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SCO Ready to Give Iran Full Membership

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Report



Angry Dems, GOP clash over Afghanistan

The U.S. Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, has appeared before the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee and testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, making him the first official from the administration of President Joe Biden to testify publicly to lawmakers since the Taliban takeover.

Biden's testimonies to Congress this week kicked off at the House then the Senate, in what could be a long series of high-intensity hearings about the chaotic end to America's longest war.

With plenty of finger-pointing going around, over how the two-decade-long war ended, lots of fireworks are expected at the hearings. Some Republicans already called on Present Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris and Blinken all to resign.

Blinked defended Biden's withdrawal during five hours of heated exchanges at the first congressional hearing where at least two Republicans have called on him to resign from office. Instead the U.S. Secretary of State blamed the Trump administration for lacking a real plan over America disastrous military withdrawal from Afghanistan.

Many Republicans, particularly those closely allied to former President Donald Trump, interrupted or even shouted over Blinken during the House hearing, a sharp shift from the committee's usually bipartisan cooperation. Blinken dismissed accusations that the State Department should have done more to help Americans and at-risk Afghans to be evacuated. He repeatedly noted that former Republican President Trump had negotiated the withdrawal agreement with the Taliban, and said Biden's administration could not renegotiate because of threats from the group to resume attacking Americans.

The top American diplomat said "there's no evidence that staying longer would have made the Afghan security forces or the Afghan government any more resilient or self-sustaining"

"We inherited a deadline. We did not inherit a plan," Blinken said, referring to the Trump administration's agreement to remove all U.S. forces from Afghanistan by May 1.

Members of Congress, both Democrats and opposition Republicans, have pledged to investigate the withdrawal since the Taliban seized control of Afghanistan last month after a rapid advance.

The panel's top Republican, Representative Michael McCaul, was among those that offered harsh criticism saying "the American people don't like to lose, especially not to the terrorists. But this is exactly what has happened" Page 5

Steel ingots export rises 39% in 5 months on year

TEHRAN- Iran's export of steel ingots increased 39 percent during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-August 22), as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Based on the data released by the Iranian Steel Producers Association (ISPA), 3.079 million tons of different types of steel ingots (slab, billet, bloom) was exported in the five-month period of this year, while the figure was 2.213 million tons in the same time span of the previous year, Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) reported.

Although, Iran's import of the steel ingots fell 33 percent to 2,000 tons in the first five months of the present year from 3,000 tons of the past year's same period.

In early May, Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry issued a three-month waiver for some approved steel production units to be able to export steel products especially long sections.

The ministry had restricted the exports of steel products and obliged all steel producers to offer their products at Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME).

Iran's export of steel during the previous Iranian calendar year 1399 (ended on March 20) declined 13.1 percent compared to the figure for the preceding year, data released by the Iranian Steel Producers Association showed.

Based on the mentioned data, over 2.839 million tons of steel products were exported in the mentioned year, registering an 18-percent decline year on year. Page 4



© ISNA, Mohammadali Ghasemi

COVID-19 toll declining thanks to mass vaccination

TEHRAN – The coronavirus mortality related to delta variant peaked in July and recorded over 700 daily deaths, but with the increase of vaccination pace, the toll is now decreasing.

Today, more than one million doses of vaccine are injected daily in the country, and many age groups

of the elderly, rare diseases patients, teachers, university professors, health professionals, veterans, etc. have been vaccinated against the disease and now the process of vaccinating students is underway.

Studies show that people who are not vaccinated

are 4.5 times more likely to develop COVID-19 than those who are fully vaccinated, and 10 and 11 times more likely to be hospitalized and die, respectively.

According to these studies, vaccines are effective against Delta strain and prevent hospitalization and death. Page 7

Iranian fuel tanker reaches Syria

TEHRAN — After 19 days, the Iranian ship containing 33,000 metric tons of gasoline reached Baniyas port in Syria on Tuesday.

Hezbollah leader Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah had threatened retaliation if anyone tried to interfere with the shipment and said the tankers bringing fuel are considered Lebanese territory.

Nasrallah dropped a bombshell when he announced that an oil tanker carrying Iranian fuel oil was bound for Lebanon.

Addressing a commemorative ceremony marking the Day of Ashura, Hezbollah's chief announced that the first of several ships loaded with fuel would sail from Iran to Lebanon within hours, warning the United States and Israel against any sabotage.

"Our first ship has completed all arrangements and will sail within hours from Iran to Lebanon with the blessing of Imam Hussein (peace be upon him)," he said, noting, "This ship will be followed by other ships, but we gave pri-

ority to diesel oil on the first ship because it is a top priority and is linked to people's lives."

Nasrallah thanked Syria for receiving the shipment on Sunday and facilitating its transfer, and said it would reach Lebanon by Thursday.

Unable to deliver directly by sea to Lebanon due to sanctions, the Iranian vessel, named Faxon, went instead to Baniyas, Syria for land transfer. Page 2



Iran start 2021 Futsal World Cup on high

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Serbia 3-2 in their opening match at the 2021 FIFA Futsal World Cup on Tuesday.

Hamid Ahmadi, Farhad Fakhim and Ahmad Esmaeilpour scored for Iran at the Avia Solutions Group Arena in Vilnius, Lithuania. Mohammad Nazemasharieh's men will play the U.S. and defending champions Argentina on Sept. 17 and 20, respectively.

The top two teams from each of the six groups will advance to the round of 16 as well as the four best-ranked third-placed teams, with the knockout phase beginning on September 22 and the competition drawing to a close on October 3.

Video technology is used at the FIFA Futsal World Cup for the first time, with a review operator and pitchside screen available for referees.

Iran compete in their eighth straight Futsal World Cup, more than any other Asian nation.

Iran made history by finishing third at the 2016 World Cup, the best-ever result by an Asian team.

This tournament was due to be held last year, but was postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Much of that squad returns in 2021, including Mahdi Javid, Hossein Tayebi and captain Ali Asghar Hassan-zadeh, four-time AFC Futsal Player of the Year.



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Anjireh caravanserai one step closer for being global

TEHRAN – Photo depicts the ruins of Anjireh caravanserai which is estimated to date from the Ilkhanid era (1256–1353) situated in a barren desert in central Iran, September 14, 2021.

A few weeks ago, restoration work commenced on the stone inn amid hopes for a possible registration on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Located in Ardakan county, the crumbling stone inn has an irregular octagonal plan and it is the "oldest caravanserai" within Yazd province.

Sassanid bas-relief to be installed on original place atop steep canyon

TEHRAN – Fars province's tourism directorate is set to reinstall a massive bas-relief, attributed to the Sassanid king Shapur I, on its original place near the entrance of a cave atop a steep canyon in southern Iran.

"This magnificent bas-relief is to be moved to its original location near the mouth of a cave on the face of Tangeh Boraq (Boraq Canyon)," the provincial tourism chief, Hadi Shahdoost Shirazi, said on Tuesday.

The project is being carried out under the supervision of top experts affiliated with the UNES-

CO-registered Persepolis, the official noted.

Over the years, the difficulty of access to the original location hampered [adequate] protection of the site and paved the way for illegal diggers and antique traders to harm the site several times, the official explained. However, the bas-relief was previously transferred to [an appropriate place] to undergo restoration and further protection, he added.

The official noted the heavy weight of the inscription, which is about seven tons, and the limitation of using simple means of transportation

on the slope of the valley, such as scaffolding and hand cranes, are among the difficulties in the process of transferring the inscription.

One of the hidden gems in the southern province, Tangeh Boraq has situated about 190 km from Shiraz. The canyon is named after a nearby village located to the south of the canyon. Here a roaring river has plunged through the high-rising rocks of the canyon and created the narrow chasm of Tangeh Boraq, which is sometimes referred to as "an oasis of incomparable beauty". Page 6

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Op-ed



Ruminations about the fall of Kabul

By Friedrich Kratochwil

The hasty retreat of the U.S. from Afghanistan and the re-establishment of Taliban rule in Kabul are certainly events that justify further critical reflection. But such a reflection is neither helped by attempts to prophesize about "the future" of the world, of the West, the East or whatever, nor is it as simple as connecting, for example two past events and draw a straight line which presumably discloses where we are going, as the narrative line "from Saigon to Kabul" suggests. For one, yes, Vietnam was a defeat of U.S. policies, as is the "loss" of Afghanistan, and here the undeniable disaster of the hasty and nearly irresponsible withdrawal will provide ample room for criticism, but the "meaning" of the event will probably remain contested.

In pondering such a question, we quickly realize that we have to cast our net wider than tallying up the losses since even after the disaster in Vietnam the U.S. did not disappear from the world stage. As a matter of fact, the end of the Cold War and the chances for a sensible and less dangerous world order emerged subsequently, brought about by the careful management of the U.S. and Soviet relations bringing also other nations including formerly "occupied" areas on board. That in the end those chances could not be institutionalized and did not result in robust and workable arrangements is truly one of the tragedies of our times. Recalling those facts suggests that critical assessments are ill-served by the simple-minded analogy of "winners and losers" taken from the strictly defined template of a (card)-game, even if drawing on such analogies is popular among mass audiences, academics ("we won" the Cold War, or ushered in the "end of history"), or even politicians (as the pathetic Trump presidency showed). The simple reasons for this mistaken analogy is, that the point of the political game is precisely the "making" of rules rather than just entering a game with specified ex ante rule, which are in a way self-executing – if you violate a rule of chess you are no longer playing chess – which is entirely beside the point. Similarly problematic is the analogy of policymaking to applying of rules to a case, as much of the "norms-research" by self-appointed constructivists in international relations suggests because making a political choice is not the same as engaging in an act of administration or even adjudication.

El Faro to publish book on Arbæen gathering in Colombian

TEHRAN – The El Faro International Publishing House in the Colombian capital of Bogota has announced its plan to publish a book on the Arbæen gathering.

"Arbæen, the Heaven on Earth" will be published this year on Arbæen, which will fall on September 27, El Faro director Angelica Maria Rojas said in a press release published by Persian news media on Monday.

Arbæen marks the end of the 40-day mourning period following the martyrdom of the Imam and his loyal companions on Ashura.

Over the past decade, Iran has initiated the Arbæen gathering, which is held by Shia Muslims in Iraq every year.

Hundreds of thousands of Iranians and Shia Muslims from other countries embark on a journey to the Iraqi city of Karbala to observe the day of Page 8



Putin calls Raisi, says meeting is postponed

TEHRAN — Russian President Vladimir Putin called his Iranian counterpart Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi on Tuesday, saying he had been quarantined for possible coronavirus disease, and called for arranging a meeting between the two presidents as soon as possible.

Referring to the Moscow-Tehran cooperation in the fight against the Coronavirus, as well as the joint production of the Sputnik vaccine, the Russian president stressed the continuation of this cooperation.

In the telephone call, Raisi said that Iran is pursuing the development and deepening of cooperation between the two countries in all dimensions.

Raisi also stressed the need for continued cooperation between the two countries in the fight against the coronavirus, including joint vaccine production, saying, "This cooperation should con-



tinue vigorously until the complete eradication of this global disease."

Raisi and Putin were supposed to meet on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in Dushanbe, which will be held on September 16-17.

Amir Abdollahian: 'Trial and error' is key reason for instability in Afghanistan

TEHRAN — Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian addressed a virtual meeting on the "Humanitarian Situation in Afghanistan" chaired by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Monday afternoon.

In part of his speech, Amir Abdollahian said, "We all face a new situation and a new challenge in Afghanistan today and we believe that a key reason for the current instability, insecurity and dire situation in Afghanistan is the policies of trial and error of the United States of America."

Amir Abdollahian stressed that the U.S. created tragedies during the years of occupation of Afghanistan and it created a disaster with the way they left the country and the world witnessed those disastrous scenes at Kabul airport in recent days.

Amir Abdollahian added, "At the political level, we must send a single message to Afghanistan that a secure, stable and developed Afghanistan can only be created through the formation of an inclusive national government composed of all parties," the Iranian chief diplomat remarked.

Iran's foreign minister also expounded on Tehran's vision on the humanitarian situation in the Central Asian country, saying, "We believe that in the humanitarian dimension, the people, women, and children in Afghanistan in recent

years and in recent weeks have been facing a deplorable situation and today the international community is obliged and should send urgent humanitarian aid to Afghanistan."

While announcing Iran's readiness to facilitate the dispatch of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan by various countries, Amir Abdollahian said the Islamic Republic has kept all its borders open to help prevent a new refugee influx from Afghanistan.

The top diplomat added that this is aimed at keeping local businesses, common markets, and cross-border trade open while sending humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan.

He also criticized the international community for failing to fulfill its obligations to address the situation of Afghan refugees. The Iranian foreign minister stressed the need for immediate humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people and also the formation of an inclusive government in the country. Abdollahian also emphasized Iran's relationship with all parties in Afghanistan.

He concluded by saying, "We pursue a policy that seeks the formation of an inclusive Afghan government and also want an Afghanistan free of terrorism and drugs where the Afghan people themselves can decide their future."

Iranian ambassador meets Azeri presidential aide

TEHRAN — Seyed Abbas Mousavi, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Republic of Azerbaijan, met with Hekmat Hajiyev, assistant to the president of Azerbaijan.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed the latest developments in bilateral relations and development of future plans in political, economic, cultural, consular and other areas of interest.

