

Decoding IAEA’s Silence Over Clear Violation of NPT in AUKUS Pact

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Interview



Views towards Islamic art is changing in the cultural centers of the West: professor

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN – Professor Kevin Richards, chair of the Liberal Arts Department at Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, says that attitudes towards Islamic art in the West are changing.

“I think the view towards Islamic art is changing in the cultural centers of the West,” Richards tells the Tehran Times.

“In part, this is due to the powerful critique of Orientalism offered by the late Palestinian scholar Edward Said. He helped point to the problems around how Islamic culture and art was housed in Western cultural institutions, as well as how it was studied in Western academic institutions.” Despite common misconceptions towards Islamic art in the dominant culture of the West, new generations of scholars seem more aware of Islamic heritage.

“Subsequent scholars, informed by Said’s groundbreaking work, have helped bring a renewed interest to Islamic art and culture, while also leading to newer institutions that attempt a different approach from those informed by the concept of Orientalism,” Richards argues.

He was very kind to participate in a written interview as follows:

To what extent the contemporary art is inspired by religion? As we know, Europe before the Renaissance was under the control of the church.

Regarding contemporary art, institutional religion is not necessarily a primary point of inspiration, even as the spirit continues to be a crucial concern in art. One can point to some of the new developments in art. ▶ Page 5

Report



Senate attempt to reform U.S. police fails

Negotiations in the U.S. Congress to reform police practices following the 2020 murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis have collapsed, Democratic Senator Cory Booker says, as President Joe Biden blamed Republicans for the failure.

The end of congressional negotiations, at least for now, marked yet another setback for the Democratic president, who campaigned on the need for policing reforms.

Calling Floyd’s murder “a stain on the soul of America,” Biden, in a statement, held out hope for eventually signing a comprehensive police reform bill into law and said he would look at developing further executive actions on the matter.

Biden says, “Regrettably, Senate Republicans rejected enacting modest reforms, which even the previous president had supported while refusing to take action on key issues that many in law enforcement were willing to address.”

Among the issues that lawmakers were discussing were some changes to “qualified immunity” that protects police officers from some lawsuits accusing them of using excessive force and prohibiting the kind of chokeholds and other restraints on people being arrested that have led to deaths.

Reuters found among some cases it analyzed more than three dozen in which qualified immunity protected officers whose actions had been deemed against the law.

The increasing frequency of such cases has prompted a growing chorus of criticism from lawyers, legal scholars, civil rights groups, politicians, and even judges that qualified immunity, as applied, is unjust. However, this broad coalition says the doctrine has become a nearly failsafe tool to let police brutality go unpunished and deny victims’ constitutional rights. ▶ Page 5

Five french ministers targeted by Israeli spyware

TEHRAN – A recent investigation by the French government has revealed that the cell phones of five French ministers and a member of President Emmanuel Macron’s diplomatic team contained traces of Pegasus’s spyware.

French media reported that at least five ministers’ smartphones –currently in government, were infected in 2019 and 2020 by Pegasus spyware.

Among the list of ministers or secretaries of state targeted by the Pegasus, confirmation fell for Jean-Michel Blanquer (National Education), Jacqueline Gourault (territorial cohesion), Julien Denormandie (agriculture), Emmanuelle Wargon (housing), and Sébastien Lecornu (overseas). All were already members of the government.

The media reported that the phone of at least

one member of the diplomatic team of the French President was also contained by Pegasus.

The media did not reveal which country had spied on the officials. Still, the French newspaper Le Monde had previously reported that Moroccan intelligence was using the application to spy on the French president and his cabinet. Rabat denied the report.

According to Sputnik, the Elysée Palace and the ministers declined to comment.

Earlier, it was reported that the President of France had changed his smartphone and phone number due to the fear that it had been targeted by the Israeli spyware “Pegasus.”

He did so after the media reported that he may have been one of the 50,000 targets of the spy-

ware made by the Israeli group NSO.

In mid-July, investigations by 17 media outlets revealed that NSO spyware had been used to successfully hack 37 smartphones belonging to journalists, government officials, and human rights activists from around the world.

Various media outlets, including the Washington Post, Le Monde, the Guardian, and several other sources, revealed that the Israeli spyware had been sold to some countries, including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, to hack into the smartphones of several key figures around the world.

The revelation of the Pegasus spy scandal has provoked so many international reactions that Amnesty International Secretary-General ▶ Page 5

Top military aide predicts U.S. will soon flee Syria, Persian Gulf

TEHRAN – Yahya Rahim Safavi, a top military advisor to Leader of the Islamic Revolution, has predicted that the Americans will eventually flee Syria and the Persian Gulf region very soon after their humiliating withdrawal from Afghanistan.

“Meanwhile, they have to escape from the Persian Gulf and West Asia as they cannot stay in this region,” Fars quoted Rahim Safavi as saying.

The Americans have to flee Syria as soon as possible after their humiliating experience in Afghanistan, the top military advisor predicted.

Syrian Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad said on Sunday the U.S. should pull out from his country before it’s too late.

Speaking on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, he told China Media Group (CMG) that lessons should be learned from last month’s Afghanistan withdrawal, which he described as “an absolutely humiliation for the United States and its allies.”

Foreign Minister Mekdad also said on August 29 that the “thunderous defeat” of the United States in Afghanistan will lead to similar defeats for American troops in Syria and other parts of the world.

Mekdad said the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan “is a strong lesson for the allies and tools of the United States in the region and the world.”

“Shared interest, threats”

Safavi also praised Iran’s membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), saying Iran share common interest and threats with key members of the organization.

“Iran, as the largest power in the West Asia region, has joined the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) based on the shared interests, threats, and enemies, while the Americans are at odds with Russia, China, and North Korea,” Rahim Safavi added.

North Korea is neither a partner, observer nor a member of the SCO.

He underlined that Iran as a major power in West Asia has extended and added to the power of SCO as it connects the power in the East to the power in West Asia and the Mediterranean Sea.

“Iran, in fact, increased the geopolitical, geo-economic, and geostrategic weight of the Shanghai Organization,” Rahim Safavi, a professor geostrategic studies, pointed out. ▶ Page 2

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Non-oil trade rises 47% in 6 months yr/yr

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

Mehdi Mir-Ashrafi said that Iran has traded 79.1 million tons of non-oil products worth \$45 billion with other countries in the mentioned period, IRNA reported.

The official put the six-month non-oil exports at 60 million tons valued at \$21.8 billion, with a 61-percent rise in value and a 30-percent growth in weight.

The IRICA head mentioned liquefied natural gas, methanol, polyethylene, semi-finished iron products, iron ingots, propane, urea, gasoline, iron rods and cathodes as the main exported products in the said time span.

He said major export destinations of the Iranian non-oil goods were China with about 14.8 million tons worth \$6.5 billion, Iraq with 13.9 million tons worth \$3.8 billion, Turkey with 7.2 million tons worth \$2.3 billion, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) with 5.8 million tons worth \$2.2 billion, and Afghanistan with 2.5 million tons worth \$1.0 billion. ▶ Page 4

Iran plans to resume tourist visas next month: minister

TEHRAN – Iran plans to resume tourist visas by next month after months of suspension amid strict government measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus, the tourism minister announced on Monday concurrent with the World Tourism Day.

“By the order of President [Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi] the issuance of tourist visas and the flow of foreign tourists from land and air borders will be resumed from [the month of] Aban (Oct. 23 – Nov. 21) following 19 months of suspension,” Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Minister Eza-tollah Zarghami said on Monday.

The government approval to resume the issuance of Iranian tourist visas has been declared to all relevant organizations and agencies, the deputy tourism minister Ali-Asghar Shalbafian said on Monday.

Months of steep recession has taken its toll. Many travel insiders, hoteliers, and tour operators have faced big dilemmas such as bankruptcy, unemployment, debts, and the prospects of not being competitive on the international level.

They now have good grounds of hope as Zarghami announced on September 19 that the country plans to lift visa restrictions to help the severely hit tourism industry.

Meanwhile, the number of people testing positive for COVID-19 has continued to fall in the Islamic Republic, curbing a stubborn fifth wave of the pandemic, which has seen daily mortalities of up to 700 in recent weeks. As of September 22, the figure dropped to below 300 as the government has devoted a great deal of effort to vaccinate citizens against the nasty virus.

Some experts believe Iran is still somehow “unknown” for many potential travelers due to Western “media war”. Several estimates have been released so far on the extent of the tourism-related losses incurred by the pandemic. Only months into the outbreak, Zarghami’s predecessor, Ali Asghar Mounesan, lamented that the number of foreign travelers to Iran was drastically plunged due to the pandemic. ▶ Page 6

Over 800 knowledge-based firms active in advanced materials

TEHRAN – A total of 866 knowledge-based companies are operating in the field of advanced materials and products based on chemical technologies, according to the Vice Presidency for Science and Technology.

Advanced materials are a strategic field for any country. Because all areas such as aerospace, biotechnology, microelectronics and automotive de-

pend on it. Therefore, the growth and development of knowledge-based companies active in this field is effective in the development of other sectors, and meet the needs of industries.

Advanced materials also have a significant impact on employment and income generation, and the more countries have access to these materials; their development occurs more rapidly. ▶ Page 7



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Ayatollah Khamenei attends funeral prayer for Hassanzadeh Amoli

TEHRAN — Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei attended the Islamic funeral prayer for top religious and scientific figure Ayatollah Hassan Hassanzadeh Amoli on Sunday.

Hassanzadeh Amoli died at the age of 93. Health officials said he died of heart failure due to old age. He was considered among philosophers of the Islamic world. He spoke French and Arabic. The religious scholar wrote books in philosophy, mysticism, mathematics, astronomy and Persian and Arabic languages. ▶ Page 2

Top military aide predicts U.S. will soon flee Syria, Persian Gulf



From page 1 ► He also predicted that the new power bloc in Asia will confront Western bloc led by the U.S.

The former IRGC commander predicted that Asia will supersede the West economically in the future.

This view by Rahim Safavi is shared by many other analysts as well.

“The power of the Asian continent will become the world’s number one economic power in the next few decades, and it is undoubtedly a fact that American power is on decline.”

In relevant remarks last week, Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Major General Hossein Salami said that Iran is bolstering its power to gain victory against Washington, noting that Israel is no more counted as a power.

“We have built power to defeat the U.S. When we build power for man’s largest military empire, i.e. the U.S., small powers like the Zionist regime are no longer counted in our equations,” General Salami said.

He underlined that the Iranian nation has managed to embrace victory against the cruel

U.S. sanctions and economic war as well as the psychological pressures and heavy media operations of Washington and other Western powers, and defused their plots.

The sanctions that former U.S. President Donald Trump has imposed on Iran under his “maximum pressure” campaign are still on despite a change of government in the U.S.

In relevant remarks on September 19, General Salami said that the U.S. has lost its power and is a defeated, fugitive and depressed state which has been forced to withdraw its forces from the region.

The IRGC chief was openly referring to the U.S. scandalous exit from Afghanistan after 20 years of occupation.

