

Big Tech Controls Freedom of Speech

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Interview

Iran takes upper hand over Saudis when it comes to West Asia: analyst

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN – The chief executive officer of Gulf State Analytics (GSA) says Iran is far ahead of its Saudi opponent in West Asia in terms of power struggles.

"Whether we're discussing Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, or Palestine, it is easy to argue that Iran has taken the upper hand over Saudi Arabia when it comes to important power struggles," Giorgio Cafiero tells the Tehran Times.

"Nowhere more than in neighboring Yemen has Saudi Arabia felt so humiliated by a force that many officials in Riyadh and Washington view as an Iranian proxy," he adds. "This weak position concerning Yemen that Saudi Arabia has found itself in is a major factor contributing to Riyadh's diplomatic outreach to Tehran."

Following is the text of the interview:

How do you assess Iran-Saudi Arabia's tension-easing talks? What are the challenges and opportunities?

It is healthy for the Middle East (West Asia) that at various points throughout 2021, there have been talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia in Baghdad and elsewhere. To expect such dialogue to quickly lead to a full rapprochement between Tehran and Riyadh or the beginning of a friendly and warm relationship would be naive. Nonetheless, these talks have the potential to enable Iran and Saudi Arabia to find ways to decrease and better manage existing tensions in bilateral relations.

As many analysts have argued, Yemen is most likely the first place in the region where Tehran would be willing to make some concessions in exchange for the Saudi Kingdom making its own concessions to the Islamic Republic. The possibility of Tehran using its influence in Yemen to push the Houthis away from their current actions if Riyadh agrees to re-normalize relations with the Syrian government might be one starting point that could be built on later. ▶ Page 5

Hezbollah chief calls Iran sincere ally

TEHRAN – Hezbollah Secretary General Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah told the visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian that "Iran has proven that it is a sincere and loyal ally, and it does to leave alone its friends at difficult times."

During the meeting, Nasrallah also thanked Iran for standing on the side of the Lebanese people, government and the resistance movement since decades ago.

The Hezbollah chief made the remarks as until this date Iran has shipped three fuel tankers to Lebanon which is facing a crippling fuel crisis.

The Hezbollah secretary general went on to say that there is a great hope that through cooperation by all sides Lebanon will get out of the current difficult situation.

Amir Abdollahian and Nasrallah also assessed the latest political developments in Lebanon. Abdollahian insisted that Iran is unwavering in its position toward Lebanon and supports the country in all areas.

Amir Abdollahian made a first visit to Lebanon on Thursday morning since he took over as foreign minister. According to IRNA, He visited Beirut directly from Moscow.

During his stay in Beirut, Amir Abdollahian held talks with senior Lebanese officials including President Michel Aoun, Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, Prime Minister Najib Mikati, Foreign Minister Abdallah Bou Habib about mutual and regional issues. ▶ Page 3

New CBI governor outlines long-term priorities

TEHRAN – The new Governor of the Central Bank of Iran Ali Saleh-Abadi who was appointed to the position on Wednesday has underlined controlling inflation, stabilizing the forex market, and monitoring the banking network as priorities of the bank during his tenure.

"The most important priority of the Central Bank is to control inflation, and with the help of the government's economic team, which includes the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, the Ministry of Industry, Mining and Trade and other ministries, we try to stabilize various markets in the coming months," Saleh-Abadi stated.

"Stability in the forex market is also one of the

priorities that will be pursued and the necessary mechanisms have been devised to have balance in the foreign currency exchange market," the official stated.

According to Saleh-Abadi, directing the resources of the banking system to the productive and knowledge-based sectors is also among the priorities of the central bank.

"We intend to direct the resources of the banking system to the productive and knowledge-based sectors and other areas that play a productive role in the national economy to help calm the country's economic environment," he said.

He said that in defining foreign exchange policies, CBI will seek to develop non-oil exports, adding: "In a situation where the country needs non-oil exports, this is our priority and we will pursue policies to encourage non-oil exports."

Regarding interaction with trade partners, the new governor of the CBI said: "We will also pursue cooperation in the field of foreign currency exchange in order to include our trade partners' currencies in the country's trade cycle."

Currently, there is a positive atmosphere in the country, and the situation will improve with the mechanisms devised by the government, Saleh-Abadi added.

Report

Rascals can't celebrate Iran's victory

TEHRAN — On Sunday, October 3, Iranian free-style wrestler Hassan Yazdani won over his American rival David Taylor to become world's champion. But what made this story into a political story is how a Saudi-backed network tried to bury this victory in the ground.

The story began when Yazdani left the arena victorious, towards the locker room, and Armin Ghobadi Pasha, Iran International's correspondent in Oslo, Norway, tried to interview Yazdani, but he denied the request. This raises a question: Why Iranian athletes won't take part in interviews with Iran International?

According to Wikipedia, Iran International was launched in May 2017, with the aim of serving the 80 million people that live in Iran and the Iranian diaspora around the world, in addition to informing and educating a global audience on the latest news and developments in Iran and across the Middle East.

False. Iran International was launched with the aim of disinformation campaign against the Iranian government, people and even athletes. Ghobadi Pasha launched a campaign to sanction Iranian athletes. ▶ Page 2

Keep the environment away from politics: DOE chief

TEHRAN – Ali Salajegheh, the Department of Environment chief, has urged the world to avoid politicization of the environment, but to uphold the globally recognized "common but differentiated responsibilities".

He made the remarks at the 4th Forum of Ministers and Environment Authorities of Asia Pacific, held virtually on Thursday.

Pointing to the major environmental challenges, he said that "we need to synergize our efforts to achieve a better result to save the planet."

In the region, we are facing several environmental pressing issues and problems which are ever-increasing and exacerbating. Water scarcity is among the most important ones and many member states are trying hard to catch up with it."

Expressing pleasure, he noted that "there is finally a global tendency to building back better and to formulate a balanced nature."

Also, it is good to see special attention to green recovery which will greatly help to achieve the sustainable development goals and various international instruments' objectives to preserve and promote biodiversity and ecosystems.

This noble objective will be achieved by creating green jobs, promoting sustainable consumption and production, and healthy circular economy."

To address these challenges, we have to avoid politicization of the environment and we need to

uphold the globally recognized "Common but Differentiated Responsibilities".

Developed countries have to recognize their commitment to providing means of implementation such as financial assistance and transfer of technologies and the developing countries need to make the best use of their resources, he highlighted.

"Sustainable development now is at the center of the United Nations efforts; however, we need to bear in mind that development cannot be prescribed as a global solution to fit into the local or regional policies."

By the same token, we need to address the unilateral sanctions against some countries including mine, which is an important impediment to financial contributions of those countries to maintain the pace of conservation of nature," he further emphasized.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Salajegheh stated that "one of the success stories of the Islamic Republic in recent years is the revitalization of Lake Urmia as a vast lake, which has been done with the support and cooperation of friendly countries."

Iran also intends to implement sustainable plans to protect the nature of arid and semi-arid regions through nature-based solutions and lessons learned in the past in the face of climate change and combating sand and dust. ▶ Page 7

Report

World Post Day: a brief history of postal service in ancient Iran

By Afshin Majlesi

TEHRAN – World Post Day is celebrated on October 9, the anniversary of the establishment of the Universal Postal Union in 1874 in the Swiss capital, Bern. It is an occasion to recognize the invaluable contributions of postal workers and post offices to our societies all over the world.

The history and post and postage, however, goes far back in time as Iranians, during the Achaemenid era (c. 550-330 BC), enjoyed an innovative efficient system, which remained a source of inspiration for subsequent generations.

Prehistorical Iranians were able to deliver messages from one end of the gigantic Persian Empire, which stretched from Ethiopia, through Egypt, to Greece, to Anatolia (modern Turkey), Central Asia and to India, to the other just within few days using couriers on horseback.

According to reliable sources, a message could be sent from Susa, the administrative capital of the empire in western Iran, to Sardis, which is now situated in what is now western Turkey, in between seven and nine days, traveling through the then Royal Road, a sort of highway connecting the two cities. ▶ Page 6

Iran condemns deadly terror attack in Afghanistan's Kunduz

TEHRAN – The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh late on Friday strongly condemned a terrorist suicide bomb attack on a mosque in the Afghan city of Kunduz, sympathizing with the bereaved families and prayed for the recovery of the injured.

Khatibzadeh said terrorist acts in any form by anybody is deplorable.

The bomb attack has killed at least 50 people, BBC quoted officials as saying. It was the deadliest assault since U.S. forces left the country.

Bodies were seen scattered inside the Said Abad mosque, used by the minority Shia Muslim community.

More than 100 people were injured in the blast in the northern city.

The Islamic State group said it was behind the attack.

IS-K, the Afghan regional affiliate of the IS group that is violently opposed to the governing Taliban, has carried out several bombings recently, largely in the east of the country.

Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid called the attack a "crime".

Zalmai Alokzai, a local businessman who rushed to a hospital to check whether doctors needed blood donations, described seeing chaotic scenes after the attack during Friday prayers.

Local security officials were quoted by Tolo News as saying that more than 300 people were attending the prayers when the attack happened.

The United Nations said Friday's bombing was a "third deadly attack this week apparently targeting a religious institution" and was part of a "disturbing pattern of violence".

Iran coach Dragan Skocic hits milestone

TEHRAN – Iran national football team head coach Dragan Skocic sets a new record of 10 consecutive wins in all competitions.

Iran edged the UAE 1-0 in Group A of the 2022 World Cup qualification Round 3 Thursday night and Skocic overtook Mohammad Mayeli Kohan's nine-match winning streak in the National Team.

Skocic was appointed as Iran coach in February 2020 as Marc Wilmots's replacement.

The Croat started his career with Iran with three wins over Uzbekistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Syria in three friendly matches.

Skocic made history with Iran in the 2022 World Cup qualification Round 2, beating Hong Kong, Cambodia, Bahrain and Iraq in four must-win matches.

He added three more wins to his tally in the matches against Syria, Iraq and the UAE in the 2022 World Cup qualification Round 3.



Azartash Azarnush, member of Center for Great Islamic Encyclopedia, dies at 84

TEHRAN – Linguistic Azartash Azarnush, whose studies centered Persian language's influence on Arabic and was a member of Iran's Center for the Great Islamic Encyclopedia, died on Thursday. He was 84.

Azarnush's death was announced by the Center for the Great Islamic Encyclopedia, which did not mention the cause of his death.

He was the director of the Arabic Department of the Center since 1986 and also a senior advisor and a member of the Supreme Council of the institute. ▶ Page 8

Deputy FM calls Iran-Oman ties exemplary



TEHRAN - Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri Kani on Wednesday said the new Iranian administration is seeking a policy of closer interaction with neighbors, calling Iran's relations with Oman "friendly and exemplary".

Kani, who has launched a tour of regional states, made the remarks in a meeting with Omani Foreign Minister Badr Albusaidi, IRNA reported.

The two sides also discussed the latest regional developments.

The Omani Foreign Minister, for his part, said the relations between the two

neighboring countries are based on trust and described Iran as a key country in the region.

Kani also met with his Omani counterpart Sheikh Khalifa al-Harthi.

In the meetings, bilateral relations and ways to improve relations in all sectors, especially in the economic area, were also discussed.

Oman has been acting as an intermediary between Iran and the United States. The first nuclear talks between Iran and Oman started in Muscat. Oman, which has gotten the title of the Switzerland of Europe, is also making efforts to bring an end to the Saudi-led war against Yemen.

Michel Aoun: Lebanon backs Iran's efforts to solve problems with regional states

TEHRAN - During a meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian in Beirut on Thursday, Lebanese President Michel Aoun underscored his country's support for Tehran's measures to improve relations with countries in the region.

According to IRNA, Aoun praised Iran's solidarity with Lebanon in the face of the crises and Tehran's assistance after the explosion at the port of Beirut, stressing that the talks would bring views closer on the disputed issues.

Lebanon has been going through political and economic crises over the past 18 months. However, recently the rival factions agreed on forming a new government.

Amir-Abdollahian, who was in his first visit to Beirut as Iran's foreign minister, announced Iran's strong support for Lebanon and announced Tehran's readiness to provide comprehensive support to Lebanon,

especially in the current difficult economic situation.

Amir-Abdollahian also conveyed the greetings of Ayatollah Ebrahim Raisi, President of Iran, to his Lebanese counterpart.

The top diplomat also elaborated on Iran's position toward regional and international developments, the atmosphere of dialogue between Tehran and some foreign and Arab governments, and the negotiation process on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the official name for the 2015 nuclear deal.

"The Islamic Republic is absolutely confident that Lebanon will be able to overcome all the difficulties it is facing, just as the friendly and brotherly people of Lebanon have gone through all the difficult stages in the past," Amir-Abdollahian told a news conference after arriving at Beirut airport on Thursday morning, IRNA reported.

Iranian parliamentary team visits Rome for climate conference

TEHRAN - A parliamentary delegation from Iran visited Rome, Italy, to attend the preparatory meeting of UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26), IRNA reported on Friday.

The preliminary meeting of the COP26 will be held on October 8-9 with the presence of the parliament speakers and MPs from 72 countries and 8 international organizations. The meeting is hosted by the Italian House of Representatives and collaboration of Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the United Nations.

The conference will discuss issues such as global goals for tackling climate change, the green approach to improving living conditions during the COVID-19 outbreak, the financing global climate change policies and the role of parliaments in achieving the goals of the COP26.

At the final session of the conference, the

initial draft of the final document of the UN Parliamentary Conference on Climate Change is to be adopted.

Hamid Bayat, the ambassador of the Iranian ambassador in Rome, welcomed the parliamentary delegation and held an official meeting with the team.

The ambassador, while explaining the existing capacities of Italy in the field of environment and modern agriculture, announced the readiness of the Italian authorities to cooperate in the fields of agriculture, environment and ways to deal with climate change with their Iranian counterparts.