According to an Armenian report, the Azeri police are inspecting Iranian trucks carrying goods from Iran en route to Armenia.

Pan-Armenian news website quoted reports by the National Security Service of Armenia claiming

that the Azeri police are inspecting trucks with Iranian license plates, which are carrying goods from the Islamic Republic to Armenia.

"The border guards of the National Security Service of the Republic of Armenia and the guards of the border service of the Federal Security Service (FSB) of the Russian Federation are working together to resolve the situation," the NSS said in a statement, according to the website.

The news outlet also said that Azeri police forces earlier set up a checkpoint on Goris-Kapan Highway – the one also used by Iranian truck drivers – in Armenia's Syunik Province, a week after blockading the road altogether.

Iranian fuel tanker reaches Syria

From page 1 ▶ Lebanon's Prime Minister Najib Mikati has not yet commented on the arrival of the Iranian tanker.

"Lebanon set to receive more fuel shipments from Iran"

The Hezbollah chief said a third and a fourth fuel-laden vessel is expected to navigate towards Lebanon in the future, saying his group seeks for a part of Lebanon's fuel needs to be met using Iranian imports.

"Paperwork has been done for the dispatch of the third gasoline-laden ship from Iran. The fourth ship will carry diesel and will be sent over subsequently," Nasrallah said during a speech on Monday, Press TV reported.

Referring to Lebanon's new government that was formed recently at the direction of President Michel Aoun following endless indecision, he said the government would decide on any fuel shipments that could follow that.

Nasrallah, however, asserted "we want part of Lebanon's fuel imports to be provided by Iran."

The Hezbollah movement announced a decision to start importing fuel from the Islamic Republic last month amid crippling economic conditions, caused partly by the United States' sanctions that have been targeting Lebanon over Hezbollah's legitimate involvement in the country's political and military sectors.



'Some hoped Israel would target the ships'

Nasrallah went on to say that some used to speculate that the promise for shipment of fuel from Iran simply served propagandist media purposes. "It, however, became finally clear that such remarks are false," he said, according to Press TV.

Those same people were hopeful for the Israeli regime to target the vessels, the Hezbollah chief said.

"[Their speculations] were proven wrong. Israel is in a tight spot and the deterrence equation is there" to dissuade it from taking

any such action.

By deterrence power, Nasrallah was referring to his movement's vast arsenal of missiles, including precision ones, that the group has vowed not to hesitate to deploy to defend the country against the Tel Aviv regime.

Meanwhile, Nasrallah said the fact that the movement was distributing the fuel at a lower price that its purchase and imports have cost proved that it has not been cooperating with the fuel shipment "for commercial purposes."

"We're not after conducting business here," he noted.

IAEA should reflect Iran's goodwill in its report: MP

TEHRAN - Regarding Iran's cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), a member of the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee of the Parliament says Tehran expects the UN nuclear watchdog to provide a "positive report" about Iran's nuclear program to the IAEA Board of Governors.

"It was decided that the director-general to present a report on Iran's goodwill and positive actions to the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency at the next meeting," Abolfazl Amouei told IRNA in an interview published on Tuesday.

The MP pointed to the extensive cooperation between Iran and the IAEA, and stressed: "Most of the inspections of the nuclear activities in the world have been carried out in Iran, so that over 23% of the total inspections of the International Atomic Energy Agency last year were related to Iran."

At this stage, Iran expects that with good intentions that Iran has had in the past and now, the IAEA will be able to submit a positive report on Iran's actions to the IAEA board, the MP remarked.

Amouei said when Grossi returned to Vienna he said that he will surely present a report about Iran's goodwill to the board and that the level of cooperation between the UN body and Iran is at a very good level.

Addressing the IAEA conference on Monday, Grossi said, "We (IAEA and Iran) have been able, once again, to strengthen the IAEA's indispensable verification work for the benefit of all."

Amouei said, "We expect that, with the goodwill we have had in the past and now, the Agency will provide a positive report on Iran's actions to the Agency's Board of Governors."

IAEA director-general held talks in Tehran with Mohammad Eslami, the new chief of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) on Sunday. Following the talks, the IAEA and AEOI issued a joint statement in which they "reaffirmed the spirit of cooperation and mutual trust".

Part of the statement also said, "IAEA's inspectors are permitted to service the identified equipment and replace their storage media which will be kept under the joint IAEA and AEOI seals in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The way and the timing are agreed by the two sides."

Amouei said, "Grossi's visit is part of the technical cooperation between Iran and the international nuclear watchdog. Of course, the main goal of the Agency's mission should be techni-



cal, because the politicization of the Agency will damage the position of this Agency and its cooperation with Iran."

The visit between Grossi and Iran's nuclear chief took place one day before the start of the IAEA conference.

The MP went on to say that Iran as a signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is legally entitled to carry out peaceful nuclear activities, and in return the IAEA must monitor Iran's nuclear program like all other NPT parties.

The member of the parliamentary committee said in accordance with the JCPOA Iran "agreed to accept monitoring beyond the safeguards agreement" and therefore Iran voluntarily implemented the Additional Protocol, which allows for snap and intensive inspections.

However, since the American and European sides did not adhere to their commitments based on the 2015 nuclear deal Iran voluntarily suspended the implementation of the protocol, the parliamentarian stated.

In July 2015, when the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action was signed between Iran and the P5+1 (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany), the IAEA was tasked to monitor Iran's commitment to the agreement.

According to the JCPOA, Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear activities in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions. However, in May 2018 Trump quit the nuclear agreement, returned sanctions and imposed new ones. The sanctions were in line with Trump's "maximum pressure" campaign against the Islamic Republic.

Amouei said Grossi suggested that although Iran has restricted access by IAEA inspectors to surveillance cameras based on the Additional Protocol, Iran should "retain the cameras and footages" and, if it reaches an agreement on the nuclear deal with the P4+1, "it be able to access the content of these cameras."

Iraq serious to implement economic projects with Iran: MP

TEHRAN - "Al-Kadhimi is seeking Iran's satisfaction," says the head of the National Security and Foreign Policy Committee of Iran's Parliament.

Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi held talks with senior Iranian officials including Parliament Speaker Mohamad Bagher Ghalibaf on Sunday.

"The Iraqi Prime Minister was the first political official since the Raisi administration took office, which shows the depth of Iran-Iraq relations," Vahid Jalalzadeh told Mehr on Monday.

He said that the Iraqi prime minister traveled to the Islamic Republic to congratulate Raisi's presidency and to pursue economic and political projects between Iran and Iraq.

Al-Kadhimi stated that in his government he tried to implement the agreements signed between Iran and Iraq in political, economic and security areas, and to gain the consent of the Islamic Republic, the MP noted.

Jalalzadeh stated: "Al-Kadhimi, referring to the economic, political and security pressures on the Iraqi people in recent decades, emphasized that the Iraqi officials and nation will not forget the efforts and struggles of the Iranian people in supporting the Iraqi people."

Iraq has been suffering since Saddam Hussein invaded Iran in September 1980 that lasted until in 1988. After the war against Iran, Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990. Iraq was put under the UN sanctions for its capture of Kuwait. From 1991 to 2003, Iraq was just allowed to sell oil to import food and medicine.

In 2003, the U.S. invaded Iraq under the false pretext that Iraq was hiding weapons of mass destruction. The invasion turned Iraq into a battlefield for terrorists, so that rarely a day passed that a terrorist attack did not happen in Iraq. Amid bombings and terror attacks by terror groups such as al-Qaeda and pro-Saddam groups, a new more violent group that its kind that the world had emerged in 2014. It was called Daesh in its acronym or Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

Iran rushed to help Syria and Iraq in the fight against this unimaginably brutal group.

However, Jalalzadeh said Qalibaf told the Iraqi prime minister that the Iranian people are asking why Iraq is not helping Iran at this time of illegal sanctions by the United States.

"The speaker of the Majlis addressed the Iraqi prime minister and said the people ask us that we helped Iraq and our youth sacrificed their lives for the



common security of the two countries, then why Iran and Iraq do not have defensible relations in economic fields, and Iraq is not helping Iran in sanctions time."

"You are right," al-Kadhimi stated in response to the remarks of the Iranian speaker, the parliamentary committee chief said.

Al-Kadhimi noted that after the sanctions of the 1990s, Iraq is continuing to receive the currency it needs from U.S. federal banks, and "we are facing sanctions in financial and banking matters that we could not get rid of, but we are trying to stand by the people and the government of Iran."

Jalalzadeh evaluated the trip as positive and highlighted that if the two nations of Iran and Iraq came together, many problems in the region would definitely be resolved.

"Iraq can take important steps in breaking U.S. sanctions against Syria. In addition, the Iraqi government can help the Lebanese people circumvent the sanctions."

The Islamic Republic seeks to develop economic relations with Iraq, the MP underlined, and stated the team that accompanied the Iraqi prime minister on the visit to Iran was very significant.

It is rare for a country's prime minister to bring so many officials with him. The ministers of foreign affairs, energy, transport, housing, chief of the national security council, and the minister of finance accompanied al-Kadhimi on the visit, which demonstrates Iraq's political will to improve economic relations with Iran.

The parliamentarian referred to some border and economic issues in the bilateral meeting.

"I hope this visit will be a prelude to the promotion of Iran-Iraq relations during the Raisi administration."

In response to a question on whether the Iraqi prime minister had a message from Saudi Arabia for talks with,

Jalalzadeh stressed, "Iraq has been the venue for talks between the Iranian and Saudi delegations until today."

This case goes its own way, he said, underscoring that the Islamic Republic seeks to defuse tensions and establish good relations with neighboring countries.

"The experience of Afghanistan is before us. If we pave the way for foreign countries to act in the region, no communication will be established between neighboring countries."

The MP also said Iran was ready to have mutual and constructive relations with the countries in the region.

"We hope that Saudi Arabia and other countries of the Persian Gulf will understand this concept and help establish communication in a constructive and bilateral relationship that serves the interests of both countries."

One of the important principles of the foreign policy of the current administration, as emphasized by the President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, is the promotion of relations

with neighboring countries, Jalalzadeh reiterated.

He stressed: "The priority of the Islamic Republic is economic diplomacy with neighboring countries."

During his visit to Tehran, Prime Minister al-Kadhimi addressed many bilateral issues and discussed ways to boost ties with Iran in an arduous effort to balance Iraq's relations with key stakeholders in the region.

Heading a politico-economic delegation, al-Kadhimi was welcomed by the new Iranian president, Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi. The Iraqi premier met with the Iranian president to discuss a variety of issues including visa abolition for Iranian citizens, completion of a joint railway project and increasing the level of trade between Iran and Iraq.

During a joint press conference, the two leaders stressed the importance of deepening the Iran-Iraq relations at all levels.

"The deep bonds between Tehran and Baghdad stems from the beliefs and hearts of two nations, two countries and two governments," Ayatollah Raisi said. "Despite the wishes of the enemies, the level of relations between Iran and Iraq will develop day by day."

SCO ready to give Iran full membership

TEHRAN — In mid-August, while the world was focused on understanding the orientation of the newly-inaugurated government of Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi, Iran's top security official, Ali Shamkhani, dropped a bombshell that continues to reverberate across the West Asia region.

After a phone call with his Russian counterpart Nikolai Patrushev, the secretary of the Iranian Supreme National Security Council announced that Iran will soon become a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), ending a 16-year-period of being on the sidelines of the China-led, economy-oriented regional institution.

In a Twitter post, Shamkhani aid he held a conversation with his “friend and colleague, Mr. Patrushev” in which they examined developments in Afghanistan, Syria, and the Persian Gulf region.

He capped off his tweet with glad tidings. “Fortunately, the political obstacles to Iran's membership in the Shanghai CO have been removed & Iran's membership will be finalized,” he said.

This finalization is expected to take place during the incoming summit of the SCO which will be held in Dushanbe on Thursday this week. Iranian President Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi will leave Tehran for Dushanbe on Thursday in his visit foreign trip as president.

In addition to meeting Tajik President Emomali Rahmon, Ayatollah Raisi will also meet many other foreign officials. A meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin was also on Raisi's agenda but Coronavirus



infections among Putin's inner circle canceled the meeting as the Russian president will be quarantined in Russia during the summit.

Putin, however, was keen to set a date for a future meeting with Ayatollah Raisi. On Tuesday, he called his Iranian counterpart to ask for arranging a meeting with Raisi at the earliest convenience.

Preparations for the Iranian president's visit to Tajikistan have already been underway. On Monday, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan Muzaffar Huseinzoda met with the Iranian ambassador to Tajikistan, Mohammad Taghi Saberi. On the same day, the Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman announced that the Iranian embassy in Dushanbe was busy making arrangements for Raisi's historic visit.

Iran's success in joining the SCO is a milestone in the country's foreign policy. Ever since 2005, Iran has sought to change its “observer status” at the SCO to full membership. But each time, there was a hurdle in the path. There were some

differences with Tajikistan, a country that despite its many cultural commonalities with Iran, kept Iran from fully joining the organization.

But with Ayatollah Raisi taking the reins in Tehran, these differences are coming to an end. It is no coincidence that the same country that prevented Iran's membership is now hosting an SCO summit that will welcome Tehran into the organization.

