab world.

"The issue of Iraq's return as an Arab actor in the region, was one of the points mentioned by the Islamic Republic in recent years, and Tehran was interested in Iraq being able to take a special position as soon as possible," Sadr al-Hosseini said in a televised interview.

Sadr al-Hosseini added, "The summit began with the invitation of the officials of the Islamic Republic, and Iran announced a special cooperation in this regard, and in fact the first visit of the foreign minister of the new administration to this country was done for this purpose."

On the absence of Syria as a neighboring and regional country while French President Emmanuel Macron invited to the summit, the expert said: "The important point was that Bashar al-Assad did not attend the meeting because he rightly expected the Arab community to give him the same seat he had in the past, and to hold the first meeting among the Arab states and then he will be present at the meeting."

The analyst stated, "Of course, on the behalf of the government of Iraq, Faleh al-Fayaz went to Syria where he formally invited the Syrian president".

He said: "But France, as a member of the United Nations Security Council, came to this meeting aiming at making arrangements for economic issues and putting emphasis on the necessity of restoring peace and stability in the region."

"Of course, France's unwarranted interference in some countries in the region and the Arab world in this regard has not been forgotten," the senior expert highlighted.

Contrary to remarks by Sadr al-Hosseini, Iraq did not invite President Assad to the conference. Reportedly, Al-Hashd Al-Sha'bi (Popular Mobilization Force) favored inviting the Syrian leader.

Purpose of Baghdad Summit

Sabah Zanganeh, another senior expert on regional issues, said that the main purpose of the Baghdad summit was not to resolve disputes, but rather to make grounds for regional cooperation.

In an interview with IRNA on Sunday, Sabah Zanganeh went on to say that that the lev-

el of delegations participating in the summit was higher than average because the number of countries, expected to participate, sent high-level representatives to the meeting.

He highlighted, "The presidents of Egypt and France, the Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, the Emir of Qatar and the King of Jordan attended the summit as the heads of the state, and Turkey, Iran and Saudi Arabia also participated at the level of foreign ministers, which is an acceptable level for a regional summit."

"It seems that the main purpose of the summit was not to resolve disputes, but rather to create the grounds for regional cooperation."

Zanganeh elsewhere noted that "the Islamic Republic of Iran was also invited to the summit because of its proximity to Iraq and its great role in the stability of Iraq, because most of the invited countries were Arab states, and all of these countries, except the Islamic Republic, have good ties with the United States."

The former representative of Iran in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation stated, "The President of France Emmanuel Macron represented the Western countries in the summit", noting that politically, all the countries present in the summit has proximity with the U.S. and only Iran has no friendship with the U.S.

Referring to the change of administration in Iran and the appointment of Hossein Amir-Abdollahian as the foreign minister, Zanganeh said, "All countries will look to the Islamic Republic of Iran to guess the foreign policy of the new administration and based on that, adjust their foreign policy vis-à-vis Iran."

The former diplomat considered regional conferences such as the Baghdad summit as a good opportunity for dialogue between Iran and the countries of the region.

"The Iranian foreign minister had good meetings with senior officials of the region, including Emirati, Kuwaiti and Iraqi officials, and indicated that the Islamic Republic's principled policy of good neighborliness in the current administration would also be pursued."

Elsewhere, Zanganeh referred to the absence of Syria at the summit, saying that Iraq may have refused to invite Syria to the meeting due to U.S. or Turkish pressure as Baghdad and Damascus face common threats and the presence of terrorist groups in their border areas.

The expert concluded, "These common concerns could be the basis for joint action between the two countries, and the Islamic Republic could help address these concerns, and the fact that Syria was not invited to the summit is a matter of regret."

From page 1 ► Khatibzadeh added what the Biden administration has done so far is an insistence on the failed policies of the Trump administration.

"If they are looking for better results. They must reconsider their behavior in putting maximum pressure on the Iranian people, which is in fact economic terrorism, and only then will they see that the path to dialogue in Vienna is going well," he pointed out.

The diplomat said the fact the Vienna talks have not born results so far is due to the "stubbornness and irrational behavior" of the American and Western sides, suggesting if there is a change in behavior, the nuclear deal will be revived.

The spokesman also reiterated Tehran's long-held position that the JCPOA has nothing to do with regional issues.

"The JCPOA will be followed in a separate space from the region and will follow its own path," the Foreign Ministry official remarked.

Responding to a question on the conversation between the EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell and Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian, the spokesman said the conversation was to congratulate the appointment of Amir Abdollahian as the new Iranian foreign minister.

"In this telephone conversation, he expressed interest in having a meeting with Amir Abdollahian at his earliest convenience, and naturally in this telephone conversation, one of the topics on which he focused was the issue of the Vienna talks," the spokesman stated.

According to Khatibzadeh, Borrell said he was aware about a change of government in Iran and these democratic changes should be allowed to take place, and at the same time demanded that the Vienna talks be resumed as soon as possible.

The diplomat added that the Iranian side also welcomed diplomacy in the



Iran: Vienna talks not intended to rewrite JCPOA

phone call and emphasized that the rights of the Iranian people should be upheld in the talks.

He underlined, "Determining the date of the new round of the Vienna talks is subject to consultation between all parties."

It should be noted that the Vienna talks are not talks to agree on a new text, the spokesman added.

"Rather, it is a negotiation to ensure the full implementation of the JCPOA by the United States, and what has been done in Vienna is to ensure this path, and if the United States returns to all its obligations under the JCPOA and Resolution 2231 in a veri-

fiable manner, Iran will agree to have a seat in the room and table of the nuclear deal and Iran will stop its compensatory measures and will fulfill its obligations in accordance with the JCPOA," he elaborated.

The spokesman noted that the JCPOA is an international document that has been signed and sealed once and it is not possible to be changed.

"During the negotiations, we will either succeed in guaranteeing its full implementation or the JCPOA will not be revived. Each of these two paths are different; and in any case there are different options on the part of the

"Any action that is not constructive is detrimental to the Vienna talks"

Iran says won't rush to recognize Taliban



TEHRAN — Speaking at his weekly press briefing on Monday, Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh reiterated that Iran seeks the establishment of an "inclusive" government in Afghanistan, and is ready to facilitate intra-Afghan talks.

He added that what the Leader of the Islamic Revolution said about Afghanistan has been Iran's firm policy on the country over the past 40 years.

"We have always stood by the people of Afghanistan and our priority has been to ensure peace, stability and progress in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is our dear neighbor. It is in our realm of civilization, and a statement I read at the ministry last week emphasized that the lives, honor, and properties of the

Afghan people must be respected by all groups in the country. What we think will bring peace and stability to Afghanistan is the formation of an inclusive government in this country that reflects the ethnic and demographic composition of Afghanistan," he elaborated.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on August 29 that the Islamic Republic backs the people of Afghanistan regardless of who is in power.

Ayatollah Khamenei wished peace and prosperity for the Afghan nation, saying, "May God bring the best situation for the nation of Afghanistan."

The Leader described Afghanistan as a brotherly country which shares many affinities with the Iranian nation.

"Afghanistan is our brother country, with the same language, religion, and culture," the Leader noted.

Khatibzadeh added, "In this regard, the responsibility of the future government of Afghanistan will help fulfill their definite obligations, and we are waiting to see the formation of an inclusive government and the commitment of that government to fulfill its responsibilities, and based on that, Iran

and the international community will make their decisions."

The spokesman said that what Iran seeks is that Afghans decide for their future.

"What is clear from the statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which I have read before, is that we seek the people of Afghanistan to decide their own destiny, and no force outside Afghanistan can decide for the people of Afghanistan and their future. Afghanistan should be allowed to create an inclusive government in the country by facilitating inter-Afghan dialogue, not a minority government against the majority or a government with only one group, but a government that reflects the demographic and ethnic composition of Afghanistan," he elaborated.

Khatibzadeh said that the Taliban, as a group, is part of Afghanistan and part of the future of the country.

"We have announced ourselves to hold the second round of inter-Afghan talks in Tehran. Of course, this depends on the fact that all groups can participate in it," he added.

"We have announced ourselves to hold the second round of inter-Afghan talks in Tehran"

All the way to Egery and back

From page 1 ► "Diplomacy should not be impacted by the nuclear issue. In the nuclear issue, the U.S. acted extremely shamelessly. They withdrew from the JCPOA but talked as if Iran had withdrawn from it. They ridiculed the negotiations. The Europeans acted like the U.S., too," the Leader remarked in his first meeting with President Ebrahim Raisi and his cabinet.

"The current U.S. government is no different from the previous one. They demand the same things that Trump demanded. Behind the scenes of U.S. foreign policy there lies a predatory wolf that sometimes changes into a cunning fox. Today's situation in Afghanistan is an example of this," Ayatollah Khamenei stated.

To understand the importance of what the Leader said on Saturday, let us take a look at what Biden and Bennett said on Friday.

Biden said, "We'll support Israel's developing deeper ties as well with the Arab and Muslim neighbors and globally. That's a trend that I think should be encouraged, not discouraged. And we're going to do all we can to be of value [to it]. We also are going to discuss ways to advance peace and security and prosperity for Israelis and Palestinians. And we're also going to direct our teams to work toward Israel fulfilling the requirements of the visa waiver program to get that done."

He continued, "The U.S. will always be there for Israel. It's an unshakeable partnership between our two nations. And I've known

every Israeli prime minister since Golda Meir, gotten to know them fairly well, and I look forward to us establishing a strong personal relationship. So welcome."

For his part, Bennett, in a rather ironic statement, said, "I come here from Jerusalem our eternal capital, and I bring with me a new spirit, a spirit of goodwill, a spirit of hope, a spirit of decency and honesty, a spirit of unity and bipartisanship of folks..."

Well, it is obvious that Biden is no different from Trump. As mentioned earlier, mannequins change, but the policy is the same.

Now let's go to the not-so-funny joke Bennett said. "I bring with me a new spirit, a spirit of goodwill, a spirit of hope, a spirit of decency and honesty, a spirit of unity and bipartisanship of folks..."

With that logic, one must assume that for 73 years, there was an utterly meaningless struggle between the defenseless Palestinians and the Israeli settlers. Has it really been for this "goodwill, hope, decency and honesty," that Israel has been bombarding, gunning down and suppressing them! Your joke is not at all funny Bennett. On the other hand, it is a pure lie, contrasting your claim of "spirit of decency and honesty."

The meeting between Biden and Bennett is a prelude for pres-

suring Iran to retract from its rightful nuclear activities. Back to what was mentioned earlier about how the Obama-Biden administration were influenced by the Tel Aviv policies, the difference is that Bennett assumes he is smarter than Bibi. Little does he know that details leak fast!

Bennett told Biden that although he is against a U.S. return to the 2015 nuclear deal with Iran, he isn't going to publicly campaign against it like his predecessor, Benjamin Netanyahu, two U.S. sources briefed on the meeting told Axios.

Iran's Supreme National Security Council Secretary Admiral Ali Shamkhani tweeted on Saturday that while Biden's talked about "other options" against Iran which is an illegal threat against another country, this gives Iran the right to "available options" as a reciprocal response.

Washington and Tel Aviv seem to have forgotten the attack on the Ain al Asad Airbase attack on Jan 8, 2020. Iran now responds to any adventurist act.

"Yet, determined to exercise its inalienable right to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in all its aspects, the Islamic Republic of Iran warns against any possible miscalculation or adventurist act by the Israeli re-

gime. As stated in our previous letters to the Security Council, the Islamic republic of Iran reserves its inherent right under international law to take all necessary measures to protect and defend its citizens, interests, installations and sovereignty against any terrorist or disruptive acts," Iran's ambassador at the United Nations, Zahra Ershadi, wrote to the UN Security Council chief on Friday.

