

Will Sadr Cooperate with Other Iraqi Political Factions?

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Interview

Olympic medal winner Rezaei lauds Iranian wrestlers

By Farrokh Hesabi

TEHRAN – Former Iran wrestler Alireza Rezaei appreciated the Iran national team's freestyle and Greco-Roman performance in the 2021 World Wrestling Championships.

Iranian wrestlers won seven gold medals, three silvers, and three bronzes in total (freestyle and Greco-Roman) and earned the best record in terms of medals in the tournament. In terms of points, Iran earned third and second place in freestyle and Greco-Roman, respectively.

"We got outstanding results in the tournament," said Rezaei in his interview with Tehran Times.

"No matter what medals our wrestlers won, their performance in all the categories was excellent. Our wrestlers did their best both in freestyle and Greco-Roman.

"I should congratulate all the wrestlers as well as the coaching staff and all the Iranian people who love wrestling," added Rezaei, who won a silver medal at the 2004 Olympics in the men's Freestyle 120 kg.

Regarding the level of the competitions, Rezaei said: "since the World Championships took place after a short time after Olympics, the participating teams brought their younger wrestlers to test them. However, in this edition, most of the teams, especially the favorites to win the medals, had their main squad, and the tournament level was high."

When asked about the reasons behind the success of Iranian teams in Oslo, Norway, Rezaei explained: "There has been a good connection and cooperation between the junior, ▶ Page 3

Report

Iraqi parties reject "scam" election

Many parties, mostly Shia parties, have denounced the early poll results describing them as a "manipulation" and a "scam" just days after Iraq's parliamentary election.

The leader of the conquest (Fatah) party, the outgoing parliament's second-largest alliance, Hadi al-Ameri, rejected the results and warned, "we will not accept these fabricated results whatever the cost and we will defend the votes of our candidates and voters will full force".

The conquest's leader's remarks were echoed by other party leaders. The state of the law coalition leader and former Prime Minister, Nouri al-Maliki, also rejected the results despite his party gaining more seats than the previous election.

A joint statement by several parties, including the Fatah Alliance, said, "we will appeal against the results, and we reject them". The statement also signed by the party of former prime minister Haider al-Abadi, who served from 2014 to 2018, also said, "we will take all available measures to prevent the manipulation of votes".

The Popular Mobilization Units, some of whom have switched from military to politics after they spearheaded the defeat against Daesh, condemned the results as well. ▶ Page 5

Iran urges G-24 to provide financial support to developing countries

TEHRAN – The governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) has stressed the need for the financial support of developing countries during the pandemic, in a virtual meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Twenty-Four on International Monetary Affairs and Development (G-24) on Monday.

Speaking in the meeting of the G-24 group's finance ministers and central bank governors, Ali Saleh-Abadi stated that strong financial support of developing countries is very important, adding: "We welcome the allocation of \$651 billion from

the International Monetary Fund (IMF) resources to battle coronavirus pandemic and accelerate the economic recovery of countries."

He noted that the priority of this group should be financial and technical support of developing countries in order to provide them with fair access to the COVID-19 vaccine.

"The key priority of G-24 Group is the worldwide [COVID-19] vaccination, so it is necessary to accelerate the production and distribution of [COVID-19] vaccines around the world and

ensure that all countries have fair access to vaccines."

The official further urged international banks to cooperate in order to help developing countries overcome the problems created by the pandemic.

"Multilateral development banks have an important role to play in supporting pandemic-related measures, reducing financial constraints, and tackling debt crisis, and we urge the World Bank to adopt a medium-term strategy to help middle-income countries," Saleh Abadi said. ▶ Page 4

Nasal dose of COV Pars reduces virus transmission by 90%

TEHRAN – The inhaled dose of COV Pars vaccine reduces the transmission of delta and alpha coronavirus variants by up to 90 percent, Ali Es'haqi, head of Razi Vaccine and Serum Institute, has said.

Developed by the Razi Vaccine and Serum Research Institute, Razi Cov Pars is the second Iranian-made vaccine that started the clinical trial on February 27.

The vaccine is protein-based, which employs recombinant versions of the spike protein and tutors the immune system against the virus by producing antibodies.

It is developed in 3 doses. The first two doses are injectable and the third dose is intranasal. The second dose of the vaccine will be injected into the volunteers 21 days later and the third dose will be inhaled 51 days later.

The results of the research show that people who received COV Pars did not have any side effects, he stated, adding, even after the shot, none of those who were infected with the virus were hospitalized.

In the second phase of the study, we examined the immunogenicity very closely, and the evidence suggests that the COV Pars vaccine can not only induce antibodies but can also activate cellular immunity, he noted. ▶ Page 7

Qalibaf says sanctions and distortion are two serious wars against Islamic Revolution

TEHRAN – Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf said on Tuesday that "sanctions" and "distortion" are two serious challenges to the Islamic Republic, emphasizing the need for win over the economic and media warfare against the country.

"Sanctions and distortion are two serious wars against the Islamic Revolution, but we must win against the enemies," Qalibaf said during a ceremony marking the memory of Brigadier General Hamedani who was martyred while commanding the war against terrorists in Syria.

"Over forty years after the victory of the Islamic Revolution, we have gone through many pressures and threats, and from the Sacred Defense until today, we have seen the animosity of the enemies at its peak," said Qalibaf.

Sacred Defense refers to Iran's resistance against the invading Saddam Army in the 1980s.

The senior legislator noted that the enemies have been seeking to overthrow the Islamic Republic, but today the Iranian nation have been able to do great things.

"The enemies are in war with us in various ways. Today we are involved in economic war and media war and our front line is here. I and many Iranians believe that media warfare is more effective than economic warfare, and even to succeed in economic warfare, we must succeed in media warfare," the Speaker stated.

"We are witnessing distortions against the revolution, Sacred Defense and various other areas, where

there is also the enemy's media war. Sanctions and distortions are two serious wars against the Islamic Revolution, but we must win against them," suggested Qalibaf, a former mayor of Tehran. He pointed out: "We have belief because we adhere to the divine teachings, we will be a definite winner."

Qalibaf said despite all these pressures the Iranian nation have witnessed that the Islamic system has survived.

"Islamic Republic has broken American hegemony"

Elsewhere in his remarks, the speaker of the parliament noted that that today the Islamic Republic has not only maintained its survival powerfully and become a regional power, it has also broken the American hegemony in the region.

He added: "... those who are analysts, commentators, thinkers and logicians should speak, and especially clarify the issue of Afghanistan, which raises some questions as to why Iran's strategic depth is in Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, but not in Kabul and Panjshir; therefore, explaining this issue is important for the society and the youth to know our strategy."

Qalibaf went on to say that modern society is full of pluralism and there are many people with different and similar views.

"These people should analyze the issues properly so that there is no doubt about the origin of the path, but of course there is a different critique and approach in any area but if the beliefs change and the revolution is distorted, we must stand against it."

Field survey traces Neanderthal remains in western Iran

TEHRAN – An archaeological survey has commenced on the Bawa Yawan shelter and its surroundings hoped to shed new light on Neanderthal life in western Iran.

Co-led by Iranian archaeologists Saman Heydari-Guran and Ahmad Azadi, the survey also aims to demarcate boundaries of the site, which yielded an in-situ Neanderthal tooth in 2017.

In previous [archaeological] seasons, in addition to the discovery of a 42,000-year-old Neanderthal tooth, archaeological layers embracing cultural data from Paleolithic, Middle Neolithic, and post-Paleolithic periods were identified, ISNA quoted Heydari-Guran as saying on Monday.

The tooth, which is a lower left deciduous canine belonging to a 6 years old child, was found at a depth of 2.5 m from the shelter surface in association with animal bones and stone tools near Kermanshah.

Stone tools discovered close to the tooth be-

long to the Middle Paleolithic period and a series of C14 dating suggests the Neanderthal is between 41,000-43,000 years of age which is close to the end of the Middle Paleolithic period when Neanderthal disappeared in the Zagros.

"In addition to demarcation and documentation projects, we hope to create a better situation to preserve Bawa Yawan shelter in a more favorable way using photogrammetric techniques," the senior archaeologist said.

A previous study performed by Heydari-Guran based in the Neanderthal Museum in Mettmann, and his international fellows such as Stefano Benazzi, who is a physical anthropologist at the University of Bologna, the analysis showed the tooth has Neanderthal affinities. Conducted by a team of archaeologists and paleoanthropologists from Iran, Germany, Italy, and Britain, the results of the study appeared on the online journal PLOS ONE in August. ▶ Page 6

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Safar Barlek of the 21st century: Erdogan the new caliph

By Abir Bassam

Since the Americans' withdrawal from Afghanistan, it has become clear that everyone is holding his breath. That is exactly what Recep Tayyip Erdogan is doing these days. Ten years have passed since his war on Syria. However, he has so far achieved zero accomplishments towards his 2023 dreams. As a matter of fact, Erdogan is in the worst position ever. His dream of becoming the new Ottoman Caliph began to fade away.

If we want to understand what is going on in his mind, it is crucial to follow gas and oil pipelines: He actively participated in the war on Syria because Syrian President Bashar al-Assad refused to betray his Russian and Iranian friends by allowing the Qatari gas pipelines to pass through Syria then Turkey to reach Europe. Such a step would have empowered Turkey, opened a wide door for it to enter the gas trade industry, and would become the Americans' firm grip around the Iranian and Russian necks.

He saw the opportunity getting closer as the war on Syria was announced. He imagined himself as the main player with the two strongest powers globally: the U.S. and Europe. Hence, his chance to fulfil the 1940s Turkish-American plan to occupy northern Syria, mainly Aleppo and Idlib, where he could continue all the way to al-Mussel in Iraq. ▶ Page 5



CICA: An initiative to change equations

NUR-SULTAN, Kazakhstan — As the 6th ministerial meeting of the CICA (Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia) kicked off on Monday in Nur-Sultan, the ministers emphasized the need for stronger multilateralism amid the increased challenges, including the pandemic and the destabilizing situation in Afghanistan.

The one-day event in the Kazakh capital gathered representatives of 23 out of 27 member states and observers, heads of international observer organizations, and partner organizations in a hybrid format.

Founded by Kazakhstan's First President Nursultan Nazarbayev in 1992, ▶ Page 2

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Public Relations Department of Iran Aluminum Company



Iran launches air defense exercises



TEHRAN - The joint specialized air defense exercise of the Modafe'an-e Aseman-e Velayat (Defenders of Sky of Velayat) kicked off on Tuesday morning in Iran's central desert.

The military drill kicked off with the deployment of indigenous missile, radar, reconnaissance, electronic warfare, communication systems, and visual surveillance network, Fars News reported.

Announcing the start of the exercise, Brigadier General Qader Rahimzadeh, Commander of Khatam al-Anbia Air Defense Base, said in the first phase of air defense exercise, the deployment of defense systems with "the rapid reaction of operational forces in accordance with the principles of passive defense to deceive the enemy were carried out."

General Rahimzadeh added: "At this stage of the exercise, reconnaissance flights and identification of manned and unmanned aircraft of the Army and the IRGC were conducted."

Protecting the air borders of the Islamic Republic and comprehensive protection of the country's sensitive and vital centers are among the aims of the drills, the commander stated.

Pointing to the use of indigenous air defense systems in the exercise, the commander of air

defense base said stationing command and control systems, the indigenous Meraj radar systems, Fatah-2 radars, tactical intelligence and reconnaissance systems, electro-optical systems and electronic warfare systems were used in the exercise.

Referring to the air defense systems used in the exercise, General Rahimzadeh said: "In the joint specialized air defense exercise, all detection, reconnaissance, interception and combat systems used by the army and IRGC air defense units are manufactured by committed Iranian specialists and youth in the armed forces and defense industries of the country."

He called the slogan of the drill "defense authority, secure sky" and said that the formation of safe layers of air defense to protect the air borders of Iran and also comprehensive defense of the country's critical centers were among the objectives of the military exercise.

Iran has made major inroads in designing and building sophisticated weapons. For example, the air defense missile system, named Bavar 373, is believed to rival the Russian-made S-300. The progress in defense industry can serve as a catalyst for advances in other industries in the country.

Gharibabadi bids farewell to Ulyanov

TEHRAN — Mikhail Ulyanov, the Russian representative in the international organizations based in Vienna, has announced the farewell meeting with his Iranian counterpart Kazem Gharibabadi by publishing photos.

"Today we had a farewell meeting with Kazem Gharibabadi, the permanent representative of Iran. For more than three years, we worked closely together in Vienna on a wide range of issues, with emphasis on issues related to the International Atomic Energy Agency and the JCPOA," Mikhail Ulyanov tweeted on Monday.

"I attach great value to this cooperation, Kazem," Ulyanov concluded.

Earlier, Ambassador Gharibabadi had tweeted: "My mission in Vienna will end on October 25 to take on a new position in Tehran."

He added: "Our policy is based on active participation in international organizations, including with the aim of securing Iran's national interests."

Gharibabadi is to be appointed as deputy chief of Judiciary for international affairs and secretary of the High Council of Human Rights.

Gharibabadi had been serving as Iran's ambassador to the IAEA since 2018. He had previously served in various positions, including deputy chief of the High Council of Human Rights for International Affairs at the Judiciary



and ambassador of Iran to the Netherlands and Permanent Representative to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

EU top official expected to visit Iran soon

TEHRAN — A top European official is expected to fly to Tehran as soon as this week to seek an agreement to restart the nuclear talks between Iran and world powers after months of delays, officials with knowledge of the meetings said.