Mehdi Farshadan, a member of the IPU Executive Council, and Alireza Nazari, a member of Agriculture Committee, highlighted the activities of the Iranian Parliament in dealing with climate change and the green approach to modern agriculture.

TEHRAN - An Iranian diplomat on Thursday categorically rejected "baseless allegations" against Tehran's nuclear and missile programs by certain European countries and Saudi Arabia, saying Tehran's peaceful programs are being pursued in line with the country's inherent rights and international commitments.

Heidar Ali Balouji, representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the UN General Assembly First Committee, said in a statement that Iran is committed to the full implementation of the 2015 nuclear agreement, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), provided that the other signatories live up fully to their commitments and lift all unjust sanctions in a speedy and verifiable manner.

"On JCPOA, as we stated earlier, the uncontested reality is that so far, Iran has adhered to the JCPOA terms while U.S. and E3 have failed to meet their JCPOA obligations," Balouji stated, according to Press TV.

E3 refers to three European countries of Britain, France and Germany that are still party to the 2015 nuclear party but have just been paying lip service to the agreement since the deal was ditched by former U.S. president Donald Trump in May 2018 under his "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran.

The "maximum pressure" was intended to strangle the Iranian economy. In retaliation, Iran adopted "maximum resistance" in the face of illegal sanctions and began to gradually suspend some of its nuclear commitments a year after the U.S. withdrawal. The Iranian compensatory measures were in line with the paragraph 36 of the JCPOA which has "provided a mechanism to resolve disputes and allows one side, under certain circumstances, to stop complying with the deal if the other side is out of compliance."

Balouji said in addition to honoring their JCPOA commitments, the European countries need to put pressure on the U.S. to return to full implementation of the JCPOA and UN Security Council Resolution 2231.

Since April, Iran and the remaining parties to the JCPOA have been holding talks in Austria's capital, Vienna, to bring the U.S. back into the deal and lift its anti-

Iran strongly dismisses nuclear allegations by Riyadh, certain European states



Iran sanctions. While the talks have been paused since Iran's presidential election, Tehran has said it will only engage in talks that are aimed at reaching tangible

Plan."

On allegations about Iran's missile program, Balouji said Iran's defensive missile capability is being pursued in line with the country's inherent rights and international commitments.

Certain Western countries that have launched a campaign against Iran for its defensive missile program are those countries that supplied sophisticated arms to former Iraqi ruler Saddam Hussein in his war against Iran in the 1980s. These same countries even refused to sell arms to Iran to defend itself.

Some of these countries even sold materials for building chemical weapons to the Saddam regime which used them against Iranian troops and civilians and also Kurds in northern Iraq.

'Saudi Arabia, Israel missed no chance to undermine JCPOA'

He also denounced the Saudi

"Saudi Arabia is raising questions about Iran's peaceful nuclear program while it is still implementing an old version of SQPs."

Iran FM: US oral messages, E3 unfulfilled promises not criterion to revive JCPOA

TEHRAN - Neither oral message of the United States nor the European trio's empty promises are taken seriously in Tehran when it comes to their calls for a mutual return to the historic 2015 nuclear agreement, Iran's foreign minister said on Thursday.

"If there is real intention on the part of the other sides and all of them return to their commitments, Iran will return to its commitments as well," Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said after a meeting with his Lebanese counterpart Abdallah Bou Habib in Beirut on Thursday.

"However, in this regard, the U.S. oral messages are not our criterion," Press TV quoted Amir-Abdollahian as telling reporters.

Amir-Abdollahian added, "The unfulfilled promises of the three European countries are not our criterion. We will act in accordance with the other sides' practical actions, the lifting of the sanctions and their return to their commitments."

The fate of the nuclear deal, officially called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), was put in limbo after former U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew Washington from it in May 2018 and reinstated harsh economic sanctions against Iran within his "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran.

Following Washington's departure from the agreement, the remaining parties to the JCPOA have launched negotiations in the Austrian capital, Vienna, to revive the deal and bring the U.S. back into full compliance with all of its contractual commitments.

However, the talks have been paused after the election of Ebrahim Ræisi as Iran's president, with the new administration declaring that Tehran will engage in talks that are only aimed at reaching tangible outcomes, particularly the lifting of all U.S. sanctions.

In the meantime, the European trio — France, Britain and Germany — have joined the U.S. calls on Iran to resume the negotiations as soon as possible.

But Amir-Abdollahian maintained Iran accepts negotiations as a principle, only if it secures the Iranian nation's rights and interests.

Based on the JCPOA, Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear program in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions. Iran remained fully loyal to the agreement, endorsed by United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231, for a full after the U.S. abrogated the deal. However, in May 2019 Iran announced that its "strategic patience" is over and started to gradually remove bans on its nuclear activities. In

each compensatory measure that took place at bimonthly interval, Iran was insisting that if the European parties to the deal compensate Iran for the U.S. sanctions, it will reverse its decision. However, Europeans did nothing tangible. They only paid lip service to the need to preserve the multilateral agreement. Iran's compensatory measures were based on the paragraph 36 of the JCPOA which has provided "a mechanism to resolve disputes and allows one side, under certain circumstances, to stop complying with

"We will act in accordance with the other sides' practical actions."

Any change in regional geopolitics is Iran's red line, MP warns

TEHRAN - The representative of Kangavar in the Iranian Parliament has stressed the need to respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of countries in the South Caucasus region, describing any change in the geopolitics of the region or borders as Iran's red line.

Ali Rezaei, in an interview with IRNA on Friday, advised the officials in Baku to respect Iran's interests as a friendly and neighboring country and prevent the movements of the fake Zionist regime in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Tehran has been suspicious of Azerbaijan's links to the Israeli regime, whose supply of drones and other weapons helped Baku gain the upper hand in the war with Armenia last year. The war started September

27, 2020 and ended on November 10. The Republic of Azerbaijan was the initiator of the war.

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian has said that Tehran will not tolerate Israel's presence near Iran's borders and will take due measures against the regime's activities.

Highlighting the destructive records of the Zionist regime, MP Rezaei said: "The Islamic Republic of Iran will not allow the fake Zionist regime to carry out destructive measures under the pretext of industrial and agricultural activities."

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has practically proved its good neighborliness and fraternity with the Republic of Azerbaijan over the last three decades, so creating an

obstacle in the transit route in the Caucasus region is against good neighborliness."

The MP also said a military drill, codenamed the Conquerors of Khaybar military drill, conducted by Iranian Army in northwestern borders is a natural and sovereign right of Iran.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran monitors any movement and is ready to respond to any sinister intentions. The main approach of this exercise is deterrence against any possible dangers against our country," the parliamentarian remarked.

On October 3, a top Iranian security official reiterated the Islamic Republic's "benevolent" relationship with neighbors, calling on them to remain vigilant in the face of

"fruitless foreign influence" and settle issues through cooperation.

"Powerful Iran has always been benevolent to its neighbors and never posed a threat to them," Ali Shamkhani, secretary of the Supreme National Security Council (SNSC), wrote on his Twitter account.

He added that regional countries can resolve problems through collective cooperation. Shamkhani was openly referring to disputes between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Armenia.

"Any foreign influence is fruitless so we call on neighbors to be vigilant in this regard & to stay away from them," Shamkhani tweeted, according to Press TV.

The military exercises by the

Iranian army were criticized by Azerbaijan. The military exercises started last Friday and lasted for a few days.

President Ilham Aliyev said he was "very surprised" by Iran's decision to hold drills close to his country's borders, and questioned the timing of the maneuvers. Aliyev had also accused Iran of sending over trucks to "illegally" cross into the Nagorno-Karabakh region, which is a matter of dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Iran's Armed Forces regularly hold military maneuvers to increase their preparedness and military prowess. The drills serve as a warning message to the enemies against any act of aggression against the Islamic Republic.

representative's anti-Iran allegations, saying the kingdom, along with the Israeli regime, did their best to derail the negotiations that led to the JCPOA, and afterward, missed no chance to seriously undermine the full and effective implementation of the deal and resolution 2231.

"They still pursue such policies and practices systematically and in gross violation of their explicit legal obligations under the Charter of the United Nations," the Iranian envoy said.

"The representative of the KSA is raising questions about Iran's peaceful nuclear program while it is still implementing an old version of SQPs, thus preventing the IAEA from being able to fully monitor and verify the Saudi's nuclear activities," he added.

The SQP or the small quantities protocol is a protocol to a comprehensive safeguards agreement concluded between the IAEA and a state on the basis that the state has less than specified minimal quantities of nuclear material and no nuclear material in a facility.

In a speech before the First Committee, Riyadh's ambassador, Abdullah bin Yahya al-Mouallimi, had claimed that Iran's continued enrichment of uranium beyond the JCPOA limits "poses a threat to the security of the countries of the region."

He had also described Iran's ballistic missile program as "dangerous" and called for efforts to address Tehran's "negative practices" and ensure that Iran would be prevented from "acquiring nuclear weapons."

In response, the Iranian envoy said, "On regional security, raising unfounded accusations against the defensive ballistic missile program of Iran is also an attempt to cover up the skyrocketing trend in the military expenditure of Saudi Arabia and its unquenchable appetite for importing deadly arms."

While expressing hope that Riyadh will heed Iran's calls to establish a dialogue within the region to address regional problems, Balouji said the real source of regional insecurity is the massive build-up of foreign forces and military installations, a large number of which are hosted by some regional countries, including Saudi Arabia.

the deal if the other side is out of compliance."

Amir-Abdollahian said, "In the nuclear agreement, Iran is the only country that remained committed until the very end and we will revive this approach if there is reciprocation from the other sides."

Earlier, the top Iranian diplomat had urged Washington to release at least 10 billion dollars of Iran's blocked funds as a positive signal that would translate into tangible outcomes for the Iranian people, instead of constantly messaging Iran to come back into the Vienna talks.

"The Americans have been constantly looking for connections and sending messages [to Iran]," he said, adding, "If the Americans have the stated intention, they should release some of Iran's blocked funds."

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Wednesday that he had spoken with his Russian counterpart about restoring the Iran nuclear deal and claimed that the issue is of mutual concern to the United States and Russia.

"We had an opportunity to compare notes on where we stand and where we hope to go," Blinken said at a Paris news conference.

After the discussion, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that talks to restore the deal "should be resumed as soon as possible." The global community wants the U.S. to "return to the obligations of the nuclear deal" and halt "illegal restrictions on Iran and all of its trading partners," he said.

After meeting with Lavrov in Moscow, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian said Wednesday, "We are now finalizing consultations on this matter and will soon restore our negotiations in Vienna."

Rascals can't celebrate Iran's victory

From page 1 ► He collaborated with the notorious self-proclaimed "human rights activist" Masih Alinejad, to stop Iranian athletes from competing in international competitions.

Now the same person wants to interview Iranian athletes right after they emerge victorious from prestigious competitions. Impossible, and unbelievable.

As a propaganda broadcast that supports terrorism, war, and sanctions, Iran International feels obliged to support sanctioning Iranian athletes. Yet, it feels good to see that Iranian wrestlers turned their request down.

The incident united Iranian athletes against the Saudi-backed media outlets to sanction them. May this unity stand for longer.

Hezbollah chief calls Iran sincere ally

From Page 1 ▶ In his talks, the foreign minister insisted on Iran's strong support to Lebanon in all areas.

In each of the meetings, the talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia were also discussed.

Iran says stands with Lebanese

During his meeting Prime Minister Mikati, Amir Abdollahian congratulated Mikati on forming the new government in Lebanon and said the Islamic Republic, as always, will stand by the Lebanese people and is ready to assist the country, especially to overcome power outages and fuel shortages.

For his part, Mikati stressed that Lebanon welcomes any effort from brotherly and friendly countries and the international community, as long as it falls within the context of assisting Beirut in preserving the state.

"Lebanon is in dire need today, more than ever, to strengthen the confidence of the Lebanese in the state and its institutions, through normal relations among countries based on mutual respect and common interests, in a way that serves the aspirations of their people," he said, according to Press TV.

Mikati added that the best service that can be provided to Lebanon and the region is that the dialogue between the Arab countries and Iran yields full consensus on various issues.

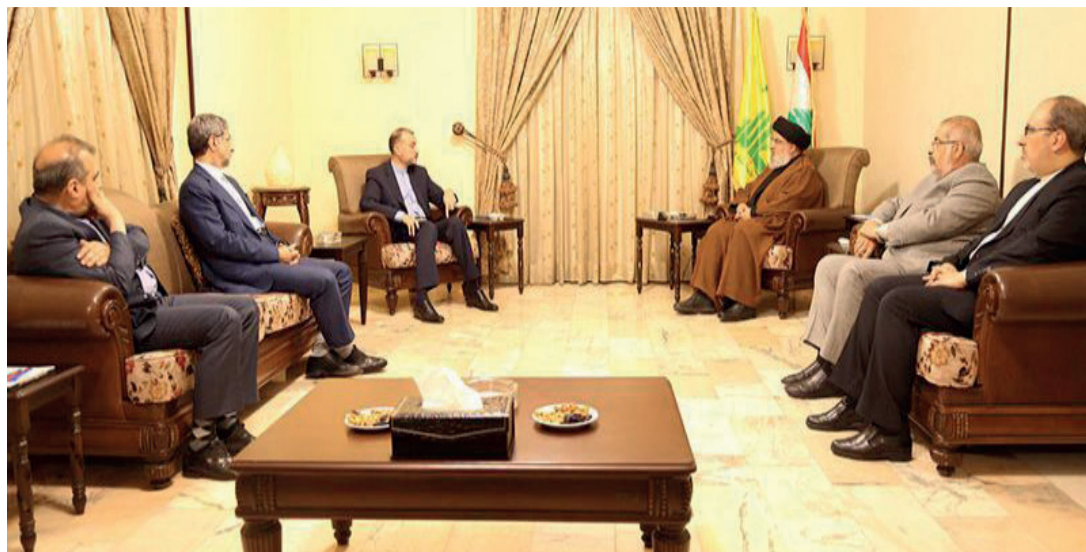
Iran says ready to build two power plants in Lebanon

In his joint press conference with the Lebanese foreign minister upon his arrival in Beirut on Thursday morning, Amir-Abdollahian said Iran is ready to build two power plants in Lebanon, one in Beirut and the other in the south of the country, in a period of less than 18 months.