“Today we no longer see the dangerous U.S., but we witness a failed, fleeing, and the depressed U.S.,” General Salami said.

General Salami also expressed delight that the Iranian nation’s resistance too had helped them weather all pressures.

“Inside our own country, despite all natural or imposed pressures, the Iranian nation has been engaged in resistance [too]. And now, these obstacles are being removed, the adversities are giving way to

easier times, and the roads are being paved,” he said.

The entire world is now envying this nation that has been successfully standing up to great powers for more than four decades, the commander remarked.

“Iran’s name is identified with grandeur, compassion, advancement, integrity, and unity,” he stated.

Ayatollah Khamenei attends funeral prayer for Hassanzadeh Amoli

from page 1 ► In a message issued on September 26, Leader of the Islamic Revolution also offered condolences over the passing of the prolific religious scholar.

The message the Leader reads as follows:

In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful

With deep sorrow, I have received news of the demise of the spiritual scholar and traveler on the path of monotheism, Ayatollah Hasanazadeh Amoli. This learned, multidimensional religious scholar was among the unique and distinguished figures whose limited number in any era delight

the eyes and hearts of those who know them and benefit from these scholars’ knowledge, insight, reason, and soul.

The writings and works of this honorable scholar will be a great source for the lovers of knowledge and intricate meanings, God willing. I offer my condolences to all his friends, students, and admirers, especially to the faithful believers and revolutionary people of the city of Amol and also to the enthusiastic youth who were attracted by his revolutionary stances and lofty manners. I ask God to bestow His forgiveness and mercy on him and raise his status.

Iran urges UN to take a firm stance against assassination of nuclear scientists

TEHRAN — Reza Najafi, Iran’s acting Deputy Foreign Minister for International Legal Affairs, has stressed that Tehran expects the United Nations to take a firm position in face of terrorist acts against Iranian nuclear scientists and Lt. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, Iran’s anti-terror hero.

Reza Najafi made the remarks in a meeting with Michele Coninx, Executive Director of the UN Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee, at Iran’s Permanent Mission in New York, IRNA reported on Friday.

So far, a number of Iranian nuclear experts have been assassinated. The main suspect for assassinations is Israel. Also, in January 2020 the United States assassinated Gen. Soleimani in a drone strike near Baghdad’s international airport. The assassination took place upon direct order of former U.S. president Donald Trump. ISIL celebrated the assassination of the legendary commander.

Najafi and Ms. Coninx also focused on of mutual interaction in the fight against terrorism, cooperation capacities, terrorist threats in the region, including in certain countries near Iran, and the need to combat the financing of terrorist groups.

The situation in Afghanistan and the need for the United Nations to pay more attention to this Central Asian country in its current state in order to prevent the country to become a safe haven for terrorist groups, including ISIL and al-Qaeda, was emphasized by the Iranian deputy foreign minister.

The Iranian diplomat also said it is necessary that the United Nations take steps to counter this conception that the UN adopts double standards in the fight against terrorism.

In another separate meeting, Najafi met with Vladimir Voronkov, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Counter-Terrorism.

Implementation of the UN General Assembly resolution entitled Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the need to return foreign terrorist fighters and their families, especially children, to their camps in Syria and Iraq, and the potential threat of extremism and terrorist acts were discussed and the two sides expressed their concerns in this regard.

The current situation in Afghanistan and the need to prevent the country to become a safe haven for terrorists, as well as the approach of the UN counter-terrorism measures, were discussed.

Najafi also invited Voronkov to visit Tehran.

Decoding IAEA silence over clear violation of NPT in AUKUS pact

TEHRAN — The AUKUS pact, with all its controversies, has turned all eyes on three world powers and an international body: The United States, United Kingdom, France, and United Nations nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Referred to as “Cold War 2.0” by some political analysts, the AUKUS pact (Australia, UK, U.S.) is a trilateral partnership, which is aimed to provide Canberra with nuclear-powered submarines.

“This decision is contrary to the letter and spirit of the co-operation that prevailed between France and Australia,” French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian and Armed Forces Minister Florence Parly said in a joint statement.

The switch “marks an absence of coherence that France can only observe and regret”, the pair added.

Paris has gone from viewing Australia and the United States as a friend and ally to nations which can’t be trusted.

Macron had invested serious political capital in turning the submarine contract into something more enduring. In 2018 he stood on a warship at Garden Island military base in Sydney and pledged a new era of French involvement in the Indo-Pacific — something the coalition had wanted for years and welcomed with open arms.

Standing next to Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison in the Elysee Palace courtyard, Macron said France was committed to “defending the balance in the Indo-Pacific region” and stressed “how much we consider the partnership we have with Australia to be at the heart of this Indo-Pacific strategy.”

What Macron didn’t know was that four days earlier, Morrison had used a meeting with U.S. President Joe Biden and British Prime Minister Boris Johnson at the G7 summit in Cornwall, England, to discuss a secret plan to ditch the French submarines and replace them with a nuclear-powered fleet using U.S. and UK technology.

The Australian prime minister told Macron at that Elysee Palace meeting, and in the days after, that Australia was considering its options. But he did not tell Macron about the plan being developed in secret with the U.S. and UK, according to Brisbane Times.

For unknown reasons, Morrison and Macron did not speak over the phone despite the momentous news. In a joint televised address with Biden and Johnson, Morrison did not once mention France. It fell to Biden to insist France was still a key ally in the



region.

Australia hasn’t just picked a fight with France but also the European Union. The relationship was already rocky after the EU blocked the shipment of millions of AstraZeneca vaccine doses to Australia earlier this year.

The AUKUS pact came as a blow to France’s economy. They lost a major economic deal. Some say they lost over \$56 billion, some say \$66 billion, and the Guardian even went on to say that France lost a \$90 billion deal.

France has taken diplomatic measures. It started to recall ambassadors from the United States and Australia for “further consultations.”

The move prompted Australia to try to mend broken ties with France. A spokesperson for Australia’s foreign affairs minister, Marise Payne, said, “Australia understands France’s deep disappointment with our decision, which was taken in accordance with our clear and communicated national security interests.”

She also said that Australia values its relationship with France, “which is an important partner and a vital contributor to stability, particularly in the Indo-Pacific. This will not change.”

The spokesperson said Australia and France share many issues of interest and “we look forward to engaging with France again.”

In his interview with CNN’s Fareed Zakaria, Philippe Etienne, the French ambassador to Washington who is now in Paris, said that he will be back in Washington next week.

“..I have a couple of consultations to complete but then I will be back in Washington where I will have a lot of work to do with our American intelligence.”

This raises eyebrows over the role of the intelligence services in the AUKUS pact.

AEOI sends letter of complaint to IAEA

TEHRAN — Following the publication of an inaccurate report by the International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Rafael Grossi on Sunday, Iran’s nuclear spokesman announced on Monday that he had sent a letter to the IAEA protesting the “unconstructive” move by the Agency.

Behrouz Kamalvandi asked the IAEA not to undermine the “constructive process through purposeful and biased reports.”

Kamalvandi explained that Grossi and his colleagues are well aware that the agreement reached in the form of a joint statement in Tehran on September 12 would not include the surveillance equipment and cameras at the Karaj site as it is still under security investigation as a result of a sabotage act in June.

He said that the request to “generalize” the replacement of memory cards to the cameras at the complex was raised during the IAEA director general’s visit to Tehran and also on the sidelines of the Vienna General Conference.

However, Kamalvandi added, the term “specified” in front of the word “equipment” was used for this purpose with the aim of excluding this complex from service.

The AEOI spokesman reminded that during the meeting in Vienna, when the director general

once again requested the servicing of cameras of the Karaj site, AEOI chief Mohammad Eslami explicitly stated that for the reasons mentioned in the previous meeting, generalizing the replacement of all memory cards at the Karaj site is impossible and outside the announced framework of the joint statement.

The AEOI spokesman noted that it is necessary for the officials of this international organization not to destroy the constructive process created following the recent cooperation between Iran and the IAEA, advising the body to avoid purposeful political positions, as well as false and biased reports.

Iran and the global nuclear watchdog have found themselves in disagreement over the contents of an understanding reached earlier this month, which was part of efforts to restore the 2015 Iran nuclear deal.

The Russian ambassador to the IAEA, Mikhail Ulyanov, said late on Monday that the decision by Tehran not to allow access to the facility in Karaj does not constitute a violation of the safeguards.

“At today’s IAEA Board of Governors, I stressed that the denial of access to the facility in Karaj isn’t a violation of safeguards, just partial implementation of voluntary transparency measures by Iran. However, it’s



important to find a positive solution in the interests of Iran and JCPOA,” Ulyanov tweeted.

Iran decided to restrict international inspections of its nuclear sites in 2019 after the United States withdrew from the landmark nuclear agreement a year earlier. It, however, later granted limited access to IAEA inspectors.

The IAEA said on Sunday its inspectors had been denied access to a centrifuge manufacturing site in Karaj, near the capital Tehran. Iran has boosted its nuclear activity in the wake of the U.S. withdrawal from the deal.

The site in Karaj was targeted by a sabotage attack in June, the third such attack on Iran’s nuclear sites since mid-2020. Iran has accused

Israel of orchestrating all these attacks.

In a series of tweets on Monday, the Iranian Ambassador to IAEA Kazem Gharibabadi criticized the Agency for staying silent on the “terrorist” attacks and not issuing a statement even for the threat they posed to its own inspectors and equipment.

He also said the agreement earlier this month was for “identified equipment” and Iran informed the Agency during discussions in Tehran and Vienna that the equipment related to the Karaj site are not included since the site is still under security and judicial investigations.

“Any decision taken by Iran on monitoring equipment is only based on political rather than legal considerations and the Agency cannot and should not consider it as one of its entitlements,” Gharibabadi stated.

He also said the Agency’s latest report “isn’t accurate”.

The agreement struck in Tehran had avoided the possibility of a resolution against Iran at the Agency’s board of governors meeting earlier this month. Such a resolution could jeopardize the prospects of restoring the 2015 agreement, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) since Tehran has said it won’t negotiate under “pressure” from the West.

control anywhere.”

Therefore, all three parties to the AUKUS pact have violated this article. They have shared nuclear knowledge, without letting IAEA in the know. Ironically, the IAEA is quite silent over the matter, and has taken the high road. It seems that the countries who own nuclear bombs, are using the IAEA to reach their petty goals.

While Iran has ferociously protested over IAEA’s double standards over NPT violations, the UN nuclear watchdog has not responded to Iran yet.

In his remarks on September 22, Iranian Ambassador to the IAEA Kazem Gharibabadi pointed to Tehran’s conviction that every NPT signatory has the right to pursue its peaceful nuclear program, regardless of the level of enrichment, solely on the basis of its own needs and in accordance with the IAEA safeguards, but underlined the need for necessary safeguards arrangements in place to ensure civilian nature of their nuclear programs.

It is essential that Australia reach an agreement with the IAEA on necessary safeguards arrangements, he said, adding that the IAEA must have access to high-enriched nuclear material in Australia at any agreed and reasonable time, and no excuse is acceptable in this regard.