Apart from the economic benefits that come with Iran's membership, Tehran's joining the SCO would be another indication of the change brought about by Ayatollah Raisi, who campaigned on a platform of balancing Iran's foreign relations. To this end, the Raisi government made it clear that it wants to push forward long-time strategic partnerships with some rising powers in the East including Russia and China. Gaining full membership to the SCO could be a major step in that direction.

Of course, this membership is not meant to tip the balance of Iran's foreign policy

solely in favor of Eastern powers. Instead, Iran seeks more balanced relations with the East and West after years of intense engagement with the latter at the expense of improving relations with the former.

This recalibration was necessitated by the fact that Iran had become an indispensable partner for the East and West. Iran is one of the few countries in the tumultuous region of West Asia still enjoying considerable stability and huge economic potential, which may have prompted the SCO to welcome Iran into the organization.

This mutually beneficial membership will also improve Iran's geopolitical standing in the region. After becoming a member, Iran will gain veto power to prevent any new memberships. This means that other countries, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates that are still at loggerheads with Tehran, will have to seek Iranian consent before joining the SCO. These countries are not mulling yet such membership at the moment due to their strong security partnerships with the West, especially the United States.

At the incoming Dushanbe summit, Saudi Arabia and Egypt are expected to be granted the status of dialogue partner, suggesting that Riyadh has not ruled out the prospect of joining the SCO in the future.

With the chaotic withdrawal of the U.S. from Afghanistan, the Saudis have to think twice before continuing to rely on Washington in maintaining their security. In fact, there are already indications that the Saudis have reached the famous conclusion of former Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak that “he who is covered by the Americans is indeed uncovered.”

IRAN IN FOCUS

SEPTEMBER 15, 2021

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

3

SPORTS

Iran too strong for Pakistan at Asian Volleyball C'ship

TEHRAN – Iran defeated Pakistan 3-0 (25-20, 25-19, 25-20) in Pool B and advanced to top eight teams of the 21st Asian Senior Men's Volleyball Championship.

Saber Kazemi score a match-high 17 points with captain Milad Ebadipour adding 14 more markers for Iran's victory.



The 21st edition features 16 teams comprising hosts Japan, India, Qatar and Bahrain in Pool A and reigning champions Iran, Pakistan, Thailand and Hong Kong China in Pool B. Pool C consists of Australia, China, Uzbekistan and Kuwait, with Korea, Chinese Taipei, Kazakhstan and Saudi Arabia in Pool D.

As of September 6, 2021, world No.10 Japan are the Asian team with the best world ranking, followed respectively by Iran (11), Korea (21), Qatar (27), China (29), Australia (30), Chinese Taipei (32), Thailand (39), Pakistan (52) and Kazakhstan (58).

Iran are drawn along with Pakistan, Chinese Taipei and South Korea in Pool F.

Behrouz Ataei's team will begin the new round from Thursday.

The 21st Asian Senior Men's Volleyball Championship is being held from Sept. 12 to 19 in Chiba, Japan, and the teams vie for two spots in next year's FIVB Volleyball Men's World Championship in Russia.

Esteghlal knocked out of the AFC Champions League

TEHRAN – Esteghlal football team of Iran were knocked out of the 2021 AFC Champions League after losing to Saudi Arabia's Al Hilal Monday night.

Esteghlal suffered a 2-0 loss against the ACL three-time champions in Dubai's Al Wasl Stadium.

Esteghlal were the better team and created several chances in the first thirty minutes of the match but they conceded the first goal in the 39th minute. Bafetimbi Gomis was on target for Al Hilal after Esteghlal defender Amirhossein Moradmam was tripped in the penalty area and the unmarked Frenchman found the back of the net.

Salem Al Dawsari made the scoreboard 2-0 in the 56th minute after receiving a good pass from Moussa Marega.

Shortly after, Esteghlal put the Saudi Arabian team under pressure but failed to capitalize on their chances.

Esteghlal's defeat ended their bid for a first Asian club title since 1991.

Iran futsal coach Nazemasharieh signs contract extension

TEHRAN – Iran national futsal team coach Mohammad Nazemasharieh has signed a contract extension.

The 52-year-old coach has penned a one-year extension.

He leads Iran at the 2021 FIFA Futsal World Cup in Lithuania.

Iran started the campaign with a match against Serbia on Tuesday.

Under leadership of Nazemasharieh, Iran won their first-ever medal at the Futsal World Cup.

Iran defeated Portugal in penalty shootout to win a bronze medal in 2016.

Iran also claimed two titles in the AFC Futsal Championship (2016, 2018) under coaching of Nazemasharieh.

We won an important match, Al Hilal coach says

TEHRAN – Al Hilal football team head coach Leonardo Jardim paid tribute to the determination of his players for

winning an important match against Iran's Esteghlal in 2021 AFC Champions League Round of 16.

Goals from Bafetimbi Gomis and Salem Al Dawsari secured the 2019 champion a place in the quarter-finals for the fifth time in eight editions.

“We won an important match against a team who had won their group,” said Jardim in the post-match press conference. “Despite the win, the match was not easy and we faced strong opponents.”

“I told the players that our opponents would push hard in the early periods of the match. We, however, controlled the match afterwards and played with a balanced performance.

“The players showed great determination to win the match. Our aim is to win all our matches in the knockout stage and we must show great concentration,” the Portuguese added.

Farhad Majidi rues Esteghlal's AFC Champions League exit

TEHRAN - Esteghlal head coach Farhad Majidi said his team paid a heavy price for not converting their chances, adding that the difference between the two sides was Al-Hilal's foreign contingent.

Esteghlal suffered a 2-0 loss against AL Hilal in the 2021 AFC Champions League Round of 16 in Dubai's Al Wasl Stadium.

“Our players gave their best and despite creating chances, we failed to convert them,” said the former international player.

“Al Hilal are a strong team and they have influential foreign players,” he added.

“I want to thank the players for what they did. It was a difficult match as our preparations were not perfect while our opponents changed their style of play specifically for this match,” Majidi concluded.

Iman Basafa joins Indian club Bengaluru

TEHRAN – Indian football club Bengaluru announced that they have completed the signing of Iranian midfielder Iman Basafa on Tuesday.

The Iranian players has joined Bengaluru on a one-year deal.

Basag has most recently played for Machine Sazi. He is Marco Pezzaiuoli's 10th signing of the summer.

Basafa has represented Iran in the U-17, U-20 and U-23 levels. “I am very happy to join Bengaluru and come to a country like India where football is growing very fast. I am excited for what lies ahead, for myself and our team and I hope to be able to contribute,” Basafa said.

Basaf started his career at Shahrdari Arak and has also played for Esteghlal, Fajr Sepasi, Malavan, Aluminum Arak.

Lebanon midfielder Chaito misses Iran match

TEHRAN – Lebanon football team attacking midfielder Hassan Chaito has missed the match against Iran.

Lebanon football team are in Group A of the 2022 World Cup qualification Round 3.

Chaito has suffered an ACL tear and will be sidelined at least for six months.

Lebanon will host Iran on Nov. 11 at the Saida International Stadium in Sidon. Iran sit top of Group A, while Lebanon are in the fifth place.

Persepolis earn hard-fought win over Istiklol in 2021 ACL

TEHRAN – Persepolis football team of Iran edged past Tajikistan's Istiklol in the 2021 AFC Champions league Round of 16 on Tuesday.

Mahdi Torabi struck in the 90th minute to secure Persepolis a 1-0 win over Istiklol.

Persepolis were the better team in their away match but failed to capitalize on their chances against organized Istiklol until the last seconds of the match.

“I am very happy for winning the match. To play in artificial turf made our job difficult but we deserved to win and I am happy for our fans,” Torabi said.

Ex-ambassador: SCO membership will force the West to provide facilities to Iran

TEHRAN – Iran is set to become a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) which currently consists of China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

The SCO leaders will meet in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, September on Tuesday. President Ebrahim Raisi of Iran will participate at the summit. Iran's membership of the organization is set to be endorsed in the summit. So far Iran has been an observer member.

Mehdi Safari, the former Iranian ambassador to China and Russia, has said that with Iran's permanent membership in the SCO, the West will understand that the space for Iran will not be limited.

The comment by Safari comes as Iran has been subject to sanctions by the West, especially after the former Trump administration quit the 2015 nuclear agreement and slapped the harshest sanctions in history against Iran.

In an interview with the Sobh-e-Naw newspaper, Safari partly blames Iran for failing to become a full member of the SCO so far. Part of the reason for Iran's non-permanent membership in the SCO has been Iran's own failure, and in the past eight years, there has been little willingness on the part of Iran to become a permanent member, the former diplomat stated.

Safari noted, “When I was ambassador to Russia, I stated in a telex to Tehran that we should become a permanent member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, but because the administration was looking to enhance ties with the West at that time, namely in 1997, my proposal was not taken into consideration.”

The member countries of the organization are noticing that the foreign policy perspective of Raisi's administration is more focused on neighboring countries, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries and Asian countries in general, and for this reason, they have welcomed Iran's permanent membership, Safari highlighted.

The SCO is a Eurasian political, economic, and security alliance. It was founded on June

15, 2001 in Shanghai. The founders were China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

Elsewhere in his interview, the former diplomat stated that the Shanghai pact was originally a security organization to ensure the security of the region against the United States and NATO.

He said since after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States also sought a disintegration of Russia the countries of Russia, China and Central Asian republics “formed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization”.

The formation of this organization was a very strong barrier against the United States, Safari noted, stating that today Shanghai is the largest organization in the world, especially as China, Russia and India account for two-third of the world's population.

The former diplomat believes that Iran's permanent membership in the Shanghai organization will bring security, political and economic benefits for Tehran, especially in the fight against terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime.

“The main part of the current Shanghai organization is economic cooperation,” Safari said, underlining that a bank has been established by China and Russia within the organization, and the Central Asian countries are using the bank's loans and other economic facilities of the organization.

China and Russia are the founding fathers of the SCO.

According to the former ambassador, with Iran's permanent membership in the SCO, the West would understand that in case of sanctions, the space for Iran would not be limited as the world is very large.

Safari believes membership in the SCO will bring security, political and economic benefits for Iran.

extensive programs are being pursued by the Office of the President and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. “Necessary follow-ups have also been carried out in Dushanbe and the Iranian embassy in Tajikistan.”

The spokesman added: “Iran's request will be considered at the Shanghai summit, and we hope this review will lead to the result we expect.”

Iran FM receives more congratulatory messages

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdolllaian continued to receive on Monday congratulatory messages and phone calls from his counterparts around the globe.

The messages and calls were done in the spirit of congratulating the new Iranian foreign minister on beginning his job as top Iranian diplomat.

Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Lestari Priansari Marsudi has sent a message to Abdollahian, congratulating him on winning Parliament's vote of confidence and his inauguration as Iran's top diplomat.

In this message, the Indonesian foreign minister called Iran one of Indonesia's important partners in the region. She added, “The development of relations during the 70 years of our diplomatic relations has provided the ground for the promotion of cooperation between the two countries.”

She expressed hope that the friendship and cooperation between the two countries would lead to better conditions for both nations, especially during the Covid pandemic.

Burkina Faso's Foreign Minister Alpha Barry has congratulated his Iranian counterpart Abdollahian on his winning of Parliament's vote of confidence and his inauguration as Iran's top diplomat. In a message, Alpha Barry added that he's ready to cooperate with Abdollahian to strengthen friendly relations between the two countries.

Irish Foreign and Defense Minister Simon Coveney sent a message to Abdollahian, congratulating him on his

appointment as Iran's new top diplomat.

The Irish defense and foreign minister referred to his country's constructive cooperation with our country and emphasized the need to maintain dialogue with Iran. Coveney also called for continued cooperation between the two countries.

In a message to the Iranian foreign minister, Mongolian Foreign Minister Battsetseg Batmunkh congratulated him on winning the Iranian Parliament's vote of confidence and his inauguration as Iran's top diplomat.

In this message, the Mongolian foreign minister expressed willingness to cooperate with her Iranian counterpart in order to strengthen the long-standing friendly relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Mongolia, especially regarding trade and economic cooperation.

Christophe Lutumdula Apala Pen'Apala, the Democratic Republic of Congo's deputy prime minister and the country's Foreign Minister, has sent a message to Iran's top diplomat, congratulating him on his appointment to the post.

In the message, Lutumdula said the Democratic Republic of Congo is willing to expand bilateral ties with Iran more than ever before.

The Congolese foreign minister also wished Abdollahian success as Iran's new foreign minister.

Abdollahian also received a phone call from his British counterpart Dominic Raab in which the top British diplomat congratulated the new Iranian foreign minister on his appointment to the job.

Raab congratulated him on his

appointment and expressed hopes, under the new government in the Islamic Republic of Iran, relations and exchanges between the two countries in different fields expand based on mutual understanding, according to the Iranian foreign ministry.

The phone conversation also included other issues of mutual interest. During the phone call, the Iranian foreign minister expressed regret over the effects of the wrong policies of the U.S. and some other western countries regarding Afghanistan, stressing that establishment of security and stability in the country hinges on the establishment of an inclusive government with the participation of all ethnic groups, readiness for talks, avoiding violence, attention to people and also practical fight on terror, according to a statement put out by the Iranian foreign ministry.