"We would do this quickly as part of a joint venture between Lebanese and Iranian investors and sharing Iranian technical engineering services [with Lebanon]," Press TV quoted him as saying.

He also stressed that the Islamic Republic is prepared to help Lebanon overcome the economic crisis it is facing.

Lebanon has been mired in a deep



economic and financial crisis since late 2019. The crisis is the gravest threat to the country's stability since the 15-year civil war ended in 1990.

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

In August, while the Arab country was going through crippling fuel shortages, the secretary general of the Lebanese resistance group Hezbollah, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, announced the import of Iranian fuel to help Lebanon manage the shortages.

Three tankers carrying Iranian fuel have already reached Syria to be transferred to neighboring Lebanon.

Iran has also expressed readiness to sell fuel to the Lebanese government.

In his meeting with Parliament Speaker Berri, Amir Abdollahian thanked the Lebanese MPs for their constructive approach in helping form the new government in Lebanon and taking steps in line with protecting the country's national security.

The Iranian foreign minister said his country attaches great importance to Lebanon in its foreign policy and said

the Islamic Republic is ready to create a situation for economic activities by Iranian investors in Lebanon.

The Iranian foreign minister also said presence of foreign forces in the region are the chief causes of "insecurity and instability" in the region.

In his meeting with Berri, Amir Abdollahian again reiterated that Iran is ready to build power plants in Lebanon. He said Iranian engineering companies are capable providing services to Lebanon at the level of global standards with lower prices.

"Iran has been on the side of Lebanon in difficult times"

For his part, the Lebanese parliament speaker thanked Iranian officials for sending messages congratulating Lebanon on forming new government. He also said receiving technical and engineering services from Iran at different fields is now a necessity for Lebanon.

The two sides also held talks over dialogue between Iran and Saudi Arabia and assessed the process as positive.

Berri also said Iran has been on the side of Lebanon in difficult days.

"We believe that one should know friends at difficult times and Iran has been a country that has been on the side

of Lebanon in hard times and assisted to promote and strengthen the status of Lebanon in the region," Berri pointed out.

"Dialogue is best way to resolve regional and international issues"

In his press conference with his Lebanese counterpart, Amir Abdollahian said dialogue is the "best way" to resolve regional and international issues.

"We believe in dialogue and consider it as the most proper way to resolve regional and global issues and problems," the Iranian foreign minister suggested.

Amir Abdollahian also said Iran is ready to help rebuild the port of Beirut through export technical and engineering services if the Lebanese make such a request.

Aoun says Lebanese see Iran as their friend

In his meeting with Amir Abdollahian, President Aoun also said the Lebanese consider Iran as their friend and see it on their side.

"In Lebanon both people and officials consider Iran as their friend and we always feel Iran on their sides," Aoun remarked.

The Lebanese president also expressed happiness over dialogue between Iran and Saudi Arabia and said it is "important" and a source of "stability" in the region.

Big tech controls everything

TEHRAN — On Monday afternoon, the world of Internet experienced one of the worst breakdowns in history. Let's explore why.

When Facebook suffered an outage of about six hours on Monday, businesses suffered along with it. The platform and its Instagram and WhatsApp siblings play key roles in commerce, with some companies relying on Facebook's network instead of their own websites.

But on Monday, that network came crashing down. It wasn't a hack, Facebook said, rather a self-inflicted problem.

An update to Facebook's routers that coordinate network traffic went wrong, sending a wave of disruptions rippling through its systems. As a result, all things on Facebook were effectively shut down worldwide.

The disruption stands as one of Facebook's worst setbacks since a 2019 incident that took the platform offline for nearly 24 hours — an outage that, like Monday's, was attributed to a change in Facebook's server configuration.

This week's outage struck around 11:40 a.m. ET. At about 6:30 p.m. ET, the company announced that it had resolved the problem and was bringing services back online.

In an update on the outage, Facebook said, "Configuration changes on the backbone routers that coordinate network traffic through our data centers," blocking their ability to communicate and setting off a cascade of network failures.

That explanation suggests the problem arose between Facebook and the Border Gateway Protocol, a vital tool underlying the Internet.

Border Gateway Protocol is often compared with the GPS system or the Postal Service. Similar to ideas like map coordinates or ZIP codes, the system tells the rest of the world where to route traffic and information.

When a company can't use the gateway protocol, it's as if their online domains simply don't exist. But that didn't stop web pages, searches and messages from looking for Facebook's properties. And that, in turn, led to other problems.

"Many organizations saw network disruptions



and slowness thanks to billions of devices constantly asking for the current coordinates of Facebook.com, Instagram.com and WhatsApp.com," tech expert Brian Krebs notes.

The outage came as Facebook faces intense scrutiny over its products and policies — including a whistleblower who is testifying before a Senate subcommittee on Tuesday — prompting some to wonder whether the company had been hacked. But the company said it was simply "a faulty configuration change."

Facebook also stressed that there is "no evidence that user data was compromised as a result of this downtime."

Former Facebook product manager Frances Haugen testified before the U.S. Senate on Oct. 5, 2021, that the company's social media platforms "harm children, stoke division and weaken our democracy."

Haugen was the primary source for a Wall Street Journal exposé on the company. Called Facebook's algorithms dangerous, she said Facebook executives were aware of the threat but put profits before people, and called on Congress to regulate the company.

Haugen told Congress that Facebook consistently chose to maximize its growth rather than implement safeguards on its platforms, just as it hid from the public and government officials internal research that illuminated the harms of Facebook products.

"The result has been more division, more harm, more lies, more threats and more combat. In some

cases, this dangerous online talk has led to actual violence that harms and even kills people," she testified.

Before Haugen left the social network, she copied thousands of pages of confidential documents and shared them with lawmakers, regulators and The Wall Street Journal, which published a series of reports called the Facebook Files.

"During my time at Facebook, I came to realize a devastating truth: Almost no one outside of Facebook knows what happens inside Facebook," Haugen told Congress. "The company intentionally hides vital information from the public, from the U.S. government, and from governments around the world."

Social media platforms rely heavily on people's behavior to decide on the content that you see. In particular, they watch for content that people respond to or "engage" with by liking, commenting and sharing. Troll farms, organizations that spread provocative content, exploit this by copying high-engagement content and posting it as their own, which helps them reach a wide audience.

Haugen has leaked one Facebook study that found that 13.5% of UK teen girls in one survey say their suicidal thoughts became more frequent after starting on Instagram.

Another leaked study found 17% of teen girls say their eating disorders got worse after using Instagram.

About 32% of teen girls said that when they felt bad about their bodies, Instagram made them feel worse, Facebook's researchers found, which was first reported by the Journal.

Sen. Marsha Blackburn, R-Tenn., accused Facebook of intentionally targeting children under age 13 with an "addictive" product — despite the app requiring users be 13 years or older.

"It is clear that Facebook prioritizes profit over the well-being of children and all users," she said.

Facebook, and other "big tech" companies are now acting as a tool for the imperialist powers by being selective about everything, including news one must read. They decide for your taste, for your interests, and everything. A dangerous trend that might endanger human's ability of thinking.

security, progress in the region is important."

The minister added Iran will continue its constructive approach in the region and sees regional cooperation as the key for economic development in the region.

He also said that Iran will continue to ship fuel to Lebanon that suffers from a severe energy crisis.

SPORTS

Iran victorious over UAE in 2022 World Cup qualifier

TEHRAN — Iran football team defeated the UAE 1-0 in Group A of the 2022 World Cup qualification on Thursday.

Mehdi Taremi scored the winning goal in the 71st minute in Dubai's Al Wasl Stadium after receiving a superb pass from Sardar Azmoun behind the Emirati defence.

With one minute remaining, Taremi was brought down by Abdullah Ramadan and Australian referee Chris Beath showed the spot but Ali Khaseif saved Azmoun strike.

Iran cemented their place at top of the group with nine points out of three matches.

Earlier in the day, South Korea defeated Syria 2-1 in Seoul and Iraq and Lebanon shared the spoils in a goalless draw.

Saipa come fourth at Asian Women's Club Volleyball Championship

TEHRAN — Iran's Saipa were defeated against Supreme Chonburi of Thailand 3-0 (25-21, 25-18, 25-19) in the third-place match of the 2021 Asian Women's Club Volleyball Championship on Thursday.

Kazakhstan's Altay defeated Thailand's Nakhon Ratchasima in straight sets in the final match.

The competition was held in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand, from October 1 to 7.

Altay booked their place at the 2021 FIVB Volleyball Women's Club World Championship.

Iran's Zare named best MB at Asian Club Championship

TEHRAN — Poursan Zare of Iran was named the best middle blocker of the 2021 Asian Women's Club Volleyball Championship.

Zare helped Saipa to finish fourth in the competition which was held in Thailand.

Pleumjit Thinkaow of Supreme Chonburi was also named the best middle blocker of the tournament.

Altay of Kazakhstan's outside hitter Sana Anarkulova was named the Most Valuable Player of the competition.

Mehrdad Mohammadi undergoes surgery

TEHRAN — Iranian winger of Qatar's Al-Arabi Mehrdad Mohammadi underwent the foot injury on Wednesday.

He will be sidelined for six months.

Mohammadi sustained a knee injury in the match against Al-Sadd in Qatar Stars League last week.

Al-Arabi completed the signing of Esteghlal midfielder Farshid Esmaili as Mohammadi's replacement.

Mehrdad is the twin brother of Milad who plays for AEK Athens.

Ex-Leicester City forward Futacs linked with Esteghlal

TEHRAN — Marko Futacs has been linked with a move to Esteghlal football team of Iran.

The 31-year-old player started his playing career at Werder Bremen II in 2009 and has also played at Portsmouth, Leicester City, Hajduk Split and Fehérvár.

The striker has most recently played at Hungarian team Zalaegerszegi.

Esteghlal forwards Mehdi Ghaedi and Cheick Diabate left the team at the end of the last season.

Esteghlal are going to end their nine-year title drought in Iran Professional League.

Foolad start Asian Club Volleyball C'ship on high

TEHRAN — Iran's Foolad Sirjan swept past Rebusco of the Philippines (25-15, 25-22, 25-5) in the 2021 Asian

Men's Club Volleyball Championship on Friday.

Foolad will play Uzbekistan's AGMK on Sunday.

Thailand's Diamond Food and Al Arabi of Qatar are in Pool B.

Thailand's Nakhon Ratchasima QminC, Sri Lanka's CEB, Kazakhstan's Burevestnic Almaty, Kuwait's Kazma and South Gas of Iraq are in Pool B.

Pool A consists of Nakhon Ratchasima of Thailand, CEB of Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan's Burevestnic Almaty, Kazma of Kuwait and Iraqi South Gas.

The competition is being held in Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand from October 8 to 15.

The 2021 Asian Men's Club Volleyball Championship is the eleventh edition of the Asian Men's Club Volleyball Championship, an annual international volleyball club tournament organized by the Asian Volleyball Confederation (AVC) with Thailand Volleyball Association (TVA).

The winners of this tournament will be qualified to 2021 FIVB Volleyball Men's Club World Championship.

Esteghlal midfielder Esmaili joins Al-Arabi of Qatar

TEHRAN — Esteghlal midfielder Farshid Esmaili joined Al-Arabi of Qatar football team.

The 27-year-old player played for Esteghlal six years but they parted ways at the end of the last season.

Esmaili has been hired as a replacement for his countryman Mehrdad Mohammadi who has been sidelined for six months due to a knee injury.

Pakdaman to represent Iran at France Grand Prix

TEHRAN — Iranian sabreur Ali Pakdaman will participate at the France Fencing Grand Prix in November.

He will be Iran's only representative at the event.

The Grand Prix will be held from November 11 to 13 in Orléans, France.

Pakdaman represented Iran in the 2016 and 2020 Olympic Games.

Arsenal want to sign Azmoun as Lacazette replacement

TEHRAN — Arsenal are reportedly going to sign Sardar Azmoun as it plans for Alexandre Lacazette's departure.

Lacazette is wanted by a number of European teams with his contract at the Emirates running down. It expires in June, meaning clubs can finalize a pre-contract agreement with the center-forward as early as January.

Azmoun managed 19 strikes in 24 matches last season as Zenit lifted the Russian league title.

In total, his record for Zenit stands at an impressive 58 goals in 95 appearances. Onze Mondial write that Azmoun has 'caught the eye' of Arsenal scouts recently. Azmoun revealed last month that he had rejected Tottenham during the summer.

On a potential transfer, he said: "I never said that I was leaving Zenit. The media wrote that I was undergoing a medical examination and agreed on everything with a certain team."

Iran third at 2021 World Wrestling Championships

TEHRAN — Iran finished in third place in the 2021 World Wrestling Championships in Oslo, Norway.

The Iranian freestylers won three gold and three silver medals as well as a bronze medal and finished in third place with 162 points in team ranking.

Hassan Yazdani in the 86kg, Amir Hossein Zare in the 125kg and Kamran Ghasempour in the 92kg won Iran's three gold medals.

Alireza Sarlak in the 57kg, Amir Mohammad Yazdani in the 65kg and Mohammad Nokhodi in the 79kg claimed three silver medals.

Mojtaba Goleji also won Iran's only bronze in the 97kg. Russia won the title with three gold medals, one silver and four bronzes and 173 points.

The U.S. came second with three gold, four silver and two bronze medals and 168 points.

Tehran-Riyadh talks on the right track, Iran FM says

TEHRAN — Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian said on Friday that the talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia are on the "right track", noting that Iran and Saudi Arabia as two important countries play important role in stabilizing the region.