Diverting the discussion, especially resorting to the tacky tools of military threat to force Iran to relinquish its legal rights, have never been able to get the desired result for the Israelis.

For a half decade, the United States has been acting based on its calculations. There is nothing wrong with this, in principle. Problem is, these calculations go wrong most of the times. Case in point is the embarrassing evacuation from the U.S. embassy in Kabul. Seemingly, when you have a president who takes a fine nap when the boring Israeli Prime Minister begins ranting, you are bound to miscalculate vital issues.

The Israeli regime's possible adventurism will backfire, whether explicitly or implicitly, especially as they are trying to shape the U.S. foreign policy. Biden must be wary that Iran is not that patient, and will retaliate with "available options." It is best if he focuses on fixing the clownish show of evacuation from Afghanistan, and when all done, get back to actually "negotiating" with goodwill.

TEHRANTIMES



TEHRAN – During a visit to Iraq, French President Emanuel Macron sought to portray his country as a reliable outside force that can be counted on in the era of American decline.

But regional power circles with different perspectives said in unison that France is not capable of playing a role previously assumed by other much more powerful countries.

Sensing a regional premonition of danger in some Arab states due to possible American withdrawal from the region, President Macron seized the opportunity of Baghdad’s regional summit to open a new chapter for French power projection in the region.

Speaking at a news conference in Baghdad where several regional leaders were attending the summit, Macron struck a different note than that of his American allies who are in the process of withdrawing from decades-long quagmires such as Afghanistan. While Americans are busy handling the repercussions of their withdrawal, Macron made it clear that France is here to stay.

In what appeared to be a reassurance call to apprehensive allies of the U.S. in the region, the French president said his troops will remain in Iraq until further notice.

“No matter what choices the Americans make, we will maintain our presence in Iraq to fight against terrorism,” as long as the Iraqi government wanted it, Macron told reporters.

Earlier in a meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi, Macron had justified the retention of French troops with the threat posed by the Daesh terrorist group.

“We all know that we must not lower our guard, because Daesh (ISIS) remains



Macron talks big but few believe him in the region

a threat, and I know that the fight against these terrorist groups is a priority of your government,” the French president said.

He also paid a visit to Iraq’s holy sites in Mosul and Kadhimiya in a gesture of respect to all Iraq’s religious sects. “We are here to stress the importance of Mosul and to express appreciation for all the sects that make up Iraqi society,” Macron said in a speech at Mosul’s Church of Our Lady of the Hour.

Macron also announced France’s intention to open schools and a consulate in the city. The French president’s statements and remarks were met with different reactions in the region. Some criticized his insistence on maintaining

French troops in Iraq when some countries in the region strongly oppose the presence of foreign troops there. Others described Macron’s readiness to maintain troops in Iraq as an effort to further meddle in the country’s internal affairs.

But all unanimously agreed that France is seeking to play an outside role in a region where even greater powers with more capabilities failed to achieve their goals.

“French President Emmanuel Macron rose up to play a role that exceeds the size and presence of his country, which he seeks to consolidate in Baghdad, thinking that ‘anti-terror’ operations can continue forever,” Lebanese newspaper

Al-Akhbar said.

The position of the French president came as the “combat mission” of the United States, which maintains about 2,500 soldiers in Iraq, according to the announced official figures, ends by the end of this year, when the mission of the American soldiers in Iraq will turn into an “advisory” role.

Quoting a political source who closely followed the Baghdad summit, the Lebanese newspaper said France intends to assume the role of a proxy for the Americans after they withdraw from Iraq. The source considered that the French military – numbering 600 in the framework of the international coalition – is not qualified in terms of quantity and armament to play a different role if the country faces any dangers similar to what happened in 2014.

Al Arab, a newspaper close to the United Arab Emirates, echoed a similar assessment of French capabilities in the region. It said that “France is too big to be neglected, but too small to offer comprehensive options and solutions at the level offered by the United States if it seeks to take advantage of the vacuum that the United States will leave after the withdrawal.”

Quoting observers, the London-based newspaper noted that the last thing Iraq needs now is a “false French dawn.”

It also compared Macron’s support for Iraqi Christians with France’s guardianship over Christians in Lebanon. “The visit of the French president to Mosul reflected support for the Christians of Iraq. This is reminiscent of France’s guardianship over Christians in Lebanon, which indicates that France is trying to create the same conditions in which it worked in Lebanon and failed,” Al Arab said.

Iran FM holds talks with Syria leaders

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian paid a visit to Syria on Sunday right after taking part in a regional summit in Baghdad to which Syria was not invited.

In his first visit to Syria as foreign minister of Iran, Abdollahian met with his Syrian counterpart Faisal Mekdad and President Bashar Assad.

During his meeting with Mekdad, Abdollahian expressed his satisfaction with his first visit to Syria as Iran’s minister of foreign affairs and announced the Islamic Republic’s support for the Arab country, according to a statement by the Iranian Foreign Ministry.

He thanked Syria for its position as an effective member at the forefront of the resistance.

Abdollahian congratulated Syria on holding a successful presidential election and said Syria today has entered the economic and reconstruction stage and has also paved the way for the return of refugees.

He stressed the necessity of cooperation between the two countries at the level of the Joint Cooperation Commission and also the High Joint Commission formed by the two countries.

The Syrian foreign minister also once again congratulated Abdollahian on his appointment as Iran’s foreign minister after being endorsed by the Iranian Parliament.

Faisal Mekdad described the formation of a new administration in the Islamic Republic of Iran and Tehran’s support for the Syrian government and people as very valuable.

He said the continuation of cooperation between Iran and Syria in different areas is highly important.

The Syrian Foreign Ministry said Abdollahian visited Damascus to discuss “economic terrorism.”

In a statement on Sunday, the Syrian Foreign Ministry said, “Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian arrived in Damascus today on a visit to hold talks with senior state officials on developments in the region and strengthening bilateral relations in the face of pressures on the two countries.”

In a statement to reporters upon his arrival at Damascus International Airport, Abdollahian said, “We are here in Damascus to review economic, commercial and cultural relations and relations in all areas of common



interest. We are fully confident that the two countries will work together with giant steps to confront economic terrorism and relieve pressure on our peoples.”

Abdollahian pointed out that the relations between Tehran, Damascus and Baghdad are strategic.

For his part, Mekdad said during his meeting with the visiting minister that the two sides planned to discuss important issues related to relations between the two countries, the situation in the region and the international situation, especially after the recent developments in Afghanistan. He extended his warm congratulations to Abdollahian on his assumption of the position of minister of foreign affairs.

Syrian state news agency SANA reported that the two ministers discussed a number of issues related to bilateral

cooperation, especially in the political and economic fields, as they agreed to enhance efforts to implement what was agreed upon regarding this cooperation, in order to bring bilateral relations to the level that the peoples of the two countries aspire for.

Regarding Iran’s participation in the Baghdad summit, Minister Abdollahian stressed that Iran’s stance was clear from the beginning, during and after the summit regarding the importance of coordination with Syria in all issues relating to the region, and that Iran has always been and still calls for coordination to be a key factor in the stability and prosperity of the region, SANA added.

Abdollahian objected to the exclusion of Syria before and during the Baghdad summit. “We believe that Syria, as one of Iraq’s important neighboring countries, should have been invited to this meeting, too,” said Abdollahian before leaving Tehran for Baghdad.

During the summit, Abdollahian once again alluded to Syria’s absence. “I would like to emphasize the role and support of regional nations in stabilizing and resorting security to Iraq including the friendly and brotherly

country of the Syrian Arab Republic. I would like to express regret that Syria is not attending this summit,” he remarked.

In Damascus, Abdollahian also met with President Assad. The Iranian Foreign Ministry said the talks included issues of mutual interest.

At the meeting, Abdollahian congratulated Assad on holding a successful presidential election. He also hailed the political, international and battlefield victories of Syria and extended top Iranian officials’ greetings to the Syrian president. He also briefed Assad on the Iraqi summit in which he attended a day before, the Iranian Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Iran’s chief diplomat referred to the economic cooperation between Iran and Syria, highlighting the need for activating the Joint Commission of Economic Cooperation and other existing related mechanisms.

The Syrian president also expressed pleasure at Iran’s support for his country and outlined his views on bilateral ties and also cooperation between Tehran and Damascus regarding regional and international issues.

According to Syria’s official SANA news agency, Assad discussed with Abdollahian the strategic relations between the two countries in addition to regional and international developments.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed steps taken by the two countries to enhance bilateral cooperation with the aim of reaching a higher level of partnership at various levels, particularly in the economic and trade fields, in a way that enables the two peoples to continue facing the repercussions of the blockade and sanctions imposed on the two countries as a result of their adherence to their sovereignty and the independence of their decisions, according to SANA. It added that talks during the meeting also dealt with the latest regional and international developments, especially the situation in Afghanistan and its repercussions on the security and stability of the region in general.

Assad stressed that the continuous cooperation between Syria and Iran has given positive results in protecting the interests of the two friendly countries and peoples, particularly in the field of combating terrorism. The president also affirmed that Syria will continue to combat terrorism until all the lands are liberated from it.

Abdollahian pointed out that Iran and Syria have achieved great victories in the war against terrorism thanks to the common will of the two countries’ leaderships, reiterating his country’s continued support to Syria and its people to confront terrorism in all its forms, especially economic terrorism and its repercussions.

its constructive efforts and vision. The Islamic Republic of Iran was one of the first regional countries to recognize the new Iraq and to develop its political, economic and trade ties with Iraq by supporting the political processes in this country.”

Khatibzadeh also answered a question on the controversy over the place where Abdollahian stood during a photo-op at the summit. “Addressing margins that want to downplay the text is not a foreign policy area. This trip has been so well reflected among various groups that some may want to cover this bold text with margins,” he said, adding, “Everyone knows the position of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region, Iraq and the international arena, and what is important is that the Baghdad summit was on the path to greater convergence, and in this summit, we have a common destiny in this region.”

The Iranian foreign minister paid a visit to Syria right after taking part in the Baghdad summit.

IRAN IN FOCUS

AUGUST 31, 2021

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

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SPORTS

2022 WCQ: Skocic names –27man list for Syria match

TEHRAN – Iran national football team coach Dragan Skocic announced his 27-man list for Syria match in the 2022 World Cup qualification Round 3.

Iran will host Syria in Group A in Tehran’s Azadi Stadium on Thursday.

South Korea, the UAE, Iraq and Lebanon are also in the group.

Group B consists of Japan, Australia, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, China and Oman.

Group winners and runners-up will qualify for the 2022 World Cup. The third teams will play a two-legged playoff. The winners then advance to an inter-confederation playoff, to be played June 2022.

Goalkeepers:

Alireza Beiranvand, Amir Abedzadeh, Payam Niazmand

Defenders:

Shoja Khalilzadeh, Hossein Kanaanizadegan, Milad Mohammadi, Omid Noorafkan, Sadegh Moharami, Jafar Salmani, Saleh Hardani, Siavash Yazdani, Aref Aghasi

Midfielders:

Milad Sarlak, Ahmad Nourollahi, Mohammad Karimi, Yasin Salmani, Zobeir Niknafs, Alireza Jahanbakhsh, Saeid Ezatollahi, Vahid Amiri, Saman Ghoddos, Mehdi Torabi, Ali Gholizadeh

Strikers:

Karim Ansarifard, Sardar Azmoun, Mehdi Taremi, Mehdi Ghaedi

Iran’s Eslami grabs gold at 2021 ASBC Asian Youth & Junior Boxing C’ships

TEHRAN – Iranian boxer Hirbod Eslami claimed a gold medal at the 2021 ASBC Asian Youth and Junior Boxing Championships on Sunday.

He defeated his Uzbekistan’s rival at the 75kg at the youth category.