Abdollahian touched on Iran's hosting of some four million Afghan nationals over a period of more than four decades and reiterated the necessity for the international community to fulfill its common responsibility to prevent the new waves of asylum seekers and fight supply of narcotics in a lasting manner.

Abdollahian also said Iran is ready to facilitate humanitarian aid to Afghanistan.

The foreign minister also, in reply to comments by his British counterpart, stressed that the Islamic Republic of Iran expects all illegal sanctions against the country to be removed. He said while the 13th administration [the administration of President Ebrahim Raisi] is naturally in the process of consultations on how to continue the Vienna talks, it has reiterated

Steel ingots export rises 39% in 5 months on year



From page 1 ► As ISPA data indicated, the exports of steel products, intermediate steel, and sponge iron all declined last year, and despite significant output growth and the demand decline in the domestic construction sector, the exports of the mentioned products did not increase due to the pandemic.

Iran is currently the tenth largest steelmaker in the world and is estimated to climb to seventh place by the Iranian calendar year 1404 (March 2025).

According to the latest data released by the

Majlis gives green light to establishing Agricultural Investment and Trade Organization

TEHRAN – Iranian Parliament (Majlis) on Tuesday approved a bill for establishing the Iranian Agricultural Investment and Trade Organization, IRNA reported.

As a subsidiary of the Agriculture Ministry, the mentioned organization is established in order to integrate policy-making, planning, and supervision of investment, financing, and trade in the agricultural sector in line with the government's plans for developing the said sector.

The Organization is formed from the merger of the Department of Commerce at the Agriculture Ministry with related units in the Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry including the Agricultural Export Development Office in the Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) and the General Directorate of Agricultural Products at the Consumers and Producers Protection Organization.

As reported, the mentioned organization is going to be officially established within three months.

Supporting investment in agricultural businesses, planning to direct liquidity towards investment in the production of agricultural products in coordination with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, increasing the

World Steel Association (WSA), production of crude steel in Iran reached 17.8 million tons during January-July, 2021 to register a 9.9 percent growth year on year.

Iran's monthly crude steel output stood at 2.6 million tons in July 2021, rising nine percent compared to the figure for July 2020.

The WSA's previous report had put Iran at the world's tenth place in terms of steel production in the first three-month of 2021.

According to the association's data, Iran produced 7.5 million tons of crude steel in Q1 2021, registering a 10.7 percent growth compared to the same period in 2020.

The Islamic Republic's steel output stood at 2.6 million tons in March, indicating a 10.7 percent rise year on year.

The Iranian Steel industry has been constantly developing over the past years against all the pressures and obstacles created by outside forces like the U.S. sanctions and the coronavirus outbreak that has severely affected the performance of the world's top producers.

volume and quality of investment in public and private sectors of the agricultural industry, monitoring the financial resources allocated for investment projects in the agricultural sector, and supporting activities leading to the expansion of the capital market in the agricultural sector in coordination with the Securities and Exchange Organization(SEO) are among the major goals of the said organization.

Development of export markets through the development of regional cooperation with other countries, especially neighbors in the trade of agricultural goods in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Trade Promotion Organization, supporting cooperative organizations in the agricultural sector for domestic marketing and foreign trade of agricultural goods in coordination with the Economic Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Trade Promotion Organization, as well as policy-making and planning to eliminate unnecessary intermediaries from the market of agricultural products with an emphasis on creating and developing national and local markets are also reported to be among the goals targeted by the Iranian Agricultural Investment and Trade Organization.

499 idle industrial units revived in 5 months

TEHRAN- The head of Iran Small Industries and Industrial Parks Organization (ISIPO) announced that 499 idle industrial units have been revived in the country during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-August 22).

According to Ali Rasoulia, the mentioned units have created job opportunities for over 12,478 people, IRNA reported.

Rasoulia said that reviving 1,600 idle and semi-active industrial units in the industrial parks and zones, as well as 400 units outside of such parks is targeted for the current fiscal year.

The official mentioned Industry, Mining and Trade Ministry's programs for developing the country's productive sectors in the current year and said: "Industry Ministry has defined 36 new programs for improving the productivity of the country's major strategic industries in the current year among which ISIPO is in charge of two programs.

The mentioned programs include providing infrastructure for industrial parks and zones and reviving idle and semi-active industrial units, he explained.

Last year, 1,557 stagnant and semi-active units returned to the production cycle in the industrial parks with a financing of 35 trillion rials (over \$833 million), providing employment for 27,000 people, the ISIPO head further said.

With the aim of reactivating stagnant units or units that are operating below capacity, 900 consultants from the private sector and knowl-



edge-based companies were selected in the form of industry clinics across the country to recognize the weaknesses of these units, Rasoulia has previously stated.

"Despite the two major challenges of sanctions and coronavirus pandemic, which imposed severe restrictions on the country, we tried to activate domestic capacities by turning to localizing the technology of manufacturing parts and equipment", he added.

Sanctions have caused problems for financial exchanges and the export of goods to other countries, he said, adding, "The negative effects of coronavirus pandemic on various parts of the country, including industry, are not hidden from anyone, and the economic growth of

some countries has reached below zero during this period."

Iran is proud that despite these restrictions and pressure from these two important challenges, its industry has grown by more than seven percent, according to the statistics and reports from various sectors, the official further highlighted.

Also, as announced by Deputy Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Mehdi Sadeqi Niaraki, over 6,500 new industrial units were established across the country during the past year which created jobs for over 121,000 people.

Touching upon the Industry Ministry's plans for the realization of the motto of the current year which is

Reviving 2,000 idle and semi-active industrial units is targeted for the current fiscal year.

Iranian heavy crude oil price falls 3.6% in August: OPEC

TEHRAN - Iranian heavy oil price decreased \$2.64 in August to register a 3.6-percent fall compared to the previous month, according to OPEC's latest monthly report published on Monday.

Following the increase in oil supply by OPEC members in the mentioned month, the Iranian heavy crude oil price settled at \$70.34 per barrel, compared to July's \$72.98 per barrel.

According to the report, the country's average heavy crude price was \$65.7 from the beginning of 2021 up to the report's publishing day, in comparison to \$39.34 in the previous year's same period.

The report put Iranian crude output for August at 2.485 million barrels per day (bpd) indicating an 8,000-bpd decline compared to the figure for the

previous month.

Based on OPEC data, the country's average crude output in the second quarter of 2021 stood at 2.443 million bpd indicating a near 229,000-bpd rise compared to the average figure for the year's first quarter.

OPEC basket prices also fell \$3.2 or 4.4 percent to settle at \$70.33 a barrel in August from the previous month.

Iranian heavy crude oil price had followed an upward trend since the beginning of the current year up to May.

In addition to the devastating impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on the global oil industry which resulted in the drastic fall in oil prices, the Iranian oil industry has also been under pressure from the U.S. efforts



to isolate the country by re-imposing sanctions.

The country, however, has been ramping up its oil production over the past few months following the recent developments in the White House and also the recovery of the global markets from the negative impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

Earlier in February, Fitch Solutions Incorporation, a subsidiary of Fitch

named the year of "Production: support and the elimination of obstacles" by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, the official has said: "In the year that has been dedicated to the production sector by the Leader of the revolution, the orientation of all government organizations and executive bodies should be towards supporting the country's industrial and mining units."

Niaraki pointed to a 40-percent increase in the issuance of establishment licenses for industrial units in the previous year, saying: "The number of establishment licenses increased to more than 36,000 last year, which shows that people are encouraged to invest in the productive sectors."

He also mentioned an 85-percent rise in the allocation of land for establishing industrial units across the country and noted that over 4,500 hectares of land were handed over to applicants in the previous calendar year.

According to the official, there are over 46,000 small and medium-sized industrial units in Iran's industrial parks and zones, of them about 9,200 units are inactive.

Iran's industrial parks play a significant role in making the country independent through boosting production, which is a major strategy of Iran to combat the U.S. sanctions.

In fact, strengthening domestic production to achieve self-reliance is the most important program that Iran is following up in its industry sector in a bid to nullify the effects of the U.S. sanctions on its economy.

Ratings, which is one of the U.S.'s three biggest credit rating agencies, forecasted a 6.8-percent growth for Iranian oil exports in 2021 if the U.S. comes back to the 2015 nuclear deal.

In one of its latest reports dubbed "Iran Oil and Gas Report", Fitch also saw the Islamic Republic's crude oil exports double in 2022 compared to 2020.

"The prospects for the Iranian oil sector have brightened significantly following Joe Biden's victory in the U.S. presidential election on November 3. President Biden has indicated that he will seek to re-enter the U.S. into the Iranian nuclear deal, paving the way for a roll-back of secondary sanctions and recovery of around 2.0 million bpd in oil production," the report said.

First step to start one-million housing project to be taken by next 2 weeks

TEHRAN- Iran's Transport and Urban Development Minister Rostam Qasemi announced that the first step for the implementation of the one-million housing project will be taken by the next two weeks.

Addressing the press on the sidelines of the 21st International Exhibition of Building and Construction Industry (Iran Confair 2021), which he inaugurated at Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds on Monday, the minister said that in the next two weeks, good news will be announced in terms of the government's housing program, which is the practical step to start construction of the houses.

"We have no problem with the land issue, and this strategic move by the Ministry of Transport and Urban Development to establish a land bank is envisaged in a two-month plan that provides a large portion of the land for our four-year goals in the housing sector", he explained.

It is while last week, the deputy head of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA) had said that the lack of infrastructure makes the one-million housing project a challenge.

Mohammad Atabak believes that from the point of view of providing the required materials, the implementation of the annual construction plan of one million houses is possible and feasible, but the lack of infrastructure such as water, electricity and gas is likely to pose a serious challenge to this

project.

The production of constructional materials can certainly meet the need for the construction of this number of houses per year, but not in a situation when power outages have taken the breath away of cement and steel factories, he noted.

He said that if the weakness of the infrastructure, especially in the field of energy supply (gas and electricity), is not eliminated, the implementation of this project will probably be challenged.

The deputy speaker of the parliament has recently said 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 August 29, 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.

Also, the 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.

In early August, 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.

Started in winter 2018, the National Housing Action Plan aims to construct 400,000 small and medium-size apartments (70-100 square meters in size) across the country and particularly in Tehran, where housing prices have risen most sharply.

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

Back in March, 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-Boyer-Ahmad, and Golestan came in the second stage, while from Chaharmahal-Bakhtiari, Hamedan, and Yazd provinces came in the third stage.

ward trend.

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

He pointed to the continuous increase in inflation rate in recent months and its effect on capital

market transactions and added: "Shareholders' fears and worries about investing in the market will be eliminated by increasing government support and will increase their willingness to invest in this market."

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

Over the last three years, many efforts have been made to allocate the needed land for housing projects including the National Housing Action Plan.

TEDPIX climbs 21,700 points on Tuesday

TEHRAN – TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), gained 21,730 points to 1.496 million on Tuesday.

As reported, 7,213 billion securities worth 61.549 trillion rials (about \$1.465 billion) were traded at the TSE on Tuesday.

The first market's index gained 19,412 points, and the second market's index rose 32,865 points.

TEDPIX gained 6,000 points to

1.526 million in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday, September 10).

During the past week, the indices of Bandar Abbas Oil Refinery, Mobarakeh Steel Company, State Retirement Fund, Social Security Investment Company, Isfahan Oil Refinery, and Berekat Pharmaceutical Group were the most widely followed indices.

Back in July, Market Analyst Mehdi Bayat-Manesh had said that TEDPIX

is going to improve in the second half of the current Iranian calendar year (September 23, 2021-March 20, 2022).

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

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

TCCIMA to offer proposal package for developing industrial, mining sectors

TEHRAN – Head of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (TCCIMA)'s Industry and Mining Committee says the chamber is preparing strategies to remove obstacles facing the country's industry and mining sectors.

"In preparing this package, the consultation of Iran Mine House (IMH), Tehran House of Industry and Mining and the Association of Home Appliances Industry has been used," Ali Naghib said on Tuesday.

Referring to the new Industry Minister's plans for taking new measures in line with the expectations of the private sector and also the formation of a joint working group with the private sector, he added: "Now is a good time to present a clear list of challenges and problems facing the economic sectors, and also the expectations of the private sector and propose some solutions to the new minister."

According to Naghib, participation of the private sector in formulating policies and strategies for the country's industrial development, pursuing and resolving fundamental problems in the field of taxation, insurance, and social security, preventing exchange rate fluctuations, trying to lift international sanctions, improving the business environment, removing the obstacles in administrative processes, implementing the approvals of the Business Facilitation Headquarters and the Government-Private Sector Dialogue Council, monitoring the proper implementation of the regulation on improving the business environment, reviewing and amending unnecessary laws and regulations and solving the problem regarding the shortage of raw materials are some of the expectation of the private sector for developing the country's industrial and mining industries.

Developing domestic production and cutting reliance on external sources for meeting the country's needs has become one of the main priorities of the Iranian government over the past few years, and especially since the re-imposition of the U.S. sanctions in 2018 several programs have been implemented to realize this goal.