Western nations including the U.S. and Germany have repeatedly warned they're not willing to wait forever for a new round of talks to begin after the last one stalled in June.

European Union deputy foreign policy chief Enrique Mora is expected in the Iranian capital for talks within days, according to the officials, who asked not to be identified in line with diplomatic rules, BNN Bloomberg reported.

Shuttle diplomacy between the participants in the talks -- China, France, Germany, Russia, the U.S. and U.K. -- has picked up recently, and a restart of broader talks could happen within the next three weeks, they said.

Peter Stano, a spokesperson for the European Commission, declined to comment on any travel plans, saying it was part of the work of officials to see partners around the world. On the Iran negotiations, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell has stressed repeatedly that "it is urgent to resume the Vienna talks very soon," and the Iranian foreign minister had promised him a swift return to negotiations, Stano said.

On October 7, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman said that Moscow hopes another round of the Vienna talks on restoring the deal will begin in the near future.

"We have taken note of the fact that all parties concerned are focused on faster coordination of a procedure for breathing a new life into the JCPOA. We hope that another round may take place in the near future," Maria Zakharova said, the TASS news agency reported.

We should not resume the Vienna talks on JCPOA from scratch: Russia

TEHRAN - Despite the hiatus that was brought about in the Vienna nuclear talks, the negotiations should not go back to day one, says the Russian ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

"This is very important! We should not resume the Vienna talks on JCPOA from scratch," Mikhail Ulyanov tweeted on Monday.

By the JCPOA, the Russian diplomat was referring to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the official name of the nuclear deal that was signed between Iran and the P5+1 group of countries -- the United States, the UK, France, Russia, China, and Germany -- in Vienna in July 2015.

The talks to revive the nuclear deal started in April and lasted until June 20. Six rounds of talks were held during this interval. The talks were suspended due to the presidential election in Iran in which a new government came to power. The talks to revitalize the deal were initiated as Joe Biden announced his administration is willing to return to the agreement.

"During the previous six rounds of negotiations

significant and very useful progress has been achieved," he added.

The new government in Iran is about to resume the nuclear deal talks in future days or weeks. However, new Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian has been insisting that the talks should produce tangible results, which means a total and verified removal of sanction.

The April-to-June talks were held between Iran and the remaining parties to the agreement. The U.S. was participating in the talks indirectly. Iran had announced it would not enter direct talks with the American side until the U.S. rejoins the multilateral agreement and lift sanctions. The European Union as the coordinator of the talks acted as intermediary between Iran and the U.S.

Former U.S. president Donald Trump left the JCPOA in May 2018 and slapped the heaviest sanctions in history against Iran under his policy of "maximum pressure" campaign against the Islamic Republic. Trump was seeking a rewriting of the JCPOA. He wanted to deprive Iran, as a signatory to the nuclear Non-



Proliferation Treaty (NPT), of its inalienable right to nuclear fuel cycle.

The Trump administration introduced total ban on Iran's oil export, the country's main source of income. Trump and his close team had the illusion that Iran would surrender to the maximum pressure policy. However, Iran adopted maximum resistance against the illegal sanctions.

Iran wanted to live up to its commitments to the JCPOA even without the United States. It remained fully loyal to the agreement for one year after the U.S. exit. However, in May 2019 the Supreme National Security Council of Iran announced that Tehran's strategic patience is over and Iran started to gradually remove bans on its nuclear program. Even at the time the Islamic Republic announced that it will reverse its decisions if the European parties to the agreement compensate Iran for the sanctions. However, the European trio - Britain, France, and Germany - bowed to the American pressure and just paid lip service to the need to preserve the agreement.

Under the JCPOA Iran agreed to put limits on its nuclear

activities in exchange for termination of economic and financial sanctions.

The nuclear deal was expected to be restored immediately after Biden came to power as he was acting as vice president when the deal was struck during Barack Obama's presidency. However, the American team has been trying to link the revival of the agreement to Iran's defensive missile program and refusal to lift new sanctions that Trump had imposed on Iran under different names.

Two senior political analysts have called on the Joe Biden administration to separate talks on a revival of the nuclear deal from security issues in West Asia.

Writing an article in the Foreign Policy, the two analysts said U.S. allies in West Asia have already taken the initiative on regional issues.

Insisting on a package deal could permanently derail nuclear talks, warned Professor Vali Nasr from Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies and Hossein Mousavian, a West Asia security and nuclear policy specialist at Princeton University.

CICA: An initiative to change equations

From page 1 ► CICA is aimed at the political rapprochement of countries and the creation of a common and inclusive space for security and stability in Asia. CICA unites 27 states, nearly half of the world's population and more than half of the world's GDP.

"Seeking solutions to the most acute problems of the continent requires a multilateral approach and cooperation," wrote Nazarbayev in his address, read out by Acting Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Akan Rakhmetullin.

Amid the growing global dominance and cold war narratives, CICA remains an "important global political center" promoting the principles of "partnership, equality and mutual solidarity."

Rakhmetullin, in his opening remarks, also noted the significance of the region in terms of economic and human potential. "What remains unchanged is that Asia is our common home, and it is our responsibility to address acute issues. There are still zones of instability, nuclear non-proliferation, terrorism and extremism risks," he said.

Iranian delegation at the conference is headed by Alireza Haghighian, Director General of the Eurasia Department of the Foreign Ministry.

Iran says considers heinous crimes in Palestine as child of "normalization" process

In his speech, he thanked the government and people of Kazakhstan for their warm hospitality.

"Today, the world is in a parallel situation," the diplomat noted.

He also underscored that the COVID-19 pandemic has severely affected regional cooperation. He then went on to emphasize the importance of unity among the CICA members to overcome such challenges.

The pursuit of unilateral security by relying on military power has long since ended, Haghighian said.

He also said that "trans-regional interventionist powers" who seek to create insecurity and threaten to disrupt the security of others to achieve their

"illusionary security" are well-versed in the cases of Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Afghanistan.

He added that security and development are the two sides of the same coin.

"Today, we need constructive interaction to achieve sustainable and indigenous security," Haghighian said.

He added that Iran considers Asia as the driving force in its foreign policy and economic interactions.

According to the diplomat, Iran adheres to its policy of strengthening good neighborliness, building trust, and opening the door for other Asian countries.

The diplomat reminded the CICA members that Iran has proposed several peace initiatives to help solve the regional crises.

"Iran is working closely with countries in the region to remove problems such as terrorism, and to emphasize the need to increase continued multilateral cooperation among the CICA member states are the manifestation of the Islamic Republic of Iran's constant commitment to play a participatory and cooperative role in ensuring security and sustainable development in the region and the world," he added.

Haghighian also said that Iran has always considered the security and stability of its neighbors as its own.

"We believe the issues between neighbors should be resolved through dialogue and political solution," the diplomat underlined.

He noted that in this regard, any alliance or unity with third parties especially entities with a grim record of aggression, assassination, espionage, conspiracy, war crimes, and crimes against humanity will result in nothing but losses for the perpetrators of such alliances.

"The blind support for apartheid in the occupied Palestinian territories and the denial of basic rights of the Palestinian people exacerbate throughout the Middle East," Haghighian lamented.

He blamed countries for being silent over

the massacre of the Palestinian children and the escalation of the crimes of the occupying regime in Palestine, saying that these heinous crimes are one of the consequences of the so-called "normalization" process, which few countries joined.

"Iran in strongest possible way condemns the escalations in the occupied Palestinian territory, including the holy Quds, as a blatant, systematic violation of human rights, and humanitarian laws," the diplomat remarked.

He then concluded by saying that CICA has a very important place in the foreign policy chart of Iran, adding that the coronavirus pandemic, climate change, cyber-attacks, and so on, require a "fundamental overhaul" of security priorities.

CICA is an intergovernmental forum aimed at strengthening regional cooperation and ensuring peace, security, and stability in Asia. The idea of creating the organization was first voiced by Kazakhstan's First President Nursultan Nazarbayev in 1992 at the 47th session of the United Nations General Assembly, while the first CICA summit was held in June of 2002. CICA members include 27 Asian countries, including Azerbaijan, Bahrain, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Russia, South Korea, and Turkey, nine observer states, and five international organizations, according to Astana Times.

The establishment of the CICA forum emerged from the firm belief that international progress can come about only through strong and effective partnerships. Since the first ministerial meeting, which took place in 1999, CICA has strived to enhance cooperation through elaborating multilateral approaches towards promoting peace, security and stability in Asia.

Yet the world has changed dramatically in the past two decades. Asia has become a key driver of global economic growth and development. Multi-polarity has become the norm of international relations. Countries are actively cooperating thanks to globalization, yet at the same time nationalism is on the rise in many parts of the world. To adapt to these changes, the CICA forum must transform in order to continue to fulfil its important role.

Iran's steps in JCPOA talks will correspond to moves by other parties: FM

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian says Tehran will soon "finalize" its internal deliberations on the resumption of the Vienna talks aimed at reviving the 2015 multilateral nuclear deal it signed with world powers.

"In future talks, our actions will be proportional to the level of deeds and measures of the other

parties," Amir-Abdollahian said in a meeting with Switzerland's President of the National Council Andreas Aebi in Tehran on Tuesday.

The United States, under former President Donald Trump, unilaterally withdrew from the deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), and reinstated draconian

sanctions on the Islamic Republic, although the country had displayed full compliance.

In early April, Iran and the remaining parties to the JCPOA began to hold talks in Vienna after the U.S. administration of Joe Biden voiced a willingness to rejoin the agreement and remove the sanctions.

Since the beginning of the

Vienna talks, Tehran has argued that Washington—as the first party that violated the JCPOA—needs to take the first step by returning to full compliance. Tehran also says it will resume all of its nuclear commitments under the deal only after the U.S. removes all the sanctions in practice.

(Source: Press TV)

Will Sadr cooperate with other Iraqi political factions?

TEHRAN – Iraq's electoral commission finally announced the results of the war-scarred country's early parliamentary election which handed a controversial Shi'ite cleric a remarkable lead over other political factions.

The election, held on Sunday, was the main task of the provisional government of Mustafa al-Kadhimi, who succeeded former Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi last year in the wake of nationwide protests over corruption and lack of basic services.

Al-Kadhimi has vowed to stand aside in the election and only act as the implementer of the vote to ensure the integrity of the election. He underlined this on Twitter after completing the preparations for the election.

"We have succeeded in fulfilling our promise and our duty in securing fair elections. I thank our people. I thank all voters, candidates, political powers, observers, IHEC staff, our brave ISF who provided security, the United Nations, and the marjiyya," the prime minister said.

According to initial results announced by Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission, Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr's party won more seats in the parliament than any other faction. Former prime minister Nouri al-Maliki trailed the Sadrist Movement as the next biggest winner among Shi'ite parties.

Kurdish and Sunni political factions close to Sadr also increased the number of seats they hold in the parliament. Other Shi'ite factions such as the Fatah



alliance, the political arm of the Popular Mobilization Forces, surprisingly lost most of their seats, prompting a heated debate among observers on the future of Iraq's position in an increasingly polarized region.

Some pundits and media outlets, especially those affiliated with Saudi Arabia, sought to portray the results of the election as a blow to Iran's influence in Iraq, ignoring the fact that Iran's relations with Iraq are beyond the political fortunes of Iraqi political factions.

Saudi newspaper Asharq Al-Awsat reported that "Iran's allies" in Iraq endured a "harsh defeat" in the elections, winning fewer seats than in the previous vote in 2018. Arab News ran a story saying that "an alliance of Iraqi candidates representing Shi'ite militias supported by neighboring Iran has emerged as the biggest loser in the country's national elections."

But these reports ignore a number of facts: first, Iran was among the first countries to congratulate Iraq on the successful holding of its early election. Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian issued a message to his Iraqi counterpart Fuad Hussein congratulating Iraq on the successful holding of the parliamentary vote.

The Iranian foreign minister also announced Tehran's support for Iraq's stability and security, saying the Islamic Republic is ready for cooperation with Baghdad on the path toward development and progress in relations between the two nations.

Earlier, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh congratulated the Iraqi government, people and elected lawmakers on successfully holding parliamentary elections.

Second, the biggest winner of the Iraq vote, i.e. Sadr, is no enemy of Iran. Instead, he enjoys relatively good relations with Tehran and has visited the holy city of Qom even when he was politically at odds with Iran. In fact, Sadr does not oppose Iraq having good neighborly relations with Iran. He only seeks to institutionalize these relations for the good of the Iraqi and Iranian people. More importantly, Sadr has not pivoted toward Iran's regional and trans-regional rivals and enemies despite his occasional political differences with Iran.

Third, Sadr is unlikely to rule Iraq alone. Iraq's political system requires any majority faction to cooperate with other groups to form a government. Sadr will likely be willing to cooperate with other factions to get his nominated prime minister approved by the parliament. This cooperation is of vital importance to the Sadrist Movement given the fact that the movement won an election with a record low turnout of 41 percent.

Sadr himself proved skilled at political maneuvers. He used to be the kingmaker without exposing himself to public wrath. The nationalist cleric understands that he needs other factions to shield himself from public anger arising from possible inadequacies. This paves the way for another consensual government in Iraq that would cater to the needs of all political groups with Sadr leading from behind and having the final say on all state matters.