While stressing that the IAEA needs to regularly inform the Board of Governors of the developments surrounding the new partnership, the Iranian diplomat raised the alarm about putting the issue of non-proliferation and disarmament at risk.

“The U.S. and the UK have put the issues of non-proliferation and disarmament at risk. The U.S. and the UK must abandon double standards and hypocrisy, and refrain from jeopardizing their obligations under the NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty), in particular Article 3, under the pretext of fabricated ‘strategic concerns,’” Gharibabadi stressed.

The submarines used by the U.S. Navy and also the British use highly enriched uranium, or HEU, enriched to a level of 93 percent -- the same level of uranium concentration necessary for a powerful nuclear weapon.

Only six countries -- the U.S., Britain, France, China, India and Russia -- have nuclear-powered submarines.

The AUKUS deal will make Australia the seventh nation to acquire nuclear-powered submarines.

It is high time for the IAEA to stop being a U.S. tool, and act independently.

FM says Iran not linking economy to JCPOA talks

TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has stressed that Iran will return to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) talks but will not tie its economy to these talks.

Abdollahian made the remarks in a meeting with Naledi Pandor, the Minister of Cooperation and International Relations of South Africa,

on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly on Friday (local time).

The Iranian foreign minister said the new Iranian administration’s

foreign policy is “pragmatic” and that Iran would return to the Vienna nuclear talks intended to revive the JCPOA, but would not tie its economy to these talks.

He said Iran would respond in kind if the other parties returned to fulfilling their obligations under the JCPOA.

The remaining parties to the JCPOA are Iran, Germany, France, Britain (European trio), Russia and China. The talks for revitalizing the JCPOA started in April in order to bring the United States to full compliance with the deal. Six rounds of talks were

held until June. However, the talks were suspended as Iran was holding a presidential election.

During the meeting, the top Iranian diplomat also hailed the president and the government of South Africa for their congratulatory messages to the president and foreign minister of Iran, describing the relations between the two countries very well.

Referring to the history of the two countries’ support for each other in international bodies, Abdollahian announced his readiness to hold a joint economic commission between

Iran and South Africa.

For her part, the South African Foreign Minister congratulated Abdollahian on his appointment as foreign minister and stressed his country’s interest in cooperating and expanding relations with Iran.

Stating that excellent cooperation in the fields of science and technology has been formed between the two countries, Pandor

said that during her visit to Iran she witnessed very good progress in various fields, especially in the fields of science and technology.

Envoy says IAEA report on cameras of Tesa Complex in Karaj is ‘inaccurate’

IAEA report goes ‘beyond the understanding’; Gharibabadi notes

From Page 1 ► He added that any decision by Iran regarding the IAEA monitoring equipment is “only based on political rather than legal considerations”; therefore, the IAEA cannot and should not assert its rights in this regard.

Gharibabadi highlighted: “The joint statement of the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran and the director-general of the IAEA on September 12 was also obtained in good faith of Iran and with the aim of replacing the ‘specified equipment’ memory cards. The Agency also took action to implement this goal from September 20 to 22.”

During the talks in Tehran and recently in Vienna, it was clearly stated that since the security and judicial investigations into the Tesa complex in Karaj are still ongoing, the monitoring equipment of this complex will not be under technical service, the ambassador added.

That is why the term “specified equipment” was used in the joint statement, he said.



Therefore, Gharibabadi underlined, the IAEA Director-General's September 26 report “isn't accurate and goes beyond the agreed terms” of the joint statement.

Iran had vetoed the IAEA's request to have “full” access to the footages and memory cards of the nuclear sites. In December 2020, the Iranian parliament

passed the generalities of a bill titled “Strategic Action to Lift Sanctions.”

The bill requires the government to raise uranium enrichment levels to 20% and install advanced centrifuges.

According to the 9-article bill, the AEOI will be required to produce and store at

least 120 kilograms of enriched uranium with 20 percent purity at the Fordow nuclear facility every year, and to fulfil the country's peaceful industrial demands with uranium enriched above 20%.

The bill entails uranium enrichment activities with at least 1,000 IR-2M centrifuge machines at the Natanz nuclear plant within three months after the ratification of the law, and compels the AEOI to launch uranium enrichment as well as research and development activities with at least 164 IR-6 centrifuges and increase the number of centrifuge machines to 1,000 within a year after the ratification of the bill.

The bill also requires the government to suspend the voluntary implementation of the Additional Protocol to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) three months after the ratification of it if the parties to the nuclear deal between Iran and world powers, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), failed to uphold their obligations under the agreement.

Syria welcoming closer Iran-Arab ties

TEHRAN – Syrian Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad has welcomed any move to foster closer relations between Iran and Arab countries

In an interview with pan-Arab satellite television channel Al Mayadeen on Sunday, Syria's top diplomat said his government supports efforts aimed at integration among regional countries.

He said Iran has always supported the Arabs and sided with the people of Syria and Palestine, and welcomed any move toward rapprochement between Tehran and the Arab world.

“We must respond well to the good behavior of the Iranian side,” Mekdad said, according to Press TV.

The interview by Mekdad comes as Iran and Saudi Arabia, which have been at loggerhead over a number of issues, including the Riyadh-led war on Yemen, have been holding four rounds of talks in Iraq.

Iran's new foreign minister, Hossein Amir Abdollahian, who has returned from the annual UN General Assembly meeting in New York also plants to take a tour of Syria and Lebanon in which a new government has been formed after months of political instability.

The chief Syrian diplomat also said the government in Damascus is “not afraid of Israel or its sponsors”, as he reaffirmed support for Lebanon, which has seen Syria serve as a conduit for shipments of Iranian fuel to the crisis-stricken neighboring country.

Earlier this week, the second Lebanon-bound shipment of Iranian fuel arrived in Syria's northwestern port city of Baniyas under an initiative by the Hezbollah resistance movement to ease the country's crippling energy crisis.

The fuel is being imported to sanctions-battered Lebanon via Syria in an effort to avoid entangling Lebanon in the U.S. sanctions on Iran.

The humanitarian move by Iran has ruffled feathers in Tel Aviv. Hezbollah chief Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah last month dared the Israeli regime to stop the shipment.

“The vessel, from the moment it sails until it enters (Mediterranean) waters, will be considered Lebanese territory,” he said during a televised speech last month. “To the Americans and Israelis, I say: it's Lebanese territory.”

Mekdad, echoing Nasrallah's words, said Syria is not afraid of the Israeli regime and its attempts to prevent the Iranian fuel from reaching Lebanon.

He also lashed out at Western countries for their

“double standards” toward the government and the people of Syria.

“Syria does not trust the intentions of Western countries,” Mekdad asserted. “These countries created terrorism in Syria and financed it and they continue to send terrorists and assassins to Syria.”

Thousands of terrorists flooded Syria. They mostly used Turkey to enter Syria. Terrorists were mostly from Chechnya (Russia), Pakistan, Egypt, and the West.

Al Qaeda in Iraq, the insurgent group that rose to prominence in the fight against the American occupation in the years after the 2003 invasion, also poured into Syria.

“Crime against humanity”

The Syrian foreign minister also denounced the unilateral U.S. approach, stressing that Washington has suffered on the account of its distance from international organizations.

“Syria is rich in natural resources, but the U.S. and European sanctions have caused problems to the country's economy,” he said, lambasting the sanctions regime against Syria.

Mekdad also called for the repeal of the Caesar Act, which blocks foreign investments in Syria's reconstruction efforts, calling it a “crime against humanity” by the U.S. government.

He said the law is “not in the interest of the people of Syria but in the interest of Israel”

The top Syrian diplomat further called for the “dignified withdrawal” of U.S. forces from the region, “not like Afghanistan.”

In late August, Syria's foreign minister said the “thunderous defeat” of the United States in Afghanistan will lead to similar defeats for American troops in Syria and other parts of the world.

Reconciliation program in Dara'a

Several units of the Syrian army were deployed in the villages and towns in al-Yarmouk Basin area of ??western Dara'a on Monday, according to the official Syrian news agency SANA.

The deployment took place after the surrender of dozens of armed men and fugitives in the village of Sahem al-Jawlan in the Hauran region of the Dara'a governorate.

Meanwhile, operations are underway to bring gunmen in the villages and towns of al-Shajira, al-Qusair, Abedin, Na'fa, Jama'a, Beit Areh and Koya in the

northwestern province of Dara'a into the mainstream fold, in line with a reconciliation agreement reached by the Syrian government.

Many similar reconciliation programs have been initiated in recent days, starting from Dara'a al-Balad neighborhood and continued in other villages and towns of the governorate.

Last week, the Syrian army entered the towns of Tal Shihab and Zaizoun in Dara'a, where militants laid down their arms under a truce agreement proposed by the government last month.

The complete control over Dara'a is seen as a significant victory for the government in Damascus since the province borders the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights.

The strategic territory's return to the Syrian government could sever collaboration between the Israeli regime and militants and accordingly deal a blow to Tel Aviv's plans to annex the Golan Heights.

Meanwhile, Turkey has sent reinforcements to northwestern Syria where Russia has stepped up airstrikes, three days before Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart Tayyip Erdogan are due to meet.

Quoting several sources, Reuters said Russian jets bombed villages around the city of Afrin on Sunday, intensifying airstrikes on towns and villages held by Turkish-backed militants.

At least five militants from a Turkey-backed faction were killed while at least 12 civilians were injured in the attacks, the report said.

Erdogan and Putin are scheduled to meet in Sochi on Wednesday to discuss the situation in the war-ravaged Arab country.

Last week, Syria's Foreign Ministry strongly condemned the Turkish military's ongoing operations in the northern part of the country, stressing that the offensives are in blatant violation of the Arab nation's sovereignty and independence.

An unnamed official source in the ministry said that the operations were in line with the “hostile policies” of Turkey's ruling AK Party, SANA reported.

The report said Syria calls on UN Secretary General António Guterres and the Security Council to adopt a clear stance vis-à-vis the Ankara government's “aggressive policies”, as Security Council's resolutions reiterate respect for Syria's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity.

Steadfast steps of Raisi administration to complete semi-finished projects

TEHRAN — The focus of the government officials last week, which coincided with the 41st anniversary of the Sacred Defense and the beginning of the new school year, was to pursue and remove obstacles with an emphasis on reducing poverty and completing semi-finished projects.

The diligent efforts of the officials of the Raisi administration for the development and prosperity of the country are not hidden from anyone despite the fact that it started its work in early August.

From the very beginning, the president took over the executive responsibility of the country with the slogan of “people-oriented administration”, and this orientation has been reflected in the provincial trips of government officials with the aim of increasing social capital and hope, pursuing affairs, removing obstacles and resolving problems, IRNA reported on Saturday.

Economic development and reduction of poverty along with sustainable employment are among the most important strategies and priorities of the administration, which in this regard the completion of semi-finished projects can pave the way for development of the country's border and near regions.

Experience has indicated that the greater the presence of officials among the people, the more correct and close to reality the decisions and policies adopted will be, and the more efficient the administration will be leading the affairs to be more transparent.

Last week, September 18–September 24, a number of national figures visited provinces.