The industry and mining sectors, as major pillars of the Iranian economy, have been especially the focus of the said programs.

With the 13th government taking office, the new Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Seyyed Reza Fatemi Amin has put the above-mentioned strategy atop his ministry's agenda and announced the implementation of 36 new programs for developing the country's industrial, mining and trade sectors.

Angry Dems, GOP clash over Afghanistan

From page 1 ► McCaul questioned why assets like the Bagram Air Base were not maintained and why the administration had not reached counterterrorism agreements with neighboring countries.

McCaul warned the hearing “this is a national security threat as China moves in. For all I know they make take over Bagram”

Blinken said his department was actively working to identify any potential threats.

The Congress Members asked a long list of questions regarding the sudden collapse of the former Afghan government and the hectic evacuation of some 124,000 people.

Democrats expressed concern about Americans and at-risk Afghans who still wish to leave.

However they backed the withdrawal as necessary, even if it was painful. The committee's chairman Representative Gregory Meeks pointed out that he “would welcome hearing [from republicans] what exactly a smooth withdrawal from a messy chaotic 20-year war looks like”.

Blinken praised the evacuation claiming it was “a heroic effort.” He pledged that the United States will continue to support humanitarian aid to Afghanistan but not through the Taliban, only through non-governmental organizations and UN agencies.

Afghanistan was already at risk of running out of food as it faced a devastating drought before the political upheaval even began.

“We need to do everything we can to make sure the people of Afghanistan don't suffer any more than is already the case” Blinken said.

In a pre prepared statement made public to the media, Biden admitted “consistent with sanctions, this aid will not flow through the government, but rather through independent organizations like NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and U.N. agencies”.

He also rejected speaking personally to any members of the Taliban leadership for the time being saying “any legitimacy that they may seek from the international community... is going to be contingent on their actions”.

Before the questioning began a Senate



aide said “we expect a confrontational hearing.” Members of Congress promised a long list of questions about the rapid collapse of the U.S.-backed Afghan government.

In a written reply to a request for comment on the hearing McCaul said “I imagine there will be a lot of questions on what decisions were being made leading up to the withdrawal, including why the White House pressed DOD (the Defense Department) to withdraw troops before we evacuated American civilians and our Afghan partners”.

Democrats had always maintained they wanted the hearing to address not just the seven months Biden was president before Kabul was captured by the Taliban but all 20 years of U.S. involvement in the country, under presidents from both parties.

Senator Chris Murphy says he fears “that Republicans are going to turn this into a circus and try to put the blame on Joe Biden for 20 years' worth of mistakes in Afghanistan”.

Murphy, a Democratic member of the foreign relations panel, also told reporters “the real question is why did we

stay in Afghanistan for another 10 years after we knew that there was going to be no way we could build an Afghan military, an Afghan government that was capable of holding the country against the Taliban once we left”.

Another committee Democrat, Senator Chris Van Hollen, noted that Trump had pushed to get out of Afghanistan even more quickly and criticized Biden for remaining as long as he did.

“It's a little hard to take and listen to Republican colleagues who strongly supported the Trump decisions to now be attacking President Biden for decisions that they had previously supported” he said.

A U.S.-led invasion toppled the Taliban in 2001 after the September 11 attacks. Washington accused the Taliban of providing a safe haven for al-Qaeda leaders in Afghanistan and used the pretext to invade the country and topple the Taliban.

20 years later, the Taliban returned to power with many Americans asking who exactly benefited from the trillions of dollars spent on the war?

U.S. Afghan exit concerns Persian Gulf allies

A senior Persian Gulf Arab official says the United States' chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan has raised questions for its Arab allies in West Asia about whether or not they can continue to rely on Washington.

U.S. allies fear the Taliban's return and the vacuum left by the West's chaotic withdrawal will allow al-Qaeda to gain a foothold in Afghanistan 20 years after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States.

The Persian Gulf Arab official spoke to media on condition of anonymity due to the high sensitivity of the diplomacy.

“Afghanistan is an earthquake, a shattering, shattering earthquake and this is going to stay with us for a very, very long time”

“Can we really depend on an American security umbrella for the next 20 years? I think this is very problematic right now – really very problematic.”

The official added Persian Gulf Arab allies of the United States find the way that U.S. foreign policy appears to oscillate with “180-degree shifts” problematic.



He also said that the withdrawal of the United States had sent a message to militants across the world that all they had to do was to continue their fight.

U.S. allies in the Persian Gulf use the term militant loosely and the official would more likely be referring to anti-U.S. forces in general.

The concern by Washington's allies in the Persian Gulf is another signal of America weakening power in the region.

Ruminations about the fall of Kabul

From page 1 ► That much should be obvious, if one is not befuddled and prefers to wallow in the simplistic gloating over the defeat of the forces of evil or – looking on it from the other side, i.e., of the loser (and his allies) that now everything is in jeopardy so that we just have to redouble our efforts and make no compromises in the future. While, of course, the latter stance is hardly sensible, victory might be an equally problematic advisor, as it seems to vindicate the winner's view, instead of suggesting the need for a critical postmortem assessment. I hope therefore that powers in the Middle East- from Saudi Arabia to Emirates, Iraq, and Iran will think a lot more about the implications of this event than just gloat over this “victory” in the name of Islam.

It is this type of stereotyped thinking in terms of uncritically accepted analogies, although rather common in both the public debates and even the scholarly discourses, which I want to probe in this contribution. Shoddy thought ranges from the “truths” of realism to the prediction of the eventual victory of human rights (of course understood in terms of the projects and priorities which “people like us” – a la John Rawls – pursue), to the notion of the duty to “do Gods work” – as one of the main culprits of the last sub-prime crash at the Wall Street so disingenuously put it. All such obfuscations prevent us from taking care of the problems of praxis and of making policy, instead of just trying to realize some pre-existing blueprints which are often not even worth the paper on which they are drawn, or which are based just on assertions addressed to searching, but often rather uncritical audience, in order to impress it. But then again it could worse if policies base on such phantasmagoric notions are pursued –without much ado and even a bow to propaganda- directly by “fire and sword”.

To that extent the difficulties ahead of the “victorious” Taliban are considerable. They will have to prove that they are more than just a cohort of determined fighters who can organize resistance against outsiders – forcing the latter to retreat through clever handing of pyrotechnics and “local knowledge” – but that they are also capable of transcending the deep cleavages in their society for the pursuit of common projects when no external enemy provides anymore the glue for collaboration. Here the adeptness in using force becomes a curse rather than a blessing, as it tends to escalate conflict, that could lead to full-fledged civil war or an unstable stalemate of persistent, even though lower-level violent conflict, or to widespread “passive” resistance, all of which would disable common policies. Force, coming out of the barrel of a gun is thus hardly a “trump” on all occasions, or as Napoleon once so aptly remarked: “You can do a lot of things with bayonets, but one thing you cannot do with them: to sit on them”.

True, the Taliban have changed over the years and have apparently also acquired more recently considerable skills in handling monetary instruments to deal with the backwardness and poverty within the inherited territory. However, for becoming a new Switzerland, or even an oasis for tax dodgers, a lot more is required than military hardware plus a functioning surveillance system which will treat insiders harshly but outsiders and their in-transparent dealings leniently. In short, without meeting those above-mentioned demands enabling the pursuit of common projects, there is the danger of getting stuck with the role of being the “grave for empires” and of remaining a garden for the cultivation of poppies, which in their “processed form” and by means of functioning (black) “markets”, meet the never-ending demand of Westerners for “recreational” drugs.

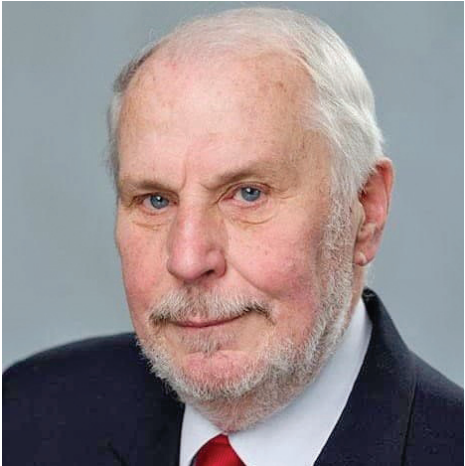
Perhaps the prospects are, however, a bit better than I make them out to be, and we can perhaps perceive already a kind of silver lining on the horizon. Given the embarrassed policy-making machineries in Europe and of parts of a global civil society carrying out humanitarian projects, both groups might have a stake in continuing the impossible dream of transforming Afghan society by outside “help”. In this convenient narrative – making already its rounds in Europe- the West failed because it never actually tried to “really” tackle the task it

set for itself. So, help without much talk about the attached “strings” might be the token for atonement or a move by the “donors” for saving face. If we think that this is the proper scenario, we still have to face the fact, that we simply sweep then first part of the problem i.e., its “do-ability”, on which this interpretation rests, under the rug by assuming that humanitarianism is a self-justificatory action that transcends political concerns. That might be all well in theory – and some of those projects such as those pursued by the Red Cross or by the Doctors without Boundaries actually “work” precisely because of their (assumed) non-political nature. But how difficult it is to preserve this line becomes clear only on the ground as can be gathered from the many reports of the often disenchanted “helpers” and some detailed case studies. Besides, it is hard to believe this “noble lie” of an apolitical humanitarianism can be maintained in this case – and is not just be used as a temporary convenient prop – when an entire human rights agenda with clearly political projects ranging from the protection of private property rights and free markets to sexual preferences and lifestyles, and free elections, lurks in the background.

Here we quickly enter the problem of whether the focus, on larger political orientations rather than on the pragmatic and temporary muddling through providing us with better tools for assessments, as my interviewer intimates. Of course, moving to the broader picture is in a way heuristically fruitful, but not every “large scheme” will be illuminating, despite its popularity. To that extent, we could e.g., use the traditional left/right dichotomy for deciphering the puzzling internal and external political developments. Then the disastrous policies and the “fall of Kabul” become emblematic for the growth of right-wing sentiment especially in the U.S. and or for the rise of “populism” in Europe. In this way, we “see” that inventing an enemy diverts attention of the population from governmental failures, while also allowing the other party which opposes governmental policies to vest itself in the garb of progressive universalists. However, while I do not deny that we had to witness significant transformative changes in last decades, both in domestic and international (or perhaps better: global politics) the links between the identified “drivers” of these developments remain to be researched rather than postulated. In short, I do not think that the old conception of the protagonist left– standing for progress– and of the right being emblematic for “reaction”, does much of the explaining. At worst, it leads to the replay of the ideological position familiar of the immediate post-war times in which especially left intellectuals in France tried to argue that the SU must be supported as it represents the best hope for a new humanity, in spite of Stalin's terror exemplified by his gulags and show trials.

Here a quick reality check is in order. Significantly it was the active communist Tito and the chairman of the Soviet KP Khrushchev who had to debunk this myth long before the voices of the victims could be heard in literature. Western academics were-if not silent – nevertheless severely criticized – within the academy as well as by supposedly “progressive” left parties – if they showed interest in finding the origins or roots of totalitarianism and dared to compare facism, Nazism and Stalinist “socialism”. Similarly myopic is the argument that domestic unrest and terrorism can be attributed solely to fascist and racist right-wing – as if we did not have of the Brigade Rosse in Italy, the Baader-Meinhof gang in Germany. The terrorist attacks by external movements were saved from their nationalist “rightness” by simply dubbing them “liberation” movements in line with the argot of “leftist” progress

To that extent, it seems to me doubtful that the violence of dschihadists and of nationalist ultras – the former growing up in the banlieues of Paris the latter in Norway or Germany, can be understood in terms of the old cleavages, or the mechanist image of a “drift”. This is, of course not to deny that many Western societies long considered to be well integrated have experienced severe strains in the last few decades, that do call into question the Kantian/Hegelian phantasy of an “end” of history.



The findings indeed raise the further and perhaps more interesting question of why democracies, which supposedly supply the best approximation to realizing universal values, seems to falter not only by revolution – and here the “silent” revolutions are especially significant – but also that they can falter quite ironically “democratically”, i.e. they do so while following the prescriptions of democratic systems.

There is, of course, no point to enter into these rather complicated debates save to mention in passing out some interesting points, which the editor mentions in his questions to me: the role of academia and the even broader issue of knowledge. So, I take the liberty on concentrating on the (in)-adequacy of our conceptual frameworks for understanding and – even more importantly- of “making” the social world. To that extent I shall leave the issues of religion – which I addressed at least obliquely in a previous gloss in this paper – in abeyance, save to note that the dominant discourse of “secularization” has run its course and exposed – quite ironically given its ideological stance – its own religious roots in prophecies and eschatological expectations.

Let us, therefore, turn to the role of academia and its close symbiosis with the policy-making circles: it is of course no new problem, as the example of Plato's ill-fated expedition to Sicily shows. It has been particularly well documented in the case of the U.S. in which the same role-reversal between academics and decision-makers which can be observed within the policy-making machinery (economics and foreign affairs) as well as between regulators and (former) occupants of private industry. The latter leads easily to objections to the capture of the controllers by the controlled and – and here explicit legal separation-barriers become necessary – but one should also ponder the prudential issue of the usefulness of some form of a separation of powers between the academy and government.