Iran, Jordan FMs discuss economic potential in bilateral ties

TEHRAN – Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian on Monday held a phone call with Jordan's Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayman Safadi to discuss issues of mutual interest, including economic opportunities in the region.

In the telephone conversation, Amir Abdollahian explained that Iran is in favor of friendly and brotherly relations based on mutual respect with regional countries, and noted that the Islamic Republic and Jordan should benefit from economic and trade opportunities of the region in order to improve bilateral relations, according to the Iranian foreign ministry.

He expressed Iran's support for regional dialog and cooperation away from foreign interference, and emphasized the expansion of cooperation among regional countries, especially Iran, Iraq, Syria and Jordan, as a basis and driving force for further economic prosperity and stability in the region.

The top Iranian diplomat expressed support for the historic role of Jordan as custodian of the holy city of al-Quds and other Islamic and Christian sites in the city against the Zionist regime's efforts to exercise sovereignty over these places.

Abdollahian stressed the need for all Islamic countries to take responsibility regarding the issue of Palestine and holy city of al-Quds. He emphasized the need for synergy among them regarding joint action in international organizations to help Palestine.

Abdollahian also reiterated Iran's stance regarding a referendum to determine the fate of Palestine, with the participation of its original inhabitants including Muslims, Christians and Jews, as the only solution to the Palestinian issue. He described as unacceptable imposed plans that ignore the rights of the Palestinian people and prolong the occupation.

During the telephone conversation, Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi also said Amman views relations with the Islamic Republic as important and respectable. He stressed the need for developing an understanding

based on collective interests in light of regional conflicts.

He described terrorism and extremism as common challenges facing all regional countries.

The Jordanian foreign minister also called the issue of Palestine the number one problem in his country and, referring to Jordan's sacrifices in this regard, He stressed the need to ensure the rights of the Palestinian people.

The foreign ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Jordan also conveyed greetings from their countries' high-ranking officials.

The Jordanian foreign ministry also offered some details about the phone conversation. "Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, Ayman Safadi, received a phone call from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hossein Amir Abdollahian. During the call, they discussed bilateral relations, means of developing them, and a number of regional issues of common interest," it said in a statement.

The statement added, "The two ministers also discussed efforts to resolve regional crises, contacts and dialogue paths taking place in the region to resolve differences, and build regional relations that consecrate security and stability, and serve the interests of all its peoples and countries. Safadi stressed that the Kingdom always works for dialogue, and wants healthy regional relations, based on the principle of good neighborliness and non-interference in internal affairs."

It concluded, "The two ministers affirmed keenness to develop relations, and to continue communication and frank dialogue on all issues, in a way that contributes to strengthening the relations of the two countries and resolving regional differences."

Abdollahian greets Iraq on parliamentary polls

Also on Monday, Abdollahian congratulated his Iraqi counterpart Fuad Hussein on the successful holding of the country's parliamentary vote, describing it as the symbol of the place of democracy in Iraq, the Iranian foreign ministry said in a separate statement.

both inside and in the diplomatic missions.

He also issued necessary instructions to the consular section officials about creating a single service window, simplifying the forms, solving the problems of the Mikhak system, creating round-the-clock offices to help Iranians applying for help, addressing the problems of the second and third generations of Iranians, including with regard to the departure of conscripts, creating a channel for direct communication with the Iranian foreign minister.

In this virtual meeting, in addition to a

Abdollahian expressed hope that with unity and solidarity among all Iraqis and their elected representatives at the parliament and with the formation of a new government in Iraq, the country will be on track toward stability and prosperity.

The Iranian foreign minister also announced Iran's support for Iraq's stability and security, saying the Islamic Republic is ready for cooperation with Baghdad on the path toward development and progress in relations between the two nations.

Iraq announced the early results of its parliamentary election and Iran was among the first countries to congratulate Iraq on holding the vote.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh also congratulated the Iraqi government, people and elected lawmakers on successfully holding parliamentary elections.

Khatibzadeh expressed hope that through unity and solidarity among all lawmakers, a new government will be formed in Iraq.

He said Iran, as always, supports Iraq and is ready for joint cooperation with Baghdad on the path toward full-blown growth and progress.

In late September, Abdollahian met his Iraqi counterpart on the sidelines of the annual session of the UN General Assembly in New York.

In the meeting, the two sides discussed bilateral relations and exchanged views on the agreements reached during a recent trip to Tehran by the Iraqi prime minister, the Iranian foreign minister's visit to Baghdad and meeting of Iraq's neighboring countries held in New York.

Another topic which came up for discussion was economic diplomacy.

The two sides also reached agreement on issues pertaining to the exports of natural gas and electricity to Iraq.

The two top diplomats also agreed to more seriously follow up on and quickly resolve certain bilateral issues, including the transfer of Iran's assets currently kept by Baghdad.

They also discussed the latest developments in the region, the Persian Gulf and Afghanistan.

group of compatriots living abroad, the Deputy Foreign Minister for Consular, Parliamentary, and Expatriates' Affairs and other managers in the field, as well as the ambassador and permanent representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations and diplomats at Iran's Interests Section in Washington were also present.

They provided the foreign minister with a detailed report on the performance of the Iranian consular, technology and interest sections with regard to providing consular and electronic services.

The spokesman said that at Iran's suggestion, Russia is also scheduled to attend the meeting. He also responded to the question of whether Iran would attend the Moscow summit on Afghanistan, saying, "Russia's proposal is under consideration."

Russia does not share borders with Afghanistan. However, Moscow is highly sensitive toward developments in Afghanistan. Russia is fully aware that an unstable Afghanistan will have an adverse effect on the former Soviet Republics in Central Asia.

SPORTS

Olympic medal winner Rezaei lauds Iranian wrestlers

From Page 1 ► youth and adult sections of Iran and their coaching staff and now the success is the result of academic work in the previous years.

Rezaei then talked about the members of the freestyle team.

"Amirhossein Zare did a great job in 125kg and was much better than what he was in Tokyo Olympics. I enjoyed watching the matches of Kamran Ghasempour, who was terrific in 92kg despite battling in this weight for the first time. He beat two world-class wrestlers on his way to winning the gold medal.

"Hassan Yazdani created a national pride for all the Iranian with his unique performance. Also, Alireza Sarlak in the 57kg, Amir Mohammad Yazdani in the 65kg, and Mohammad Nokhodi in the 79kg, who earned silver medals, were excellent and deserved to win gold if they were a little bit lucky," he concluded.

Iran share spoils with S. Korea in World Cup qualifier

TEHRAN – Iran were held to a 1-1 draw against South Korea in the 2022 World Cup qualification on Tuesday.

Son Heung-min struck four minutes into the second half at the empty Azadi Stadium in Tehran on a counter attack. The Tottenham star beat Iran goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand after six consecutive clean sheets

Soon after, Iran dominated the match and put the Taeguk Warriors under pressure.

Iran midfielder Saeid Ezatolahi could have equalized the match in the 67th minute but his strike hit the woodwork.

In the 76th minute, Sardar Azmoun sent a long ball from Korean's left flank outside the six-yard area and Iran captain Alireza Jahanbakhsh found the back of the net with a powerful header.



Mehdi Taremi could have scored the winner two minutes later but his strike hit the post.

The result ends Iran's 10-game winning streak under head coach Dragan Skocic.

Iran remained Group A leaders with 10 points, two points ahead of South Korea.

Iran are scheduled to meet Lebanon and Syria in the November window while Korea face UAE and Iraq.

There are 12 countries competing, which are divided into two groups of six teams. The top two places in each group will qualify for the 2022 World Cup in Qatar.

Iran to mark 14th National Paralympic Day

TEHRAN – Iran's National Paralympic Committee (NPC) will mark the 14th National Paralympic Day on Oct. 16.

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, the NPC will symbolically celebrate the Day in Tehran's Olympic and Paralympic Academy.

The main goals of the National Paralympic Committee are to introduce the Paralympic Movement to the Iranian society, contribute to the inclusion of people with disabilities, change attitudes towards people with disabilities and provide them with social opportunities.

"We are going to motivate the Iranian families to participate in the National Paralympic Day. This day provides an opportunity to make them familiar with

the Paralympic Movement." Iran's NPC secretary general Mohammad Tabe told the reporters in a conference held in the Paralympic Committee's headquarters.

"The children with impairment should be encouraged to participate in the sports. The National Paralympic Day can help us to identify the talented children as well," he added.

Iran first celebrated the National Paralympic Day in 2003 and was included in the National Calendar by a Presidential order in 2016.

At the Paralympic Games in Tokyo, Iran ended 13th in the medals table with 12 golds, 11 silvers and one bronze.

Foolad at Asian Club Volleyball C'ship semis

TEHRAN – Foolad Sirjan qualified for the 2021 Asian Men's Club Volleyball Championship semifinals.

The Iranian team defeated Thailand's Diamond Food 3-1 (25-19, 25-23, 23-25, 25-23) on Tuesday.

Foolad have previously defeated the Philippines' Rebisco, AGMK of Uzbekistan and Qatar's Al Arabi in the competition in Pool B.

Foolad will play Thailand's Nakhon Ratchasima QminC on Thursday.

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

The winners of this tournament will qualify for the 2021 FIVB Volleyball Men's Club World Championship.

Iran learn fate at Intercontinental Beach Soccer Cup

TEHRAN – Iran learned their fate at the 10th Intercontinental Beach Soccer Cup Dubai.

The Iranian team have been drawn along with newly crowned world champions and three-time winners Russia, Japan and Paraguay in Group B.

Group A consists of UAE, Senegal, Spain and Portugal.

Iran are back to defend their crown and also to renew their rivalry with Russia. These two teams, and their ardent fans, have been a constant feature on the tournament's highlight reels over the years.

The tournament is organized by Dubai Sports Council and Beach Soccer Worldwide in association with UAE Football Association.

Zenit, Azmoun in advanced talks with Bayer Leverkusen and Lyon

TEHRAN – Bayer 04 Leverkusen had already shown great interest in Sardar Azmoun in the summer. Both parties are apparently still in contact – a free transfer in 2022 seems possible.

Looking for reinforcements, Azmoun had been a hot topic at the Werkself before the start of the season. According to consistent media reports, Bayer 04 were very interested in signing the Iranian attacker from Zenit St. Petersburg; According to reports, a change for 14 million euros was even nearing completion.

However, the deal was not brought across the finish line, instead, the Leverkusen-based Lucas Alario was equipped with a new contract until 2024. In addition to the Argentine and the already seeded Patrik Schick, there was no need for a third attacker who would have had ambitions for a regular place.

Despite the failed move, the two parties should still be in contact. The Italian portal Calciomercato even reports that there are "advanced negotiations" about a change in the coming summer. Then Azmoun's contract with Zenit ends, the Iranian would therefore not cost a transfer.

To what extent the talks will affect the future of Alario and Schick remains open for the time being.

According to Calciomercato, the French top club Olympique Lyon would also like to sign the attacker on a free transfer basis: OL currently seem to be the worst competitor in the bidding for Azmoun.

The 26-year-old has impressively demonstrated in recent months that he knows where the goal is: after collecting a total of 25 scorer points (19 goals, six assists) in the Russian league in the 20/21 season, he is now currently also back to six goals (five goals, one assists in nine games).

Iran set to host foreign ministers of countries bordering Afghanistan

TEHRAN — Director General of the West Asia Affairs Department at Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has announced that Iran will soon host a meeting of foreign ministers of the countries neighbor to Afghanistan.

"There are considerable diplomatic moves to understand the developments in Afghanistan and the impact on its future. Different countries pursue their diplomacy in different mechanisms," Seyyed Rasoul Mousavi wrote on his Twitter account.

Emphasizing that Afghanistan's future lies in regional

cooperation with its neighbors, Mousavi said: "A meeting of the foreign ministers of Afghanistan's neighbors will be held in Tehran soon."

Saeed Khatibzadeh, the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, commented on the meeting of Afghanistan's neighbors in Iran on Monday. He said: "The first online meeting between foreign ministers of Afghanistan's neighbors was held and a meeting was scheduled in Tehran with ministers in attendance. The meeting is on the agenda, but it is not clear when it will be held."

Iran urges G-24 to provide financial support to developing countries



From page 1 ▶ He also welcomed the strategies taken by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to deal with climate change, saying that this support must be adapted to the economic conditions and structures of all countries.

Saleh-Abadi finally noted that reducing carbon emissions should be in line with the efforts of developing countries to alleviate poverty, inequality, and employment growth.

Elsewhere in the meeting, IMF Head Kristalina Georgieva explained the Fund's actions in the field of planning and accelerating the access of countries to the COVID-19 vaccine and said: "It is predicted that by the end of this year, 40 percent of the world's total population will get vaccinated."

Iran able to export engineering, technical services to many countries

TEHRAN – Head of Iran's Planning and Budget Organization (PBO) has said many of the countries in the region are seeking the Islamic Republic's engineering and technical services and the country can provide them with such services, IRNA reported.

"The 13th government's major policy is to expand presence in target markets, and many countries in the region are looking for our engineering and industrial capabilities," Masoud Mir-Kazemi said on Tuesday.

Speaking in a meeting with some of the country's major contractor companies, Mir-Kazemi noted that such companies should become more productive, value-creating companies.

"Maintaining international economic markets is more important than entering those markets, and to achieve this important, the government should pay special attention to organizing the private sector activities in target markets," he said.

"We know the value of the work of the

country's technical, engineering, and professional organizations. The talent and potential of these companies should not be taken for granted," the official added.