Pouria Saeidi Asl (57kg) and Abolfazl Faridi (63kg) have previously won two bronze medals in the competition underway in Dubai, the UAE.

The tournament has brought 250 boxers together.

Hamideh Abbasali undergoes knee surgery

TEHRAN – Iranian female karate player Hamideh Abbasali underwent a knee surgery on Sunday.

He suffered an injury in the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo and failed to win Iran’s first-ever medal in karate in the women’s section in Olympics.

Abbasali had undergone surgery in March 2020 on her Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL).

Abbasali will start her training after three months, Orthopaedist doctor Sohrab Keyhani said.

Saman Razi wins bronze in Paralympics 2020

TEHRAN – Saman Razi from Iran snatched a bronze medal in the powerlifting men’s -107kg in the 2020 Paralympic Games on Monday.

He lifted 231kg to win a bronze medal.

Mongolian Sodnompiljee Enkhtabayar won the gold medal with a 245 lift.

The silver medal went to Malaysian Yee Khie Jong who lifted 237kg.

Iran wheelchair basketball suffer a narrow loss against Germany

TEHRAN – Iran wheelchair basketball team suffered a narrow 56-53 defeat against Germany in Group B of the 2020 Paralympic Games on Monday at the Ariake Arena in Tokyo.

Iran bade farewell to the Games with a 1-4 record.

Iran defeated Algeria but lost to Australia, the U.S, Britain and Germany in the Games and failed to advance to the knockout stage.

The top four of the six teams in each group will qualify for the next stage.

Powerlifter Pourmirzaei takes silver at Paralympics 2020

TOKYO – Iran’s Mansour Pourmirzaei claimed a silver medal at the men’s +107kg weight category in the 2020 Paralympic Games on Monday.

He lifted 241kg and finished in second place behind Jordan’s Jamil Elshebli who lifter 241kg too but won the gold medal due to a lighter body weight. The bronze medal went to Iraqi Faris Al-Ageeli with a lift of 228kg.

Pourmirzaei’s medal was Iran’s fifth medal in powerlifting in the 2020 Paralympic Games.

Rouhollah Rostami won a gold medal in the -80kg, Amir Jafari (-65kg) and Hamed Solhipour (-97kg) won two silver medals and Saman Razi seized a bronze in the -107kg weight class.

Pourmirzaei dedicated his medal to late Siamand Rahman who had won two gold medals in the class in the 2012 and 2016 Paralympic Games.

Pakdel joins Persepolis

TEHRAN – Aluminum Arak striker Hamed Pakdel joined Persepolis football team on Sunday.

He started his playing career in 2013 in Paykan and has also played in Parseh, Machine Sazi, Sanat Naft and Pars Jam.The 30-year-old forward has penned a two-year deal with Persepolis.

Pakdel scored 10 goals for Aluminum last season.

He is Persepolis’ fifth signing in the summer.

Persepolis have previously completed the signing of Nassaji winger Alireza Dehghani, Gol Gohar defender Alireza Ebrahimi, Padideh defender Ali Nemat and St. Pölten defensive midfielder Reza Asadi.

IPL: Rasoul Khatibi takes charge of Aluminum

TEHRAN – Rasoul Khatibi was named as new head coach of Aluminum football team on Sunday.

Khatibi, 43, will lead the Arak-based football club for the second spell.He left Aluminum in February and took charge of Tractor but was dismissed as the Tabriz based football team coach following poor results.

He has returned to Aluminum for the 2021/22 season of Iran Professional League (IPL).

Khatibi replaced Alireza Mansourian in Aluminum.

Sitting volleyball defeat Brazil in Paralympics 2020

TEHRAN – Iran sitting volleyball team defeated Brazil 3-0 (25-19, 25-23, 25-22) in Group B of the 2020 Paralympic Games on Monday.

Iran, who started the campaign with a 3-0 win over Germany, will meet China on Tuesday.

Iran have made the final at every Games since debuting sitting volleyball and have won six gold medals – making them clear favorites.

Hosts Japan are debuting in the men’s tournament, and are in Group A with Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Russia Paralympic Committee (RPC) and Rio 2016 bronze medalists Egypt.

Group B is led by Iran, but also features Brazil, China and the last qualifiers, Germany.

No meeting held between Iran, Saudi Arabia during Baghdad summit: Foreign Ministry

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh has said that no meeting was held between Iranian and Saudi officials during the Baghdad summit on Sunday.

Responding to a question on whether Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian had a meeting with his Saudi counterpart during his stay in Baghdad, Khatibzadeh said, “No talks have been held in Baghdad more than what was held before. We did not see any new talks in Baghdad.”

He made the remarks during a weekly press briefing on Monday.

Asked why the Iranian president did not participate in the Baghdad summit, the spokesman replied, “For each international summit, the level and composition of the participants are decided by the countries based on the details of the holding and preparation in the countries. Whether the honorable president or the foreign minister attends a meeting is decided on the basis of the level of the participants

and the president’s plans and issues such as this. There is practically no difference in the field of foreign policy in this area, especially regarding Iraq.”

He added, “As Iraq’s neighbor, we have repeatedly stated a principled policy that we stand by Iraq in any move and initiative that contributes to the peace, stability and tranquility of Iraq and its regional role. The previous visit of [Iranian President] Ayatollah [Seyyed Ebrahim] Raisi was very successful and they had very good talks with all the Iraqi officials, and a visit to Iraq will take place in the future, God willing.”

Raisi visited Iraq in February as Iran’s Judiciary chief.

The spokesman described Abdollahian’s visit to Baghdad as “successful” and noted, “He had intensive bilateral and multilateral consultations with Iraqi officials and officials attending the summit.”

In his first foreign trip as foreign

Production by major automakers exceeds 345,000 in 5 months



From page 1 ► The mentioned producer's output in the said period increased by five percent compared to the last year's same five months.

Last week, new Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Seyyed Reza Fatemi Amin said that his ministry has a two-year plan for the auto industry based on which this industry will undergo serious changes and improve significantly.

"We must strengthen competition, improve management and economic mechanisms, and increase production in the auto industry in order to succeed in our plans," Fatemi Amin said.

"Our plan is to produce 1.6 million vehicles next year (begins in March 2022), which will increase to three mil-

lion units in [the Iranian calendar year] 1404 (begins in March 2025), and 30 percent of the production, equivalent to about one million units, should be sent to export markets," he added.

Iran's major carmakers had manufactured 900,714 vehicles in the previous year (ended on March 20), which was 4.3 percent more than the figure of its preceding year.

According to Coda data, during the past year, IKCO manufactured 480,338 vehicles, which was 21.9 percent more than the output in its preceding year, which was 393,812 vehicles.

SAIPA manufactured 317,321 vehicles, with a 12.6-percent fall from 363,379 vehicles manufactured in 1398. And Pars Khodro manufactured 103,055 vehicles in the past year, showing a 2.8-percent drop from the output of its previous year, which was 106,072 vehicles.

Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry's programs for the current Iranian calendar year show that the manufacturing of 1.2 million cars has been put on the agenda.

According to the Industry Ministry data, since Iranian automakers had produced 984,200 such vehicles in the previous calendar year, the country's car output is planned to increase by over 21.9 percent in the current year.

'Raising tax revenue to GDP ratio through smart collection on agenda'

TEHRAN – Iranian Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ehsan Khandouzi said, "We should increase the tax revenue to GDP ratio up to 50 percent through smartening of tax collection process", IRIB reported on Monday.

"We should try to increase the tax to GDP ratio, up to 50 percent in the next four years, and achieving this goal is possible through smart and fair taxation," Khandouzi said in a meeting with senior managers of the country's tax organizations.

In this meeting, Khandouzi stressed the need to achieve macro-scale goals and plans and said: "We have suffered from both inefficient traditional tax collection methods and unfair tax methods that cause injustice to various social groups," the minister stressed.

He further referred to the important role of the country's National Tax Administration as an important source of revenue for the government along with other agencies, saying: "The mentioned goal is a covenant of commitment by the National Tax Administration

with the president, the economy minister and the parliament."

It is expected that the executive plans for achieving these goals will be reviewed and finalized in two sections including short-term (until the end of the current Iranian calendar year that is March 2022) and long-term (until the end of the government incumbency) plans within three days in a meeting with the head of the National Tax Administration, the official noted.

"This period should be the beginning of a new era in the country's tax system," he stated.

Iran managed to collect 590 trillion rials (about \$14 billion) of tax revenues during the first three months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-June 21), registering a 70 percent rise compared to the previous year's same period.

The country's national budget bill for the current Iranian calendar year has predicted a tax income of 2.7 quadrillion rials (about \$64.2 billion), which indicates that 25 percent of the country's annual tax income plan was realized in the mentioned quarter.

Over 600,000 tons of commodities traded at IME in a week

TEHRAN– Over 636,000 tons of commodities worth more than 103 trillion rials (about \$2.452 billion) were traded at Iran Mercantile Market in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

As reported by the IME's Public Relations and International Affairs Department, the exchange sold 310,018 tons of commodities on its metals and minerals trading floor.

The next trading floor was the oil and petrochemical on which the exchange saw trade of 323,576 tons of commodities.

It's worth noting that the IME played host to trade of 2,502 tons of commodities on its side market as well.

As previously reported, during the fourth 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.

The exchange played host to trading 2.555 million tons of commodities on its metals and minerals trading floor, valued at more



than \$830 million.

On this floor, the exchange saw trades of 821,176 tons of steel, 1,252,000 tons of cement, 15,785 tons of copper, 490 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 63 tons of precious metals concentrate, 21,495 tons of aluminum, 280,500 tons of iron ore, 107,785 tons of zinc, 400 tons of coke, 16,000 tons of cast iron, 47,500 tons of sponge iron and 34 kg of gold bars.

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

The IME's customers purchased on this floor 349,831 tons of bitumen, 320,321 tons of polymeric products, 125,773 tons of chemicals, 15,908 tons of base oil, 100

tons of slops wax, 492,350 tons of vacuum bottom, 27,025 tons of sulfur, 450 tons of argon, 1,030 tons of insulation and 113,000 tons of lube cut.

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

The value of trades at Iran Mercantile Exchange in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20) rose 108 percent compared to the preceding year.

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

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

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

Pharmaceutical Group were the most widely followed indices.

Iran's new Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs Ehsan Khandouzi has underlined the capital market as one of the major priorities of his ministry during his tenure, outlining the programs for improving this market.

As ISNA reported, increasing the role of the capital market in financing production companies and projects, diversifying financial instruments in the capital market, eliminating unnecessary regulations and barriers, facilitating the entry of companies into the stock market, reducing the cost of issuing bonds by facilitating relevant regulations, canceling monopolies and facil-



itating licensing for stock market-related services such as portfolio management, marketing and brokerage, reforming corporate governance to manage conflict of interest between major and minor stakeholders and finally providing incentives for people to invest indirectly in the capital

Iran-EAEU trade up 93% in 4 months yr/yr

TEHRAN – The value of non-oil trade between Iran and the members of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) exceeded \$1.6 billion in the first four months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21 – July 22) to register 93 percent growth compared to the previous year's same period, IRNA reported.

According to Hossein Kakhaki, director-general of the International Cooperation Department of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), Iran exported over \$385 million worth of commodities to the EAEU members in the period under review, 46 percent more than the figure for the previous year's same period.

During the said four months, the Russian Federation with \$188.926 million, Armenia with \$83.043 million, Kazakhstan with \$53.395 million, Kyrgyzstan with \$24.294 million, and Belarus with \$6.578 million of imports were the top destinations for the Iranian exports to the EAEU, according to Kakhaki.



Iran's imports from the bloc hit \$1.252 billion in the mentioned period, the official said.