More problematic is, of course, the Platonic argument that philosophers have to rule the state, as they are in possession of true knowledge. It is the thesis of “unity of truth” that justifies such a claim, even though over time Plato took a more distanced view (see his *Politikos*, or his last work, *The Laws*), although his student Aristotle remained scathing in his criticism of his teacher. For him abstract ideas and the recognition of the natural order of things cannot be relied on in practical question because of their contingency and their location in time rather than space, which calls for adducing “local” or circumstantial rather than universal knowledge, (what “works here” “what situation is this”), and of the fact that social ordering occurs not by manipulating natural forces but by utilizing concepts. The latter invariable contain contestable evaluations which involve more than purely cognitive issues. Finally, the appraisals these concepts facilitate span different and incommensurable domains even though all actions are directed towards a final goal: eudaimonia which is problematically translated as “happiness”.

Thus, because of temporality, contingency, and incommensurability this “directedness” of all action is not subject to a simple efficiency criterion (if x is a means to y then I have to do x if I aim at y and my efforts are rational if I accomplish this by the least effort). Here issues of conflicting values arise and in the absence of a common currency by which they can be traded off, choices have to be made “all things considered”, rather than in terms of a specifiable price (The happiness of being with my children is not easily trumped or traded off with the honor and reputation I gain by publishing, which might entail neglecting my children).

It is this reduction of the issue of choice that also neglects time, in particular the history and genesis of a “problem”, which valorizes imagination and the “knowing many things” rather than one “unshakable truth” (Descartes). Being able to compare and see similarities and differences among things, of finding one's way quickly in a choice situation rather than losing time by costly searches for further information –which do not have a “natural” or definite end and engender the possibility of coming up empty- become now crucial characteristics of “real choices”. Since these characteristics are defining and have to be attended to, instead of being “assumed away” so as to make calculation easier or provide us with a logically more cogent and parsimonious model of action.

Those defining distinctions were emphasized in the Aristotelian and humanist tradition, but they have been elaborated in different ways in our times by Isiah Berlin, Philip Tetlock, Herbert Simon, to name just a few. Needless to say, that these unorthodox had a difficult stand in academia where the reduced rationality of neoclassical economics reigns supreme. To that extent, the issue of how to think about problems is preempted by a notion of science (by assumption, and inference) which actually never was – as the history and philosophy of science show (Kuhn, Toulmin, Putnam) – but which- quite, fortunately- not even the natural sciences adopted. Biology did not become physics and modern logic-contrary to the firm belief on the stringency of logic-creates its own paradoxes (vide Russell's paradox, Wittgenstein) which, in turn, bodes ill for the claim that it is unconditionally and universally applicable.

What does all this mean for the issue of understanding politics and for training people for advising decision-makers? Above all, it would suggest that modesty and thoughtfulness should not be sacrificed on the altar of “scientific” certainty which is unavailable – at least in the form specified by of positivist epistemology – since most practical choices are more complex. They are not limited to problems of maximization (even if a minimax criterion is introduced and the imperfection of information is endemic in strategic situations). Besides, the generative capacity of trust and works rather differently

than most economists suggest due to their “methodological” commitments and myopias. Here Kant “dove” provides a telling gloss on the dangers of certainty arrived at through a “theoretical” simplification. In the introduction of his *Critique of Pure Reason* (A 6, B9) he writes:

Mathematics gives us a splendid example of how far we go with a priori cognition independently of experience. ...This circumstance, however, is easily overlooked ...Encouraged by such proof of the power of reason the drive for expansion sees no bounds. The light dove, in free flight cutting through the air, the resistance of which it feels, could get the idea that it could do even better in an airless space.

In spite of such warning that with assuming away friction in order to get a better understanding of what makes flying possible, we lose the actual subject which we try to understand, “high powered” modeling has been the rage in social sciences. Ironically the objections are simply passed over by pointing to the “theoretical” criteria of parsimony,

elegance and cogency they possess. Given these virtues, it seems to matter little what they tell us about world in which we live and act.

Similarly, if one looks at most of the public affairs schools in the U.S. and Europe they are mostly run by economists – or worse – by failed economists turned administrators. Focusing nearly exclusively on the issue of “scarcity” (of money) – certainly a real problem in “inefficient” non-market organizations – they are deeply convinced that universities and schools of higher education have to be run according to business principles. Given this frame of mind, it matters little whether you sell cars, salsa, computer games, toilet paper or diplomas. Based on the metaphysical assumption of the continuity of nature, there has to be also a corresponding continuity that links book-keeping to peace-keeping! After all, there are numbers and your “products” can be assessed by the analysis of the job placement of your students, your scholarly contributions can be evaluated by citation statistics and by the testimony of hapless politicians who found your ideas useful and tried to apply them in the real world. Technology freaks are praising the use of new technologies “required” by the emerging electronic battlefield or they advocate the militarization of space in order to gain control, given that we are not doing that well in actual ground combat. Closer to earth we are treated to the democratic peace argument although the actual working of this “system” to be constructed remains more than murky and has led to several political disasters, not to mention that the shining examples embodying this theory of design (the U.S., UK, EU) are not doing too well – and that is putting it mildly.

But aside from those errors which are in a way part of the praxis and of the production of knowledge, what has to be attended to is that the structure and the priorities of the former republic of letters have fundamentally changed. This is not only due to incidental stupidity and fortuitous factors which might account for incidental errors, but systemic failure requires a different approach: a showing of deep-seated social changes that have undermined the old system. Here the “ivory towers” of yore, come to mind as a template that could be used as they once allegedly existed in splendid isolation. But that picture might be rather misleading as knowledge production in academies and institutions of higher education were not only with the emergence of modernity “political projects”, as not only Hobbes and Descartes demonstrate, but before that also the colleges and universities with their links to the Church and the sponsorship by kings amply attest to this fact. Thus, it would be gravely mistaken that former institutions of learning, such as medieval universities were idyllic places of learning exempted from the tides of politics. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the marketization of knowledge in our times has linked the public and the realm of knowledge in fundamentally different ways.

Paradoxically, the new and the old ways show however several similarities. Precisely because learning is a fundamentally social enterprise learning by authority and learning in a group of peers or in the laboratory or among peers, presupposes certain social virtues. One of them is deference to authority, even though the vetting of knowledge-claims among peers differs in the type of authority which by tradition was entitled to settle disputes among the scholars. But as students quickly learn, that might be in practice “the same difference”: getting along and learning to satisfy the systemic requirements of passing “objective” tests – be they the quoting of canonical texts –which was the old way– or submitting now one's findings to “peer review” always implies both deferences and also comes – at least – with some strategic behavior. To that extent the issue of authority is always present although “naturalized” by being usually taken for granted and bracketed (deference). But, as we can see such “deference” is a far cry from the notion of a “clear and Compellent” proof, that is plain to all if they just follow the presentation, and that truth will appear at the end (as the old Greek *aletheia* (truth) means literally “not being hidden”).

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Sassanid bas-relief to be installed on original place atop steep canyon



From page 1 ► From a touristic point of view, the canyon, which is situated some 1940 meters above sea level, can be a refuge from the burning summer heat. The walls of this slot canyon, rising to a height of more than a hundred meters, are coated with moss.

The striking cave is sighted nestled on the cliffs, once formed by the tributaries of the river. It is a cozy limestone cave with natural decorations of stalactites and stalagmites. The flow of the river through the rocks also creates mesmerizing small waterfalls and natural lakes.

At the time of Shapur I (reigned 241 CE–272), the Sassanid Empire stretched from Sogdiana and Iberia (Georgia) in the north to the Mazun region of Arabia in the south; in the east, it extended to the Indus River and in the west to the upper Tigris and Euphrates river valleys.

According to UNESCO, the ancient cities of Ardashir Khurreh and Bishapur include the most significant remaining testimonies of

the earliest moments of the Sassanid Empire, the commencement under Ardashir I, and the establishment of power under both Ardashir I and his successor Shapur I.

In 2018, UNESCO added an ensemble of Sassanian historical cities in southern Iran -- titled "Sassanid Archaeological Landscape of Fars Region"-- to its World Heritage list.

The ensemble is comprised of eight archaeological sites situated in three geographical parts of Firuzabad, Bishapur, and Sarvestan. It reflects the optimized utilization of natural topography and bears witness to the influence of Achaemenid and Parthian cultural traditions and of Roman art, which later had a significant impact on the architecture and artistic styles of the Islamic era.

"The architecture of the Sassanid monuments in the property further illustrates early examples of construction of domes with squinches on square spaces, such as in the Chahar-Taq buildings, where the four sides of the square room show arched openings: this architectural form turned into the most typical form of Sassanid religious architecture, relating closely to the expansion and stabilization of Zoroastrianism under Sassanid reign and continuing during the Islamic era thanks to its usage in religious and holy buildings such as mosques and tombs," the UN cultural body said in its website.

The Sassanid archaeological landscape also represents a highly efficient system of land use and strategic utilization of natural topography in the creation of the earliest cultural centers of the Sassanid civilization.

The project is being carried out under the supervision of top experts affiliated with the UNESCO-registered Persepolis.

Safavid-era mansion in Belad Shapur restored to former glory

TEHRAN – A restoration project has recently been completed on Kohzadi Mansion, a Safavid-era (1501-1736) monument located in the ancient city of Belad Shapur, a local tourism official has announced.

The project involved repairing the façade of the mansion, its floor covering, and rooftops, Esfandiar Abab said on Tuesday.

A budget of 3.5 billion rials (about \$84,000 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) was allocated to the project, the official added.

Located in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province, Kohzadi Mansion is one the most beautiful monuments in the city with two side rooms, a central yard, and a water well, he noted.

Last November, the provincial tourism chief Majid Safai announced that the historical neighborhood of Dehdasht and the historical monuments located inside it is planned to be restored and revived. A budget of 20 billion rials (\$476,000 at the official rate of 42,000 rials) has been allocated to boost tourism infrastructure in the ancient city of Belad Shapur, the official explained.

Despite all the destruction that took place in this historical city in different eras, with an area of more than 45 hectares, it is currently



considered as one of the largest historical structures in the country in terms of size and number of historical buildings. Inscribed on the National Heritage list in 1985, the ancient city of Belad Shapur is one of the top tourist sites of the province.

Belad Shapur, known by its current name, was built at the time of Shapur I, also known as Shapur the Great, (reigned 241 CE–272), the second king of the Sassanid Dynasty. Under his leadership, the empire stretched from Sogdiana and Iberia (Georgia) in the north to the Mazun region of Arabia in the south; in the east, it extended to the Indus River and in the west to

traditional musical instrument, metalwork, and marquetry to name a few. Nomadic culinary arts, live workshops, and performances are among other themes for the event.

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

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

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

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

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

Kerman added to Iran's golden 'triangle' of tourism



A view of Fat'habad Garden in Kerman.

TEHRAN – The ancient city of Kerman has been added to Iran's golden 'triangle' of tourism, which was already embracing Isfahan, Shiraz, and Yazd, an official with the Planning and Budget Organization (PBO) said on Monday.

"Comprised of Isfahan, Shiraz, and Yazd, the golden triangle of tourism was defined years ago. And this year, we added Kerman to it based on a national land management mandate," Saeid Vakili said, IRNA reported.

Kerman has been a cultural melting pot since antiquity, blending Persians with subcontinental tribe dwellers. It is home to myriad historical sites and scenic landscapes such as Bazaar-e Sartasari, Jabalieh Dome, Ganjali Khan Bathhouse, Malek Jameh Mosque, and Shahdad Desert to name a few.

The golden 'triangle' offers sightseers an epitome of Iran for those who are first-time visitors to the Islamic Republic both in terms of the historical sites and cultural

identity.

Celebrated as the heartland of Persian culture for over 2000 years, Shiraz has become synonymous with education, nightingales, poetry, and crafts skills passed down from generation to generation. It was one of the most important cities in

the medieval Islamic world and was the Iranian capital during the Zand dynasty (1751–1794). Shiraz has also been named Iran's 2020 Book Capital.

In July 2017, the historical structure of the city of Yazd, which is the capital of Yazd province, was

Tehran City Theater to receive further safeguard as demarcation completes

TEHRAN – A team of experts has recently demarcated Tehran's City Theater, paying the way for the cultural complex, which is widely considered as the sole professional center of theater in Iran, to receive further maintenance and care.

Legal properties and boundaries of Te'atr-e Shahr (the City Theater) were determined and approved on Monday by a team of experts afflicted with the Tehran Municipality, and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, Mehr reported.

The demarcation project is aimed to pave the way for better conservation, landscaping projects of the monument, which is a national cultural heritage site.

The complex is considered the main outlet of Iran artistic theater. It contains several performance spaces including the halls of Cheharsou, Qashqai,



Sayeh, the performance studio, and the main hall. The complex was designed by architect Ali Sardar Afkhami in the 1960s and opened to the public in 1972. After the 1979 Islamic Revolution, the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance has

overseen its operation.

The theater complex has no fences or walls, close to Valiasr intersection Daneshjoo Park (Student Park). It is divided into five halls, four of which are located on the ground floor and basement.

The City Theater is constructed as almost a replica of the 12th-century Tughrul Tower, which stands tall in Rey, southern Tehran. The monument enjoys a cylinder-shaped structure and is surrounded by columns similar to the Persepolis columns which made the structure like a tent.