"Iran-Saudi talks are on the right track that entail more negotiations... At this

stage we have reached (some) results," Amir Abdollahian told reporters in Beirut.

Headed information will be provided about possible implementation of agreements between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

The foreign minister said it was the Saudi Kingdom that cut diplomatic ties with Iran.

He added Iran welcomes durable talks with Riyadh that produce tangible results.

Calling talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia constructive, he said, "We hope the two sides to reach a good result... Iran and Saudi Arabia are two important countries in the region. The role of the two countries in helping a sustainable

security, progress in the region is important."

The minister added Iran will continue its constructive approach in the region and sees regional cooperation as the key for economic development in the region.

He also said that Iran will continue to ship fuel to Lebanon that suffers from a severe energy crisis.

President Raisi visits oil-rich Bushehr Province

TEHRAN – Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi visited the oil-rich Bushehr province on Friday heading a high-ranking delegation comprised of six ministers, Shana reported.

As reported, Raisi was accompanied by ministers of Interior, Transport and Urban Development, Oil, Energy, Agricultural and Finance and Economic affairs during his visit to the southern province.

Upon arrival, the president stated that expert studies have been done to determine the problems of the province and to offer solutions for resolving them.

"During this visit, major steps will be taken to solve the problems of Bushehr province," Raisi said.

Referring to the great capacities of Bushehr province in the fields of agriculture, fisheries, palm trees and oil, gas and petrochemical sectors, he stressed the need to focus on these sectors in the province and added: "effective steps must be taken in oil, gas and petrochemical sectors to solve the problems of the province."



President Raisi delivering a speech upon arrival to Bushehr Province on Friday.

"Developing infrastructure including water, electricity, transportation roads and especially connecting the province to the national rail network are also among the measures that will be considered during this trip to take lasting steps to solve the fundamental problems of the people of the province," Raisi added.

IRICA offers new facilities for importers of basic goods



TEHRAN - The Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) is offering new facilities for the importers of basic goods in order to facilitate the clearance of such goods from the country's customs, IRIB reported.

According to IRICA Deputy Head Mehrdad Jamal Orounaqi, from now on, payment of import duties on basic goods will be made at the end of customs formalities.

"One of the reasons for the stagnation in the clearance of imported goods was the inability of production units to pay import duties. In this regard, the IRICA has allowed the owners of goods to provide a valid bank guarantee instead of paying import duties," Orounaqi explained.

Another facility provided by IRICA is the credit clearance of production inputs and basic goods, which enables the owners of goods to clear part of the raw materials of their production units without paying import duties.

By offering the new facilities, the IRICA intends

to move the payment of import duties from the stage of declaring goods to the stage of issuing customs licenses, which will be implemented in the next few days, the official said.

"All importers will be able to use this opportunity to deposit the import duties of the declared goods while performing the customs formalities," he added.

Back in May, former Iranian President Hassan Rouhani had ordered IRICA to take the necessary measures for the facilitation of the clearance of basic goods deposited at the country's customs.

Rouhani had issued a decree ordering to investigate and resolve the mentioned issue.

Also in February, the Iranian market regulation headquarters approved six new directives aiming to enhance the clearance of goods at the country's customs.

The mentioned directives covered a variety of areas including the value of the goods, weight tolerance, abandoned goods, banned goods, and foreign transit.

Also, to prevent the deposition of goods in special economic zones and customs, the IRICA was given the authority to take the necessary actions to clear basic and essential goods for transit, without requiring the owners to place order registration.

Earlier in January, former Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Alireza Razm-Hosseini had said that his ministry was going to take necessary measures to accelerate the clearance of goods at customs to help regulate domestic markets.

Over 127,000 tons of car tires produced in H1

TEHRAN- Iranian tire manufacturers produced 127,666 tons of the product during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22) to register a two-percent drop compared to the same period of time in the past year.

Over 11.777 million tires were produced during the six-month period of this year, indicating a three-percent decline in terms of number, IRNA reported.

According to the statistics, in the mentioned period, 73,578 tons of passenger cars were produced, showing four percent fall year on year.

In the period under review, some 13,289 tons of van tires were also produced, indicating a 14-percent growth. Meanwhile, 27,341 tons of truck and bus tires were produced, showing a three-percent rise.

Production of the tires of light agricultural vehicles experienced a decline of 28 percent to stand at 1,838 tons, while that of the heavy ones also declined one percent to stand at 9,105 tons.

Production of the tires of rod building and industrial vehicles also fell 14 percent to 2,515 tons in the period under review.

In the first half of the present year, 9,082 tons of bicycle and motorcycle tires were produced, showing 18 percent growth.

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

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

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

It is clear that among different ministries,



the Ministry of Industry, Mining, and Trade was one with a somehow heavier responsibility to materialize the motto of the year.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Iran, Armenia confer on establishing new transit routes

TEHRAN – Iranian Deputy Transport and Urban Development Minister Kheirollah Khademi has announced an agreement between Iran and Armenia for establishing new transit routes, IRNA reported.

"The alternative transit route for Iranian trucks in Armenia will be asphalted within the next month, and there will be no need to use the previous route which passes through Azerbaijan and requires us to pay tolls to the country," Khademi said.

Earlier this week, Khademi visited Armenia on top of a delegation for discussing solutions to resolve recent transit problems posed by Azerbaijan along a 20-kilometer section of Armenia's Goris-Kapan Road stretching from Norduz (in Iran) to Yerevan.

"Positive meetings were held with Armenian officials, including the Minister of Infrastructure and his deputies. In order to



determine a new route for Iranian trucks; good solutions were also suggested with a specific schedule to solve the problem," the official stated.

The northern part of the route (from Yerevan to Georgia) has been completed by Armenia and the southern part toward

the Norduz border in Iran is remaining which the two sides agreed to launch the construction operations.

According to Khademi, Armenia's long-term plan is to build section 4 of this global corridor, and Iran has announced its readiness for its consultants and contractors to

participate in the implementation of this project.

Azerbaijan is controlling and claiming ownership for approximately 20 km out of a 400 km route from Norduz to Yerevan. Since last month, Azerbaijan has imposed strict regulations on Iranian drivers which are posing major problems for them passing through the 20-kilometer section of Armenia's Goris-Kapan Road including paying tolls levied by Azerbaijani border guards.

Iran and Armenia are seeking ways to bypass Azerbaijan for their traffic.

The Goris-Kapan Road is the main traffic route in southern Armenia. Since the end of the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War, a 20-kilometer section of the road has been under Azerbaijani control. But since early 2021 it has set up border guard posts on their sections of the road, thereby disrupting the traffic along the route.

First train of SP phase 14 refinery to go operational soon

TEHRAN – The first train of the phase 14 refinery of Iran's South Pars complex has been nearly completed and will be put into operation soon, the operator of the phase 14 development project, Mohammad Mehdi Tavasoli-Pour said.

According to the official, the first train of South Pars Refinery Phase 14 was scheduled to be completed by October 7, and as scheduled the refinery's pipeline has been connected to the national gas network to receive sweet gas for final tests and assessments."

He noted that all of the refinery's utility units, including water, electricity, steam, air, instrumentation, and nitrogen services have been completed, and said: "Following the injection of sweet gas from the sixth national pipeline, the commissioning of these units and other process units of the refinery will be completed quickly."

Referring to the holding of intensive managerial and executive meetings with contractors of different sections of the South

Pars phase 14 refinery, Tavasoli-Pour said: "In these meetings, strategies to accelerate the completion of construction and commissioning operations, supply of goods and issues related to manpower are examined and necessary solutions are suggested and identified by the employer and communicated to the contractors for implementation."

Phase 14 development is aimed at producing 56.6 million cubic meters per day of rich gas, 75,000 barrels/day of gas condensate and 400 tons/day of sulfur, and 1 million tons/year of liquefied petroleum gas and one million tons/year of ethane to be fed to petrochemical plants.

Back in October 2020, the operator of the South Pars Phase 14 development project said the project's onshore refinery is scheduled to be fully operational by the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (September 2021).

The huge South Pars field, which Iran shares with Qatar in the Persian Gulf, covers an area



of 9,700 square kilometers, 3,700 square kilometers of which are in Iran's territorial waters. The remaining 6,000 square kilometers, called North Dome, are situated in Qatar's territorial waters.

The field is estimated to contain a significant amount of natural gas, accounting for about eight percent of the world's reserves, and approximately 18 billion barrels of condensate.

Export from East Azarbaijan increases 55% in six months yr/yr

TEHRAN- The value of export from East Azarbaijan province in the northwest of Iran rose 55 percent during the first six months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 21), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, a provincial official announced.

Ali Jahangiri, the deputy governor-general of the province for economic coordination, announced that commodities worth \$622 million were exported from the province in the six-month period.

He said that 84 items have been exported to 99 countries in the first half of this year.

Most of the products were exported to the neighboring countries, the official underlined.

As announced by the head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA), the value of Iran's non-oil trade rose 47 percent during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year, as compared to the same period of time in the past year.

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.

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.

The official further announced that Iran has imported 19.1 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$23.1 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 IRICA head has announced that the value of Iran's non-oil trade stood at \$73 billion in the past Iranian calendar year.

Mir-Ashrafi has put the weight of non-oil trade at 146.4 million tons, and said that the figure shows a 25-million-ton annual decline, which is the result of sanctions and coronavirus pandemic.

TSE's main index rises 3.5% in a week

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), rose 3.5 percent in the past Iranian calendar week.

The index closed at 1.488 million points on Wednesday (the last working day of the week).

During the past week, the indices of Social Security Investment Company, Bandar Abbas Refinery, Iran Khodro Company, Sepid Makian Company, and Berekat Pharmaceutical Group were the most widely followed ones.

A capital market analyst has said the trades at the Tehran Stock Exchange are going to follow an upward trend in the remaining months of the current Iranian calendar year (ends in March 2022).

"Based on the forecasts, it seems that the stock market trading will experience a positive trend and be upward by the end of this year due to the current inflation in the country's economy," Soheil Kolahchi has told IRNA.

And another capital market analyst says the Iranian stock market is expected to be stable in the third quarter of the current Iranian calendar year (September 23-December 21), IRNA reported.

"We expect to see a steady trend in market transactions in [the Iranian calendar months of] Aban and Azar (autumn months), and I suggest shareholders invest in leading industries," Salman Nasirzadeh said.

He pointed to the current risks of the stock



exchange and added: "The stock market in the current situation, along with its positive movements, is associated with risks, now the most important risk that may be imposed on the market is possible macroeconomic decisions."

He emphasized the measures that can help the stock market to follow an uptrend and said: "By creating stability in the regulations, transparency of information and increasing the initial public offering in the market, it is possible to change the trend of the market."

Nasirzadeh stated that with proper knowledge of investing in stock exchange transactions, the capital market can be considered as a positive market in the medium- and long term.

Back in July, Market Analyst Mostafa Safari had said that trades in the Iranian stock market

will be much better and more reasonable in the second half of the current Iranian calendar year compared to the first half of the year.

Safari believed that reaching a possible agreement on the nuclear deal will have a positive impact on the capital market and pave the way for significant growth in the market.

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

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

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

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

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

Iran takes upper hand over Saudis when it comes to West Asia: analyst

From page 1 ▶ If there is a major improvement in relations between Tehran and Riyadh, it will likely require a significant amount of time. For decades such bitterness, distrust, and vitriol have come to shape Iranian-Saudi relations. Overcoming this history of extremely negative relations can't happen quickly. There are also many delicate issues in the Middle East (West Asia) that pit the Iranians and Saudis against each other as opposing stakeholders. To the point, both sides should proceed with these talks patiently.

Why does Iraq persist in playing the role of a mediator between Iran and Saudi Arabia?

Iraq has vested interests in maintaining good relations with all its neighbors and helping countries in the region defuse their tensions. Any direct military confrontation that involves Iran could easily fuel chaos and bloodshed in Iraq. After decades of war, sanctions, and occupation, the Iraqis do not want another destabilizing war in the Middle East (West Asia) to subject their country to more suffering and misery. If Baghdad can facilitate productive dialogue that bodes well for regional stability, Iraq's leadership is keen to step up as a diplomatic player in the Middle East (West Asia). The Iraqi president's role in mediating the Jordanian-Syrian rapprochement and bringing Egypt and Syria closer is two other cases.

How do you see the Saudis' position in the Persian Gulf in light of their failure to defeat the Houthis, especially as the U.S. is reluctant to support this war?

Whether we're discussing Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, or Palestine, it is easy to argue that Iran has taken the upper hand over Saudi Arabia when it comes to important power struggles. Nowhere more than in neighboring Yemen has Saudi Arabia felt so humiliated by a force that many officials in Riyadh and Washington view as an Iranian "proxy." This weak position concerning



Yemen that Saudi Arabia has found itself in is a major factor contributing to Riyadh's diplomatic outreach to Tehran.

At this juncture, there seems to be a healthy realization in Saudi Arabia that President Barack Obama was correct in 2016 when he spoke about Riyadh and Tehran's need to find ways to share the region, highlighted by Saudi Arabia's increasingly pragmatic foreign policy 2021. By ending the blockade of Qatar, improving relations with Turkey, talking to Iran, and making gradual overtures to Syria's government, throughout this year, the Saudis have been busy pursuing more diplomatic approaches to countries that Riyadh has had big problems within recent years. This is a marked contrast from the foreign policy agenda that Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MbS) pursued during the Trump years in which Saudi Arabia was far more belligerent and aggressive in the region.

"Nowhere more than in neighboring Yemen has Saudi Arabia felt so humiliated by Houthis"

Do you believe the U.S., under the Biden presidency, is following Obama's policy of sharing the region between Iran and Saudi Arabia?