The visits took place concurrent with Sacred Defense Week ceremonies, honoring wartime veterans, the start of the academic year, inspecting projects, etc.

At a time that the country is grappling with the Coronavirus pandemic, the members of the administration have tried to get first-hand information about problems in provinces and the progress of the projects under construction.

This report refers to a selection of the most important measures, achievements and remarks of cabinet members in the host provinces last week, including Ilam, Yazd, Khorasan Razavi, Hamedan, West Azarbaijan, Khuzestan, Qom, and Alborz.

Ilam, destination of the fourth visit by president

Ilam province was the destination of the president's fourth provincial trip. Raisi arrived in the province on Friday, September 24, along with a group of government officials on a one-day trip to the province.

President Raisi, upon entering the province, referred to Ilam's proximity to Iraq, sand said: “With the activation of border markets, border exchanges, especially exports, will increase in this province.”

Visiting the Kanjancham Dam in Mehran city was one of the president's plans during the trip.

On the sidelines of the visit, he stressed the administration is making efforts to complete the semi-finished projects.

He warned that an abandonment of such projects would undermine social trust.

Attending a cemetery of martyrs in the border province, Raisi said the key to progress and victory in the country is to move in the path of martyrs and wartime veterans with sincerity and jihadist spirit.

“Any manager and official who acts with a revolutionary spirit and with unwavering service to the people will achieve all the lofty goals of the system,” the president remarked.

The president's face-to-face meeting with the people and addressing their problems were other plans of Raisi during his visit to the western province of Ilam.

After being informed of the problems and hearing about suggestions and demands of the locals, the President called on the governor of Ilam to take the necessary measures to resolve the problems.

Helping to solve the housing problem, supporting knowledge-based research initiatives and projects, removing barriers to production in the field of animal husbandry and agriculture, and providing the necessary facilities and equipment for the education of students were among the issues raised in face-to-face meetings.

Also in a meeting with the ulema, elites and families of the martyrs and war

veterans in his one day tour of the province, the President said, “Exports to Iraq and other neighboring countries should be developed and infrastructure should be prepared in this regard.”

The main points of the President's remarks during the provincial tour were:

- The most important capacity of Ilam province is capable manpower, especially the youth.

- The people of Iran are beholden to Ilam, the people who were at the forefront of the battlefield during the holy defense.

- The people of Ilam heroically stood against the Ba'athist regime of Iraq against Iran and sacrificed many martyrs for the sake of Islam and the revolution.

-The message of the martyrs is that we should not allow the ideals of the revolution and obedience to the Supreme Leader to lose color in society. Also justice for the oppressed and the dignity of the Iranian nation should not be undermined.

Ilam, Khuzestan and Kermanshah provinces suffered the greatest losses during Saddam Hussein's war against Iran in the 1980s.

The president had previously traveled to the provinces of Khuzestan, Sistan-Baluchestan and South Khorasan.

Sistan-Baluchestan and South Khorasan are among the less developed provinces in Iran. Khuzestan was also the scene of protests over water scarcity in July mostly resulting from droughts and cultivation of water intensive crops.

IRAN IN FOCUS

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Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

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SPORTS

South Korea look to end winless streak against Iran

TEHRAN – South Korea football team haven't beaten Iran in Tehran in seven previous meetings, with two draws and five losses. The Taeguk Warriors are determined to end their winless streak in Tehran.

South Korea, who have long had trouble against Iran, sit in second place in Group A with four points in the 2022 World Cup qualification Round 3. Top-ranked Asian team Iran lead the table with two wins out of two matches.

The Taeguk Warriors have gone 9-9-13 (wins-draws-losses) versus the 'Persians Leopards'.

English Premier League-based duo Son Heung-min and Hwang Hee-chan have been included in South Korea's squad for their upcoming World Cup qualifiers against Syria and Iran.

Paulo Bento's side host the Syrians on Oct. 7 before travelling to Tehran to face Iran five days later at the Azadi Stadium.

“What we should do is to focus on our way of playing and respect the opponents, and try to improve certain aspects that we didn't do so well in some moments of earlier games,” the Portuguese coach said in an online news conference.

“We'll try to improve our way of attacking the opponents, create more chances to score than in the first two games, and keep within the same behavior in the defensive process” he added.

Esteghlal coach Majidi pens three-year contract extension

TEHRAN – Esteghlal head coach Farhad Majidi put pen to paper on a three-year contract extension on Saturday.

Mostafa Ajoorloo, the new general manager of Esteghlal club, said that he would support Majidi as the Blues' head coach.

On Saturday, Majidi extended his contract for three more years.

Also, former Esteghlal player Bijan Taheri was named as sporting director of the club.

Iran to take part at World Company Sports Games

TEHRAN – Iran will participate at the 3rd World Company Sports Games (WCSG) in Greece.

The Games will be held from October 6 to 10 in Athens.

The athletes will compete at the 28 disciplines in the five-day competitions.

Iran finished third in the 2018 WCSG in France, winning 18 gold, eight silver and five bronze medals.

Iran will compete at six sports namely, athletic, swimming, football, beach volleyball, dart and table tennis in the Games.

Geraei, Iran’s big savior in Tokyo 2020: UWW

TEHRAN – Mohammad Reza Geraei's run in the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo was a big savior for the country's otherwise disappointing performance.

He defeated three-time world champion Frank Stabler from Germany in the quarterfinal and then Georgian Ramaz Zoide in the semifinal of the 67kg weight class.

In the final, he defeated Parviz Nasibov from Ukraine,UWW.org reported.

World Cup winner Nazir Abdulaev from Russia will be a big threat to Geraei's quest to become an Olympic and World champion in the same year.

The Greco-Roman wrestler now has a chance to take things to the next level by winning a senior Worlds medal.

The 2021 World Wrestling Championships will be held in Oslo, Norway from October 2 to 10.

Kamalvand takes charge of Naft Masjed Soleyman

TEHRAN – Faraz Kamalvand was appointed as new coach of Naft Masjed Soleyman football team on Sunday.

Kamalvand, 44, was appointed as Tractor coach on July 31 but announced his resignation after a month.

He replaced Sirous Pourmousavi in the Iranian top-flight football team.

Mahmoud Fekri, who led the team in the 2020/21 season, was also a candidate to return to the club but they chose Kamalvand as their new head coach.

Naft Masjed Soleyman came 13th last season.

Farhad Fakhim misses rest of Futsal World Cup

TEHRAN – Iran futsal player Farhad Fakhim missed the rest of the 2021 Futsal World Cup due to the foot injury.

In the match against Uzbekistan, he suffered a knee injury and MRI has revealed a right knee sprain.

Hossein Tayebi, who has been absent so far for the rib injury, is a doubt for the match against Kazakhstan.

Iran played Kazakhstan Monday night in the 2021 Futsal World Cup quarter-finals.

Ex-Iran wrestler Yaghoubi passes away

TEHRAN – Former Iran freestyle wrestler Mohammad Mehdi Yaghoubi passed away on Saturday.

He died of heart disease at the age of 91.

Yaghoubi won a bronze medal in the -57kg class in Helsinki in 1951 World Wrestling Championships.

He also claimed a silver medal at the 1956 Summer Olympics in Melbourne.

Tehran Times extends deepest sympathy to the Yaghoubi's family, loved ones, and friends over his demise.

Iran loses to Italy at World Deaf Volleyball Championship

TEHRAN – Iran lost to Italy 3-1 (25-19, 25-19, 21-25, 25-14) at the 4th World Deaf Volleyball Championship on Sunday.

Iran had begun the campaign with a 3-0 loss against Russia but defeated Bulgaria 3-1.

Iran will play Turkey on Tuesday.

Iran are headed by Mohammad Torkashvand in the competition.

The 2021 World Deaf Volleyball Championship is being held in Chianciano Terme, Italy from September 23 to October 2.

Non-oil trade rises 47% in 6 months yr/yr



From page 1 ► The official further announced that Iran has imported 191 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$231 billion in the first six months of the present year, with a 37-percent growth in value and a 15-percent rise in weight year on year.

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

The United Arab Emirates with 5.9 million tons of goods worth \$7.3 billion was the top exporter to Iran in the said period, followed by China with 1.5 million tons of goods worth \$5.0 billion, Turkey with 2.1 million tons worth \$2.4 billion, and Switzerland with one million tons worth \$900,000, the official stated.

According to the official, out of the total 19.1 million tons of goods imported into the country in the first six months of this year, 14.3 million worth \$8.9 billion were basic goods, which constitutes 75 percent of the total imported goods.

The official also noted that over 5.856 million tons of goods were transited through Iran in the said period, registering an 85-percent rise compared to the same period in the previous year.

Ugandan trade delegation visits Tehran seeking expansion of ties

TEHRAN – A Trade delegation from Uganda has visited the capital Tehran to explore avenues for expanding economic relations with the Iranian private sector.

The trade delegation attended a meeting with the representatives of the Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (TCCIMA) on Sunday, the portal of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCI-MA) reported.

The meeting was attended by the ICCIMA Deputy Head for International Affairs Mohammadreza Karbasi, Ambassador of Uganda to Tehran Muhammad Tezikuba Kisambira, the heads of ICCIMA specialized committees, as well as representatives of the country's export organizations and chambers of commerce, and a group of businessmen interested in trade with the African country.

During the meeting, the attendees exchanged views and information for cooperation in a variety of fields including foodstuff, agricultural products, coffee exports, agricultural machinery, construction,



ICCIMA Deputy Head for International Affairs Mohammadreza Karbasi (2nd R) and Ugandan Ambassador to Tehran Muhammad Tezikuba Kisambira (2nd L)

and engineering, as well as roads and housing.

Speaking in the event, Karbasi mentioned Uganda's great trade potentials and natural resources, saying: "Uganda has abundant mineral resources including copper, cobalt, limestone, iron ore, gold, and also untapped oil and gas resources, and the country has a very fertile soil."

Emphasizing that there are many potential areas for economic cooperation between the two countries,

Karbasi said: "According to studies, considering Iran's industrial capacities and the import needs of Uganda, the economies of the two countries can complement each other in many areas."

In addition to direct economic relations, Iran, as a major regional power in West Asia, can provide Uganda with an opportunity to access the markets of Central Asia, the Caucasus, Russia, and Iraq for exporting its agricultural products, especially tea and coffee, Karbasi

Iran becomes world's 20th biggest auto producer

TEHRAN – Iran currently stands at the 20th place among the world's top automobile manufacturers producing 821,060 vehicles by the end of 2019, according to the Organisation Internationale des Constructeurs d'Automobiles (OICA), worldpopulationreview.com reported.

Based on the OICA data, China is the world's largest producer of vehicles, manufacturing over 21 million cars and 4.36 million commercial vehicles. The largest domestic car manufacturers in China, known as the traditional "Big Four," are SAIC Motor, Dongfeng, FAW, and Chang'an.

The United States is the second-largest car producer in the world, although it produces less than half of what China does, manufacturing over 2.5 million cars and 8.37 million commercial vehicles.