Standing tall in the city of Rey, Tughrul Tower is the tomb of Seljuk ruler Tughrul Beg, who died in Rey in 1063. Originally, like other monuments of its time, it was capped by a conical dome which would have added to its height.

Traditional spinning revived in Lorestan

TEHRAN – The traditional craft of spinning, which was obsolete in the western Lorestan province, has recently been revived, the provincial tourism chief has announced.

To increase the skills of spinning instructors, training courses for nomads have been organized, Seyyed Amin Qasemi said on Tuesday.

Natives to different cities in the province participated in these training courses to learn the know-how of spinning with semi-industrial spindles, the official added.

"This method does not change the production process for traditional yarn and only uses electricity rather than hands to operate the spindles," he noted.

High wool production capacity in Lorestan province will contribute to the prosperity and spread of the ancient art of spinning as well as provide jobs and income for the women in the province, he explained.

Lorestan is one of the lesser-known travel destinations in Iran and mainly acts as a gateway to the neighboring Khuzestan province which hosts UNESCO sites of Susa, Tchogha Zanbil, and Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System.

The province is also a region of raw beauty that an avid nature lover could spend weeks exploring, living with a nomad or rural family.



Bisheh Waterfall, Snow Tunnel, Poldokhtar ponds, Falak-ol-Aflak Castle, Soltani Mosque of Borujerd, Shapouri Bridge, and Shirez Canyon are amongst tourist sites of the mountainous province.

Lorestan was inhabited by Iranian Indo-European peoples, including the Medes, c. 1000 BC. Cimmerians and Scythians intermittently ruled the region from about 700 to 625 BC. The Luristan Bronzes noted for their eclectic array of Assyrian, Babylonian, and Iranian artistic motifs, date from this turbulent period.

The region was incorporated into the growing Achaemenid Empire in about 540 BC and successively was part of the Seleucid, Parthian, and Sasanid dynasties.

Tehran to host national handicrafts exhibit



TEHRAN- The 35th national handicrafts exhibition of Iran is scheduled to be held at the Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds from October 19 to 22 as taught restrictions over the coronavirus pandemic have been relaxed.

A 'red condition' of the virus in Tehran postponed the exhibition set to take place in August; CHTN quoted Khashayar Nikzadfar, the CEO of the parent company of Iran Tourism and Tourism Development, as saying on Tuesday.

It is planned to offer artisans and visitors of the exhibition a 30 percent discount during the showtime, the official added.

The exhibition will be held in compliance with health protocols and social distancing rules due to the coronavirus pandemic, he noted.

The exhibit traditionally brings together craftspeople and artisans from all over the Islamic Republic to showcase arrays of personal ornamentation, woodwork, illuminated manuscript, miniature, textile printing, enamel, leatherwork, handwoven textile, calligraphy,

Restoration begins on Dolat-Abad Caravanserai in central Iran



the growth of employment, the official mentioned.

Markazi province is considered the industrial capital of the country. It is rich in natural, historical, cultural, and religious attractions.

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 caravanseries 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!

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

Iran warns WHO of ‘vaccine apartheid’ threat

TEHRAN – The Iranian deputy health minister has warned the World Health Organization of a ‘vaccine apartheid’ threat which ‘can be a threat to the global health’.

Alireza Raisi made the remarks in a meeting with Jaffar Hussain, WHO Representative & Head of Mission to Iran, saying that the world can become immune just through public vaccination, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

“This is very dangerous that it is announced that visas are issued only if the holders are vaccinated using certain brands, namely Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca, and Johnson & Johnson.”

The vaccine apartheid, which is being promoted by some countries,



results of studies and the introduction of vaccines, this time, regardless of the usual interactions in the sale and purchase of medical and health-oriented products, countries were forced to negotiate with a small number of vaccine manufacturers.

In the meantime, even before the vaccines were approved, several rich countries pre-purchased far beyond their needs. According to the country’s health officials, more than

Fauna of Iran



(Part 2)

After Blanford’s work the pace of studies of Persian fauna increased. The Russian ornithologist N. A. Zarudny traveled extensively in Persia in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, collecting birds and other vertebrates (Zarudny; Nikol’skii, 1903; idem, 1907); the greater part of his collections is in the zoological museum in St. Petersburg.

Persian birds have probably been studied more extensively and by more workers than any other group of fauna). The most important synoptic lists, handbooks, and papers include those of Simon H. Jervis Read (1958; idem in Camb. Hist. Iran); Charles Vaurie; Francois Hué and Robert D. Etchécopar; Hermann Heinzel and his colleagues; Derek Scott and his colleagues; Stanley Cramp and K. E. L. Simmons; Colin James Oliver Harrison; and Philip Arthur Dominic Hollom and his colleagues. According to Scott, 491 species are known to occur in Persia.

Mammals, particularly game species, have also been investigated, most notably in reports of the Persian Game and Fish Department, later incorporated into the Department of Environmental Conservation. The most comprehensive synopsis of Persian mammals is that of Douglas Lay, who accompanied the Street expedition in 1962-63. He provided descriptions of habitats, remarks on specimens collected by the expedition, and a synoptic list of the 125 mammal species known in Persia in 1967, with summaries of their distribution.

Xavier de Misonne published a descriptive zoogeographic analysis of the mammals, as well as brief descriptions and characterizations (1959; idem in Camb. Hist. Iran). Fred Harrington produced a guide to Persian mammals under the auspices of the Department of the environment; it was organized by type of habitat, rather than taxonomically, and included 148 species, 112 of them illustrated. Probably the most detailed systematic study of a group of mammals in Persia is that of the bats (q.v.) undertaken by Anthony DeBlase, who accompanied the 1968 Street expedition; he recognized thirty-eight species and provided a detailed account of each, as well as a brief zoogeographic analysis of Persian bats.

Among important papers on Persian reptiles published since Blanford’s work are those by A. M. Nikol’skii (1903; 1907), based on Zarudny’s collections; Franz Werner, who published a list of known species and a descriptive zoogeography; and Steven Anderson (1963) on a collection from southern Persia, including a list of the reptiles, a zoogeographic discussion, and a bibliography. Anderson (Camb. Hist. Iran) provided a zoogeographic analysis of lizards and an updated list (1974) and synopsis (1979) of turtles, crocodiles, and amphibians. Mahmud Latifi of the Razi institute at

Karaj near Tehran, one of the foremost producers of snake antivenin in the world, compiled a handbook on the snakes of Persia, including keys for identification, descriptions, illustrations, distributions, and information on snakebite; in the English translation Alan Leviton and George Zug provided an emended list of Persian snakes, totaling seventy-five taxa.

Amphibians have traditionally been considered together with reptiles. In addition to the papers by Werner and Anderson (1963), Anderson listed six species of salamanders (a seventh, Salamandra salamandra semenovi, has since been recorded) and seventeen species of frogs from Persia. The most detailed amphibian study so far is that by Josef Eiselt and J. F. Schmidtler on the frogs of Persia.

Apart from studies of commercially important species undertaken by members of the Department of the Environment, the fishes (q.v.) have received attention from several zoologists. Nelson Annandale and S. L. Hora (1920) reported on those of Sistan; Lev S. Berg provided the first list of fresh-water fish since that of De Filippi; and M. A. G. Saadati attempted a systematic treatment. N. B. Armentrout (1969; 1980) compiled a checklist of Persian fresh-water fish, and the list has been extended and updated in the publications of Brian Coad (1979; 1980; 1987), who has recorded 155 native fresh-water species and has provided the only published zoogeographical analysis.

Insects constitute the largest segment of Persian fauna. Although there has been no comprehensive treatment, there is a large literature on individual species. An important series, “Contribution à la faune de l’Iran,” has been published in Annales de Société Entomologique de France. In a symposium volume on the fauna and zoogeography of the Middle East, edited by Friedhelm Krupp, Wolfgang Schneider, and Ragnar Kinzelbach, a number of important papers shed light on distribution patterns and relationships among the insects of Persia and neighboring countries, including Odonata (Schneider), Raphidioptera (H. Aspöck), Trichoptera (Malicky), and Zygaena (Nau-mann).

Arthropods (q.v.) that have been studied in Persia include a number of arachnids (q.v.), like ticks, mites, spiders, scorpions (see especially Vachon and Kinzelbach for a review of taxonomy and distribution in the Middle East), pseudoscorpions, and solpugids; centipedes; millipedes; and such crustaceans as fresh-water crabs and terrestrial isopods.

Fresh-water and terrestrial gastropods and oligochaetes also occur in Persia.

(Source: Encyclopaedia Iranica)

Diabetes accounts for 8.5% of health care costs

TEHRAN – Over 8.5 percent of the total health expenditures of the country are spent on diabetes, Baqer Larijani, head of Institute of Endocrinology and Metabolism, has stated.

“Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) kill 41 million people each year, equivalent to 71 percent of all deaths globally.

Diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and respiratory diseases are the cause of more than 80 percent of premature deaths due to non-communicable diseases. Unhealthy diet, smoking, physical inactivity, and alcohol consumption are the main related risk factors.

Reducing risk factors as well as screening, early diagnosis and timely treatment of non-communicable diseases can reduce a large part of their damage,” he said.

According to global estimates, the number of diabetics in the West Asia and North Africa region will increase by 96 percent over the next 25 years.

In recent decades, the prevalence of diabetes and the number of deaths due to diabetes in the world has increased dramatically, and this increase has been much greater for type 2 diabetes, he said, IRNA reported on Tuesday.



penditures are spent on matters related to this disease.”

Due to the importance of diabetes, the country’s health care system has adopted several strategies and policies to reduce the burden of the disease, including, collecting data and measuring the burden of the disease at national and transnational levels, the creation of a national action plan for non-communicable diseases, the development of a national diabetes framework, the establishment of a national network of diabetes clinics, the design of a diabetes research roadmap and the national diabetes registration system, he explained.

Referring to the second edition of the National Document for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases, he noted that the document has been updated by various working groups of the Ministry of Health, in cooperation with the Endocrinology and Institute of Endocrinology and Metabolism of Tehran University of Medical Sciences.

Diabetes burden in Iran

In Iran, 25 percent of people are not aware of

their diabetes. The figure is 50 percent in the world and 60 percent in West Asia and North Africa region.

About 422 million people worldwide have diabetes, the majority living in low-and middle-income countries, and 1.6 million deaths are directly attributed to diabetes each year.

Both the number of cases and the prevalence of diabetes have been steadily increasing over the past few decades. As it is expected that by 2030, 578 million people will develop diabetes, and the number of patients may exceed 700 million by 2045.

In 2019, 4.2 million people died of diabetes. And now, 50 percent of coronavirus patients were diabetic.

About 90 percent of diabetics are diagnosed with type 2 diabetes worldwide. Education, self-care, and following a healthy lifestyle, and using medication are effective in controlling the disease.

Type 2 diabetes is preventable and, in some cases, can be cured early. Lack of access to insulin, failure to early diagnosis of type 1 diabetes leading to diabetic ketoacidosis is a common cause of death in children and adolescents.

Diabetes is a major cause of blindness, kidney failure, heart attack, stroke, and lower limb amputation. A healthy diet, physical activity, and avoiding tobacco use can prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. In addition, diabetes can be treated and its consequences avoided or delayed with medication, regular screening, and treatment for complications.

Over 14,600 inmates of involuntary crimes freed last year

TEHRAN – Iranian benefactors helped release a total of 14,681 inmates of unintentional crimes across the country over the past Iranian calendar year (March 2020–March 2021), Hadi Sadeghi, an official with the Judiciary, has said.

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

The third way of assistance is the

release of unintentional convicts by paying their debt. Last year, a total of 35 trillion rials (nearly \$833 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) has been donated to pay the debt of the released prisoners.

Last year, provinces of Fars, Yazd, and Isfahan topped the list for releasing the highest number of involuntary crime doers, he further stated, IRIB reported on Tuesday.

As an annual tradition, benefactors come together in a ceremony to raise funds for releasing prisoners of unintentional crimes during the holy month of Ramadan (which started on April 13 this year), through which, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has donated 5 billion rials (about \$120,000).

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

Former President Hassan Rouhani, former Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani, and former Judiciary



Chief Ebrahim Raisi made a total of 3.9 billion rials (around \$92,000) in contributions to free prisoners of unintentional crimes.

COVID-19 toll declining thanks to mass vaccination

From page 1 ► Iraj Haririchi, deputy minister of health, has recently said that with speeding up vaccination, 10 percent of outpatients and about 5 percent of patients have decreased and mortality will significantly reduce in the next three weeks.

“To contain Delta mutant, we plan to vaccinate 90 percent of the population,”

he added.

Alireza Reisi, the spokesman of the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control, also said in this regard “Currently, the fifth wave is declining, the peak has completely dropped in 21 provinces, eight provinces have just crossed the peak and in three provinces the increasing trend has stopped.”

Therefore, it is forecasted that by the next two weeks, the number of hospital admissions will be lower than 3,000 per day, he further added.

Mass vaccination against COVID-19 will be soon accelerated, as it is planned to increase vaccination centers, and import more doses of the vaccine to the country, Raisi said a week earlier.