Earlier this year, Head of the Association of Iranian Exporters of Technical and Engineering Services Bahman Salehi told IRNA that value of the Iranian exports of technical and engineering services in the previous Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20) stood at only \$500 million despite the great capacities in this area.

Iraq, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, as well as developing African countries are the main target markets for the export of technical and engineering services, Salehi said.

"Iran's neighbor Turkey, despite lower capacities in technical and engineering services, has snatched the lead from the Iranians and recorded an annual export of \$35 billion," he regretted.

Manufacturing of TV sets up 11% in 5 months yr/yr

TEHRAN- Manufacturing of TV sets in Iran has increased 11.7 percent during the first five months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-August 22), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, the data released by Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry indicate.

As reported, 447,700 TV sets have been manufactured in the five-month period of this year.

Manufacturing of home appliances in Iran has risen 8.7 percent during the first five months of the present year, as 2.61 million sets of such products have been manufactured inside the country.

Home appliances manufacturing has also increased 78 percent to stand at 15 million sets in the past Iranian calendar year (ended on March 20).

Rise in home appliances manufacturing and export has been also planned for the current year.

Last year, the industry was able to achieve 78 percent growth despite the restrictions on the manufacturing sector, Deputy Industry, Mining and Trade Minister Mehdi Sadeqi Niaraki has said, adding, "While foreign brands left Iran, manufacturers were able to achieve this leap by relying on domestic capacities."

Back in April, the official had said that considering the Iranian home appliance industry's infrastructure and

capacities, the country will be able to become an exporter of such products in the near future because most of the raw materials needed by the mentioned sector are produced domestically.

Stating that the Industry, Mining, and Trade Ministry will definitely support domestic manufacturers and national brands, the official added: "Today we have the necessary manpower, knowledge, and infrastructure in the field, so there is no reason to look for foreign sources to meet the country's demands."

Over the past few years, the Iranian government has been following a new strategy for supporting domestic production to neutralize the impacts of the U.S. sanctions while reducing the reliance of the economy on oil revenues.

The home appliances sector has been one of the pioneers in this regard and like many other areas, the production of home appliances has witnessed a significant rise in the past two years so that this industry's production capacity increased by 24 percent in the past Iranian year, and by 10 percent in its preceding year.

In early April, the secretary of the Association of Industries of Household Appliances of Iran said, "We expected to produce about 12 million units, including small and large appliances in the previous year, however, the figure increased to about 15 million by



the yearend, registering a 24 percent growth compared to the preceding year."

"We also had good growth in after-sales service, product quality improvement, indigenization and exports, so that last year \$345 million worth of home appliance products were exported," Abbas Hashemi added.

Pointing to the advantages of home appliance industry in Iran, the official said: "Production of home appliances in the country is an advantage considering cheap energy and workforce and the country's geographical situation," he noted.

"This industry should be more supported," he stressed.

Regarding the return of foreign brands to the country, Hashemi said: "we should prevent the imports of foreign finished products into the country in order to support domestic producers."

He further noted that foreign companies can invest in this industry and co-produce their products with local manufacturers.

TEHRAN – Iranian capital Tehran hosted an Iran-Kazakhstan business forum on Tuesday during which the two sides stressed the need for removing visa issuance and transportation obstacles, to realize a \$6 billion annual trade target.

The business forum was attended by senior officials from both sides including the Head of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (ICCIMA) Gholam Hossein Shafeie, Kairat Torebayev, Kazakhstan's vice minister of trade and integration, Kazakh Ambassador to Tehran Askhat Orazbay, and ICCIMA Deputy Head Mohammadreza Karbasi, as well as the head of Iranian chambers of commerce and businessmen from the two sides.

As reported by ICCIMA portal, members of the Iran-Kazakhstan Joint Chamber of Commerce, representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways (RAI), the Trade Promotion Organization (TPO), and the Agriculture Ministry were also present at the event.

Speaking in the meeting, Shafeie underlined the two countries common cultural and religious backgrounds and said: "Our relations with neighboring countries have a special priority for the government, and Kazakhstan, as one of the largest countries in Central Asia, has an important place for us in Iran's foreign policy."

Iran, Kazakhstan aiming for realizing \$6b in annual trade



ICCIMA Deputy Head Mohammadreza Karbasi (1st R) and ICCIMA Head Gholam Hossein Shafeie (2nd R)

"In the last two years, despite the coronavirus pandemic the borders of the two countries were never closed and commercial goods were exchanged through water borders,"

Shafeie added.

He stressed that given the resources and capabilities of the two countries in various fields such as oil, gas, and shipping in the Caspian

Sea, petrochemicals, agriculture, metals, minerals and chemicals, animal husbandry, construction materials, and technical services and engineering, bilateral relation with the Republic of Kazakhstan has special significance for Iran.

"Especially given the active presence of Kazakhstan in global interactions, as well as its membership in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Shanghai Agreement, the potential for the development of trade relations between the two countries is more than before," the official said.

Further in the forum, Orazbay stated that holding this event on the eve of the 30th anniversary of Kazakhstan's independence is of special importance for the country, adding: "Kazakhstan is not only the largest country in Central Asia but also the largest economy among them. At present, Kazakhstan is one of the 50 most developed countries in the world, and with the plans made, we want to become one of the top 30 countries in the world in the future."

Torebayev for his part noted that Iran and Kazakhstan have always had friendly social, cultural, and political relations and are close to each other.

"The possibility of communication by rail, sea, and air between the two countries has brought their relations closer together," he stressed.

Stock market to bring positive returns to shareholders in H2: analyst

TEHRAN – Capital Market Analyst Soheil Kolehchi believes the stock market is going to be able to compete with other parallel markets for bringing positive returns to investors in the second half of the current Iranian calendar year (September 22, 2021-March 20, 2022), IRNA reported.

Stating that the stock market can be one of the suitable markets for investment in the second half of the year, Kolehchi said: "The capital market can provide an acceptable return to shareholders and experience good growth compared to other parallel markets by the end of the year."

"The stock market can grow by the end of the year as the prevailing environment for investing in other parallel markets (including the forex, gold, and housing markets) is calm

and nothing special is going to happen in any of them," he explained.

Emphasizing the sharp decline in the number of deals in the housing market in recent months, Kolehchi noted: "The foreign currency exchange market is also experiencing slight fluctuations."

The capital market expert continued: "Due to the existence of such conditions, the capital market takes the same path as other markets and takes a slow path to ascend. This market will be accompanied by many ups and downs in its path but eventually, it moves upward."

"It seems that the cement industry and the banking group can be suitable industries for investment and provide bigger returns by the end of the year; therefore, we can pay special attention to these groups compared to other

industries for investment," he added.

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 year, compared to the first half of the year.

Safari had mentioned the support programs carried out by the government as a positive factor that has impacted the trades in the stock market, saying that such measures have ensured the growth of the market in the future.

He pointed to the upward trend of the market and noted: "despite the fact that the market has always experienced some decline in the last two months of summer, this summer the positive news over the nuclear deals and the prospects of lifting the sanctions pushed the market up."

Iran, Switzerland seeking to enhance agricultural co-op

TEHRAN – Iranian Agriculture Minister Javad Sadati Nejad met with Switzerland's Parliament Speaker on Tuesday during which the two sides stressed expansion of agricultural cooperation between the two countries, IRIB reported.

Speaking in the meeting, Sadati Nejad said Iran seeks to develop agricultural cooperation with Switzerland in the form of two investment projects in the north and south of the country.

The agriculture minister pointed to two major investment projects in the north and south of the country and said: "Each of these projects requires an investment of about two billion dollars, and we hope to achieve positive results [with Switzerland] in this regard."

According to Sadati Nejad, the project in the north of the country is in the field of rice production, and with the implementation of this project 1.2 million tons will be added to the country's rice production. The investment project in the south of the country is in Khuzestan Province, it covers 250,000 hectares of land and is aimed for boosting grain production.

"In our country, there are unique opportunities for cooperation with Switzerland, and we can have closer relations in the field of agriculture," the minister stressed.

The official expressed hope that trade relations between the two countries would continue despite the obstacles, saying: "over the past years, these interactions have existed in various fields like agricultural seeds, pesticide control, and despite sanctions, Switzerland has



continued its services and trade transactions with Iran."

He noted that the agricultural ministry has defined big projects across the country, adding that Iran could also have joint investment projects with Switzerland.

Pointing out that the two sides need money transfer channels to continue trade, the minister added that one of the platforms that can be used in this regard is the humanitarian channel that has been set up between Iran and Switzerland, but money transfer has not been done through it yet.

The official further mentioned Iran's export capacities, saying that pistachios, saffron, and medicinal plants are among the popular products that can be exported from Iran to Switzerland.

TEDPIX drops 38,700 points on Tuesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), lost 38,772 points to 1,418 million on Tuesday.

As reported, over 5,965 billion securities worth 48.875 trillion rials (about \$1.163 billion) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index fell 30,996 points, and the second market's index dropped 70,033 points.

TEDPIX rose 3.5 percent in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

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

A capital market analyst has said 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.

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

As ISNA reported, increasing the role of the capital market in financing production companies and projects, diversifying financial instruments in the capital market, eliminating unnecessary regulations and barriers, facilitating the entry of companies into the stock market, reducing the cost of issuing bonds by facilitating relevant regulations, canceling monopolies and facilitating licensing for stock market-related services such as portfolio management, marketing and brokerage, reforming corporate governance to manage conflict of interest between major and minor stakeholders and finally providing incentives for people to invest indirectly in the capital market have been mentioned as the major programs that the economy ministry is going to pursue in order to improve the capital market.

Export from South Khorasan rises 14% in H1

TEHRAN- The value of export from South Khorasan province in the east of Iran has risen 14 percent during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21-September 22), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, a provincial official announced.

Saeed Beheshti-Rad, the head of Commerce Office of the province's Industry, Mining and Trade Department, said that 564,000 tons of products worth \$65 million were exported from South Khorasan in the first half of the present year, indicating 26 percent decline in terms of weight, as compared to the same time span of the previous year.

He named melon and watermelon, cement, ceramic tiles, distilled fuel oils, gas oil, bitumen, rebars and dates the main export items, and Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Turkmenistan the major export destinations.

The official further announced that 1,157 tons of products worth \$380 million were imported to the province in the first half of this year, showing 27 percent growth as compared to the same period



of time in the past year.

He named tile production line parts, accessories and parts related to rubber mine, alfalfa seeds, mangosteen, roasted hemp and basil seeds as the major imported items, and United Arab Emirates, Georgia, and Afghanistan as the main sources of imports.

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 191 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 191 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.

Iraqi parties reject "scam" election

From page 1 ▶ One of the Popular Mobilization Units (also known as the Hashd al-Sha'abi) most powerful faction, the Hezbollah Brigades, rejected the election as "the biggest scam and rip-off the Iraqi people have been subjected to in modern history."

The Hezbollah Brigades spokesman, Abu Ali al-Askari, accused the new electoral system of attempts to distort

the image of the popular force saying, "the Hashed al-Shaabi brothers are the main targets".

The Popular Mobilization Units was formed in 2014 and went on to play the most significant role in the defeat of Takfiri Daesh terrorists, which at one point had expanded its control of Iraq to over a third of the country.

After defeating Daesh, many of the Popular Mobilization Units went on to integrate into Iraq's state security apparatus as per a law passed by parliament. Others went into politics and joined the Conquest (Fatah) alliance which won second place in the 2018 parliamentary election. The alliance fielded many of its candidates in parliament.

The Iraqi Electoral Commission later said the votes of 3,100 polling stations would be counted manually and added to the announced results.

Sunday's parliamentary vote, the fifth in the violence-ravaged country since the U.S.-led invasion in 2003, was marked by a turnout of 41 percent.

It did, however, for the first time, use a new bio-metric electronic voting system. The system automatically shut down at 6 pm on Sunday.

A copy of the results was sent to every party or independent candidate, which could be a major sign of why so many parties are opposing the election result as there are reports the numbers they received did not match the numbers announced.

Iraq's election commission declared before



the election on Sunday that it would announce the results by afternoon the following day. However, the announcement of the full results was delayed by up to seven and a half hours, with the only explanation given was technical problems. The commission did not explain exactly why those technical problems were.

According to preliminary results from the electoral commission, the biggest winner appeared to be the movement of Shia cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, which increased its lead to 73 of the legislature's 329 seats. Parliament speaker Mohamad al-Halbousi's Toqadom (progress party) came in second place with 38 seats, despite state TV stating 43 seats. In third place (according to the election commission) was the state of law coalition with 37 seats. Former prime minister Nouri al-Maliki also leads the party.

There were fears before the election that the German-made (imported from South Korea) bio-metric electronic voting system could be subject to hacking from foreign powers.

Incumbent Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi's political future is uncertain, with few analysts willing to predict who will emerge as the country's new leader. The incumbent Prime Minister brought forward the vote from 2022 to appease a mostly youth-led protest movement that erupted two years ago against corruption, unemployment and crumbling public services.

Following the election, Muqtada al-Sadr delivered a defiant speech talking about the future of the country, which observers said the tone sounded like that of a country's leader, not a party leader.

No party has ever won a majority out of parliament's 329 seats, so the usual negotiations to form the biggest alliance are expected to drag on longer.

The process of forming a new government (which had been expected to be formed

quicker this time than the previous elections) is something still hanging in the air.