Russian Federation with \$1.062

million, Kazakhstan with \$178.722 million, Belarus with \$8.29 million, Armenia with \$2.239 million and Kyrgyzstan with \$216,000 were the top five sources of Iranian imports.

Iran and Eurasian Economic Union

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

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

Iran is a very important market in the region and the development of ties with this country is of high significance for the EAEU members (Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan).

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

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

'Inefficient power plants major challenge of electricity sector'

TEHRAN – Iranian Energy Minister Ali-Akbar Mehrabian has said inefficient power plants and drought are the major challenges of the country's electricity sector, IRNA reported.

Higher level of installed [power plant] capacity compared to the actual generation, the existence of external problems such as reduced rainfall and non-standard conditions of power plants are three major problems in the electricity industry, Mehrabian said on Monday on the sidelines of a visit to Iran Grid Management Company.

"To solve these problems, we require a proper plan to increase the electricity generation with the same number of power plants in the coming years," the minister stated.

"Unfortunately, in recent years, we have not been able to develop the power plant industry and add to the number of the country's power plants in proportion to the demand growth; in other words, supply is far behind demand, and today's demand is 13,000 megawatts more than production," he added.

The minister noted that the Energy Ministry



needs to define and implement new projects in collaboration with private sector investors, major electricity consumers like large-scale companies, and the government itself, to be able to meet the country's electricity needs and prevent outages in the future.

According to Mehrabian, investing in renewable power plants will be one of the serious plans of the Energy Ministry in the coming years.

He underlined the management of supply and demand as another major issue that should be considered and said: "In consumption and demand management, we should use incentives instead of increasing prices; in such a way that consumers can manage their consumption and we would be able to return the resulting savings to the consumers."

The energy minister announced the development of a practical and accurate plan for consumption management and noted: "We are currently preparing to develop this practical plan, which will be submitted to the government soon and, if necessary, we will send it to the parliament in the form of a bill."

The official further pointed to the developments of the electricity industry and said: "The first outstanding characteristic of this industry is its significant development and expansion during the years after the Islamic revolution and the second characteristic is that we are completely independent in this industry."

Parliament's deputy speaker stresses construction of 1m housing units

TEHRAN- The deputy speaker of Iran's parliament stressed that by using the land, facilities and the capacity of the private sector, it is possible to build one million housing units in the country.

Speaking in a TV interview on Sunday night, Ali Nikzad referred to the plan for surge in housing construction, and said that the MPs presented the plan to the parliament, which became law yesterday.

He continued by pointing out that this plan is very progressive; in this plan, the issue of land and the transfer of government lands to the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development was accelerated.

Deputy Head of Iran's Mass Construction Association Iraj Rahbar has recently said the country's contractors are capable of constructing one million housing units a year if the necessary funding and land is provided.

Mentioning a plan for the construction of one million affordable housing units per year by the new government, Rahbar said: "allocating land and financing are two important factors for the successful implementation of any housing project, and if these two are provided, building one million housing units per year will be easily possible."

The official noted that over the last three years, many efforts have been made to allocate the needed land for housing projects including the National Housing Action Plan to the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development, but the land has not been provided as needed.

Rahbar further stressed that there are different ways to attract financial resources for housing construction

projects including the use of private sector potentials.

If the trust between the private sector and the government is restored, the issue of taxation on housing projects is resolved and the government's dues to the private sector contractors are paid on time, mass builders will be more motivated to participate in construction projects, he said.

The official noted that private sector investors have huge resources that can be guided into mass construction projects if they are encouraged and appropriate incentives are considered by the government.

Referring to the recent rise in the prices of cement and steel as main items used in construction, he continued: "The rise in the prices of cement and steel is one of the obstacles in housing production that the government must address; the government has provided all the necessary facilities including cheap energy for the cement and steel production units, but we see that such products are exported instead of being supplied to the domestic market."

Earlier this month, Mahmoud Mahmoudzadeh, deputy transport, and urban development minister announced that planning has been made and preparations have been done to start constructing 1.3 million affordable housing units across the country.

Mahmoudzadeh said the required regulations have been prepared and facilities have been created to provide land for the mentioned housing units by the next government.

"With the measures taken, the conditions are more favorable for the new government to begin the work," he noted.

Meanwhile, Iran's newly appointed Transport and Urban Development Minister Rostam Qassemi said his ministry will strongly pursue the National Housing Action Plan during his tenure.

"The implementation and completion of the National Housing Action Plan, for which a lot of efforts have been made, will continue in the 13th government," Qassemi said on Thursday.

"Providing affordable housing for lower classes is the priority of the ministry," he stressed.

Underlining some of his ministry's major plans during his office, the official said: "Strengthening various sectors of transport including land, air, sea and rail will be on the agenda and we will try to increase the share of transport in the country's Gross Domestic Product."

The official further noted that his ministry will try to complete the semi-finished projects and fulfill the demands of the government and people.

Started in winter 2018, the Na-



tional Housing Action Plan aims to construct 400,000 small and medium-size apartments (70-100 square meters in size) across the country and particularly in Tehran, where housing prices have risen most sharply.

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

Back in March, former Transport Minister Mohammad Eslami had announced that 510,000 residential units will be provided for the applicants under the framework of the National Housing Action Plan during the current year.

In early September 2019, the registration of the National Housing Action Plan was started from Kerman Province. The second round of registration began in ten other provinces in November that year.

Applicants in Sistan-Baluchestan, Qom, North Khorasan and South Khorasan provinces registered first and those from Kordestan, Kohgiluyeh-Boyerahmad, and Golestan came in the second stage, while from Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, Hamedan, and Yazd provinces came in the third stage.

TEDPIX loses 49,000 points on Monday

TEHRAN– TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 49,409 points to 1.523 million on Monday.

As reported, over 12.866 billion securities worth 111.667 trillion rials (about \$2.658 billion) were traded at the TSE on Monday.

The first market's index dropped 38,917 points, and the second market's index lost 91,022 points.

TEDPIX rose 50,000 points, or three percent, to 1.55 million in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

During the past week, the indices of National Iranian Copper Company, Mobarakeh Steel Company, Social Security Investment Company, Iran Khodro Company, and Barekat

market have been mentioned as the major programs that the economy ministry is going to pursue in order to improve the capital market.

According to Khandouzi, the stock market is one of the most important pillars of the economy as it will play a significant role in financing government projects and supporting economic growth.

The minister had previously mentioned financing the government and ensuring economic growth as the main priorities of the Economy Ministry during his tenure.

"The main responsibility of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs is to finance the government and ensure economic development using sustainable, safe, and low-

risk methods," Khandouzi said on Thursday, the first day of his work as economy minister.

Earlier on Wednesday, the parliament had approved Khandouzi to take office as the new Economy Minister mainly because of his comprehensive plans for improving the capital market.

In a report presented to the parliament on the mentioned day, the parliament's Economic Committee had stated that Khandouzi's capital market reform plan was one of the reasons why the committee approved the minister.

The mentioned report also underlined some of the expectations that the parliament and people would have regarding the stock market, including the promotion

of information transparency in the market, strengthening commodity exchanges, expanding the energy exchange activities through the supply of crude oil and petroleum products in this exchange, and designing new financial instruments, launching securities market rating agencies and co-operating with the capital markets of other countries.

The report also emphasized the institutional reform of corporate governance for public corporations and financial institutions in order to develop the capital market.

According to market analysts, Khandouzi's new plans for the stock market have sent positive signals to the market.

How imperialist interventionism destroyed Afghanistan

From page 1 ▶ Basic brutalities were a standard fare under the neo-liberal kleptocracy promoted by the American empire and its European accomplices. In December 2001, while the invasion of Afghanistan was still underway, the U.S. staged a farcical conference in Bonn, Germany. At Hotel Petersburg, Hamid Karzai – a former consultant to the American oil giant Unocal – was chosen as the modern-day viceroy of Afghanistan. His puppet government was an absurd charade sustained by the hubristic beliefs of neo-colonial benefactors.

Karzai enjoyed no authority beyond the suburbs of Kabul. Fledgling control over the countryside was maintained by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) through the Northern Alliance – a group of warlords recycled from the anti-Soviet war of the 1980s. Shabby strongmen of the south, who had either been vanquished or absorbed by the Taliban in the 1990s, started serving as U.S.-backed gangsters in the ethnic Pashtun areas from which 95% of the Taliban are drawn.

Corruption was hardwired into the American scheme. David Whitehouse notes: “The CIA paid millions to warlords for their allegiance, promised them a cozy connection with contractors, and looked the other way as they revived the opium trade.” Karzai happily knocked around with these local forces and independent tribal militias. He struck compromises with the regional commanders; ministries in the central government became bargaining chips between the president and the leaders of patrimonial-tribal networks.

The Afghan state became a means of self-enrichment. As the Taliban peddled heroin to finance their insurgency, the Afghan government joined the fray to compete with the jihadists for control over the illicit drug trade. Opium cultivation significantly increased, affecting the rates of addiction in the country and surrounding Central Asian states. Against the background of a booming narco state, a class of the nouveau riche emerged – anchored in the elitist matrix of the Karzai family, senior government officials, former mujahideen commanders, drugtraffickers, and criminal thugs.

In Afghanistan, the reconstruction fund was channeled through transnational corporations – at the cost of contracting directly with Afghan businesses. While the U.S. spent approximately \$145 billion in aid, much of this did not make it into the hands of ordinary Afghans. In 2006, Fariba Nawa wrote:

“[T]he U.S. and the international community have a system, through world financial institutions, that treats the country like a massive money laundering machine. The money rarely leaves the countries that pledge it; USAID gives contracts to American companies (and the World Bank and IMF give contracts to companies from their donor countries) who take huge chunks off the top and hire layers and layers of subcontractors who take their cuts, leaving only enough for sub-par construction.”

Internationalized palm-greasing was put on full display in the disintegration of native infrastructure. Highways began to crumble even



before they were finished; roofs of schools unexpectedly collapsed; and medical facilities lacked adequate clean water delivery or waste removal systems. Contractors walked away with millions of dollars in aid money for this work.

Kabul became a disjunctive city. With billions of dollars in aid pouring in, a tiny minority of Afghans found sinecures in the sea of foreign companies or in the swollen community of nongovernmental organization. But most drudged for only a dollar or two a day and lived in mud-brick homes with no water and highly irregular electricity. The situation in the peripheries was worse.

Government security forces and the Afghan Local Police gained notoriety for human rights violations and extrajudicial killings. Incessant bombardments caused widespread civilian casualties, upending the daily lives of ordinary Afghans. Karzai remained unperturbed, busy with his own business of power consolidation. He generalized corruption as a state-building strategy; plunder of state resources helped guarantee support for his administration from the diverse factions of the domestic ruling class.

The August 2009 presidential election publicly spotlighted the alliance of reactionary opportunists that was engaged in the scramble for wealth. Karzai's campaign team included the president's brother Ahmed Wali Karzai, the drug lord of Kandahar; Abdul Dostum, an Uzbek warlord who had massacred several thousand prisoners in 2001; Muhammad Fahim, a former defense minister involved in drugs and human rights abuses; and Akhundzada, the former governor of Helmand Province, who was caught with nine tons of drugs in his compound in 2005.

Karzai's clique retained power with the help of warlords, who de-

livered votes by using the fraudulent techniques of machine politics. In return, they were given the carte blanche to pursue murderous policies in their respective fiefdoms and profit from opium poppies. These thievish intrigues kept nourishing the Taliban, which increasingly became a distorted expression of the Afghan anger against imperialist occupation and neoliberal robbery. As Tariq Ali remarked in 2007, “The Taliban is growing and creating new alliances not because its sectarian religious practices have become popular, but because it is the only available umbrella for national liberation.”