“We plan to double the number of vaccination centers, which is about 1,008 by now,” Raisi stated, adding, in addition, we plan to operate most centers in two work shifts to increase the speed of vaccination and to surpass 1.5 million injections per day.

He went on to in total, about 20 million doses of vaccine will be imported

by the end of September, adding, about 30 million doses also will be delivered to the country since October.

Mass vaccination against COVID-19 started on Iranian citizens with the Russian-made Sputnik V vaccine on February 9.

While Iran continues efforts to

mass-produce local candidates, over 18 million doses of foreign vaccines have already been imported and others are expected soon.

Iran is also producing vaccines jointly with three countries of Russia, Cuba, and Australia.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Knowledge-based companies unite to counter coronavirus

All knowledge-based companies in the country have been united to combat the coronavirus and many startups have been activated in this field, said Sourena Sattari, vice president for science and technology.

Some 200,000 nano masks are produced daily in the country, Sattari said, hoping that the output will reach 300,000 by the end of the week, IRNA reported.

He said Iran is one of the few countries that are able to manufacture machinery for producing nano masks which block particles less than three-tenths of a nanometer, including viruses.

شرکت‌های دانش بنیان برای مقابله با کرونا بسیج شده‌اند

سورنا ستاری معاون علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری گفت تمامی ظرفیت‌های شرکت‌های دانش بنیان برای مقابله با ویروس کرونا بسیج شده‌اند و استارت‌آپ‌های زیادی در این حوزه فعال شده‌اند.

به گزارش ایرنا، ستاری با اشاره به اینکه در حال حاضر روزانه ۲۰۰ هزار عدد ماسک نانویی در کشور تولید می‌شود، گفت امیدواریم تولید این ماسک‌ها تا پایان هفته به ۳۰۰ هزار عدد در روز برسد.

وی گفت: ایران جزو معدود کشورهایی است که دستگاه‌های تولید کاغذ نانو فیلترهای ماسک را دارد که قادر هستند تا جلوی ذرات کمتر از سه دهم نانومتر، شامل ویروس‌ها، را بگیرند.

COVID-19 UPDATES ON SEPTEMBER 14

New cases	22,329
New deaths	408
Total cases	5,340,656
Total deaths	115,167
New hospitalized patients	3,436
Patients in critical condition	7,123
Total recovered patients	4,627,027
Diagnostic tests conducted	30,445,641
Doses of vaccine injected	37,866,551

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SEPTEMBER 15, 2021

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

An ignorant person will always overdo a thing or neglect it totally.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times» Noon:12:59 Evening: 19:30 Dawn: 5:23 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:48 (tomorrow)

Art in Iran: History of Parthian art

Statue of Hercules in Bisotun, Zagros mountain, Kermanshah Province, Iran. (Getty Images/ Jean-Philippe Tournut)

Part 2

The relief shows a rider, whose head resembles that of Mithradates I (ca. 171-138 BC), followed by a page and advancing toward a group of four nobles.

The rider and the page are in profile and apparently wear Greek dress. The nobles, clad in a simple form of Parthian dress—trousers and an undecorated tunic, the hem of which falls in three points—stand frontally.

The rider and the page wear their hair relatively short, in the Greek fashion, but the nobles have a Parthian tripartite hairdo. The man closest to the rider is distinguished by his greater size, his sword, and the fact that an eagle flies toward him.

The rendering also follows two different conventions: the frontal figures are carved in a more linear fashion than are the rider and his page.

This frontality and linearity also characterize the later reliefs of Artabanus V from Susa, dated to AD 215, as well as the rock reliefs of Tang-e Sarvak, Tang-e Botan, and Bid Zard, all in Elymais, and the figures on the isolated boulder at Bisotun.

The contradictions in style and composition make the dating of the relief from Khong-e Noruzi difficult; it is possible that the figures of the rider and the page were deliberately archaized for some now unknown historical reason. The scenes carved on one of a group of isolated boulders in Tang-e Sarvak (Khuzestan) provide a good illustration of the range of subject matter considered suitable for rock reliefs in the Parthian period.

On the north face the investiture of a king identified in the inscription as Orodes is shown. He reclines on an eagle-footed couch, holding a wreath in one hand. He wears a tunic, trousers, and a helmet. Behind him stands a god, perhaps Bel, who also wears a helmet; the two standing figures at the left side of the relief are perhaps Athena Anahita and Mithras.

The male figures all wear their hair in two bunches over the ears, a characteristic Parthian hairdo. Below the investiture scene is a panel containing three standing figures.

To the right of the investiture, and on a corner of the boulder, is carved an altar on which stands a huge baetyl tied with a fillet. This baetyl is being worshiped by a huge figure on the adjacent face of the rock.

This face is divided into two major registers. At the ends of the upper register are two seated figures, perhaps a king and queen, between whom are carved standing figures.

The lower register contains four figures standing with upraised right arms, probably a gesture of homage to the seated figures above them; to the

right of this group is a hunter on horseback. Below this register an isolated panel contains a scene of a man strangling a lion.

These scenes, then, include investiture, worship, homage to royalty or nobility, and animal combats illustrating the prowess of a ruler or nobleman. The similarity of style to the stele of Artabanus V from Susa suggests a date in the later 2nd or early 3rd centuries AD.

A number of votive images of worshipers, both in relief and in the round, apparently decorated the terraces of the sanctuary at Bard-e Neshandeh and, to a lesser extent, that of Masjed-e Soleiman, located in the southern part of Elymais.

The images at Bard-e Neshandeh represent for the most part worshipers clad in a rather unadorned form of Parthian dress and standing either with the right hand raised in worship or offering sacrifice at an altar. The most complex relief, which is incomplete, contains five figures. The principal figure, probably identified as a king or noble by his elaborate Parthian dress and high tiara, offers sacrifice.

Behind him stand two figures in decorated Parthian dress, while another figure in simpler garments salutes him across the altar. The fifth figure is probably an attendant. All of the figures from Bard-e Neshandeh are rigidly frontal.

On the basis of comparisons with Hatra and Dura Europos, Ghirshman suggests that the sculptures date to the 2nd century AD at the latest and that some might belong in the 1st century.

The workmanship is simpler than at Hatra, presumably because the sites were located far from the centers of the Parthian court. Vestiges of Greco-Roman influence, in motif if not in style, are present in the high relief sculpture of Herakles and the Nemean lion from Masjed-e Soleiman.

The popularity of Herakles throughout the Parthian world is notable. The relief of Herakles from Bisotun shows that he was introduced into Iran during the period of Seleucid control.

In addition to Masjed-e Soleiman, Herakles is attested during the Parthian period at Tang-e Botan in the Shimbar valley (Elymais), and the figure strangling a lion from Tang-e Sarvak is probably based on Herakles as well.

He is one of the few deities of Greek origin to be popular at Hatra, Dura Europos, and (to a lesser extent) Palmyra. In Iran, he may have been associated with Verethragna (Bahram), in Mesopotamia, perhaps with the old Mesopotamian “nude hero.”

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

To be continued

Lviv Golden Lion festival next stop to perform “Holodomor”, “Women’s Auschwitz”

TEHRAN – Iranian troupe Segane will perform their popular plays “Holodomor” and “Women’s Auschwitz” during the Golden Lion International Theatre Festival in Ukraine following their performances last week in a festival in the country.

The Golden Lion festival will take place in the western Ukrainian city of Lviv in October, and the plays will be staged on the closing day of the festival on October 8, the organizers have announced.

“Holodomor” and “Women’s Auschwitz” are parts of a trilogy written by Ali Safari about the three historical events that claimed millions of lives during the twentieth century.

The Holodomor is recognized as a genocide of the Ukrainian people carried out by the Soviet government. It was a famine planned by Joseph Stalin to eliminate a Ukrainian independence movement.

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

As part of the wider Soviet famine of 1932–33, which affected the major grain-producing areas of the country, millions of inhabitants of Ukraine,

A poster for “Holodomor”.

the majority of whom were ethnic Ukrainians, died of starvation in a peacetime catastrophe unprecedented in the history of Ukraine.

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

Safari will helm the troupe in performing “Women’s Auschwitz”

at the Golden Lion festival, while “Holodomor” will be directed by Raha Hajizainal, who staged the play at Tehran’s Neauphle-le-Chateau Theater earlier in February.

After Ukraine’s ambassador to Iran, Serhii Burduliak, watched a performance of the play, Segane was invited to perform it at several Ukrainian festivals, including the Melpomene of Tavria International

Theater Festival, which was held in Kherson from September 3 to 11.

Amir Shams, Mehdi Abuhamez, Nazanin Mihan, Mohammad Pasandideh, Sarina Azad Milani and Hassan Mohammadian are among the main members of the cast.

Seganeh is also scheduled to perform the plays at the Theatre On Pechersk in Kiev from October 4 to 6.

El Faro to publish book on Arbæen gathering in Colombian

El Faro director Angelica Maria Rojas holds some books in an undated photo.

From Page 1 ► Arbæen at the holy shrines of Imam Hussein (AS), the third Imam of the Shia, and his brother, Hazrat Abbas (AS).

“This pictorial book, which also contains passionate writings in Spanish, aims to introduce this great gathering in Colombia and it will be unveiled in a special session,” Maria Rojas said, however, she didn’t mention any names for the writers or compilers.

“Photos by 21 Iranian and Pakistani photographers make the book an honorable and everlasting work,” she added.

“The book illustrates the Arbæen gathering for non-Muslims and those who have recently converted to Islam step by step from the beginning in Najaf to Karbala so that it would produce a pretty good image of the gathering for the readers,” she stated.

She said that this is the first time a book on the Arbæen gathering is being published in Latin America and added, “The book will first be distributed in Colombia and Mexico, and we have plans to publish it in Ecuador, Venezuela and Argentina in upcoming months.”

She also said that the book will be published in French and Portuguese in the near future.

The book carries photos by the Iranian photographers Iman Jannaati, Ahmad Hassani, Ahmad Zohrabi, Amir Hesaminejad, Hamid Abedi, Mohammad Akhlaqi, Zohair Seidanlu, Faezeh Bakhtiari, Mohsen Karamali, Mohammad-Javad Hashemi, Mohammad-Ali Marizad, Mohammad-

Zurich Film Festival to screen three movies from Iran

TEHRAN – Three movies by Iranian filmmakers have been selected to be screened at the 17th edition of the Zurich Film Festival.

Asghar Farhadi’s acclaimed drama “A Hero”, the winner of the Grand Prix (ex aequo) at Cannes 2021, will be showcased in the Gala Premieres section of the festival, which will open in the Swiss city on September 23.

The film is about Rahim who is taken into custody as he is unable to pay his debts. After being granted two-day parole, he attempts to get his lender to write off part of the debt and withdraw the charges. When Rahim finds a handbag full of gold pieces and returns it to the owner instead of helping himself, he is suddenly celebrated in the media as an upstanding citizen.

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

“Ballad of a White Cow” co-directed by Behtash Sanaeiha and Maryam Moqaddam has been picked to be screened in the feature film competition. The film won third place in the 2021 Berlinale Competition Audience Award this year.

The film follows 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.

“Hit the Road” will be reviewed in the Special Screenings category of the festival.

Directed by Panah Panahi, the film tells the story of one family and their mysterious journey through rural Iran. From early on, it’s made clear that the clan is on some sort of mission, and the drama slowly escalates as details are revealed.

From its humorous opening to its feverish, music-driven conclusion, this film both commands and rewards the viewer’s attention.

The Zurich Film Festival will run until October 3.

Tehran cultural center to review “A Matter of Death and Life”

TEHRAN – The Book City Institute in Tehran plans to review the latest Persian translation of “A Matter of Death and Life” written by Irvin D. Yalom and Marilyn Yalom in an online session next week.

Zahra Ebrahimi, the translator of the book, and critics Arastu Mirani and Reza Asadpur will attend the session, which will be screened live on September 21 on www.instagram.com/ketabofarhang at 11 am.

This edition was published by Parseh in Tehran in July. Three other Persian renditions of the book, first published by Redwood Press in March 2021, have previously been released by different publishers.

The book relates a year-long journey by the renowned psychiatrist and his writer wife after her terminal diagnosis, as they reflect on how to love and live without regret.

Internationally acclaimed psychiatrist and author Irvin Yalom devoted his career to counseling those suffering from anxiety and grief. But he had never faced the need to counsel himself until his wife,

esteemed feminist author Marilyn Yalom, was diagnosed with cancer.

In “A Matter of Death and Life”, Marilyn and Irv share how they took on profound new struggles: Marilyn to die a good death, Irv to live on without her.

In alternating accounts of their last months together and Irv’s first months alone, they offer us a rare window into facing mortality and coping with the loss of one’s beloved.

The Yaloms had numerous blessings – a loving family, a Palo Alto home under a magnificent valley oak, a large circle of friends, avid readers around the world, and a long, fulfilling marriage – but they faced death as we all do.

With the wisdom of those who have thought deeply, and the familiar warmth of teenage sweethearts who’ve grown up together, they investigate universal questions of intimacy, love and grief.

Informed by two lifetimes of experience, “A Matter of Death and Life” is an openhearted offering to anyone seeking support, solace and a meaningful life.

Front cover of the Persian translation of “A Matter of Death and Life”.