But there remains a big question mark after the objections voiced by so many parties over what they say is an election "scam". Who interfered?

In any case, the Popular Mobilization Units (affiliated with the conquest alliance) are not expected to go anywhere. They have vowed to preserve the country's sovereignty against any foreign occupation. They mean they will not rest until Iraq's sovereignty is returned from the U.S. occupation.

That means the end of American military forces on Iraqi soil, an end to American warplanes flying over the skies of Iraq without prior permission of Baghdad. The closure of all U.S. military bases scattered across the country; Iraqi security personnel have no access to it, and it is unknown what is happening there. Essentially, American forces (except those advising Iraqi pilots on the F-15 fighter jets the Iraqi government has purchased) pack up their bags and leave the country.

The party that won the most seats, the Sadr party itself, has called for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq, where Washington maintains a force of at least 2,500 and an unknown number stationed at the U.S. embassy, which is viewed as a city within a city conspiring the large scale of the "diplomatic mission". The Popular Mobilization Forces argue this is the government's job, and it will exhaust all diplomatic efforts to achieve that goal. But if the government cannot achieve the end of the occupation through dialogue, they Popular Mobilization Forces and the Iraqi resistance have repeatedly declared they are prepared to resort to the use of arms and end the American occupation.

According to many analysts, only then can foreign interference end in Iraq's domestic affairs and only then can Iraq's economy and services to the local population improve.

Safar Barlek of the 21st century: Erdogan the new caliph

From page 1 ▶ during the chaos of the futile war on ISIS seemed to be reachable. By reaching his aim, Erdogan will be able to open a corridor for the Qatari gas pipelines and realize the dream of retrieving the legacy of the old Turkish Petroleum Company, which was seized to exist after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1925.

Consequently, Erdogan announced his desire to establish a 15-km deep buffer zone along the Syrian borders and inside the Syrian territory. This is in fact an occupation declaration, which will definitely enable him to reach the Syrian oil and gas fields. He even tried to offer the Russians a compromise that he would like to share managing these fields with them after Donald Trump's announcement of withdrawing the American troops from Syria in 2018.

It was clear since the year 2019, after attacking the Kurds in east-north Syria, that he has lost the Americans and European support in the region. Especially after inking the Russian missiles S400 deal against Washington's will. Then he supported Azerbaijan against Armenia, threatening both Iranian and Russian security.



The situation was repelled with Iran when he recited a poem on the 11th of December 2020, which could have provoked the feelings of the Azeris in Iran. On the 28th of February 2021, he even accused Iran of harboring the Kurdistan Workers' Party, which Turkey considers a terrorist organization.

Now the situation is escalating again. A few days ago, the Iranian Army's Ground Force launched the "Fatih Khyber" maneuvers in the northwest of the country near the border with Azerbaijan, with the participation of several armored brigade, 11th artillery group, drone group, and 433rd military engineering group, with the support of airborne helicopters. A major maneuver that indicates there is an escalation between Iran and Azerbaijan, which is taking place under Turkish auspices. The escalation is an attempt to threaten Iran's security from the north.

When Dr. Mohsen Fakhrazadeh, the Iranian nuclear scientist, was assassinated at the end of last year, the American newspaper New York Times described the deed as "the most brilliant work of the Mossad". At that time, many resources revealed that the executors of the operation sneaked into Iran through Azerbaijan and were in Turkey for a while before moving. And now Iran has great concerns because Azerbaijan plays host to active Israeli and American spies.

As Iran is going now to another stage of nuclear talks with G5+1, it is an opportunity for the American and Turkish interests to meet again, as Erdogan is pushing towards achieving a victory in the region, and the Americans are trying to create trouble to distract it. We know what the Americans want, but what matters here is what Erdogan wants.

Erdogan wants to be a bigger participant in the Azeri oil industry. He wants to push Iran into aiding him to give him more space in the Syrian lands. He wants to be given a chance to save face and be granted some kind of victory in his "War on Syria". It is his wars that he is leading in Libya, Sudan, the Mediterranean Sea, and now in Afghanistan and Azerbaijan. Erdogan was preparing himself to become the first of the new coming reign of the new Ottoman Sultanate in 2023.

2023 is the date for two important occasions; the first is the Turkish presidential elections. And the second is the end of the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne. Erdogan had high hopes that he would be able to accomplish a lot before the designated date. Turkey has been involved in every trouble in any Arab country since the "Arab Spring" began. He has an agenda in each of them, from Syria to Libya, to the Mediterranean Sea, to where he seeks to preserve the Turkish right for expansion. Erdogan believed in building double

alliances between Russia and Iran from one side and the United States through Turkey's presence in NATO from the other. He can manipulate everyone to achieve his goal in Syria to secure the Buffer Zone. He started a policy of Turkification in northern Syria, which is against international law in occupied regions and countries. In addition, as he is still politically maneuvering to reach this goal, he is becoming more like a bull chasing a red carpet. He is backstabbing everyone, even his allies in Nusra.

Erdogan, the paranoid, has used every possible method to rally aggregations against local governments and authorities in each country as he built his alliances. In Syria, he played on sectarian differences to rally Sunnis and, in particular, on Muslim Brotherhood groups to build alliances against the current Syrian government. He imported terrorists from al-Nusra, armed them and ideologically manipulated terrorists from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and the Chinese Xinjiang, into fighting in Syria in the name of Islam against the Alawites "regime". He represented himself as the protector of Sunnis. In order to justify bombarding the Kurds, he was playing on nationalistic feelings.

In Libya, he played on empowering the Muslim Brotherhood against other atheist groups, as he hates them. He empowered the al-Wifaq government along with the Americans to pave the way to dividing Libya, where the dirty international game almost tore the country apart using terrorist groups financially backed by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Turkey, i.e. Qatar.

In Azerbaijan, he presented himself as the protector of the Sunnis. Turkish intelligence paid around four million dollars to regroup Sunnis in Said and Tripoli. The same thing was going on with Hamas in Palestine in the name of the freedom of the Palestinians and their fight against Israel. In the Arab countries, Erdogan worked hard to be designated as the new Muslim leader and was very careful not to be perceived as a Turk but as a Muslim. And now the same game is going in Azerbaijan.

Erdogan's interference in Azerbaijan does not fall out of the Americans' expected Turkish role. A few days ago, a Congress member praised the important role Turkey is playing within NATO. It is not a language of reconciliation; it is a language of playing on Erdogan's ego. Therefore, it is only fair to question the Turkish role in Azerbaijan, in particular to the relation between the two mentioned countries and Israel.

Iran has been dealing with the two countries with tolerance, as neighboring countries, particularly Turkey, who is playing in this case on the nationalistic feelings of the Azeris in Iran to start a trouble, in the least expression. It is clear, if the situation escalates with Azerbaijan, Iran would be walking through land mines. Therefore, it needs to be carefully leading its diplomatic negotiations. On the other hand, Iran knows, but it needs to acknowledge that as long as Turkey occupies one meter in northern Syrian, the region will never see peace and security. The first step to get the Americans out of Iraq and Syria will be to cut Erdogan's feet in Syria, once and for all.

In leading his quest for victory, Erdogan moved the terrorists around the region. Now he is filling Azerbaijan with these mercenary terrorists from the Arab region and center of Asia, just like the Ottoman when they dragged the compulsorily recruited soldiers from their villages and houses from all over the Arab countries to fight their war in the Baltic region. A dream that needs to put an end to it. The Syrians believe that it ends with ending the Turkish occupation in Idlib. However, it is important that their friends believe that too.

The Safar Barlek was the mobilization effected by the late Ottoman Empire during the Second Balkan War of 1913 and World War I from 1914 to 1918, which involved the forced conscription of Lebanese, Palestinian, Syrian, and Kurdish men to fight on its behalf.

To avoid sinking, Lebanon should sail east: Sanctions are already here

By Julia M.K.

In a September 28 statement following a meeting with Speaker of the Parliament Nabih Berri, new Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati said that he had "no objection" to visiting Syria, but on the condition that "Lebanon does not face any sanctions."

However, the sanctions-like effects are already here and have ravaged Lebanon's economy for months, if not years.

Washington has already triggered and tightened the conditions in Lebanon that have resulted in extreme hyperinflation, strict capital controls, and the massive loss of savings for many Lebanese. The extreme economic strain that has been inflicted as a form of sanctions on neighboring Syria has come full force onto Lebanon, with the impacts of the Caesar Act rippling over to the Lebanese economy.

While the "sanctions" label has been equivocal, it is undeniable that there is a current blockade against Lebanon; since 2019, its oil cartels have refused to purchase oil for anything less than the dollar equivalent as the local currency tanks and the purchasing power of millions of Lebanese is diminished. The US-allied Central Bank governor, Riad Salameh, complied in not only implementing a financial engineering scheme that eventually shuttled dollars out of the country, but also in implementing sanctions that hurt the Lebanese economy as a whole as well as putting the final end to fuel subsidies, an austerity measure which already pushed Lebanon's already soaring gas prices further in cost, a policy decision that was opposed by the president and parliament.

Throughout the year, Lebanon was forbidden from importing petroleum from other nations. In April of this year, facing impending cuts to Lebanon's electricity and fuel supply, then-acting Lebanese PM Hassan Diab sought to secure oil from Iraq. The trip was halted and the deal was sabotaged by U.S. and Saudi pressure on the Iraqi



prime minister al-Kadhimi not to meet with the Lebanese caretaker PM. Since then, U.S. maneuvers at preventing Lebanon from obtaining any petrol for Lebanon were sabotaged and prevented --until Hezbollah moved forth with plans to secure oil from Iran, in which the U.S., on cue, rushed to provide its "alternative proposal" of gas from Egypt and Jordanian electricity.

Mikati told CNN in an interview with the channel that he was "saddened" by the apparent breach of "sovereignty" made by the life-saving import of Iranian oil. In the same interview, he had to push back against the accusations by the CNN reporter that upon his appointment that he was forced to appoint two Hezbollah allied ministers, despite the representation of multiple political parties in the Lebanese cabinet, that somehow the Hezbollah picks are "coerced."

The only coercive element, of course, has been the United States and the IMF, which have imposed strangling economic austerity measures, unfair political demands, and illegal economic measures regardless of the compliance of targeted nations.

As America plunders Lebanon's economy into the ground in attempts to achieve its aims of elimination of Hezbollah, the east, such as China, Russia, and Iran extend their hand to similarly debt-trapped nations in the global south, moving in cooperation forward instead of backward. Iran's admission into the SCO has enabled it to maneuver past much-needed sanctions relief regardless of Washington's whims or renegotiated conditionalities. Syria has had many nations regionally and internationally approach it in reconciliation, and it is evident that the only option for any nation in the Global South, whether besieged economically or militarily, to move forth on its own terms, with the aid and assistance of nations willing to assist on the basis of cooperation rather than economic subservience.

China, Russia, and Iran extend their hand to debt-trapped nations in the global south.

of win-win than economic subservience.

Russia and China have repeatedly extended favorable offers to Lebanon to construct badly needed electrical infrastructure, including the Russian offer to fix and modernize the Beirut port, offers which are far more favorable to Lebanon than the usual debt-traps with

no result from myriad World Bank and EU funded projects promised over the years. China has proven its capabilities worldwide in both relieving smaller nations of debt and building infrastructure; Iran, similarly has broken blockades with its delivery of fuel to Venezuela and Lebanon.

If Mikati wants to deliver on his promise of forming a "rescue" government that will alleviate the effects of economic strangulation on Lebanon, he must look to move the country forward instead of cowering backwards. Lebanese Security General Abbas Ibrahim was enthusiastic about opening borders with Syria following a high-level delegation visit earlier last month to facilitate the U.S. energy plan that required the imports to navigate through Syrian infrastructure.

Even the U.S. is expected to renege upon its word on its own proposal, evident following the scrutinization of longtime U.S. ally King Abdullah of Jordan in the Pandora Papers released Sunday that coincided with the official securitization of cross-border coordination between the two nations that would enable the transport of energy from Jordan to Syria. Years ago, it was revealed and admitted by the U.S. itself that its allies supported ISIL in Syria, and the coincidental destruction of a Syrian gas pipeline on September 18 should signal the unreliability of both the U.S. and its allies, both in the form of international financial institutions and through its geopolitical alliances, in doing anything constructive for Lebanon's economic recovery. As Lebanon hits its lowest point ever, it's evident that it has nothing left to lose by looking east for allies that have extended their hand towards Beirut to pull it out of its sinking ship.

Julia M.K. is a Beirut-based analyst, writer, and political commentator. Along with regular appearances on Press TV, her work has also appeared in Al-Mayadeen, Al-Akhar, Mirat Al-Jazeera, Counterpunch, and elsewhere.

Iran national handicrafts exhibit canceled amid COVID uncertainty

TEHRAN – The 35th national handicrafts exhibition of Iran has been canceled due to ongoing uncertainty around the COVID-19 pandemic.

The major event was due to take place at the Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds from October 19 to 22.

“This exhibition was to be held from October 19 to 22. However, to hold the exhibition as glorious as possible, it is postponed to a time when the coronavirus restrictions come to an end through public vaccination,” deputy tourism minister Pouya Mahmoudian said on Tuesday.

“This year, after research, we concluded that the coronavirus restrictions would remain in place... moreover, the health of craftspeople is very important to us, so it was decided to postpone the exhibition to a more appropriate time,” she explained.