Like the Obama administration, the current administration of Joe Biden has focused on a major geopolitical pivot away from the Middle East (West Asia) toward Asia to counter China's ascendancy. The Quad (Australia, India, Japan, and the United States) and AUKUS (the trilateral security pact between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) are some of the hallmarks of this pivot. Within this context, the Biden administration would like to see Iran and Saudi Arabia have lower temperatures in their relationship. And find ways to share the region because the White House wants fewer sources of tension in the Middle East (West Asia) that could spark a new conflict. Washington would feel obligated to intervene at the expense of the U.S.'s ability to shift resources eastward.

From Saudi Arabia's perspective, the United States is no longer seen as a reliable ally. Do you think the Saudis will resort to diversifying their alliances with other superpowers via consolidation of ties with China and even Russia?

Riyadh is looking to diversify its security partnerships following years of various blunders in U.S. foreign policy, which have been causing the Saudis to question further the wisdom of depending so much on Washington for the Kingdom's security. The deepening of Saudi Arabia's relationships with Beijing and Moscow takes place against the backdrop of major trust issues that have weakened the Saudi-U.S. partnership - issues that China and Russia have carefully and skillfully taken advantage of to advance their own foreign policy agendas. But there is no indication that either China or Russia would be interested in replacing the U.S. as a security guarantor for Saudi Arabia and other western-aligned Arabian sheikdoms of the Persian Gulf. Some experts contend that Saudi Arabia's moves to strengthen its ties with China and Russia are mostly designed to gain greater leverage in its relationship with Washington, not actually abandon the partnership with the U.S. in favor of new ones with Beijing and/or Moscow.

Amid discussions about Saudi Arabia diversifying its defense and security relations, it is important to consider that Beijing and Moscow are both on positive terms with Tehran. Saudis are fully aware that neither the Chinese nor Russians would side against Iran anywhere as much as the U.S. has since 1979. In other words, if either China or Russia became a security guarantor for monarchies in the Arabian Peninsula, they would balance their ties with those Arab states with Iran, unlike the U.S., which has basically instinctively backed Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) members against the Islamic Republic.

CIA launches group on China, scraps Trump-era Iran center

The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) says it has created a top-level working group on China as part of a broad U.S. campaign focused on countering Beijing's growing influence across the Pacific and elsewhere in the world.

The CIA said in a statement on Thursday that the China Mission Center (CMC) was formed "to address the global challenge posed by the People's Republic of China that cuts across all of the Agency's mission areas."

The group will have weekly director-level meetings intended to drive the agency's strategy toward China.

CIA Director William Burns called China "the most important geopolitical threat we face in the 21st century."

"CMC will further strengthen our collective work on the most important geopolitical threat we face in the 21st century, an increasingly adversarial Chinese government," Burns said.

"Throughout our history, CIA has stepped up to meet whatever challenges come our way," Burns said. "And now facing our toughest geopolitical test in a new era of great power rivalry, CIA will be at the forefront of this effort."

Burns also said the CIA would continue to focus on "an aggressive Russia, a provocative North Korea and a hostile Iran."

As part of the agency's reorganization, the CIA has said it will fold mission centers on Iran and North Korea into existing groups covering each country's respective region.

Both the country-specific mission centers were created during former President Donald Trump's administration.



The group on China will become one of fewer than a dozen mission centers operated by the CIA to drive the agency's strategy toward China. The announcement parallels the broader shift of the administration of President Joe Biden to confronting China as its leading "strategic competitor."

In June Biden announced a new task force at the Pentagon to assess and respond to Beijing's military challenge.

Biden's administration has repeatedly signaled a shift of resources toward "great power" competition with China.

Sen. Marco Rubio, the intelligence committee's top Republican, said in a statement on Thursday that "the threat posed by the Chinese Communist Party is real and growing."

"Every part of our government needs to reflect this great power competition in message, structure, and action."

The U.S. spy agency would also ramp up efforts to recruit Chinese speakers and create another mission center focusing on emerging technologies and global issues.

Relations between the U.S. and China have grown tense in recent years, with the world's two largest

economies clashing over a range of issues, including trade, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, military activities in the South China Sea as well as the origins of the new coronavirus.

China has accused the U.S. of wrongly scapegoating Beijing and pointed to previous U.S. intelligence failures as well as the collapse of the American-backed government in Afghanistan.

CIA alarmed by capture, killing of informants
The new plan comes after top U.S. counterintelligence officials warned that a number of CIA informants had been captured and executed.

According to The New York Times, the warning came in a top-secret memo the officials issued to all of the CIA's stations and bases around the world last week.

The agency's counterintelligence mission center looked at dozens of cases in the last several years involving foreign informants who had been killed, arrested or most likely compromised.

The cable itself was not necessarily unique, but the Times noted that announcing the specific number of killings is rare as the information is usually kept strictly under wraps by intelligence officials.

Recruiting spies has always been highly risky, the cable warned.

It said the CIA has not excelled in the area recently for reasons that include being too trusting of sources, underestimating foreign intelligence agencies, and moving too quickly to recruit informants while ignoring potential risks.

(Source: Press TV)

UN ends Yemen war crimes probe amid Saudi Arabia's intense lobbying

The United Nations Human Rights Council has dropped an investigation into possible war crimes by the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen amid reports of intense lobbying by Riyadh.

Members of the UN rights body pushed through a vote on Thursday to shut down war crimes investigations in Yemen, with 21 countries voting against the motion, 18 in favor and seven abstentions.

The vote marked the first time a resolution has been defeated in the UN Human Rights Council's 15-year history.

The resolution, led by the Netherlands, would have given independent investigators another two years to monitor atrocities perpetrated by the Saudi-led coalition during Yemen's protracted conflict.

Dutch ambassador Peter Bekker denounced the vote as a major setback, saying, "I cannot help but feel that this Council has failed the people of Yemen."

"With this vote, the Council has effectively ended its reporting mandate, it has cut this lifeline of the Yemeni people to the international community," he added

Radhya Almutawakel, chairperson of the independent Yemeni activist group Mwatana for Human Rights, said she was deeply disappointed by Thursday's vote.

"By voting against the renewal of the GEE today, UN member states have given a green light to warring parties to continue their campaign of death and destruction in Yemen," she said, referring to the investigators known as the Group of Eminent Experts.

John Fisher of Human Rights Watch said the failure to renew the mandate was "a stain on the record of the Human Rights Council."

"By voting against this much-needed mandate, many states have turned their back on victims, bowed to pressure from the Saudi-led coalition, and put politics before principle," he said.

The vote came as several rights advocacy groups revealed earlier this week that Saudi Arabia, which is not a voting member of the UN Human Rights Council, had been heavily lobbying against the resolution that would extend the mandate of UN investigators in Yemen.

"Saudi Arabia, a leading party to the conflict in Yemen accused of serious violations including likely war crimes, together with its coalition allies, is engaging in a tireless lobbying campaign to deter states at the Human Rights Council from renewing the inquiry mandate," Afrah Nasser, Yemen researcher at US-based group Human Rights Watch, said in a statement.

Nasser said if the panel bowed to Saudi pressure and failed to extend the mandate by two years, it would be "a stain on the credibility of the Council and a slap in the face to victims."

Stephane Dujarric, a spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, said the UN chief still believes there is a need for accountability in Yemen.

"We will continue to press for accountability in Yemen, a place ... in which civilians have seen repeated crimes committed against them," Dujarric said.

The Group of Eminent Experts, set up by the council in 2017, has found repeatedly that Saudi airstrikes and shelling during the seven-year conflict may amount to war crimes.

(Source: Press TV)

Kamel Jendoubi, head of the group, said in presenting its latest report last month that airstrikes launched by the coalition "continue to exact a huge toll on the civilian population".

Since March 2015, Jendoubi said, it is estimated that over 23,000 airstrikes had been carried out by the coalition and that over 18,000 civilians had been killed or wounded.

Saudi Arabia, backed by the U.S. and regional allies, launched a war on Yemen in March 2015, with the goal of bringing the former Riyadh-backed regime back to power and crushing popular Ansarullah resistance movement.

The war has left hundreds of thousands of Yemenis dead, and displaced millions more. It has also destroyed Yemen's infrastructure and spread famine and infectious diseases.

Yemeni armed forces and allied Popular Committees, however, have grown steadily in strength against the Saudi-led invaders, and left Riyadh and its allies bogged down in the country.

(Source: Press TV)

Pandora Papers expose greed, Assange exposed war crimes. Assange should not be in prison



By John Wight

The only surprise when it comes to the Pandora Papers revelations, exposing the scale of the greed and corruption of various world leaders, political figures and officials in hoarding obscene amounts of cash in offshore tax havens, is that anyone should be surprised.

We are living through a crisis of late capitalism, an economic system whose many and manifold contradictions have been exacerbated by a global pandemic. And we have reached the point where huge imbalance in wealth within states, between states - and also within and between regions - is no longer tenable. What is also no longer tenable is the clawing hypocrisy that underpins Western liberal democracy.

The man who more than any other has exposed this hypocrisy is Julian Assange, currently languishing in Belmarsh high security prison in London awaiting the outcome of the U.S. government's appeal against the decision of a British judge towards the end of 2019 not to allow his extradition to the U.S. on grounds that his treatment there is likely to amount to cruel and unusual punishment.

The level and intensity of the persecution Assange has been made to endure is a measure of the extent to which he removed the flowery curtains of democracy and human rights behind which the savage beast of US-led Western hegemony resides. In exposing the vicious and racist character of the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan, the mountain of war crimes committed in their name, Julian Assange and Wikileaks quickly became a greater and more potent threat to the ability of the Empire to continue as normal than a thousand bayonets.

In societies underpinned by justice and decency instead of injustice and hypocrisy and lies, Julian Assange would be celebrated and lionized for his courage and fidelity to the truth in awakening the masses to the high crimes and war crimes committed by the powerful in their name. We don't in the West live in such societies, however, which is why Assange has and continues to suffer the prolonged persecution at the hands of the mediaeal minds who sit at the apex of power in Washington and London.

The journalists responsible for the Pandora Papers story have been hailed as truth-tellers and can no doubt look forward to being showered in awards for their efforts. The only difference between them and Julian Assange is the willingness to dig down into the very belly of this warmongering beast in Washington, responsible for unremitting death and destruction since the demise of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, and show the world its entrails.

"It is the job of thinking people not to side with the executioners," French philosopher and thinker Albert Camus tells us, and since the aforementioned demise of the Soviet Union the executioners of our time have been on the march, leading to the executions of Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq, and the putative executions of Cuba, Venezuela, Syria, and Iran, et al.

Julian Assange walks in the same tradition as Albert Camus. Like him he is a man of fierce moral principle who could, if he'd so wished, have ploughed the same lucrative furrow as the journalists over at the Guardian do. This is the same Guardian that squeezed Assange like a lemon, enjoying the prestige of publishing the explosive revelations that came his way as head of Wikileaks, before tossing him aside when the going got tough and fabricated allegations of sexual abuse came down the pipe against him from Sweden.

"Better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven," is the Miltonian line from his classic 17th century poem, Paradise Lost, yet what we have with our mainstream journalists are people who made their peace with those who reign in hell and willingly serve the lie that this is the best of all possible worlds.

The revelations contained in the Pandora Papers are seismic, but compared to those contained in the Afghanistan and Iraq war logs, released by Julian Assange and Wikileaks, merely skim the surface of the depravity of the rich and powerful.

Every second of every day Julian Assange spends in prison stands as an indictment of Washington and its servile British ally. Yet on the level of consciousness, Julian Assange is not in prison we are. He has been to the mountaintop, as Dr King famously proclaimed towards the end of his life, but unlike Dr King Assange did not see the Promised Land there, he saw instead the broken land created in the name of U.S. foreign policy.

There are no words to describe the foul stench of hypocrisy that permeates the corridors of power and corridors of mainstream newspapers and news organizations in the West. They are all part of the same lie and in order to live with themselves, they banish truth into the wilderness as if banishing a heretic.

Julian Assange is the great heretic of our age. He stands in the tradition of all the brave men and women in history who dared to say "No," regardless of any personal sacrifice and cost involved. It is the job of all right-thinking people never to forget him or forgive those responsible for his plight.

John Wight is an author and political commentator based in Scotland.

Shimon Peres sexually harassed me: former Israeli MK

TEHRAN - Former Israeli MK Colette Avital reported two incidents during which former President and Prime Minister Shimon Peres harassed her.

According to an interview published in the Hebrew edition of Haaretz, the first incident occurred when they were both on a diplomatic mission in France. The former Israeli prime minister invited Avital to have breakfast at a hotel and sexually harassed her.

Avital alleged that she reported the incident to Peres's former deputy minister Yossi Beilin, requesting not to be left alone with him the next time he came to Paris, where she served as a diplomat.

After three years, she returned to Tel Aviv following Shimon Peres and Likud leader Yitzhak Shamir's deal to form a unity government in rotation. She tried for a new position but was told that her gender would prove a barrier to advancement.

The second incident occurred during a meeting. Af-



trying to find a new position, she was told that her gender was a barrier to advancement.

ter Peres had declined her request for a prominent position, the new prime minister assaulted Avital.

Colette Avital has served in the Israeli regime Ministry of Foreign Affairs for 38 years and has been Tel Aviv Ambassador to Portugal and Consul General in New York.

After these missions, she served in the Israeli parliament in the Labor Party for seven years.

Iranian museums welcome cooperation with other SCO members

TEHRAN – Iran encourages cooperation between museums of member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Mohammadreza Kargar, the director of museums and historical properties at Iran's tourism ministry has announced.

He made the remarks during an online meeting of the museums' directors of the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which was held online on Thursday in Tula, Russia.

Iran welcomes any kind of museum cooperation with the SCO, and so far, has cooperated with several member states of this organization on exhibitions and research projects, the official explained.

"It would be of great interest to us to work closely with the organization, and we suggest that joint exhibitions be organized in the national museums and/or major museums of each country," he noted.

In each of these countries, museums, which are the most important institutions of culture, are expected to play an essential role in trade and politics, as well as economic and technological relations, which will affect the development of these countries, he mentioned.