No effort was made to reform the central government. In fact, intra-elite power tussles overshadowed the needs of the masses. Afghanistan's 2014 presidential candidates Abdullah Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani were both pro-imperialist, praising the U.S. for getting rid of Soviet interference. When a dispute arose about rigged elections, then U.S. Secretary of State

John Kerry – in the manner of a true patron – brokered a deal between the two stooges of America. A “national unity government” – with an unconstitutional dual executive – was formed with Ghani as the president and Abdullah

as the “chief executive”.

By the time Karzai left office in September 2014, after the American mediation, Taliban unleashed a strong offensive that shattered the Afghan army's shaky hold on the countryside, taking over half of the rural districts. Ruling authorities were largely passive, periodically paralyzed by internal disagreements, bickering and rifts. Discontent with the Afghan state kept growing; the Taliban insurgency could not be stopped by armed drones, carrier airstrikes, night commando raids, systemic torture,

biometric identification, and computerized intelligence.

In September 2019, Ghani and Abdullah again declared themselves the winner of the presidential election. Two months later, they signed a power-sharing agreement under which the former remained president while the latter was named head of the National Reconciliation Council, responsible for all affairs related to the country's peace process. Washington's favored ally, Ghani, established himself as a comically ineffective figure.

Educated in Columbia, Harvard and Stanford, his resume included teaching stints at Berkeley and Johns Hopkins before holding positions at the World Bank and the UN. Ghani served as the chief advisor to Karzai and as the state's finance minister prior to assuming the presidency. He is also the author of the book Fixing Failed States, published by Oxford. Firmly cocooned in the imperial fantasies of the Western world, he valued Americans more than Afghans.

Ghani eagerly welcomed Beltway investments in ratholes such as an \$88 billion army that vanished without US support. Warlords – and the entire chassis of religious fundamentalism – were left untouched, free to smuggle, loot, and rape. Productive investments, capital formation and wealth redistribution were abhorred. Ghani was totally unwilling to nudge a privileged class loath to forgo the American dollars it had been salting away in bank accounts in Switzerland, Dubai, and the U.S.

The highly dysfunctional Afghan government – with limited writ over a narco state, dependent on foreign aid and rentier economics for its survival – soon met its Waterloo at the hands of the Taliban insurgents. While Ghani made a cash-rich escape with four cars and a chopper full of money – in total stealing \$169 million from the state coffers – he left behind a nation torn apart by hunger, poverty and arms, waiting to be feasted upon by religious zealots. This was the predictable denouement of a repulsive saga of imperialist interventionism.

assurances from the Taliban that foreign nationals and those with authorization to leave Afghanistan will be free to evacuate, as tensions and bloodshed escalate on the streets of Kabul.

In a joint statement released by the UK along with the U.S. and more than 90 other countries, it was confirmed that the Taliban had said anyone who wished to leave the country could do so.

The joint statement said: “We have received assurances from the Taliban that all foreign nationals and any Afghan citizen with travel authorization from our countries will be allowed to proceed in a safe and orderly manner to points of departure and travel outside the country.”

On Monday, the UN Security Council discussed the Taliban's reassurances, amid mounting concerns over the plight of thousands of Afghans with western links.

A significant number of foreign citizens also continue to wait at the airport in the hope of being rescued despite the security threats and departure of foreign forces.

Footage of people holding foreign passports and pleading for help has surfaced on international media outlets.

Critics have slammed the way foreign governments have abandoned their own nationals. It follows the chaotic withdrawal of the U.S. led coalition following two decades of occupation, which has led many analysts to make comparisons with the U.S. military evacuation of Vietnam.

The Afghan state became a means of self-enrichment.

U.S. “kills” 9 Afghan family members

Nine members of one family were killed in a U.S. drone strike targeting a vehicle in a residential neighborhood of Kabul, according to U.S. media citing a relative of those killed.

The dead include six children, the youngest being a 2-year-old girl, the brother of one of the dead also told local media.

Only after the emergence of the reports, the U.S. military acknowledged that there are potential civilian deaths following a U.S. airstrike in Kabul.

A spokesperson for U.S. Central Command claims that “powerful subsequent explosions resulting from the destruction of the vehicle, indicating a large amount of explosive material inside that may have caused additional casualties.”

In a statement, the spokesperson added: “we are aware of reports of civilian casualties following our strike on a vehicle in Kabul today”.

U.S. CENTCOM initially said there were no indications of civilian casualties.

As reports of the fatalities emerged five rockets were launched in the direction of Kabul Airport. American officials said they were intercepted by the C-RAM missile system installed at the airport.

The incident took place earlier on Sunday, when the U.S. military launched the drone strike against a vehicle that Washington claims was carrying Daesh's local affiliate.

The Taliban condemned the strike, saying it had violated Afghanistan's sovereignty. Zabihullah Mujahid, the main spokesman for the group, said civil-



ians had suffered casualties in the U.S. strike and a house had been hit.

A day earlier, the U.S. struck a target in the province of Nangarhar, also alleging that it was targeting Daesh.

China's Foreign Ministry has condemned the attack saying “while respecting the sovereignty of Afghanistan, the U.S. should take concrete action to help Afghanistan fight terrorism and stop violence, rather than playing double standards or fighting terrorism selectively”

Critics of U.S. drone strikes say they tend to kill civilians instead of the alleged target and radicalize elements of the population.

Meanwhile, world leaders say they have received

Iran showing it is a loyal friend to Lebanon: academic

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN – A Lebanese political researcher says that Iran proved that it is a loyal friend to Lebanese people and never spare effort to help Lebanon in critical conditions.

“Iran is a loyal friend of the Lebanese people, and it will not hesitate to provide aid to end the crisis that is ruining peoples' life,” Tariq Aboud tells the Tehran Times.

The Lebanese Hezbollah has vowed that Iran would send fuel to Lebanon which is facing economic collapse and serious shortages of fuel for essential services.

“This initiative must be read in the context of the confrontation between Resistance Axis and Washington, which wants to bring the peoples of the region to their knees, from Tehran to Baghdad, Sana'a, Damascus and Beirut. But they failed and this will never happen,” the professor at the Lebanese International University notes.

Following is the text of the interview:

What are the main roots of the fuel crisis in Lebanon?

The main roots of the fuel crisis are a monopoly, as the laws in Lebanon prevent any side outside the oil and gas cartel from entering the market and working to compete with the oil cartel.

At the same time, the groups that are directly connected with the power centers in the country and the deep state have taken the control of the Lebanese economy.

The second reason is the indiscriminate support by the Lebanese central bank for the fuel, without following specific and clear mechanisms that prevent monopoly, hoarding and smuggling the fuel, which can lead to saving the treasury billions of dollars annually.

What happened in the past two years specifically relates to three purposes: the first is to increase the profits of the oil cartel in an imaginary way. The second is to make a profit from the people's deposits in the treasury. And the third is to push towards societal chaos aimed at provoking unrest and riot in Lebanon.

What are the implications of Hassan Nasrallah's move when he called for Iranian fuel?

The messages conveyed by Sayyed Nasrallah's initiative regarding Iranian oil is expressed on several levels:

First, Hezbollah never accepts to stand by and watch the collapse of the country and the humiliation of the people on the streets.

Second, Iran is a loyal friend of the Lebanese people, and it will not hesitate to provide aid to end the crisis that is ruining peoples' lives.

Third, this initiative must be read in the context of the confrontation between the Resistance Axis and Washington, which wants to bring the peoples of the region to their knees, from Tehran to Baghdad, Sana'a, Damascus and Beirut. But they failed and this will never happen.

How do you see the repercussions of sending fuel tankers by Iran to Lebanon? Have you seen any change in the postures of pro-West parties in Lebanon?

The parties allied with Washington have no choice, as they follow U.S. policies in the country. That is why they cannot modify their rhetoric because they need to express hostility towards Resistance Axis. It is natural that we do not see any change in their tone and behavior, but rather we will see greater brutality and more propaganda.

Given that Lebanon is living under a shortage of fuel and electricity cuts, who are the parties that are trying to obstruct economic trade and cooperation between Tehran and Beirut?

They are the same sides that spare no effort to hamper economic trade between Beirut, Damascus, Baghdad and Tehran. They are mostly political parties that benefit from the current state of chaos. I am talking about money cartels that possess exclusive agencies. These cartels do their best to show that they are trustworthy for Washington.

How can Hezbollah respond to Israel if the latter targets Iranian tankers en route to Lebanon? Do you expect a military clash?

The balance of power does not allow Israel to target the tankers, because the Americans do not want a new war in the region.

Therefore, I believe that the convoy of ships will arrive at Lebanon shores in peace, and will mark a major turning point in the political and economic situation of Lebanon.

Dozens of Saudi-backed troops killed

Scores of soldiers have been killed in missile strikes on a Saudi-backed military base in Yemen.

A spokesman for Saudi backed mercenaries in the south, Mohamed al-Naqib, says between 30 and 40 soldiers have been killed and at least 65 wounded in the attacks, adding that the casualties could still rise.

Reports say the operation used armed drones and ballistic missiles to attack the al-Anad military base, belonging to the Saudi-led coalition in southwest Yemen.

According to military sources, speaking to the Associated Press, there were three explosions in the training area at a time when dozens of troops were performing morning exercises.

Medics described harrowing scenes following the explosions, with soldiers carrying the wounded to safety while, at the same time, fearing another potential attack hitting the site.

Residents nearby said several loud blasts were heard in the area. Other residents from the central city of Taiz said they heard ballistic missiles fired from launchers positioned in the National Salvation Government held eastern suburbs of the city.

A military spokesman for Ansarullah which has carried out many retaliatory attacks against Saudi Arabia and its interests in Yemen did not confirm or deny the attack on the base. Observers says it carries the hallmarks of the movement's previous retaliatory attacks.

Ansarullah have launched similar attacks on al-Anad camp, including a bomb-laden drone in January 2019, killing six troops.

The latest operation came at a time when UN backed peace talks between the Saudi-led coalition and the National Salvation Government, have stalled after Riyadh refused to lift its devastating and deadly all out blockade on Yemen.

The talks had been focused on steps to lift the blockade especially on the Hodeidah port and Sana'a airport. This as the world's largest humanitarian crisis continues to grip the country.

Some 21 million people are believed to be in need of humanitarian assistance; according to UNICEF around 2.3 million children under the age of five are projected to suffer from acute malnutrition this year.

Meanwhile, the International Organization for Migration has warned about the dire humanitarian situation in Yemen. The organization wrote on its social media platforms that well over 16 million Yemenis have no access to safe water and sanitation.

The IOM says, last year it had helped more than 2 million Yemenis, providing them with services such as safe water and hygiene.

In a report, the UN backed organization warned that the Saudi's war on Yemen continues to displace Yemenis in their own homeland.

According to the organization, 50,000 civilians were forced from their homes in the first half of 2021 alone.

In March 2015, the Saudi-led coalition, backed by the US and the UK waged a war on Yemen.

Rights groups and international organizations say Saudi Arabia has committed multiple war crimes in its southern neighbor. Saudi airstrikes have indiscriminately struck family homes, weddings, funerals; even school buses carrying dozens of children have not been spared from the bombardment.

North Korea “restarts” nuclear reactor

The UN atomic watchdog has said North Korea appears to have restarted a nuclear reactor that is widely believed to have produced plutonium for nuclear weapons.

The International Atomic Energy Agency has had no access to North Korea since Pyongyang expelled its inspectors in 2009. The country then pressed ahead with its nuclear weapons program and soon resumed nuclear testing. Its last nuclear test was in 2017.

The IAEA now monitors North Korea from afar, largely through satellite imagery.

In an annual report, the UN nuclear watchdog said “There were no indications of reactor operation from early December 2018 to the beginning of July 2021” the report said of the 5-megawatt reactor at Yongbyon, a nuclear complex at the heart of North Korea's nuclear program.