Organizers of the exhibition had previously publicized that the event might be postponed to another date if the unstable condition of the pandemic continues.

Last year, the 34th national handicrafts exhibition was held online for the first time in a decision made by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts to promote handicrafts, craftspeople, and dealers in the pandemic era.

The exhibit traditionally brings together craftspeople and artisans from all over the Islamic Republic to showcase arrays of personal ornamentation, woodwork, illuminated manuscript, miniature, textile printing, enamel, leatherwork, handwoven textile, calligraphy, traditional musical instrument, metalwork, and marquetry to name a few. Nomadic culinary arts, live workshops, and performances are among other themes for the event.

With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the number of cities and villages registered by the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries,



Chile with four, and India with three ones come next.

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

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

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

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

\$1.7m invested in North Khorasan's handicrafts sector



TEHRAN – A sum of 70 billion rials (about \$1.7 million at the official exchange rate of 42,000 rials per dollar) has been invested in the handicrafts sector of North Khorasan province during the first half of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21), the provincial tourism chief said on Tuesday.

Handicraft products worth over 50 billion

rials (\$1.2 million) have been exported from the northeastern province during the mentioned time, Ali Mostofian said.

He also noted that during the mentioned period the province's artisans and crafters received 78 billion rials (\$1.8 million) in loans to support their businesses.

Currently, over 17,000 artisans and crafters are practicing 61 handicraft fields across the ancient province, he noted.

Experts believe though the northeastern province may not be the first choice of travelers, its tourism industry is getting momentum.

According to Lonely Planet, most foreign tourists pass straight through North Khorasan in transit between Mashhad and Gorgan, but if you have time to explore, it's worth diverting south from the capital, Bojnurd, towards Esfarayen, famed for its wrestling tournaments, the remarkable citadel of Belqays and the partly preserved stepped village of Roein some 20km north.

Field survey traces Neanderthal remains in western Iran

From page 1 ▶ “Neanderthal extinction has been a matter of debate for many years. Discoveries, better chronologies, and genomic evidence have done much to clarify some of the issues. This evidence suggests that Neanderthals became extinct around 40,000–37,000 years before the present (BP), after a period of coexistence with Homo sapiens of several millennia, involving biological and cultural interactions between the two groups.”

However, the bulk of this evidence relates to Western Eurasia, and recent work in Central Asia and Siberia has shown that there is considerable local variation. Southwestern Asia, despite having a number of significant Neanderthal remains, has not played a major part in the debate over extinction” according to Heydari-Guran who led the Bawa Yawan excavation project.

In a review of the present study, Feridoun Biglari, a Paleolithic archaeologist at Iran National Museum, has said: “This recent discovery, along with other Neanderthal remains previously found in other parts of Zagros, including Shanidar Cave, Bisotun

Cave, and Wezmeh Cave, indicate that Neanderthals were present in a wide geographical range of Zagros from northwest to west of this mountain range since at least 80,000 until about 40,000–45,000 years ago when they disappeared and Homo Sapiens populations spread into the region”.

The Bawa Yawan is the second Neanderthal tooth that has been discovered in Iran. The first Neanderthal tooth was discovered in the Wezmeh cave near Kermanshah in 2001.

Moreover, the discovery of the third tooth of the Neanderthal child was announced by a joint Iranian-French team that was discovered in Qal-e Kord near Qazvin in 2019. These discoveries show that Iran has a rich paleoanthropological record and the country can produce important data in the future.

A 2019 study published in the Journal of Human Evolution,



suggests that Neanderthals were roaming over the Iranian Zagros mountain range sometimes between 40 to 70 thousand years ago.

Until the late 20th century, Neanderthals were regarded as genetically, morphologically, and behaviorally distinct from living humans. However, more recent discoveries about this well-preserved fossil Eurasian population have revealed an overlap between living and archaic humans.

Neanderthals lived before and during the last Ice Age of the Pleistocene in some of the most unforgiving environments ever inhabited by humans. They developed a successful culture, with a complex stone tool technology, that was based on hunting, with some scavenging and local plant collection. Their survival during tens of thousands of years of the last glaciation is a remarkable testament to human adaptation.

Zagros mountain range in southwestern Iran, extending northwest-southeast from the border areas of eastern Turkey and northern Iraq to the Strait of Hormuz, is about 990 miles (1,600 km) long and more than 150 miles (240 km) wide. It forms the extreme western boundary of the Iranian plateau, though its foothills to the north and west extend into adjacent countries.

According to Britannica, the oldest rocks in the Zagros range date to Precambrian time (that is, before 541 million years ago), and the Paleozoic Era rocks date to between 541 million and 252 million years ago are found at or near the highest peaks.

Most of the rocks in the mountain range, however, are limestone and shale from the Mesozoic Era (252 million to 66 million years ago) and the Paleogene Period (66 million to 23 million years ago). The range was primarily formed by orogenies (mountain-building episodes) driven by the movement of the Arabian Plate underneath the Eurasian Plate during the Miocene and Pliocene epochs (23 million to 2.6 million years ago).

Culinary, handicrafts exhibit underway at Jameh Mosque of Saveh

TEHRAN – The 12th-century Jameh Mosque of Saveh is hosting an exhibition of a wide variety of local dishes as well as traditional arts and handicrafts, Saveh's tourism chief has announced.

The exhibition that displays artworks by over 50 crafters in the fields of leatherworks, woodcarving, pottery, and carpet, aims to promote cohesion between artists and encourage them to pursue their crafts in the future, Reza Ayyaz said on Monday.

The event also aims to draw further attention to the mosque as a historical monument and tourist attraction, the official added.

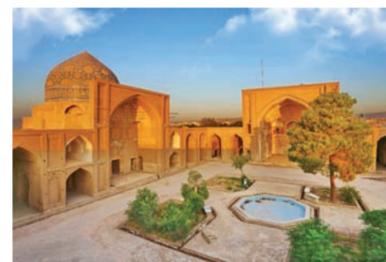
Sources say that the Jameh Mosque of Saveh, which is sometimes referred to as “a museum of Islamic architecture”, has continuously been a busy place of worship, yet the monument has undergone restoration projects since the time it was completed in the 12th century onwards.

The Seljuk-era mosque is still a big source of charm for the faithful, sightseers, and buffs of history and Islamic architecture. It comprises a courtyard, porch, minaret, dome, and two archaic altars ornamented with Kufic calligraphic motifs.

The mosque is named after Saveh, the central Iranian city. The terms “Jameh Mosque” or “Masjed-e Jameh” or “Friday Mosque” are used in Iran for a grand communal mosque where mandatory Friday prayers are/were performed: the phrase is used in other Muslim countries but only in Iran does it designate this purpose.

Iranian cuisine, a cultural element

Iranian cuisine, usually dominated by fragrant herbs, varies from region to region. It principally



accentuates freshness, deliciousness, and colorfulness.

Experts say that food is not merely an organic product with biochemical compositions. However, for members of each community, food is defined as a cultural element.

No Persian meal is complete without an abundance of herbs. Every table is usually set with sabzi-khordan, a basket of fresh herbs, radishes, and scallions, which are eaten raw and by the handful. Persian cuisine is, above all, about balance – of tastes and flavors, textures and temperatures.

Wide-ranging handicrafts

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

In January 2020, the cities of Shiraz, Malayer, and Zanjan and the village of Qassemabad were designated by the WCC- Asia Pacific Region, putting

Iran's number of world crafts cities and villages from ten to 14.

Shiraz was named a “world city of [diverse] handicrafts”. Malayer was made a global hub for woodcarving and carved-wood furniture. Zanjan gained the title of a “world city of filigree”. And Qassemabad village, which is nationally known for its traditional costumes, was also promoted to a world hub of handicrafts. Chador Shab, a kind of homemade outer garment for women, was, however, the main subject for the WCC assessment for the village.

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). The country's handicrafts exports slumped during the mentioned months in comparison to the same period last year earlier due to the damage the coronavirus pandemic has inflicted on global trade.

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

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

Tourism industry, universities should forge strong partnership to solve problems: expert

TEHRAN – Further cooperation between the tourism industry and universities is essential to solve tourism-related problems, the Head of the Iranian Tour Operators Association has announced.

By bringing science and industry together, the universities will be able to solve many of the challenges facing tourism, Mehr quoted Ebrahim Pourfaraj as saying on Tuesday.

The reasons for the development and the factors leading to the backwardness of tourism in the country need to be identified, the official added.

In this regard, a review of one hundred years of Iran's tourism industry can be used by experts to provide data and statistics related to the useful, effective, and even destructive activities, he noted.

“It is only by understanding the history and making decisions based on the experiences of our forefathers that we can learn from our mistakes and avoid repeating them.”

As evidenced by experience, the intellectual and financial support of industry and universities has led to positive results for the development of industry, he mentioned.

He also noted that by growing the tourism industry, the main unemployment issue facing the youth will be largely solved, since tourism creates jobs.

Iran is potentially a booming destination for travelers seeking cultural attractions, breathtaking sceneries, and numerous UNESCO-registered sites. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, Iran aims to increase the number of



tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025.

Last November, the World Tourism Organization announced that international tourist arrivals to Iran plunged 72% during the first eight months of 2020 when compared to 2019, highlighting the severe impact of COVID-19 as the main factor.

Optimistic forecasts, however, expect

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

An available data show eight million tourists visited the Islamic Republic during the first ten months of the past Iranian calendar year (started March 21, 2019). Iran welcomed some 7.8 million foreign nationals a year earlier, achieving a 52.5 percent increase year on year.

The ancient land embraces hundreds of historical sites such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 26 being inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Timurid forces defeated the Mamluk army in Syria and that of the Ottomans at Ankara (1400–1402). In 1405, while preparing to invade China, Timur died.

The vast empire he carved proved to be difficult to keep; his son and successor, Shah Rukh (r. 1405–47), barely managed to maintain the empire's boundaries, and subsequent Timurid princes sought to establish their own kingdoms, weakening the empire with internal strife. Eventually, only Khurasan and Transoxiana remained Timurid, and during the remaining years of the dynasty, these were ruled by separate branches of the Timurid family.

initial mechanical and chemical cleaning, etc. were among operations performed during the restoration process of this wooden box, the official explained.

The Timurids were the final great dynasty to emerge from the Central Asian steppe. In 1370, the eponymous founder, Timur (Tamerlane), who belonged to a Turko-Mongol tribe settled in Transoxiana, became master of this province and established Samarqand as his capital.

Within thirty-five years, he subjugated all of Central Asia, greater Iran, and Iraq, as well as parts of southern Russia and the Indian subcontinent. To the west,

Five monuments to turn into creative centers for handicrafts

TEHRAN – A selection of five Iranian historical and cultural monuments will be turned into creative centers for handicrafts, the head of the Fund for Development of Handicrafts and Handmade Carpet and Revitalization and Utilization of Historical and Cultural Places has announced.

Haj Shahbaz Khan Public Bathhouse in western Kermanshah province, Moshir Divan Mansion in western Kordestan province, Zaeim Abui Mansion in southeastern Sistan-Baluchestan province, Najafi and Haj Raeis mansions both in southwestern Bushehr province, have recently been ceded to the private sector in order to be converted into handicrafts centers, Hadi Mirzai said on Tuesday.

Besides maintaining and preserving historical sites, the establishment of these centers enables them to promote handicrafts, encourage and honor artists, veterans, and activists who are involved in various fields of handicraft and handwoven carpets, the official added.

These centers also aim to develop, promote, and export local handicraft products while also creating local employment opportunities in the fields of cultural heritage, tourism, and handicrafts, he noted.

Some historical sites and monuments across Iran have been temporarily ceded to the private sector during the past couple of years under the close supervision of the Fund, to achieve higher productivity and better maintenance.

The lack of a sufficient government budget for the restoration of all centuries-old sites is the main reason behind the ceding projects.

Upon an initiative scheme, the Fund (known



by its Persian acronym Saabta) provides the opportunity for privately-owned businesses to run certain old structures to be maintained and repurposed into hotels, traditional restaurants, or lodging places.

According to cultural heritage officials, this sort of investment seems to be attractive for private investors, because accommodation in [well-preserved] monuments is attractive for both domestic and foreign tourists.

In 2019, the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts announced that of the numerous historical buildings and structures that are scattered across Iran, some 2,500 ones need restoration.

Iran hosts some of the world's oldest cultural monuments including bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, gardens, as well as rich natural and rural landscapes, 26 of which have been registered on the prestigious UNESCO World Heritage list.

Centuries-old wooden box restored to original state

TEHRAN – An exquisite wooden box, which reportedly dates from 580 years ago, has been fully restored to its original state under the supervision of cultural heritage officials in Semnan province.

Being kept at Imamzadeh Taj al-Din, a religious shrine in Parvar village of the northcentral province, the lavishly decorated box dates back to the Teymurid era (1370–1507), provincial tourism chief Hamidreza Doustmohammadi said on Monday.

Documentation, fault detection, and identification of effective factors in its destruction, sampling of various wooden pieces, wood typology, disinfection,

Iran, China to develop co-op on combating desertification

TEHRAN – Iran and China discussed ways on Monday to enhance cooperation on combating desertification, ISNA reported.

The Forests, Rangelands, and Watershed Management Organization (FRWMO) and the Xinjiang Institute of Geography and Ecology of China held a virtual meeting on Monday with the aim of sharing knowledge and experiences from measures and developing cooperation in combating desertification and wind erosion.