Cultural officials and museum directors from Russia, China, Kirgizstan, Uzbekistan, India, Mongolia, Pakistan, and Belarus also attended the meeting.

As part of the meeting, participants discussed creating future-oriented relationships between museums, implementing joint projects, and exchanging opinions on the creation of museum brands.

Back in September, Iran, which was an observer member of the SCO, was officially admitted as a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.



Currently, some 800 cultural heritage museums are active across Iran and some three million historical objects are being kept at museums affiliated with the Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Ministry.

Iran is home to one of the world's oldest continuous major civilizations, embracing settlements dating back to 4000 BC. It also hosts some of the world's oldest cultural monuments including bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, gardens, rich natural, rural landscapes as well as 26 UNESCO World Heritage sites.

The name of Iran, formerly known as Persia, mostly conjures up the first Persian Empire, ruled by the Achaemenids (ca. 550 – 330 BC) and sites such as Pasargadae and Persepolis. However, there are tens of prehistorical sites as the Burnt City in Sistan-Baluchestan, Tepe Sialk in Kashan, Susa, and Tchogha Zanbil in the Khuzestan province, and Ecbatana in Hamadan which predate the Achaemenid period.

From a wider point of view, Iranian history can be divided into Pre-Islamic and Islamic eras. The Medes unified Iran as a nation and empire in 625 BC. The Islamic conquest of Persia (633–656) that put an end to the mighty Sassanid Empire (224–651) was a turning point in the history of the nation.

Restoration begins on historical cistern in Semnan

TEHRAN – A restoration project has been commenced on a Qajar-era (1789–1925) Ab-Anbar (cistern) in the centuries-old village of Biabanak, Sorkheh county, north-central province of Semnan.

A budget of 250 million rials (almost \$6,000 at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been allocated to the project, Sorkheh's tourism chief has said.

The project involves strengthening the historical structure as well as repairing its access road, Bahman Akhlaqi said on Thursday.

The cistern is planned to turn into a center for handicrafts after being fully restored, the official added.

The historical texture of Biabanak village, which dates back to the Safavid era (1501–1736), has been inscribed on the national heritage list.

The term Ab-Anbar is common throughout Iran as a designation for roofed underground water cisterns. It associates with water management systems in arid areas that are reliant on permanent springs or seasonal rainwater.

Such underground reservoirs or are parts of the iconic qanat systems, which rely on snow-fed streams flowing down from surrounding mountains.

250 Iranian inmates trained as crafters

TEHRAN – A total of 250 inmates have recently been trained as crafters in prisons across eastern South Khorasan province during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year 1400 (started March 21), the deputy provincial tourism chief has said.

The courses aimed to empower the prisoners and provide job opportunities for them after their release, Hossein Abbaszadeh announced on Friday.

Woodcarving, traditional costumes, marquetry, and traditional embroidery were some of the fields covered in the courses, the official added.

Last year, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts signed a memorandum of understanding with the Prisons, Security, and Corrective Measures Organization to create jobs

and make income for prisoners. The MOU is aimed at implementing special educational and promotional programs, identifying talented prisoners, and improving their social status.

According to deputy tourism minister Pouya Mahmoudian, handicraft products made by prisoners are displayed in various exhibitions to benefit both prisoners and their families from the sales.

South Khorasan is home to many historical and natural attractions such as Birjand Castle, Dragon Cave, Furg Citadel, and Polond Desert. It is also known for its famous rugs as well as its saffron and barberry which are produced in almost all parts of the province.

Invitation to participate in the tender "first announcement"

BiStoon Tamin paper manufacturing company to perform reviewing and completion of basic design engineering, detail design and purchasing engineering, site supervision, pre-commissioning, test and commissioning of the project of construction of BiStoon Tamin packaging paper factory located in Iran, Kermanshah province, Harsin city intends to purchase consulting services through tender among the consulting engineering companies with qualified and free capacity with the sufficient expertise and experience in the field of designing the paper industries. Eligible companies can apply to the RONIN CO. (address: No.9, Aftab street, Khoddami avenue, Vanak square Tehran, Iran (Tel.:+9821 88052006) from the second announcement October 19, 2021 to Wednesday October 27, 2021 to receive the bidding documents. The employer is free to reject or accept the bids of the bidders.

World Post Day: a brief history of postal service in ancient Iran



Messages were sent across the expansive Persian Empire (c. 550 – 330 BC) on the Royal Road, such as this section in Sardis, Turkey (Credit: Design Pics Inc/Alamy)

From page 1 ▶ As mentioned by the Encyclopedia Iranica, the celebrated Greek historian Herodotus described the system in the days of the Achaemenid King Xerxes (r. 486 to 465 BC): "Now there is nothing mortal that accomplishes a course more swiftly than do these messengers, by the Persians' skillful contrivance. It is said that as many days as there are in the whole journey, so many are the men and horses that stand along the road, each horse and man at the interval of a day's journey; and these are stayed neither by snow nor rain nor heat nor darkness from accomplishing their appointed course with all speed. The first rider delivers his charge to the second, the second to the third, and thence it passes on from hand to hand? . . . This riding-post is called in Persia, angareion."

In that era, the post was a government service for carrying official correspondence in sealed bags though routes occasionally disrupted by war, rebellion, or simply lack security.

In addition, postal riders and messengers played a particularly important role in gathering intelligence throughout the empire. For instance, among their duties was escorting government officials to their posts.

Jobin Bekhrad, the founder and Editor of Reorient, in his article titled "The surprising origins of the postal service", which was published by BBC in June 2020, writes: "Although civilizations like those of Egypt and China are said to have been amongst the first to use postal services, and the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian Empires in modern-day Iraq were using forms of mail delivery before the Persian Empire was founded in the 6th Century BC, the Persians of Iran took the idea of a postal system to previously unseen heights – and then some. They used an extensive network of roads worked by expert horsemen who covered stupefying distances throughout the massive, diverse empire with bewildering speed and unwavering resolve."

"Herodotus' description is fragmentary. The Royal Road from Sardis to Susa is... just one royal road among many others," writes French Iranologist, Pierre Briant, in From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire, as stated by Bekhrad.

At its peak under the reign of Darius the Great, the Persian Empire stretched from Greece to India. Briant notes in his book how tablets from Persepolis, the ceremonial capital of the empire, show that messages were sent to and from India and Egypt, also pointing out that the historian Ctesias mentioned the Greek city of Ephesus, too, in his writings.

"The entire imperial territory," Briant writes, "was covered".

"Never before had messages been delivered on such a massive scale. The ancient Persian postal system was powered by horses that operated on a relay system, making journeys speedy and efficient. But the Persians would not have been able to cover the daunting distances they did in so little time had they not been expert horsemen. The ancient Iranians (of whom the Persians were just one of the numerous peoples) were redoubtable when it came to horsemanship. The postal system aside, the Iranians inspired the use of cavalry amongst the Athenian Greeks, for example, and also devised the game of polo," according to Bekhrad, who has enriched his article by including several treasured quotes, some of which given below:

"Historically, the Persian Royal Road was the first major land structure conceived to thoroughly exploit horse transportation and relay," writes Prof. Dr. Luc-Normand Tellier in his book "Urban World History: An Economic and Geographical Perspective."

According to Dr. Lindsay Allen, a lecturer in ancient history at King's College London, the Persian postal system was also impressive for its use of a standardized language across such a vast expanse, as well as its consistency in terms of message delivery and format. Although Old Persian was the Persians' native tongue, the linguistically unrelated Aramaic was the administrative

language of the empire and thus used in composing messages throughout it, much in the same way that English and Latin-alphabet transliterations are usually used on envelopes and parcels worldwide today.

"For long distances, we're looking at Aramaic on ink on prepared animal skin, folded up and sealed," Allen said. "This was the first time that consistently formatted letters, folded and sealed, were used. Unfortunately, we have only a few surviving parchment letters written in Aramaic... [but] even these suggest there was shared administrative practice between letters sent to Egypt and those sent by a local governor in Bactria."

While the Royal Road was an incredibly efficient and effective way of delivering messages, it was only used for administrative purposes and not by private individuals. The Persian emperors used the Royal Road and other such routes for issuing decrees and for their "armies, tribute-bearers, and... troops of government workers," according to Briant.

It was also used by the emperor to keep abreast of all the goings-on in the empire. In the Cyropaedia, a book in praise of Cyrus the Great that is still read as a classic guide to effective leadership, Xenophon attributes the establishment of the Persian postal system to Cyrus and describes his use of it in gathering intelligence: "The king will listen to any man who asserts that he has heard or seen anything that needs attention," he writes. "Hence the saying that the king has 1,000 eyes and 1,000 ears; and hence the fear of uttering anything against his interest since he is sure to hear, or doing anything that might injure him 'since he may be there to see."

According to Xenophon of Athens, Cyrus first found out how far a horse could travel "when ridden hard" before breaking down, and then used this distance to set up stations at intervals

throughout the empire. The couriers traveled from dusk till dawn, and Xenophon – who was once hired by the Persian prince Cyrus the Younger as a mercenary and had to flee back to Greece from Iran with his army when the former's coup d'etat went awry – considered the Persian postal system to undeniably be the "fastest overland traveling on Earth".

Herodotus also mentions the relay system in the Histories. "The first rider delivers his charge to the second, the second to the third, and thence it passes on from hand to hand," he explained; and his description of the Persian couriers gives added credibility to that of Xenophon, who wasn't always the most historically accurate: "There is nothing mortal that accomplishes a course more swiftly than do these messengers, by the Persians' skillful contrivance... [They] are stopped neither by snow nor rain nor heat nor darkness from accomplishing their appointed course with all speed."

In her 1890s travelogue titled "Persian Pictures", English writer and traveler Gertrude Bell wrote about how she and her companions found themselves "lying in a little alcove under the archway of a tiny tumble-down post-house, vainly demanding fresh horses".

Nevertheless, the myriad Chapar-khanehs (post offices) that dotted Iran at the time, no matter how decrepit they could often be, were invaluable to travelers like Bell as they also served as little inns between major cities. Chapar-khanehs are no longer used in Iran today, but they can still be seen throughout the country.

Bekhrad concludes his article that the Royal Road and the Persian postal system may very well be things of the past, but the ingenuity of the Achaemenid Persians and the perseverance of their couriers continue to influence and inspire well beyond the borders of ancient Iran, and even the mighty Persian Empire.

According to Iranica, after the fall of the Sassanid Empire in the 7th century CE, the Persian system of message delivery was practiced more or less both by invaders like the Arabs and Mongols, and the indigenous dynasties that followed like the Safavids, Zands, and Qajars.

Tourism ministry receives registration certificates of four UNESCO sites

TEHRAN – Certificates of registration of four Iranian UNESCO World Heritage sites have been handed over to the tourism ministry, the deputy tourism minister has announced.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts has received registration certificates of four cultural heritage, which have been listed by UNESCO over the last two years, IRNA quoted Ali Darabi as saying on Friday.

The ministry has received certificates for Trans-Iranian Railway, Cultural Landscape of Uramanat as tangible cultural heritages as well as the art of miniature, jointly with Azerbaijan, Turkey, and Uzbekistan and pilgrimage to St. Thaddeus jointly with Armenia, as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, the official added.

Having a global register of tangible and intangible heritage is vital because these works, regardless of race, nationality, and religion, belong to all human society, and all governments and nations have a duty to preserve and protect them, even during times of war, he noted.

Increased recognition of a country's cultural heritage on the World Heritage list certainly contributes to the development of the tourism industry and businesses related to it, and most importantly, introduces the culture and civilization of a nation to the world, he explained.

With 26 World Heritage Sites, Iran ranks 10th in the world in terms of the number of historical monuments and sites registered on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Before the Islamic Revolution, Persepolis, Naghsh-e Jahan Square, and Choghaznabil were the only three UNESCO-listed monuments, but today the number has been increased this number to 26 historical sites.

Trans-Iranian Railway

The railway can be regarded as a turning point for comprehensive developments in Iran. These



developments include a wide spectrum of various economic, commercial, social, cultural, and even political aspects in a sensitive and important period of contemporary world history.

Consequently, the 1394 kilometers long Trans-Iranian Railway was built with a width of 1435mm and 90 working stations along its route. It starts at a point north of Turkaman port located southeast of the Caspian Sea. After going through Sari and Qaem-Shahr cities, the railway enters the mountainous region of Alborz through the high Firooz-kooh Pass which is linked with Tehran and Varamin Plain by numerous bridges and tunnels.

Further on after crossing the flatlands of Qom and Arak, the Trans-Iranian Railway penetrates Zagros highlands in Lorestan Province and passing through a large number of tunnels and bridges reaches Andimeshk situated in the low Kuzestan Plain. Finally extending to the vicinity of Dezfoul, Ahwaz, and its grand bridge on Karoon, the Trans-Iranian Railway is divided into two branches ending separately at Khoram-Shahr and Imam-Khomeini ports on the Persian Gulf.

Cultural Landscape of Uramanat

Stretched on the slopes of Sarvabad county, and

shared between the provinces of Kordestan and Kermanshah, the rural area of Uramanat embraces dense and step-like rows of houses in a way that the roof of each house forms the yard of the upper one, a feature that adds to its charm and attractiveness.

As the cultural landscape covers 300 villages and in terms of architecture and landscape, it is one of the most beautiful and presentable heritages in the world.

The art of miniature

The miniature is a type of two-dimensional artwork that involves the design and creation of small paintings on books, paper-mâché, rugs, textiles, walls, ceramics, and other items using raw materials such as gold, silver, and various organic substances.

Historically, the miniature was exemplified by book painting in which the text was supported visually, but the element has evolved and can also be observed in architecture and as an adornment in public spaces.

The miniature displays a specific type of perspective in which the size of the figures changes according to their importance – a key difference between realistic and naturalistic styles. Though it has existed for centuries, it continues to develop and thus strengthens the bonds between past and present. Traditional painting principles and techniques are preserved, but artists also bring individual creativity into the process.