Japan with 9.68 million cars, Germany with 4.66 million, India with 4.51 million, Mexico with 3.99 million, South Korea with 3.95 million, Brazil with 2.94 million, Spain with 2.82 million, and France with 2.20 million cars were the other top producers in the world,



during 2019.

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

According to the Codal portal data, the production by the mentioned com-

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

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

SAIPA manufactured 131,699 ve-

hicles in the mentioned period. Production by this automaker fell 4.28 percent in comparison to the previous year's same time span.

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

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

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

"Our plan is to produce 1.6 million vehicles next year (begins in March 2022), which will increase to three million units in [the Iranian calendar year] 1404 (begins in March 2025), and 30 percent of the production, equivalent to about one million units, should be sent to export markets," he added.

Annual overhaul begins for 40 power plant units across Iran

TEHRAN - The annual overhaul program of Iran's power plants has begun for 40 units of power plants with a total capacity of 7,000 megawatts across Iran, Managing Director of Iran Grid Management Company Mostafa Rajabi Mashhadi announced.

"Major overhaul and inspection of 40 power plant units have begun to prepare them for electricity supply in the summer of 1401 (next Iranian calendar year beginning in late March 2022)," IRNA quoted Rajabi Mashhadi as saying on Monday.

In order to ensure the proper operation of power plants in the peak consumption period, the annual overhaul program starts every year in early September and will continue until late May in the next year, the official said.

Summer months constitute Iran's peak demand periods, so most of the power plant overhaul programs are scheduled to take place during the autumn, winter, and spring seasons.

Every year, during the overhaul program thousands of personnel constantly work to complete the annual repair program of the country's power plants on time and ensure the stable supply of electricity to customers during peak days.

Last year, the annual overhaul program was conducted for 100,000 megawatts capacity of the country's power plants.



The capacity of power plant units that went through the overhaul program last year increased by 11 percent compared to the preceding year.

Currently, the knowledge for producing 80 percent of the equipment and spare parts of the power plants has been localized by Iranian experts in cooperation with knowledge-based companies and research centers.

Iran's total power generation capacity currently stands at about 85,000 MW, more than 90 percent of which is supplied by thermal power plants.

Currently, a total of 478 thermal power plants are operating throughout Iran which includes both gas power plants and combined cycle plants.

Monthly red meat production increases 43% yr/yr

TEHRAN- Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) announced that production of red meat in Iran stood at 52,800 tons in the fifth month of the current Iranian calendar year (July 23-August 22), showing 43 percent growth compared to the same month in the past year.

The SCI's report said that beef and veal had the lion's share in the country's red meat output during the fifth month with 28,232 tons, followed by lamb and mutton with 20,189 tons, goat meat with 3,440 tons, and red meat from other livestock with 939 tons.

Also, the amount of red meat supply in the official slaughterhouses of the country in the fifth month of this year has decreased two percent compared to the previous month.

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

Iran is among the leading consumers of red meat in the West Asia region with lamb



being the most sought after.

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

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

Qorbanzadeh appointed as new head of IPO

TEHRAN- Hossein Qorbanzadeh was appointed as the new head of the Iranian Privatization Organization (IPO), IRNA reported.

Finance and Economic Affairs Minister Ehsan Khandouzi appointed Qorbanzadeh to the post in a decree on Sunday.

Qorbanzadeh replaced Hassan-Ali Qanbari who was appointed to the position back in January.

Amendment of the general policies for the implementation of Article 44, taking necessary measures for achieving the objectives of the general policies of Article 44, using new methods in pricing in the privatization process, and reforming the methods for offering the shares of government-owned enterprises to the private sector are emphasized by the Economy Minister as major tasks of the new IPO head.

Hossein Qorbanzadeh is an Iranian journalist and politician who was previously the General Secretary of Progress and Justice Population of Islamic Iran. He has also served as the chief editor of Hamshahri newspaper. He was previously editor-in-chief of Tehran Emrooz newspaper.

The Iranian Privatization Organization affiliated with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs is in charge of implementing the country's privatization programs by setting prices and ceding shares to the general public and on the Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE).

IME's value of monthly trades up 50%

TEHRAN- The value of trades in Iran Mercantile Exchange (IME) rose 50 percent in the sixth Iranian calendar month Shahrivar (ended on September 22), as compared to its previous month.

As reported by the IME's Public Relations and International Affairs Department, 8.062 million tons of commodities worth \$2.013 billion was traded at the exchange in the mentioned month, showing also 70 percent growth in terms of weight.

The IME sold on its metals and minerals trading floor 6.018 million tons of commodities worth more than \$997 million.

Commodities traded on this floor included 1.050 million tons of steel, 4.649 million tons of cement, 19,180 tons of copper, 720 tons of molybdenum concentrate, 84 tons of precious metals concentrate, 28,010 tons of aluminum, 250,000 tons of iron ore, 16,820 tons of zinc, 400 tons of coke, 31,000 tons of sponge iron and 108 kg of gold bars.

Furthermore, the exchange saw on both domestic and export pits of its oil and petrochemical trading floor, trade of 2.004 million tons of commodities valued at more than \$985 million.

The IME's customers purchased on this floor 521,024 tons of bitumen, 417,787 tons of polymeric products, 163,169 tons of chemicals,

17,029 tons of base oil, 3,500 tons of slops wax and 643,000 tons of vacuum bottom.

Moreover, the IME sold on the same floor 34,645 tons of sulfur, 1,610 tons of insulation and 194,000 tons of lube cut.

It's worth noting that there was also 860 kg of saffron traded on the agricultural trading floor.

Last but not least, the exchange played host to trading 39,198 tons of various types of commodities on its side market.

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

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

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

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

Gas consumption by households drops 2bcm in H1

TEHRAN – Gas consumption by Iranian households has dropped two billion cubic meters (bcm) in the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, the head of National Iranian Gas Company (NIGC)'s Dispatching Department announced.

Mohammadreza Jolaei also put the gas consumption by all sectors at 104.2 bcm in the first half.

The amount of natural gas consumption in the country in the first half of this year was 104.2 bcm, of which the share of domestic, commercial and non-major sectors was 37.479 bcm, major industries 23.994 bcm, and power plants 45.7 bcm, the official stated.

He had previously said that the country's natural gas consumption in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20) increased eight percent compared to the preceding year (1398).

Some 233 billion cubic meters of natural gas was consumed in the country during the previous year while the figure stood at 216 billion cubic meters in 1398, according to Jolaei.

Of the total gas consumption in the previous year, 122 billion cubic meters was consumed by domestic, commercial, and non-major industries, 24 billion cubic meters was the share of major industries and 66 billion cubic

meters was allocated to power plants, he stated.

The official noted that during the past year, the consumption by domestic sector and power plants hit new record highs but NIGC managed to prevent any major blackouts even during the peak consumption periods.

The country's power plants received an average of 167 million cubic meters (mcm) of gas per day in 1398, which reached 181 million cubic meters per day in the previous year, indicating a 5.1 billion increase in the power plants' gas consumption.

Gas consumption in Iran increased eight percent in the past Iranian calendar year.



According to Jolaei, some 262 billion cubic meters of gas was injected into the national gas network in the previous year, registering a six-percent rise compared to 1398.

Iran is currently producing over 810 mcm of natural gas on a daily basis which is mostly

used inside the country for the domestic sector and also as fuel for the power plants and a small portion is also exported to neighboring countries like Iraq.

According to NIGC's former Managing Director Hasan Montazer Torbati, of the total produced gas, some 25 percent goes to household consumption, 37 percent is supplied to the power plants, 30 percent is used in the industry sector, four percent used as CNG and four percent is for other consumptions.

Montazer Torbati stated that gas supply has been developed significantly in the cities and villages of the country over the past seven years due to the increase in gas production in the South Pars gas field (Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf).

Views towards Islamic art is changing in the cultural centers of the West: professor

From page 1 ► One can point to some of the new developments in art, such as land-based art, as a quest to use the art to contemplate the spiritual in a secular society. One can also see artists working in installation who try to provide such contemplative spaces within museums and galleries. Artists still seek areas to offer viewers the meditative experience that marks religious experience, even as it does so beyond the confines of tradition.

Today, identity and social justice questions are of much greater concern, pointing to a shift from art before the twentieth century. These questions can brush up on religion when they pertain to identity or communities marginalized by institutional forces. Still, contemporary art tends not necessarily to work in concert with institutional religion today. Sometimes, religion is a touchpoint for works that attempt to shock audiences. For instance, Chris Ofili's The Holy Virgin Mary (1996) or Maurizio Catalan's The Ninth Hour (2003) make direct references to the tradition of religion but do so in a way that often leads to controversy and protest.

How do you describe the relationship between modernity and religion? Coexistence or contradiction?

Modernity tends to be at odds with religion. The world of modernity, marked by the rise of urban capitalism, led to a more secular society and a focus on the material world instead of spiritual concerns. In the West, this represents an outgrowth of the Enlightenment and the critical perspective that most Enlightenment thinkers had towards religion and its ties to the aristocracy. As a result of these influences, as more artists broke away from the official institutions of art and society, one sees a more critical stance on religious traditions. The French avant-garde artist Gustave Courbet, expressing this attitude, once said, "I cannot paint an angel, for I have never seen an angel."

At the same time, however, art comes to take the place of the spiritual in a secular society. One sees this with the rise of public museums in the nineteenth century. Many of these museums took on the form of classical architecture, especially temples from Ancient Greece and Rome. These modern temples to culture began to displace religious institutions as spaces for spiritual contemplation and considering the meaning of existence. This shift is supported by the language used by the advocates for public museums, pointing to how museums were supposed to help people transcend the concerns of the material realm.

Even in the twentieth century, within modernist aesthetics, this ideology is espoused. Perhaps most notably, one sees this in Michael Fried's formalist aesthetics, especially in his seminal essay "Art and Objecthood." He concludes his observations on minimalist painting and sculpture by



noting that we are literalists most of our lives but that "presentness is grace." These spiritual yearnings can also be seen within any number of points within twentieth-century art in the West, from Kandinsky to Rothko and beyond to contemporary figures such as Bill Viola.

How can art go beyond the languages and cultures and touch the deep sense of humanity?

Art's use of visual forms allows for an appeal to the immediacy of visual sensation to stir feelings and thoughts that are not dependent on being articulated in words. The potential to speak universally is something that marks some of the utopic longings of early modernism. There was a faith that art could potentially provide a universal language through color and forms alone. One instance of this was the de Stijl movement in the Netherlands that believed that the use of yellow, red, and blue, along with black, white, and gray, in concert with grids and rectilinear forms could provide a visual language not just for the fine arts, but also for architecture and design. They believed that all creative individuals could find ways to use this limited language not just for fine art but for all forms of creation that come to impact daily life.

Some of these ideas led to the growth of international modernism in architecture, even if there is great skepticism about this quest for the universal in the early twenty-first century. Early modernism's search for the universal appears as another form of Western cultural hegemony from the twenty-first-century perspective.

Do you believe that art is a global phenomenon, or is it dependent on cultural or geographical values? What does the post-modern approach say?