“However, since early July 2021, there have been indications, including the discharge of cooling water, consistent with the operation of the reactor.”

The IAEA issues the report annually before a meeting of its member states, posting it online with no announcement. The report was dated Friday.

In June, the IAEA said there were indications at Yongbyon of possible reprocessing work to separate plutonium from spent reactor fuel that could be used in nuclear weapons.

The latest report said the duration of that apparent work five months, from mid-February to early July – suggested a full batch of spent fuel was handled, in contrast to the shorter time needed for waste treatment or maintenance.

“The new indications of the operation of the SMW(e) reactor and the Radiochemical (reprocessing) Laboratory are deeply troubling” it said.

There were indications “for a period of time” that what is suspected to be a uranium enrichment plant at Yongbyon was not in operation, it said. There were also indications of mining and concentration activities at a uranium mine and plant at Pyongsan, it added.

North Korea says its nuclear weapons program is for defensive purposes. It has repeatedly opposed joint annual war games between South Korea and the United States. Pyongyang views the war games as rehearsals for an invasion.

This year, the North called on Seoul to end the military drills saying they are complicating peace efforts between the two sides. Nevertheless the South went ahead with the military exercises.



Promoting tourism economy a major priority of government: Raisi

TEHRAN – Iranian President Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi has said his administration is planning to promote the tourism economy as one of the major priorities of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts during his tenure, CHTN reported on Sunday.

He made the remarks in a meeting with the nomadic tribal leaders of the southwestern Khuzestan province on Friday, underlining the country's great potential and capacities in the tourism sector.

Raisi noted that that tourism minister Ezatollah Zarghami will soon pay a visit to the province to pursue the government's programs in this regard.

Referring to Khuzestan's capacities for pursuing the mentioned programs, including young and educated manpower, the president stated: "Provincial managers should consider creating jobs for the province's youth and benefiting from local manpower as a priority."

He mentioned natural resources and for-

ests as assets of Khuzestan province and added: "Preserving these forests, which are in fact people's resources in the region, should be also considered."

"Oak trees, which are one of the major assets of this region and benefit the ecosystem greatly, should not be damaged; this wealth not only must be fully preserved for future generations but also developed," Raisi stressed.

The president further emphasized that provincial planning council meetings should focus on the potentials of the province to be able to identify the capacities and use them to solve the problems of the region.

Raisi traveled to Khuzestan on Friday for a one-day visit to the province.

Iran expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 26 being inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Moshir caravanserai joins shortlist for collective world heritage

TEHRAN – The 19th-century Moshir caravanserai has joined a shortlist of traditional inns that Iran pursues its possible inscription as a UNESCO World Heritage.

The Qajar era (1789-1925) caravanserai in the city of Borazjan, southwestern Bushehr province has recently received cultural heritage experts' preliminary approval to join the shortlist, the provincial tourism chief announced on Monday.

An all-inclusive dossier for Moshir Caravanserai has been prepared and it is expected to gain UNESCO status as the province's first World Heritage site along with some other historical caravanserais, Mohammad Hossein Arastuzadeh said.

By encouraging more tourists to visit such historical sites, global registration could contribute to their preservation and protection as well as increase economic prosperity for the region, the official explained.

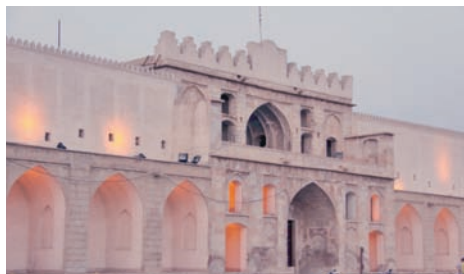
The historical inn was inscribed on the national heritage list in 1983.

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

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

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

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



Iranian caravanserais being ready for collective UNESCO tag

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

Last year, the tourism ministry announced that Iran is developing a dossier for a selection of its historical caravanserais for a possible inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage list. In this regard, cultural heritage experts are assessing such monuments that are scattered across the country to make a shortlist in terms of their architecture, historical and cultural values.

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

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

fourth, and fifth "saltmen" were also carbon dated. The third body was dated and placed in 2337 BP, the fourth body in 2301 BP, and the fifth mummy was dated to 2286 BP, placing them all in the Achaemenid period.

The isotopic analysis of the human remains revealed where these miners were from. Some of them were from the Tehran-Qazvin plain, which is relatively local to the mine's locality, while others were from north-eastern Iran and the coastal areas around the Caspian Sea, and a few from as far away as Central Asia.

Furthermore, the archaeozoological finds, such as animal bones found within the context of the saltmen, showed that the miners might have eaten sheep, goats, and probably pigs and cattle, as well. The archaeobotanical finds recorded showed different cultivated plants were eaten, indicating an agricultural establishment in the vicinity of the mine.

Inscriptions in Persepolis palace hold clues about evolution of Persian script

From page 1 ► written in Aramaic script; there is also varied literature in Middle Persian embracing both the Zoroastrian and the Manichaean religious traditions. Pahlavi was the name of the official Middle Persian language of the Sassanian empire, according to Britannica.

Tachara is one of the oldest and most interesting palaces of Persepolis that its charming structure is situated south of the Apadana and on a platform 220-3m higher than the level of the latter and the adjacent courtyard.

Persepolis website says that Tachara was built on a rectangular plan, measuring 40m by 30m, and a north-south axis. It consists of the main hall with twelve columns, two smaller columned halls on the north, a columned portico on the south,

and several guardrooms or storage chambers on either side. A stairway with two reversed flights leads to the portico from a courtyard on the south. The inner walls of these flights are sculptured with representations of servants and attendants, dressed alternately in the «Median» and «Persian» costumes, carrying food and utensils.

A frieze consisting of several scenes is sculptured on the center of the facade of the staircase. In the upper part of the middle section is the winged-circle (the Iranian Glory), flanked by two



A view of Tachara Palace located in heart of the UNESCO-registered Persepolis, southern Iran.

antithetic seated sphinxes who each raise a hand towards it in a gesture of veneration.

Behind each sphinx is a terrace of palm trees. Below this scene are two antithetic rows of nine soldiers in the «Persian» costume (fluted cylindrical tiaras, flowing skirts, and three-strapped shoes). They are facing a cuneiform inscription in Old Persian carved by Xerxes in a rectangular area framed by bands of rosettes.

The main hall and other rooms are provided with rectangular niches, each of which is hewn from a single

block of stone and is crowned with a vertically fluted architrave element known as the Egyptian covetto cornice. Originally, five doors pierced the walls of the main hall: two opening into the pair of four-columned northern rooms, one giving access to the southern portico, and two leading into the adjacent western and eastern chambers.

Persepolis, also known as Takht-e Jamshid, whose magnificent ruins rest at the foot of Kuh-e Rahmat (Mountain of Mercy) is situated 60 kilometers northeast of the city of Shiraz in Fars province. The city was burnt by Alexander the Great in 330 BC apparently as revenge to the Persians because it seems Xerxes had burnt the Greek city of Athens around 150 years earlier.

Iran urges greater tourism cooperation among ECO states

TEHRAN – Iranian deputy tourism minister has urged the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) to lay the ground for greater tourism cooperation amongst member states in the post coronavirus era.

Vali Teymouri made the remarks on Monday addressing "International Festival of Dushanbe-The ECO Tourism Capital" and "The International Forum of Agro-Tourism Development in Tajikistan", which were held simultaneously in an online environment.

"Forecasts and studies on tourist behavior indicate their communications will change in the post-coronavirus world, making neighboring countries and regions a more important factor," the official said.

Therefore, it is needed to shift to regional tourism cooperation [in particular] within ECO countries, he added.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Teymouri admired the selection of Dushanbe as the ECO Tourism Capital for 2020 and 2021 while he reminded attendees of the selection of Sari and Ardebil as ECO Tourism Capitals for 2022 and 2023.

In an interview with the Tehran Times, Teymouri explained how traveling and hospitality sectors of



the country are adopting the virus-related limitations, stressing the need to re-analyze target markets, redefine tourism products and improve the level of e-services. "We need to revise marketing strategies, and to redefine tourism products by paying great attention to nature tours, rural tourism, ecotourism, agricultural tourism as a tool to empower local communities and travel businesses."

Last year, Iranian former tourism minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan announced that mass, unplanned travels are not approved. "The outbreak of the coronavirus has caused damage to the tourism industry in Iran and [other parts of] the world in such a way that according to statistics,

Prehistorical grain storage discovered in northern Iran

TEHRAN – Locals have discovered a prehistorical grain storage pit during a construction operation being held in the northern village of Shamam in Gilan province.

"Part of a hand-made structure was recently found by chance during the construction of a residential building in Shamam village," IRNA quoted Iranian archaeologist Solmaz Rauf as saying on Sunday.

"With the provincial cultural heritage experts present, the work was stopped and the manmade structure was documented and surveyed," she added.

The discovery, which has an entrance diameter of 70 centimeters and a depth of 122 centimeters, is thought to be underground grain storage, she explained.

Such pits were mainly dug in fields with densely textured soil and are found in a variety of places and cultures, especially in moist areas, she noted.

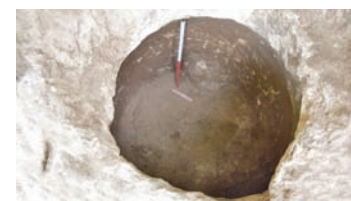
Besides protecting their contents from insects and microorganisms, as

well as mice and rodents, the storage pits provided a secure place to hide grain, which was the staple food in the past, from strangers and enemies, she added.

The official, however, did not provide further detail about the age of the underground storage.

Early people needed a sustainable way to store grain for use over long winters. Food preservation allowed communities to stay in one place, establishing towns and cities without the need to travel for food or better conditions. Some of the earliest forms of grain storage utilized baskets, sacks, and jars. Some communities had a separate storehouse where they kept grain inside in a large pile. In some societies, these storehouses may have also acted as a sort of social gathering place for hunter-gatherers.

Of course, these methods weren't sustainable — jars, sacks, and baskets are only suitable for short-term use



and small portions of the grain. Open or exposed storehouses left the grain vulnerable to rats, bacteria, insects, moisture, and parasites.

Archaeological evidence suggests that very early forms of the silo existed nearly 11,000 years ago, years before crop domestication became widespread. Early people likely used them to fight against famine. They predominantly stored barley and wheat, and the silos had raised platforms and slight slopes for drainage and moisture protection.

Some others used the underground pits. In this process, grain was conserved to be used as animal feed rather

than to feed humans. The pit was hermetically sealed, and because of the low temperature and low oxygen levels, there were few insects.

Gilan is well-known for its rich Iron Age cemeteries such as Marlik that have been excavated over the past century. It was once within the sphere of influence of the successive Achaemenian, Seleucid, Parthian, and Sassanid empires that ruled Iran until the 7th century CE. The subsequent Arab conquest of Iran led to the rise of many local dynasties, and Gilan acquired an independent status that continued until 1567.

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

Center for wooden artworks to be established in Borujerd



TEHRAN – Local authorities will establish a center dedicated to wooden artworks and woodturning in the city of Borujerd, which is situated in western Lorestan province.

"Considering Borujerd's rich history and potential as a city of woodworks, a specialized craft center will be set up here to focus on this specialty," the provincial tourism chief, Seyyed Amin Qasemi, said on Sunday.

Establishing such centers is hoped to play a key role in generating jobs for the locals and attracting more tourists to the region, the official added.

With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the num-

ber 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.

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

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

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

Salt mummies' personal belongings go on show at German museum

TEHRAN – Arrays of personal objects and tools, once belonging to the famed Iranian salt mummies, have been put on show at the Deutsches Bergbau-Museum Bochum (The German Mining Museum in Bochum).