Pilgrimage to the St. Thaddeus

The annual three-day pilgrimage to St. Thaddeus Apostle Monastery in northwestern Iran is held each July. The pilgrimage venerates two prominent saints: St. Thaddeus, one of the first apostles preaching Christianity, and St. Santukhd, the first female Christian martyr.

The bearers of the element are the Armenian population in Iran, Iranian-Armenians residing in Armenia, and followers of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Pilgrims gather in Tabriz before departing for the monastery. They cover 700 kilometers from Yerevan to the monastery annually.

Centuries-old caravanserai to host crafts exhibit in southwest Iran

TEHRAN – Tens of artisans and exhibitors will put on show handicrafts in a month-long exhibition, which is scheduled to commence on October 12 in a centuries-old caravanserai southwest Iran.

"The exhibition will be held in the historical Moshir al-Molk Caravanserai in Dashtestan county of Bushehr province from the 20th of [the Iranian month of] Mehr to the 20th of Aban," provincial tourism chief Mohammad-Hossein

Arastouzadeh said on Wednesday.

The purpose of holding the event, which will be held in compliance with health regulations, is to boost handicraft sales and to promote such a historical monument to visitors, the official explained.

The coastal province borders with the Persian Gulf on the west and is bounded by the regions of Hormozgan and Fars on the southeast and east and Khuzestan on the northwest.

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.

Spikogen vaccine licensed for emergency use

TEHRAN – The Food and Drug Administration has issued an emergency permit for the Iranian-Australian Spikogen vaccine, IRNA reported on Thursday.

“Vaccines such as Pfizer have been shown to be less effective against new strains of the coronavirus, in some cases below 50 percent.

However, the effectiveness of the Spikogen vaccine has been higher than the permitted values in the World Health Organization guidelines,” Mohammad Reza Shansaz, head of the Food and Drug Administration, said.

“Currently, the predominant coronavirus in the country includes Delta, British, and Wuhan variants; the clinical study of the Spikogen is one of the few studies in the world to have been conducted entirely at the peak of the Delta variant.

At the third phase of the clinical study, the efficacy of the vaccine before the onset of symptomat-



ic and mild cases of Covid-19 and in the prevalence of delta strain in the country is estimated at about 60 to 65 percent,” he noted.

The monthly production capacity of

Spikogen is at least three million doses, according to the Sinogen pharmaceutical company.

The first phase of the study was performed on volunteer Australians

and received the necessary approval, the second phase was administrated to 400 Iranians, which has had no serious side effects.

Vaccines against viruses can be divided into three main categories: live attenuated, inactivated/killed, and subunit vaccines. Recombinant protein subunit vaccines are composed of at least 1 type of viral antigen. These vaccines are significantly more secure than live attenuated and inactivated vaccines.

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

While Iran continues efforts to mass-produce local candidates, over 80 million doses of foreign vaccines have already been imported and others are expected soon.

Iran is also producing vaccines jointly with two countries of Cuba and Russia.

Iran attending UN Climate Change conference



TEHRAN – An Iranian delegation has participated in the Pre-COP26 Parliamentary Meeting, which is being held in Rome on October 8-9.

COP26 is the foremost international conference

on climate change. It brings together leaders from across the globe to advance climate action and to promote the implementation of the Paris Agreement, the world's major legally binding international treaty on climate change.

The IPU has long supported the engagement of parliaments in annual COP meetings through the organization of parliamentary meetings. COP26 provides a critical opportunity to reflect on what has been achieved since the Paris Agreement was signed in 2015 and to set concrete plans to reach the Paris Agreement targets, at a time when the climate crisis is more critical than ever.

The IPU is co-organizing a Pre-COP26 Parliamentary Meeting in Rome, followed by the Parliamentary

Meeting at COP26 in Glasgow, co-organized with the British Group of the IPU on November 7.

The Pre-COP26 preliminary meeting is being attended by the representatives of the Parliaments of 72 countries and 8 international organizations.

The conference discusses issues such as global goals for tackling climate change, the green approach to improving living conditions during the COVID-19 outbreak, the financing of global climate change policies, and the role of parliaments in achieving the goals of the COP26.

The final session of the conference is expected to approve the initial draft of the final document of the UN Parliamentary Conference on Climate Change.

Finland supports Afghan refugees in Iran

TEHRAN – Finland has contributed €1.5 million to help the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) support Afghan refugees in Iran.

This particular donation will help UNHCR, in coordination with its Government counterpart, the Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants' Affairs (BAFIA), to provide assistance such as healthcare, education, and livelihood support to the most vulnerable persons of concern in the country.

Finland's contribution will also help UNHCR pre-position Core Relief Items, hygiene kits, and tents along with border areas, to help Afghans who are recently fleeing conflict and discrimination in their country.

In 2021 alone, UNHCR is directly aware of some 18,000 Afghans who newly arrived in Iran using irregular routes, although the total number that has entered the country is likely to be significantly higher. Since the beginning of the year, over 660,000 persons were newly displaced within Afghanistan itself.

In 2021 alone, some 18,000 Afghans newly arrived in Iran.

“Continued instability and uncertainty in Afghanistan have led to many Afghans fleeing to neighboring countries such as Iran.

Finland's financial contribution will help strengthen the humanitarian response in Iran by allowing us to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to those most in need, including newly arriving Afghan refugees,” said Ivo Freijns, UNHCR Representative in Iran.

“Finland highly appreciates the valuable work and action of UNHCR in this difficult and rapidly changing situation,” said Kari Kahiluoto, Ambassador-Designate of Finland to Iran.

Finland's support aims to ensure that refugee-hosting countries get the support they need from the international community, recognizing that a sustainable solution to refugee situations cannot be achieved without international cooperation.

The Afghan displacement situation is the most protracted and third largest in the world. With the situation in Af-

ghanistan still being volatile, sustained international support for UNHCR's programs will be needed in 2022 and beyond – both to ensure adequate emergency support for new arrivals, and to continue helping Afghan persons of concern who were already in Iran.

Iran hosting world's fourth-largest refugee community

Iran is hosting the world's fourth-largest refugee community. The country has generously hosted approximately 1 million refugees for the past 30 years. The majority, which mainly came from Afghanistan and Iraq, live in urban areas. Approximately 31,000 of the most vulnerable refugees living in 20 settlements located throughout the country.

Based on the latest statistics, over 3 million Afghans are living in Iran – some 780,000 Afghan refugees, over 2 million undocumented Afghans, and another 600,000 Afghan passport-holders with Iranian visas.

However, in light of the pandemic, all refugees, even those undocumented, benefited from access to free primary health services and free COVID-19 related testing, treatment, and hospitalization, just like Iranian nationals.



The same happened for the vaccination when the country has generously considered refugees over the age of 75 for vaccination against coronavirus.

In order to support the refugees living in the country, the seventh phase of the health insurance plan will cover 120,000 vulnerable refugees through a memorandum of understanding signed between the Health Insurance Organization and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

In Iran, UNHCR is seeking \$16.2 million for its COVID-19 emergency, while requires an additional \$98.7 million to support Iran in maintaining and sustaining its commendable inclusive refugee policies, under the umbrella of the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR).

Keep the environment away from politics: DOE chief

From page 1 ► In the context of reducing the effects of sand and dust storms in the region, certainly, we need the support of countries with experience and technology, as well as countries affected and also

UNEP and other relevant International Organizations through investment, use of scientific data, and the interaction between science and politics.”

Therefore, on behalf of the Islamic Republic of Iran,

as a leader in combating dust in West Asia, I extend my hands to reach out to the region and beyond to combat sand and dust storms in Asia and Pacific, he concluded.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

Special plan prepared to attract overseas Iranian researchers

The Vice Presidency for Science and Technology has prepared a special plan to attract scientists and researchers living abroad, IRNA news agency reported on Saturday.

The project aims to promote “supporting technological activities and startups”, “postdoctoral facilities”, “supporting employment in innovation centers and accelerators as a trainer and consultant”, “providing facilities for opportunity studies”, “providing housing facilities”, “supporting employment in reputable domestic companies”, “support for lectures and specialized workshops” and “support for cooperation as invited and appointed professors”.

It is estimated that about one percent of all Iranian students are studying abroad, which is not above the international average of around 3 percent.

طرح ویژه برای جذب پژوهشگران ایرانی مقیم خارج

جذب محققان و پژوهشگران خارج از کشور یکی از اولویت‌های کشور محسوب می‌شود و در این راستا معاونت علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری طرحی ویژه پیشنهاد کرده است.

به گزارش ایرنا، معاونت علمی و فناوری ریاست جمهوری، این طرح شامل «حمایت از فعالیت‌های فناورانه و ایجاد شرکت‌های نوپا»، «تسهیلات پسادکتری»، «حمایت از اشتغال در مراکز نوآوری و شتابدهنده‌ها به عنوان مربی و مشاور»، «تسهیلات دوره فرصت مطالعاتی»، «تسهیلات مسکن»، «حمایت از اشتغال در شرکت‌های معتبر داخلی»، «حمایت از برگزاری سخنرانی و کارگاه‌های تخصصی» و «حمایت از همکاری به عنوان اساتید مدعو و معین» است.

بر اساس برآوردها نزدیک یک درصد از کل مجموع دانشجویان ایرانی در خارج از کشور تحصیل می‌کنند. این رقم در مقایسه با میانگین بین‌المللی که حدود ۳ درصد است، رقم بالایی محسوب نمی‌شود.

Italy donates 1.2m doses of vaccine to Iran

TEHRAN – Italy has donated 1.2 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccine to Iran under the COVAX facility, Ambassador Giuseppe Perrone said on Monday.

“Italy's donation to Iran shows the deep solidarity and the long-standing friendship between the two countries.

Italy and Iran were among the countries that suffered the most at the beginning of the pandemic, and both were put to a test,” Perrone said during the donation ceremony on Monday.

In addition to the Iranian officials from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Iran's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and representatives of the United Nations in Iran, prominent Italian virologists, Professor Bassetti of the San Marino Polytechnic and Professor Pontali of Galliera Hospital in Genoa, and officials of Atieh Hospital in Tehran were present at the ceremony held at the ambassador's residence in Tehran.

The donation will be delivered by UNICEF in the coming days.

Italy earlier allocated €100,000 to the WHO for activities of prevention and awareness of the population in Iran towards socially responsible behavior and another €100,000 to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for treatment



of patients affected by the epidemic in Iran.

Iran has recently accelerated its vaccination rollout and is now administering in the range of one million doses per day. So far, 20 percent of the population has received both doses. However, the pandemic continues to strongly affect the country's unvaccinated population.

Vaccination reduced the mortality rate among the elderly aged 60 or above by 30 percent, and the trend is declining.

Studies show that people who are not vaccinated are 4.5 times more likely to develop COVID-19 than those who are fully vaccinated, and 10 and 11 times more likely to be hospitalized and die, respectively.

Worsening climate anxiety 'poses significant threat to society', experts warn

The existential threat posed by the climate crisis has ‘significantly’ raised levels of eco-anxiety – the chronic fear of environmental doom – particularly among young people, and is likely to be damaging to individuals and society, experts have warned.

Writing in the British Medical Journal (BMJ) in a special edition on the climate, health experts from Imperial College London say recognition of eco-anxiety and its psychological impacts is increasing, but leaders are still failing to address the worsening environment crisis.

Citing the IPCC's latest report, described as “code red for humanity” by the UN, Professor Mala Rao, and Richard Powell, both experts on public health, said: “For the eco-anxious, more concerning than even this apocalyptic news is the extraordinary level of indifference and banality with which the climate crisis is treated by many others, including those in positions of influence.”

Eco-anxiety is disproportionately affecting children, young people and “the communities with the least resources to overcome the adverse consequences of the climate crisis”.

They warn that ignoring the rise of eco-anxiety “risks exacerbating health and social inequalities between those more or less vulnerable to these psychological impacts,” while the socioeconomic effects, which they say remain largely hidden and unquantified, “will add considerably to the national costs of addressing the climate crisis”.

Ahead of the Cop26 summit in Glasgow next month they are calling on leaders to “recognise the challenges ahead, the need to act now, and the commitment necessary to create a path to a happier and healthier future, leaving no one behind.”

The article points to a 2020 survey of child psychiatrists in England showing that more than half (57 per cent) are seeing children and young people distressed about the climate crisis and the state of the environment.

It also highlights a recent international survey of climate anxiety in young people aged 16 to 25 which revealed that the psychological (emotional, cognitive, social, and functional) burdens of the climate crisis are “profoundly affecting huge numbers of these

young people around the world”.

The experts suggest these findings offer insights into how young people's emotions are linked with their feelings of betrayal and abandonment by governments and adults.

They suggest governments are seen as failing to respond adequately, leaving young people with “no future” and “humanity doomed”.

In order to tackle and alleviate the rising levels of climate anxiety they suggest people of all ages should have dependable sources of information on the crisis and increased exposure to the natural world.

“The best chance of increasing optimism and hope in the eco-anxious young and old is to ensure they have access to the best and most reliable information on climate mitigation and adaptation,” they explain.

“Especially important is information on how they could connect more strongly with nature, contribute to greener choices at an individual level, and join forces with like-minded communities and groups.”

The authors concluded: “The climate crisis is an existential threat, and fearfulness about the future cannot be fully tackled until a common united global strategy is put in place to address the root cause, global warming, and to give everyone – especially the young and the most vulnerable communities – the hope of a better future.”

In an editorial to mark the journal's special issue, the BMJ said time is running out prevent the damage done by humanity to our planet, and they call on health professionals to act now, both individually and by holding organisations and governments to account.

“The evidence is clear: setting targets is no longer enough,” they warn.

“We need to recognise and communicate the harms to health of the climate emergency, create guidance on how to adapt to the change that cannot be prevented, and prevent further damage through mitigation strategies and by motivating behaviour change.”