It might be more accurate to say that aesthetic experience, often linked to art, is a global phenomenon, but that art itself often depends on cultural and geographical values. That is to say, visual culture, a term that can include the fine arts and other forms of visual expression, is something that marks all cultures, even if cultural difference is a critical element to how these visual phenomena take form.

At the same time, the contemporary art world is marked by globalization, leading to a more cosmopolitan art world, one where many different cultural perspectives are housed. This represents a progressive step towards an ideal of inclusiveness that is quite different from the attitude of post-modernism. That is to say, the rise of post-modern aesthetics, which permitted an eclectic use of ideas and forms from many cultures, was still tied to elements of Western privilege. Today, there is a greater sensitivity to the potential for cultural appropriation and the need to respect other cultures in a way that post-modern art did not always do. In many instances, post-modern aesthetics continued the aspect of Western cultural hegemony permeating early modernism.

In this regard, the contemporary art world is marked by artists from all over the globe, embodying an ideal of pluralism and inclusiveness. Many of these artists explore questions of identity that are deeply rooted in their cultural context. The attempt to drive visual culture to a universal ideal has led instead to an exploration of cultural differences and visions that have been excluded or marginalized in the traditions of the West.

Here, artists exploring questions informed by the post-colonial theory are significant, as their work opens up narratives that counter the Euro-

centric trajectory of modernism and post-modernism. One sees this not only in the range of artists included in the major biennials around the globe but also by the curators who have a crucial role in helping make decisions about whose work should be brought into conversation with audiences at these significant cultural events. In this regard, the work of the late curator Okwui Enwezor is important to note, as his contributions to major events such as Documenta and the Venice Biennale, among others, helped open the contemporary art world to other perspectives.

How is Islamic art viewed in the West?

I think the view towards Islamic art is changing in the cultural centers of the West. This is due to the powerful critique of Orientalism offered by the late Palestinian scholar Edward Said. He helped point to the problems around how Islamic culture and art were housed in Western cultural institutions and how it was studied in Western academic institutions. Subsequent scholars, informed by Said's groundbreaking work, have helped bring a renewed interest to Islamic art and culture while also leading to newer institutions that attempt a different approach from those informed by the concept of Orientalism.

In terms of the contemporary art world, there are several important artists whose work engages with the traditions of the Islamic world. Three that most immediately come to mind are Shirin Neshat, Shahzia Skikander, and Mitra Tabrizian. While none of these artists are traditional, they each find ways of engaging with their cultural identities that take into consideration from perspectives of the Middle East and the West. Looking too complicated questions surrounding how to negotiate a space between cultures and between the contemporary and the historical. An interesting study of Islamic aesthetics and contemporary art is Enfoldment and Infinity: An Islamic Genealogy of New Media Art by Laura U. Marks. She explores the connections between traditional Islamic aesthetics and contemporary artists working with video and other new media.

At the same time, the art world is moving towards a more inclusive space of respect and cosmopolitanism. It is also important to note that popular culture in the West still perpetuates many misconceptions around the Islamic world that fuels ignorance around the beauty and richness of Islamic art and culture. In this vein, there is a struggle between progressive forces attempting to build a more inclusive space built around mutual respect and knowledge and conservative forces fueling a pervasive common culture that still sustains cultural misunderstanding and fear, especially within the West. In trying to build a better future, artists and intellectuals still have a lot of work to overcome these cultural biases.

Germany's SPD seeks alliance with Greens, FDP to replace Merkel-led coalition

Germany's finance minister and leader of the Social Democratic Party, Olaf Scholz, has said he plans

to form a new three-way allied government with the Greens and Free Democratic Party (FDP) after winning Sunday's federal elections.

In the wake of the historical loss of outgoing Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservative bloc, Scholz said on Monday that the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and Christian Social Union (CSU) should now go into the opposition.

"The CDU and CSU have not only significantly lost votes, but they have essentially received the message from citizens -- they should no longer be in government, but should go into the opposition," he said.

Scholz said he hoped to strike a coalition deal before Christmas. Merkel will remain caretaker chancellor until a coalition is formed.

According to results revealed by the electoral commission, the Social Democrats have secured 25.7 percent of the votes, while Merkel's conservative bloc faced its worst result since 1949, gaining only 24.1 percent of the votes.

Greens came in third with a reassuring 14.8 percent of the vote, followed by the FDP and the Alternative for Germany party (AfD), with 11.5 percent and 10.3 percent respectively.

"Three parties gained strength: the SPD, the Greens and the FDP. This is a clear request formulated by the citizens of this country. These three parties must lead the next government," Scholz.

Meanwhile, the CDU/CSU's candidate for chancellor, Armin Laschet, said that he still had a right to form the next government despite coming in second.

He argued that "it has not always been the case [in Germany] that the parties that were in first place provided the chancellor."

Scholz, however, disagreed, saying that "a lot of people ticked the box by the SPD because they wanted a change of government and wanted the next chancellor of this country to be Olaf Scholz."

Merkel's departure from the political stage after 16 years is now expected to change the course of Europe's biggest economy, according to analysts, who say her absence will leave a substantial leadership gap in the continent.

(Source: Press TV)

Following widespread reactions and criticism, the Israeli regime claimed to have formed a commission to investigate the misuse of this spyware. A spokesman for the Israeli Ministry of Defense said that Israel did not have access to the information collected by the company's customers.

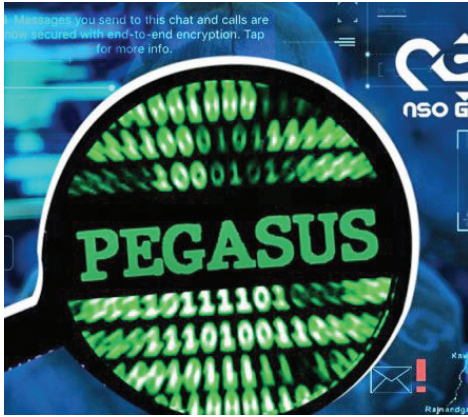
A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media, said that many states believed that the Israeli cabinet was involved with NSO Group. He said it was foolish to assume that they did not share sensitive national security information with Tel Aviv.

The French President Emmanuel Macron had changed his smartphone and phone number due to the fear that it had been targeted by the Israeli spyware Pegasus.

Since the revelation, there have been reports confirming a joint investigation by 17 media outlets into the disclosure of the spyware. In early September 2021, it was reported that three U.S. intelligence officers used various espionage programs, including Pegasus, to assist the Emirati cyber group spying on local human rights activists.

Five french ministers targeted by Israeli spyware

From page 1 ► Agnes Kalamar has said in a statement that the Pegasus project is a good weapon for repressive governments and a repressive threat to the media.



Amnesty International also condemned the action, "Meaningful control of the spyware industry is now urgently needed to stop further violations. All legal steps must be taken to unveil the full extent and nature of NSO complicity in human rights abuses."

Senate attempt to reform U.S. police fails

From page 1 ► The Reuters research supports arguments that the Supreme Court has built qualified immunity into an often insurmountable police defense by intervening in cases in favor of the police.

The high court has indicated it is aware of the mounting criticism of its treatment of qualified immunity. After letting multiple appeals backed by the doctrine's critics pile up, the justices are scheduled to discuss privately as soon as May 15, which, if any, of 11 such cases they could hear later this year.

Speaking to journalists, Booker says, "It was clear at this negotiating table at this moment we were not making progress" following nine months of meetings. He added, "In fact, recent back and forths with paper showed me that we were actually moving away from it."

Republican Senator Tim Scott, in a statement, accused Democrats of reverting to "a partisan approach to scoring political points." Scott said the two sides had reached agreements banning chokeholds, limiting the transfer of military equipment to police departments, and increasing mental health resources.

In April, Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin was convicted of the May 2020 murder of George Floyd. This death triggered protests across the United States and gave new impetus to police reform efforts in Washington to stamp out systemic racism.

Floyd, a Black man, died after Chauvin, white, knelt on his neck for more than nine minutes. Re-

Tim Scott accused Democrats of reverting to "a partisan approach to scoring political points."

U.S. Fed warns of "severe damage" over debt default

The chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve called on lawmakers to raise the nation's borrowing limit urgently on Wednesday, warning that failure to pay government debts would do "severe damage" to the economy.

"It's just very important that the debt ceiling be raised in a timely fashion so the United States can pay its bills when it comes due," Jerome Powell said as the central bank concluded its September meeting. Failure to pay, he added, is "just not something we can contemplate."

Powell's warning came after six former U.S. Treasury secretaries also urged the Senate to overcome the impasse "without delay" to avoid the harmful fallout should Washington default on its debt. However, the plea for quick action looks set to fall on deaf ears, as the opposition leader in the Senate has steadfastly refused to cooperate with the ruling Democrats to increase the debt ceiling.

That could lead to chaos in financial markets, officials have warned.

The Democratic-controlled House of Representatives passed a measure to suspend the debt limit until after next year's mid-term elections and fund government operations until December 3.

But it is now stuck in the Senate, which has until September 30 to take action to avoid a shutdown and a second deadline of mid-to-late October to suspend the debt ceiling.

Powell warned that "no one should assume that the Fed or anyone else can protect the markets or the economy in the event of a failure" by the United States to service its debts. And the group



of former finance ministers -- who served under presidents Jimmy Carter, George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama -- said in a letter to congressional leaders of both parties that even a short-lived default could threaten economic growth.

"It creates the risk of roiling markets and of sapping economic confidence, and it would prevent Americans from receiving vital services," they warned. According to the officials, "it would be very damaging to undermine trust in the full faith and credit of the United States, and this damage would be hard to repair"

They said protecting the "unshakeable creditworthiness" of the United States "is a sacrosanct responsibility." But Republican Senate leader

"No one should assume that the Fed or anyone else can protect the markets or the economy in the event of a failure"

Iran plans to resume tourist visas next month: minister

From page 1 ► "Tourism of the country was growing before the corona [outbreak], its revenues reached \$11.7 billion in 2019, which accounted for 2.8% of GDP, nearing the average share of tourism in the world GDP, which was 3.2 percent," Mounesan said.

He added 8.7 million foreign nationals visited Iran during the [Iranian] year (1398), adding that Iran was ranked as the second fastest-growing country in tourism based on data compiled by the World Tourism Organization.

Iran is potentially a booming destination for travelers seeking cultural attractions, breathtaking sceneries, and numerous UNESCO-registered sites. 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.

Even before the pandemic, Iran's tourism was already grappling with some challenges, on top of those Western "media propaganda" aimed at scaring potential travelers away from



the Islamic Republic. Some experts believe Iran is still somehow "unknown" for many potential travelers due to such a "media war".

They, however, consider bright prospects for the tourism sector of the country if it vigorously pursues comprehensive strategies to counter U.S.-led propaganda and strict sanctions, yet does its best to loosen tough travel regulations.

Over 80k Iranian pilgrims travel to Iraq to partake in Arbäeen procession



TEHRAN – Head of Iran's Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization Alireza Rashidian has said more than 80,000 Iranian pilgrims have traveled to Iraq so far to partake in the huge annual Arbäeen procession.