"The exhibit features the scientific discoveries of archaeologists about the peculiarities of the salt men [whose corpses and belongings have been discovered in Chehrabad Salt Mine of Zanjan province]," provincial tourism chief Amir Arjmand said on Monday.

A similar exhibition will be held at the Frankfurt Archaeological Museum, the official added.

Last year, a team of experts from the two countries started a project for purifying, cleansing, and restoring garments and personal belongings of the mummies which were first found in the salt mine in 1993.

What was a catastrophe for the

ancient miners has become a sensation for science. Sporting a long white beard, iron knives, and a single gold earring, the first salt mummy was discovered in 1993. He is estimated to be trapped in the mine in ca. 300 CE. In 2004 another mummy was discovered only 50 feet away, followed by another in 2005 and a "teenage" boy mummy later that year.

In 1993, miners in the Douzlakh Salt Mine, near Hamzehli and Chehrabad villages, accidentally came across a mummified head. The head was very well preserved, to the extent that his pierced ear was still holding the gold earring. The hair, beard, and mustaches were reddish, and his impressive leather boot still contained parts of his leg and foot, according to Ancient History Encyclopedia.

The first mummy, dubbed the "Saltman", is on display in the National Museum of Iran in Tehran. He still looks very impressive. The third,

Flora of Iran



(Part 5)
Differentiation and migration
The Tertiary orogenesis began in the Miocene, producing a fundamental change in the division between land and sea in the Near East. The result was extensive ecological differentiation within the area, which in turn strongly influenced the evolution of species. At first the Mesogeian element must have played a greater role in the emerging and increasingly arid regions.

Species of the Paleo-African element could have migrated to the Near East over the land bridges between Asia and Africa, which still existed at that time, and could have colonized the Persian Gulf region and part of present-day Baluchistan. The worsening of the climate led to a retreat of the Indo-Malesian flora, while the Arcto-Tertiary flora advanced.

Nevertheless, the shrinking Tethys left behind a great basin stretching from Syria across Iraq and Persia as far as Afghanistan, which served as a barrier to the further penetration of the Arcto-Tertiary flora in the Tertiary. The boundary between the Holarctic and Paleotropical kingdoms was probably established at that time (Zohary, 1973); it still runs through southern Persia.

As fossils indicate in the Pliocene, the Arcto-Tertiary flora was distributed somewhat farther south than it is today. It was also richer in species, as can be seen from fossils of *Dicksonia*, *Ginkgo*, *Glyptostrobus*, and *Libocedrus*. In Persia, however, the nucleus was probably limited to the Hyrcanian district in the Pliocene. Today xerophytic descendants of the Arcto-Tertiary flora are considered Irano-Turanian species and are distributed over the arid parts of the Euxino-Caucasian-Hyrcanian subprovince and the mountain chains of the Zagros and Kurdistan (species of *Quercus*, *Pistacia*, *Rhamnus*, *Prunus*, *Cerasus*, *Amygdalus*, and *Acer*). The Indo-Malesian flora did not retreat entirely.

A few species survived in the warm and protected coastal regions of the Black and Caspian Seas. With the further retreat of the Tethys, an Irano-Turanian flora of Mesogeian origin was introduced into the Near and Middle East, spreading to newly emerging arid, often saline areas. A distinct evolution of species within the Irano-Anatolian stock, mostly colonized from Persia, ensued.

The ice age and the postglacial era
At the end of the Tertiary the vegetation of Persia and the entire Near East was probably very

similar to the present vegetation, leaving aside the strong influence of human beings during the last two or three thousand years. The boundaries of individual floral regions were practically identical with those today.

One major question is to what extent the climate on Persian territory was affected by the Ice Age and consequently how climatic changes affected the flora. Whether there was a pluvial period in the Near East or whether the climate differed only slightly from today's arid conditions is still a matter of heated debate. The evidence suggesting extensive glaciation of the central Persian mountains is very slight.

Hopefully, on the botanical side, palynological research will provide some clarification. For the time being, however, all claims for a fundamentally different distribution of forests and scrub during a few epochs of the Pleistocene are purely speculative. The same is true for the period from the great thaw about 30,000 years ago to the end of the last Ice Age and through the postglacial period. So far, the scant evidence derived from investigations (e.g., Zeist, 1967; idem and Wright, 1963) does not permit general conclusions.

Clarification of the evolution of vegetation on the Persian highland in the postglacial period is a pressing problem for future research. Such studies could reveal the extent to which human intervention has altered the ecosystems of Persia, and could provide information crucial for the regeneration of the damaged environment.

Evolution of new species and centers of diversity

According to Zohary (1963; 1973), 20 to 25 percent of Persian flora consists of indigenous (endemic) species. Many of them form the nuclei of large genera, with clusters of closely related species that probably appeared relatively recently.

Genera with especially large numbers of endemic Persian species include *Silene*, *Acanthophyllum*, *Alyssum*, *Amygdalus*, *Trigonella*, *Medicago*, *Astragalus*, *Onobrychis*, *Euphorbia*, *Acantholimon*, *Convolvulus*, *Heliotropium*, *Onosma*, *Salvia*, *Nepeta*, *Phlomis*, *Stachys*, *Scrophularia*, *Asperula*, *Helichrysum*, *Achillea*, *Echinops*, *Cousinia*, *Eremurus*, *Tulipa*, and *Allium*.

The genus *Astragalus* alone supposedly includes about 400 species endemic to Persia, an estimate that would probably be somewhat reduced after a critical review.

(Source: Encyclopaedia Iranica)

Iran among upper-middle countries in readiness for frontier technologies



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.

In recent years, the vice presidency for science and technology has been supporting knowledge-based companies active in the production of sanctioned items.

Vice President for Science and Technology Sourena Sattari told the Tehran Times in October 2020 that "U.S. sanctions caused exports of knowl-

edge-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."

To date, 42 knowledge-based companies with a total value of 2.8 quadrillion rials (nearly \$66.6 billion) have been listed on the stock exchange and they will soon turn into the biggest businesses in the country, Sattari said.

Meanwhile, President Ebrahim Raisi has confirmed that 30 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine will be imported.

"All public and private sectors, real and legal persons, and individuals must be coordinated and unanimous to control the spread of this dangerous virus," Raisi said on August 14.

Raisi highlighted that it is not solely enough to draft and announce health protocols, adding that if an individual disobeys the protocols and causes people to get sick, he has violated their rights.

In his August 11 televised address, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei suggested that containing the rapidly increasing wave of the Coronavirus is the first and foremost issue of the country.

Placing great emphasis on the fulfillment of duties and the implementation of decisions regarding the Coronavirus pandemic, Ayatollah Khamenei said "the vaccine, whether imported or domestically produced, must be provided with double effort and in any way possible made available to all people."

"Fortunately, with the production of the domestic vaccine, its foreign import route is also paved, while before that, despite the payment for the vaccine, foreign sellers failed to fulfill their commitments," the Leader said, urging officials to take importation and production of vaccine seriously.

Talks are underway with Sputnik, Johnson and Johnson, CanSino Biologics, and AstraZeneca.

On August 25, World Health Organization (WHO) representative to Iran Jaffar Hussain announced that three million doses of vaccine will be delivered soon to the country under the COVAX facility.

The COVAX Facility is a partnership, co-led by Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gavi-The Vaccine Alliance, and the WHO, alongside key delivery partner United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Iran has purchased 16.8 million doses, while roughly 5.8 million doses have already arrived in the country, and three million is expected to receive by the coming days, he stated.

The Iranian Red Crescent Society head Karim Hemmati said on August 26 that a total of 20,390 million doses of the vaccine have been imported so far.

Moreover, negotiation is underway with one or two European countries to purchase Pfizer and Moderna coronavirus vaccines, Alireza Raisi, the spokesman for the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control, has said.

Referring to good efforts made to import vaccines, he said: "By the end of September, we will definitely import about 30 million doses of vaccine. With another memorandum of understanding from October, we will receive another 30 million doses.

So, if we receive 60 million doses of vaccine, we can vaccinate the age group of 30 by the beginning of November."

TEHRAN – More than 300 websites that used to sell smuggled goods have been so far identified and shut down, IRINN reported on Monday.

According to the report, the volume of smuggled home appliances has decreased from \$2.247 billion in the Iranian calendar year 1397 (March 2018–March 2019) to \$897 million in the current year.

Over the past week, smuggled goods and currency worth 2,733 billion rials (nearly \$65 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials)

have been discovered in the country, police official Mohammadreza Moqimi announced on Saturday.

A total of 12,431 million items of smuggled goods along with 1,256 million liters of smuggled fuel and 783 smuggled cars were seized during the mentioned period, he added, IRNA reported.

In this regard, 1,310 culprits have been arrested and handed over to the judicial authorities, he noted.

By Mehdi Garshasbi

TEHRAN – The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Technology and Innovation Report 2021 has placed Iran among upper-middle countries in terms of readiness for frontier technologies.

The index yielded results for 158 countries with the United States, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom receiving the highest scores on a scale of 0 to 1. Based on their rankings, countries are placed within one of four 25-percentile score groups: low, lower-middle, upper-middle, and high values of the index.

The report has put Iran in the 71st position with a total score of 0.46, higher than Qatar, Oman, and Morocco.

Iran was also placed 82 in ICT, 74 in skills, 37 in R&D, 130 in industry, and 53 in finance sectors.

Only a few countries currently create frontier technologies, but all countries need to prepare for them. To assess national capabilities to equitably use, adopt and adapt these technologies this report has developed a 'readiness index'. The index comprises five building blocks: ICT deployment, skills, R&D activity, industry activity, and access to finance, according to the report.

Human development over the past two decades has been accompanied by rapid changes in technology and the increasing proliferation of digitized devices and services. In many respects, these have been beneficial.

Iran is placed 82 in ICT, 74 in skills, 37 in R&D, 130 in industry, and 53 in finance sectors.

Technology development in Iran

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

Currently, some 5,000 knowledge-based companies are active in the country, manufacturing diverse products to meet the needs of the domestic

education, and good mental health.

IRCS in talks for importing COVID-19 vaccines from renowned sources



TEHRAN – The Iranian Red Crescent Society is currently negotiating with a number of renowned international manufacturers for importing coronavirus vaccines.

"In addition to China's Sinopharm, we are negotiating with other renowned companies such as Sputnik [of Russia], Johnson and Johnson [of the Netherlands], CanSino Biologics [of China], and AstraZeneca [of England]," IRNA quoted IRCS official Alireza Askari as saying on Monday.

As per contracts signed with international manufacturers, some 100 million doses of coronavirus vaccine should be imported by the end of 2021, Nasser Riyahi, the head of the Association of Medicine Importers, said on Sunday.

The COVAX facility has pledged to provide Iran with 16.8 million doses of the vaccine, IRIB quoted Riyahi as saying.

Russia has also signed contracts to export 30-50 million doses of the vaccine to Iran, but it has reneged on the promise, he noted.

"It had been planned to import 50 million doses of Chinese vaccine from Sinopharm, but to date around half of the amount has been delivered."



ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

2 billion tons of soil erodes annually in Iran: expert

Iran loses 2 billion tons of soil per year as a result of land use changes, rainfed agriculture, and overgrazing, Hossein Akhani, environmental and botanical expert has announced.

"Sometimes, to support agriculture, land use changes permits are issued, while being unaware of its dire consequences on the soil," he lamented, YJC reported on Saturday.

"Iran is responsible for the loss of 10 percent of the world's total soil erosion per year due to unsustainable agriculture, overgrazing, destruction of natural reservoirs (interconnected sources of water supply such as rivers crossing the mountains)," he said, regretting, humans with uncontrolled interference, such as damping numerous wells have led to the collapse of these connections and prevented water from reaching some regions of the country.