Vahid Jafarian, director of the FRWMO for desert affairs, said that desert ecosystems in Iran and China have created common challenges such as sand and dust storms, drought, and land degradation.

To overcome the existing challenges, we need capacity building, training, and transfer of experiences as strategic plans of the FRWMO desert affairs, he added.

The joint strategic document and projects of Iran and China to combat desertification include the use of environmentally friendly economic capacities such as nature tourism development, use of renewable energy, and development of medicinal plants through scientific meetings, education, and expert, he explained.

Some 60 percent of Iran's lands are exposed to the desert, according to the FRWMO. The progress of desertification in Iran's soil occurs in a situation where the desert per capita in Iran is more than twice the global average.



Desertification and wind erosion in natural resources is a dynamic phenomenon that changes with drought and rainfall conditions, Iran is located in an arid and ultra-arid climate and 88 percent of the country is covered by this type of climate.

This year, a total of about 3 trillion rials (around \$71 million) has been proposed for fighting desertification, but due to the drought, more funds should be spent on desertification compared to the previous years, Jafarian said in July.

Iran's deserts are affected not only by climate change and geographical location but inefficient management of natural resources. However, desertification is no longer just the cause of drought, but the decline in soil fertility and increased migration are new consequences of desertification.

On the other hand, Iran's groundwater resources are running out, as it consumes more than 85 percent of its freshwater resources annually, while global statistics show that more than 60 percent of water consumption is a sign of crisis and water stress.

Deserts are affected not only by climate change and geographical location but inefficient management of natural resources.

'Afghan rulers must be held accountable for drug trafficking'



TEHRAN – Given the withdrawal of Europeans from Afghanistan, the rulers must be held accountable for smuggling and transit of narcotics under border agreements, Qassem Rezaei, deputy commander of the Police Force, has said.

What is expected of the ruling authorities in Afghanistan is to control the borders and to be responsible for unauthorized traffic, he added.

Also be responsible for insecurity and anything that happens on the eastern borders, because according to border treaties and agreements are obliged to be accountable to Iranian border guards, although our border guards are fully prepared and if necessary, we use the forces of other organizations in this regard, Rezaei highlighted.

With the departure of Westerners from Afghanistan, the transit of narcotics was somewhat restricted, but last week more than three tons of narcotics were discovered on the eastern borders, indicating that the transit of narcotics was not

controlled across the border, he lamented.

Afghanistan's control over drug transit is our serious expectation, he noted, highlighting, some 200 tons of narcotics were produced in Afghanistan before the presence of Europeans, now it has reached over 8,000 tons, which is at least 40 times more.

Despite the coronavirus restrictions and the imposition of harsh sanctions, Iran, with sincere efforts, managed to seize an unprecedented record of more than 1140 tons of narcotics in 2020, which compared to 2019, shows a 41 percent increase in discoveries.

Iran forerunner in fight against narcotics

Iran is the leading country in the fight against narcotics worldwide; despite its proximity to Afghanistan, which is the largest producer of narcotics.

According to the UN Office, the Islamic Republic's continuous efforts to combat narcotics trafficking came up with the seizure of more than 90 percent of opium, 70 percent of morphine, and 20 percent of world heroin.

Despite the coronavirus restrictions and harsh sanctions, Iran managed to seize an unprecedented record of more than 1140 tons of narcotics in 2020.

Despite the conditions caused by the coronavirus outbreak and the imposition of harsh sanctions against the country, fortunately, with the efforts of anti-narcotics police in 2020, drug detection increased by 41 percent.

After the Islamic Revolution (in 1979), 3,800 were martyred, 12,000 were wounded and disabled in the fight against drug trafficking.

The UNODC has praised Iran's efforts to fight against narcotics trafficking on the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

The organization also officially announced that the world's first place in the discovery of opium, heroin, and morphine belongs to Iran.

According to UNODC, Iran remains one of the major transit routes for drug trafficking from Afghanistan to European countries and has had a leading role at the global level in drug-control campaigns.

UNODC World Drug Report 2020 estimates that in 2018, 91 percent of world opium, 48 percent of the world morphine, and 26 percent of the world heroin were seized by Iran.

Mustafa Prize 2021 announces winners

During this period, a joint award will be given to two scientists from the Islamic world residing in a non-Muslim country and a joint award will be given to three scientists residing in Islamic countries.

In the public section, the Mustafa Prize 2021 will be shared between Professor Kamran Vafa, an Iranian Muslim, and Professor Zahed Hassan, a Bangladeshi scientist.

Three other scientists living in Islamic countries will also share the prize, namely, Professor Mohammad Saegh, Professor Iqbal

Chaudhry, and Yahya Tilati from Morocco.

In all specialized fields of the Mustafa Prize, the nominees should be Muslim and have a high profile in scientific research. However, there would be no other limitations regarding gender and age.

In 2015, the first edition of the prize was held in Tehran, and professors Jackie Y. Ying and Omar M. Yaghi were the two winners of the 2015 Mustafa Prize.

The Mustafa Foundation seeks to encour-

age education and research and is set to play the pioneering role in developing regional relations between science and technology institutions working in member states of the Organization of Islamic Countries.

The event is held during the Islamic Unity week in Iran, which is annually celebrated between two dates of the birthday of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) by Sunnis and Shia.

The prize is granted to the works which are deemed to have improved human life and made tangible and cut-

Myriads of migratory birds flying over Gilan province

TEHRAN – With the onset of the cold season, wetlands in the northern province of Gilan are hosting thousands of migratory birds, Saeed Shahan, head of the provincial department of environment, has said.

One of the main destinations of migratory birds to distant lands is wetlands. Wetlands are ecosystems saturated with water, either seasonally or permanently.

Due to the climate characteristics of Gilan province, wetlands such as Anzali, Amirkalayeh, Bojagh, and Steel Astara wetlands are home to 200,000 to 250,000 migratory birds from the northern hemisphere in winter and summer every year.

"It is predicted that due to recent rains and rising water level of Anzali Wetland, we will host more migratory birds this year," Sasan Akbaripour, provincial DOE chief stated.

The garganey started migrating to Gilan wetlands as the vanguard of the migration period in early September, and now other species enter the province in groups of 5,000 to 10,000.

He said that favorable weather conditions, an abundance of required food, and security are the reasons for the landing of thousands of migratory birds, including ducks, swans, geese, and terns, and other birds of 81 different species in the reservoirs of Gilan.

Some 21 environmental protection checkpoints in Gilan are fully prepared to prevent illegal hunting and trapping of migratory birds and to deal seriously and legally with environmental crimes, he further highlighted.

The annual census for migratory birds in Iran begins in the middle of the Iranian calendar month of Dey (December 22-January 20) and ends in the middle of the month of Bahman (January 21-February 19), through which Iran hosts rare species of migratory birds heading from north to the southern countries due to reduced seasonal temperatures and food availability.

Iran's bird species

Hosting over 600 species of birds, Iran is a cli-



matically rich country, so it is said that the number of bird species in Iran is higher than in the whole of Europe. A wide range of wetlands is the reason behind migratory birds choosing Iran for an annual wintering habitat, as a large number of birds fly a thousand miles each year to benefit from this rich climate.

Hosting over 600 species of birds, Iran is a climatically rich country.

Every year, from early September to late February, Iran hosts rare species of migratory birds heading from north to the southern countries due to reduced seasonal temperatures and food availability.

It is estimated that there are about 50 billion birds in the world out of 9,000 species, many of which are migratory. Accordingly, about five to seven million birds migrate to Iran in different seasons. There are about 530 species of birds in Iran, 320 of which are migratory species, some of which are native species.

Among the various groups of migratory birds wintering in Iran, the largest population belongs to the group of geese, swans, and ducks amounting to 781,499 and the smallest population of seven are the long-tailed ducks or oldsquaw.

The provinces of Mazandaran and Golestan are the first provinces with the highest number of migratory birds for having sufficient resources, as the movement of migratory birds is closely linked to the seasonal availability of resources.

Nasal dose of COV Pars reduces virus transmission by 90%

From page 1 ► In the first to third phases of the trial, 14,000 people received the shot that was completely resistant to the Wuhan variant, but with the advent of the delta strain, the effectiveness of the vaccine was slightly reduced and 20 percent of those who received the vaccine had mild symptoms of the disease, which disappeared within one to two days.

Fortunately, we did not have any cases of death or hos-

pitalization among these people, and this is a sign of the effectiveness on the delta strain, he added.

According to Es'haqi, the third dose of COV Pars complements other vaccines. Pregnant women and people under the age of 18 can also receive the vaccine.

According to the Food and Drug Administration, 14 vaccines are being domestically developed in the country which are in different study phases.

The winners will be granted cash prizes amounting to \$1 million.

ting-edge innovations on the boundaries of science or have presented new scientific methodology.

ENGLISH IN USE

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Afghanistan thanks Iran for free services to refugees during COVID-19

Afghanistan has appreciated Iran for offering health and treatment services to Afghan refugees infected with coronavirus free of charge.

The Afghan Foreign Ministry in a statement on Saturday announced its gratitude and appreciation to Iran for its humanitarian efforts to address the issue of Afghan refugees in the country.

All measures, especially the recent decree by the Iranian president to provide free medical treatment to Afghan refugees in Iranian public hospitals, have assured the Afghan government, IRNA reported on Sunday.

According to the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, providing transportation services to transit trucks and providing the necessary health assistance to vulnerable Afghan nationals are among the measures that are highly appreciated.

افغانستان از همکاری ایران برای مداوای مهاجران مبتلا به کرونا قدردانی کرد

وزارت امور خارجه افغانستان از کمک و همکاری جمهوری اسلامی ایران به مهاجران افغانی مبتلا به ویروس کرونا و مداوای رایگان آنها قدردانی کرد.

وزارت امور خارجه افغانستان روز شنبه در اطلاعیه‌ای اعلام کرد: مراتب امتنان و سپاسگزاری خود را از جمهوری اسلامی ایران در رابطه به اقدامات بشردوستانه آن کشور درباره رسیدگی به مهاجرین افغان در آن کشور ابراز می‌دارد.

در این اطلاعیه آمده است: تمام اقدامات به ویژه صدور حکم اخیر رئیس جمهوری ایران برای درمان رایگان مهاجران افغان در بیمارستان های دولتی ایران موجب خاطر جمعی رهبری دولت افغانستان شد.

براساس اطلاعیه وزارت خارجه افغانستان، ایجاد تسهیلات در رفت و آمد کامیون‌های ترانزیتی و فراهم آوری مساعدت های لازم بهداشتی برای مهاجران در مناطق آسیب پذیر آن کشور اقداماتی هستند که از جانب دولت افغانستان به چشم قدردانی نگریسته می‌شوند.

COVID-19 UPDATES ON OCTOBER 12

New cases	13,391
New deaths	213
Total cases	5,729,785
Total deaths	122,868
New hospitalized patients	1,869
Patients in critical condition	5,124
Total recovered patients	5,249,956
Diagnostic tests conducted	33,453,877
Doses of vaccine injected	67,029,381



OCTOBER 13, 2021

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

Like your body your mind also gets tired so refresh it by wise sayings.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon: 11:51 Evening: 17:50 Dawn: 4:46 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 6:10 (tomorrow)

Iranian languages and scripts: overview

The term "Iranian language" is applied to any language which is descended from a proto-Iranian parent language (unattested by texts) spoken, presumably, in Central Asia in the late 3rd to early 2nd millennium BCE.

In historical times, Iranian languages have been spoken over an area stretching from easternmost Chinese Turkestan (Xinjiang province, in the case of Sogdian and Khotanese) to western Europe.

The proto-Iranian language was closely related to proto-Indo-Aryan (unattested by texts), from which various modern Indic languages are descended (e.g., Hindi, Gujarati, Urdu, Bengali), as well as the Dardic languages spoken in northwestern Pakistan.

The Iranian and Indo-Aryan language groups are commonly referred to as the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European language family, which would have been spoken several millennia earlier somewhere, perhaps, in the area of southern Russia.

A third group, the Nuristani languages, appears to constitute a separate branch of Indo-Iranian, but the exact relationship is disputed.

The Iranian languages are known from three chronological stages, commonly referred to as Old, Middle, and New Iranian. The only language of which all three stages are known is Persian, the language originally spoken in the province of Fars, which is descended from Old Persian, the language of the Achaemenid empire (6th-4th centuries BCE), and Middle Persian, the language of the Sassanid empire (3rd-7th centuries CE).

The other known Old Iranian languages are Old and Young Avestan, the languages of the Avesta, which were probably spoken in Central Asia and the area of modern Afghanistan between the mid-2nd and mid-1st millennia BCE.

Other Old Iranian languages from which no texts survive, but which were the ancestors of known Middle Iranian and New Iranian languages, include Median, the language of the Median state, known chiefly from loanwords in Old Persian, and several Scythian or Saka languages spoken north of the Black Sea.

The known Middle Iranian languages, spoken from about the 3rd century CE to about 1000 (some even later) include the following (from east to west): Khotanese, spoken in the Buddhist kingdom of Khotan located along the western part of the Southern Silk Road in Chinese Turkestan; Sogdian, the language of the kingdom of Sogdiana (approximately modern Uzbekistan); and the Chorasmanian language of the Chorasmanian state located along the upper course of the Oxus river (Amu Darya).

In the Kushan empire, or Bactria (approximately northern Afghanistan), Bactrian was spoken, which had inherited the Greek script of the settlers Alexander had left behind.