"It is estimated that more than 80,000 Iranian pilgrims have entered Iraq to attend the Arbäeen

ceremony," ISNA quoted Rashidian as saying on Monday.

Earlier this month, Iraq agreed to double its previously declared visa quota for the Iranian nationals willing to attend the massive pilgrimage.

Arbäeen marks the 40th day that followed the anniversary of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (AS), the third Shia Imam, and his 72-strong companions in the Battle of Karbala, in what is now southern Iraq, in 680 CE. The battle featured an unjust fight between Imam Hussein (AS) and his army and the hugely outnumbered army of the Umayyad caliph of the time, Yazid I.

Each year, millions of Muslim mourners set out on a symbolic 80-kilometer-long walk that begins from the holy city of Najaf in Iraq, where Imam Hossein's father Imam Ali (AS)'s shrine is located, to the holy city of Karbala that houses Imam Hussein's shrine.

Historic neighborhoods of Soltanieh to be equipped for tourism

TEHRAN – Soltanieh, which is home to a UNESCO-designated monument of the same name, has undergone an intensive urban study intended to equip the ancient city for tourism.

Meaning "Town of the Sultans", Soltanieh was briefly the capital of Persia's Ilkhanid dynasty (a branch of the Mongol dynasty) during the 14th century. It is situated in Zanjan province, northwest Iran.

The Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Department of Zanjan seeks to improve the historic texture of Soltanieh and the cohesion of its urban buildings, provincial tourism chief Amir Arjmand said on Sunday, CHTN reported.

The study examines various aspects such as landscape architecture, criteria of urban

furniture, streets and thoroughfares, beautification, murals, creation of tourist spaces, the official said.

The UNESCO-registered Dome of Soltanieh, ("Soltanieh Cupola") is the highlight of the city's tourist attractions.

The very large dome is the earliest extant example of its type and became an important reference for the later development of the Islamic dome. Similarly, the extremely rich interior of the mausoleum, which includes glazed tiles, brickwork, marquetry, or designs in inlaid materials, stucco, and frescoes, illustrates an important movement towards more elaborate materials and themes.

The 14th-century structure, which is also famed as the Mausoleum of Oljaytu, is highly recognized



as an architectural masterpiece particularly due to its innovative double-shelled dome and elaborate interior decoration. The very imposing dome stands about 50 meters tall from its base.

Its interior has long been under renovation, chockfull of scaffolding poles. However, its decoration is such impressive that scholars including A.U. Pope described it as 'anticipating the Taj Mahal'. It is the earliest existing example of the double-shelled dome in Iran.

According to UNESCO, the Mausoleum of Oljaytu is an essential link and key monument in the development of Islamic architecture in central and western Asia. Here, the Ilkhanids further developed ideas that had been advanced during the classical Seljuk phase (11th to early

13th centuries), during which the arts of Iran gained distinction in the Islamic world, thereby setting the stage for the Timurid period (late 14th to 15th centuries), one of the most brilliant periods in Islamic art.

UNESCO says, "Excavations carried out in the 790-ha Mausoleum of Oljaytu property have revealed additional vestiges of the old city, and a large part of this property has retained its archaeological character. As the ancient capital of the Ilkhanid dynasty, Soltanieh represents an exceptional testimony to the history of the 13th and 14th centuries in Iran."

A great-grandson of Hulegu, founder of the Il-Khanid dynasty, Oljaytu was a Mongol ruler who, after dabbling in various religions, adopted the Shia name Mohammed Khodabandeh.

Historical mansions in southwest Iran to turn into handicrafts centers

TEHRAN –A total of seven historical mansions scattered across the southwestern Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad province are planned to turn into handicrafts centers and markets, the provincial tourism chief has announced.

"All funds required for these projects have been provided, and the projects will soon be implemented," Majid Safai said on Monday.

The mansions need to be revived and restored, without compromising their architecture's identity, in order to become handicraft centers, the official added.

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

With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for



the number of cities and villages registered by the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next.

The value of Iran's handicrafts exports stood

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

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

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

Some \$809,000 paid to support tourism businesses in Hormozgan

TEHRAN – The Iranian government has paid some 34 billion rials (some \$809,000 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) in loans to the tourism businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic in Hormozgan province.

There are about 346 licensed tourist facilities across the southern province, many of which have been almost completely or partially closed as a result of the coronavirus outbreak, the provincial tourism chief has said.

"There has been only 15 to 20 percent of hotels and accommodation centers in the province used by tourists and travelers, and many of these units survived only due to the support of the government," Sohrab Banavand announced on Monday.

He also noted that 16 tourism-related projects worth 140 billion rials (\$3.4 million) are currently underway across the province, which is scheduled to come on stream by the end of the current Iranian year 1400 (ends March 2022).

Known as the province of islands, Hormozgan province is located on the northern coasts of the Persian Gulf. It embraces scenic islands among which Kish, Hormuz, Hengam, and Qeshm are the most beautiful ones and top tourist destinations in southern Iran.

Over the past couple of decades, the coral Kish Island has become a beach



resort where visitors can swim, shop, and sample a laid-back and relatively liberated local lifestyle. It is home to free-trade-zone status, with ever-growing hotels, shopping centers, apartment blocks, and retail complexes.

Hormuz, which is mostly barren and hilly, is situated some eight kilometers off the coast on the Strait of Hormuz, which attracts many tourists by its colorful mountains, silver sand shores, and great local people.

Hengam Island has scenery rocky shores, serene sunset, and kind natives, which can attract travelers who enjoy a relaxing trip by spending time on this tranquil island.

Qeshm Island is a heaven for eco-tourists as it embraces wide-ranging attractions such as the Hara marine forests and about 60 villages dotted

mostly across its rocky coastlines. The island also features geologically eye-catching canyons, hills, caves, and valleys, most of which are protected as part of the UNESCO-tagged Qeshm Island Geopark, itself a haven for nature-lovers.

Government's care and support packages

In October 2020, the tourism ministry proclaimed that a new support package was approved to pay loans to businesses affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

Depending on the type and activity of the businesses, they could benefit from at least 160 million rials (\$3,800 at the official rate of 42,000 rials) to nine billion rials (\$214,000) of bank loans with a 12-percent interest rate.

The loans were allocated to tourist guides, travel agencies, tourism transport companies, tourism educational institutions, eco-lodges and traditional accommodations, hotels, apartment hotels, motels, and guesthouses as well as traditional accommodation centers, tourism complexes, and recreational centers.

Optimistic forecasts, however, expect Iran to achieve a tourism boom after coronavirus contained, believing its impact would be temporary and short-lived for a country that ranked the third fastest-growing tourism destination in 2019.

75 historical objects restored in Ardabil in H1

Borujerd seeks national recognition for indigenous cultural elements

TEHRAN – The Iranian city of Borujerd, located in western Lorestan province, has put forward seven cultural elements as candidates for inclusion in the National Intangible Cultural Heritage list, the provincial tourism chief has said.

The skills of several local handicrafts including knife making, woodcarving, and hand-made traditional hats as well as the talent of making Qajari dolls and its related rituals are planned to be added to the prestigious list, Seyyed Amin Qasemi announced on Saturday.

An all-inclusive dossier has been prepared for the cultural elements, which will be soon submitted to the tourism ministry, the official added.

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

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

TEHRAN – A total of 75 historical relics have been restored by teams of cultural heritage experts and restorers in the northwestern province of Ardabil during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year 1400 (started March 20), the provincial tourism chief has said.

The relics, which are being kept in different museums across the province, have been restored in collaboration with the private sector, Nader Fallahi said on Saturday.


As part of this project, the museums in the province will see qualitative and

quantitative improvements, the official added.

Sprawling on a high, windswept plateau, whose altitude averages 3,000 meters above sea level, Ardabil is well-known for having lush natural beauties, hospitable people, and its silk and carpet trade tradition, it is also home to the UNESCO-registered Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble.

The province is very cold in winter and mild in summer, attracting thousands every year. The capital city of Ardabil is usually recorded as one of the coldest cities in the country in winter.

Second Announcement



IN THE NAME OF GOD
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING

INTERNATIONAL TENDER No: 1400/108-53/03

Tender Holder:
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN BROADCASTING (IRIB)

Subject of Tender :
Broadcasting the TV network of JAME JAM 2 on Galaxy 19 Satellite in accordance with the technical specification and other terms and conditions mentioned in the tender documents.

Deadline and how to receive the tender documents:
From **Sunday 26 Sep 2021 (1400/07/04)** until **Wednesday 29 Sep 2021 (1400/07/07)** by **12:00 p.m** with presentation of introductory letter by company or its representative and the receipt of paying the documents fee.

Place of receiving the tender document:
Interested participants may refer to purchasing (KALA) Dept. ,4th Floor of IRIB Administration Complex ,Hotel Esteghlal St. Vali –Assr Ave,Tehran, Iran

The fee of the tender documents and how to deposit it:
Submission of payment receipt for the amount of 1,000,000 Rials to account 4101029171204273 with BIC No.IR 310100004101029171204273 IRAN Central Bank in the name of IRIB.

Type and amount of guarantee for participation to tender:
The amount of deposit for participating in tender is USD 37200 fixed or its equivalent in Rials 9300000000 which should be in the form of Bank Guarantee.

Time and place of delivering Bidding Envelopes:
The sealed (A,B&C) packages/envelopes and the qualification evaluation package/envelope separately packed , should be submitted no later than **09:00 a.m. on Saturday 30 of Oct 2021 (1400/08/08)** at the address mentioned in 4th clause.
- Time and place of opening Qualification Evaluation envelopes:
The date of opening the Qualification Evaluation envelopes is on Saturday 30 of **Oct 2021 (1400/08/08)** at **10:00 a.m** in the office of International Purchasing Dept.

Time and place of opening Envelopes:
The envelopes A of those eligible participants who meet the qualification criterion and approval of Technical and Commercial committee will be opened on **Sunday 31 Oct 2021 at 03:00 p.m (1400/08/09)** in the office of Financial Vice President .In case of complete content in the envelopes A the envelopes of B and C of eligible participants will be opened at the same time and place.
The participant must be qualified by the competent authorities.

Fore more information please see :
www.iriboffice.ir/tenders and http://iets.mporg.ir/ Tel: 00982122167053

Purchasing (Kala) Dept.,IRIB

Over 3,700 ID cards issued for children of Iranian mothers, foreign fathers

TEHRAN – Identity cards have so far been issued to 3,720 children born to Iranian mothers and foreign fathers, Seifollah Aboutorabi, the National Organization for Civil Registration spokesman, said on Monday.

Under a new nationality law, which was amended in 2019, nearly 75,000 children at risk of becoming statelessness are eligible for Iranian citizenship which allows children under 18 years to apply for identity documents.

The first group obtained their Iranian nationality and Iranian identity booklet (shenasnameh) in November 2020.

According to official figures, 28,000 children below the age of 18 years have filed applications to receive birth certificates and ID cards.

According to the law, children of Iranian women and non-Iranian men who were born before or after the law can be Iranian citizens in case the Iranian mother requested if they have no security problem before the age of 18.