The editorial suggests that health professionals can take the lead on making services more sustainable through reducing overdiagnosis and overtreatment in healthcare, eliminating waste, streamlining services, and better managing suppliers and procurement.

COVID-19 UPDATES ON OCTOBER 8

New cases	9,897
New deaths	185
Total cases	5,683,980
Total deaths	122,197
New hospitalized patients	1,424
Patients in critical condition	5,451
Total recovered patients	5,186,096
Diagnostic tests conducted	33,039,254
Doses of vaccine injected	62,183,170



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OCTOBER 9, 2021

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Poverty often disables an intelligent man from arguing his case; a poor man is a stranger in his own town.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon: 11:53 Evening: 18:02 Dawn: 4:39 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:02 (tomorrow)

What's in Tehran art galleries



Painting

* An exhibition of paintings by Saeideh Arian, Elnaz Ebrahimi, Akram Afzali, Sima Amirsardari, Abolhassan Riazi, Hassan Noruznia, Sepideh Majdkian, Behdad Najafi and several other artists will open at Rasul Mehr Gallery.

Najafi is also the curator of the exhibition, which will run until October 15 at the gallery located at 27 Kavusi Alley, West Rudbar St., off Mirdamad Blvd.

* Negar Gallery is currently playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Mahin Monfared.

Zarvan Roubakhsh is the curator of the exhibition entitled "Reflection", which will be running until October 19 at the gallery located at 33 Delaram Alley, East Roshanai St. in the Qeitarieh neighborhood.



* Delgosha Gallery is playing host to an exhibition of paintings by Sara Ahmadi.

The exhibit named "Flowing Forest" will run until November 7 at the gallery located at 30 Mohajer Alley, Iranshahr St., Karim Khan Ave.

* Rambod Masudi and Mandana Masudi are displaying their paintings in an exhibition at Artland Gallery.

The exhibition will be running until October 14 at the gallery, which can be found at 4 Safa Alley, Kachui St. in the Evin neighborhood.



* A collection of paintings by Lohrasb Bayat is on display in an exhibition at Tarrahan Azad Gallery.

The exhibit will run until October 19 at the gallery located at 5 Salmas Square, off Fatemi St.

Graphic design

* Graphic designs by Ali Beheshti are currently on view in an exhibition at Dastan Basement Gallery.

The exhibit will be running until October 22 at the gallery located at 6 Bidar St., off Fereshteh St.



Sculpture/painting

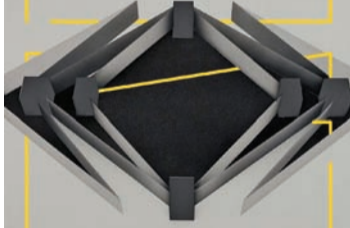
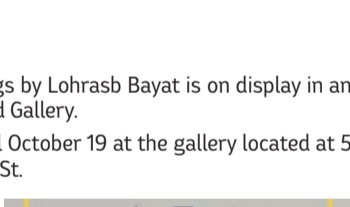
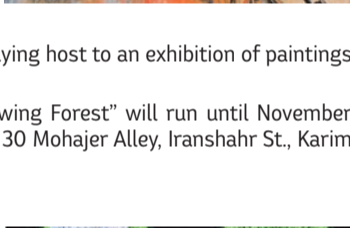
* O Gallery 2 is showcasing the latest sculptures and paintings by Elham Yazdani in an exhibition entitled "Unclear Form".

This exhibition will also run until October 25 at the gallery located at 18 Shahin St., Sanai St.



* The Sarv Cultural Center is displaying a collection of artworks created by a number of children with mental disabilities, Down's syndrome and autism in a charity exhibit.

The exhibition will run until October 22 at the center located in 2nd Saei Alley, near Saei Park, Vali-e Asr Ave.



Azartash Azarnush, member of Center for Great Islamic Encyclopedia, dies at 84

From Page 1 ▶ "One of the prominent figures of the Center for the Great Islamic Encyclopedia leaves us alone after 35 years of continuous collaboration and writing many books and articles," the director of the center, Kazem Musavi Bojnurdi, said in a press release.

Musavi Bojnurdi pointed to the prominent scholars of his center who have died over the past decade, and said, "How can we carry the great burden of providing knowledge at the center without them?"

Born in 1937, Azarnush studied Arabic literature at the Faculty of Theology and Islamic Studies at the University of Tehran.

He then left Iran to continue his studies in France, where he obtained a Ph.D. Following his return home, he began his teaching career at the Faculty of Theology and Islamic Studies.

He also translated several books from Arabic literature, including the Kitab Futuh al-Buldan (The Origins of the Islamic State), the best-known work by the 9th-century Persian historian Ahmad ibn Yahya al-Baladhuri of Abbasid-era Baghdad.

His rendition of the Kitab al-Musiqa al-Kabir (Grand Book of Music) written by Abu Nasr Muhammad ibn Al-Farabi, a



Azartash Azarnush speaks during a ceremony held on July 13, 2021, at the House of Humanities Thinkers in Tehran to honor the prominent scholar for his lifetime achievements. (IQNA/Tahereh Babai)

renowned early Islamic philosopher and jurist who lived during the 9th and 10th centuries, writing in the fields of political philosophy, metaphysics, ethics and logic.

His books on Iranian studies and the Persian language's influences on the Arabic language have been highly regarded by scholars.

Among those books is "The Clash between Arabic and Persian", which explains how Iran's first Arabic-Persian translation centers were established and how modern Persian script was developed over a four-century span beginning from the time of Salman-e Farsi (seventh century CE).

It is an in-depth survey of the history of the Arab invasion of Iran and describes battles between Arab rulers and Iranians in various parts of our country, and discusses many historical facts about the role of Iran's political and cultural figures of the time.

The French publisher Fayard has acquired the copyrights of the book.

In a review session for his book, Azarnush had said, "I don't agree with the idea that the Arabic language has overwhelmed [the Persian language]; the Persian language has had an active and dynamic presence over the centuries, but no one has talked about this aspect of the Persian language.

"I meant to scrutinize the origins of the first developments of the Persian language that came after the Sassanid era. I should refer to the late [Hossein] Zarrinkub's 'Two Centuries of Silence', which recognizes the scholars' silence on the vitality of the Persian language in those times.

"Many problems begin to surface when someone decides to study this subject. One of them is the problem of sources – most of them were written from a dogmatic point of view and some were written on the orders of the caliphs and governors. Thus, the Persian language has remained neglected here."

"The Badger" wins awards at Global Nonviolent Film Festival

TEHRAN – Iranian drama "The Badger" has scored another success by winning awards in the best film and best screenplay categories at the Global Nonviolent Film Festival in Hollywood, California.

One of the five awards presented to the film produced by Sina Saeidian was in the best feature film category.

The other winners were "Tommy Machismo" by producer Mustajab Kirmani from the U.S.; "Tale of Zozo", a Nigeria-Uganda co-production produced by Kingsley Ukaegbu; "Away from Shore", a co-production between Bulgaria and Ukraine produced by Kostadin Bonev; and "Shellfish" produced by James Hopewell from the U.S.

Directed and written by Kazem Mollai, "The Badger" also received one of the two awards presented in the best screenplay section.

The movie is about Sudeh, a 40-year-old woman who faces a strange incident right before her second marriage. Sudeh and her son Matiar live in an old apartment.

One day, she hires a pest control company to solve the termite problems in the apartment. While the pest

control company is working, Matiar is recording the procedures, as this is his hobby. The next day, Matiar gets kidnapped after school, and the kidnapper asks Sudeh to pay 10 Bitcoins for her son. Tremendous pressure is put on Sudeh, but the truth hidden beneath will surprise everyone.

"Darking Way" written by Zsolt Pozsgai from Hungary was another winner in the section.

The festival, which is the most important international event for nonviolent films, announced the winner last week.

The jury of the festival included film maestro Shamil Aliyev from Azerbaijan, animation director Joe Chang from Canada-China, producer Elio Dell'Unto from Canada, cinematographer and documentary producer Flynn Donovan from the U.S. and film critic Hamed Soleimanzadeh from Iran.

In the best director category, Hunter Hopewell for "Shellfish" from the U.S., Kostadin Bonev for "Away from Shore", Sohrab Khandelwal for "Que Sera Sera" from India and Zsolt Pozsgai for "Darking Way" were honored.



Vishka Asayesh acts in a scene from the Iranian drama "The Badger".

The award for best actor went to Penko Gospodinov for his role in "Away from Shore", while the award for best actress was given to Pap Katalin in "Darking Way".

Winners in the best documentary, best short film and several other categories were also awarded.

"How the Earth Shaped Human History" published in Persian

TEHRAN – British writer Lewis Dartnell's book "Origins: How the Earth Shaped Human History" has been published in Persian.

Nashre No is the publisher of the book rendered into Persian by Sahar Yusefi and Mani Parsa.

When we talk about human history, we focus on great leaders, mass migration and decisive wars. But how has the Earth itself determined our destiny? How has our planet made us?

As a species, we are shaped by our environment. Geological forces drove our evolution in East Africa; mountainous terrain led to the development of democracy in Greece; and today voting behavior in the United States follows the bed of an ancient sea.

The human story is the story of these forces, from plate tectonics and climate change, to atmospheric circulation and ocean currents.



Front cover of the Persian translation of Lewis Dartnell's book "Origins: How the Earth Shaped Human History".

How are the Himalayas linked to the orbit of the Earth, and to the formation of the British Isles? By taking us billions of years into our planet's past, Professor Lewis Dartnell tells us the ultimate origin story.

When we reach the point where

history becomes science we see a vast web of connections that underwrites our modern world and helps us face the challenges of the future.

From the cultivation of the first crops to the founding of modern states, Origins reveals the Earth's awesome impact on

the shape of human civilizations.

James McConnachie, a journalist who works for the Sunday Times, called the book "a thrilling piece of Big History" and added, "Origins by Lewis Dartnell stands comparison with Yuval Noah Harari's Sapiens."

Dartnell is an astrobiology researcher and professor at the University of Westminister.

He has won several awards for his science writing, and contributes to the Guardian, The Times and New Scientist.

He has also written for television and appeared on BBC Horizon, Sky News and Wonders of the Universe, as well as National Geographic and History channels.

A tireless popularizer of science, his previous books include the bestselling "The Knowledge: How to Rebuild Our World from Scratch".

Iranian languages and scripts: Documentation

Afghanistan and Central Asia

This is the area of the modern East-Iranian dialects, which in phonological and grammatical structure differ considerably from the West-Iranian dialects.

The differences reflect the greater historical developments in Middle East-Iranian languages, compared with the Middle West-Iranian ones. The distribution of these languages in Afghanistan after the late twentieth-century wars is not known.

Material from the Pamir languages began appearing in the early 19th century, which was included by Geiger in Grundriss and by Grierson in Linguistic Survey of India.

Large materials were collected by G. Morgenstierne on his two missions (1924 and 1929), and Soviet scholars published on languages in the Soviet Union. On the whole, scholarly and complete descriptions of these dialects are much more numerous than for those in Iran itself.

Recent descriptions to date include Pakhalina (1983, 1989) on the historical phonology and morphology of the Pamir languages, and Pakhalina (1969) is a useful concise overview. Edel'man (1986) is a historical grammar of East-Iranian languages.

Parachi and Ormulu, spoken in central Afghanistan and across the border in Pakistan (Waziristan) are, according to Morgenstierne, the remnants of a Southeast-Iranian dialect group. Grierson included a long section on "Ormuri

or Bargista" in Linguistic Survey of India; Morgenstierne recorded both languages in 1924.

Pashto (several dialect groups) is spoken mainly in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as in the diaspora. Wanetsi is a closely related, but separate, dialect spoken in Pakistan. Pashto has a large literature going back to the 16th century, both in the Afghan standard (Qandahar) and the Pakistani standard (Peshawar).

The earliest publications date from the 18th and 19th centuries, but the first major studies were those of Dom, Bellew's grammar and dictionary with etymologies, Darmesteter's collection of Afghan songs, Geiger, and Grierson.

More recent grammars include Penzl (1955), Shafeev (1964), and Grynberg (1987). Indigenous grammars include Reshtin and Bokhari. Dictionaries include the Pashto Tolana's Pashto-Persian dictionary and Persian-Pashto dictionary and the Pashto Academy's Pashto Zeba, as well as Badakhshi, Aslanov, and Kabir.

Afghan Pashto is written in the standard Arabo-Persian script, with additional diacritics for non-Persian phonemes. Pakistani Pashto is written in the Pakistani variant of the Arabo-Persian script, with additional diacritics.

Munji or Munjani, spoken in the Munjan valley in eastern Afghanistan, and Yidgha, spoken in the Lutkuh valley (Pakistan) across the mountains from the Munjan valley, probably belong to the same subgroup of East Iranian as Bactrian.

According to a local tradition, the Yidgha speakers originally came from Munjan. These two closely related dialects have been known since the late 19th century. Later studies include Zarubin, but they were first described in detail by Morgenstierne.

Eshkashmi (Ishkashmi), Sanglichi (Sanglechi), and "Zebaki" were/are spoken to the west of the opening of the Wakhan corridor. Eshkashmi was known only from hearsay by the time of the Grundriss, and only "Zebaki" was included in the Linguistic Survey of India. Morgenstierne provided the first descriptions of Eshkashmi and Sanglichi.

Languages of the Yazghulami-Shughni group are spoken in northern Afghanistan and Central Asia, but also include Sariqoli spoken at Taqumbash in the eastern Pamirs, in Chinese Turkistan.

Yazghulami and the now extinct Wanji constitute one subgroup of this group. The Shughni group proper in turn contains the sub-groups Khufi-Roshani, Oroshori-Bartangi, and Sariqoli.

These dialects were first mentioned in the late 19th century. Shughni, Sariqoli, and Roshani were included in the Grundriss and Shughni and Sariqoli in the Linguistic Survey of India.