In Parthia, east of the Caspian Sea, Parthian was spoken, the language of the Parthian, or Arsacid (q.v.) empire; and in Pars, under the pre-Sassanid dynasties, Middle Persian, also called Pahlavi, was spoken, which became the official language of the Sassanid state and was the language of the Zoroastrian "Pahlavi" literature. In the area of the Caucasus, Alanic languages, descendants of Scythian, were spoken, of which little is known.

Today, Iranian languages are spoken from Turkey, Iraq, and the Caucasus in the west to Chinese Turkestan and Pakistan in the east, as well as widely in the diaspora, especially in Europe and America.

There are several literary languages, among them the following: Persian (Farsi), spoken

throughout Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and in adjacent areas; Ossetic, spoken in Ossetia in the southern Caucasus in two main variants, Digoron and Iron; Kurdish, spoken in three principal variants in eastern Turkey and Syria, northern Iraq, and western Iran, as well as in surrounding areas; Baluchi (several dialects), spoken in eastern Iran and western Pakistan, but also in southern Afghanistan and Central Asia; and Pashto (several dialects), spoken mainly in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Non-literary languages and dialects comprise the following:

Northwestern and central Iran

Taleshi on the western shore of the Caspian Sea and Tati and Azari dialects from Iranian Azerbaijan through the Central Province and into Gilan, corresponding roughly to ancient Media; the Caspian dialects, Gilaki in Gilan and Mazanderani; Zaza (Dimli) in eastern Turkey and Gurani (including Awromani) in eastern Iraq and western Iran; several dialects on the northern edge of the Dasht-e Kavir, among them Semnani; and the Central dialects, comprising a number of more or less interrelated dialects spoken in an area between Hamadan, Dasht-e Kavir, Kashan, and Isfahan.

Southwestern and southern Iran

Lori (in several varieties) and Bakhtiari; Fars dialects in the province of Fars; Larestani (in several dialects) in Larestan; dialects in the area from Bandar Abbas (Bandari) and Hormoz to Minab and further north to Jiroft and Kahnuj; Bashkardi in two dialects in Bashkerd, southeast of Bandar Abbas; and Kumzari on the Musandam peninsula across the Strait of Hormoz. These are also called the "Perside" dialects.

Southeastern Iran

Baluchi, spoken chiefly in Iranian and Pakistani Baluchistan.

Afghanistan and Central Asia

Parachi and Ormul in central Afghanistan and across the border in Pakistan; Eshkashmi and Sanglichi to the west of the Wakhan corridor; Yidgha in eastern Afghanistan and Munji/Munjani in western Pakistan (related to Bactrian); the Yazghulami-Shughni group in northern Afghanistan and Central Asia, including Sarikoli in western Chinese Turkestan; Yaghnobi in the Yaghnob valley in Tajikistan (laterally related to Sogdian); and Wakhi in the Wakhan corridor in northeastern Afghanistan (laterally related to Khotanese).

These languages and dialects can be divided into several larger groups on the basis of phonetic, grammatical, and lexical features (isoglosses). For instance, the languages of southwestern and southern Iran often have a d- where other Iranian languages have a z- (e.g., the verb "to know": Persian dan-, dun-, but elsewhere zan-, zun-, etc.).

This isogloss separates Persian from most other Iranian languages and dialects, including Kurdish and Mazanderani, for instance. Other isoglosses, however, such as the words for "to do" and "to speak," are shared by Persian (and the other Perside dialects), Kurdish, and Mazanderani, which all have forms from kun- kart (kirt) and gow- guft, against surrounding dialects with forms from kar- kart (kirt) and wach- (waj-) waxt (wat).

A grammatical feature typical of most Iranian languages (including Pahlavi), but lost in New Persian, Lori-Bakhtiari, and the Caspian dialects, is the ergative construction, according to which, instead of saying "I saw them," one uses a construction meaning literally "by me seen they are."

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica

Today, Iranian languages are spoken from Turkey, Iraq, and the Caucasus in the west to Chinese Turkestan and Pakistan in the east.

TEHRAN – Iran plans to celebrate Hafez Day in the Indian city of Hyderabad by organizing an art exhibition, which will open on Wednesday at the Salar Jung Museum.

A collection of photos of Shiraz, Hafez's hometown, calligraphy and wood inlay works will be showcased at the exhibition, which will be organized by the Shiraz Municipality and the Consulate General of Iran in Hyderabad.

As the central part of the cultural program, the photo exhibition will put on view a collection of pictures of fascinating religious, cultural, historical and tourist attractions of the southern Iranian city, the Shiraz Municipality announced on Tuesday.

Several calligraphers have been invited to inscribe live poems from Hafez, one of the finest lyric poets of Iran who lived all his life in Shiraz during the 14th century.

Three rare manuscripts of the Divan of Hafez are scheduled to be showcased at the exhibition, which will run until October 22.

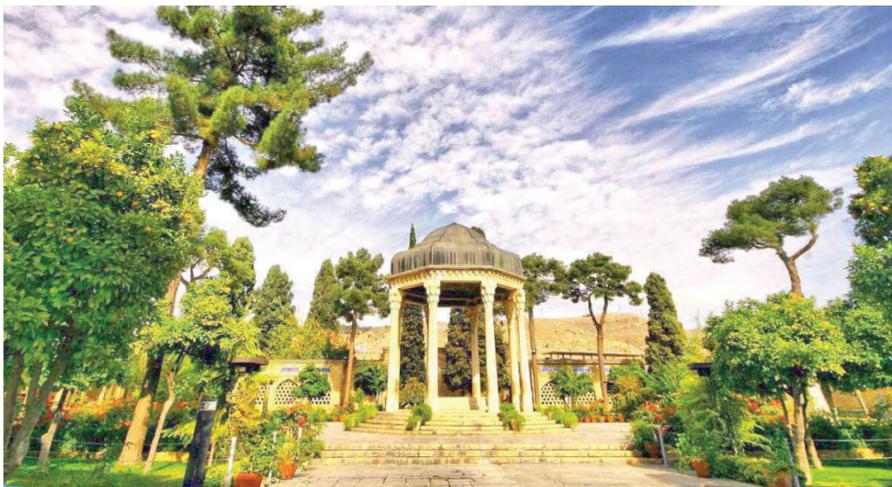
Secretary to Government of Telangana Youth Advancement, Tourism and Culture Department and a large number of Indian cultural figures and literati have been invited to attend the opening ceremony of the exhibition.

Syed Ainul Hasan, a professor of Persian and Central Asian Studies School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, is scheduled to deliver a speech.

The Siasat Daily, a leading English newspaper in Hyderabad, will provide full coverage of the exhibition.

As home to the mausoleums of

Iran to celebrate Hafez Day at Hyderabad museum



Mausoleum of Persian poet Hafez, Shiraz.

several poets, including Hafez and Sadi, and numerous cultural heritage sites, Shiraz has been seeking to achieve the title of Iran's cultural capital over the past few years.

Hafez Day, which fell on October 12 this year, is celebrated at Hafezieh, Hafez's mausoleum, and other Iranian cultural centers every year by organizing poetry sessions and musical performances.

Hafez is most famous for his divan and among the many partial English translations of this work are those

by Gertrude Bell and H. Wilberforce Clarke.

Hafez received a classical religious education, and lectured on Quranic and other theological subjects. "Hafez" designates one who has learned the Quran by heart. He also wrote commentaries on religious classics. As a court poet, he enjoyed the patronage of several rulers of Shiraz, which was Iran's 2020 Book Capital.

Shiraz has applied for the title "World Book Capital" in 2022.

Every year, UNESCO convenes delegates from the International Publishers Association and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) to grant the title of the World Book Capital to one city.

The Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur was named World Book Capital for the year 2020, and the Georgian capital Tbilisi was confirmed as World Book Capital 2021.

Tehran to host review of Chinese films



A scene from "Fly with the Crane" by Chinese director Li Ruijun.

TEHRAN – A review of Chinese films will be organized next week at Tehran's Art and Experience Cinemas, which are dedicated to screening art films.

Seven films have been selected to be screened during a weeklong program beginning on Saturday.

This program, which will be a hybrid event with virtual and live screenings, will be organized in collaboration with the Embassy of China in Tehran to celebrate fifty years of diplomatic relations between the country and Iran.

"Song of the Phoenix" directed by Wu Tian-Ming

in 2013 is one of the films selected for the review program named "A Look at Chinese Cinema".

It revolves around the life and trials of You Tianming, a young suona apprentice who forms his own suona troupe at a time when the traditions of suona music are declining in Chinese society. As a grown man, he has to face the painful reality that his chosen calling is no longer in tune with a modern, urbanized China.

"The Assassin", Hou Hsiao-Hsien's 2015 action drama will also be screened.

It is about a female assassin who receives a dangerous mission to kill a political leader in eighth-century China.

Yee Tung-Shing's 2015 drama "I Am Somebody" has also been selected to be reviewed in the program.

This movie shows that life is not easy for aspiring actors who come to Hengdian to be extras, hoping to one day become movie stars.

The program also features Zhang Yimou's "Coming Home" and "Shadow".

"Coming Home" had its world premiere at the Cannes Film Festival in 2014. The story is adapted from the novel "The Criminal Lu Yanshi" by Geling Yan.

Movies from Iran compete in Schlingel children's festival

TEHRAN – Four movies from Iranian filmmakers are being screened at the 26th Schlingel International Film Festival for Children and Young Audiences in Germany.

The films "Sun Children", "Locus", "The Young Wolves from the Apple Valley" and "Put at Stake" will compete in the different categories of the festival, which is underway in Chemnitz.

Directed by Majid Majidi, "Sun Children" has been selected to be screened in the Junior Film category.

It is about Ali and his friends, who keep afloat with small rip-offs when a big fish waves. They are given the task of recovering treasure that is buried in a drainage shaft. To get into the tunnel, they become part of the "Sun School", a



A scene from "Put at Stake" directed by Nadereh Turkamani.

school for street children.

In "Locus", a short film by Amir Ruini, there is a power outage in the cemetery morgue. The morgue staff can tell by the foul odor that something is wrong. There is also a corpse there, the mother of a ten-

year-old boy.

"The Young Wolves from the Apple Valley" tells the story of Asho, who is in danger. Since his father was charged with murder, he has had to hide as the girl Sogol with his aunt.

In this movie, Lu and Feng are a devoted couple forced to separate when Lu is arrested and sent to a labor camp as a political prisoner during the Cultural Revolution. He finally returns home only to find that his beloved wife no longer recognizes him.

"Shadow" was screened at several international events, including the 75th Venice International Film Festival, Toronto International Film Festival and the 2018 BFI London Film Festival.

Directed by Li Ruijun, "Fly with the Crane" will also be reviewed. The film premiered at the 69th Venice International Film Festival in 2012.

It is about 73-year-old Ma and his good mate Cao who were once coffin makers. Since the Chinese government implemented the practice of cremation, the demand for coffins dried up therefore Ma spends his days hanging out with his grandchildren. When Ma returns from attending a mid-Autumn festival with his daughter and her family, he is told that Cao has passed away and his coffin is secretly buried in a cornfield next to a lake.

The lineup also features "Anima" by Cao Jiming.

The story of the film is set on a cold winter day in the town of Muirdaoga, where a boy falls into a bear den during a hunting trip. His older brother is forced to kill the bear, which is considered taboo and labels him an outcast in the lonki tribe.

Together with his cousin Pari, he goes in search of his mother, who was previously believed to be dead, in the Apple Valley.

Fereidun Najafi is the director of the film, which is competing in the Panorama section.

"Put at Stake" is competing in the Children's Film category.

Directed by Nadereh Turkamani, the film follows Shahin and his friends, who want to start a soccer team. To earn the money for jerseys and shoes, they fatten geese. The sack of shots that the new boy in the village put in front of the door is just right for them. But the food is poison for the animals.

Dozens of movies from across the world are competing in the festival, which will run until October 16.

"Labor Unions and Autocracy in Iran" published in Persian

TEHRAN – "Labor Unions and Autocracy in Iran" by Iranian scholar Habib Ladjevardi of Harvard University has been published in Persian.

Zia Sedqi is the translator of the book published by Nashre No. The book was first published by the Syracuse University Press in 1985.

Ladjevardi follows the rise and ebb of political development in Iran from 1906 to the recent past by looking at one aspect of political growth: the emergence of labor unions.

Presenting a history of the labor movement in Iran, he begins with the genesis of the movement from 1906 to 1921 and then looks at the state of labor unions under Reza Shah from 1925 to 1941.

During the 1940s polarization between the unions and the government increased, as did Soviet and British influence on the unions.

From 1946 to 1953, Iran saw the rise and fall of government-controlled unions and, after 1953, workers without unions.

After years of frustration and countless examples of contradiction between words and deeds, the workers and most of the politically aware populace became cynical about constitutional government, parliamentary elections, the promises of the ruling elite, and the friendship of the Western powers.

Ladjevardi's account of the labor movement in Iran leaves little doubt as to why the workers turned against them all: the monarchy, "Western democracy," and the West itself.

Ladjevardi has been director of the Iranian Oral History Project at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies since 1981 and chair of the editorial board of the Harvard Middle Eastern Monograph Series since 1990.

Born in Tehran, he grew up in Scarsdale, New York.



Front cover of the Persian translation of Habib Ladjevardi's book "Labor Unions and Autocracy in Iran".