These children, after reaching the age of 18, can apply for Iranian citizenship if not requested by the mother, then will be granted Iranian citizenship in case of no security problem.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees also has welcomed the law as a step toward reducing statelessness around the world.

UNICEF also welcomed the implementation of the Iranian nationality law.

Although Iran is not a party to the UN Conventions on Statelessness, the Government of Iran is taking steps towards the prevention and reduction of statelessness in the country.

While the law does not give moth-

ers and fathers equal rights to confer nationality to their children, it represents significant progress.

Statelessness: a global issue

Around the world, stateless people can face a lifetime of exclusion and discrimination and are often denied access to education, health care, and job opportunities – making them vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

Worldwide, statelessness affects millions of people, leaving them without the basic rights and official recognition that most of us take for granted. Some 3.9 million stateless people appear in the reporting of 78 countries, but UNHCR believes the true total to be significantly higher.

“No child chooses to be stateless,” said Ivo Freijssen, UNHCR Representative in Iran last year. “Without identity and official documents, stateless people are often excluded from society. The Government of Iran is leading by example through its new law. It is a hugely positive move for these children and their families.”

Iran sends Afghanistan third shipment of aid



TEHRAN – The third consignment of humanitarian aid of Iran arrived at Kabul Airport on Sunday.

The shipment consisted of 15 tons of food and medicine, Tasnim news agency reported.

On Saturday, Iran delivered the second shipment of aid to the Afghan people, which included 21 tons of food, including rice, oil, and other food items.

Last week, another shipment of Iranian aid, including food and medicine, was sent to Afghanistan.

According to a recent World Food Program survey, only 5 percent of Afghans currently have access to adequate, high-quality, three-course-a-day meals.

“In the last two weeks, about 50 percent of the Afghan people have been without at least one meal,” said Arif Husain is Chief Economist and Director of the Food Security Analysis and Trends Service at United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), a week earlier.

Asking for \$200 million in emergency aid to deliver food to Afghanistan’s vulnerable people before winter arrives, he said the country would run out of food supplies in less than a month if emergency aid did not arrive.

The Taliban seized control of the country last month as foreign forces allied with the U.S. withdrew from Afghanistan after a 20-year war. The events culminated in the capture of the capital, Kabul, on August 15, two decades after the Taliban was driven from power by a US-led campaign following the September 11 attacks on the United States.

The UN said that at the start of the year more than 18 million people – about half of Afghanistan’s population – require aid amid the country’s second drought in four years.

Mali appreciates IRCS for quality health services

TEHRAN – The Malian Health Minister Dieminatou Sangare has appreciated the services provided by the health center of the Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) in the African country, IRNA reported on Monday.

She made the remarks in a meeting with the head of IRCS health center Khalil Mokhtari.

Mokhtari for his part said that the health center is providing services to Malian people for 29 years and performing more than 5 types of specialized therapies.

Eye surgeries, ENT, cesarean section, and paraclinical facilities, etc. are among the services provided by this center, he added.



It is necessary for the Malian Ministry of Health to take appropriate measures to solve the problems of this center, so that the development process pace up for the benefit of the deprived, he highlighted.

Providing low-tariff and government-sponsored medical services

for coronavirus vaccination as well as care for mothers before and after pregnancy is one of the services provided by the IRCS health center in Mali, he noted.

Sangare appreciating the services of the IRCS expressed hope that the humanitarian activities of the center in Mali will expand.

IRCS services worldwide

At present, the Iranian Red Crescent Society provides medical services to people in 13 Asian, African, and Latin American countries.

Currently, some 14 medical facilities are offering humanitarian, relief, and health services to the deprived people in 13 countries, including

Azerbaijan, Afghanistan, the United Arab Emirates, Bolivia, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Congo, Kenya, Lebanon, Mali, Niger, and Ecuador.

The IRCS polyclinic center includes various departments such as laboratory, pharmacy, radiology and physiotherapy, and general practitioners along with obstetricians, gynecologists, internal medicine, pediatrics, ophthalmologists, and dentists

One of the most important points in establishing medical centers abroad is that all of these centers are self-governing and earn their income by providing services to patients in the mentioned countries,” Karim Hemmati, IRCS head, noted on January 13.



technological products by supporting 7,000 projects over the past 8 years.

There are currently 6,263 knowledge-based companies operating in the country, offering advanced products and services in various fields of technology to domestic and foreign markets, and some of them have entered international markets, Siavash Maleki, deputy head of the Fund stated.

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

Over 800 knowledge-based firms active in advanced materials

From page 1 ► In Iran, 866 knowledge-based companies operate in this field, so that can pace up the development process.

Iranian knowledge-based firms

The Innovation and Prosperity Fund affiliated with the Vice Presidency of Science and Technology has earmarked a sum of 170 trillion rials (nearly \$4 billion at the official rate of 42,000 rials) to support knowledge-based companies over the past 4 years.

The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology has paved the way for research and production of

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Iran to implement food safety program

A food safety document will be approved and implemented in the future in the country, Vahid Mofid, an official with the Food and Drug Administration has stated.

The document is consisting of standards through which food safety is best ensured; the whole food production process from cultivation to markets will be under control, it also identifies and controls hazards in the production, manufacturing and handling of food rather than relying on end product standards alone, he explained.

The standards enable the country to oblige food businesses to meet the document principles, they will be subject to periodic observations by a suitably qualified food safety auditor, he added.

اجرای سند ایمنی غذا در حال پیگیری است

مدیرکل فرآورده‌های غذایی و آشامیدنی سازمان غذا و دارو درباره وضعیت فعلی سند ایمنی غذا گفت: سند ایمنی غذا در حال تکمیل شدن است و تا پس از طی مراحل اداری اجرا شود.

وحید مفید روز جمعه در گفت و گو با خبرنگار ایرنا افزود: با این سند، نظارت بر کل حلقه‌های تولید در زنجیره غذا از مزرعه تا سفره تحت کنترل بخش‌های مختلف درمی‌آید و میزان سموم مصرفی، انواع کودهای مصرف شده و چگونگی حمل مواد غذایی و توزیع آن، نوع آب و آبیاری زمین‌ها در سند ایمنی غذا تعریف شده است چراکه این عوامل در کیفیت محصول غذایی تاثیرگذار هستند.

مدیرکل فرآورده‌های غذایی و آشامیدنی سازمان غذا و دارو اظهار داشت: این استانداردها کشور را قادر می‌سازد که تولیدکنندگان غذایی به رعایت اصول سند مجاب کند، و شرکت‌های تولیدکننده مواد غذایی هر دوره توسط یک سازمان ایمنی مواد غذایی کنترل خواهند شد.

Fighting locust in 80,000 hectares of farms underway

TEHRAN – The battle against locust in the current farming season is underway across 80,000 hectares of lands nationwide.

Saied Moein, an official in Plant Protection Organization (PPO) said on Sunday that the government had allocated sufficient funds and equipment for the campaign to protect farms in south of the country against locust invasion.

He added that PPO expects a mild locust invasion affecting farms in the region between early March and late April next year, Press TV reported.

Moein said that the Iranian government’s general treasury department had started allocating funds needed for the battle against locusts since earlier this week.

The official said the government was ready to increase the funds in case locust invasion spread to a larger area of lands in southern Iran.

“We have purchased 70-80 new insecticide spraying machines and they are kept in warehouses,” said Moein.

Locust swarms are expected in farms in at least 10 provinces scattered in south, southeast and southwest Iran this farming season.

Iran spent five trillion rials (\$20 million) to curb locust infestation in the farming season to September. However, the area covered by the campaign this season is expected to increase fourfold.

The campaign was much larger in 2018 and 2019 when Iran was forced to battle locusts in nearly one million hectares of lands.



Forecasts provided by international organizations and Iranian government departments suggest swarms of locust originating from areas in northwest Saudi Arabia can invade farms in southwest and western Iran for a first time this season.

FAO explains that desert locust infestations are normally present in southeast Iran during the spring. Local breeding coincides with seasonal rains that often occur from about February or March until April or May. In warmer years, rains that occur during the winter can lead to late winter and early spring breeding.

By June, vegetation is usually dry again and any adults that were produced during the spring move east towards the Indo-Pakistan summer breeding areas. Most of the spring breeding occurs along a 450 km stretch of coastal plains on the Arabian Sea from Jask (Hormozgan) and the Strait of Hormuz and the Gulf of Oman in the west to Chabahar and Gwadar (Sistan-Baluchestan) near the Pakistan border in the east.

The most important area along the coast is the Vashnum Plains near Chabahar. If rains fall and temperatures are warm, breeding may also occur in the interior, namely the Jaz Murian Basin from Kahnuj to Iranshahr, and in the Zaboli, Suran, and Saravan valleys that lead to Panjgur, Pakistan. Desert Locust adults rarely cross the mountains to the north of these areas.

Fauna of Iran

(Part 8)

Faunal areas

Anderson (in Camb. Hist. Iran) delineated thirteen faunal areas in Persia, based on physical geography, climate, and distribution of lizards. This schema can be extended to the fauna as a whole, though other authors might well categorize the areas differently, depending upon distribution of other groups.

For example, distribution of fishes and other fresh-water organisms is most readily characterized according to drainage systems, whereas the more vagile animals (especially nonpasserine birds), some flying insects, and many mammals are less constrained by topography than most reptiles, amphibians, fishes, terrestrial mollusks, and arthropods.

The central plateau. The internal drainage basin of the plateau lies entirely within Persian borders and is rimmed by mountains. Although some species range broadly over this entire region, others are confined to particular types of habitat, for example, mountain slopes, sandy plains, gravel plains and slopes, and salt depressions, or are associated with particular types of vegetation or plant species.

The Urmia basin. The mountain fauna of the area of the Iranian plateau that drains into Lake Urmia have affinities with those of the eastern Mediterranean, Transcaucasia, and Anatolia. Other species generally represent the fauna of the plateau but are distinctive at the species and subspecies levels.

The Sistan basin. The inclusion of this portion of the Helmand drainage within the borders of Persia adds a number of species to the fauna of the country. The affinities of these fauna are primarily with those of the Iranian plateau, though some species are shared with the eastern deserts



and the Aralo-Caspian region. Anderson (1968) found that the majority of lizard species belong to two basic categories, widely distributed Iranian plateau forms, found primarily in the uplands, and an endemic sand-adapted Helmand type having affinities with those on the plateau.

The Caspian region. This region includes the northern slopes of the Alborz, especially the lower elevations covered in Hyrcanian forest, and the narrow coastal region. The fauna is related to those of Mediterranean Europe and Transcaucasia, and a few Aralo-Caspian elements are found along the western shore north of the Aras River. Contact with Aralo-Caspian fauna occurs in the vicinity of Gorgan and Pahlavi Dez.

(Source: Encyclopaedia Iranica)

COVID-19 UPDATES ON SEPTEMBER 27

New cases	14,470
New deaths	289
Total cases	5,547,990
Total deaths	119,649
New hospitalized patients	2,219
Patients in critical condition	6,209
Total recovered patients	4,966,098
Diagnostic tests conducted	31,868,828
Doses of vaccine injected	51,950,783