فرسایش سالانه ۲ میلیارد تن خاک در ایران

کارشناس محیط زیست و گیاه شناس گفت: سالانه ۲ میلیارد تن خاک در ایران به دلیل تغییر کاربری زمین، کشت دیم و چرای بی رویه فرسایش می‌شود.

به گزارش خبرنگار حوزه محیط زیست گروه اجتماعی باشگاه خبرنگاران جوان، حسین آخانی اظهار کرد: برخی زمان‌ها برای حمایت از کشاورزی اجازه تغییر کاربری به زمین داده می‌شود، اما غافل از این هستیم که به دلیل ناپایداری خاک ده‌ها برابر خسارت ناشی از آن را باید تحمل کنیم.

وی بیان کرد: ایران ده درصد کل فرسایش خاک جهان را دارد و این به دلیل کشاورزی ناپایدار، چرای بی رویه، از بین بردن شبکه هیدرولوژیک (منابع تامین کننده آب از طریق شبکه رودخانه و زیر زمینی که هردو با هم در ارتباط هستند)، انسان با دخالت‌های بی رویه از جمله سد سازی و حفر چاه منجر به بر هم خوردن این ارتباط‌ها شده است و باعث نرسیدن آب به مناطق مختلف ایران شود.

COVID-19 UPDATES ON AUGUST 30

New cases	33,780
New deaths	669
Total cases	4,960,744
Total deaths	107,151
New hospitalized patients	4,918
Patients in critical condition	7,886
Total recovered patients	4,175,405
Diagnostic tests conducted	28,780,305
Doses of vaccine injected	26,941,260

TEHRAN TIMES



www.tehrantimes.com

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Public Relations Office: Tel: (+98 21) 88805807
Subscription & Distribution Dept.: Tel: (+98 21) 43051603
Printed at: Jame Jam Bartar Borna - 44197737



Tehrantimes79

No. 18, Bimeh Alley, Nejatollahi St., Tehran, Iran P.O. Box: 14155-4843 Zip Code: 1599814713

AUGUST 31, 2021

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

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

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times» Noon:13:05 Evening: 19:52 Dawn: 5:09 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:36 (tomorrow)

Art in Iran: Neolithic to Median

Late Neolithic Iranian pottery, circa 4,000 BC, British Museum.

Part 2

Cylinder seals of what is here traditionally called proto-Elamite style, showing animals acting like humans may be slightly later. Mesopotamian representations of animals acting like humans as on the sound box of a harp from Ur, may have to be traced to influence from such proto-Elamite representations.

The relatively frequent representation of women is also distinctive of the art of Iran. This applies not only to the small clay figurines of the Neolithic age which are found from Asia to Europe and which survived as a popular type of ritual or magical object in various contexts of later periods, but to such representations as kneeling female votaries in alabaster of about 3000 BC or to standing figures of glazed faience of the middle and late second millennium BC from Susa and Chogha Zanbil.

Variety of styles

In contrast to the iconographic motifs, some of which are found in widely different areas and periods but which demonstrate a measure of coherence in religious or magical concepts, the style of a work of art, that is, the manner and expression by which an iconographical motif is represented, varies strikingly from region to region and from period to period.

This creates great difficulties for the chronological and geographical classification of objects, especially of those which do not come from controlled excavations.

Art of the early village cultures, eighth to fourth millennium BC

Of the extant objects produced by the art of the early village cultures: clay figurines, painted pottery and stamp seals, the clay figurines of females found in levels of the seventh and sixth millennia BC show the great variety in style mentioned above.

The examples from Tepe Sarab, however, manifest a feature which is characteristic of some of the artistic production in Iran in several periods and regions: the figures are not made in one piece but are fitted together from several parts.

Clay figures of animals in this early period are simpler than those of humans, but a small boar from Tepe Sarab is a very expressive creature with its large head, small eyes, and curved back and legs extended in a posture of speedy movement.

Incisions on the body may indicate wounds. Later cuneiform texts of Mesopotamia indicate that sympathetic magic played a great role in magical procedures; thus, use of pictorial incisions to indicate the effects of a successful huntsman's spear may have been intended to work magic for a future hunt. Such use of magic would explain the intensity of expression in many early sculptures.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

To be continued

Director says historical drama “Unfinished Mystery” committed to truth

From Page 1 ► the chapter of the history of our country,” Amani told the Persian service of FNA on Monday.

“It was a difficult job to create the atmosphere of the period of the history because the series recounts a true historical story,” he noted

He also found casting a difficult job in the historical genre as he had to find actors that closely resemble the real characters.

Amani also thanked makeup artist Shahram Khalaj for his collaboration in this project.

Farhad Jam, an actor in the popular series “The Spouses” co-directed by Bijan Birang and Masud Rasam in 1994, has been cast as Bahonar in “Unfinished Mystery”.

In addition, Ramin Rastad, star of acclaimed movies “Conditional Release” and “Friday Evening”, plays the role of Ayatollah Ali-Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, a member of the Islamic Republican Party.

Alireza Mehran portrays the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei. He earlier starred as Ayatollah Khamenei in Mohammadreza Varzi’s 2015 TV series “The Enigma of the Shah”.

Javad Hashemi plays the role of the then president, Mohammad-Ali Rajai, who was also killed in the assassination.

The shooting of the 26-episode series began in January 2021 in Iran, and the crew left the country to film

Farhad Jam (L) and Ramin Rastad portray Mohammad-Javad Bahonar and Ayatollah Ali-Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani in a scene from the TV series “Unfinished Mystery”.

some scenes on location outside the country.

The series also centers on Masud Keshmiri, a member of the MKO who infiltrated the Islamic Republican Party and, coming up through the ranks, reached the position of

secretary of the Supreme National Security Council before planting an incendiary bomb in his briefcase that detonated in the prime minister's office, martyring Rajai and several others who were present.

Following the assassination

of Bahonar and Rajai, Ayatollah Khamenei was selected as Iran's third president after the victory of the Islamic Revolution.

The series is scheduled to broadcast on the Channel 3 of Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting.

“Ballad of a White Cow” named best at Der Neue Heimatfilm Festival

“Ballad of a White Cow” by Behtash Sanaeiha and Maryam Moqaddam.

TEHRAN – Iranian drama “Ballad of a White Cow” won the award for best narrative feature at the Der Neue Heimatfilm Festival in Austria, the organizers announced on Monday.

The acclaimed movie co-directed by Behtash Sanaeiha and Maryam Moqaddam is about Mina, a young woman who lives alone with her deaf child as her husband was executed for a murder charge a year ago. She tries to get her life together, take good care of her child and make both ends meet. However, her life gets more sorrowful when she finds out that her husband was innocent.

It won third place in the 2021 Berlinale Competition Audience Award this year.

The Der Neue Heimatfilm Festival, which took place in the Austrian town of Freistadt from August 26 to 30, also awarded an honorable mention to

“Beans” by Canadian director Tracey Deer in this category. The film also won the Youth Jury Prize worth €1,500.

“As I Want” by filmmaker Samaher Alqadi was named best documentary at the festival.

Motivated by the public rape of her best friend in the streets of Cairo, Alqadi uses her camera as her weapon against sexual harassment and embarks on a journey of self-awakening as she confronts her own haunting past.

The special mention of the documentary competition went to “Colors of Tobi” by Alexa Bakony from Hungary, while “School of Hope” by Mohamed El Aboudi won the honorable mention of this section.

“Surviving Gusen” co-directed Gerald Harringer and Johannes Pröll won the audience award.

Tehran museum unveils books of chefs-d’oeuvre

TEHRAN – The Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMCA) has unveiled seven books, five of which illustrate the masterpieces from world-renown artists the major art center of the country preserves.

“A Selection of World’s Artworks of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art” is one of the books of the collection unveiled on Monday in a special meeting attended by Deputy Culture Minister for Artistic Affairs Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini, Visual Arts Office director Hadi Mozaffari, and TMCA director Ehsan Aqai, the TMCA announced.

Published in 390 pages, this book covers the paintings and sculptures of the museum.

“A Selection of World’s Prints of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art” is another book, which has been published in 455 pages.

“A Selection of World’s Photographs of the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art”, another book of the collection, features photos by prominent photographers of the

world.

The TMCA preserves a large collection of works by American artist Andy Warhol, who was a leading figure in the visual art movement known as pop art.

His artworks have been published in a book entitled “Persona”. A number of his works were showcased in an exhibition of the same title at the museum in June.

Another book entitled “Souvenir” pays tribute to Iranian artist Manijeh Miremadi, who had donated a collection of her paintings to the museum.

Her collection was showcased in an exhibition as part of a program the TMCA set up in June to reopen after an extensive restoration that lasted over two years.

The TMCA has recorded the process of the restoration in another book.

Another book of the collection was a copy of The Shahnameh of Shah Tahmasb, one of the rare copies of Persian poet Ferdowsi. The museum

Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art director Ehsan Aqai (L), Deputy Culture Minister for Artistic Affairs Seyyed Mojtaba Hosseini (C), and Visual Arts Office director Hadi Mozaffari hold copies of books unveiled at the TMCA on August 30, 2021. (TMCA)

collected copies of folios of the edition preserved at museums across the world.

The TMCA director said that the book is the most complete copy of the Shahnameh ever published in Iran.

The Shahname of Shah Tahmasp is arguably the most important and beautifully illustrated version ever produced.

It was created by two generations of the most renowned early-16th-century

artists at the royal atelier in Tabriz, the first capital of the Safavid dynasty.

Characterized by calligraphy, painting, and illuminations of exquisite quality and artistic originality, the volume is considered one of the highest achievements in the arts of the book.

After its creation, this copy traveled through several royal collections until it was broken up and dispersed in the 20th century.

Bestselling author Rachel Caine’s “Killman Creek” published in Persian

TEHRAN – “Killman Creek” by Rachel Caine, an American writer of science fiction, fantasy, mystery, suspense, and horror novels, has been published in Persian.

The book translated into Persian by Hossein Masudi Ashtiani has been published by Ketabe Kucheh.

Every time Gwen closed her eyes, she saw him in her nightmares. Now her eyes are open, and he’s not going away.

Gwen Proctor won the battle to save her kids from her ex-husband, serial killer Melvin Royal, and his league of psychotic accomplices. But the war isn’t over. Not since Melvin broke out of prison. Not since she received a chilling text: “You’re not safe anywhere now.”

Her refuge at Stillhouse Lake has become a trap. Gwen leaves her children in the protective custody of a fortified, well-armed neighbor. Now, with the help of Sam Cade, brother of one of Melvin’s victims, Gwen is going hunting. She’s learned how from one of the sickest killers alive.

Cover of the Persian translation of Rachel Caine’s “Killman Creek”.

But what she’s up against is beyond anything she feared—a sophisticated and savage mind game calculated to destroy her. As trust beyond her small circle of friends begins to vanish, Gwen has only fury and vengeance to believe in as she closes in on her prey. And sure as the night, one of them will die.

Caine grew up in West Texas and graduated from

Socorro High School in El Paso, Texas, in 1980. She earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting from the Rawls College of Business at Texas Tech University in 1985, with a minor in music.

Caine wrote and published novels and short stories since 1990. She was a professional musician who played with notable musicians including Henry Mancini, Peter Nero, and John Williams.

From 1999, Caine was employed in corporate communications as a web designer, editor, corporate communications manager, and finally as director of corporate communications for a large multinational company.

She took an eight-month hiatus for most of 2008 to meet pressing deadlines, and retired from her position to write full-time in 2010. She lived in north Texas with her husband, artist Cat Conrad. She did most of her writing at home and on the road during appearances.

In 2018, Caine was diagnosed with soft tissue sarcoma and died on November 1, 2020.